

THE WAR DIARY OF GERALD WARNER
December 7, 1941 – August 25, 1942

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Kobe, Japan; Consular Officer

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 - Dispute with Japs over turnover
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 - Possible sale of personal effects
 - Receives English newspapers
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- January 19- February 4
 - Trouble with guards
 - Jap officials discuss money and guards
 - Reports of possible exchange to Argentina
 - War news from Singapore and elsewhere
 - Recreation (bridge and tennis)
- February 4-7
 - Guard problems
 - Office turnover to Swiss
- February 8-10

Greater East Asia Day
Visit to Consulate office
February 11-20
Reports of Singapore's fall imminent
Report that Argentina may break relations
Dispute over contacting Swiss (Champeau)
Daily routine
Winter
Study of grass writing
February 21
Report of Singapore surrender
Possible developments
Personal effects misrouted
Japs supervise evacuation of consular office
Destruction of Consular seals, etc.
February 22-25
George Washington's Birthday
Cleanup of office
Cold continues
Daily routine
February 26-March 4
Guard problems
Kobe Club appeal for year-end contribution (!)
Phony report of air raid on Los Angeles
Possible sailing April 27
Socializing
Possible sale of effects
Rain
More claims of Jap victories
March 5-15
Press reports of US bombings
Continued packing effects
Reports of fall of Java
Daily routine
Trouble with thieving cook
March 16-17
Arrangements for (uncertain) departure
St. Patrick's Day party
Socializing
March 18-25
Favorable reports of exchange ship
Problem getting money from bank
Preparing for sale of effects
Trouble with unhelpful police .
Thieving cook finally leaves
Climate heats up

Problem paying staff
Offensive guards
Report that bombing in Manila destroyed effects
Continued preparing for furniture sale

March 27

Daily routine
Report that exchange ship to sail April 27
Continued preparations to leave
Report of sailing April 20th
Press reports US preparing attacks from sea and Alaska
Exchange to include missionaries and others
Sailing date still unclear
Problems with custom deliveries continue

April 3-4

Good Friday – No Hot Cross Buns
Bargaining with Brits over gin sale price
Report that Osaka Consular staff OK

April 5-7

Easter Sunday
Pet dog Jenny found killed for meat
Packers began packing
Sale of effects continues

April 8- 8

“Japanese Rescript evening 8th declaring war on U.S. and Brit”
Continued sale of goods and payment of debts
Internees crowding and other problem
Continued packing and selling effect
No news of sailing plans
Items unsold to be sent to Tokyo for storage
Packing
Report that sailing delayed one month
Packing finished
Continue sale of items
Purchase and barter for pearls
Restricted social life

April 18-26

Left Taiwan one year ago today
Sailing date still uncertain
Reports of Tokyo bombing unnerve locals
Air-raid alarm. Some ac-ac but no raid
Blackouts
Press says bombs hit only hospitals and schools
Press says planes shot down at sea

April 22-26

Report of earthquake on 21st
Press reports on air-raid

Patrolling of skies
Air-raid sirens and reports of ac-ac
Daily routine
April 27-May 13
No new sailing date
Reports Guam Am. prisoners may join
Problem over property lists
Brits liquor requirements
Air-raid precautions
Problem contacting Swiss
Corregidor falls
War reports
Reports of June 10 sailing date
Daily routine
May 14-24
Conflicting reports of sailing dates
War progress reports
Daily routine
Date in NY August 12
Eye problem
Reports sailing date July 15
Reports of move to Yokohama early June
May 25-June 2
Planes overhead in evening
Confusion re departure date
Packing and repacking
Planes patrolling
Exchange liquor for pearls
Reports on Gripsholm
June 3 date to Yokohama?
Travel arrangements
June 3-12
To Yokohama
Housing
Met other diplomatic and consular internees
Japanese "hospitality"
Sailing date new June 17 on Gripsholm
Environment
Press report of Jap war successes
Treatment by Japs
June 13-17
Daily routine in Yokohama
Press reports Jap victories Midway and Aleutians
The Asama docks
Reports on transport arrangements
Luggage to ship

Third class accommodations
June 18-25
Aboard the Asama
Fellow passengers
Daily routine
June 26-July 2
Daily routine aboard Asama
Living conditions
War reports
July 3
Arrived at Mekong Rive mouth
Bad war reports
July 4
July 4th Celebration
July 5-10
Arrived off Singapore
Daily routine
Planes sighted celebrating Greater Asia Day
Zigzagged through mine fields
Reports Singapore has fallen
July 10-21
Crossed the equator
The Missionaries are running the ship
Discussions re transfer to Gripsholm
Routine and complaints
“The Tattooed Lady” and other songs
Bad war news
Daily life stinks
July 22
Arrived at Lorenzo Marques
Spotted Gripsholm anchored nearby
Mail from home
List of transfers
July 23-27
Boarded Gripsholm
List of accompanying evacuees
Visits ashore
Discussion with Dept. re travel arrangements
Routine
July 28-Aug. 9
Gripsholm sails from L.M.
Passengers’ stories of mistreatment
Reports of onward route to US
Passenger language qualification questionnaires issued
Routine
Further career assignments

Aug. 10

Arrived at Rio de Janeiro
Received and sent mail and shopped
Met other evacuees
Tried unsuccessfully to telephone wife
At liberty in Rio

Aug 11

Departed Rio for New York

Aug 12-24

Aboard Gripsholm
Talk of future plans
Life aboard
Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR)
War discussions
Preparations for landing NY

August 25

Docked at New Jersey pier
Briefed by FBI and Army & Navy
Reporters eager for interviews
Great day in New York

Ann Warner's Notes