

AS3/P16-1/00

10-bh

Serial 181

May 19, 1942

From: The Commanding Officer.
 To: The Chief of Naval Personnel.
 via: (1) Commander Submarines, SOUTHWEST PACIFIC.
 (2) Commander ALLIED NAVAL FORCES BASING WESTERN AUSTRALIA
 Subject: Lieutenant (junior grade) Earl Ray Brewster, ChC-V(S), U.S. Naval Reserve - Missing in Action.
 Reference: (a) Article C-7002(1) BuNav Manual.
 (b) Article 2170(9) BuSandA Manual.
 Reference (A) Inventory of Chaplain Brewster's effects.

1. The subject officer was transferred from this vessel, then in Manila, P.I., to the U.S. Naval Hospital, Canacao, Cavite, P.I., on December 1, 1941, diagnosis fistula in ano.

2. On December 10, 1941, this vessel departed from the Manila Area.

3. Patients were transferred from the U.S. Naval Hospital, Canacao to the U.S. Army Hospital, Sternberg on about December 7, 1941.

4. Members of the Staff of Commander Submarines, Asiatic Fleet, who were left in the Manila Area and were at that time occupying the Enlisted Men's Club in Manila, state that Chaplain Brewster reported there on about December 15, 1941, that he was given orders, "To report to the Commanding Officer, U.S.S. CANOPUS for temporary duty and further transfer to your ship". After consultation with Staff of Commander in Chief, Asiatic Fleet, and before these orders were complied with they were cancelled and orders were issued to Chaplain Brewster, "To report to any Army or Navy activity for further transfer to your ship". The Army or Navy activity was designated verbally as the Philippine Girls College, Seven Day Adventists, at Calocan where patients had been assembled from various points. Chaplain Brewster left the Enlisted Men's Club on or about December 20, 1941, to carry out these orders.

5. Copies of orders mentioned in paragraph four (4) are not available. The substance was quoted from memory from Ray A. PETERSON, DY(PA), U.S. Navy, and Ronald J. STAFFORD, Y1c, U.S. Navy, both attached to the U.S.S. SARGO and now serving on the U.S.S. HOLLAND on the Staff of Commander Submarines, U.S. ASIATIC FLEET.

AS3/P16-1/00

10-clk

Serial 181

Subject: Lieutenant (junior grade) Earl Ray BREWSTER, ChC-V(S)
U.S. Naval Reserve - Missing in Action.

6. Enclosure (a) is an inventory of the effects left in the U.S.S. HOLLAND by Chaplain BREWSTER when he was transferred to the U.S. Naval Hospital. These effects will be retained on board until directed otherwise.

7. Information required by reference (a) is as follows:

- (a) Earl Ray Brewster.
 - (b) Lieutenant (junior grade)
 - (c) - - -
 - (d) Rosella M. Brewster - wife.
 - (e) 919 "C" Avenue, Coronado, California.
 - (f) Not notified.
 - (g) - - -
 - (h) Base pay \$166.67 - Rental \$60.00 - Subsistence \$36.00
 - (i) Rosella M. Brewster
 - (j) 919 "C" Avenue, Coronado, California.
 - (k) National Service Insurance amount unknown -
allotment to Veterans' Administration \$7.90.
Other allotments - Bank of America \$10.00
Rosella M. Brewster \$175.00
Navy Mutual Aid 13.01
- (1) All allotments deducted 1 May 1942.
On active duty.

8. In view of the above and the surrender of United States forces in Bataan and Corregidor it is certain that Chaplain Brewster is missing and it is very possible that he is a prisoner of war. By copy of this letter the Disbursing Officer, U.S.S. HOLLAND, is directed to comply with article 2170 (9) of BuSanda Manual.

P. E. PENDLETON.

Copy to:
Disb.Off. HOLLAND.
Supply Officer, U.S.S. HOLLAND.

U.S.S. HOLLAND
30 May, 1942.

RECEIVED THIS DATE:

Pat Roney,
Lieut jg SC USNR

CERTIFIED TO BE A TRUE COPY:

J. A. Callaghan,
Lieut-Comdr., USNavy.

Frisen John

DIVISION OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

U. S. MARINE CORPS

DATE *12 Feb 44*

DO NOT DETACH

THIS SHEET IS PART OF THE OFFICIAL RECORD

URGENT _____ ROUTINE _____

*Chief Chaplain
Capt W. W. ...*

MAJOR GENERAL COMMANDANT

ASSISTANT TO THE MGC *Room 3070*

SECRETARY TO THE MGC

ADJUTANT & INSPECTOR

QUARTERMASTER

PAYMASTER

RECRUITING

DIVISION OF RESERVE

AVIATION

PLANS & POLICIES

OFFICE PUBLIC RELATIONS NAVY DEPARTMENT

FOR INFORMATION, APPROVAL, COMMENT, RECOMMENDATION, AND RETURN TO PUBLIC RELATIONS.

Please read this in connection with the Hawkeye story of the chaplain, to send you this morning

DIVISION OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

RRB

Roxton, Texas
7 February, 1944

From: Major J. Hawkins, USMC
To: Brigadier General Robert L. Denig, USMC
Subject: Heroic conduct on the part of Chaplain
Earl Ray Brewster, U.S. Navy
Reference: (a) Your letter of 31 January, 1944

1. In accordance with the request contained in reference (a), this account of heroic conduct on the part of Chaplain Earl Ray Brewster, USN, while a prisoner of war in the Philippines, is submitted.

2. After the final surrender of the Philippines, I was interned at Prison Camp number 1 at Cabanatuan, Nueva Ecija, P.I. I met Chaplain Brewster for the first time in this camp and was immediately struck by his splendid example of courage and fortitude under the stress of the terrible circumstances in which we found ourselves. In this camp all Naval and Marine Corps personnel, seeking to keep together as much as possible, had managed to be quartered in the same portion of the camp. It was difficult to maintain faith and hope in these horrible circumstances, but it was made easier for all of us by the moral and spiritual leadership of Chaplain Brewster. He was our friend and counselor and a constant source of good cheer and hope. He ministered to the sick, organized a daily Bible class for us which benefitted all of us greatly, and every Sunday he delivered a sermon to us which was absolutely inspiring. His efforts were endless even though his physical strength ebbed constantly as a result of the starvation we were enduring.

3. Finally a group of prisoners numbering one thousand were sent to Camp number 2 at the former Davao Penal Colony in Mindanao. Chaplain Brewster and I were in this group. We all suffered terribly from exposure and the unbelievably crowded and filthy conditions on the Japanese ship during the eleven day trip to Davao. Upon our arrival there, we were forced to march about twenty miles, which, in our weakened condition, was almost beyond the limits of our endurance. It was not long after our arrival in this new camp that Chaplain Brewster developed beri beri, the disease which caused untold suffering among the prisoners. The chaplain's condition was very serious. He suffered endless, stabbing pain in his feet and legs and he was not able to get up from his bed in our crude hospital. He was very thin. Sleep for him was almost impossible since there were no sedatives and the pain never stopped, not even for a minute. He once told me "Jack, I never knew such suffering was possible on this earth."

But I will never give up." Major Austin C. Shofner, USMC, Major Michiel Dobervich, USMC, and I visited him several times each week and tried to help him by bringing a little fruit which we stole and smuggled past the Japanese guards. He kept his cheerful attitude through all his suffering. Although we thought his case was almost hopeless, we were overjoyed when he began to show improvement, and we marveled when we found him on his feet, even though it caused him torturing pain, holding religious services for the other suffering patients in the hospital. When I escaped with the other members of our party of ten, we left Chaplain Brewster still improving, still walking, still defying pain, still bringing hope and courage to the hearts of men.

4. It is hoped that this inspiring story will become a permanent record of the Chaplain Corps.

J. Hawkins

Jack Hawkins

BRONZE STAR MEDAL

EARL RAY BREWSTER

*Already
got. See*

For distinguishing himself by meritorious conduct while detained by the Japanese at Prison Camp No. 1, Cabanatuan, Philippine Islands and at Prison Camp No. 2, Davao Penal Colony, Mindanao, from 2 January 1942 to 4 February 1945. At Cabanatuan, Chaplain Brewster set a splendid example of courage and fortitude for his fellow prisoners. Although his strength ebbed constantly as a result of starvation and exposure, he ministered to the sick, provided moral and spiritual leadership for the men, organized daily Bible classes, and held inspiring religious services. Shortly after he was moved to the Davao Penal Colony, he developed beri beri, which caused endless and stabbing pains to his feet and legs so that he was unable to leave his bed in the crude hospital. No sedatives were available, but in spite of the constant pain, he kept his cheerful, exemplary attitude. Although his actions caused him torturous suffering, he soon got to his feet and began holding religious services for other patients in the hospital, bringing hope and courage to the hearts of his companions. His heroic conduct and service throughout were in keeping with the highest traditions of the Naval Service.

NAVY DEPARTMENT

IMMEDIATE RELEASE
PRESS AND RADIO

8/11/45
check
MARCH 1, 1945

*St. H. ...
re O'Connell
Hamilton*

NAVY CHAPLAIN CONDUCTED SERVICES IN JAPANESE PRISON CAMP
ALTHOUGH SUFFERING FROM NEAR STARVATION AND BERI-BERI

Suffering from near starvation and beri-beri but defying pain, a Navy chaplain, Lieutenant (junior grade) Earl Ray Brewster, U.S.N.R., still was able to bring "hope and courage to the hearts of men" while imprisoned in the Philippines, a Marine Corps officer, Major Jack Hawkins, U.S.M.C., whose home address is 1206 20th Street, Detroit, Michigan, related in a written account of the heroic conduct on the Navy chaplain's part.

Chaplain Brewster's wife and children who live at 919 "C" Avenue, Coronado, California, last week were notified that he had been freed after being detained in a Japanese camp from the time of the fall of the Philippines in May 1942 until the liberation of the Davao Penal colony in Mindanao in February. Chaplain Brewster, 40, was attached to the USS HOLLAND, a submarine tender, when the Philippines fell and was taken prisoner then.

When first interned at Camp Number One at Cabanatuan, where the chaplain and he were together, Major Hawkins said: "Chaplain Brewster was our friend and counselor and a constant source of good cheer and hope. He ministered to the sick, organized a daily Bible class and every Sunday delivered a sermon which was absolutely inspiring." His efforts were endless, Major Hawkins told, though his physical strength ebbed constantly as a result of the starvation they all were enduring.

Later Chaplain Brewster and Major Hawkins with others were sent to the camp at Mindanao. Enroute by Japanese ship during the 11-day trip to Davao, the men "suffered from exposure and the unbelievable crowded and filthy conditions."

Not long after their arrival in the camp, Chaplain Brewster developed beri-beri. "He suffered endless stabbing pain in his feet and legs and he was unable to get up from his bed in the crude hospital. He kept his cheerful attitude through his suffering. Finally he showed improvement and we marveled when we found him on his feet holding religious services for the other suffering patients in the hospital," said Major Hawkins.

"When I escaped with other members of our party," wrote the Major, "we left Chaplain Brewster still improving, still walking, still defying pain, still bringing hope and courage to the hearts of men."

Chaplain Brewster is a native of Sacred Heart, Oklahoma, and was ordained in the Methodist ministry in October 1934 by Bishop James Cannon, Jr. At the time he entered the Navy he was pastor of a church at Santa Paula, California, and formerly had held pastorates at Galt, Berkeley, Willows and Ventura, California.

Four other Navy chaplains still are detained by the enemy including Lieutenant James E. Davis, U.S.N., whose mother, Mrs. Grace E. Davis, lives at 1325 Sixth Avenue, Venice, California; Lieutenant Francis J. McManus, U.S.N. whose mother, Mrs. Anna McManus lives at 6907 Hough Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio; Lieutenant David L. Quinn, U.S.N., whose wife, Mrs. Dorothy Davis Quinn, resides at 311 Chesepeake, Chrisfield, Maryland; and Lieutenant

Herbert R. Trump, U.S.N., whose wife, Mrs. Mabel Elizabeth Trump lives at 1592 East Mound Street, Columbus, Ohio.

(Photographs available, Pictorial Section, Office of Public Relations.)

*Termination
Herpeltz alias*

8-43

CHAPMAN BREWSTER

OF AMERICA

WE

TO ALL

EQUIP-

MENT

REQUIRE-

MENT

PER

SQ. INCH

LBS.

INCHES

LBS.

SHIP.