

F.W. Baumeister, Dutch POW: diary (1942-1946), during and after the Japanese domination



December 8, 1941

At the office received the word about the Declaration of War by the Netherlands and the U.S. against Japan. I was working at the SS (*the Dutch East Indies National Railways*) in Palembang (Exploitation Office of the SS) in Soengaigerong, and was called in at the Infantry (Detachment Palembang) (*in Sumatra*)

January 23, 1942

First aerial bombardment on the airport Talangbetoetoe (about 13 km outside of Palembang)

February 13, 1942

Aerial raid on Talangbetoetoe (airport Palembang) Friday

February 14, 1942

Japanese parachutists landed near the airport Talangbetoetoe on the oil tower of the BPM (Bataafse Petroleum Maatschappij, (*the name of a Dutch East Indies Petroleum company*)) in Pladjoe and of the N.K.P.M. (= "*Nederlandsche Koloniale Petroleum Maatschappij*") in Soengaigerong.

All together (bombers, combat planes, Navy O(?) and transport airplanes) about 115 planes flew from Muntok to Palembang.

February 15, 1942

Sunday. Palembang has to surrender the airport to the Japs. Captain (....?, *couldn't read this name*), our local Military Commander, stayed behind with a part of our group. Our group has been divided into two parts. One group went via Benkoelen back to Java and the other group via Tandjongkarang, Oosthaven, Merak.

February, 21 1942

Arrival in Bandoeng. I went directly home and found my mother severely ill in bed. The next morning she had to be taken in to Borromeus hospital.

February 24, 1942

Positioned at the Regentweg (Ardjoena school) where all the military from the "Buitengewesten", (*other regions in Dutch East Indies*), like for example Palembang (*Sumatra*), Pontianak (*Kalimantan*), Muntok (*on the Island Bangka, near Sumatra*), Bandjermasin (*South Kalimantan on Borneo*) and Tarakan (*East Kalimantan*) etc. were assembled. Aerial raid on Bandoeng (airport Andir (....?) (near the area of Tjimindi). Then came to a "kampong" (= *a little village*).

February 28, 1942

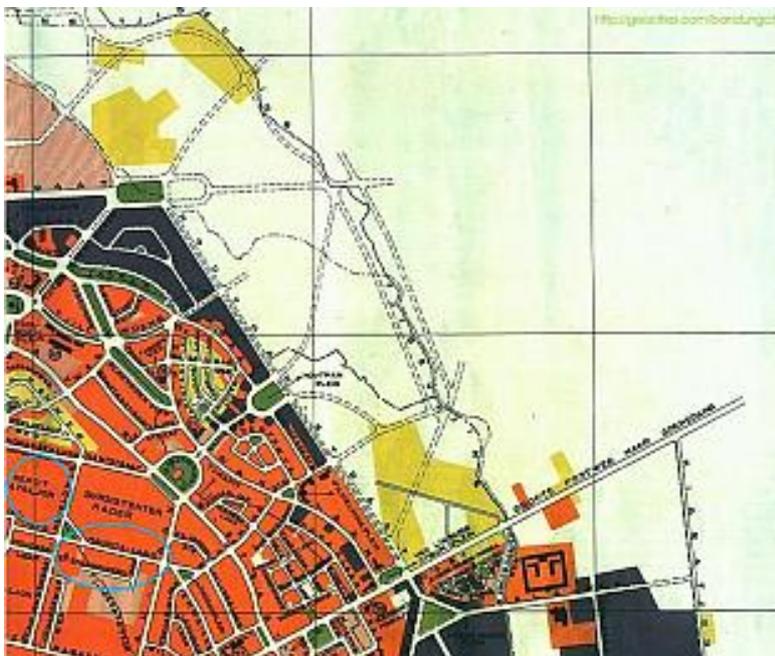
Landing of the Japs on Java.

March 1, 1942

Positioned with 41 other military men, storm soldiers at Genius: "Flame spitters" in Tjimahi. Here we would get an approximately 4 days education and afterwards would be placed back in our Infantry group. It never came to that, because our command kept us in Tjimahi (to go to Tjiateur if necessary)

March 8, 1942

Capitulation of the army in the Dutch East Indies. In the night. I went by truck together with some of the Flame spitters to Bandoeng and was then positioned at the Cavalry at Tegallega (racetrack), from there we were positioned at the "Depot Indonesian and Australian horses" at Mauritslaan (2<sup>nd</sup> Stadhouderslaan) in Bandoeng. (see map)



 Stadhouderslaan and Depot Battalion  
(old map of north east Bandung (<http://bandungsae.com> )

June 14, 1942

The Dutch and the Indo-Europeans were separated in Bandoeng. The Dutch stayed in the camps: "Luchtduel, 15<sup>th</sup> Battalion and 1<sup>st</sup> Depot Battalion". (The barracks of the 15<sup>th</sup> Battalion and later 1<sup>st</sup> Depot Battalion as well, was situated in the centre of Bandoeng. It was also bordered by these streets: Van Oldenbarneveltstraat, Noorder Magazijnstraat, Kampementstraat en Noorder Kampementstraat).

All the Indo-Europeans had to leave to Tjimahi (4th and 9th Battalion).

September 25, 1942

1<sup>st</sup> group of prisoners (division Cavalry), that left from our camp to an unknown destination. My brother Theo was one of them.

January 15, 1943

Departure of me and others (about 1000 men) to Batavia , Meester Cornelis (*an area in Batavia*) to a coconut plantation, about 8 km from Meester Cornelis , via a pleasure-area "Polonia" and the airport Tjilitan. Here there were also many Australians (this camp was like a go-through-house): Kampong Makassar.

January 29, 1943

From this coconut plantation at night at 02.00 hours moved to Tandjong Priok (*harbor in Batavia*) .....? (*couldn't read what my father wrote here*) on foot, then by train, 3<sup>rd</sup> class with closed shutters and in the morning got on board, destination Singapore.

February 2, 1943

Arrival in Singapore. With trucks (under the command of captain Berg) on our way to Changi Village.

April 15, 1943

600 men, among them 200 Officers, all from the A-block, left to Thailand. Until the station by cars, after that further by train. We had Major Kemper as commander. Our doctor was ....(?)

April 20, 1943

Arrival in Thailand (Ban Pong). At 00.00 hours we started our daily walk from 25 to 35 km towards the inlands. We will have to work on the railway that still has to be made from Ban Pong to the Burmese border, a distance of approximately 200 km. After Ban Pong we got to Tarua, a place on the big river Me Khlong, that was also "the river" of other camps in Thailand. After that came Canburry. Here we got vaccinations against cholera, typhus, smallpox and we got the unforgettable "ringsteken", (*anal inspection with a glass stick*) one of the "pleasant" treatments of the Jap.



Source: Museum Museon, NL  
Camp drawings from  
the occupied Dutch Indies  
(1942-1945)

After that we got Camp Tardan (or Terbong?) (*approximately 112 km from Non Pladuk*) and the big base camp Tarso. Here we got a half day rest, and were able to take a bath in the river in groups of 200 men, under supervision of the Jap. Here I saw, for the first time, a whole group of Thai elephants, that were meant to be used for activities at the railway, for example transportation of big tree trunks, needed for bridge building. From Tarso we only left with 400 men, 200 men stayed behind to start working in the neighborhood. Alongside Kenyo and jungle camps we

April 29, 1943

arrived at Ken Sayo, our basecamp, at 5 p.m. (approximately 116 km from Ban Pong). (= *Kensayok*, about 171(!) km from Ban Pong). The next day

April 30, 1943

was a rest day for us.

May 1, 1943

Started activities for road-construction respectively road-improvement.

May 3, 1943

30 men, under the command of boatswain Lageman, left to the jungle-camp, about 12 km north of Ken Sayo (sawmill). It couldn't be called a camp yet, because at arrival we had to set our tents by ourselves. That too was like the Jap.

Our number was reduced to 23 men, because of different mutations; replacements back to Ken Sayo, deaths and illnesses.

Breeuwsma, Woudstra, Rooymans (friend of J(?) Dilling) died. Lageman went back to Ken Sayo because of illness and we got constable Brantz as our Commander. The last who have worked at the mill were: quartermaster Terpstra, Tadema, van der Hulst, Boekweit, Roeters, Riemsdijk, Meyer, Witterick, Smeets, Boonstra, Wensink, Tiemannbeeld, Struwer, Bernhard, Werff, Vos, Bos, Hermsen, Dijkstra, van den Bergh, Mayer (West-Indier) later deceased in Tarso (Schelkens is .....(?), *I couldn't read this*), Schouten (later deceased in Kliang Khar); myself (Fred Baumeister)

July 31, 1943

From the sawmill we all went back to Ken Sayo to a further destination, Kliang khar (railroad-work)

August 1, 1943

rest day.

August 2, 1943

left for Kliang Khar, distance approximately 84 km. Here started the worse misery.

With dysentery and a big injury on my left foot, because of lousy (damaged) shoes I started my march. I didn't want to stay behind but accompany my fellow sufferers.

After an approximately 10 km walk an Englishman fell down from a railway-bridge, that was under construction. Heavily wounded he was carried away and from what I heard afterwards he recovered.

Via Rintin and Ku'i (in the last camp a panther stirred up our feelings) we arrived in Hindato.

August 2, 1943

Here the Dutch Palmer and me stayed behind; Palmer because of his dysentery and me too because of this disease and because of my foot injury (in the meanwhile this injury turned into a tropical ulcer).

August 6, 1943

Lieutenant Tanaka from the Onai-group picked us up from Hindato and together with him and his helpers and prisoners including our Pilot Officer Verwayen, H03(?) we moved on the river to Kliang khar (our final destination) and arrived there on

August 9, 1943

(approximately 35 km from the Burmese border). My friends went on from Hindato on foot via Brankasi, Takiwon, Tamblong, Kliang klar.

Above us was the camp Nikki-Nikki, approximately 6 km from us. We all got a couple of days rest.

August 14, 1943

Commencement of the railroad-work.

September 19, 1943

A film shooting (during the day) was made of the work.

September 20, 1943

Idem (night film shooting). This film was meant as a propaganda film.

September 22, 1943

At around 8.00 p.m. we were shown a film (night shooting).

September 23, 1943

together with 29 other ill men deported, by dugout canoe, to Tarso (barrack 5)

On October 8, 1943 the railroad-work is ended.

October 20, 1943

left from Tarso hospital to the hospital in Chungkai (by dugout canoe).

May 15, 1944

Left from Chungkai hospital to Tamuang hospital (under Canburry and Njam Predoc).

June 8, 1944

From Tamuang hospital sent to the working-barracks for examination and transmission to Japan. The remaining (more severe) patients will be deported to camp Moncombattan (= *Non Kumbaton*)

June 22, 1944

Left with music from Tamuang (600 men: 4 parties of 150 men) to Japan via Singapore (by train)

June 27, 1944

Arrival in Singapore (camp at the River Valley Street, where also Gurkha and Sikhs were living).

July 2, 1944

went on board the "Shi Maru" (*This was probably the Hakushika maru*) and

July 4, 1944

"set sail" 12 ships in convoy ("The Tiger" as Commander of our Party)

Our ship got convoy-number 2. We got 2 meals per day.

In Singapore captain Smit got news that a Dutch Party, coming from Sumatra, on her way to Singapore from Belawan Deli, was torpedoed (many deceased).

July 8, 1944

Arrival in Miri (Borneo), stayed 2 days

July 10, 1944

Departure from Miri to the Philippines

July 16, 1944

Arrival in Manila. Stayed 1 week.

Foraging. Captain Smit's group stayed behind.

July 23, 1944

Departure from Manila to Formosa.

July 25, 1944

1 Dutch (De Jong) died onboard because of blood poisoning.

July 27, 1944

Arrival in Takao. In Formosa foraging (bacon, bamboo shoots, bananas, tomato sauce, syrup).

August 1, 1944

Arrival in Kilung, (Formosa's 2<sup>nd</sup> harbour) stayed 3 days.

August 4, 1944

Left from Kilung, nr 13 of the convoy (13 ships).

August 10, 1944

Arrival at Maedji (=Moji) Nippon, a couple of deaths.....

From Maedji walked over a wooden overflow (landing stage) underground, walked for approximately half an hour. We arrived at an underground station with a roof alike the station Tandjong Priok (Harbor in Batavia) (*harbour in Batavia*). There we ate from triplex boxes. Afterwards crossover by ferry to Shimoneseki. Transported further by train.

August 11, 1944

Arrival at 6.00 a.m. in Kobe. Transported further to Osaka (change over), Nagoya (change over), Kagan to Yokka ichi and further to our camp (a sort of prison).

August 23, 1944

Started working in a copper factory.

September 4, 1944

Americans, coming from the Philippines, arrived in our camp.

They were on board of a ship for 3 months and came here out foraging .

September 17, 1944

Big flood in our camp.

September 21, 1944

The Dutch/English were divided in 2 shifts (day and nightshifts, 3 groups with 8 hours shift). The Americans continue to work in dayshift.

October 7, 1944

Big tidal wave.

December 7, 1944

Forceful earthquake. The factory considerably damaged. The chimney (615 feet high) (the biggest in the world) broke down partially (1.15 p.m.)

December 10, 1944

Earthquake at 1.20 at nighttime.

December 12, 1944

Idem at 8.00 at night.

December 14, 1944

first snowflakes at approximately 3.00 in the afternoon.

December 17, 1944

Snowfall at night (approximately 2 cm thick snow).

December 24, 1944

Distribution from the American Red Cross ( 1 package each).

January 22, 1945

Idem (1/2 package each).

January (or February, difficult to read) 2, 1945

~~idem (1/2 package each)~~ Corporal Arend Tabak deceased.

February 9, 1945

Soldier PPM Appel deceased.

February 12, 1945

Distribution Red Cross packages (1/2 each).

March 11, 1945

Idem (1/4 package each).

March 21, 1945

Idem (1/4 package each).

April 8, 1945

Idem (1/4 package each).

April 29, 1945

Idem (1/3 package each).

June 1, 1945

The number of camp inhabitants 75 Dutch, 25 English and 50 Americans (Party A) under the command of captain Henry and ensign Ter Braake left to district camp 7 (Toyama) Nagoya.

June 2, 1945

150 Americans (Party C) under the command of Colonel Stump (*this is Stubbs*) go to camp 11 (district Nagoya).

June 17, 1945

Bombardment at Yokkaichi at nighttime.

June 18, 1945

Bombardment of our factory ( 2 hangars thoroughly destroyed).

June 22, 1945

Bombardment in the neighborhood of the gas factory Yokkaichi.

June 24, 1945

Bombardment in Yokkaichi.

June 26, 1945

Bombardment in the neighborhood of our factory.

July 9 or 10, 1945

Bombardment in the neighborhood of our factory and Yokkaichi ( 2 burst firing behind us in the sea).

July 15, 1945

American combat planes (pursuits) flew over our camp.

July 24, 1945

Bombardment area Nagoya (at approximately 7 o'clock alarm until 5.30 in the morning).

July 25, 1945

Bombardment Nagoya, the whole day alarm from 5.30 in the morning).

July 28, 1945

Arrival of a Dutch doctor, doctor Klusman. Bombardment area Nagoya, and machine guns firing at our factory.

July 30, 1945

Bombardment Nagoya, Yokkaichi and our factory and camp. Fire guns firing at our factory and camp at 1 o'clock in the afternoon. Makatita deceased. Cornelis H \_\_\_\_\_  
Sergeant Bailey both legs amputated, 2 Dutchmen (Kouwberg and Hes) and 2 Americans not severely injured.

August 1, 1945

Air-raid alarm, everybody in the morning into the trench.

August 8, 1945

2 bombers flew over our camp.

August 15, 1945

The working went to work at 1 o'clock and about half an hour later unexpectedly returned. The factory-Japs had held a praying meeting. The rumor goes that the war must be over. (The war with Germany must have ended on May 8, 1945 at 10 o'clock) From now on there's no more working in the factory.

August 17, 1945

Until now no more air-raid alarms, in spite of the planes that fly over our camp and at night all the lights are on. At 6 o'clock a thanksgiving service was held by everybody.

August 19, 1945

The Japanese camp doctor came back at 1 o'clock in the afternoon from the conference in Nagoya.

First measures taken were

- 1) ration of rice from 640 grams to 800 grams for each person. Foraging a great amount of beans. 15 kg dried fish instead of 3 kg. Coffee, tea, orange powder, seaweed, tobacco.
- 2) Our own officers take the roll-call themselves from now on. Outside the barracks our officers have to be saluted.
- 3) swimming twice a day: from 10-12 and from 2-4 p.m. No further than 20 meters.

August 20, 1945

At last again cigarettes in the camp (6 pieces each).

August 23, 1945

Today one year ago we started working in the factory. In the afternoon wine was distributed (1 bottle for 9 men). A pig, weight approximately 50 kilos was brought into the camp and slaughtered.

August 24, 1945

At 8.00 o'clock at night, it was announced that the "temporary" truce will continue until August 31, 1945. On that day the definitive truce (peace) will be signed in Tokyo. From the 9<sup>th</sup> of September there will be made a commence to remove prisoners of war. Within a few days planes will drop packages with food and cigarettes by parachutes.

August 26, 1945

Ration of rice raised from ½ a bowl to 1 bowl each (every meal). Received 3 apples each. For the first time we see fruit in the camp.

August 27, 1945

2 pigs brought into the camp. 3 delegates from the Red Cross/ neutral Commission came in at 9.00 o'clock in the morning and left at 12.30. gave news: on 2 towns in Japan 2 atom bombs were dropped to force Japan to surrender ( 200.000 people killed by one bomb).

August 29, 1945 Allied planes flew over our camp. 12 packages Red Cross stuff dropped, enough for 2 days; afterwards more packages will be dropped (coming from the British battleship "the Indefatigable"). On August 30, 1945 Japan will be occupied.

August 30, 1945

6 planes have dropped 13 Red Cross packages. Received .....?*(I couldn't read this part)*, also illustrations. The prisoners will be moved by plane (when the weather is fine) or by ship (if the weather is bad) to the Philippines. The date for signing the peace treaty is moved to September 2, 1945.

September 2, 1945

British and American planes have dropped several drums/crates with food, medicine and cigarettes.

(at 6.30 in the morning) At 8.00 o'clock flag parade on the beach. Announced that we momentarily have received enough food. The food, that we cannot finish can't be thrown away, but will be given to the Koreans, who are in the same circumstances as we. (They only have 300 grams each)  
Paulus P.M. deceased.

September 3, 1945

At 10.00 o'clock in the evening received a message, that we will leave the next morning at 4.30

September 4, 1945

At 4.30 in the morning left for the station Nagoya and traveled further by train to Hamamatsu. Further per landing craft to the U.S.S. "The Rescue" (hospital ship). The sick stayed behind on this ship, the healthy will be taken to Tokyo by cruiser. I come and lie in Ward D4.

September 8, 1945

At 9.30 in the morning embarked to Tokyo.

September 9, 1945

At approximately 3.00 p.m. got off board the U.S.S. "The Rescue" in Yokohama. There trucks drove further with groups of approximately 30 men to Atsugi airport, 20 miles southwest from Tokyo, or approximately 10 miles from Yokohama's coast.  
Drove through distressed areas of Yokohama. At the airport provided with Red Cross vehicles and left about 8.30 p.m. by plane.

September 9, 1945

At approximately 2 o'clock at night arrived at Okinawa airport. (Yantan airport).

September 12, 1845

At 7.30 (or 8.30) a.m. left from Okinawa (sleeping place) to the airport Okinawa and at approximately 7.00 a.m. left for Manila. At 4.30 arrived at Manila (Nichols field). From there moved to the 312<sup>th</sup> General Hospital. Arrived at 5.15 p.m. and there admitted (Ward D2) complete address

"Detachment of Patients" 213<sup>th</sup> General Hospital, APO 75, c/o Postmaster, San Francisco, California

September 18, 1945

Released from the hospital (312<sup>th</sup>) and arrived in the 29<sup>th</sup> Replacement 62 Bat<sup>n</sup> Tent C4 (between Muntinlupa and Alakong)

October 3, 1945

Moved to the 5<sup>th</sup> Replacement 46 Bat<sup>n</sup> 102 Company ~~Tent~~ 3<sup>rd</sup> Platoon Tent 63

October 7, 1945

Admitted to the 313<sup>th</sup> General Hospital in Manila

October 12, 1945

Released from 313<sup>th</sup> General Hospital and placed back at the 5<sup>th</sup> Replacement 46 Bat<sup>n</sup> 192 Company 1<sup>st</sup> Platoon Tent ii (or 11?)

October 18, 1945

250 Marines and sailormen send back to the Netherlands.

November 6, 1945

Transferred to 270 Company, 2<sup>nd</sup> Platoon, Tent 68.

November 25, 1945

Theo left with approximately 2000 men to the Dutch East Indies

December 4, 1945

Left from Manila. Got on board with 2500 men on the SS "Circassia".

December 5, 1945

Headed out at 8.30 a.m.

December 9, 1945

At 7.00 a.m. arrival at Balikpapan, Krea III Valley Road.

March 21, 1946

transferred to LOC Batavia

March 27, 1946

Left from Balikpapan to Batavia per SS "Van Heutzs"

With me went also the 1<sup>st</sup> Detachment of the 1<sup>st</sup> Regiment Artillery + a part of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Detachment. The 1<sup>st</sup> Detachment was meant for Semarang, the 2<sup>nd</sup> was for Soerabaia, and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Detachment (Theo is the head of this) for Batavia.

March 31, 1946

Arrived at Batavia and placed at the Subsistentenkader (*don't know the English translation*) of the 10<sup>th</sup> Battalion Infantry.

April 1, 1946

Went to the DVO (=Departement van Oorlog, *this is the Department of War*) in Noordwijk (*this was a part of Batavia*). I can be transferred to the ~~DVO~~ LOC (*Leger Organisatie Centrum*), (*the main task of the LOC was the care and remilitarization of the liberated POWs*) detachment in Bandoeng.

April 8, 1946

Arrived in Bandoeng and placed at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Company in de Ananaslaan 28.

*Here my father's diary ended.*