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~~This chapter of the Manhattan District History. These informal writings~~  
record some vivid personal recollections, set down some time after the event  
by two officers who took part in the surveys of 'the effects' of the bombs.

The first recollections are those of Brigadier General (then  
Colonel) R. C. Wilson, U.S.A.F., quoted from a memorandum dated 13 August  
1948, as follows:

"In compliance with your request, I have jotted down some of my  
recollections of Japan as it appeared to me just before and immediately  
after the surrender of August 14, 1945. I have confined my notes to strictly  
non-technical aspects since the latter have been covered elsewhere in a  
great number of reports - including my own.

## ARRIVAL IN JAPAN

"I had just returned to the United States from Okinawa when The  
Bomb was dropped on Hiroshima. I was immediately ordered back to the  
Pacific with instructions to find and report to Brigadier General Newman.  
I left in a great hurry, with only verbal orders - an almost certain way to  
become officially 'lost' - and after searching Hawaii, Guam and Tinian, I  
wound up back in Okinawa just 3 weeks after having bid it what I had  
thought was a final farewell. There I found General Newman pleading for  
transport with the 11th Airborne Division, which was then moving into  
Yokohama.

"Failing to move with the 11th, we ordered in one of the C-54's  
from the 509th Group on Tinian, and proceeded with our own private invasion.

"We landed at Atsugi amid a scene of tremendous activity. The  
airdrome was battered but fully operational.

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"We obtained transportation and headed for Yokohama. The countryside was green and peaceful, showing no sign of war. But along the roads women turned their backs, and demobilized soldiers trudged by individually or in small groups with a studied indifference. Only the children greeted us - and they did so with enthusiasm. They made the 'V' sign without fail, and shouted 'Barco!' Some of them demanded gum, so it was plain that we were on the route of the 11th. The universally identical greeting of the children could only have been the result of careful schooling.

"The outskirts of Yokohama were thoroughly burned out, the people living in huts improvised of galvanized iron sheeting and other salvaged material. It was obvious that community life was being carried on under exceedingly great hardship.

"The center of the city, however, was not greatly damaged. Life appeared to be fairly normal, although the absence of any considerable number of people was notable. Through the streets passed mobs of demobilized troops, slogging along in informally organized companies as if the men clung together for mutual support. These motley companies were generally absolutely silent, and appeared to be ignored by the few civilians on the streets.

"The hotel selected for housing high-ranking officials and for assigning billets for others, was dramatically guarded by a squad of fully armed and bayoneted soldiers who greeted us with a crashing 'present arms.' In the gathering dark, backlit by the flooding hotel light, this scene was better than any movie could produce.

"I was assigned a nearby apartment; and a maid of perhaps 15 years of age who knelt and touched her forehead to the floor whenever she entered the place.

"The place was kept spotlessly clean, had running water and was a vast improvement over Okinawa! The bed, however, was a huge boxlike structure of wood covered only with a straw mat and a thin quilt. The pillow appeared to be filled with either sand or compacted sawdust.

"After a day or two in Yokohama during which time we saw the headquarters develop into a faithful replica of the Pentagon, Colonel Doubleday and I obtained a jeep and visited Tokyo.

"Tokyo was in frightful condition. Hardly a building was undamaged, and vast areas were destroyed completely. There were no American troops in town, which as yet was 'off limits' to the 11th Airborne. We saw an occasional reporter, but otherwise had the conquered city to ourselves. The people were not hostile but exceedingly curious. They swarmed all over our jeep at each stop. Community life was organized and controlled by hordes of gendarmes.

"We stopped at the largest of the department stores, which was pitifully stocked. The clerks evidenced no apparent surprise to see us there but rather acted as if they were serving the American tourist of happier days.

"We did not see Tokyo again for about a week after our 'capture' of the city. Then, as we approached, we were greeted by an immense sign reading 'Welcome to Tokyo by Courtesy of the First Cavalry Division.' Thus goes unsung a notable military triumph!

HIROSHIMA

"The initial inspection party, which was led by Major General Farrell and Brigadier General Newman, and which included Dr. Morrison and other civilian and military personnel, departed for Hiroshima from Atsugi in a C-54 commanded by myself. We flew over the burned out and ruined cities of Osaka and Kobe, arriving over Hiroshima in midmorning. It was apparent that a landing on Hiroshima's airport was impracticable because of the limited runway length and the wreckage which littered the place. We proceeded, therefore, to the military airbase of Iwakuni, about 20 miles to the south. Here we managed a successful landing despite bomb craters and the wreckage of many aircraft - one of which lay squarely on the runway.

"We commandeered a bus and soldier-driver from the local Commander and set out for Hiroshima. This was a notable journey marked by incredibly bad roads and frequent breakdowns. If my memory serves, it required 4 to 5 hours to cover the 15 miles from Iwakuni to the headquarters of the military commander of the Hiroshima area.

"At headquarters, we were allowed to stand in a huddle of baggage outside the gates, while our agitated guide, Dr. Suzuki, arranged for our reception. Eventually, we were admitted, and toiled up the hill from the gate to the 'taisa's' office in a plainly evident atmosphere of hostility.

"It was clear that the taisha had not expected us, was doubtful of the purpose of our visit, and lacked instruction from 'higher authority.' Despite Dr. Suzuki's explanations (which we could only assume were correct) he remained cold, hostile and uncooperative. It developed that he expected

some sort of a surrender demand and that this, with its attendant loss of face, he intended to resist. At long last, he accepted our visit to the 'Disaster' as inevitable, but refused to provide accommodation, or assume responsibility for our safety. He did agree to assign an officer to guide (and doubtless to watch) our party.

"We were surprised, in the light of all this coldness, at the taisha's request, just prior to our departure, to be photographed with the two Shosbos. Generals Farrell and Newman agreed, and the taisha squared himself away in the middle of a short settee where he spread his knees apart and gripped his sword firmly with both hands. The generals sat on either side of him on the too-short seat. We got a ridiculous picture of the taisha firmly and expansively posed on the settee with an American general clinging for dear life on either side.

"The agitated Tsuzuki, now reinforced by the Jap major, got us back to our bus and headed to the shrine of Miashima for the night. The shrine, located on an island, is centuries old and still a goal for pilgrims. It is reached through a town which appears to be the Japanese equivalent of Atlantic City - or even Coney Island. Nevertheless, when our ferry docked, not a townsman was to be seen on the main street leading from dock to temple. At each street crossing along the main route, however, a gendarme was stationed. In absolute silence, except for the noise we ourselves created, we struggled up the street with our luggage. With the Major leading, we passed the closed shops and houses; and as we passed, each gendarme in turn fell in silently behind us. I have forgotten how far we walked, but we had quite a platoon behind us when we arrived at the shrine!

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"Here we were met by the head priest and by one who appeared to be a hotel keeper. After 'registering' we were scattered in pairs throughout a group of small houses along the bank of a running stream. The whole shrine area was forested, gloomy and strange to American eyes. Presently, each of us was presented with a kimono and sandals and directed to the community bath. There we compromised with the local custom by standing on the edge of the pool and dousing each other with bucketfuls of the hot water which flowed in from one side.

"We had taken the precaution of bringing our arms to the bath, and after emerging, we found that all other equipment had vanished (to protect it from wandering deer, it was explained). So we dressed in our kimonos and sandals, buckled on our weapons and followed a guide to the chief priest's quarters for dinner. The priest was most cordial, as was his wife. His excellent dinner of venison was served to the squatting gentlemen by his wife and a number of other ladies. After dinner, he served Japanese 'Scotch' (complete with UK label) which tasted like kerosene and which, perhaps fortunately, no-one could drink.

"Soon after dinner we retired to our mats with an odd sensation of unreality.

"Next morning things had changed. Although we left very early, the town was thronged with people who appeared curious and even friendly. Our baggage was carried to the ferry for us. And on the mainland we found a string of cars to take us into Hiroshima.

"A good deal has been written about Hiroshima, but no-one can describe adequately the smell - and the flies. The former was noticeable.

From a distance of several miles: first a faint taint which at certain points in the city became almost overpowering. Even the Japanese, who seem not to notice their nauseating 'honey carts,' had their noses bound up while they probed the ruins. And the blue-bottle flies swarmed in clouds. To open a car window was to fill the car with flies. And we climbed through the ruins in individual swarms.

"I tramped through Hiroshima unaccompanied, except for a photographer. The able-bodied people paused to watch us, but never displayed any hostility. I went where I wished, except that I was dissuaded from climbing a hill in the southeast part of the city. I was told that it was the abode of Yama -- God.

#### "NAGASAKI

"The initial party entering Nagasaki was composed essentially of the Hiroshima group; Dr. Warren and his medical staff still were absent. Rear Admiral R. E. Byrd joined us as an additional observer to the party which once again departed from Atsuga in a C-54 commanded by me. Our landing field, Omura, was covered with low clouds and we were forced to fly far to sea in order to get under the low cloud layer. Omura airdrome was in frightful shape: its hangars were shot up or burned, its barracks abandoned, and its field pitted with bomb craters and littered with burned-out or wrecked airplanes. In picking our way through this ruin on landing, we blew out all four tires on the airplane.

"This left us virtually stranded, but after broadcasting aimlessly for assistance, the party requisitioned a bus and departed for Nagasaki. (In the absence of the party from Omura an airplane with spare tires and a maintenance crew arrived from Okinawa where our distress signal had been

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received. They repaired the airplane and departed with an air of unruffled efficiency.)

"On the trip from Omura to Nagasaki, it was observed that the rice paddies had been organized into a complex and deadly system of defense-in-depth. It was apparent that the capture of this area could have been accomplished only at a staggering cost in casualties.

"In Nagasaki our party halted in front of the government offices where we de-bussed and stood in the street while Dr. Suzuki palavered with the gendarmes. It appeared that the governor was in his office but was too busy to receive us. He would let us know when he was free. Meanwhile, presumably, we were to wait in the street. This occasioned an outburst culminating with an oration by Admiral Byrd to the effect that he was the President's personal representative and intended to wait upon the pleasure of no minor Japanese functionary. The governor promptly joined us in the street, where he was allowed eventually to coax us into his offices.

"Our business being stated, we prepared to go about our inspection in the city, but found our transportation to be the now familiar decrepit bus. We requested cars, but were informed that there were none in Nagasaki - this although we could see American limousines passing just under the window. Further discussion developed the fact that cars were the property of the Japanese army - therefore, their use by us was unthinkable. We got our cars.

"Our first night in Nagasaki was spent at an 'American style hotel.' It was so completely vile that I, and several others, thereafter lived in our airplane and 'commuted' to Nagasaki.



"One final recollection of Nagasaki: on the evening of the second day there, Colonel Doubleday and I went to the docks to watch the U. S. Marines land and occupy the town. It was very interesting to be on the 'wrong' end of a Marine landing. We noticed that some of the troops were as embarrassed as surprised to see us there. I don't really know if the two incidents are connected, but next evening the Marines arrested those of our party who were entering a geisha house to attend the now docile governor's welcoming party. The charge was 'out of bounds.'"

The second set of recollections are those of Colonel Stafford L. Warren, now Dean, School of Medicine, University of California, quoted from a letter dated 17 June 1948, as follows:

"There are three points of interest which involved our parties which might be of interest to you.

"Colonel Friedell's party in Hiroshima discovered a small amount of radium, presumably about twenty-five milligrams. It was picked up about three hundred feet or so off the main street in an area about one-half mile from the epicenter. There was a pile of bone fragments and bone ash where a great number of human bodies had been cremated by the Japanese. The Geiger Counter detected it and led them to the spot. They dug the pile up with shovels and by eliminating one shovelful after another, they finally located a small container, obviously a cervical or vaginal radium applicator, the best guess being that it was in a patient receiving treatment in a doctor's quarters or a hospital room at the time of the blast. Colonel Friedell brought the radium back to Tokyo and had a discussion among the group, including our own party and other.

personnel, concerning what was to be done with the source. We finally decided to turn it over to Dr. Tazuke who deposited it with the Japanese hospitals located at the Tokyo Imperial Medical School. This was done the day before we left. It was reported to our Intelligence and to MacArthur's Intelligence Section, but I do not know what the final outcome was. We also certified that it had no bomb potentialities. This was a good evidence of the accuracy of the surveys and the sensitivity of the equipment, in spite of the very rainy weather.

"Colonel Friedell's party entered the suburban area to the west of Hiroshima to follow the trail of the fall out. They traced it to the western peak adjacent to the edge of the city clear to the top of the hill where there was a shrine. They could go no further because there was an absence of roads and they were faced with an impenetrable bamboo forest which was located on the other side of the hill. By that time they were exhausted and also were nearing the end of their stay. The survey had to be terminated, so we do not know the western extent of the downwind contamination. It was very minor and not hazardous, being almost at the lower limit of sensitivity of their instruments.

"The second episode of some interest occurred when Nolan, Oughterson, Kasner, and I were grounded at the Hiroshima Airport. An ex-Los Angeles Japanese newspaperman appeared on the scene at dinner and interpreted accounts of the Japanese newspaper, of which he carried a copy. It contained the storm of controversy raised by the American correspondents over the ethics of using the bomb. The Japanese, of course, were beginning to chime in, but in general, were sitting tight, keeping their

own thoughts to themselves about this matter. He discussed this far into the night, and came up with the following arguments:

"The Japanese knew they were beaten and had planned to give up in February after fighting two months following our invasion which was scheduled for November 1st. This was all news to us but was verified later as the assault date. By dropping the bomb, we made further resistance impossible, thus saving their face. They could surrender when the Emperor said to without having to commit mass hara-kiri, which was to be their fate if they surrendered at the end of the war. A second strong argument which they accepted completely was the belief that in the process of our assault, we would have killed perhaps as many as several million Japanese. In the assault we would probably have had as many as five hundred thousand American boys killed. Was it not better to extinguish two cities instantaneously and bring the matter to an abrupt stop by what amounted to a surgical operation, the net result of which saved many more lives? We thought, when we went to bed and until we got back to Tokyo almost four days later, that we would spring this on the staff and the newspaper people in Tokyo when we arrived. To our surprise, this had broken in the Japanese papers the next day after our night meeting as coming from the Japanese, not from us, the Japanese saying that it was ethical to use the bomb and they were glad that we had done so because it had saved a great many Japanese lives, and a great many American lives. We were greatly amused at the puzzled expressions and comments of the local correspondents who felt that they had been sold down the river by the Japanese whom they expected to climb aboard the band wagon. We, of course, kept quiet

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about our part of it. The matter soon quieted down both in Japan and the United States, although our own people frequently bring the subject up as a sort of neurotic self-flagellation.

"The third interesting episode was our visit to the Temple of Peace. As we left our bivouac area on the island the last morning, Tsuzuki had asked whether we would like to visit the Shrine and see this famous historical landmark. As I remember, it was about fourteen hundred years old, built on stilts over the tide water. It was a beautiful little building, old style Japanese Architecture, made of cedar planks of great dimensions and having a high polish. The four of us and four enlisted men finally were admitted to the inner Shrines. We took our shoes off and walked in. Tsuzuki halted us in a line, bowed to the idol. The High Priest came out dressed in pure white, and he and Tsuzuki went through a ceremony before the idol, and then came back and faced us. Two men, supposedly spirits, dressed in white came out and furiously waived plumes about the place, driving away the evil spirits. Then ceremonial dishes filled with hot sake were given to us and we were told this was a pledge to peace, and, on that basis, we all drank it. Colonel Oughterson, as MacArthur's representative at the time, stepped forward and paid his respects to the local factotum who had treated us so courteously. I got philosophical and gave a toast to the future peace between all nations and the hope there would be no more war again. I got a little emotional about it, and this, together with the knowledge that we did not rape or pillage his community, surprised the Priest greatly. We then backed out and took the boat to shore where we were greeted very

respectfully, and much more effusively and ceremoniously by the local gendarme captain than we had been previously. It was hard for me to reconcile this ceremony with the knowledge which we had received several days before, that this Shrine was the center for kamikazes, who had lived a life of riotous celebration in the hotels located just above the shrine. The latter part of the week before their tour of duty was spent there, and then the last day or some period was spent in consecration and dedication at this Shrine before they took off for their missions. I wondered whether there were more kamikazes or relatives of kamikazes on this island where we were singularly vulnerable. It was interesting, but not unexpected, that it would take us some time, two to three days, to get a message from either of the two cities to Tokyo. However, Tsuzuki seemed to have a mysterious system of telepathy because he could make arrangements through Tokyo from those distances in a few hours. Since we were afraid that any investigation of how he did it at the time would cause the system to fail and leave us stranded, we did not inquire as to the mechanism.

"I shall never forget walking into the Medical School in Nagasaki about five weeks after the detonation, and, on the landing of the second floor, stepping over the body of a young female partly burned, going down the corridors of an American designed concrete building like these at home, finding in room after room the laboratory equipment so familiar at home, and on the floors, two or three or more bodies, partly burned, entangled in window frames, and twisted under the benches. They must have been doctors, nurses, technicians, and students. The

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school was located about three-quarters of a mile from the epicenter, and the walls were thick concrete. In the basement below the main entrance, which was easily accessible, there were four pairs of new wooden shoes with pink or red ribbons for the toe. Each pair was beside an empty litter on the floor. Also beside each litter was a smear of what I interpreted to be bloody vomitus or bloody diarrhea. Outside was a pile of bones from the cremated bodies. The pile was about three feet deep and fifty feet in diameter.

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