



# **Prisoner of the Rising Sun: The Lost Diary of Brigadier General Lewis Beebe (Texas A & M University Military History Series)**

*Brigadier General Lewis Beebe*

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A never-before-published account of the experience of an American officer at the hands of Japanese captors, *Prisoner of the Rising Sun* offers new evidence of the treatment accorded officers and shows how the Corregidor prisoners fared compared with the ill-fated Bataan captives.

When Japanese aircraft struck airfields in the Philippines on December 8, 1941, Col. Lewis C. Beebe was Gen. Douglas MacArthur's chief supply officer. Promoted to brigadier general, he would become chief of staff for General Wainwright in early March, 1942. From his privileged vantage point, Beebe kept diary records of the Japanese invasion of the Philippines, their advance to Manila and capture of the Bataan Peninsula, and their assault on Corregidor. On May 6, Japanese troops assaulted Corregidor and secured the island in less than twelve hours. Beebe was among those captured and held prisoner until the end of the war in the Pacific, more than four years later.

During his captivity, Beebe managed to keep a diary in which he recorded the relatively benign treatment he and his fellow officers received (at least in comparison with the horrific conditions described in the better-known accounts of less high-ranking POWs held by the Japanese elsewhere). He reports on poor rations, less than adequate medical care, and field work in camps in the Philippines, on Taiwan, and in Manchuria. He also describes the sometimes greedy and selfish behavior of his fellow captives, as well as a lighter side of camp life that included work on a novel, singing, POW concerts, and Red Cross visits. His philosophy demanded that captivity should be borne with optimism and self-respect.

Annotation and an epilogue by General Beebe's son, Rev. John M. Beebe, add details about his military career, and an informative introduction by historian Stanley L. Falk places the diary in the context of the broader American experience of captivity at the hands of the Japanese. The diary itself not only provides new details of the treatment of officers by the Japanese army, but also offers a glimpse into the psyche of one of the members of the Greatest Generation who transformed his captivity by using it to sort out what was most important in life.

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