

WHEN I first met Judy she was only three, but very elegant, brave and wise. Four years later she was awarded a V.C. Judy was a well-bred pointer, and the V.C. she won was the animals' V.C.—the Dickin Medal. Her citation stated that she was the only animal officially P.O.W. with the Japanese. But there was more to it than that. I should know. I was with her throughout the war.

Her early history, as I heard it, may not be accurate. I got it from naval ratings—fellow P.O.W.'s. As a puppy she was purchased in Shanghai for 20 guineas and became the official mascot of H.M.S. Grasshopper, a Yangtse gunboat. Just before the Japanese invasion of Malaya this boat was called to Singapore. Some of her crew were transferred to H.M.S. Prince of Wales and they took Judy with them. When the Prince of Wales was sunk, Judy was rescued and went back to H.M.S. Grasshopper with some of her old shipmates.

On Friday, February 13, 1942, H.M.S. Grasshopper left Singapore loaded with evacuees. Like many other vessels leaving Singapore that day she was bombed, set on fire, and beached on one of the uninhabited, waterless islands of the Rhio Archipelago. A few survivors, many badly wounded, reached the shore. The next day the ship was still blazing and her loose ammunition was exploding. Even above this din they heard Judy barking. She was imprisoned in the chart-room of the burning ship. One of her shipmates swam out and rescued her shortly before the magazine exploded.

The next days were living hell. The wounded and dying screamed in vain for water. Two or three fit men undertook to swim to another island to see if they could get some, and took Judy with them. Their search was fruitless until Judy attracted them by her eager barks to a spring below high-water mark. Her discovery saved the lives of the whole party, which was finally rescued, taken up the Indragiri River in Sumatra, and 200 miles across the island to Padang on the west coast. The fortunes of war led me also to Padang, where I first met Judy on March 15.

JUDY COULD TAKE IT

... The Story of an Animal V.C.

ON Sunday, September 25, listeners to the Main National and Commercial Stations heard a talk about a dog whose sagacity helped to save many prisoners-of-war in Japanese hands from starvation, and whose example of courage and the will to live became an inspiration to the men to carry on. For this she was awarded the Dickin Medal—the animals' Victoria Cross. The talk, given by Gerard G. L. McLeod, of Auckland, who was with her throughout the war, served also to draw attention to Animal Welfare Week which began on Monday, September 26. For the benefit of those who did not hear the talk and of those who would like to read it at their leisure, here it is.

She was rather aloof towards me at first, but we soon became firm friends.

When the Japanese occupied Padang on March 17, they put us into a prison camp, but would not admit Judy. Next morning I awoke to find her under my bunk. How she got into the camp, which was surrounded by a high brick wall, remains a mystery. A few days later I escaped to the jungle, so that I didn't see Judy again till six months later, when I was recaptured and brought back to Padang. She was in fine fettle. The Dutch, who had taken a big supply of rations into the camp, had helped greatly in feeding her. Although there were 1,100 men in the camp, about 200 of whom were English and Australian, I flatter myself that Judy recognised me. You see, we had become real friends during those few days before my escape.

IN THE BAG

SHORTLY before Christmas, 1942, we were told that the camp would move across Sumatra to Medan on the east coast of the northern end of the Straits of Malacca. The journey of 600 miles was to be done by lorry. No animals were to accompany us. What were we to do with Judy? She was so intelligent that we decided to train her to walk into a sack and stay quiet while we carried her about on our backs. The plan succeeded and, unknown to the

guards, she accompanied us. We kept her hidden for a fortnight after arriving in Medan. When the guards first saw her they were nonplussed, but we assured them that she must have followed the convoy on foot. They believed us and marvelled.

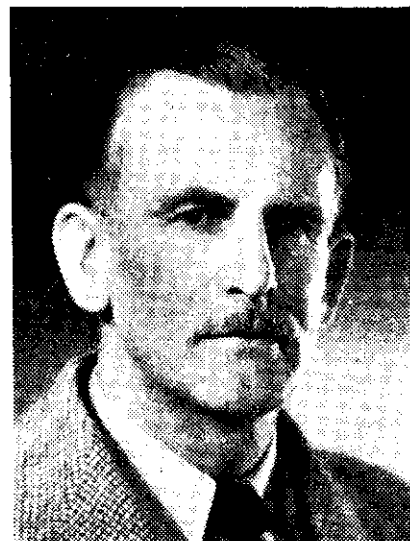
Conditions deteriorated steadily in Medan. Our rations reached the bare minimum of existence. We had little food to spare for Judy, but while we grew haggard she remained sleek. I decided to find out the cause of this. At dawn one morning I caught sight of her near long grass round the Japs' own cookhouse. She worked her way on her belly through the grass till she was in view of the cook-house. Here she remained in hiding till the cook went for water. With one bound she was into the cook-house, and away with a large chunk of meat in her mouth. (We had never seen meat in months.)

Her thieving in Medan was never discovered. Several times she came home with a large bone which we made into soup. In return she had her portion of soup and some of our rice. She was more fortunate than another dog owned by a Dutchman in the camp. Caught in the act of stealing from the Japs, the dog was put in a cage near the guard-house. On the cage the Japs placed this notice—"Guilty of the gravest crime known to the Japanese, theft; this animal must not be fed." In five days the dog was dead. This unbelievable example of sadistic barbarism I leave without comment. It's only one of hundreds I could quote.

Under the strain of the hardships in Medan some men went mad. Among them was a naval P.O., who could imitate a bosun's pipe perfectly. It was heart-breaking in the extreme to hear him pipe up "Liberty Boat" and to watch Judy, even after two years, react to it and scamper to every entrance of the camp, only to return distressingly disconsolate. She had always gone ashore in the first liberty boat when she was aboard a naval vessel. In 1943 Judy became the mother of six delightful puppies. How she could have mated still baffles me, but she frequently accompanied us on working parties and must, somewhere in the jungle, have met a really well-bred dog, for the pups all had very good lines like hers, but were jet black. The Japs took the puppies as soon as they were weaned. In three months they were all dead through maltreatment.

RATIONS FOR JUDY

IN June, 1943, Colonel Banno became Japanese Camp Commander. He had fought for the Allies in 1914-18, and I



Alan Blakey photograph
GERARD G. L. McLEOD, who told the story of Judy

suspect him of having had leanings towards both animals and the English. With him came a guard commander—the most brutal man I have had the misfortune to encounter. This fellow decided to kill Judy because she invariably snarled when he passed her. One night he called out the guard and had them surround Judy with fixed bayonets. It was obvious what their orders were. At the critical moment Banno appeared on the scene.

He slashed the guard commander several times across the face with his scabbard and, much to our delight, showed his displeasure in other unmentionable ways. Next day we approached Banno to obtain a rice ration for Judy. We pointed out that she had been on the ration strength of the Navy as an official mascot and was therefore a combatant and a P.O.W. like ourselves. The idea pleased him immensely, so he made her an official P.O.W., adding her name to the camp rolls.

Without Judy's help we could not have built the radio we operated in Medan. We had all the essentials for the set except the valves. One party of prisoners went frequently to work at a Japanese store where a large quantity of radio equipment was kept. To steal the necessary valves was a simple process, but to get them into camp was almost impossible, as we were searched—even down to our boots—as we entered the camp each evening. Judy was allowed to accompany this party and, of course, was not searched. So we tied the valves under her collar and in this way got them past the guards. The news we received on this set helped tremendously to improve the morale of the prisoners.

We operated the set each night, and it was quite a dangerous business; one man who had been caught at it had been shot a few months before. The guards made frequent tours of the camp during the night, and we would certainly have been caught operating the set had it not been for Judy, who wandered outside whenever we were at work, and returned to utter a low growl whenever



BBC photograph
JUDY poses, wearing her Dickin medal, for the BBC television camera