

Tales Of Escape From Malaya

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right when you can see it coming during the day, but at night, when you don't see it until you are almost on it, it is quite exciting. The sea is pretty prickly with rocks, too. Fortunately we had done a bit of sailing so we knew what to look out for, but we spotted one or two boats that had been wrecked along the coasts of one or other of the islands. We met a Chinese junk with a huge crowd on her, about a hundred and thirty, with just one man aboard who knew a little about navigating. I reckon he did a wonderful job getting her out and keeping her afloat.

Abandoned Food Dump

We were also very lucky about supplies. About the third day out we were running short of food and cash and were getting worried. We happened to pass fairly close to another yacht and we hailed them and commented on their supplies of tinned stuff. "Oh," they said, "we have just visited the food dump."

"What food dump?" we asked.

"The Government dump on the island," they replied, and they explained how by chance they had heard that at certain points on the islands there were food dumps in specially marked out places for evacuees from Malaya. We sailed back about eight miles and found the spot and got supplies for three or four days for both boats and, equally valuable, sailing directions through the islands and to the next food dump.

We Were Incredibly Lucky

On the whole it was just a very pleasant little trip. But the last stretch over to Sumatra offered a bit of excitement. We had arrived on this last island in the evening and we planned to rest that night and the next day and get a Malay to take the lot of us over in his boat the following night. We went up to a Malay village and we got a Malay to prepare a curry to celebrate what was almost the end of our voyage. Well, that Malay did us proud and we had a grand meal, the best of any I've ever tasted, and we were just thinking of turning in when we heard that the Japs had landed on this very island and that we had better get away as fast as we could. We did. We had a long walk through deep mud to the beach, and then a hasty push off. We could not sail to the point that we had intended making at Sumatra as the Japs were already there, but instead slipped in unobtrusively up coast and cut across the jungle for six hours or so. We were incredibly lucky. The Japs were well on to Sumatra. Further south Palembang was going up in flames. We might have had another sea voyage in some broken-down craft or other but the day we got to the west coast we were picked up by a British man-of-war and so taken off. It may all sound very adventurous, but my own feeling was that we were safer and more comfortable than those who got away by more normal channels.

A Woman's Experience

"I WAS in hospital for my last fortnight in Singapore," said another who escaped, a woman, in an interview. "Those last few days were pretty bad.

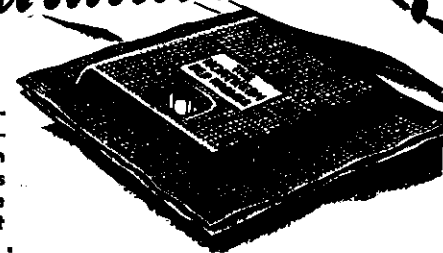
The 'planes were zooming overhead almost all the time. The all-clear would be sounding at one end of the city while the alert for a new raid would go at the other end. We patients were told to get under the bed when an alarm sounded and at first we did, all of us that were fit enough, but it was miserable. I had a boil and I kept on bumping it and I could not decide whether it was better to climb in and out or just stay under the bed and have done with it. The Japs really did seem to respect our Red Cross and though bombs were dropping on all sides we were not hit. One thing I should like to say, the Chinese nurses were just marvellous. They deserved the V.C. They didn't leave. They didn't panic. They stayed on without any hesitation or alarm. They knew, as well as we did, that they had everything to lose if Singapore fell. Most of them had been nursing for years and they would lose their jobs, their pensions, everything, and they had nowhere to go. They could not go home. Singapore was their home. That was why some of us hated leaving. We may have seemed foolish to stay on but we wanted to stay and help. It looked like deserting these others to make off to Australia and New Zealand and leave those who could not go. However my husband fetched me and put me on a boat on the Friday before Singapore fell. And I was too sick and miserable to resist, so here I am. As far as I know my husband is still there. The boat was jammed with refugees like myself, and we were attacked for four days, but miraculously we escaped."

Items From The ZB's

A NEW serial will begin on August 18, at 10.15 a.m. from 3ZB, called *The Green House*. This is the story of Fred and Nancy Green, a newly-wed couple who share their home with Eleanor, Fred's sister, an old maid who has young ideas. She leads all the town's social functions, belongs to all the clubs, knows everyone, and talks about everybody. Fred, an amateur inventor, owns a hardware store, where all the town's characters come to buy and gossip. Each episode deals with some problem, humorous or serious, in this household, and interest increases when Eleanor falls in love with and marries an English Shakespearean actor who has come to the town to direct a local play and who stays to save the hardware business from ruin.

WHAT strange experiences have you had? This is the question that the ZB stations are asking you. The new serial, *Strange Experiences*, is the dramatised version of some of the stories that have been sent in. The prize for having your story chosen will be £1 1s. The first episode of the series is the story told by a Mr. Collins of a visit that he paid to an old friend, a priest, in the slums of Glasgow—but we leave you to hear for yourself what happened. This programme has already started from 1ZB, 2ZB and 3ZB. It will begin from 4ZB on August 18, and from 2ZA on August 27, in each case on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 8 p.m.

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