

8-17-1945

Lieutenant Wayne Jones Tells of Manila Life 8-17-1945

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Lieutenant *Aug. 17,* *1945-* Jones Tells of Manila Life

Newton Officer States That Citizens of Manila Are Beginning to Rebuild Their City; Shops Going

Lieutenant Wayne Jones, who is with an Infantry division in Luzon, writes his parents, Mr. and Mrs. V. A. Jones of Newton:

"About an hour ago I finished a mess kit full of swiss steak. I've had to rest since then in order to feel comfortable. The food so far has been excellent.

"We hitch-hiked to Manila in an Army truck; that's the only way you can get there and back, but in the city itself, the civilians seem to have their automobiles. Nearly all are right hand drive. Where we would put four or five in a car, they may have ten in these. They really pack them in.

"I can imagine what the cities of Europe look like now. When you are on the outskirts of the town, things don't look so bad. There aren't many stone buildings out there. But the closer you get toward the center of the town, the more permanent buildings there are. I don't think there is one stone, cement, or other permanent building that isn't destroyed. From a distance some of the buildings look o. k., but when you get close to them you can see only four walls. The streets are lined with rubble and trash. The 'walled city' is nothing but rubble. Everything is destroyed.

Much Inflation Apparent

"The Filipinos have started building back already and there are many little shops along the streets. They sell about anything you could think of. The prices are enormous. I priced a camera like I have at home and it was 150 pesos. One peso is equal to 50 cents. Their smaller change is centavos. Fifty of those equal twenty-five cents of our money. Also a fifteen cent deck of cards was priced at six pesos. A roll of film sold for five pesos. The watches were priced 400 pesos.

"There are lots of what you might call little night clubs. They have sprung up everywhere. They seem to have all kinds of liquor, but again the price is high.

"The system of barter is somewhat erratic. They will sell you a pineapple for half a dollar or exchange it for a package of cigarettes. The latter is strictly against regulations. A package of cigarettes on the ship sold for five cents.

Praises Red Cross

"The Red Cross seems to be the only decent thing in Manila. They have hot coffee and doughnuts all the time, and best of all cold pineapple juice. It's all free. They are building a larger building there also that will be nice when it is completed. There are also a few PX snack bars in Manila where you can get a coke and a hamburger. The cokes are cold but nothing else is. Ice sells for a dollar a pound.

"The bay is still cluttered with sunken ships. Only the masts are sticking above the water. That also helps to instill in your mind the realities of war. The destroyed buildings are the best example of that, however."