

## Gets Warm Welcome From His Dad



Five and a half years are a long time, Dad, and it is good to be back home again. "Thus Major Stephen Farris greeted his father, Andrew, after returning to this city. Major Farris spent three and a half years in a Japanese prison camp, having been taken prisoner at Corregidor.

## Major Stephan C. Farris, Taken Prisoner At Corregidor, Says Atrocity Stories Are Authentic

By JAMES BELL

"Gosh, it's great to be back in Bethlehem!" said Major Stephan C. Farris, U. S. Army, who returned to his home yesterday after having been a prisoner of the Japs since May 6, 1942. Major Farris, son of Andrew Farris, 737 Evans Street, arrived in Bethlehem yesterday morning. He was liberated on September 8, 1945, by troops attached to General Eichenberg's 8th Army.

Although reluctant to make any statements as to conditions at the time of surrender, due to Army regulations, Major Farris revealed many things which were more or less in line with propaganda dished out during the conflict with Japan.

Major Farris graduated from Liberty High School with the class of 1931, and received his diploma at West Point in 1939. After graduation, he was assigned to Fort Hancock, N. J., for three months, and then was transferred to the Philippines, with the 92nd Coast Artillery, Philippine Scouts, under the command of General Grunert, who was later displaced by General MacArthur.

He was commissioned a Captain on December 19, 1941, while at Corregidor. He served with the gallant group who made the historic stand on Corregidor, under the command of General Wainright, finally surrendering to the Japs on May 6, 1942.

the Japs seemed to coincide with the appearance of our bombers over Japan. According to Farris, the sight of our bombers winging their way toward Tokyo was a wonderful boost to their morale, although the Japs began to treat them badly.

Farris made a broadcast over the Japanese network in 1943, which was picked up by short-wave listeners on the West coast, and relayed throughout the United States. Following that broadcast, Farris and the other officers refused to speak over the radio, because they felt that they were aiding the Japanese cause.

Asked whether the officers were given any special consideration, Farris replied, "It made no difference whether you were an officer or an enlisted man, the Japs treated you as though you were dirt. They took special delight in lining up the sick men and beating them down with their fists. Stories of Jap atrocities have been quite authentic, and certainly not exaggerated."

Farris received the rank of Major on September 2, 1945.

On November 25, he will return to Woodrow Wilson Hospital, Staunton, Virginia. After that, he will be assigned to temporary duty somewhere within the United States.

Following the surrender, Farris was kept at Corregidor until May 23, 1942. He was then moved to Cabanatuan, Luzon, and then to Osaka, Japan, where he was put in a prison camp supervised by the Mitsubishi Company, of the Japanese Army.

From there, he was transferred to a prison camp at Zentsuji, on the isle of Shikoku, in Japan. He was kept at this camp until June 23, 1945, at which time he was moved to Rokuroshi, on the island of Honshu, and was there when the war ended.

When captured, Farris weighed 160 pounds, but at the war's end he tipped the scales at only 118 pounds. Lack of food at the prison camps was responsible for the deaths of many men, and health conditions at the camps were unbearable, he said.

At the Zentsuji prison camp, living conditions were really not too bad, in comparison with some of the other camps, according to Major Farris. With 650 officers and 100 enlisted men listed as prisoners of war at that camp, only three died from malnutrition. For some reason or other, the Japs adhered to quite a liberal policy, even going so far as to allow the men to stage a program at Christmas time, 1943. The famous Christmas play "Christmas Carol," by Charles Dickens, was presented by the prisoners, under the direction of Fred Koenig, of Belleville, Illinois.

As for receiving gifts from home, Major Farris stated that only one package found its way into his hands. Packages from the American Red Cross were received quite regularly during the period from November, 1944 to April, 1945.

In all his years as a prisoner of war, Farris received but forty-six letters, most of them limited to twenty-five words. Oddly enough, news of the war was available through the newspapers that were smuggled into the camps. Progress of the war was followed closely by all the men, and when news of the victory in Europe reached the camps, the men were overjoyed.

Harsh treatment of the men by

Farris, Stephen

October 27, 1945