Battalion (III. Seebataillon) in Tsingtau, the German enclave on the northern coast of China, south of Port Arthur (Figures 3 and 4). The III. Seebataillon in Tsingtau was headquartered in a large barracks complex known as the Bismarckkasernen (Figure 5). (Historical note: The 3rd Sea Battalion, was roughly equivalent in mission to the USMC and originally stationed in Cuxhaven, Germany (Figure 6). Beginning in June 1898, it was deployed to the Far East and assigned responsibility for the defense of Tsingtau. Half of its troops were rotated back to Germany or other colonies every year. The governor of Tsingtau in 1914 was Kapitän zur See Alfred Meyer-Waldeck, who was responsible for German military forces in the area (Figure 7).

At the outbreak of WWI, in August 1914, Japan sided with the Allies and declared war on Germany. Soon a Japanese force under the command of General Mitsuomi Kamio, estimated at around 60,000 men, together with a small British contingent, prepared to attack the small German enclave (Figure 8).

In Charles Burdick's book *The Japanese Siege of Tsingtau* (Archon Books, 1976) we find mention of Major Anders: "... On September 11 and 12 he [von Kessinger](Commanding officer of the 3rd Naval Battalion) changed assignments for the defensive force. Major Ernst Anders, from the III. Naval Battalion, assumed control of the mountain approaches running along the German right from the water to the Tung liu schui heights. For executing the assignment he received a company from the East Asiatic Detachment, together with a reserve artillery battery, the observation troops already in the mountains, and some signalmen. The employment of these men was left to Anders's discretion and report......"

"The constant pressure through reconnaissance activity and the obvious superior Japanese numbers made the Germans understandably nervous. In particular, the unexpected Japanese appearance in the Kletter Pass bothered Major Anders in his camp near Kouyai. He, with von Kessinger's approval, developed a sudden attack plan to help his men's morale .... Quickly assembling a taskforce from his command (some 100 men from the
East Asiatic Detachment, 30 men from 5th Company, III. Sea Battalion, 4 machine guns, and 2 artillery pieces), Anders ordered a sortie for the morning of September 23. Shortly after 8:00 A.M. a 10-man Japanese patrol started out from the camp toward the German lines. They quickly discovered that the enemy was at their own doorstep. Immediately both sides engaged in a furious firefight. The Germans, effectively using their machine guns and tree cover, inch ed up both sides of the Pass. Under cover of the noise a small number of Germans pushed around the Japanese flank. Soon exhausted by their efforts they climbed a small high point and started firing. They were too far away to affect the action, but, as they opened fire, the two artillery pieces joined the fray. The combination proved most effective, and the Japanese ran off in disorder.”

Despite such acts of courage, on November 7, 1914 Tsingtau, out of ammunition and short on food and supplies, fell to the Japanese.

Up to this time, Anders’ medal group or Grossordensspange tells a consistent, continuing narrative of his military career. It consists of the following decorations: Red Eagle Order, 4th Class with Swords; Royal Prussian Crown Order, 4th Class with Swords; Officer 25 Year Long Service Cross; China Commemorative Decoration; Africa Commemorative Decoration (with Gross-Namaland and Herero-Land bars); and the 1898 Centenary Medal.

At this point (November 1914) the medal bar is unable to “tell” us more of Anders’ fate, and in fact falls silent on the next part of Anders’ service, which was that as a Japanese prisoner of war (POW). Sources in Japan, principally the Deutsches Haus in Naruto, Tokushima Prefecture, indicate that Major Anders, prisoner number 316 (of about 5000) was one of 186 officers captured by the Japanese in Tsingtau and interned in the Kurume POW camp (Figure 9). Kurume was one of 20 POW camps set up in Japan that initially housed 370 German and Austro-Hungarian prisoners. This was unfortunate for Anders, because according to other Japanese sources, the Kurume POW camp was the worst of all the POW camps in Japan at the time, and Japanese authorities treated German POWs harshly there. The Japanese authorities had warned the prisoners that any attempt to escape from the camp would be dealt with very severely. Nevertheless, as the years passed, some did attempt to escape. Only a handful ever made it out of Japan, and only one actually reached Germany before the end of the war. Japanese records indicate that while he was in Kurume, Anders was called upon to represent the German

POWs at a meeting with Japanese officers following an outbreak of violence in which a Japanese soldier slapped a German officer.

To its credit, despite the tight discipline in the camp, the Kurume POW camp, which later housed 1314 men, did feature several amenities for the POWs. The camp had two playgrounds and a track at the corner of the camp. There was a tennis court and a Faustball-field (a variation of volleyball) for officers and a smaller tennis court for enlisted men. The prisoners were very keen on such sports activities as gymnastics, soccer, tennis, hockey, boxing and wrestling. Orchestras made up of POWs regularly gave concerts, and plays were performed using POWs as actors (Figure 10).

Major Anders survived the ordeal of several years as a POW. However, he was not able to return to Germany until late 1919. The day after Christmas, Major Anders, at the head of a vanguard of 98 prisoners, was sent to Yokohama. There on December 27, the group embarked on the Kifuku Maru and after a voyage of 61 days, on February 26, 1920, arrived at Wilhelmshaven. According to the Military Archives (Militärarchiv) of the Bundesarchiv in Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany, on January 30, 1920, Anders was promoted to Lieutenant-Colonel, with effective date of rank of April 18, 1918.
He left the III. Seebataillon and was returned to regular Army service on March 9, 1920. In the 1926 Honor Rank List he is shown as a Colonel a.D. (ausser Dienst), or on retired status, a rank often awarded lieutenant-colonels shortly before they retired.

By this time, Anders’ medal group included the Iron Cross 2nd Class, the Oldenburg Friedrich-August Cross 2nd Class and the Hamburg Hanseatic Cross, all for service during the war, but which were unavailable to him as a POW in Japan. The story of Oberst a.D. (Colonel, Retired) Ernst Anders, open and hidden, as told by the different components of his Grossordensspange or medal group, ends here.

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Hans-Joachim Schmidt (Figure 2).

Nick Voskamp (Figures 3 and 9).

Dr. William Matzat (Figure 4 and 5).

Medal Miscellany

The new USAF Air and Space Campaign Medal