

PERPETUATION OF TESTIMONY OF
DEAS ALEXANDER COBURN
CHIEF PHARMACIST'S MATE USN
CHARLESTON, S. C.

My name is Deas Alexander Coburn. My permanent home address is 9 Agalea Road, Wappoo Heights, Charleston, S. C. I am now 29 years old. At the beginning of the war, December 7, 1941 I was a pharmacist's mate, second class, stationed at the USN Hospital, Canacao, Cavite, P. I. My serial number is 261 86 49. I went overseas in July, 1941 and returned to the United States November, 1945. I am now a Chief Pharmacist's Mate stationed at the U. S. NAVAL MINECRAFT BASE, CHARLESTON, S. C.

I was captured in Manila, P.I. on 2 January, 1942 by the Japanese when they took over that city. I was held at Bilibid Prison in Manila until about December 13, 1944; then I was sent to Camp #17, a prison camp about fifty miles from Nagasaki which is on the island of Kyushu, Japan. I arrived at this camp January 31, 1945. I remained at this camp until liberated September 15, 1945.

My group of about 1600 prisoners left Bilibid Prison 13 December, 1944 and went aboard a Japanese ship, the Oroyku Maru, which was in Manila Harbor. The next day this ship was attacked by American planes and that night the ship was beached in Subic Bay by the Japanese. The following day I, with the other prisoners that were still living, were allowed to swim ashore and were then imprisoned in a tennis court at Olongapo, where we stayed for about six days with only a few spoonfuls of raw rice to eat each day. The Japanese in charge of our prisoner group were Lieutenant Toshima and a civilian interpreter, Mr. Wada.

December 22, 1944 we were removed from Olongapo to a theater at San Bernando Pampanga. December 24, 1944 we were sent by railroad boxcar to San Fernando Del Union in Lingayen Gulf. The trip by rail took about eighteen hours during which time we were given neither water nor food and were crowded so closely in boxcars that only a few at a time could rest by squatting on our heels.

December 26, 1944 most of my group embarked aboard a ship which took them to Takao, Formosa. The remainder, about 250, of which I was a member, were put aboard another ship a few minutes after the first group boarded their ship. My group arrived in Takao, Formosa January 1, 1945 at which time we rejoined the other group on their ship. During this trip my group received only a few spoonfuls of food per man per day, the reason being, we were told, that our allotment of food had been sent with the other group and there was no food on our ship for us to eat.

67-5-120

ENCLOSURE (F)

RG 153
Stack 270
Row 7
Camp 8
Sheet 7
Box 1434

U.S. NAVAL AIRCRAFT ENGINEER
WEST END CALIFORNIA STREET
CHARLESTON, S.C.

NOT RECORDED

January 6, 1945 we were again bombed by American planes, killing about 350 prisoners.

January 13, 1945 we were transferred to another ship and left Takao, Formosa for Moji, Kyushu, Japan. We arrived at Moji, Kyushu January 30, 1945 with about 400 of the original 1600 prisoners alive. We had lost most of our clothes when we abandoned the first ship in Subic Bay and we were not supplied with sufficient clothing during the rest of our trip to Japan to protect our bodies from the elements.

Alexander Coburn
Dess Alexander Coburn

Subscribed and sworn to before me
this 19th day of September 1946.

J. S. Liddy
J. S. LIDDY, LICER, USNR.

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