

STATEMENT

July 24, 1943

I left Cabanatuan September 1, 1942 for the Pasay detail. Two-hundred (200) men including myself went on this detail. There were about 400 there when I arrived. This detail began in July, 1942. The Japanese there are constructing an airfield with four runways. The longest one at the present time is one mile, and is still being built upon. At the beginning of the prisoners of war detail there was only one "pre-war" runway at Pasay.

On the first day of our arrival one of our very first instructions was to "clip" our hair off to a "baldy." We were advised that we were prisoners of war and were told that as long as we did our work everything would be alright. Several days later it was necessary that we learn how to count in Japanese at least up to thirty (30). The following day after arrival we went to work promptly at 7:15 A.M. Reveille was at 6:00 A.M. At 6:15 we had "bango" (Japanese word for muster). Breakfast was immediately after bango. We again stood Bango count at 7:15 A.M. work call. The reason for the second bango was to have a perfect check - to account for every man; those who were in camp, the sick, etc. All men, sick or well had to line up for every bango.

At the start of this detail we had six (6) officers, and one Army Corpsman, a Sergeant, served as doctor. At the beginning the Japanese took the Corpsman's word as to which men were sick, later, however, this policy changed even though we were provided with an Army Doctor (a Major). The distance from our post to the detail at the airfield was two (2) miles, which we walked to in columns of three. Upon arrival there we again stood a bango count. It would take us approximately one (1) hour to walk that distance. After bango we would start working with pick and shovel filling mine cars with dirt. Our work consisted of leveling off the field, cutting into banks and leveling the high and low places. All holes for dynamite purposes were drilled by hand with a hand bar. A quota was always set by the Japanese on the drilling of these holes, which was difficult work without the proper tools, and this quota depended on the conditions under which we were working; taking into consideration wheather and rocky ground. There were several tracks (tracks on which the mine cars were transported), four in all, and the men were divided up in each of these sections; - two (2) men would push the car of dirt to the unloading place - the weight of which was about $\frac{1}{2}$ ton. There were about 60 to 70 men working on each track. A Japanese sentry was in charge of each group. Four (4) men shoveled the dirt into a car, when the car was returned from its unloading mission a new load had to be picked by the remaining two (2) men. The mine car is always on the move; being either loaded or unloaded. The complete process of loading and unloading a car it usually takes about $\frac{1}{2}$ hour. The Japanese would estimate a quota for the days work in loads. One method that was used for greater out-put, was to tell our group to get out as high as eighteen (18) loads on that one particular day - after which we would fill the quota, and perhaps getting $\frac{1}{2}$ hour off. - On the next day, however, the Japanese would increase the quota and try to work us on our peak quota. During this period we would get off work at 11:50 - (A bell was sounded for this purpose). We would then have our dinner at the field and did not return to work until 1:30, at which time the bell was again sounded. The bell was again sounded to quit work at 4:15 in the afternoon. We would then line up and have bango in the field. After this we marched to the sentry post (about 10 minutes walk) and underwent another bango session. We would then march to our quarters, arriving there about 5:30. Upon arrival to camp all the men rush to the showers, (after a bango is taken, of course,) Supper was at 6:00. At the end of every bango we would salute the Japanese commander as commanded. "Kiotski" was for attention; "Kieri" for salute or bow; and "Nari" for bringing the hand down for a salute. - "Yasumai" was used for rest. We always counted in Japanese during bango. With regard to the showers, it was first come first serve. There were six (6) available showers, three of which usually went on the blink, for four-hundred (400) of us, and we all needed a shower badly after a days work in the field. After supper, those who did not make the showers previously, again make a rush to take a bath. At 7:15 that night was "sick call" - a list of the sick would be reported to the Japanese by the attending American doctor. The first doctor came in Camp on December, 1942 - six months after the start of the detail. Prior to this an Army medical Sergeant was in charge. He was a very competent corpsman and on one occasion operated on a gas gangrene case on a man's leg which was eventually cured. Our living quarters was the Pasay Elementary School, a one-story wooden building. We had no beds, no mosquito nets, and had two small blankets, issued by the Japanese. We slept on a "Banig" - a wooden elevation about 20" off the floor. The very first group on this detail built all these elevations on all the floors, leaving space only for an aisle.

In connection with clothing, each man had no more than two (2) changes; this was brought with us. We had just one pair of shoes. There were two (2) latrines for the entire camp building. The showers were located out in the court-yard in a shack. There were thirty (30) men living in one room. There was one senior man (American) in charge of each room. The senior men of the various rooms alternated as "Tojigo" (charge of quarters) and kept watch all night, trading off with another "Tojigo" at 12 midnight. To go to the latrine permission was first received from the "Tojigo", who would put down the man's number. Every man had a number which was issued upon arrival to the camp. Our numbers are painted on our hats and on our shirts. The Japanese call us by our numbers when they don't yell at us or just grunt in our general direction.

In connection with our meals: For breakfast we had fish soup and rice - for dinner we had vegetable soup and rice usually; - For supper we had fish soup and rice again. The regular issue was one canteen cup of soup and one mess-kit of rice. Most of us had mess kits that we had brought with us, others had pans, cans, or whatever other type of receptacle they could find to eat out of. The cooking was done by Americans who, however, we not all cooks - there was one cook there by trade, consequently the cooking suffered at times. From what I could observe, the Japanese ate considerably better than we did. In one sense they ate the same as we did but it was prepared differently. They also received such food as pork occasionally, fish steaks, also sweet squash, and plenty of tea (we never received tea or any other kind of drink). They were also issued beer from time to time.

Bed time is at 9:00 P.M. All rooms are checked by the commander of the camp - a Japanese Warrant Officer. All men would have to be lying down and covered to the neck with a blanket. When this Commander entered the room the room master would salute and say "Room Jugo(15), Sanjumei(30 men)." (Room #15, 30 men). If one man was sick at the hospital the statement would be "Tohi mei Bioni." (One man sick). There were a total of 30 building rooms in the building. - Two (2) for the Japanese, and one (1) for the hospital, and one (1) for the galley crew. American officers had a separate room.

Every other Sunday was supposed to be "Yasumai" (Rest). On that day we would have to clean our rooms completely from top to bottom and "air" our clothing - we also had to do our washing, and generally on that morning we busy as ever. That afternoon we would actually be off. There were no religious services whatever at the camp. For Christmas day we asked for a Catholic Priest to come in for just that afternoon. This request was refused by the Japanese.

The American commander at that time was Captain Schutte. The Japanese officers were "Cherry Blossom" nick-named that due to his Warrant insignia - he was camp commander. He was very strict; temperamental; from time to time he would become infuriated over small matters. In one case he noticed where some Americans were cooking some beans "on the side" and scattered and trounced on everything in sight. In one instance, one American tried to get a pair of shoes, the response was, that he got hit by both shoes full in the face by this commander, because he did not have an old pair to exchange for the new. (He did keep the shoes, however). On many occasions he would kick the patients on the shins when he could not see any bandages on them to prove they were sick. This commander was only in charge of us while in camp, we had another commander in the field. Other Japanese officers in camp were "Four eyes", "Oxford" (called that because he was intelligent looking and was intelligent). As an answer to any requests he would oftentimes answer "Am sorry old chawp, I can't do that today." "Oxford" was well liked by the men. He would oftentimes help us when we got in trouble with the commander. "Four eyes" was also well liked and friendly to the Americans. "Clark Gable" was another Japanese in charge there (called that because he was a large and rather handsome fellow), and was a nice fellow. All these Japanese were Warrant Officers. There were three or four others besides these. - One of these was called "Mickey Mouse" because he had a squeaky voice.

The Japanese in charge in the field were "The Wolf" - so called because he acted and looked like a wolf. He would pop up from nowhere and sneak up on the men on the job; - he was a brute and oftentimes became uncontrollably angry. He was a rather large man and pretty powerful. He was the "supreme commander" of the Americans in the field, and would oftentimes slap and beat the men. His style was to slap and backhand a man numerous until the man went down, then he would kick him. When the man could get up again the same procedure followed, until he was tired of hitting the man. One occasion of this type took place because a man did not make a proper salute. I saw two (2) Americans (Krumphacker & Beli) ordered to do 25 push-ups for whistling. Krumphacker who was a healthier and stronger man got through this number okay, but Beli could not do any more than 20. This took place at noon before lunch. The sentry tried to force Beli to complete the other 5 push-ups, but he just could not do them. For this he was made to stand at attention while 2 sentries beat him repeatedly on the back, on the legs, and all over his body with pick handles. They beat him for at least 10 minutes. His body was badly bruised, and he was made to finish the days work that afternoon. This beating was ordered by the "Wolf". He then made a speech in Japanese telling us that the reason for the beating was due to the man's whistling. (This was the first time this order was issued.) He went on to say that the whistling was an American style, but the Japanese did not like it. We could not smoke while on the field. If any one was caught smoking the "wolf" would make him but in another "load" after working hours.

(Psychological attitude of Americans in camp real statement that the good thing about "Wolf" was that he would not beat up a man and kick him around unless he was guilty of a wrong. For this reference was made to an instance where a man did not bring down his hand at the appointed time of a salute.) A Mrs. Norton, was the only person that I know of that brought in clothing to us. She brought clothing of all kinds, and would do so whenever permission was given her. At Christmas she sent in candy and cake and some fruit. She was very kind, and we were all very grateful to her on these occasions. She was not permitted to come into the camp and not American could speak with her. She was just permitted to reach the gate where she would leave the articles to be picked up. Later she stopped bringing these articles, the reason being (as we conjectured) that the Japanese in Camp were using some of this clothing for their own use, and would really "deck-out" with some real "get-ups". Red Cross boxes from the United States were greatly received at Christmas time. We each received a total of 2-1/2 boxes. The toilet articles in the CCC package of Raleigh cigarettes each and that was all. We received three - 10-day rations of Corned Beef, brought from the U.S. - That is, it was put into our soup on one meal of each of the 10 days. This procedure took place on three different occasions. Each man also received 1/4 canteen cup of white sugar as his total ration. We never received issue of tooth paste or tooth brush during the 10 months that I was on this detail - however, these articles could be bought at .27 for tooth powder (Japanese make) and .25 for the brush, if the men could afford to buy them.

Our pay was 10 Centavos for privates, 15 Centavos for Non-Coms, and 25 Centavos for Warrant Officers, per day. On days that we did not work or were on the sick list payment was not received. We first were paid about November of 1942. A commissary started soon after which was run by American officers (who, incidentally got their cut), under the direction of the Japanese. The items usually stocked were Mongo Beans, potatoes, peanuts, onions, and sometimes cookies. There was an allowance of purchase allocated for each item. Those who had the money were allotted the expenditure of two pesos (P2.) every 15 days.

An influx of 3-- men were brought in from the Cabanatuan American Prison Camp the later part of May, 1943, making a total of 800 Americans on that detail. Major Bress was in charge of the hospital work and later Captain Haines was brought to help in hospital work. At the beginning, when Major Bress arrived (December, 1942) there was no question by the Japanese when a man was turned in as sick. Since March, 1943, however, there has been a sudden change in attitude by the Japanese in the entire functioning of the camp and especially of medical cases. After this time they would not accept the doctor's word as to the inability of a man for work. (I believe that this attitude was due to the set backs the Japanese have been suffering at the hands of the American forces, as this attitude was overnight.) Civilian Navy Reserves were in charge of the camp. Major Bress made many improvements in the way of medical work - sanitation - checking of food stuffs etc. There were 4 Army corpsmen that worked with the two doctors during this later period. There were cases of false death reports which Major Bress was compelled to sign by the Japanese, regarding improper diagnosis for victims of starvation and beatings. I believe that this was the case of three American Prisoners. They were diagnosed as Beriberi or some other plausible disease. The average number of patients in the hospital are about 10 men at an average - serious cases. The hospital is just another room in the building - and of course, no beds. Major conducted several minor operations. Serious cases requiring operation were generally brought to Bilibid Prison Hospital. There is also a constant light duty list running approximately 30 to 40 men. There were numerous cases of men who the doctor did not think advisable to go to work as they were not in condition, but the Japanese did not accept the doctor's recommendations. The sick always march at the head of the column when marching to work. For the men diagnosed as sick during morning bango there is a separate line of formation. The Japanese become very irritated when their best workers become sick, and oftentimes good workers are picked out of the sick line by their respective sentries. They are not very concerned with the condition of the poor workers. There are numerous cases of men who are seriously sick from dysentery and pellagra that are forced to work because the Japanese cannot see any outward appearance of illness, such as bandages etc. If a man passes out during working hours or becoming ill, he gets slapped about severely and sometimes beaten severely by the sentry or the Wolf. In the case of good workers, however, they are spared the beating. When a man passes out or gets ill on the field the Japanese say that it is "faking." The doctors take a great deal of responsibility in connection with which men are kept from work.

I remember one man named Hutchison (Wd 14) who made a remark in the company of Japanese that Americans are bigger than the Japanese. For this remark he was beaten severely with a large rope, by three (3) sentries for about one-half an hour. I saw his face all swollen up and blood dripping from the seat of his pants. This man was in bad condition, however, he was sent to work the next day. It was very evident that when Americans watched a beating the beating was longer and more severe; for this reason the other prisoners do not mill around when one of them is "getting it."

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Authority NND735027

By md NARA

July 3, 1943.

Statement by No. 2:

A man passed out in the field just before noon on about the 25th of June. The Japanese thought that he made a fake pass out and when he "came to" they gathered around him near the eating place at Nichols Field. A Japanese who is in charge began beating this man with a pick handle severely. I was an eye-witness to this beating. Two other Japanese also were beating him with pick handles. He was knocked unconscious. The Japanese brought him to with water. Then they took him to the drinking faucet and shoved a hose in his mouth and turned the water on full force, and it seemed to me as if they were trying to drown him. The Japanese then ordered us away to work and left this man lying there.

The same night when we returned from work back to the Pasay compound, they dismissed the men and called the two medical officers to the front Japanese office. I saw the Japanese, who is in charge of the work at the field, hit Captain Haines with his revolver on the left lower jaw and again on the upper right lip, and as a result 5 upper teeth were loosened and his jaw bone was injured. The other medical officer, Major Bress, was hit on top of the head and received 3 cuts - he was hit 3 times by the same Japanese, with a revolver. It seems that they were struck because they were held responsible for the enlisted man passing out on the field that day.

July 3, 1943.

Statement by No. 3:

Coca complained of being unable to work. He passed out 7 times during the day previous to his death while working at Nichol's Field loading cars. Finally the guard beat him severely with a blackjack and he was returned to the camp at Pasay. I did not see this beating but it was told to me that night when the men came in from the field.

The doctors were beaten occasionally for sending sick men to the field. These men were not sick prior to departure for work. Recently Captain Haines' lip was split during a beating and Major Bress received a scalp laceration from the Japanese guards at Pasay. Both doctors were beaten severely because of Quattroni's inability to work.

The doctors are beaten if there are not enough men to go out to work or if men pass out while working.

Quattroni was beaten with a pick handle at Nichol's Field about a week ago. I did not see the beating but I saw Quattroni after he was admitted to the hospital at Pasay. Quattroni's body was bruised and swollen.

July 3, 1943.

Statement by No. 1:

On or about June 11, 1943 I saw Coca completely unconscious in the evening before we left Nichol's Field. Several of the Americans tried to revive him but had no success. Coca was carried in from Track No. 6 of the airfield by several of the men. These men stated that Coca passed out while working. I know for a fact that on that afternoon Track No. 6 did not receive food or water. They did not receive any food that noon, the reason being that the workers on that track did not remove enough dirt.

One hundred of us mustered in front of the guardhouse that evening. Coca was one of the group. He could not stand up because he was unconscious and was being held up by two Americans. The Japanese in charge of the work at the field came up to Coca and hit him with the strap part of his blackjack in the face. He then lifted Coca's hat and hit him on the

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By md NARA Date 6/1/01

Another beating was the case of (George Smolen RM 3c) who was called out of line after bango one night and beaten severely with a stick 2" in diameter. He was made to stand at attention during the beating and was beaten on all parts of the body -- he was knocked down several times and was each time recovered to attention to be knocked down again. When the sentry got tired he called another sentry to continue the beating.

They had Filipines working at another runway by themselves -- approximately 1500. We were not allowed to talk to them. They were treated better than the Americans. They were hired and received about 90 Centayas daily.

Conditions at the Pasay detail became much worse after February 1943. It seems that conditions were purposely made harder. We were worked overtime -- our hours made irregular and the loads were increased in number for the daily work. We have worked without shirts in the rain on many days during the rainy season. During rainy days when the track was slippery the car would clip off the track and the Japanese would beat the men working on that car because they held it as carelessness. During the last 6 months we would get in for dinner at 12:00 PM and a few minutes later would be called out to work -- many of them men not having finished their meal. On some occasions we were forced to run back to our quarters, from the field, because it was getting dark or was threatening to rain.

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