

12/18/1942

IN THE MATTER OF WAR CRIMES COMMITTED BY JAPANESE
NATIONALS AND IN THE MATTER OF THE ILL-TREATMENT
OF PRISONERS OF WAR AT FUKUOKA. 19 PRISONER OF
WAR CAMP.

AFFIDAVIT.

I, Roy Broadway Watson,
of 2, Manor Road North, Wallington,
in the County of Surrey, a cellulose sprayer.
make oath and say as follows :-

- (1) I joined the R.A.F. as an A.C.2., number 1257198 in August 1940. In October 1940 I was posted to 84 Squadron in the Near East, and after a period of service in Palestine, Iraq, and Greece the squadron was posted to Sumatra in January 1942.
- (2) About the middle of February 1942 the Squadron moved to Java, and I was taken prisoner there by the Japanese on 8th March 1942.
- (3) For about eight months I was in various transit camps in Java, and about November 1942 we left Java for Japan on a ship called the "Assuri Maru" or something like that. We broke our journey for about three days at Singapore, and were altogether a month or five weeks on the ship. Upon arrival in Japan I was sent with a batch of prisoners (250), to a prisoner of war camp called FUKUOKA 19., although the number was subsequently changed to 11. This camp was on the island of FUKUOKA, and the nearest town was MUGI or MUJI, which was a port.
- (4) There was a Japanese officer, I believe a Lieutenant, in charge of the camp, and about two dozen guards, none of whose names I know.
- (5) We worked in a coal-mine, in three shifts, from 6 a.m. to 2 p.m., 2 p.m. to 10 p.m., and 10 p.m. to 6 a.m., and we changed our shifts every 14 days. We had three meals a day, one before going to work, one to take with us, and one on our return from work. The meals consisted of a portion of rice and some thin soup made of soya bean paste, seaweed etc. To start with the quantity of rice per man each day was 900 grammes, but this was later reduced to 540 grammes a day. We wore our own clothes, and in addition we were given a pair of shorts like football shorts and a thin shirt to work in, and to wear in the camp we were given Japanese uniform, which was well-worn.
- (6) There were about 500 of us in the camp altogether and we lived in 22 wooden huts. The number in each hut varied, but we were not overcrowded. We slept on rice-straw mats, and had four blankets each which were issued by the Japanese. There were no tables or chairs in these huts and we had our meals in a communal dining hall, where there were tables and forms. The sanitary arrangements were of average Japanese standards. Any men who were injured down the mine were employed round the camp as a Hygiene Squad, under a Sergeant called Wright who belonged to the Royal Artillery, the 77 A.A. Regiment, I think.
- (7) The medical supplies to the camp were practically nil,

/but 70-19

DECLASSIFIED

Authority 775011
By KTNARA Date 02/10/01

RG 331 SCAP Legal
Section, Admin Div.
Area Case Files
POW Camps #19 to #256
Box 927 FU 19

but we had two Japanese medical orderlies who were lent to the camp by the mining company where we worked. It was their job primarily to see that as many as possible of us went to work. We had a Dutch doctor called Lieutenant VANDEMEIR or something like that who would know more about the medical supplies.

(8) During the three years I was at the camp I had approximately the contents of one complete Red Cross parcel, spread over the time I was there. The most I ever had at any one time was when we had one parcel between four of us. I think that was in the middle of 1944. The rest of the time they just gave us odds and ends out of parcels when they thought they would. The Japanese guards used to go into the stores where the Red Cross parcels were kept, and I have seen a number of them helping themselves to articles from the parcels, particularly cigarettes. A lot of the Japanese N.C.O.'s had boots from the Red Cross parcels, they were Canadian Army type boots.

(9) The working conditions in the mine were very bad. The foremen used to stand over us while we were working and beat anyone whom they thought was not doing enough work. They hit us with anything that was handy, including pit props, pick handles etc. There were a great number of accidents in the mine, and I should say that there were between 30 and 40 serious accidents, involving broken limbs, during the time I was there.

(10) The treatment of prisoners by the Japanese guards in the camp was bad, there were frequent beatings for anyone committing small offences such as not saluting a Japanese soldier, but it is extremely difficult to pick out any individual acts of brutality as it became such a common occurrence. There is one incident however which stands out in my memory. About a week or so before the war finished, in August 1945 I think it was, about nine of the prisoners were suspected of stealing a pumpkin from the camp gardens. They were lined up by the Japanese guard under a sergeant whom we knew as "HOPPY", and were beaten over the head and back with a chair. "Hoppy" did the actual beating. I heard afterwards that one of the men concerned was under observation for a long time with a suspected fracture of the spine. I don't know the names of any of the prisoners concerned. (All the prisoners on day shifts were lined up for a meal at this time and must have seen this occur.)

(11) The Japanese civilians at the mine treated the prisoners much worse than the prison guards. The beatings were more severe, and more frequent than in the camp, and practically all the civilians were as bad as one another. One incident I remember occurred when I was on night shift, in about June 1945. The engineer in charge of the shift who was called KATOSAN alleged that someone had stolen some beans from his garden and lined up the whole shift, and said he was going to beat us all until someone owned up. He started off at the end of the line hitting the prisoners over the back with an iron bar. The chap who had the worst of it was Gunner Jack HOPKINS; of the 249 Light A.A. Regiment, Royal Artillery., I think it was, who was first in the line. He was badly knocked about and we had to carry him back to camp, where he was sick for some days. KATOSAN only hit about the first four or five prisoners, including myself, and then stopped because he had exhausted himself. I was not so badly knocked about as Hopkins, but was badly bruised. Ernie COOK, another chap in the R.A.F. was also beaten up on this same occasion. I don't know his number, but he lives at Rawmarsh, near Rotherham, Yorkshire. I didn't report to the Medical Inspection Room because if I had done I should probably have had another beating up from one of the

/Japanese

RG 331 SCAP Legal
Section, Admin Div.
Area Case Files
POW Camps #19 to #256
Box 927 FU 19

DECLASSIFIED

Authority 775011
By KT NARA Date 02/28/04

Japanese orderlies.

(12) Captain Peter WILLIAMS, 77 A.A. Regiment, R.A. who was the only British officer in the camp should be able to give more detailed facts of the brutalities in the camp as he was there all day, whilst we were away working in the mine.

(13) I cannot mention any brutal acts committed by ITO Benji, or Captain TAKATA Shuichi, as I cannot identify either of these people in my own mind. The three Japanese civilian guards known to us as "PEG LEG", "MEAT KING", and "SLIMEY", were all responsible for numerous acts of brutality, but I am unable to give specific details of acts for which they were individually responsible owing to the lapse of time. I would like to say that the "Meat King" got his name from stealing the rations, and in particular twice when meat was issued to our cook house for us he went in and stole it. These two occasions were late in 1944, and I remember them as they were about the only two occasions that we had meat. These three mentioned above frequently beat the prisoners, and "Slimey" was in a class of his own as the worst guard in the camp.

(14) I remained in the camp until after the war with Japan ended and later returned to this country, being demobilised in about March 1946.

47 Parliament Street, Westminster.
SWORN at.....

in the County of..... London.....

this.....^{9th}.....day of April 1947.....

(Signed)
R. Watson.

Before me

(Signed) R.H. Gardner.

A Commissioner for Oaths.

70-19

RG 331 SCAP Legal
Section, Admin Div.
Area Case Files
POW Camps #19 to #256
Box 927 FU 19

DECLASSIFIED
Authority 775011
By KT NARA Date 02/28/08