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For the WAR CRIMES OFFICE

Judge Advocate General’s Department – War Department

United States of America

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In the Perpetuation of Testimony of Terence Sumner Kirk, T/Sgt, USMC, 260583.

In the matter of the beating of Lt. Heizinger, USMC, by a Japanese interpreter named Ishikara, and the killing of John Riddle, a former civilian on Wake Island, at Woosung, China between 1 February 1942 and 2 November 1942; and the beating of M/Sgt Robert Smith, “Oscar” Gray, and three other members of the U.S. Marine Corps by two Japanese commonly known as “Mad Monk” and “Sick Bay Corporal”, the lack of food, poor living conditions, the withholding of Red Cross parcels, and the death of 250 to 300 prisoners of war due to starvation at Fukuoka camp #3, Yahata, Japan, between the fall of 1942 and September 1945.

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Taken at: Marine Barracks, U.S. Naval Gun Factory, Washington, D.C.

Date: 21 March 1947.

Reporter: Joseph S. Kelley, Special Agent, CIC, MDW.

Questions by: Raymond C. Cole, Jr., Special Agent, CIC, MDW.

Q. Would you please state your name, rank serial number and permanent home address?

A. Terence Sumner Kirk, T/Sgt., USMC, 260583, and my permanent home address is Sabillasville, Maryland.

Q. Were you a Prisoner of War?

A. Yes.

Q. When were you returned to the United States?

A. I returned to the United States on 24 September 1945.

Q. At what places were you held and state the approximated dates?

A. I was attached to the North China Marine Detachment and together with others was captured by the Japanese on 8 December 1941 at Chinwangtao, China. We were immediately sent down to Tientsin, China and held there until 28 January 1942. From Tientsin we were sent by rail – 50 men to a Chinese boxcar – to Shanghai, arriving there on 1 February 1942. I was put in the prison camp at Woosung, China, just outside Shanghai, where I stayed until 2 November 1942. From Woosung I was transported by ship, to Yahata, Kyushu, Japan. In Yahata we were put in Headquarters Camp Fukuoka, Camp #3, where I remained until I left the camp on 7 September 1945 going by train to Yokohama, Japan. I arrived in Yokohama on 9 September 1945 and on 10 September I caught a plane to the States.

Q. Do you know of any atrocities or mistreatment of prisoners of war by the Japanese during your internment?

A. Yes. On one occasion I remember a Marine Lt. (FNU) Heizinger (phonetic) was beaten with a club, around the face and head, until he was unconscious. This beating was given Lt. Heizinger by a Japanese interpreter named Ishihara. The apparent reason for the beating Lt. Heizinger received was that he was trying to get something for the men in the Camp and Ishihara just wanted to put him in his place. Edward L. Kirkpatrick, T/Sgt., USMC, whom I believe to be presently stationed in San Diego, as well as many others in the Camp, were witnesses to this beating. This took place at Woosung. As far as I know, Lt. Heizinger did not suffer any permanent injuries from the above-mentioned beating, but was incapacitated for about a week. Lt. Heizinger received medical treatment for his injuries from our own medical personnel at the camp.

Another incident I remember that happened while we were at Woosung, was a shooting. A former civilian on Wake Island, and electrician named John Riddle, was told by a Japanese guard, whose name I don’t know, to fix an electric light socket. When Riddle tried to explain to the guard that the trouble was a burned out light bulb, the guard shot Riddle, through the neck, and killed him. The guard was taken away from out camp shortly after this shooting and I never did see him again. I did not witness the actual shooting, but ran out of my barracks after hearing the shot and saw Riddle lying on the ground, dying. An actual witness of the killing was Ernest T. Larson, whose present address I don’t know. Larson was a former Marine stationed at Tientsin before the war.

During the summer of 1943, after we had arrived at Fukuoka, I remember an incident where five Marines were beaten. M/Sgt. Robert Smith, presently stationed at Quantico, Virginia, an “Oscar” Gray, whose present whereabouts I don’t know, are the only two names I remember of this group. They were given a ‘going-over” by the Japanese guards. The reason for these beatings was that the Japanese did not like the “attitude” of the five Marines. They were taken in front of the “Sick Bay’ and were beaten on the buttocks with belts, clubs and sticks for about 2 hours. None of the men sustained any permanent injuries from this beating of which I know. Two of the Japanese who participated in this incident I remember only by nickname – one known as the “Mad Monk” and the other as “Sick Bay Corporal”.

While at Fukuoka there were many incidents of beatings and mistreatment of the Prisoners, but I have forgotten their names of the Japanese and Americans involved. However, the general treatment of the prisoners by the Japanese under command of the Japanese Camp Commander a Major Rata, was pretty bad. In the summer of 1943, the meager rations we had been receiving were cut in half, on direction of Major Rata. In the winter of the same year (1943) we were moved from permanent steam-heated buildings to shacks in another part of the compound. Our rations were never increased, we were kept on half rations, and with the added hardship of living in these poorly constructed huts or shacks, many of the men died, due to exposure and starvation. All in all I would say approximately 250 or 300 men died during the time I was in Fukuoka due to starvation. Prisoners were taken in death at a rate of five or six each day. I remember one time that we had 1300 Red Cross parcels delivered to the Camp. After the Japanese guards at the camp finished sorting and appropriating these Red Cross supplies for themselves, the prisoners were issued one box per 27 men. All told, during our internment of 34 months at Fukuoka we received 2 ½ boxes of Red Cross supplies from the Japanese, the remainder of the supplies sent out to the prisoners being taken by the Japanese under direction of Major Rata, the Camp Commander.

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