The WWII History of Sylvan E. Murray

Celebrated War Hero, Son, Father, Brother, Husband, Grandfather and all around good guy ;-)

MURRAY SYLVAN E,CPL,33013084,ORD,27 BG (L) 454 Ord,601,Fuk-08B-Inatsuki

<http://home.comcast.net/~winjerd/PacRostr.csv>

<http://www.battlingbastardsbataan.com/bob1.htm>

Name: Sylvan E. Murray

Rank: PFC

Serial #: 33013084

Destination: Japan

Hellship : 7/17/1944 Nissyo Maru

Primary Philipine camp: Pasay

<http://aad.archives.gov/aad/record-detail.jsp?dt=2212&mtch=1&cat=all&tf=F&q=sylvan+murray&bc=&rpp=10&pg=1&rid=19297>

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| --- | --- | --- |
| SERIAL NUMBER | 33013084  | 33013084  |
| NAME  | MURRAY SYLVAN E  | MURRAY SYLVAN E  |
| GRADE, ALPHA | CPL  | Corporal  |
| GRADE CODE | 6  | First Lieutenant or Chief nurse or Head dietitian or Head physical therapy aide or Corporal or Technician 5th Grade or Lt. Jr. Grade or First Class, Seaman  |
| SERVICE CODE | 1  | ARMY  |
| ARM OR SERVICE | ORD  | Ordnance Department  |
| ARM OR SERVICE CODE | 87  | ORD: ORDNANCE DEPARTMENT  |
| DATE REPORT: DAY (DD) | 16  | 16  |
| DATE REPORT: MONTH (MM) | 04  | 04  |
| DATE REPORT: YEAR (Y) | 3  | 1943  |
| RACIAL GROUP CODE | 1  | WHITE  |
| STATE OF RESIDENCE | 32  | Pennsylvania  |
| TYPE OF ORGANIZATION | 223  | Undefined Code  |
| PARENT UNIT NUMBER | 0454  | 0454  |
| PARENT UNIT TYPE | 06  | Group/Regiment/Commands/System  |
| AREA | 45  | Southwest Pacific Theatre: Philippine Islands  |
| LATEST REPORT DATE: DAY (DD) | 12  | 12  |
| LATEST REPORT DATE: MONTH (MM) | 10  | 10  |
| LATEST REPORT DATE: YEAR (Y) | 5  | 1945  |
| SOURCE OF REPORT | 1  | Individual has been reported through sources considered official.  |
| STATUS | 8  | Returned to Military Control, Liberated or Repatriated  |
| DETAINING POWER | 2  | JAPAN  |
| CAMP | 601  | Fukuoka POW Camp #1 - Kashii (Pine Tree Camp) Kyushu Island 33-130  |
| REP |  |  |
| POW TRANSPORT SHIPS |  |  |

Fukuoka 8 CAMP

<http://www.mansell.com/pow_resources/camplists/fukuoka/fuk_08_inatsuki/fuk_08_inatsuki_main.html>

<http://www.powresearch.jp/en/archive/camplist/index.html#fukuoka>

The Evening News, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania Wednesday, February 13th, 1946

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Looking the Town Over

COINCIDENCE

“Believe it or not,” says Cpl. Sylvan E. Murray, 118 Houston Street, Penbrook, “but the same man who inducted me into the Army at New Cumberland in May, 1941, was the same man who rescued me from a Japanese prison camp in Kyushu, Japan on September 21, 1945.” He is Sgt. Walter E. Sloan, of Cresson, PA.

Corporal Murray was with the 454th Ordinance Company, stationed at Clark Field, in the Philippines at the time of the fall of Bataan. Previous to his capture by the Japanese he was fighting as an infantryman with the small forces left on the mainland. The only thing Murray would say about the fighting was that it was “rough.”

Murray said that perhaps the only thing that saved his life on the infamous Death March was that after his capture in April, 1942, he was allowed to speak with a Japanese officer who had been educated in the United States and taught him enough of the language of the Nips to get him by in case of dire need of food. Murray said that he grew very tired and hungry on the march, but knew that if he fell by the wayside he would be shot. During the march a break was called by the Nips, and Murray dropped on the road in a stupor, thereby missing meager rations that the Japs issued.

AT CABANATUAN

The Penbrook soldier was interned in the Cabanatuan prison camp for nine months. “The least said about that place,” he said, “the better.” Prior to his being transferred to Japan he was placed on work details at Nichols Field. There he received his basic education in Japanese psychology. Murray said that if a soldier happened to bear near a Nip guard when one of his buddies working quite a distance away stopped for a rest the soldier took the beating, for the Jap guard wouldn’t think of walking the distance to the second soldier.

In July 1944, Murray and 951 other soldiers were taken aboard a ship for shipment to Japan. The trip was too horrible to describe, Murray said. The former S. Stephen’s Episcopal choir boy said: “I would rather make the Death March again than take that trip.” For three days and three nights he couldn’t sit down because of lack of space. After three weeks he landed in Kyushu, Japan.

During his stay in Japan, Murray worked in the shipyards of Osaka and the coal mines in Kyushu. The food was a little better than the Philippines, he said. The treatment from Japanese soldiers was very bad and they expressed more hatred for the American soldiers than in any other prison camp in which he was placed, Murray said.

SAW NAGASAKI

After his liberation in September, 1945, Murray passed through Nagasaki and saw the chaotic remains of the industrial city which had been struck by the second atom bomb. “There was nothing standing in the city; it looked as if a huge tidal wave had swept in and demolished the city,” Murray said.

Corporal Murray is on a 104-day furlough, of which tow weeks will be spent in Miami Beach through the courtesy of the Army Air Forces. Following his Southern vacation he will return to this city, and will spend the remainder of his leave with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Ira S. Murray.

Corporal Murray, a graduate of John Harris High School, was employed by a Pittsburgh construction company prior to his entry into the service.