R E S T R I C T E D

GENERAL HEADQUARTERS

SUPREME COMMANDER FOR THE ALLIED POWERS

LEGAL SECTION

INVESTIGATION DIVISION

INVESTIGATION REPORT

IN THE CASE OF

PRISONER OF WAR CAMP

INVESTIGATIONS

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PRISONER OF WAR CAMP NO. 3 (FUKUOKA)

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R E S T R I C T E D

INVESTIGATION DIVISION

LEGAL SECTION, GHQ., SCAP., TOKYO

MEMORANDUM :

SUBJECT : Re Investigation of Prisoner of War Camp No. 3

By direction of the Chief, Investigation Division, ROBERT E. HUMPHREYS, 2ND Lt., Inf., accompanied by Sgt. TARO SHIMOMURA as interpreter, proceeded to NAKABARU, KOKURA CITY, KYUSHU and made an investigation of Prisoner of War Camp No. 3, between 19 February and 21 February, 1946.

1. Location

Number Fourteen Branch of the Fukuoka POW Camps is located at NAKABARU, KOKURA CITY on the TOBATA Line of the West Railroad Company, Ltd. POWs were used in the YAWATA STEEL WORKS.

2. Description

Layout of the camp is as shown on blueprint enclosed as Exhibit One. Buildings were of typical Japanese design and each prisoner was allowed one and one-half mats (mats are 3’x6’) in the living quarters.

Only the sick rooms had heating equipment. Hot water bottles were also given to sick prisoners whenever considered necessary. Each POW barracks was equipped with four electric lights. Water was taken from the reservoir of Yawata. Each POW barracks had fifteen water taps for the wash-stand in the toilet room. See Testimony of MINORU YOSHIDA.

3. Clothing and Equipment

Japanese army issues to the prisoners are not known. Issues by the Yawata Steel Works during the time the camp was in operation included 3,000 to 4,000 working suits, 700 pairs of rubber soled footwear, 3,000 pairs of gloves, and 1,500 towels. See Testimony of MINORU YOSHIDA.

4. Prisoner of War Personnel

A roster of POW personnel at camp No. 3 is enclosed as Exhibit Two.

5. Guards

A roster of Japanese camp personnel, including guards, is attached to this summary. Roster includes present address and position occupied in camp.

6. Work and Recreation

Prisoners worked eight hours per day; from 8 o’clock in the morning until 4 o’clock in the afternoon. They were allowed a half hour off for lunch and a ten minute rest period once in the morning and once in the afternoon. They also had three resting days per month.

The POW representative was W.O. DORRIS, Major, C.A.C., USA, who was the senior officer in the group. (See Testimony of YOSHIDA) Red Cross articles were distributed in small quantities by POW officers about twice per week. (See Testimony of SUSUMU MURATA) The camp POW representative, Capt. KURAN, told TAKESHI OGARI that Major Ritake was guilty of stealing Red Cross supplies. See Testimony of TAKESHI AGARI. This man (AGARI) also testified that Major RIKITAKE had given him some of the supplies. Freedom of religion was not interfered with. Prayer meetings were held every evening by the Chaplain as a rule. They also had Sunday Mass and religious celebrations on Christmas. (See Testimony of MINORU YOSHIDA)

There was an army Canteen in the camp which sold cigarettes, toilet paper, sweets, and other daily necessities. Toward the end of the war, however, practically nothing was available except cigarettes due to the national shortage. (See Testimony of YOSHIDA)

7. Utilization

The prisoners worked in various places in the YAWATA STEEL WORKS, including the pig iron section, steel manufacturing section, rolling mill section, brick making section, boiler room, civil engineering, construction and building, motor car repair shop, forging section, casting section, tool making section, and unloading ore, coal, limestone, etc. The nature of their work included conveying materials, rolling mill operations, cutting, separating and sorting iron gears and saws, finishing up machines, and clearing ashes from the furnaces. (See Testimony of MINORU YOSHIDA) It is to be noted that many of the finished products of the Yawata Steel Works were used directly in the war effort.

8. Food

POWs working in the steel works received a daily ration of a main dish consisting of rice, wheat, wheat flour, corn, and/or Kaoliang (a kind of Italian millet from Manchuria). This was accompanied by a dish of soup containing vegetables and supplemented by meat or fish once or twice a week. The number of calories represented by this diet is not known. (See Testimony of MINORU YOSHIDA)

9. Medical

Deaths during the period that this camp was in operation included 65 Americans, 13 British, 49 Dutch, 25 Indian, and six of various other nationalities; a total of 158 deaths. Roster of POW deaths is enclosed as Exhibit Three. Causes of deaths were attributed to pneumonia, beri beri, diarrhea, and other diseases resulting from malnutrition, and overexposure. Other deaths were the result of accidents in the steel mill and Allied bombings.

There were 10 POW doctors and two POW Dentists who took care of the prisoners. There was one ward for dysentery patients, one for communicable diseases, and two for regular patients. SUSUMU MURATA was the only Japanese medical officer. There were five orderlies and one NCO who also worked in the dispensary. A sufficient supply of medical supplies, with the exception of bandages, were available in the camp. When additional supplies were required they were obtained from the company hospital. (See Testimony of SUSUMU MURATA).

10. Sanitation

The camp was infested with bed-bugs, lice and fleas. Insect exterminators were scarce and any effort to remove this condition was in vain. (See Testimony of SUSUMU MURATA) Bathing and latrine facilities were seemingly sufficient to accommodate all of the prisoners. Unsanitary conditions surrounding the handling of food is evidenced by the many cases of diarrhea among the POWs.

11. Safety Measures Employed

Air raid shelters as shown on blueprint (Exhibit One) ajoined the camp area and seemed to be capable of accommodating all of the prisoners. Prisoners working at the steel works were loaded on freight cars when the alarm was given and removed to a rail road tunnel nearby. The prisoners working further from the tunnel, such as the West Yawata area, were taken to two shelters prepared (See Testimony of MINORU YOSHIDA) There was not sufficient space in the air raid shelters for the Japanese civilian workers and the prisoners too. The civilian workers simply ran out directly to the shelters while the POWs were gathered from many different places and then marched in a group to the shelters. This took about ten minutes and by that time the civilians had taken up practically all of the room. As a result many of the POWs were forced to remain outside and expose themselves. There was a time when only Japanese laborers were allowed inside the shelters and the prisoners were left inside the steel mill. (See Testimony of YOKIO KOGA) In the air raid on August 8, 1945, a POW named HICKEY was killed and another POW, HAWS, was seriously injured in the right arm. This was a surprise attack, coming during the rest period, and caught the steel mill unawares. HICKEY was killed by a fire bomb dropping directly on his head while he was resting in a shed and HAWS was injured while seeking shelter with the other prisoners. (See Testimony of MINORU YOSHIDA).

12. Punishment and Discipline

Two solitary confinement cells were built into the guard house where as many as twenty prisoners were confined at one time. (See Testimony of YOKIO KOGA)

Major RITITAKE hit a POW with the broad side of a sword while questioning him. It was Major RIKITAKE’s belief that unless the soldiers beat the prisoners once in a while they didn’t have the value as a soldier. (See Testimony of TAKESHI AGARI)

SHOZO NAGKURA, who was in charge of clothing for the POWs often beat the prisoners when they came to him to exchange worn out clothes. (See Testimony of TAKESHI AGARI)

A guard called WATERSNEAK by the prisoners would beat the prisoners for no reason at all. (See Testimony of YOKIO KOGA).

ROBERT E. HUMPHREYS, 2nd Lt., Inf.

Investigating Officer

Legal Section, GHQ, SCAP

MELVIN S. COHN, 2nd Lt. Inf.

Investigating Officer

Legal Section, GHQ, SCAP