C O N F I D E N T I A L

STATE OF CALIFORNIA: )

 ) ss 9SC-WC-2921

County of Monterey )

WILLIAM EARLE BRAYE, being duly sworn, deposes and says:

I am a citizen of the United States, 29 years of age, and reside at 634 Terrace Street, Salinas, California. Prior to discharge, I was a Staff Sergeant in the United States Army, serial number 20900649.

I was a prisoner of war of the Japanese from 9 April 1942 to 14 September 1945. I was captured at Kilometer Post 167.8 on Bataan, was taken on the “Death March” to Camp O’Donnell, and from there went on labor details in various parts of Luzon, Philippine Islands, eventually going to Cabanatuan Camp Number 1 and from there to Bilibid and was shipped to Japan by freighter. I arrived at Moji, Japan, on 4 August 1944, and was placed in camp $4, Moji, Fukuoka area, where I remained until my liberation.

Nissyo Maru was the name of the ship on which I was transferred from Manila to Moji. It left Manila on 17 July 1944. There were 1500 prisoners transported on the ship. We were kicked down into the hold by Japanese soldiers. The hold was only big enough to contain about 100 men; nevertheless we were forced to squeeze in on top of one another. Men immediately started to pass into unconsciousness from suffocation. Our officers got permission that evening to open a forward hold in the ship, which was empty. This hold contained nothing but a few planks in the center of the steel floor. 900 of our group were then crowded into this portion of the ship, in groups of 50, each group being allocated a definite part of the hold for their quarters. Our space was limited so that for the next 17 days of this voyage, no man could lie down, but each of us sat with his knees drawn up in front of him, and his fellow would sit between his knees, with his head on the first man’s chest. One aisle was provided for men who had to go to the latrine. The latrine consisted of one wooden bucket which was let down by a rope at evening and raised the same way the next morning. This bucket would be soon filled and would overflow so that the floor around it would be contaminated.

During the entire trip we received one half cup of water per man per day plus such rain water as we could catch during rainy days, through the open hatch. Our food during the trip consisted of two daily issues of a mess kit of barley, ¼ cup of potato, greens or onion soup was also issued the first four days, but discontinued after that.

There were no facilities for washing or bathing. On the tenth day at sea, a salt-water hose was made available and the men washed off with that and on the morning of our arrival in Moji this was provided again, but at no other time was any provision made for cleaning ourselves.

The prisoners were in poor condition from their imprisonment in the Philippines and during the trip two men died, apparently from the combined results of suffocation, starvation and thirst imposed upon their already weakened condition. I do not know the identities of these two men, nor do I now know anyone who could identify them.

The foregoing constitutes all my knowledge of the general conditions of the transportation of the group of American prisoners from Manila to Moji on the described occasion.

William E. Braye

William Earle Braye

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 27 day of April 1946, at Fort Ord, California.

Frederick A. Schmaltz

FREDERICK A. SCHMALTZ

Major, QMC

Adjutant

Interviewed by: Melvin E. Ceder, Special Agent, CIC, NSC.

C O N F I D E N T I A L

STATE OF CALIFORNIA: )

 ) ss 9SC-WC-2921

County of Monterey )

WILLIAM EARLE BRAYE, being duly sworn, deposes and says:

I am a citizen of the United States, 29 years of age, and reside at 634 Terrace Street, Salinas, California. Prior to discharge, I was a Staff Sergeant in the United States Army, serial number 20900649.

I was a prisoner of war of the Japanese from 9 April 1942 to 14 September 1945. I was captured at Kilometer Post 167.8 on Bataan, was taken on the “Death March” to Camp O’Donnell, and from there went on labor details in various parts of Luzon, Philippine Islands, eventually going to Cabanatuan Camp Number 1 and from there to Bilibid and was shipped to Japan by freighter. I arrived at Moji, Japan, on 4 August 1944, and was placed in camp $4, Moji, Fukuoka area, where I remained until my liberation.

When we arrived at Moji, Japan, 49 enlisted men and Warrant Officer (j.g.) Jack Rosen were segregated from the approximately 1500 prisoners who had come in on the ship from Manila, and put in a two-story building which had formerly been the European Y.M.C.A. of the city. I was among those so selected. This building was known as camp $4, Moji. There were, in all, about 310 prisoners in the building, including Javanese, English, Australian, Canadian, Dutch and the Americans I have mentioned.

The Japanese in charge of this camp was a Captain in the Japanese Army named Saito. He was short, stocky man, about 5’4” in height, weighing about 140 pounds. He was clean shaven but heavily bearded, had perfect teeth, and affected an extremely military bearing and was always very cool. He gave evidence of a very good education and spoke English fluently. He invariably wore a pair high tan military boots coming to his knees. From time to time he would be friendly to individual prisoners, but on many occasions he ordered the entire camp punished for minor violations.

I was beaten on many occasions by the guards at this camp. Being Section Leader of a detail of about 23 Americans, I bore the responsibility and most of the punishment for petty violations by my detail. For such minor matters as failure to count off correctly in formation, a whole squad would be taken out and beaten with a leather belt or bamboo pole, across the face or body. These occasions were so frequent that I cannot at present specify how often they happened or who the responsible guards were. I do recall that at various times I was beaten by the guards named Suzuki and Sakaguchi. I cannot accurately describe these two guards, but each has an outstanding deformity: Suzuki has his right hand off just above the wrist, and Sakaguchi’s right hand is crippled so that he cannot open the fingers, which remain clutches into a fist, and he has only the use of the thumb on the right hand.

In January 1944, I was suffering considerable pain from an infected middle ear which had so affected me that I had no control over my senses. At this time there were recurrent air raids and as I now understand it, it was considered a privilege to remain in bed and not go to the air raid shelters with the other prisoners. Whether the doctors had neglected to advise me of this fact or I was so delirious that I did not understand them, I don’t know, but I recall that when an air raid occurred at that time, I went to the shelter. When the raid was over, I was seized by the guards, and beaten by them. One of the guards, Enui, a man about 5 feet 3 inches tall whose only characteristic which I now recall was his very rapid gait, always seemed to be running, used a saber on me in this beating and during the course of it inflicted a cut on my back about ½ inches deep and 10 inches long. They beat me with their fists across the face and knocked me down and stamped on me. Then I was made to stand at attention in front of the guard house until 5:00 a.m., during which time the guards sprayed me from time to time with a fire extinguisher; and it was a cold winter night and I was dressed only in light Japanese summer uniform.

At 5:00 a.m. they told me I was excused and should go to bed because at 6:00 a.m. I would have to go out to work with my detail. I was taken before the Sergeant in charge, who on this occasion was Ino, a relatively kind man who did not participate in the beating. He had the doctor take my temperature which was 104.2. He ordered me sent to bed and kept there and I was in bed 17 days before I recovered and went back to work.

The foregoing constitutes all my present knowledge of the above-described incidents.

William Earle Braye

William Earle Braye

A F F I D A V I T

TOKYO )

 : SS

ISLAND OF HONSHU )

William E. Braye, being duly sworn, deposes and says:

I reside at 634 Terrace Street, Salinas, California and I was inducted into the Unites States Army on February 10, 1941. I received my honorable discharge on April 5, 1946.

I was a member of Company “C”, 194th Tank Battalion, Provisional Tank Group, Philippine Department. I was taken prisoner at Bataan, Philippine Islands, on April 9, 1942.

I thereafter was held prisoner at camp O’Donnell, Cabanatuan and Los Pinas, and was later transported to Japan aboard the Nissyo Maru.

I arrived at Moji Prisoner of War camp, Fukuoka Number 4, on 4 August 1944 and remained there until September 20, 1945.

At Moji camp I was a witness to numerous beatings and tortures administered by various members of the Japanese personnel at said camp to various Allied Prisoners of War.

In or about the months of May or June 1945, Seaman 2/c Walter M. Cole and 1st Sgt. James Kinder were severely beaten by Sakaguchi, a civilian guard who was also known as “Clutching Hand”, and by Morio Inouye, also a civilian guard together with others.

The beatings of these two men took place in the camp compound, which was within easy view of the Prisoner of War barracks wherein I was confined and I was an eye witness to some of the same.

One morning these two prisoners were taken out of the barracks and brought to the guardhouse where they were stood at attention outside of same. They were questioned relative to the possession by them of some sugar and thereafter the above-named Japs proceeded to severely beat them in and about the head and body with fists, sticks, belts and any other objects readily available to them as they were administering the beatings this first beating continued intermittently over a period of over two hours due to the fact that in between blows the two men were made to assume the physical exercise position push-ups. Every time their bodies touched the ground, the Japs would rain further blows and kicks upon them. The two prisoners were then confined to the guardhouse for about four or five days and during this period they were subjected to further similar beatings on and off during the daylight hours. The Japanese guards made it a point to subject these men to these beatings and this torture when we returned from work in the evenings. Other Prisoners of War who had occasion to remain at camp during the day told us that they witnessed these two men being subjected to similar beatings during the day while we were out at work. During the four or five days that all this went on the two men were fed only one meal per day and were given very little water.

In the early part of September 1944, I was subjected to a beating at the hands of Sakaguchi and other members of the guard under the pretext that I had failed to salute him. I was beaten in the camp compound for a period of about an hour with fists, sticks, and clubs. Sakaguchi used a bamboo club in joining other guards to inflict this beating upon me.

On another occasion in or about January or February of 1945, I received another severe beating from Sakaguchi and other guards for a minor infraction of the camp rules. On this occasion I was beaten with clubs, fists, sticks, and saber sheaths and Morio Inouye kept striking me with an unsheathed saber across my back. I still have scars across my back from same. This beating went on for about 30 minutes until I was rendered unconscious. I was then carried to the guardhouse and upon being revived I was stood up at attention and questioned by Sakaguchi. Without any response to his questioning on my part, he stuck me with his fists and I fell to the ground. He then proceeded to kick me in and about my head, ribs and face. I was then stood at attention and Sakaguchi and the other guards then took a fire extinguisher and sprayed water over my face for a period of about four hours on and off. It was freezing weather and I was completely drenched.

In about July 1945, I saw Sgt. Ted Marshall, a British Prisoner, after he received a terrible beating with a pick at the hands of Sakaguchi. One of his legs was severely cut up and he was limping on same when I last saw him at the end of the war. Marshall himself told me that Sakaguchi has struck him with a pick-axe and struck him with his fists while at work on a detail over which Sakaguchi was Honcho.

There were numerous other occasions when this guard, Sakaguchi, beat me during the period of time that I was at this camp. It was his general course of conduct to beat and torture Allied Prisoners of War for little of no cause. He was a cold-blooded menace to the prisoners who were unfortunate enough to come within his sphere. He was a man of about 35 or 40 years of age, about 5’5” tall, weighted about 130 pounds, wore black horn-rimmed glasses, had sharp features, no mustache, and was dark complexioned. He was called “Clutching Hand” due to the fact that he had a deformity in his right hand whereby it was always in the position of a semi-clenched fist with only his thumb being capable of movement.

William E. Braye

Sworn to before me this 16th day of September 1946 at Tokyo, Japan

[Illegible signature]

Major, Inf.

?? Opr, Inf Div.