

HEADQUARTERS
U. S. STRATEGIC BOMBING SURVEY
(Pacific)
APO #234
C/O POSTMASTER, SAN FRANCISCO

INTERROGATION NO. 266

Place: Tokyo
Date: 3 Nov. 1945

Division of Origin: Military Analysis Division.

Subject : Supply of Horses to Japanese Army, Remount Depots.

Personnel Interrogated and Background of Each:

Col. OGATA, Vice Director of the Horse Administration Bureau. Served in that capacity only since March 1945.

Col. ONETA, Ass't Chief of the War Preparations Section concerned, mobilization of troops and horses.

Where Interviewed: Meiji Building, Room 238.

Interrogator : Captain Walter M. DROZD.

Interpreter : Lt. BOYD, USNR.

Allied Officers Present: None.

NOTE: The original person requested for this interrogation was Lt. General NIIZUMA, Chief of the Horse Administration Bureau, War Ministry. However, Lt. General NIIZUMA was not available for the interrogation and it has been indicated by Col. OGATA and ONETA that the general has not yet been located, but is believed to be living somewhere in the suburbs of Tokyo. Both Colonels OGATA and ONETA had been sent to substitute for him.

Neither of these men were too well informed on the topic of the interrogation. Both expressed some opinions, however seldom any definite views. A list of prepared questions were given to them with instructions to see if some answers could be secured from personnel in their former offices. Both said they would try to remember the problems encountered in the supply of horses to the Japanese Army, however they would have to rely chiefly on their memories. The reason for this, they said, was that all records on the number of horses supplied to forces overseas and those available in Japan proper, had been destroyed in transit as they were being shipped by train from the Central Remount Depot to the War Ministry in July 1945.

The following are questions asked of Colonels OGATA and ONETA and their answers:

- Q. How were requirements for the supply of horses for the Japanese Army computed?
- A. The system of horse supply changed frequently in Japan proper. Generally, Armies overseas would requisition replacements for horses much like that for the replacement of personnel.
- Q. What governed the amount of horses that could be requisitioned?
- A. Table of Organization which showed how many men and horses should normally be in an Army.
- Q. Was there a definite ratio established between the number of men and the number of horses in each organization?
- A. No, however we can go back over the T/O's and establish the relationship. (They were instructed to do so).
- Q. How did Armies requisition horses, that is, where did they forward requisitions?
- A. Requirements from overseas GHQ were forwarded directly to the War Ministry.
- Q. How were the requirements computed by GHQ for all its armies?
- A. GHQ for Kwantung Army (Hsing-king) in Manchuria, compiled requisitions of all armies under its jurisdiction. GHQ for the China Expeditionary Army (Nanking) compiled requisitions for all its armies in China. SE Asia Area requisitions were compiled at GHQ, Saigon. Southwest and Central Pacific Island Area requirements were compiled at GHQ, Rabaul. From these GHQ's requisitions were sent directly to the War Ministry.
- Q. What were the chief sources for acquiring horses?
- A. Hokkaido and Kyushu, mainly, and from all the prefectures of Japan. The War Ministry directed horses to be brought to specific collecting points in each prefecture at particular times. The Army would then select what it wanted. Horses were bred in Hokkaido, and Kyushu, and Northern part of Honshu.
- Q. Was the supply of horses adequate?
- A. No, even at beginning of war there was a marked shortage of horses. Before the war in 1937 a survey indicated the lack of horses in Japan. A seven year plan was therefore inaugurated to increase the number of all types of horses. This plan was not successful prior to the war for there was a shortage of beans, corn, and other types of foods. After the start of the war large numbers of horses were shipped overseas, many of these were females which cut down the program of breeding.
- Q. Was the supply of horses overseas satisfactory?
- A. No, the chief difficulty in supply was the inadequate quantity of horses in Japan, and this was further curtailed by the inability of depots to ship the available horses overseas.
- Q. Explain this difficulty in shipping.

The following are questions asked of Colonels OGATA and ONETA and their answers: cont'd.

A. Ship space was not adequate and often not available for shipment of horses. The sinking of ships by bombings and submarines gave other items of supply higher priority on available ship space.

Q. How did air action affect the supply of horses in Japan proper? Were the remount depots bombed? What number of horses was destroyed in these bombings?

A. We do not have the statistics on how many horses were killed in Japan through bombardments. However, the remount depot at Tahanabe in Kyushu was bombed and the ferry between Southern Hokkaido and Northern Honshu which frequently transported horses was also bombed.