

Ex. 1498

Evidentiary Document # 5129.

Statement.

WONG SIN JOON, 716 Geylang Rd., S'pore.

(told in his own words).

I was in the SSVF under Capt. Yap Pheng Gock, until the surrender and disbandment under orders. I went to live with friends at Lavender Street Corner Bar.

On the 17th Feb 1942 at 12 o'clock we were told by the Kempei-tai (Jap Military Police) that we must go to Jalen Besar to be interned, and we must bring with us two or three days ration. We arrived at the place at 4 o'clock and found the place full of people, (quite a few thousands of them) we were then put into a house in Syed Alwi Rd. where they were already full. The area allotted to us was from Maude Rd. to Syed Alwi Rd. with barbed wires around, and no one should cross over these wires, if they do they will be shot. All the houses, street corners, five-foot way, and Siong Lim Saw Mills are packed like sardines, and could hardly walk freely. Cooking is very difficult, water is scarce, and these places were very dirty, still more people are coming in. All could hardly sleep when night came, because of short of space, and the only way to sleep is to sit down and crossed our legs.

We stayed there for two days, and were later told by the Japs that all the family can return to their homes on the morning of the 19th, and men and boys above sixteen years are not allowed to go; early in the morning of the 19th all of them (the families) were lined up in a long queue ready to leave the camp. The Japs came at about 8 o'clock and told them that they can go now. When my wife and children had left me that day, I went back to the house anxiously awaiting to go back home.

At 2 p.m. 19th Feb Koh Jiek Yong told me that the Japs have called out for 2nd Batn. Chinese volunteers to surrender. I got out and saw a crowd of Chinese around a white banner with Chinese characters on it, and a Chinese standing under this banner asking has anybody seen Mr. Tan Kah Kee; nobody answered. He then told the men that the Japanese wanted all the Chinese volunteers to surrender; if they do, they will be given a pass to go back home and a job as a policeman; if they do not surrender and if caught within three days they will be shot to death. I left the mob of listeners and went in search of my volunteer friends, and there I found Cpl. Chia Tiang Bee, Cpl. Koh Jiek Yong and few other volunteers. I asked them whether it is necessary for us to surrender; they told us not to do anything yet as they wish to find out. We then walked to the gate and there we saw a crowd of people, some are volunteers outside the gate giving their names and addresses, and the one who is taking down the records are one of our "E" Coy. man, and furthermore we saw at the gate near the exit are Lieut. Goh Siew Lee and Mr. Yap Tian Chye.

Some of the civilians let loose after being questioned, and were given an identification stamp on the palm of their hands. Our turn comes next with Cpl. Tiang Bee leading, as soon as we passed the gate I heard

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somebody say, here they are. Cpl. Tiang Bee were being recognized and he was told to bring us to report to the man in charge on the left. Lieut. Goh assured us that we will be all right as he will look after us volunteers and not to worry. [We were then fall in and marched to the Victoria Bridge School and were put in the drill hall.] We were there for quite a while, and Lieut. Goh came out and told us to give our names and addresses again as he wished to have all records of us, after this he left us and we never saw him again.

[When morning came about 9 or 10 o'clock three lorries and one private car came to our place, one lorry was full of Japs. They surrounded our place and came into our hall; they were armed with Bren Guns, and told us to stand up in two rows of 35 each, then simply tied our hands behind our backs and told us to go out to the empty truck. Our lorries went out with the private car leading. We passed Lavender Street, Kallang Rd., got into Groove Road and then to Changi. We were expecting the lorry to stop at the Changi jail, but to our surprise they kept on moving, then we knew of our fate, that we are going to be shot.

After several minutes the first lorry stopped somewhere near the custom house. The prisoners were told to get down, and were taken to the house and searched and relieved of all their possessions, such as gold rings, cash, gold watches and other articles. The lorry which I was in came next; it stopped but we were not searched. The Japs told us to join the others. We were then told to go down to the beach. (Just like a flock of sheep going to the slaughter). We could hardly move when we saw the firing squad. Some of us cried, some calling for their parents. As regards to myself I cried too but could shed no tears, my limbs were as cold as ice when I looked around and saw the firing squad in their position. I noticed the machine-guns were placed on the right and left of us, the Tommy-gunners in lying position. Bren-guns right in the centre and the firing squad before us. (This was on the 20th Feb, 1942)

Despite all the crying and moaning we found ourselves on the beach facing the squad with our hands tied behind our backs. We were then lined up in two rows of 35 each. As soon as we were in line the Japs caught us in a cross fire over and over again, and in a few minutes we were all down. I fell face downwards, shot, but still alive. I dare not move, just pretend to be dead. By this time the tide was coming in, and the Japs had ceased fire, and I thought the Japs had left us. I could hold out no longer. I wanted to breathe and the water got into my nose and mouth, so I took a deep breath and moved; all of a sudden I heard the rattling of the guns again, and I felt the burning pain just at my left side of my body and gave a shout, "Oh, my God." I'm finished. Though seriously wounded and I am still alive and conscious, this time I dare breathe no more, but kept very still. Once again the firing had ceased, and I only heard the beating of a drum.

I waited for a while but nothing happened so I slowly raised my head and looked around, half dozed and in terrible pain; and what a ghastly sight met my eyes. The sea water had turned red instead of green, and only a foot away were the bodies of my mates Cpl. Chia Tiang Bee and

Pte. John Peter Tan riddled with bullets. At the same time I heard a low voice calling for help just two bodies away from Cpl. Tiang Bee and John Peter Tan. I did not know what to do, I dared not get up for fear that some Japs might be around, but I just rolled over the bodies of my friends and got to the man who had called out. He told me that we had better get out of the place quick. I asked him how we could escape when our hands were tied behind our backs. He told me to put my wrists in between his teeth; I did so and he managed to release me; then he told me that he had got a pen-knife in his pocket; I took the knife out and released him, and told him to wait. I turned to my left this time and to my surprise I saw several more still alive. I wasted no time and got to them and released them. Two of them had nasty wounds in their left shoulders; they were two men from "E" Coy. One of them is named Pte. Tan Cheng Cher. Another one was shot through the thigh and he belonged to the Fort Canning Signals.

After releasing them I told them to get away quickly. I got back to the one who had released me, and I found that he was already dead with a big wound in the centre of his throat, caused by 45 bullet. I wasted no time but joined the other two and got out of the place. We could hardly stand up, but we crawled to some lallang bushes where we rested. We asked each other where to go after this, and one of them said that we must keep going to the left. We crawled some distance then had another rest and must have fallen asleep, as we were so tired and hungry due to heavy loss of blood. (This was in the evening of the 20th Feb 1942.) I woke up at the break of dawn, and got to the one nearest to me, but I could not find the other two with the broken shoulders. They had gone while I was asleep.

My friend said that we must keep on going, so we kept on crawling for about 200 yards where we found some blood stains along our paths. On and on we followed the trail of the bloodstains till we reached some Malay villages, where we saw some well-dressed Malays, but we dared not go to them for fear that we might encounter some Japs, but we called to them and they turned round and saw us, and asked us what we wanted. They refused to assist us, but eventually we got away. Later we contacted some British soldiers who took us to a Field Ambulance Unit where our wounds were treated.

(Signed) LONG SIN JOON.

statement made to me at S'pore 12 Feb, 1946.

(Signed) W. TOTMAN, Major.

O.C. Civil Affairs War Crimes Investigation Section
Singapore.

Examined by me with original affidavit and certified to be a true copy.

(Signed) P.S. LAMBE, Lt. Colonel.

17 April 46.

AAG War Crimes, HQ ALFSEA.