

In the International
Military Tribunal for
the Far East.

The United States of America and others

v.
ARAKI, Sadao

AFFIDAVIT.

I, Roderick Graham Wells of Tatura, in the State of Victoria, formerly VX14024 Lieutenant R. G. Wells of 8 Division Signals make oath and say:-

1. I became a prisoner of war at Singapore on 15th February, 1942. I left there on 8 July, 1942, with "B" Force and arrived at Sandakan on 18 July, 1942, and went to Sandakan Camp.
2. There were 1490 men from "B" Force at this camp. Early the following year 500 Englishmen arrived and in April, 1943, "E" Force consisting of 500 Australians arrived at the Camp.
3. I remained at this camp until July, 1943, and during that time 32 or 33 prisoners died from malnutrition diseases and dysentery.
4. We were accommodated in weather board huts built by the British for accommodation of native prisoners. These huts were divided into three cubicles each 15 feet by 20 feet and ten officers lived in each cubicle. The men were accommodated in smaller attap huts and lived fifty to a hut. The officers' and men's huts were alive with lice and bugs. The Japanese gave us nothing to eradicate the vermin.
5. The same water supply which the English Administration had provided for 250 to 300 natives was all that the Japanese allowed for about 1500 men. The water had to be rationed and was not safe to drink unless boiled.
6. We had only one small cook-house to prepare meals for 1500 men. The cooking of the rice for the morning meal commenced at midnight and the cooks kept turning it out throughout the night with the result that it was not fresh in the morning. Our meals consisted of rice and a soup made from a native green boiled in water. The Japanese food was much better in quantity and quality than that given the prisoners. In addition to rice, they got fish, vegetables and other delicacies

7. The rations of the sick were reduced. The prisoners of war working at the drome would then divide their rations so the sick got an equal share, but Captain Hoshijimi stopped this by compelling these prisoners to cook and eat their midday and evening meal at the drome. The Japanese did not provide us with any medical supplies other than a small quantity of quinine.

8. The prisoners of war were engaged on the construction of an aerodrome. Whilst I was at Sandakan this aerodrome was used entirely for military planes. The hours of work were from 8.30 a.m. to 5 p.m. at night with an hour for dinner and sometimes a ten minute spell each morning and evening. After the first wet season, November 1942, the water and mud rotted the boots off the men and no replacements were made. About 25 to 30 per cent had to work bare-footed whilst others had clogs which they made for themselves. The Japanese did not issue any footwear to the prisoners.

9. The Japanese enforced discipline against prisoners of war by corporal punishment of individuals and mass punishment of the prisoners as a whole. The corporal punishment consisted of beating with sticks, kicking and face slapping. Almost every guard on the aerodrome carried a wooden stick about 4 feet 6 inches long and one to one and a half inches in diameter for that purpose. Beatings were a daily occurrence. Pte. Darlington was so badly beaten that his arms were broken, he was bleeding from head, face, arms and legs, and he was unconscious. He was then tied up and put in a cage 5 feet by 4 feet and 2½ feet from the ground. Sergeant-Major Asgood was with me on a wood party when he was struck across the ear with a stick and his caddrum broken. Mass punishment consisted of an all round decrease in the rations. I made complaints to Captain Hoshijimi about the use of the cage, the work required from the men, the low rations they were receiving, the lack of footwear and clothes and referred him to the International Conventions. He said he was not interested in the International Conventions.

10. Thirteen prisoners of war escaped and were recaptured. These were tried and sentenced to terms of imprisonment up to six years. Eight others were charged with planning to escape and were sentenced to imprisonment for up to four years.

11. I was arrested on 24 July 1943 and then taken to Sandakan Military Police Headquarters. Here I was confined for three months, the first three weeks in solitary confinement in a cell and the remainder of the time with other prisoners in a room in which we were continuously under observation and which was lighted all night. All my footwear and clothing were taken from me with the exception of a pair of shorts. I was

frequently interrogated. Corporal punishment and torture were used by the Kempei Tai during these interrogations to extract information. I was flogged with a whip and beaten up with a wooden sword on two or three occasions. I was also racked on an improvised rack. I was handcuffed and tied to a verandah rafter by a rope passing through the handcuff chain, and around the rafter at such a height that on kneeling I was suspended with my knees about six inches above the ground. A beam of wood about 4 inches square and 6 feet long was placed behind my knees, and by means of two interrogating officers, standing on either end of the rafter enabled my body from the knees upwards to be stretched. Another beam of wood similar to that above was laid across my ankles and similar pressure applied. The effect was to stretch my arms and legs and almost break the ankle bones by making me kneel with the fore part of my feet on the ground, with the rafter across my ankle on each edge. It pulled all the flesh away from the ankle. After two minutes of this treatment I became unconscious. I was revived by water being thrown over my head. The interrogation was resumed to the accompaniment of a different type of torture which consisted of my head being repeatedly struck in the same place with a small hammer. I was also beaten across the head with a rafter of wood and as a result my middle ear was broken and I have permanently lost my hearing in the one ear.

On 16th August 1943 I was made to consume a quantity of raw rice. They then introduced a hose into my throat and filled me up with water. The result was that after about four hours the rice, as it absorbed the water swelled, and stretched the stomach muscles to an extraordinary degree.

The rice pulled a large portion of my bowel out through the anus. I asked for medical attention. This was refused. All prisoners when not being interrogated were compelled to sit up with crossed legs from 7.30 a.m. until 10.30 p.m.

During this period of three months our only food was 5 ounces of rice and a small piece of rock salt or a dried fish head each per day.

12. On 25th October 1943 Capt. Matthews, who had been arrested on 22nd July, 1943, a number of other prisoners and I were shipped to Kuching. The voyage lasted eight days. We were tied on deck throughout the whole voyage and had no cover, being exposed to the sun, rain and waves which washed on to the deck. Our ration was the same as at Sandakan Military Police Headquarters.

13. I remained at Kuching for five months until I was tried on 29th February 1944 by court-martial consisting of Lieutenant-

General BABA. Capt. Matthews and a number of others were tried with me. We were not given a defending officer nor told what charge was laid against us. Captain Matthews asked what the charge was but was not told; he also asked for a defending officer but his request was refused. We had previously been compelled to sign or thumbprint statements in Japanese. These had not been translated before we signed them and we did not know what was in them. No evidence was given, we were merely questioned on these statements and within half an hour everyone with the exception of Matthews, myself and three other ranks was sentenced. We were sentenced two days later. I was sentenced to 12 years' penal servitude with hard labour. Matthews was sentenced to death. A firing squad was waiting for him as I left the court and about ten minutes later I heard the sound of firing coming from the direction of the Roman Catholic Cathedral about 100 yards away from the Court. Eight natives were also executed that morning but the Japanese said they were killed with the sword. On 8th March I left Kuching for Outram head Cacl.

Sworn at Essendon in the State)
 of Victoria this the 18th day) (Signed) R.G. WELLS.
 of October 1946) Licut.
 R.of O.

Before me $\frac{1}{2}$

(Signed) JOHN RUSH, J.P.

[Faint, illegible text, likely a duplicate or bleed-through of the main text above.]

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