

INVESTIGATION - BALLALE IS.

Period Nov 42 to Sep 43.

KOREAN - KANESHIRO FUKUKAN

interrogated by NX 70429
Maj. E. C. Millikin.

I was on BALLALE IS from 3 Nov 42 to Aug 43. I was employed in a working gang, but because of my good knowledge of the Japanese language was employed to interpret any orders given by Japanese to my gang.

I am NOT sure exactly when the white PW landed at BALLALE, but think it was Dec 42 or early Jan 43. The Japs told me there were about 600 PW.

They landed from a large freighter, but I do NOT know the name of it.

I was returning from work when I saw the PW marching from the disembarkation point towards their compound.

According to a Jap report current at the time the ship came from SINGAPORE.

I have seen the PW at various times. I think they were ENGLISHMEN. Their clothes were light khaki, somewhat similar to clothes worn by Aust troops. Hats were slouchtype, some men wore forage caps and some officers type caps. Boots were of various types. Some of the men had tattoo marks on them. I particularly remember that some were anchors and some were English words. I can NOT remember details of any other tattoos. The general knowledge at the time was that the PW were Englishmen. That is to say it was mentioned by the Japanese and we overheard it. Witness is shown picture of RA badge - he states that he saw some PW wearing badges and he thinks some might have been the RA badge.

I heard a story from the Japanese that either the night of the landing or the next day a PW was beheaded by OZAKI. I do not know why this was done. I overheard a group of Japs discussing the matter. I have seen the grave, indicates on enlargement of BALLALE IS/1: 63360 (see portion of file War Crimes Investigation 13 Nov 45 23 Bde) reference 5025 0550. The grave was beside the road.

There was a group of army men in charge of the PW - I have no idea of the name of the unit nor of the soldiers names. I do NOT know if the army personnel lived with the PWs I only saw them escorting the PWs to and from work. I do NOT know of any illtreatment of the PW apart from the beheading as above, but I did hear from the Japs that if the PW were slow at their work they were beaten with a pole. I do NOT know of any other beheadings or shootings as individual incidents. (NOTE the matter of the mass killing was referred to at this stage, but not taken down, being kept for its proper sequence)

There was a lot of allied bombing and according to the Japs a lot of PW were killed and wounded, as there was a direct hit on the PW compound. I heard that the dead were buried, but I do NOT know where the grave is. I did NOT hear that PW who died of wounds were dumped at sea in rice sacks. The part of the island where the PW were quartered was out of bounds to all personnel except Japanese on duty.

After the air raids I saw only about 70 to 100 white PW.

I did NOT hear about the Jap kitchen being bombed and as a result the PW were all beaten.

The airstrip was never finished, there was always some work to be done repairing bomb damage etc.

/On

On the night of 30 June 43 the place was shelled from the sea, the Japs were afraid of a landing and killed the PW next day. I am certain the shelling was on 30 June. I do NOT know how many PW remained at this stage, but they were all killed by bayonets or swords. I heard that a large pit was dug, I do NOT know by whom and when the PW were killed they were buried there. I do NOT know where the grave is but I understand that it is in the vicinity of the PW compound. I do NOT know by whose order the PW were killed but OZAKI was the senior officer at that time.

I recall an incident when tobacco was fairly plentiful and I and some other Christians wanted to give some to the PW. As the Japs at all times were very harsh in their treatment of the PW we were afraid to approach them on behalf of the white PW.

I think that KONNO SHIGERU would know something about these things because he worked near the Koreans for a period of about a month and in that month the Koreans heard a fair bit about the PW from Japs who were working with KONNO. At this time KONNO was either a 1st or 2nd class P.O.

NOTE KONNO under persistent and repeated questioning gave very little information -

He admitted he was on BALLALE during the period. He was camped in the jungle area and saw some white PW at odd times, but NONE after about May 43. He had no idea of identity of units, nationality, where from, he heard some were killed in air raids but never heard what happened to the remainder.

With regard to other happenings on BALLALE, I have never heard about the American airman who was alleged to have had boiling water poured over him.

I did NOT at any time see any Chinese, but I heard that some came to the island to work on the air strip. I do NOT know how long they were on BALLALE.

With regard to White PW, I do NOT know of them having to work while they were sick. Nor did I at any time hear about any dying of malnutrition. I did NOT at any time hear that the PW used to take their sick mates to work and hide them in the scrub near the strip and then help them back to the compound after the days work was finished.

There was a lot of sickness amongst the Japs and Koreans, and if they had a fever they could rest, however men with tropical ulcers even if they were limping, had to work.

I do NOT know what were the rules about PW working when sick but in the working parties almost all of them appeared weak. I do NOT know anything about their food situation.

The PW were always in separate parties and at no time was I close enough to observe in order to base any opinion as to good or bad treatment of them by the Japs.

The above evidence was taken at No. 11 Compound, Kokopo and at Witnesses Compound, Rabaul.

/s/ E. C. Millikin, Major
Interrogating Officer