

no 1893

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GENERAL HEADQUARTERS
UNITED STATES ARMY FORCES, PACIFIC
WAR CRIMES BRANCH

AFPO 500
2 January 1946

MEMORANDUM TO: Prosecution Section (Report No. 142)
THRU: Executive Officer, War Crimes Branch
SUBJECT: The murder of eleven American Baptist teachers of the faculty of the Central Philippine College and the murder of six other Americans at Camp Hopevale near Tapaz, Capiz Province, Panay, P.I., on 20 December 1943.

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II. SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE:

Japanese officers and enlisted men under the command of a Captain WATANABE, engaged in one of the several punitive expeditions in Panay Island, left the township of Libacao, Capiz Province, on 18 December 1943 for Iloilo City (R 1). The next morning, they reached Camp Hopevale near Tapaz, Capiz Province, which was first surrounded, and then Captain WATANABE and his soldiers entered the Camp proper. Sixteen Americans along with three others who had been captured previously, were placed under guard without food or water (R 1). In the afternoon of 20 December 1943, one of the American women was seen kneeling with her hands tied behind her back and begging Captain WATANABE for mercy. Captain WATANABE ignored her pleas and drew his Samurai sword. An hour later, inside a house that was already in flames, were discovered twelve bodies and there was a strong odor of burning flesh. Some of the victims had been bayoneted and some had been beheaded (R 2). Three weeks later, another witness who was familiar with the names of most of the Americans visited the scene and was able to identify the remains of the victims from teeth, bits of burned clothing, hair, identification tags, and a truss. The remains were taken from two burned dwellings and buried in the church at Katapunan (R 5, 9). On the day of the execution, one Filipino who was in hiding reported that he had seen blood on the trousers of one of the Japanese guards (R 5, 6) and that one of the Japanese told Filipinos that the Americans whom they had feared were now gone and that the Filipinos should obey the Japanese (R 6). Another witness verified that she saw smoke coming from the Hopevale area on the date of the massacre (R 8) and that her brother and a cousin saw the bodies in three burned houses (R 9, 11). Some of the remains of the Americans were identified (R 11). Two of the bodies were not burned and were found outside (R 11). All of the victims except Mrs. Rounds, her son, Douglas, the Clardy family and Albert KING were members of the faculty of the Central Philippine College at Iloilo City, Panay (R 1).

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