

R E S T R I C T E D

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



INTERROGATION NO. (~~NOT ASSIGNED~~)⁶⁰⁵ PLACE: TOKYO
(Japanese Intell. No. 50) TIME: 28 Nov. 48

Division of Origin: Japanese Intelligence Section, #2,
USSBS.

Subject: Training and Duties of YOMUSHI.

Person Interrogated and Background:

YANAGITA, Masuo, Lt. Comdr. IJN.

1938 Graduated from Academy.
1938(April - July) Yagumo (Trainer)
1938(July) 1939(March) Yinu (Cruiser)
1939(March) 1939(Oct.) Oboro (Destroyer)
1939(Nov.) 1940(May) Chiyoda (Seaplane Carrier)
1940(May) 1940(Nov.) Katori
1940(Nov.) 1942(April) Naval Academy gunnery instructor.
1942(April) 1943(Sept) Kumano (Cruiser)
1943(Sept.) 1945(July) Tsuchiura Air Group
1945(July) Navy Department, Transportation, Main Sect.

Where interviewed : Meiji Building.

Interrogators: Lt. Comdr. William H. Botzer, USNR
Lt. Comdr. F. Shackelford, USNR

Interpreters: Lt. Comdr. F.B. Huggins, USNR
Lt. Otis Cary, USNR

Allied Officers Present: None.

SUMMARY

The YOMUSHI program was established by the Naval Air Arm in September 1943 to train reserve officers to become ground officers with air groups and squadrons, personnel officers, athletic instructors, classification officers at flight schools, and liaison officers at aircraft factories. Approximately 1600 officers were graduated, before the war ended, from three schools which in their 4 month courses taught aeronautics (tactics and important related subjects), personnel work and watch officer duties.

The YOMUSHI assigned to air groups and squadrons but not to carriers were the closest thing the Japanese Navy had to intelligence officers in the lower echelons. Without any special training for the job, they nevertheless did, before a flight, compile target information which the air group or squadron commander used in briefing the pilots and they interrogated them upon returning from combat or search missions. In no sense, however, did they concentrate only upon intelligence duties for much of their time was devoted to assigning planes to pilots, regulating takeoffs and landings, keeping records and handling routine administrative matters.

R E S T R I C T E D

-1-

Q. Are you familiar with the YOMUSHI program?

A. Yes, generally. While with Tsuchiura Air Group in 1944-45, I worked with the program for two months.

Q. How long a training course did they have?

A. Four months.

Q. Where were the YOMUSHI trained?

A. MEI, SHIGA, TSUCHIURA.

Q. What courses did the curriculum include?

A. Aeronautics (tactics and related subjects), personnel, watch officer duties.

Q. Were the YOMUSHI reserve officers?

A. Yes.

Q. How many were trained in all?

A. About 1600, 1st Class 200, 2nd Class 400, 3rd Class 1000.

Q. When did the YOMUSHI program start?

A. September 1943.

Q. What was the reason for starting this program?

A. People returning from Guadalcanal felt that ground officers should be trained for ground duties. There were not enough fliers to go around, not enough to perform ground duties and fly at the same time.

Q. On what basis were candidates selected for the YOMUSHI program?

A. The following qualifications were usually necessary.
(1) Good physiques but disqualified for flying.
(2) College graduates.

Q. Did you take part in instructing the YOMUSHI?

A. Yes, for two months in 1944-45 when with the Tsuchiura Air Group.

Q. What courses did you teach?

A. I was administrative and personnel officer for the school. I was not a regular instructor, but occasionally taught classes in administration.

Q. Was Capt. WATANABE the head of the program?

A. No, not the entire program. He was in charge of the school at Tsuchiura. Commander Muto KENICHI, I think, was in charge of the program while Commander EMURA, who had been on Guadalcanal, conceived the idea.

Q. What was done with the YOMUSHI after they graduated?

A. They filled the following five billets:
(1) Work in the field with air groups.
(2) Running classification tests at flight schools.
(3) Personnel officers.
(4) Athletic instructors.
(5) Semi-liaison officers at aircraft factories.

Q. Did Commander TERAJ have anything to do with the program?

A. Not directly. He may have had something to do with promoting the program. I'm not sure.

Q. What were the duties of the YOMUSHI who were attached to air groups in the field?

A. They selected the planes the crews would fly, regulated takeoffs and landings, handled affairs between the ground personnel and the pilots, kept records of the flights.

Q. Were YOMUSHI assigned to carriers?

A. No.

Q. Just what sort of flight records did they keep?

A. They kept the flight time of pilots and crew members, and prepared the combat and sighting reports.

Q. What information was included in the combat reports?

A. Time and place of combat, number of rounds fired, results of combat.

Q. Who gave the YOMUSHI such information?

A. The pilot himself.

Q. What is your opinion of the effectiveness of the YOMUSHI program?

A. It came too late. It was some help but not too much.

Q. If the YOMUSHI had been developed earlier, do you think it would have been effective. ?

A. Yes, very much so.

Q. Was it planned to train additional YOMUSHI when the war ended?

A. No. There were more pilots than planes and pilots could do the job of the YOMUSHI, so it was not intended to start another class after the one that graduated in August 1945.

Q. Before a combat mission, did the YOMUSHI brief the pilots on weather and targets?

A. No, the air group or squadron commander would brief the pilots on the basis of the data given him by the YOMUSHI.

Q. Would the YOMUSHI prepare information on the performance of enemy aircraft?

A. Not necessarily. It depended on whether the squadron commander wanted him to perform the duty or not.

Q. Would they prepare data on a target that the pilots were to attack?

A. Yes. Photographs were turned over to the YOMUSHI who interpreted them and gave the information to the squadron or group commander.

Q. Did the YOMUSHI have any training in photo interpretation?

A. Only such graduates as went to the YOKOSUKA Photo Interpretation School.

Q. Were YOMUSHI assigned to squadrons as well as to Air Groups.

A. Yes.