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FOR THE WAR CRIMES OFFICE

Judge Advocate General's Department -- War Department  
United States of America

In the matter of the failure of the Japanese to furnish proper food, quarters, and medical care to American prisoners of war at Woosung, China, between 1 February 1942 and March 1943.

Perpetuation of testimony of Sgt. Roger Dick Bamford, 1622 Avenue B. Kearney, Nebraska, Serial No. 306927.

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Taken at: Kearney, Nebraska  
Date: 15 February 1946  
In the presence of: Charles H. Phares, S/Agt, SIC. 7SC, Omaha, Nebr  
Reporter: Charles H. Phares, S/Agt, SIC. 7SC, Omaha, Nebr  
Questions by: Charles H. Phares, S/Agt, SIC. 7SC, Omaha, Nebr

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Q: State your name, rank, Marine Corps Serial Number and permanent home address.

A: I am Roger Dick Bamford, Sgt, Serial No. 306927. My home address is 1622 Avenue B, Kearney, Nebraska.

Q: State your citizenship and the date and place of your birth.

A: I am a citizen of the United States and was born at Elm Creek, Nebraska, on November 6, 1922.

Q: What education have you had?

A: I was graduated from highschool at Kearney, Nebraska.

Q: Did you have a civilian occupation?

A: No. I went from highschool to the Marine Corps.

Q: Where were you stationed? What were your military duties?

A: I was attached to an anti-aircraft unit stationed on Wake Island when the war between Japan and the United States broke out on 7 December 1941.

Q: Were you a prisoner of war?

A: Yes. I was captured at Wake Island on 23 December 1941. I was transferred soon to Woosung Prison Camp at Woosung, China where I was held until March 1943. I was then transferred to a prison camp at Kangwan, China where I was held from March 1943 until June 1945. We were then transferred to a prison camp at Iengtia, China, where we were held from 1 June to 1 July 1945. The last prison camp I was in was located at Hokodate, Hokaido, Japan where I was held from 1 July 1945 to about 15 August 1945 when I was released by American Forces. I was returned to the United States soon after being released.

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Q: Do you recall the food issued by the Japanese to the American prisoners of war at Woosung Prison Camp between 1 February 1942 and March 1943?

A: Yes, I do.

Q: State what you recall concerning the food issued to the American prisoners of war.

A: We were issued a small teacup full of cooked rice three times a day. Ordinarily we received a little watery turnip soup twice a day or some soup of a similar nature. We were never issued meat and we could get no other food. We received no Red Cross parcels at that camp.

Q: Do you recall the quarters in which prisoners were kept?

A: I do.

Q: State what you recall concerning the quarters.

A: We were sheltered in barns and slept on the ground. There were cracks in the walls of the barn through which cold air passed freely.

Q: Did you have stoves and fuel furnished in these quarters?

A: No, we did not.

Q: What sort of weather prevailed in this area during the winter months?

A: Temperatures got as low as fifteen and twenty degrees above zero and we had snowfalls. The weather was ordinarily damp. We were never able to be really warm. Two blankets were issued to each man as bedding.

Q: Were clothes issued to you?

A: The Japanese issued no clothing and some of the prisoners had no clothing at all when they arrived at Woosung because the Japanese had made them strip when they left Wake Island. Some had a pair of pants; others a shirt, but that clothing lasted only about three months.

Q: Did you have any facilities for bathing?

A: We washed ourselves in buckets but for the first three months I was at Woosung I did not have a bath. The Japanese furnished no soap. We never did wash our clothes because we felt they would fall apart if they were washed.

Q: Did the Japanese furnish medical care for the American prisoners?

A: The Japanese furnished no medical care and while we were at that camp approximately thirty or forty prisoners died due to malnutrition, beri-beri, and dysentery.

Q: Did you have a Doctor among the American prisoners?

A: Lt (j.g.) Kahn, USN, Ft Worth, Texas, was in this camp and did what he could for us.

Q: What sort of latrine facilities did you have?

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A: We had one latrine built to accommodate four men but there were approximately fifteen hundred men at the camp so that latrine was very inadequate for our needs. The Japanese furnished no disinfectants for keeping the latrine clean.

Q: Who was the Japanese Commander at Woosung Prison Camp?

A: The first Commanding Officer was a Col. Use but he died while we were there and was replaced by a Captain Indo.

Q: Who was the ranking American officer?

A: He was Colonel Ashurst, USMC. Other officers present were Major Brown, who had been stationed at Peping; Major Devereaux, who had been stationed at Wake Island and Commander Thison, a Doctor.

Q: Were protests lodged with the Japanese commander regarding conditions which you have described?

A: Yes, but the protests did no good.

Q: Do you remember the names of any of the Enlisted Men who were at this camp with you?

A: A Sergeant Marion L. Wynn of 4475 Saratoga Avenue, San Diego, California, and Sgt. Fred Beese, Modale, Iowa were in this camp with me.

Q: Do you have anything further to add to the above?

A: No.

Q: Do you have any knowledge of other mistreatment of American prisoners of war by the Japanese?

A: Only what I have given you in sworn statement above.

/s/ Roger Dick Bamford, Sgt.  
USMC

ROGER DICK BAMFORD, Sgt, USMC

STATE OF NEBRASKA)  
( SS  
COUNTY OF BUFFALO)

I, Roger Dick Bamford, of lawful age, being duly sworn on oath, state that I have read the foregoing transcription of my interrogation and all answers contained therein are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

/s/ Roger Dick Bamford, Sgt. USMC  
ROGER DICK BAMFORD, Sgt. USMC

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 5th day of March 1946.

/s/ Irene Tauson  
Co. Clerk, Buffalo Co.

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Charles H. Phares, Special Agent, SIC, 75C, certify that Roger Dick Bamford personally appeared before me on 15 February 1946 and testified concerning War Crimes; and that the foregoing is an accurate transcription of the answers given by him to the several questions set forth.

/s/ Chas. H. Phares  
CHAS H. PHARES, S/Agt, SIC, 75C.

Omaha, Nebraska  
Mar. 5, 1946