

Qx1657

Evidentiary Document 5003.

Evidence of Naik PARTAP SINGH, taken on 27th September, 1945, at the Prisoner-of-War and Internee Reception Depot, Morotai, in the presence of Mr. Justice Mansfield.

Sapper Clerk JOGINDAN SINGH, 17 Field Coy., is sworn as interpreter.

By full number, rank, name and unit are 40834 Naik Partap Singh, 17 Field Company.

I was captured on 15th February, 1942, at Singapore. I was in hospital when I was captured and from the hospital I went to Biddadari Camp, where I remained until April, 1942. I was not ill-treated but the Japanese made us work. When we were unloading a ship in the harbour at Singapore, I saw the Japanese beating a few Indian soldiers who were working. They were beating them with sticks. I do not know the names of the Japanese or the Indian soldiers. Rifle butts and boots were also used by the Japanese for beating. Some of the men were bleeding but none were knocked unconscious.

I was then transferred to Tayrsal Park camp. I was myself beaten by the Japanese with sticks but I do not know the names of the Japanese. I received marks from the sticks on my body but I was not bleeding. I was at Tayrsal Park for about two weeks.

I then went to Lutong camp, in Borneo. I was there from May 1942, until May, 1943. I saw the Japanese beating soldiers. The soldiers were not given sufficient rations to satisfy their hunger and we were not given any clothing. The soldiers were beaten with sticks, steel bars and wire pliers. I used to work on the oil wells and the Japanese used to beat us with whatever instrument they had in their hands. The reason given for the beating was that the Indians had fought against the Japanese. Nearly all of us were beaten but I cannot remember the names of all of them. Amongst those beaten were Lachman Singh, who was later killed by the Japanese by beating, Sedha Singh, Mehardali Shah, Dalip Singh, Ghulan Khan and Charan Singh. I was not present when Lashmar Singh was beaten. Private Miyo was one of the Japanese concerned in the beating, but I am unable to remember the names of the others.

I remember going to Lutong Ferry with some Australians on 23 June, 1945. I saw five dead Indians there; the dead bodies were in the stream. Their hands were tied behind their backs and they had been beheaded. The names of these soldiers were Sher Singh, Karan Singh, Suraina, Malla and Mahomed Iqbal. I could identify these men by the clothes they were

N01657



wearing and one of them had a bangle. I had known these men before as they had been with me in the Lutong camp. An Indian civilian named Narian Singh knew the Japanese killed these soldiers. Their hands were tied and anything they had in their possession was taken from them. Narian Singh escaped in the bush. When I left the camp in June Narian Singh was at Miri camp. At first he was a driver for the Japanese. I last saw the five men alive a week before I saw their dead bodies. I was told by an Indian civilian, Lahna Singh, that about 20 persons, including some Australians and Indians, were killed by the Japanese. At that time Lahna Singh was in Miri camp.

I was one of 70 Indians who were taken from Lutong camp to another camp about nine miles away in May, 1943. We were asked to join the Indian national army; we told the Japanese that we would work under them but we would not join the Indian National army. We were being used as coolies, loading and unloading the ships. The Japanese beat us with sticks and rifle butts. I was tied up with ropes; sometimes my hands were tied and other times my legs were tied. I was beaten on three different occasions. My legs were bleeding as a result and I still have the scars. I was also beaten on the back and on the face. I was never attacked with swords but the Japanese told us we were going to be killed. Of the 70 Indians, 41 were taken away and I never saw them again. Some of the remainder came to Morotai and the others are still with the Japanese. Those who came back included Partaprao Sinde, Ramchandar Gaichor, Dyanu Tawre and Pandu Latnekar. I cannot remember the names of the others. Those men named are all at Morotai.

I was beaten with sticks and rifle butts by a Japanese named Lieut. Okamura. I was beaten all over my body and was badly injured about the legs and was unable to walk for a month.

Some Indians were kept about 600 yards from the camp. I was going to see my friends when the Japanese saw that I was absent from my bed. When I came back they beat me.

We were given rice and sweet potatoes to eat and sometimes the roots of bumble trees. We received half a pound of rice per day. I was sick with dysentery, malaria and beri beri while I was in camp. The Japanese did not give me any treatment but a few pills. We had to work for nine hours a day. Sometimes we had also to work at night to load and unload ships. On occasions I was given rest from work.

Lieut. Ochida was the Commander of the prison camp at Miri.

A fair number of Indians died in Lutong, some of them from disease.



The Japanese allowed us to carry out our religious observances in the camp.

The Japanese took 20 civilians, including Christians, Indians and Chinese, into the jungle because they were accused of giving false propaganda to other civilians. I never saw them again. They were taken from Miri camp. I did not see again the Japanese who escorted these 20 prisoners. Amongst those taken away were Suba Singh, Sohn Singh and Fauja Singh and a Christian called Bill. I cannot remember the names of the others.

I have read the purports to be a transcription and translation of evidence given by Naik Partap Singh before Mr. Justice Mansfield with myself as interpreter on 27 September, 1945, and state that it is a true and accurate translation of the evidence so given by the said Partap Singh. I was present before Mr. Justice Mansfield on this date when Partap Singh swore that the said evidence was true and correct in substance and in fact and immediately before the said Partap Singh so swore I read to him a true and accurate translation of the said evidence in the Indian language.

(Signed) Jogindan Singh.

I, Partap Singh, swear that the evidence read over to me by Jogindan Singh immediately prior to my taking this oath is to my knowledge true in substance and in fact.

(Signed) Partap Singh.

Taken and sworn before me at Morotai  
on this 27th Day of September, 1945.

(Signed) A. J. Mansfield.  
Commissioner.