

JAPANESE WAR CRIMES "DOUBLE TENTH"
CASE, CHANGI, SINGAPORE.

A F F I D A V I T.

I. CHARLES ERIC HILTERMANN, Merchant of BRINKMANN and Co., Singapore, with address C/o Hiltermann Bros., 24 Line Street, London, E.C.3, make oath and say as follows:

1. I was in Singapore at the time of the capitulation of the British forces to the Japanese in February 1942. Immediately after the capitulation and in company with most of the other civilians on the island I was interned in CHANGI GAOL. There I stayed until 15 October 1943. On that date and without warning I was taken to the Kempei-tai headquarters at the Y.M.C.A. Other people were taken with me and they were LIONEL GOODALL and JIMMY MILNE. We were not given any information as to why we were taken, nor was any charge made against us. We all three arrived at the Y.M.C.A. on the same day, 15 October and were at once put into various cages. All the time I was in the Y.M.C.A. which was four weeks there were anything from eighteen to twenty-five people in this cage. We just had bare boards to lie on and there was a pedestal W.C. in one corner which we had to use for all purposes, washing, drinking water and of course necessary calls of nature. Our food consisted of very limited quantities of rice, which was a starvation diet.

2. Within half an hour of my arrival at the Y.M.C.A. I was pulled out for interrogation by the Japanese. The Japanese interrogator started off by saying: "We know everything, tell us all you know". I hadn't the slightest idea what they were talking about and I said so. Without more ado I was struck by the third Japanese person, who was obviously there purely in the capacity of a beater up. The other two were of course the interrogator and his interpreter. Then they started my interrogation proper. I was accused of spying, asked the names of spies in CHANGI and agents in SINGAPORE. I was also questioned about a radio transmitter. The whole interrogation lasted from 1.30 in the afternoon until 9.30 at night, when I was carried down to my cage in a semi-conscious condition. On six other interrogations within the next 10 days I had to undergo similar treatment.

3. My memory is a little vague as to the kind of various tortures which were inflicted on me during these questionings. One of the tortures I remember was being tied up in a kneeling position with a stick under my knees and hands tied behind my back. A rope was then tied to my wrist and over a pulley in the ceiling. One of the Japanese then pulled on the rope and I was hoisted up by my wrists. While in this agonising position I was beaten with sticks and ropes. I also had the water treatment which consisted of a cloth being put over my mouth and then water being poured on it and I very nearly suffocated. In order to breathe I had to take in a great quantity of water and this distended my stomach enormously. I was, however, spared the torture of somebody jumping on me.

4. Another method they used was to tie me to a table and burn me with cigarette ends and cheroots up and down my thighs. I have the scars of these still on me. Those tortures I have enumerated were the major ones. All through these interrogations I was constantly beaten and kicked and knocked about by the interpreter, interrogator and any of the Japanese who were present.

NO 1520

5. After ten days of this they gave up trying to get any information out of me and I was left more or less in peace. After four weeks in the Y.M.C.A. I was sent over to Smith Street Detention Barracks and there I was kept in a tiny cell measuring 6½ ft. by 5½ ft. There were sometimes as many as seven people in there at the same time. This minute cell had also a pedestal type W.C. in it. On the occasion that there were seven people there we literally had to squat on the floor and there was no chance of stretching out. Apart from this physical discomfort there was the acute mental distress of hearing the screams and yells of other unfortunate people being tortured in other rooms in the same building, and never knowing when one was going to be called for interrogation and torture oneself. This mental torture was the worst part of the whole imprisonment which I suffered both in the Y.M.C.A. and Smith Street. It was almost worse in the Y.M.C.A., which was a large wooden building and as all the doors were open, one could hear everything that went on. It was like "bedlam" day and night.

6. Food at Smith Street was much the same as at the Y.M.C.A. It consisted of very limited quantities of rice - not enough to live on for very long. During the three months I was there nothing happened to me personally apart from the usual brutal treatment of the guards. Sometime in the middle of March I went back to the Y.M.C.A. and spent another three weeks there. I was finally released on the 8th April 1944 and was brought back to Changi where I spent four or five weeks in hospital.

7. During the time I was in the Y.M.C.A. and Smith Street, I saw a good many of the British people who were seized by the Kempei-tai during October 1943. On one occasion I saw the Bishop of Singapore who had been maltreated terribly. His legs from his hips to his ankles had been beaten to pulp. They were literally like raw meat. He could not move at all and was just about able to crawl. I also saw STEVENSON before he died. He was black and blue from beating. His body was in a terrible condition. He too could barely move himself. MIDDLEBROOK I saw while I was in Smith Street. He told me what treatment he had suffered during his interrogation and that No. 81 was the man responsible. He was in a very bad physical condition, covered in bruises and sores. FRASER I also saw in Smith Street. He had not been badly treated when I met him. He was only suffering from severe dysentery and was so weak that he had to be helped to the W.C. We ourselves were so weak at the time that we could hardly get him there. PERRY was in the opposite cell to me at Smith Street and I could see him through the bars. He was blown up like a balloon from beri-beri. CLARK was with me in the same cage at Smith Street. He too was in a very bad way from beating and general maltreatment. When he was brought into my cell I simply did not recognise him and had to ask him his name.]

Evidentiary Document # 5131.

8. With regard to the members of the Kempei-tai whom I saw in the Y.M.C.A. and Smith Street, I have looked carefully at the folder of photographs shown to me marked "Exhibit A" and attached to this my affidavit. In this folder of photographs I can positively identify Nos. 1, 3, 29, 30, 32, 81, 82, 67 and 84 as being members of the Kempei-tai whom I saw in the Y.M.C.A. and Smith Street.

9. With regard to these people who personally maltreated me, my memory is a little vague but I am almost certain that No. 30 was the man who interrogated me first and I am positive that No. 1 was the beater up on that occasion. The only other person I can recognise is No. 67. He used to come around the cages and rub iodine in our open sores. This was not done with any tenderness or with a view to alleviating our suffering. He obviously used to enjoy doing it and laughed at us.

10. All the Kempei-tai people were always very tidily dressed and smart in their appearance. They were usually dressed in civilian shark skin suits.

SWORN by the said CHARLES ERIC)
HILTERMANN at 3/9 Southampton)
Row in the County of London,)
this 28th day of January 1946)

(Signed) ERIC HILTERMANN.

Before me,

(Signed) J. DERMOT WALSH.
A Commissioner for Oaths.

Certified true copy.

(Signed) ?
Lt. Col.