

Ex 1673-A
P. 1

Evidentiary Document No. 5179.

227042, Lt. Stephen Victor Furt DAY, General List., British Army,
being duly sworn, gives the following evidence:

My home address is c/- V. R. Day, Dalgetty and
Coy, Albury, N.S.W. (telephone no Albury 168).

My number, rank, name and unit is 227042, Lt.
Stephen Victor Furt DAY, General List, British Army. I was
attached to HQ South-West Pacific area at Bandeong. I saw
no war crimes or atrocities prior to the cessation of hostilities
and I became a prisoner-of-war at Tandjong Priok and was there
from 15 Mar 42 until Nov 42. Then I went to Changi where we
were for a fortnight and then moved to Kuching. I arrived at
Kuching in November. It was only a matter of three weeks from
the time we left Tandjong Priok until we arrived at Kuching.

From Singapore to Kuching I was a member of a
force of 500 under Col. Russell. That force was composed of
English other ranks and officers. I was in the English camp
at Kuching and spent the rest of the war there.

At Tandjong Priok we were given a surrender
form to sign. It was to the effect that we would make no
attempt to escape. We refused to sign this form but were
eventually given an order by a staff officer under pressure
to sign the form.

One officer refused to sign the form and he got
a rather bad beating up from the sword chain of the Japanese
Camp Comdt. Unfortunately I do not remember the name of either
the officer concerned nor of the Japanese Camp Comdt.

I had to take part in working parties for the
organized looting of businesses for the Japanese. The Japanese
used the British as working parties to strip offices in the
town of everything of value. The British would be given a whole
block of offices to force the safes and collect anything of value
They then took the things in trucks to the docks for shipment
overseas. They were civilian offices that were looted.

In the particular office where I was the safes
had already been drilled open. There was nothing left of any
value except papers of interest to the particular firm itself.
There was no actual cash or anything like that left in the safe.
It was regular feature at Bandieng at one stage for a working
party to go into town and get everything they could from the
offices and send it down to the docks. They took furniture,
fittings, electric light bulbs. What actually became of them I
do not know, but presumably they were loaded on to the ships.
That was about May or June, 42.

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There would be no more than 300 Australian troops in our camp at Tandjong Priok. They were scattered around in other camps in the town of Batavia itself. At the time operations ceased Gen. Sitwell was our direct commander and then we eventually split into smaller parties. Lt. Col. Russell was in charge of the party that went over to Kuching. He subsequently died there and Lt. Col. Whimster took over command.

I do not know the name of the Japanese CO at Tandjong Priok nor the names of any units there. We were under the camp guards and the working parties were under their supervision and control. Other than that we saw very little of Japanese soldiers at that time. I can give you no help as to identification but I know our Intelligence kept records. We had very little opportunity of keeping records.

I cannot remember the name of the ship on which we were taken from Java to Singapore. It was a comparatively modern freighter. We were packed in the hold but had sufficient to eat and there was sufficient water to have a drink when we wanted to do so. The officers were permitted to lie on the deck and in the hatches and there was sufficient room in the holds for the men to lie down.

The conditions on the trip from Singapore to Kuching were very bad indeed. It was a very small freighter of approximately 600 tons. There were a lot of troops on board. Conditions were foul. They were all English troops on board and the trip lasted approximately four days. The trip resulted directly in the death of three or four men although there were no deaths on board. Dysentery broke out on board and facilities for catering with it were nil. They were lying on the hatches. As soon as we got to Kuching there was a very bad outbreak of dysentery and quite a few deaths.

On the last one and a half days of the trip there was no drinking water whatever. There was room to lie down and the troops were allowed on deck for certain hours at the beginning of the voyage to wash and collect food. There were wooden boxes on both starboard and port side for latrines. They were quite inadequate. They were hosed out twice a day. When we were on a lighter going off at Kuching they hosed the latrine out on top of us. I do not know the names of any of the Japanese in charge on that trip.

At Kuching I had far more contact with the Japanese than in Java. Col Suga (since deceased) was in charge of the camp. His NO was Yamamoto. There was a civilian interpreter named Kubu. He did not have Army status. Lt. Ojima, formerly of Sandakan, was there. Interpreter Inigaki was there - he was probably the worst of the whole bunch. Sgt

Kobo was an NCO and Pte Hidata was one of the guards.

We were not allowed to communicate between camps. It was one big area with special camps. I must admit that I did say "Salim" to one of the Indians going past. I was seen and taken out, beaten, knocked down, quite a number of times with a Chunkel (sort of hoe) handle. The beating was by an ordinary Japanese soldier. Unfortunately I cannot remember his name, I was asked what I said and I said that I merely said "Salim" when taken before Lt. Ojima and Inigaki. I was told that I was a liar and I was continually beaten and interrogated as to what information I had passed on. I repeated all the time that I had only said "Salim". I was continually beaten about the face and ended being kicked in the stomach and lower regions. I was not kicked in the testicles although he tried hard enough. That went on for about 20 minutes and then I was taken to the cells and placed in the cells for the night.

I was then taken before Col. Suga and told that I had been sentenced to five days imprisonment in the cells with severe punishment but that owing to it being the Emperor's birthday he gave me five days rice and water. I spent the five days in the cell. The worst feature of that was that you were only allowed to go to the urinal three times in 24 hours. Being on a rice and water diet, the rice turning to water, you would want to go to the urinal 6 or 8 times in a night. Consequently I was unable to eat fully. I was released at about the end of six days.

Sgt. Kobo was the sergeant in charge of the guard and I think he was responsible largely for discipline as far as the Japanese troops were concerned. He occasionally broke out and beat up various people. I have seen him quite frequently at it. He was more or less fair and he did not do it unless you gave him some cause for annoyance as far as they were concerned.

Hidata was an entirely different type. He was purely sadistic and he delighted in being as cruel as he could to anyone he took a dislike to. He took a dislike to Capt. Whiteman and everytime he saw that officer outside he made him stand before the ranks and he would beat him up or knocked him down, and jump and stand on his back. He did that to at least half a dozen people who he disliked intensely for any reason whatsoever. He was a very bad and vicious type.

It is very difficult to say whether any deaths were caused by Hidata. It did necessitate their going off duty for two or three days and eventually going to hospital with something else and dying. After a week in the cells you came out with dysentery, scabies and beri beri and once you were in a very bad condition you could not afford to let any of these

things get the better of you. I cannot say I saw anyone die as a direct result of an attack by these people. They have been directly responsible for the death of quite a number. The fact that a man was sick or under-nourished did not stay them or prevent them in the least.

Originally the officers were going down with working parties to the aerodrome. We did not want the men to work as hard as the Japanese wanted and we got it both ways.

After March-April, 1943, we were taken from the men into a special camp. We did not have to do any work for the Japanese after that. We were given a strip of jungle to clear and told we would have to grow our own food. That was quite impossible.

The prisoners of war were employed on the construction of aerodromes and airstrips. I saw those airstrips in use afterwards by military fighter planes. I did not see men working in the shipyard itself but they were working on the preparation of the ground prior to the building of the yards. They were also employed handling ammunition and bombs.

Kuching was bombed practically every day from April 45 onwards. To my knowledge the camp was definitely not marked as a prisoner-of-war camp. To my knowledge there were no Prisoner-of-war casualties from the bombing.

The food position was very bad. Per man per day the food ration was:

Rice	6.73	ozs.
Sago flour	2.27	ozs.
Tapioca root	4.0	ozs
Cucumber	3.0	ozs

They were Japanese rations, to which we supplemented from ourselves potato leaves and the stems, equivalent to 12 ozs, and artichokes, which includes the whole plant, root and stalk, 15 ozs. On top of that we had about half a teaspoonful of sugar and a very small tea ration. We had a lower ration scale than the men because we were not working for the Japanese. The camp being as it was in the latter part of 1945 to keep the gardens going and keeping wood going, and with 50 and sometimes 75 percent of the camp ill and unfit to do these jobs, it meant that a lot of people in the camp had to work very hard indeed.

The health of the men was far worse than the health of the officers. The health of the officers was very bad. In the British officers' camp we had about 15 percent death roll and in the men it was 60 percent. In our camp we had about 120 officers.

The Japanese guards were definitely getting a better ration than we were. When I was in the guard house I could see all the guards food and what they got. Although their ration was not what a European would consider a good diet it was very good food indeed. They had ample fish, pork, fruit, and rice.

Originally we had a pork issue, in the early stages, once a week and in the final stages it was once a month or once every two months. It represented a piece of meat $\frac{1}{2}$ " x $\frac{1}{2}$ ". We did occasionally get fish and when we did get it it was dried shark and it was alive with maggots. You got it once a month if you did not get pork.

Medical supplies for practically the whole time were non-existent. In the British officers' camp there was no doctor until the last month. There were 5 or 6 doctors in the Australian camp doing nothing. We applied repeatedly for a doctor from the Australian camp. We had no medicines. People with scabies, etc, were treated with hot water when we could afford it from our meagre wood ration. It was a matter of using a rag which you could wash out and put back again.

I knew Yamamoto well and I have seen him quite frequently. He never maltreated me but I have seen him maltreat other people. I did not actually trade with Yamamoto but a person who was very friendly with me did trade a watch for medical supplies. I can assure you that Yamamoto was trading Red Cross medical supplies for watches. He traded with at least two British officers in our camp. The medical supplies were handed over to our camp medical orderlies and used for the benefit of the whole. There was also a market as far as watches were concerned with the Japanese QM for food.

Just prior to the capitulation for the two or three days when Japan was hesitating as to whether to accept or not a lot of medical supplies were issued by Yamamoto consisting of bandages, disinfectants, iodine, quinine pills, sulphur, which had undoubtedly been stored by him. His excuse was that he did not know how long the war was going to last and he had to make provision for another 12 to 18 months.

Twice while in Kuching we were lined on the road while a senior Japanese officer drove past in a car. What his name was or what he was like I have no idea. I think it may have been Baba but I could not swear to that. There were no such thing as regular inspections by senior officers. In the early days Col. Suga visited the camp frequently. For the last 18 months he did not come near the camp at all. He did not go near the hospital at all, his excuse being that he considered the conditions in the hospital so appalling that he

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could not bear to go down. He went to the Women's Camp and he treated the women quite well. He used to take the children out in his car and I think he did try to help them. Some people seem to think he did his best to help us and others have the opposite opinion. He did allow men to be starved and work without shoes. He had women working in the sun and he did see his men beating up prisoners. I know that women have been beaten up but I have never actually seen it. He must have been aware of it.

Collective punishment was the Japanese method of maintaining discipline or frightening. That consisted of standing to attention in the centre, standing with your hands above your head. The whole camp was brought out on a parade and men made to stand for two or three hours in the sun. Anyone who moved a muscle or blinked an eye was taken out and beaten down and told to get back again. Lt. Ojima I would say would be responsible. Sgt. Kubu was in charge of one. Hadata was given charge of another and he perpetrated beatings for any reason at all. I am unable to say whether they reduced the basic ration at all. What they did do was to reduce us in the canteen. The canteen system in the later stages was non-existent. Earlier you could purchase from a Japanese fruiterer fruit and things like that. They did threaten and they did at times say "You have done this and there will be no canteen for one month."

I have seen bananas brought in and photographed but no-one ever knew where they went to. I never got a taste of any.

As far as I know among the British officers there were no trials or executions.

We did receive pay. We originally received 80 dollars a month and 60 were deducted for board and lodging and 10 were credited in the Yokahama Bank. From the remainder we contributed 5 dollars a month to the men's mess or the hospital. It was increased later on but the increase in pay was not proportionate to the cost of anything you could purchase. In the latter stages it was no use because you could not buy anything with it.

We receive two issues of Red Cross supplies, one at Changi and one about a year after we had been at Kuching. They were from the American Red Cross and one parcel which was meant for one man was divided between 4 and 5 men. I may say regarding the initial issue which we received at Changi, far from supplementing our rations it was mainly responsible for keeping us alive for the first two or three days after we arrived at Kuching. No arrangements had been made for any cooking, rice, or anything. There was no water laid on. It

was entirely due to having these Red Cross rations that kept us going. It was not for three or four days that we got an issue.

I know the Japanese opened Red Cross medical supplies. I cannot say that they opened them anywhere at the camp at Kuching but I have definitely seen Japanese guards eating Red Cross rations. Whether they came from the particular camp or whether they had been opened somewhere else I do not know. I have not seen them smoking American cigarettes. I have seen them eating preserved dates and figs and these packages of fruit you get in Red Cross supplies.

The men at Kuching were literally worked and starved to death. There was no proper issue of clothing and footwear. Tropical ulcers were very bad at one stage. I know of one amputation due to tropical ulcers and I know chaps who have lost fingers and toes. To my knowledge there was only one actual amputation.

I was in hospital for about three days in 1945 with dysentery. Conditions at that stage were quite inadequate. There were no medical supplies. The cure for dysentery was a dose of salts and starvation. I subsequently saw the men's quarters on the capitulation and the conditions in the men's hut in their sick bay with dysentery were absolutely appalling. The men were lying on the ground too weak to move. There was no one there to clean up the mess or to look after them. The whole atmosphere of the place was frightful. The Roman Catholic sisters from the Convent did a very fine piece of work cleaning it up after the capitulation.

I CERTIFY that the above evidence is true and correct.

(Signed) S.V.B. DAY
Lt.

Taken and sworn before me at
SYDNEY on this 22nd. day of November,
1945.

(Signed) A. J. MANSFIELD
Commissioner.