

INTERNATIONAL MILITARY TRIBUNAL FOR THE FAR EAST.

No. 1

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND OTHERS.

-against-

MAKI, SADAO AND OTHERS.

I, OLIVER EDWIN GEORGE ROBERTS of RUNCORN, BRISBANE in the STATE of QUEENSLAND, make oath and say as follows:-

I was QK.9252 GNR. OLIVER EDWIN ROBERTS of the 2/10 FIELD REGIMENT, 8 AUSTRALIAN DIVISION, when I was taken prisoner by the Japanese at Singapore in February, 1942.

2. In May, 1943 I went to JAPAN by ship, we landed at KOBE and marched to Orio. There were about 300 or 400 British and 50 Australians in this party. Most of the men were suffering from dysentery and beri beri when they reached Orio.
3. The food which we were given there was mainly rice with occasional pieces of dog meat, octopus, whale blubber and shark. Occasionally we were given vegetables, but the amount was not sufficient for the men and diseases due to malnutrition increased.
4. Before we started work at Orio we were taken out into a village and made to double around the square in front of the Japanese people, several men collapsed and were beaten by the Japanese guards in front of the people.
5. We were put to work in a coal mine, where the conditions were very bad. There was a lot of water and the roof was dangerous, on one occasion it fell in and caused two or three deaths including one Australian named TROTTER.
6. On another occasion an English Soldier named HORNE was killed when he was crushed between two coal trucks. The hours of work were ten hours per day and on one occasion we went for twenty-one days without rest.
7. On a number of occasions men who were sick were forced to work in the mine.
8. There were a number of beatings given to the prisoners by the Japanese Guards. I, myself was hit on the head with a rifle butt, and there is still a dint in my skull from it.
9. We were put in mud huts which were verminous.
10. In the wintertime the cold was intense, and we were given very thin blankets which did not keep us warm, in consequence there were a number of cases of pneumonia and five or six Australians died from pneumonia.
11. American Red Cross Parcels were sent to the camp, but most of the contents were stolen by Japanese Guards.
12. Throughout the whole of the time that we were in this camp medical supplies were very short and because of this a number of deaths took place.
13. One Japanese at this camp with a name like "DEGUS" used to pick the lice off the men's clothes and make the men eat them.

No 1944

14. Gnr. ERWIN escaped from the camp one night and was re-captured about forty miles away. His body was brought back to the camp in a box. I saw the body lying **in** the box, but I could not see his head. I was informed by some civilian Japanese that Erwin was first of all shot and then his head was severed.

O. E. G. Roberts (signed)

SWORN BEFORE ME AT
BRISBANE, ON THE 30 DAY
OF AUGUST, 1946.

A. J. Mansfield (signed)

JUDGE OF THE SUPREME COURT OF QUEENSLAND.