

Ex 1511

Evidentiary Document # 5130.

SUMMARY OF EXAMINATION

OF

[No. 2586617 Sgt. G.V.P. PICOZZI, Royal Corps of Signals having been duly sworn states:-

I am 30 years of age, of British Nationality, born at London. My permanent home is (NIL).

I am at present living at Pearl's Hill Prison, Singapore where I am acting as a warder.

[The following is an account of my experiences in The Military Gaol in Pearls Hill Prison, Singapore, where I was incarcerated from August 1943 until August '44.

I was locked up in cell 19 D Block. There were 13 other soldiers there when I arrived and when I saw them I realised that this was indeed hell on earth. They were covered in septic scabies, were suffering from beri-beri and in many cases dysentery. Everyone was hopelessly undernourished and terribly thin, the average weight being about 7 stone. The food was totally inadequate - three meals a day consisting in all of some 8 ozs. of rice with a little soup and an occasional fish head. For five months we all but starved to death and I personally went down from 12 stone to 6 stone 2 lbs. by which time I was very sick with scabies and beri-beri. On asking or rather begging for medicine I was told to hurry up and die as there was no treatment for such as I. In seven months I had been in solitary confinement as I was still an untried prisoner and my state of mind was such that I just wanted to die.

[Everyone lived in constant fear of the guards as severe beatings were the punishment for the slightest offence. The following are some of the worst atrocities which I witnessed:-

1. In March or April 1944 there was in prison with me an old Greek priest from Malacca. He was suffering from severe scabies and one night when he was moaning in his cell the guard went in and kicked and beat him. He died the same night. The guard who murdered him is himself now a prisoner in the gaol and I have identified him as YAMANISHI.
2. Chinese and Eurasians ^{to walk} have been carried out on stretchers to be beheaded, too sick to ~~talk~~ or even crawl. Young Chinese, too young to die, have left for execution shouting for victory for the Allies and showing us the way to die for King and Country.
3. The most pathetic sight was seven Eurasians, some of them my friends in peacetime, whose only crime was that they had taken news into Changi Camp which was common practice in Singapore. For this they were condemned to death after promises from the Japs that they would be excused if they became good citizens. They were beheaded on 26 Nov. '43.

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4. When Hatfield was condemned to die he was kept in an empty cell for six days prior to his execution. He was in a very bad state and was handcuffed and without bedding. He had a horror of beheading and the guards never lost an opportunity of tormenting him with reminders of what was to come. His mental anguish must have been almost unbearable. From a 16 stone man he had become a 7 stone wreck and was executed on 6 Dec. '43.
5. An Indian soldier was kicked in the back by a guard and completely crippled. He could not walk and eventually died. The guard who murdered him is himself now a prisoner in the gaol and I have identified him as NIHAR. HIDEO.
6. A Chinese man was driven mad by constant beatings and eventually killed himself by bashing his head against the wall of his cell. The guard who was responsible for this man's death is himself now a prisoner in the gaol and I have identified him as KIMATA.
7. An English POW named Brown of the Loyal Regiment was driven mad by constant beating and general illtreatment. The guard responsible for this is himself now a prisoner in the gaol and I have identified him as MINO. He was also in charge of the issue of rations and made sure that the British and Australian POW were almost starved to death.
8. Two Australians died of starvation and general illtreatment in July 1943. The man who is partially responsible for their death is MORIMOTO who is now a prisoner in the gaol.
9. I have personally been illtreated by the following guards who are now prisoners in the gaol and who I have identified:-
 - (a) HIEDA - Knocked me unconscious three times with his sword butt and made me crawl one mile on my hands and knees when I was sick with dysentery and malaria and could not walk. He did this just for the pleasure of seeing my sores cut and bleeding.
 - (b) MURATA - When I was unable to walk and was crawling along he kicked me in the face because I was not going fast enough. It has left a scar on my forehead.
 - (c) SATO - Took particular delight in torturing me by making me crawl about and beating me when I was too sick to move.
10. The following guards also delighted in illtreating prisoners. They are all in gaol and have been identified by me:-
 - (a) TSUKUDA, Keiji - reduced already meagre rations and kicked sick prisoners.
 - (b) KOGA - general illtreatment.

- (c) ONISHI - particularly fond of beating English soldiers. He kept me on about 4 ozs. of rice and water for 14 days because I would not kiss his shoes.
- (d) SAITO - starving and beating.
- (e) KOBAYASHI - particularly fond of hurting officers.
- (f) HATORI - beat up everybody. He beat a British soldier named Lawson and broke two of his ribs. Particularly fond of kicking prisoners until they were unconscious.
- (g) YAMASHITA - a particularly vicious type who specialised in beating up sick prisoners. He was in charge of the kitchen for a time when he made sure we were given half rations and sour rice until everybody was sick. Then he came round telling us to hurry up and die, helping us along with kicks and blows.
- (h) SAITO - general illtreatment.
- (i) OKUMURA - general illtreatment.
- (j) HACHIYA - general illtreatment.
- (k) SHIMOY - general illtreatment.

After Dec. '43 things began to get a lot better. The food increased and everyone who could work was allowed to do so. Of course if you were sick you were still starved, the Jap method being no work, no food. After about six weeks things began to drop off again and beatings once more became the order of the day. It was futile to complain for there was nobody to complain to. Eventually I was sent to Changi POW Hospital when the guards thought I was past saving. This was one of their most famous jokes. They would keep soldiers in their cells with no medical treatment and just before they died send them to Changi. In this way the responsibility for the deaths did not lie with the prison authorities.

My statement can be corroborated by

- Sgt. YAPP, RASC.
- Sgt. MORAN, 2 Loyals
- Bdr. NOON, 155 Fd. Regt.
- CSM. BLEE, 2/26 Regt. LIF.

(Signed) G.V. PICOZZI, Sgt.

Sworn before me

(Signed) W.G. PRITCHARD, Lt. Col.
O.C. No. 7 War Crimes Investigation Team.

This 8th day of January 1946

detailed to examine the above

by C in C, Allied Land Forces SEA.