

Evidentiary Document No. 5398.

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GILBERT AND ELLICE ISLANDS COLONY

High Commissioner's Court for the Western Pacific.

Held at Tarawa, Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony, on the sixteenth day of October, 1944, under the Pacific Order in Council, 1393, by me David Curtiss Innes Wernham, Deputy Commissioner for the Western Pacific.

(Sgd) D. C. I. Wernham  
Deputy Commissioner for the  
Western Pacific

DEATH INQUIRY

Whereas there is reason to believe that the deaths of the following twenty two persons -

1. Reginald G. Morgan, Wireless Operator in the service of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony at Tarawa.
2. Basil Cleary, Dispenser in the service of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony at Tarawa.
3. Isaac R. Handley, retired Master Mariner, residing at Tarawa.
4. A. M. McArthur, retired Trader, of Nonouti, Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony.
5. A. L. Sadd, Missionary, residing at Beru, Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony.
6. A. C. Heenan, Wireless Operator in the service of the New Zealand Government and formerly stationed at Maiana, Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony.
7. J. J. McCarthy, Wireless Operator in the service of the New Zealand Government and formerly stationed at Abenama, Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony.
8. H. R. C. Hearn, Wireless Operator in the service of the New Zealand Government, and formerly stationed at Kuria, Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony.
9. A. E. McKenna, Wireless Operator in the service of the New Zealand Government, and formerly stationed at Nonouti, Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony.
10. A. L. Taylor, Wireless Operator in the service of the New Zealand Government, and formerly stationed at Beru, Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony.

11. T. C. Murray, Wireless Operator in the service of the New Zealand Government, and formerly stationed at Beru, Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony.
12. C. A. Pearsall, Wireless Operator in the service of the New Zealand Government, and formerly stationed at Tamana, Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony.
13. L. B. Speedy, Private (64653), New Zealand Expeditionary Force, formerly stationed at Maiana, Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony.
14. C. J. Owen, Private (64606), New Zealand Expeditionary Force, formerly stationed at Maiana, Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony.
15. D. H. Howe, Private (64056), New Zealand Expeditionary Force, formerly stationed at Abemama, Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony.
16. R. J. Hitchen, Private (63882), New Zealand Expeditionary Force, formerly stationed at Abemama, Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony.
17. R. Jones, Private (64485), New Zealand Expeditionary Force, formerly stationed at Kuria, Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony.
18. R. A. Ellis, Private (64382), New Zealand Expeditionary Force, formerly stationed at Kuria, Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony.
19. C. A. Kilpin, Private (64057), New Zealand Expeditionary Force, formerly stationed at Nonouti, Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony.
20. J. H. Nichol, Private (64062) New Zealand Expeditionary Force, formerly stationed at Nonouti, Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony.
21. W. A. R. Parker, Private (64005), New Zealand Expeditionary Force, formerly stationed at Tamana, Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony.
22. R. M. McKenzie, Private (64022), New Zealand Expeditionary Force, formerly stationed at Tamana, Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony.

occurred at Tarawa in the Gilbert Islands District and were brought about by violence, it is therefore lawful for me to hold an inquiry, under section two of the Death and Fire Inquiries

Ordinance 1924, into the cause of the deaths of the twenty two persons aforesaid.

(Sgd) D. C. I. Wernham  
Deputy Commissioner for the  
Western Pacific,

List of Witnesses.

1. Tiriata, Clerk and Interpreter, Tarawa.
2. Frank Highland of Tarawa.
3. Mikaere of Tarawa.
4. Leslie Copeland of Tarawa.
5. Ikamawa of Ocean Island.
6. Captain O. J. Drennan, Gilbert and Ellice  
Defence Force.

Tiriata, Clerk and Interpreter in the service of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony, deposes on oath as follows:-

On September 3rd. 1942, the Japanese landed at Betio and occupied it. There were about six ships. On 17th September, 1942, I heard from Mr. Cleary that the Japanese commander was letting him leave Betio and go to stay at Abakoro. On the same day, Bishop Terrienne, Rudolph Muller and three Europeans and two Gilbertese boys arrived by a big Japanese ship. I understand that they came from Abemama. Nabuti, one of the Gilbertese boys told me that they came from Abemama.

Q. Did you see Bishop Terrienne arrive?

A. I saw him, but I did not talk to him. Both he and Rudolph Muller were guarded by a Japanese soldier with a rifle and bayonet.

On the 23rd. September, 1941, the Japanese who was previously working for N.B.K. at Butaritari and was now in charge of the native labour under the Japanese at Betio, asked me to write a letter to Mr. Cleary at Abakoro to come to Betio. Next day Mr. Cleary arrived and asked me why he had been sent for. I told him that I did not know. After he changed his clothes he went to look for Masibusi. Late on the same day, I heard that Mr. Cleary, Mr. Morgan and Captain Handley were taken by the Japanese to the lunatic enclosure. About 5.30 pm. Masibusi came to my house, wanting myself and Chief Kaubure Teurakai to leave Betio on a Japanese ship, early next morning. Next morning we left Betio on a big Japanese ship, accompanied by a warship

and one ship carrying equipment for listening for submarines. When we approached Beru, the warship first came up to anchorage at full speed and fired two or three shots. The ship on which we were travelling then anchored. Then we went ashore on the launch. The tide was too low to take the launch into the lagoon, so the Japanese soldiers jumped into the water and swam ashore. They could not find the Europeans on the Government station, but only a few natives. The Japanese then went separately to look for the Europeans. Two soldiers returned to the Government station with Mr. Sadd. They took him on board the ship.

Q. Did you see any Roman Catholic priest?

A. I saw Father Pouvreau in the District Officer's house, where the Japanese officer was.

Q. How did the Japanese treat Pouvreau?

A. I did not see. From Beru we left for Tamana. When the Japanese landed there, they asked the natives where the Europeans were. The natives told them that they were still in their house. On their way down to see the Europeans, I saw three Europeans walking towards them. The Japanese took them to the wireless station. The Europeans packed their clothes and were taken on board the ship.

Q. Do you know their names?

A. No, two were in uniform and the other was wearing a lavalava. I heard that he was a wireless operator. The Japanese took them on board the ship. Then the ship went to Tabiteuea. The Japanese landed on the Government Station. They asked if any Europeans were there. They found that there were no Europeans except the Roman Catholic missionaries. They wanted to see the priest and the Chinese but only saw one Chinaman. They had no chance to see the others because aeroplane engines were heard and they hurried back to the ship. When we reached the ship we went to Kuria. There Leslie Copeland, myself, Mr. Sadd and the three Europeans were shipped to another ship. Then Leslie and myself went ashore with Japanese soldiers. Other Japanese soldiers had already landed and were looking for one more European. Not long after they found him. They took the three Europeans on board.

Q. Do you know who they were?

A. I do not know their names.

Q. Had you seen them before?

A. No. Two were wearing uniform and the third one was wearing a lavalava. After that we left for Tarawa. When we reached Tarawa, we all went ashore, also these Europeans. We waited beside the Government store and the Europeans were taken away by Japanese soldiers. When the Japanese soldiers arrived, they all marched to the Japanese commander. Masibusi, Leslie Copeland, Fritz Reiher, Tourakai and myself followed the soldiers.

The soldiers lined up in front of the Japanese Commander's house, where I saw all the Europeans whom we had brought. They were handcuffed and tied against coconut trees. Not long after, Masibusu told Leslie and myself to be ready for the next trip. That day was 30th September, 1942. On 1st. October Masibusu called me and we went on board the ship. The ship sailed for Nonouti. When she reached Nonouti, I went ashore with the soldiers. They asked the natives where all the Europeans had run away to on their last visit. They were told that the Europeans were waiting for them on the Government Station. The Japanese found them inside the Native Government Office. They called them and lined them up and questioned them.

Q. How many Europeans were there?

A. Four. I do not know their names except for Mr. MacArthur. While they lined up one Japanese came forward and hit them hard on the head with his hand and they fell down. Three Japanese officers with stripes on their collar were watching. Then they were all taken on board and the ship left for Tarawa.

Q. Did you see any Roman Catholic missionaries on the island?

A. No.

Q. How were these Europeans dressed?

A. All except MacArthur wore uniform. MacArthur wore white shirt and white trousers.

After the ship anchored at Tarawa, we all landed. The Europeans were taken away first. Masibusu and I followed them to the Japanese Commander's house. The four Europeans were handcuffed against other trees. The Europeans, whom had been brought from Beru, Tamana and Kuria, were still there, handcuffed and tied against the trees. I heard that they had been tied up for four days, before being taken to the Lunatic Asylum. A few days after that I left Betio to Bonriki and stayed there for two weeks. One day when I was fishing in the lagoon, an U.S. warship was shooting at Betio from outside. Two U.S. planes dropped bombs. Next day I went to Betio to find out what had happened. I first heard that all the Europeans had been killed, because one of them ran away from the Lunatic enclosure. I heard that the Japanese found him and took him back to the Lunatic Asylum.

Q. After seeing the European prisoners at the Commander's house, did you see them again?

A. Yes. I saw them twice after that. I think that I saw the whole lot except Captain Handley and Mr. MacArthur. They were working, carrying gravel near the Post Office.

Q. Whom did you recognize?

A. I recognized Mr. Sadd, the three Europeans from Tamana and the three Europeans from Kuria and the 3 from Noncuti I could not recognize the others, except Mr. Morgan and Mr. Cleary.

Q. About how many were there?  
A. About twenty.

Q. How did the Japanese behave to the members of the Sacred Heart Mission?  
A. Some of the Japanese Officers were kind to them, but most were not.

Q. Can you tell me any instances when they were insulted or badly treated by the Japanese.  
A. No, but they took from the missionaries all their food and anything which the Japanese wanted.

Q. Do you know why the Japanese killed Mr. Sadd and no of the Catholic missionaries?  
A. I tried to ask Masibusi why the Europeans were killed, but he only shrugged his shoulders.

Signed by me at Tarawa this sixteenth day of October, 1944.

(Signed) P. B. TIRIATA.

Before me

(Signed) D. C. I. WERNHAM  
Deputy Commissioner for  
the Western Pacific.

Frank Highland, of Tarawa deposes on oath as follows:-

My wife and myself were on Betio for three days, a week or two weeks before Betio was shelled for the first time by a U.S. ship (or sub) on October 15, 1942. I saw Reverent Sadd, one trader, McArthur by name, two New Zealanders in uniform (shorts and drill jackets with buttons) two New Zealanders in civilian clothes. Each one had his hands tied behind his back by several feet of rope, the other end was attached to coconut trees. This was in Burns Philips area. The hands of one soldier were swollen. A Jap went to him and said "Do you want to be untied a little?" The New Zealander said "no, you tied it tight, you can leave it on as it is." The same Jap went to McArthur and asked the same question. McArthur said, "Yes it is too tight". I and my wife saw them feed a tin of food and a handful of rice. Their hands were untied for this, a guard being with each man. My wife and I were about two fathoms away at the time. The same evening it rained. The men slept on the grass under the trees.

The third morning after that we saw them still tied up. My wife and I were not allowed to go near them. Midday that day we saw them locked up in the lunatic asylum. Their hands were not tied. We saw Mr. Cleary, Mr. Morgan and Capt. Handley with them. Mr. Cleary wrote me a letter, tied it to a stone and threw it outside the fence. The letter begged me to help them with sugar if I had any or if not, native molasses so after I read that letter the Jap saw me and rushed at me. He tried to hit me with a big stick. I just walked away I put a match to the letter after that. The same afternoon, I left Betio and came over to Eita. I stayed here for a few days then my wife and I took back to them some sugar the Japs had given my boy and two bottles of molasses. I threw the sugar over the fence. Mr. Morgan made signs to me to send a girl we had with us to go and talk to the guard at the gate of the enclosure. When the guard was busy with the girl I climbed up the fence. Mr. Cleary climbed up inside and I gave him the two bottles of molasses. Reverend Sadd saw this and got a tin of biscuits and threw it over the fence to some young boys with me and told them to keep it. The guard saw this and chased us away. We left Betio then.

Three days after the ship shelled Betio, I heard the news that they the European prisoners had been killed and went down with some native boys. I asked the natives working there where they were killed. They took me two hundred yards back of the west side of the lunatic asylum fence. There were many Japs around so next morning at nine I went with Constable Takaua and saw where the bodies were burned in a Babai pit. Takaua watched and I went in the pit and lifted up coconut branch and corrugated iron. The bodies were all partly burnt. I lifted one body with just an arm burnt and showed it to Takaua. There were no heads on the bodies. I saw another heap in the pit and under the iron were the skulls. When I saw this I dropped the tin. I then kept watch while Takaua looked. That is all I have to say.

Q. When you saw the bodies, did you attempt to count them?

A. No. They were covered with corrugated iron and coconut leaves on top of it.

Signed by me at Tarawa this 18th day of October, 1944.

(Signed) F. HIGHLAND

Before me

(Signed) D. C. I. WERNHAM  
Deputy Commissioner for the  
Western Pacific.

/ Mikaere of Tarawa, Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony, deposes on oath as follows:-

When the first United States aeroplanes came to Betio, it was at about 2 o'clock in the afternoon. Two United States aeroplanes bombed Japanese ships in the port. All the native labourers ran on to the reef. When the two aeroplanes went away, the natives returned to the place where the British Government station used to be. I was with the Bishop in his house. One of the Japanese went to the natives and told them that one of the Europeans had escaped from the Lunatic Asylum enclosure. All the natives were sent to the building which was the office of the District Officer. After that they were sent back to their camp, because the Japanese said that the European had been caught.

Q. Did you remain with the Bishop or did you go to the office of the District Officer?

A. I went with the other natives to the office of the District Officer.

Q. Did the Japanese say who the European was who had escaped?

A. No. The natives all went to their camp and I went to the Bishop's house. Then one Japanese came to us and showed his sword to us. That sword was covered with blood. He said that he had killed the Europeans with his sword.

Q. Did you know who that Japanese was?

A. I do not know, but perhaps some of the natives might know. He was not a soldier, he used to sit all the time in the office.

Q. When he came to the Bishop's house to show his sword, from what direction did he come?

A. He came from the direction of the old native village. He left us and went to the former British Government Station. Shortly after 5 p.m. I went to cut toddy beside the Lunatic Asylum. I heard a lot of noise and saw a lot of Japanese inside the Lunatic Asylum enclosure. I wanted to see what was happening so I went to the house which was formerly used by the natives looking after the lunatics. When I reached the house I saw the Europeans sitting in a line inside the enclosures. While I lay in that house, the Europeans being already lined up, I saw one of the Europeans, it might have been Captain Handley, pulled out from the house by the Japanese and placed in front of the Europeans.

Q. Was he alive?

A. He was dead. When he was placed in front of the



Europeans, he was lying down, covered with blood. Then one Japanese started to kill the Europeans. He cut off the head of the first European, then the second, then the third, then I did not see any more because I fainted. When I came to, I saw the Japanese carrying the dead bodies to two pits on the West side of the Lunatic enclosure. I could not see how many bodies there were. When I was lying in the house, a Japanese coolie ran past and fell down close beside, with a tin full of European clothes. He put the tin down in the house, and went back to help to carry the corpses. I took the tin of clothes and went back to the Bishop's house. I informed the Bishop about the death of the Europeans. The clothes were taken from me by other natives, except for one pair of shorts and one shirt.

Q. Can you tell the date on which that happened?  
A. I do not remember.

Q. About how many Europeans did you see lined up in the Lunatic Asylum Enclosure?  
A. I did not count them. There were more than ten.

Q. Did you recognize the Japanese who cut off their heads?  
A. He was the same man who came to show his sword to the Bishop.

Q. Were the Japanese who killed the Europeans coolies or soldiers?  
A. They were all coolies.

Q. Do you know who was the European who escaped?  
A. I do not know, but I heard from natives that it was Mr. Cleary.

Q. Did you recognize any of the Europeans, who were in the Lunatic enclosure, other than Captain Handley?  
A. I recognized Mr. Sadd and Mr. McArthur. Before that day I had seen Mr. Cleary and other European prisoners working on the wharf at Betio. After the day on which I saw the Europeans killed, I did not see any Europeans on Betio except the Bishop, Father Viallon and Brother Conrad. About two days afterwards I saw the bodies of the murdered Europeans, but it was difficult to see them among the ashes, for the Japanese had burned them.

Signed by me at Tarawa this 18th day of  
October, 1944.

(Signed) Mikaere.

I certify that the above statement was faithfully interpreted by me and re-interpreted to the witness before his signature was appended thereto.

(Signed) Ernest Milne.

Before me

(Signed) D. C. I. Wernham  
Deputy Commissioner for  
the Western Pacific.

Leslie Copeland of Tarawa deposes on oath as follows:-

The Japanese landed their troops on Betio on 2nd. September, 1942. When they landed Basil Cleary stayed in his house. Then the Japanese took over my house and Captain Handley's house. I stayed in a small house near the beach. Every night I went to see Mr. Cleary after dark. Then he told me that the Japanese were letting him go to stay on Abaokoro. The next day I saw Mr. Cleary on the beach ready to leave for Abaokoro. That was the last time I saw him. The day after that Tiriata and I went on board the Japanese ship and left for Beru.

Q. Why had you to go on board?

A. The Japanese told Tiriata and myself to go on board the ship. The next day, when we were at sea, Kansaki told us that we were going to Beru. After two days we arrived at Beru before 6 a.m. We left the ship at about 7 a.m. to go ashore in the launch.

Q. Was there only one ship?

A. One destroyer, one like an A.P.C. and one big cargo ship. When we went ashore the tide was falling but they still wanted to go ashore. I tried to get their launch left high and dry in the passage. I did this to give the wireless operator ashore more time. All the soldiers had to wade ashore. When we got ashore the wireless house was on fire. The wireless operator had cleared off. A few natives were on the Government Station, but they told the Japanese that they did not know where the Wireless Operators were. The natives told Kansaki that Mr. Sadd and the Roman Catholic Father were at their homes. Kansaki told me to go ahead to tell the Father and Mr. Sadd that they must wait in their houses. When I got to the Father's house, he was already hiding in the bush. Mr. Sadd was in his house. I told him that the Japanese were on their way. I returned to the Japanese as Kansaki had told me. When I reached the Father's place, the Japanese were there, and the Father was there. When they had finished talking to the Father in his house, we went on to Mr. Sadd's house. When they got there on the road they sent word to Mr. Sadd to come and see

them there. Mr. Sadd did not come till after the third message. The Japanese officer could not speak English and Kansaki was not there. They called Mr. Sadd a Wireless Operator. I succeeded at last in telling them that he was a missionary. Then he sent Mr. Sadd with one soldier guarding him to the Government Station. We continued to the last village in the North and then returned to the Government Station. We left Beru at about 5 p.m. with Mr. Sadd. We left Beru and went to Tamana. We went ashore at Tamana early next morning. The three Europeans stayed in their houses waiting for the Japanese.

Q. Do you know their names?

A. No, because the Japanese would not let us speak to them. We left Tamana at 2 p.m. taking the three Europeans with them.

Q. Who were these three Europeans?

A. Two were soldiers and one was an Wireless Operator. When I reached there, one soldier was in full uniform, the other was wearing a lavalava. The Japanese tied their hands, but in ten minutes time they untied them. The Japanese told them to get ready and they both left in uniform with kit bags. The third European was not in uniform. One of the soldiers was called "Mack" by the natives. He was dark, and very tall and strong. We left Tamana for Tabiteuea. We went ashore at Tabiteuea to look for wireless. A native told the Japanese that there was no Wireless Operator or wireless there. The Japanese did not meet any of the Roman Catholic missionaries there. We left Tabiteuea for Tarawa, but turned aside to call at Kuria. We arrived there in the evening and one Japanese ship was there before us. We went ashore and met Fritz Reiher and Tourakai there. As soon as we got ashore the Japanese from the first ship returned on board with Tourakai and Fritz. Fritz and Tourakai told us that the Japanese had found two of the coast-watchers. In about five minutes time we followed the Japanese officer down the road to the South, and the Wireless operator and some natives came to us. The Japanese took him aboard. He had only a white lavalava.

Q. Do you know his name?

A. No.

Q. Do you remember what he was like?

A. He was thin, and not very tall.

Q. Were the natives bringing this European to the Japanese?

A. I could not say, as I was a little way behind the Japanese officer. About half an hour later we went on board the other ship, where Fritz and Tourakai were. I did not see

the Europeans on board.

Q. Were there any Europeans or missionaries on Kuria?

A. I did not see any. Fritz and Tourakai did not know that we were on board till we reached Betio. Next morning we went ashore at Betio with those Europeans. We were all marched to the house where the Commander of the Japanese was, with those seven Europeans. After we had seen that, Kansaki told us that we could go home and Tiriata and I left. At about 4 p.m. the Japanese sent word that they wanted me again. I went to the Japanese commander's house. I saw those Europeans lying or sitting on the ground with their hands tied behind their backs and fixed to coconut palms.

Q. How many were there?

A. Once before that there were three. The natives said that they were from Abemana. But on that afternoon there were only the seven which had arrived on the same ship as I did. The Japanese told me to be ready to leave again at once. Kansaki took us on board a ship said by the Japanese to be the "Katori Maru", the same ship on which we went to Beru. Next morning we were off the passage at Abaiang. The ship anchored close to the passage and we went ashore in a landing boat. We slept in Bonriki village. Next morning we went as far as the South end, with Japanese soldiers searching in the bush. We returned to the Government Station by boat and slept there that night. Next day the Japanese marched to the North. We slept at Takarano village. Next morning the Japanese tried to get to Ribono, but when we reached the passage the Japanese officer in command changed his mind. We returned on a landing boat to the Government Station. As far as I can remember we left for the ship on the same day.

Q. Did the Japanese find any European missionaries there?

A. On the first day Kansaki went to see the Sisters at the Catholic seminary with the leader of the Japanese soldiers. I stayed on the road and did not see any of the missionaries. Next morning Kansaki and I cycled back to ask the sisters whether they had any tobacco. When we got there I heard one of the Sisters report to Kansaki that they had had a bad time with Japanese soldiers at night. The Japanese asked for matches and the Sisters threw the matches down to them, but the Japanese wanted the Sisters to come down to them. When we went North, Kansaki and the leader of the Japanese saw the Fathers at Koinawa. I did not see them, but waited with the other Japanese in the main road.

After we left Abaiang we went to Maiana, arriving in the morning. It was low water and we landed at Tebikerai.

The Japanese walked to the Government Station. Before they reached there they had been told that two of the Coast-Watchers were at the Government Station and that one was hiding in the bush. At the village before the Government Station, all the Japanese went to the bush to look for that man. About two hours later they returned from the bush without having found him. Some natives, whom I do not know told Kansaki that Maerere knew where the European was. They questioned the boy who kept on saying that he did not know where the European was. They tied his hand and took him to the Government Station. Between the village and the Government Station one native, whom I do not know, told Kansaki that he knew the part of the island where the coast-watcher was hiding. Kansaki told the Japanese leader and he sent back Kansaki with 6 Japanese the native boy, and myself. Kansaki and two or three soldiers went on the boundary of the piece of land and myself, the native boy and two soldiers were on the other boundary. We went right across the island. When we got there the two Japanese saw a big bush. The two Japanese pointed that they were going to the bush and when we were marching there I walked on some coconut leaves and I stood on top of the lid of the fox-hole without knowing it. The Japanese heard the noise, turned back and lifted the rubbish up and found the man there. The Japanese pushed myself and the native aside, and they all ran together. They took him with them. This happened about six and seven p.m. We reached the Government Station at about 10 p.m. Maerere was still tied up but they let him loose next morning. The two other Europeans had been taken on the Government Station on the evening before. The natives said that the Wireless Operator's name was Arthur, and that the man found in the bush was Leslie and the other man was Charlie. Between 6 a.m. and 10 a.m. the Japanese went to see the Fathers and Sisters. I saw the Fathers and Sisters on the Government Station; I think that the Japanese brought them there. We left Maiana in the afternoon and returned to Tarawa. We reached there in the evening. Next morning Masibusu told me that I could leave Betio. I made up my mind to go and see Captain Handley, Basil Cleary and Mr. Morgan. I tried to approach the lunatic asylum, where they were guarded, from the back of the village. When I got close, I saw Basil Cleary inside the fence walking between two buildings. I tried to whistle softly because the guard was on the door, but he did not hear. I tried to throw a small stone, but he did not see. I stayed about quarter of an hour, then I returned slowly. I only saw Cleary. The same day I left Betio. That night I slept at Banraeaba. Then I left for Abaokoro, slept there two nights and went to Taborio and decided to build my house there. The same day a warship shelled the island. The date was the 15th October, 1942. The same night some natives came by canoe from Betio and told us that all the Europeans had been killed. On the 29th October, 1942, the Japanese ordered me to return to Betio.

Then Masibusu told me that all the Europeans who were in prison had been killed.

Q. How did the Japanese treat the members of the Sacred Heart Mission?

A. When the Japanese were coming from Buariki to Abaokoro, they always called at the Mission Station at Taborio. I think the reason was that they wanted to get wine from Father Grandgeorge. Generally the Japanese left the Missionaries alone unless they wished to go through the Father's gear to get clothing or fish-line.

Q. Can you tell me anything about Mr. Morgan?

A. Before I left for Beru, I saw Mr. Morgan in the Japanese Commander's house in the corner of the verandah. He was waving his hand to me. I asked when he was going back to Bairiki. He replied "Now". I went to the ship, but when I got back he was not in Bairiki and I heard that he was in the lunatic asylum.

Signed by me at Tarawa this 19th day  
of October, 1944.

(Signed) L. Copeland.

Before me (Signed) D. C. I. WERNHAM  
Deputy Commissioner for the  
Western Pacific.

Ikamawa of Ocean Island, Native Clerk in the service of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony, deposes on oath as follows:-

In 1942 I was at Beru. Japanese troops landed at about 5.30 a.m. on Beru on the 29th of September, 1942. Mr Allan L. Taylor and Mr. Thomas C. Murray were stationed on Beru as Wireless Operators. On that day Mr. Taylor was on watch from 4 a.m. to 8 a.m. When the Japanese arrived Tekarara assisted Mr. Taylor to send the messages. Then the Japanese shelled the island. Mr. Taylor and Mr. Murray ran away to the bush at Nuka village, and told Tekarara to burn the station as soon as the Japanese landed.

Q. How do you know that?

A. Mr. Taylor told me, when I saw him afterwards. The Japanese landed at the Government Station. About ten of them went to the Mission Station at Rongorongo. I saw Mr. A. L. Sadd in his house, but I did not speak to him. Then the Japanese came bringing Leslie Copeland with them. I ran to Tabiang. I never saw Mr. Sadd again. The Japanese all returned to their ship in the evening. Next day (Sunday) I saw Mr. Taylor and Mr. Murray. They had decided to escape from Beru, using the London Missionary Society launch and the Government whale-boat. They said that they would leave at 5 p.m. that day. They asked for three natives to

go with them and Constable Teikarawa, L.M.S. Teacher Tarieta and Irata were willing to go with them. I went to Tabiang to ask the natives to help to carry the stores to the boats. When I was there, a native arrived on a bicycle to tell me that Mr. Taylor and Mr. Murray were not going, and to tell me to go to Rongorongo at about 7 p.m. I went there, and they told me that they were not going because Pastor Iubili would not let them have the London Missionary Society launch, and the Native Government refused the Government whale-boat, because they were frightened of the Japanese. The natives said that, before he left, the Japanese Commander told them that the island would be shelled if the natives allowed the Europeans to leave the island. After that Mr. Taylor and Mr. Murray stayed at Rongorongo till the Japanese returned on the 7th of October, 1942. On that day I went to Rongorongo to see Mr. Taylor and Mr. Murray. A native boy came from the Government station to say that the Japanese had landed at the Government station and wanted to take Mr. Taylor and Mr. Murray. Mr. Taylor and Mr. Murray went to meet the Japanese. They told me not to go with them. So I went back, and they went towards the Government station. I never saw them again.

Q. Did you know the names of any of the other New Zealanders who were in the Gilbert Islands in 1942?

A. There were only two New Zealanders at Beru, Mr. Taylor and Mr. Murray. I do not know the names of any of the others.

Signed by me at Tarawa this 20th day of October, 1944.

(Signed) IKAMAWA

Before me

(Signed) D. C. I. WERNHAM  
Deputy Commissioner for the  
Western Pacific.

Oliver John Drennan, Captain in the Gilbert and Ellice Defence Force, and resident at Tarawa, deposes on oath as follows:-

I am an Assistant District Officer in the Gilbert Islands District. According to the records kept in the office of the District Officer, Gilbert Islands District, the following New Zealand personnel were on Coast-Watching duty in the Gilbert Islands, at the time of the Japanese occupation:-

At Little Makin:

Operator - M.P. McQuinn  
Soldiers - Pte B. L. Were (64696)  
- Pte L. E. H. Muller (65006)

At Butaritari:

Operator - J. M. Jones.  
Soldiers - J. M. Menzies (36495)  
- M. Menzies.

At Abaiang.

Operator - S. R. Wallace.

At Maiana:

Operator - A. C. Heenan  
Soldiers - Pte. L. B. Speedy (64653)  
- Pte C. J. Owen (64606)

At Kuria:

Operator - H. R. C. Hearn.  
Soldiers - R. Jones (64485)  
- R.A. Ellis (64382)

At Abemama

Operator - J. J. McCarthy  
Soldiers - Pte. D. H. Howe (64056)  
- Pte. R. J. Hitchen (63882)

At Nonouti:

Operator - A. E. McKenna.  
Soldiers - Pte. C. A. Kilpin (64057)  
- Pte. J. H. Nichol (64062)

At Beru:

Operators - A. L. Taylor  
- T. C. Murray.

At Tamana:

Operator - C. A. Pearsall  
Soldiers - Pte W.A.R.Parker (64005)  
- Pte R. M. McKenzie (64022).

Signed by me at Tarawa this 20th day of October, 1944.

(Signed) O. J. Drennan.

Before me -

(Signed) D. C. I. Wernham  
Deputy Commissioner for the Western Pacific.



FINDING

That it is established beyond doubt that the said twenty two persons, namely -

- |                       |                     |
|-----------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Reginald G. Morgan | 12. C. A. Pearsall  |
| 2. Basil Cleary       | 13. L. B. Speedy    |
| 3. Isaac R. Handley   | 14. C. J. Owen      |
| 4. A. M. McArthur     | 15. D. H. Howe      |
| 5. A. L. Sadd         | 16. R. J. Hitchen   |
| 6. A. C. Heenan       | 17. R. Jones        |
| 7. J. J. McCarthy     | 18. R. A. Ellis     |
| 8. H. R. C. Hearn     | 19. C. A. Kilpin    |
| 9. A. E. McKenna      | 20. J. H. Nichol    |
| 10. A. L. Taylor      | 21. W. A. R. Parker |
| 11. T. C. Murray      | 22. R. M. McKenzie  |

were killed by Japanese at Betio, Tarawa on or about the fifteenth day of October, 1942.

(Signed) D.C.I. Wernham  
Deputy Commissioner for the  
Western Pacific.

20th October, 1944.

I certify that the presents typewritten on this and the fifteen preceding pages are a true copy of the record of an Inquiry held at Tarawa on the sixteenth, eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth days of October, 1944, under section two of the Death and Fire Inquiries Ordinance 1924.

At Tarawa, Gilbert and Ellice  
Islands Colony, this nineteenth  
day of March, 1946.

(Signed) D. C. I. Wernham  
Deputy Commissioner for the  
Western Pacific.