

Def. Doc. # 2111

Exh. No.

3137  
by  
Branch

INTERNATIONAL MILITARY TRIBUNAL FOR THE FAR EAST

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, et al,

-vs-

AKI, Sadao, et al



SWORN DEPOSITION

DEPONENT: Charles Ream Jackson,  
048583, Commissioned  
Warrant officer, U.S.  
Marine Corps.

Having been duly sworn, does hereby depose and state as follows:

My name is Charles Ream Jackson, and I am a Commissioned Warrant Officer of the United States Marine Corps. I have been in the military and naval service more or less continuously since 14 June, 1917. Prior to entering the Marine Corps on 3 September, 1927, I had some eight years service in the Infantry and Coast Artillery of the Army, rising to the rank of First Lieutenant. I resigned, with an honorable record on 27 July, 1925; was commissioned a First Lieutenant in the Officers Reserve Corps, Infantry, with a certificate of capacity for Captain. I resigned this commission to enter the Marine Corps.

In the Marine Corps I rose to the rank of Sergeant Major, the highest an enlisted man could go, and at the outbreak of war was serving as the Battalion Sergeant Major of the Second Battalion, Fourth Marine Regiment. I served through Bataan and Corregidor, was twice wounded and twice awarded the Purple Heart, and was awarded the Silver Star decoration for gallantry in action against the enemy.

As a prisoner, I was confined mainly in Cabanatuan Prison Camp, leaving there about the middle of August of 1944, and arrived in Hanowa Camp, Akita Prefecture, Honshu Island, Japan, shortly after the 1st day of September, 1944.

I had suffered from bacillic dysentery, amoebic chronic dysentery, edema and neuritis beri beri, ambliopia -a sort of dimness of vision

caused by starvation -, ulcers, malaria, pellagra, and general mal-nutrition, among other ailments. At the time I arrived in Hanowa my main sicknesses were chronic amoebic dysentery, recurrent malaria, pellagra, and both types of beri beri. I weighed about one hundred twenty five pounds, some fifty pounds underweight. I had about recovered from my wounds.

I consider my mental condition perfectly normal, considering the conditions of my captivity.

At the time of our arrival, a young Second Lieutenant of the Imperial Army was in command of the camp - I recall not his name - and he was replaced some six weeks later by one First Lieutenant Asaka of the Japanese Infantry.

There were five hundred enlisted prisoners, Captain Elmer P. Fleming, Field Artillery Reserve, First Lieutenant Richard T. Pullen, Coast Artillery Reserve, Major Jackson of the Army Medical Corps, and First Lieutenant John E. Lamy, likewise of the Medical Corps. There were some eight Army Medical Corpsmen, all enlisted, included in the five hundred.

For the first ten days we loafed and rested, with extra rice, but never enough food for our starved bodies. Camp details were set by Captain Fleming, and rosters prepared. We were organized into one group to work on the top side of the copper mine, working muck, another group to work in the machine shop, about four groups to work beneath the ground, mining ore, a group in the smeltery, and the aforesaid camp detail group. This last was the prized and desirable detail, and was set by Captain Fleming.

The Mitsubishi Mine People had gone to considerable expense and trouble to receive us, and had built a new barracks to house us. It was better made than the ordinary construction in the village, as I could see. It was obvious, since we had all been processed at Bilibid Frison in the Philippines, and marked "fit" by American doctors - the sick were taken off the detail - that the Mine folk expected five hundred able bodied men. However, as I said, I was by American standards a sick man, and so were most of the others.

A Japanese Doctor whom we called the "Black Prince" came in after we had been there for a month or less. Major Jackson was a too kind hearted man, and had placed about three hundred and fifty of these prisoners on quarters, meaning they were too sick to work. He was no diplomat, hated the Japanese, and refused to back down from his position that if these men went to work, they would soon die. The "Black Prince"

shook most of them off the list, all but forty, whom he considered very sick. The rest were sent to the Mine. It was obvious that the Army authorities and Mine folk wanted to know why these men were not working, and pressure was put on Lieutenant Asaka to get them back to work.

The Doctors were relieved from all duties, and a medical sergeant, whom we called "Cyclops", ran the sick call. He gradually let the quarters list increase to nearly eighty men. Lieutenant Pullen, who knew a little Japanese, was sick call interpreter. "Cyclops" was totally ignorant of his duties, and was putting smooth malingerers of long practice in such on the quarters list, and sending sick men to work. Around November 20 he sent a Private of the Army named Miller up to the Mine to work, and Miller died on the way back of pneumonia, aggravated by malnutrition. At the same time a Japanese Inspection Party was in the camp. As a result, Doctor Jackson was sent to some Tokyo Hospital or other; Doctor Lery partly resumed medical duties, supervised by "Cyclops" - a now subdued and chastened man - and some two weeks later, we got Doctor Dan Golenternek, Captain of the Army Medical Corps, in as Camp Surgeon. This man was a splendid physician, and a master diplomat in working with the Japanese. He took full charge, and in a short time, as the bitter cold came upon us, around three hundred or more were on the quarters list.

Lieutenant Asaka even had in civilians for heavy work, such as clearing snow off the roofs, and emptying the latrines, assisted in this latter, partially, by the prisoners.

"Cyclops" got up a sort of forty bed hospital, and things began to get better. From what I personally observed of the adjacent Chinese and Korean prisoners, and the free Japanese Mine workmen, by Oriental standards we were treated very well. By our American standards, we were badly treated. But then there was a war on, and our captors were Oriental.

Punishments were handed out, as far as possible, by Captain Fleming, who, as far as I knew, never reported a man to the Japanese. These were of a minor nature, mainly forfeiture of the small tobacco ration for theft from each other and from the common food supply. The Japanese punished on the spot with a slapping that hurt mostly our dignity for petty offenses, such as not saluting properly, being out of uniform in freezing weather, and petty thefts, when detected.

It was several months before Asaka put any one in the Brig, and practically every man who went in there richly deserved it. They stole from fellow prisoners, or from the common food supply. The

Def. Doc. # 2111

Brig was a tough place, with no heat, and Asaka let most of them out in the cold weather on recommendation of Doctor Golenternek before their sentences had expired.

I considered Asaka very lenient in punishment. Men sold in the Mine Japanese Army blankets, shoes, and other articles issued them by the Army and Mine people. In most cases, they were reissued new clothes, and nothing much was done about it.

However, he required a rigid military etiquette - these prisoners refused, almost to a man to cooperate - and his guards slapped people around plenty, but with no brutal beatings. However, some of the civilian "Guides" were very brutal at the Mine, out of sight of Asaka, who always stepped in to stop such practices in my opinion, as far as I could see. Sergeant Ralph Pope, Engineers, Army, had his arm broken by a "Guide" known as "The Rat". Whether an official report was ever made to Asaka I do not know.

After Lieutenant Colonel Walker, Aviation, took over as Senior Officer Prisoner, he threatened to report men to Asaka, and did so for theft. One Technical Sergeant Lebeau went into the Brig, with the hearty approval of all of us, for confirmed and repeated thieveries, around the end of March, and stayed there, except for occasional hospital treatment, until nearly July, 1945. Colonel Walker recommended him to Asaka for such punishment, and told us he had done so, for Lebeau rated it.

The only beatings I ever saw the "Cyclops" hand out were at the beginning of cold weather, when he ordered men to be fully clothed outside barracks, as a health measure. They blithely ignored his orders; one afternoon he laid for them, and slapped those he caught out of uniform. On one other occasion, marching us around for "Bango" dismissal as Senior Noncommissioned Present, we refused, in our hatred and stubbornness, to do it with snap and precision, and several men were lightly slapped.

On the whole, "Cyclops" was our friend. He gave the sick meager gifts, for his pay was very little, and got that hospital going. They relieved him around late March, and his going was regretted. His successor was a nondescript "buck passer", who did little for or against the prisoners. "Cyclops" even thought enough of his former patients to come back and pay them a visit at his own expense later on in the summer, and this should be credited him as a good mark.

First Sergeant Jack Boyd, Army Infantry, having been informed by Captain Fleming, who got it from Asaka, that all prisoners were

to be executed in the event of a major landing on any one of the four home islands, and several other prisoners, stole dynamite, caps, and fuses from the Mine in order to make a last ditch defense when the shooting started. There must have been forty pounds secreted under the floors of the barracks. Around the end of April, as we came in from the Mine, we heard it had been discovered, and there would be an investigation. In the Philippines we would have been shot first, and investigated later. At evening "Bango", Asaka, who spoke English, but never condescended to use it to the prisoners, addressed us through the Camp Interpreter. To our relief, he said no one would be punished, but the next time there would be a court martial, and probable death penalty.

The prisoner rations were entirely separate from those of the Guards, though cooked in the same galley. Captain Fleming, and later, Colonel Walker, supervised the distribution. These officers tried their best to make a fair distribution, but the men stole from the food supply, to eat themselves, and sell the rest for tobacco.

From what I personally observed, the Guards had about half as much more to eat as we did, and the Mine civilians had about the same amount, or possibly a little more, than us. What Asaka, Takahashi (First Sergeant and Second in Command), Sanhai (Police, Quartermaster, and Mess Sergeant), and "Cyclops" had to eat I cannot say, but I saw this much - they lost weight, day by day, and I make a guess that the loss averaged twenty pounds per man. It would have been very easy for them to have eaten all they wanted, and I credit them for their honesty in this matter.

Christmas came, with Red Cross packages, four twelve pound boxes per man. To us these were the rarest of delicacies. We counted these precious packages as they were unloaded at the railroad station, we knew exactly how many there were. I am positive that outside of some thefts by the prisoners, no Japanese ever stole any of them. We bitterly hated Asaka because he tantalized us by issuing them in increments - maybe Doctor Golenternek was back of that - but this was the best thing for all of us, starved as we were.

The Japanese Guards would have given anything for those packages, and it was a source of great trouble and worry to Asaka to keep those packages properly guarded.

Asaka began to short us on the rations, to build up a storeroom. The impression we got from the Japanese was the war was to be a ten year one, of attrition, and we had better save food for next

Def. Doc. # 2111

year. The Army, suffering from the blockade, might not have enough for us. He prudently built up quite a lot. After surrender, before the planes dropped us "K-rations", he gave us all we could eat, and more besides.

Once, with Captain Fleming, Takahashi was talking about the general treatment of prisoners, and I heard him say, "Oh, you cannot kill these prisoners. The Commandant (Asaka) is responsible for their lives and well being."

All in all, from personal observation, I considered Asaka hard and strict, a true professional soldier, who took care to safeguard lives and health. He had little food and medicines to do it with, and condoned repeated thieveries from the Mine of fuel, trading with the civilians, and violations of Army orders.

There were periodic inspections by the high command from Tokyo of the prisoners. Soldier-like, Asaka had the camp cleaned up, and prisoners dressed their best, just like inspections in our own Army. However, as far as I know, no prisoner was permitted to interview the inspecting officers and state grievances.

In this particular camp, only eight men died. One was the result of a mine cave-in, Private Werner, U.S. Marine Corps, one was tuberculosis, First Sergeant McCarthy, of the Army and I think the rest were plain pneumonia, aggravated by general malnutrition and dispondent heartbreak. Out of five hundred and sixty men, for we had received an increase of British prisoners, this seems to be pretty good, from what I have heard of other camps. There was positively no sadistic tortures or aggravated brutality, such as I saw in the Philippines. Outside of the Brig, and the slappings from the Guards, there was not much to complain of in the way of punishments.

AT SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA,

This 11th day of August, 1947.

DEPONENT: /S/ Charles R. Jackson

I hereby certify that the foregoing was duly sworn to, signed and sealed in the presence of this witness.

At the same place, on the same day.

Witness: /S/ Samuel A. Roberts  
Defense Counsel