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AUSTRALIAN WAR CRIMES COMMISSION.

Evidence taken at Sydney on 12 November 1945 before Mr. Justice Mansfield.

NK.71148 Lieut. Ben Charles HACKNEY, 2/29 Battalion, being duly sworn, give the following evidence:

My full number, name, rank and unit are NK.71148 Lieut. Ben Charles Hackney, 2/29 Battalion. My home address is 12 Benelong Crescent, Bellevue Hill, Sydney.

On the evening of 17 January 1942 2/29 Battalion made contact with the enemy at Bakri and from the morning of 18 January the battle was at its height. On 19 January 1942 we joined up with 2/19 Battalion some little distance south of Bakri. From Bakri we withdrew to Parit Sulong, where we were held up by a bridge and strong Japanese forces defending the bridge. We made a stand there from the morning of 21 January until we were captured the following day, and we had very heavy casualties.

The following is a summary of the happenings between 22 January 1942 and 21 March 1942 inclusive. I do not know the names of the Japanese responsible and I do not know of my own knowledge what unit it was that captured us at Parit Sulong, but I have heard subsequently from Col. Kappe that it was the Japanese Imperial Guards Division; these soldiers were bigger than the usual Japanese soldiers..

1. Many men comprising A.I.F. and Indian Army soldiers - the majority severely wounded, some of whom had been lying in trucks, vans etc., up to four days with necessarily limited medical attention and were subjected to the treatment briefly outlined below at PURIT SULONG by I.J.A. soldiers.
2. Prior to the closing in of IJA soldiers I myself had been wounded in four places making me incapable of walking and greatly restricting any movement.
 - (a) a bullet through the left leg below the knee causing a fracture.
 - (b) shell splinter in back.
 - (c) shell splinter in outside of right calf.
 - (d) shell splinter in rear of right knee.
3. These soldiers made up some of the casualties of the 65 Fd Bty (2/15 Fd Regt.); 4 A Tk Regt.; 2/19 Inf. Bn; 2/29 Inf Bn, and other units of the 45 Indian Bde, under which command these A.I.F. forces had been placed. These soldiers had been gathered together during

the days prior to and including the 22 January 1942, and were by 1200 hrs 22 January 1942 assembled - some in trucks, others lying about in various positions (many of whom because of wounds had been unable to gain the shelter of a vehicle) - on or about the roadway immediately NORTH of the PARIT SULOING Bridge.

4. Enemy fire of all types continued for some time to pour in from all directions upon the vehicles and personnel who had gathered along a short section of the road after an order had been given for all troops who were able to do so to vacate the position. Because of lack of unwounded soldiers and scarcity of arms and ammunition very little retaliation fire went out from this group in return for that of the enemy. Another officer and I operated for as long as ammunition was available a Bren gun from beneath a utility truck in order to in some way add to the comparative lack of fire from our position and to perhaps lengthen by at least a short period the time when the enemy would inevitably close in on our position, and thereby enable those who had been able to get away to have a better opportunity of travelling a fair distance before the Japs had use of the road and were able to push forward and perhaps prevent our men from gaining contact with our forces from whom we had been cut off for several days.

5. About 1430 hrs all fire from the convoy ceased and shortly afterwards from all directions especially WEST Japanese soldiers closed in on our positions. Indications amidst much unintelligible yelling, were made for our personnel to assemble at a point WEST of the road and over a parit which ran by the side of the road.

6. Some of the fit men - of whom there were very few - were allowed to assist the more unfortunate; others were compelled to move immediately to the assembly point and remain. This assembling was a slow process as many were incapable of movement. Men were lying about in all directions. Some dead, many seriously wounded who had been unable to gain any shelter whatever being incapable of any movement. Other unable to make much progress, had managed to crawl or drag themselves to one of the many vehicles and there lie exhausted.

7. The following are some of the acts committed by the Japanese during the process of assembling the men.

- (a) On many occasions a Jap approaching a wounded man, would indicate for him to move along with the rest; however, sometimes the soldier would be incapable perhaps of any movement whatever. Upon failing to do as the Jap indicated, the latter would immediately begin yelling and making signs - still no movement by the wounded soldier whereupon he would be bashed about with the rifle, kicked, and on some occasions eventually either run

through many times with the bayonet, or with the rifle close to his head - shot. This was the fate of a good many wounded men.

(b) Sometimes men hobbling towards the little bridge over the parit which led to the assembly place, and others who were crawling would have a Jap come up to them and he dealt a terrible blow, sometimes to the body but most always to the head, with the butt of the rifle. Some were knocked down, whereupon they would be kicked,

(c) The fate of others was to be hurried when they were already moving as fast as their wounds would allow, by some Japs using a variety of methods - some kicking, some often striking with their rifles and other times many prodding the men with their bayonets.

(d) One man badly wounded in the chest and thigh was making to the bridge very slowly by crawling and dragging himself along the ground. He was hit several times by Japs but was incapable of moving faster. A Jap drove his bayonet into the man and made as if to push him along the edge of the road. The man fell full length face downwards, whereupon the Jap thrust in his bayonet several times and then left him, moving off to some other unfortunate who would also be brutally treated to make him move faster.

(e) A Jap came to my position. He pushed another officer, who was with me and standing, away, then indicated for me to move also. I pointed out that I was unable to do so, whereupon he began kicking me; but even knowing what was wanted and with the urge to avoid this foul treatment, I was unable to stand. He then struck me several times with his rifle, then prodded me with his bayonet. Finally he let the officer come back but even with his help I was unable to walk, my left leg being useless and my right altogether too painful. The Japs started screaming again and began belting us both with his rifle butt. Eventually, with the aid of another, I managed to get along by swinging myself on their shoulders. When crossing the small bridge the three of us were struck many times by the Japs on both sides.

(f) By these various means all the prisoners were either herded into the area or killed by shooting or bayoneting, or left dying on the road.

(g) Upon approaching the bridge over the parit all personnel had to take off any equipment and throw on the road watches, pens, pencils - anything visible to the Japs except clothing.

(h) After crossing the bridge, almost everyone being hit as he did so with a rifle by one or all of the Japs who were on both

sides, all prisoners had to remove their clothing except their boots and socks and putties, which was thrown into a heap. The clothes were thrown amongst the prisoners after a considerable time had elapsed, during which they had been searched.

(i) One wounded man who had been placed by our own people upon a table form and put inside an office truck, was seen by a Jap. The table form was dragged out and left leaning against the back of the truck. The fellow had been dead for some time and become stiff. The body was then propped up in an upright position on the tabletop. Situated in this position, it created enormous amusement to the Jap concerned and was an object of ridicule to many Japs afterwards.

8. When all had assembled the prisoners were made to sit in the nude in a circle within a ring of Jap guards. There were approximately 110 A.I.F. soldiers and 35 to 40 Indian Army soldiers.

9. Many Japanese troops were by this time moving along the road, some on foot, others on bicycles and many in lorries (both Jap and civilians). They were halted often and on these occasions many would come over to have a look at the prisoners - about 150 nude bodies, unshaven, dirty and blood clotted; some fresh and many reopened by movement and still bleeding freely. To the Japs the prisoners were of great interest, some showing mirth, others ill temper and wickedness; many hit or kicked (or both) and punched and prodded men with bayonets, often if possible kicking where a wound lay open, and so great was their satisfaction upon any visible evidence of pain that the dose was often repeated.

10. One Jap tormented prisoners by drawing his sword and wiping the blood off it by repeatedly dipping it in the water in the parit and drawing it over an officer's throat. Others he torments by making as though to run them through or cutting their throats.

11. All those on the outside of the group, and particularly those closest to the road were treated worst. I was one of those near the road having been amongst the last to arrive at the assembly point, and was, like others, kicked, struck and battered many times, most always with rifles and on some occasions with sword stabbers. The Japs most always used their rifle butts. The wound in my back attracted the attention of many who whenever possible took delight in kicking and belting the place where a wound was exposed.

12. Many prisoners were knocked unconscious when dealt terrific blows on the head with rifle butts.

13. The Jap in charge of the prisoners was dressed quite differently from the personnel of the guard, with dark coloured tunic, breeches, knee high boots, armed with pistol and sword with some braid at the hilt, and carrying a large map case. He gave orders to the guard.

14. The prisoners were forced into a little shed or garage which was altogether too small in view of the following circumstances and actions, as given below:

(a) The Japs grunted, yelled, kicked, hit and prodded with bayonets until most of the prisoners had scrambled into the shed.

(b) Some were knocked unconscious and others killed during the process.

(c) Some walked on top of the more helpless, wounded men were pushed and fell upon others and terrific yells of pain were practically continuous.

(d) Those closest to the opening were first to be put into the shed which soon became a stinking, scrambling hell hole full of tortured, groaning, delirious wounded soldiers.

(e) Those still fit were unable to do anything except for those immediately around them.

(f) The shed was much too small; fellows near the doorway, being hit, kicked and prodded scrambled in, endeavoured in vain to avoid hurting their comrades. There was not room even to put a foot down without stepping on some part of some body already with bodies above and below.

(g) Again and again fellows were forced in on top of others.

15. Many men were groaning most of the time and there were yells, repeated time and time again, by many for water. It was hours and hours and with some a day or more since they had had a drink, for water and those to issue it had been scarce during the four days of the progress along five miles of road. Water was not given to the prisoners.

16. Six officers were taken from the group and put together about six or seven yards away.

17. Requests were made at first and when these were ignored demands were made of the Jap in charge to provide medical attention and water for the prisoners and also smoking materials (of which much of the

prisoners own was lying in a heap nearby), but these were ignored. This Jap could read but refused to speak English.

18. A little later another move was made and again the prisoners were subjected to violence and terrific brutalities by the guards. This time all the ORs were put into two rooms off some coolie quarters. This was a long process; many had to be carried and, although not far, steps had to be climbed; the dead were not allowed to be left, their bodies too, had to be taken into these rooms. The worst wounded were again treated wickedly; they were expected to move as fit and when failing to do so were struck, kicked and punched. Many incapable of any movement without assistance were pushed on the head and some were killed by bayonetting and a few were shot. Altogether, a large number were wounded further by the Japs.
19. When all the ORs were in the rooms the doors were closed. The six officers were made to sit on the steps in front of one of these rooms.
20. Requests and demands for medical aid, water and smokes were again ignored and although these were made time and time again throughout the whole period, they were ignored by the Jap in charge.
21. Shortly afterwards an Indian soldier who had been hiding in one of the many vehicles (which were being inspected and searched by the Japs) was brought into the building. He had a bad wound on one hand, the top part of which had been blown away, and one leg of his trousers was saturated with blood as though he were bleeding from some wound in his thigh. He was immediately struck to the ground by a Jap and his pockets cleaned out.
22. The ORs who had been jammed into the small rooms were scrambling to the windows, groaning all the time, and yelling time and time again for water and to be let out.
23. The noise of battle was long gone; nowhere except in the far distance could be heard even a gun. Occasionally, an enemy plane flew overhead.
24. Still going down the road were lorry after lorry of Japanese soldiers and much artillery equipment. Very seldom now was there a halt but each time the convoy did stop Jap soldiers invariably came across to the building to see the prisoners.
25. Later, many staff cars came along, two of which were preceded by tank and motor cyclists and followed similarly. They halted in front of the place where the prisoners were and many Japs came over. They were met by the Jap in charge of the prisoners amidst much shouting,

saluting, and bowing by this Jap and the personnel of the guard. Other Jap soldiers in the area also gave their attention to the party which consisted of officers and some very senior ones

26. One of these new arrivals was outstanding and presumably the commander of the Japanese forces in the area - a short, stocky fellow. A body guard kept close with him always. He was well dressed, his sword hanging low and with a great amount of brown cord at the hilt, knee high boots and spurs all glistening. The attitude of the Japs to this officer was as though he was something far and above any of them, as though to them he was as a God.

27. He looked at the officer prisoners, who were made to move off the steps and stand; then mounted the steps, the body guard keeping very close, and looked through the window at the mass inside of one of the rooms.

28. Upon leaving the building he spoke to one of the officers accompanying him who in turn passed on what were apparently orders to the Jap in charge of the prisoners.

29. Leaving a couple behind this party then departed. Again came the yelling, bowing, and saluting. At first the tanks, then the cycles then the cars moved off, and after them were more cycles and tanks. Along the road wherever Japanese were to be seen, they paid their compliments to these two cars very reverently.

30. One of those remaining was asked to allow water to be given to the prisoners, many of whom were all the time yelling for it. A little Malay boy who had been with the convoy for some time was told by him to get some. On returning, however, the Jap in charge noticed the container and immediately hit it out of his hands and then kicked the kiddy.

31. He was asked about medical attention but said that Japanese medical men were too busy. Later asked for water, he said that if the Jap in charge said, "No", there was nothing he could do about the matter. When asked could the cigarettes be got from the heap of prisoners' belongings he replied, "Not yet."

32. Another group of Japs arrived and took many photographs and made notes. After this was completed, the cigarettes and water which had been held out by the personnel of the guard to the prisoners, some of whom had been let out of the rooms for the purpose of being photographed, but held just beyond their reach, were retained by the Japs and thrown away respectively, which made worse the feelings of the already near despairing men.

33. The Ors were again forced into the room.

34. The Indian soldier, who had been knocked down in front of the building, was showing signs of regaining consciousness. He began to sit up but the Jap in charge kicked him over again. He sat up again and this time was viciously kicked many times. For a while the Indian lay still, groaning and jabbering. The Jap yelled at him and took a rifle from one of the guards and bashed the Indian, then thrust the bayonet into him time and time again. Then he was heaved into the parit by the Jap thrusting the bayonet into his body and heaving. A few seconds and the terribly blood-stained, horrible face emerged above the water and the Jap levelled the rifle and fired. The head jerked but remained above water; there was another shot and this time the head disappeared.

35. The traffic going south was not so thick now and moving more freely, occasionally a motor cyclist or a car going north. There were still a few who left the road to see the prisoners or to poke about the vehicles inquisitively, some occasionally kicking a body to see if any life was left in it.

36. About sunset the guards began to move about the house. Machine guns were brought from where they had been resting between tours of duty and placed in front of the building.

37. The officers were then tied together by the following methods. Two guards approached the officers undoing as they came a small coil of rope which they took from their belts. The officers were then made to stand, two of them unable to do so without assistance and both incapable of walking. Both hands of each officer were tightly tied behind his back. After this, another length of rope was tied to the wrists, passed up under the chin and around the neck and then down again to the wrists, where it was pulled tight, thus forcing the hands well up the back and making the rope terribly tight against the throat. The second rope was not cut but was passed on to the wrists of the next officer, where a similar procedure was carried out; then again on to the next and so on, so that as well as making more secure the tying of each they were all linked together. During this process, the two Japs treated the officers unmercifully, jerking the ropes this way and that and many times lashing them severely about the head and body with loose lengths, often kicking ferociously at some part of the body that was swaying or stumbling - through the Japs own treatment - in the wrong direction for them to do whatever they wished. During this procedure I was kicked in the legs and lashed about the body and head, particularly the latter, many times, this being mainly because I was unable to stand properly and each time a rope was pulled I swayed this way or that, thus continually hindering these Japs in their work.

38. This done, the ORs were brought out from the rooms. One by one as they came down the steps they were tied brutally with their hands behind their backs; the first was then connected to the second but only from wrist to wrist, not over or around the neck as with the officers, then from the second to the third and so on, the first then being tied to the nearest of the small line of officers.

39. The supply of rope ran out and some Japs were bringing pieces of wire and with these were tying up many of the prisoners.

40. Complaints were made to the Japs in charge regarding this ill-treatment. Nearly every man was lashed, mostly about the head, and kicked by the Japs. Often a soldier who was more difficult to tie because of his wounds preventing his movement, was subjected to lashings (sometimes now with wire) and kicking. Occasionally, another guard seeing his fellow soldier beating a prisoner, would rush up and add to that prisoner's misery by striking him with his rifle butt.

41. This habit of one Jap coming to another when that other was ill-treating a prisoner, so as to add his efforts also, occurred very often.

42. The Jap in charge took no notice of the complaints.

43. It was necessary to move the first lot well away from the steps of the building to allow the others to come down from the rooms and be tied. They were shifted back towards the shed which before had been filled with prisoners. When the line of officers moved, one of them fell immediately. After being kicked in all parts of the body and being struck many times with rifle butts, he was cut free from the chain. I fell after very little movement. The Japs became more annoyed apparently because I was the second one to fall and I suffered similar ill treatment, but to a greater extent. I was kicked in all parts of the body and struck many times on the head and body with rifles. One kick split my right eyebrow which then hung down over the eye, the blood pouring over my face. After some kicks and hits the Japs would force the others along. In this way I was dragged a short distance. Then would commence again another reign of blows and then I would be dragged a few more feet. Eventually, the Japs cut me loose and left me lying upon the ground in a much worse, painful and aching condition than before. The wound in my back had been kicked many times, which kept it bleeding freely, as were all the other wounds and cuts I had received.

44. Towards the end, either the supply of rope and wire was exhausted or the Japs grew tired of tying the prisoners as a few numbering about 20, were left untied. The remainder were tied in groups of 20 to 25

each. The dead were left in the room.

45. The prisoners were then made to move along the front of the buildings towards, and then around, the south end. There were many who were unable to move at all, and others because of being tied, could not get the necessary assistance, so that many stumbled, some fell, causing others also to fall. These were then kicked and struck, and bayoneted, until as many as could do so were again standing, and then the line proceeded slowly, some still being dragged, of which a few occasionally raised themselves to their knees only to be again thrown off balance. Many of these were then freed from the line and left lying. The Japs grasped others and dragged them along, some were kicked, some struck, others deeply prodded with bayonets.

46. The prisoners were then herded into a group and the massacre which followed was to say the least most violent and wicked.

47. Rifles and machine guns belched forth a storm of death - a few fell, a group fell. After the first while a few remained standing - these were either struck by rifle fire or hit by a burst from a machine gun. Rifle and machine gun fire went toward any person who yelled. Firing was indiscriminate and many men had fallen not because of death but because they had either been pulled down by others falling, or because the indiscriminate firing had only added to the number of their wounds and the pain they suffered.

48. Some Jap soldiers then returned to the front of the building, and began taking away the bodies of those who had been cut free from the chains. These they dragged round the corner in the same direction as the others had been taken.

49. They left behind only one body; this being the furthest away from the bodies of the two officers who had previously been cut free from the chain. This was I. To me the fate of the prisoners was quite evident, and my only hope of escape was to endeavour to make the Japs believe that I was dead, and perhaps stand a chance of being left lying there. I knew that I should have appeared dead enough provided that I remained quite still. Blood had been running over my face from the wound in my eyebrow and also from a few cuts in my head which had bled freely. I was hatless; had not done my hair for ages; I was unshaven for more than five days; my hair was matted with blood and dirt; my neck and shirt top were very bloody; the wound in my back still bleeding and small pool of blood on the ground; my shirt torn to ribbons and saturated with blood below the wound and all along the side; my shorts were also bloodstained. My right leg from the knee down was also

bloody; the old bandage on my left leg was long since dirty and discoloured; one bayonet had gone through the bandage and entered the calf above the exit hole of the bullet; also above the back of my left boot another bayonet wound bled freely.

I lay quite still, very uncomfortable and aching as I was still bound securely and painfully tight; the rope still being around my neck prevented me from stretching my arms, my hands still being in the vicinity of my shoulder blades. Some Japs came, stood over me for a while, and as if to make sure one pushed me several times with his boot I allowed my body to move quite freely in whatever direction it was forced. One or more of them then kicked me in several places. With this they left leaving a few behind to fire in the direction of any sound or whenever anyone moved.

50. Many Japs went to the road and returned bringing many of the tins of petrol which were carried on our vehicles.

51. They proceeded to pour this over the prisoners, many of whom were still conscious.

52. The prisoners were then set alight, and amid screams and yells of pain, fright, nervousness and delirium, burnt to death.

53. I lay outside the building unable to move even just a little to a less aching position. Whilst there the outburst of curses and yells that had accompanied the beginning of the firing and had since somewhat subsided, was not very long after revived again.

54. I could see the flickers of a fire which occasionally would burst out very brightly. The prisoners were being burnt, and many were screaming and yelling terribly. There came to me the smell of burning rag and then what was just as distinguishable the odor of burnt flesh.

55. I had managed to be 'dead' as far as some of the Japs were concerned and now was determined even more than ever before that no matter what pain I was suffering, how my body ached, or how uncomfortable or what cramps I had to endure, I would remain 'dead' until such time as the Japs departed.

56. Throughout the whole period Japs came from the road to see what was going on. In passing me sometimes I would only be pushed, other times completely ignored, and on other occasions individuals acted unmercifully. How many time I was kicked, battered with rifles by those Japs passing, I know not, but all the time I had to maintain that lifeless attitude.

57. Jap personnel for ages maintained a patrol about the area. Occasionally a shot or shots would be fired. Many times one or more of them in their wanderings came across my body; some just passed by, others would satisfy themselves by previously used methods - kicking and hitting mostly on the head. Some unfortunately used their bayonets most just pricking me in the back. On two occasions they were more than pricks; once the Jap jumped and grunted as he lunged forward but fortunately he was too far away and the bayonet entered my side between the ribs and apparently did no harm; the other when a bayonet point struck my right elbow making it useless for many days; one Jap decided he would have my boots, and caused me much pain whilst he roughly pulled them off my feet.

58. As time went on activity in the area became less and less, until eventually there was no sign or sound of any Jap about. I waited long after this before being certain that no one was patrolling. I knew that to be seen moving would be the end.

59. Much later, after I had forced myself from my bonds, which was a very painful and long and tedious task - and got some water, I was met by a sergeant and another soldier, both smelt very strongly of petrol - they had been with the group when fired upon and set alight.

60. Sgt. Croft told me that they were amongst the few who had not been tied, and had been together when the prisoners were fired upon, they had fallen with the first burst of firing - neither of them hit - and lay with the remainder. When the petrol was brought from the road they had both had some thrown on them. Then the group had been set alight. The fellow with Croft had yelled out and was immediately fired on. Sgt. Croft then got this fellow and himself free from the heap of men, had lain still and quiet close by until the Japs left the area.

61. The soldier, whose name I do not know, died when in the jungle a short distance west of Parit Sulong, on the following afternoon the 23 Jan. 42.

62. Sgt. Croft left me at first light on the morning of the 24 Jan 42, accompanied by an English soldier who had come to our position in the jungle in the early hours of 23 Jan 42 and who had been cut off from our forces when north of Parit Sulong.

63. Pte. C. Robertson of 2/19 Inf Bn is reported to have seen Sgt. Croft about two days later (approx 26 Jan 42). But as far as is known Sgt. Croft has not been seen since that date.

64. After spending 36 days lying in and crawling about the jungle in a rubber plantation area between Parit Sulong and Batu Pahat, I was captured by Malay policemen and taken to Parit Sulong police station on the 27 Feb 42. I was still unable to walk, had suffered a great deal from my wounds, exposure, starvation and filth, and had become very weak and dirty and lost a tremendous amount of weight.

65. The following day 28 February 1942 I was handed over to Jap soldiers by the Malay Police and taken by some of these Japs to Batu Pahat where I was left for some time outside a building approx South of the town which was a Japanese HQ, convalescent Depot and hospital combined.

66. About sunset of that day a Jap came to me carrying a piece of rope. This he put round my neck with a slipknot. Calling for two Indians to keep me, I was taken about 150 yards to a guard room. One the way, if I at any time lagged back, the Jap gave the rope a severe pull which jerked my neck considerably and I was many times prevented from breathing as the rope pulled too tight on my throat.

67. Upon arrival at the guard room - which had an open front, the Jap came out and watched as I was being lashed to a post. With my back against it, rope was first wound around my throat and the post, then over my chest. More rope was brought, my hands tied behind my back, and the rope then wound round and round, until I was securely and tightly tied to the post from my neck to my feet.

68. The personnel of the guard then went past in single file, each either hitting, punching or kicking me as they passed on their way back into the guard room.

69. So I remained until well into the night. Several times the guard commander came out and looked at me. My beard greatly amused him and he would stand laughing as he plucked hairs out of it one by one. Each time a relief came out of the room I was punished in some way or other and again when the relieved ones returned. Generally by being smacked or punched on the face and chest or kicked.

70. On the afternoon of the next day, the 1 March 1942 I was taken by a Jap guard to a hospital. Here a Jap doctor refused to admit me and refused also medical attention, and said he would have to send me elsewhere as the hospital was too full.

71. I was taken to the BATU PAHAT Police Station and there put into a cell where there were 8 English soldiers who had been brought there a few days before, when captured a few miles out of that town.

72. One of these men was very ill and suffering greatly from bad wounds in shoulder and head.

73. During the following 15 days the numbers were increased to 22, some of whom were wounded. The following conditions existed.

- (a) Medical attention was refused each time requests for some were made.
- (b) Although asking many times for soap, only on one occasion was a very small piece provided. Everybody was very filthy and clothes dirty.
- (c) Food very inadequate - amounting to two small meals each day of about one third of a pint of rice.
- (d) One Jap often walked into the section of the gaol and calling on a man, punch him on the face and chest and finally with one terrific blow, mostly always to the face, knock the fellow back into the cell.
- (e) On two occasions a man was taken into a corridor and made fight the Jap - receiving all the blows and not being allowed (under the penalty of much more severe treatment) to hit back.
- (f) Two Indian Army soldiers were sometimes put in front of some of these men and made strike them on the face.
- (g) Chinese who were locked in the gaol were often severely ill treated. One was put into a straight jacket after being beaten about the head and body by a pair of crutches (both of which were smashed into small pieces during these beatings;) and starved until he died.

74. On 17 March 1942 the 22 prisoners commenced a journey to KUALA LUMPUR.

75. Upon arrival at KLUANG railway after spending the night of 17/18 March at AYER HITAM we were taken across the rails and made clean out a filthy dirty cattle truck. After this all were put inside and the door closed. After some time during which the truck was shunted back and forth several times, it was attached to a goods train and set off northward.

76. On arrival at GEMAS, we walked to the police barracks. Everyone was weak and myself still unable to walk without assistance.

77. The following morning 19 March 1942 we were taken early to the railway station and put into an open coal truck the bottom of which was covered thickly with coal dust and refuse.

78. It was unbearably hot in the open truck during the day, and some of the men became very ill and bilious.

79. From KUALA LUMPUR railway station we were taken to PUDO GAOL in that town arriving about 0130 hrs 20 March 1942. An untidy, unshaven, filthy dirty, partly clothed, unrecognisable group in tattered garments and mostly barefooted (some suffering a good deal from wounds and illness, and all very weak from starvation and exposure

80. Soon after my arrival there I weighed myself and found that I was 8 stone 7 pounds having lost 5 stone 3 pounds (or 73 pounds) since going into action 63 days previously.

This is the tenth and last page of the evidence of EX 71148
Lieut. Ben Charles HACKLEY, 2/29 Battalion.

I certify that the above evidence is true and correct.

Taken and sworn before me at)
Sydney on 12 November 1945)
/s/ A. Mansfield)
Commissioner)

B.C. HACKLEY
Lieut. EX 71145
2/29 Bn. A.I.F.