

1. NGX. 310

2. Capt

3. John Joseph MURPHY

4. AIF AIB

5. 1 Nov 43 - GASMATA

6. I was landed with AIF party at WAGIN BAY, CAPE ORFORD - spent 2 days and left 1 Oct for GASMATA. Passed through JACQUINOT and went to OLD AWUL MISSION. I was with SKINNER's and WRIGHT's parties - each party branched off and I proceeded along SOUTH coast with my party. We were on the bank opposite the Jap camp waiting for moonrise. Up to this time we had native co-operation. About midnight MG firing broke out and we moved out inland to some thick scrub and waited for daylight. Lt BARRETT and I went back and discovered that Jap camp had been strafed by PT boat - 5 Japs killed, barge destroyed, wireless destroyed and seaplane shot down. The remainder of Jap and natives took to bush. One result of this action was that natives became hostile and informed Japs of our presence and they commenced searching for us (this was learnt after capture). About 2 days after the strafing we reached coast between AWUL and GASMATA - TAVILO R. While here a boy shot a wildfowl and the noise attracted a Jap patrol. We saw the patrol and moved to a ridge and laid up. A native of TAVILO - ULEIO - brought the Japs to us. The Japs surrounded us - one of the boys panicked and made a noise which brought MG fire onto where I and Lt BARRETT were. Lt BARRETT was hit and killed outright. We escaped from this posn and went faster inland, travelling to dusk, having abandoned eqpt. Then I had only Sgt CARLESON with me. We decided to continue with out original plan. We moved for 7 days, keeping inland, but lack of food forced us to the coast to get to gardens. The following day we met a native party and they took us to the village of AMIO where there was a deserted Jap camp. The Lulusais took us to KAS.KAS. I later learnt that Lulusais of AMIO and Tul Tul of KAS KAS sent word to Japs. I don't know the name but I could recognise them. Early morning 1 Nov we reached AWIT River which we crossed and found ourselves surrounded by a Jap patrol of 25. We saw the Japs and tried to engage them with out carbines, but accidentally touched magazine release catch and lost all the magazines. We then took to the bush and got out of the cordon and started to re-cross the river. I was shot in wright wrist and Sgt CARLESON was killed. I grabbed him, but finding him dead, let him go. I fell over in the stream and was washed down to where the Japs were waiting. When I was first captured my hands were tied behind my back so tightly that the cords cut into my wrists, but the following morning when I complained of this the bonds were loosed but I was kept tied until reaching GASMATA. I only know that I was captured by naval units. I was not ill-treated, and, in fact, after reaching GASMATA was reasonably well-treated. I was only shortly interrogated and I had my wound dressed. I was sent by submarine on 3 Nov to RABAU where I was handed over to prison conducted by Navy. The camp was small and contained 12/16 civilian internees:-

Allan CAMERON	- Eng Adm
Albert EVANSON	- Manager PONDO
? FITZGIBBONS	- PW RABAU

Harry BADGER

Telephone Mech Jack who arrived RABAU shortly before Jap invasion.

Red-headed young man 27/28 - motor mech for Carpenters.

Father LAMAN and Lay Brother from SOLOMONS MISSION.

Half-caste med assistant from SOLOMONS.

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They were in the camp until I left in Dec 43, but I heard they were moved to KOKOPO in Mar 44.

There were also about 4 or 5 Aust airmen:-

Two Pilot Officer each surnamed VINCENT, one from ADELAIDE.
W/O John Pretty BAILEY WA.
P/Lt who was shot down in sea Nov. Dec 43.

Before I left I saw two VINCENTS and WO BAILEY put on a truck with some US airmen to go to TOKIO.

The following US airmen were in the camp:-

Lt Phil BECK -
Marine CRAWFORD shot down in May 43.
Army Air Corps First Lt NEWMAN
Navy Air Corps Stephen WYRADDY off "SARATOGA"
Army Air Corps CALLAGHAN
Second Lt O'HAGEN.

We were not provided with rations, but were fed by civilians internees. Rations light. The cells were cleaned by us and were in fair condition - one man to a cell. We wore a handcuff on right wrist all day and at night and during air raids were handcuffed. PO in charge of the guard KAKAMUA. Camp was on MALAGUNA PENINSULA, Carpenters (KANAU). I did not know names of other guards. Two were friendly, others were brutal and used to bring us up after each air raid and punched us twice while we were handcuffed and at odd times when so disposed. I would easily recognise these men again. One was short and young, the other tall and young, 25/28. No medical attention except by medical assistant (internee), either for wound or malaria. No nets no blankets and no clothing. They expected to send us soon to TOKIO. About 12 Dec 43 I was moved to MP prison in AH TEK tailoring shop RABAU. We were provided with blankets, clothing, toilet requirements and second-hand footwear. Food was good but small, treatment rugged but fairly decent, exercise and bath daily except when raids were on. Col KIKICHI was in command of all MP but I do not know the name of the prison commandant. When we complained of ration we were given an increase and allowed to serve ourselves. Occasional medical treatment was fair and we got a twelve day course against malaria. There were air-raid shelter, but, except during the day, we could not use them. When in air raid shelters we were handcuffed. The guards punished us by beating and slapping for infringement of regulations, but were lenient on a whole. The camp was destroyed on 2/3/44 by an air-raid. We were then in shelters. At night we were taken to a tunnel 30x5x7 and 63 were jammed in. We were forced to stand and the entrance blocked by heavy boards and nails. We remained for 2 days there, then 21 were taken away, then 19 the next day, leaving 16 PW, 3 Chinese prisoner offenders, 2 half-castes and 2 natives. We slept in shifts. During the day we were provided with rice balls and 3 pints of water per day. We were there for 12 days. Several of us were allowed out to work during this period, constructing new shelters. When complete we were moved in and given blankets and nets. Good quarters, food good but small. After a month we made complaints about the rations and they were increased to as much rice and stew as we could eat. The guards beat us for small offences, sometimes severely, but representations to officers resulted in orders to guards not to strike us. We also got some medical treatment. In September an experiment was conducted by medical branch on us to ascertain what the result would be of feeding us on cassura-root instead of rice. The ration was 660 grams peeled cassura-root per day for one month. They then reduced the rations. At end of one month we were weighed - we had gained weight and improved in health. At end of second month they did likewise. We had asked for rice, but learnt it was an experiment from the guard NCOs who also said that if the experiment was successful the Jap soldier would be fed

wholly or partially on tapioca. Dr FUSITA was KEMPEI doctor who was responsible for medical treatment, was in charge of experiment.

About Oct we were left with unit of 20 members in charge of WO MATSUMOTO at Camp on TUNNEL at Junction of RABAU- KOKOPO Rd and Rd to Observatory. Rations became small and three guards tried to bet extra rations for us. They were:-

Sgt-Maj KAMODA
Cpl YAMASITA
Interpreter TOKAHARA

They got into bad favour for their attempts on our behalf. The commander was fair and only carried out orders. We were there until peace was declared. Two months before peace the official ration was 100 grams of rice per day with a pint of soup and hot water to drink. We had the use, if we desired, of a net and blanket. No medical treatment. Permanent guards were friendly and we were allowed to bathe when water was available.

About a quarter of our food was what we could steal and about one-tenth of what the guards gave us. We could have received more as they received 300 grams of rice and extras. We got no extras.

As soon as peace was declared they could not do enough for us. Our rations were the same as their officers. We received cigarettes and whisky.

At time of release there were with me one NZ and 6 Americans. This was all that was left of 64 who were in the camp when first destroyed. Of the remainder, 40 were killed by bombs. Information came first by rumour and reports of guards and later officially. We were informed by Jap authority that they were killed by our bombs while being transported to WATOM ISLAND. In the 40, several were so sick when they left the camp that they probably died before removal. Sixteen died of disease and neglect - medical treatment was only taken when it was too late.

Dr FUSITA appeared to be casual, but gave me a 12 day course of malaria treatment and cured me and did likewise to several others. This was in prison at RABAU. He provided lotions for sores and treatment of beri beri. He treated the wounded roughly. An Aust PW, FENWICK, captured in BOUGAINVILLE, arrived with his arm in plaster set by Japs at BOUGAINVILLE. FUSITA took the plaster off, either breaking the arm as he did so, or the arm had not knitted. Anyway he gave no treatment and the arm never set. FENWICK was one of the 40 who were killed.

I was senior officer at all camps, except for a time when there were 2 American Majors and an Aust Sqn-Leader, and for the best part of the time I was prison representative. Sqn-Leader J.E. TODD was the Australian. He died on 12 Aug 44 from what appeared to be catarrh of the kidneys.

Cpl WATTA was constantly brutal, and before order was issued not to beat us, it was his custom, after we were shifted from RABAU, to enter our cell each morning he came on guard and line us up and beat us on the head with a stick for minute offences against the rules of the prison, or anything not specifically allowed, he would beat the offender brutally with rods or his rifle butt. During his hour of watch he made us sit out from the walls with our feet doubled under us and refused to allow really sick men to lie down and rest. If through weakness or desperation they tried to lean or lie down he would enter cell and beat them with rifle butt or kick them. Whenever he was in charge of men emptying the latrine bucket, he would beat them with sticks. On one occasion he flogged Lt OSBORNE, USNAF, across the face with a stick leaving cuts, and he likewise assaulted several others. Any instruction or order was accompanied by threats or blows.

He never laid hands on me except on one occasion when I was reported for passing a cigarette into a cell he punched me. On one occasion I scrounged a plate of food and was discovered. Cpl WATTA walked into the cell, accused me of taking it and looked as though he was going to hit me, but I squared up and WATTA walked around me and eventually assaulted Lt MASON USNAF.

After shifting from the tunnel we had an addition of 6 US and one NZ airmen and after peace one more NZ was added, named WARREN. Sixteen men died at TUNNEL HILL camp - beri beri, dysentery and malaria, but chiefly neglect with one case of toxæmia due to failure to extract a bullet from a leg. This was PO SYMONDS, shot down in SHOTLANDS at the end of the third quarter of 1944.

Dr HIRANO conducted malarial experiments on myself and others. We were carefully examined, blood-slides taken twice daily and results recorded. I and another had positive results, about six others had negative. These men the Dr collected and told that he was going to inject the blood of healthy Japanese into them. Two of the men were very weak and sick and the experiment was generally conducted without proper medical supervision and in the absence of decent medical conditions. Myself and Sgt PALMER of the USAAF who had shown a positive daily result to malaria tests were injected on two occasions with 20 ccs of a serum which the Dr had said had been formed in live sheep. His object was to try and immunise PALMER and myself against malaria. Speaking for myself I was willing for the experiment to be conducted. The two sick men injected with blood died a few days later and the Dr was not present, and although telephoned for did not arrive. Some of the other men developed malaria and did receive a little quinine. Before the experiment the Dr informed them and particularly me as the senior officer of the prison camp that those men had been many months in prison without mosquito nets and with poor food and that they had no malaria. He considered they had developed an immunity and was anxious to see if he could promote malaria by injecting them with the blood of those Japanese soldiers. After the two men died he expressed his regret and said they had had malignant malaria and their death was not due to the blood injection. When peace was declared he congratulated us on our survival and again referred to his experiment and carefully informed me in the presence of the others that the Japanese soldiers whose blood he had used had developed an immunity to malaria and he thought that by injecting their blood into the prisoners-of-war he could induce a similar immunity in the prisoners. He was very careful to make this point clear and that the experiment was for our benefit and health.

(sgd) John J Murphy