

Report Covering the Period 28-11-42 to 28-7-43 at Mitsushima then Tokyo N° 3 Camp for Prisoners of War.

1. Reception. We landed at Moji about 1700 hrs 26-11-42 suffering badly from the cold due to inadequate tropical dress all exhausted and most sick due to conditions of the voyage. We travelled by passenger train under good conditions but one sick man died on the train. When close to Mitsushima, after 48h travelling, the train stopped due to a landslide. We all detrained and climbed with kit over a mountain to a second train. This effort left us in a state of complete exhaustion from which many never recovered. Arriving at Mitsushima Camp at approx 2200 hrs., we were paraded at attention for 2 hrs though we could scarcely stand. We were addressed by the Commandant and threatened with death and dire penalties for any attempt to escape and for other breaches of regulations. We were not allowed inside until all had signed a parole, when we finally went supperless to bed at 0100 hrs 29-11-42 to rise at 0530 hrs the same morning. On this day all personnel, including the seriously ill, were ordered outside naked for measurement and weighing. There was a sharp frost with thick ice on the ground. One dead officer was kicked by the Jap W.O. because he did not rise to attend the weighing.

2. Accommodation. The camp was situated on reclaimed land in the bed of the Ten Rhu River in a deep gorge where the sun only penetrated for a few hours in the middle of the day in Winter consequently it was very cold, 20°F below freezing being common. The camp itself consisted of rough wooden huts all close together inside the fence with no room for any recreation. Officers and men had exactly the same kind of

accommodation but were separated. Each man had a bunk space approx 7ft long 3ft wide and 5'6" high. Bunks were double deck on each side of the huts and the pathway down the centre had a rough stony floor. Walls were 4 inch thick with great cracks which, with ill-fitting doors and windows, admitted the bitter winds. The sick had a separate hut of exactly the same kind. The latrine was an open cesspit never emptied, in summer swarming with flies and rats. We suffered extremely from cold - many deaths being due to this. No adequate heating was provided. Stoves were provided 2 per 100 men late in January and removed in March. Fires were allowed approx 1 hour at 1600 hrs daily. Under crowded conditions with open latrines the camp soon abounded with vermin which helped to spread disease. We suffered from lice, fleas, flies, mosquitos and rats and were denied ~~and~~ aids for fighting these pests.

3 Food. The staple diet was half cooked barley containing a very small proportion of rice with watery vegetable soup three times a day. This barley was most difficult to assimilate causing inflammation of the stomach and intestines. Those who could not adapt themselves to it died of diarrhoea and starvation; all suffered from its effects. The lack of protein soon caused oedema. During my only interview with the commandant I pointed out the need for protein and later beans and some salt fish were provided. Meat came in such small quantities and so infrequently as to be quite negligible. The sick were given the same food as the rest but half rations. No dairy products were ever supplied. Fresh fruit supplied was negligible. The cook house was controlled by the Japanese and officers were not allowed to enter to make any complaints or suggestions.

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Cold water was unsafe and there were penalties for drinking it but facilities were not provided for thoroughly boiling adequate quantities of water. No tea or other beverage was provided or for sale officially. All weight records have been lost but the majority of personnel were dangerously underweight and suffering from the various deficiency diseases.

4 Clothing We were brought to Japan in tropical shorts and shirts in winter so many received fatal chills before reaching the camp. We were issued with ~~one~~ British captured clothes, one grey flannel shirt, one battle dress suit and one pair of Jap underpants but no boots. Due to working in frost and snow on sharp rocks, the men's feet were soon in shocking condition but they were driven out with their feet tied up in straw rope. Later second hand Jap army boots were issued but they were all too small, however the men were beaten on the head with sticks until they forced their feet into the boots. Their sufferings were indescribable. (For Red Cross boots see para 10) For many weeks, no toilet paper, soap, tooth powder or brushes were issued and later at irregular intervals

5. Discipline. No regulations were ~~issued~~ published until we had been in the camp many months. When we erred in ignorance we were beaten with fists, sticks or swords or kicked by any Japanese without trial or redress. Japanese personnel broke their own regulations constantly without our knowing. When the regulations were published just before a visit by the Tokyo Col. from HQ, they appeared reasonable on paper but they were purely theoretical and never applied in practice. When prisoners were taken before the Commandant on formal charges, they were beaten unofficially first. If sentenced to guardroom, a man was stripped to his undershirt (mid winter) and waked every 10 mins throughout the night. In the morning

he received his breakfast, went to work, missed his mid-day meal and returning at night, received his supper and went back to the guard room and so on until the sentence was complete. One man was sentenced to 20 days but collapsed after about 17 days. Whenever there was a prisoner in the guardroom, the officers had to stand a watch outside one at a time by roster. This held whatever the weather and in spite of the fact that the officers were blameless. On one occasion in mid-summer all prisoners were forced into the dark ill-ventilated guardroom shoulder to shoulder with the overflow outside. We stood from 1800 hrs to 2300 hrs. After three men had collapsed we were released. Everybody was punished because a few had misbehaved on parade.

6. Work. The men worked from dawn till 1600-1700 hrs according to the light with one hour for lunch. The work consisted of navvying and coolie work picking, shovelling and carrying stone and cement in the construction of a dam for a hydro-electric project. "Rest" days were irregular but occurred about once in 7 days at first and later once in 10 days. On rest days all heavy camp fatigues were carried out so the men got little rest. After the first day when they worked alongside the men, the officers stayed in camp and officially did not work but carried out "service" which consisted of all camp fatigues:- Carrying wood and water, cleaning latrines and drains, shovelling coal, cook house fatigues etc. In addition officers did Duty Officer and various administration work. In some ways officers were worse off than men being subjected to special humiliation in front of their men, frequent beatings and starvation for punishment.

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7. Pay The men were paid nominally 1 Yen per day of which they received ~~one~~ 10 sen per day the remainder being "Government Deposit" though what became of this money we never found out. Later NCOs were increased to 15 sen per day. Officers were paid the agreed scale according to rank and later not more than 50 Yen per month, the remainder being placed in bank deposits. The money however was practically useless for we could only buy a little trash at exorbitant ^{and Black Market goods} prices, from 10 times normal up. Messing cost 15-16 Yen per month (During my stay in Japan I spent 1800 Yen and received in value only about a tenth of this sum at the frozen rate $1/180$ per Yen!) The Japanese occasionally bought medicine and fruit for the whole camp and charged this against the officers.

All foreign currency was called in for exchange to Yen. £ (English money) was valued at 98 sen!

8. Health. On arrival in camp, all suffered from cold & exhaustion and many from diarrhoea, scurvy, diphtheria and colds. 50 men went sick immediately and no orderlies were allowed to the one Dutch-Japanese doctor. Two orderlies were allowed later. Poor accommodation, lack of heating, lack of medicines, safe drinking water and special food made effective treatment of the sick impossible. By mid Dec. there had been 12 deaths and the sick increased to 73. The commandant was infuriated because the working parties were diminished and ordered all sick who could stand to parade outside enforcing his order by beating with sticks. He weeded out the sick according to his own ideas, ignoring the doctor, and sent most

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