

***Testimony of a Japanese soldier concerning the execution of Seldon T. White and Earl Vance Wilson.***

Affidavit

Name: HAMANO, Ushitaro, Superior Private at the time of the incident.

Present Address: 304, Higashi-machi, Higashi-ku, Togawa City, Fukuoka Prefecture.

Having sworn an oath, I, HAMANO, Ushitaro, state as follows on my own accord.

From 3 October 1941 to 29 August, 1943 I served in Yoshigoshi Platoon, 111<sup>th</sup> Land Duty Company.

- Date of Landing at Palawan Island.

About the beginning of April, 1943, I landed at Palawan Island with Kinoshita Unit, 111<sup>th</sup> Land Duty Company.

- Date of leaving Palawan Island.

While I was engaged in the airfield construction work in Palawan Island from the beginning of April 1943 to the beginning of July 1943, I was ordered to return to the main force (Manila) and left Palawan Island in July 1943.

- Flight of the prisoners of war.

I was watch duty on that day as a guard to watch over around the place of labor for the construction of the airfield. When calling the roll before starting the work in the afternoon after lunch, we found that two of the prisoners of war were missing. So we stopped to work, and sent the rest of the prisoners back to the camp for the

moment, and our unit immediately started in search of the missing prisoners of war. I was sent to Tagburos area.

- Arrest of the prisoners of war.

I think it was about one week after the prisoners of war had escaped and also on the day when were sent to Irakuan from Tagburos that a truck came from our unit to tell us to go back as the two runaway prisoners of war had been arrested. Accordingly we got into the truck and returned to our unit, and found the two prisoners of war sitting on the floor of the guard-post house.

- What happened after the arrest of the prisoners of war.

We saw the two prisoners of war in the guard-post-house later on the day of their arrest, but the next day they were not there, probably because they had been sent to the KEMPEI-TAI.

We started to work with the prisoners of war in the airfield again. One day I cleared away stumps from the place of work, while on other I was assigned a part to lay large stones on the ground.

- Execution of the prisoners of war.

I think the day of execution was Sunday. When I was in my squad, I was ordered to assemble in front of the guard-post-house with a gun, as a personal inspection was going to be given on the process of the prisoners' flight, and so I did. I think two more men went from our squad. I did not remember who they were. However, on being told by my comrades at the hotel lately, it was made clear for the first time to me that these two soldiers were the recruits FUJISAKI, Yoshio and OHKAMI, Kichijiro. I do not remember the other men. When we were assembled in front of the guard-post-house, there was a truck. The interpreter and Sergeant SUSUKAWA were there, too.

After a while, we saw the commander coming from the direction of the KEMPEI-TAI. The prisoners walked after him, escorted by two soldiers.

The two prisoners were to be taken into the truck. They were pulled up from above, while we pushed them up from behind, and all the party got on the truck.

When I was in the truck, I noticed for the first time that there were two or three shovels and I thought it was strange to take these things when going for a personal inspection.

The truck started off for the airfield. On reaching there and crossing the runway, we stopped at the place where we used to have lunch when we were out for work.

Hearing "Get them down!", we put the prisoners down and got off. The inspection on the process of the flight started then.

The Commander was talking with the interpreter, who said something to the prisoners. Then the prisoners began to walk and we, including the Commander, followed them. On the way we went into a jungle and the interpreter took out a note-book and, talking to the prisoners, walked on.

We went far into the jungle along a narrow path, stopping now and then. I got a good deal mosquito bites, and yet we went on. I saw two shovels, while the prisoners had carried at the time of their escape, lying on the ground. We went further into the jungle leaving the shovels untouched, as they served as evidence that the prisoners of war had escaped so far. Soon it became lighter in front of us, and we came to a wide road. I looked round and knew that it was the road, leading to Tagburos and Irakuan, familiar to me. Then I saw a truck by the roadside. When I looked at it carefully, I knew that it was the one which had carried us to the airfield.

Soon after we came to a wide road, the Commander and Sergeant SUZUKAWA were looking at the note of the process of the flight taken down by the interpreter. Sergeant SUZUKAWA , I think, then called to us to get on. We went on the truck with the prisoners of war and moved on.

“All is over at last. We have only to go back to our unit now,” thought I. When we reached the three-fork road, however, we went to the direction of the airfield. Then I saw the shovels in the truck and began to wonder if we were going to kill the prisoners of war. I looked at the prisoners, but they were looking on the scenery around, sitting. I wondered if they knew they were looking at the view for the last time, and I looked away, because I could hardly bear to look at them. Regardless of my feeling, the truck ran eastward, without going in the front entrance of the airfield. We soon came to the east coast. I thought, “Are we going to kill them here?” But the truck turned to the left into the coco-nut plantation, where it was almost dark on all sides, and there were coco-nut trees everywhere. We advanced through them. We stopped suddenly when we were almost at the end of the coco-nut plantation. Then the Commander got down from the front seat, Sergeant SUZUKAWA and the interpreter got down. They went to the Commander and while talking with him, they looked round and round. Then Sergeant SUZUKAWA, said something to the Commander as if he had hit on an idea, and pointed, toward the inner part.

The Commander looked that way, bent his head a little, and began to walk in that direction. Sergeant SUZUKAWA and the interpreter were to follow him, when the former turned round toward us and told us to get down and added “The shovels, too.” Taking down the prisoners as we were told, we also put down the three shovels from the truck and followed, Sergeant SUZUKAWA with the prisoners of war.

I did not know how far we went, as I kept watching the two prisoners, but I think we walked about twenty meters. The Commander stopped when he came to an unknown luxuriant tree. There was a space of ground covered with sand, about ten square “taubo”. The Commander ordered two or three men to dig a hole, about five feet square.

At that moment I and one or two other soldiers were watching the prisoners. The Commander, Sergeant SUZUKAWA, the interpreter and others watched two or three men dig a hole with shovels.

When they had dug up a hole, the Commander spoke to Sergeant SUSUKAWA, who told us “to keep watch at a proper position not to allow the natives living in the neighborhood come near.” I immediately went into a bush on the right side to keep watch. As there seemed no native inhabitants around, I looked toward the prisoners now and then. Just when I looked that way, the prisoners were kneeling down in front of the hole. As I looked from behind them, they were hanging their heads down and I could not see their faces well. Two men were standing behind the prisoners with guns in their hands. At this sight, I thought, “Why did they run away? Were things so hard for them that they had to run away?” I had no courage to look at the prisoners and turned my eyes to the coco-nut plantation, where the truck was placed in the direction of the way back, looking ready to take us back.

All was quiet there. The sound of the waves was heard from the shore nearby and the sea breeze came rustling over the coco-nut leaves.

All of a sudden the silence was broken by the report of the gun. I was surprised and nearly dropped my gun.

Turning toward the prisoners, I saw them fallen on the edge of the hole. The Commander, Sergeant SUZUKAWA and the interpreter

were looking down at the dead bodies. Relieved of duty to watch, we also went to the spot. Blood was gushing out of the forehead of one of the prisoners of war. Looking at the other one, fallen beside him, I immediately left the spot. There was a big hole between the nose and the mouth, and the face was covered with blood. I found myself chanting a prayer.

The ropes were removed from the two prisoners killed by shooting. I think they had their shoes on. They were buried in the hole together.

I saw all this from a distance, but noticed everyone looked pale. When the prisoners were buried, the Commander said, "Do not talk to anyone of the prisoners of war we shot to death." He then walked to the truck with Sergeant SUZUKAWA and the interpreter.

I went back to the truck, walking after my comrades carrying shovels and looking back the spot we had buried the prisoners. I got in. Soon the truck began to move. We ran out of the coco-nut grove, as if we were running away from it. We were all silent in the truck.

We passed in, front of the airfield and finally we arrived at our unit. Sergeant SUZUKAWA and the interpreter were talking, looking at the note. At the cross-road leading to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Barracks the truck turned to the KEMPEI-TAI, and, while I was wondering where we were going, the truck stopped in front of the KEMPEI-TAI.

There Sergeant SUZUKAWA said "You may go". We were glad to hear it and went off the truck. I returned at once to KAWASAKI Squad.

- Names of the persons who were present at the execution of the above mentioned prisoners of war:

(From the Headquarters)	Commander KINOSHITA
	Sergeant SUZUKAWA

(Interpreter)	Superior Private OGURI
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(Motor-car and Transportation Section)

Superior Private INUZUKA

(KAWASAKI Squad)

Superior Private HAMANO

First Class Private FUJISAKI

First Class Private OHKAMI

I remember there were three more, whose names I do not know, as they belong to a different Squad

- Name of the Commander of the KEMPEI-TAI at the time of the incident.

I do not know it at all.

- Sergeant DEGUCHI's case.

I did not know any one of the KEMPEI-TAI. I have not even heard the name, Sergeant DEGUCHI.

The above is stated according to my memory without falsehood or concealment.