

Testimony of Gaudencio M. Manlavi, a Filipino guerrilla fighter which includes facts concerning mistreatment of Pvt Seldon T. White and Earl Vance Wilson.

AFFIDAVIT

I, GAUDENCIO M. MANLAVI, after being duly sworn to speak the truth conscientiously, adding nothing and concealing nothing whatsoever, testified at Puerto Princesa, Palawan, P. I. This 19th day of June 1948 as follows:

Q. What is your full name?

A. Gaudencio M. Manlavi

Q. State your age, nationality and religious belief.

A. 31 years of age, Filipino and of Catholic faith.

Q. What is your present home address?

A. Puerto Princesa, Palawan, P. I.

Q. State your marital status.

A. Married - 2 children.

Q. State your educational background.

A. High school graduate.

Q. State your activities during the Japanese Occupation.

A. In May 1942 the Japanese forces landed at Puerto Princesa. At this time I joined the Volunteer guard under Dr. Mendoza, noted guerrilla of Palawan. I was a member of this unit until October 1943 at which time Antonio Palay and I were captured by the Japanese Kempei Tai. After being arrested by the Kempei Tai I was kept in confinement with Palay until March 1944. At this time I was released by the Japanese and sent to Manila to attend a forced program of study under the supervision of the Japanese Army. I was in Manila undertaking this study for a period of 45 days during which term I was subjected to military training and Japanese propaganda. I returned to Puerto Princesa approximately May 1944. I had to work for the Japs attached to the Japanese Philippine Constabulary; I carried this out for 3 months and then escaped to the north and joined my former unit. I took with me two rifles, 3 guerrilla prisoners (formerly held by the Japanese) and ammunition. I then carried out guerrilla activities until the end of the war.

Q. Prior to your capture by the Kempei Tai in October 1943, did you have contact with any American Prisoner of War located at Puerto Princesa POW camp?

A. Yes

Q. Explain your activities and relationship with the POW's.

A. After the POW's landed herein August 1942 they were detailed to work in the construction of an airfield, near Canigaran beach. Soon after they assumed their assigned work, Antonio Palay

and I made contact with 7 of them who were supposed to be the main leaders of a large number of the POW's we wanted to escape. In the beginning our contact with these POW's consisted of supplying them with cigarettes, food, and military information. The next development and relationship with them consisted of making plans for their escape. Then one night we led them to a hidden banca and they escaped successfully by sea to southern Palawan. Later on another group of POW's were aided by us and they, too, made a successful escape.

Now in 1943 we tried to help two other POW's make a safe get-away but through poor contact and misunderstandings they were caught by the Japanese and thrown into the Kempei cell.

Q. What were the names of the 1st group of escapees?

A. Henderson, Wright, Davis, Hodges, Eliot, Leghorn and one more.

Q. List the members of the second group of escapees.

A. James, Charlie?, Little Joe, Sloat, Hansen, Swift and Pryon. Sloat and Hansen were caught placed in the hands of the Kempei Tai, and later sent to Manila.

Q. Who were the members of the 3rd group who tried to escape?

A. White and Wilson - the escape was unsuccessful.

Q. State the entire period you were held in confinement by the Kempei Tai.

A. October 1943-March 1944.

Q. Who initially captured you and put you under arrest?

A. Members of the Kempei Tai, KUSUMOTO, VEHARA, MEHARA, ITO.

Q. Who was the CO of the Kempei Tai at this time?

A. M/Sgt DEGUCHI; he was acting CO since Lt WATANABE was in Manila.

Q. For how long was DEGUCHI CO?

A. I believe it was the last three months of 1943.

Q. Were there any American POW's in the Kempei cell during the period you were incarcerated?

A. Yes

Q. How many?

A. Four

Q. What were their names?

A. White, Wilson, Ditto and May.

Q. What happened to White and Wilson while they were kept in confinement by the Kempei Tai?

A. They were beaten with clubs all over the body, their hands were tied behind their backs and they were hung up in the air by means of a rope. They were also kicked, judo-ed, and beaten with fists.

Q. How many different times did you see such treatment offended White and Wilson?

A. Several times.

Q. Who took part in these beatings and acts of atrocity?

A. I personally saw M/Sgt DEGUCHI, VEHARA AND MIHARA take part in these beatings.

Q. What were DEGUCHI'S action?

A. He took part and also directed the others to administer the various aforementioned savage and inhuman acts.

Q. Were you ever subjected to any maltreatment by the Kempei Tai?

A. Yes

Q. How many different times?

A. The first three months of my imprisonment, I was a victim of beatings with fists, clubs, and a hammer, judo-ed, suspended in the air for 30 minutes at a time, placed in a drum can head down with water covering my whole body, and at various times was administered the water treatment whereby a hose was placed in my mouth and water forced into my throat.

Q. Did any other Filipino receive any maltreatment from the Kempei Tai during the period you were in confinement.

A. Yes. Antonio Palay and he suffered the same atrocities as I.

Q. Who was responsible for Palay's beatings and maltreatment?

A. I saw M/Sgt DEGUCHI directing the maltreatment and he was yelling out commands in a loud voice.

Q. Did you receive any injuries as a result of your aforementioned maltreatment?

A. Yes, sir, I did. I had a chest bone broken, my right forefinger broken, scars on both wrists as a result of a rope tied around them after which I was suspended in the air completely off the ground, rope scars on both ankles, and my upper back and shoulders wrenched whereby I have difficulty today in moving my limbs freely and lifting heavy things.

Q. Did you notice what injuries were received by White and Wilson?

A. Yes, I saw scars over their body including hammer marks; their skin was broken in several places and as a result they were bleeding.

Q. What finally happened to these two men?

A. They were taken out of the cell by the Kempei, loaded on a truck, and later heard they were executed near the airfield.

Q. When were Ditto and May placed in the hands of the Kempei?

A. Approximately November 1943.

Q. For what reason were they arrested?

A. Attempting to escape.

Q. Were you already a prisoner of the Kempei Tai when the above two POW's were placed in confinement?

A Yes

Q. In what cell were Ditto and May placed?

A. In the same one as I was kept.

Q. By November 1943, how many of you were placed in the same cell together?

A. About 30 of us Filipinos.

Q. How many Americans?

A. Two - Ditto and May.

Q. How long were Ditto and May kept by the Kempei Tai?

A. Approximately one month.

Q. Then what occurred to them?

A. We heard they were sent to Manila.

Q. Did you notice as to the type of treatment and handling given to Ditto and May?

A. Yes

Q. Explain this.

A. They were beaten with clubs, kicked in the kidneys, hit across the face, hit over the head with a club, and with their hands tied behind their backs, they were suspended in the air off the floor for an hour at a time. I was in the same cell as these two men while they underwent the above described torturing and they were crying and shouting because of the terrible pain and suffering.

Q. How many times did this treatment take place?

A. I remember three different days. I forget to mention that either Ditto or May were thrown over a partition in the cell by means of judo by DEGUCHI.

Q. Who took part in the maltreatment given to Ditto and May?

A. DEGUCHI, MIHARA, VEHARA, KUSUMOTO AND KUROIWA.

Q. What type of treatment did you see DEGUCHI give these two POW's?

A. Kicking, slapping, use of a club, and judo.

Q. Do you have any personal information regarding the massacre of the POW's?

A. No

Q. Have you any information regarding DEGUCHI's presence at the time of the Palawan Massacre?

A. Yes.

Q. Do you have anything further to add to your statement?

A. No

I certify that I have read the above four (4) pages and they are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

GAUDENCIO M. MANIAVI

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 22nd day of June 1948.

V. W. Dyer Jr.
Investigator
SCAP, Legal Section