

File

File: 999-28-12

Title: Report of the Investigation Division Legal Section
HQ, SCAP re Established the identity of the two crew
Origin: members of Plane 44-69978

Origin: Invt.Div. Legal Section GHQ, SCAP
Dates: 22 Jan 47 Classification:

Authenticity: Check sheet signed

Source: Rec Pers Div Cas Branch

Extracted by G.A.A. Date 5 Apr 47 microfilmed MP Date _____

AG-KI Form 91 (20 July 45)

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HEADQUARTERS PHILRYCOM
Check Sheet

148
Maj. W. C. Elliott

~~Maj. J. A. Callender~~

Do not remove from attached sheets Univ. 560

frm/mlr

File No.

Subject: Transmittal of Report of Investigation

DATE: 26 MAR 1947

FROM: REC PERS DIV
Casualty Branch

TO: Recovered Personnel Division

1. Attention is invited to Report of Investigation Division, Legal Section, General Headquarters, Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers No. 3, dated 31 October 1946, furnished your office by check sheet this Branch dated 6 January 1947. Above report definitely establishes the fate of all members of the crew of B-29 number 44-69978, piloted by 1st Lt. Samuel B. Hitt, 0730029, missing 25 May 1945, with the exception of the five survivors who have been returned to military control.

2. Attached is a copy of case Number 350, of Investigation Division, Legal Section, GHQ, SCAP, furnished for your information and file. This investigation is trying to establish the identity of the two crew members of plane 44-69978, decapitated by the Japanese.

1 Incl:

Copy of Rpt of Inv,
Div., Legal Sec.,
GHQ SCAP No. 350
dtd 22 Jan 47.



W. C. ELLIOTT
Major, A.C.D.

Chief, Casualty Branch

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SECRET
CONFIDENTIAL
TOP SECRET

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Maj. W. C. Elliott

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Transmittal of Report of Investigation

26 MAR 1947

Recovered Personnel Division

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2. Attached is a copy of case Number 350, of Investigation Division, Legal Section, GHQ, SCAP, furnished for your information and file. This investigation is trying to establish the identity of the two crew members of plane 44-69978, decapitated by the Japanese.

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Copy of Rpt of Inv,
Div., Legal Sec.,
GHQ SCAP No. 350
dtd 22 Jan 47.

-W. C. ELLIOTT-
Major, A.G.D.
Chief, Casualty Branch

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Walt. R. G. Elliott
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Transmitted of Report of Investigation
Transmit

28 MAR 1947

Recovered Personnel Division

1. Attention is invited to Report of Investigation Division, Legal Section, General Headquarters, Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers No. 7, dated 21 October 1946, furnished your office by check sheet this Branch dated 6 January 1947. Above report of the crew of all members of the crew of B-29 number 44-69378, piloted by 1st Lt. Samuel B. Hitt, OVS0029, missing 22 May 1945, with the exception of the five survivors who have been returned to military control.

2. Attached is a copy of case number 330, of Investigation Division, Legal Section, GHO, SCAP, furnished for your information and file. This investigation is being to establish the identity of the two crew members of plane 44-69378, designated by the Japanese.

1 Incl:
Copy of Rpt of Inv,
Div., Legal Sec.,
GHO SCAP No. 330
446 22 Jan 47.

W. G. ELLIOTT
Major, A.D.D.
Legal Branch



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Report of Investigation Division, Legal Section, GHQ, SCAP, Osaka Branch

Inv. Div. No. 350

GRD No.

Report by: Roy T. YOSHIDA

Title: Corrected:
Takayoshi SAKAINO, et al.

Synopsis of facts: Noboru YAMAMOTO denies participation in the bayonetting of the corpse of Lt EMERY and further alleges Sgt/Maj SAKAINO decapitated two flyers, neither of whom he can identify by name.

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REFERENCE:

Report of Maj. L. H. BARNARD, dated 30 December 1946.

DETAILS:

At Osaka:

The title of the case is corrected from Takayoshi SANANO to Takayoshi SAKAINO to reflect correct spelling of his name.

On 18 January 1947 Noboru YAMAMOTO former 2/c Pvt of the MABUCHI Co was interrogated at the Osaka Branch Office, Legal Section GHQ, SCAP, Investigation Division, by reporting agent, concerning his participation in the bayonetting of Lt. EMERY's body and for information concerning any abuse of other B-29 fliers. Original of situation map is being transmitted to GRD with copy of this report. (See inclosure #2).

YAMAMOTO states that at 2400 26 May 1945 during an air raid a B-29 crashed in a rice field 1500 meters east of the company headquarters. Immediately after the plane crash his platoon was ordered to assemble in front of the platoon quarters by 2nd Lt (FNU) NAKAMURA. The platoon was halted approximately 200 meters from the scene of the crash while Lt (FNU) NAKAMURA proceeded alone to receive further orders from the company commander Masaaki MABUCHI. The platoon was then withdrawn approximately 3 kilometers from the scene of the crash toward the river where they remained the rest of the night.

On 27 May 1945 YAMAMOTO was assigned as guard in the area of the plane crash from noon until 2000. He returned to his quarters upon relief that night.

On 28 May 1945 YAMAMOTO with his platoon were assigned to the hill behind the

Distributions:

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| | : | Do not write in this space. |
| 1 - Prosecution | : | |
| 1 - GRD | : | |
| 1 - Sapporo | : | |
| 1 - Fukuoka | : | LEGAL SECTION |
| 2 - AG Casualty Br | : | INV. DIV. |
| 1 - OCGM (Memorial Div) | : | File No. 350 Serial No. 35 |
| 3 - Inv Div (File #350) | : | Initials |
| 1 - Withdrawn for Osaka files. | : | |

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company headquarters on the construction of underground defense positions. Their subsistence were delivered to them, while they were in position.

On 29 May 1945 at 1100 YAMAMOTO was assigned to the observation post on the hill behind the company headquarters. While he was there, he made the following observation of the activities going on in the section of the temple yards where the execution and the bayoneting were subsequently carried out:

"After I had been on duty for several hours in the observation post, I saw two injured fliers sitting on mats of straw. In preparations for the executions, they tied the fliers' hands to a tree on either side with their arms outspread to keep their bodies up-right. The fliers seemed so badly injured that they could not stand up without assistance. They made a loop of rope tied to the end of a bamboo rod to hold the fliers' heads erect to permit decapitation. Then I saw Sgt/Maj Takeyoshi SAKAINO come out of the Co Headquarters with a sword in his hand. I did not see the actual decapitations because of my squeamishness and I turned my head away just as the Sgt/Maj Takeyoshi SAKAINO took the decapitation stance by raising the sword over his head. After about five minutes I turned around and I saw that the heads were separated from the corpses. The headless corpses were still tied in the previous position. Immediately after that the non-commissioned officers gathered the raw recruits and, cutting free the bodies of the two fliers, made preparation for the bayonetting that followed the execution. The bodies of the fliers were propped up against an object so that they could not fall over. The non-commissioned officers directed that the bayonet practice continue for approximately thirty minutes."

YAMAMOTO named 2nd Lt (FNU) KIKUCHI, Sgt (FNU) YAMAMOTO, and Sgt (FNU) ITOJIMA as being present at the executions. He cannot recall the names of the others who were present, but recalled that in the later conversation with ITO (FNU), 2nd/ai Pvt of 2nd Lt (FNU) KIKUCHI's platoon, who told his impression of the execution, most of the non-commissioned officers not on duty elsewhere were present at the bayonetting. Witness recalled that the villagers of Asa Enoki, Hiyo-shi-mura, Chosei-gun, Chiba-ken were also standing along the road leading beside the temple. He cannot recall any of the villagers names since he was not acquainted with anyone there. (See inclosure 1 for Noboru YAMAMOTO's complete sworn statement).

UNDEVELOPED LEADS:

The Tokyo Office:

At Tokyo - Will interrogate Hatsu ISHIMORI, Kensei ITO, presently incarcerated in SUGAMO Prison, concerning their participation in the bayonetting of Lt EMERY's body, and obtain any information concerning the mistreatment and ultimate disposition of the other B-29 crew members.

Will report the result of the demand placed on the Japanese Government for the military and biographical history of subjects.

At Gunma-ken, Seta-gun, Hagemura, Tenshojinai, Gunma Koto, Shikan Gakko - Will interrogate Kenso HIMENO concerning his participation in the bayonetting of Lt EMERY's body and for information concerning mistreatment of other B-29 crew members.

Will report the result of investigation requested in the Zone of the Interior.

At Kanagawa-ken, Kawasaki-shi, Utsuki-mu, Zenrin Gaiji Senon Gakko, Waishimyo - Will interrogate Koso HINUMA concerning his participation in the bayonetting of Lt EMERY's body and for information concerning beatings of other B-29 crew members.

The Sapporo Office:

At Sapporo - Will interrogate TOKAMA, TAKEMURA, KUBO, SHINA, GONO, COSHIMA

G O P Y

and YAMAMOTO concerning the beating of prisoners.

P E N D I N G

2 Incls:

Inclosure 1 - Statement of Noberu YAMAMOTO dated 18 January 1947.

Inclosure 2 - Location map drawn by Noberu YAMAMOTO.

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Noboru YAMAMOTO was interrogated at the Osaka Branch Office on 18 January 1947 by Mr. Roy T. Yoshida, Investigator, Legal Section, GHQ, SCAP.

Noboru YAMAMOTO, after being duly sworn to speak the truth conscientiously, adding nothing whatsoever, testified on this date to Mr. Roy T. Yoshida, Investigator, Legal Section GHQ, SCAP, in the Yasuda Building, at Osaka, Japan, as follows:

Q. What is your full name, age, address and nationality?

A. Noboru YAMAMOTO, age 23, I am a Japanese national living at 2-32 Kanda-cho, Chigusa-ku, Nagoya-shi, Aichi-ken.

Q. Do you expect to remain at your present address for the next six months, and if not how can your whereabouts in the future be ascertained?

A. My present home is expected to be converted into a hospital in the near future and I am at present looking for an apartment, I can always be contacted at the Chubu Nippon Shinbun (Central Japan Newspaper) at Nagoya-shi.

Q. What is your present occupation?

A. I am a news reporter for the Chubu Nippon Shinbun.

Q. What was your occupation during the war?

A. I was a student until I was conscripted on 1 May 1945.

Q. To what Army unit were you assigned?

A. I was assigned to the Gohoku Infantry Group, 54 Bn, Mabuchi Co and when I was demobilized I was stationed with this unit at Daito-mura, Chiba-ken.

Q. Where were you on 26 May 1945?

A. I was at Asa Enoki, Miyoshi-mura, Chosei-gun, Chiba-ken, with my unit.

Q. Who was your company commander?

A. It was 1st Lt MABUCHI, Masaki.

Q. Tell me in your own words the events that took place in the vicinity of your station on 26 May 1945.

A. I am not certain of the time, but it was on the night of 26 May 1945, we had taken cover in an air raid shelter when we heard a large crash and found that a plane had crashed nearby.

We were then ordered to assemble in front of our quarters and led by 2nd Lt NAKAMURA, was led to a point approximately 200 meters from the scene of the plane crash and were ordered to wait. From this point I could see other platoons fighting the fire of the wreck. Lt (PNU) NAKAMURA proceed on alone and to receive his instructions from Lt MABUCHI. About ten minutes later he returned and led the platoon to a point 3 kilometers from the crash along the river. We remained on guard until the morning. At 0500 we were ordered to return to our quarters where we remained until noon. At noon I was ordered to stand guard over the remains of the plane and was not relieved until 2000 that night.

On 28 May 1945 our platoon was ordered to the hill behind the company headquarters to dig underground defense positions and we remained there all day. Our food was brought up to us during the day. When our work was over for the day we returned to our quarters.

On 29 May 1945 I got up at 0500 and remained within my quarters since we were not allowed to leave it. At 1100 was ordered to stand guard at the ~~at the~~ observation post some 200 to 300 meters behind the company headquarters. (IN: See enclosure 2, Situation map.) I remained on guard until I was relieved at 1900. After relief I returned to my quarters and remained there studying until call to quarters.

Q. While you were on duty at the observation post, what did you see going on below you in the temple yards?

A. Several hours after I had assumed my post, I saw two injured fliers sitting on mats of straw, and preparations for their executions were being carried

out. The injured fliers who were unable to sit up were tied to two trees and their arms outspread so as to keep their bodies erect. They made a loop of rope at the end of a bamboo rod and placed it around the fliers neck to permit their decapitation. Then I saw Sgt/Maj Fnu SAKAIÑO come out of the company headquarters with a sword in his hand. I did not see the actual decapitation because of my squeamishness. I turned my head away as Sgt/Maj(Fnu)SAKAIÑO took the decapitation stance by raising the sword over his head. After a time I turned around and saw that the heads were separated from the bodies. The headless corpses were still tied in their previous position.

Immediately after that the non-commissioned officers of the company made preparations for the bayonet practice that followed. The corpses were cut down from the trees and were propped up against an object so that they could not topple over. As I recall they were not tied to the object. The bayonet practice continued for approximately thirty minutes.

I believe that the corpses were buried behind the temple which is behind the company headquarters.

Q. Do you recall any others, other than Sgt/Maj(Fnu)SAKAIÑO when you mentioned already?

A. I can recall only Sgt/Maj SAKAIÑO for certain since the vision from the observation post allowed me to see the execution grounds only. There were others whose face I can recall, but their names elude me.

Q. How is it possible that even on a short acquaintance with men in your company that you recall Sgt/Maj SAKAIÑO?

A. I remember that all the non-commissioned officers who were not on duty elsewhere were present. Lt KIKUCHI, Sgt YAMAMOTO (FNU), and Sgt IYOJIMA were present and 2nd/el Pvt(Fnu) IYO too, since he described his feelings and impressions to me later in our quarters.

Q. Where are these men that you mentioned?

A. I am not too sure, but I believe YAMAMOTO is in Hakodate, Hokkaido; IYO in a village near Abashiri in Hokkaido.

Q. Do you know the present whereabouts of Sgt/Maj SAKAIÑO?

A. No.

Q. Were there others than soldiers present at the execution?

A. At the time of the execution, I noticed many of the villagers watching the scene from the road.

Q. Did you know any of the villagers?

A. No, we were not allowed to meet them.

Q. Did you know Ezo HINUMA?

A. Yes, I know him. I believe he was a part of Lt (Fnu) KIKUCHI's Platoon.

Q. Where is he at present?

A. I do not know, but I met him in Tokyo after I was demobilized on 11 September 1945 and he told me that he was attending Zenrin Geiji Higher School.

Q. Did you see the fliers before they were executed?

A. Yes, I saw them every time I passed in front of the company headquarters.

Q. What were conditions under which they were kept?

A. Two uninjured fliers were tied to the trees and the two injured ones were laying on mats of straw. There were kept out in the open.

Q. You mentioned four fliers what happened to the uninjured pair?

A. They were turned over to the Keupai Tai.

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Q. What happened to them after they were turned over to the Kempei Tai, have you ever heard?

A. No.

Q. Can you identify any of the fliers by name?

A. No. I have never heard their names.

Q. How many other similar incidences did your unit participate?

A. Only the one I just described to you.

Q. Are you sure of it?

A. Yes.

Q. Have you anything further to add to your statement?

A. No.

/s/t/ NOBORU YAMAMOTO

ALLIED OCCUPATION FORCES)

:SS.

CITY OF OSAKA)

I, Noboru YAMAMOTO, being duly sworn an oath, state that I had read to me and understood the translation of the foregoing transcription of my testimony and all statements and answers contained therein, consisting of 3 pages, are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

/s/t/ NOBORU YAMAMOTO

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 21st day of January 1947.

/s/t/ ROY T. YOSHIDA

Investigator, Legal Section
GHQ SCAP.

ALLIED OCCUPATION FORCES)

:SS.

CITY OF OSAKA')

I, Roy T. Yoshida, Investigator, Legal Section, GHQ, SCAP, certify that on 18th day of January 1947, personally appeared before me Noboru YAMAMOTO, and gave the foregoing testimony, and the several statements and answers set forth therein, in Japanese; that I truly translated the testimony into English; that after the testimony was transcribed, I read it back to the witness in Japanese; and the said Noboru YAMAMOTO affixed his signature thereto in my presence.

/s/t/ ROY T. YOSHIDA

Investigator, Legal Section.
GHQ, SCAP.

OSAKA, JAPAN
21 January 1947

Case #350

Incl 1. Statement of Noboru YAMAMOTO, dated 18 Jan 47.

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