

Document 27472 statement of execution of the two survivors of the Mansel Clark crew, B-29 serial number 42-24984 lost on May 29, 1945. the two survivors were and executed with 9 members of the crew of the 444th Bomb Group crew of the "Black Jack Too" shot down on June 5, 1945, over Kobe:

Pilot Lt. HURLEY, Richard M.
Gunner Sgt. ROBERTSON, Elgie L.

Date 1 August 1947

Report of Investigative Division, Legal Section, GHQ. SCAP

Inv. Div. No. 73 CRD No. Report To: William R. Gill

Title: Lt. General Tasuku OKADA, et al.

Synopsis of facts:

Details concerning the Execution of 27 B-29 Crewmen at Tokai Army Headquarters have been reported on by Shigayoshi SUZUKI, former Japanese Lt. General and Judge Advocate for the Eastern District Army Headquarters, and are set out.

DETAILS:

At Tokyo:

This report is based on the receipt of Document #27472 from the Translation Section of ATIS. This document was secured from the Japanese and was translated. It is being set out as indicated in report dated 7 February 1947.

Previous portions of this document were set out in other reports and were as follows: On 7 February 1947, a written opinion was set out. This was translated by SUZUKI and was not sent to ATIS. On 24 March 1947, ATIS Document #27474-B was received concerning the "ONISHI Plan" and was set out. On 13 April 1947, ATIS Document #27468 was received and was set

out concerning information of Western Army and Tokai Army Murders. On 30 June 1947, ATIS Document #27474 was received concerning sworn statements which were secured from Tokai Army Personnel and were set out. On 3 July 1947, ATIS Document #27469 was received concerning sworn statements which were secured from Western Army Personnel and were set out.

ATIS Document #27472 has been received from ATIS and is being transmitted to the Criminal Registry Division with their copy of this report. The original Japanese document is being transmitted to the Criminal Registry Division and the translation of that document reads as follows:

Doc. No. 27472

SPECIAL TRANS. TEAM

**GENERAL HEADQUARTERS
SUPREME COMMANDER FOR THE ALLIED FORCES POWERS
MILITARY INTELLIGENCE SECTION, GENERAL STAFF
ALLIED TRANSLATOR AND INTERPRETER SECTION**

NOTE: Translation Requested by Legal Section

Received ATIS: 11 Feb 47.

Description of Contents: Record of atrocities on captured enemy air personnel in the TOKAI Area.

Doc. No. 27472

**Top Secret
No. IV of 10 copies**

Detailed Report on the Execution of the 27 B-29 Crewmembers

- I. From the establishment of the TOKAI Army Headquarters on 11 Feb 45 until the termination of the war, 44 B-29 airmen landed alive within the jurisdiction of that headquarters. The first six airmen were taken prisoner due to evidence of their having attacked military objectives. The next 11, who landed on 14 May, were committed for trial by court martial on suspicion of having

committed serious war crimes due to their bombing of non-military objectives. The remaining 27, who landed in the later part of May and who had committed inhumane and indiscriminate bombing, were executed in accordance with military regulations without proper procedure due to the situation at that time.

- II. The following are the details of the execution of the 27 war criminals.
 - A. About May of this year, the Army came to the conclusion that the Allied Forces would land on JAPAN proper around August. The entire Army was absorbed in operational preparations, and activity at Headquarters increased tremendously. Eleven airmen, who had participated in the bombing of non-military objectives at NAGOYA on 14 May, were taken captive. While discussions were held about committing them for trial by court-martial, the number of airmen captive increased due to the intensified air raids.

It was revealed through questioning these airmen that, since the latter part of May, the air raids by the enemy had been converted entirely into inhumane, indiscriminate city bombing aiming at the murder of citizens and the burning and destroying of private homes.

- B. As time went on, military operational activities increased greatly and the situation demanded speedy action. Despite the Government's and the people's absolute co-operation, the damage by indiscriminate bombing increased to serious proportions, and the feeling of hostility was raised to its highest point. On the other hand, the successive severe air raids day after day made the handling of these airmen very difficult. Under the circumstances, it was impossible to waste many days in the complicated procedure of a court-martial. Toward the middle of June, the army commander requested the chief of the Judicial Section, OKADA, and Senior Staff Officer ONISHI for speedy action in court-martial trials and ordered the study of a convenient method of adapting military regulations to cover the remaining airmen.
- III. After consultation with other staff officers concerned. Colonel OHISHI, senior staff officer, reached the conclusion that those airmen who were found to have carried out indiscriminate bombing contrary to the laws of humanity should be executed according to martial law without the legal procedure of a court-martial. Chief to the Judicial Section, OKADA, also agreed with

him, regarding it as an inevitable consequence of the circumstances. He then reported to the chief of staff and the commander and obtained their authorizations.

- IV. As the evidence of indiscriminate, inhumane bombing became clarified through the investigation of the enemy 27 airmen who parachuted down during late May and early June, Colonel ONISHI reported to the commander, and, according to his orders, the former informed Colonel YONEMARU, the aide-de-camp, through Staff Officer YASUDA, of the decision to execute the fliers.
- V. Thus Colonel YONEMARU ordered Captain YAMADA to execute 11 of the 27 fliers who had parachuted down earlier and then ordered captain NARITA to execute the following 16.
- VI. Captain YAMADA, commanding 13 non-commissioned officers and men on 28 June, transported the 11 fliers in a truck and had them executed at Mt. MIYAJI, AKATSU-Machi, SETO-Shi.
- VII. Captain NARITA, commanding eight officers and men on 14 July, had the rest executed at the grounds behind the second building of headquarters.
- VIII. After the execution, their bodies were cremated. Most of their ashes were laid in the TSUSHIMA Crematory and the rest were placed at the NAGOYA Army Cemetery.
- IX. Their belongings forwarded with them were sized and confiscated, but some of them were destroyed with the second building of headquarters in the air raid. The rest were burned at the termination of the war with secret wartime documents. Those which remained untouched were left in the custody of headquarters but in late November were handed over to the US Army in compliance with orders.

I copied the above from the report from TOKAI District Demobilization Inspector to the Army Demobilization Minister.

17 Dec 45

The First Demobilization Board Higher Court
Recorder: OKANO, Torakichi

Doc. No. 27472

Sworn Statement

I swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

25 Feb 46

Witness: YAMADA, Rikio

Interrogation of Witness

Witness: YAMADA, Rikio

Accused: a) OKADA, Jasuku

Charge: Murder

b) ONISHI, Hajime

Charge: Aiding and Abetting Murder

The examining officer, FURUKAWA, Mamoru, interrogated the witness at the TOKAI Army District Demobilization Board Local Court in the presence of the recorder, MIURA, Minoru, on 25 Jan 46, as follows:

Question: What is your name, age, address, and occupation?

Answer: Name: YAMADDA, Sukeo

Age: 30

Address: AICHI Ken, ICHI Gun, HATAYAMA Mura, Oaza YAMAGUCHI, Aza TANAKA, 386 Banchi.

Occupation: Director of the TOKAI- HOKURIKU Branch of the Food Commodities Section, All-Japan Agricultural Association.

The examining officer ascertained that the witness did not come under Clause 1, Article 236, of the military regulations and told YAMADA that he would be questioned as a witness and that it would be considered perjury if he gave any false information and he would be punished accordingly. He then placed the witness under oath.

Question: Did you have anything to do with the execution of B-29 crewmembers by the TOKAI District Army?

Answer: In accordance with an order from the commanding officer, there were two executions of B-29 crewmembers. I took part in the first execution, but Capt NARITA, Kikumoto participated in the second one.

Question: What was your military career like?

Answer: I graduated from the private commercial school connected with the Central Association of Industrial Unions in TOKYO Shi, KOJIMACHI Ku, YURAKU Cho, in March 1935. I was drafted into the conscript reserve on 25 Oct 37 and was discharged on 25 Feb 38. I was called up for service again on 24 Sep 38 and was sent to North CHINA on active duty and was appointed a reserve officer candidate. I was commissioned a second lieutenant on 1 Aug 40 and was promoted to first lieutenant on 10 Mar 42. I was discharged on 15 Aug 43. I was called up again to the 2nd Central Army on 21 Jan 45 and was assigned to the Administrative Section of the Division Headquarters. On 11 Feb 45, I was transferred to the Administrative Section of the TOKAI District Army and was ordered to duty in the Supervising Section in July. At the end of the war, I was transferred to Operations Section and on 3 November, I was demobilized. I had been promoted to captain on 20 August.

Question: What was your post of duty when you took part in the execution of the B-29 crewmembers?

Answer: I was on general duty as an officer attached to the Administrative Section of the TOKAI District Army.

Question: When were the airmen executed?

Answer: I think it was on 28 Jun 45.

Question: Describe the conditions under which you were ordered to execute them?

Answer: On June 27, the day before the executions, when I was on duty in the Administration Section, Col. YONEMARU, Masakuma, (senior administrative officer) who was my superior officer, entered and told me that the commanding officer had ordered the execution of the B-29 crewmembers. He said that they would be executed in the vicinity of SETO, and while looking at a map on the wall, ordered me to carry out the executions of the 11 airmen who had come in first since I was well acquainted with the SETO area as I commuted to the post from SETO. He further ordered me to select carefully the personnel required for the executions and to conceal our intention of execution. Furthermore, he added that the airmen would be executed by sword. Of course, I stood at

attention while he was giving me the order. It took place perhaps at noon of that day, but I cannot recall the exact time.

After receiving the order, I summoned Sgt. YAMAMOTO, Eiichiro and Sgt. FUJITA, Yoshitaka, both of whom were attached to the Administrative Section at that time and told them the gist of the order and ordered them to go to the execution grounds.

Then I explained the order to 1st Lt. NARITA, then in charge of the guards (he took part in the second execution and was later promoted to captain) and asked him to send me the suitable number of men. He agreed to my proposal and I went to the office of the senior administrative officer and reported the above-mentioned account to him. I told him that I would execute the airmen the next day.

Then I ordered Pfc. HIRANABE of the Transportation Division of the Administrative Section to get a truck ready for the next day.

That evening I received from Capt. NARITA a roster of the executioners which I called before we started out on the following day. The executioners were as follows:

Sgt. KAWAKAMI (later promoted to sergeant major)
Sgt. KONDO
Cpl. TSUCHIYAMA
Cpl. FURUYAMA (later promoted to sergeant)
Superior Pvt. SERIYAMA
Superior Pvt. HAYASHI
Superior Pvt. KOBAYASHI
Superior Pvt. OMINAYA
Superior Pvt. UCHIYAMA
Superior Pvt. KOGISO

All of these 12 soldiers were guards.

Question: How did you reach the scene of the execution on the 38th and what preparations did you make there?

Answer: On the preceding day, I had told Capt. NARITA the gist of the adjutant general's order when I asked him to bring out the 11 previously captured airmen before our departure. At about 0930 on the 285^h, the day of the executions, Capt. NARITA called on me in the Administrative Section and told me that the preparations had been completed. Then I told the adjutant general that I was just about to begin the executions of the airmen and told him the names and grades of the executioners.

At the front gate, I found that they were ready to start out as Capt. NARITA had told me. The 11 airmen were forced to sit on a rug spread on the back of the truck (TOKAI truck No. 3). They were blindfolded and had their hands tied behind their backs. The non-commissioned officers and men had been ordered to go to the scene of the execution, surrounded the fliers and remained standing so that no one on the outside could catch a glimpse of the airmen. I took my seat on the front platform. We started out about 1000.

At about 1100, we arrived at YAMAMICHI in the southeastern part of SETO. The place of execution was halfway up a hill, about 2 km from the base. After our arrival there, we selected a place where the ground was comparatively level. We cut down the brush and cleaned out a natural hole. There were no people there, which caused me to be confident that the airmen could be secretly executed as was ordered.

After the place had been cleaned up, I told my subordinates that the prisoners should be killed with a single sword stroke and that they should be executed one after another. The airmen had been taken to a spot about 100 m from the execution site.

Question: How were the airmen executed?

Answer: In accordance with their orders, the executioners carried out their duties in order of seniority. However, I do not know the name's of the airmen. Each executioner took an airman from the guards and led him to the aforementioned pit where the executioner cut off the victim's head in the traditional BUSHIDO manner. I stood nearby during the executions and watched, wondering if they would conduct themselves with dignity. Each killed his assigned prisoner with one sword stroke. I think that it took more than an hour for us to execute all the airmen, since we had to bring them individually from their position, 100 m from the scene. It was about 1630 when we came back to our quarters.

Question: Did you tell the airmen before the execution that they were going to be killed?

Answer: No, but their behavior and departure, on the way out, and at the scene made me believe that they knew of their impending execution before their departure. At the very moment of execution, they conducted themselves with bravery and composure, which also confirmed my presumption.

Question: Did you ask for the wills of the airmen before their execution?

Answer: No, I did not.

Question: Did a medical officer accompany them?

Answer: No.

Question: How did you dispose of the dead bodies?

Answer: Each body was buried in the hole with due ceremony. We received this suggestion from the senior administrative officer.

Question: How were the airmen dressed?

Answer: They were dressed in the same clothes as when they made the air raid. They were buried with their clothes on.

Question: How did you deal with their belongings?

Answer: They were dressed as related above and did not have any belongings.

Question: were they interned before the execution?

Answer: I heard that they were interned in the headquarters building. But I am not sure about it, since it was not my duty.

Question: Did you give anything to the airmen at the execution place?

Answer: Water was prepared for them before they started from headquarters. It was given to them at their request. It was given also on the way to the execution place.

Question: Did they act as if they wanted to say something before the execution?

Answer: No, their self-composed behavior was so admirable that I was impressed.

Question: Did you set any grave posts?

Answer: No, I set nothing, since I was not prepared. But I planted a pine tree.

Question: How is the place now?

Answer: Towards 18 August, I was ordered by Major YASUDA to cremate the buried bodies and to bring their remains back. The executioners of before exhumed the bodies to cremate them. I returned with the remains in

a box and handed it over to the guard unit. The box was to be enshrined in the unit. I heard later that they were buried afterwards in the NAGOYA Military Cemetery. But I have no detailed information about it.

Question: How did you dispose of the Japanese swords which were used for the executions?

Answer: The swords were a present from citizens to the Army. They were distributed to the command after the execution. I suppose they have been presented to the Allied authorities. I am not too sure, but I will add for your information that three swords were used for the execution and that some of the executioners might have used their own swords.

Question: When were the swords handed to the executioners?

Answer: They were handed to them at the execution place. The senior administrative officer suggested the use of these swords.

Question: Do you know who the executioners were?

Answer: I think the executioners were: YAMAMOTO, FUJITA, KONDO, TSUCHIYAMA, FURUKAWA, KAWAKAMI AND HAYASHI.

Question: Who owned and administered the place of execution?

Answer: It was owned by the Prefectural Government (TN the AICHI Prefectural Government) and administrated by nobody. The Army used the place and did not have any connection with the Prefectural Government.

Question: What did you hear from the senior administrative officer when you reported the execution to him?

Answer: When I reported it to him, he asked, "Was the execution carried out with the utmost solemnity?" I answered "Yes."

Question: Were the fliers aware of the fact they were tried by a military tribunal?

Answer: Yes, I knew that the prosecutor of the military tribunal examined them.

Question: Did you ever investigate whether the fliers could be executed without trial by military tribunal or not?

Answer: I remember reading that the fliers should not be executed without trial by military tribunal. I have also studied the problem. When I was

ordered by the senior administrative officer on the 27th, I thought that the executions was ordered by the commander after the decision of the military tribunal. I think it was about the middle of July when I found out that these airmen had not been committed for trial by the military tribunal. It was when Major ITO, of the Judicial Section, asked me whether SETO was a competent place for the execution of the 11 airmen who had been committed by the military tribunal in the middle of July.

Question: At that time did you consider the choice of executioners?

Answer: I thought that only those who had confidence in their ability could solemnly execute prisoners at a single stroke. I selected YAMAMOTO and FUJITA from the administrative Staff and asked Capt. NARITA to select suitable officers for the execution. I selected men of ability as executioners from among those who were sent by Capt. NARITA. Others were used as observers.

Question: Have you anything to add to your statement?

Answer: I have nothing to add to my statement. Now, from democratic points of view, some people are criticizing the absolute obedience in the Japanese Army. Believing that I should absolutely obey the orders of the senior administrative staff officers, my immediate superior, I executed those airmen.

Question: I wish to ask you again where these airmen were executed?

Answer: It was at AICHI Ken, AKAZU Cho, YAMAJI. It is Prefectural land. Since it is situated on the boundary between SETO Shi and HATAYAMA Mura. Some people call it AICHI Ken, AICHI Gun, HATAYAMA mura, Oaza YAMAGUCHI, TAMAJI.

Question: Do you remember the order of the executioners?

Answer: The order was: FUJITA, KONDO, YAMAMOTO, TSUCHIYAMA, FURUKAWA, KAWAKAMI, HAYASHI, FUJITA, KONDO, YAMAMOTO AND TSUCHIYAMA. That is, each of the first four executed two airmen.

YAMADA, Rikio

(Seal)

We wrote his statement down and read it to him. Admitting it was the truth, he signed and affixed his seal to this document on the same day at the First Army Demobilization Board Local Court.

Recorder at the First Army Demobilization Board Higher Court:

MIURA, Minoru (Seal)

**Preliminary Examining Officer at First Army Demobilization Board Higher
Court: FURUKAWA, Mamoru (Seal)**

The following is not part of this document 27427

Nine of the following ten B-29er's were executed from the crew of "Black Jack Too" one was wounded in his parachute jump and died, or was executed, the day after the crash. That man is unknown.

Pilot (AC)	1st Lt. PALMER, Woodrow B.
Pilot	2nd Lt. WALLS, Owen P.
Navigator	2nd Lt. DAILEY, Robert F.
Bombardier	1st Lt. COULTER, Don A.
Engineer	Sgt. FARISH, Henry T. Jr.
Radar Op.	M/Sgt. PROUTY, Eugene J.
Radio Op.	S/Sgt CHAPMAN, Willard M.
Gunner	S/Sgt. NILES, Cleveland T.
Gunner	Sgt. SABO, Peter
Gunner	Sgt. MEISLER, Charles A.

Also executed with the "Black Jack Too" crew were the following survivors of the 40th Bomb Group B-29 42-24984, Mansel Clark's crew, lost on May 29, 1945.

Pilot	Lt. HURLEY, Richard M.
Gunner	Sgt. ROBERTSON, Elgie L.

Transcribed by Sparky Corradina