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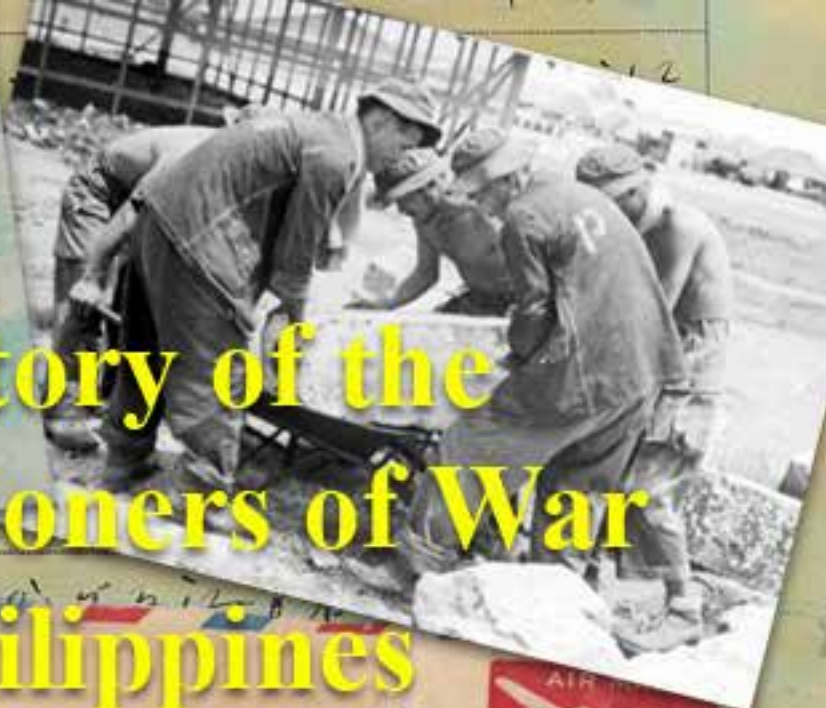
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Postal History of the Japanese Prisoners of War in the Philippines and of their War Crimes Trials

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JAPANESE WAR CRIMINALS GET PHILIPPINES AMNESTY

MANILA.—The official list of Japanese war criminals and collaborators whose sentences have been commuted or pardoned will be published in Manila on July 4, Philippine Independence Day.

Japan Stock Exchange P.I. A.P.O. 707

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**Postal History of the
Japanese Prisoners of War
in the Philippines
and of their
War Crimes Trials**

By Gene M. Labiuk

Edited by Gray Scrimgeour

Cover designed by Mae Ann Camacho

Mississauga, Ontario, Canada

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Preface

With the Japanese invasion of the Philippines on December 8, 1941 and the occupation that incurred thereafter, the Philippine Islands were run by a very strict military regime that saw the American Prisoners of War (POWs) and foreign nationals that were interned in POW and civilian internment camps suffer under the harshest conditions. The Filipino people themselves were mistreated, beaten, starved and killed by the hatred of the Japanese military and government officials. Much has been documented and written about these POW camps and civilian internment camps. When the United States and her allies invaded the Philippines on October 20, 1944, liberation began, as did the defeat of the Japanese hold on the Philippines. A great many Japanese military personnel then were taken Prisoners of War; so were the Japanese civilians who had occupied and taken up residence in the Philippines.

Little has been written about these Japanese POWs until 1988, when Yano Fumihiko published an essay entitled *Japanese Military Personnel Prisoners' Mail in the Philippine Islands*, which appeared in *Yubin Shigaku*, the publication of the Postal History Society of Japan. With permission, this essay was revised and translated into English by Edward Rasmussen in 1990. This English version is not widely available, this topic is not widely collected, and the material discussed is uncommon, so I have decided to use the material within Fumihiko's essay—supplemented with material from my collection and from other collectors—to tell the story during this period of Philippine history. Black-and-white illustrations are used from the above publication.

After describing the Japanese POW mail, I will present the postal history of the War Crimes Trials.

Acknowledgements

First, I would like to acknowledge Yano Fumihiko for his excellent work *Japanese Military Personnel Prisoners' Mail in the Philippine Islands*, the basis of this essay. Fumihiko—a pioneer in this field—wrote many articles for the International Philippine Philatelic Society and for Japanese philatelic organizations describing mail of Japanese Military prisoners. This topic was not commonly collected or discussed during his time. There are still a lot of unanswered questions, some of which may never be solved.

This publication has material from several sources other than myself and Mr. Fumihiko. I would like to thank those who have graciously allowed me to use and get material and information on this topic: Ed Nocom for use of his Japanese military material used in the Philippines, Horst Mueller for his knowledge and finding material, Brian Plain for his knowledge and time regarding the Showa years, and Dann Mayo for his assistance in trying to find fellow collectors who collect this material. I also thank Ken Bryson and the International Japanese Philatelic Society for their assistance, and the Allen County Public Library for allowing me to reproduce the letters of Captain George Muntz, who was on the prosecution team of General Yamashita.

A word of appreciation and thanks to the members of the American Philatelic Society, Translation Service for their assistance.

A great big thank you to Gray Scrimgeour for taking the time to edit and proof this manuscript for publication and for his guidance during this project.

And a thank you to Hans Becker, Editor of the International Philippine Philatelic Society, who has graciously put everything together to bring this essay to the readers.

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Foreword

After the Japanese invasion of the Philippines on December 8, 1941 and the following occupation, the Philippines was run by a very strict military regime that saw American POWs and foreign nationals interned in POW and civilian internment camps suffer under the harshest of conditions. Also, the Filipino population itself was mistreated, beaten, starved and killed by the Japanese military and government officials. Much has been told of these POW camps and civilian internment camps. When the United States and her allies began the invasion of the Philippines on October 20, 1944, liberation began and the defeat of the Japanese hold on the Philippines started. A great many Japanese military personnel were taken as Prisoners of War; Japanese civilians who had occupied the Philippines also were imprisoned. Little has been written about these Japanese POWs until 1988, when Yano Fumihiko published his essay *Japanese Military Personnel Prisoners' Mail in the Philippine Islands*, which appeared in *Yubin Shigaku*, the publication of the Postal History Society of Japan.

With permission, this essay was revised and translated into English by Edward J. Rasmussen in 1990. This English version is not widely available, and this topic is not widely collected and the material in discussion is uncommon. Therefore, I have incorporated Fumihiko's essay into this publication and have supplemented it with material from my collection and from others. The black and white illustrations are from Fumihiko's publication. I will first discuss the Japanese POW mail, and then go into the story with examples of postal history of the War Crimes Trials.

The Liberation and Surrender

Liberation

The Second Quebec Conference (code named “Octagon”) was held at Quebec City, Canada from September 12–16, 1944. British Prime Minister Winston Churchill and United States President Franklin D. Roosevelt attended, along with their Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS). This event was hosted by Canadian Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King. During this conference, Washington received an intelligence report from the Pacific that stated that Japanese naval forces in and around the Philippine Islands were severely damaged from previous campaigns and that the air defence around the Philippines was greatly hampered due to loss of aircraft and a lack of experienced pilots. The Japanese army had great strength and would pose the largest problem in the liberation of the Philippines. This information was relayed to the American delegation at Quebec City and upon receiving this information President Roosevelt and his JCS excused themselves and after much discussion decided to move the date forward by two months for the liberation of the Philippines to October 20, 1944. This information was relayed back to Washington and then to General MacArthur and Admiral Halsey. The date had been set and Operation King II (King Two) was now put into effect.

The morning of October 17th began with mine-sweeping tasks and movement of the 6th Rangers to three small islands in Leyte Gulf. The Rangers had taken the islands of Suluan and Dinagat. At Suluan, the Rangers overpowered a small defending Japanese force and destroyed their radio station. Dinagat was found to be unoccupied. On the next day, the third island—Homonhon—was taken with no opposition. The Rangers proceeded to erect navigation lights for amphibious transports to follow. Underwater demolition reconnaissance teams relayed information that the landing beaches were clear for the assault troops.

On the morning of October 20, 1944, the big naval guns of the U.S. Seventh Fleet under Admiral Kinkaid opened fire on the east coast beaches of Leyte in the area of Tacloban. Fighter aircraft from the aircraft carriers began their attacks. Soon soldiers and equipment of the U.S. Sixth Army landed on the shores, establishing a beachhead and then proceeding inland. In the northern part of the Philippine Sea, the U.S. Third Fleet under Admiral Halsey prevented the Japanese navy from attacking the Seventh Fleet from the north. **Figure 1** is a map showing the locations of the naval forces of both the American and Japanese navies during the naval battle at Leyte Gulf. The landings and the naval battles also involved ships of the following allied navies: Australia *HMAS Shropshire*, *Australia*, *Arunta*, *Warramunga* and *Gascoyne*, United Kingdom *HMS Ariadne* (mine layer) and the Netherlands *HNLMS Sommeldijck*. As U.S. forces moved inland, Japanese soldiers and civilians were taken into custody by the advancing troops. A photo of one of the first Japanese prisoners to be captured on Leyte Island is illustrated in **Figure 2**. Also taking part in the landings were military observers of the Canadian and British Armies. These observers were throughout the Pacific taking account of the Japanese defence and fighting techniques, when the war in Europe would end their attention would then turn to the defeat of Japan.

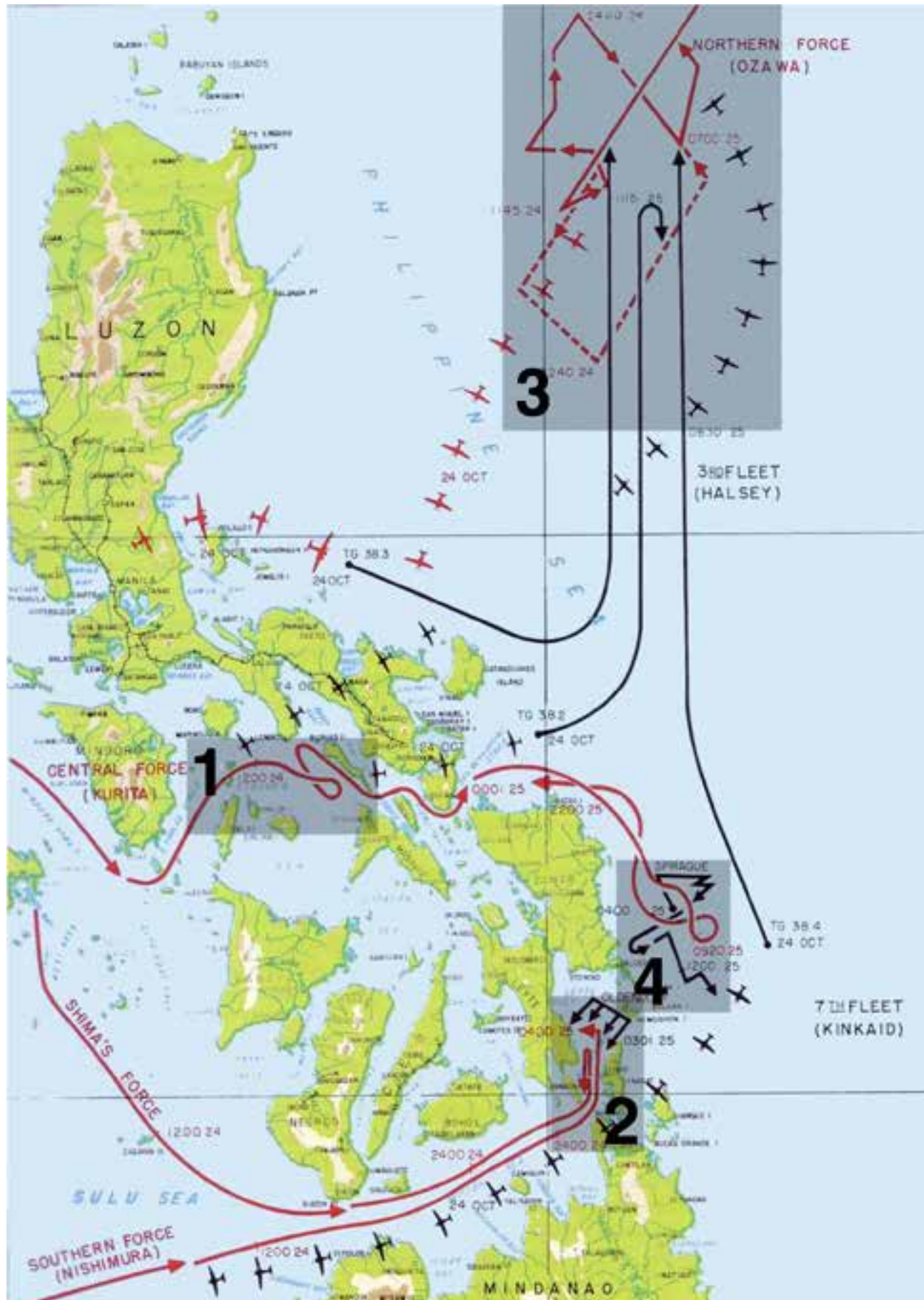


Figure 1, Map displaying the engagements that comprised the Battle of Leyte Gulf. - Wikipedia ¹



Figure 2, October 1944. -

One of the first Japanese prisoners to be brought in after Leyte Island was captured. Prior to his capture he had been attacked by a Filipino with a jungle knife; the bandages indicate the severity of the attack. - Australian War Memorial, photo 155427

Over the next few days, many naval battles occurred in Leyte Gulf, which resulted in the sinking of Japanese vessels. The surviving Japanese sailors were rescued from the waters by the U.S. Navy. With the success of the land operations and the naval engagements came the question of what to do with the captured Japanese (see the next section “The Camps”).

On October 23, Tacloban was made the interim capital of the Philippines. Even as this was taking place, fighting still raged on Leyte until December 25, 1944. That date was when Leyte was declared free of combating Japanese military personnel. *Figure 3* displays an October 20, 1944 photo of General MacArthur addressing the assembly in front of the Provincial Capital building at Tacloban on the occasion of handing over Civil Rights to President Osmeña. President Osmeña is to the right of General MacArthur. *Figure 4* exhibits a photo (dated December 14, 1944) of Sergio Osmeña, President of the Commonwealth Government of the Philippines.



Figure 3,

October 20, 1944, - General MacArthur addressing the assembly in front of the Provincial Capitol building at Tacloban on the occasion of handing over Civil Rights to President Osmeña. - *Australian War Memorial, photo 017768*



Figure 4,

Sergio Osmeña, President of the Commonwealth Government of the Philippines, in his office at the provincial building in Tacloban, from which the government operated. - *Australian War Memorial, photo 017894*

A newspaper story, featured as *Figure 5* describes the battles that had taken place in Leyte days after the landings. Tacloban welcomed the Americans as indicated by the newspaper story displayed as *Figure 6*.

FEW PRISONERS TAKEN ON LEYTE

NEW YORK, October 24.—General MacArthur's headquarters has revealed that the invasion troops have killed 3000 Japanese and captured at least 12 towns and villages on Leyte on an expanding 25-mile front, states the United Press representative on Leyte.

Japanese resistance is weakening as the Americans advance. Few prisoners are being taken. General Krueger has disclosed that Japanese losses are 10 to 1 compared with those of the Americans.

The correspondent adds: "Filipino guerillas in organized bodies, are trickling steadily into the American lines under their own officers, and are aiding the Americans in their rapid progress all along the front.

"American troops under Major-General Hodge have fanned north from Dulag, taking San Jose, and southwards taking Dao. Tanks and infantrymen of the 7th and 96th Divisions have fought through rain, muddy roads, and swamps to the outskirts of San Pablo, where they are within striking distance of Burauen, at the southern end of the island highway, the last remaining enemy communication link in this part of Leyte. The fall of Burauen and the cap-

ture of Santa Fe, at the northern end of the road, would drive the Japanese into the wild mountains. Japanese counter attacks are scattered and ineffectual and attempts at infiltration at night time are weak and futile."

Al. Dobking, Associated Press correspondent, states from Leyte: "Soldiers of the 7th Division, preceded by Sherman tanks, trudged 12 circuitous miles in 10 hours through swamps, undergrowth, banana groves, and cornfields to seize San Pablo airfield. Most of the enemy are in full retreat."

Ashabel Bush, Associated Press correspondent, states from Tacloban: "It has been a miserable 30 months for the people of Leyte since the Japanese arrived, particu-

larly the remaining Americans, who, Robert Price, 33, said, were suspected of collusion whenever guerillas were active or planes flew over the islands. Then they, their children, and their Filipino wives and mothers were gaoled and questioned. If the Japanese were dissatisfied, they were beaten, their legs were tied, their hands tied together behind their backs, and they were left hanging by the arms from crossbeams. Price said he was once suspended for 90 minutes, spinning like a barbecue."

PAVED WAY FOR LANDING

Ralph Teatsowth, correspondent of the United Press, states: "Four thousand Filipino guerillas supplied detailed information of enemy troop dispositions and paved the way for the American landing. The guerillas, led by Colonel Rupert T. Kengalon, former member of the Filipino constabulary, aged 55, said that, though frequently outnumbered by 80 or 90 to one, they had in their engagements killed 3800 Japanese.

"Some Filipinos were horribly tortured. Some were buried alive, some given water treatment, and some tied up in the sun without food or water. Many women were outraged."

The Leyte correspondent of the Associated Press states: "Lieut. Leon Tinnall returned recently after having spent seven months behind the Japanese lines in Mindanao, fighting with guerillas and gathering information which played a major part in the invasion. Lieut. Tinnall, who went to Mindanao by submarine, returned in the same way. He radioed information which resulted in the sinking of over 50 enemy ships. He said that guerillas were conducting a highly effective war and the Japanese were so scared that they would not leave their camps except in large parties. When he left the guerillas controlled a large section of one Philippine island."

Figure 5.

Newspaper story featuring details of the battles taking place in Leyte, soon after the landings. -
Morning Bulletin (Rockhampton, Queensland) October 26, 1944

Tacloban Welcomes Americans

The CBS representative, William J. Dunn, from General MacArthur's Headquarters, says: "I never in my wildest dreams expected to witness such scenes as those greeting the Americans returning to the Philippines. The first Americans entering Tacloban were welcomed with mingled laughs and cheers. The people were almost inarticulate due to emotion. Filipino women, dressed in colorful costumes, waved from every window and doorway. Old men threw smiling salutes to everyone in uniform.

"This afternoon several hundred Filipinos staged a parade in the business section of the city. It was a brilliant affair marked by much flagwaving and jubilant shouting. The celebration was in marked contrast with one held by the Japanese a few days ago.

"It seems several days before the landings the people of Tacloban got word the Americans were returning. The effect was so immediate that the Japanese sensed what was happening and the enemy commander formally announced that an American invasion was impossible and that the convoy had been destroyed off Formosa. Eight hundred planes, seven carriers and 13,000 marines were lost. The commander ordered a full dress parade followed by a grand ball lasting three nights as a victory celebration.

"The entire Japanese garrison paraded but only a handful of civilians fell in behind. The remainder of Tacloban residents stayed indoors.

"The first night of the ball the United States Navy provided the 'music' with a softening up routine along the beach. The first landings were made on three islands in Leyte Gulf. The worst typhoon for 20 years then swept the city. Between the shelling and the wrath of the elements the Japanese lost all interest in the festivities and by the fourth night they were rapidly losing all interest in Tacloban."

Figure 6.

Newspaper story, discussing the reception the Americans received upon their arrival in Tacloban. -
Daily Mercury (Mackay, Queensland), October 24, 1944

As mentioned in the newspaper story, "This afternoon several hundred Filipinos staged a parade in the business section of the city". *Figure 7* displays a photo of a Victory Parade at the newly-liberated city of Tacloban, the interim capital of the Philippines, while *Figure 8* shows the Leyte Boys and Girls High Schools that housed No. 1 Wireless Units RAAF (Royal Australian Air Force) intelligence and code breaking personnel.



Figure 7.

October 22, 1944. Victory parade, Tacloban, the first capital city of the Philippines to be liberated by United States Forces from the Japanese. – Australian War Memorial, photo P00954.031



Figure 8.

October 1944. Leyte Boys and Girls High Schools used by No. 1 Wireless Unit RAAF for intelligence and code breaking personnel. – Australian War Memorial, photo P00954.029

The Australia House, “Home for Australians”, was a native building at Tacloban where Australian war correspondents and public relations officers met (*Figure 9*).



Figure 9.

November 20, 1944. Native building at Tacloban where Australian war correspondents of the three services and public relations officers would meet. Note the sign ‘AUSTRALIA HOUSE’ above the personnel. – *Australian War Memorial, photo OG1878i*

General MacArthur obtained intelligence information that the Japanese were going to kill all American POWs and foreign civilian internees in the camps. With this information, a second front was established at Lingayen Gulf at the northwest corner of Luzon, Philippines. On January 9, 1945, the Battle of Lingayen commenced with the naval forces of the U.S. and Australia opening fire on the beaches and General Krueger’s Sixth Army landing and securing a beachhead. The race for Manila was now on. February 3rd saw American soldiers enter Manila and secure the Santo Tomas civilian internment camp (see *Figure 10*). The main Japanese force at Manila fled into the mountains north and east of the city.



Figure 10.

Post card showing liberated civilian internees and American troops at Santo Tomas, February 3, 1945.

Surrender

On July 7, 1945 at Potsdam, Germany, the President of the United States, the Prime Minister of Great Britain and the Premier of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics met and discussed many things, one of which included the military campaign against Japan. One result of this conference was that the Soviet Union would enter the war against Japan and another major result of this conference was the establishment of the “Potsdam Declaration” in which President Truman and Prime Minister Atlee with concurrence of the President of the National Government of China issued a final ultimatum to the Japanese Government that gave Japan the choice of surrender or destruction. Japan’s not responding or accepting the terms of the Potsdam Declaration led the U.S. to drop the first atomic bomb on Hiroshima on August 6, 1945. No response from the Japanese to this attack forced the Americans to drop their second atomic bomb on Nagasaki on August 9th.

On August 15, 1945, Japan notified the United States of their acceptance of surrender and the terms of the Potsdam Declaration. This same day the Emperor of Japan made a radio broadcast to the Japanese people and to the military in the homeland and in all foreign soils to cease combat and that Japan has surrendered to the Allied Powers and to lay down their arms and work towards peace for the future. Also, on the same day, General MacArthur was made Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (SCAP).²

On August 17, General MacArthur directed Japan to send to Manila “*a competent representative empowered to receive in the name of the Emperor of Japan, the Japanese Imperial Government, and the Japanese Imperial General Headquarters certain requirements for carrying into effect the terms of surrender.*” An Australian newspaper article reports that a Japanese envoy would be leaving Japan for Manila as exhibited in **Figure 11**.

JAP ENVOY LEAVING FOR MANILA SUNDAY

Tokio Warning On Allied Landings SURRENDER TO REDS

Australian Associated Press

NEW YORK, Friday.—A Japanese envoy will leave Tokio on Sunday to fly to Manila to receive the Allied surrender terms from General MacArthur.

This announcement has been broadcast by Tokio Radio since Gen. MacArthur sent a brusque message to the Japanese Government to stop arguing and get on with the business of surrendering.

Another Tokio broadcast has informed the people of Japan that Allied occupation forces will be landing shortly in the Japanese homeland.

Meanwhile, in Manchuria, the Russian ultimatum has had effect and on several sectors enemy troops are beginning to surrender.

Tonight's Moscow communique reports that more than 20,000 Japanese officers and men have been taken prisoner.

Figure 11

Newspaper article giving scant details of a Japanese envoy leaving Japan for Manila to obtain the article of surrender. — *News (Adelaide)*, August 18, 1945

Japanese Hedging

IT was reported in Manila today that Japanese tardiness in sending an emissary to Manila did not mean that they were going to offer any real opposition to signing the surrender document.

It merely meant that the enemy was adopting the action they were expected to take.

This was partly the result of the Japanese trait to avoid committing themselves as long as possible, and partly an attempt to save face.

The Japs knew they had no alternative but to accept any conditions General MacArthur dictated, but they meant to give an appearance of having some independence in accepting final arrangements.

More hedging was expected right up to the final signature.

Meanwhile, preparations for the occupation of Japan are being pushed ahead, and many adminis-

trative sections are now packing for departure.

There will be close control over Japanese life in the early stages, but instructions to troops emphasise that the Japs are not to be regarded as a type of sub-humans.

The aim is to re-educate the people in such a way that after two years American troops will be as popular with the Japs as they now are with the people of other occupied countries.

In Manila the hall where the Japanese will meet General MacArthur will be protected by 30 stalwart six-footers from the general's guard of honor.

These same men have guarded all of General MacArthur's top-ranking guests, including Admiral Mountbatten, General Arnold, and Admiral Nimitz.

Four hundred military police will guard the route from an undisclosed airport to the conference hall.

Figure 11

Newspaper article giving scant details of a Japanese envoy leaving Japan for Manila to obtain the article of surrender. — *News (Adelaide)*, August 18, 1945

On August 19th at 1800 hours, a U.S. Army transport plane landed at Nichols Field from Shima, Japan with 16 members of the Japanese surrender delegation on board. Their identities were quickly checked and they immediately were transported to temporary quarters on Dewey Boulevard, Manila and within three hours “the Manila Conference” began. On August 20th at 1300 hours, the Japanese surrender delegation was on its way to Japan with all the necessary surrender documents, The Manila Conference was over. **Figures 12 and 13** show members of the Japanese surrender delegation arriving at Nichols field.

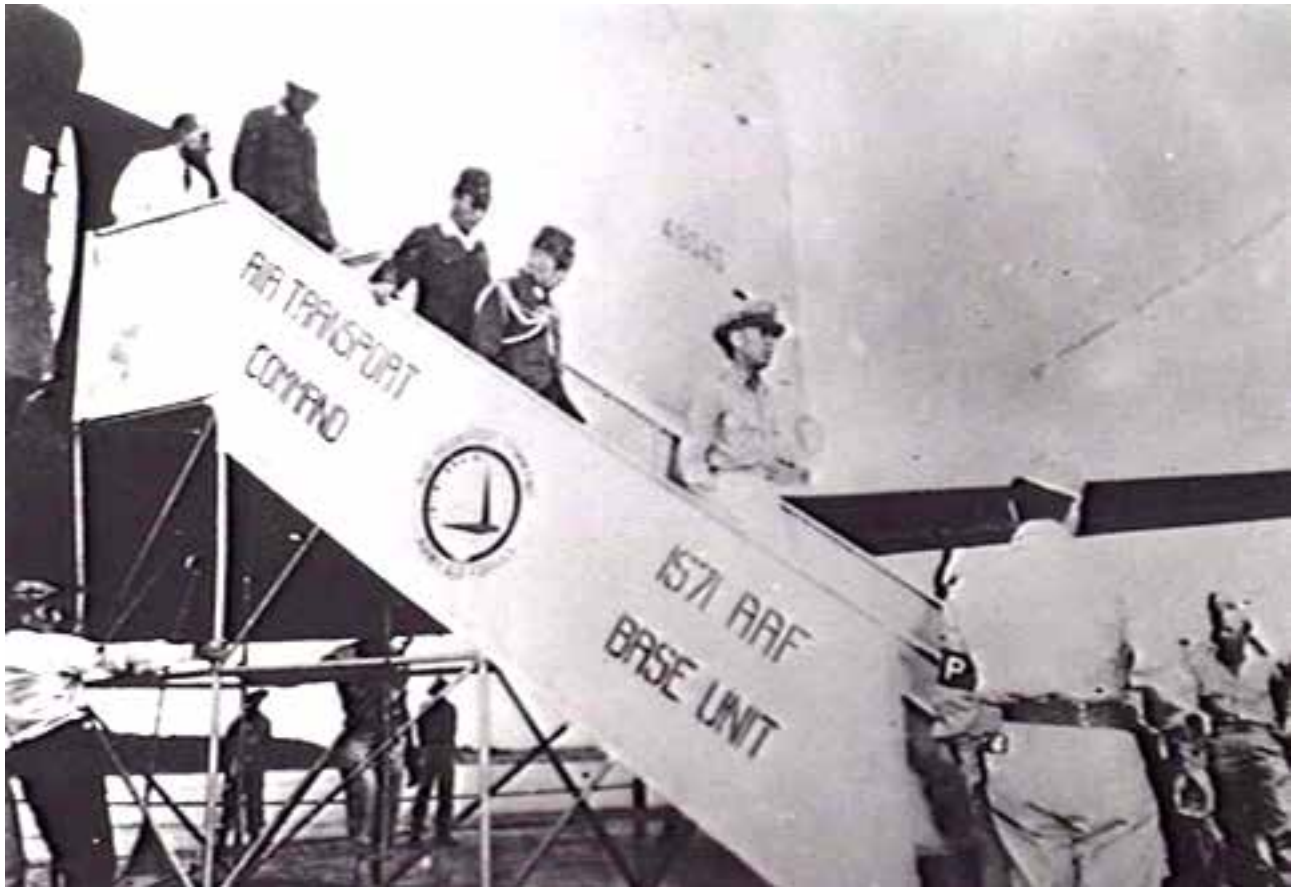


Figure 12.

Members of the Japanese surrender party arrived at Nichols Field to attend The Manila Conference. The Japanese officer leading this delegation was Lt. Gen. Torashiro Kawabe, Vice Chief of the Japanese Imperial General Staff. – *Australian War Memorial, photo P1443.603*



Figure 13.

Members of the Japanese surrender delegation arrived at Nichols Field to attend The Manila Conference. – *Australian War Memorial, photo P01443.060*

The Manila Conference had taken place at General MacArthur's headquarters at the Manila City Hall. Two photos that show Japanese surrender delegates are shown here as *Figures 14 and 15*.



Figure 14.

A Japanese interpreter explains terms to the Japanese surrender party, watched by U.S. General C. A. Willoughby. – Australian War Memorial, photo P01443.061



Figure 15.

Members of the Japanese surrender party being led into Manila City Hall by U.S. General C. A. Willoughby. – Australian War Memorial, photo P01443.065

With the Emperor's proclamation of August 15th, Japanese military commanders began the process of surrendering their forces to the allies throughout the Western Pacific and Southwest Pacific areas. In the Philippines, General MacArthur had ordered General Styer who was commanding the Army Force of the Western Pacific (AFWP) to receive the surrender of the remaining Japanese forces in the Philippines.

After hearing the Emperor's proclamation, many Japanese commanders began surrendering their forces throughout the Philippines. The commanding officer of approximately 4,000 air force personnel on Mindanao began negotiations to surrender his troops. Rear Admiral Takasue Furuse, who was in command of approximately 1,500 naval personnel in the Infanta area of southern Luzon, commenced talks of surrender with the guerrilla organization. On September 1, Japanese forces on Bataan agreed to surrender their weapons on this day and Major General Shintaro Yuguchi, commander in the Cayagan Valley stated that he would surrender his forces when he had received word from General Yamashita. On September 2nd, Colonel Matsui—commander of Japanese forces in the southern part of the Cayagan Valley—surrendered his troops to the U.S. 27th Division. A further 2,300 Japanese troops located north in the Dummum River and Capisayan District sent a message that they would surrender themselves during the period of September 2nd-6th.²

With the message from the Emperor and surrendering taking place throughout the Philippines, General Yamashita—commander of the 14th Imperial Japanese Army—made no attempt to contact to surrender his forces.²

After locating General Yamashita's headquarters, on August 24th Major General William H. Gill, commander of the 32nd Division, had a message air-dropped requesting that contact be made to discuss the terms of surrender. The following day a second letter was dropped requesting Yamashita to send a representative to discuss the surrender of forces under his control. Eventually, on August 26th a Japanese representative from Yamashita arrived at an outpost near Kiangan where he presented a letter to be given to Major General Gill, acknowledging the receipt of the two previous messages and that he had no authority to surrender his troops until the signing of the surrender in Tokyo. After much discussion, Yamashita agreed to meet with American military personnel on September 2nd at Kiangan and was willing to proceed to Baguio to sign surrender papers for the Japanese military forces in the Philippines.²

On September 2 at 0900, General Yamashita along with his Chief of Staff Lt. General Akira Muto and other staff officers delivered themselves to an escort of the 32nd Division near Kiangan. A party of naval personnel under Vice Admiral Denhichi Okochi also appeared. From Kiangan the Japanese were transported to Bagabag Airfield, where they boarded a C-47 transport plane to take them to Baguio.²

General Styer, who had attended the surrender in Tokyo, flew back to Manila on the morning of September 3rd accompanied by General Wainwright and General Percival. Upon arrival they immediately boarded a plane for Baguio. At noon at the former residence of the U.S. High Commissioner at Camp John Hay, the American and Japanese officers met to sign the surrender of the Philippines.²

A newspaper story displayed as *Figure 16* tells the story of Yamashita signing the surrender documents. *Figure 17* is a photo of General Yamashita signing the document of the surrender of the Japanese forces in the Philippines



Figure 16.

Newspaper story of the Japanese surrender in the Philippines. — *Daily Mercury*, (Mackay Queensland), September 4, 1945



Figure 17.

The Japanese commander, General Tomooyuki Yamashita, is seated in the middle on the near side of the table. Seated on the opposite side, second from left, is Lieutenant General Jonathan M. Wainright, U.S. Army. Toward the right end of the table, immediately to the left of Gen. Yamashita's head, is Commodore Norman C. Gillette, USN, Deputy Commander, Philippine Sea Frontier. –
U.S. Naval Historical Center, photo NH 97276

Three hours after the acceptance of the terms and signing of the surrender papers, the Japanese delegates were flown to Nielson Airfield in Manila and then transported to New Bilibid Prison, where they were incarcerated to be held for war crimes trials. [Ed note: the trials of General Yamashita and Muto will be detailed under the War Crimes and Trials section.]

After the official surrender, more Japanese troops surrendered: 2,900 in Cebu; 1,400 in Negros; on Mindanao 4,000 troops in Davao Province; 2,000 in the Agusan Valley; and in excess of 1,000 air force personnel in the mountains northwest of Davao.

After the formal surrender of the Japanese Military forces on September 3, 1945, arrangements were made for the detained military personnel to begin sending mail home to their families and receiving mail. These mailings were to begin in October 1945, with the first ship returning to Japan from Manila on the 13th of October. From then on, POW mail was carried aboard ships involved with repatriation duties. [Ed note: This discussion will take place under the section *The Mails*.]

THE POW CAMPS

Prior to October 20th, there were 462,935 Japanese troops stationed in the Philippines, 336,352 of whom were killed (see *Figure 18*); 12,573 were taken prisoner in combat and 114,010 surrendered after the armistice on August 15, 1945.³

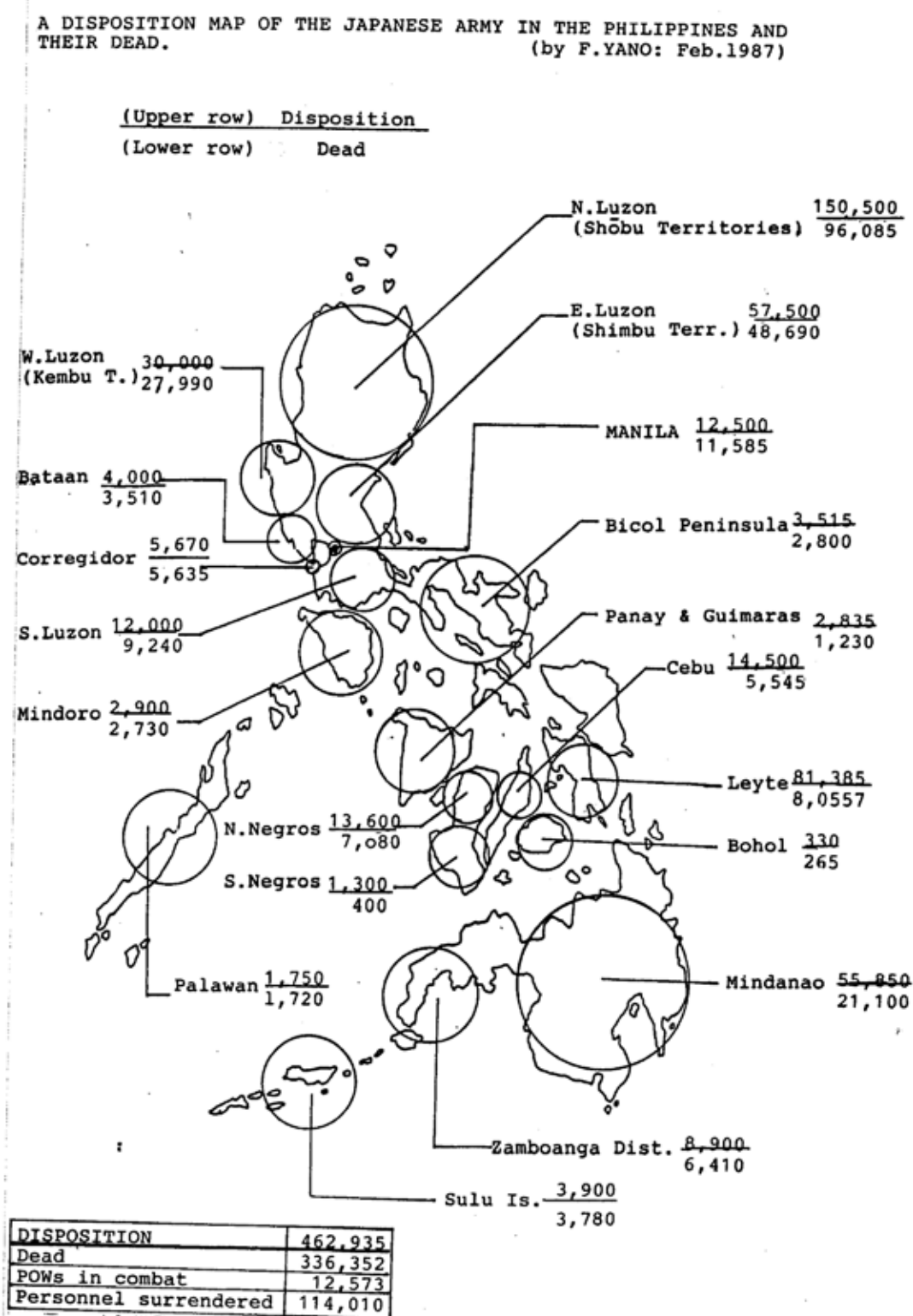


Figure 18.

Map of Japanese personnel total, death and statistics. – courtesy of Japanese Military Personnel Prisoners' Mail in the Philippine Islands by Yano Fumihiko³

From January 9, 1945, after the Lingayen landings, Japanese soldiers were surrendering in large numbers and facilities for their imprisonment had to be constructed, **Figure 19** shows a breakdown of Japanese soldiers who had surrendered in combat and after August 15, 1945 throughout the Philippines.³

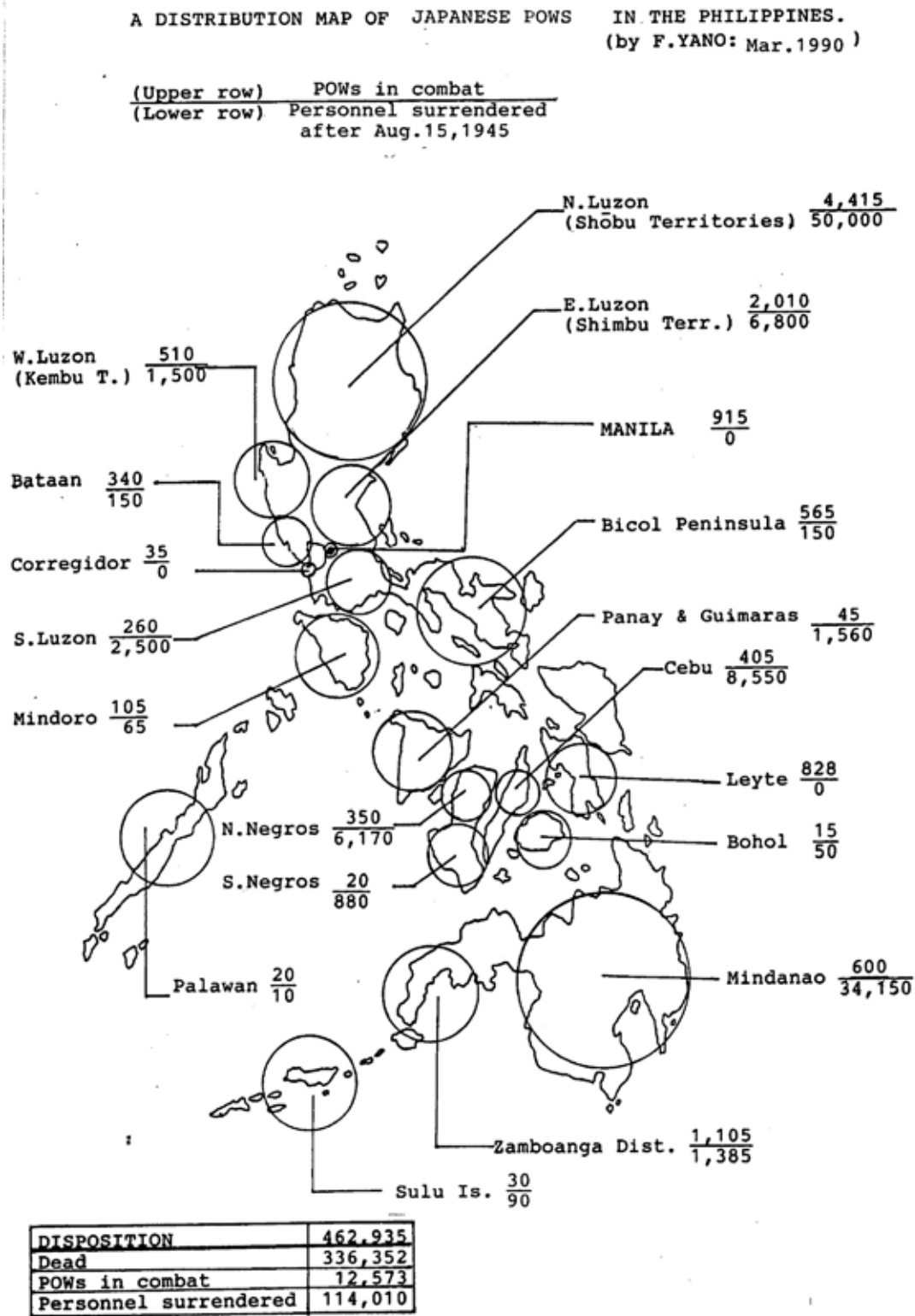


Figure 19.

Map showing a breakdown of the number of Japanese soldiers who surrendered in combat and after August 15th. – courtesy of Japanese Military Personnel Prisoners' Mail in the Philippine Islands by Yano Fumihiko³

Figure 20 illustrates a breakdown of the various camps, dates and gathering locations after August 15th for the assembly of the Japanese soldiers.³

POW CAMPS of Japanese Soldiers in the Philippines.
 By Mr. H. SOEDA (Kita-kyūshū city) based on the reports of Japanese repatriated soldiers from the Philippines. Rewritten into Roman letters by F. YANO (Sakai city) March 1990.

POW CAMP	Concentration point and/or provisional assembly camp after August 15th, 1945.	* LABOR (branch) CAMP
LEYTE	LUZON	*Airdrome organization.
Drag. Field Stockade Oct. 1944.	Bontoc 90km point	Florida Blanca Clark Field Nicholas Field
Tacloban. F. Stockade Nov. 1944.	56km point 42km point	*Port Facilities.
Palo. Field Stockade June. 1945.	Baguio	N. San Fernando Batangas
LUZON	Kiangan Bagabag Solano	*Depot Facilities.
Bilibid Prison Apr. 1945.	Aparri Lallo Echague	Santa Ana Quezon Marikina
Los Baños Prison May 1945.	N. San Fernando	*War theater Clean up.
Muntinlupa New Bilibid Prison Sept. 1945.	Bauang San Jose	Intramuros Corregidor Caloocan
+) Canlubang LUPOW Cabuyao } area Calamba }	S. San Fernando	*War Criminal suspects.
No. 1-13 Stockade	Montalban Marikina	Mandaluyong
Canlubang POW Hospital. Nov. 1945.	Legaspi	*Golf course Facilities.
MINDANAO	LEYTE	Wack-wack Golf Club
Daliao POW Camp No. 1-18 Stockade	Tanauan Palo	*Filipino Army Barracks Construction. O'Donnell
	MINDANAO	*Quarrying for Manila Reconstruction.
	Zamboanga	Los Baños
	Cagayan Agusan Pugo Gusa	*US Army Barracks Facilities.
	Butuan	Paranaque
	Tamogan	*US Army Base Facilities.
	Dadiangas	Ft. Mckinley
	NEGROS	*Clean up, etc.
	San Carlos Fabrica Bacolod	Tacloban (LEYTE)
	CEBU	*Clean up, etc.
+) Abb. of Luzon POW Camp.	Talisay	Daliao (MINDANAO)
SAMAR	PANAY	
Gamay	Cabatuan	
	MASBATE	
	Masbate	

Figure 20.

Map showing a breakdown of the various camps and the gathering locations (with dates) after August 15th. – courtesy of Japanese Military Personnel Prisoners' Mail in the Philippine Islands by Yano

About 30 kilometers south of Tacloban, the first POW camp was constructed at Dulag to hold these Japanese POWs.

The island of Leyte saw four POW camps built to hold Japanese POWs, Dulag, Palo, Tanauan and Tacloban. Figure 21 illustrates a breakdown of the camps on Leyte, Luzon and Mindanao.³

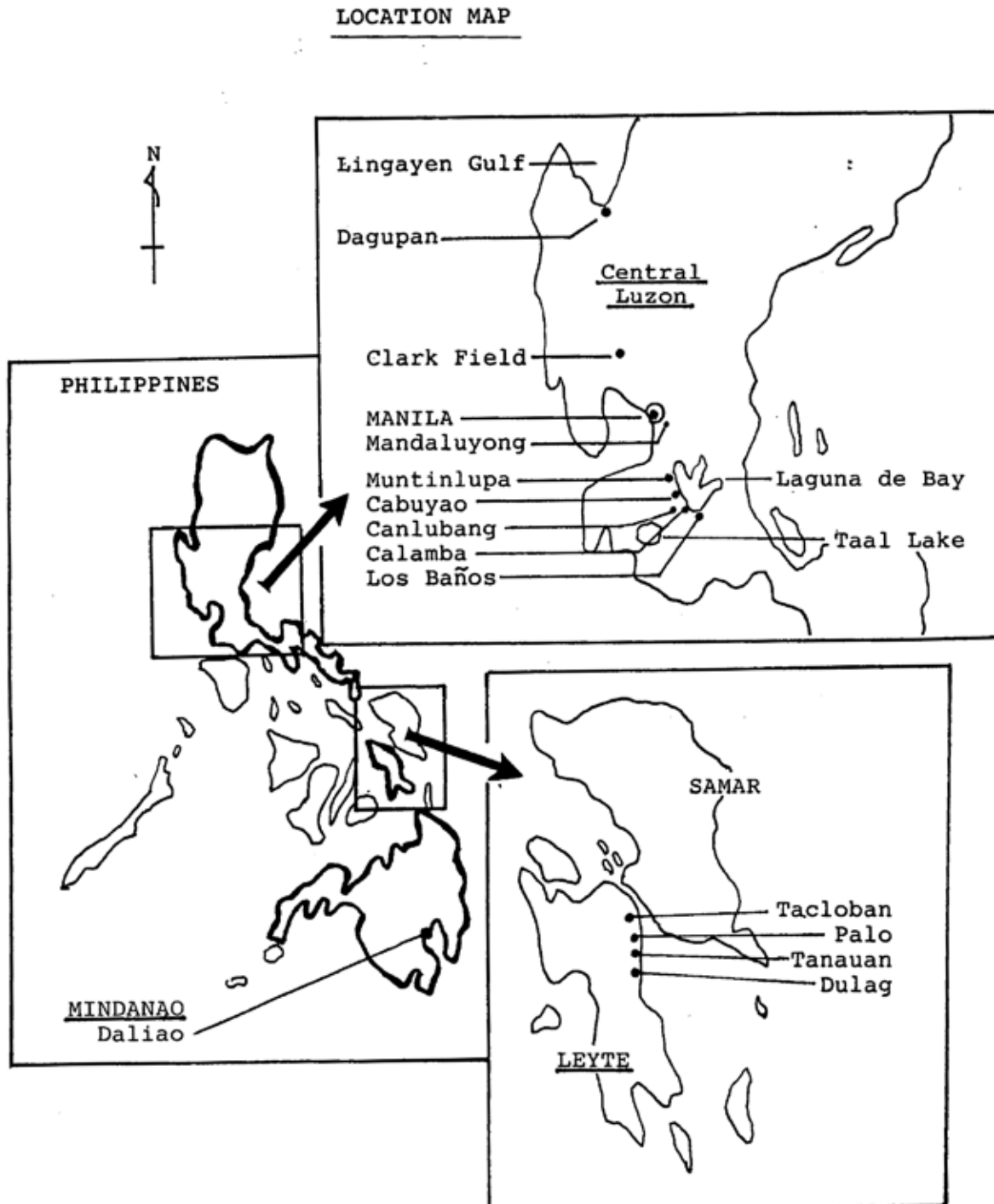


Figure 21.

Map showing the various Japanese POW camps. – courtesy of Japanese Military Personnel Prisoners' Mail in the Philippine Islands by Yano Fumihiko³

As illustrated in *Figure 20* Japanese POW camps were created in great numbers throughout Leyte and Luzon. The camps created in Luzon were referred to as LUPOW (LUZON POW), which comprised Cabuyao, Calamba and Canlubang. Los Baños and Muntinlupa were in Laguna Province south of Laguna de Bay and at Mandaluyong, a suburb of Manila. Illustrated as *Figure 22* is the sign to the entrance of LUZON POW CAMP #1. The camps on Leyte were near Tacloban and on Mindanao at Daliao, near Davao City.⁴

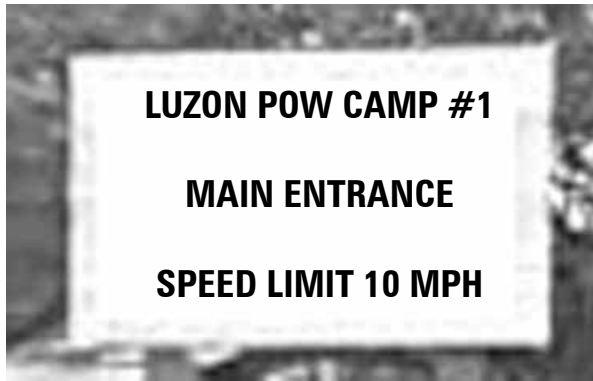


Figure 22.
Sign at the front entrance of LUPOW #1 Camp.
– Source unknown

Japanese POWs lining up for food at Camp No. 1, Canlubang, Laguna are shown in *Figure 23*. An ink sketch of the POW Hospital at Canlubang is displayed as *Figure 24*.³



Figure 23.
Japanese POWs line up for food at LUPOW #1, Canlubang Camp. – Source unknown



Figure 24.

Sketch of the POW Hospital at Canlubang, taken from the cover of Fumihiko's publication. – courtesy of *Japanese Military Personnel Prisoners' Mail in the Philippine Islands* by Yano Fumihiko³

Figure 25 shows a cover from one of the guards at Luzon POW Cp. #1 (LUPOW #1), postmarked August 23, 1945, shortly after the Japanese surrender



Figure 25.

Cover postmarked August 23, 1945 from Luzon POW Cp. #1, A.P.O. 75 rated 6¢ air mail to Utah.

Figure 26 displays a December 1944 censored “V-MAIL” air mail letter from a member of the P.W.P.Co. (Prisoner of War Processing Company) “164 P.W.P.Co. A.P.O. 72 / c/o pm San Francisco, Calif to San Diego.” It is endorsed FREE because it was mailed from the field. A.P.O. 72 was located at Tacloban at this time.



Figure 26.
Censored 1944 Christmas V-MAIL air mail letter form used by a member of the Prisoner of War Processing Company at A.P.O. 72 located at Tacloban.

By the end of March 1945, approximately 700 captured army and navy personnel were confined to the camp at Tanauan, and just before the official surrender that number reached 2,000.

A photo of Japanese POWs cleaning up the streets in Manila from Japanese destruction is featured in a newspaper story entitled “Japanese War Prisoners Work in Manila” (**Figure 27**).

JAPANESE WAR PRISONERS WORK IN MANILA.



Figure 27.
Newspaper photo and caption “Japanese War Prisoners Work in Manila”. – *Muswellbrook Chronicle* (New South Wales), June 19, 1945

Many of the Japanese soldiers who were captured were interned in POW camps. Some were sent to work in the construction of the 3rd Australian Reception Camp at the U.S. Army 5th Replacement Depot about 20 miles from Manila. This camp was a repatriation camp for British and British Commonwealth liberated POWs from the Far East, and was under the command of the Australian Army. Liberated British, Canadian, Australian, New Zealand, South African, and East Indian POWs were repatriated from this camp, often referred to by the residents as “The Empire Camp”. *Figures 28* and “*29* illustrate Japanese POWs working at this facility.



Figures 28 and 29.
Photos of Japanese POWs working on the construction of the 3rd Australian Reception camp for liberated British and British Commonwealth POWs prior to their arrival from Japan and the occupied territories in the Far East. – *Australian War Memorial, photo 019044 and 019045*

As Japanese military personnel were surrendering, the big question to both the Philippine and U.S. governments was “how and when do we repatriate these Japanese?” In a New Zealand newspaper story of October 18, 1945 entitled “Japanese Repatriation Schedule”, there is a listing of repatriations as displayed in *Figure 30*. The story had no reference to how many were to be repatriated from the Philippines, but gave a date of February 1947. A few days later, a further story appeared in an Australian newspaper providing a figure of 138,000 Japanese war prisoners to be repatriated, but giving no date (see *Figure 31*). Repatriation of the POWs in the Philippines to Japan had begun on October 13, 1945 and was completed by June 30, 1947. These dates applied to regular Japanese soldiers; those held and tried for war crimes were still confined until they were pardoned or were transferred to Japan to complete their sentences. Those who were deemed to be war criminals were held until a much later date. They were transferred to the New Bilibid Prison at Muntinlupa, Rizal. [Ed note: this discussion is continued under the heading *War Crimes and Trials*.]

JAPANESE REPATRIATION SCHEDULE

TOKIO, October 17

The Minister of War, Mr. Shimomura, told Cabinet that the schedule for repatriating Japanese troops from overseas was as follows: From North Korea, Manchuria, Sakhalin, and the Kuriles, 877,000 by August, 1948; North and South China, 1,086,000 by April, 1948; an unspecified number from the Philippines by February, 1947;; from Formosa, 202,000 by August, 1949; from New Guinea and the South-west Pacific, excluding the Rabaul area, 199,000 until March, 1949.

The Allied command has limited to 1000 the amount of yen which repatriated Japanese civilians may bring home. Officers may bring 500 and other ranks 200. The Government is holding sums in excess pending further Allied orders. Koreans and Chinese goin ; home are limited to 1000.

Figure 30.

New Zealand newspaper story outlining the repatriation of Japanese prisoners from oversea. No numbers of Japanese troops from the Philippines were given, but a date of February 1947 was mentioned. – *Evening Post (New Zealand)*, October 18, 1945

THE PHILIPPINES. JAPANESE REPATRIATION. Manila Press Protests.

MANILA, Oct 28.—In order to ease the feeding and housing problems the United States army is repatriating 138,000 Japanese war prisoners and civilians from the Philippines.

Manila editorials protest that the Japanese should first be made to remove their battledress and help to rebuild the cities.

Figure 31.

Australian newspaper story discussing the number of Japanese prisoners from the Philippines who were to be repatriated, but no date was mentioned. – *West Australian (Perth, West Australia)*, October 29, 1945

An example of mail from a camp being used late is displayed as **Figure 32**. It was written by a senior American officer at LUPOW Camp #2, dated September 20, 1946, one year after the war was over. An undated postmarked cover from 1946 is depicted as **Figure 33**, from a member of the Military Police guard at Camp 1, with a return address of *Hq. Det. 602 M.P. Bn., Luzon P.O.W. Cp. #1*.



Figure 32.

An example of a cover from a senior American officer at LUPOW Camp #2, sent well after the war was over.



Figure 33.

An example of a 1946-usage cover from an M.P. guard at Luzon P.O.W. Camp #1.

Plans for the repatriation of Japanese civilians and military personnel (other than those arrested for war crimes) began immediately after the signing of the surrender treaty. *Figure 34* exhibits a newspaper story that tells of two stripped-down Japanese destroyers arriving and leaving Manila with Japanese civilians for the trip home to Japan.



Figure 34.

Newspaper clipping detailing the arrival in the Philippines of the first ships to repatriate Japanese civilians to Japan. — *Daily Telegraph (Sydney)*, October 14, 1945

Many of the Japanese POWs were repatriated to Japan by American ships at the cost of the Japanese government. One of these repatriations was performed by an American ship as illustrated in **Figure 35**; the *John L. Sullivan* departed Manila on April 2, 1946 proceeding to Tacloban, where she picked up Japanese POWs from LUPOW #1 and also 7 army generals, 16 officers, 3 civilians and Japanese Red Cross nurses.⁵ [Ed note: The *SS John L. Sullivan* was named after the famous heavyweight champion boxer.]



Figure 35.

Photo of the *SS John L. Sullivan*, at Manila prior to proceeding to Tacloban to repatriate Japanese POWs. – courtesy www.pacificwrecks.com

By the end of 1946, virtually all Japanese civilians and POWs had been repatriated to Japan. It was estimated that 665 Japanese still remained in the Philippines, being held for suspected war crimes or as witnesses to the atrocities.

A newspaper account from January of 1947 mentions the repatriation of over 900,000 Japanese to Japan from the Western Pacific areas under United States jurisdiction, as detailed in **Figure 36**.

REPATRIATION OF JAPANESE

TOKYO, Jan. 9 (A.A.P.).— Allied Headquarters announced yesterday the complete repatriation of all Japanese from the Western Pacific areas under United States control.

A total of 923,000 Japanese have been returned to Japan from the Philippine Islands, Hawaii, the Ryukyu Islands, South Korea, and the Mariana, Gilbert, Bonin, and Marshall Islands.

Figure 36.

Newspaper clipping announcing the completion of the repatriation of all Japanese from the Western Pacific area under U.S. jurisdiction. — *Sydney Morning Herald (NSW)*, January 10, 1947

[Ed note: The above repatriation information accounts for Japanese civilians and Japanese military personnel not involved with war crimes. The repatriation of those Japanese military personnel involved with war crimes will be detailed under the ***Pardon*** section in the War Crime Trials chapter.]

THE MAILS

In this section, I have not tried to explain the postal rates, as it can be seen from the postage on the covers and postcards that there is no uniformity. Even though postal rates may/were established, they may not have been adhered to due to lack of postage stamps and postal information, *Figure 37* shows the postal rates that existed at the time

JAPANESE POST WAR POSTAL RATES

<p>Domestic</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Postcards</p> <p>April 1, 1945 to July 24, 1946 – 5 sen July 25, 1946 to March 31, 1947 – 15 sen April 1, 1947 to July 9, 1948 – 50 sen</p> <p>Overseas</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Postcards</p> <p>April 1, 1945 to September 9, 1946 – 15 sen</p> <p>September 10, 1946 to March 31, 1947 – 50 sen</p> <p>April 1, 1947 to August 27, 1947 – 2 yen</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Letters</p> <p>April 1, 1945 to July 24, 1946 – 10 sen / 20 grams July 25, 1946 to March 31, 1947 – 30 sen / 20 grams April 1, 1947 to July 9, 1948 – 1 yen 20 sen / 20 grams</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Letters</p> <p>April 1, 1945 to September 9, 1946 – 30 sen + 15 sen per additional 20 grams September 10, 1946 to March 31, 1947 – 1 yen + 50 sen per additional 20 grams April 1, 1947 to August 27, 1947 – 4 yen + 2 yen per additional 20 grams</p>
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Figure 37.
 Chart showing the Japanese post war postal rates.

The Japanese time period discussed in this essay is often referred to as the Shōwa era and existed for the reign of Emperor Shōwa (Hirihito) which began December 25, 1926 and lasted until his death on January 7, 1989. The dates in the postal markings from Japan are in Shōwa years. For example, the date shown in *Figure 38* is 20-11-22; add 25 to the first two digits to get the Gregorian year of 1945. In this example, the year is referred to as Shōwa 20 which is 1945. The Gregorian calendar years and the Shōwa years for the period of 1941 to 1953 are illustrated in *Figure 39*.

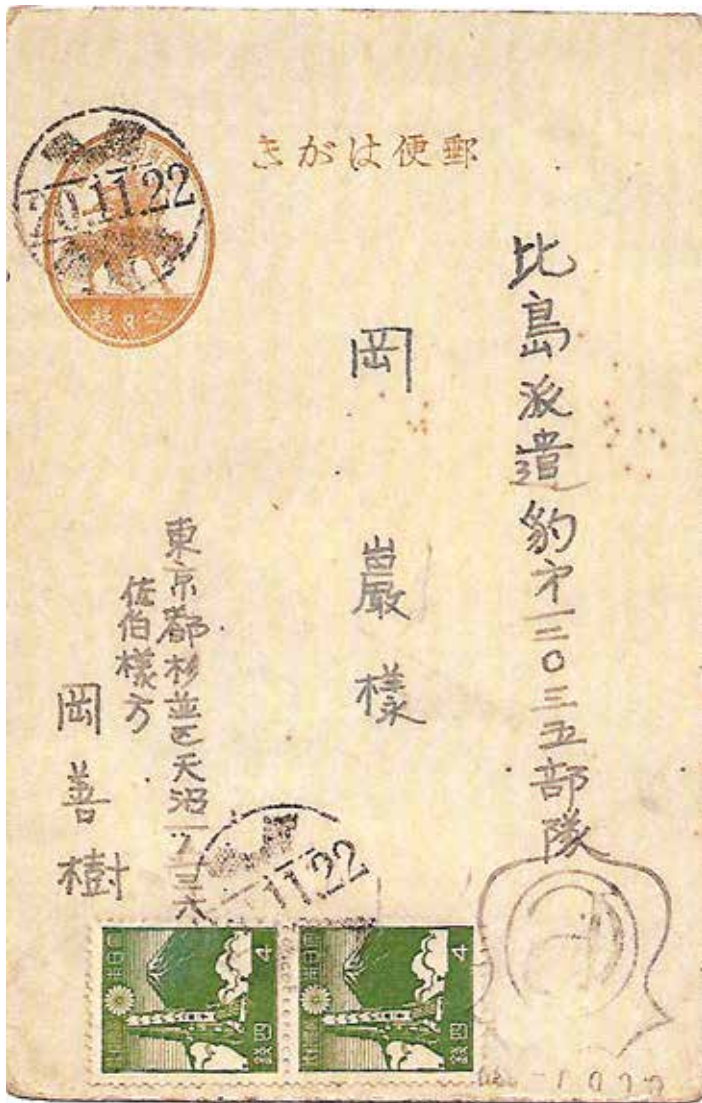


Figure 38.

An example of a postmark in the Shōwa 20 year which is 1945. – *courtesy Ed Nocom*

Figure 39.

A chart showing the Gregorian calendar year and the corresponding Shōwa years. – *courtesy Brian Plain*

JAPANESE YEAR DATES	
Gregorian	Japanese
1941	Showa 16
1942	Showa 17
1943	Showa 18
1944	Showa 19
1945	Showa 20
1946	Showa 21
1947	Showa 22
1948	Showa 23
1949	Showa 24
1950	Showa 25
1951	Showa 26
1952	Showa 27
1953	Showa 28

Censorship marks on these covers and cards can be referred to as the “PC Shield” or “Fish Bowl” type and are usually followed with a line above the Shield “C.C.D. J – ###”, in which the “C.C.D.” indicates Civil Censorship Department and the letter “J” indicates it was censored in Japan. Without the “J” a letter may have been censored in the Philippines or may also have been censored in Japan. *Figure 40* show the two types of Shield censor markings.

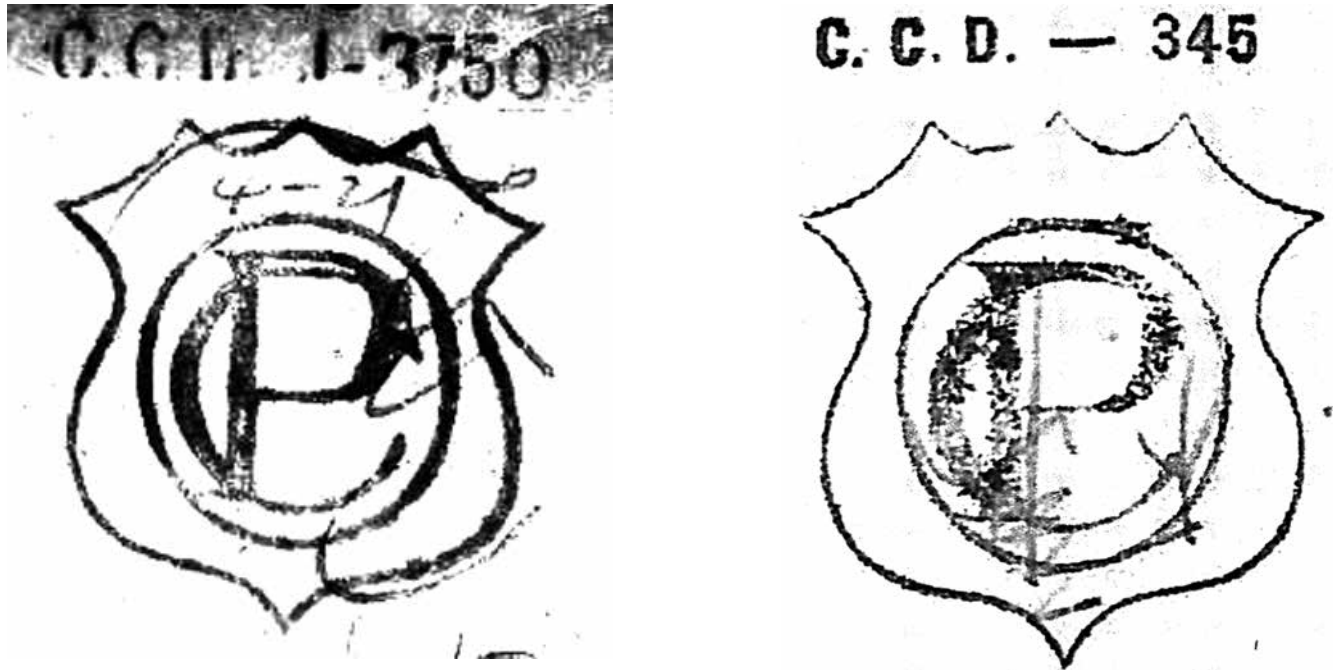


Figure 40.
Censor markings which were used on incoming
mail from Japan to POWs in the Philippines.

Japanese mails for the POWs in the Philippines were kept in storage facilities at the Japanese Post offices, and under orders from GHQ, SCAP (Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers) dated October 28, 1945 which stated that the sending of these mails could begin on November 16, 1945. An example of this order is shown as *Figure 41*.³

**GENERAL HEADQUARTERS
SUPREME COMMANDER FOR
THE ALLIED POWERS**

AG 311.7 (28 Oct. 45 CIS) 28 October 1945
(SCAPIN 202)

MEMORANDUM FOR :
IMPERIAL JAPANESE GOVERNMENT
THROUGH: Central Liaison Office, Tokyo
**SUBJECT: Establishment of Limited Mail System
for Japanese Awaiting Repatriation.**

I. The request of the Japanese Government to establish a limited mail system between Japanese awaiting repatriation in formerly Japanese occupied areas & the home island is approved, subject to the following provisions:

- a. Official correspondence will be restricted to matters which pertain to repatriation of Japanese forces & Japanese nationals.
- b. Private correspondence will be limited to postcards, & will be of a personal nature only.
- c. Commercial & financial communications are prohibited.
- d. All mail will be routed through censorship stations at Tokyo, Osaka or Fukuoka.

FOR THE SUPREME COMMANDER :
(Sgd.) H. W. ALLEN
H. W. ALLEN,
Colonel, AGD,
Asst. Adjutant General.

**COMMUNICATION BOARD BULLETIN NO. 229
NOVEMBER 16th, 1945 (Shōwa 20th year.)**

Henceforth for the present, mail between formerly Japanese occupied territories or foreign countries, and the home islands, will be processed subject to the following restrictions:

Areas to Which Mail is Addressed..

- (a) South Korea (south of the 38th parallel), Taiwan, Pacific Trust Territories, Japan Attached Islands (the Bonin and the South-west Island Chain), Republic of China Hong-kong, Malaya, Sumatra, Borneo, Java, Celebes, Burma, Philippine Islands, Indo-China and Siam.
- (b) In regard to military (soldiers') mail, the areas are those customarily served in the past except Manchuria.

Types of Mail and Message Content..

- (a) Official correspondence is restricted to matters concerning repatriation of Japanese forces and Japanese nationals in letters or postcards not requiring special handling.
- (b) Mail other than the foregoing is restricted to postcards not requiring special handling with messages concerned only with personal welfare and other matters of a personal nature.

Postage Rates..

- (a) Mail addressed to overseas territories or Republic of China to be in accordance with prior usage.
- (b) Mail other than the foregoing to be in accordance with postage rates for foreign mail.

Figure 41.

An example of the SCAP order for the restarting of mail services between the Japanese homeland and formerly occupied territories. – *courtesy of Japanese Military Personnel Prisoners' Mail in the Philippine Islands by Yano Fumihiko*³

Mail destined for Japanese POWs in the Philippines can be classified into four main types: 1) mail that had been posted prior to surrender and delivered to the POW in the Philippines after surrender;

2) mail posted after surrender and addressed to a POW's battle unit during the period when mail was suspended from August 16 to November 15, 1945;

3) mail posted after the Communications Board Bulletin of November 16, 1945, see *Figure 41*; and

4) mail properly addressed to a POW awaiting repatriation and including Name of POW, POW Camp, A.P.O. Number.

[Ed note: when describing covers and postcards throughout this essay, I will refer to the above classifications as follows: Classification 1.]

Mail that was addressed by the above conditions and could not be delivered was to have been burned in large drums under military supervision, but as can be seen from the material in the market place a lot of this mail did not make the burning stage.

Upon surrender, Japanese soldiers were placed into POW camps and were unable to communicate with their family members in Japan and give them the necessary information about where they were being held and how to properly address their mail. Family members did not know whether their son(s) or husband was alive or dead and often sent mail to the last known address, which was the military unit or regiment. The U.S. forces kept records of the various military units and what camps they were in and in a lot of cases had the mail delivered to POWs there.

Illustrated as *Figure 42* is a 10 sen rated cover that falls into Classification 1, posted during war time and was to have been delivered after the resumption of mail services. It was posted at Kyoto, Japan with a year of Shōwa 20, dated 20-07-13 (July 13, 1945) to a captured soldier, code 10680: 14 Army Field Ordinance Depot. The postcard was censored in the Philippines after the surrender by the U.S. Army censor with the PC Shield censor hand stamp. With a July date of posting, this cover was held in Japan and delivered after the November 16th date of resumption of mail services.



Figure 42.

A postmarked cover with a year of Shōwa 20 dated 20-07-13 (July 13, 1945) posted while the war was still in progress and held in Japan.

Displayed as **Figure 43** is a 3 sen postcard up rated 2 sen from Japan to a civilian in the Philippines posted after the surrender of Japanese forces and prior to the resumption of mail services, with a year of Shōwa 20, postmarked 20-10-1 (October 1, 1945) (Classification 2). This postcard is from Tatsumo Nishimura, Omi-aza, Ubara-mura, Amata-gun, Kyoto-fu to Minoru Nishimura and Sugimoto Eizo, c/o Kuro Post Office 43-15-24, c/o Furukawa Development Co. Ltd., Post Office Box 100, Davao, Philippines. This is a scarce example of a postcard to an interned civilian.

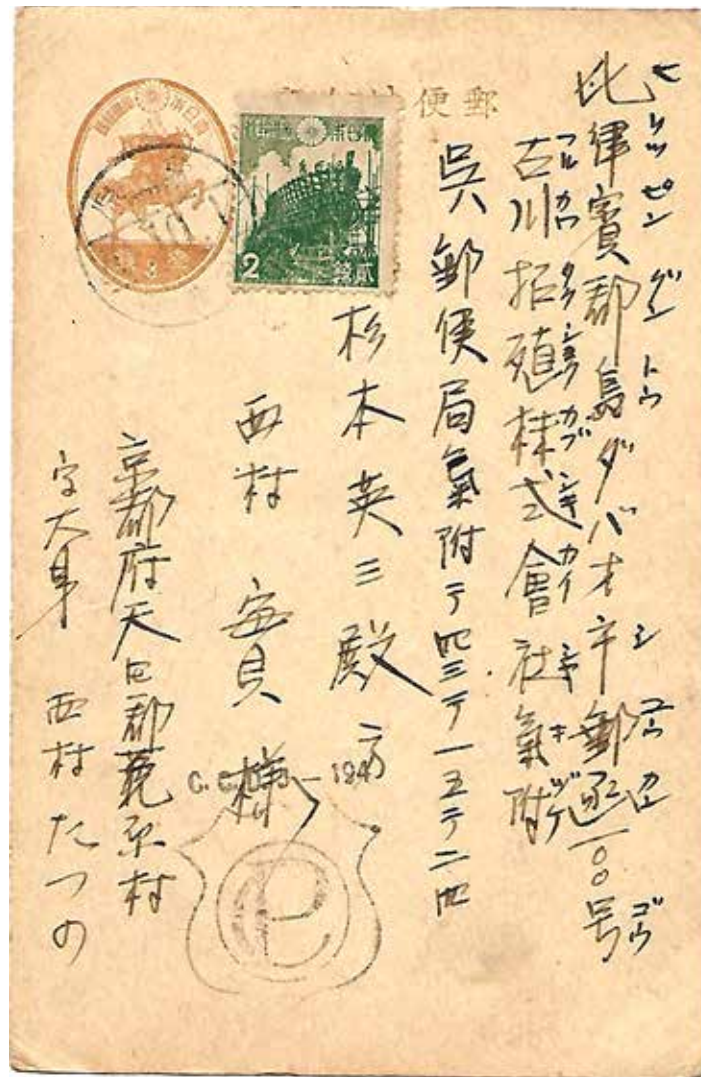


Figure 43.

A scarce postcard to a civilian internee at Davao, postmarked with a year of Shōwa 20 dated 20-10-1 (October 1, 1945) prior to the resumption of mail services to POWs. – Ed Nocom collection

Shown as **Figure 44** is a first-day postcard posted on the day of the resumption of mail services between Japan and the POWs in the former occupied territories, 3 sen postcard up rated 10 sen for 13 sen, with a year of Shōwa 20 dated 20-11-16 (November 16, 1945) from Nakano to the Philippines (Classification 3)



Figure 44.

Postcard postmarked on the first day of mail services from Japan to POWs in the former occupied territories, with a year of Shōwa 20 dated 20-11-16 (November 16, 1945), from Nakano, Japan. – *Ed Nocom collection*

Illustrated as **Figure 44A** is another first-day postcard posted on November 16, 1945, properly rated at the 15 sen overseas rate to a Japanese POW in the Philippines. This card is from Miyoko OBA, Shioguchi-cho 504, Higashiyamanashi-gun, Yamanashi-ken, Japan.



Figure 44A.

Properly rated postcard at 15 sen, postmarked on the first day of mail services from Japan to POWs in the former occupied territories, with a year of Shōwa 20 dated 20-11-16 (November 16, 1945), from Yamanashi-ken, Japan.

The previous two postcards illustrated a postal rate of 13 sen and 15 sen while this next example displays a postal stationery card rate of 3 sen, featured as **Figure 45** posted at Futatsue Shōwa 20 dated 20-11-20 from Sanno Akibayashi, Hiroi-aza, Futatsue-machi, Yamamoto-gun, Akita-ken, to Kokaji Akibayshi, Philippine Expedition I-7259 Unit, A Unit. There is no censor marking on this card so I do not know if this postcard ever got into the mail system as it was underpaid (Classification 3).

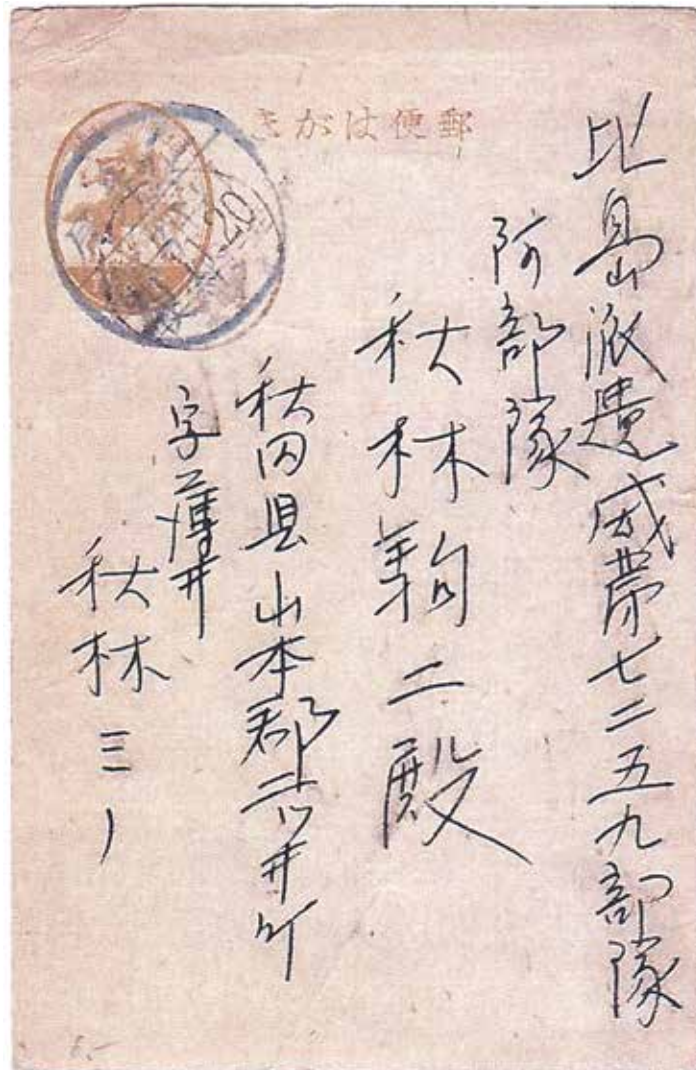


Figure 45.

Postcard postmarked four days after the resumption of mail services from Japan to POWs in the former occupied territories. This postcard may not have been delivered because there is no censorship marking, possibly because the card was short paid. – *Ed Nocom collection*

Figure 46 illustrates a 5 sen post card uprated with 10 sen in adhesives to form a 15 sen postal rate. The card is from Japan, city unclear, postdated Shōwa 20 20-12-20 (December 20, 1945), from Masatoshi Onishi, Mishimamura, Mima-gun to Masatoshi Onishi, Hyo-12023 Unit Philippines Expeditionary Force (Classification 3). The Shōwa year in the postmark has been damaged and above the date stamp a handstamp “20” was added to indicate the year; this shows the importance of the year to the Japanese.

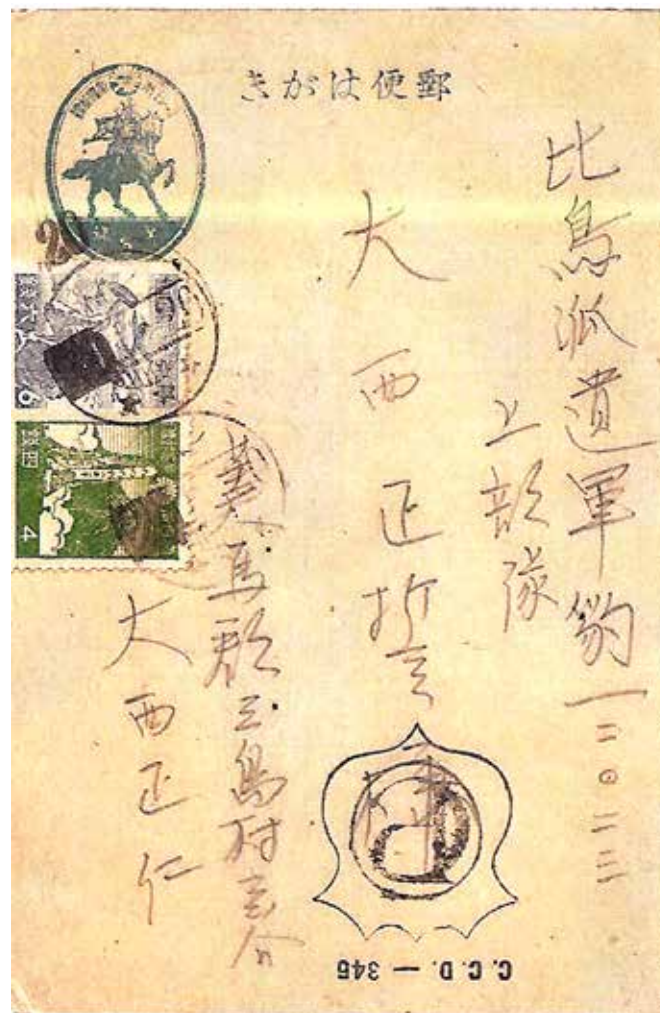


Figure 46.

Japanese postcard to the Philippines with a damaged Shōwa year and then the “20” handstamped above the dater. – *Ed Nocom collection*

Postal cards were the only type of mail that could be sent at first, but the odd cover did get through as exhibited in **Figures “47 and 48**, both 10 sen rated covers, **Figure 47** is from Okayama, Japan, with a year of Shōwa 20 dated 20-10-25 (October 25, 1945) going to a captured soldier with code 16603 I: 103 Airfield Battalion, 2 Flying Division. **Figure 48** was posted in Japan with a year of Shōwa 20, dated 20-11-6 (November 6, 1945) to a captured soldier code 10612 I: Southern Area 12 Military Hospital. Both covers were posted prior to the resumption of mail services and were held in storage until November 16, 1945 (Classification 2).

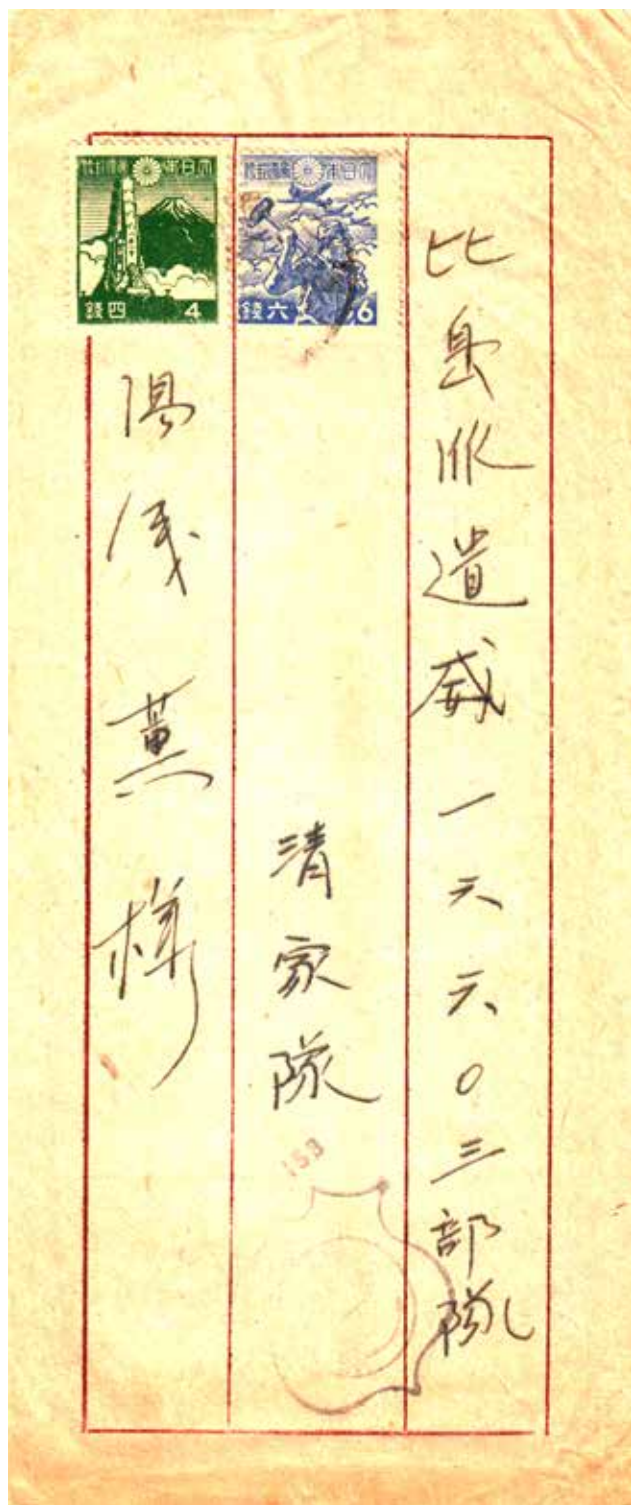


Figure 47.
Ten sen rated cover to a Japanese soldier in an airfield battalio

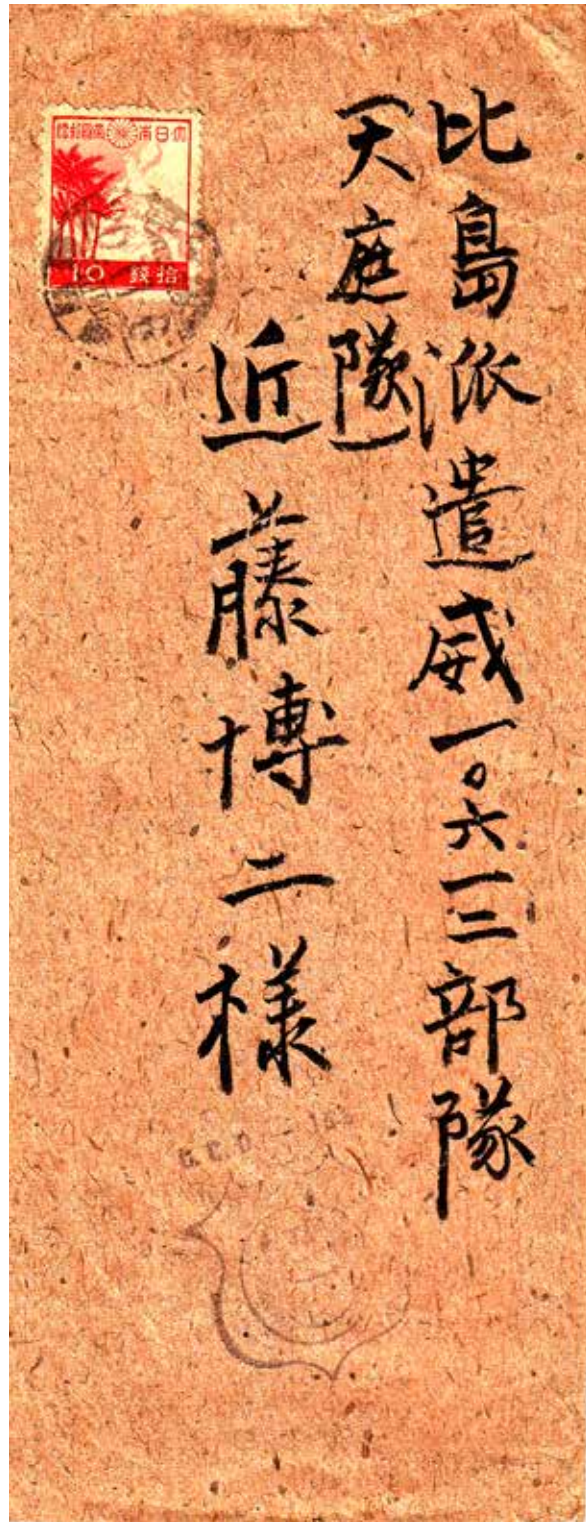


Figure 48.

Ten sen rated cover to a Japanese soldier in a Military Hospital unit.

With the mail now being allowed to be sent to the Philippines, virtually all of it could not be delivered because it was addressed to the soldier's unit; since they were now in prison camps, their mail could not be delivered and was to have been destroyed. An example of POW mail addressed to a soldier in a military unit from Japan, to "Mr. Meguro Masao, Ph. Ind. Quick Firer, 25th Battalion Head Office", with a year of Shōwa 20 dated 20-12-23 (December 23, 1945), postcard is a 2 sen Red Warrior up rated 3 sen in adhesives for a total of 5 sen, illustrated as **Figure 49**. (Classification 3).

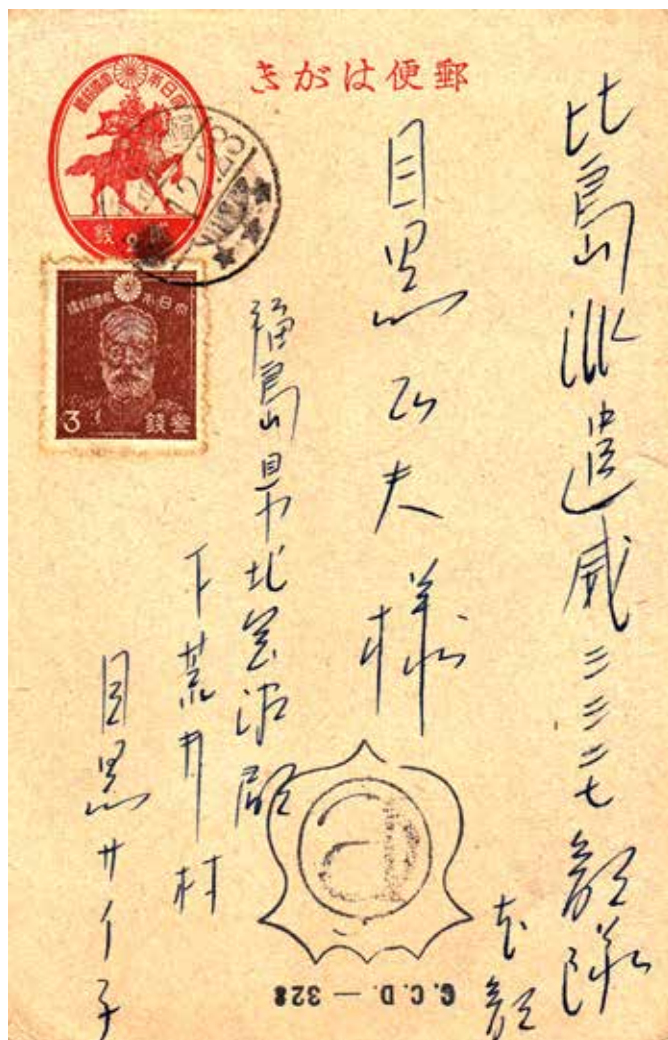


Figure 49.

Two sen Red Warrior postcard up rated 3 sen for the 5 sen postcard rate to a POW internee, Meguro Masao, Ph. Ind. Quick Firer, 25th Battalion, Head Office

Figure 50 exhibits a 14 sen rated postcard to an army hospital in Baguio, with a year of Shōwa 20, dated 20-12-21 (December 21, 1945) on which part of the message is “Looking force HITO (Philippines) dispatch I 7208 force OOTA unit, Mr. Okado Haruo.”, (Classification 3).

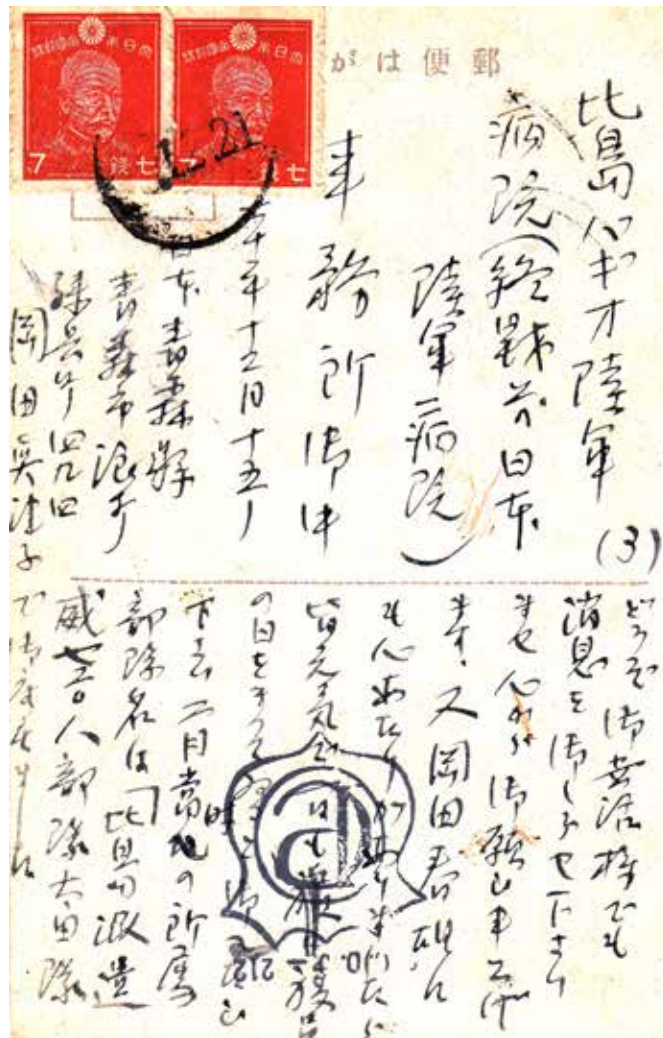


Figure 50.
Fourteen sen rated postcard addressed to a Japanese military unit.

Many Japanese officers were detained in separate camps from the regular enlisted men, or if they were in a mixed camp they were detained in separate quarters. Many of these officers were being held on war-crime charges or may have been deemed a threat to peace because of their loyalty to Japan. These officers were held in the camps much longer than the regular soldiers and as such they were able to receive letters and to inform their family members about the camps in which they were being detained at as exhibited in **Figure 51**. This is a postcard from Tokyo, with a year of Shōwa 22, dated 22-11-01 (November 1, 1947) to Mr. Yato Kato at LUZON POW CAMP NO. 1 / Philippines Island / APO 900 which was located at Manila. The postcard was noted as received on December 8th (Classification 4). Luzon Camp No. 1 was at Calamba.

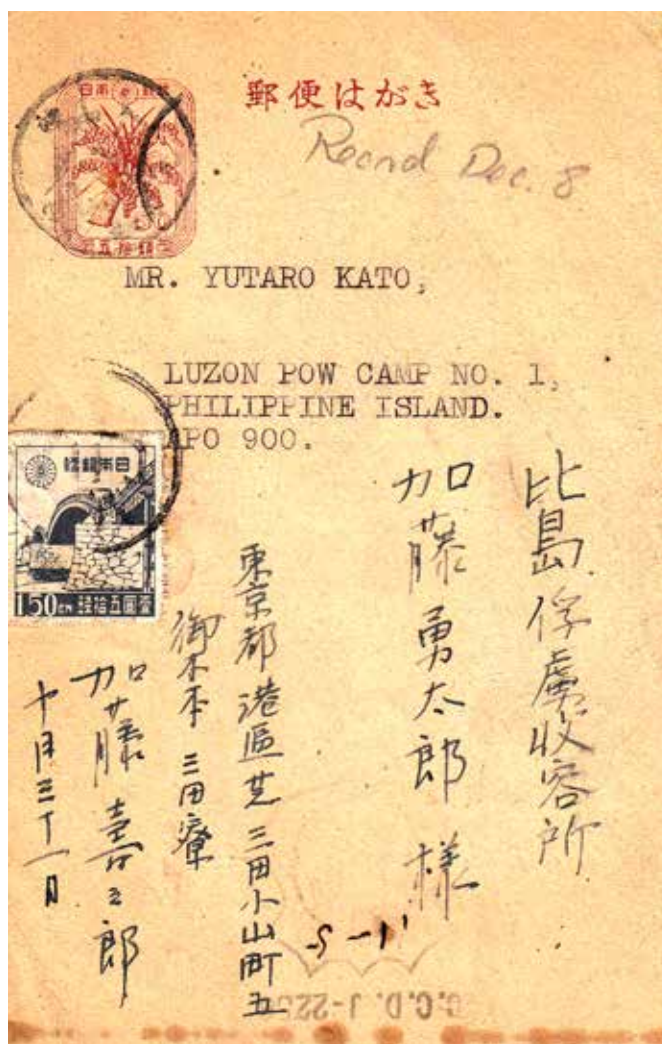


Figure 51.

A 50 sen postcard up rated 1 yen 50 sen ($50 + 1.50 = 2$ yen) from Tokyo to Luzon POW Camp 1, APO 900, which was located at Manila.

Figure 52 shows a cover postmarked with a year of Shōwa 22, dated stamp 22-4-17 (April 17, 1947) rated 1 yen 20 sen from Japan to the Philippines, (Classification 3).

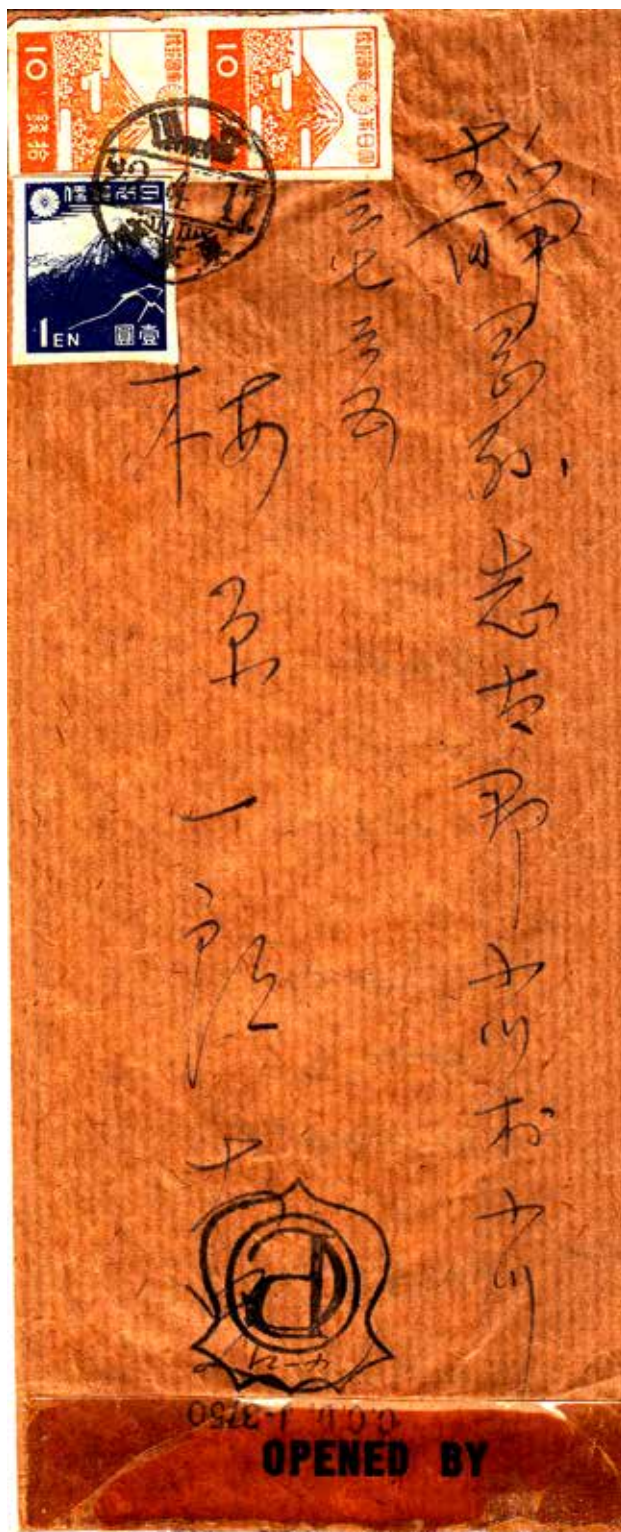


Figure 52.
Cover posted in 1947 to a Japanese POW in the Philippines, with the Japanese style date stamp

Exhibited as *Figures 53, 54 and 54A* are three bilingually addressed postcards to POWs. *Figure 53* shows a 5 sen postcard uprated with 10 sen in adhesives to make up a 15 sen postcard rate, with a year of Shōwa 20, dated 20-12-26 (December 26, 1945) from Osaka-city Suburb Minoo Village to a Tacloban Internment Camp on Leyte Island. (I believe that the receiver Masayuki Nakamura was a civilian internee) (Classification 4). *Figure 54* also displays a bilingually addressed 2 sen postcard uprated with 13 sen in adhesives for a 15 sen postcard rate, with a year of Shōwa 20, dated 20-12-19 (December 19, 1945) from Takoaka, Japan to a POW at Compound No. 10, Luzon P.W. Camp No. 1, A.P.O. 75, (Classification 4). *Figure 54A* exhibits a 3 sen postcard uprated with a 2 sen adhesive (still short paid and allowed to pass through the mails), showa dated 20-11-26 (November 26, 1945) from Japan to a Japanese officer at POW Camp 3 at the Leyte Detention Center, A.P.O. 72, (Classification 4).

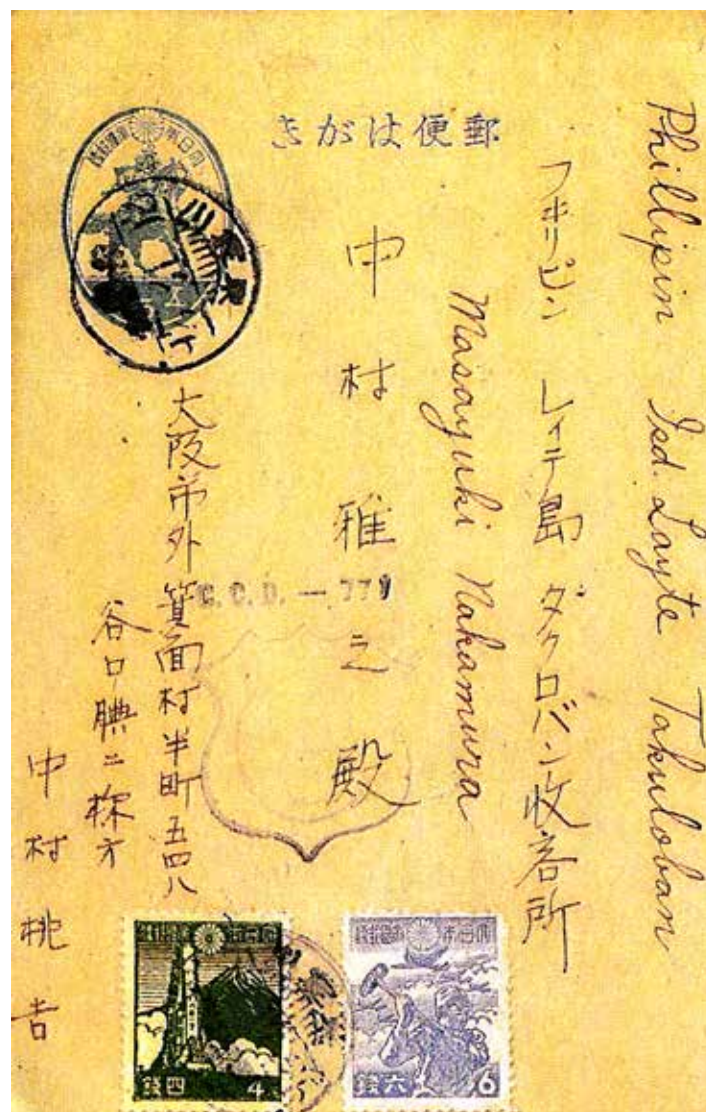


Figure 53.

A 15 sen rated bilingually addressed postcard from Japan to an individual at Tacloban. – source unknown



Figure 54.

A 15 sen rated bilingually addressed postcard from Japan to a POW at Compound No. 10, Luzon P.W. Camp, A.P.O. No. 75. – source unknown

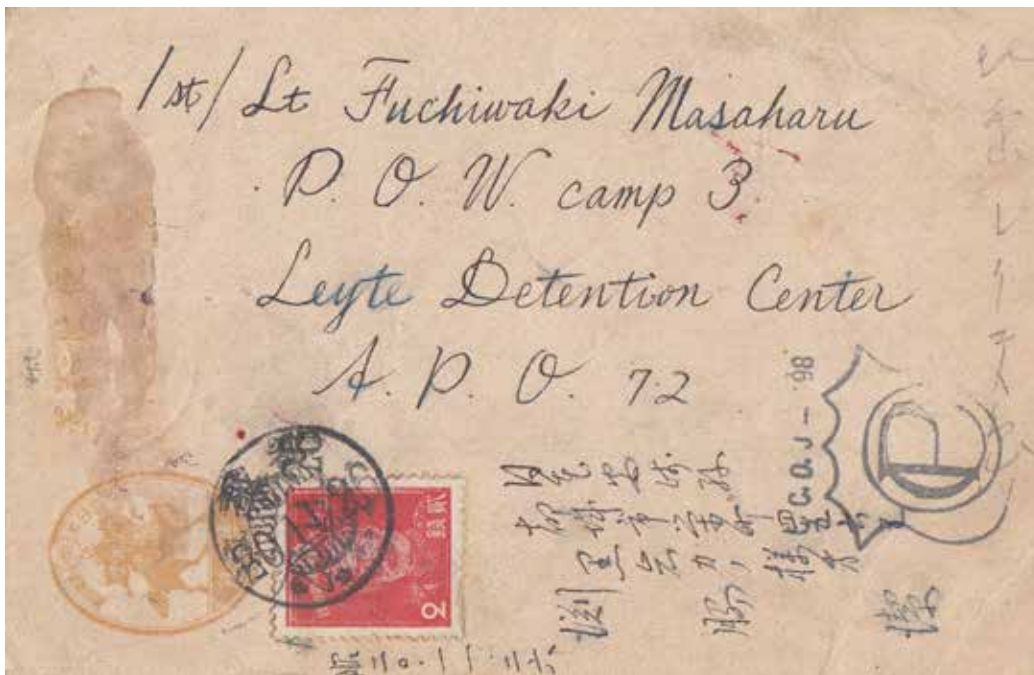


Figure 54A.

A 5 sen rated bilingually addressed postcard from Japan to a POW at P.O.W. Camp 3, Leyte Detention Center, A.P.O. 72

Mail could be sent from Japan to POWs in the Philippines from November 16, 1945 in which there is no location or camp name as to where the POW is being held. The following two examples of this type of mail are illustrated as the bilingually named postcard in **Figure 55** on which the only information in English is the name of the POW and his unit number, Hi-To Haken, Ji-15311 Butai Yamamoto Butai (Manila Air Depot). It is a 3 sen postcard uprated 2 sen in adhesives for a 5 sen rate, with a year of Shōwa 20, dated 20-11-22 (November 22, 1945), (Classification 3). **Figure 55A** illustrates a 3 sen postcard uprated with a 2 sen adhesive (still short paid and allowed to pass through the mails), showa date unclear from Kurita District, Shiga Prefecture, Japan to a Japanese POW soldier. This example also does not have the location or name of the camp in which he is interned, (Classification 3).



Figure 55.

A 5 sen rated bilingually addressed postcard from Japan to a POW in which there is no mention of the location or camp as to where this POW is being held. – source unknown

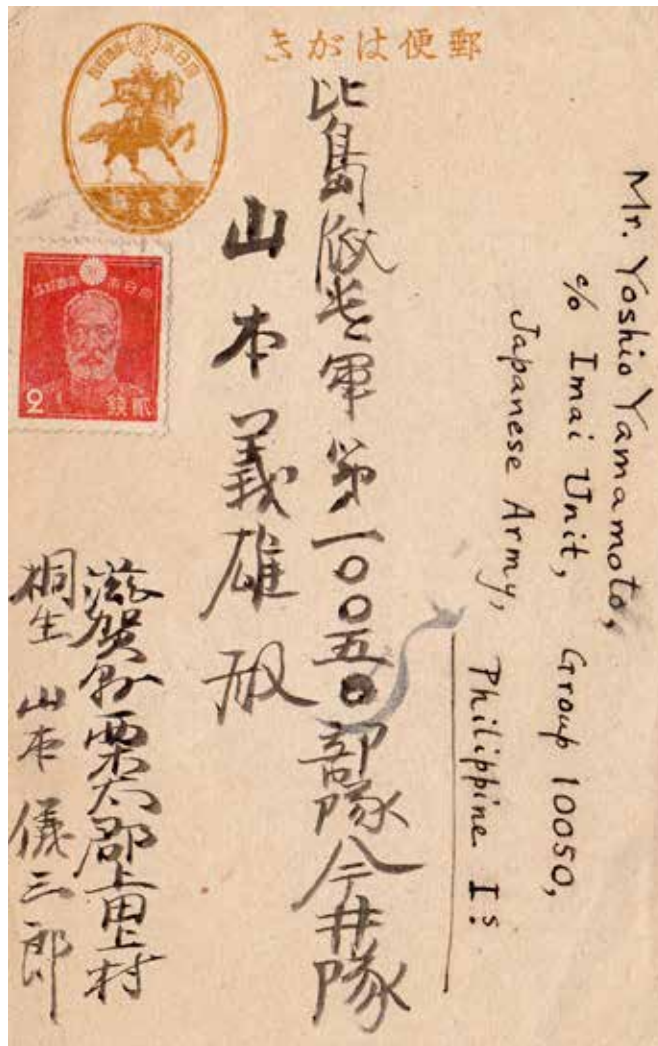


Figure 55A.

A 5 sen rated bilingually addressed postcard from Japan to a POW in which no camp or location has been specified.

With thousands upon thousands of Japanese soldiers being held as POWs throughout the far east and Asia, civilian postcards and adhesive stamps started to become depleted and Gunji Yuban (military mail postcards) were authorized to be used for which postal fees were paid at the post office; two such examples are exhibited as **Figures 56 and 57**. **Figure 56** is from Tokushima, Japan postmarked with a year of Shōwa 20, dated stamp of 20-11-22 (November 22, 1945) sent to a soldier by the name of Yamaguchi with a Philippine military address code, Shun 10679: 79th Infantry Brigade, 103 Division, Luzon. A second postal marking is hand stamped over the printed Japanese equivalent of “Military Mail”; this circular hand stamp indicating FEE PAID is in the center of the marking. This leads one to believe that the postcards and adhesives used by civilians were depleted or close to being depleted at this post office and the use of the old Gunji Yuban military postcards was necessary to correspond with the Japanese POWs in the Philippines (Classification 3).

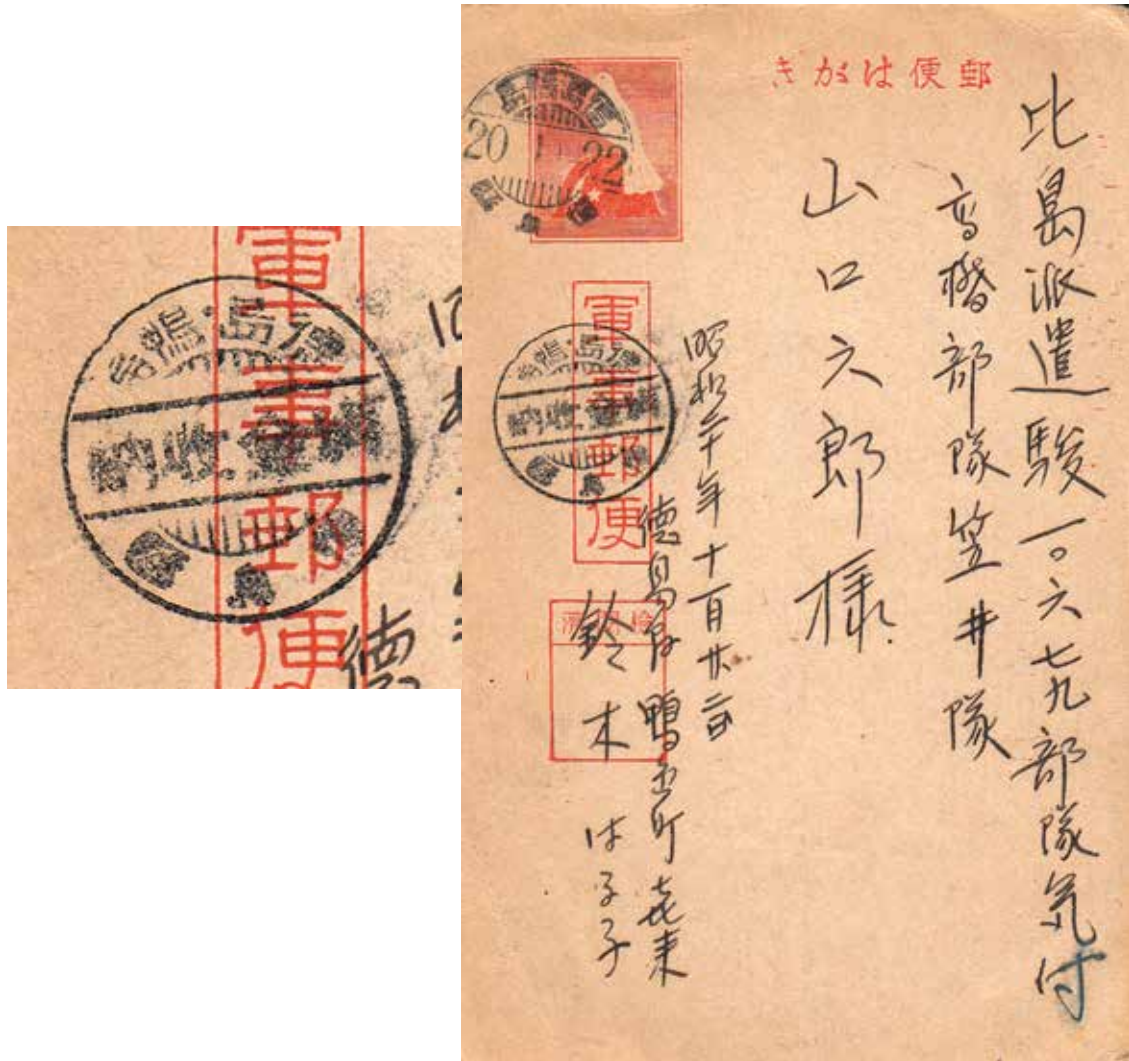


Figure 56.

Gunji Yuban military postcard used to correspond with a Japanese POW in the Philippines, for which a postage fee was paid to the post office as indicated by the second postal marking

A second example of a Gunji Yuban used for post-war correspondence to a Japanese POW in the Philippines is shown as *Figure 57*; the Japanese printed “Military Mail” was crossed out in pen. Postal charges would have been applied at the post office, The date of this card is unreadable. The postcard is from Akiko Furuta, Hojo, Niyugawacho, Shuso-gun, Ehime-Ken (Prefecture) to Ochi Amiyoshi, Philippines Expeditionary Force 1-10631 Unit HQ (Classification 3).

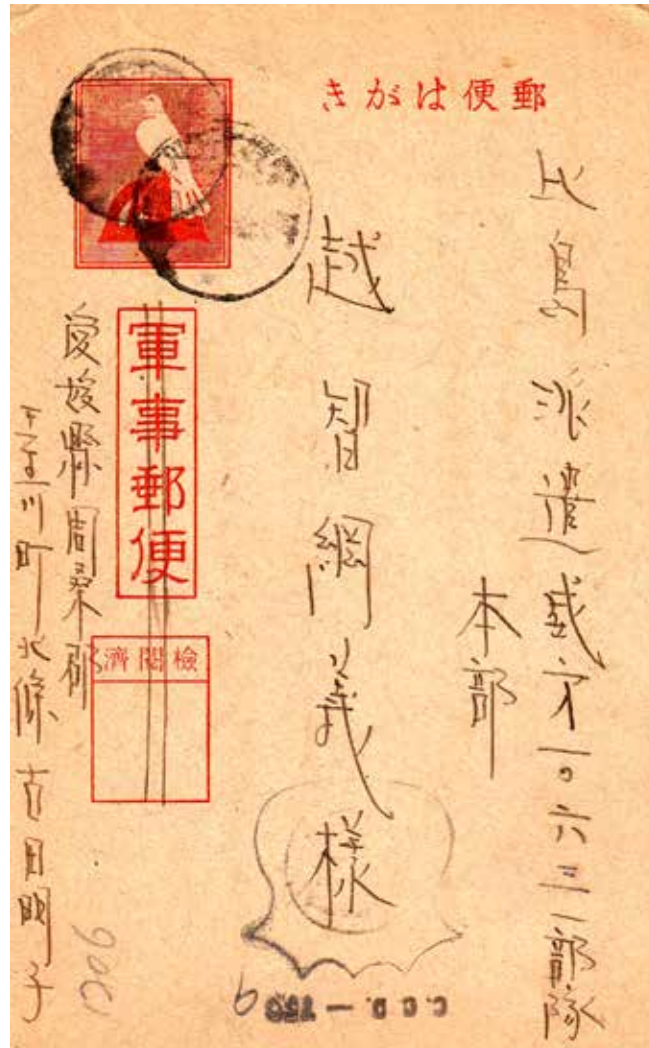


Figure 57.

Gunji Yuban military postcard used to correspond with a Japanese POW in the Philippines, on which the censor marking is crossed out in pen

Some of the mail destined for the POWs in the Philippines made reference to “Camps” in the Japanese address. These camp names may have been assigned to the previous Japanese military unit or were a reference camp name given in Japan. Two such examples of camps referred to with Japanese names are detailed in *Figures 58 and 59*. *Figure 58* illustrates a 5 sen postcard uprated with 10 sen in adhesives for a 15 sen rate from Tokyo, with a year of Shōwa 20, dated in manuscript 20-11-23 (November 23, 1945) to Hashimoto Yoshiro, PH #129 Logistical Hospital, “Kamakura Camp”, with Kamakura Camp listed as the destination in Japanese (Classification 3). *Figure 59* details a 30 sen rated cover with a year of Shōwa 21, dated 21-01-2 (January 2, 1946) to Ishikura, Phol. Disp., I-10292 Unit, “Matsumoto Camp”, with Matsumoto Camp listed in Japanese as the destination.



Figure 58.

Five sen postcard up rated 10 sen for a total of 15 sen, from Tokyo with notation in the address that the receiver is at the Kamakura Camp.

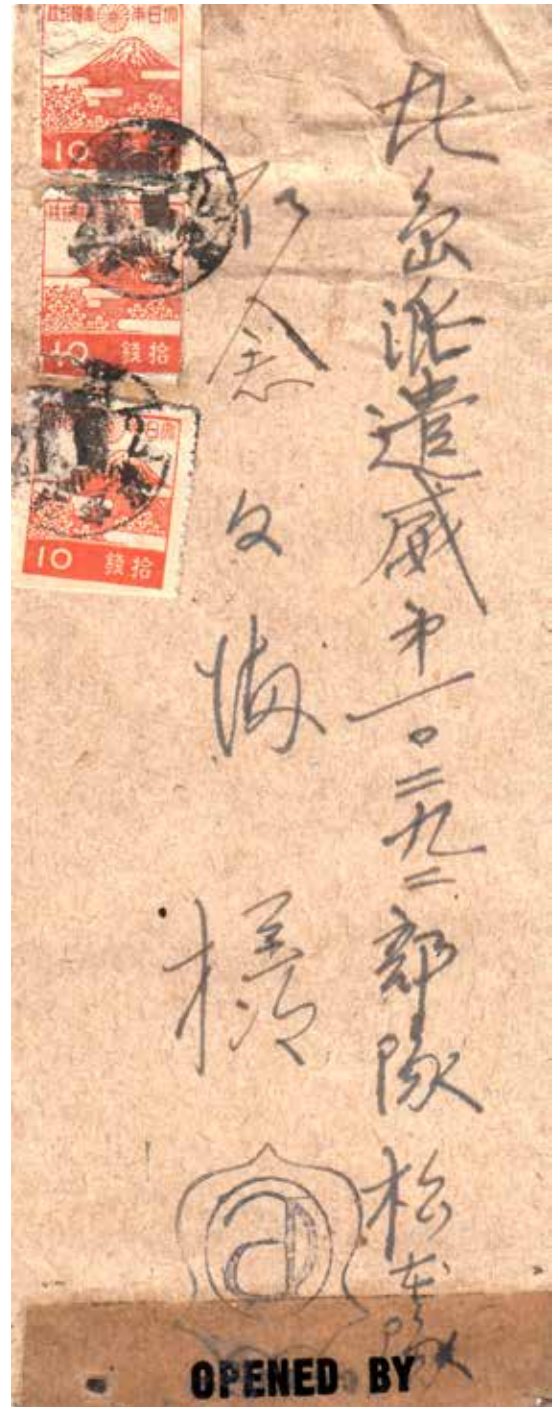


Figure 59.

Thirty sen cover from Japan with the address noting that the receiver was at the Matsumoto Camp.

A 15 sen postally rated post card, with a year of Shōwa 21, dated 21-09-17 (September 17, 1946) from Ōita Prefecture, Japan to Luzon POW Branch Camp, #8 Clark Field APO 719 is displayed as Figure 60.³



Figure 60.
Postcard to Luzon POW Camp #8 Clark Field. – courtesy Mr. Soeda³

As can be seen from the material shown, there was a wide range of postage on the postcards and covers during this period, which may be due to unorganized postal matters after the surrender and for many years to come.

All of the examples shown previously is incoming mail from Japan to POWs in the Philippines. Outgoing mail from Japanese POWs to Japan is rather uncommon, one such example is shown as Figure 61, which is from a soldier being held at the L.D.C. Station Hospital (Leyte Detention Center) to his mother in Japan. The writer sends his greeting, talks about his conversations with other soldiers about different topics, misses home, dated February 24 (1946).

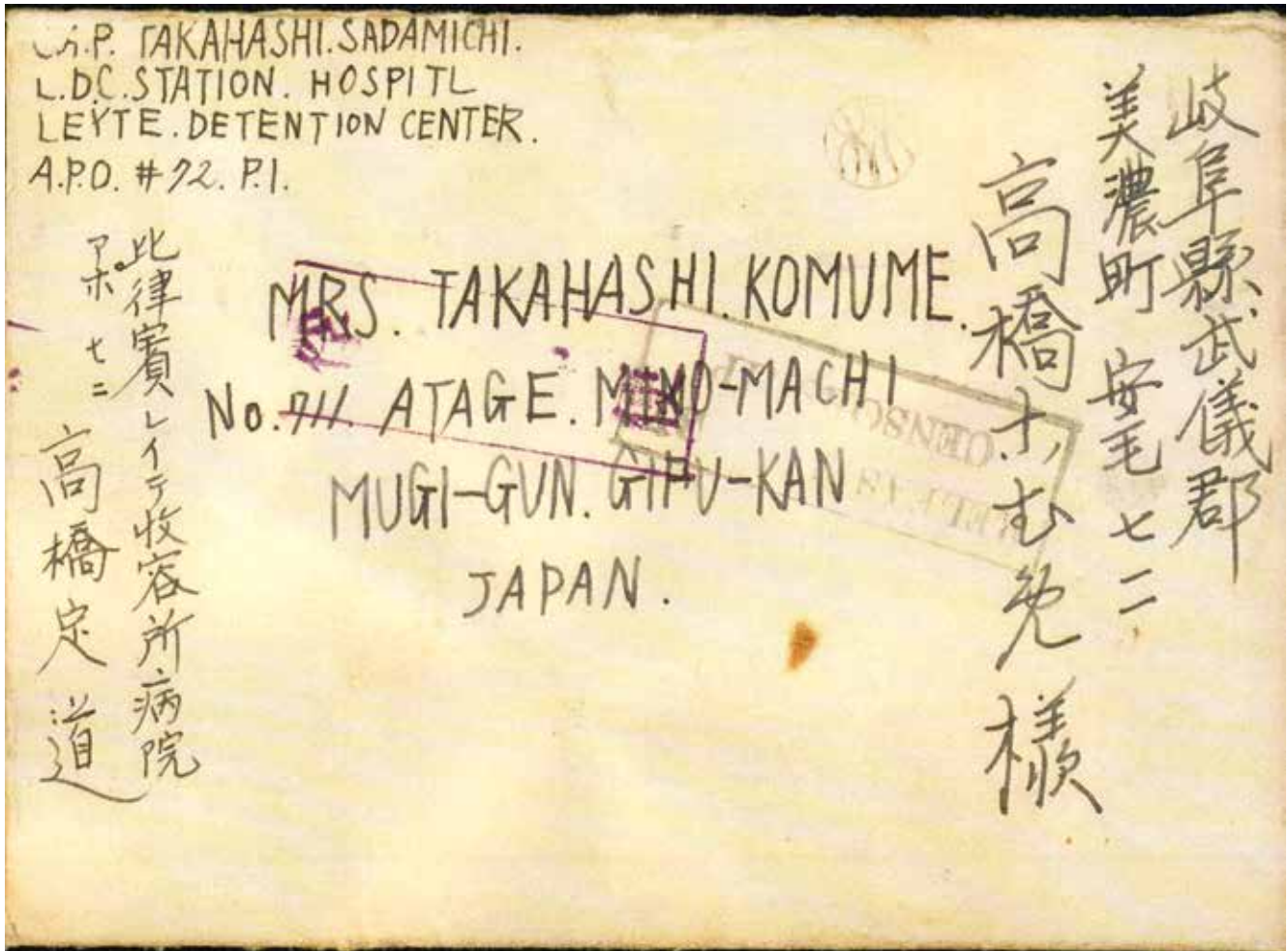


Figure 61.

Letter posted to Japan by a Japanese POW being held at the Leyte Detention Center Hospital.

Other examples of mail from the Philippines to Japan will be shown and discussed in the next chapter “POW Postcards and Letter Sheets”.

POW Postcards and Letter Sheets

After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, the United States entered World War II against Japan, Germany and Italy. Internment camps where civilians of Japanese descent were interned for the duration of the war were established throughout the U.S. Post cards and letter sheets were issued in the United States to civilians of Japanese descent who were interned. These same post cards and letter sheets were later issued for the Japanese POWs and civilian internees in the liberated areas of the Pacific and the Philippines, which were previously under Japanese occupation.

POW postcards

The cards were printed on a pale blue-green card stock that was specially treated so that it changed color when it absorbed moisture. This paper may have been used in case a prisoner tried to use disappearing ink or something else of that nature. The size was 5.5 x 3.25-inches (140 mm x 82 mm). Cards were printed on two sides in black ink and printing was bilingual, in English and Japanese. There were three types of post cards, with form numbers that were used for the Japanese Prisoners of War.

Form numbers are listed on government printed forms, for the purpose of re-ordering. If a government department requested a reprint of a form/document, a requisition would be filled out and sent to the printing office and then the printer would check the form number in their file as to its location, remove the printing plate or type and proceed to press. Every time a copy change was made on a form, it would receive a new form number. The dates on these forms were mainly the first date the form was printed and if a copy change was required than the printing date was also changed, as can be seen on the following examples.

W. D., P. M. G. Form No. 5
February 17, 1942

W. D., P. M. G. Form No. 5-1
November 1, 1942

WD AGO FORM
1 MAR 1945 19-7
Supersedes WD PMG Form 5-1,
1 Nov. 1942, which may be used.

The abbreviations used on these cards and letter sheets are as follows: W.D. = War Department; P.M.G. + Provost Marshal General; A.G.O. = Adjutant General's Office.

Form 5, dated February 17, 1942

The first style of POW cards has a printed date of February 17, 1942, two months after the attack on Pearl. An unused example of this first card is displayed as **Figure 62**, with this printing information on the front bottom right corner of the card: W.D., P.M.G. Form No. 5 / February 17, 1942.

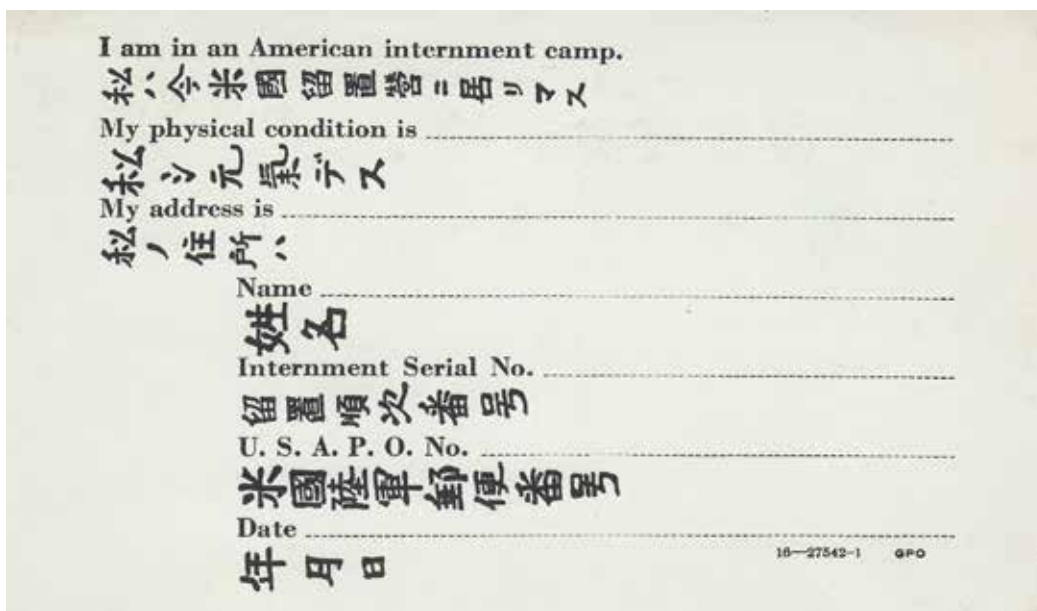
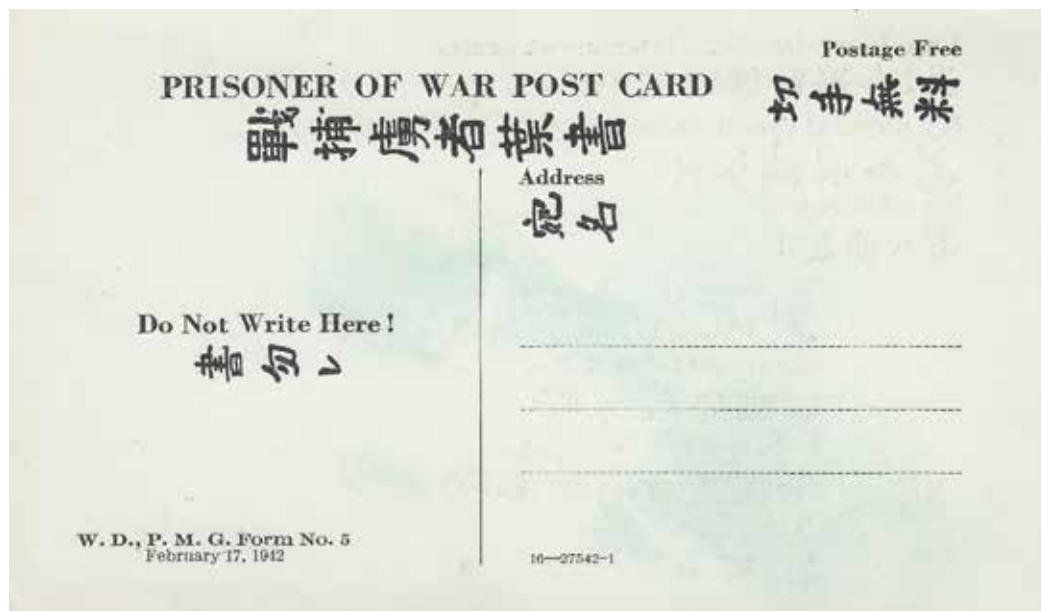


Figure 62.

An unused example of the first Japanese POW card with the date of February 17, 1942.

Form 5-1, dated November 1, 1942

A second card of identical design as *Figure 62* is illustrated as *Figure 63* in which the form no. is now 5-1, with a date of November 1, 1942.³

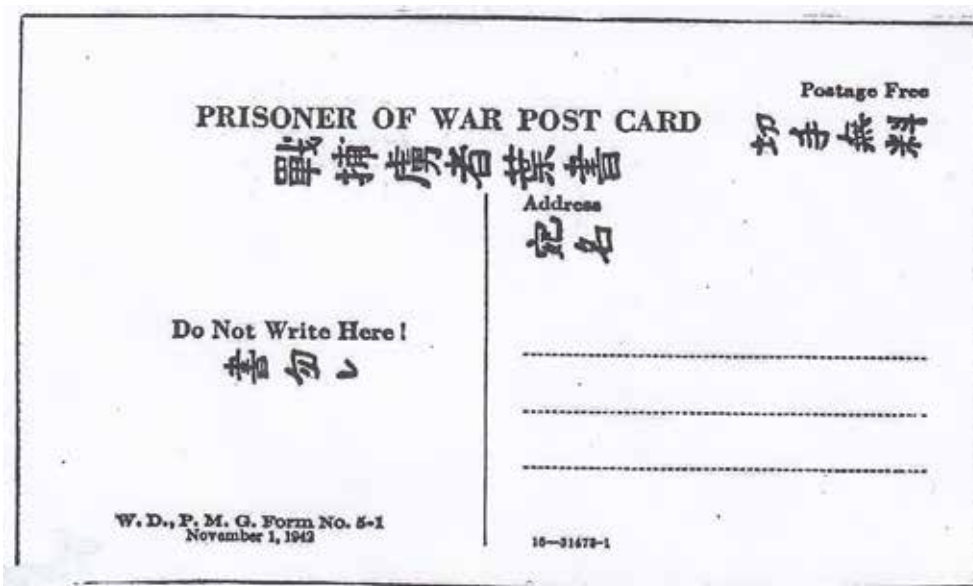


Figure 63.

An example of the first style of the Japanese POW card, but with the form no. changed to 5-1 and a date of November 1, 1942.³

Form 19-7, dated March 1, 1945

A third card appeared with a date of March 1, 1945. An unused example is exhibited as *Figure 64*. The front is basically the same as the first style except on the front of the card at the bottom left, where “WD AGO FORM / 1 MAR 1945 19-7, Supersedes WD PMG Form 5-1, 1 Nov. 1942”. The back on this post card is different from the previous two in that there are dotted lines for writing a message.

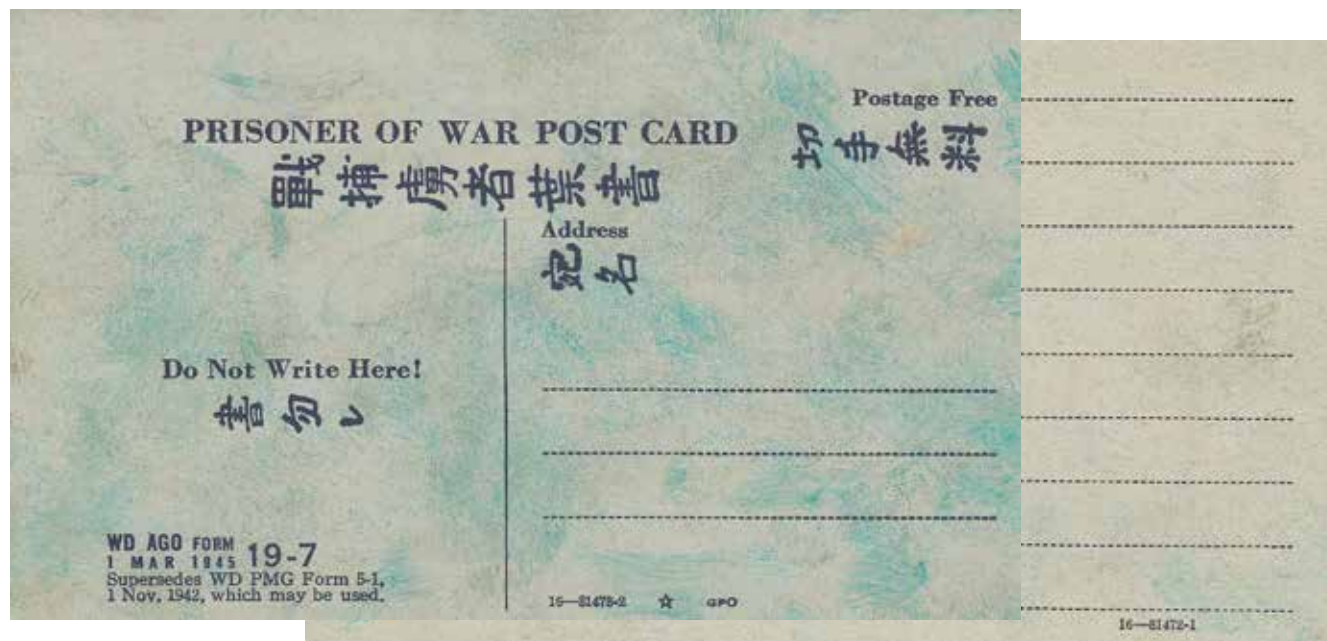


Figure 64.

An unused example of the second Japanese POW post card with a March 1, 1945 date and form no. 19-7.

Two used examples of this Form 19-7 post card are exhibited, both used at POW Calamba Camp No. 1, **Figure 65**. The first is dated April 8, 1946 and it was censored in Japan with the PC shield censor handstamp. **Figure 66** exhibits a post card censored in the Philippines with the boxed RELEASED BY CENSORSHIP. The PC Shield censor hand stamp was primarily used on mail of Japanese prisoners who were being held on lesser charges, while the boxed RELEASED BY CENSORSHIP hand stamp has been recorded used on mail of those serving more serious charges and used In the Philippines.

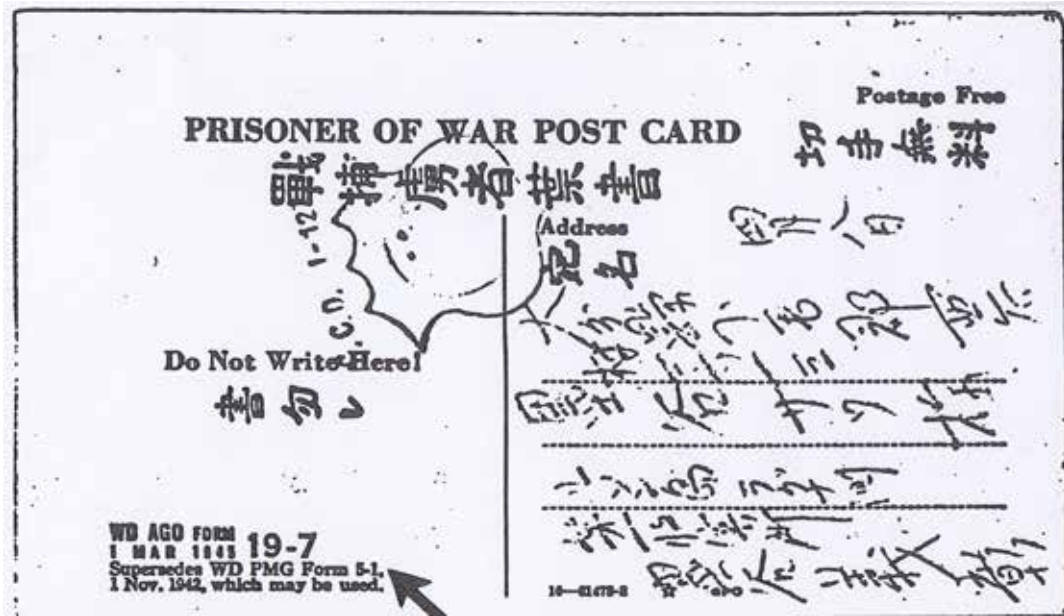


Figure 65.

A used example of Form 19-7 post card, from a POW at Calamba No. 1 Camp, dated April 8, 1946, censored in Japan. – courtesy of Japanese Military Personnel Prisoners' Mail in the Philippine Islands by Yano Fumihiko³

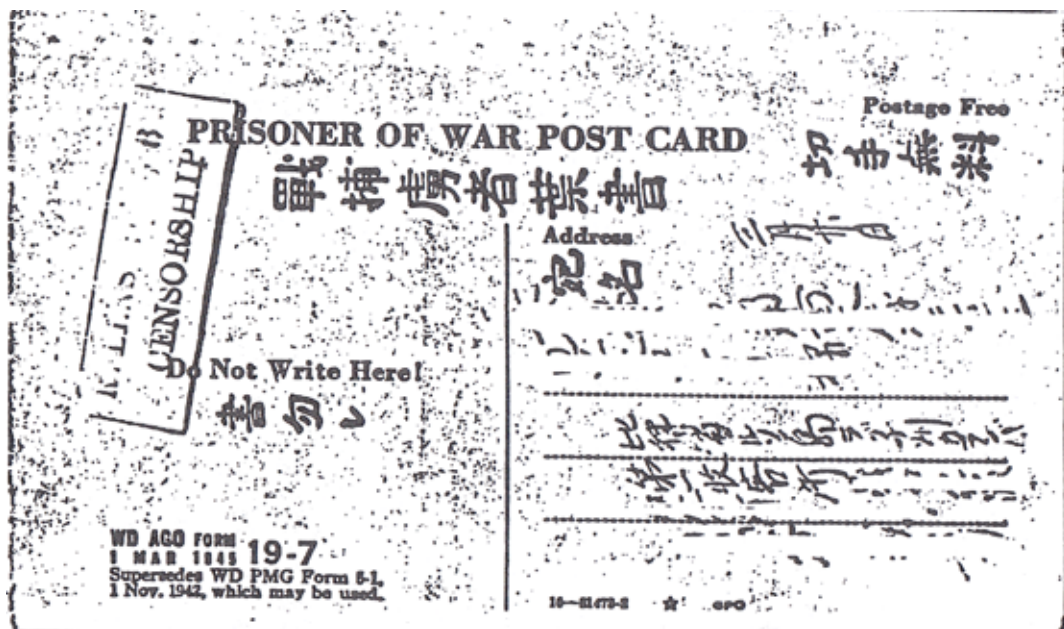


Figure 66.

A used example of Form 19-7 postcard from a POW at Calamba No. 1 Camp, dated March 30, 1946, censored in the Philippines. This POW was in prison for harsher crimes and was kept in the War Convicts Ward. – courtesy of Japanese Military Personnel Prisoners' Mail in the Philippine Islands by Yano Fumihiko³

Another example of the scarce third type of POW card is shown as **Figure 67**. This card is from “Kishioka Takashi, 1-B, Sub-base “R”, POW Camp, Batangas, P.I.” and is dated May 9th, to a family member with Shōnai, Osaka Pref. Japan, May 31 indicated as the date of arrival.³ Mail from Batangas (as indicated at the bottom of the back of the card) is very uncommon.

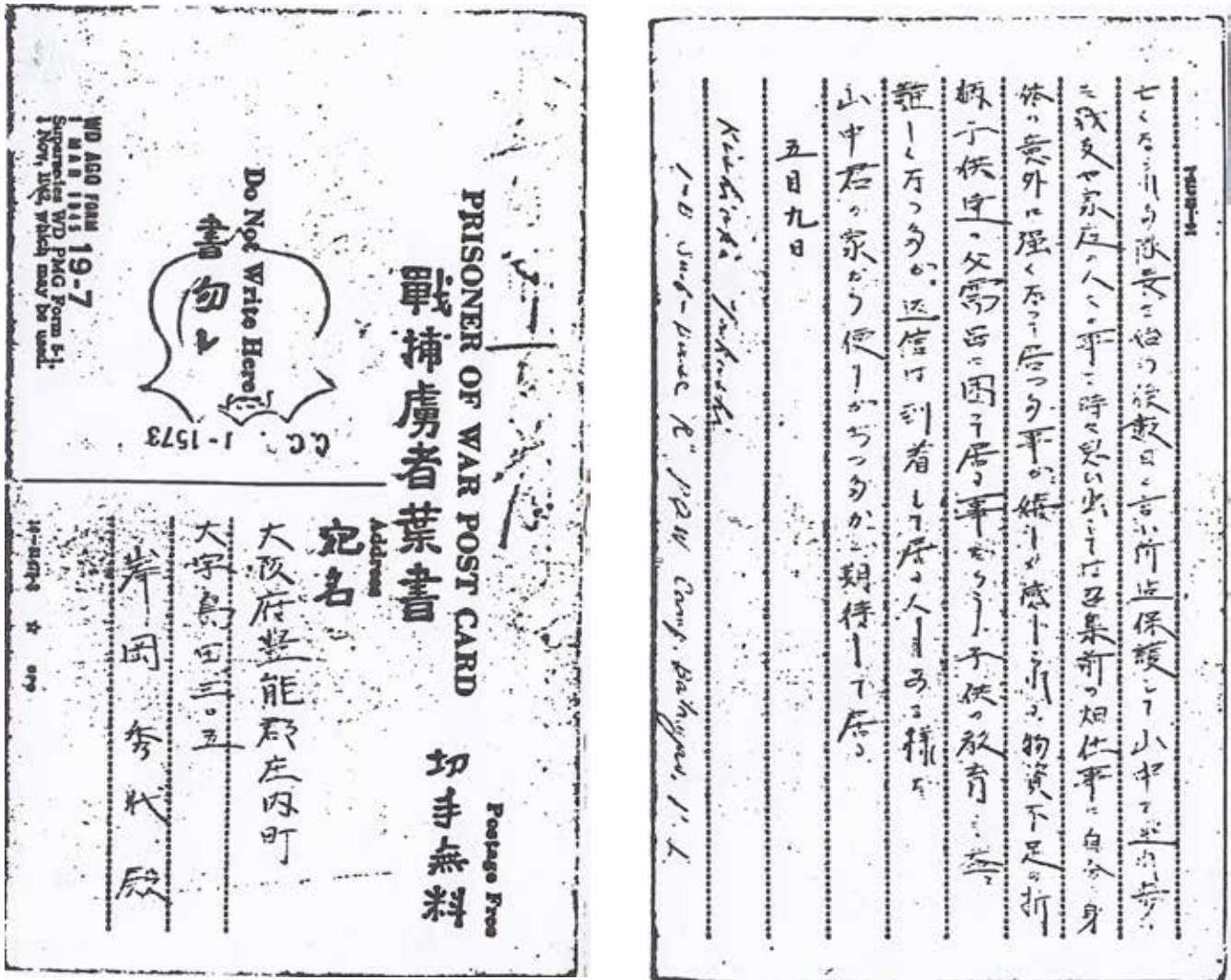


Figure 67.

A scarce used example of a POW post card from Batangas, dated May 9th, censored in Japan. – courtesy of Mr. Ogihara³

A very unusual POW post card in which the text is bilingual English and Italian is illustrated as **Figure 68**. This example is from, Soeda Kirokichi in LUZON POW branch Camp #8, Clark Field APO 719, to a Mr. K. Soedka in Oita Pref., Japan.³ Compared to the previous post cards, which have Form 19-7, the Italian language is in place of the Japanese. The date is the same except the Form number is 19-11 and some of the verbiage at the bottom right on the front of card is different. The only conclusion that I can attest to is that both cards were printed at approximately the same time and both have a date of November 1, 1942 and upon completion of the printing process those cards for the Japanese and Italians were in the same production area and the package with the Italian version was accidentally mixed into the Japanese version for transportation to Manila.

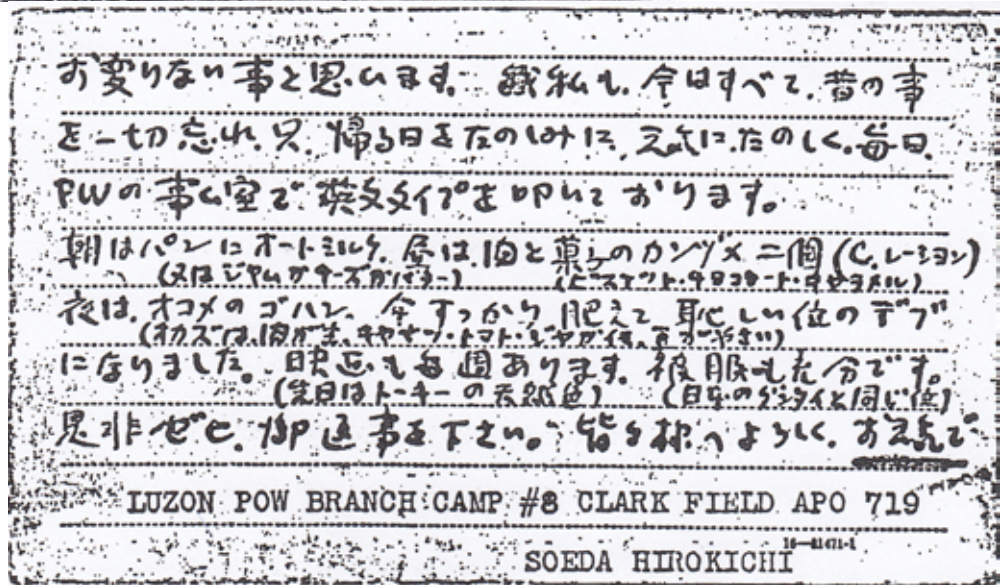
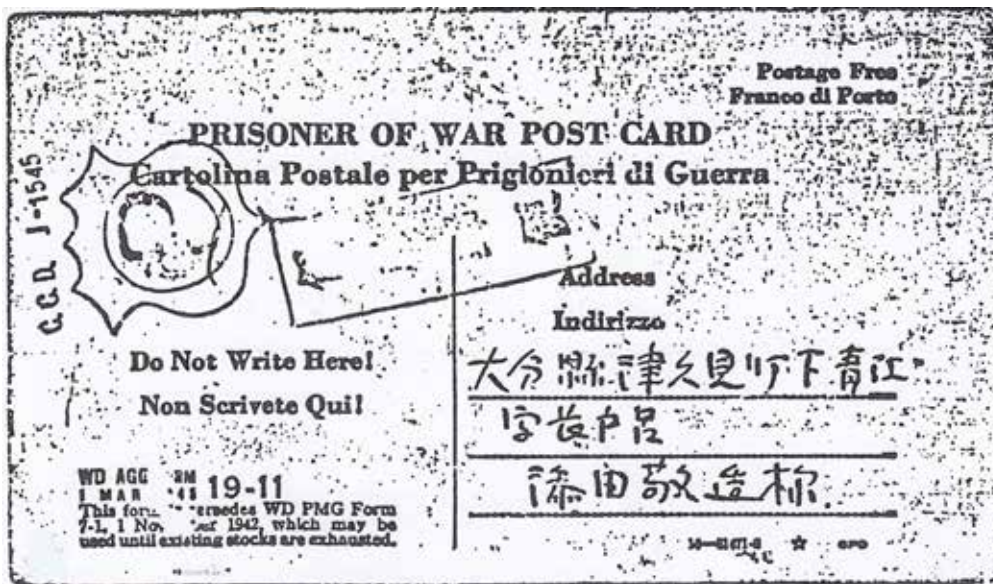


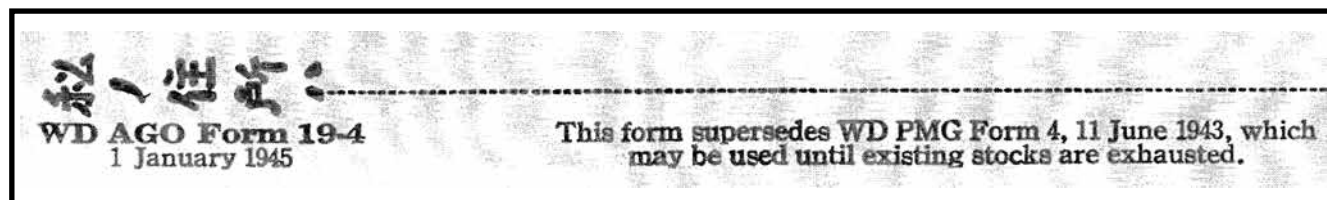
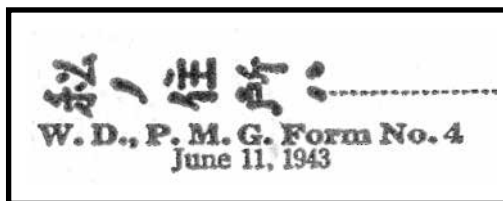
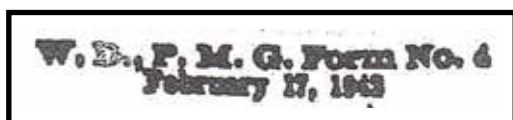
Figure 68.

POW post card that was to have been used by an Italian POW somewhere, accidentally been shipped to Manila and used by a Japanese POW. – courtesy of Japanese Military Personnel Prisoners' Mail in the Philippine Islands by Yano Fumihiko³

Letter sheets

These letter sheets are multi-lingual, with the information printed in English, German, Italian and Japanese, with both sides printed in black on blue-green paper. The form number and production date are located at the bottom left corner on the inside of the form, below the sender's information. The letter sheets were to be used by POWs overseas as well as American civilians of Japanese descent in the United States for correspondence within the U.S. [Ed note: in Mr. Fumihiko's publication, he illustrates on page 26 an example of the first type of letter sheet from an internment camp in New Mexico to Hsinking, Manchukuo that was posted on March 16, 1943, arriving at Chungking on November 6, 1944 and reaching Hsinking on March 21, 1945, two years in travel. This example illustrates that these may also have been used for foreign destinations.]

There were three types of letter sheets with form nos. used for the Japanese Prisoners of War. Information on these POW letter sheets was supplied by the excellent work by Yano Fumihiko.³ The form numbers and printing dates are: Form No. 4, February 17, 1942; Form No. 4, June 11, 1943 and Form No. 19-4 January 1, 1945.⁴



Form No. 4, dated February 17, 1942

The first type of the POW letter sheet is printed in black on two sides of blue-green paper, with a size of 6 x 14-inches (15 cm x 35.5 cm). This type had 3 folds which created 4 panels and on the inside there were 24 ruled lines for writing a message and 4 lines for the sender's name and address with a line in English, German, Italian and Japanese. The outside contains space for the receiver's address, with lines in each of English, German, Italian and Japanese, along with PRISONER OF WAR in large bold-face type and POSTAGE FREE. This first style of letter sheet differed from the previous in that a flap was inserted into a slit to close the form. An example of this first letter sheet with a production date of February 17, 1942 is reproduced here as *Figure 69*³ Mr. Fumihiko states in his publication that he has seen an example of this first type used by a civilian in the Philippines to Hyōgo-ken, a Prefecture in Japan.

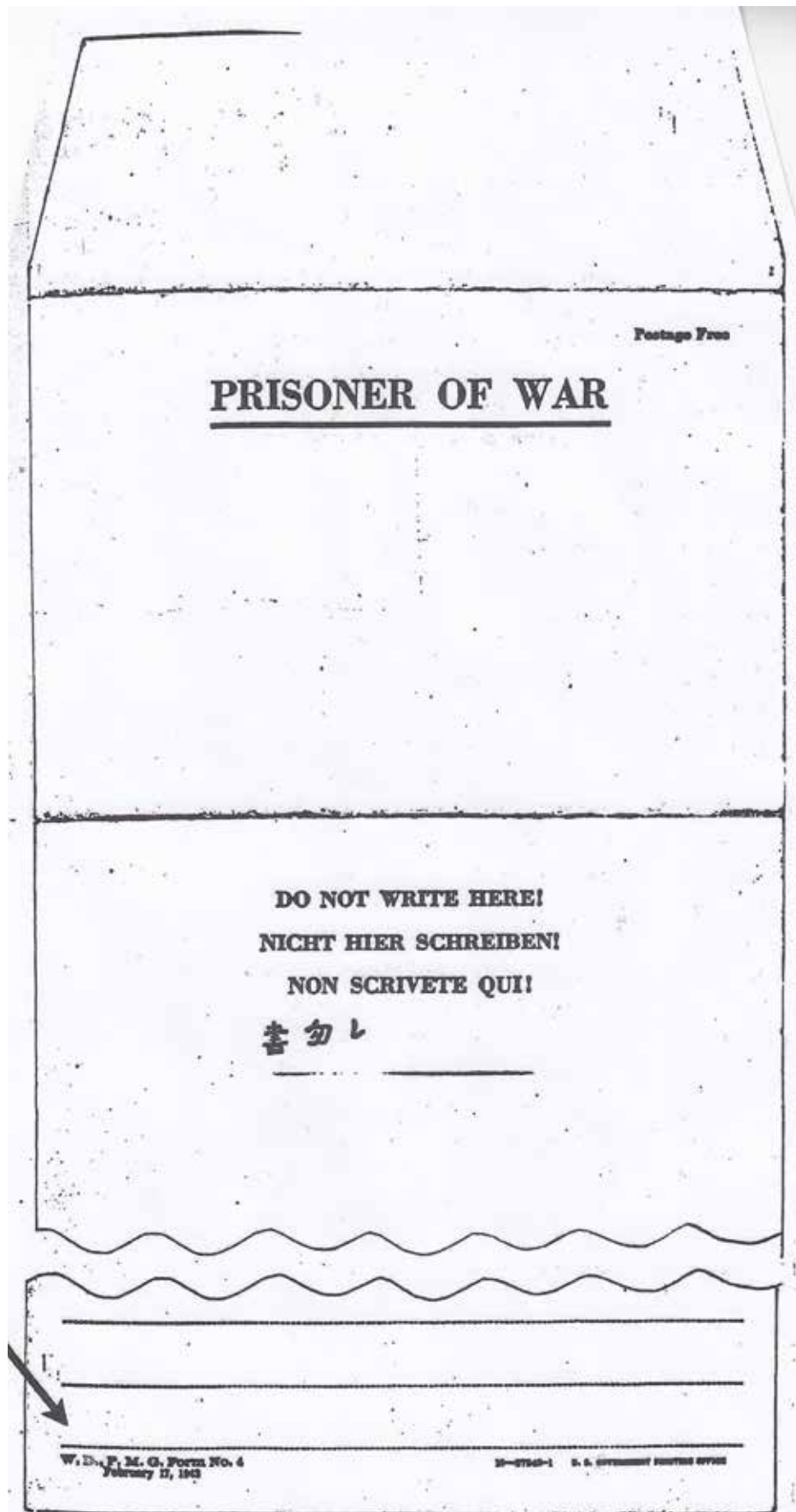


Figure 69.

A black and white copy from Mr. Fumihiko publication showing the first type of letter sheet. – courtesy of Japanese Military Personnel Prisoners' Mail in the Philippine Islands by Yano Fumihiko³

Form No. 4, dated June 11, 1943

The production of POW letter sheets with this date produced a different size, being 7-7/8 x 14-inches (20 cm x 35.5 cm). The message area is made up of 19 boxed lines. An example of Form No. 4 with a June 11, 1943 date is illustrated as **Figure 70**; it is from Kato Yutaro, Luzon POW Camp #1, APO 75. There is a month of December 4 but no year is indicated. APO 75 was at Manila. (Luzon POW Camp No. 1 was at Calamba.) Kato was tried by the U.S. Military Commission and sentenced to LUPOW #1 (sentencing details unknown). This air letter form is going to Mie-ken, Japan, censored with the PC Shield censor hand stamp. The production information on this form is as follows: **W.D., P.M.G. Form No. 4 / June 11, 1943.**

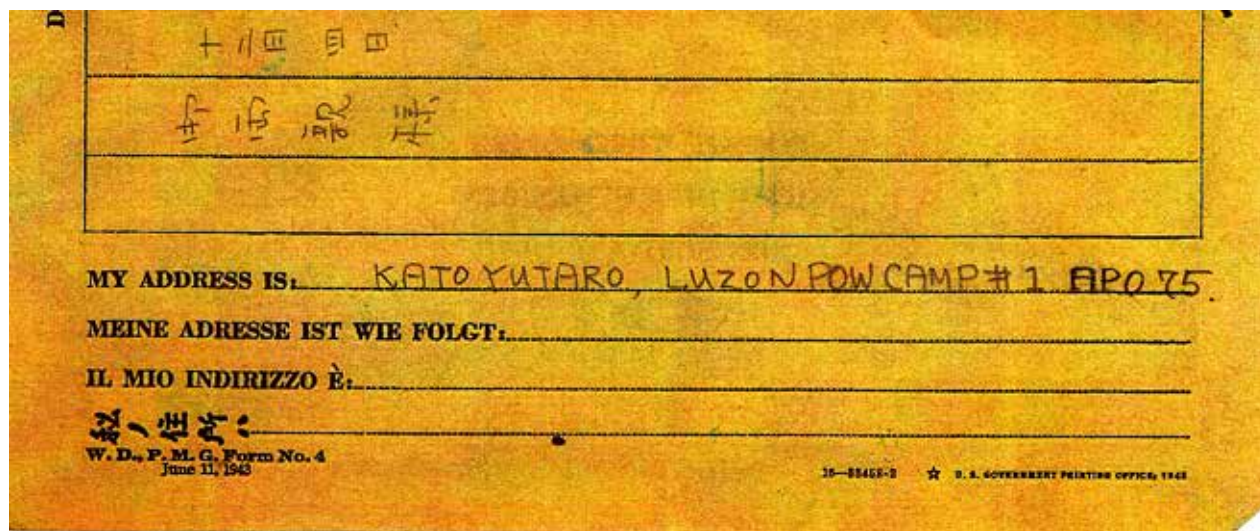
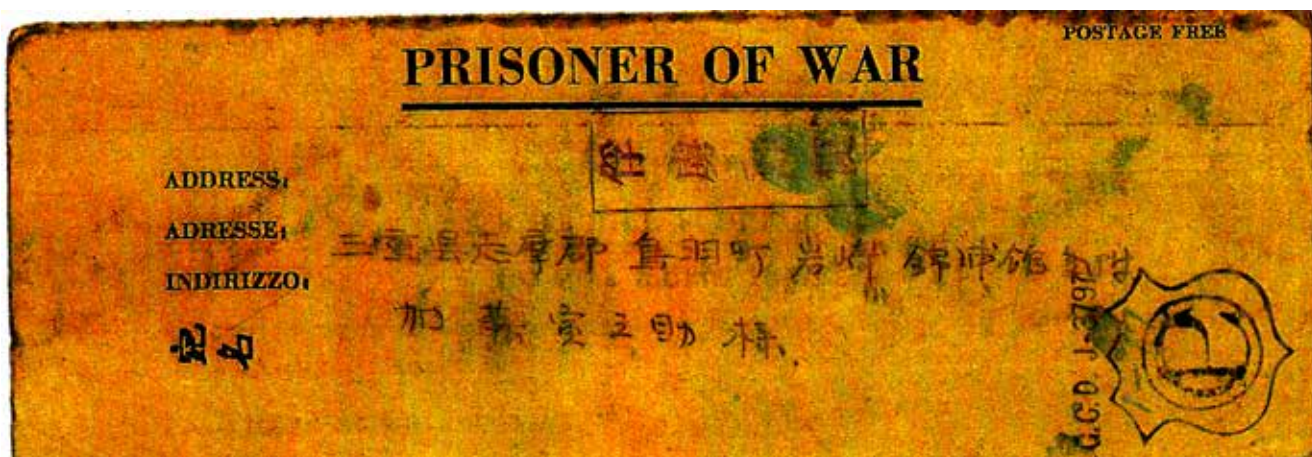


Figure 70.
 Letter sheet from Luzon POW Camp #1, APO 75 to Mie-Ken, Japan
 (The next two pages show the back and front of this cover)

1-4792-01

勿 寫

NON SCRIVETE QUI!
NICHT HIER SCHREIBEN!
DO NOT WRITE HERE!

勿 寫

NON SCRIVETE QUI!
NICHT HIER SCHREIBEN!
DO NOT WRITE HERE!

勿 寫

NON SCRIVETE QUI!
NICHT HIER SCHREIBEN!
DO NOT WRITE HERE!

POSTAGE FREE

PRISONER OF WAR

ADDRESS:
ADRESSE:
INDIRIZZO:

郵 局 收 據

姓名

三軍退志厚郡真明町岩崎 錦伸鐘
加藤室之助 様



C.D. 1-37927

Figure 71 exhibits a partial letter sheet on which the address is in both English and Japanese. It was sent by a convicted war criminal at Luzon POW Camp #1 to Kochi Prefecture in Japan, dated July 1946. The front is censored by the boxed RELEASED BY CENSORSHIP hand stamp which was used on mail for those convicted of serious war crimes. A Japanese censor marking was added.

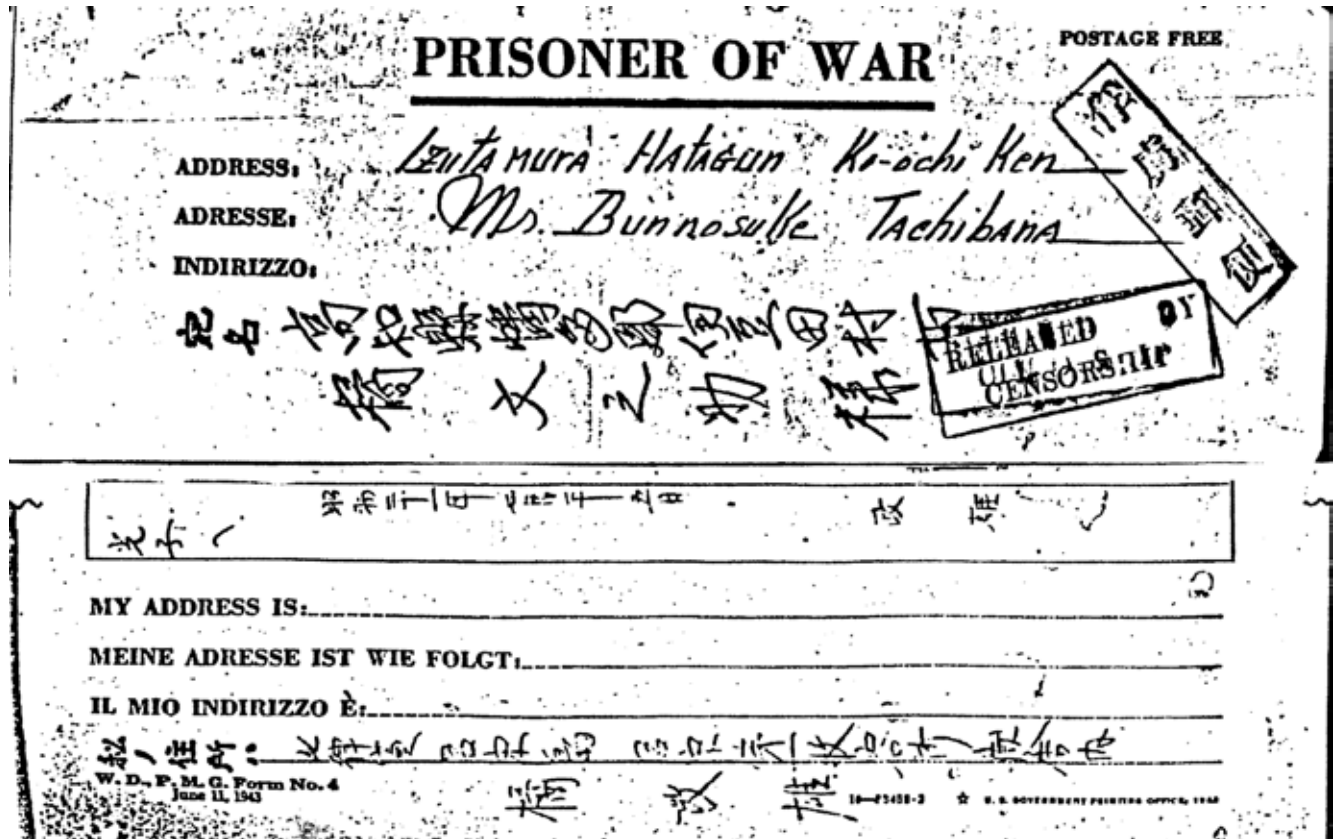


Figure 71.

Partial letter sheet from a convicted war criminal being held at Luzon Camp #1 to Japan. —courtesy of Japanese Military Personnel Prisoners' Mail in the Philippine Islands by Yano Fumihiko³

Form No. 19-4, dated January 1, 1945

This third type of letter sheet has the Form No. 19-4 and the P.M.G. has been replaced by the AGO. Also two lines have been added toward the center as earlier. The inside message portion of this example of Form 19-4 is exhibited as *Figure 72*. The letter sheet is from Lieutenant General Shizuo Yokoyama to his daughter in Japan. The sender was serving his sentence as a war criminal when this was written. [Ed note: the front of the letter sheet and information on the sender will be further discussed in the “War Crimes Section”.]

Civilian Internees

Japanese civilians living in the Philippines at the time of the American liberation also were interned in either the camps or in detention centers. They would have been held in separate facilities from the soldiers, but under guard. These Japanese civilians in the Philippines were more than likely there serving the Japanese Government in the occupation as managers/consultants/overseers for the utility companies, for agricultural businesses and farms, for logistics and communication, and for municipal and provincial governments, as well as in financial and health and welfare roles.

Mail from the civilian internees to Japan is not common, and I have never seen or had the chance to purchase such material. The few examples shown here are from Mr. Fumihiko's publication. I believe they are from civilians because in both instances there is a serial number "51J#####" following their name. Examples from soldiers in Mr. Fumihiko's publication as well as in my own material have no serial numbers following their names. There were letter sheets prepared in the U.S. for those interned Japanese that had "INTERNEE OF WAR", but none of these have been recorded as used in the Philippines.

Figure 73 exhibits a letter sheet on which the PRISONER OF WAR has been inked out and CIVILIAN INTERNEE added. This example is from a civilian at Luzon Camp #1, APO 75 (Manila) to his Filipina wife at Tabaco in Albay, dated November 9, 1945. Following his name is his serial number 51J20361. This is on the second type of letter sheet, Form 4, June 11, 1943.

From D. Masuda
51J20361
Luzon Camp #1
APO. 75

~~PRISONER OF WAR~~
CIVILIAN INTERNEE
"SPANISH"
Sra Preciosa Bernard
TABACO ALBAY

POSTAGE FREE

ADDRESS:
ADRESSE:
INDIRIZZO:
✶

MY ADDRESS IS. D. Masuda 51J20361
MEINE ADRESSE IST WIE FOLGT. Luzon POW Camp #1
IL MIO INDIRIZZO È. APO 75

W. D. P. M. G. Form No. 4
June 11, 1943

16-5142-2 ★ U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE: 1943

Figure 73.

Letter sheet from a civilian internee at Luzon Camp #1 to his wife at Tabaco, Albay. – courtesy of Japanese Military Personnel Prisoners' Mail in the Philippine Islands by Yano Fumihiko³

Shown as **Figure 74** is a cover to a civilian interned in the Philippines. Postally rated 10 sen, dated 21-3-6 (March 6, 1946) to Shinichi Hirai, Esq, 51J-41972, LDC Station Hospital, Leyte Detention Center, APO 72, which was located at Tacloban. It was posted at Shizuoka, Prefecture, Japan.³ The addition of “Esq.” and his serial number “51J-41972” after his name would indicate that he was a civilian. The receiver’s address is written in Japanese; also, a label typed with the information in English has been added to ensure delivery.

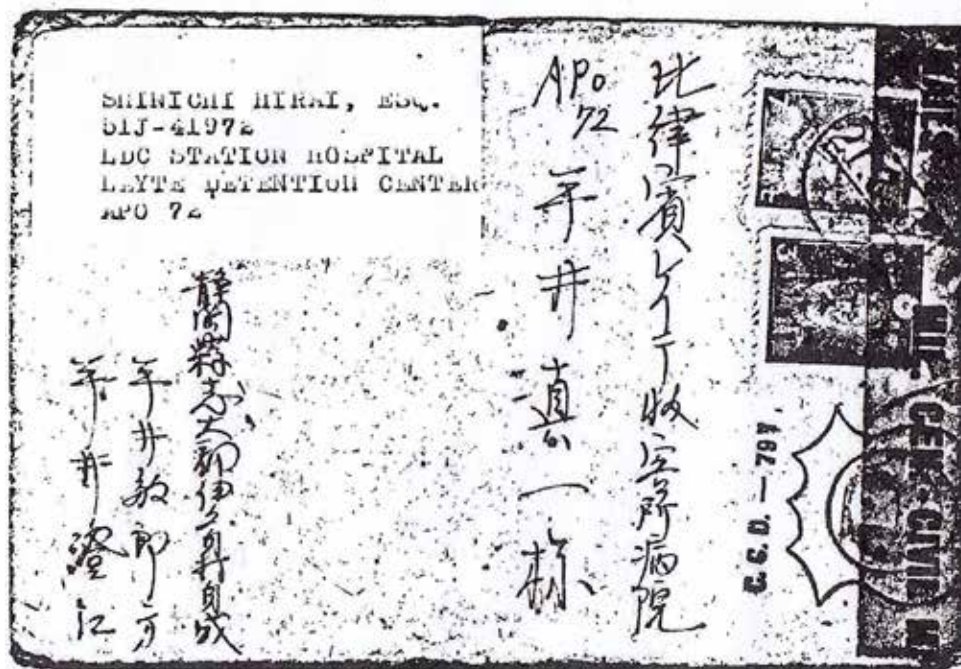


Figure 74.

A cover from Japan to a Japanese civilian internee at the Leyte Detention Center in the Philippines.³

I believe **Figure 75** was written by a civilian internee Furuta Akita at PHILRYCOM JAPANESE PRISONER STOCKADE, MANDALUYONG, RIZAL, LUZON, P.I. A.P.O. 707 to Japan, dated 1947.9.5 (September 5, 1947). This letter sheet is the third type, Form 19-4. On August 1, 1947 those Japanese who were convicted of war crimes were transferred from the U.S. POW camps at Madaluyong, Rizal and Canlubang, Laguna to Bilibid Prison at Muntinluba, Rizal.⁶ Since the letter sheet was dated September 5, 1947, this indicates that the sender had not been transferred to Bilibid and was not convicted with any war crimes charges and likely was being held as a civilian internee convicted of criminal charges. Civilian internees were all repatriated by the end of 1946.

OPENED BY

任意郵便 PRISONER OF WAR POSTAGE FREE

ADDRESS: 坂倉 武蔵 守 復 夫
 ADRESSE: 坂倉 武蔵 守 復 夫
 INDIRIZZO: 坂倉 武蔵 守 復 夫
 宛名: 坂倉 武蔵 守 復 夫

MIL. GEN. CIVIL MAILS

MANDALUYONG,
 MY ADDRESS IS. PHILRYCOM JAPANESE PRISONER STOCKADE,
 MEINE ADRESSE IST WIE FOLGT: RIZAL, LUZON, P. I. A. P. O. 707.
 IL MIO INDIRIZZO È: FUJITA AKIRA
 坂倉 武蔵 守 復 夫
 1947.9.5.

WD AGO Form 19-4 1 January 1945
 This form supersedes WD FMG Form 4, 11 June 1941, which may be used until existing stocks are exhausted.
 15-2125-2 ★ U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

Figure 75.

Letter sheet with the third type of letter sheet - Form 19-4 from Mandaluyong Stockade to Japan, believed to be from a civilian serving a sentence for criminal charges.^{3,4}

WAR CRIMES AND THE TRIALS

With the war against Japan over, the U.S., allied nations and countries that were formerly occupied by Japan began the process of bringing war-time criminal charges against Japanese military, governmental and political officials for war-crime atrocities. The U.S. Sixth Army commanders in the Philippines formed a War Crimes Inquiry that obtained information from the civilians. This led to the establishment of a War Crimes Tribunal located in Manila. Trials were held in Manila, Tokyo and Yokohama. There were four war crimes trials that involved Japanese military personnel relating to the Philippines: The International Military Tribunal in the Far East (IMTFE) held in Tokyo; Yokohama War Crimes Trials held at Yokohama, Japan; U.S. Military Commission in the Philippines; and the National War Crimes Office (NWCO) in Manila. *Figure 76* displays a newspaper article of September 25, 1945 in which General MacArthur announces that trials of Japanese accused of war crimes will begin soon.

Jap War Trials To Begin Soon

NEW YORK, Monday (A.A.P.).—Trials of Japanese accused of war crimes will begin soon, General MacArthur announced in Tokio.

A Manila report says the trials might begin within a week.

The Japanese are expected to be divided into classes:

- Those who planned the war, such as the 1941 Premier, General Tojo, and his Cabinet Ministers.
- Officers who permitted brutalities, such as General Homma, commander-in-chief in the Philippines.
- Soldiers and civilians who committed atrocities.

They will be tried by military tribunals, which have wider powers and more latitude than courts-martial.

General MacArthur will appoint the tribunals, which will include members of Allied nations.

The trials will be held, where possible, in the areas where the crimes were committed.

Tokio correspondent of American Associated Press says the Japanese people appear unconcerned about the fate of their war leaders.

Figure 76.

Australian newspaper article mentioning that war crimes will begin soon. – *Daily Telegraph (Sydney, NSW), September 25, 1945*

Evidence that an undetermined number of U.S. airmen who took part in General Doolittle's raid on Tokio in April, 1942, were executed and buried outside Tokio, has been found by the Japanese War Ministry investigating committee.

The Japanese Premier (Prince Higashi-Kuni) told General MacArthur today that Emperor Hirohito had not abdicated.

Earlier, a broadcast from Chungking (China) claimed that Hirohito had abdicated on Saturday.

The broadcast stated that Hirohito had left the throne to avoid punishment as a war criminal.

Figure 76.

Australian newspaper article mentioning that war crimes will begin soon. – *Daily Telegraph (Sydney, NSW)*, September 25, 1945

Japanese war crime trial cases were of three types: Class A, Class B or Class C crimes. Class A crimes were major cases such as conventional war crimes “joint conspiracy to plan, start and waging wars of aggression”; Class B crimes were “conventional war crimes” and Class C were “crimes against humanity”. Class A crimes were tried by a military tribunal at the IMTFE in Tokyo. Class B and C crimes were tried by military commissions as appointed by Headquarters of the U.S. 8th Army at Yokohama.⁷

International Military Tribunal for the Far East (IMTFE), (Tokyo)

The International Military Tribunal for the Far East (sometimes referred to as the Tokyo War Crimes Tribunal or the Tokyo Trial) convened on April 29, 1946 at the War Ministry office in Tokyo, with trials commencing on May 3, 1946. It was adjourned on November 12, 1948. *Figure 77* exhibits a newspaper article dated January 21, 1946 regarding the formation of the International Military Tribunal for the Far East.

WAR CRIMES.

HIGH-RANKING SUSPECTS.

FAR-EAST TRIBUNAL.

ESTABLISHMENT ORDERED.

NEW YORK, Jan. 20.—General MacArthur has issued an order establishing an International Military Tribunal for the Far East to try high war-criminal suspects justly and promptly (says the American Associated Press correspondent at Tokio). The tribunal's permanent seat will be Tokio. It will have no fewer than five and no more than nine members appointed by the Supreme Allied Command from names submitted by the Allied signatories to the surrender document. The tribunal shall bring to trial those persons charged individually or as members of organisations or in both capacities with offences, including crimes against peace.

Nothing in General MacArthur's order prejudices the jurisdiction of other tribunals to try war criminals. The Supreme Command appoints the tribunal's general secretary and also the president, who has a casting vote.

War crimes are defined firstly as the planning, preparation and initiation of waging a declared or undeclared war of aggression or a war in violation of international law, treaties, agreements or assurances or participation in a common plan or conspiracy for the accomplishment of any of the foregoing; secondly, as violations of the laws and customs of war; thirdly, as the murder, extermination, enslavement, deportation or other inhuman acts committed against any civilian population before or during the war or perse-

cutions on religious or racial grounds in execution of or in connection with any crime within the tribunal's jurisdiction, whether or not in violation of the domestic law of the country where they were perpetrated.

Nations Represented

The "New York Times" correspondent in Tokio says that according to the latest information only Britain, America, Canada, New Zealand and China had replied accepting invitations to nominate representatives for the Allied War Crimes Tribunal by January 15, the time limit set for acceptance. Thus it is probable that the Tojo Cabinet will be tried by a court on which Russia, France and the Netherlands and possibly Australia, will not be represented.

One clause establishing the tribunal lays down the fact that an accused person who acted in pursuance of orders from his Government or superior officer would not be deemed to be absolved from individual responsibility although such circumstances might be considered in mitigation of his punishment.

This clause is evidently intended to forestall pleas frequently made to the military courts trying lesser criminals that the accused were acting only in accordance with orders but the rule may prove explosively double-barrelled. Legally-trained observers point out that if subordinates are tried for obeying the orders from superiors the question of the superiors' personal responsibility is immediately raised. Since the Emperor stands at the very summit of the Japanese military and Governmental hierarchies it is difficult to see how he can be excluded. The rule therefore may become an argument in the hands of those of the Allies who believe that Hirohito himself should face the same charges as are laid against his subjects.

Figure 77.

Continued next page

Australian Prosecutor.

SYDNEY, Jan. 20.—Mr. Justice Mansfield, of the Queensland Supreme Court, has been appointed to the International Military Court as Australian prosecutor to try major Japanese war criminals in Tokio shortly. He returned from London on a Qantas Airways Lancasterian today after attending the United Nations War Criminals Commission as the Australian Government representative. He is to interview Dr. Evatt in Sydney tomorrow.

Figure 77.

Newspaper article featuring the story of the formation of the International Military Tribunal for the Far East. — *West Australian (Perth)*, January 21, 1946

Class A Crimes

There were 28 Japanese political leaders and military personnel charged with Class A crimes and tried at the IMTFE. Of the 28 defendants who were on trial, two died during the trial and one was ruled mentally unfit; the remainder were found guilty on at least 1 count, with sentences ranging from 7 years to death. *Figure 78* shows the accused civilian and military officers standing as the tribunal judges enter the courtroom during their war criminal trial at the IMTFE.



Figure 78.

Photo of the accused Japanese civilian and military individuals at their IMTFE trial. — *U.S. Federal Government photo*, May 14, 1946

Seven of these 28 were sentenced to death by hanging and were executed in the early morning hours of December 23, 1948 at Sugamo Prison, Tokyo. *Figure 79* illustrates a newspaper article listing the seven who were executed and their crimes.

JAPANESE WAR LORDS HANGED

TOKYO, Dec. 23: General Tojo, the former Japanese Premier, and the six other war lords sentenced to death by the International Military Tribunal for war crimes were hanged early this morning.

This has been announced by the United States Army, which said that the hangings had taken place between 12.1 o'clock and 12.35 o'clock (Tokyo time) this morning.

Officials inside the prison phoned Radio Tokyo, where correspondents had waited 30 hours for news of the hangings.

The seven Japanese, and the crimes for which they were condemned to death, were:

TOJO, HIDEKI (64), general, former War Minister and Prime Minister: Conspiracy to secure domination of East Asia and the Pacific and Indian Oceans.

DOIHARA, KENJI (65), general, commander Seventh Army at Singapore: Conspiracy, waging a war of aggression, war against China, aggression war against U.S.A., British Common-

wealth, Netherlands, the Soviet Union (1938), France, ordering, authorising or permitting war crimes.

HIROTA, KOKI (70), former Foreign Minister and Prime Minister: Conspiracy, waging aggressive war against China and failing to prevent crimes against prisoners of war and civilians.

ITAGAKI, SEISHIRO (63), former War Minister, commander of Seventh Army in Singapore in 1945; after Doihara: Conspiracy, waging aggressive wars and war crimes.

KIMURA, HEITARO (60), C.-in-C. Japanese Army in Burma, former member of the Supreme War Council: Conspiracy, waging aggressive wars and war crimes.

MATSUI, I WANE (70), Samuru-born, C.-in-C. Central Army, in command at rape of Nanking, founder of Greater East Asia Society: Conspiracy and failing to prevent crimes against prisoners and civilians.

MUTO, AKIRA (56), former Chief-of-Staff of 14th Army in the Philippines under General Yamashita (executed for war crimes): Conspiracy, waging aggressive wars, war crimes and failing to prevent crimes against prisoners and internees.

The brief Army announcement gave no other details. The Army promised, however, that details of the last minutes of the seven war lords would be made public as soon as witnesses could be interviewed at the prison. Newspapermen were not allowed to attend.

Only a small unidentified group of military officials witnessed the hangings.

The execution of the seven Japanese had been delayed for six weeks as a result of an appeal by two of the condemned men to the United States Supreme Court. The Court on Tuesday refused to interfere with the International Military Tribunal.

Army Headquarters previously announced that the bodies would be cremated. To prevent enshrinement of the war criminals their families will be denied their ashes.

Figure 79.

Newspaper article listing the names of the seven who were executed at Sugamo prison for war crimes. — *Western Australian (Perth)*, Thursday December 23, 1943

Only one of those executed had direct contact with the Philippines: that was Lieutenant General Akira Muto. General Muto was Vice Chief of Staff, China Expeditionary Force, 1937; director, military Affairs Bureau, 1939-1942; army commander in Sumatra, 1942-43; army chief of staff in the Philippines in 1944-1945. In February of 1945, troops from his command were involved in the “Rape of Manila” in which over 100,000 Filipinos were murdered. A photo of General Muto at the IMTFE trial is displayed as *Figure 80*.



Figure 80.

**Photo of General Akira Muto at the IMTFE trial. –
source unknown**

Yokohama War Crimes Trials by the U.S. Eighth Army *Class B and C Crimes*

On December 5, 1945, with the authorization of SCAP, the commanding general of the U.S. 8th Army started to appoint a military commission to try Class B and Class C war crime cases in Yokohama. A newspaper article of December 10, 1945 makes mention that the Yokohama trials will begin on December 17th is exhibited as ***Figure 81.***

U.S. WAR CRIME CHARGES

Enemy Atrocities In Philippines

A.A.P. And Our Special Representative

TOKIO, December 9.

The United States has charged Lt.-Gen. Masaharu Homma, conqueror of the Philippines, with permitting the "death march" on Bataan and other atrocities against Filipinos, states Associated Press of America.

The American indictment also named Lt.-Col. Saichi Ohta, commander of the Kempeitai or military police, in the Philippines in 1942; Maj. Zanzo Saito, commander of the "Tiger unit" of the Japanese Army; Maj. Takashi Tohei, commander of the Kempeitai unit near Manila, and Col. Akira Nagahama chief of the Kempetai in the Philippines from late in 1942 to 1945.

Homma is also charged with responsibility for crimes against civilian internees, including the torture and execution of two English merchant marine officers and an Australian, Mr. B B Laycock, of Sydney.

Trials of Japanese accused of atrocities against American prisoners of war will begin on December 17 at Yokohama. An American military tribunal will try 300 military and civilian personnel.

Tojo, former Japanese Premier, was high on the list for the trials to begin in January, said Mr. Joseph D. Keenan, American chief prosecutor, who recently arrived in Tokio. Accusations would go back to 1937 when Japan started the China war.

The Japanese radio for the first time was ordered on Friday to tell the people the true story of what happened before and during the war, says a correspondent of the "New York Times." Newspapers, magazines and radio stations will begin today a series of 20 articles on the Pacific situation, dating from 1931.

Figure 81.

Newspaper article making mention that the war crime trials will begin on December 17 at Yokohama. – Advertiser (Adelaide), December 10, 1945

There were 996 Class B and Class C defendants who were charged, of whom 142 were acquitted, 124 sentenced to death, 63 to life imprisonment and the remainder to prison terms.⁷ Some of those who were tried and sentenced at Yokohama with connections to the Philippines are displayed in various newspaper articles as *Figures 82, 83 and 84*. *Figure 82* makes mention of the execution of two senior officers who had ordered the Bataan death march. *Figure 83* tells of Lt Junsaburo Toshino and Cpl Kazutane Aihara who were charged for the mistreatment of American POWs aboard the hell ship *Oryoko Maru*; both were also personally responsible for the beheading of 15 American POWs in a cemetery. *Figure 84 "Gets 25 Years"* talks about Iku Takasaki the former commander of the POW camps at Cabantuan and Davao, being sentenced to 25 years of hard labour.

Japs hanged for Bataan death march

Tokyo (AAP-Reuters)

The Supreme Allied Command announced on Saturday that 15 Japanese war criminals had been hanged at Sugamo prison.

They included Major-General Yoshitaka Kawane and Colonel Kurataro Kirano, convicted of having ordered the Bataan death march in which 10,000 Americans and Filipinos died.

Among the others executed were a lieutenant and four men who had been convicted of having killed six US Navy flyers captured in French Indo-China after a Catalina flying-boat had crashed there in January, 1945.

Figure 82.

Newspaper article from Australia making mention of the execution of General Kawane and Colonel Kirano, who were convicted for their role in the Bataan death march. — *Argus (Melbourne)*, June 13, 1949.

TWO JAPANESE TO HANG

YOKOHAMA, Friday (A.A. P.) — An Eighth Army tribunal sentenced to death two of nine defendants charged with mistreatment of American prisoners of war aboard the hell ship Oroyoko Maru, on which, it is estimated, 1300 of 1600 prisoners died on their way from the Philippines to Japan.

The two to hang are Lieut. Junshiro Tsohin and Cpl. Kazutane Aihara, both members of the prison ship's guards, who are also held personally responsible for the beheading, in a Philippines cemetery, of 15 American prisoners of war. Four defendants received equal sentences of from 10 years to life, while the captain of the ship and two guards were acquitted.

Figure 83.

Australian newspaper article mentioning the execution of Lt Toshino and Cpl Aihara for the beheading of 15 American POWS in a cemetery. — *Advocate (Burnie, Tasmania)*, May 10, 1947.

Canadian Air Hero Among Those Called To Testify

Wing Cmdr. Birchall Brought To Japan To Tell Of Camp Cruelties

Yokohama, Dec. 15, (CP)—Hiroshi Ushioda, former official of a prisoner-of-war camp at Yokohama, pleaded innocent to-day before a military commission trying him on charges of mistreating Allied prisoners. Among those brought to Japan to testify against Ushioda was W-C Leonard J. Birchall, of Saint John, N.B., and St. Catharines, Ont., one of Canada's air heroes of the war.

Saved Ceylon

With Warrant Officer C. Onyette of Hunter Isle, Ont., Birchall helped thwart a Japanese air attack on Ceylon April 5, 1942, by flashing the electrifying words: "Jap fleet sighted."

The warning enabled the defenders of Colombo to prepare a warm reception for the Japanese aircraft carrier fleet. Seventy-five planes raided Colombo, 27 of which were destroyed and five probably destroyed in an Easter Sunday battle which probably saved the capital of Ceylon from further Japanese menace.

Birchall was listed as "missing in flying battle" after the raid, officially termed at the time "one of the greatest achievements of Canadian flyers in the present war." Subsequently he was located in a prison camp.

Gets 25 Years

As testimony started in the Ushioda case, another United States Eighth Army Commission convicted Iku Takasaki, former commander of prison camps at Cabantuan and Davao in the Philippines, of responsibility for the deaths of two American soldiers and abuses of others, including Maj. Arthur Wer-muth, famed "one-man army of Bataan."

Takasaki was sentenced to 25 years at hard labour for the deaths of Lieut. Robert Huffcutt, Buffalo, N.Y., and Maj. Charles Harrison, Leesburg, Va.

It was testified that Takasaki permitted subordinates to beat prisoners. One witness said Wer-muth was beaten severely for protesting against the treatment of fellow prisoners detailed to haul fertilizer.

Figure 84.

Canadian newspaper article mentioning that the former commander of the Cabantuan and Davao POW camps received 25 years of hard labour. — *Hamilton Spectator*, (Ontario, Canada), December 15, 1947.

Figure 85 illustrates a newspaper article outlining the last scheduled trial of a Japanese war criminal at Yokohama.

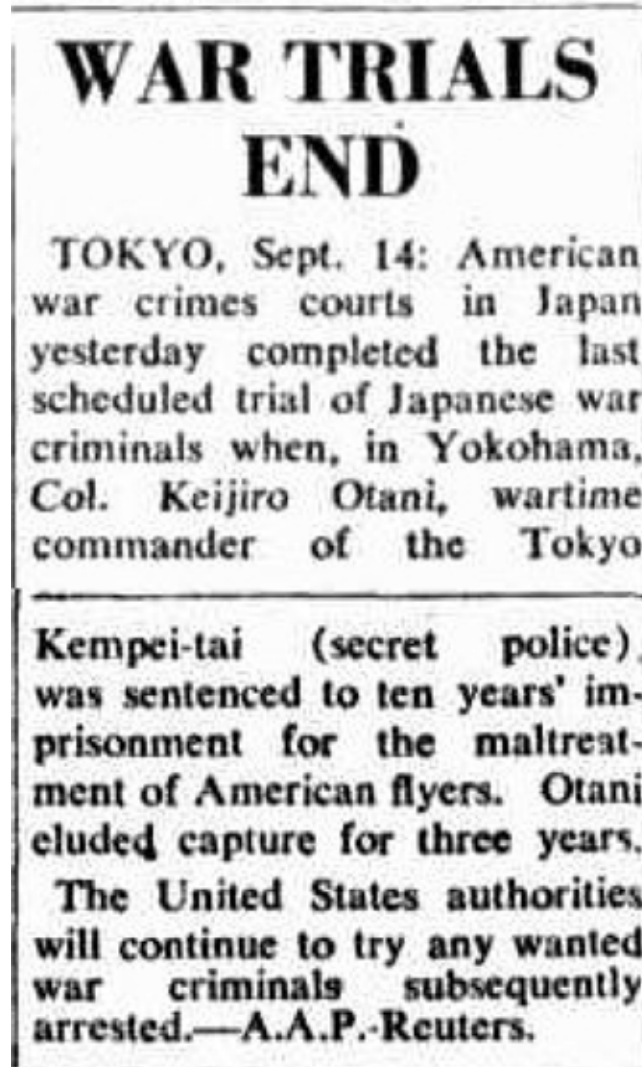


Figure 85.

Newspaper article mentioning the last of the war crimes trials at Yokohama. – *West Australian (Perth)*, September 15, 1949

U.S. Military Commission (Manila)

This commission was held at the U.S. High Commissioner's residence in Manila, and was overseen by five American generals who were the judges. The Commission began October 7, 1945 to mid 1947. The Commission prosecuted over 169 defendants, of whom 133 were found guilty and 25 were given death sentences and 16 received life imprisonment. The remainder received sentences of varying years in jail. A cover is exhibited as *Figure 86* from a Manila law firm to the Chief, Investigation Section, War Crimes Branch, GHQ, AF-PAC, APO 500, post marked December 1945. APO 500 was located at Manila at this time.



Figure 86.

A cover from a Manila law firm to the War Crimes Branch, GHQ, AFPAC, postmarked December 1945.

A cover from an American Japanese interrogator/interpreter is displayed as *Figure 87* ID Sgt. Richard Sakakida, War Crimes Invest. Det. APO 75 to a Robinson Reminders, Westfield, Massachusetts, and postmarked December 1945. APO 75 was located at Manila during this time.



Figure 87.

A cover from an American Japanese interrogator/interpreter to a U.S. resident in Massachusetts. – source unknown

Sgt. Richard Sakakida was one of the first two Japanese American citizens to be enlisted into the U.S. Army Counter Intelligence Corps and then integrated into the pre-war Japanese community in the Philippines. These operatives were to obtain intelligence information about the Japanese residents and any military information that may have been obtained prior to the Japanese invasion. After the war, Sgt. Sakakida was part of the war crimes interrogation and investigative teams, and interrogated and testified against many of the Japanese who had tortured him for being a spy, **Figure 88** exhibits a photo of him testifying at a war crimes trial. One of those he did testify against was General Yamashita.

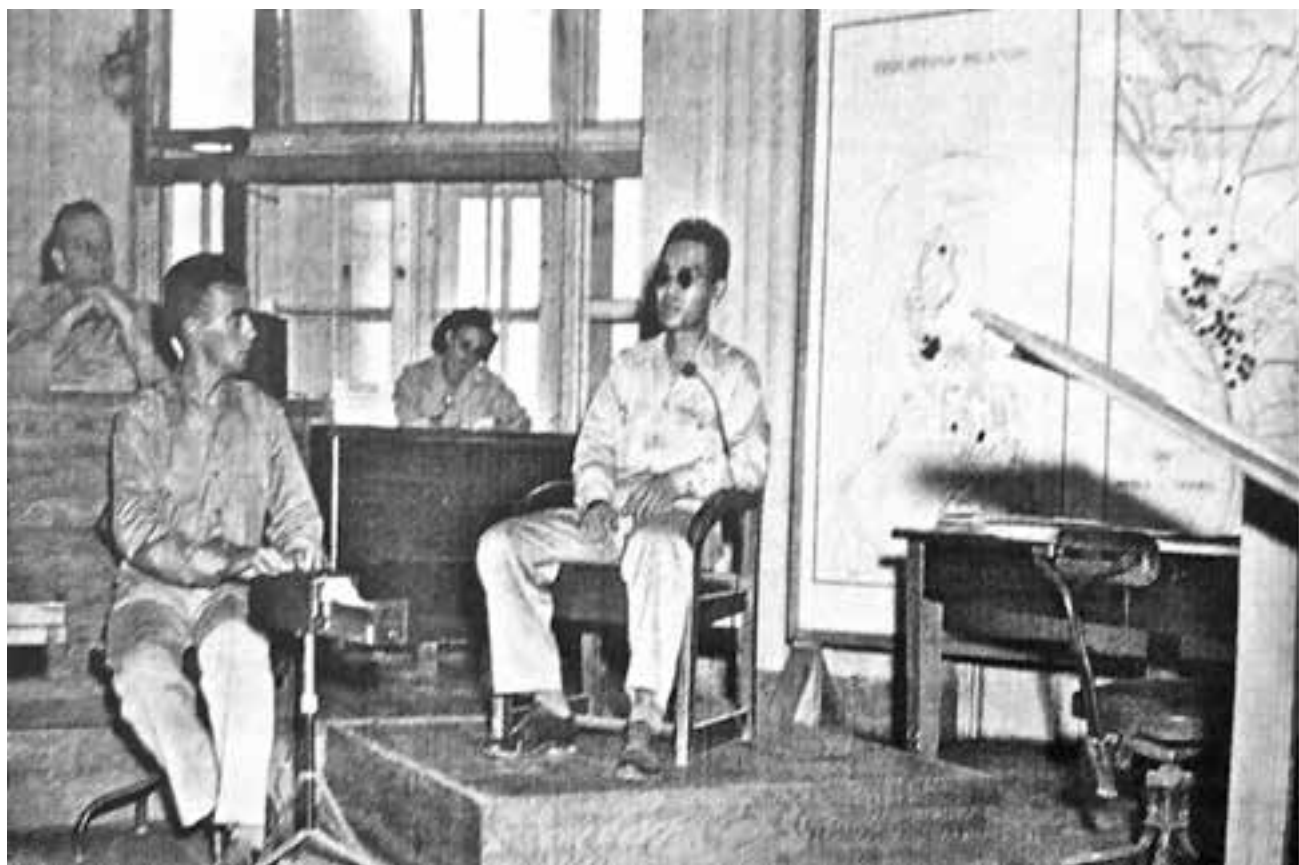


Figure 88.

Photo of Sgt. Richard Sakakida testifying at a war crimes trial in Manila. – *corregidor.org*

[Ed note: The important story of Sgt. Richard Sikakada, Counter Intelligence Corps and the declassified top secret work which he had done in the Philippines is discussed in a separate chapter at the end of this essay.]

The two most notable Japanese officers to stand trial were General Yamashita and Lt. General Homma. An Australian newspaper article exhibited as **Figure 89** makes reference to the U.S. Military Commission's first war crimes trial, that of General Yamashita.

First Jap War Crime Trial Today

From RAY JOHNSTON

MANILA, Sunday.—
General Tomoyuki Yamashita ("Tiger of Malaya") will stand trial as a war criminal in Manila tomorrow.

Yamashita, who is the first Japanese to face trial as a war criminal, will be charged with violations of the laws of war.

He is being tried on General MacArthur's orders by a U.S. Military Commission.

Yamashita is expected to seek an adjournment tomorrow to get legal representation from Japan.

The Americans will tolerate no delay, and if Yamashita needs a Tokio lawyer a plane will bring one immediately.

The charge against Yamashita reads: "While commander of armed forces of Japan at war with the U.S. and its Allies, Yamashita unlawfully disregarded and failed to discharge his duty to control operations and members of his command.

"He permitted them to commit brutal atrocities and other crimes against the people of the United States and its Allies and dependencies, particularly the Philippines.

"He, General Tomoyuki Yamashita, thereby violated laws of war."

A Subdued Tiger

Yamashita is a very subdued tiger as he languishes behind bars in the Manila Prison.

Today Yamashita said: "What does it matter? They can only hang me or shoot me, and it will save me the trouble of committing hara-kiri.

"The American soldier has a big heart."

The interpreter added: "Yamashita hopes."

Yamashita's treatment of Australian Eighth Division troops in Singapore will be in the long list of atrocities with which he is charged.

It was at the Singapore surrender in February, 1942, that Yamashita arrogantly banged the table and shouted at the British Commander (General Percival): "Answer yes or no."

Figure 89.

Australian Newspaper article detailing the U.S. Military Commission's commencement of General Yamashita's trial. — *Daily Telegraph (Sydney, NSW)*, October 8, 1945

Trials began quickly and the first Japanese officer to be tried was General Tomoyuki Yamashita, "The Tiger of Malaya" as he became known for his 70-day campaign to capture Singapore and Malaya. Yamashita was tried for war crimes committed by his troops while he was in charge of the Philippines in 1944. The five American Generals who tried Yamashita are illustrated as *Figure 90*.



Figure 90.

Photograph of the five American Generals who tried Yamashita. Left to right: General M. C. Handwerk; Major General Donovan; Major General Russell Reynolds, president; Major General James Lester; and General Egbert Bullens. – George Mountz Collection, Yamashita Trial Photographs, Allen County Public Library, Fort Wayne, Indiana, Date October 31, 1945, Photographer U.S. Army Signal Corps, by Sgt. Sig Meyers.

Captain George E. Mountz was a member of the prosecution team that prosecuted General Yamashita for war crimes. He was brought to Manila just prior to the commencement of the trial and left shortly after the guilty verdict and sentencing. While at Manila, Mountz sent letters home to his wife and family virtually every day, outlining trial events as well as life in Manila. Displayed as *Figure 91* is the first page of a two-page letter dated Manila 06 Oct 45 that details information for a dress rehearsal the day prior to General Yamashita's plea hearing.

The first page of Mountz's letter follows:

*“Manila
06 Oct 45*

Dearest,

Another Saturday has rolled around & if you read the papers you know that things are coming to a head rather fast.

The arrangements are to have Gen. Yamashita plead on Monday, Oct. 8th. This will take place in the High Commissioners House where the trial is to be held. The Commission seem to be more worried about the Newsreels and Newspaper men than about the prosecutors or defence attorneys.

The present plan is to have a full dress rehearsal, Sunday PM, all officers must appear with all decorations & ribbons (I will appear blank as usual). Major Kerr advised me that I had to take part (stand around) in the arraignment so you want to watch the Newsreels on the arraignment of YAMASHITA . . .”

Manila
04 Oct. 45.

Dear Sir,

Another Saturday has rolled around & if you read the papers you know that things are coming to a head rather fast. The arrangements are now to have Gen. Yamashita plead Monday, Oct 8th. This will take place in the High Commissioner's House where the trial is to be held. The Commission seem to be more worried about the Newsreels & Newspapers men than about the prosecutors or defense attorneys.

The present plan is to have a full dress rehearsal, Sunday PM, all officers must appear with all decorations & ribbons (I will appear blank as usual). Major Kerr advised me that I had to take part (stand around) in the arraignment so you want to watch the Newsreels on the arraignment of YAMASHITA

Figure 91.

First page of a letter dated October 6, 1945 regarding the dress rehearsal for the plea of General Yamashita.⁸

Although Yamashita was not directly involved in the atrocities and crimes, he was aware of them and did nothing to stop them. A photo of Yamashita with a member of the U.S. Military Police is displayed as *Figure 92*. Yamashita was held at the New Bilibid Prison and for security purposes was taken by ambulance to the residence of the Philippine High Commissioner, where the trial was held. It lasted from October 29 to December 7, 1945 at which time he was found guilty and sentenced to death by hanging. Yamashita was executed on February 23, 1946 at Los Baños, Laguna Prison Camp. *Figure 93* shows a newspaper article that refers to the guilt of Yamashita.



Figure 92.
Photo of Yamashita with Military Police Major Kenworthy. — National Archives and Records Administration.

Death Sentence For Yamashita

MANILA, Fri.—General Yamashita was to-day found guilty, as charged, and sentenced to death, says the American Associated Press.

“This Commission finds that a series of atrocities and high crimes were committed by the Japanese armed forces under your command against nationals of the United States and its Allies and dependencies, and that they were not sporadic incidents, but often methodically

supervised by your Japanese officers and non-commissioned officers.

“That you, during the period in question, failed to provide effective control over your troops as required by the circumstances. Accordingly, on a secret ballot with two-thirds or more of the

Commission concurring, the Commission finds you guilty as charged, and sentences you to death by hanging."

This was the verdict read by Major-General Russel Reynolds, President of the Military Commission, to Yamashita, as he stood before the Bench.

As he heard the verdict Yamashita's shoulders sagged somewhat, but he quickly straightened up, and told the court: "I swear to God I am innocent of these charges, but I wish to thank the brilliant upright officers who defended me, and I wish to thank

the Commission for a fair trial."

WILL APPEAL.

The defence counsel later indicated that Yamashita will appeal to Lieut.-General W. D. Styer, Commander of the Army Forces of the West Pacific, who convened the Commission, then, if necessary, to General MacArthur, as Allied Commander in the Pacific, then the United States Supreme Court, where an appeal is pending.

It is understood that the defence intends to take every advantage of every possibility as the case sets a precedent in international law.

Figure 93.

Australian Newspaper article outlining the guilty verdict and the sentence. – *Daily Examiner (Grafton, NSW)*, December 8, 1945

Captain Mountz wrote a four-page letter to his father on Dec. 7, 1945 regarding the guilty verdict of General Yamashita. This letter is a first-hand account of the proceedings. Due to its importance, it is reproduced in its entirety as **Figure 94**, and is transcribed as follows:

Manila

07 Dec. 1945

Dear Dad,

The Wills of the Gods, as the quotation goes – and by strange coincidence four years to the Day from the Jap attack on Pearl Harbor, the top Jap Commander stood before a Military Commission & heard them find him guilty of failure to control his troops & condemned him to death.

It was a tense scene at 2 PM today in the court room there at the High Commissioners Palace. We arrived at 1:30 – the place was jammed full with all possible Standing Room taken, the M.P. guard had been doubled, and at both the Prosecution & Defence entrance additional M.P. men were standing & one M.P. officer on either side of the Bench. The movie lights were all on – we sat there for 15 minutes & promptly at 2 P.M. we were called to attention & the Commission entered.

Gen. Reynolds began to read the Statement of the Commission (a copy herewith enclosed – save it for me) & as he read, with the newsreels grinding in the back ground, into three microphones broadcasting their result to the world; an unearthly silence came over the Courtroom as the General continued to read. I know personally the perspiration began to drip off me as the suspense continued to mount.

Finally he reached the bottom of page 5 & Yamashita, Col. Clark & Homamota came before the bench. Yamashita ask & was given permition [sic] to have Homamota read a prepared statement, redeclaring his innocence.

Then the General read the verdict of Guilty & death by Hanging - & Immediately, Yamashita, Muto, (unclear) & Homamota were taken from the Room under heavy guard – still in dead silence.

May I digress to say that Yamashita took it hard, great lines seemed to appear in his face he stumbled as he turned & his Military bearing was gone – as he was lead from the room.

After the Japanese were clear of the area the Court adjourned to the rush of news-room to their wires and the crowd getting out – it was all completed in just 20 minutes but what minutes of surprise & drama & in my humble opinion minutes when New History was written.

As you will note on reading the opinion, they went right down the line on the question of Command responsibility & failure to control his troops. It is a clear decision & the first real one in the history of war fare.

Naturally it must be reviewed & MacArthur has the authority to reduce the sentence but that is anti-climax for we have done our job.

I can only add that in my opinion he received a fair and complete trial, & while the rules of evidence were different from what we are used to, his rights as a person were protected in every way & he had every opportunity for a complete presentation of his defence.

As usual I am a little late but you know I'll be thinking of you all Day on Dec. 11th and known you will have a very Happy Birthday. Peter & Pam will see that it is perfectly remembered.

*Love to all
George”*

Manila
07 Dec 1945

Dear Dad,

The Mills of the Gods, as the quotation goes - and by strange coincidence four years to the Day from the Jap attack on Pearl Harbor - the Top Jap Commander stood before a Military Commission & heard them find him guilty of Failure to Control his troops & Condemned him to death.

It was a tense scene at 2 PM today in the Court Room here at the High Commissioners palace. We arrived at 1³⁰ - the place was jammed full, with all possible Standing Room taken. The M. P. guard had been doubled, and at both the Prosecution & Defense entrance additional M. P. men were standing & one M. P. officer on either side of the Bench. The Movie lights were all on - We sat there for 15 minutes & promptly at 2 P.M. we were called to attention & the Commission entered.

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Then the General read the verdict of Guilty & death by hanging - & immediately, Yamashita, Muto, Hatanaka & Komamota were taken from the Room under heavy guard - still in dead silence.

May I digress & say that Yamashita took it hard, great lines seemed to appear in his face, he stumbled as he turned & his military bearing was gone - as he was lead from the room.

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Manila
Dec. 7, 1945

rush of newsmen to their wires and
the crowd getting out - It was all
completed in just 20 minutes but
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& in my humble opinion minutes
when New History was written.

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opinion, they went right down the line
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one in the history of warfare.

Naturally it must be reviewed
& MacArthur has the authority to reduce
the sentence but that is anti-
climax for we have done our
job.

I can only add that in my
opinion he received a fair and
complete trial, & while the rules of
evidence were different from what
we are used to, his rights as a
person were protected in every way
& he had every opportunity for a

complete presentation of his defense.
As usual I am a little late
but you know I'll be thinking of
you all Day on Dec 11th and know
you will have a very Happy birthday.
Peter & Pam will see that it is
properly remembered.
Love to all
George

Figure 94.

Historically-important four page letter dated December 7, 1945 regarding the guilty verdict and sentencing of General Yamashita.⁸

The Yamashita prosecution team consisted of eight officers. A photo is presented as *Figure 95*, which also features Captain George Mountz.



Figure 95.

Eight-member Yamashita prosecution team; left to right, Capt. Pace, Capt. Hill, Capt. Calyer, Lt. George E. Mountz, Major Robert Kerr, Capt. Webster, Major Opinion (Philippine Army). In rear 1st Lt. Yarde.⁸

[Ed note: The letters that Captain George Mountz had written from Manila have been digitized and are on the web site of the Allen County Public Library along with 111 photographs taken of the trial and of war torn Manila. For those who wish to read these letters of the trials, the web site is in the reference section at the end of this essay⁸.]

The second most notable and wanted Japanese officer was Lieutenant General Masaharu Homma. He was the senior officer responsible for the Bataan Death March, which accounted for the killing of thousands of American and Filipino soldiers by the Japanese on their march to the POW camps. Because of his being too lenient to the Filipino people in peace and not aggressive in war, he was forced into retirement by the Imperial General Headquarters in August of 1943. In mid-September of 1945, Homma was arrested in Japan and was extradited to the Philippines, where he stood trial at an American Tribunal in Manila from January 3 to February 11, 1946. Details outlining the charges against Homma and some of the other senior officers on war crime charges is reproduced from a newspaper article shown as *Figure 96*. *Figure 97* illustrates a photo of Captain George A. Furness, defense counsel, outlining objections to the trial.

WAR CRIMES

A Damning Indictment

42 CHARGES AGAINST JAPANESE GENERAL

Tokio, Dec. 9.—The death march from Bataan, which cost the lives of 1200 American and 16,000 Filipino prisoners, and the bombing of the open city of Manila, head the list of the 42 specific war crimes charged against Lieut.-General Homma in the U.S. indictment.

Homma is charged under a general indictment with having, between the outbreak of the Pacific war and August, 1944, when he was Commander in Chief in the Philippines to control his forces, and permitted them to commit brutalities and other high crimes, and with having violated the rules of war by refusing to grant quarter to the United States forces at Manila Bay.

The torture, massacre and systematic starvation and ill-treatment of thousands of American and Filipino prisoners are described in a damning list, which includes the following crimes:—Widespread raping and brutal mistreatment of American and Filipino women throughout the Philippines; the torturing and starving of patients at two general hospitals; the tying together and massacring by beheading bayonetting and shooting, of 400 officers and N.C.O. prisoners of war in Bataan; the burying alive of numerous American and Filipino officers and men; the deaths of 1522 Americans and 29,000 Filipinos by torture; the execution, starvation and neglect of wounded in Camp O'Donnel, in Luzon, and the deaths of 1463 other Americans in camps 1, 2 and 3 and the Dewey boulevard victory

march, a six hours' march to exhibit prisoners as objects of humiliation and degradation.

Homma is also charged with having been responsible for crimes against civilian internees, including the torture and execution of two English merchant marine officers, Thomas Fletcher and Henry Weeks, and an Australian, Blakey Borthwick Laycock, of Sydney, in the Santa Tomas camp, Manila, and the execution of Dr. Clarence Young, the Chinese Consul General in the Philippines, and the seven members of the consulate staff in the Chinese cemetery at Santa Cruz, in April, 1942.

A separate indictment charges Homma with having ignored the surrender of the United States' forces on Corregidor, and three other fortified islands in Manila Bay, and having bombarded them after they had laid down their arms.

Lieut.-Colonel Ohta also is charged with killing the Chinese consular staff and atrocities against prisoners of war and internees.

Colonel Nagahama is charged with the torturing and killing of war prisoners.

Major Saito is charged with the deliberate killing of civilians, and with having wiped out a Filipino village near Luzon.

Major Tohei, who commanded the military police detention barracks near Manila, is charged with having tortured many prisoners and killed many others by beheading, bayoneting and shooting.

Figure 96.

Australian newspaper article outlining the charges for which Homma as well as some of the other senior military officers would be standing trial. – *Kalgoorlie Miner (Western Australia)*, December 10, 1945



Figure 97.

Captain George A. Furness, defense counsel, reading into the records the official objections against the authenticity of the purpose of the military commission hearing the trial. – *National Archives and Records Administration*

Homma was found guilty on February 11, 1946 on all counts of violating international rules of war relating to the atrocities committed by troops under his command during the Bataan Death March, and was sentenced “to be shot to death with musketry”. He was executed on April 3, 1946 at Los Baños, Laguna by an American firing squad. A newspaper photo of Homma after he was found guilty is shown as *Figure 98* and *Figure 99* gives details of his execution.

GEN. HOMMA TO DIE



General Homma, former Japanese commander in the Philippines, has been sentenced to be shot as a war criminal. Homma's sentence has gone to General MacArthur for review.

Figure 98.

Photo of Homma behind bars after being found guilty and being sentenced. — *Daily Advertiser* (Wagga Wagga, NSW), February 25, 1946

HOMMA IS SHOT FOR WAR CRIMES

Australian Associated Press.

MANILA, Tuesday.—General Masaharu Homma, former Japanese Commander-in-Chief in the Philippines, was executed here today by an American firing squad.

After the surrender of General Wainwright's army in Corregidor fortress early in 1942, Homma was responsible for marching the survivors 85 miles from Bataan to San Fernando during which 17,200 men died.

Homma died tied to a post with a black hood over his head.

A four-inch white target was placed over his heart at which 12 rifles were aimed.

At least one of the rifles and perhaps as many as four contained blanks so that members of the firing squad will never know which shots were harmless.

"Deserved Fate"

Homma appealed to the United States Supreme Court against the sentence of death imposed by a military court at Manila and his appeal being rejected General MacArthur then had to review the sentence.

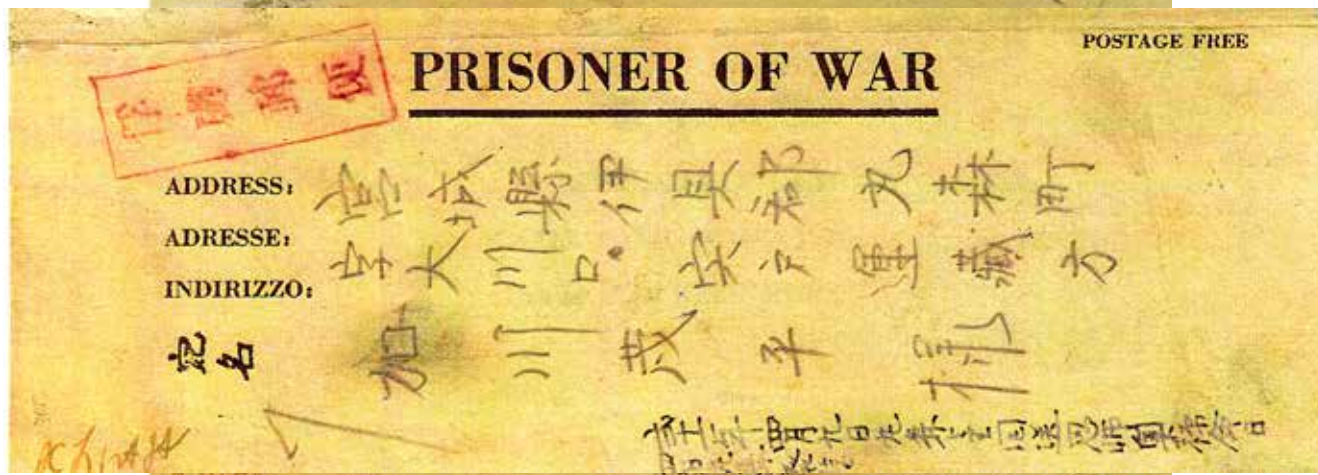
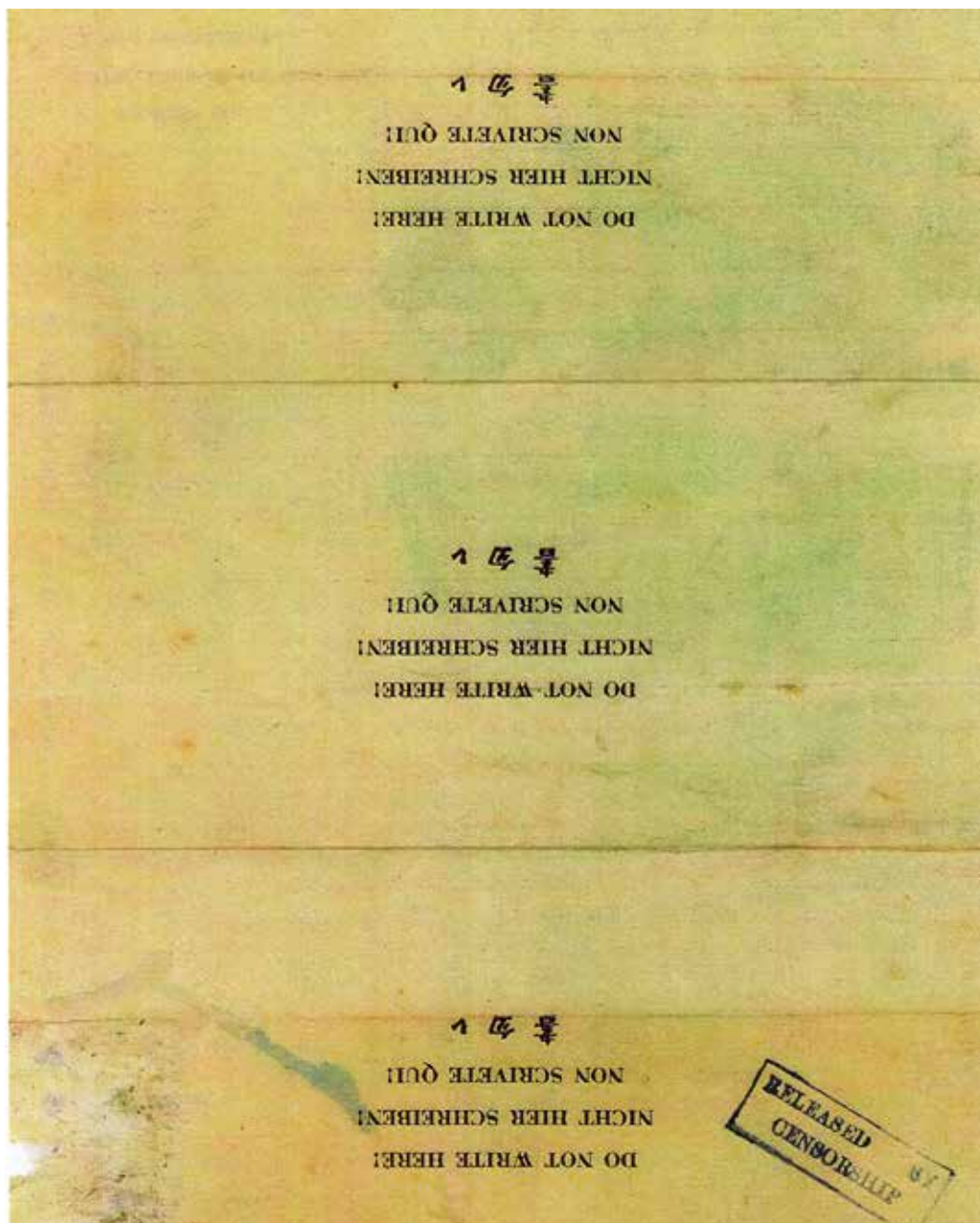
Refusing to save Homma, he said that no accused had ever been given a fairer trial and if Homma did not deserve his fate no one ever did.

Of the men who perished on the death march MacArthur said, "Of all fighting men, none more deserved the honors of war in their hour of final agony."

Figure 99.

Newspaper article giving details of the execution of Homma. — *Newcastle Sun* (NSW), April 3 1946

An example of a POW letter sheet form dated April 1946 to Miyagi, Japan from a Japanese soldier tried by the US Military Commission is exhibited as **Figure 100**. Kagawa Unsuburo was held at Stockade #6, APO 450, which was at Batangas, Luzon.



DO NOT WRITE HERE!
 NICHT HIER SCHREIBEN!
 NON SCRIVETE QUI!

書勿レ

前略

音信が来るとして心配して居るが、
 思ひを言が決して心配はなさない。
 元氣で、お保重を、は身に付けて居ると
 毎々聞かす。休みの時は、お茶を淹れ、
 聊かお茶を、食物を充ち頂けると長
 びては是達を様に肥えませ、自分で
 ちかえして、お茶を、お茶を、お茶を
 するが、お茶を、お茶を、お茶を
 どのが、お茶を、お茶を、お茶を
 後はお茶を、お茶を、お茶を
 雁尾村の人の居る所を、お茶を、
 半下宿一宿のお茶を、
 今姑くお茶を、お茶を、お茶を
 かう、お茶を、お茶を、お茶を、
 未年乍ら、お茶を、お茶を、お茶を、
 御健康をお祈りして、お茶を、

書勿レ
 NON SCRIVETE QUI!
 NICHT HIER SCHREIBEN!
 NON SCRIVETE QUI!
 DO NOT WRITE HERE!

DO NOT WRITE HERE!
 NICHT HIER SCHREIBEN!
 NON SCRIVETE QUI!
 DO NOT WRITE HERE!

MY ADDRESS IS:.....

MEINE ADRESSE IST WIE FOLGT:.....

IL MIO INDIRIZZO È:.....

私ノ住所:.....

加川 運三郎

Hagawa unsakurō

125082.

P.O.W. STOCKADE, #6, AP0450

W. D., P. M. G. Form No. 4
 June 11, 1943

16-53459-2 ☆ U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE: 1943

Figure 100.

POW letter sheet from Stockade #6, which was located at Batangas, Luzon to Miyagi, Japan. – courtesy of Japanese Military Personnel Prisoners' Mail in the Philippine Islands by Yano Fumihiko³

When the Philippines were granted their independence on July 4, 1946, they were no longer a Commonwealth in the United States of America and were now a republic and responsible for their own affairs. On August 1, 1947, war crimes cases were transferred to the Republic of the Philippines. The U.S. Military Commission continued to finish the trials that were in progress. This transformation of responsibility was completed by the end of 1947.

Philippine Court

September 1945 saw the establishment of a Peoples Court, which was used to try Filipino civilians who had collaborated with the Japanese. [Ed note: This court falls outside the scope of this essay and is only mentioned for information purposes.]

National War Crimes Office (Manila) (NWCO)

On July 4, 1946, the Philippine Islands were granted their independence and became the Republic of the Philippines. With this change, a lot of the laws had to be rewritten because they were no longer a Commonwealth but now an independent nation. The United States military turned over the trials for the war crimes to the new NWCO, after negotiations with the new Philippine government the United States agreed to the following conditions: the U.S. army retain custody of Japanese war crimes suspects and deliver them for trial as required; the U.S. army assume responsibility for the transfer to Japan and incarceration of those convicted and given less than death sentences; the Philippine government be provided with Japanese interpreters and counsel to act as defense attorneys; that facilities and equipment currently used by the Legal Section Manila Branch be loaned to the Philippine government for use in its war crimes trials; and that Legal Section Manila Branch keep sufficient staff in the Philippines to advise on the conduct of the trials. On May 6, 1947 Legal Section agreed to the demands of the Philippine government and by early July orders had been issued to accommodate the Philippine government's requests. With this agreement, the Philippine government assumed responsibility for trying the balance of Japanese war crime suspects in the Philippines and the U.S. continued to provide support.⁹ On July 29, 1947, President Roxas signed an Executive Order No. 68 that established a National War Crimes Office whose purpose was to collect information and evidence on Japanese war crimes and atrocities.

While negotiations were proceeding between the Philippine Government and the U.S. on transferring the war crimes trials to the Philippines jurisdiction, the U.S. continued to proceed with the collecting of evidence and bringing to justice those involved in the atrocities, *Figure 101* displays a cover from a member of the War Crimes Trials to Dorothy Ann Miller, of Illinois, postmarked April 8, 1947. Dorothy Miller was listed as a civilian internee at Santo Tomas.



Figure 101.

War Crimes Trials cover from Manila to a civilian internee who was interned at Santo Tomas Internment Camp.

August 1, 1947 saw the first trial to be held by the NWCO. In this trial, Captain Chūshirō Kudō was found guilty for offences at Laguna in February 1945. He was sentenced to death by hanging and was executed on August 13, 1948. In all, there were 155 defendants who stood trial; 128 were army, 19 navy and 8 civilians. Death sentences were given to 79 defendants; there were 31 life sentences and 28 prison terms; 11 were found not guilty and the other 6 had charges dismissed or cases suspended. The eight civilians that stood trial were of Japanese descent, two of whom were sentenced to death by hanging. One had his charges dismissed, four received prison terms and one was found not guilty. The two civilians who were sentenced to death had their sentences commuted to a term of life in prison.⁹

One of those sentenced to death was Lt. General Shizuo Yokoyama, for being involved with the killing of approximately 100 Filipinos in Batangas Province in April 1945. Yokoyama was found guilty and sentenced to death by musketry on May 23, 1949. He was later sentenced to life in prison in the pardons of 1953 and was fully pardoned on December 28, 1953. A POW letter form from General Yokoyama to his daughter Michiko in Tokyo that was written on June 6, 1948 is displayed as *Figure 102*. This letter was written while he was incarcerated at the New Bilibid Prison (NBP), referred to as Muntinlupa at Mandaluyong, Rizal, while awaiting his execution. The letter in the envelope was censored and it was resealed with the translucent military censor tape. A PC Shield censor hand stamp and a boxed Japanese censorship hand stamp were applied. [Ed note; the inside contents of the form and form number are described under POW letter sheets earlier in this essay as *Figure 72*.] While at NBP, Yokoyama developed tuberculosis.¹⁰ In the pardons of July 3, 1953, his sentence was commuted to life in prison in Japan at the Sugamo Prison and later that year in December he was granted a full pardon.⁹ [Ed note: more information on the pardons will be discussed below under the heading “Pardons”]

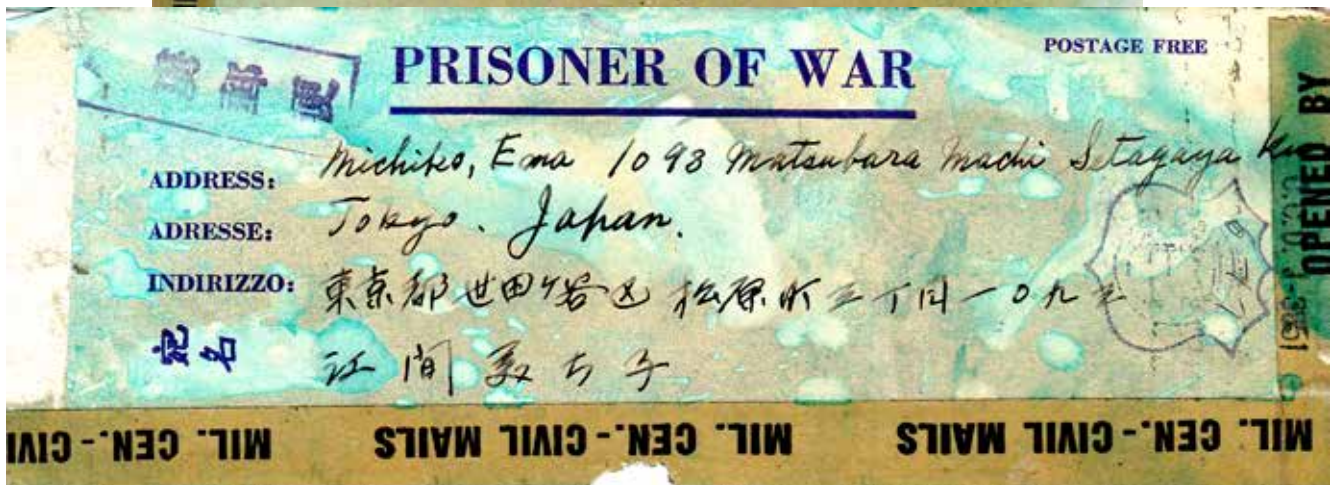
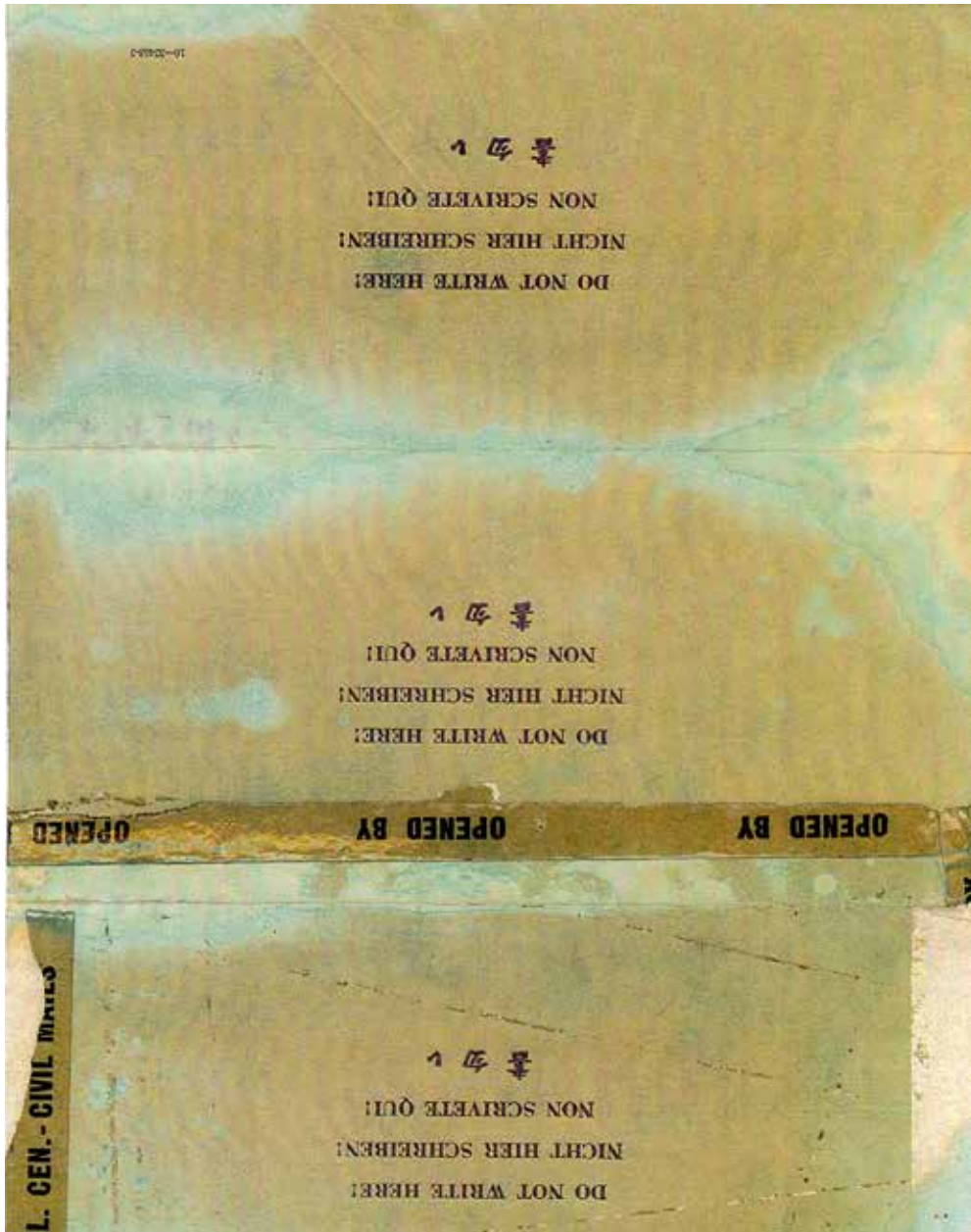


Figure 102.

Front of a letter sheet from General Yokoyama to his daughter that was written on June 6, 1948 while he was awaiting his execution at NBP.

102 The last trial of the NWCO was concluded at the end of 1949.

New Bilibid Prison (NBP) / Old Bilibid Prison (OBP)

Part of the original agreement for the Philippine government to accept responsibility for the war crimes trials was that the U.S. military would retain custody of prisoners awaiting trial and be responsible for the Japanese who were convicted and sentenced to life or lesser prison terms. Hopefully, these prisoners would be repatriated to Japan and serve the remainder of their sentences at Sugamo Prison in Tokyo. Those that received the death penalty were to be transferred to the custody of the Philippine Government.⁹ On August 1, 1947, those Japanese who were convicted were transferred from the U.S. POW camps at Madaluyong, Rizal and Canlubang, Laguna to the New Bilibid Prison at Muntinlupa, Rizal.⁶

Old Bilibid Prison was constructed by the Spanish in 1865 and was referred to as “*Carcel y Presidio Correctional*” or as in English “Correctional Jail and Military Prison”. The “*Carcel*” section of the prison could hold 600 inmates while the “*Presidio*” accommodated 527 prisoners. **Figure 103** displays an aerial photo of the old prison. A photo of the gated entrance to the prison with American military guards, is displayed as **Figure 104**. Note the Japanese lettering on each side of the gate.

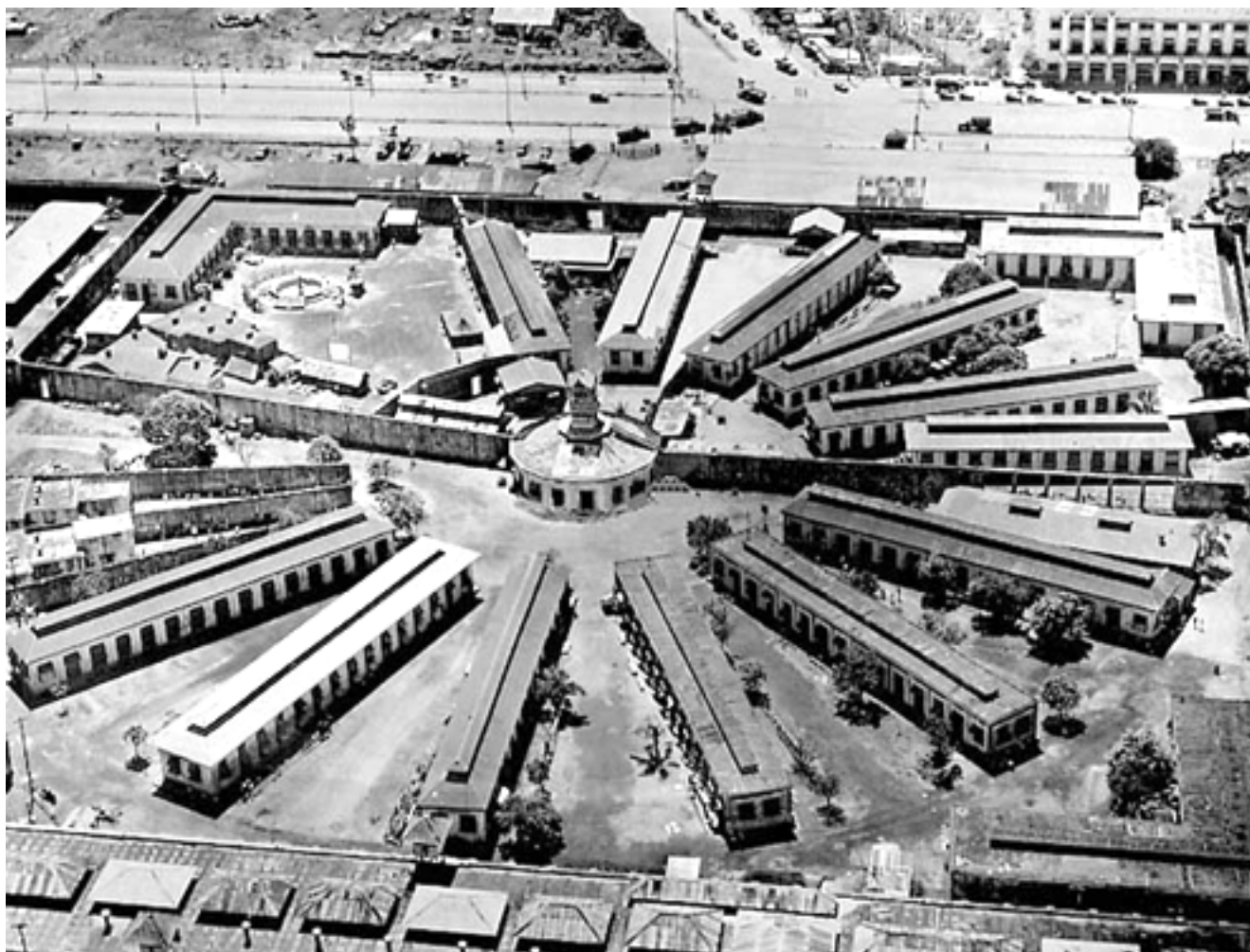


Figure 103.

An aerial view of the Old Bilibid Prison taken in 1945. – Photo by Louis Nevin Hodges Sr., photographer in the United States Army Air Force in the Pacific Theater of Operations.



Figure 104.

Photo of the gated entrance to OBP, with American military guards. Note the Japanese lettering on either side of the gate.

Due to increasing rates of crime over the years, construction began on a new prison in 1936. In 1940 the inmates were transferred to the new constructed facility; in 1941 the new facility became known as “The New Bilibid Prison”, “The New Bilibid Prison in Muntinlupa” or just “Muntinlupa”. During the Japanese occupation of the Philippines, the NBP was used as a POW and civilian internment facility while the OBP was used throughout the occupation by the Japanese Kempeitai (military police) for the holding of Filipino special prisoners. In 1945, the NBP was used by the Americans as a facility holding Japanese war crime prisoners. An early 1950 photo (*Figure 105*) shows the main entrance to the NBP, and a modern photo of the NBP is exhibited as *Figure 106*.

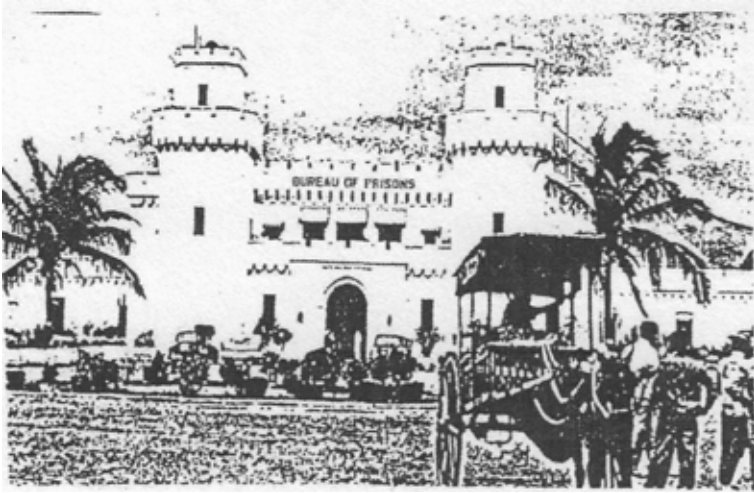


Figure 105.
A 1950s photo of the main gate at Muntinlupa. – courtesy of Japanese Military Personnel Prisoners' Mail in the Philippine Islands by Yano Fumihiko³



Figure 106.
Modern photo of New Bilibid Prison in Muntinlupa.

On May 27, 1948, Major Eleuterio Fojas, chief of the NWCO, sent a formal request for the transfer of prisoners to NBP. This was “absolutely necessary” because “there are now more prisoners condemned to death than can be accommodated at the Prisoners of War stockade under the custody of the U.S. Army.” This request was granted by the Justice Secretary and by June 1, 20 convicted-to-death Japanese were transferred to NBP. By the end of the year, the transfer to NBP of the remainder of the Japanese prisoners— both suspects and those sentenced—was completed.⁹ The Philippine Government wanted control of the Japanese prisoners because they felt the U.S. might consider a peace treaty with Japan and the Japanese would then want control over the war criminals, something the Philippine Government would not accept at this time.⁹

At NBP, those Japanese sentenced to death were housed on the ground floor of one of the buildings in cells accommodating three men each. They wore blue uniforms to distinguish them from the other prisoners. The Japanese prisoners who were sentenced to life or lesser terms or were awaiting trial wore red uniforms; they were originally housed in a separate building, but were later transferred to the same building as those condemned to death.

Mail posted by the Japanese prisoners at NBP was censored and backstamped with a large double ring handstamp in purple that was signed and dated. A clear example of this is displayed as *Figure 107*.

Figure 107.

Example of the type of censor backstamp used on Japanese prisoner mail at NBP. – *Philippine Philatelic News, Volume XII, No. 3, Third Quarter, 1990*



A cover sent from General Yokoyama to his daughter, Miss Yokoyama-Michiko, is shown as *Figure 108*. It was written on December 12, 1948 and censored one day later, with the prison censor handstamp, and recensored upon arrival in Japan with the CCP shield censor hand stamp. The information on the cover is in both Japanese and English.⁶

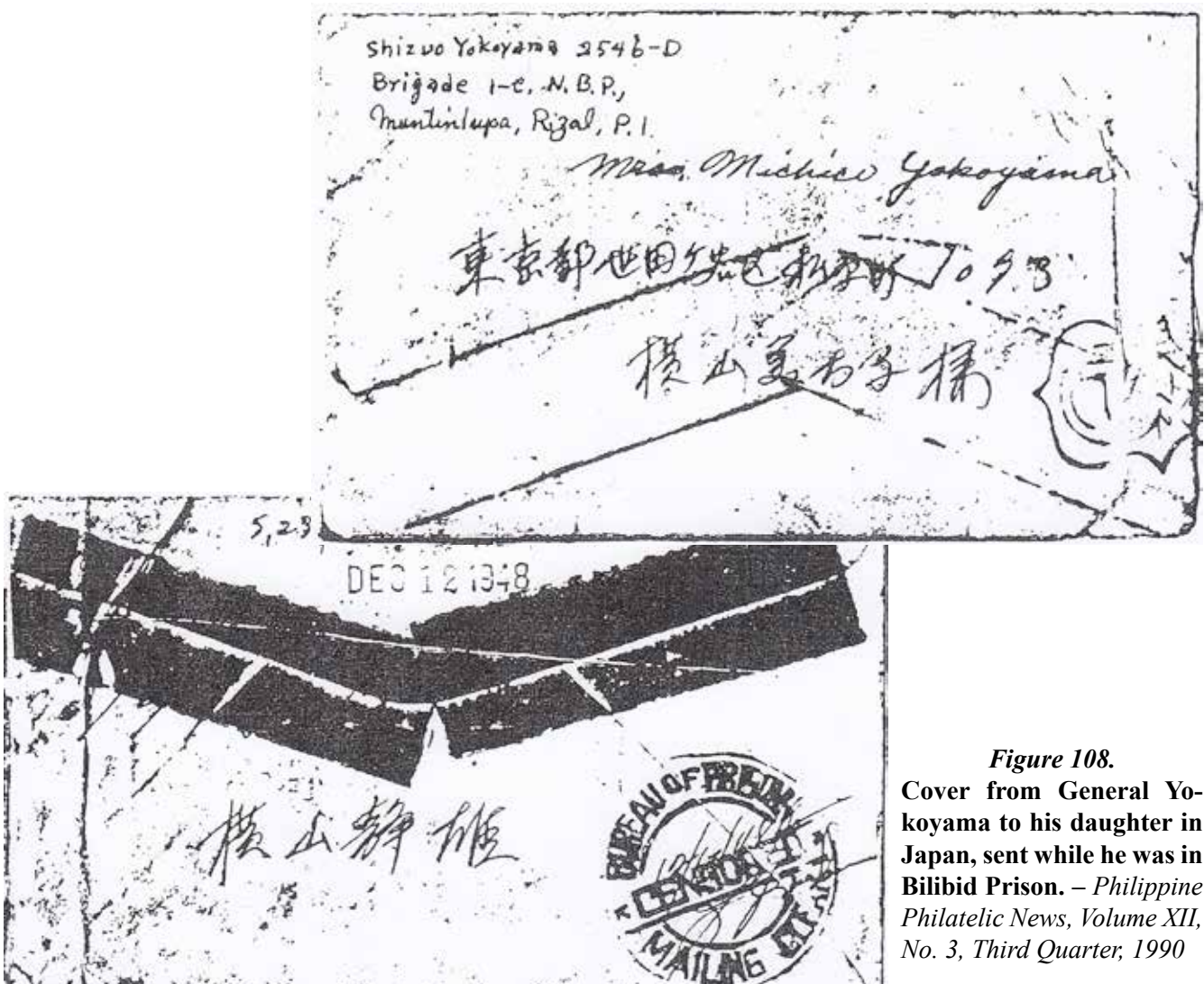


Figure 108.

Cover from General Yokoyama to his daughter in Japan, sent while he was in Bilibid Prison. – *Philippine Philatelic News, Volume XII, No. 3, Third Quarter, 1990*

Another cover from General Yokoyama is displayed as *Figure 109*. In this case, the cover was written in Japanese and addressed to his wife, Mrs. Yokoyama-Misayo and was sent out by the Repatriation Relief Office, Bureau of Demobilization, Judicial Affairs Investigation Section (rubber-stamped Kanji inscription on the reverse).⁶

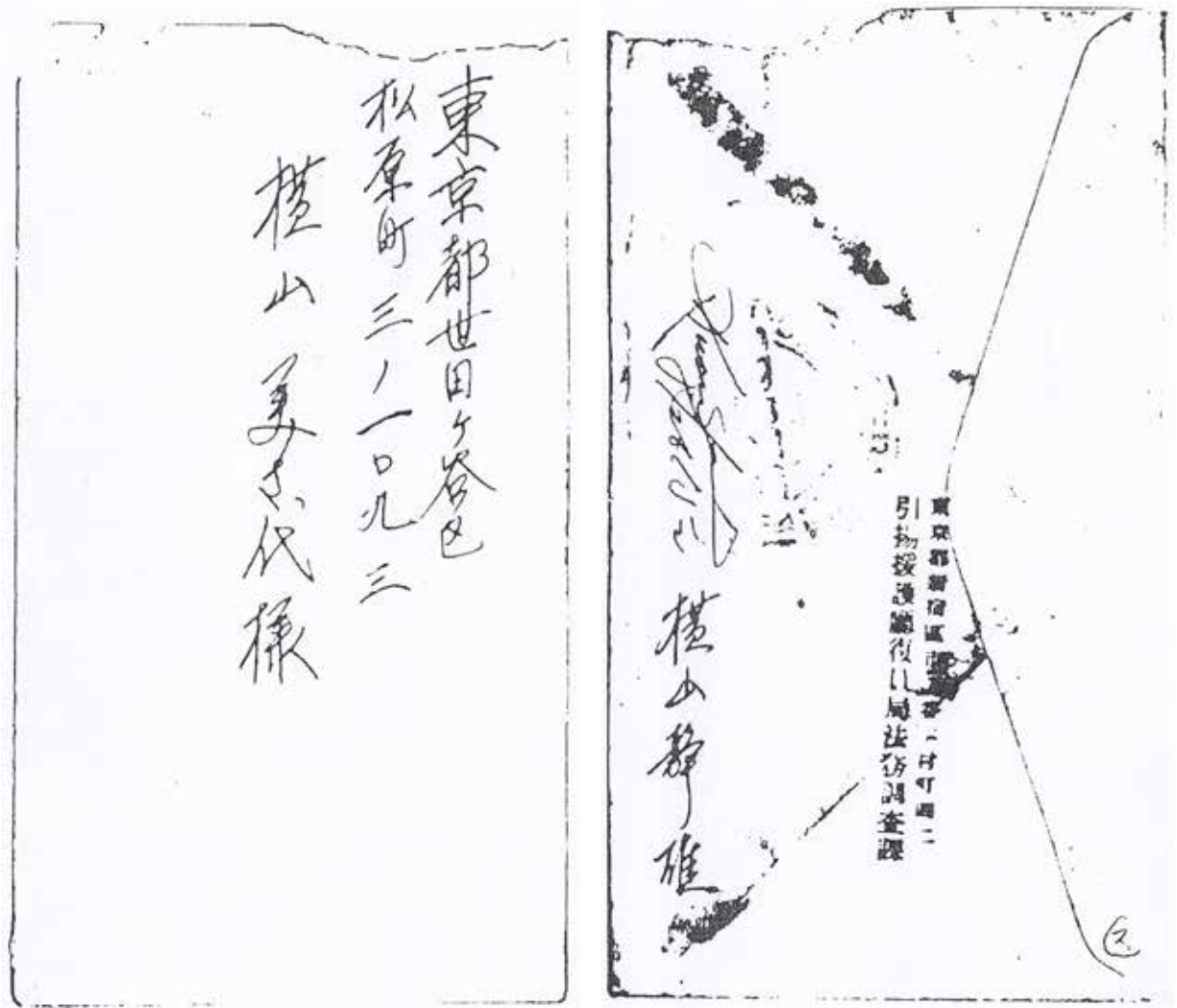


Figure 109.

Cover from General Yokoyama to his wife in Japan. – *Philippine Philatelic News*, Volume XII, No. 3, Third Quarter, 1990

Figure 109A illustrates a bilingual addressed posted cover from the New Bilibid Prison to Tokyo, showing the censorship marking on the back dated November 6, 1949. Note the envelope corner indicating Bureau of Prisons, New Bilibid Prison, Muntinlupa, Rizal, Philippines.

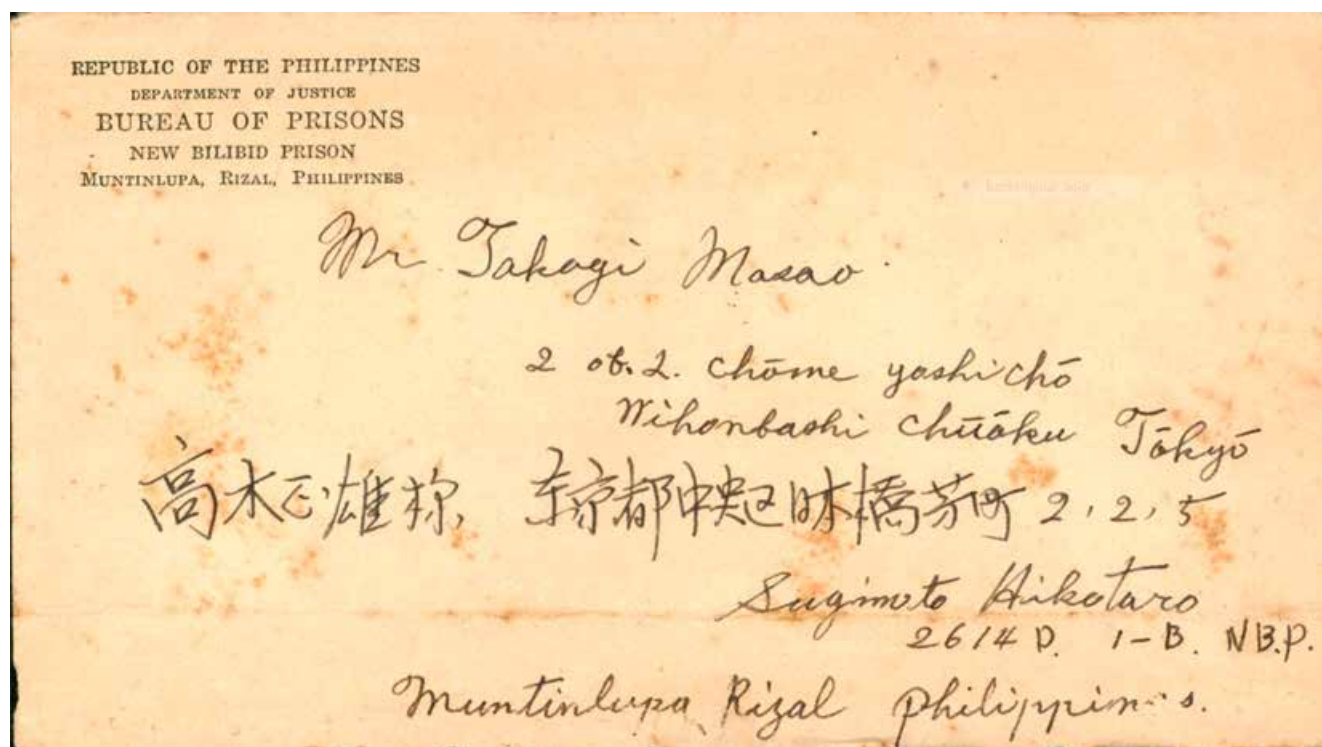


Figure 109A.

Cover from a Japanese prisoner at the New Bilibid Prison in 1949. – courtesy Stampedia Auction, Japan

The spiritual needs of the Japanese prisoners were administered by Buddhist monks and Christian ministries. One such Buddhist monk was Shunin Kagao; a cover from him to General Yokoyama's wife in Japan is exhibited as *Figure 110*. The cover is postmarked July 11, 1951. It entered the regular mail service to Tokyo, Japan. The reverse of the cover shows censorship with the Bilibid Prison large censor marking.⁶

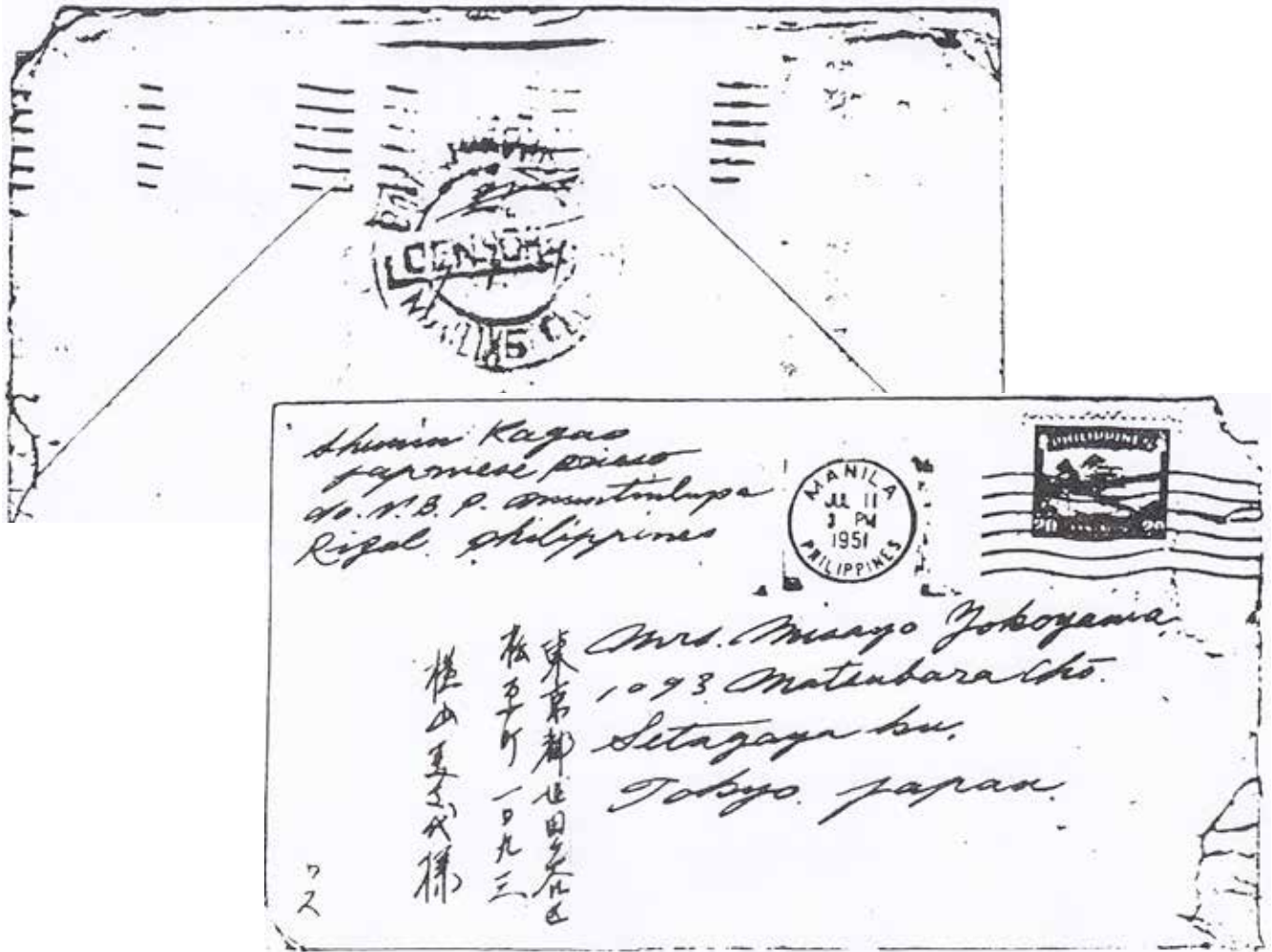


Figure 110.

Cover from Buddhist monk Shunin Kagao to General Yokoyama's wife in Japan, with the Bilibid Prison censor marking on the back. – *Philippine Philatelic News, Volume XII, No. 3, Third Quarter, 1990*

Figure 111 illustrates a cover from a Japanese prisoner Sergeant Kiyomitsu Kitajima, who was serving a life sentence at NBP for his actions in Mountain Province from May to September 1944. The cover to Del Monte, Quezon City was postmarked on November 28, 1950. Kitajima was pardoned on July 4, 1953.⁹



Figure 111.

Cover posted from New Bilibid Prison written by Kiyomitsu Kitajima to a Filipino at Del Monte, Quezon City.

With the San Francisco Peace Treaty signed on September 8, 1951, the Philippine authorities now probably allowed more mail to Japan to leave NBP from the jailed war criminals. Japanese prisoners had access to a letter sheet provided by the Department of Justice, Bureau of Prisons, B.P. Form No. 58. It was on light blue paper. An unused copy of the top and bottom of the form is shown as *Figure 112*.³

B. P. Form No. 58

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
BUREAU OF PRISONS
NEW BILIBID PRISON

Issued by

No.

Date, 195.

Name

Carded by

Brigade No.

PRISONER'S LETTER

To

Address

Trusty Police and Detention prisoners are allowed to write one letter a week: First class, two letters a month; and second class, one letter a month.
All mails for the prisoners will be opened and examined before delivery.
Trusty Police, Chief and Asst. Chief squad leaders are allowed to receive visitors every Sunday morning. First class every other Sunday morning; Second class, every fourth Sunday afternoon; and Detention prisoners, every Saturday afternoon.
Because the prisoners, as indicated in the above rules have limited number of visits on specified days; relatives and friends of prisoners are requested to come together in groups when they visit.

22224-2

Figure 112.

A copy of the top and bottom of the Prisoner's Letter form No. 58 that was prepared for the Japanese prisoners at Bilibid Prison. – courtesy of *Japanese Military Personnel Prisoners' Mail in the Philippine Islands* by Yano Fumihiko³

Figure 113 illustrates a written copy of the Prisoner's Letter form dated October 16, 1951 from former Japanese Captain Masao Ono. It is addressed to a prisoner at Sugamo Prison in Tokyo. This letter was carried by favor by an employee of the Welfare Ministry Relief Office to the addressee. The writer had placed a scenic black-and-white sketch on the front. On the back of the form, 20 men had written 2- or 3-line messages.³ Masao Ono was sentenced to death by hanging for atrocities committed at Cayagan during March and April of 1945. He was committed to a life sentence at Sugamo Prison in the pardons on July 4, 1953 and fully pardoned on December 28, 1953.⁹

U. S. Form No. 58

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
DEPARTMENT OF ARMY
BUREAU OF PRISONS
NEW ISLAND PRISON

2461-D

Masso Corso

1-2

PRISONER'S LETTER


Sent by _____

Date _____

Classified by _____

Oct 16

Mr. Mikio Kai & Mrs. Giachuro Miyama
Sugamo Prison, Japan.



Trusty Police and Detention prisoners are allowed to write one letter a week First class, two letters a month and second class, one letter a month.

All mails for the prisoners will be opened and examined before delivery.

Trusty Police, Chief and Asst. Chief ward leaders are allowed to receive visitors every Sunday morning. First class, every other Sunday morning Second class, every fourth Sunday afternoon; and Detention prisoners, every Saturday afternoon.

Because the prisoners, as indicated in the above rules have limited number of visits on specified days relatives and friends of prisoners are requested to come together in groups when they visit.

1949-9

Figure 113.

Bilibid Prisoner's Letter form No. 58 that was prepared for the Japanese prisoners. This form was sent on October 18, 1951 to a prisoner at Sugamo Prison, Tokyo. The sender had drawn a sketch on the front of the form. – *courtesy of Japanese Military Personnel Prisoners' Mail in the Philippine Islands by Yano Fumihiko*³

In January of 1952 efforts were taking place on a large scale to try to get the incarcerated Japanese at NBP repatriated to Japan. One of the companies heavily involved in this campaign was NHK, Nippon Hōsō Kyōkai (Japan Broadcasting Association). One of their means was by sending voice broadcasts of the prisoners back to Japan. Also, 550 letters were brought to NBP from Japan via NHK on April 11, 1952. Picture postcards were provided by NHK featuring an NHK studio in Japan with a special ‘Imo-han’ cachet. These were taken back to Japan for posting. An example of this card with its cachet is featured as *Figure 114*³



Figure 114.

NHK postcard (with a special cachet) given to prisoners at NBP, later taken to Japan by NHK, and posted there on April 10, 1953. – courtesy of Japanese Military Personnel Prisoners’ Mail in the Philippine Islands by Yano Fumihiko³

PARDONS

With the last of the Philippine trials completed by the end of 1949, 138 men were convicted of one or more charges and more than three quarters of these men received sentences of death or life in prison. With the U.S. tribunals in the Philippines, 90 received death sentences, of which 69 were executed. Those who received lesser sentences were incarcerated at Sugamo prison in Tokyo, with some not receiving their release until 1957 and 1958.⁹ At the end of 1949, a newspaper story appeared in the Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners' Advocate describing a petition with over 3000 signatures from the families and friends of 140 criminals convicted in the Philippines, asking that they be allowed to serve their sentences in Japan. A copy of this story is illustrated as *Figure 115*.

Japanese War Criminals Seek Repatriation

TOKYO, Dec. 30, A.A.P.-Reuter.—Families and friends of 140 Japanese war criminals convicted in the Philippines have sent a petition to the President (Senor Quirino), asking that the criminals be allowed to serve their sentences in Japan, the Chief of the Philippines Legal Section in Japan (Major P. M. Stuart) said to-day.

Major Stuart said he had passed on to the President petitions bearing more than 3000 signatures.

The convicted criminals included 68 sentenced to death by hanging and eight by firing squad, but the sentences are awaiting review.

Other sentences ranged from five to 30 years.

Major Stuart said the criminals were Japanese Army and Navy personnel, some of whom had been convicted of murder, rape, cannibalism, and torture against Philippine non-combatants.

Figure 115.

Copy of a newspaper story about a petition asking the Philippines for the convicted war criminals to serve the balance of their sentence in a Japanese prison. — *Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners' Advocate (New South Wales)*, December 31, 1949

On January 19-20, 1951, 14 more Japanese were executed for their war crimes. Buddhist priest Kagao Shūnin became aware of these executions and alerted the Japanese government, ignoring the warning by the Philippine government not to discuss the executions. In mid-February, Kagao also became aware of another set of executions that were to take place when 10 new graves were dug. Again Kagao notified the Japanese Government. During the balance of 1951, many petitions were forwarded to Malacañan (the presidential palace). In addition, there was discussion between the Japanese and Philippines governments. During 1952, discussions between the two countries continued at a slow pace towards the commuting of the death sentences and serving the war criminals' time in Japan.⁹

In January 1952, Philippine President Quirino made assurances that there would be no more executions. And in February, he added that there might be more pardons and that he hoped to return the war criminals to Japan as soon as possible. Keeping them in the Philippines was uneconomical.⁹

In August 1952 an Australian newspaper story reported that Japan has had no response from Australia, Britain, the United States, France, Netherlands and the Philippines regarding paroles and having war criminals serve the balance of their sentences in a Japanese prison. This article is displayed as *Figure 116*.

Jap Notes not answered

Herald Special Service

NEW YORK, Fri. — The Japanese Government has had no replies to Notes it sent to Australia, Britain, the United States, France and the Netherlands asking for permission to parole 157 of its war criminals and give clemency to 73 others.

Nor has there been any answer yet from Australia and the Philippines to a Japanese request that 350

minor war criminals held outside Japan be repatriated to serve the rest of their sentences in Tokyo gaols.

Ray Falk, Tokyo correspondent of the North American Newspaper Alliance, reports that Japan is not seeking the release of those 13 important prisoners who were convicted by the International Tribunal of waging aggressive war.

Yoshida's Government wants to free only men who were convicted of atrocities against Allied soldiers and civilians.

Figure 116.

A copy of a newspaper story reporting that the Japanese government has had no response to its requests to parole some war criminals and have others serve the balance of their sentences in Japan. — *Herald (Melbourne)*, August 9, 1952

In September 1951 at San Francisco, a peace treaty was signed, in which Article 14 acknowledged that Japan would be responsible for paying for reparations. With limited resources available in Japan, they chose to negotiate with Allied Powers, seeking compensation individually. In early 1952, Japanese and Philippines representatives met to discuss reparations. The Philippines was seeking \$8 billion payable over a period of 10-15 years, with the Japanese government paying interim reparations prior to the Philippines ratification of the peace treaty. The Japanese acknowledged that they should pay reparations, but to them the amount was excessive. Since the Philippines had not ratified the peace treaty, they had no obligation to pay reparations, so they left for home. The cat-and-mouse game continued through the balance of 1952 and 1953; the Philippines had something that Japan had wanted, “Japanese prisoners to come home” and Japan had something the Philippines wanted, “money for reparations”, for which the Japanese felt was in excess to damages.⁹

On June 27, 1953, the Philippine government announced that it intended to repatriate all Japanese war criminals still held in the Philippines. Those Japanese who were sentenced to life or term sentences would be granted freedom and those who were sentenced to death would have their sentences commuted to life with their sentence to be served at Sugamo prison in Tokyo. President Quirino’s statement on amnesty would become effective July 4th (Philippine Independence Day) about which a newspaper story is shown in *Figure 117*. [Ed note: one of those mentioned in the newspaper story is Lt-General Yokoyama; several of his correspondences from NBP are exhibited in this essay.]

JAPANESE WAR CRIMINALS GET PHILIPPINES AMNESTY

MANILA.—The official list of Japanese war criminals and collaborators whose sentences have been commuted or pardoned will be published in Manila on July 4, Philippine Independence Day.

President Elpidio Quirino signed the list before departure for the United States on Saturday. In all, 113 Japanese prisoners who have been confined to Muntinglupa gaol, outside Manila, since the liberation are among the beneficiaries of executive clemency.

Some Japanese will be given pardons and repatriated. Others given death sentences will have them commuted to life imprisonment and be sent to Japan to serve the rest of their terms.

President Quirino also pardoned about 300 collaborators. It is understood that among

the prisoners to be sent to Japan are Lieut.-General Siusuo Yokohama and Rear-Admiral Takasue Furuse, whose death penalties were commuted to life imprisonment.

Among the top brass pardoned are Lieut.-Generals Yoshihide Hayashi and Kendsishei Masuoka, who were serving life terms.

The President's decision was believed to be motivated

was believed to be motivated by a desire to foster better relations with Japan.

An official spokesman also said the Philippines gesture might hasten settlement of the Philippines' demand for war reparations from Japan.

At the week-end, a Japanese businessman brought in a shipment of 30 thick books containing the signatures of 5,000,000 Japanese asking for early release of Japanese war prisoners.

In Singapore it was learned that the last three Japanese war criminals serving sentences in Singapore's Changi prison will be released tomorrow and deported to Japan.

The criminals were to sail on the Japanese freighter Ginko Maru, arriving in Japan around July 12.

In Europe, the West German Chancellor, Dr. Konrad Adenauer, visited German war criminals still held by British authorities at Werl, Westphalia, and assured them his Gov-

ernment would do everything to secure their release.

He had asked the British High Commissioner, Sir Ivone Kirckpatrick, for permission to see the prisoners.

About 100 war criminals are held in Werl prison—the only war crimes gaol in the British Zone.

Figure 117.

Newspaper article giving details of the general amnesty by the Philippine government to the Japanese war crime prisoners. — *Advocate (Burnie, Tasmania)*, June 30, 1953

Some of the conditions of this pardon/amnesty that were agreed upon by both Japanese and Filipinos were:

- 1) The Japanese government would take care of the proper maintenance and support of the prisoners.
- 2) If the Philippine courts (where their sentences were transferred) should see that those concerned serve.
- 3) None of the prisoners with commuted sentences were to be given clemency or parole by the Japanese government without prior Philippine approval.¹⁰

On July 15, 1953 a Japanese ship left Manila with the Japanese prisoners on board. It arrived at Yokohama on July 21. *Figure 118* illustrates “the loading of the urns containing the ashes of 17 executed war prisoners”.

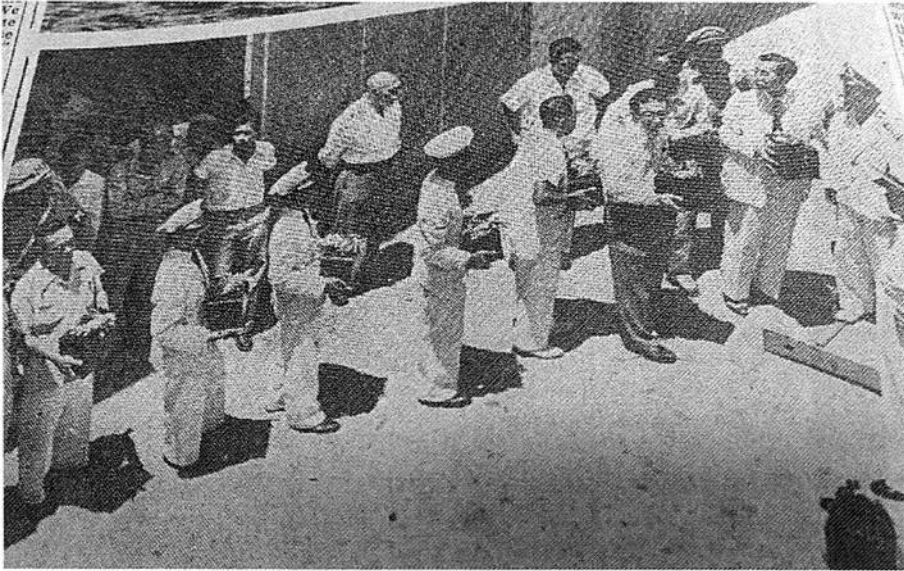


Figure 118
A photo of the loading of the urns containing the ashes of 17 executed war criminals. –
Manila Bulletin

Upon arrival of the ship at Yokohama, there was a joyous occasion as displayed in *Figure 119* in which a repatriated war criminal is greeted by his mother.

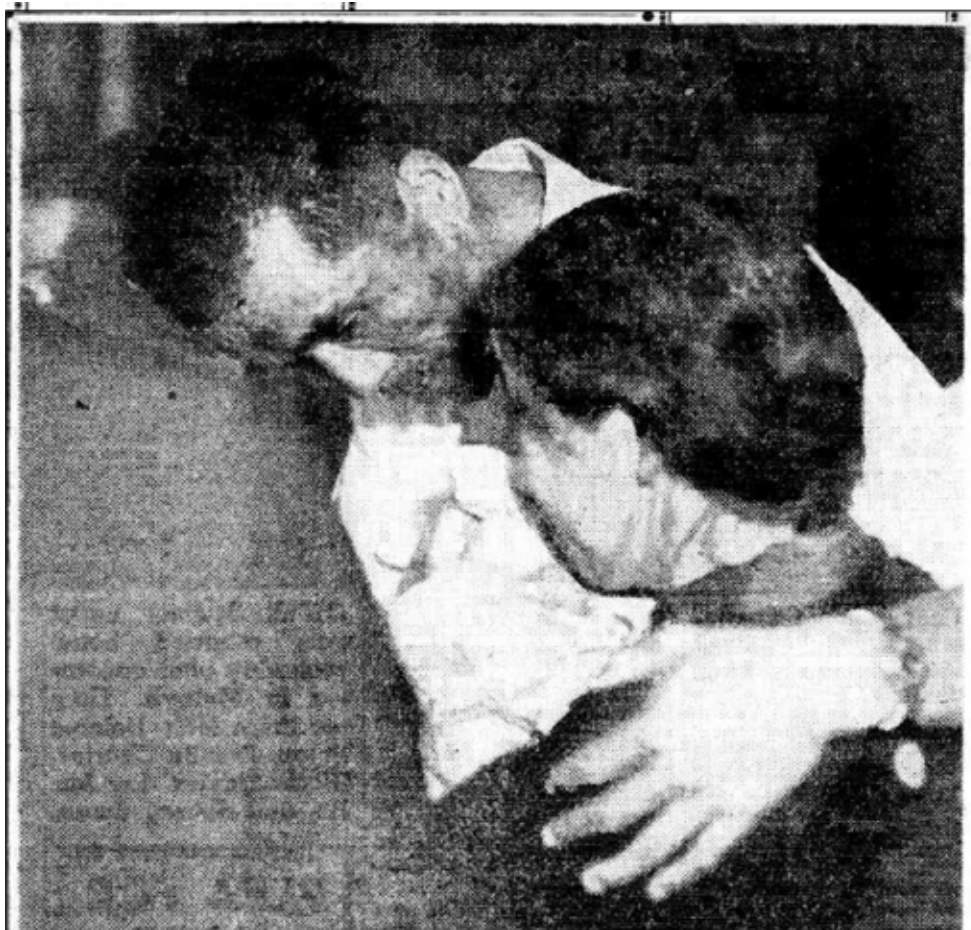


Figure 119.
A photo of a repatriated war criminal embracing his mother. –
Daily Telegraph (Sydney), July 30, 1953

In 1956 the Japanese and Philippine governments finally reached an agreement on the amount of reparations to be paid by Japan. The total was \$550 million, a far cry from the \$8 billion originally sought. This \$550 million was to be in capital goods and services paid over a 20-year period. The settlement also agreed that Japanese private firms would extend commercial loans totaling \$250 million. With this agreement, the way was paved for the Philippine government to ratify the San Francisco Peace Treaty of 1951 so Japan and the Philippines were no longer at war.⁹

On December 28, 1953, those Japanese war criminals who had their death sentences commuted to life at Sugamo prison were pardoned and were now free.

SUGAMO PRISON

Originally built in 1895, in the European style of prisons, Sugamo Prison became the home to Japanese criminals and by the 1930s was home to political prisoners such as communists and others who had ideas contrary to the Japanese “Peace Preservation Laws” of the 1930s and 1940s. During World War II, the prison held allied spies, and even executed Soviet spy master Richard Sorge, who was hanged on November 7, 1944.

The prison survived the Tokyo bombings undamaged and after the war it was used by the Americans to house those Japanese who were awaiting war crimes trials. Japanese found guilty of war crimes and given death sentences from both the trials of the IMTFE and the Yokohama War Crimes Trials were executed by hanging at the prison. *Figure 120* exhibits a 1945 photo of Sugamo Prison, which was used to detain arrested Japanese politicians and military officers for war crimes while awaiting trial. *Figure 121* depicts a photo of the gated entrance to the prison. *Figure 122* displays a photo of the prison under the night lights in 1948



Figure 120.

A 1945 photo of Sugamo Prison, which housed arrested Japanese politicians and military officers for war crimes while awaiting trial.



Figure 121.
A photo of the gated entrance to Sugamo



Figure 122.
Night photo of Sugamo Prison in December 1948.

In July 1953, the Philippine Government granted a pardon to those Japanese being held at Bilibid Prison; those who were sentenced to life in prison or were to serve a term of years in custody were granted a pardon. Those awaiting the death penalty had their sentences commuted to life in prison and were to serve it at Sugamo prison,. They were given full pardon on December 28, 1953.

One of the most well known inmates of Sugamo Prison was Iva Toguri D'Aquino or the woman more commonly referred to by American soldiers as "Tokyo Rose". A mug shot of Tokyo Rose is illustrated as *Figure 123*.



Figure 123.

Mug shot of Iva Toguri D'Aquino, commonly known as Tokyo Rose, taken at Sugamo Prison in 1946.

In 1962, Sugamo prison closed, and in 1971 the buildings were demolished.

Richard Sakakida¹¹



Richard Motoso Sakakida was one of five children, born on November 19, 1920 at Puuene, Maui, Hawaii. The family moved to Honolulu in 1923, and after his father passed away in 1927, the siblings were raised by a single mother. Richard attended McKinley High school and Hongwanji Japanese Language School, graduating from both in 1939.

Relationships between the United State and Japan were deteriorating after Japan's invasion of China, and the U.S. realized that it was a matter of time before Japan would have its eye on territorial lands in the Pacific and the Pacific Rim. General MacArthur's headquarters in the Philippines had requested two Niseis to be recruited into the Corps of Intelligence Police (CIP) in which these two would work undercover within the Japanese community in the Philippines.

On April 21, 1941, Richard Sakakida and Arthur Komori (the other Nisei agent) jumped ship at Manila and began to merge into the Japanese community.

With the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and the landing of Japanese soldiers on Philippine soil, the Americans began detaining Japanese civilians at the Japanese Club House. Richard was detained by the Philippine Constabulary as being a Japanese spy. He was later released by an American officer and continued with his duties. With the Japanese occupation, he was later arrested and interrogated by the Japanese Military Police and the Judge Advocate General's section of the 14th Japanese Army informing him he was on trial for treason. Being of Japanese ancestry, it was deemed that he was a Japanese citizen and could be tried for treason. Sakakida's mother had registered Richard's birth at the Japanese Consul in Hawaii as was the custom, which would make him an honorary Japanese citizen. She had the foresight to officially void this registration in August of 1941 when he left for the Philippines, which meant he was not a Japanese citizen and could not be charged for treason, an event credited with saving his life. He was later charged with minor crimes and the interrogations continued.

In February of 1943, he was removed from Bilibid Prison and taken to the residence of Colonel Nishiharu, Chief Judge Advocate of the 14th Army Headquarters, where he was to work in the office doing general work and also serve as the Colonel's houseboy at his home. His house-boy job did not last that long as the Colonel discovered that Sakakida had been dipping into his supply of American cigarettes and had him removed from the house. Now the only job he had was to work in the office and do his general office duties. With this change, he was to live in the former English Club in Manila City, which had now been converted into a civilian barracks with strict conditions—a roll call at 0600 and 2230 hours and a bed check at midnight. Being fluent in Japanese and English, he was able to

assist the Philippine citizens in many ways. One person he helped was Mrs. Tupas, the wife of Ernest Tupas, formerly of the CIP and being held at Bilibid Prison. While filling out visitation forms for Mrs. Tupas and other wives of guerilla members, Sakakida planned to break them out of Bilibid. After bed check, he left his barracks and with four other guerillas dressed as Japanese officers, they went to the main gate, overpowered the guards. More guerillas ran into the compound and released nearly 500 guerillas. Sakakida was able to get back to his bed at the 0630 roll call and when he was at his job in the morning, the superintendent of Bilibid Prison came to the Colonel to inform him of the prison break.

On another occasion Sakakida had learned of the plans for a Japanese Expeditionary Force to Australia. He was able to get this information to Tupas, who relayed this to MacArthur in Australia. U.S. submarines were waiting and of the 15 Japanese vessels involved, only one returned to the Philippines. The rest were sunk.

In June 1945, Sakakida began to get the feeling that the Japanese police were watching him and he decided to flee to the jungle to fight with the guerillas. In a fire fight, Sakakida was wounded and was left behind. For three months he tended to his own wounds and lived off the land until he came across some U.S. soldiers, who took him into custody as a spy, and held him until two officers from the CIC arrived to release him.

After healing of his wounds, he became involved in the war crimes trials—identifying, interrogating and assisting in the trials. Many of those in the past who had interrogated and tortured him were now seeing him in a U.S. uniform and interrogating them.

In September of 1975, after 34 years of military service, Sakakida retired as a Lt Colonel. He was awarded the Philippines Legion of Honor and the Bronze Star and Prisoner of War Medal ((he was posthumously awarded the Distinguished Service Medal on October 28, 1998). He was inducted into the Military Intelligence Corps Hall of Fame in 1988 and also into the Air Force Office of Special Investigations Hall of fame.

Sakakida passed away on January 23, 1996 after a lengthy illness complicated by his war wounds.

In 1994, the Philippines issued two 2-Peso stamps to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the escape of nearly 500 guerillas. The stamp is illustrated in *Figure 124*.



Figure 124.

Pair of 2 Peso stamps issued for the 50th anniversary of the escape of nearly 500 guerillas from Bilibid Prison.



Official First Day Cover with pair of stamps and Manila CPO, December 8, 1994 special postmark



Cover with First Issue of 1994 (top) and Second Issue of 1995 with lighter colors and Cabanatuan City Hall, May 15, 1995 postmark with waves

Conclusion

Published discussion of the topic of this book is understandably infrequent. Post-war mail to and from the Japanese POWs is scarce. Presumably family members and historians have retained any remaining related correspondence. In addition—for various reasons—many philatelists may not want to collect artifacts that remind them of war crimes committed over 75 years ago. Nonetheless, there is sufficient material available to provide the story of its delivery. The aim of this book is to describe to Philippine collectors a summary of the postal artifacts currently recorded regarding this chapter of World War II history.

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