

AWM52
2nd Australian Imperial Force and
Commonwealth Military Forces unit war
diaries, 1939-45 War

Item number: 8/3/105

63 Infantry Battalion

December 1945

WAR DIARY or ~~INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.~~

(Erase heading not required.)

Army Form C.2118.
(Adapted.)

Unit 63 INF BN

Date and Time.—From 1 DEC 45 To 2 DEC 45

Place.	Date.	Hour.	Summary of Events and Information.	Remarks and references to Appendices, Diaries, &c.
AMBON	1 Dec	0900	Location statement of Bn sub-unit locations.	See appendix 6
		0930	Col E.B. Ellison with party RITOH, KAI and TANIMBAR GROUPS for concentration of Japanese Forces that area.	
			Capt Rowan 2 i/c acting C.O..	See appendix 8
			Dumping continuing PIROE (CERAM) AMBON areas of responsibilities. Progressive total Jap stores dumped AMBON 374 tons.	
			33 Inf Bde report 280 Japs moving from CERAM to LAHA area.	
			These Japs are members of original landing force and are to be used to unearth evidence re mass Executions Aust PW's that area.	
		1530	Explosion occurred during dumping area of the Coaling Wharf	
			1 Jap killed 2 Aust wounded - Enquiry proceeding.	
	2 Dec	0900	Church Parade as per unit RO's. Normal Bn stand down day.	See appendix 8

WAR DIARY or INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

Army Form C.2118.
(Adapted.)

(Erase heading not required.)

Unit 63 INF BN Date and Time.—From 3 DEC 45 To 4 DEC 45

Place.	Date.	Hour.	Summary of Events and Information.	Remarks and references to Appendices, Diaries, &c.
AMBON	3 Dec 45	0900	Loc statement forwarded to 33 Inf Bde.	See appendix 8
			No. of Jap prisojers held in Unit Compound - 72	See appendix 7
		1200	Lt Marshall proceeded to LAHA to supervise work to be done	See appendix 7 4
			by Japanese endeavouring to locate evidence of Mass Execut-	
			ions of Aust PW's.	
		1500	Lt McEwan took over Comd 9 Pl PIROE.	
	4 Dec 45	0900	82 Japanese with 3 Jap Officers brought from CERAM to LAHA-	See appendix 1 & 4
			these Japanese were at LAHA at the time of action 2/21 Bn	
			and are to be interrogated regarding fate of Aust PW's	
			unaccounted for.	
		1000	Promotions NCO's - trade grouping and Proficiency Pay	See appendix 8
			promulgated through Bn RO orders Part I.	
			Dumping of allied bombs etc LAHA in progress.	See appendix 7

WAR DIARY or INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

(Erase heading not required.)

Army Form C.2118.
(Adapted.)

Unit 63 INF BN

Date and Time.—From 5 DEC 45

To 7 DEC 45

Place.	Date.	Hour.	Summary of Events and Information.	Remarks and references to Appendices, Diaries, &c.
AMBON	5 DEC	0900	Interrogation of Japanese witnesses of the Battle for LAHA commenced at LAHA by I.O., Lt Marshall, Lt Bubb.	See appendix 4
		1200	Dumping ammunition etc AREA A (AMBON) completed. Total dumped 631 tons.	See appendix 7
		1430	From interrogation Japs at LAHA further Mass Grave of Aust PW located alleged to contain 50 bodies.	See appendix 7
	6 DEC	1000	Bde Comd and Party visited LAHA	
		1600	Exhumation of Mass Aust Grave LAHA bodies recovered 35 complete six uncomplete - 2 RAAF - 2 DUTCH work not completed. Hands apparently bound with sig cable.	See appendix 7
		1800	Lt-Col Ellison returned from TANIMBAR, KAI Groups.	
	7 DEC	1000	Third Mass Grave discovered LAHA area.	See appendix 1 & 4
		1500	Exhumation of Second Mass Grave completed. Total bodies	See appendix 1 & 4

WAR DIARY or INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

(Erase heading not required.)

Army Form C.2118.
(Adapted.)

Unit 63 INF BN

Date and Time.—From 7 DEC 45

To 10 DEC 45

Place.	Date.	Hour.	Summary of Events and Information.	Remarks and references to Appendices, Diaries, &c.
AMBON	7 DEC	1500	recovered approx 61 - bodies removed to AMBON and pit closed.	
		1600	Exhumation of Second Mass Grave completed.	
			26 Personnel with 150 points and over marched out to Demob centre for return to Australia.	
	8 DEC	1600	Exhumation third Grave LAHA area completed and pit closed.	See appendix 4
			Total bodies recovered approx 139 - removed to AMBON.	
	9			
	9 DEC	0900	Identification of Japs by native residents of HATOE TAWIRI	See appendix 4
			LAHA. Bn normal stand down day - Church parades as per Unit RO's	
	10 DEC	0900	8 Pl A Coy moved from ERI to Bn area in preparation for move-	See appendix 6
			ment to PIROE (CERAM)	

WAR DIARY or INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

Army Form C.2118.
(Adapted.)

(Erase heading not required.)

Unit 63 INF BN Date and Time.—From 10 DEC 45 To 13 DEC 45

Place.	Date.	Hour.	Summary of Events and Information.	Remarks and references to Appendices, Diaries, &c.
AMBON	10 DEC	1000	Jap prisoners held in Unit Compound 15 Offrs 65 OR's	See appendix 7
		1700	Interrogation at LAHA by Bn I.O. of Japanese who participated in battle of LAHA Feb 1942.	See appendix 7
	11 DEC	0800	Location statement forwarded to 33 Inf Bde	See appendix 6
			8 Pl A Coy embarked for movement to PIROE (CERAM) by barge to carry out recce in that area.	
		0900	LAHA clearing of areas of Aust defence positions 1942 - in search of buried battle casualties.	See appendix 3
	12 DEC	0900	Search for Aust Battle casualties continuing LAHA.	See appendix 3
		1730	Lt E.J. COX took over Command Bn detachment at PIROE (CERAM).	
	13 DEC	1000	Lecture delivered at Bn area by Maj McLOED (AAES) on Rehabilitation.	

WAR DIARY or INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

(Erase heading not required.)

Army Form C.2118.
(Adapted.)

Unit 63 INF BN

Date and Time.—From 13 DEC

To 16 DEC 45

Place.	Date.	Hour.	Summary of Events and Information.	Remarks and references to Appendices, Diaries, &c.
AMBON	13 DEC	1000	Jap IKEUCHI taken under guard to LAHA to attempt location of grave of Aust Battle casualties.	See appendix 1 3
	14 DEC	0900	Drilling of Guard pl to be supplied for Bde HQ 15 Dec 45.	
			Detachment at PIROE advised Japs to vacate all dump areas by the 16 Dec from which date Dutch will assume responsibility to control those areas. Jap 5 Div HQ are expected to be transferred from PIROE area by 25 DEC 45.	
	15 DEC	0900	Official war Photographer visited LAHA mass Grave sites with Bn I.O..	
		1600	17 Pl D Coy mounted guard main Wharf AMBON.	See Appendix 6
	16 DEC	0900	Advice received from Bde that date on which all arms held by	

WAR DIARY or INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

(Erase heading not required.)

Army Form C.2118.
(Adapted.)

Unit 63 INF BN

Date and Time.—From 16 DEC 45 To 23 DEC 45

Place.	Date.	Hour.	Summary of Events and Information.	Remarks and references to Appendices, Diaries, &c.
AMBON	16 DEC	0900	Jap sentries etc is to be handed over - has been extended to 31 Dec 1945.	
	17 DEC	0900	Location statement forwarded to 33 Inf Bde.	See appendix 6
			Japs held in custody Unit Compound 16 Offrs 72 OR's.	" " "
			Applications lodged by members of Bn qualifying for Defence Medal.	
		1000	Report by Bn on the LAHA massacres completed and fwd Bde.	See appendix 4
		1900	Aust Army Concert Party No 9 gave performance in 63 Bn theatre.	
	18 DEC	0900	Bn location statement as at 17 Dec attached.	See appendix 6
	22 DEC	1200	9 Pl A Coy returned from PIROE (CERAM) to Bn area.	See appendix 6
	23 DEC	0900	Bn Stand Down - Church parade as per Unit RO's	See appendix 8

WAR DIARY or INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

(Erase heading not required.)

Army Form C.2118.
(Adapted.)

Unit 63 INF BN

Date and Time.—From 23 DEC 45

To 25 DEC 45

Place.	Date.	Hour.	Summary of Events and Information.	Remarks and references to Appendices, Diaries, &c.
AMBON	23 DEC	1230	Exhumation of grave vicinity LAHA airstrip commenced.	See appendix 3
		1700	Unchecked bodies recovered from above grave 6.	" " 3
	24 DEC	0900	Search for further bodies of alleged Aust Battle Casualties continues at LAHA.	See appendix 3
		1000	Xmas Greetings from Bde Com Brig H. WRIGLEY C.B.E. promulgated through Bde Newspaper "AMBON NEWS".	See appendix 10
		1000	All Japs used for Grave digging LAHA area returned to Jap HQ GALALA except 1 Interpreter - 29 OR's.	See appendix 11
	25 DEC	0800	Xmas Day - Bn stand down day.	
		1000	Church Parade conducted by Chaplain Guest - Bn Rec Hut.	See appendix 8
		1100	Permission received to credit 4 days Xmas Leave to all ranks of this Unit.	

WAR DIARY or ~~INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY~~

(Erase heading not required.)

Army Form C.2118.
(Adapted.)

Unit 63 INF BN

Date and Time.—From 26 DEC 45 To 28 DEC 45

Place.	Date.	Hour.	Summary of Events and Information.	Remarks and references to Appendices, Diaries, &c.
AMBON	26 DEC	0800	17 personnel in transit by air from MOROTAI to AUST stayed over night at Unit Barracks.	
	27 DEC	0900	Location statement of Bn - forwarded to Bde HQ.	See appendix 6
	28 DEC	0700	Continuation of drafts personnel under Demob.	
		0900	HQ Coy patrol 2 Sgts 6 OR's moved to WIAME to locate and return reported FORMOSANS to GALA: Jap HQ - 12 FORMOSANS - taken into custody.	
		1500	Int personnel attached to 16 Pl LAHA returned to Bn HQ -	
			It is considered that work from Int view is completed for that area.	
			Summary of crashed A/C reported PIROE.	See appendix 3
			D Coy HQ plus 17 and 18 Pls returned to Bn area.	" " 6

WAR DIARY or INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

(Erase heading not required.)

Army Form C.2118.
(Adapted.)

Unit 63 INF BN Date and Time.—From 30 DEC 45 To 31 DEC 45

[illegible]

San Francisco, Cal.
10. 63 Inf Bns
2 Jan 46.

APPENDIX I

WAR DIARY

63 INF BN (AIF)

DECEMBER 1945

COMMANDING OFFICERS REPORT:

December has been a successful month for the Bn with particular regard to its operational functions.

As was predicted in my report for November War Diary, all of the units main tasks have now been completed.

The Laha search operations conducted with assistance from Japanese who took part in the original battle there have disclosed the locations of the remaining graves of the Australian soldiers in that area. In all 316 bodies have been recovered at LAHA and SOEWAKODA. Some of which, perhaps between 30 and 40 are Dutch. The task of accounting for all missing Australians should be completed shortly.

Dumping of Jap War Like stores from the Bn areas of responsibility is also finished with the exception of certain types of aerial bombs which are too big and heavy for Bn resources to handle. Disposal of these is being arranged by 33 Inf Bde.

During the month only a few men of the Bn have been marched out for demob proceedings but all arrangements have been made in anticipation of the early movement of those who by reason of demob points and length of tropical service are eligible for release. It is anticipated that only a small cadre of the Bn personnel will remain on Ambon after the early part of January 46.

With the exception of 16 Platoon which remains temporarily at Laha and 8 Platoon which is at PIROE CERAM all other units have now been concentrated at BENTENG Dutch Arty Barracks with Bn HQ in order to facilitate control and withdrawal of the remaining members.

The Christmas and New Year festivities have afforded us all with opportunities for welcome relaxation and enjoyment. Rations were ample and Christmas was celebrated in traditional army style. The conduct of all ranks during the period has been excellent.

Everyone now looks forward with high hopes for the future and the early prospect of returning to the mainland.

H. B. Ellison
Lt-Col.
C.O. 63 Aust Inf Bn (AIF)

WAR DIARY
63 INF BN (AIF)
DECEMBER 1945

QUARTERMASTER'S REPORT.

1. RATIONS

All rations received of good quality, no rations were condemned. Xmas ration considered ample and of good variety. Week ending 28 Dec 45 rations underdrawn 67. This figure has been reduced from 800 overdrawals on Oct 10 45. Only surplus commodities in hand is dried fruit.

2. QUARTERING.

Members of Unit are stationed at LAHA, PIROE, MAIN WHARF, GUARD COMPOUND BENTENG BARRACKS, D COY moved to BENTENG (A COY lines) 29-30 Dec 45. Tentage is in use at LAHA, PIROE, MAIN WHARF, GUARD COMPOUND for living and cooking accomodation.

3. UNIT EQUIPMENT.

Vide 33 Inf Bde Q1036/1725 of Dec 45 return of surplus equipment to AMBON was proceeded with.

4. CLOTHING ISSUES.

Small amount of clothing was received and issued during month. Only large sizes available from ORDANCE. Lost reports for clothing are abnormally high.

5. BARGE SERVICE.

3 Jap barges were relinquished to Bde for dumping and removing of Japs on CERAM. Unit was to have taken ove Launch from 233 LAD but a storm damaged BARTOEMERAH wharf and caused launch to be smashed beyond repair.

6. TRANSPORT.

All Jap vehicles still unreliable and becoming increasingly difficult to maintenance owing to the lack of spare parts. Punctures and blowouts are abnormally high due to the poor condition and age of tyres. All JEEPS are showing signs of overwork, Maintenance is fair but to obtain maximum efficiency all JEEPS should be thoroughly overhauled. This is impossible under present conditions. Supplies of puncture repair outfits are scarce, which results in many vehicles being without spare tyres.

0514151

Georgina Lt.
Q.M. 63 Aust Inf Bn (AIF)

MESSAGE FORM

Register No.

Call	Ser. No.	Priority	Transmission Instructions
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ABOVE THIS LINE FOR SIGNALS USE ONLY

FROM (A)	Originator 63 Inf Bn	Date—Time of Origin 20 1810 I	Office Date Stamp
For Action			
TO	16 PL LAHA		
(w) For Information (INFO.)			Message Instructions GR

ORIGINATOR'S No.

I 122 unclassified (.) your I 5 of 201700 I (.)

continue digging throughout area until further notice (.) 33 BDE

will advise when search operations may be closed down (.) forward

articles recovered to BN HQ as early as possible and ensure these

are sent in charge of responsible unit member

War Diary (2) ✓

File

This message may be sent AS WRITTEN
by any means { except

Wireless

Signed

If liable to be intercepted or fall into
enemy hands, this message must be
sent IN CIPHER

Signed

Originator's Instructions
Degree of Priority

Time	System	Op
THI or TOR		
Time Cleared		

MESSAGE FORM

Register No.

Call

Ser. No.

Priority

Transmission Instructions

ABOVE THIS LINE FOR SIGNALS USE ONLY

FROM
(A)

Originator

Date—Time of Origin

Office Date Stamp

63 Inf Bn For Action

21/9/001

TO

33 Inf Bde

(w) For Information (INFO.)

Message Instructions

GR

ORIGINATOR'S No.

16 PL LAHA

1 125 unclassified (.) Search party vicinity LAHA

Airstrip advise discovery evidence discovery further graves

probably Australian battle casualties (.) Await your instructions

Man Henry
File

This message may be sent AS WRITTEN
by any means { except }
Wireless

If liable to be intercepted or fall into
enemy hands, this message must be
sent IN CIPHER

Originator's Instructions
Degree of Priority

Time	System	Op
THI or TOR		
Time Cleared		

Signed

[Signature]

Signed

Subject: EXHUMATION - GRAVE 5 - LAHA.

63 Inf Bn (AIF)
AMBON
20/41
26 DEC 45.

33 Inf Bde.

Ref current search for graves of Australian soldiers
Killed in action Feb 42.

1. Grave 5 was located near north eastern end LAHA airstrip 21 Dec 45 at MR AMBON 1:100,000, 069916 and exhumation commenced 231300 I Dec 45 under direction of 30 war graves unit. Work was completed 231515 I.

2. 6 incomplete skeletons were recovered. All bones were badly decomposed.

3. The grave was a trench 20 feet long and about 4 feet wide with the bodies disposed longitudinally.


4. The following articles were removed from the grave and are now held by War Graves unit:-

- 1 Rifle
- 1 S & W Pistol .38
- 1 Whistle
- 1 Compass
- 1 signet ring
- 1 pannikin
- 1 pearl handled pocket knife
- 1 Officers star
- watch band
- 1 respirator
- Thompson SMO Mags
- 4 steel helmets
- numerous rounds .38 .45 .303

5. No distinguishable evidence of execution or violence was found, and it would appear possible that the men may have been battle casualties.

6. This grave site did not conform in detail or location with that described by ICHUUCHI, but was approximately in the position anticipated by a considerable number of the members of the 1st KURE who state the bodies are those of battle casualties.

7. Careful and extensive digging in the vicinity of this grave site and where suggested by ICHUUCHI has so far failed to produce further results.


Lt-Col.
G.O. 63 Inf Bn (AIF)

IM/AHT

Copies to: Legal
War Diary (2) ✓
File.

Subject: WAR GRAVES & MOVEMENTS OF AUSTRALIAN SOLDIERS
ESCAPE - 33 AUSTRALIANS FROM LATOBIAN AREA

63 Inf Bn (AIF)
MUNICH
20/33
V DEC 45

33 Inf Bn

Reference of Bn Cases Nos 33 and 34 concerning the above.

1. Attached is extract from letter received by I.O. this Bn from
VK 21553 Op. A. AULT whose present address is "41 Landing Craft
Coy, LAUNCESTON". Op1 AULT was a member of the party which made its
escape from above area in Feb 43 and proceeded to GORAM IS (GERAM).

2. Extract:-

"On the night of 3 Feb 43, twenty-three of us went out on a
night patrol and on returning Major McKee got sick and sent
back for the stretcher-bearers, who, upon arrival, told us
that the place had been taken and the troops dispersed. The
Major gave us the choice of going in and surrendering or
making an attempt of escaping. Twenty of us preferred the
latter, the other three surrendered. Eventually we escaped
in a small sailing vessel not far from Ayris village. I do
not remember all the names, but here is a few - Lt GUYMAN,
Sgt WILKINSON, Sgt AMERSON, PERCIVAL PALMER, T. CLARK, T. GIBSON,
T. HAWKIN, L. HAWKIN, J. HAWKIN." As to the rest I am not clear.
We sailed to an island eighty miles east of Sabon, stayed there till
we had the craft fixed up, the natives doing all they
could to help us, giving us a navigator to our next stopping
place Ambai (Geram). Heard that some Dutch and Australians were
in front of us, but can give no names. Two days travel from
Ambai natives informed us that the Japs were waiting for us
down the coast further. A debate was held, 90% went ashore
to walk to Gocer, the rest stayed with the ship and then we
went far out to sea, then steered for Gocer. Ran into a
frightful storm that wrecked the ship, but finally we hit
Gocer with the help of the natives. We were put into the
Dutch hospital as we were fairly ill and if my memory serves
me properly that is where you will get most of your information
for I think that every man that got there put his name in the
hospital book. From here to Tocai, Dobo, Morau, where we
met up with some more Australians and Dutch. We went to
Australia in the Dutch boat "Hannon" landing at Roper River,
then flew to Brisbane, landing date April 8."

IV/13

Copies to: GWS
Legal
PW C & R
War Diary (2) ✓
File

William C. A. Col.
G.O. 63 Inf Bn (AIF)
100

Subject: CRASHED AIRCRAFT

63 Inf Bn (AIF)

AMBON

21/5
20 Dec 45

33 Inf Bde

The following translation of a statement by Radja of MOERNATEN (CERAM) is forwarded for necessary action please:0

" Statement about an aircraft which crashed near MOERNATEN six miles from that village, near the village of "AIR PANA" in the month of August 1944.

1. The plane was American with two fuselages.
2. The number on the tail was 423398.
3. Written under part of the tail was "Disconnect electrical wiring before removing tail".
4. Only the dead body of the pilot was found in the aeroplane.
5. Five aluminium plates were removed from the fuselage of the plane and the following papers found:
6. One small notebook which was not burnt but was taken by a member of Kempei Tai of MOERNATEN named SASAKI to Kempei Tai office at PIROE or MERIKAOE. On the book was written "Central America".
7. All the burnt luggage was taken by:-
 - (a) Adolf Elij - Kepala Sua.
 - (b) Jonathan Wate
 - (c) Ribana Elij
8. The Kempei Tai officer ordered the people not to bury the body.
9. When I returned home from the Kempei Tailgaol I, with two friends, burned the skeleton.

MOERNATEN 6 Nov 45
Radja who was written the above

E. WATE. "

Copies to: No 2 RAAF PW
Enquiry Unit C/-
11 Gp RAAF MOROTAI.

CFSS
War Diary (2)
File

Lt-Col
Lt-Col
C.O. 63 Inf Bn (AIF)

Subject: PERSONAL EFFECTS - 406222 I.W. READ

63 Inf Bn (AIF)
AMBON
13/28
20 Dec 45

2 RAAF PW Enquiry Unit (For FO. ANDERSON)
C/- 11 Gp RAAF
MOROTAI

1. Attached is small canvas bag marked as above for disposal.
2. The article was produced to Det 63 Inf Bn at PIROE by a native named HALIBATO resident at PIROE.
3. Native states that: "He fought with the Australians at POHON PORLE (near AMBON Hospital) and was given the article by the airmen to hand to the Allies after the war. READ was taken prisoner about 4 or 5 Feb 42. He had come from LAHA to AMBON just prior to Jap attack on AMBON."
4. It seems obvious that the article was received by the native in AMBON but small reliability is given to the sequence of events as quoted.

IM/ID

W. P. Allison
Lt-Col.
C.O. 63 Inf Bn (AIF)

Copies to:- War Diary (2)
File

MESSAGE FORM

Register No.

Call

Ser. No.

Priority

Transmission Instructions

ABOVE THIS LINE FOR SIGNALS USE ONLY

FROM

Originator

Date—Time of Origin

Office Date Stamp

(A)

63 Inf Bn

29 1700 I

For Action

2 RAAF PW Enquiry Unit c/- 11 GP RAAF
Morotai

TO

(w) For Information (INFO.)

Message Instructions

GR

33 Inf Bde (for Records Det)

ORIGINATOR'S No.

1160 unless (.) forwarding by mail seven identification
plates from U S fighter A/C believed P38 which crashed at MOERNATEN
CERAM (.) date of crash unknown (.) fate of pilot unknown (.)
advance infm from one plate as follows (.) LOCKHEED aircraft
corporation BURBANK CALIFORNIA Serial Number 2923 - 206
assembly number 197400 (.) have you infm ref crashes at
following places (.) TOETOMATEN ROEMAHITA WARIN KAIRATOE
PIROE all CERAM (.) no details at present held concerning crashes
at last five places named

War Diary 2 ✓

File.

This message may be sent AS WRITTEN
by any means { **incl** }

Wireless

Lt.

Signed

If liable to be intercepted or fall into
enemy hands, this message must be
sent IN CIPHER

Signed

Originator's Instructions
Degree of Priority

Time

System

Op

THI or TOR

Time Cleared

Subject: LAHA MASSACRES

63 Inf Bn (AIF)

AMBON

20/37

17 DEC 45

33 Inf Bde

1. Forwarded herewith is a detailed report concerning the above which arises out of investigations made by this Unit into the fate of Australians missing after the battle for LAHA.
2. The search for graves of those killed in action is proceeding but owing to changes which have occurred on the ground since 1942 identification of the exact location by the Japanese is proving most difficult.

IM/ID

W. D. Mellison
Lt-Col.
C.O. 63 Inf Bn (AIF)

Copies to: Legal
FSS
war diary (2)✓
File

THE LAHA MASSACRES

Int Sec
63 Inf Bn (AIF)
AMBON
17 Dec 45

1. There follows a detailed account of investigations conducted by 63 Inf Bn as to the circumstances surrounding the executions of Australian and Allied Prisoners taken by the Japanese after the battle for LAHA, and the discovery of their communal graves. Notes concerning the development of the battle, the numbers who escaped and supporting appendices are attached.
2. Conclusions given hereinafter represent only the opinions of I.O. 63 Inf Bn and are not intended to be final.

CONCLUSIONS

- (a) There were no survivors amongst members of the Allied force captured at LAHA.
- (b) The orders for the execution, believed issued by Rear Admiral HATAKEYAMA, were premeditated and absolute.
- (c) The motive for the executions was revenge in every case, coupled with the characteristic bestiality of the uninhibited Japanese mind.
- (d) The executions took place on 6 (2), 15 and 20 Feb 42 respectively.
- (e) The executions were performed by beheading, bayonetting and possibly clubbing.
- (f) Japanese Officers WOs and POs carried out the beheadings, since swords are not used by lower Navy ranks.
- (g) The Allied prisoners were executed and buried with all personal gear to destroy evidence of their existence.
- (h) Deliberate attempts have been made by the Japanese to hide the sites of the graves for as long a period as possible after the surrender on 15 Aug 45 (incorrect siting of grave markings in 1 case and failure to mark at all in others).
- (i) Contrary to orders, the Japanese are attempting to conceal those facts concerning the executions which would incriminate many of their officers and men who are still living.
- (j) The Japanese took great care to conceal the grave sites from Indonesians living in the area.
- (k) The majority of the Japanese under suspicion for the massacre crimes are now in Japan or dead.

- (l) The total of Allied bodies recovered from the massacre graves is 310 - a figure which must be presumed to include RAAF, Dutch and possibly some Indonesians.
- (m) The total number of Australians who escaped from the HITOE Peninsula is either 19 or 22 (including 11 RAAF) personnel who made an initial escape and were recaptured.
- (n) Either 5 or 7 Australian soldiers and 11 RAAF escaped to the north coast of HITOE Peninsula and subsequently returned or were brought back to LAHA and/or AMBON.
- (o) 1 Australian soldier escaped from LAHA died on the north coast of HITOE Peninsula.
- (p) The number of Australians who died in the battle for LAHA cannot be established definitely until confirmation is given of the number involved who returned to Australia and until the Dutch Authorities state how many of their white and Indonesian troops were included in those captured.
- (q) A relatively small number of identifications of those massacred will be possible owing to the fact that Australian soldiers were not issued with stainless steel identity discs.
- (r) The Australians at LAHA inflicted very severe casualties upon the Japanese attacking units before their surrender or escape, and the stand they made in the face of overwhelming odds should go down in war history as one of the finest feats of collective heroism by any Australian Force.

Lawrence Clon Lt
I.O. 63 Inf BN (AIF)

3.

THE LAHA MASSACRES

FEB - 1942

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PART I

DIARY OF EVENTS LEADING UP TO AND INCLUDING
THE LOCATION OF MASS GRAVES AT LAHA AND
SOEWAKODA BY 63 INF BN (AIF).

Date
1945

CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE DISCOVERY
OF MASS GRAVES AT LAHA AND SOEWAKODA

Report
Reference

15 Oct
to
22 Oct

Sub units of 63 Inf Bn proceeded to LAHA and ROEMAHITIGA and, after establishing HQ in those places, immediately commenced recce patrols with the object of accounting for Australian missing.

During these patrols enquiries conducted throughout LAHA area produced consistent reports of a widespread belief amongst the natives that a large number of Australian PW had been executed and buried in mass graves in Feb 42. This confirmed the Japanese admission that they had executed approximately 150 Australians a short time after the surrender at LAHA.

As all natives had fled the area at the commencement of the battle and had remained in the hills for some weeks before returning to their villages, definite information was difficult to obtain from this source, and Bn patrols were instructed to intensify their enquiries in this direction.

22 Oct

Acting on information received from Indonesian residents of LATA-SOEWAKODA villages, an NCO of Bn "Int Sec" accompanied by Japanese Sjt INO visited an area in the vicinity of MR 095036. There they found a cross had been erected, marked "In Memory VX 43876 Maj Newbury 2/21 Bn and Unknown Australians". It was stated by INO that the number buried was believed by him to be 11.

See Sketch
Map

Ambonese Jan LAKATUA and M.SIJATAWO, residing at LATA, were questioned and stated that they believed the bodies were buried, not at the marked site, but at a spot about 70 yards distant from the cross, where the ground showed a slight depression. LAKATUA further stated that he believed the numbers to be considerably in excess of 11.

P. 33

Interrogation of Indonesians living in this locality revealed that general opinion confirmed LAKATUA'S belief, also that the Australians had been executed.

25 Oct

CFSS NCO operating in LAHA area contacted an Indonesian named Christian NIKIJULUW who claimed to have witnessed the execution of a number of Aust PW. He indicated one site at which he had seen an number of Aust PW executed and thrown into a pit, and another, about 50 yards NE of the first, which he also believed to be a mass grave. Both these sites were close to the road between LAHA and the original TAWIRI village.

P. 34

See
Sketch Map

31 Oct

Members of 63 Bn Int Sec proceeded to the marked grave of Maj Newbury & unknown soldiers at SOEWAKODA, accompanied by Japanese:- Lt Comd KOBAYASHI, Lt OMAE, Lt YAMANOUCHI, Sjt INO and interpreter ISUDA.

5
Date
1945

Report
Reference

31 Oct

Here the Japanese indicated a position approx 5 yards from the cross and stated that they believed it to be the actual grave. Lt Com KOBAYASHI and party also made a written statement in which the number of Australians buried was declared to be 30 or 40.

p. 30

1 Nov

In preparation for investigation by War Graves Maint Unit, both alleged grave sites near the LAHA-TAWIRI road were cleared of undergrowth. When cleared the earth showed signs that at some time previously it had been disturbed.

2 Nov

Excavation of sites was commenced by Jap working party under supervision of NCO War Graves Unit. At first site indicated by NIKIJULUW (now known as "MASS GRAVE NO 1") human remains were found at a depth of a few feet. Exhumation proceeded.

See Sketch
Map

The second site was opened and appeared to have been an air raid shelter. A deep excavation was made over the entire area without result and work on this site was abandoned.

3 Nov)

4 Nov)

Exhumation continued.

5 Nov

Exhumation of MASS GRAVE NO 1 concluded, pit was filled in and the last of the bodies removed to AMBON. The total number disinterred was approximately 60.

(Note: Final Check by War Graves Unit establishes number of bodies recovered as 67 - incl 3 (?) Dutch - see Report by that Unit for full details and identification of individuals).

p. 39

13 Nov

Japanese working party under supervision of NCO War Graves Unit accompanied by Bn representatives, commenced excavation of grave site at SOEWAKODA (now known as "MASS GRAVE NO 2"). Excavations made at position marked by cross and spot indicated by Lt Comd KOBAYASHI yielded negative results in both cases. Work was then begun at site pointed out by Indonesians LAKATUA & SIJATAWO, and at a depth of two feet human remains were uncovered. Exhumation then proceeded.

14 Nov

Exhumation was completed by War Graves Unit and pit closed, all bodies having been removed to AMBON. The total number exhumed was estimated at about 50 Australians.

(Note: Final check by War Graves Unit establishes number as 46 - see Report by that Unit for full details and identification of individuals)

p. 39

17 Nov

In an endeavour to ascertain the fate of members of the Aust force at Laha still unaccounted for, all available members of Bn Int Sec moved to LAHA, to make a thorough investigation of the whole area in which Australians fought or were held prisoner in 1942. This included the lines of Aust defences on or near the LAHA perimeter. These positions were cleared and dug up wherever it appeared possible they had been filled in.

Date
1945

Report
Reference

17 Nov Patrol activity by Bn sub-unit detachment stationed at LAHA was increased and the area ALLANG to LATA and the adjoining hills was patrolled thoroughly and all Indonesians likely to have relevant information closely questioned. Patrols traversed the whole of the coast of HITOE Peninsula within Bn area of responsibility.

30 Nov 89 members of Japanese Occupation Force who were known to have been in LAHA area during the period under investigation were assembled at LAHA from AMBON, CERAM and adjacent islands, with orders to disclose the fate of the Australian Garrison.

5 Dec Interrogation of Japanese assembled at LAHA commenced by I.O. and one other officer of 63 Bn.

WOs S. HAMANISHI and M. TANABE stated during interrogation that from hearsay and their memory of freshly turned earth seen while on duty at LAHA in Feb 42, they believed they could identify 2 grave sites. They conducted I.O. to an area between old TAWIRI village and line of Aust defences 1942, and after very little searching indicated 2 depressions a few yards apart which they stated were graves containing altogether the bodies of 50 Australians (now known as MASS GRAVE NO 3). An excavation was made by Jap working party under supervision I.O. and members Bn Int Sec, and at a depth of 3 feet human remains were uncovered. The hole was then partially filled in.

P. 19. 21

See Sketch
Map

Efforts were next made to locate grave site which informants stated was in area on western outskirts of old TAWIRI village - but without success.

6 Dec Excavation of MASS GRAVE NO 3 commenced by Jap working party under members of War Graves Unit. By 1630 hrs 35 bodies had been exhumed. Clearing of area alleged to contain second mass grave continued and trial excavations were made but without result.

7 Dec Second mass grave located by Jap working party under Int Sec 63 Inf Bn with directions from TANABE who had now realised that the jungle which surrounded the site in 1942 was gone. Human remains were uncovered 6 inches below surface. Area was cleared of undergrowth and revealed another depression a few yards nearer the LAHA-TAWIRI road which on being tested also proved to be a grave. These latter two pits are now known as "MASS GRAVE NO 4".

See Sketch
Map

Exhumation proceeded on MASS GRAVES NOS 3 & 4 under supervision of War Graves Unit.

Exhumation of Mass Grave No 3 was completed - total bodies estimated at 61

(Note: Final check by War Graves Unit establishes number bodies recovered at 62 incl 4(?) RAAF & 7(?) Dutch - see Report by that Unit for full details and identification of individuals.)

P. 39

7
Date
1945

Report
Reference

- 8 Dec Exhumation of MASS GRAVE NO 4 completed. Bodies removed to AMBON; total number estimated at 139. (Note: Final check by War Graves Unit establishes number at 135 incl 2(?) Dutch - see Report by that Unit for full details and identification of individuals).
- 9 Dec Jap members of Force of Occupation 1942 lined up and identifications made by Indonesian inhabitants LAHA, HATOE and TAWIRI villages with a view to finding any Japanese who might have information which he was deliberately withholding.
- 10 Dec Interrogation of Japanese was continued while Jap working parties under Bn Int personnel searched battle grounds and the vicinity of the NE end of the airstrip for the graves of those Australians believed killed in the action.
- 11 Dec to
13 Dec Search maintained for graves of battle casualties on information received by interrogation Japanese including Interpreter ICHEUCHI who states he assisted at the burial of 11 Australian dead.

GENERAL: During the period 15 Oct 45 to 14 Dec 45 major reconnaissance patrols carried out by 63 Inf Bn sub-units in areas from which information might be obtained regarding the battle for LAHA numbered 63, and all old defence systems were cleared and thoroughly searched.

p. 39

- PART II -

CHRONOLOGICAL RECONSTRUCTION OF SEQUENCE OF
EVENTS IN THE BATTLE OF IAHU - A SUMMARY.

A SUMMARY OF THE CHRONOLOGICAL RECONSTRUCTION
OF EVENTS IN THE JAPANESE OCCUPATION OF LAHA.

Date 1942	Approx time Hrs		Report Reference
31 Jan	0100	1st KURE Special Marine Landing Party including 2 pls from 1st and 2nd SASHERO Special Marine Landing Parties respectively disembarked from troopship "KIRISHIMAMARU" and seized a beachhead at HITOE LAMA, north coast AMBON ISLAND. Slight resistance from Dutch defenders was encountered, but consolidation was effected rapidly.	p. 22
	0300	An Army Company of about 200 landed under command Lt WAKABAYASHI and moved forward of the beachhead proceeding on foot and by bicycle towards DORIANPATA (MR 197996). Apparently guided by native collaborators, this force did not apparently encounter any serious opposition and made rapid progress to SOEWAKODA (MR 100936) via ROEMAHTIGA.	
	0500	1st KURE minus the first party (which remained behind to complete unloading of stores and to hold the beachhead) followed the WAKABAYASHI Unit on foot using the same route and also apparently guided by Indonesians.	p. 20
	1400 to 1800	Jap HQ set up at SOEWAKODA probably by Army unit.	
	1800 to 1900	1st KURE troops arrived at SOEWAKODA. During early part of the night plans were made for immediate attack against Australian and Dutch troops believed on native and official information to be holding positions around LAHA airfield.	
1 Feb	0200 to 0400	A major portion of the Jap army and navy troops attacked the Australian defence positions along LAWA River and this attack was probably supported by preliminary naval bombardment. At this stage Australian and Dutch dispositions were probably as follows:-	See Sketch Map
		Aust Battle HQ - SW part TAWIRI vill age u/c Major Newbury.	
		C Coy HQ - Old Dutch Airforce H Building LAHA Wharf area, u/c Capt Perry.	
		2 pls C Coy plus Mortar dets & MMG - LAWA River front and TAWIRI village.	
		1 pl C Coy - Reserve, at LAHA Wharf area.	
		1 pl A or B Coy - AMBON BAY front, pillboxes & trenches.	

Date Approx
1942 Time
 Hrs

Report
Reference

1 Feb

1 pl A or B Coy	-	SIKOELA River front Pillboxes & trenches.
2 Dets AA LMG	-	NE and SW ends of airstrip.
1 Coy Dutch Militia- (u/c Lt SNELL)		High ground vicinity Mt LAHA extending down to LAWA R. and across to SIKOELA River. (Site of HQ not known)
LAHA Force HQ	-	Vicinity SIKOELA River north of airstrip. (Building now demolished)
RAAF Ops Room	-	Vicinity LAHA Force HQ (Building now demolished)
Det 2/12 Fd Amb	-	North of airstrip in Dutch Airforce buildings since demolished.
Det 2/11 Fd Engrs RAE	-	Vicinity det 2/12 Fd Amb.
18 Tk/A Bty (? correct title)	-	Probably 1 troop defendi- -ing road crossings of LAWA and SIKOELA Rivers.
Det 2/21 Bn Carrier- Pl (probably 1 Sec, 3 Carriers)		Probably forward of LAWA River in initial stages of battle and possibly spotting for mortars whose fire was well directed.
Mortar OP	-	Probably on Mt LAHA.
Services: Pay, Postal, AASC, Ord	-	Probably vicinity LAHA Force HQ in foothills,

NB: The above is a reasonable reconstruction supported by Japanese, Dutch and Indonesian eyewitnesses. Its accuracy is NOT guaranteed.

1 Feb

Throughout the day the defended localities were bombarded by naval gunfire from Lt Cruiser JINTON (? Class) and by aircraft from the Jap Carrier CHITOSE (? Class) and 11 or 2 Air Div. It seems likely that retaliatory gunfire came from the BENTENG fortress for at least portion of the day, and there is no doubt that Aust mortar fire wrought much havoc among the attacking forces. It is said by Indonesians that 11 Jap aircraft were prevented from landing on the airstrip by accurate AA fire from 2 LMGs posted in vicinity. It is not thought that any were shot down however.

Date	Approx Time		Report Reference
1942	Hrs		
1 Feb		<p>The defending forces had no air support whatsoever. Such was the intensity of fire from positions in TAWIRI that the Japanese overestimated the strength of the defenders and therefore refrained from putting in a full scale attack. Instead, sections were thrown in and withdrawn after a few hours - probing for weaknesses in the perimeter. During the day the WAKABAYASHI Unit crossed the LAWA near the sea and attempted to enter TAWIRI but was forced to withdraw after a short time.</p>	pp. 23 24
1 Feb	1200	<p>The Dutch Coy was ordered to surrender by the Commander at LATERI and did so without undue delay. The white flag was hoisted and almost immediately taken down by the Australians. Some of the white Dutch and a few native troops apparently joined the Australians. Lt Snell made his escape via the hills and the balance of the native troops, conforming to the practice adopted at PASO divested themselves of arms, clothing and equipment and became peaceful Ambonese.</p> <p>At about the time of the Dutch surrender the OP on Mt LAHA seems to have reported an attempted encircling movement by a Jap force (apparently the WAKABAYASHI Unit or 3 Pl of the KURE) and mortar fire was brought to bear on the northern sector of the LAWA River front forcing the Japanese to move further into the hills. It is reported that this movement was guided by an Ambonese of TAWIRI or LATA who was subsequently killed in the action. This force did not attack on the 1st, being doubtful of the strength of the defence in the Mt LAHA area and so kept fairly well to the north of the airstrip.</p> <p>During the night patrol clashes continued and the naval bombardment may have been continued, though this is doubtful.</p>	p. 32
2			
2 Feb	0400	<p>Determined section attacks were commenced by the Japs along most of the LAWA front but no progress was made and the attackers continued to overestimate the Australian defence.</p>	p. 25
	Day-light	<p>Naval and air bombardment was resumed or intensified by the Japanese who concentrated their fire on the pillbox areas and TAWIRI.</p>	
	Noon	<p>Major Newbury, well aware that the Australian left flank was open and that further resistance would be useless, crossed the LAWA under a white flag and proceeded towards SOEWAKODA intending to negotiate the terms</p>	p. 26

Date 1942	Approx Time Hrs		Report Reference
2 Feb	Noon	<p>of a surrender. He was accompanied by a party of about 10, and 2 Jap soldiers guided the delegation to Jap HQ at SOEWAKODA where it was handed over at first to WO SUWA OC of the attached Correspondence Party. It is not known with what Jap Officer the surrender terms were discussed, but at all events IKUCHI and Lt IKARA acted as interpreters and Capt HATAKEYAMA and interpreter TAKADA may have been present. Apparently disbelieving the Australian intention to surrender the whole of Major Newbury's party was confined under guard in SOEWAKODA village Indonesian school, and later at the LAWA the defenders were called upon to surrender.</p> <p>Shortly after Major Newbury's departure from TAWIRI, Capt Perry appears to have brought up to the LAWA about 30 men of the reinforcement pl at the wharf, and it is possible that some were also drawn from the AMBON BAY and SIKORLA River sectors, since he must have foreseen that his force would be divided by the Jap group performing the encirclement movement.</p>	See Sketch Map
	After-noon	<p>Several small parties of Australians, apparently believing the surrender to have been finalised, gave themselves up to the Japanese and joined Major Newbury at SOEWAKODA.</p> <p>Sporadic attacks by the Japs on the LAWA continued during the afternoon but no full-scale attack was made.</p>	
	Night	The situation remained stable on the LAWA Jap army group continued to work its way through the jungle in the hills.	See Sketch Map
3 Feb	0500	The WAKABAYASHI Coy approached the SW end of the airstrip and probably deployed on the high ground overlooking the LAWA area. By daylight they were in position for a final assault.	p. 23
	0600	Capt HATAKEYAMA and Lt WAKABAYASHI, accompanied by the interpreter IKUCHI and TETSUOKA moved forward with the army soldiers and finding no opposition at the airfield, crossed it and bearing a white flag proceeded towards the wharf. At the Headquarters building they were met by Capt Perry and a formal surrender was negotiated.	p. 18
	0630	It seems likely that the Australians had been warned by Capt Perry during the night that surrender was imminent, for a number undoubtedly attempted to escape both before and after the cessation of the battle. In all,	See Sketch Map

Date	Approx Time		Report Reference
1942	Hrs		
3 Feb	0630	about 90/100 Australians and Dutch must have gone to the hills from the LAHA area and about 26 proceeded across the island to the north coast and escaped capture. At least 19 of these are known to have left by prahu for CERAM, 1 died in hiding and the remainder later returned to south coast villages or to AMBON and surrendered.	p. 37
	0700	Most of the Australian and Dutch troops in the LAHA area moved to the wharf area, and shortly afterwards the Japanese commenced their occupation of the airstrip and surroundings.	
	Morn- ing	<p>Some Australians surrendered at the LAHA and during the day proceeded in parties to SOEWAKODA where, by evening, Major Newbury's party had increased to about 50 (according to Jap reports).</p> <p>Apparently some or all of the Australians who had occupied the Ambon Bay area were among the party of 90/100 who had gone to the hills at cessation of fighting, together with those from SIKOELA River sector and perhaps some from the HQ north of the airstrip or from the wharf. This party is believed to have moved into the hills behind the SIKOELA River taking quantities of rations with them - but this at present is only an assumption based upon subsequent events.</p>	p. 18
	0800 to 0900	After having assembled in the wharf area - near the rear of the HQ building - the Australians were moved to the northern end of the airstrip under escort, and there a nominal roll was made out by IKEUCHI, assisted by an Aust Army Chaplain (identity not yet known). The roll was prepared in duplicate, ICHEUCHI retained one (which he says he destroyed at the time of his leaving LAHA on about 17 Feb) and the other was given to Capt HATAKEYAMA.	See sketch Map
	1100 to 1200	<p>The Australians were moved to guard enclosures prepared, it is believed, in the old Aust HQ area north of the airstrip, and in TAWIRI village. Possibly the distribution was about 40 to the latter and 150 to the former, with a few Dutch in both places. (This assumption is based upon subsequent events and investigations, and Jap statements that about 150 Australians were kept prisoner north of the airstrip until about the 15th Feb)</p> <p>During this day Rear Admiral HATAKEYAMA, Comd 24 Spec Naval Base Force, set up his HQ in the Allied HQ north of the airstrip.</p>	p. 21

Date	Approx Time Hrs	Report Reference
1942		
3, 4 & 5 Feb		<p>The Australian prisoners were employed at LAHA during this period in sundry working parties, handling stores and unloading ships at LAHA, while at SOEWAKODA they were apparently simply kept under guard. There is little information concerning treatment accorded them although the Japanese witnesses say it was good.</p> <p>On or about the morning of 4/6 Feb Sub Lt FUKUDA with a patrol of about 40, took 2 of the Aust prisoners as guides to ALLANG where it was believed that an Allied Battery existed. The party walked and returned on the morning of the following day, having found nothing.</p> <p>p. 20</p>
4 Feb	0400	<p>1 pl of the 1st KURE left HITOE LAMA and proceeded by truck and on foot to LAHA. The shipping moved round by sea to LAHA and unloading operations continued on 5 Feb.</p> <p>p. 20</p>
5 Feb		<p>It is believed that on this day Wing Comd Scott and 10 RAAF members who had escaped from LAHA to the north coast and thence towards CERAM were brought back by destroyer to LAHA, plus possibly 6 or 7 soldiers, all having been picked up at sea on or about 4 Feb 45. These apparently were all imprisoned in TAWIRI village.</p> <p>At some time between 3 and the morning of 6 Feb Rear Admiral HATAKEYAMA - whose motive is not clear - issued an order for the execution of the Allied PW in Japanese hands on the HITOE Peninsula. It is said that prior to the landing the Japanese issued an ultimatum to the effect that the Allied defenders offering execution as the alternative to unconditional surrender. The threat may have been interpreted literally by HATAKEYAMA, but it seems more likely that the executions were conceived as reprisals for the death of Japanese officers and soldiers in the battle for LAHA. At all events the order was passed to Capt HATAKEYAMA who in turn handed it on to Lt NAKAGAWA.</p>
6 Feb	Morn- ing	<p>Suitable graves were prepared to receive the Australians about to be executed that day. Some of the prisoners who were required to continue working at LAHA were allowed to live and the balance - about 108 (incl the SOEWAKODA party) were set aside for execution.</p> <p>The graves (Nos 2 & 3) were dug in the vicinity of the prison barracks both at SOEWAKODA and TAWIRI, and it is reasonable to assume that the prisoners living in those areas were the ones later executed and buried, leaving the remainder concentrated in the airfield area.</p> <p>See Sketch Map</p>

Date	Approx Time Hrs		Report Reference
1942			
6 Feb	After-noon	<p>Lt NAKAGAWA accompanied by WO YAMASHITA and the execution party of about 40 arrived at SOEWAKODA by barge and proceeded immediately with the execution of Major Newbury's party (now believed to have numbered 46). When it had been completed he returned to LAHA where the second execution was either in progress or about to commence.</p>	p. 18
	Evening	<p>Some time after return of the SOEWAKODA execution party to LAHA the Japanese executed Wing Commander Scott and 59 Aust Army, RAAF and Dutch prisoners near the mouth of the LAWA River - immediately north east of TAWIRI village. As far as can be ascertained the prisoners were brought from TAWIRI VILLAGE Compound on foot and had with them all their personal belongings. It is not at present known by what sub-unit the executions were done but it seems likely that Capt HATAKEYAMA was present at the time.</p>	p. 19 See sketch map
7 to 8 Feb		<p>Sub Lt FUKUDA returned from patrol to ALLANG and some time subsequently the two Australians who accompanied the party as guides were executed and buried in a trench immediately adjacent to the pit in which Wing Commander Scott was interred. There is at present no indication as to who performed this execution.</p>	p. 20
9 to 10 Feb		<p>Australian prisoners held in the area north of the airfield continued to work as labour parties at the wharf (where IKUCHI states he personally brought 25 to 50 each day) and on the dumps about the airfield.</p>	
Period about 11 Feb		<p>On or about 11 Feb the Australians and Dutch who had been living in the hills of HATOE began to surrender in parties to the Japanese owing to food shortage, sickness etc. They were placed apparently in the barracks previously occupied by the Australians at TAWIRI, and were brought a few days later to the old Dutch stable building near the H^o at LAHA wharf - on or about 16 Feb.</p>	
12, 13 & 14 Feb		<p>The Australian airfield party continued to work in that area and those at TAWIRI simply remained in their compound.</p>	
15 Feb	Abt Noon	<p>Approximately 100 Jap sailors, probably including about 4 officers, arrived by barge from AMBON. They are thought to have been the survivors of the crew of a minesweeper or minesweepers sunk in the Bay of Ambon. This party apparently left LAHA the same evening shortly after dark.</p>	p. 20 22
		<p>Commencing soon after lunch the Aust PW held at the airfield barracks, with all their personal possessions (they had been told they were going to a new camp) came to the wharf area by truck in small parties. It is likely that the move was ordered by Sub Lt FUKUDA then at the wharf building, under instructions from Rear Admiral HATAKEYAMA. The loading of the prisoners was almost certainly supervised by IKUCHI.</p>	p. 21 22

Date	Approx Time	Report Reference
1942	Hrs	
15 Feb	After-noon	<p>From the wharf area the prisoners were conducted on foot in twos and threes by Jap soldiers or sailors to the grave prepared immediately south west of TAWIRI village. There they were executed, 135 of them, by swords and bayonets in the hands of the Jap minesweeper sailors. FUKUDA was probably in charge of the execution ground, because he was not seen at the wharf HQ during the after-noon. Other high ranking officers may also have been present, for a driver reports having carried a Captain to the airfield just about sunset.</p> <p>There is an alternative theory concerning the execution based on an unconfirmed report that the Australians were executed and buried within 50 yards of the wharf HQ building, and subsequently reburied at the location where the bodies have been found. This is at least possible in view of the difficulty of estimating the size of grave necessary to contain 135 bodies, so that they may not have been properly covered.</p>
16, 17, 18, 19 Feb		<p>The remaining Australians, numbering between 60 and 70, were retained under guard near the HQ building at the wharf, but did little or no work except possibly to perform minor tasks.</p>
20 Feb	1100	<p>The Australian prisoners were taken from their quarters with all personal belongings to the shed immediately adjacent to the northern end of the Wharf causeway - apparently to strength-en their belief that they were being taken to new prison quarters. Then, singly, they were taken to the grave between LAHA and TAWIRI and executed. At present there is no indication as to which Japanese performed the execution, nor whether any of them were officers. However since Sub Lt FUKUDA was still commanding at the Wharf Headquarters it is reasonable to presume that he must possess detailed knowledge of the circumstances of the execution. ICHIBUCHI states that he was called to AMBON on the morning of the 16 Feb and that he has no knowledge of subsequent events at LAHA except by rumours heard at Victoria Barracks and TANTORI.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>From Feb 42 onwards there are other fragmentary reports from Indonesians to the effect that Australians and/or Englishmen were employed from time to time by the Japanese at LAHA in the years that followed the occupation and it is fairly reliably reported that at least one further execution took place there.</p> <p>According to the Radjas of LATA and LAHA respectively and Herman PADUA, English PW were brought from LIANG to LATA about 3 months after the massacres and transported daily to work at LAHA for about one year. Australians were seen also working at LAHA about 18 months after the landing.</p> <p>Mahommed Sedik LEUMHIKA of ASTILOLOE who was</p>

Date	Approx Time	Report Reference
After Feb 42		<p data-bbox="578 351 1646 686">employed by the Japanese as a coolie boss at the airfield has stated that he is the sole witness to an execution of 15 Australians which took place about a year after the landing at the Jap Hq north of the airfield. The prisoners, he thinks, were brought from TANTORI with a party of 25, 10 of whom returned to AMBON.</p> <p data-bbox="578 718 1646 941">Unfortunately he has no knowledge where the bodies were taken ultimately, except that the truck carrying them proceeded from the Hq towards the airfield along the road to the wharf.</p> <p data-bbox="578 957 1646 1532">During and after Feb 42 many changes occurred in the Japanese organization at LAHA. The Yoshiwara and Yamashita platoons and probably the Wakabayashi Unit were sent to other theatres (SASEHO units to TIMOR & WAKABAYASHI Unit to GUADALCANAL); and many of the original landing force personnel went to Japan and AMBON. Changes occurred in command of the area and the wide dispersal of troops with definite knowledge of the executions seems to have been accomplished, if not deliberately at least with official appreciation of the circumstances demanding it.</p>

- PART III -

APPENDICES:

1. SUMMARISED REPORTS BY JAPANESE EX MEMBERS
OF JAPANESE FORCES OF OCCUPATION.
2. REPORTS BY INDONESIANS.
3. SUMMARY OF ESCAPES FROM LAHA BATTLEFIELDS.
4. REPORT CONCERNING CONDITIONS IN MASS GRAVES LAHA-
SOEWAKODA INCLUDING LIST OF EYEWITNESSES.
5. WAR ORGANIZATION OF JAPANESE FORCES
EMPLOYED IN THE BATTLE FOR LAHA.
6. SKETCH MAP LAHA - SOEWAKODA AREA.

SUMMARISED REPORTS BY JAPANESE EX MEMBERS
OF JAPANESE FORCES OF OCCUPATION:

- (a) List of Officers Commanding JAPANESE
HQ, LAHA WHARF AREA.
- (b) HAMANISHI Shigeo.
- (c) TANABE Masato.
- (d) OKA Mitsujiro.
- (e) KUNO Ginitchi.
- (f) INOUE K.
- (g) WATANABE H.
- (h) MIZUNO Tehikagu.
- (i) ABE Keiichi , TSUKAHARA S, ANDO T.
- (j) ITO Hisakichi.
- (k) IWASE Hatsutaro.
- (l) Statement by KOBAYASHI, OMAE, YAMANOUCHI,
INO and ISUDA.

LIST OF OFFICERS COMMANDING JAPANESE HQ-
LAHA WHARF AREA DURING PERIOD 3 FEB 1942
TO MAR 1943.

This list is compiled from information supplied by various members of Japanese Force of Occupation during interrogation at LAHA:-

- | | | |
|---|---|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Rear Admiral HATAKEYAMA | - | From 3 Feb - 5 Feb 42 (To Ambon HC) |
| Capt HATAKEYAMA | - | " 3 Feb - 8 Feb 42 (To Ambon) |
| Sec Lt FUKUDA | - | " 6 Feb - 20 Feb 42 (To Ambon) |
| 2. Sub Lt Name Unknown
(Member of Minesweeper) | - | " 20 Feb - 15 Apr 42 |
| 3. WO YAMASHITA | - | " 15 Apr - 25 Apr 42 |
| 4. Name Unknown (Came to
Ambon as O/c reinforcement
from Japan) | - | " 25 Apr - 15 Jun 42 |
| 5. WO K.SASAKI | - | " 18 Jun - 5 Aug 42 |
| 6. WO HOMMA | - | " 5 Aug - 15 Oct 42 |
| 7. WO SUMINO | - | " 15 Oct - 25 Oct 42 |
| 8. WO I.FUJIGAKI | - | " 25 Oct - 5 Mar 43. |

(Dates given in Nos 2 to 8 inclusive are approximate only)

19
HAMANISHI Shigeo

6.
Int Sec
63 Inf Bn
12 Dec 45

Interrogated 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 Dec 45

At time of the landing he was a Corporal (2nd class P.O.) commanding 2 Sec of the Headquarters party under W.O. ISHIKAWA Matasarinon (now Capt ISHIKAWA who went to Japan in April 1945).

He moved from HITOK LAMA to SOEWAKODA, arriving at about 1400 hrs 31 Jan 42. At 1600 he went into action with his section at the LAMA River. Casualties were suffered and at 2100 hrs that night the party was withdrawn to SOEWAKODA. At 0400 hrs on morning of 1 Feb this party again went into action at the LAMA and at about daylight he was wounded in the right shoulder by a falling coconut palm. He returned to SOEWAKODA alone and there received medical attention. He remained at SOEWAKODA until the afternoon of 6 Feb 42.

He heard that on 2 Feb, commencing about daylight, Lt WAKABAYASHI with an army force carried out an encircling movement which went behind Mt LAMA and arrived at the southern end of the airstrip about daylight on the morning of 3 Feb.

Capt HATAKEYAMA with a surrender party incl IZUCHI went to the Wharf at about 0630 hrs that morning.

While he remained at SOEWAKODA he noticed a party of Australians on the morning of the 2nd, which, by the evening of the 3rd had increased in number to about 50. He heard that they had surrendered to the Japanese (vide statement held by 23 Inf Bde). The prisoners were under guard in the Indonesian School building (Vide Sketch attd).

At about midday on 6 Feb Lt NAKAGAWA and W.O. YAMASHITA arrived at SOEWAKODA by barge from LAMA with a party of 40 soldiers who were members of the YOSHIWARA (15 men) and YAMASHITA (25 men) Shotai (pls) of the 1st and 2nd SASHEO Special Naval Landing Parties attached for the operation to the First Kure. NAKAGAWA carried orders from Capt HATAKEYAMA for the execution of the prisoners.

The execution was carried out immediately and completed by about 1500 hrs in the afternoon at a place near SOEWAKODA (vide Sketch Map attd). He witnessed the execution of about the first 15 prisoners and then left for the village.

He did not see either NAKAGAWA or YAMASHITA execute any of the prisoners but says that 4 or 5 swords were used by Petty Officers in command of the sections. One of the swords employed had belonged to W.O. YOSHIWARA who was killed 2 Feb 42 in action at the LAMA River. The others were the property of the P.Os who used them. Some of the PW were killed, he believes, by bayonets attached to the rifles of a few of the soldiers present. Those who killed the prisoners had volunteered for the task. He states that he did not wish to take part in the execution himself and in any case could not do so because his right shoulder had been injured. The wrists of most of the prisoners were lashed together behind their backs and they had all their personal gear with them.

He believes that the motive for the execution was one of revenge for the death of numbers of the SASHEO Units killed on the LAMA River - in particular for the death of W.O. YOSHIWARA.

At about 1530 hrs on the same afternoon he embarked in one of the two barges at SOEWAKODA with other walking wounded and proceeded to LAMA arriving at about 1600 hrs. The second barge carrying the execution party arrived at about the same time.

HAMANISHI Shigeo (Cont'd)

From the wharf he went to quarters provided in the house of the Radja of TAWIRI (vide Sketch Map) and retired early being very tired. He remained in his quarters until the morning of 8 Feb. He heard during 7 Feb that about 60 Australians had been executed nearby on the evening of 6 Feb commencing at about 1800 hrs. He did not hear the name of the unit responsible for the execution but knows definitely that W.O. SASAKI Kakutaro (O.C. MG Party of 1st Kure) himself executed at least one of the prisoners. Capt HATAKEYAMA, he believes, was also present at the execution but does not know whether that officer used his sword. He thinks that HATAKEYAMA ordered the prisoners' wrists to be bound and that they be buried with all their gear. He heard that the prisoners executed had been members of the RAAF and Aust Mortars and MGs. (NB. It is significant to note that practically all casualties suffered by the Japs were caused by Australian mortars and machine guns which had been sited in TAWIRI village and that SASAKI's party lost 4 killed and 25 wounded, including 4 P.Os.).

He states that the prisoners (number not known) were kept from 3 Feb 42 until 6 Feb 42 in a barbed wire enclosure surrounding 3 Indonesian houses in the village of TAWIRI (vide Sketch Map).

With regard to the RAAF prisoners, he heard at the time that a party of airmen numbering 17 or 18 who were escaping from the north coast of HITOE Peninsula had been picked up at sea from a prahu by a Japanese destroyer which brought them back to LAHA on 5 Feb 42.

After breakfast 8 Feb he went for a walk to see the area where the battle had been fought and also to see the grave of the prisoners executed on 6 Feb. Without difficulty he found the pits which were covered with red clay freshly turned. Later that morning he was taken by barge to AMBON Wharf and was moved from there to Victoria Barracks where there was a Japanese Hospital.

He heard later also that the small grave in a trench adjacent to the pits contained the two Australians who had accompanied FUKUDA's patrol to ALLANG. These were executed shortly after their return to LAHA. (NB. These bodies have been recovered and are included in Grave No 3 totals).

Some time later, while at Victoria Barracks, he heard from other Jap soldiers there that about 180 more Australian prisoners had been executed at LAHA on or about 15 Feb 42, and from them obtained directions to the two grave sites. He states that he was not able subsequently to visit the places. (According to Indonesians now at LAHA and District he was seen at LAHA several times during 1942).

N.B. Much of the information concerning the organization of the Jap Force at LAHA (vide Appendix 5) was given by HAMANISHI. He is very obviously well informed concerning Jap activities at LAHA and would appear to be clever. I believe he knows more than he has yet admitted. I would recommend that he be medically examined with a view to determining whether the injury he claims to have suffered in the action was genuine.

Sanmuelson Lt.
I.C. 63 Inf Bn

21
W.O. TANABE Masato

Int Sec
63 Inf Bn
12 Dec 45

Interrogated 5, 6, 7, 10, 11 Dec 45:

Was a Corporal (2nd Class P.O.) commanding 2 Sec of First Pl 1st Kure (Sub Lt FUKUDA Rinnosuki). He landed at HITOK Lama at 0400 hrs on 31 Jan 42. After the beachhead had been seized the First Platoon was employed to hold the ground gained and to unload stores from shipping. TANABE continued in this manner until 0400 hrs on 4 Feb 42 when the ships went round to AMBON Bay. Trucks carried the party to DORIANPATA where it was split at 1800 hrs, 16 men going to AMBON via PASO and the remaining 30 proceeding foot to LAHA. The party entered LAHA at 0900 hrs 5 Feb 42 via road north of TAWIRI village and so arrived at the north-east end of the airfield. From the airfield the party proceeded to the wharf area where it was met by Capt HATAKEYAMA. Quarters were allotted in TAWIRI village from 7 to 9 Feb 42 and in garage building (vide Sketch Map) from 9 to 20 Feb 42. The change was effected because troops which previously occupied the wharf area moved to AMBON on or about the 8th.

While he lived in TAWIRI village he did not see or hear of any Australian prisoners there.

From 5 to 7 Feb 42 he worked unloading stores at LAHA wharf and collecting Japanese dead from the battle grounds. On 6 Feb he saw about 200 Australians working on the wharf.

At 0800 hrs on or about 7 Feb 42 (? date) he left LAHA with Sub Lt Rinnosuki FUKUDA's patrol to ALLANG where a fortress was believed to exist. The patrol returned to LAHA at 0200 hrs on 8 Feb having walked the whole distance and found nothing. 2 Aust PW accompanied the patrol as guides. He heard on the day of his return that about 50 Australians had been executed during his absence. He says he does not know by whom the execution was done.

On 10, 12 and 15 Feb 42 he was a member of a patrol whose function it was to prevent the escape of any of the Australians or the ingress of any Indonesians. On each occasion he passed the freshly turned earth of what he ascertained to be the graves of the 50 Australians executed on or about 6 Feb 42. The place was near the sea north east of TAWIRI village. On the 15th also he had lunch at the wharf area and while eating saw about 100 Jap sailors including about 4 Offrs, W.Os or P.Os disembark from barges which he believes brought them from AMBON. He did not know any member of the party and heard later that they were the survivors of the crew of a minesweeper which had been sunk in the Bay between BENTENG and LAHA and who had been sent to execute about 120 Australian prisoners. The party had left when he returned to LAHA at 1000 hrs on 16 Feb 42 from a patrol which took him around the south-western end of the airfield and into the vicinity of the mouth of the SIKOKLA River. On 15th Feb he says he saw also the following Japanese at LAHA:- Capt HATAKEYAMA, Lt NAKAGAWA and Sub Lt FUKUDA (latter last heard of in Japan 1944). He did not see W.O. SASAKI that day. Prior to the 15th TANABE says he did not see any strange Japanese sailors at LAHA.

On or about 20 Feb TANABE went to Victoria Barracks at AMBON where on or about 27 Feb he met ICHIBUCHI for the first time. ICHIBUCHI did not mention to him any executions at LAHA but he heard later from other Japanese (names not remembered) the approximate locations of the graves of those Australians who were executed 15/20 Feb 42. In Sep 42 TANABE went to BORLEA (GERAK) where he stayed for 1 month proceeding thereafter to KAOE (HALMAHERAS). After 4 months there he returned to AMBON and there lived in the vicinity of the signal station.

This man had a particularly good recollection of the location -ave No 3 north-east of TAWIRI and it will be noted that he was entirely absent on duty when any executions were taking place. no means dull witted.

I.O. 63 Inf Bn.
Tanabe Masato

P.O. OXA Mitsujiro

Int Sec
63 Inf Bn
12 Dec 45

Interrogated 11 Dec 45:

He was a driver in 5 Sec of the Attached Party of the 1st LURE. He arrived at LAHA on 4 Feb 42 and went to Victoria Barracks AMBON on or about 27 Feb 42.

During his stay at LAHA his vehicle was used to carry guards to and from their duty and for transporting oil drums about the area. For 4 days - 10, 11, 12, and 13 Feb he worked with Australian Prisoners who were used as loading parties.

On 14 or 15 Feb at about 1600 hrs he was sent from the garage near LAHA Wharf to collect Aust Prisoners who were kept in an enclosure north of the airstrip (vide Sketch Map). He made two trips carrying 15 to 18 men on each occasion to the well at the HQ building near the wharf. He understood at the time they were being moved to new barracks and remarked that they were in possession of all their personal gear (knives, forks, spoons tucked into socks etc.). The prisoners were not tied nor was there a guard on his truck and he now assumes therefore they were not told that they were about to be executed. Each time he went to the barracks for prisoners IOHEUCHI supervised loading and told him to proceed to HQ at the wharf.

The order for the prisoners to be brought to the wharf area was issued to him by P.O. SHIMOYA Kenichi (who is now said to be at GALALA). SHIMOYA had his instructions from Sub Lt FUKUDA Rinnosaki, who was in command of the Jap HQ then stationed at the wharf.

He heard 5 days or a week later that the prisoners he transported were executed that afternoon by the survivors of the crew of a minesweeper (name not known) which was sunk by a mine in the Bay of AMBON. The men came from AMBON. He knows in addition that several vehicles were used earlier in the afternoon to carry Aust prisoners to the wharf at the orders of P.O. SHIMOYA. OXA stated that he did not hear of the location of the grave dug for the executed nor the names of those responsible.

Lawrence Lt
I.O. 63 Inf Bn

KUNO Ginitohi

Int Sec
63 Inf Bn
12 Dec 45

Interrogated 11 Dec 45:

Was a member of the Attached Party transport section under W.O. ODA.

Arrived with the Sec after the battle ended and was quartered at the Garage building near LAHA Wharf under the command of P.O. SHIMOYA.

During his stay at LAHA he was kept very busy at his work and had no time to see much of the Australian Prisoners.

At about 10 or 11 in the morning of the 14th. or 15th Feb a considerable number of sailors from a minesweeper (whose number he heard was "9") arrived at the wharf by barge from AMBON. They were armed with rifles and bayonets and he does not remember seeing them leave later.

During the afternoon of 14th or 15th Feb P.O. SHIMOYA sent several vehicles out to carry Australian prisoners but he did not himself carry any until late in the afternoon, about sundown, after he had been summoned to the HQ building (vide Sketch Map) by someone speaking on the phone. He proceeded to the compound where the Australians were and there saw ICHEUCHI but did not speak to him. The prisoners had all their personal gear and on two trips he carried 25 or 40 of them to a place just in front of the HQ building near the wharf where a number were assembled.

He did not see Sub Lt FUKUDA on the afternoon concerned but states that that officer was commanding in the wharf area at the time.

Paul W. Choy Lt
I.O. 63 Inf Bn

24.
P.O. INOUE K.

Int Sec
68 Inf Bn
12 Dec 45

Interrogated 10 Dec 45:

This man was a member of 5 Pl 1 SASREO attached to 1 KUKI under command of W.O. YOSHIWARA.

The party landed at HITOE LAMA and went into action at the LAMA River on 2 Feb 42 and was repulsed minus 5 men killed including W.O. YOSHIWARA.

While in action that day he saw the men of the WAKABAYASHI Unit try to enter TAWIRI Village against very strong opposition.

Early on the morning of 3 Feb the party, going by the jungle from SOBWAOKODA, came to the high ground overlooking LAHA and when the battle ended the members entered LAHA via the N.E. end of the airstrip. On arrival he saw 50 or 60 Australian prisoners sitting down on the airstrip. The party proceeded to barracks north-west of the airstrip where he remained until about 5 Feb. During this time he saw no Aust Prisoners nor did he enquire as to their whereabouts.

On about 5 Feb he was moved to an Indonesian house in TAWIRI, where he continued to live until about 17 Feb 42 when the whole party moved to AMBON.

On 7 Feb he suffered an attack of malaria and remained in bed until the 11th.

He states that he was in TAWIRI at the time of the SOBWAOKODA execution and heard of it while suffering from malaria from a friend whose name he does not remember.

Since he was suffering from malaria he states he could not have been concerned in the executions which he heard took place nor, he says, does he know where they took place. When questioned as to whether there were any Australians in or about TAWIRI village after 6 Feb he at first stated that there were a number living there on the 8th and 9th and that he saw these again from time to time until he went to AMBON. Some time later he stated that after the attack of malaria 7-11 Feb he did NOT see any Australians in TAWIRI.

When asked whether he took part or was present at either of the executions on 6 Feb, he strongly denied the possibility and at this point in the interrogation said he felt ill and asked to leave the room. He seemed agitated.

He subsequently again denied having detailed knowledge of any of the executions and said he only heard later in AMBON of those that took place about the 15th.

NB. In spite of INOUE's obvious confusion of dates and incidents I do not believe in his professed ignorance of events which occurred on 6 Feb 42 - particularly since he was living within 300 yards of the first place of execution at TAWIRI.

Santhelroy Lt
I.O. 68 Inf Bn

P.O. WATANABE H.Int Sec
68 Inf Bn
12 Dec 45Interrogated 10, 11 Dec 45:

This man was personal servant to W.O. SASAKI O.C. MG Party 1st Bn.

The MG Party went into action at the LAHA River on 2 Feb and shortly afterwards through casualties it was forced to withdraw to SOHWAKODA. The party returned to the LAHA on the morning of the 3rd and when the Australians surrendered entered LAHA through TAWIRI village with about 20 men. The remainder had been killed or wounded (4 & 24) in the battle.

All the party including W.O. SASAKI left LAHA on the morning of 7 Feb 42 and went to Victoria Barracks, AMBON.

While at LAHA he stayed for one night on the north side of the airfield near the Jap HQ at that time, and then moved to an Indonesian house ^{via} LAHA native village where he remained until departure. The task of the party was A/A defence of the airfield.

WATANABE states that SASAKI knew IGUCHI very well at LAHA. He says he does not know whether SASAKI was at the TAWIRI execution on 6 Feb 42, nor the number of the executed.

NB. I believe that WATANABE is a plausible liar with regards to the movements of SASAKI.

Sanawellon Lt
I.O. 68 Inf Bn

W.O. MIZUNO TohikaguInt Sec
63 Inf Bn
12 Dec 45Interrogated 10 Dec 45:

Landed at HITOE LAMA commanding 3 Sec 3 Pl of 1st Bure. His O.C. was W.O. YOSHIWARA. Proceeded to SOEWAKODA and attacked on the LAMA River at 0200 on the night of 1/2 Feb 42. At 0700 hrs sec was forced by heavy mortar and MG fire to retire via the hills to SOEWAKODA. At 0200 hrs night of 2/3 Feb the sec attacked again at the LAMA and at 0600 crossed the river and entered the northern portion of TANIRI village. Shortly afterwards, the battle having ended, the sec made its way across the airfield to the barracks taken over by the Japanese near the SIKOBELA River (vide Sketch Map). While passing the strip at 0700 or 0800 he saw about 150 Australian prisoners sitting and standing at its N.E. end.

- He stayed 1 night at LAMA and on 4 Feb returned to SOEWAKODA where he remained until the 6th. During the afternoon he walked back to LAMA arriving at about 1700/1800 hrs. On arrival he heard that the execution had taken place that afternoon at SOEWAKODA. So far as he remembers having heard, the following Japanese were present at the execution:- Lt NAKAGAWA, W.O. YAMASHITA, TAKADA and W.O. HAMANISHI. He believes that the executions were done by the YAMASHITA or YOSHIWARA Pls. He heard later of the other executions but states he knows no details of any.

Samuelson Lt
I.O. 63 Inf Bn

Int Sec
63 Inf Bn
12 Dec 45

ABE Keiichi

Interrogated 9 Dec 45:

He was a member of the Inf Gun Party - O/C W.O. INOUE (K.I. A.)

In the early afternoon of 2 Feb 42 he left SOEWAKODA under orders to lead wounded back from the LAWA front. On arriving nearly at the river a party of about 10 Australians carrying a white flag came towards him up the road. They were accompanied by another Jap soldier and seemed to be led by a man of considerable dignity.

ABE accompanied the party to Jap Hq (vide Sketch Map) at SOEWAKODA and there handed it over to W.O. SUWA O/C Correspondence Det of the Attached Party.

He did not see where the party was taken, because he returned immediately to the LAWA in accordance with previous orders and entered LAWA on the morning of 3 Feb with other members of the unit. He was quartered on the north side of the air field and did not hear of any executions until the day after they had taken place. He heard also that those executed on or about 6 Feb 42 were RAAF and Army personnel of Mortar and MG dets.

NB. It is reasonable to assume that the party of 10 Australians was in fact Maj NEWBURY'S original surrender delegation.

Robert Clary Lt
I.O. 63 Inf Bn

Int Sec
63 Inf Bn
12 Dec 45

P.O. ITO Hisakichi

Interrogated 10 Dec 45:

Was a member of 2 Sec of Machine Gun Party.

After arriving at LAHA, his duty was A/A defence of the airfield area.

He knows no details of the executions but believes that some may have been carried out as reprisals for the wounding of 4 of the P.O. Sec Commanders of the party.

P.O. TSUKAHARA Sueaki

Interrogated 10 Dec 45:

Was a member of 1 Sec (P. Ueda) of Machine Gun Party.

He was employed after arrival at LAHA in A/A defence role and says he knows only of the broad fact that a number of Australians were executed at about that time.

P.O. ANDO Tsuneharu

Interrogated 10 Dec 45:

He was a member of the SATO Section of the Machine Gun Party. SATO was wounded at the LAWA River on 2 Feb 42.

On arrival at LAHA he retired to his quarters near the airfield - having had no sleep for about 4 days and remained there until the morning of 7 Feb 42 when he was moved to AMBON.

He professes complete ignorance of any of the circumstances surrounding the execution.

NB. I find it difficult to believe that this man would be permitted to spend about 72 hours in his quarters while so much work must have been required of the soldiers during the period of consolidation.

Santhillay Lt
I.O. 63 Inf Bn

IWASE Hatautaro

Int Sec
63 Inf Bn
12 Dec 45

Interrogated 9,10 Dec 45:

This man was a member of the Infantry Gun Party - O/C
W.O. INOUE (K.I.A.)

The party took up a position about half way between
SOEWAKODA and TAWIRI right on the coast at about 0800 hrs 2 Feb 42.

At 1400 hrs that day the position became too hot to
hold owing to mortar fire and the party returned to SOEWAKODA.

When the fighting ended the party entered LAHA and
entered barracks on the north side of the airfield.

IWASE says he has no information concerning the
execution of the Australian Prisoners.

NB. I do not think this man is very intelligent.

Sanford Clary Lt
I.O. 63 Inf Bn

30.

6.

STATEMENT MADE BY JAPANESE LT COMD
KOBAYASHI, LT OMAE, LT YAMANOUCHI,
SJT INO & INTERPRETER ISUDA

This statement (original held by 63 Inf Bn Int Sec) was written and signed in English - the first part by Lt OMAE and the second part by Lt Com KOBAYASHI:-

1. Lt Com KOBAYASHI and his interpreter Lt OHMAE came LAHA and examined the newly built grave of the Australian Prisoners of War who included Maj Newbury and his thirty or forty soldiers died on 6-8 Feb 42. The location of the above grave was different from the location where Lt Com KOBAYASHI had been guided about 10 days before, as the location being buried the above Australians. We found the latter location situated five meters behind the former location.

Interpreter Lt OHMAE for
Lt Com KOBAYASHI

2. The identification of Maj Newbury was carried by showing the photograph to the men who participated in LAHA battle on Jan and Feb 1942.

Lt Com KOBAYASHI was ordered to examine Prisoners of War by the Japanese Commander. Lt Com KOBAYASHI instructed to Lt NINOMIYA to build the above grave. Lt NINOMIYA was in charge of inspecting the Allied graves. After he was instructed to build the grave he was taken ill and he asked a favour to build it to Lt YAMANOUCHI. Lt YAMANOUCHI built the grave of the abovementioned Australians.

The name of the man who identified Maj Newbury is H. TAKADA. He was navy interpreter when he landed at LAHA. He saw Maj Newbury at SOEWAKODO School. He is now in CERAM.

Lt Com KOBAYASHI
Lt OMAE
Lt YAMANOUCHI
Sgt INO
Interpreter ISUDA.

REPORTS BY INDONESIANS:

- (a) SIHASESLE and MATULESSY
- (b) LAKATUA Jan
- (c) NIKIJULUW Christian
- (d) PADUA Herman

Int Sec
63 Inf Bn

Indonesians - SINASESLE and MATULESSY
Members of the Dutch Force at LAHA Jan/Feb 42

Interrogated by Cpl Koochew 63 Bn "I" Sec:

Major NEWBURY commanded Aust tps LAHA and Capt PERRY commanded C Coy 2/21 Bn with 200 natives - Lt SNEL (NEI Force) i/c. The latter included 30 Dutchmen.

The enemy made an initial landing at HITOE LAHA and made way to LATA being led by natives by foot track. at 5 o'clock 3 Feb the enemy brought fire to bear on Aust tps at TAWIRI.

The Aust troops occupying the outskirts of TAWIRI village were approximately 50 strong incl mortarmen. This force fought still holding position until 6 Feb the day of general surrender. However an Australian officer hauled down the surrender flag and the fight continued another day.

During the fighting prior to the surrender Aust tps manned pill boxes along coast from TAWIRI to SIKOELA River; from thence along river to MR 053912. Dutch troops manned Mt LAHA area.

After initial action at 1500 hrs 11 enemy transport planes attempted to land on airstrip but were repulsed by 2 MMGs in post MR 068916.

Lt SNEL from OP MR approx 050916 saw enemy encirclement attempt about TAWIRI. Thrust to MR approx 062912. He sent runner to warn Aust tps who brought mortar fire to bear on the enemy.

An Aust soldier (Sjt) observed that Japs were using Indonesian uniforms and ordered all Dutch tps from the TAWIRI area.

Capt PERRY then took 30 Aust tps from LAHA Jetty to reinforce TAWIRI.

On Feb 5 Lt SNEL was ordered by Dutch comd to escape. Dutch tps moved to LIMA.

Int Sec
63 Inf Bn.

Jan LAKATUA - LATA Village

Interrogated by QFS Sec 26 Oct 45:

1. Informant stated that the grave of Maj NEWBURY as marked by the Japanese is NOT the true location.
2. Informant states when his people returned from the hills after the landing of the Japs in LAHA area, he and some of the village personnel noticed a spot about 50 yards from the grave as indicated by the Japs where the earth had been newly turned. At this spot a very strong smell was noticed also a bone was seen sticking up from the earth.
3. Informant states that the area as indicated by the Japs showed NO marks of digging and he believes the Japs are lying. He also states he thinks there are more men in the grave than the Japs state - namely 1 offr & 10 ORs.
4. This native seems to be very intelligent and it is thought he is telling the truth.
5. Both graves were visited by 63 Bn "I" Sjt and PS WCO and "I" Sjt has made a report to his HQ giving map ref.

(Signed) B Harris Walker Cpl

Int Sec
63 Inf Bn
12 Dec 45
L

Translation of Statement by CHRISTIAN NIKIJULUW
CHRISTIAN

"Information concerning 61 Australian PW executed by Japanese:

On 20 February 1942 when I was in a coconut tree 20 metres from the bridge near the Dutch Army garage at LAHA, I saw two Japanese soldiers carrying rifles examining the area around the coconut tree in which I was. They did this to ensure that there was nobody in the area. After searching the area one soldier called to another Japanese to come. The third soldier had no rifle, he had only a machete in his hand, about 30 cm long. This third soldier brought an Australian with him whose hands were bound together and eyes blindfolded.

The Australian mentioned above was brought to a hole used as an air raid shelter by Dutch Army drivers. Here he was beheaded and cast into the hole. I watched until 5 Aust PW were one by one beheaded in front of the hole. After this I felt ill and turned my face away so that I could not see any longer. I stayed in the tree for about two hours, after which I turned my face to the hole again and saw it full with Australian dead bodies.

I then saw the three Japanese walking towards TAWIWI, and climbed down.

All this took place on 20 February 1942 between 1100 and 1300 hours.

The information I have given above is true.

(Signed) Chr Nikijuluw

Witness: S.R. Marshall

Herman PADUA

Result of Interrogation. This man is a native of New Guinea now living at LANA:-

From 11 Feb 42 he worked for the Japanese, assisting the drivers near building in LANA wharf area.

On 15th. February 42 he moved to H Building, LANA wharf area, working in the Jap kitchen. At about the same time the Japs brought 71 Australians and Dutch from the hills of MATOE where they had surrendered. They all carried rifles but had no ammunition. They were put in the stables near the H building. They did not work.

Towards the end of Feb. 42, at 1600 hours all of the 72 were executed. The reason for the execution being that three transport ships had been sunk near ALLANG.

During the execution, nobody was allowed to use the road in the vicinity.

The executed had their hands tied and were blindfolded before they were taken to place of execution. At 1700 hrs that day PADUA went home via the airfield as execution was not completed. The following morning there were no Australians in the stables.

PADUA only knows of one grave (MASS GRAVE NO 1). This grave was covered with coconut trees only.

After the execution no Australians worked at LANA until early this year when white PWs (number and nationality unknown) came to LANA from LIANG to work on oil and bomb dumps. They lived at LATA.

(Note: This man does not appear to be very intelligent and was uncertain as to dates and numbers. He sticks to the main facts of his story, however, under close questioning).

SUMMARY OF ESCAPES FROM LAHA BATTLEFIELDS.

ESCAPES FROM LAHA

Int. Sec
63 Inf Bn
12 Dec 45

A. ESCAPES FROM LAHA AREA TO NORTH COAST AMBON - JAN/FEB 1942

Authority: I.O. 63 Bn with 33 Inf Bde Patrol 26/27 Oct. 45.
63 Bn Patrol to ALLANG 2/5 Nov 45.
63 Bn Patrols LAHA area Oct/Nov 45.
Patrol North coast AMBON by J. Westplat (Bn Interpreter)
28 Nov/2 Dec 4

References for details, sources of infm and means of identification:

63 Bn 22/130 of 22 Nov 45 "Recce LAHA & Area NW to Coast
" " 22/132 " 22 Nov 45 "Recce ALLANG Area."

The following numbers of Australian escapees from LAHA area crossed HITOE Peninsula to north coast villages, during period 30 Jan 42 to 3 Feb 42:-

Arrived at LIMA	31 (incl 11 RAAF)
" " OERENG	4
" " ASILOBLOE	3
Total	<u>38</u>

Subsequent movements of these were:-

LIMA: Arrived from LAHA 31

To ASILOBLOE in parties of 4, 5 & 1	10
" KAITETOE	2
" HATOE for surrender to Japs	2
" ALLANG " " "	3
Died of illness & buried at sea	<u>1 18</u>

LEFT LIMA BY NATIVE CRAFT FOR
DESTINATIONS SOUTH COAST CERAM 13 (incl 11 R)

ASILOBLOE: Arrived direct from LAHA 3

Arrived from LIMA	10
" " OERENG	4 17
Returned to AMBON to surrender	<u>2</u>

LEFT ASILOBLOE BY NATIVE CRAFT FOR
DESTINATIONS SOUTH COAST CERAM 15

OERENG Arrived direct from LAHA 4

To ASILOBLOE	<u>4</u> -
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KAITETOE: Arrived from LIMA 2

LEFT KAITETOE BY NATIVE CRAFT FOR
DESTINATIONS SOUTH COAST CERAM: 2

SUMMARY:

Escaped from LAHA to North coast	28 (incl 11 R)
Surrendered from HATOE	2
" " ALLANG (Ptes Cowland, Ryan, Campbell)	3
" " AMBON ("Rex", "Jack")	2
Died at LIMA (Pte A. Cleland)	1
Left North coast Villages for Destinations South Coast Ceram (Incl Lt Max Brown & 11 RAAF) ? MCBRIDE	20
Total	<u>38</u>

ESCAPES FROM LAHA (Cont'd)

Int Sec
63 Inf Bn
12 Dec 45

B. ESCAPES FROM AMBON VIA NORTH COAST

Authority: I.O. 63 Bn with 33 Bde Patrol 26/27 Oct 45.
63 Bn Patrol 6/11 Nov 45
Patrol by J Westplat (Bn Interpreter) 28 Nov/2 Dec 45.

References for details, sources of info and means of identification:
63 Bn 22/131 of 22 Nov 45 "Recco - ASILOBLOE to KAITETOE"

Escapes:

<u>Point of Departure</u>	<u>Means</u>	<u>Intended Destination</u>	<u>Approx Date</u>	<u>Description & Identity</u>	<u>No</u>
LIMA	Native craft	AMAHAI (Ceram)	2/2/42	RAAF	11
	"	LOEHOE "	20/3/42	Aust Army (incl "Max Brown")	2
ASILOBLOE	"	ELPAPORTIH "	27/2/42	Aust Army	5
	"	LOEHOE	"	"	3
	"	LAGEWA	"	"	7
KAITETOE	"	LOXI	Mar 42	" (Ptes Digney & Howe)	2
					<u>30</u>

Note: The 2 Australians who left Kaitetoe had with them U.S. airmen NELSON & HARGRAVE, survivors of a crashed aircraft near HILA.

Subsequent Movements:

- (a) It appears probable that the 11 RAAF personnel who left LIMA for AMAHAI were captured en route and brought back to LAHA, where they were executed.
- (b) Although patrols at various villages on south coast Ceram have had difficulty in obtaining accurate information, it is believed that the 19 Army personnel reached GESER IS en route to Australia.

Sanneccoy Lt
I.O. 63 Inf Bn

REPORT CONCERNING CONDITIONS IN MASS GRAVES LAHA -
SOEWAKODA INCLUDING LIST OF EYEWITNESSES.

REPORT CONCERNING CONDITIONS IN MASS GRAVES LAHA-
SOEWAKODA, INCLUDING LIST OF EYEWITNESSES

The coldly calculated and bestial plan to massacre all those who had opposed the Japanese on the battlefields of TAWIRI is clearly reflected by the obvious allotment of prisoners for the killing to units and individuals, and by the dreadful disorder of the bodies of the victims in their common graves. The prisoners were used as coolie labourers and when their usefulness had ceased they were murdered in cold blood without regard to whether or not they had been combatant troops or otherwise. What indignities they were subjected to while they remained alive can only be conjectured.

For ready identification the 4 main grave sites have been numbered in sequence of exhumation 1 to 4. They are located as follows:-

Grave No 1	- near LAHA wharf	- MR 074915
2	- near SOEWAKODA	- MR 095936
3	- NE of TAWIRI	- MR 076918
4	- SW of TAWIRI	- MR 074916

As documentary evidence of conditions in the graves and to identify the areas in which the executions were done, approximately 70 exposures on 35 mm film were made by Unit Photographer, 63 Inf Bn, during exhumation of the bodies in Graves 3 and 4. These films were handed to Legal Officer 33 Inf Bde at LAHA on 8 Dec 45 for transmission to AMF HQ Military History Section. The prints, if satisfactory, will be annotated and attached to this report.

No photographs were made by 63 Inf Bn at either of graves 1 and 2 owing to lack of photographic material at the time.

GRAVE NO 1 - 67 Bodies incl 3(?) Dutch:

Opened: 2 Nov 45

Closed: 5 Nov 45

Eyewitnesses: Cpl (now Pte) HENDERSON - War Graves Unit

Sjt DALLIMORE)

Pte M. BENNETT) - 63 Inf Bn Int Sec.

An Official Army Photographer (apparently from MOROTAI).

About 6 Japanese were employed as working party, which, before digging cleared about 10 yards square in the thick jungle. Several additional test holes were made in the vicinity.

The skeletons were piled haphazardly one on top of the other and apparently all the executed had with them their personal belongings and identifications of some were possible as a result.

This grave produced clear evidence that the majority of the men had their wrists bound with lengths of signal wire, but there was little suggestion that the prisoners had been executed. This would be consistent with the theory beheaded.

that the executions were done by a number of sailors or soldiers using individual weapons.

By equipment recovered it was assumed that at least three of the executed were Dutch.

It is believed the Official Photographer made two exposures at this grave.

41

GRAVE NO 2 (Newbury's Grave) - 46 Bodies, all Australians:

Opened: 13 Nov 45

Closed: 14 Nov 45

Eyewitnesses: Cpl (now Pte) HENDERSON - War Graves Unit
Sjt DALLIMORE)
Pte M. BENNETT) Int Sec, 63 Inf Bn.

A party of 6 Japanese was used to excavate this grave site and a number of additional sites in the vicinity were tested. The bodies (bones only) were covered by about 2 feet of earth and the depth of the hole beneath was about 3 feet.

Many of the heads recovered were severed from the bodies (NB: 4 or 5 "Samurai" swords were employed in the execution) and in the majority of cases wrists had been bound together with 1/2" manilla rope in the traditional manner behind the backs. It was obvious from the arrangement of bodies in the grave that they had been kicked or thrown in one on top of the other, and indications were that an unsuccessful attempt had been made to burn them.

There was no indication in this grave that any of the executed were other than Australian. Very little personal gear and no discs identity were recovered, the only positive identification being the paybook of Major Newbury.

No photographs of any kind were made at the grave.

GRAVE NO 3 - 62 Bodies incl 4 (?) BAAF & 7 (?) Dutch:

Opened: 6 Dec 45

Closed: 7 Dec 45

Eyewitnesses: Brigadier H. WRIGLEY - 33 Inf Bde
Col DUNN - LHC
Capt HOWARD - 33 Inf Bde(SCA)
Capt FLETCHER - 33 Inf Bde (ALO)

Capt Davis (RMO))
Capt McDONALD)
Capt ROWAN)
Lt MARSHALL)
Lt McCLOY)
Lt HUBB) - 63 Inf Bn
Lt MCKENZIE)
Lt GLUYAS)
Lt HEARLE)
Chap GUST)

WO DAWSON)
Cpl BIDDLE) - CFSS
Cpl PHILLIPS)

Cpl POTTINGER - War Graves Maint Unit.

Jap working party (about 30) cleared a track through thick jungle to the site and commenced work at two places about 10 yards apart. A third site (completing a rough triangle) was found to contain 2 bodies. In addition 5 trial holes were sunk in the vicinity.

The skeletons were beneath 2 to 3 feet of earth and had been buried fully clothed, in a number of cases (about 10) with wrists bound by signal wire. There was no positive evidence that any of the men had been beheaded but the confusion of the bodies in the pit and the state of their decomposition may have precluded this being found. It is reasonable to presume that most of the men were bayoneted.

42.
Many pieces of equipment and small personal items were recovered including 4 RAAF and 3 Dutch metal identity discs. Several leather thongs which had carried discs identity were recovered intact. They had not been broken or cut.

Approximately 30 exposures on 35 mm film were made at this site by Unit Photographer, 63 Inf Bn.

Brigadier H WRIGLEY and Colonel DUNN, War Crimes Commissioner, inspected this site during exhumation work and examined bound wrist bones and identifications.

GRAVE NO 4 - 135 Bodies incl 2 (?) Dutch:

Opened: 7 Dec 45

Closed: 8 Dec 45

Eyewitnesses: Capt Williams - 33 Inf Bde (Legal Officer)
Chap Moverley - 33 Inf Bde

Capt McDONALD)
Lt MARSHALL)
Lt BUBE) - 63 Inf Bn
Lt McCLOY)

WO2 BISSETT - QFSS.

Lt INGRAM)
Cpl POTTINGER) - War Graves Maint Unit
Pte HENDERSON)

Jap working party of about 40 was employed at this site for clearing a road in and in digging. 4 additional trial holes were dug in the immediate vicinity of the two found to contain bodies. The latter were about 5 yards apart.

The grave is on the outskirts of TAWIRI Village where previously there had been coconut palms and thick secondary jungle. Since the area was a battle ground in Feb 1942 it is now relatively clear.

This site indicated even more dreadful killing than did the previous three sites.

The skeletons were found at a depth of only 6 inches and the confusion of the bodies was indescribable. A group of about 5 heads was found in the corner of each pit and others had obviously been separated from the bodies. A few sets of wrist bones were recovered bound with signal wire.

In one pit blackened bones suggested an attempt at burning but this cannot readily be proved.

Two broken thigh bones were recovered, indicating violence either before or after death.

In most cases bones were so closely intermingled that the recovery of complete skeletons was impossible.

Several additional leather thongs for identity discs were recovered intact and uncut, with red fibrous material remaining in the knots. One disc found in a money belt had decomposed completely, leaving its impression but no letters or figures on the enclosing leather.

All the bodies had been fully clothed and fully equipped and a number of identifications have been made.

The condition of this grave was so terrible that

it can only be presumed that one of two things happened. Either the bodies were buried, dug up and reburied, or else death was due to beheading and bayonetting, after which the bodies were kicked, bashed or violently thrown into the pit. In the latter circumstance it is not impossible that some of the men may have been alive when buried.

At least three skulls were broken as though by blows with a rifle butt or other heavy instrument and it is significant to note that a heavy stick roughly shaped as a club about 2'6" long (similar to those consistently used by the Japanese on this island) was among the articles recovered from the grave. One skull was found in 6 or 8 pieces, while another had the lower jaw shattered. In addition one had a round hole which could have been made by a bayonet pushed in and rotated.

About 25 photographs were made in and about this grave by Unit Photographer, 63 Inf Bn.

Note: See in addition official reports by War Graves Maint Unit in connection with all the above graves.

Lambert Lt
I.O. 63 Inf Bn

NAVAL AIRCRAFT - 1st Lt. HATAKEYAMA - Capt. ABEKAWA
24 Naval Special Base Force

Capt. HATAKEYAMA - Combined Force Comd

1st KURE SPECIAL MARINE LANDING PARTY

1st KURE - C/o 1st Kure

Attached from ARMY - HATAKEYAMA SHUTAI

- HATAKEYAMA
(1st Lt. - Guadalcanal)

Approx 200 men
20 Marines

K.I.A. (est) 9
Wounded (est) 18

Command Party			1st Party			2nd Party			3rd Party			4th Party (ex 2 343RD Spec LP)			5th Party (ex 3 343RD Spec LP)			6th Party (ex 4 343RD Spec LP)			Inf Gun Party			Attached Party			Engineers (Att from 24 Base Force)			Reinforcements											
K.O. Ishikawa-O/o			Sub Lt Fukuda H. O/o (exp Japan 1944)			K.O. Nagata-O/o (K.I.A.)			K.O. Yoshikawa-O/o (exp Japan)			K.O. Yamashita-O/o			K.O. Ishikawa-O/o (K.I.A.)			K.O. Otsuki (exp Japan)			K.O. Inoue-O/o			1. Correspondence (K.O. Inoue)			2 Civil & Architectural Co			1 (KURE) 11											
Sec	Comd	No	Sec	Comd	No	Sec	Comd	No	Sec	Comd	No	Sec	Comd	No	Sec	Comd	No	Sec	Comd	No	Sec	Comd	No	Sec	Comd	No	Sec	Comd	No	Sec	Comd	No									
1	K. Yoshikawa	12	1	M. Baba	12	1	K. Tanaka	11	1	G. Honda	12	1	-	-	1	P. Ueda	11	1	P. Ueda	8	1	K. Honda	-	1	Correspondence (K.O. Inoue)	4	2	Civil & Architectural Co	1	(KURE)	11										
2	S. Hatanaka	11	2	M. Tanaka	11	2	T. Nakano	11	2	M. Ohta	11	2	-	-	2	K. Tanaka	11	2	K. Tanaka	5	2	-	Amaki	-	2	Pay (Capt. Pay. Hatanaka)	20	3	Hygiene (K.O. Tanaka)	7	(KURE)	11									
3	- Minakawa	11	3	M. Tanaka	11	3	- Tanaka	11	3	M. Ohta	11	3	-	-	3	K. Tanaka	11	3	K. Tanaka	8	3	-	-	4	Construction (K.O. Tanaka)	7	4	Medical (K.O. Tanaka)	20												
			4	M. Tanaka	11	4	M. Tanaka	11	4	M. Tanaka	11	4	-	-	4	K. Tanaka	11	4	K. Tanaka	10	4	-	-	5	Transport (K.O. Tanaka)	20															
TOTAL STRENGTH: 24			TOTAL STRENGTH: 44			TOTAL STRENGTH: 45			TOTAL STRENGTH: 47			TOTAL STRENGTH: 48			TOTAL STRENGTH: 48			TOTAL STRENGTH: 52			TOTAL STRENGTH: 50			TOTAL STRENGTH: 73			STRENGTH: 22														
			K.I.A. 1			K.I.A. 12			K.I.A. 4			K.I.A. 5			K.I.A. 4			K.I.A. 4			K.I.A. 1																				
			Wounded: 10			Wounded: 10			Wounded: 7			Wounded: 24			Wounded: 2																										

APPROX STRENGTH OF LAND FORCES EMPLOYED IN THE BATTLE

APPROX STRENGTH OF LAND FORCES EMPLOYED IN THE BATTLE

NAVY 400
ARMY 200
TOTAL 600

ESTIMATED CASUALTIES

	NAVY	ARMY	TOTAL
Killed	28	9	37
Wounded	24	15	39
TOTAL	52	24	76

45.

APPENDIX 6

SKETCH MAP - LAHA-SOEWAKODA AREA.

LAHA - SOEWAKODA AREAS.

Scale approx 1:20000



KEY		
Ref No	Map Ref	Description
1.	074914	Grave No 1 (Capt Watchorn)
2.	094949	Grave No 2 (Major Newbury)
3.	074920	Grave No 3 (Wing Commr Scott)
4.	074916	Grave No 4
5.	100937	School house SOEWAKODA
6.	098934	Jap Battle HQ
7.	073913	Jap HQ (previously Aust) - LAHA WHARF Area
8.	073913	THE WELL (Referred to by CHEUCHI)
9.	074913	Old Stables (since destroyed)
10.	073914	Garage building
11.	073917	Aust Prison Compound - TAWIRI
12.	056913	" " " " - Airfield
13.	067916	" " " " - Prisoner Assembly Area
14.	053913	LAHA Force HQ - Later JH.Q
15.	073916	WHERE TANABE Lived at TAWIRI
16.	075917	House of Radio of TAWIRI - WHERE HAMANISHI WAS
17.	072912	Where Capt D.G. Perry Surrendered
18.	100937	Jap Cook house referred to by Hamanishi
19.	069916	Approx site of burial of Aust battle dead
20.	072912	Shed where prisoners held prior to execution

63 AUST. INF. BN. H.Q. AREA

SCALE 10 YDS TO ONE INCH

