

EVACUEE REPORTS:

HENDRIXSON,

HOLLY, JR.

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GENERAL HEADQUARTERS
SOUTHWEST PACIFIC AREA
MILITARY INTELLIGENCE SECTION GENERAL STAFF

Philippine Evacuee Report #233

APC 500
6 June 1944

Subject : CUYO and PANAY
From : Pvt Holly HENDRIXSON JR

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Name : Holly Hendrixson Jr ✓
Born : 1920 at Madison, Arkansas
Education : High School
Service : Enlisted Air Corps July 1941
Assignment: 48th Materiel Squadron, airplane mechanic
In PI : Since November 1941

Interrogated by G-2 GHQ SWPA
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Hendrixson still showed the effects of hardships at the time he was interviewed, and was not exact as to details, especially of chronology. Much of his information was topographical, for which he was referred to the Allied Geographical Section. Information is considered correct in essence, although probably inaccurate in some details.

CHRONOLOGY

8 Dec 41 : At Nichols Field on Luzon.
late Dec 1941 : Left for Mindoro in a group of 50 volunteers under Lt BAGGETT.
Jan - Feb 1942 : Group operated field at San Jose, Mindoro.
5 Mar 1942 : Japanese landing at Caminwit Point. Group destroyed aviation gasoline and evacuated to the hills.
7 Apr 1942 : Group received radio message from General KING, saying that Bataan was surrendering and the group was on their own.
Apr 1942 : Group evacuated to Panay and were attached to 61st Division, USAFFE.
17 May 1942 : Surrender of 61st Division. Group left for Mindanao in sailboats.
20 May 1942 : Group arrived at Cuyo Island.
21 May 1942 : A Japanese force arrived at Cuyo. Two officers and half the enlisted men of the group surrendered. Hendrixson, sick with malaria in hospital, hid in the grass.
Jun - Aug 1942 : Remaining group of Americans living on Cuyo and other islands of the group.
6 Jun 1942 : Hendrixson captured by Japanese in a launch off Cuyo. Escaped two or three days later.
Aug 1942 : Group captured two Japanese in a sailboat at Cuyo.
early Sep 1942 : Group evacuated to Palawan to escape Japanese reprisals.
Sep 42 - Jan 43 : Guerrilla activity on Palawan.
7 Dec 1942 : Hendrixson returned to Cuyo for appendectomy.
Feb 1943 : Returned to Palawan.
May 1943 : Group returned to Cuyo.
Jun 1943 : Group left Cuyo with Captain WHITEHEAD to join guerrilla forces on Panay and to give reports on Palawan and Cuyo.
Jun - Aug 1943 : On Tablas with Captain Whitehead.
1 Sep 1943 : Hendrixson joined 6th Military District at Sara, Iloilo.
Sep 43 - Feb 44 : Worked under Captain GRUNDT establishing air spotter posts on Panay.
Feb 1944 : Started evacuation to Australia.

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JAPANESE INTERNEES ON MINDORO : The Philippine Constabulary had rounded up 21 Japanese civilians and interned them in a schoolhouse near the San Jose airfield in southern Mindoro. After the group of Air Corps men evacuated to the hills on 5 March 1942, the Internees were liberated by the invading Japanese.

SAITO ✓ Japanese rancher in the hills about 3 kilometers from the San Jose airfield. Had a Filipina wife and several daughters, and used to serve meals to visiting Air Corps men. VIGOUROUX carried a picture of one of Saito's daughters which later saved his life. Reported that the Japanese used Saito's place for a machinshop, repairing airplane engines, after they had landed.

Capture by Japanese On 6 June 1942 Hendrixson and Vigouroux were on their way from Cuyo to Capnoyan Island in a sailboat to look for guns. Later in the afternoon a Japanese launch carrying nine men approached and captured them. They were thoroughly searched and all their belongings were taken, including 15 rounds of ammunition hidden in Hendrixson's shoe. Both men were then tied up, kicked, slapped, and otherwise mistreated. They were asked where they came from, what they were doing, whether they were ready to die, and similar questions. At nightfall Hendrixson was put in the bow of the launch and the Japanese turned the spotlight on him and shot close to him.

The launch was in charge of a Captain who spoke English. A sergeant also spoke English and said he had fought in Singapore, Bataan and Corregidor. All the soldiers were infantrymen and were unusually dark in color. They were equipped with USA arms, .45 pistols and .30 rifles, and there was considerable equipment, food and cigarettes in the boat which evidently came from Corregidor.

The Japanese Captain found the picture of Saito's daughter among Vigouroux's effects and asked Vigouroux who it was. When Vigouroux said it was Saito's daughter, the Captain was visibly impressed, and both Hendrixson and Vigouroux believe that this saved their lives. Before this the men had been all for killing them, but the Captain now restrained them.

The Japanese told the two men that they were going to Agutaya Island and that they would leave them there to work for a priest who hated Americans. They also said they would come back later to the island, and if the two Americans had escaped they would find them and kill them. That night the launch anchored off Canipo Island. Vigouroux stayed on deck, and Hendrixson was obliged to squat out on the bowsprit for 12 hours.

On the morning of 7 June 1942, they landed at Agutaya and were met by the priest, Father Jose. The Japanese unbound the two men and took them on a tour through the village. All houses and cupboards were broken open, money and valuables were stolen, and the Captain practiced with his Samurai sword by slitting open every cat and dog he could reach. No people were killed.

The Japanese soon left and the two men stayed for two or three days with Father Jose in the convento. They were free to walk around the town and were told by the civilians that this had been the first Japanese visit to the island. They arranged with civilians to get a boat, and escaped at night to Cuyo two or three days after they had landed.

FATHER JOSE : Father Jose on Agutaya was known to the Japanese prior to their first landing on the island on 7 June 1942. He told Hendrixson that he had been a Chaplain with Franco's army in Spain, and had arrived in the Philippines in 1937. He was about 35 years old and either a Spaniard or German, judging by his accent. He disliked Americans, boasted a good deal of Fascist prowess, and had pictures of Franco and Fascist literature throughout his house. He was at some pains to sell a camera to the Japanese when they arrived, and later claimed that the Japanese had stolen it. He was later brought to Cuyo by members of the American group.

Capture of Japanese from Coron In August 1942 a sailboat came into Cuyo Harbor and hoisted the Japanese flag. The group of Americans hid on the dock and captured the two Japanese who came in the sailboat, a Major and an enlisted man, both from Coron. Soon after this they left for Mindanao to avoid reprisals, bringing the two Japanese with them.

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Before they left Cuyo, they wrote a letter addressed to the Japanese Imperial Army and saying that the two Japanese had been captured by Americans and were being taken to Mindoro. This letter was given to the Mayor of Cuyo so that his people would be protected from Japanese reprisals.

On the first day out they met a Japanese launch and exchanged fire with it for about half an hour. The two Japanese prisoners tried to escape and were killed. Reports were later received from Coron that six Japanese in the other launch had been killed on this encounter.

The Americans then returned to Cuyo.

Guerrillas on Palawan Two brothers, Alfred and Paul COBB, were cattle ranchers on Dumaran Island, and were organizing a guerrilla force in the summer of 1942. They wrote to the Americans on Cuyo and early in September 1942 most of the American group left Cuyo to join them, and also to escape Japanese reprisals for the capture and death of the two Japanese from Coron. In the following months they organized a guerrilla force of about 150 men armed with shotguns. The Cobbs had a supply of beef from their ranch, and the Americans were busy on Dumaran Island and on the mainland north of Danlig getting palay, boats and other equipment. They planned to attack Puerto Princesa and liberate the American prisoners of war held there by the Japanese.

The local PC company commanded by Major MARAMBA had evacuated to the hills on the Japanese occupation of Puerto Princesa. They lived by confiscating food and goods from the civilians without pay. Considerable friction arose between the Americans and this PC company, since the PCs would not cooperate in the matter of obtaining palay and would not share their arms and ammunition.

Hendrixson left for Cuyo early in December 1942 to have his appendix removed, and returned to Palawan in February 1943. At this time friction with the PCs had become worse. Once they ambushed the Americans and disarmed them, stealing their arms, ammunition and equipment. The Americans thereupon ambushed the PC and took back their equipment.

Doctor "Mendoza", ex-Governor of Palawan, joined the Americans. He made arrangements to get 20,000 pesos for them from the acting Governor of Palawan, but the latter gave it to the PCs instead. Lt GLEW also joined them at this time. They made their headquarters in and around Tinitian where Dr. "Mendoza" lived, and achieved some successes in shooting up Moro boats running supplies to the Japanese in Coron.

One day in May 1943, Lt GARCIA of the PCs came to Dr. "Mendoza's" house with 21 men and tried to put the Americans under arrest for illegal activities, saying that he would take them, dead or alive. The Americans resisted and temporized, agreeing to meet him later for a conference. That night they escaped to Cuyo.

Shooting of Lt Glew The brother-in-law of the Mayor of Cuyo was working under the Japanese in Iwahig Prison Colony on Palawan. He went to Cuyo early in 1943, and at this time the Americans chased him for two hours in a sailboat, but he escaped.

In May 1943 Lt Glew, accompanied by Hendrixson and BEARDEN, called on him in Cuyo and told him that they would take him to the guerrilla forces in Panay for trial for working with the Japanese. Next day the mayor called all available arms in his office.

In the morning of 20 May 1943, Lt Glew, accompanied by Hendrixson and Vigouroux, called on the Mayor of Cuyo to arrange for guards to be stationed on the pier to give warning of any Japanese approach. The Mayor, PEDRO PONCE DE LEON, was a Spanish mestizo whose father had been killed in the Spanish-American War, and who was decidedly anti-American. Hendrixson soon left in order to arrange lunch.

As soon as Hendrixson got down into the street, he heard shots from the mayor's house. The Americans investigated, and found that Glew had been shot dead. Vigouroux played possum and was unhurt.

GUERRILLAS ON PANAY : There is some friction between Visayan and Tagalog officers of the 6th MD on Panay. Politics continue, and if one officer is promoted, others must be promoted, too. Colonel PERALTA realizes this and controls it as best he can.

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AIR SPOTTER SYSTEM : Hendrixson was assigned to Captain GRUNDT while with the guerrilla forces on Panay. He travelled over all of northeastern Panay establishing a system of air observation posts. He set up six posts reaching from Carles to the Passi-Calinog area, each one mobile within a predetermined zone. These zones covered the main Japanese air routes. Each post noted details of each Japanese flight, such as date, time, type and number of aircraft, altitude and direction of flight, and would report every few days by messenger to headquarters. Captain Grundt made a monthly report for Colonel Feralta. Blueprints and drawings of Japanese plane types were available for recognition purposes. The 6th MD Engineers furnished the blueprints and HEISE did most of the drawings.

Japanese Penetration at Sara Hendrixson was at Sara with Captain Grundt early in September 1943 when the Japanese began to penetrate into guerrilla areas in the south. On 13 September 1943 the Japanese converged on Sara by sea and by land. Hendrixson evacuated with Grundt and Heise to the hills north of Sara. For the next three weeks they moved from place to place in the hills evading Japanese raids.

The Japanese totaled about 500 and were accompanied by BCs. They were armed with rifles and bayonets, and many had tommy guns. Officers carried sabres and many soldiers carried large knives for beheading. It was reported that bloodhounds were used to track people, but Hendrixson did not see this. The BCs would act as point. Some of these BCs were veterans of Bataan who had been obliged to join the organization and were kindly disposed towards Americans. Hendrixson was warned more than once by the BCs that the Japanese were coming and that he had better clear out. Others of the BCs were volunteers. These men were of the gangster type, thoroughly unreliable and killed more people than the Japanese.

On coming into a barrio the Japanese would tell the people to surrender in a group and they would not be hurt. The people would then line up to surrender and would be bayoneted or beheaded by the Japanese. Hendrixson saw one barrio where 63 civilians had thus been killed. Pregnant women were cut open so that the child would fall out of the womb. Attractive young girls had their breasts, ears and lips cut off. All were decapitated - men, women, children and dogs.

During the first week in October Hendrixson visited Sara town and found the Japanese still there.

CAPTAIN GRUNDT ✓: American, formerly employed by the Iloilo-Negros Air Express. Hendrixson worked under him in Headquarters, 6th MD from September 1943 to March 1944. He carries two .50 caliber machine gun slugs in his back and in his right arm, and is not a well man.

CAPTAIN JOE HERMAN ✓: American, Engineer officer at Headquarters, 6th MD at Sara. In September 1943, when the Japanese came in, Herman started to evacuate with Hendrixson but would not go far as he did not like to walk. Reported he was overtaken by the Japanese near Canapian, Capiz, shot his wife and small child, and shot it out with the Japanese until he was killed.

HEISE ✓: Mestizo, former civilian employee on Bataan, was 3rd Lt under Captain Grundt at Sara. Did mostly office work and drew pictures of Japanese planes to be used by the air spotters.

ERRIC T GLEW : Originally from 48th Materiel Squadron. Left the group on Mindoro, and was commissioned 2nd Lt by General CHRISTIE on Panay. Surrendered with the 61st Division in May 1942. Escaped from Japanese prison camp in Iloilo, got a boat and started out for China. Landed in southern Palawan and met Hendrixson's group in northern Palawan early in 1943. Shot and killed by the Mayor of Cuyo in May 1943 at Cuyo.

FRANK VALENZANO, DURHAM, "BACUZZI" : Men of the 48th Materiel Squadron, left Panay on 5 December 1943 for Palawan.

JOHNSON, SPALDING ✓: Enlisted men of the 28th Bomb Group, joined Hendrixson's group on Mindoro when USAT "Mayon" was bombed in December 1941. Hendrixson last saw them at Teytay, Palawan, early in 1943.

CHARLES WATKINS ✓: US sailor, escaped from the Japanese at Puerto Princesa and joined the Americans. Left Panay in September 1943 for Palawan.

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"DE COVANEL" : USNR officer, formerly in charge of the mines on Coron. Hendrixson last saw him at Taytay with his wife and child early in 1943. Reported he later moved to Cuyo with his family in order to get medical treatment.

KIERSON ✓: American, civilian, former employee of US Army Transport Service. Guerrilla leader in the Brooke's Point area on southern Palawan in 1943. Called himself "Colonel". Visited the Americans at Tinitian early in 1943 in order to coordinate plans for the attack on Puerto Princesa.

HENDRIX ✓: American soldier, reported by Kierson to have been killed at Brooke's Point in a quarrel with a Moro over a woman.



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