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# SEA AIR

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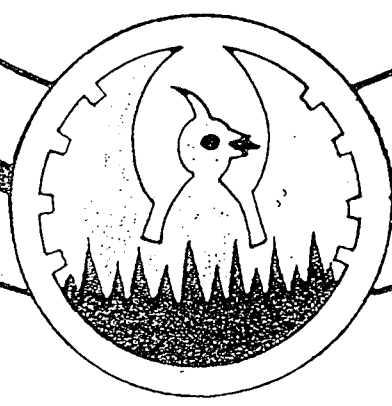
No. 186

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1945

12 JULY

AIR BULLETIN



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*G. F. Blunda*  
G. F. BLUNDA  
COLONEL, CAC, U.S. ARMY  
SUPERINTENDENT

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ITEM 1775 (cont.)5. Sup Pte PW 348/309.

- a. During a Feb raid on MEIKTILA, there were 10 casualties.
- b. On 18 Apr 45 a hospital in village huts was destroyed by bombing. Patients had dispersed; but there were some casualties (TOUNGOO).
- c. PW saw one single-engined Allied aircraft brought down by AA fire at PYINMANA in mid 1944.

/MH

ITEM 1776Interrogation

Source: Preliminary Interrogation of PW 4 Corps 575/536, private of 1 Coy (KEIBI), S2 Airfield Bn (SATC BUTAI, MORI 9868).

Assessment: PW was interrogated in PUGU gaol. He was unwounded, but the effects of a fall 3 weeks previously were still evident. His intelligence was good for a man of his rank, and his attitude serious but cooperative. The reliability of his information is considered fair where he expressed certainty; but there were many air subjects on which he was very hazy or of which he knew nothing.

1. FUNCTIONS OF BRANCHES

- a. KEIBI (Guard): Defence of airfields, sentries, guards, ground fighting, AA, MGs, ground observers.
- b. NISHI HIKOJO KIBUTAI (West Airfield Duty Unit): A detachment with same duties as the battalion as a whole.
- c. SEIBI (Maintenance): Aircraft maintenance, MT, driving, repairs, development of air photos, refuelling and servicing aircraft, electricity, arming and loading aircraft ammunition.
- d. ZAIRYCHAN (Material Section): (10 men) Spare parts, tools, ammunition. Care and supply.
- e. SHIKIHAN (Command Section):<sup>3</sup> Each company and HQ have their own SHIKIHAN. All clerical work is done by the SHIKIHAN as well as despatch of the ashes or hair of the dead to the YASUUNI shrine in JAPAN.
- f. KIISHO (Meteorology): PW was sure that there was a meteorological contingent at the HLECU airfields, but he could not give details.
- g. TSUSHIN (Signals): Personnel at HQ numbered 10 men.
- h. SETTEITAI (Construction Unit): Their task was to construct runways, revetments, hangars and even barracks with the help of large numbers of Burmese coolies. In addition they cooperated with SEIBIHEI in repairs of many kinds. SETTEITAI were generally

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ITEM 1776 (cont.)

HAKENTAI (detachment). They were distinct from Airfield Battalions.

- i. GUNZOKU: There were no Jap civilians attached to PW's unit.
- j. KEMPEI (Gendarmerie): There were no gendarmes attached to the unit, nor living on or near the airfields at HLEGU. There were, however, 2 gendarmes billeted in HLEGU village. These always wore plain clothes and could be seen sometimes cycling, motoring or walking round the airfields. He thought that their job was primarily to keep watch on the villagers. He added that gendarmes were greatly disliked by the troops. They were not necessary for purpose of arresting troops, unless a man absented himself from his unit.
- k. JOHO (Intelligence): PW had no knowledge of the Intelligence branches.
- l. YUSOBUTAI: He could say nothing of Air Transport.
- m. He had never heard of Jap paratroops.
- n. FIRE OUTBREAKS. There was no fire-engine on the airfields. Fires were put out by the troops as best they could.
- o. His unit was not concerned with rescue of personnel from crashed aircraft, but there were 40 SEIPIHEI from 2 Coy available for repairs to damaged aircraft.
- p. RADAR: There was never any RADAR installation or set at HLEGU to PW's knowledge.
- Q c. "COMFORT GIRLS": There were none at HLEGU.
- r. MARCHING ORDER: On the march, HQ went midway between 1 Coy (which led) and 2 Coy.
- s. There were 50 machine gunners, including AA MG crews.

## 2. AIRFIELDS

### a. MONSCON PERIOD

From May to October each year the airfields at HLEGU were not used - all aircraft were withdrawn for 6 months to MALAYA, THAILAND, etc. Troops were employed during that time in building shelters of which there were finally 30 on the Eastern airfield and 20 on the Western strip.

### b. LANDING LIGHTS

Electric landing lights were used along runways. White lights indicated the entrance to runways; red lights marked the outside edges; and green lights marked the half-way point. Power was provided by a petrol-driven generator in a truck.

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ITEM 1779Interrogation.

Source: Interrogation by RAF Int Wing, SEATIC, of PW Air/025, a Prob Offr (AA gunner) of 52 Airfield Bn. Captured at KUNE Fd Hosp, 20 Mar 45.

Assessment: PW Air/025 is not very observant and is very vague as to dates and place names. Intelligence: Good. Reliability: Fair.

1. IDENTIFICATION AND EARLY HISTORY OF PW.

Rank - Probationary Officer

Unit - 52 Airfield Battalion.

Duty - AA gunner

Date and Place of birth - 1 Apr 21, at SUEHIROCHO, HAKODATE.

PW entered YACHIGASHIRA Elementary School in HAKODATE, in Apr 28, and in Apr 34, went to HAKODATE SHOGYO GAKKO (a middle school) where he stayed five years. From Apr 39, to Mar 42, he studied at the MEIJI University in TOKYO, his major subjects being world politics and economics.

Immediately after graduation, he joined the SASTORO ZAIMUKYOKU, a bureau directly connected with the Finance Ministry. PW's job was to investigate and assess financial holdings and transactions of all companies in HAKODATE City. This bureau had no connection with the tax office. PW stayed here up to the time of his call up, 10 Apr 43.

2. CHRONOLOGY.

10 Apr 43 Called up and posted to N-79

1 Oct 43 Posted to 1 Air Training Unit

29 Apr 44 Embarked from MOJI

May 44 Arrived MANILA

29 May 44 Arrived SINGAPORE

Jun 44 Left SINGAPORE by train for BAMPONG

Jul 44 Left BAMPONG by train for RANGOON

13 Aug 44 Arrived BEIKTILA, joined 52 Airfield Bn

Beg Feb 45 Went to MYITNGE

Beg Mar 45 Established AA site just South of KYAUKSE

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ITEM 1779 (Cont.)g. RELATIONS WITH SUPERIORS.

PW got on very well with his superiors, and men under him. He says the men were treated very fairly and had no cause for complaint. The Gendarmes were to be feared and the less he had to do with them the better.

h. ALLIED WEAPONS.

PW was subjected only to Allied aircraft fire and bombing attacks and these he did not regard as very fearsome, especially when he lay in a trench.

i. MAIL.

PW never corresponded with his family, but he knows that letters took one month to reach JAPAN.

j. AMENITIES.

PW received only one comfort bag while he was in BURMA. At MEIKTILA there was a canteen where soap, tooth brushes, cigarettes, cakes etc. were available.

( At MEIKTILA too, there were 5 houses of prostitution but he never visited them so does not know anything about the comfort girls.

k. PROPAGANDA.

The most effective propaganda according to PW is broadcast of sentimental Japanese songs, which rouses a nostalgic feeling.

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