

Ellen Mavis Hannah, Statement Re Dr Goldberg.

I hereby declare that the following facts are true:-

Ellen Mavis Hannah states:-

My full name is Ellen Mavis Hannah.

My official designation is Captain Hannah SFX10595, 2/4 CCS, and I am at present residing at flat No. 4, 200 Adelaide Terrace, Perth.

I was on duty with my unit in Singapore from 18 February, 1941, to 12 February, 1942, on which date I was evacuated from Singapore but the ship "Vyner Brooke".

I know Anna Maria Goldberg, but I had no association with or knowledge of her in Singapore.

Although I did not see Dr Goldberg on board the "Vyner Brooke" I know that she was evacuated on the same ship, because of subsequent happenings and I personally met her on Sunday, 15 February 1942 the Customs house or at Montauk, Bangka island.

During the voyage of the "Vyner Brooke" from Singapore, we were attacked by Japanese aircraft on 14 February, 1942, and as a result the ship was lost.

I was a survivor from the "Vyner Brooke", and on the morning of 16 February we were interrogated by the Japanese as to our nationality.

Dr Goldberg was beside me, and declared that she was German, because of that she should not be interned.

Later we will move from the Customs house to another camp from which Dr Goldberg was released with others who were reported to be anti-British, allowed to live freely in the town. She remained there until the middle of April 1942 when she was brought with internees to Palembang, Sumatra.

She had brought into the internment camp, and remained there for a very short period, when she was again released and allowed to practise as a doctor in the hospital belonging to the Charitas nuns in Palembang.

She remained there in this capacity until August, 1943.

During that time civilian men, civilian women servicemen were treated in that hospital, where also practised Drs. Cecil and Tecklenberg, Mother Alocoque and her nursing sisters.

In this period food was easily obtained from the town and from the hawker who came to the hospital.

This food had to be bought as it had nothing to do with the Japanese rations.

Many people in the camp were destitute.

The servicemen, at this time, were receiving so much money per month from the Japanese, some of which was set aside for the benefit of the destitute people in the camp and those who went to the hospital.

This was done on the known to the Japanese.

Also 5% was charged on all goods bought by the patients from the hospital, i.e. for one guilder a charge of five cents was made.

This money was added to the money the servicemen contributed and kept under the jurisdiction of Dr Goldberg and Mrs Molly Watts Carter, deceased.

When destitute patients went into hospital, a ration of food, such as bananas, sugar, butter, and eggs was purchased from these funds for each.

Some of the Australian Army Nurses Service, including myself, found the system very unsatisfactory, as they had reason to believe that Dr Goldberg and Mrs Molly Watts Carter benefited from this fund, and very often patients who require extras were unable to obtain them.

During the whole of internment there were many instances where patients with money were kept in hospital much longer than was necessary, while others who were very sick were refused admittance.

We believe that it was because Dr Goldberg benefited to a great extent as far as food is concerned from the money spent by patients in the hospital.

Because we were discontented with the arrangements for the use of this money, two others and myself appealed to the servicemen to set aside a sum of money each week for the sole use of the nurses.

The written message, unsigned and unaddressed, was intercepted by the Japanese, and we heard nothing further of it.

The letter was so worded that only those who had knowledge of what it intended to convey could grasp the meaning of it.

During the period in which the hospital was used for all internees and servicemen, various sums of money were borrowed from the servicemen and from the Chinese who were free in the town.

All this money passed into the hands of the patients and doctors in the hospital.

I was given 100 guilders by the servicemen through Dr Goldberg in January, 1943.

To my knowledge nobody but Dr Goldberg and Captain Cook, deceased, had any knowledge of this transaction.

The money was used by 15 of the Australian Army nursing service for shoes, etc.

In August, 1943, the servicemen who were patients in the hospital suddenly moved to their camp.

The civilian men and women who were also patients were sent back to their respective camps, and the Charitas nuns with their Mother Superior and Dr Goldberg came in to our camp.

I have reason to believe the Drs Cecil and Tecklenberg were at this time put into jail.

In September, 1943 the civilian women, with the nuns, Dr Goldberg and the patients were moved to another camp which had been occupied by civilian men, and had a part set aside within the camp for a hospital.

This was used solely by Dr Goldberg until September, 1944.

There were three other women doctors in the camp, but they had nothing to do with the hospital until, by Japanese orders in September, 1944, they were directed to help Dr Goldberg in the hospital of the new camp in Muntok to which we were moved.

During the period in the Palembang camp and Dr Goldberg was in sole charge at the hospital, plenty of extra food was obtainable as before through a hawker who came daily.

The same unsatisfactory arrangement prevailed here as in the previous hospital in Palembang.

Early in 1944 we were interrogated by members of the Japanese secret police as to where we had obtained loans of money, and from whom.

I believe Dr Goldberg was also interrogated about this time, but no action was taken against her by the Japanese.

Mother Alocoque, too, was questioned, and then imprisoned for the duration of our internment.

We have reason to believe that the imprisonment of Drs Tecklenberg and Cecil was brought about by their many kindly acts to their fellow internees, and their possible implications in the money transactions.

Dr Cecil was subsequently beheaded, and Dr Tecklenberg died as a result of privations in jail.

I feel that the actions of Dr Goldberg during our internment left much to be desired, as she was in a position where she could have considerably helped the destitute internees, but failed to do so, and I consider that she is not a person to enjoy the privileges which Australia has to offer her.

During internment she enjoyed amenities, such as good clothing, bedding, plenty of food, etc., which were denied the destitute people of the camp, as a result of which she suffered practically no privations.