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Prisoners Of The Japanese In World War II: Statistical History, Personal Narratives, And Memorials Concerning POWs In Camps And On Hellships, Civilian



Synopsis

Narratives and facts on life in nearly 300 civilian internment centers and a similar number of POW camps.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"presents fascinating data and serves as a reference tool.... Indispensable for research" -- Choice

The title is self-explanatory. The author accomplished a formidable research job. He lists every known Japanese camp used to detain prisoners of war and allied civilians during World War II and gives a brief history of each. There were hundreds of camps to house more than 100,000 people. He also describes the conditions (awful) in many of the camps with quotes from inmates. To compare: about 4 percent of American POWs captured by the Germans died compared to about 31 percent of Americans captured by the Japanese. My purpose in looking at this book was to find accounts written by the POWs and detainees themselves. The bibliography after each section met my need by identifying many primary sources. This is not a book you'll likely read cover to cover, but as a reference book for students of World War II in the Pacific it should be on your shelf. Smallchief

Van Waterford had compiled the very best overall view of the massive internment of prisoners by the Japanese during WWII. (He clearly cites the record that the Japanese decided to consider the civilian internees as POWS, a decision many to this day refuse to recognize) Since the Japanese deliberately destroyed all relevant records, it took a dedicated historian to compile from hundred of

sources the best compilation of facts and figures I have ever seen. This is a must for any serious research on the subject. One of the better listings of the infamous Hell Ships even though multiple voyages seemed to be ignored and a number of ships not mentioned. The compilation of POW camps by region also is the most complete I have ever seen. Having studied the POW experience for many years and owner of hundreds of books relating to the subject, I place this on the very top shelf.

It should be noted that the author of this book "Van Waterford" is actually Willem Wanrooy using a pen name. Wanrooy was not just a researcher. He was a Dutch soldier and survivor of the sinking of the Junyo Maru, one of the "hell ships" used by the Japanese to transport prisoners during WWII. He was rescued from the sea only to be put to work in the camps he writes about here. If he writes more about certain ships or camps than others, it is only due to his personal experience, not a lack of desire for completeness.

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