

August 29, 1991

Slate # 1349-010

Interviewee: Dr. Allen Wise

Interviewer: Ms. Linda DuRant

Notetaker: Mrs. Lillian Shames

00:00 - Allen Wise born August 18, 1918.

00:40 - 1944 stationed at Pearl Harbor. Sent to Camp Swift, Texas. He was a medical doctor for 405th 2nd battalion.

4:05 - April 1945. Sent to Gardelegen as war was approaching end. Friday April 13 the unit was ambushed on side road. After a seven hour resistance that was quite light and not too many casualties, town was taken and unit moved in.

8:20 - As they moved into town, they found barn near airport. As they approached barn and entered it, they found 300 people murdered and piled one on top another all of them burned. There was a mass grave that was dug by people previously. Later, it was discovered there were 1016 victims. The others were already buried. The Germans had intended to bury them all but the Americans arrived much sooner than expected. Therefore, the 300 were hurriedly burned hoping they could cover up their atrocities.

10:09 - Seven people survived by digging their way with their bare hands out of the barn. That is how they were able to find out what transpired- from their stories.

13:14 - Commander made the people of the town of Gardelegen come to witness this atrocity. All this killing was done to cover up their slave labor mistreatments.

16:37 - The commander made the people of the town dig individual graves for every one of the people that were murdered. They had to give them a decent burial with markers. Taps were blown at the end of the ceremony.

18:59 - These deaths were only a little part of the whole atrocity. Jan. 1946, Allen Wise was discharged, and never talked about what he had seen. When called upon to be interviewed, the whole ugly mess was recalled in his memory. Pictures are in a book that the 2nd battalion has. (Excerpt from book copied and included with these notes).