AFFIDAVIT OF JOSEPH EDWARD ALBERTS, S1/C, U.S. NAVY

STATE OF CALIFORNIA :

: SS

County of Alameda :

Joseph Edward ALBERTS, being duly sworn, deposes and says:

My permanent home address is 2912 Emerald Avenue, Chicago, Ill., and I am 31 years of age. I have had eight years of grade school education and have had 3 ½ years of service in the U.S. Navy. My serial number is 610-73-83.

I became a prisoner of war of Japan after my ship the M.S. SAWOKLA was sunk by a German raider in the Indian Ocean. I was held as a prisoner of war at Singapore, Hakodate and Fukuoka, Japan.

While I was being held as a prisoner of Fukuoka I was forced to work in the steel mill of the Yawata Steel Company. We were always exposed to the danger of bombing and strafing by American planes as the steel mill was a primary target. The Japanese had air raid shelters for us but we were seldom ordered to them. Usually we were made to work right through air raids. On the eighth of August 1945 while we were sitting in a small tin roofed building during a temporary lay off of work, American B-29s raided the steel mill and came over without any warning. I was sitting across a table from a man named HICKEY who had been a member of the U.S. Army. I do not know anything more about this man by way of identification. Suddenly an incendiary bomb came through the roof and hit HICKEY on the head. He was killed instantly and his body set afire. I saw this happen with my own eyes as I was talking to him when it happened. In the same room another American name named JOSS was also struck in the arm by a fire bomb and a large piece was taken out of his upper arm so that the arm had to be amputated later. I have no other identification of this man either. The operation was performed by Lieutenant MARKOWITZ, Medical Corps, U.S. Navy, who amputated HOSS’s arm with a sharpened, sterilized hack saw blade. A short time later at the end of the war we discovered Red Cross packages containing a complete set of Medical instruments for performing operations which had never been given to us.

12 October 1945 Joseph E. Alberts

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 12th day of October 1945 at Oakland, California, U.S.A.

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Lieutenant, U.S.N.R.