

Japanese POW Camps

During WWII, Japan maintained over 200 POW camps throughout the occupied area; China, Japan, Korea, the Philippines, and Indonesia. These camps held 350,000 military and civilian POWs. The military POWs, and many adult male civilians, were forced into slave labor to support the Japanese war effort, working for various industries such as Mitsubishi. Often they were forced to work in places the Japanese deemed too dangerous for Japanese to do. Food was rationed and used to reward those who could work, but none of the men received sufficient nutrition. Beriberi, dysentery, malaria, scurvy, and other diseases were complicated by intentional starvation.



The average death rate of POWs held by Japan was 37.3%. In contrast, only 1.1% of the military POWs held by the Germans died.

There were POW Camps in China, Manchuria, the Philippines, and Formosa (Taiwan).

Michael Hurst has identified the sites of all the camps in Taiwan. Traces of most camps in all countries have disappeared.

