

Psychiatry Department

The department staff who were on duty at the time were Professor Takase, Associate Professor Matsushita, provisional graduate from the Medical College Terada, staffs Ito and Kurata, and 14 nurses under the supervision of Head Nurse Arimura.

The situation at the time of bombing

Professor Takase was on a business trip to Kashima, and escaped the atomic bombing. Associate Professor Matsushita was exposed to the bombing in the Psychiatric Department's associate professor's office, and Dr. Terada in the hospital room. Ito and Kurata were also in the department building, and both were killed by the atomic bomb. 6 other nurses were killed in the hospital ward.

Associate Professor Matsushita evacuated to a mountain behind the hospital, and returned home to recuperate.

Official position and name of the deceased

Official position	Name
Tentative graduate	Fumihiko Terada
Staff	Mitsuo Ito
Staff	Otsuichi Kurata
Head Nurse	Shigeko Arimura
Fourth-year nursing student	Ruriko Hamazaki
Third-year nursing student	Matsuko Iwasaki
Third-year nursing student	Yoshiko Takeya
Second-year nursing student	Chiyoko Isoda
Second-year nursing student	Yoko Ido

The atomic bomb and the Psychiatric Department

Kanetomo Matsushita

Shortly after 11 a.m. on 8 August 1945, a single enemy aircraft circled over Urakami with high speed leaving behind a contrail. While I was looking up, a contrail drew a cross shape in a circle, and rapidly disappeared without dropping a bomb. The late Professor Takagi of the Anatomy Department, bending his neck up at the sky, smiled, "It's a strange plane." At noon, we had

Imperial Proclamation of War, and the late President Tsuno'o shared us in his instruction that "A bomb which explode in the mid-air without hitting on the earth was dropped in Hiroshima, and the city was lost in fire. We walked about 15 km to take a train and finally came home." The late Professor Kunifusa, from the Forensic Medicine, heard this story, said with deep emotion that Japan's fate was imminent and his voice still rings in my ears. In retrospect, the irony of fate, it seems, was already at our feet.

On the following day, the 9th, as I was a head of the planning group at the headquarters of the civil defense duty, we gathered at the College headquarters early in the morning for various meetings for defense, discussed the imminence of defeat with the military officers assigned to us, and the late Associate Professor Fukuda, envisaged whether the enemy ground forces would land from the Nomo Peninsula or from the direction of Yagami, and formulated the strategy we would take. However, no good ideas came to our mind. We ended up proposing a naive strategy to hide in the trenches or the air-raid shelters, and offset enemy soldiers with Japanese swords as our last resort. The defense of the college was the only plan we had in mind and nothing else.

Then the god of fate called me back to the Psychiatry Department building. I think it was at around 10:50 a.m., when I received a phone call about an outpatient who came in to see me for treatment. I had a strange feeling about the visit when no one knew what would happen tomorrow but I ran down to the hospital with my steel helmet and gaiters still on, and entered the Psychiatric Department's associate professor's office. I was about to put on a white surgical gown when I pulled off my iron helmet. "Rattle rattle rattle. . ." The strange sound seemed to have lasted for more than a dozen seconds. I listened for a moment. It was a window on the north side. A bomb must be falling at my feet. What should I do. I walked around panic-stricken in the associate professor's office for a while. Then a starlight-like flash flashed in the north sky. Immediately, the mud wall fell down with a huge sound. It was an instantaneous event. Strangely, I was conscious. Am I alive? Is this the moment of my death? I had time to think. Time passed. Ah, I intuited that I had been saved. My intuition told me that the shrapnel from the bomb had missed my blind spot, and that my position must have been outside of it.

Something cold ran from my head and down my cheeks, so I wiped it off with my hand. I assumed it was blood. I opened my eyes and looked. Thick drop of ashes crowded inside the room. I could not see. Oh, both of my eyes were damaged. Soon, I started to see space filled with dim light on the east side. I could see flower beds of the department. Oh, I regained my sight. At that time, my entire body was buried under mud wall, board or wardrobe. I touched the gas pipe. It had fallen under the floor. Putting forth my strength, I was able to get out. I heard voice groaning: "It hurts, it hurts," from a narrow corridor. A nurse came running to me asking "*Sensei*, are you all right?" My back hurt, it was bleeding. I took off my gaiter and covered my whole body.

Immediately, my mind was on the image of the emperor in the College headquarters. It was my job to protect it.

I abandoned the department and went outside. The road was destroyed and lost. I slid down the cliff. Two or three College students were jumping around between the Pediatrics Department and the guard house, shaking and screaming "it hurts." I met Pediatrics Department Head Nurse. She was going here and there in my white surgical coat.

I went out of the College back gate. There were no houses around. I had no idea about the place. I climbed up the bank to the right, and came out on top of the gymnasium. There were no houses at all in the neighborhood. There were no people, and the houses were just pillars stacked on top of each other like piles of wood. It rapidly started to burn here and there by spontaneous combustion, even though no one lit a match. A student from the Special Medical Vocational Department came running. "Cheer up," I shouted. At that moment, he fell forward with a thud. He spat out a mouthful of white foam and died. I went into the bunker where the emperor's image was enshrined. The depth of the bunker was around 500 to 700 cm. There, several students and administrative staffs were groaning.

I thought that this was the end. I went up the mountain behind the bunker. The place was surrounded by big camphor trees originally, and was our place of relaxation. The big trees fell radially, in east and south directions without a leaf left on them. We came to a graveyard with crosses when we climbed up the mountain. There, for the first time, two or three dozen people from the College who escaped the death were sitting. Lecturer Mori, from the Pediatric was also sitting there with a headband. Tombstones were blown right and left. Mr. Nemoto (?) of the Academic Affairs persuaded us to leave the site together. I concentrated on climbing the mountain. I came to a path. There, I suddenly lost consciousness.

I did not know what happened after that for a while. I heard someone calling me. I opened my eyes. Did I stumbled on the legs of Professor Kitamura? He told me there was no other way but to leave here, and to cheer up. I dragged my feet and followed him. Mr. Yoshimura from the Boiler Room supported me on his shoulder. I was desperately thirsty. I drank water from the well. I vomited with huge sound. It tasted like lead-sugar water.

Naked men and women, were scorched and turned brownish-brown color, swollen and writhing. A girl's voice was heard saying: "My father is buried alive in the shelter, please help."

The chapel of Urakami Cathedral fell in an instant, as if a bomb had fallen with a thud. Moat dust whirled up the sky. Light rain started to fall. A pig was lying dead on the way.

Numerous naked men and women are moaning. There was a sound of boom of an enemy aircraft. I lost my energy again. I was not sure what happened since then. When I woke up, I was lying on the grass of a temple in Michino'o.

I spent a night. The next morning, I was taken by train from Michino'o to Isahaya, and after

treated by a military doctor, taken by the Shimabara Railway to Shimabara, where my family had been evacuated.

For the next three weeks, I was ill with a typhus-like symptoms and was treated by Dr. Toku and Dr. Osajima (then Associate Professor.) I had 23 blood transfusions, and had less than 3,000 white blood cells and was later told that I was counted as one of the patients soon to be dead.

My hair fell out completely, and bleeding spots appeared on my palms. I received daily injections from Dr. Fukuda in Taira (Shimabara), and incisional surgery (in which glass fragments were removed.) I will not describe my condition in detail. Later, I was hospitalized for two to three years at the Medical College with a diagnosis of a liver tumor. I still wonder whether this was caused by the atomic bomb.

Professor Takase (who evacuated to the Kashima area at the time) told me that at the time of the bombing there were 33 staffs in the department, and three of them survived. There were seven or eight staffs in the Medical Office. Thirteen or fourteen students in clinical training, five or six nurses and two attendants, Ito and Kurata. Lecturer Nakae, Assistant Segawa, Tanaka, Sakaue, Kaburaki, Zeng and Iki had already been called up as military medical reservists and were away.

Today, I have erected a stone statue of the Kuwannon in the countryside of Dayang, and am praying for the repose of the souls of the late President Tsuno'o, the staffs, nurses, students of the Medical College and Special Medical Vocational Department who have died.

(15th May, 1955)