

PRISONERS MOB CANADIAN LIBERATORS

By **CMDR. PETER MacRITCHIE**
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KOWLOON, Sept. 7.--(CP)--PO. Jack Hawes, of Toronto, Royal Canadian Navy photographer, and I formed a two-man liberation party for the notorious Shamshuipo prison camp where 343 Canadian soldiers have languished since Christmas Day, 1941, when the Hong Kong garrison surrendered to the Japanese.

When we got to the camp on Aug. 30, I was struck by the good shape in which I found the prisoners but all have suffered from pellagra, a disease marked by cracking of the skin, or beri beri, caused by famine. Malnutrition also has taken its toll.

Scenes that will live with me forever marked our arrival. I passed through the barriers oblivious to the fact we were the first outsiders to arrive, the first Canadians from home they had seen since the surrender.

What a howl of delight greeted us. They spotted our Canadian badges and pandemonium broke loose.

Britons, Canadians, Australians, men of 17 nations pounced on us

and a preacher kissed me. But Hawes was setting up his camera and missed the accolade.

They shot questions at me with cannon-like rapidity.

"Good old Canada, first to arrive always," cried one Canadian.