

64 Grenadiers Reach Victoria

By JAMES RENNIE

(Special to The Winnipeg Tribune)

VICTORIA, B.C., Oct. 10.—Back from nearly four years of starvation, beatings and killings, a group of 64 M.D. 10 men of the Winnipeg Grenadiers were deliciously happy Tuesday night going through an army routine they probably hated back in early 1941.

But the queues they formed for medicals, new kit, etc., mean they will be on the final leg of their homeward journey within 48 hours and that's something to be happy about after Jap prison camps in Hong Kong as a steady diet. At the excellently operated conditioning centre at Gordon Head, outside of Victoria, the Winnipeggers looked fit, spoke of the grim years of captivity as "a horrible dream and all over now."

When Hong Kong was liberated in August, most of the men had only shorts, one shirt and old shoes to clothe them. Since then Americans at Manila outfitted them in new clothing but Tuesday night's issue of Canadian battledress, boots, great coats and all the trimmings made them as happy as kids at Christmas.

As the queues moved from army stores, they filed into a recreation hut where a group of Victoria women were busy with needles, sewing on the Winnipeg Grenadiers red shoulder flashes, Canada badges and the red circular patch which the men from Hong Kong will wear.

There was a great deal of kidding as the men reached their billets to try on the clothes they will wear when they finally arrive in Winnipeg. I talked to several as the work went on.

There was short, grey-thatched S.-Sgt. Henry Peter McNaughton, of 200 Nassau st., Winnipeg, the oldest man in the outfit to survive Jap brutality. He is 58 years old, an armorer with the R.C.O.C., who was attached to the Grenadiers, fell with them at Hong Kong at Christmas, 1941, and who arrived with his mates aboard the Admiral Hughes in Victoria Tuesday.

On an American army shirt he wore a set of badly bedraggled service ribbons from the last war. He spent all his captivity in Hong Kong at the Shamshuipo camp. Here he labored 16 hours a day with his younger colleagues, dropped from what he called a "hog fat" 173 to 92 pounds. He looked well and has regained much of his lost weight.

To many of his comrades he is known as Harry Brown while CQMS. Archie McKinnon, 451 Agnes st., Winnipeg, is called Silas P. Hustle. This is the result of the pair's participation in shows staged in the camp. The names are those used for comic characters portrayed in many skits and plays produced to brighten camp life.

"It often was pretty tough to come in from that day-long labor to rehearse for a show but the payoff came when an audience of 500 of our pals laughed their heads off at our antics," Sgt. McNaughton said. Band instruments from the Grenadiers and other units were salvaged for the show orchestra.

"We even had to play command performances for some of the prominent Nip so-and sos," the sergeant said. One show which called for female impersonators produced them by making costumes from mosquito netting and wigs from frayed rice sacks.

Sgt.-Maj. Colin A. McFadyen, 523 Ellis ave., has an idea for a new badge for the unit. He will call it the "green horror" badge in honor of the tasteless reed which sometimes came up with the inevitable rice on the daily menu. It also went by the name of "whistlestick."

"We never did find out the real name of the stuff but it will be the central item in the badge I have in mind," he said. "It will be flanked by two grains of rice. That's all there is to it."

The sergeant-major is one man who is enjoying his Canadian meals to the full. At one stage he was reduced to supping boiled chrysanthemum leaves. Not good at all, he confided.

One man, genuinely moved by the warmth of the reception here and everywhere along the line since Hong Kong, is Pte. John Frankiewicz of Fort White. He admitted he "just couldn't take it" when the ship neared Victoria. "I thought I was going to cry so went below decks until he had docked," he said.

While most of the men here never left Hong Kong during their years as prisoners, Pte. Joe Campbell, of Mafeking, former miner, was shipped to the notorious Nalgada camp in northern Japan about two years ago. Here he worked all day unloading coal from ships into railway cars.

"I carried a big wicker basket, which two men loaded, and I took my beatings with bamboo poles if the guards figured I was moving too slowly," he recalled. There were 500 Canadians working in that coal dock, he said.

In all the time Pte. John Elluk, 701 Alverston st., was in a prison cage he received 14 letters. He left Winnipeg in October, 1941, and with his wife in Winnipeg is his daughter Jean, now 11 years old.

All the men agreed to avoid the forced labor through illness a man had to be "in pretty awful shape." That must have been the shape of L.-Cpl. Max Moysey, whose mother, Mrs. G. P. Moysey, is waiting for him in Holland, Man. Max was on only one work

party during those years due to repeated bouts with malaria, beri beri and, as he says, "everything else in the book of Oriental complaints."

Still on the thin side, he has made a good recovery and was eating with the best of them at their first Canadian meal sessions.

Pte. Campbell Rutherford, 263 Beverly st., worked on airport construction and bomb dump building on a daily diet of about a pound of rice or two small buns. He would not speak of his treatment by the Japs but said "everyone was slapped around in some way or another."

Making a speedy change to get into Victoria for a sample of this staid city's night life were Pte. Russ Gurr, who lived in Winnipeg when he enlisted but now calls Toronto home, and Pte. Charles Grieves, 618 Balmoral st. They had persuaded the women at the camp to make a quick job of sewing their tunic badges to get into the city, five miles away.

On their way from Hong Kong, the display of Allied military might seen at Manila stands out as one of the most startling experiences of these Winnipeggers. The number and types of trucks amazed them. They hadn't seen a jeep until then. And as Pte. Frankiewicz said "we didn't know what they were fighting the war with—that Sten gun is a nifty."

Throughout this vast camp it was the same story. The men, generally are reluctant to discuss the horrors of the past few years, content, now that Canadian soil is underfoot once

again, to enjoy to the last ecstatic moment the thrilling final leg home to Winnipeg.

Following is the list of liberated prisoners of war from the Far East who arrived on the Admiral Hughes: Lieut. Ralston Campbell, 201 Niagara st.; Lieut. John E. Dunderdale, 114 Lenore st.; Lieut. Richard Naze, 83 Winona st., Transcona; Lieut. Richard W. Queen Hughes, 158 Ruby st.; Capt. Edward B. Walker, 333 Kingsway; Capt. Fort William; Pte. Herbert Bowman, Swan River; Pte. Albert N. James C. M. Spence, 424 Norah st., Broadfoot; Fisherton; Pte. Joseph Campbell, Mafeking; Pte. Patrick Campbell, Ochre River; Pte. John Elluk, 701 Alverstone ave.; Pte. Albert Fontaine, 631 Toronto st.

Pte. James J. Fowler, 300 Rieta st.; L.-Cpl. Stewart W. Fox, 101 Rose st.; Pte. John Frankiewicz, Port Arthur; Pte. Charles R. Grieves, 618 Balmoral st.; Pte. Gerald D. Gunson, Erickson; Pte. Richard M. Hall, Box 1, Elgin; Pte. William Harding, 142 Dunraven ave., St. Vital; Pte. Stephen Kashton, Ohia; Cpl. Cecil J. S. McArthur, 1522 Logan ave.; Sgt. Kenneth B. McCulley, 489 Simcoe st.

Pte. William J. Fordyce, 10 District Depot, Winnipeg; Pte. Alfred J. McIvor, Carman; Sgt. Archibald H. McKinnon, 451 Agnes st.; Pte. Walter H. McLeod, Kinross; Sgt. Henry P. McNaughton, 200 Nassau st.; Pte. Campbell R. Maddess, St. Charles; Pte. Clifford L. Matthews, 401 Straubrooke ave.; Sgt. Alfred E. E. Mawson, Broadway ave.; Sgt. Reginald W. Maybury, 93 Harriet st.; Pte. William M. Hayne, Pilot Mound; Pte. Mike Melkowski, Sandy Lake.

Pte. James A. Moar, Crane River; Pte. Alexander Morrisette, Stonewall; Cpl. Desmond J. Morrow, East Kildonan; L./Cpl. Philip M. Moysey, Holland; Pte. William S. Muir, 885 Mulvey ave.; Pte. Leonard P. Mulvaney, 79 Morley ave.; Pte. Albert E. Oakford, Stonewall; L./Cpl. Robert A. Parker, Basswood; Pte. Lloyd G. Patterson, Plumias; Pte. George Plant, 280 Smith st.; Pte. Alexander Prairie, 413 Black Bay road, Fort Arthur; Sgt. William J. Pugsley, St. James; Pte. Albert D. Rheault, Redditt; Sgt. John W. Roberts, 1292 Alexander ave.; Pte. Walter Rogers, 965 Dudley ave.

Pte. Omar J. Runnells, 730 Jefferson ave., West Kildonan; Pte. Campbell, W. J. Rutherford, 263 Beverley st.; CQMSA. Albert E. Seymour, Erickdale; Pte. Ernest C. Sharpe, 10 District Depot, Winnipeg; Cpl. Wilfred H. Sheldon, 626 Elgin ave.; L.-Cpl. Edwin G. Smith, 777 Furby st.; Pte. Frank Smith, 1179 Pritchard ave.; L.-Cpl. William J. C. Smith, 301 Edmonton st.

Pte. Robert H. Smithson, Eden; Pte. Keith M. Stewart, Pilot Mound; Pte. George H. Sweeney, Fort Arthur; Pte. Robert G. Utech, Winnipegosis; Pte. Johannes J. Van Baalen, 414 Parr st.; Pte. Gordon E. Williamson, 485 Furby st.; L.-Cpl. James Young, Keewatin; Pte. Roger J. Zane, 10 District Depot, Winnipeg.

The following Saskatchewan men, also of Winnipeg Grenadiers, go to M.D. 12.

Pte. Merwyn J. Carlton, Melville; Pte. Orville N. Hallquist, Maple Creek; Pte. Joseph J. Hanel, Swift Current; L.-Cpl. John J. McGehee, Holdfast; Pte. Raymond Miers, Cadillac; Pte. Elved G. Thomas, Bangor; Pte. Earl H. Vermette, Prince Albert.