

HAROLD ANGUS MARTIN ATKINSON  
Experiences as a Prisoner-of-War, World War 2

Interviewed by  
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Charles G. Roland, MD:

Mr. Atkinson, I wonder if you would tell me your full name, your birthplace and birthdate?

Harold Atkinson:

Well my full name (you can add one more to that), it's Harold Angus Martin Atkinson. I was born in Selkirk, Manitoba, on February the 14th, 1922.

CGR:

A Valentine's Day baby.

HA:

That's what my mother always said.

CGR:

What year, I'm sorry?

HA:

1922.

CGR:

Okay. And were you raised in Selkirk?

HA:

We lived in Selkirk until, in 1931, my Dad died. We moved to Winnipeg and lived there till the war started.

CGR:

What were your parents' names?

HA:

My Dad's name was William Henry Atkinson, and my mother was Eva Grace Ingram.

CGR:

And what were you doing in September of 1939 when the war

started?

HA:

Working at Ashdown's Retail Hardware Store.

CGR:

Ah yes. I remember Ashdown's well. Did you sign up right away?

HA:

No. I was still under age. I was in the militia.

CGR:

Oh that's right, you'd have been 17.

HA:

I was in the militia then. And in, oh, I guess it would be late spring of 1940 -- my brother had notions, we had a discussion and decided that now would be the time to join up. We ended up out at Fort Osborne Barracks and he was eleven years older than me. He had no problem getting in but when Sergeant-Major Cairns was going to swear me in, he looked at my documents and tore them up and said, "Come back two years later. We don't need 17-year-olds yet." I went home and went down two weeks later and went through and my age was "20," and I was sworn in and that was it. But the side issue to that, Dr. McTavish here in Winnipeg was the examining doctor then, for medicals, and when I went through the second time (I went to school with his boys) and he looked at me and said, "Atkinson, what are you doing here again?" I said, "I was 18 two weeks ago, I'm 20 now." And that was it.

CGR:

You aged quickly.

HA:

From there we did end up in the Grenadiers. We went to Jamaica in May of 1941, on a reinforcement draft, and were down there until September, and returned back to Winnipeg and were re-equipped with new tropical uniforms. Everybody had their month's leave in our company. Some of them were shorter than that because they came back later. From there we were advised we were going to the west coast for (my recollection of it anyway) further training and would proceed overseas from there, but we never had any idea we were going to Hong Kong. On the train, stories started. I always remember one of our sergeants, Johnny Long, he was killed in action. Johnny said that we were to go to indochina; he was pretty close.

CGR:

Yes.

HA:

And that's about it. We ended up in a short battle in Hong Kong and were prisoners-of-war.

CGR:

I'm very anxious to get as much of your story as I can, but it's obviously going to be piecemeal and one thing that I'd especially like you to talk about now, even though it's totally out of context, is this whole diphtheria hospital business and your role in that.

HA:

Well as you perhaps know now, the diphtheria, in the case of Canadians, started in North Point Camp on the island in the mid-

summer, and we were transferred back to Sham Shui Po on or about the 27th of September, 1942. The diphtheria epidemic was already in full force there. How it started in the two camps simultaneously, I can't say. But in that period of time, the number of cases were such they had to completely isolate them. And they opened up what was the Jubilee Building. It had formerly been the officer's quarters, prior to the war, and the patients that had diphtheria were put in there, and they also isolated the carriers into another section of the camp that was barb-wired in, and they weren't allowed out and the isolation cases couldn't go out to work. And it was the early part of October that my company Sergeant-Major voluntarily "volunteered" my name as a hospital orderly. I ended up in the diphtheria hospital working as an orderly -- in the dysentery ward of the diphtheria hospital.

CGR:

Excuse me. Is that literally true that he volunteered you?

HA:

Well, he asked me to volunteer and I said, "Hell no! I'm going to go out to work. I'm getting an extra bun if I go out to work." He said, "Well if you don't volunteer, you're going anyway." So I said, "All right, I'll go."

I'm trying to think, it would be near the end of the diphtheria epidemic that I ended up with diphtheria myself. It would be early December, and I was in a position then, I was lucky there was some toxin around that made a difference for me.

But to go back to my start in there, in that dysentery ward in the diphtheria hospital, we averaged two deaths a night while

I was a night orderly, and Ron Claricoates and I worked together. And it left me with a -- I guess you'd say more of a morbid relationship to death. Death, whether it's in my own family now, or what, hasn't the same effect on me it has on other people. We had to become hard-hearted towards it. It bothers inwardly, but I don't show my emotions any more.

CGR:

If I could just say so, this is the kind of thing the doctors have to do, and then they're often criticized for being hard-hearted. They're not hard-hearted at all, normally, but you can't let yourself be emotionally involved.

HA:

You have to [have a] hard outer skin towards it, particularly. Likewise with the doctor-patient relationship. I can see it. Some of those fellows -- well, they were personal friends and there was nothing we could do for them. The anti-toxin helped the diphtheria part of it but they were so weakened with dysentery at the same time, there was no hope.

CGR:

How large was the ward? How many patients would have been in on an average day?

HA:

Gosh, Dr. Roland, now you're asking me something I wouldn't want to put a figure on. It would be difficult for me to put a finger on the number that were in that hospital at that time. Within the dysentery ward we would have, at that time, an average patient load of about 14 to 15 patients in the dysentery ward in

the diphtheria hospital. I would venture to say there could have been upwards of 100 to 120 patients in the diphtheria hospital at all times. And as their throats cleared up, they would then go over to the carriers' ward and they were patients in there.

CGR:

Now, the two deaths a night you mentioned, was that in the dysentery ward or in the whole?

HA:

In the dysentery ward only.

CGR:

Just in the dysentery ward.

HA:

There was other deaths from diphtheria. My experience only relates to the dysentery ward, because we were active all night long. We looked after the whole hospital. We were active in the dysentery ward itself, because of that fact that there was bedpans, and water bottles, and drink of water -- those fellows, they just lay there.

CGR:

Yes, that's the obvious next question. What did you do? What did an orderly do in those conditions?

HA:

Well, we didn't have any prescribed treatment. It was care more than anything else. Helping them on a bedpan, helping them with a water bottle to urinate. If they wanted a drink of water, we had water available. Some of them, at times, could get up and go to the washroom, and if they did we would give them assistance. But in most cases they were strictly bedridden.

One man I've never forgotten -- Foxall [H6061 Pte. Foxall, Reginald] -- I can't recall his first name. We knew everybody by last names. He had called for a bedpan and it would be about midnight, and I got him on the bedpan and he had his knees up, knees bent, and Claricoates and I were having a cup of Chinese tea, I guess, hot tea, and for some reason I went in to check to see how foxall was (half an hour had gone by), and he had just passed away. Just like that. It was something we had expected to happen, but not just that way. He was an experience that way I had, but, as I say, it left me with that morbid -- supposed morbid -- outlook towards death.

CGR:

Was it mostly throat diphtheria? Were there other varieties?

HA:

No. I would say -- mine was throat -- the majority of them was throat diphtheria. And in the case of the Canadians in North Point, I think it was Dr. Reid [Lt. Reid, John A.G. RCAMC] that may have discovered the first one -- there had been a number of them going to Bowen Road with throat problems, throats closing up or swelling up, and then all of a sudden they noticed the white spots.

CGR:

Were they doing tracheotomies on some of these men?

HA:

I think they did on some of them, Dr. Roland. Up at Bowen Road that could well have happened.



CGR:

It wasn't common where you were though?

HA:

Not where we were to my knowledge, no.

CGR:

What does it feel like to have diphtheria? How did you react? What can you remember?

HA:

Well, one morning when we finished our shift, I was having a drink of water -- having my breakfast, that's what it was, my bowl of rice. And just the change from the night before -- it was very, very difficult to swallow. My throat, while it wasn't swollen up on the outside, it seemed to be constricted inside. And I went down to Sergeant [A.R.] Squires' room where the doctor was, and while he wasn't there Ray had a look at my throat and said, "Hell, you've got diphtheria!" And he said, "Freddy Drover [Drover, Archibald F. Pte. E30730] will fix you up right now. Just drop your pants and bend over." And that was it. I was in the ward laying on the floor with four other fellows and in about 10 days I was back to work. Mine was a very mild case.

CGR:

It was fairly mild, yes.

HA:

And, as I say, luckily enough it was caught almost when it started.

CGR:

Who was the doctor that was there? Was there one doctor who was sort of in charge of that whole area?

HA:

Dr. Reid and Dr. [Gordon] Gray were the (we'll call them junior doctors); Dr. [John] Crawford was the head Canadian doctor. Dr. Reid I'm quite positive now was a doctor that looked after the diphtheria ward.

CGR:

Was Gray with the Rifles?

HA:

No. Well they're both in the medical corps. Dr. Reid was the Grenadier doctor and Dr. Gray, I think, was the Royal Rifle doctor [Lt. Gordon C. Gray RCAMC listed with RRC Officers]. But after we were in camp they....

CGR:

Looked after everybody.

HA:

Yes.

CGR:

Maybe you could just tell me a little bit about your war, your three-week war. Where were you? What company were you in? Where did you start and where did you end up? Things like that. I've got a map here, maybe you can....

HA:

No, I don't need a map. I can even tell you the trails, they're still up here [in my head].

I was in D Company, Winnipeg Grenadiers and our job, we were termed Mobile Company, we were situated at Wong Nei Chong Gap right adjacent to Brigadier Lawson's headquarters. And as I say,

a mobile company, our job would be to go to any given point for reinforcement purposes. We moved in after one or two manning exercises. On Sunday, December 8th over there, December 7th here, right after church parade we were, everybody was stopped from going out of camp and we had to go back and pack and down to the armories at the corner, and everybody was issued ammunition and away we went to the island to our position at Wong Nei Chong Gap. We'd previously been there on two manning exercises over the previous two weeks.

Our platoon, Lieutenant Eric Mitchell's platoon was in the pillbox right on the corner of Wong Nei Chong Gap, right adjacent to the police station. And on the morning of December the 8th -- the start of the war -- Earl Till and I were on guard duty outside and the phone rang and Till went in and it was for Lt. Mitchell, and he was being informed that war with Japan had started. And shortly after that the bombers come over and bombed the airport, and some installations on the mainland and on the island. And we knew then that we were going to be in the thick of it.

And, again, to come back to mobile company, on the night of December the 9th, they moved D Company over to the mainland to fight a rearguard action for the Royal Scots. By then the Japanese had broken through the Royal Scots position and had driven them back. And we ended up on a curve where the road above our former camp, Sham Shui Po. We were on the Taipo Road. And our platoon's position was on the curve of the road and we were to cover the two curves further up and then to the road. Some of the other company were down below in the valley and some

were up above on the other ridge. Along about 6 o'clock on the night of the 10th, orders came to withdraw, and we hedge-hopped back. Each section took their turn as rearguard and we just moved on through, and then one would stop further down and the rest would just keep going. We eventually ended up back on the island and back at Wong Nei Chong Gap. We were then....

CGR:

What day would have that been?

HA:

Oh, that would be the early morning of the 11th. We took over our pill-box again, and we were in that position then until the night of the 18th of December. And a phone call come through requesting Eric Mitchell's platoon to go first -- oh, this would be about 10 o'clock at night -- we went to the Wong Nei Chong reservoir just above the gap to guard against what we were told were fifth columnists. And shortly after that, Kohut [Basil (Bill)], our runner Bill Kohut, come up and Mitchell left, and came back about half an hour later, and we moved.

We were going to move into another position further up. We were going to catch up with A Company. We were to replace a platoon from A Company that had been held back in their other position. We still didn't know just what the situation was. We were told some Japanese had landed on the island and we were supposed to watch for them. We could hear the explosions and firing further to the east of us in the Royal Rifles direction. We never did end up with A Company [that night].

During the night the Chinese guide we had got lost on the

slopes of the hill. At daybreak the next morning, or just prior to daybreak the next morning, machine gun started firing up the valley towards, up the Wong Nei Chong Valley towards Happy Valley, up towards the police station. And we knew they weren't our guns. You could tell by the sounds of them. And just before daybreak, we were laying on the side of the hill and in the drainage ditch, and we noticed down below on our front, movement in the bush and it was two Japanese. Before we could move, they had hit the two Vickers guns at Stanley Gap and Eric Mitchell called for fire in their direction. We don't know whether we got them or not, but there was no more mortar bombs.

And we pulled back then, up further up the slopes of Jardine's Lookout and down over the crest. We knew damn well we couldn't get back to the pillbox because the path across the valley was covered then. And we did end up about 10 o'clock in the morning with A Company, who had already been up and taken the slopes, the top of Mount Butler and then the Japanese had subsequently driven them off. We were then on the lower slopes above the Tai Tam Reservoir. If you look on the map, you'll find them right in there. And about 3 o'clock in the afternoon, after repeated Japanese tries up the ridge, with all the wounded we had Major Gresham felt that if we were to pull back en masse we may be able to get back to D Company or to one of the other positions. The position we were in was untenable, there was no way it could have been held.

CGR:

Now which day was this?

HA:

This was the afternoon of the 19th then. We went out into there December 18th. We got back close to Stanley Gap where, as I said earlier, the Japanese had knocked out two Vickers guns and it was an anti-aircraft, British anti-aircraft post. And we got in a, we'll call it a cul-de-sac, it was a half moon or crescent-shaped ridge. As we proceeded to go over the top of it, we were fired on. The Japanese had already taken Stanley Gap.

We slid down over the ridge and got out one Vickers gun and bren-guns up on the ridge and the men were all around the crescent shape. And we still didn't know just what the situation was. Fire power was called down on the Japanese, but you couldn't see them. And very shortly they threw grenades over the top. They had moved in on a trail right below the ridge and that's why we couldn't see them. That's where Sergeant-Major Osborne [H6008, Osborne, John R.] rolled over on a grenade and won his Victoria Cross subsequently, after we came home when the facts were known. In the attack there was a number of men with small wounds from Japanese grenades. Earl Till was hit in the stomach by a small piece and we got a field dressing kit on him, two of us, but Earl subsequently died in Argyle camp from, well, more than anything else, loss of blood. There was nothing we could do for him. [Earl Till died in Argyle Street POW Camp, a former Chinese refugee camp.]

From there, some of us hadn't been wounded and felt we could hold out until dark and maybe we could slip away. But Major Gresham said there was too many wounded, that if we did that he didn't know what would happen [to the wounded], we would have to

stay together. And he proceeded to climb to the top with his hanky and he had this revolver towards the Japanese. And they shot him. Somehow the message must have got through about an hour later -- I forget, one of the sergeants waved a cloth again and they did allow us to surrender. That's when they took us prisoner.

Oh, I would imagine then there would, if there was 80 men in that group, that'd be a lot. But they searched us, removed our wrist watches. In my case, they took the belt off my pants and I couldn't hold my hands up. I had to hold my pants up and they would always bat you in the back with a rifle butt. And they marched us down towards Stanley Gap and we ended up in (I always call it a garage) a good-sized garage building, no windows or anything else. It was a peak gable. They crowded us in there and all during the night there were small groups of prisoners -- Indian troops, and Grenadiers, and rifles and what not -- that they pushed in into this building.

At daybreak the next morning, one of our 3-inch mortar sections went after the Japanese at Stanley Gap and they straddled the position -- one went away over, one fell short, and the other one almost hit directly on the garage roof, it come through at the corner where the roof meets the wall, and there must have been six or seven added wounded plus a number killed. Along with them was young Eric Mitchell, who had never been wounded or hadn't been hit up until then. But his forehead and his chest and everything else was injured. And his brother Vaughan, when they took us out that afternoon, his brother Vaughan wouldn't leave him, he stayed with him. We never did see

anybody again that was left in there. If you couldn't walk, you couldn't go. They wouldn't allow us to carry anybody. And I always remember Lieutenant [Orville W.] McKillop, from Portage la Prairie, he had been wounded and he wasn't going to stay. He walked with us, but he subsequently died [in Argyle camp] from, well, loss of blood in what it would be. There was no way that the doctors that we had at that time could help any of them other than change the dressings and keep the wound clean.

The rest of D Company was in their position at Wong Nei Chong Gap. D Company, the Winnipeg Grenadiers, went into action early morning of the 19th and fought continuously until the 22nd. I don't think there was a man got out of there that wasn't wounded when the Japanese allowed them to surrender. They ran out of ammunition and they couldn't get out into the ammunition storage place down the hill. The Japanese had taken it over.

The way it was, when they moved us out of that garage building, they marched -- tied us up in groups of five -- and marched us down the hill from Stanley Gap across the Tai Tam Bridge, down into North Point (which we didn't know the name of at that time). But the Japanese had used it. It had been a Chinese refugee camp and they had used it in their early crossing to store their horses and what not. And there was no windows left in it. The first drink of water we had was rainwater [in about two days], that would be the afternoon of the 28th, rainwater that dripped off the roof that we were able to catch. By then they had cut the wires off our wrists; it was our own



telecommunication wire that they used. And they twisted it and tightened it so much that it just burned marks into our wrists and it would be almost a year, in my case, before those marks eventually disappeared. In that march down, one of our fellows, Kilfoyle [H6922 Pte. Wesley N. Kilfoyle], had been bayoneted, stomach wound. And he couldn't keep up and the Japanese guard just cut him out of the group of five, we continued on and we heard him scream and we knew that had happened. They had bayoneted him again and pushed him over the cliff.

From North Point, they took us over to the mainland on a ferry and put us in a convent on the mainland (the name will come to me after) [a Maryknoll mission]. We were in there one night [the night of the 21st] with the Catholic priests and that, again, is the first time we had had anything to eat since the, you might say, the night of the 18th, and water only once. And we did get some hardtack biscuits and water from the priests. They looked after us.

The next day they moved us into Argyle and we set up what we called the hospital. It was a separate building that the wounded were put into. The waling wounded were left in the huts. Finally they brought some rice in but we had nothing to cook it in and our people had to rig up a cook-house of some kind.

If you've ever seen Canadians trying to boil pounds of rice to get it cooked, you'll know what I mean. We called it lugau. It was watery, jelly-like, very tasteless, bland rice. We existed on that until they moved us.

On December 26, they moved us -- those of us that weren't wounded and those wounded that could walk and perhaps work --

they moved us from Argyle to our old camp, Sham Shui Po. They told us then to clean it up, and there would be some other prisoners coming in. I would estimate there was a group of about 20 of us that moved over there to clean it up. Incidentally, it was right adjacent to the Jubilee building [that eventually became the diphtheria hospital].

But the camp had been cleaned out -- windows, toilet fixtures, the whole works -- the Chinese had removed everything, even the window frames, doors, hinges. Nothing was left. And about the 28th [or 29th] of December the large majority of prisoners -- Canadian, English, etc. -- that were brought in to Sham Shui Po and our quarters were distributed out to us then in different sections. The senior British officers took over the running of the camp. We were there until about December 27th [1941], and they moved the Canadians then -- the Rifles hadn't come to Sham Shui Po. The Rifles were taken prisoner Christmas day and were moved to North Point. And then they put all the Canadians together, they moved all the Canadians from Sham Shui Po to North Point and the Canadian troops were finally all together. And we were there up until September 27 and they moved us back to Sham Shui Po. This was in 1942 -- illnesses and everything else.

While we were in North Point, work started out on a voluntary basis, working on the airport, and eventually it got so that the work was compulsory. You had to be very sick to get off work. And in my case and a few others, I had dysentery bad and my weight in, oh, about July of 1942, my weight was down to about 100

1b.

CGR:

And your normal would have been what?

HA:

Well, then a 19-year-old robust young man, my normal weight about then would have been about, well, I would say about 178 to 180 lb. Just prior to that the Japanese had decided to pay the officers, pay equivalent to their relation to Japanese ranks. And Major Crawford and Captain Reid and Captain Gray, I know, were the ones that instigated it, and I'll use the word "forced" the officers into contributing to a mess fund for very, very sick men with dysentery, etc., and weight loss. And they set up a special mess tent for us, right adjacent to the doctors' examining room. And you'd be surprised at how a little bit of canned corned beef mixed in rice not only made a palatable difference, but made a difference to our stomachs and everything else.

There was a number of us in there that I can recall -- Gerry Mabley and Cliff Mathews and Joe Podosky [H6947 Podosky, Joseph] -- to name a few. I can't remember them all. That's a long time ago. But I know damn well that that mess got Mathews and Mabley and myself through, and -- well, we're still alive today.

Along with that, just prior to that I was in the dysentery ward and my brother come over to visit me and I guess, well, I was pretty low and he had Padre [Uriah] Laite come over. And my brother couldn't do anything, I wouldn't move. And the dysentery ward you could imagine what the smell would be like; there were board bunks and, in my case, I had a round hole and that's where

my rear end was and there was no control, and whenever it went it just went. And Padre Laite told me that the only way the Lord was going to be able to help me was if I got up off my skinny ass and got out into the fresh air and helped myself. And I did. I got out and back into my hut and then when that messing started, as I say, I think that saved me at that time.

When we moved to Sham Shui Po in September, I worked for perhaps a week and a half before Sergeant-Major Bert Caldwell volunteered me into the diphtheria hospital. When we come out of there, when the diphtheria epidemic was finished....

CGR:

When did that end? You were sick yourself in December.

HA:

My recollection is it would end -- the first draft of Canadian troops left in January of 1943 to Japan, about 15th -- Bob Boyd will be able to verify that for you -- about the 15th of January, and by then the diphtheria epidemic had pretty well -- well the diphtheria had subsided but the carriers' ward was still there. And it was only men that weren't in the carriers' ward and men that could walk that went on the draft to Japan. There was a large number of them that went [1183 other ranks plus Dr. Reid]. And having had diphtheria, I wasn't one chosen. And my brother and I (he was in the carriers' ward) my brother [Ronald] and I had decided that if another draft come along we would both go together.

But he didn't make it, he ended up in Bowen Road Hospital with a mastoid infection in his ear. He had some of the best

surgeons in the British Empire in there. The operation was successful, but he died about the 2nd of October, 1943, after I had gone to Japan. He had a brain tumor. The chap that was with him when he died told me that Ronnies' headaches had increased considerably and by the time they found out what it was, it was too late. And according to Ralph, if the doctors had known just what it was at the time, early, they may have been able to do something, but it was too late.

I worked at the airport until after that, after I went back to work about February, we worked at the airport every day until just prior to leaving to go to Japan in August of 1943. Then we were 21 days on a salvaged, I call it a tramp steamer. There was 500 men, 250 in each hold, and if the man on either side of you was laying down, you sat up. We took turns. They followed the coastline. We had no escort, we followed the coastline from Hong Kong and then dashed across the straits into Formosa. We were in the city there, in the harbor, ten days and we got up above the deck once a day for fresh air, or if you went to the washroom. The case in our ship they did allow us to go to the washroom upstairs on the deck.

CGR:

Whenever you wanted to?

HA:

No, no. They would allow ("toilet" in Japanese is benjo), they would allow 10 men at a time to go to the benjo. Whether you had to go or not, you went, just to get the air. Then we pulled out of there (I can't recall whether it was morning or night because I know when the ship started to move we were down

below). Again, I would imagine they dashed across the strait to Osaka and we landed in Osaka.

CGR:

Did they feed you?

HA:

They fed us on the ship once a day. A bucket of rice would come down once a day, but that's about all. In Formosa we were given fruit. I wouldn't say the texture was like a grapefruit but it was round like a grapefruit and large, but the meat inside was red and the little fingers of flesh were very coarse in comparison with an orange or a grapefruit. I forget the name of it, the name escapes me now [fruit Pomaloy in Japanese]. But that helped fill up an empty stomach.

After we landed in Osaka, we were given a bento, a lunch-box, rice box with rice balls in it and that did us on the train from there overnight to Niigata. And we were there till the end of the hostilities. In that period of time, we were all in one camp. There were three work gangs -- Marutsu, the dockyard gang (our gang), the Renko coal yard gang, and the Shintetsu [iron in Japanese] foundry gang.

Our water pump was right adjacent to the slop sump and it wasn't too long till we had problems with out drinking water. And in that period of time, a number of men had taken sick with pneumonia, and we had to set a hospital up. We were getting into the colder weather, which we weren't accustomed to. We'd been in the tropics for almost two years and our blood had thinned out and I would assume that was part of the health problem too. We

couldn't keep warm and we were improperly clothed. We still had to go to work.

Some Red Cross supplies came and the Japanese didn't issue them. Three Rifles broke into those supplies one night and were subsequently caught and every morning they were tied up outside the guardhouse and all they had on was a G-string, and there had been some snow, in the morning it would freeze. And for three or four days we'd go to work and walk by them and there was nothing we could do to help them. One of them died tied up, I think one died after, and one (if I'm not mistaken) is still living. He survived and came home. Now he may have subsequently died after he'd come home but he did get home. Their names I couldn't tell you. Some of the Rifles may be able to help you on that.

But our gang worked in the dockyards and that's the only relation I can give you to that. We loaded and unloaded pig iron, soybeans, coal, manganese ore, rice, anything that stevedoring would look after. We had access to soybeans and we stole our share of those, and when we look back now and know the protein value of soybean, those of us that did get extra soybeans to eat, that helped us. Soybean bags weighed 80 kilos, you're looking at close to 200 lb., and we had three men loading and they would lift the bag up and tip it over onto your shoulder and you'd stick your hooks in it, and you'd dog-trot 50 yards -- from the dock, through the warehouse to the boxcar and up the plank and dump it. When we first started it we thought it would kill us. But it got so that we used to have contests. Mind you the contest would help -- if you did it the Japanese would give you a little extra to eat -- two bags and one man was carrying three

bags of beans. Mind you, you didn't run with them. But when we first saw that work, we thought it would kill us, but it's surprising what the human system can stand when it has to.

Pig iron would come out of their foundry and would be, the majority of it, would be about, say, 4 inches wide, 2 inches deep, and about 20 inches long. Some were twice that width -- 4 inches wide, 2 inches deep, and about 20 inches long. And you would pick them up, one hand on either end, and toss it into the car, and an 18-ton car would take approximately a foot and a half of pig iron level, from end to end and across the door. We dogged it as much as we could, but periodically we'd get "hailo! haiko!", from them, "speed-o! speed-o!, speed it up. And we eventually found out that they expected each man to load or move 18 tons a day. We called them contracts. Some of us that were proficient in loading pig iron, wangled contracts out of them. If they had lots of boxcars, they might give six of us a contract. Once we loaded 18-ton of pig iron each, we were finished for the day; and we would start work at 8 o'clock and by 10 o'clock we were finished for the day. That's the way it went.

CGR:

And they lived up to it?

HA:

They lived up to it until they found out that there'd be six men over at the yasume [rest, in Japanese] shack not doing anything, and that didn't go over. They stopped it. Six of us, one day, took on a contract loading boxcars of beans, three men loading and three men carrying, and we'd spell off. We had to do



our own stacking in the car, but nevertheless we did it.

It would be the spring of 1944 -- no, it would be later than that -- fall fo 1944, the two young Japanese honchos we had had finally gone into the army, and one of them I could tell you about him after. We picked up an old Japanese honcho by the name of Cebae San and we called him "Sea Biscuit" -- a little, short, stocky Japanese that had been in the first World War. And he told us that if we were going to carry beans we had to eat them. Whenever a bean boat come in, we'd steal a bag of beans and take them down to our mess shack. One of our fellows that was injured was the cook. And [h6312] Carl Jonsson would have hot beans for us every day at noon. And if you look at a can of powdered milk, a pound can of powdered milk -- in our case in the Marutsu dockyard gang, that again helped us. We got one of those solid with beans, no water just solid with beans. But, as I say, we had t carry them.

But I was going to come back to that Japanese honcho -- Kobae San. We were loading -- it's a white manganese I would assume, a white powder, wet powder that's used in the processing of iron, shintetsu in Japanese, and the foundry was across the canal from us. And it come in in boxcars and we loaded it into chesae [small, pronounced chesi] railway cars and they'd go down a narrow track on a barge and go across.

We started it at 2 o'clock one afternoon loading it and a rain shower come up and this stuff was wet, and as I say, it was piled up and they didn't want it any wetter. And Kobae San called for a tarpaulin to cover the cars, and he got myself and Mac Hawes, our Canadian sergeant in charge of us, up on the top

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and he was getting so excited he was haikoing us all over the place, speed-o, speed-o. I went the wrong way and he started to curse me in Japanese -- caniro [s.o.b.] and buckaro [foolish person] and everything else. And when we got down he went after me first with his fist and then (the Japanese had a -- we'll call it a cane -- it was a hardwood hickory shaped like a sword in a scabbard) and he whacked me on the shoulders and on either side of the neck and on the head, and then he kneed me in the upper groin and I passed out. Just at that time, prior to that, we had a new camp commandant come in and when he took over and talked to us, he told us (he spoke English fluently) that if we had any problem out at work with any of the Japanese people, he wanted to know. And going in that night, Mac Hawes asked me what I was going to do. I said, "I'm going to report the son-of-a-bitch," and I did. About three weeks later, Kobae San was gone, he'd gone to the army. Now whether that had caused it or not, he may have been going to be called up anyway. But we got rid of him and that's when we picked up Cebae San.

We had pet names for them all. Cebae San was Sea Biscuit. We had an old Japanese civilian honcho that we called The Shadow. You remember the Shadow magazine? This fellow wore a big flowing black cape and a great felt hat, that's where he got his name. And we had another one we called Uncle Henry because he looked like Henry Morgan the movie star -- short, stocky, and a big fat chubby face. When we think back about those things, we always laugh.

On New Year's Eve, 1943, New Year's Day, 1944, one of the

huts we were sleeping in collapsed on us and six men were killed and (I have to stop and think, I can name five of them) [6 men killed: Sgt. Dave Sword, RRC; Sgt. Les Sauson, RRC; Pte. B. Olafson, WG; Pte. Joe Furey, WG; Pte. F. Colvin, WG; and Pete H. Jones, WG] -- six of us were injured, we had our pelvises fractured. And out of those six injured, there was only two of them they found broken bones when they x-rayed them and they were the only ones that were put in casts. The other four of lay on our backs for January, February, March before we moved. My feeling is my back problem and leg and hip problem stem from that. It took a long time to get the pension board to accept the responsibility for it, but they finally did.

CGR:

You had no medical care during that time?

HA:

Well, yes. One thing, the Japanese were quite concerned when it happened. We had an English doctor, a Major Stewart, a medical man, in our camp at that time. By this time we'd had Americans come in -- our camp had enlarged, it expanded. Dr. Stewart knew we were injured but he couldn't make any diagnosis. The Japanese flew in an American Major, Kagey [naval surgeon, American navy], he was a naval surgeon, an air force surgeon, one or the other. And when they took us out for x-rays, the reason I think they didn't find injuries in the other four, was the fact that they didn't x-ray us properly. They x-rayed us where we hurt, they didn't x-ray us on the hips and with Mabley and Hicks they found the fractures and they were apparently set and put in casts. But [Joe] Gursky and [Ray] Fidler and myself (the other

name escapes me) [L13487 Roland Dube], we lay on our backs with our knees propped up on pillow sacks for three months. But they did a terrific job there. Our people did, not the Japanese.

Kagey came in one day in March and told the three of us that were still there that if we didn't get up off our rear-ends, we would never walk again. We got up, but our backs were bent and it was all we could do to get our legs straight. But walk we did, hanging onto the wall and then finally with two sticks, and finally upright. And they moved us from the camp we were in there back to our Marutsu dockyard gang.

And about the end of June or early July, 1944, I went back out to the dockyards to work. And other than regular rest days, I was never off another day. Mind you, the extra food was tempting enough to go after. You had to really be sick to stay off when you got those extra beans by going off to work.

I'm getting a little ahead, but I'm going to relate this while it's on my mind. We were liberated on the 15th of August, 1945 and on the 15th of July, 1945, and Englishman that had come into our camp, Taffy richards, and I go caught with a loot-bag full of soybeans in our haversacks. And pistol Pete, as we called him, the Japanese sergeant-major, searched us, had us searched that night. We didn't expect a search because he was supposedly out of town and our little Japanese friend told us, "No, he go to Tokyo." We figured we were safe. But we were searched that night; he had come back to camp with another officer friend of his and he was going to show his friend how he handled his huero [POW], his prisoners. Anyway, he dismissed the

rest of them and we were the only two they found any loot with, and we stood at attention and, and I have always said, luckily enough he started to work on Taffy Richards first. But we had to stand at attention while he punched us and beat us, and that's something that's hard to do.

Then after that, in Japanese characters, he printed "stealer" all over our faces. We stood at attention in front of the guardhouse all night. And if you relaxed at all or a knee suddenly went, the Japanese guard would whack you with his rifle butt. The only break we got was we'd yell at the guard "benjo" and away we'd go, we'd run, we'd both go together. Later, earlier in the morning as the night wore on, that got more regular because standing at attention is very difficult at normal times let alone in the condition we were in.

The next morning we thought we'd get a break, but no sir, slap-happy Pistol Pete come out and we lined up with the rest of the gang and went to work. When we got out of there and Cebae San saw the characters on our face he laughed. One of the fellows that we had was pretty fluent in Japanese. Anyway we got the message across to Cebae San what had happened and he told Richards and myself to go sleep in the mess shack -- "No shigoto today, go sleep, go sleepo." He was very sorry that it happened. He had always been that way. He told us that was was terrible and it should never have started. He said he was in the first World War and that's the way he felt. There were a lot of good people, a lot of good Japanese people.

But I mentioned Mac Hawes, Mac and Roy Kirk, Jimmy Gard, Bob McLeod -- I have the date at home, I can't just put my finger on

it -- it was either early May or early June, 1945 [June 15th]. We were loading 45-gallon drums from the cement dock onto poonies, onto barges. We were always interested in what we were loading and we pushed one drum over and broke the welder edge of it when it hit the cement, and soon as it started to run we got the whiff of alcohol. You can pretty well guess what may have happened.

We tasted it with our finger. It had alcohol in it, you could sure as hell tell that. But it had a sickly sweet flavor to me. It was similar to me to glycerin. Glycerin has a sweet, sickly taste. It's not palatable to me. We had our coffee cans out and some of us proceeded to have some; but I got half a coffee can down and that was it. But those four men I mentioned had more than they should have. We practically carried Roy Kirk back to camp that night. His control of himself was gone and it wasn't from the alcohol. It was, but more than anything else, we found out later, apparently it was de-icing fluid and it had a potassium chromate, or something else in it, that had already started to work on the lining of their stomachs. They went into a coma that night and never regained consciousness. By the time the Japanese found out what it was and got stomach pumps in them, it was too late. They pretty well all died the same night, never regained consciousness. But Joe Skwarok and Pete Reisdorf and Dube and myself, among maybe one or two others that also had some, but we had powdered milk at camp that night when we got home and it helped our stomachs and we also had had some soy beans left over from noon hour that we ate, that also helped.

But that was a sad happening, to lose them that far away from liberation.

We left our camp on, oh, it would be [September 1st, 1945] - we arrived in Tokyo, Yokohama, Tokyo on the 2nd of September. We left our camp about the end of August, 31st of August or the 1st of September, and we were in to Tokyo the next day.

The Americans processed us, deloused us, what have you, medicals and everything else, and new clothes, and put us on an LSV [Landing Ship Vehicles]. And on the morning of the 3rd, the PA system come on -- "now hear this, now hear this," and they called out 25 American names and 10 Canadian names. And right away, alphabetical, right away, "Gee, here it comes. We're back in the army. Here's a fatigue job." And all he said was, "Pack you kits, you're leaving for the airport." All I grabbed was a little haversack, and I was one of the few lucky ones, I flew home, but there was 10 Canadians -- 3 Grenadiers and 7 Royal Rifles -- were the first to arrive in Canada on September 16th, Winnipeg I arrived on September 16th, 1945. We had the privilege of flying home, if you want to put it that way; along with stops along the way in American hospitals.

I was the only one to stay in Winnipeg. The other two Grenadiers were both from New Brunswick and went home to New Brunswick, and the seven Rifles continued on their way. I was home almost week before another group had been flown home, two or three of them arrived and then two or three more and then two or three more. And about, oh gosh, it would be into October before the big gang of them arrived home. Oh, I can't tell you the date exactly, but it would be in or near the middle of October of 1945

that the boat load arrived. And then there we are. I'm still living.

CGR:

Let me go back and ask a couple of questions about the camp if I could. One of the things I'm interested in has to do with the question of sex, talk about sex?

HA:

In the early months of captivity we did because most of us were robust young Canadians and single and the availability of females in Hong Kong was there even though we were there only, you might say, three weeks before the war started. There would be numbers of times when we were courting about our Susie Wongs, where you could buy them for \$100 Hong Kong a month. They'd pick you up at camp with a ricksha, brought you back in the morning.

We would, yes, but as time wore on, sex -- it wasn't that it was taboo, you had too many other things on your mind; something to eat, something of that nature. I would say if a lot of the other fellows were like myself, there would be a number of times we might have had what we'll term a wet dream, so way back somewhere the thought was there.

After we moved to Japan, and in our camp in the dockyard gang, we worked with the Japanese coolies and they were mixed young people in their mid-teens and late teens, both male and female. And I would say, speaking frankly for myself, that if the opportunity had arisen I think I could have taken advantage of it; let's put it that way. As I say now, what I used to be able to do all night, takes me all night to do now. But that was



a possibility. While it never did happen, it could have. I think even in the state I was in, many of them in the same way, if the opportunity had arisen we could have taken advantage of it.

Oh, we did after the surrender, after we were liberated on the 15th of August. There would be 10 or 12 of us ended up in downtown Niigata in a hotel (I was only there for four days), but the four days we were there, if we ran out of currency we sent someone back to camp to get more American cigarettes. We never left the room we were in. The Japanese girls bathed us, and fed us, and what have you. But I decided to go back to camp because I knew a move was coming soon. The way we left they sent one of the fellows downtown to roust them out. There were no repercussions from the civilians. They were very, I'll say, docile that way. The thoughts we had initially were that we might have problems but we had no problems, we just went into the hotel. We initially paid with yen but we ended up paying with blankets and cigarettes. We got more for a package of cigarettes than you would for 2,000 yen. But that would be about it from a sex standpoint.

CGR:

But were there any of the group at all -- you mentioned you thought you could have, given the opportunity while you were working and so on -- were there any of the group had the opportunity that you know about?

HA:

Not that I know of. I think because, even though they were what you might term then an enemy, some of those young Japanese

girls, while they were well muscled, had an appeal. We had boshy girls, ox-cart girls, boshes (boshy in Japanese is ox) their ox-carts would pull the pig iron from the dockyard around to the boxcar. And then (I can't remember her Japanese name) but she was a pretty young thing and Cebae San used to kid her that Carl Jonsson, who ended up as a cook, was well hung -- ochee -- and if she wasn't good he'd get Carl to take her in behind the beans. But that's a side issue. But, as I say, to my knowledge it never occurred.

CGR:

What about homosexuality? Were you ever aware of any?

HA:

No awareness on my part that I might have seen. I have a friend of mine in London, Ontario -- Ray Sauson and I -- the last year and a half we were in Japan, we shared everything. His brother had been killed when the building collapsed and the people between us had been killed. I was 157 and he was 151, and we ended up side-by-side. Two of the other numbers were sleeping in the second deck above us. And Ray and I always, at work, got into different gangs so that if we got anything that was eatable, we got a mixture. We shared everything; that's about all we shared, we shared nothing else. But you might talk to somebody who knew Ray and I -- like I might talk about Roland Dube and Pete Reisdorf, they were the same. We were one happy gang but at the same time we had a special buddy that looked after you and you looked after him. At times I would say that physical state, the health state would be such that even homosexuality wouldn't

be thought of. There may have been, but not to my knowledge.

CGR:

How about, oh -- not a good phrase for a doctor to use -- but how about psycho cases? Did you have people who...?

HA:

Yes. We had one man in the Grenadiers, his name was [Roy V.] Pifher (I can't remember his first name), he joined us when we came back from Jamaica. He was what some people would term reinforcement, which he was, and in North Point, it would be in the early spring or summer of 1942. Those of us that couldn't go out to work, we didn't sit with him, but we were what you might term a guard on the room they had him in. He had gone psycho, mental, not violent, but mental. When he was out for a walk, he'd get as close to the electric fence as he could and pull green shoots out, and he'd mix them with his rice -- which may not be unusual -- but his mind had gone, that's what it was. He didn't know who he was, he didn't know who we were. He didn't know where he was. Our hut, D Company's hut, was right adjacent to the building they had him in, which was outside the electric fence but still inside from that point. He couldn't go over the top because of the electric fence and the door into it was from our camp, and that's where they kept him. We had to make sure that he was fed, that he ate and got the water he required. And there'd either be one or two of us outside his door all day, just like a guard. We'd change shifts.

CGR:

What happened to him? Do you know?

HA:

He died. They took him there to Bowen Road Hospital (I'm almost sure it's Bowen Road he died in), but he did go because his mind just snapped. That's one of the few that went that way, to my recollection. Something like that, not his happening, but what happened to us, the majority of us, almost to a man, were the same. We knew eventually that the Allies would win the war, we would get home. Our main concern was keeping ourselves as reasonably alive as we could, and by and large we did. I would say that there may have been times when some of us could have let ourselves go, but there was always something to do.

It's strange. I'm still not a churchgoer today, but I believe in God and Jesus Christ. I have a belief that way. And sometimes that was the last thing we had to rely on was our faith that if we could look after ourselves reasonably well, the Lord would help us survive. I'm a member of the United Church but I don't, I very seldom go to church. My wife does, and I support the church but I'm not a churchgoer.

When you're in a spot like that, I would say the dividing line between sanity and insanity, it's a very thin line and it could happen either way. Even today when we look at some of our fellows today, we have one man here now, [H. 17580 Pte, Grieves, Charles] Charlie Grieves -- I don't know whether it's Alzheimer's disease that Charlie has or not. But Charlie is still in prison camp and he doesn't know anything, doesn't know where he is. But when he does talk, from an understanding or a (I won't say sensible standpoint), but an understandable standpoint of where you can understand what he means -- he's

always talking about the Japanese, and other than that he just rants and raves. But he still has a semblance of mind. We have another amputee, like Ray [Fidler]; Gordon's at Central Park Lodge, a senior citizen's home, and I bring him out here twice a month to visit and we always go to see Charlie. Because we know Charlie recognizes Gordon because they spent some time together in the psychiatry ward here. And he puts his hand over on Gordon's wooden leg and laughs -- ha, ha, ha -- he knows him and we assume that's what it is because it's the only recognition he has. But Harry Atkinson -- he doesn't know me. And Jim Furey here is the say way. Jim is in here about every six weeks for a seven day rest, to give his wife a rest. Jim has worked for the telephones for a number of years in the supply department and when you talk to Jim he relates everything now to work. He's got to go back to work because he's got some orders to fill. But those are the only two.

CGR:

Let me just ask a potentially touchy question. What about "bad apples" in the camps?

HA:

You mean turncoats?

CGR:

Turncoats, troublemakers. I mean real troublemakers...

HA:

Well in regard to the Canadians, there were no turncoats or what not. We had a British major (I always said Boxer but it wasn't Boxer) a Major [Boone] -- anyway his name is available to you from what's his name's book -- he was court-martialed and

three or four British other ranks that worked with him. We still maintain today his sentence was too damn light for what he did. He became a Japanese. He was fluent in Japanese. He just became one of the Japanese and he would beat a man just as easy as not.

As far as the Canadians were concerned, no, there was turncoats. Bad apples -- no more there than there would have been in a normal army life, where they might commit a crime and get seven days CB [Confined to Barracks], or something of that nature. But again that depends on how you want to look at it. Some men sold their rice rations for cigarettes, some people might think that the man who bought his rice for cigarettes was a bad apple, but you have to look at it in two lights, and I'm looking at that from a personal standpoint. At times I had sold my rice for cigarettes and other times I bought rice for cigarettes. A cigarette to me might, at that time be more valuable than a bowl of rice.

In Japan, we received 3-1/2 American Red Cross parcels in our camp, and in those were 10 packages of American cigarettes (or 8), sometimes a mixture of Chesterfields and Camels, a pound of powdered milk, a can of butter, a bar of chocolate, cheese, sugar, a number of things. The first parcel we got I traded my can of powdered milk for 10 packs of cigarettes. I traded everything off, each thing had a value. Being mercenary, a month later I could buy a can of powdered milk for a pack of cigarettes. That's a case, which way you want to look at it - that's profiteering, or not? There was a number of people the same way. It was one of those things. It was survival, you

looked after number one first and you thought of your bed-mate. When you got together, as I say, like Sauson and I and Dube and Reisdorf and Mac Hawes and Walter Jenkins, we shared everything. But again we looked after ourselves before we might give some powdered milk or some dirty sugar [sugar from sugar bag corners, emptied out in the dock yards] to somebody else -- other than the ones in the hospital.

In Niigata in our dockyard gang, I remember one specific case in August of 1944. They took six of us -- Dube and Reisdorf and Bob McLeod, Harry atkinson, and Ike Friesen into this warehouse. The Shadow too us in there. And they were jute sacks done up in bundles so there might be (I don't know how many, Dube could tell you), done up, tied with straw rope. We dumped one bundle on the floor to see what it was and when it opened it had wet sugar in the corner. So five men loaded the boxcars and cleaned the warehouse out, and we got Dube in behind the shack cleaning some wet sugar out of the corners. And our gang had sugar for two months, but we took sugar over to the hospital for Major Stewart to give to the sick people.

We stole extra beans at night. The mess cart come in from work at night, both the American dockyard gang and the Canadian dockyard gang mess carts came in every night - the rice buckets were loaded with soybeans already washed, Jonsson had washed them and they put them right into the bean soup or right into the rice. They were cooked for an hour (it might not have been cooked enough, but it was extra food). But from an individual's standpoint, that's the way it would be.

I had a friend of mine in the camp from the coal yard gang,

George LeBlanc (George died here a number of years ago), but George was always over to sell his rice for cigarettes and I never bought his rice. He did my laundry for a cigarette. You had to look at things that way. I knew if George sold his rice for cigarettes, if he was doing it all the time, he wasn't eating any rice. And in the coal yard that's all they did get, other than the extra beans we brought in at night.

But from another standpoint, we would have had no compunction if the opportunity had arisen, as far as the Japanese were concerned, to get rid of a bad apple out at work. I can relate an instance to you. It's not first-hand knowledge, it's second-hand knowledge. It's while we were laid up with our fractured pelvises. Our Canadian gang hate Kobae San so much they'd have put a loading hook in his back, but instead Mac Hawes and Bob McLeod stacking the beans, once the beans got oh 16, 18 bags high -- quite a height, you're about 20 feet. And I say we, they kept a big of beans right at the corner and it would just have meant a kick with a foot and if Kobae san had been standing under there, that bag of beans would have driven him into the cement and we would have got rid of him and taken the consequences. It could have been an accident, who would know. But he was the only Japanese we actually hated -- that we knew -- that we actually hated. We would have got rid of him that way but he never got around that corner of the stack.

But bad apples, no. We, by and large, Canadians as a whole in our camp (I can only relate you to those experiences) they were pretty good fellows. You have no doubt read of a Canadian



sergeant-major and a British sergeant that were in charge of one camp (you may have heard it from some of the fellows that were here, I don't know whether they were there or not). When we come home here they were both under arrest and in the guardhouse, Fort Osborne barracks and they were tried. The Canadian sergeant was given a severe reprimand for conduct perhaps unbecoming to NCO, he was senior NCO Warrant Officer, in the camp he was in. But the English sergeant was the ringleader of that gang and not because the Canadian was and still is a friend of mine), he was lead into it and got into it to the depth he got and it was difficult to get out. But the discipline of the camp fell on their shoulders and they had to do the same as the American officers did in our camp in Japan. They meted out discipline the only way they could -- the cutting of rations or what not. Because if they didn't the repercussions from the Japanese would have fallen on everybody in camp, and why should everybody in camp suffer for the doings of one or two men. And that's the only way I can look at this case. But I do blame the English sergeant for our sergeant-major's demise -- not demise, but the problems he had.

Whenever I go east I talk to him on the phone. I haven't seen him for a number of years but I still -- my opinion of him is, he is still a Hong Kong veteran. He went through as much as we did and one case more because none of us had to appear before a Canadian court-martial. And in all due respect to Mark he did what he felt was best for the disciplining of his Canadians. That's the only way I can look at it. When I first heard about it, I guess I was quite put out at him. I don't know what would

have happened. But after I attended the trial and listened to the evidence and as I say, I just put it down to the American officers in our camp and those two men in charge of the camp they were in.

CGR:

Anything else you can think of at all, especially anything medical?

HA:

Well, one thing I didn't mention -- the other name of the man injured in that camp came to be -- Dube, Roland Dube -- and the six men that were killed were Sergeant Sword of the Royal Rifles, Sergeant Sauson of the Royal Rifles, Harold Jones of the Grenadiers, Bud Olafson of the Grenadiers, Joe Furey of the Grenadiers, and Freddie Colvin were all killed when that big storm hit us. but that's about all. There's not much more I don't think from a medical standpoint.

CGR:

The medical officers all did their best in your opinion?

HA:

Yes they did. One thing I would like to add. I mentioned earlier about the messing, extra messing facility that Major Crawford and Captain Reid and Captain Gray had set up. I mentioned, I forget the way I termed it with regard to the officers. They forced the officers into starting this. I don't want to give the impression that all of our officers were, you might call, bad apples. Our junior officers and some of our intermediate officers and captains and so on, were very good. We

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had four of them that we termed the "Dead-end Kids" because they were always in grief with the colonel for associating with the men. And put the problems that were then in regard to messing in that camp on the doorstep and the foot of Colonel Trist, and I think any of our fellows would tell you the same thing. Whether Major Crawford did or not, I don't know. But I think he may have. I lay the messing problems on his [Col. Trist's] doorstep. I know he's dead now and can't deny that. But when we first come home, we had a reunion at the Marlborough Hotel and Colonel Trist was to be a guest speaker. He left the floor right after his introduction, he never said a word, because from the reaction of the men that were there he knew what was going to happen. So like we were -- they were prisoners-of-war and I have nothing bad to say about any of them but that one. And he forced the issue. There you are.

CGR:

Thank you.

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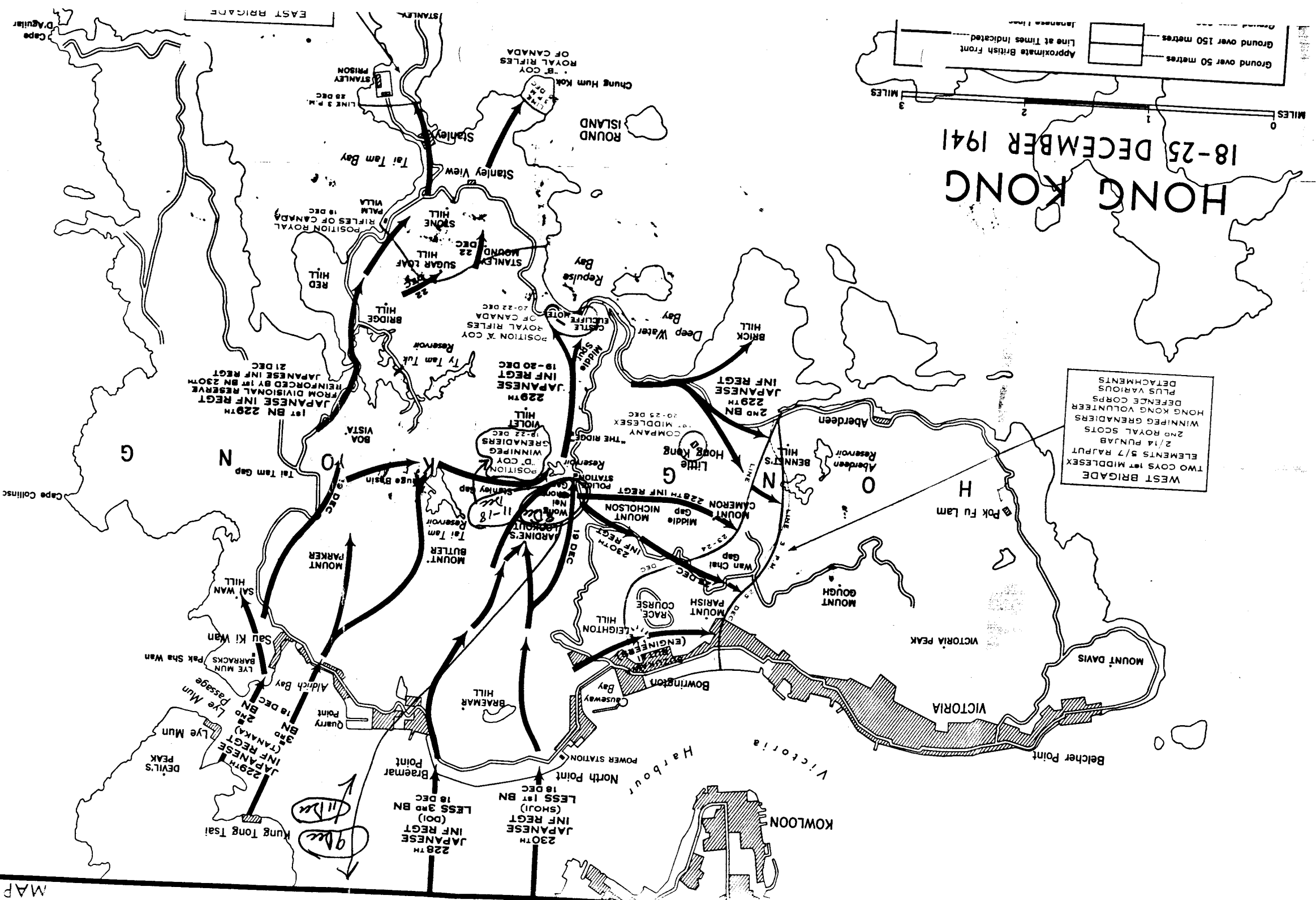
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# HONG KONG

## 18-25 DECEMBER 1941

WEST BRIGADE  
 TWO COYS 1st MIDDLESEX  
 ELEMENTS 5/7 RAJPUT  
 2/14 PUNJAB  
 2nd ROYAL SCOTS  
 WINNIEG GRENADIERS  
 HONG KONG VOLUNTEER  
 DEFENCE CORPS  
 PLUS VARIOUS  
 DETACHMENTS

*W. G. G.*  
*Attorney*



T. S.



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