

FAR EAST ISSUES OF POW JOURNAL – GAUTAM HAZARIKA, July 2023

“The Prisoner of War” was The Official Journal of the Prisoners of the War Department of the Red Cross and St John Ambulance, published at St. James Palace, London during the war. This Journal aimed to inform family members (in the banner it says FREE TO NEXT OF KIN) & the general public about the condition of Prisoners of War & internees, and how best to send them letters and parcels. Initially it had one page on the Far East on occasion as there was no information available, or whatever was, was scraps and unverifiable. 6 of these pages are below (these are just from Jun/ Sep/Oct 1943 and there probably are more).

The Far East Special Monthly editions started in February 1944, once enough information was available to warrant one. There were 12 issues in total and I’ve not found online records of a complete set anywhere. They are an incredible research resource and I was fortunate to find a complete set and am delighted to be able to share them with as many people as possible.

The first issue starts with an editorial describing efforts so far and continues with News From the Camps, Letters Home (sections that occur in all issues), Life in Stanley Camp Hong Kong, How to Address Your Letters.

The other issues were:

- No.2 March 44 (adds a section on Questions),
- No.3 April 44 (includes 2 pages on civilians, though reports from the camps also covers civilian camps),
- No. 4 Aug 44 (including an article on the Mysterious Japanese
- No. 5 Jan 45 (including article on Siam-Burma Railway – by now Burma was being recoved and detailed news of this was filtering in, including account from survivors + Civilian news)
- No. 6 March 45, includes a note on the Japanese date system, an article on how cables are sent and bottlenecks, survivor from Siam (F.Wilson, Sherwood Forresters), Christmas in Wampo Camp Siam, conditions in Java camps, Rescued in the Philippines, Civilian news, a wonderful sketch map of Stanley Camp Hong Kong)
- No. 7 May 45 – there is no ref to VE Day, so may have been published before May 8, 1945. Includes articles - Home from the Philippines, How the mail goes, Conditions in Hong Kong, a page on HK with pictures, civilian news, Japanese politics,
- No. 8, Jun 45 - war in Asia seemed to have a long hard slog ahead as Japan was expected to oppose the expected Allied invasion. Article on Lifting the Curtain in Japan, Burma Freedom at Last, Civilian News, Internment in Malaya, Last Days at Santo Tomas, Volunteer Forces Liberated
- No. 9 Aug 45: was likely published between August 12 when news first came out of Japan accepting the Potsdam Declaration, and August 15 when surrender was announced. Includes A Word to Relatives, cartoons of Siam Camps, Conditions in Shamshuipo, Rangoon Christmas an article by Cap J.H. Bunten, Cameronians, Planning their Food, pictures of life in Taiwan camps, report by Red Cross delegates visiting camps, lots of Civilian news, article Last days in Rangoon Jail
- No. 10 Sep 45 – Repatriation News, every day meals and recipes for Repatriates, Red Cross Reports, full page map of Far East Camps, Three Years in Rangoon Gaol by H. Born, article on When He Arrives

- No. 11 Nov 45 – Repatriation news, message from The King, civilian news, Liverpool welcome, Free At Last by Major F.E. Grazdoke, R.E. (Article on Taiwan) Red Cross article, Bridging the Gap (article on gap b/w prisoner life & civilian life, ie on being home as a civilian, not POW vs civilian internee), more recipes,
- No. 12 Dec 45 – FINAL ISSUE printed, Welcome in the West (travel back via US/ Canada), In Middle East India and Beyond, Red Cross, Sketch map of Burma railway camps, Far Eastern Broadcasts (forced on POWs), Far East Section at work, letter from Mountbatten.

All the 12 issues total 135 pages and are an incredible research resource

NEWS FROM THE FAR EAST

CIVILIANS

Official Reports on Camps in Japan

THE FUKUOKA GROUP OF CAMPS IN JAPAN

A number of next of kin of prisoners of war have heard that their relations are in "Fukuoka Camp." This does not mean that they are in or near the town of Fukuoka, but that they are in one or another of a group of seven camps which are administered from Fukuoka. The names of these camps are: **UBE, HIGASHI-MISOME, MOTUYAMA, OHAMA, OMINE, INNOSHIMA** and **MUKOJIMA**.

Ube (the name is given as **Ubeshinakawa** on some maps) is a large industrial town on Honshu Island near to the entrance of the Inland Sea. **Higashi-misome** is a part of Ube, and **Motoyama** and **Ohama** are close to it. **Omine** is a coal-mining town in the hills north of Ube; it is marked on the map. **Innoshima** and **Mukojima** are islands in the Inland Sea off the port of Onomichi. **Omine**, the largest camp, contains 10 officers and 1,072 other ranks.

Mukojima, the smallest, contains 4 officers and 76 other ranks. The other camp strengths range from 192 to 153, with a few officers in each.

In many respects these camps resemble each other. They are all under the joint management of the Japanese Army and the employer companies. The buildings are well lighted and ventilated.

Hygienic arrangements are adequate and there are the usual large Japanese baths in which prisoners wash, thirty or more at a time, in warm water, after thoroughly cleansing themselves outside the bath.

The rations vary in different camps and according to the season of the year. In some camps they are described as just sufficient, and in other camps as not quite sufficient, for the work which the prisoners are doing.

In two camps the prisoners are raising pigs and rabbits to supplement the very small ration of meat and fish. The prisoners request more meat, fish and fats; some of them have lost their appetite for rice. Some efforts are made to provide a special diet, including eggs, for the sick, but improvement is needed here.

There is a high rate of sickness in most of the camps; it probably reflects the conditions under which the prisoners of war were living in Java and Hong Kong before their transfer to Japan. Some serious cases have been sent to Army hospitals.

At **Innoshima** there are 100 prisoners of war from Hong Kong.

The other camps contain British prisoners of war from Java. The prisoners have gained in weight since transfer. Some clothing and shoes have been supplied by the Japanese. More warm clothing is asked for. There is a difficulty in supplying clothes for the taller prisoners, large-size clothing being naturally scarce in Japan.

There are canteens, which are not well stocked; toilet articles, stationery, games, tobacco and some fruit when it is in season can be bought. Prisoners are given five or six cigarettes a day. Money earned and brought by the prisoners is banked. The officers receive pay according to their corresponding ranks in the Japanese Army. They supervise the work done by the men, who receive working pay.

Work consists of coal mining at **Ube**, **Higashi-misome**, **Omine**, **Ohama** and **Motoyama**, and of stevedoring at **Innoshima** and **Mukojima**.

A system of piece-work is being experimented with at **Motoyama**. The normal working hours are eight a day. A day of rest is given once in seven days in some camps and once in thirteen days in other camps. Complaints of excessive hours, of time spent on travelling to work, of lack of rest days were made in several camps; it is understood that the practice of giving one rest day a week will be restored in at least one camp.

There are chaplains at **Higashi-misome**, **Omine** and **Motoyama**. No religious facilities at all are available for Roman Catholics.

Some of the prisoners find time for a little study. There are a few books in the camps; more will be provided. Some camps have gramophones.

Red Cross relief supplies of food and medicines have been sent to the camps by the International Red Cross Committee delegate.

The problems of the camps are well known to responsible officers, who are said to be intent on making improvements. Some prisoners praise the attitude adopted by the Japanese. (Visited March, 1943.)

Mail to Service Prisoners

NEXT of kin should note that the printed Prisoner of War Airmail Letter Cards available at all Post Offices be used for prisoners of war in Japanese service, for whom there is no airmail service.

When writing to prisoners in the Far East an ordinary sheet of note-paper and no stamp is required, on which should be posted in the ordinary way.

CHANGI CAMP, SINGAPORE.

It is apparent that the Japanese authorities have converted the army camp at Changi into a civilian internment camp. Nothing is known of the conditions in the internment camp, but the following information gives some idea of the situation and surroundings of Changi before the Japanese invasion:

Changi is a district on the east coast of Singapore Island, about 18 miles from the city of Singapore, and became well known when the army authorities decided to build an army camp there.

At the beginning the reconstruction of the camp was on a small scale, but in latter years, when more than one regiment was stationed on the island, the camp was enlarged to such a degree that it was recognised as being a "complete little town" on its own.

All the buildings, such as the barracks for the single men, were modern and up to date in every respect. There were also large blocks of flats which accommodated the married troops. The married officers all had their own houses, which were built on the same lines as the houses owned by the civilian Europeans.

Anyone entering Changi was immediately struck by the cleanliness and newness of the camp. The roads were excellent, and the grounds, apart from the gardens of the private houses and "married quarters," were kept in splendid condition. In short, one could really call it a complete and very pretty "garden city."

Extracts from a Letter from a Civilian in Shanghai

Shanghai, 5.2.43.
"TODAY the British Residents' Association has received 800 more names of those who are to go to join the 400 already segregated. We are allowed to take our own bedstead and bedding and two trunks, plus what can be carried. The younger single and married men whose wives are not here are being sent. There are to be two more camps for British and one for American families.

12.2.43.
"I have finished packing for the move. My number is P. . . . which stands for a godown in Pootung. Food consists of a piece of bread and cup of green tea for breakfast, rice and vegetables for dinner, and the same for supper. Pork is supplied occasionally. There is a canteen, but tinned provisions are four times dearer than outside. The over-seventies are exempted, but by the 27th another batch) this time married folk, is to be sent to another city. Single women will not be with us."

NEXT OF PRISONER OF
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BAKELITE
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NAVY BLUE
Navy blue sh of kin, causing unnecessary w P.O.W.s next send any article Socks for pri be khaki or gre

RED CR

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- Biscuits (wit
- Cheese (proc
- Chocolate (v
- Fish . . .
- Fruit or pud
- Syrup or jam
- Margarine (v
- Meat, hot
- Meat, cold
- Bacon
- Milk . . .
- Sugar . . .
- Tea . . .
- Vegetables
- Cocoa
- Oatmeal (wi
- Eggs . . .
- Soap . . .
- Cigarettes, p
- overhead
- port, etc.

This does Geneva, which parcel, but whi it is hoped, to

NEWS FROM THE FAR EAST

Here is a List of Camps

THE exact location of the camps in the Southern Area is not yet known. The camps are known simply by the name of the country in which they are situated. Camps concerned are:

BORNEO CAMP, MALAYA CAMPS,
JAVA CAMPS, THAI CAMP,
TAIWAN CAMP.

That is the name for Siam, and Taiwan is the Japanese name for Formosa. It is important that the two should not be confused.

The official notification of capture sent to some next of kin states that the prisoners are in Malai or Malaya Camps. In addressing letters, next of kin should use the English spelling, namely, Malaya Camps.

CAMPS WHOSE LOCATION IS KNOWN

MUKDEN.—Situated in Manchuria.

KEIJO, CHosen.—Keijo is the Japanese name for Seoul, the capital of Korea. Chosen being the Japanese spelling of the name of the country.

JINSEN, CHosen.—Jinsen is a few miles from Keijo; and is the port of that town. Both Jinsen and Mukden are divisional camps of Keijo.

HAKODATE.—Situated on the south coast of the island of Hokkaido, Northern Japan.

TOKIO.—There are five camps in this region, namely: Camp Park Central Yokohama, Yokohama-Kanagawa, Shinagawa, Kawasaki, Hiraoka. All belong to what is termed the Tokio group of camps.

OSAKA.—There are nine camps in this group, but the address for all of them is Prisoners of War Camp, Osaka. British prisoners are located in the following: Osaka, Sakurajima (situated in Osaka), Amagasaki (between Osaka and Kobe), Kobe (in the business section of Kobe).

ZENTSUJI.—Situated in the north-east of the island of Shikoku, Japan.

FUKUOKA.—Situated on the north-east coast of the island of Kyushu, Japan. Fukuoka is merely the administrative headquarters of the group; it is not a camp, and there do not seem to be any prisoners there.

There are seven divisional camps, all of which house British prisoners. These camps are in the western part of the main island of Japan (Honshu), but letters should in all cases be addressed to the principal camp.

The names of the divisional camps are: Ube (shown as Ushinkawa on some maps), Omine, Ohama, Moto-

yama, Higashimisome, Mukejima, Innoshima. The last two are islands in the Inland Sea.

SHANGHAI.—This camp is situated a few miles outside Shanghai. The address for letters is: Shanghai Prisoners of War Camp, Field Post Office Box 106, Shanghai. Relatives who have been given additional details, e.g., "Barracks 3" should insert these particulars before "Shanghai Prisoners of War Camp."

HONG KONG.—The two camps which contain British, Canadian and Hong Kong Volunteer prisoners of war are Argyle Street (mostly officers and their orderlies) and Shamshuipo, a former military barracks containing mostly other ranks with a few officers. Both are on the mainland, on the outskirts of Kowloon.

Sick prisoners of war are sent to Bowen Road Military Hospital on the island. There are two British doctors and some medical orderlies here.

PLEASE NOTE

Relatives of men who are missing in the Far East but who have not yet been notified as prisoners of war should continue to address letters as described in the Post Office leaflet P.2327B.

CIVILIAN INTERNMENT CAMPS

HONG KONG.—Stanley Camp is situated on the south-east of the island of Hong Kong.

SINGAPORE.—Changi Camp is on the east coast of the island of Singapore, about 18 miles from Singapore itself.

MANILA.—Santo Tomas Camp is situated on the outskirts of Manila. The internees are housed in the main building of the Santo Tomas University.

BANGKOK.—The internees live in a wing of the University of Moral and Political Science; this university is on the left bank of the river just outside Bangkok.

Stanley Civilian Internment Camp, Hong Kong

THE International Red Cross Delegate in Hong Kong visited Stanley Camp on May 13th, 1943. He reports the opening of the bathing beach with large attendances. He further reports that the composition of rations has recently improved. The authorities are giving sympathetic consideration to this problem and there is, therefore, no immediate cause for anxiety.

NO PARCELS

Next of kin are reminded that it is impossible for them to comply with the requests of prisoners for parcels, etc., owing to the refusal of the Japanese to grant facilities of this sort.

POSTBAG

ABOUT 1,500 cards sent by prisoners of war in Japanese hands reached this country during May. These have been received from prisoners in the following camps: Mukden (Manchuria), Jinsen (Korea), Tokyo, Osaka and Kobe (Japan) and Taiwan (Formosa).

Prisoners in Mukden and Jinsen have been allowed to give some information regarding conditions in the camps.

From the other camps the information is very brief, consisting of a typewritten card informing the next of kin that the prisoner's health is excellent, good or poor, that he is either working or not working (as the case may be), and ending with a request to look after the welfare of certain near relatives.

These cards have in most cases taken about six months in transit, and it is anticipated that mail from the camps in Japanese-occupied territories, such as Malaya, Java, etc., will take a considerably longer time to reach this country. Here are a few typical letters from the camps.

Climate Like England

Jinsen Camp, Chosen. 21.11.42.

I AM sure you will be overjoyed by hearing from me after all these months. I am quite safe and well in the circumstances. The climate here is very cold, more like England, but I cannot get used to it. I hope you and the family are keeping safe and well.

Working for Pay

Osaka, Kobe. Undated.

I AM interned in the Osaka P.O.W. camp, Kobe-sub camp. My health is usual. I am working for pay.

Studying Shakespeare

Keijo, Chosen. 27.1.43.

RECEIVED no letters from home yet. I Am very well here, though weather cold. Food, cigarettes are adequate. Almost normal weight. Spend my time studying medicine, Shakespeare, drawing portraits, rehearsing for concerts. We had one on Christmas Day. Unnecessary to send comforts. Textbooks would be welcome.

Safe and Well

Shinagawa, Tokyo. 22.12.42.

I AM well and safe in Japan. My health is excellent.

Five Months P.O.W.

Camp No. 4146, Hong Kong. Undated.

DURING the past five months I have been a P.O.W. The Japanese authorities have treated me very well and I am in the very best of health, and there is no cause to worry.

Here's the PARCEL

THE next problem to Red Cross have instructions in Pi/B. Read you. We are phasis some p overlook as th reveal.

The following answered by th

Can I send a German camp No. Founts Send pencils.

My husband what kind of b For Italy, or mitted.

Can I enclo husband's par

No letter to a in a parcel. A the P.O.W.'s a the top half of close it in you fill in the bott ledge it to the

What kind o send?

No special m patterned fabri

My husband Can I send him toe-ing?

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Real the leg look out in th and additions time to time.

NEXT OF

WE are gla recent d next of kin p May issue of "Journal" has proximately 8 spent in the reaches Finsbu Packing Centre. parcels now des In order to number of par maintained at kin can help mistakes when by keeping car sent to them w parcels can go t

NEWS FROM THE FAR EAST

Official Reports on Camps in Japan

CAMPS IN OSAKA AND FUKUOKA GROUPS

VISITS were paid to prisoner of war camps in Japan in April, 1943. The following features are common to all the camps.

Buildings are usually of wood or a combination of wood and plaster. The food is described as quite satisfactory, considering the present conditions in Japan (where strict rationing appears to be in force), but, nevertheless, insufficient in quantity. It consists mainly of rice, barley, vegetables and bread, with meat and fish from time to time. Butter, fats, eggs and jam cannot be obtained. There is an issue of six cigarettes a day. Canteens have been organised, but are short of stocks; such goods as are available are sold at cost price.

There is a certain shortage of clothing and underwear; it appears that the amount issued has been insufficient.

Bathing and hygienic arrangements are very satisfactory. The prisoners of war use large baths of the Japanese type.

Medical care is well organised. There are infirmaries for light cases, and graver cases can be sent to hospital. There are weekly medical inspections. Dental treatment is given by civilians.

All other rank prisoners who are fit work for an average of nine hours a day. There are three rest days in each month. The work does not conflict with the provisions of the 1929 Convention. The working pay varies according to each prisoner's capacity, between 10 and 35 sen per day. Officers are paid at the same rate as Japanese officers of equivalent rank. But only a limited amount of the pay may be retained by prisoners of war; the rest is credited to their bank accounts.

The length of the working day (which was the subject of complaints) leaves little opportunity for the use of the sports grounds which have been provided. The prisoners have some books and gramophones, and the Y.M.C.A. is obtaining more books for them.

No severe disciplinary punishments have been imposed, and no judicial prosecutions have been instituted. Two roll-calls are held daily.

Some Red Cross relief has been received in all the camps.

Brief reports on visits to individual camps convey the following information:

OSAKA GROUP

Osaka Docks (Principal Camp).—Strength was 580 Americans, British and other races. The British are from Hong

Kong. The site is not very pleasant and does not get enough sun.

Sakurajima.—The strength is 197, all British from Hong Kong, including 27 civilians formerly employed in the naval dockyard. The site of the camp is a suburb of Osaka, is sunny and healthy, but the men are overcrowded.

Amasaki.—The strength is 102, all British from Hong Kong. They are overcrowded. The site is a pleasant and healthy one, in a suburb of Osaka, near the sea.

Harima.—The strength is 399; there are only five British prisoners; the remainder are Dutch. It is situated on a promontory overlooking the inland sea in a healthy and pleasant position.

Kawasaki Park.—Three camps in Japan bear the name of Kawasaki. Two of these are in the Tokyo group. They are American camps, and reports on them have not been received in this country. Kawasaki Park is in the Osaka group and is mainly a Dutch camp, with some Australians and five British out of a total strength of 382. The prisoners are accommodated in roomy new wooden huts on a hill in a park near Kobe.

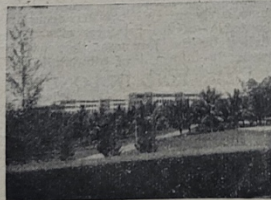
Kobe (business quarter).—Contains 371 British and 46 Americans from Hong Kong and the Philippines. Situated near a sports ground, the brick buildings are said to be comfortable.

FUKUOKA GROUP

Omine.—It appears that the large figure given as the strength of this camp in a previous report may have been erroneous.

The strength at the April visit was only 189, of whom eight were officers. They are all British from Java. They are comfortably housed in two-storeyed wooden buildings on a sunny and healthy hillside. The rooms are electrically heated. Here the food is considered to be sufficient; fresh fruit is included in the rations. The canteens are better stocked than in other camps.

The camp includes a Dutch doctor, a priest and three medical orderlies. A prayer is said daily and a sermon is preached once a week.



Changi Camp, Singapore

Ube.—153 British from Java are comfortably housed in one-storeyed huts. The officers, of whom there are 16, conduct short services. Food is said to be just sufficient.

Higashisome.—165 British from Java are in spacious wooden huts in pleasant district on the coast of the inland sea. A chaplain conducts daily prayers and preaches a weekly sermon. There have been two cinema shows.

Ohama.—151 British from Java. The site is on the shores of the inland sea, and is sunny and healthy. The food is just sufficient and includes fresh fruit. There are four medical orderlies in the camp.

Motoyama.—160 British from Java. Conditions are similar to Ohama. Electric heating is installed.

Mukojima.—Contains 179 British from Java. There is a Dutch doctor and a priest, who conducts a daily service and preaches on Sundays.

TYPING SERVICE

IN view of the new ruling made by the Japanese whereby letters in ordinary handwriting are no longer acceptable, attention is once again drawn to the facilities that we are able to offer for the typing of letters, without charge, by professional typists. Those wishing to avail themselves of the scheme are asked to follow these instructions:

1. Write your letter on an ordinary sheet of notepaper.

2. Write, on a separate sheet of paper, FULL particulars of the name and address of the prisoner and of your own name and address.

3. Place both in an envelope, together with a plain sheet of notepaper and an envelope. (This plain paper and envelope will be used for the typing of the letter to the prisoner.) Put nothing else in the envelope.

4. Put the letters "T.S." in the top left-hand corner of the outside envelope, which must also bear a 2½d. stamp. Seal it and address it to:

FAR EAST SECTION,

9, PARK PLACE, S.W.1.

Next of kin may, if they prefer, hand their letters to their local Red Cross Office. No acknowledgments will be sent.

No responsibility can be accepted either by the Red Cross and St. John or by the staff of volunteers in any matter relating to this service. Every step has been taken to ensure careful handling and the correct despatch of letters, and all letters will be treated in the strictest confidence.

When typed, letters will not be returned to the writers, but will be despatched to the Far East.

RELIEF TO FAR EAST P.O.W.S

NEGOTIATIONS for exchanges of a limited number of civilians are at present proceeding between the Japanese Government on the one hand, and on the other the Governments of the British Empire and the United States of America.

It is hoped that in the near future an exchange of Japanese from the American Continent with a number of civilians returning to that Continent will take place at Marmagoa, in Portuguese India.

If negotiations between the Government of the United Kingdom and the other Dominions on the one hand and Japan on the other can be brought to a successful conclusion, a further exchange may take place at the same port later.

With the approval of the Governments concerned, national Allied Red Cross Societies, as on the occasion of the previous exchange in the autumn of last year, are availing themselves of the opportunity to send relief supplies for all prisoners of war and interned civilians in Japanese hands to whom access is possible by these means.

Supplies on Exchange Ships

The Japanese exchange ships will convey supplies for British and Allied prisoners of war and interned civilians in the Far East, and the Allied exchange ships will convey any supplies for Japanese prisoners of war and interned civilians in Allied hands, thus giving effect to the Red Cross principle of reciprocity.

While the space available for relief supplies on the Japanese exchange ships cannot be definitely stated until their arrival at the exchange port, the War Organisation, in consultation with the

Australian, South African, and Indian Red Cross Societies, has arranged for the transport to Marmagoa of supplies of essential medicines and vital foods.

A Regular Service

Exchange ships, of course, will never be able to provide adequately even for the minimum needs of the prisoners, though where the need is so great, as in the case of prisoners in the Far East, no means of help is without great value. The ideal at which the War Organisation has been constantly aiming is a regular service such as has been established for prisoners in Europe. While efforts to secure a regular service continue, every alternative means of supply that can be put into practice has been developed.

Local Purchases by Delegates

The International Red Cross Committee, through its authorised delegates in Japan, Shanghai and Hong Kong, has given all assistance in its power by local purchases to meet the essential needs of prisoners of war and civilian internees in these places.

Though the Japanese have refused to recognise the delegates of the International Red Cross Committee elsewhere, a local representative in Singapore has been able to do a good deal by way of local purchase in that neighbourhood, and the International Red Cross Committee is seeking, not without some success, to bring relief by the same means in other areas.

The War Organisation has been asked to co-ordinate this form of relief and, in association with the Empire Red Cross Societies, has accepted the liability for

Russia to Switzerland and Portugal, and in order to reduce the time of transmission as much as possible the G.P.O. has arranged for it to be brought here by air from Lisbon.

TRANSFERS OF P.O.W.S

MANY relatives have been perturbed recently regarding reported large-scale transference of prisoners from Malaya and Borneo to Japan. They are earnestly asked to disregard such reports unless officially announced.

Next of kin can rest assured that immediately any such transfers occur and the names of the prisoners moved are advised by the Japanese, they will be personally informed of all details.

A MEETING IN LONDON

A MEETING of next of kin resident in London, of prisoners of war and civilian internees in the Far East will be held at the Central Hall, Westminster, S.W.1, on October 9th at 3 p.m. The Countess of Limerick, deputy chairman of the Executive Committee of the Joint War Organisation will be in the chair. All tickets have now been issued and no further applications can be made.

considerable sums of money which have been expended locally in this way through the International Red Cross Committee. Liabilities met and already contracted for to the end of 1943 amount to approximately £175,000. If difficulties not yet fully surmounted can be overcome, expenditure on such local purchases will be increased.

Co-operation with Other Red Cross Societies

In all these efforts to establish channels for the shipment of supplies on a continuing basis to prisoners of war in the Far East, the War Organisation keeps close touch with the American Red Cross, which correspondingly takes advantage of American and Canadian-Japanese exchanges to send medicines and other relief supplies to American prisoners of war and civilian internees in the Far East.

The co-operation of the Canadian Red Cross, as one of the great Empire Red Cross Societies, with the War Organisation has, of course, been constant throughout.

In forming a correct appreciation of the nature of the whole problem it is important always to bear in mind, amongst other things, two significant facts—

(i) that the majority of our prisoners are in places south-west of the Hong Kong-Manila line;

(ii) that the distance from Japan to this area is 3,000 miles; while finally all plans for the relief of prisoners are dependent on recognition by the Japanese Government of its responsibility for the delivery of supplies.

THE NEW MAIL REGULATIONS

THE Postmaster-General learns that the Japanese authorities require that letters and postcards to prisoners of war and civilian internees in Japan and Japanese-occupied territories shall in future be limited to 25 words and shall be either typewritten or written clearly in block-lettering.

Letters and postcards from now on which do not comply may not be delivered by the Japanese authorities, who claim that the restrictions are necessary to simplify the work of their censorship so that the correspondence can be speeded up.

The Postmaster-General stresses the necessity for correctly and fully addressing all correspondence for prisoners of war and civilian internees in the Far East in accordance with the directions given in the Post Office leaflet P.2327 B, which still holds good in all respects except in regard to the new Japanese requirements referred to above.

Copies of this leaflet can be obtained free of charge at all the principal post offices.

LETTERS

Name

Tokyo Prisoner: I HOPE that you are being safe but we have been to be sent home.

Given

Shinagawa Camp: AM doing well but was given daily papers in Cross parcel CB

Who

Camp H/Chose: IT is a bit cold in the tropics for me I shall get a bit of work which allows me to hold Christmas all right.

Never M

Shanghai Prisoner: AT present we are up the garden, but please want to do that home, because that I was never

Camp

Jinsen Camp: WE are better weather after Singapore with warm clothes every day except a small wage cigarettes every very thankful. Our conversation We have some we shall do well

A

Hakodate: IM pleased to have you without being always with you reunited soon.

In E

Changi Camp: TIME to learn to play the piano Van Hien's collection in excellent employment as button sewer

since the camp was opened in July, 1942. On the date of the visit there were seven patients in the camp infirmary, who are cared for by one Japanese doctor, two prisoner of war doctors, and a prisoner of war dentist. The optical service is insufficient.

There are a few books. Chess and cards are played indoors; and football out-of-doors. The gramophone is played for two hours after supper. Services are held on Sunday.

Tobacco may be purchased; agricultural work is voluntary, and those who work receive a little pay.

Only 78 letters have been received; most of the prisoners have had no news from home since 1941. The prisoners come from the Philippines, Malaya, Java, Sumatra and Guam.

The prisoners' representatives asked for more food (especially for workers), clothing, soap, scientific and technical books, and sports equipment.

Tamazo Camp is about ten miles from the east coast of the island, farther south than Karenko. It is described as being situated among tropical garden scenery. It was opened on April 2nd, 1943, and contains 117 prisoners of war, officers of high rank with senior Dutch and American officers with their batmen. The average age is 45.

These senior officers and their batmen are crowded into only seven rooms. This was a subject of complaint to the inspector. A later telegram informs us that more buildings were under construction and that great improvements were about to take place.

Rations are smaller than those issued at Karenko, and the prisoners of war have lost weight since their arrival. Poultry and goats are kept. There was one patient in the large infirmary.

Books and Relief Supplies

The inspector found that the prisoners had few books, and arranged for several hundred books to be sent by the Y.M.C.A. committee. There is a gramophone. Services are held on Sundays.

The officers can arrange to purchase clothes. Some wear their own boots, some have clogs. The canteen sells black tea, fruits, syrup and coffee.

Work is voluntary and paid. So far only 4 letters have been received.

The senior British officer pointed out that the prisoners had lost weight since arrival, but stated that the Red Cross relief supplies had "saved the situation." The relief supplies consisted of 225 packages of beef, cocoa, sugar, etc., and some shoes.

A dental service is badly needed. Medicines, food, clothing, pipe-tobacco and razor blades are required, and are being despatched.

Heito and Taichu Camps are being moved to other parts of the island. (Visited May and June, 1943.)

TOKYO GROUP OF CAMPS
"Sectional Camp 3, Hiraka."—The address of this camp is Tokyo Prisoner of

War Camps, Tokyo. In another telegram it is spelt "Hiroaka." It is part of the Tokyo group (which includes Kawasaki, Shinagawa, Kanagawa and Yokohama Central Park), but lies at some distance from the other camps in the Nagano prefecture, in a woody gorge of the Tenryu River near a town called Mizushima.

Its strength at the date of the visit was eight British, one Canadian and one Dutch officer, and 211 other ranks, of whom 148 were British from Java.

There are five newly constructed wooden barracks, divided into six upper and six lower cubicles, measuring 9½ by 2½ metres, each of which holds ten men. The camp is enclosed by a wooden fence about 10ft. high. The barracks are lit by electricity and warmed by two stoves each from November to March. Each man has five blankets in summer and six in winter, and two sheets.

There is a wash-house with nineteen taps and a Japanese hot bath, which holds fifty men; this is available twice a week. Sanitation and drainage are satisfactory. Drinking water is boiled.

There are two Japanese Army cooks and six P.O.W. cooks. The rations have not been reported, but it is noted that the average weight of the prisoners of war has substantially increased since their arrival at the camp. There is a vegetable

Readers are asked to bear in mind that any information regarding prisoners of war received by the War Office is communicated immediately to next of kin.

garden, in which tomatoes and turnips are grown, five rabbits and four pigs. P.O.W.s receive 3 cigarettes per day.

All the prisoners have uniforms and greatcoats, straw hats and two sets of underwear, which were supplied by the detaining Power. They use rubber shoes for work and wear clogs in camp. Leather shoes are kept in reserve.

The state of health on arrival was very bad; there have been 48 deaths since the opening of the camp. There were ten cases of sickness in the infirmary at the date of visit; they are attended by one Dutch and one Japanese doctor. The prisoners of war have petting-language difficulties. A dentist from the village attends the camp. There are now steadily improving. Convalescent patients may take walks.

Basket-ball, volley-ball, chess and ping-pong are played. There are thirty packs of cards, about sixty books and some musical instruments. The "Nippon Times" is delivered regularly but late. The canteen sells toothbrushes; tooth powder, toilet-paper and sweets.

Work is compulsory for N.C.O.s and private soldiers. They are correcting a river bed for a hydro-electric plant, and do not work on rainy days. There is one rest day weekly. Reveille is at 5.50 a.m.

on fine days, lights out is at 8 p.m. and there is 1½ hours break at mid-day.

The outgoing mail has been restricted to one postcard each at Christmas, one letter in January, and one post-card in June. Nine letters have been received.

Red Cross relief has been distributed. The representatives of the P.O.W. state that the situation is improving. Morale is good. (Visited June.)

HONG KONG CAMPS

A brief telegraphic report of the visit indicates that the number of prisoners of war now in Hong Kong is about 3,000. This figure is believed to include many Canadians and local volunteers. Health has been satisfactorily maintained at Argyle Street, the officers' camp, and has improved at Sham Shui Po. The number of cases in Bowen Road Military Hospital and in the camp hospitals has been reduced since last winter, and mortality has been low. The prisoners look fit and cheerful and the camp leaders acknowledge that there had been general improvement in conditions.

The camps are reported to be clean and the hygienic arrangements adequate. Both maintain growing pig and poultry farms and can grow vegetables and flowers. Parcels are delivered weekly from local residents, and Red Cross supplies are still available.

There are opportunities for sport, reading and study. Sham Shui Po camp has a full band. (Visited June.)

POSTCARDS FROM CHANGI

SOME postcards written by internees in Changi Camp have now reached this country. These cards were for the most part written in June and November of last year.

The health and morale of the internees seem to be very good. Health is frequently mentioned by the writers, who say: "We are well"; "Having no tummy trouble"; "Have not lost weight"; "I have not once been ill."

It is satisfactory to note that there are books in the camps. Dickens, Shakespeare, and other classical writers are mentioned. One writer has Fisher's "History of Europe," and is giving lessons in history. Others are studying Dutch and French.

No mail has yet been received, but this would not be possible, as the first letters from England were posted at the end of June, 1942, and would take at least six months to reach Malaya.

One writer says how pleased he is to hear that Mrs. — and Mrs. — have reached home. It looks, therefore, as if the messages broadcast from this country have been passed on.

The various suggestions made by the writers for sending postcards through the International Red Cross, parcels through the South African Red Cross, etc., should be disregarded. It is not possible to send any individual parcels to the camp, and it is only possible to write by means of the "Prisoner of War Post."

P.O.W.s IN THE FAR EAST RED CROSS MISSION TO WASHINGTON

EVERYTHING possible is being done by the Government to help next of kin in their anxiety about prisoners in the Far East, and to provide for the prisoners' welfare. But the real obstacle in the way of this service is the attitude of the Japanese, who have not yet fulfilled their obligations as belligerents to supply full lists of names.

The situation is explained very clearly in a joint statement issued by the War Office, the Colonial Office and the Post Office on August 16th. Here are some of the important points:—

Prisoners in Japanese hands are estimated to comprise about 40,000 to 50,000 British soldiers, sailors and airmen; 20,000 Australians and 2,000 Canadians; about 70,000 to 80,000 members of the Indian Army; 100,000 Dutch; and between 30,000 and 40,000 Americans.

Visits to Japan and occupied China have been made by Swiss representatives provided under the Prisoners of War Convention, but soon after the outbreak of war in the Far East they were told by the Japanese that such visits would be prohibited in any newly occupied territories.

No independent information, therefore, has been obtained about P.O.W.s or British internees in Malaya and adjacent territories, Burma, the Netherlands East Indies or Indo-China. Only in Hong Kong is an International Red Cross delegate being allowed to work and send back reports.

Red Cross supplies of food and medicine were sent out at the time of the

civilian exchange during August and September last year and have been delivered in all areas. Much more could be sent if the Japanese would let ships used for this special purpose enter the waters under their control.

Letters from home have taken about six months to reach Tokyo, where they are known to have been distributed to the various camps.

Britain has been making proposals to Japan, through the Swiss Government, towards a settlement of the whole subject. Meanwhile, the names of P.O.W.s mentioned from time to time in Japanese broadcasts are being passed on officially by the Government to the prisoners' families.

Only 65 per cent. of the names of men missing and in Japanese hands have so far been received by the War Office. The Colonial Office knows only 20 per cent. of the civilian internees in Malaya. More names, however, are expected to be released by the Japanese, and next of kin should not give up hope.

A MEETING IN LONDON

A MEETING of London Next of Kin of prisoners in the Far East will be held at the Central Hall, Westminster, S.W.1, on October 9th, at 3 p.m. The Countess of Limerick, Deputy Chairman of the Joint War Organisation, will be in the chair and speakers will include members of the Far East Section of the Prisoners-of-War Department. Tickets for admission can be obtained from 43, Belgrave Square, S.W.1.

TYPING SERVICE

THE facilities offered to next of kin for having their letters typed by a well-known organisation in London have been welcomed throughout the country, and already many hundreds of letters are being daily received by the Far East Section of the Prisoners of War Department at 9, Park Place, and handed over to the organisation concerned.

We should like to impress upon relatives the necessity of attaching a slip to the letter they wish typed, giving FULL details of the name and address of the prisoner and the name and address of the writer. Will relatives, therefore, please write these details clearly, preferably in block capitals, so as to avoid errors in typing.

The Surrey Prisoners of War Department asks that any relatives of prisoners of war in Japanese hands who want their letters typed and prefer to hand them in to a Red Cross office rather than post them to 9, Park Place, S.W.1, should be sure to hand them to the local Prisoners of War Organiser or Visitor, whose address can always be supplied

from the Prisoners of War Department, 119, High Street, Guildford.

Relatives in Wiltshire can hand in their letters personally at the places and times indicated below:

CHIPPENHAM: c/o Messrs. Tilley and Culverwell, Market Place, Chippenham, Tuesdays, 10-4.

DEVIZES: 55, Northgate Street, Devizes. Thursdays and Saturdays, 10-5.

MARLBOROUGH: 35, High Street, Marlborough, Fridays.

SALISBURY: The Church House, Salisbury, Tuesdays and Saturdays.

TROWBRIDGE: Central Liberal Club, Tuesdays, 10.30-4.30; Wednesdays, 2-4.30.

SWINDON: Victoria Road, Swindon. Mondays, 10-12 and 2-4.

Alternatively, letters can be sent by post at any time to 33, Fore Street, Trowbridge.

Relatives living in Glamorganshire can, if they wish, hand their letters to the Prisoners of War Headquarters, Glamorgan County Depot, 32, St. Mary Street, Cardiff.

RED CROSS MISSION TO WASHINGTON

AT the invitation of the Canadian and American Red Cross Societies, delegates of the Red Cross and St. John War Organisation are leaving immediately for Washington to take part in an important conference. The object of the Conference is to find means of facilitating by joint action the organisation of supplies for prisoners of war in the Far East.

The delegates from Britain will be Sir Ernest Burdon, Deputy Chairman of the Executive Committee of the War Organisation and Mr. J. Montague Eddy, Deputy Chairman of the Prisoners of War Department. They will represent all the Red Cross Societies of the British Empire.

Ever since the early days of the war with Japan unceasing efforts have been made by all the nations concerned to get supplies out to the prisoners of war who fell into Japanese hands, and thanks to the indefatigable work of the International Red Cross Commission, it has been found possible in various ways to supplement the rations they receive from the Japanese. But the difficulties have been very great and the enormous distances add considerably to those difficulties.

Now it is hoped that it may be possible to achieve more by establishing closer co-operation between the Red Cross organisations of the Allies and by making joint representations through the International Red Cross to the Japanese Red Cross.

MAIL SERVICE

Revised Issue of G.P.O. Leaflet

THE leaflet detailing the instructions governing the despatch of mail to prisoners of war and men missing in the Far East issued by the G.P.O. has recently been revised and copies of the amended edition can now be obtained at all principal post offices. The number of the leaflet is P.2327B, dated July, 1943.

Full particulars are given about the sending of letters and postcards and of the exact method of address, which must be strictly adhered to.

There have been important amendments in the wording of addresses, particularly where a camp address is not known, and relatives are urged to make themselves familiar with the revised regulations.

We would call the special attention of our readers to the article, "Don't Forget the Censor," on page 15 of this issue, and also to "Mail from Far East" on page 16.