

walking from the stern of their ship to the other. Portuguese Gendarmes and native soldiers strolled about to make sure no incidents took place. The Japanese, an American reporter noted, fell into two categories: those from the "Asama" were flushed with victory and treated the prisoners with cool disdain, while those arrived from North America were attempting to buy as much food as they could to take to Japan.

The Swedish crew on the "Gripsholm" were lavish with their food, medical attention and hospitality but what cheered the former Hong Kong internees the most was the sight of Allied aircraft flying overhead as they entered Capetown. Here, McLane disembarked to see the British authorities and deliver Gimson's message. Both he and William Poy spoke at length about the debacle of the military encounter in Hong Kong and the current sufferings of the Stanley prisoners-of-war. Their reports were sent onward by diplomatic bag to London and Ottawa.

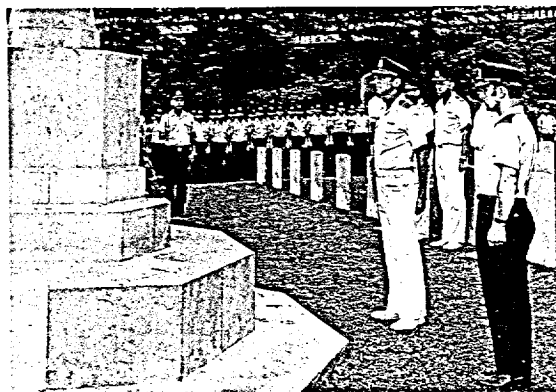
After a short stop in Rio de Janeiro, where the South American diplomats left, the "Gripsholm" arrived off the Ambrose lightship, New York. The lights of Manhattan, the Statue of Liberty. The huge American flag flying over the terminal meant that the Stanley Camp internees were home. The Canadian Trade Commission staff left the ship that afternoon for the train to Canada.

The Canadian Government, like the Canadian public, had heard nothing since the fall of Hong Kong. They could only surmise about the fate of the 2,000 men of "C" Force. Casualty lists of the dead and missing that

had been published by Ottawa, were unconfirmed. The British Army Aid Group in Chungking had little or no information about Canadian prisoners-of-war from its agents in Hong Kong. This was where the report made by McLane and Poy became so important. At a Royal Commission called by the MacKenzie King Government to examine the "C" Force catastrophe, blame was laid on general and civilian alike, but as the only eye witnesses to the events, the testimony of the Trade Commission staff was invaluable.

William Poy's criticism of the unpreparedness of the Canadian soldiers was especially damaging, and was kept secret by the Government until after the War. His observations that the raw troops couldn't tell the difference between Chinese and Japanese, and fired at any Oriental in uniform, and that the British were uncoordinated in their objectives and moved only by road, has been borne out by the official histories of the campaign. But to a nation in the throes of war, Poy's strong opinions must have come as an unpatriotic shock. Poy's outspokenness was inherited by his daughter, Adrienne Clarkson, known to Canadian television viewers as a successful interviewer, and host of "The Fifth Estate" and "Take 30", the winner of the Centennial Medal, and an Emmy Award winner. She was appointed Ontario Commissioner to France in 1982.

Of the others from the Trade Commission, Paul McLane was appointed Director (Imports) of the Shipping Priorities Committee in Ottawa, and Elvie Arnold was made a Canadian civil servant and continued on as his secretary.



Canadian troops distinguished themselves during the war in Hong Kong. Canadian military continue to visit the cross of sacrifice at Sai Wan Cemetery. Nearby Mount Butler is where CSM. John Osborn won his victoria cross.