

victoriously parade down the streets from Happy Valley, complete with a brilliant display of aerobatics by the Imperial Air Force overhead. The combat troops of the 38th Division would then sail away to Timor and Guadalcanal where, a year later, they would be decimated in bitter jungle fighting with the U.S. Marines.

On the 4th of January, all British, Canadian, American and Dutch residents were ordered to assemble with their belongings at the Murray Parade Grounds for temporary internment. While other consuls used various means to keep their nationals out of prison camp – the Swedish consul gave all Scandinavians Swedish passports as neutrals, and the French prudently declared themselves part of the Vichy regime. The Canadians, as British subjects, were interned at Stanley Prison Camp. The Government in Ottawa, did all in its power to ensure that food and medical supplies got through to the camps. It harassed the Protecting Power, Argentina, to live up to its obligations and in 1942 and 1944, Red Cross parcels from Canada filled with corned beef and dried milk saved a starving civilian population in Stanley Camp. Meanwhile, in Tokyo, the staff of the Canadian Legation had been placed under "house arrest" within the legation building – fortunately, one of some size and comfort for the four staff members. In Hong Kong, McLane and his staff had no such privileges. The American Consul was allowed to take the ample supplies of the American Club with him into internment, but no such privilege was granted to other members of the Consular Corps.

The Japanese had decided to concentrate local enemy civilians in an internment camp on the Stanley peninsula using the prison buildings and nearby Stephen's College. There were many more British subjects than expected and the authorities were surprised at the number of Asians and Eurasians who claimed to be British. The result was overcrowding, slow starvation and malnutrition. It must be remembered that the Japanese themselves were suffering from the effective American submarine blockade in the area, and had little food to share with civilian prisoners.

Finally on March 31st, 1942, the Canadian Trade Commission staff were notified

that they would be included in a diplomatic repatriation for their Japanese counterparts in North America. In preparation for this move, Americans and consular staff were moved to St. Brigid's Preparatory School. There was much speculation as to where and how the exchange would take place, but finally on June 29th, the "Asama Maru" dropped anchor off the Camp.

The black hull of the liner was painted with what the internees called "fried egg flags", with large white crosses on either side and on the bow and stern. Paul McLane, William Poy and his family, and Elvie Arnold were all ordered to prepare themselves for evacuation. William and Ethel Poy had their children with them, their daughter Adrienne barely two years old. The night before the ship was due to leave, F.C. Gimson, the Colonial Secretary, called McLane into his quarters for a private briefing on the fall of Hong Kong and the situation at Stanley. As the highest ranking non-American to be repatriated, the Trade Commissioner was charged with conveying this intelligence to London. He was to report to the first British embassy that the "Asama Maru" docked at.

The 400 evacuees, including diplomats, Red Cross officials, newspaper reporters, and all the Americans at Stanley, joined passengers from Tokyo for a difficult voyage to Lourenco Marques in neutral Portuguese East Africa. Water and food were rationed, and as the ship had already been at sea for three weeks, both were of dubious quality. But after five and a half months internment, the sensation of freedom alleviated all shortcomings. On July 5th, the ship was joined by the Italian Liner "The Conte Verde" with repatriates from Shanghai and both took on water and supplies at Singapore.

Then, thirteen days out of Singapore, both ships entered the harbour of Lourenco Marques and tied up behind the Swedish passenger ship "Gripsholm". No shore leave was permitted, but mail from North America was delivered from the "Gripsholm". The Swedish ship carried the 1,500 Japanese from the United States for the prisoner exchange. This was carried out on July 24th, with a line of freight cars drawn up along the dock and the Japanese repatriates walking from the bow of the "Gripsholm" to the bow of the "Asama Maru" and the Allied prisoners