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Chapter 11. “Out of the Blue Came Freedom”: Victory Shows and Aftermath

Sears Eldredge
Macalester College

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Chapter 11: “Out of the Blue Came Freedom”

Victory Shows and Aftermath

Suddenly, the long wait was over. On 15 August,¹ Japan surrendered unconditionally, though the official announcement of the end of hostilities wasn't made until the next day. In Thailand, all the camps did not hear the news at the same time. It wasn't just a matter of poor communications; some of the Japanese commandants, fearing reprisals, were reluctant to inform the POWs they were free.

The Announcement

At Nakhon Pathom at 6:30 p.m. on 16 August, Wim Kan was in dress rehearsal with his production of *Maatje Visser Helderziende (Maatje Visser, Clairvoyant)*, scheduled to open the next afternoon, when one of his cast members, Dr. Berlijn, was called away to attend a meeting with other officers and the Japanese commandant. With Berlijn's departure, the rehearsal came to an end. Kan had just returned to his barracks when he heard cheering and clapping. He ran outside to the theatre area where he saw the British and Dutch flags hoisted, and heard Lieutenant-Colonel Albert Coates make the official announcement that the war was over from the stage. Afterward they sang all the national anthems and the newly freed POWs returned to their barracks for a celebratory meal. “I cannot eat a single bite,” wrote Kan, “because of overwhelming emotions.” Later that evening an impromptu concert was held on the stage, with songs by Captain “Pop” Vardy, Ken Adams, and Eddie Monkhouse.¹

The POWs at Tamuang heard the news in the middle of a concert party. Since late April, all entertainment and games in the camp had been banned, but in late July/early August, the POWs were ordered to construct a proscenium theatre “and be prepared to put on shows again.”² A theatre was quickly built, but no permission to perform was forthcoming.



FIGURE 11.1. DETAIL OF AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH SHOWING TAMUANG THEATRE. IMAGE COPYRIGHT MUSEON, THE HAGUE, NETHERLANDS.

This detail from an aerial photograph taken after capitulation shows the Tamuang theatre at upper left.

There were numerous entertainers in Tamuang ready to present a concert party. Following the disastrous *Hollywood Revue* incident in mid-April at Chungkai, Joop Postma, Philip Brugman, Ron Wells,

¹ In Japan and the Far East. In Europe and the United States, it would be 14 August.

Wally McQueen, and the other Australian and Dutch entertainers had been sent down to Tamuang. In late June, Bill Bainbridge, Han Samethini, and the rest of the “Swingtette” musicians had joined them.

On 16 August, the Japanese ordered a soccer match in the afternoon and a concert in the evening. The game between Britain and Holland had drawn a large and enthusiastic audience, but the show that evening attracted only a few hundred men out of the 2,000 in camp. One of those was John Cosford:

I was sitting on the edge of the crowd, not taking too much notice, until almost by magic, the audience trebled in number and excitement mounted high. The unfortunate performers were unable to make themselves heard, above the babble of voices, as hundreds of men began to crowd round and on the stage. It was obvious that something very important was about to happen, and I think most of us began to anticipate what it was to be.

The show was stopped. The compère announced that the CO, a British RSM, had something important to say. He came on to the stage, and in a deathly hush started to speak. He said, “The latest rumour in the camp”—that was enough. Nobody waited to hear more. Tremendous cheers rent the air and continued for many minutes . . . it was a long time before the RSM could get everyone quiet again. Eventually he was able to tell us that the war had ended.³

Kanburi Officers’ Camp also heard about the surrender on 16 August just as the latest contingent of men was to leave for Nakhon Nayok. In John Coast’s words, the Kanburi POWs, “went mad.”⁴

Those in more remote sites, like Kachu Mountain and Ubon, were not informed until two days later.

By 18 August at Kachu Mountain, rumors that the war was over were running rampant and seemingly confirmed when Red Cross parcels were distributed and valuables that had been confiscated during searches returned. Games like cards and chess, which had been forbidden during daylight hours, were being played openly. The concert party had been rehearsing all day. (Word was they could now have a concert party every night if they wished.) John Sharp reported, “Almost a Christmas party atmosphere of expectation. . . . Distribution still continues—big issue of Red Cross soap. Nip says, ‘All men wash tomorrow—no smell.’”ⁱⁱ⁵ That evening, the official announcement of the war’s end was made, not by their Japanese commandant but by Mitsushita, the Japanese interpreter.⁶

At Ubon that same evening, Major Chida appeared on the saluting platform during roll call and announced, “The Greater East-Asia War is over.”⁷

ii In POW camps like Kachu Mountain that were not located near a river, supplies of water for bathing were limited or almost nonexistent. And with what was available, the bathing needs of the Japanese took precedence. Many of the Allied officers who first entered the camps remarked on the overwhelming stench of the POWs.

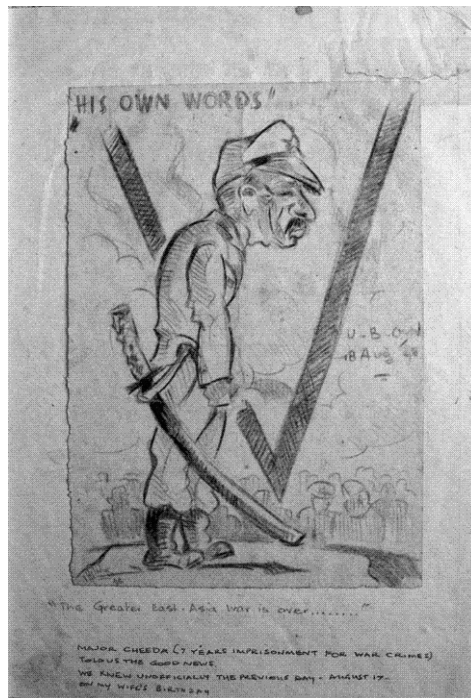


FIGURE 11.2. "His Own Words." JAN VAN HOLTHE. COURTESY OF NORMAN PRITCHARD.

In Jan van Holthe's sketch of the historic moment, Major Chida's sword hangs at his side, making him look like a defeated dog with its tail between its legs.

"The Most Peculiar and Emotional Feeling"

The POWs' reactions to the long-awaited news were not surprising. "There were men unashamed crying, with tears streaming down their faces, others hysterical with delight," observed John Cosford at Tamuang. But Cosford was also aware of another and unexpected response that actually proved more typical: "Many just stood about looking blank and bewildered, not yet able to grasp that the nightmare was as good as over."⁸

At Ubon, both Norman Pritchard and Fergus Anckorn also remembered emotional numbness as the immediate response to the news of their liberation.

PRITCHARD: To start with it was silence . . . after the horror [three and half years of captivity] came silence, as soon as we were told it was all over, we did nothing, just sat down, and just thought, and there was no hilarity, there was no cheering, no shouting—it came later.⁹

ANCKORN: The moment we were told we were free, that was, you know, after we'd been called out of those huts, and the Japanese officer told us—I'd been longing for this day, and I could visualize us chucking our hats up in the air and dancing around. It broke us completely.

We just stood there and drizzled . . . we couldn't believe . . . and when we found it was true, the Union Jack went up and all the rest of it. We just stood there, we didn't speak, and we felt—I felt awful. I wanted to burst [into tears]—something. Nothing came out. And I couldn't believe I was free, the war is over; you've survived. It couldn't get into me.

And it was terrible. Everyone was the same—we just stood there like zombies. Here we'd just been told, "It's all over." And, you know, just couldn't get it. That was the worst of the lot.¹⁰

[To hear Norman Pritchard and Fergus Anckorn give their accounts, listen to **Audio Link 11.1**]

Audio



11.1

After writing that the POWs at Kanburi had gone “mad” on hearing the news, John Coast quickly revised his initial statement:

Well, really, *mad*, was not the right word. It was the most peculiar and emotional feeling that tried and wanted to express itself immediately but didn't know how to do it. . . . Amid the knot of people standing in the darkness several senior officers were forcing their way with jungle torches, collecting a few musical instruments so that at least our pent up emotions could have some outlet in singing “God Save The King.”¹¹

The numbness of emotions long held in check was not to last. British, Australian, American, and Dutch flags, their display previously forbidden, magically appeared and were cheerily draped across stages or planted over saluting bases. National anthems were sung with great gusto. At Kachu Mountain John Sharp reported that “[a] large ‘V’ sign appeared on the proscenium [header] of the new theatre.” After a roll call, “a concert was organised on the stage—old favorites, swing music and jokes.”¹² The “old favorites,” which had just recently been tedious to listen to, suddenly became beloved once more.

One of these was “Please Don't Talk About Me When I'm Gone,” sung by Tom Boardman accompanied by his camp-made ukulele. In the changed circumstances, the lyrics took on new meaning. Originally they referred to a bittersweet parting between two lovers. But now they seemed to refer to the ex-POWs and their coming departure from Kachu Mountain, from Thailand, and from each other:

Please don't talk about me when I'm gone,

Oh, honey,

Though our friendship ceases from now on.

And listen, if your can't say anything that's nice,

*It's better not to talk at all, is my advice.
 We're parting: you go your way, I'll go mine,
 It's best that we do.
 Here's a kiss!
 I hope this brings lots of luck to you.
 Makes no difference how I carry on.
 Remember, please don't talk about me when I'm gone.ⁱⁱⁱ*

[To hear Tom Boardman sing this song while playing his camp-made ukulele, listen to **Audio Link 11.2.**]



A New Challenge

The entertainers were now faced with a new challenge: how to contain and focus the joyful, but chaotic, celebrations.



FIGURE 11.3. "THE NIGHT WE WERE FREE." WALLY DAVIS. IWM 66/308/6-9 (6) AND (9). PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF SEARS ELDREDGE.

After the announcement in the middle of the show at Tamuang, "[t]he concert party led, or rather endeavoured to lead, the crowd in community singing. They found it a hopeless struggle, most men were singing, but there were many impromptu groups, rendering all manner of songs, and most far from being melodious."¹³

ⁱⁱⁱ Music and lyrics by Gene Austin.

During the impromptu concert party at Nakhon Pathom, members of the British concert party suddenly remembered there were POWs in the hospital wards too sick to get to the theatre to join in the festivities, so they took the celebration to them. “Cast members called to adopt costumes and perform in the sick huts,” wrote Jack Chalker. “Ken Adams, van der Cruysen, Nigel Wright, and I, played in sick huts 1, 2, 3.”^{iv14}

At Kanburi, one of the first things done was to free Bill Drower from his “hell-hole.” He had survived the ordeal, but just barely. In most camps the Japanese food and clothing stores were opened and Red Cross packages that had been kept from the troops were distributed.

But the newly freed POWs also had to be cautioned. Though they were indeed free, there were severe restrictions on their behavior. Everyone, according to John Sharp, was expected to abide by the conditions laid down by Allied Command: “The Japanese are held responsible for our safety, food, accommodation, etc. until Allied authorities arrive, and we are officially handed over to them. We are not permitted to leave camp unless on special missions and then we must proceed with an escort for protection against unruly Japanese or Thais.”¹⁵

Victory Shows

One way to channel the ex-POWs’ enthusiasm was to produce “Victory Shows.” Some would be hastily conceived affairs, but in many camps, the entertainers had long been planning for such an event.

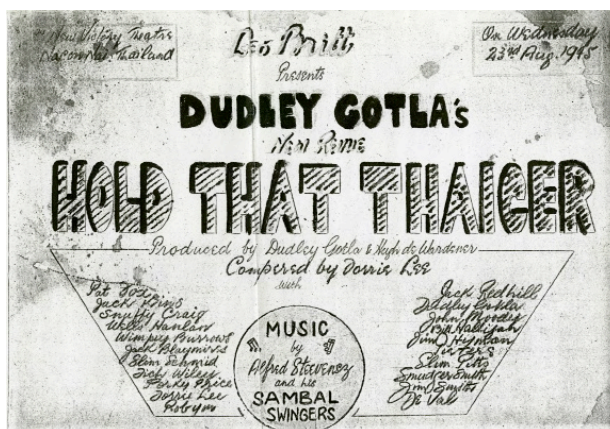


FIGURE 11.4. POSTER FOR *HOLD THAT THAIGER*. COURTESY OF HUGH DE WARDENER.

On August 23 at Nakhon Nai, Dudley Gotla presented his “new revue,” *Hold that Thaiger* (a takeoff on the popular song “Hold that Tiger”) directed by Leo Britt in their “New Victory Theatre.” The cast included many familiar faces from shows in previous camps. When asked about his victory show, Gotla wrote, “I remember virtually nothing about it—Perhaps I was in an euphoric/alcoholic haze.”¹⁶

No mention has been found of a victory show at Tamuang other than the spontaneous sing-along following the announcement. But there was a concert that could only have taken place shortly after liberation. In this show the combined Australian-British-Dutch concert party from Chungkai performed

^{iv} These were the surgical wards.

once again, and those who got bashed up during the *Hollywood Interlude* incident got their own back on the hated interpreter “Turtleneck,” who had charged the stage and stopped their show. This time without fear of reprisals, the offending Tarzan sketch “was put on again, and one of our chaps dressed as Turtle Neck, repeated his act on the stage. It took us all in at first,” exclaimed John Cosford, “until the imitation Turtle Neck was thrown bodily into the audience, by the other members of the cast.”¹⁷

At Kachu Mountain, the entertainers boasted that their victory show on 19 August was the “first musical comedy completely devised (said to be original) in Thailand (?).”¹⁸ It had the curious title *Atlantic Interlude*, as if the performers were cheekily suggesting that the war in Europe had only been an interlude in the middle of a much longer and more costly war in the Pacific.⁹

The show was in two parts: a variety show featuring music by Tony Gerrish and his band followed by a radio adaptation of George Bernard Shaw’s comedy *Pygmalion* rewritten by Keith Neighbour and R. Victor West.



FIGURE 11.5. ADVERTISEMENT FOR *PYGMALION*. KEITH NEIGHBOUR.
COURTESY OF GUDRUN TAMANDL.

The latter may appear to be an odd choice, but it is a play about emancipation from oppression. Not surprisingly, the Japanese camp commandant sent word that he was indisposed and could not be present for the performance, “but the interpreter was, and he appeared to be much touched when he was publicly thanked for help in the past.”¹⁹

Other than the impromptu concert on the night of the announcement, the entertainers at Nakhon Pathom did not plan any special victory show: two other shows were already in rehearsal and scheduled for production. That afternoon, Wim Kan’s new play, *Maatje Visser Helderziende* (*Maatje Visser, Clairvoyant*), opened at 3:30 p.m. with an all-Dutch cast. The other production was an original musical comedy, *The Rajah of Coconut*, written by B. W. “Noshier” Brown and produced by Ted Ingram.

⁹ If true, this would reveal that resentment over being abandoned in Malaya and Singapore by the British government to focus on the more immediate threat to England by Germany was still simmering within.

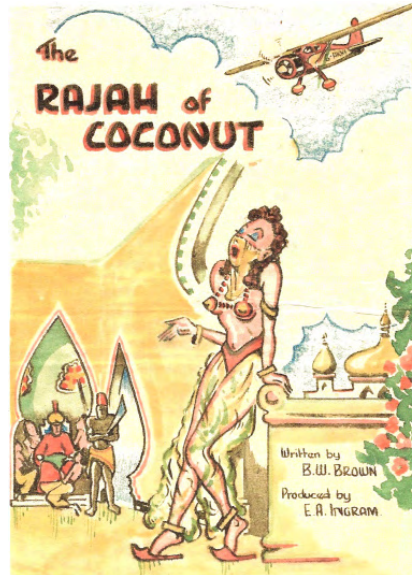


FIGURE 11.6. POSTER FOR *THE RAJAH OF COCONUT*. BASIL “AKKI” AKHURST. COURTESY OF RICHARD BROWN.

The harem girl on the show poster by “Akki” is apparently holding out on the Rajah because the single-engine “recce” plane circling overhead signals she will be rescued momentarily. A note on the back declares that *Rajah* was the first musical comedy to be produced in Nakhom Paton [*sic*] after the “cessation of hostilities.”²⁰ Unfortunately, the poster provides no dates for the performances, but Jack Chalker was on wardrobe crew for the show, so it had to have taken place before he was removed to Bangkok in early September.²¹

In giving a “singular example” of the achievements of the wardrobe staff, Chalker told a humorous story about an accident that happened during one performance:

Apart from costumes and decorative props a singular example of construction and achievement was the manufacture, a few months before our release in Nakorn [*sic*] Pathom, of a two-man operated elephant made of fine woven bamboo matting. The Elephant was part of a revue called “The Raja of Cocoanut” [*sic*]. In the elephant scene the animal, with two men inside it, did a lumbering dance about the stage and was then fed with a huge mock tin clearly marked as “Baked Beans.” This was consumed by the elephant with a great deal of abdominal activity and finally was ejected via a back passage onto the stage—accompanied with a great deal of laughter from the audience.

Fortuitously, what happened next brought the house down. This was a matinee performance and the heat must have been about 35C [96F]. The elephant was made of woven bamboo matting coloured grey with a mixture of wood ash and tapioca goo which had dried hard and had begun to revert back to powder. The heat inside the animal must have been appalling, and with the combination of this and asphyxiating dust, the back legs man was overcome

and fainted. The collapse of the rear end of the elephant after eating the baked beans seemed appropriate and hilarious and the gallant fore-legs man managed to drag its sagging carcass off stage where he too collapsed—to the immense applaud[ing] of a satisfied audience.

We quickly extracted the two unconscious men covered in sweat and grey ash, one of whom revived reasonably quickly, but the back-legs wouldn't respond and we had to call for immediate medical help. Back-legs had to be rushed away as an emergency but thankfully revived after an anxious period.²²

The victory shows at Kanburi and Ubon, which had been in the planning stage before the announcement, were, perhaps, the most elaborate.



FIGURE 11.7. KANBURI THEATRE WITH SCENIC ARTISTS AT WORK ONSTAGE. PHOTOGRAPH. AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL.

Besides the photograph of the theatre at Kanburi taken after the Japanese surrender seen earlier in Chapter 9 (see **Figure 9.7**), there is the one above showing the set designer Fred “Smudger” Smith onstage (left of center) with other artists working on a scenery piece for their victory show. Behind them is a backdrop on which the flags of Australia, Great Britain, the United States, and the Netherlands have been painted. On either side are wings painted with red, white, and blue bunting. The scenery piece being worked on is a giant map of Europe and the Mediterranean that will be flown in from the grid during the show. Whether this map was for a lecture by one of the liberators about the war in Europe or for a satiric sketch about being in the “forgotten war” in Southeast Asia is not known.

The theatre seen in the photograph desperately needs refurbishing: atap is missing from the header over the façade, vines have grown up onto the side walls of the proscenium, and the top of the proscenium sags slightly.

Regardless of the state of the theatre, the victory show was a splendid affair. Performer John Durnford wrote, “[it] can only be described in the Australian phrase, ‘a bonzer.’ In the place of honour hitherto claimed by ‘The Frog,’ ‘The Undertaker,’ Shimojo,^{vi} and their henchmen, sat the Thai governor of Kanburi province, his police officers and legal experts, and the manager of the local paper-factory.”²³

The show contained “Biggles” Bywaters’ final version of the “Kensington Girls” number that “became, with a minimum of rehearsal, ‘Tokyo Boys from Tokyo Town.’ Shouting, bowing, saluting, strutting and hissing they were word-perfect,” wrote Durnford. “Vindictive? Possibly, but understandable. Even so there was more burlesque than malice in our wit. The item was cordially approved by His Excellency, and repeated. This time we excelled ourselves. But the last chorus looked forward, not back. There would soon be ‘Bluebirds over the White Cliffs of Dover,’ we assured the audience.”²⁴

At Ubon, the morning after the POWs were told they were free, an Allied airplane flew over and seven men parachuted “out of the blue” and into the camp. These new arrivals were Lieutenant-Colonel David Smiley, an officer in the Special Operations Force (S.O.E. 136) who had been trained in Ceylon to infiltrate Thailand and instruct Free Thai guerillas; an American captain; and five Indian medics.²⁵ Smiley remembered he “had to stand alone on the stage and answered questions shot at me by the ex-POWs who had received no mail for over three and a half years. The Japanese commandant admitted to me that he had deliberately held up all the letters for the prisoners.”²⁶ Contemplating the significance of that moment, “Toothy” Martin wrote, “You may feel that *this* was the most dramatic and useful show given in the theatre over the few months of its existence.”²⁷

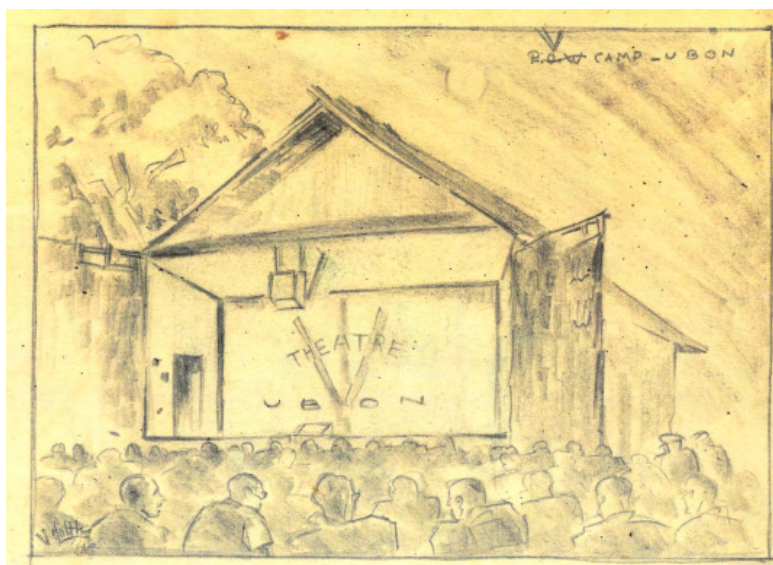


FIGURE 11.8. UBON THEATRE. SKETCH. JAN VAN HOLTHE. COURTESY OF NORMAN PRITCHARD.

The next evening, 20 August, the Ubon concert party presented their victory show. In honor of the occasion, the front curtain of the theatre had been painted with a huge “V” and Bob Gale had composed a victory song.

“I well remember Bob sweating out the only song he had to write,” recalled Norman Pritchard.

^{vi} POW nicknames respectively for Lieutenant Takaziki, Noguchi’s second in command; for a Korean guard (another of Noguchi’s underlings); and for Sergeant Shimojo, Noguchi’s “enforcer,” who was much hated.

In those last two or three days before Major [Chida] told us that the war in South East Asia was over, Bob was working on a victory song, for the Concert Party to include in the first show we put on as free men.

Poor old Bob! He normally wrote his songs when he had an inspiration. (Can you imagine now how he ever had any inspiration out there?) But the victory song had to be written. And he did. It was finished an hour or two before the curtain went up. . . . By the time the Concert Party had learned the words, and had sung the song several times, it was already a “best seller” in the camp. The audience knew the tune at least before the show—they were listening outside.

The song? It was entitled “Out of the Blue.” The words? I think I can still remember them—

*Out of the blue came freedom,
The freedom that we've all been waiting for.
Out of the blue came freedom,
The freedom that we know we all adore.
We're gonna start to build a new world,
A world of peace we've all been waiting for.
So thank you, Uncle Joe, John Bull and Uncle Sam,
For bringing us our freedom once more.*

After singing the chorus once, there was a wonderful vocal obligato which led us into the chorus again. It was one of those da-da-da-da-do choral efforts that was never ending. Every time we thought we had sung the chorus for the last time, someone would start the “intro” again, and off we went. We must have sung that freedom song twenty times on that special celebration evening.²⁸

[To hear Norman Pritchard sing “Out of the Blue,” listen to **Audio 11.3**.]



It wasn't just the song that was a huge success: so was the show, and the performers had to repeat it immediately.

Anckorn's memories of their victory show were no less powerful than Pritchard's. For the finale, Jock Cameron and his crew of scenic technicians had managed to top all their earlier achievements:

It was our big closing show . . . wonderful show. We were so happy on that night. . . . And this huge plane came down [slowly lowered] from up in the [flies] . . . you couldn't see it until it came down. The propellers were turning—and four engines. And people [were] in it, and down it came. And

they all got out and cheered and waved flags. That was all done on this little stage, no bigger than that [indicating the size of his living room]. . . . It was a tremendous finale, it really was.

And I remember we were so happy, we knew the war was over; we knew we'd survived . . . we'd given 'em a good show.²⁹

As it descended, the aircraft's wingspan "was almost from side to side of the stage."³⁰

[To hear Fergus Anckorn tell this story, listen to **Audio Link 11.4**]

Audio



11.4

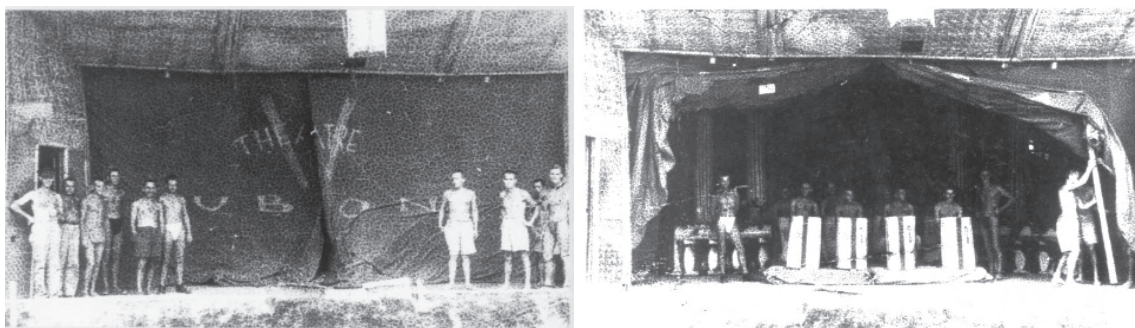


FIGURE 11.9. & FIGURE 11.10. TWO PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE UBON THEATRE. IWM PHOTOGRAPH ARCHIVE HU 65698 & HU65691.

Two photographs taken by one of the camp's liberators show close-ups of the Ubon stage. In one, the curtains are closed and newly liberated ex-POWs stand on either side revealing the camp name and large "V" painted on it; in the other, the curtains are pulled back, revealing the Kings of Swing orchestra seated behind their bandstands with their conductor, "Ace" Connolly, standing at left. Bits of painted scenery—fluted columns in the background and a low balustrade on either side of the band—can be seen dimly.

But as Pritchard made clear, even having the whole concert repeated the same night did not quell the men's need to express their elation. Pritchard explained what they did next:

And . . . after these two shows, we were so balled up. . . . The huts . . . hundreds of yards long, some of them, and we went [through them], the band and us. We processed up and down the camp . . . and it so happened that that way [indicating a direction], it worked out, was the Japs. Their enclosure—barbed-wired off—was down the end past the last hut that we came to. By the time we got there, the Japs had gone! (They must have thought we were a lynching party.)³¹

Mergui Road

Elsewhere in Thailand were camps where no victory shows were ever produced. These were the construction camps where POWs had been sent to construct fortifications and other contingencies to aid in the Japanese defense against the invasion of Burma by Allied Forces. One set of camps was in southern Thailand along the Mergui Road construction project.

In the spring of 1945, POWs from Nakhon Pathom and other camps were sent halfway down the Kra Peninsula to construct the Mergui Road from Prachuap Khiri Khan on the Gulf of Siam across the peninsula to Mergui on the Burmese coast. Many romusha also worked on this project. The road was to be used, if need be, by the Japanese as an escape route for their army in Burma.³² Instead of being returned to base camps after its completion, the POWs were ordered to stay on as maintenance crews.³³ Living and working conditions on the construction project were horrendous.

Len Gibson, a major performer in the Wampo concert party during the railway construction and more recently at Nakhon Pathom hospital camp, was one of the workers. "On April 1945 I started work on the Mergui Road," he recalled. "There were a thousand in the workforce but by August there were only about three hundred left. I think I was the only instrumentalist there and continued to sing around the camp fires at night."³⁴

The POWs heard about the end of the war on 16 August, but, knowing it would be some while before they were liberated, Gibson and his friends decided to march west towards Mergui on the Andaman Sea, where, they reasoned, they would be rescued earlier. It was a long march, and they were not in good physical condition. When they reached the next camp at Maudung, they nearly collapsed.

Some medical orderlies met us to assist the stragglers and one of them was most interested in my guitar. "Can you play that?" he asked. He was an Eurasian lad, probably a Singapore Volunteer. "We have had no music here at all. Would you play round the huts?" When I replied in the affirmative, he was delighted and whilst still helping one poor straggler, he led me down into the camp.

What I saw appalled me. I thought I'd seen some bad camps in my years as a POW, but this was the worst ever. Not surprisingly I learned later that it was named "DEATH VALLEY."

The first hut I approached had no walls. I had to sit at the entrance and peer in. The smell was terrible and not one of the inmates could even stir. The glad news of the ending of the war had not done much to revive these poor devils.³⁵

After playing a few songs, Gibson proceeded to the next hut, where he was surprised to find three men he knew. After exchanging a few words, he moved on.

I finished off at a hut where the chaps there had not been able to cope with the strain. They seemed mentally drained.

After another rice and gippo meal I just collapsed into the nearest empty space and slept.³⁶

Making better progress on their march the next day, Gibson and his companions finally caught sight of the Andaman Sea and realized their journey to freedom was nearly over.

Liberation

With so many POW camps scattered all over Thailand, it would take time for officers from Mountbatten's South-East Asia Command to organize an orderly liberation and repatriation scheme. Most of the British, Australian, and American POWs would first have to be transferred to Bangkok for further processing before they could be sent home. Those in large camps, like Nakhon Pathom (which was close to Bangkok), would be among the earliest liberated, but even that process would take weeks. Those in more remote and isolated areas would require more time. Meanwhile, the men would just have to wait. After three and a half years of waiting, this delay was not what the men wanted. They wanted to get home and were eager to know how soon they could expect that dream to become reality.

In this atmosphere of anxiety and anticipation, the entertainers' services were needed more than ever. Their task remained the same—to provide diversion to help pass the time—but now they had to temper the men's energies, not, as in the past, reignite them. Typical of the challenges they faced trying to keep the newly freed POWs attention, is what happened at Kachu Mountain.

By 20 August, the day after the victory concert, the emotional highs of the previous two days had already diminished, and John Sharp observed how the swift passage from captivity to freedom, from scarcity to plenty, had exposed the difficulty many POWs would have in their ability to cope with what they had just survived: "Plenty of food—no one wants it now. . . . Holiday atmosphere persists—some men are already complaining of boredom."³⁷

With their new remit, the small concert party at Kachu Mountain went back to work. The stage was refurbished and decorated for "expected arrivals"—officers from South-East Asia Command—and nightly performances were meant to allay the men's restlessness and boredom. This schedule soon taxed the entertainers' abilities to come up with new material, and there was fear that the shows would become repetitious and boring. To help them keep the concerts going, the entertainers were excused from all work details and permitted to rehearse all day.³⁸

One night Tony Gerrish and his band held a "Campfire Community Concert" on the parade ground.

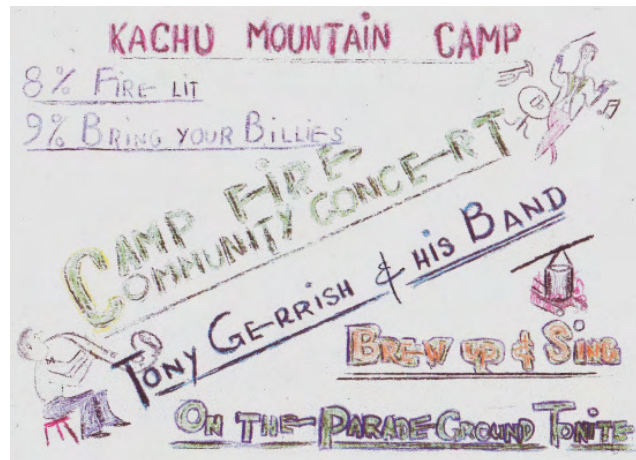


FIGURE 11.11. "CAMPFIRE COMMUNITY CONCERT." COURTESY OF JOHN SHARP.

Unfortunately for the POWs, the "brew" referred to on the crudely drawn poster would mean only tea.

But teetotaling did not hold true for everyone. The next day there was great consternation among the ex-POWs over word that their officer in charge (plus senior staff members) had engaged in a drinking party with the commandant in his office. It was rumored that the Japanese commandant had even performed a hula dance—and then asked the men to take no notice of it as he had gotten "a little drunk." He wasn't the only one. Though their leaders tried to deny it, someone had seen the British warrant officer being "carried to his hut," where he "fell over his bed, spewed, lay across the mosquito net and pull[ed] it down."³⁹ The lies about the incident only fueled the men's long-standing resentment against their leadership.

The next night the concert party presented a musical quiz and radio plays.⁴⁰ Jim Whittaker remembered that one of the questions "was to name three sister acts, expecting such answers as The Andrew Sisters, but John [Sharp] came up with the names of three sisters apparently from the world of opera or classical music."^{vii41}

When the "expected arrivals" did not show the next day, the POWs became even more disgruntled as they waited for news about when they might be sent home. With all the Red Cross food parcels consumed and supplies not arriving on schedule, the food situation was becoming dire. Adding to the deteriorating morale, there was no concert that night. But on the next night, 23 August, the concert contained a "radio broadcast" of the news the men had been anxiously awaiting: "heard of King's statement that we shall be home in six week's time."⁴²

Still Mountbatten's representatives did not arrive, and the mood in the camp remained sour in spite of the concert parties. "Men restless at the ineptitude (alleged) of camp office," Sharp wrote, "saying that some action should be taken about food etc." To stop men from breaking out of the camp in search of food, a perimeter patrol was instituted. In the midst of this unrest, the concert party put up their next show on 25 August.⁴³

Eventually, officials did arrive from Nakhon Pathom. Laurie Allison was present in the crowd gathered outside the orderly room:

^{vii} Actually, they were from Anton Chekhov—The Three Sisters.

He spoke of the huge bomb that had devastated two Japanese cities. We surrounded him and bombarded him with questions, but he mounted the camp stage and told us as much news as he could. I was still sick and the next two days passed in a haze but I remember we all stood in front of the stage and sang “God Save the King.”⁴⁴

Further Revelations

While awaiting liberation, the ex-POWs at Ubon made two startling discoveries: during their months in the aerodrome camp, they had not been alone. Pritchard tells the story:

A British Sergeant [one of their liberators] asked us in the concert party what had happened on the evening the Japs stopped the show because the comedian waved his walking stick around. We told him the Japs’ decision. But . . . “How did you know what occurred some months earlier?” His reply shook [us] up.

“I was there.” And he had been in our camp several times seeking information on reconnaissance! What courage!⁴⁵

They had not been alone at Nong Pladuk, either. During the bombing raid on 6 September, a Thai captain attached to the British Army (code name “Pluto”) had parachuted into the camp and been with them ever since.⁴⁶

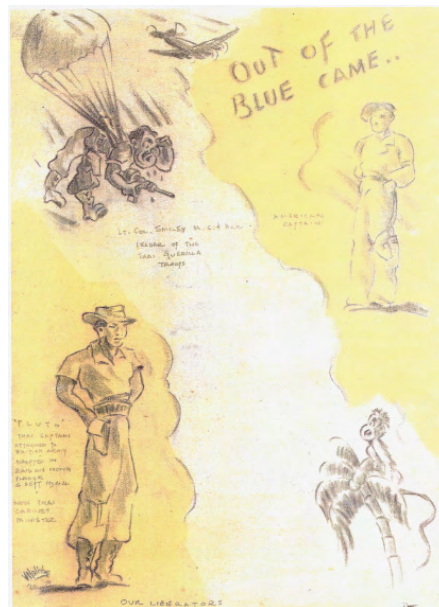


FIGURE 11.12. “OUT OF THE BLUE CAME . . .” JAN VAN HOLTHE. COURTESY OF NORMAN PRITCHARD.

Van Holthe's poster commemorates all the men involved in the POWs' liberation at Ubon.

At Kanburi, another and much more disturbing discovery was in store. On 23 August, the ex-POWs were suddenly plunged back in time when British and Dutch/Indonesians who had been sent up the line to Kran Krai/250 Kilo and beyond months earlier to build defensive fortifications for the Japanese arrived back at the rail station. Coast was outraged by what he saw:

A tottering stream of just human beings, nearly all Dutch Eurasians, was making its halting way into the camp, and with them they brought that unforgettable, indescribable smell that had been part of our lives for so long—the musty, decaying smell of the jungle vegetation; the acrid, bitter stench of dirt, dirt ingrained into the bodies and become a part of the skin; and underlying it all the stink of sick men, of dysentery, of unhealthiness. . . . There were 700 of them. And if these first were the fittest, what in God's name would the rest be like?⁴⁷

Coast and other volunteers rushed to help unload those who were not ambulatory from the railroad boxcars.

The sight of those trucks was unforgettable and unforgivable. Englishmen, clad in sacking, gaunt, hollow-eyed, just bones, their skin flaking off in great dirty brown patches, Indische Jongens, one of the personally cleanest of peoples, yellow and jaundiced, lying bleakly in the unspeakable mess of the floor of the trucks. And yet in spite of all their misery and pain and sickness, they were already saved in nearly every case; for we could see in their wide eyes the knowledge that it was OVER, that all the bloodiness of work, beatings, pig-food and jungle existence was OVER, and that that had already lit the vital, spiritual spark in their poor bodies, and a terrific and desperate will to live had already been born in them again. Within half-an-hour they were all in hospital.⁴⁸

Galvanized into action, the men at Kanburi bathed, clothed, and fed these wretched souls while the doctors and orderlies went about their bandaging and healing business. While engaged in this activity, Coast discovered an old friend from Chungkai days, "Huib van Laar,^{viii} an artist who had done so many of our Chungkai theatre posters."

He called me over to him by name, and almost weeping he said, "Don't you recognise me?" I just could not see who it was, and wasn't even sure it was a Dutchman. Then he said his name and I tried to see a likeness to the man I had worked with for months less than a year ago, but in that thin, bearded, hollow

^{viii} Coast gives him the pseudonym of Janssen in his memoir.

face with despairing eyes, I could see none. I found him a blanket, some dry kit and clothes and did my best to cheer him up. He had dysentery and malaria, but was over the worst. . . .

When my friend van Laar was strong enough to speak, he told me that to see dysentery cases on parade with blood streaming down the back of their legs and compelled to work was not uncommon. On reading through some of the atrocity accounts in the Camp Office, I discovered that van Laar himself, after being made to work with dysentery and malaria with a temperature of 104°, tried to throw himself in the river, being mentally deranged. He was rescued, but could mercifully remember nothing of it now.⁴⁹

During his last week in Kanburi, Coast went down to Tamuang, where a more pleasant surprise awaited him: “I walked onto the stage of the theatre there, and found my old Dutch producer friends rehearsing one of the same shows that they’d put on with such success in the early days at Chungkai.^{ix} And I found my old friends of the Javanese dancing and Kronchong party days, alive and well.”⁵⁰ The discovery of “Tari” and the other men must have been particularly gratifying to Coast, as he had grown to love these Indonesian performers as well as their music and dancing.^x

Repatriation

The repatriation of the thousands of POWs on the railway was logistically complex and a necessarily slow business. This time the men at Kachu Mountain lucked out. The airstrips they had built for the Japanese Air Force proved capable of handling Allied aircraft, and when food and medical supplies were brought in, they were exchanged for men who were then airlifted to Rangoon, Burma.⁵¹

Processing

As most of the ex-POWs were brought to Bangkok for initial processing, the city turned into a huge transit camp. In early September, the evacuation of Nakhon Pathom began, with the heavy sick being sent to hospitals in Bangkok. Weary Dunlop was part of this initial draft and, once in Bangkok, sent a note back requesting Jack Chalker join him so he could complete his medical sketches and other drawings that would be such a vital record of their lives as POWs. While the men waited in Bangkok for their transport home, concert parties were reorganized and shows performed under orders from the welfare officer at the ex-POW headquarters in Bangkok.

One of these concert parties was a combined Australian–Dutch/Indonesian troupe organized by Lieutenant Rae Nixon that was comprised of former members of the Tamarkan Players and Joop Postma’s Het Hollandsche cabaret from Chungkai.

^{ix} These were Joop Postma, Philip Brugman, and Ferry van Delden.

^x After the war, Coast was instrumental in bringing an Indonesian dance troupe to the United Kingdom.



FIGURE 11.13. AUSTRALIAN–DUTCH/INDONESIAN CONCERT PARTY. PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF TED WELLER.

This photograph of Nixon's concert party was taken on 24 September 1945 on the steps of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce Association building in Bangkok, where they performed a series of shows.

Rae Nixon stands in the back row to the right of the bass drum in his officer's hat. Han Samethini, in a white jacket and dark tie, stands in front at far left as the orchestra conductor. In the second row at the left, the first female impersonator is Ted Weller (Ron Wells, the show's producer, had convinced him to make one last appearance in this role).^{xii52} Next to him, in the grass skirt and coconut-shell brassiere, is "Sambal Sue."^{xiii} Major Jim Jacobs saw the show on the thirtieth and thought it "excellent."⁵³

Homeward Bound

After processing, the American, British, and Australian ex-POWs would be sent to Allied military hospitals for complete physicals before transferring to transport ships waiting to take them on the next leg of their long journey home.^{xiii} Early October found former members of the Ubon concert party in Rangoon, where they put on two performances for the regular British Army troops that had liberated Burma. At one of these shows they sang Bob Gale's "It's Grand to See You Again," which had been composed for a show in Nong Pladuk back in November 1944. In this new context, the lyrics took on a joyful reality.

^{xi} Further identified by the Ted written on the bib of his dress.

^{xii} Identifications (from front to back and left to right): Front row: Han Samethini (orchestra conductor) – A. ("Lex") Koot (violinist) – Vince Broe (saxophone player) – Bollen (clarinet) – Unknown (guitar) – ?Jan Liefveld (cornet) – T. Biderris (cornet) – Unknown (trombone) – Unknown w/ glasses (accordion) – Unknown (accordion). Second row: Henk Spoor (bass viol) – Ted Weller (female impersonator) – "Sambal Sue" (with grass skirt and coconut bra, as in Nixon's costume sketch) – ?Sid "Happy" Marshall (female impersonator identified by Morris as "tall, thin, black curly hair"). On the right: ?Jack Farmer (female impersonator) – "Ferry" van Delden (powdered wig and jabot) – Ülke "Puck" Jonkmans (female impersonator in an eighteenth-century dress and powdered wig) – ?Dick Jansen (guitar) – ?Hans Arriens (accordion player). Third row: Joop Postma – Dick Moray? – Unknown – Val Ballantyne; on the right: the Ockerse Trio (three guitar players wearing leis): ?Harry Reinders, Alfonse Ockerse, and John Ockerse. Fourth row: Unknown (with white belt) – Frank Brydges (scenic artist) – C. J. Coles-Smith (drummer) – Lieutenant Rae Nixon (with hat; O'ic Concert Party) – Unknown (white outfit). Names of other Australian performers in the group were published in the Sydney paper when this photograph was printed, but there is no discernible pattern as to which names belong to which figures.

^{xiii} The British ex-POWs were flown to Rangoon, Burma; the Americans to Calcutta, India; and the Australians sent by rail down to Singapore.

*It's grand to see you again,
 Tho' so many days have gone by.
 It's grand to hold you again in my arms.
 It's grand to kiss you again;
 I'm so overwhelmed I could cry.
 And say, "You've got me again with your charms."*

*Let's make this day of reunion,
 Something we'll never forget.
 Let's turn back the pages of romance,
 To the very first day that we met.*

*It's grand to see you again,
 It's something I might have known.
 It's grand to hold you again—my own.⁵⁴*

[To hear Norman Pritchard sing this Bob Gale song, listen to **Audio Link 11.5**]

Audio



11.5

The soldiers' response to the show was wildly enthusiastic, and they informed the Ubon troupe, "We don't want ENSA now—send them home—you stay!"^{xiv55}

Once on board ships taking them home, the indefatigable entertainers would again organize concert parties to entertain bored and anxious troops, just as they had on their way out to the Far East.

^{xiv} ENSA, the British civilian entertainment organization, which had started touring shows to British military bases in the Far East during the war, must have continued to live up to its reputation, "Every Night Something Awful!"



FIGURE 11.14. "SHIPBOARD CONCERT." CARTOON BY FRED "SMUDGER" SMITH. COURTESY OF FRED RANSOME-SMITH.

Fred "Smudger" Smith drew this cartoon of the shipboard concert *Chop SueZ* produced by John D. V. Allum as they headed toward the Suez Canal on their way back to England. The pianist-vocalist was Fred Ward, Smith's head peeks around the curtain in the background, and Allum is to his right.

On Hold

If the repatriation of British, Australian, and American troops had been slow, there were two other groups of workers on the Thailand-Burma railway whose repatriation would take even longer—or not happen at all. Although the British and Australians did make attempts to repatriate many of the thousands of Asian conscripts (*romusha*) the Japanese had brought from all over their Southeast Asian "empire" to work on the railway, many remained behind in Burma and Thailand.

For the Netherlands East Indies troops, there was another reason for the delay. On 17 August, the day following the announcement of Japan's surrender, Indonesian leaders Sukarno and Mohammad Hatta declared a war for independence from Dutch colonial rule. As the N.E.I. POWs in Thailand were composed of Dutch, Indische Jorgens, and Indonesian troops, no one was sure where their loyalties might lie, so they had to wait in Thailand until some authority could decide what to do with them while the war for independence played itself out.

Wim Kan and his small troupe of entertainers had been removed from Nakhon Pathom Hospital to Bangkok in late September. On the twenty-fifth, they began to perform a series of cabarets at the Alliance Française, at the hospital, and for Bangkok Radio. Kan even mounted a new production of his one-act comedy, *Maatje Visser*.⁵⁶

But the majority of the N.E.I. troops were forced to remain in their hospital and relocation camps up country, and therefore, according to Lieutenant-Colonel P. G. Mantel, the Entertainments Officer, "[T] he mountain camps are screaming for Wim Kan, so he has to leave on a tour immediately."⁵⁷ Actually, both Kan and Joop Postma were asked to create touring companies to perform in the camps.

One of the first stops on their circuit would be Kachu Mountain. After the British and Australians had evacuated the camp, a group of N.E.I. ex-POWs had taken it over, including J. G. Julsing, still keeping his record of all the entertainment he witnessed. On 17 October he noted Joop Postma's *Hollandsch*

Cabaret at Phetburi.^{xv} From there the tours would go on to Nakhon Pathom, Tamuang, and Kanburi.

Before leaving with Postma's group, Han Samethini had secured permission from Colonel Mantel to recruit any new musicians he found in the camps to replace those he had lost when the Australians sailed home. At Tamuang, he found the saxophone player Lou Bloemhard; elsewhere, "The Atomic Boys," led by Piet Bruyn van Rozenburg, a small dance band led by van Hofstede, and "The Zoo"—a trio consisting of Frans de Haan, Hans van Leeuwen, and Jaap Schaap.^{xvi} At the end of the tour, these musicians were brought back to Bangkok.⁵⁸

Wim Kan's cabaret performed at Phetburi on 21 October, at Nakhon Pathom, where they did three shows (one in a hospital ward), and then at Tamuang and Kanburi. In Kanburi, they received a "fabulous reception" and Arie Grendel joined their troupe. On 28 October they visited the deserted camp at Tamarkan, viewed the bombed-out steel bridge, and went for a swim in the Mae Khlong.^{xvii59}

When the two tour groups returned to Bangkok, Mantel asked Kan, Samethini, and Postma to "organize cabaret and dance evenings for the army members and the ex-POWs," and an old dance hall was turned into a nightclub.⁶⁰ According to Bloemhard, "Every Ex-POW in Bangkok came to know the Holland Club where one of the above bands would play every evening."⁶¹

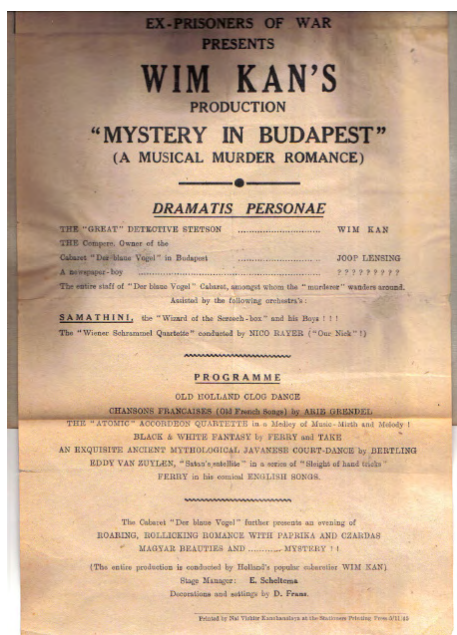


FIGURE 11.15. PROGRAM FOR *MYSTERY IN BUDAPEST*. HAN SAMETHINI COLLECTION. COURTESY OF ROBIN KALHORN.

Around 5 November, Wim Kan presented a show entitled *Mystery in Budapest* at the Holland Café with members of his and Postma's group. The imagined setting for this "Musical Murder Romance" was "Der blaue Vogel" Cabaret in Budapest. Music for the show was provided by Samethini "and his Boys" as well as Nico Rayer ("Our Nick"!). Besides other items on the playbill was "An Exquisite Ancient Mythological, Javanese Court-Dance by Bertling [Tari]. The female impersonators who played "Paprika"

^{xv} An alternate name for the camp.

^{xvi} Whose Dutch names translate as "Rooster," "Lion," and "Sheep."

^{xvii} The first of thousands of tourists who have since visited the "bridge on the River Kwai."

and the “Czardas Magyar Beauties” are not identified.

The N.E.I. troops were gradually removed from their up country camps to Bangkok and placed together with evacuees from the civilian internment camps in Indonesia in a transit camp outside the city. As representatives of Dutch colonial rule, the civilians had been evacuated to Bangkok to escape reprisal in the ongoing war for independence. On 8 November Kan met his wife and partner Corrie Vonk.⁶² It would be 1946 before the N.E.I. ex-POWs at Kanburi were evacuated down the line to Bangkok. During the long wait, they refurbished their dilapidated theatre in anticipation of further touring shows out of Bangkok.

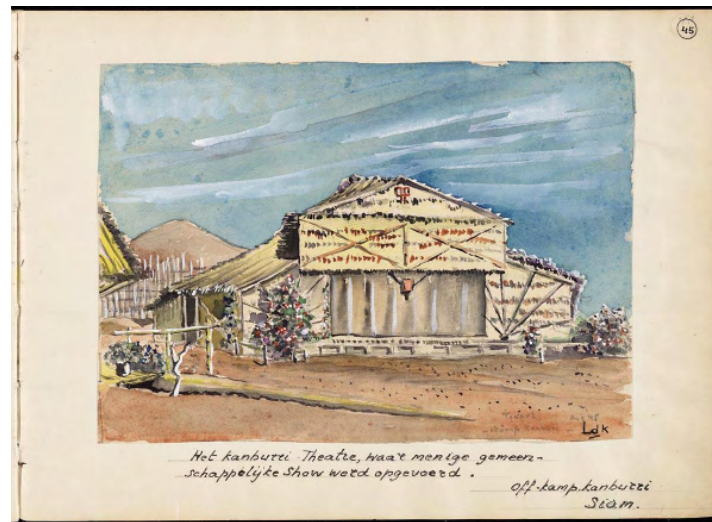


FIGURE 11.16. WATERCOLOR SKETCH OF KANBURI THEATRE. L. D. DE KROON. IMAGE COPYRIGHT MUSEON, THE HAGUE, NETHERLANDS.

Lodewikus de Kroon’s watercolor shows the Kanburi theatre newly refurbished with fresh atap, the unruly vines removed, and façade of the proscenium header shortened with the removal of the additional side panels. The slight sag in the top of the proscenium has also been straightened out and front curtains made from rice sacking have been hung in place. A smaller light box is suspended from the proscenium over center stage. At left stands a tree decorated with ornaments. Smaller shrubs, similarly decorated, are placed at right. It is Christmas 1945.

1946

The last record of a performance taking place in any ex-POW Camp in Thailand is 4 January 1946 at Kachu Mountain, where Wim Kan’s comedy *Roland ons Kind* was produced.⁶³ Whether Kan had a hand in this production is not known.

By 1 March 1946, Kan and his wife were back in Holland. With the war for independence still raging, those Dutch and Dutch/Indonesian soldiers scheduled for return to Indonesia would not get to sail for home until September. After arriving in N.E.I.-controlled Surabaya in East Java, they would be given the opportunity to stay in Indonesia, or, as Dutch citizens, be repatriated to the Netherlands.⁶⁴

The Things They Carried Home

Besides the hundreds of artifacts brought back by the ex-POWs as tangible reminders of three and a half years of captivity were numerous souvenirs of the musical and theatrical activities produced on the Thailand-Burma railway. These were mementos that did not recall the starvation and brutality or the sickness and death but rather the times of sharing in songs and laughter that had brought them hope and helped save their lives.



FIGURE 11.17. TOM BOARDMAN HEADS HOME WITH HIS CAMP-MADE UKULELE.
PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF TOM BOARDMAN.

For the entertainers, the artifacts they brought back served an additional purpose: “With us of course went our ukuleles, accordions, violins, trumpets, clarinets, etc.,” wrote Tom Boardman, “as reminders of how we did our bit in providing, as best we could, the entertainment that helped ‘To keep going the spirit that kept us going’ in the previous three and a half years of hell on earth.”⁶⁵



FIGURE 11.18. FRAGMENT OF SCENERY. COURTESY OF NORMAN PRITCHARD.

Before leaving Ubon, Norman Pritchard cut this small rectangle of woven bamboo scenery with daubs of red, white, and blue paint on it from the setting for their victory show.⁶⁶



FIGURE 11.19. CAMP-MADE EVENING GOWN. CHARLES WOODHAMS. IWM COLLECTIONS EPH 1218.

Charles Woodhams brought home this evening gown he made out of mosquito net and rice sacking for use in his jungle shows.



FIGURE 11.20. FRANKIE QUINTON'S ACCORDION. FIGURE 11.21. CLOSE-UP OF ACCORDION KEYBOARD. COURTESY OF MRS. FRANKIE QUINTON.

As an aid to his memory, Frankie Quinton inscribed all the places he had performed as a soldier on the keys of his accordion. (To hear Frankie Quinton perform one of his signature numbers recorded shortly after his return to England, listen to **Audio Link 11.6**).

Audio



11.6

Adjusting to civilian life would be difficult for many former POWs. They had changed, and the world they knew had changed—irrevocably. They were not welcomed back as conquering heroes, as other troops had been, but had to face criticism that as prisoners they had opted out of the war—that they had it easy.

The most difficult adjustments were personal. As there was little acknowledgement of post-traumatic stress, the ex-POWs were frequently told to take an aspirin or a “cuppa” and get on with their lives. Many did just that. But in Jimmy Walker’s experience, getting on with their lives was not as easy as that:

Many of us found marriage and indeed all human contacts difficult. We were not the laughing boys who had sailed away so long ago. Wives found it hard to relate to suspicious-minded men. Men who awakened them in the night with screams about “dirty Japs” as nightmares plagued their beings. Men who looked at other men and wondered how *they* would’ve behaved in starvation circumstances.

Like many, my “tiny tots” were grown children and deeply suspicious and even resentful of this stranger coming into their house and sleeping with their mother, usurping their place in her affections.^{xviii67}

What they had endured as prisoners of war was seared into their consciousness and would remain there forever.

Nearly 13,000 POWs died on the railway. The number of romusha who perished is estimated at 80,000. Japanese deaths tally around 100. It became commonplace to claim a life was lost for every sleeper laid on the Thailand-Burma railway

Endnotes

- 1 Kan, Diary, 17 August 1945; trans. by Margie Bellamy.
- 2 Cosford, 177–178.
- 3 Cosford, 179.
- 4 Coast, 228.
- 5 John Sharp, Diary, 18 August 1945.
- 6 John Sharp, Diary, 18 August 1945.
- 7 Van Holthe, inscription on sketch.
- 8 Cosford, 179–180.
- 9 Pritchard, Interview, 27.
- 10 Anckorn, Interview, 78–79.
- 11 Coast, 229.
- 12 John Sharp, Diary, 18 August 1945.

^{xviii} For the FEPOW wives’ side of the story, see Julie Summers’ *Stranger in the House* (London: Simon & Schuster Ltd., 2008).

- 13 Cosford, 180.
- 14 Chalker, Letter, 7 October 2005.
- 15 John Sharp, Diary, 22 August 1945.
- 16 Gotla, Letter, 8 September 2001.
- 17 Cosford, 140.
- 18 John Sharp, Diary, 19 August 1945.
- 19 John Sharp, Diary, 19 August 1945.
- 20 From poster in the possession of Richard Brown, son of B. W. Brown.
- 21 Chalker, Letter, 3 March 2000.
- 22 Chalker, Letter, 3 March 2000.
- 23 Durnford, 189.
- 24 Durnford, 189–190.
- 25 Anckorn, Interview, 77–78; van Holthe's poster "Out of the Blue Came . . ."
- 26 Smiley, E-mail, 30 March 2004.
- 27 Martin, Letter, n.d.
- 28 Pritchard, "It's Grand to See You Again," *London FEPOW Magazine*, n.d.
- 29 Compilation from Anckorn, Interview, 48–49, 63–64; supplemental information, E-mail, 16 June 2010.
- 30 Anckorn, E-mail, 16 June 2010.
- 31 Compiled from Pritchard, Interview, 27.
- 32 Boggett, "Notes on the Thai-Burma railway; Part IX: The Kra Isthmus Railway," 41.
- 33 Boggett, "Notes on the Thai-Burma railway; Part IX: The Kra Isthmus Railway," 41.
- 34 Gibson, Letter, 23 April 2004.
- 35 Gibson, Unpublished diary, n.p.
- 36 Gibson, Unpublished diary, n.p.
- 37 John Sharp, Diary, 20 August 1945.
- 38 John Sharp, Diary, 20 August 1945.
- 39 John Sharp, Diary, 21 August 1945.
- 40 John Sharp, Diary, 21 August 1945.
- 41 John Sharp, Diary, 21 August 1945; Whittaker, Letter, 23 April 2006.
- 42 John Sharp, Diary, 24 August 1945.
- 43 John Sharp, Diary, 23, 24, 25 August 1945.
- 44 Allison, *Begone Dull Care*, 104.
- 45 Pritchard, Handwritten note, n.d.
- 46 Note on van Holthe poster, "Out of the Blue Came . . ."
- 47 Coast, 240.
- 48 Coast, 240.
- 49 Coast, 241, 242.
- 50 Coast, 244.
- 51 Allison, *Begone Dull Care*, 104–105.
- 52 Jacobs, 169.
- 53 Jacobs, 169.
- 54 IWM 9165 Misc 116 (1934).
- 55 Pritchard, "the undefeated . . .," 2.
- 56 Kan, Diary, 25 September 1945.
- 57 Kan, Dairy, 9 October 1945; trans. by Margie Bellamy.
- 58 Bloemhard, trans. by Margie Bellamy.
- 59 Kan, Diary, 18–28 October 1945; trans. by Margie Bellamy.
- 60 Bloemhard, trans. by Margie Bellamy.
- 61 Bloemhard, trans. by Margie Bellamy.
- 62 Kan, Diary, 8 November 1945.
- 63 Julsing, n.p.

- 64 Bloemhard, trans. by Margie Bellamy.
65 Tom Boardman, Letter, 15 May 2006.
66 Pritchard, Interview, 15.
67 Walker, *Of Rice and Men*, 78.