



Hong Kong Volunteer and Ex-PoW Association of NSW



EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION TO BATCH 4 OF OCCASIONAL PAPERS

Dear Readers,

Here are two more of Henry Ching's Occasional Papers, Nos.8 and 9. One has to do with "Australians" in Hong Kong during the War and Occupation, the other with the confusingly named "Hong Kong Volunteer Company". As you will see from the record, the "Australians" (the reason for my inverted commas will appear in the text) were a mixed but doughty band. As for the Hong Kong Volunteer Company, the confusion lies in its being for the most part neither volunteer nor directly connected with the HKVDC, but it is of considerable interest to us nonetheless.

In regard to the former, Henry writes "Landon Burch's gift of prewar Volunteer Year Books has enabled me to ascertain that John Monks was in the Anzac Company and F.P. Franklin was in the Reserve Company in the mid-1930s, and there will certainly be other material I shall be able to use from them". Landon will surely be pleased to see that we are making good use of his materials. We hope this will encourage other readers to send along any information, photographs, or other memorabilia from the time which they may have in family collections. Keep in mind that all writers and editors need that vital spark of interest in their work to help keep them going! I am reminded of the late Ken Barnett, a long-serving Volunteer, who, referring to his own work on Hong Kong's history and prehistory, displayed his characteristic humour and light touch in an amusing letter on this subject, enclosing a list of topics on which he had asked for responses without avail, and adding that he sometimes felt like a blind man shouting in a cave!

Henry and I are not to be compared with Ken, but we do share his desire for (your) cooperation. Examples of the sort of thing that would be of interest include refugee life in Macao, and in Stanley Internment Camp, conditions in the POW camps in Japan, American air raids on Hong Kong etc. Even if you have nothing to offer, we would welcome suggestions for the subject matter of later papers in the series.

Meantime, Henry has papers in draft on a variety of topics. They include the HKVDC Nursing Detachment, the Auxiliary Nursing Service, brothers in the HKVDC, Escapes from Camps, Volunteers in Stanley Internment Camp, Government Cadet Officers in the War, the Internment of Civilians, POW Camps, the Executions of BAAG Agents in October, 1943, and the release of Asian POWs, among others.

With best wishes to you all from Henry and me,

James Hayes.
