

English Nurses Raped By Japanese Soldiers

By "THE MIRROR" WAR CORRESPONDENT

"European and Chinese nurses were seized by the Japs when they entered Hong Kong after the surrender on Christmas Day, 1941, and raped. English nurses were also taken by the Japs after we had been interned in Stanley Camp and raped. Afterwards they were killed. One red-headed nurse went through hell before death brought her release."

Speaker was Dr. Ingram Shaw (photo right) of the Colonial Medical Service who has just arrived in Western Australia to join his wife and family after 4 years in the hands of the Nipponese in the civilian camp at Stanley, Hong Kong.

Before the war, ironically enough, Dr. Ingram was for a time medical officer at the big gaol at Stanley; little dreamed that one day he would spend 4 years there as a prisoner. He told me that the first example of Japanese brutality was the clearing out of all patients from Queen Mary Hospital.

"They were thrown out at a moment's notice," he said. "Those too ill to walk were practically thrown into Army lorries. Stanley Camp originally housed 3000, finally 2500. Our first 6 months were hellish. Rice and fish were raw, there were no cooking facilities. European ex-prisoners volunteered as cooks.

"We all had old tins as crockery.' At first they gave us 1 duck-egg a month; that soon stopped. Rice was filthy, floor-sweepings in which rats, mice and cockroaches bred. Unless you blindfolded yourself, it was impossible to eat it.

"There were more than 50 civilian doctors interned, too many for the camp so many volunteered for other jobs. A noted surgeon became hospital orderly, another a barber, a third a cook. Lack of vitamins produced many complaints.

"People developed 'central blindness.' They could see nothing straight ahead, but looking away from an object at an angle of 45 degrees, they could then see it. 'Electric feet' was another trying complaint. I got that, found that without my volition, my feet were kicking against walls, any raised object. One doctor made a yeast from the soya bean, and so saved many people from possible permanent blindness.

"At first many of us had gardens, sold produce for other food. Then the Japs made them communal. 1944 was our best year—we got 3 Red Cross parcels, although we knew by the stuff sold on the 'black market' outside the wire, that the Japs were stealing all our other parcels.

"'Black market' was responsible for much suffering. Many women had smuggled in rings and other jewellery worth fortunes. They sold these possessions for fabulous sums, 'go-betweens' taking a rake-off. I had practically no salt for 4 years. It cost £50 a lb on the 'black market!'

Lard £50 A Lb.

"Lard was £50 sterling a pound, bacon £30, powdered egg-yolk £60, duck eggs £10, soya beans £20 a pound. Just to give you an idea of the racketeering, a ring that cost £50 before the war, was sold outside the wire through 'intermediaries' for £1,000 in cheques, plus £250 in Jap yen to purchase 'black-market' food!

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"I saw no atrocities beyond the brutal raping of the nurses in those first few days, but I was slapped many times. One woman patient of mine was black and blue after a thrashing with split bamboo. On one occasion a Jap officer took his sword, forced my head against wall with it, but I pretended to be amused and the danger passed.

"Among other things I took up—as did many others who were determined not to give way mentally—was hair-cutting, watch-making, ear-painting and the grinding of cut-throat razors—there were no 'safetys.'"



