

## **'S. S. REDANG'**

**Sunk by Japanese destroyers, on 13 February 1942.**

[Version 1.7.1; July 2020]

The invasion of Malaya and Singapore, from the time of the first landings in Northern Malaya on 8 December 1941, was swift and brutal. Within eight weeks the Japanese had taken Malaya and landed on the island of Singapore which had become intensely overcrowded by tens of thousands of fleeing civilians of all races from Malaya plus almost 100,000 servicemen.

By the second week of February 1942 the Japanese army was advancing across Singapore Island and a chaotic evacuation of mainly Europeans, Eurasians and a small number of influential Chinese was underway from the port in front of what is today's CBD.

Any vessel of literally any size was ultimately enlisted to evacuate people under what had become almost constant bombing and machine gunning by Japanese planes. Singapore itself was ablaze, columns of black smoke rose thousands of feet in the air and the streets were littered with the dead and dying.

People desperately clamoured for departure passes from the Colonial government authorities (men under 40 years of age had been banned from leaving the Island for months and women had not been publicly encouraged to leave because it would '... adversely affect morale ...'!) to board any ship leaving the Island. By 11 January 1942 even the rather incompetent men in authority saw the absurdity of their bureaucratic incompetence and more passes were issued for civilian men and women to leave and some real urgency entered the situation.

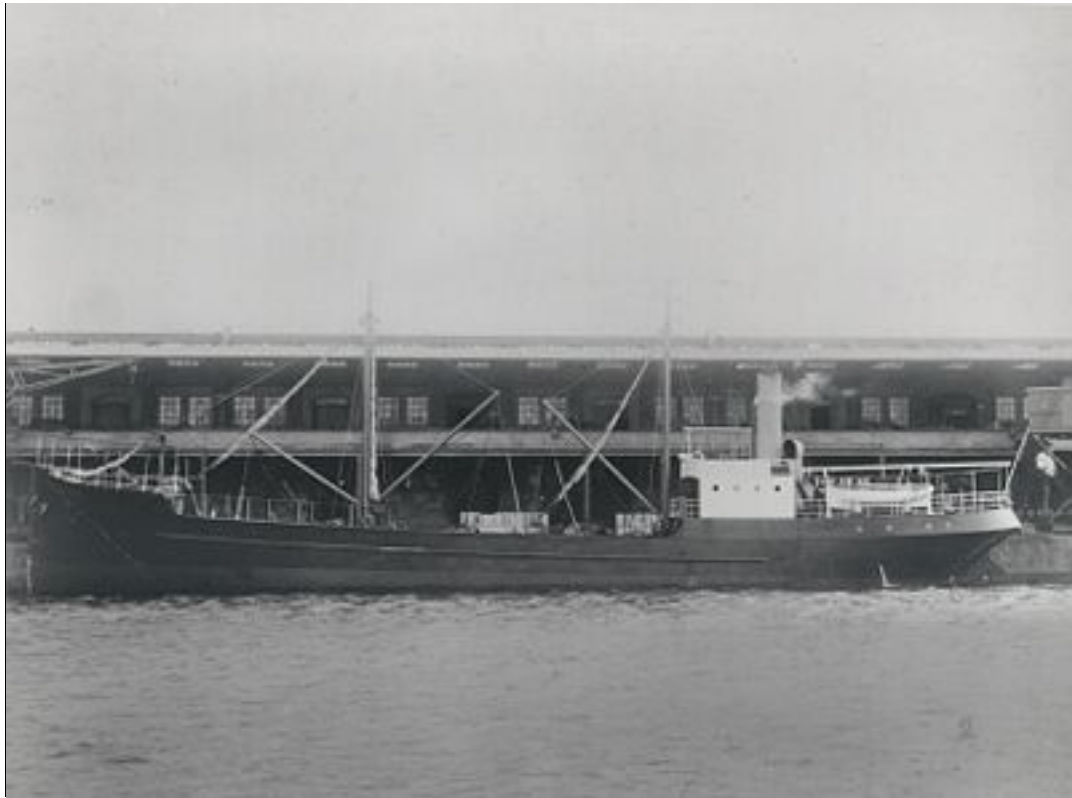
About 44 ships of all sizes - from the quite large refrigerated cargo ship "SS. Empire Star" (525 feet and 12,656 tons) through a range of mid-sized merchant vessels down to some small craft like the "SS. Tandjong Pinang" (which at 97 feet only just qualified in the definition for a 'ship') – were assembled to leave as a convoy during the 48-hour period of 11 – 13 February 1942.

Amongst these was a nondescript little cargo ship by the name of "SS. Redang".

The "S. S. Redang" was quite an outdated, oil burning, steel screw steamer built in Copenhagen, Denmark in 1901 by Kjobenhavens Flydedock of Skibsverft (MS).

It was only a modest sized ship of 500 gross tons and 165 feet in length which could travel at 8.5 - 9 knots (but one passenger says it only made 5 – 6 knots on its last voyage) and prior to the invasion of Malaya by the Japanese it had been owned by Siam Steam Navigation Co., Bangkok for some 34 years providing cargo services on the coast of Siam and Malaya.

It became a 'Prize of War' by the British Government when it was seized on 9 December 1941 upon its arrival in Singapore.



‘SS. Redang’

[Photo source: [www.wrecksite.eu](http://www.wrecksite.eu)]

This vessel with its dark grey hull lined with a white band and topped with cream coloured masts then was handed to the Singapore Strait Steamship Co for operation on behalf of the Ministry of War Transport (MS). Straits Shipping managed to operate her with a skeleton crew consisting of about three Officers, five crew in the engine room, plus five (including at least four Royal Navy and RNVR ratings) Naval Ratings on deck, and under the command of Captain S. Rasmussen, a Dane. ( [www.merchantnavyofficers.com](http://www.merchantnavyofficers.com)). Mr. D. Robertson of Marconi Intl who was on board says the ship was managed by Mansfield & Co (DR).

Survivor Douglas Banks also recorded “... *There was a small upper deck on which there were some cabins on either side with the engine room housing in the centre and a narrow alley-way separating this from the cabins on either side ...*”.

The story of its sinking after escaping from Singapore as part of that final, loose, spread-eagled ‘Convoy’ which left between 11 - 13 February 1942 is not well known and appears in very few books or public records, so this account is an attempt to clarify the story of the ship’s fate and more importantly provide a memorial to the large number of those on board who lost their lives.

*[The official file on the “SS. Redang” is held by the UK National Archives at Kew under Reference Number TS 13/2042, date 1946-47, (its former reference in its original department is P.3011) - anyone who would like to assist the compiler of this memorial document by*

*photographing the pages of the file and forwarding them to me in New Zealand or by email would be giving very much appreciated help.]*

Douglas Banks recorded that the *Cable and Wireless Ltd* evacuation group (he calls them the 'Rickwood Party') - as did the group of Czech men who worked for Bata Shoe Co - boarded the ship on the morning of 11 February 1942 but for some reason the "SS. Redang" did not sail from Singapore harbour until day break on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> February. In fact, it left from Singapore Harbour at 7.00 am on the 12<sup>th</sup> February 1942 carrying 108 souls including crew, naval and Eurasian armed guards, and civilians (NIRC).

The few sources available show differing numbers of people on board;

- Captain David Nelson, who led the Bureau of Record & Enquiry in Changi POW camp, states in his book "The Story of Changi" that there were "... passengers civilian men 61, women 6, children 3 [ giving a total of 70 passengers]".
  - Margaret Sypniewska in her webpage states "... *ninety-nine passengers, including its crew... tally was reported as a crew of ten and 89 passengers (including 6 women and 3 children) ...*". [giving a total of 89 passengers].
  - The website [www.merchantofficers.com](http://www.merchantofficers.com) states "... *She set sail for Batavia carrying seventy-one evacuees ...*" [ giving a total of 71 passengers]
  - Billie McGee on the [mercantilemarine.org](http://mercantilemarine.org) website has 19 skeleton crew and 70 refugees [ giving a total of 70 passengers]
  - Mrs E. Cross, an internee in Palembang camp and someone who compiled many lists regarding internees in Sumatra, records the ship had about 100 people on board – 28 saved.
  - But possibly the most accurate record is that of Duncan Robertson of Marconi International Marine Communication Ltd., who recorded in his report to his employers at the end of the war "... *After we left [Singapore], two launches containing deserting troops, mostly Australian, came alongside and boarded the ship after threatening the captain with rifles if he refused to allow them aboard. This brought the number aboard up to about 110, including six women...* ". (DR)
- So, for the purposes of this document we will work with 'up to 100 passengers and ten crew including officers'.

It is worth noting that, amongst the passengers, there were 24 men - many from Australia - who were employees with *Cable & Wireless Ltd* on board (DR) and this was the largest single group of people with a common link on the ship. To date, this research document has identified only 22 men from C & W. Only Messrs Robertson and Banks survived the War – with most C & W men dying in the shelling, burning and sinking of the ship but tragically eight of the ten who made it to land died during internment in the living hell of the Muntok and Palembang and Belalau Internment camps.

This loss of life amongst the C & W men was one of the most awful rates of attrition experienced during the War in any large group escaping Singapore. It compares with the horrendous loss of life amongst the nurses on board the 'SS. Vyner Brooke' and the "SS. Kuala".

It is no wonder that Captain Rasmussen did not want to take on board the twenty, mostly Australian, soldiers – he would have known that he already had on board as many people as could be saved in the three lifeboats he had on board. Logically, at least twenty people were already doomed, because of lack of lifeboat capacity, from the time of leaving Singapore if the ship was sunk.

The story of the soldiers - it is not clear if they were deserters or soldiers with permission to leave Singapore prior to the Surrender – is also described in the NIRC report in Palembang camp in 1943 *"... one hour later [after leaving Singapore] a motor launch containing eight or nine British and Australian soldiers and a Chinese girl came along side. The occupants climbed on board and the launch was abandoned. About noon the same day [this would have been the 12<sup>th</sup> February] another launch containing about a dozen Australian soldiers overtook the ship and they also came on board. The launch was abandoned..."* (NIRC).

From the list compiled by "HMS Tapah" after picking up survivors from the 'SS Redang' a few days later this group of soldiers included six men from;

- Royal Artillery (Bdr. Arthur Hansen, Bdr Broderick or Roderick Munro, and Sgt Sam Johnston)
  - 2/15 Field Regiment, AIF (Pte. Jack Russell).
  - 2/4 Field Workshop. AIF (Pte Anthony Alick Hayes)
- who are further listed in the individual entries below. It is not known whether any of these men after the War advised their respective War Offices of the names of the other 12 or so soldiers who died in the sinking of the 'SS Redang'.

So, of the estimated twenty soldiers boarding the ship, only six would survive the voyage and one of those would die as a POW in Sumatra – this leaves the identity of some 14 Australian and British soldiers from Singapore who lost their lives in this sinking a complete, sad, mystery.

During the course of this research another group of people with a common interest emerged as passengers boarding the ship in Singapore– they were employees of the Bata Shoe Company Ltd., the Czechoslovakian owned global shoe company, which by 1940 had grown to 800 employees in Malaya (ST.21.1.40). The Bata Company head office had been established in the Capitol Building in Singapore in 1930 and a manufacturing facility at Klang in 1935. It is not known precisely how many men from this organization (possibly with other Czech people from Singapore) actually boarded the ship but to date five have been positively identified – Messrs. Cervinka, Plohn, Smrzak, Strangfeld and Zelnicek. It also seems highly probable that Dr. Eugene Straussler and Friedrich Heim may have been on board but no direct link to the "SS. Redang", apart from them being part of the Bata

employee escape group and the use of the same “perished at sea” phrase for their fate by a colleague, has yet been established.

Apart from the NIRC report, one of the most complete accounts of the tragic escape attempt on the “SS. Redang” located to date is by Mr Duncan Robertson of the Marconi Company in his letter to his employer at the end of the War. We will let him tell the story first-hand;

*“... Although we were rushed aboard on the evening of the 11<sup>th</sup>, the ship was held back for some Air force personnel (who did not arrive) and did not sail until early on the morning of the 12<sup>th</sup>. The captain, a Danish subject named Rasmussen, aged apparently between 60 and 70, said the naval authorities had given him a course to the entrance of the Banka Straits, which took us right out to sea. Previously, so far as I know, small vessels, especially those with speeds of only a few knots, had been hugging the coastline. ...About 10 am the next day a Japanese seaplane flew over us and dropped one stick of bombs which near missed. I guessed that the plane would communicate with other forces, either planes or ships, and interviewed the captain about provisioning lifeboats and also making up some sort of boat station list. Up to then nothing had been done except swing out a lifeboat which was lying chocked up on the foredeck – this at the speed we were making could easily have been towed astern. When I went up to the bridge I found the captain with signal flags all over the place; I don’t believe he was very conversant with international flag signals and was trying to sort them out. We got as far as a rough distribution of the people amongst the 3 lifeboats : C.&W. people with a few others in the first one, soldiers in another, and the rest of the people and crew in the third – the 3 ships’ officers to be one in each boat. To this the captain agreed and I was on my way down from the bridge when several Japanese destroyers appeared on the port bow and, after turning to starboard, they opened fire – the captain neither putting up a white flag nor stopping the ship...” (DR)*

It is stated by one researcher that the ship was attacked by the Japanese destroyer ‘Asagiri’ north of Batavia (50 miles from the Berhala Straits) and 58 people were killed (BM).

Bata employee Zelnicek later told Viktor Kos (the Chief Accountant of Bata) whilst in internment camp at Muntok on Banka Island “... spotted a distant ship on 13<sup>th</sup> February, and soon started to be shelled. A great chaos broke out on board, as the splinters were flying around and hitting the ship...”.

Margaret Sypniewska, (whose uncle Alexander Malcolm was on board) states that the ship was attacked by two Japanese destroyers, hit, set on fire and sunk within 50 miles of Berhala Strait. She states that only thirty passengers, including four women and three children got away by boat (MS).

Mr Robertson, who had 20 years’ experience at sea including the First World War, Dardanelles landings and two instances of torpedoing, continues “... I credited the captain with more efficiency than he proved to possess (I might add that he was one of the first in the only boat which got away and saved his life) ...” (DR).

It was clearly chaos on board the “SS. Redang” according to Mr Robertson;

*“... After firing a few salvos and within 5 minutes of opening fire the ship was ablaze. Most of the people were forward where the third salvo landed. I was aft (the bridge ladder was on the after side) when the firing commenced and at once, with the assistance of several people on the after deck, commenced to get the starboard quarter lifeboat (built to carry 17 passengers) into the water. I think most of the people on the deck who were left alive got into this boat [which was the only lifeboat to get away from the ship]; the rest of the people either jumping overboard from the forward end of the ship, or being killed by shell fire....” (DR).*

Douglas Bank’ view of the events was *“... There were no incidents during the day’s run except for three or four alerts and the following night was uninterrupted. At approximately 11.00 hours on Friday the 13<sup>th</sup> February, a reconnaissance plane appeared and circled over the ship and was leaving us unmolested, when she returned and circled us again, losing height, she released two bombs, which, however, fell well clear doing no damage and left us. At about 11.40 hours three destroyers appeared on the horizon steaming towards our course at right angles, until they were dead ahead when they turned sharply and steamed towards us. Beyond keeping a wary eye on these, we proceeded with lunch. It was then seen that two of the destroyers had approached to within about 1500 yards on our port bow, the third destroyer was standing off. One of the two destroyers fired two shots across our bows, whereupon shouts were made to the bridge to hoist the white flag, but this was not done. The volunteer 2<sup>nd</sup> engineer told me later that the ‘Stop’ was rung down from the bridge, and that he and the Chief Engineer (also a volunteer) were standing by for the order ‘Go Astern’, but as this had not been received when shells commenced hitting the ship, they decided to come up. The Chief Engineer was killed as he appeared above the engine room companion which was situated about the middle of the port alley-way. When the warning shots were fired the passengers on the upper deck took cover in these two alley-ways, the majority of the party being on the port side. I was on the starboard side, where protection was possibly a little better, but I was concussed by blast, and, on coming to, found myself drenched with blood. On turning I found that Pain, who had been standing behind me, was no longer there. Shortly after this I was again concussed, and my only recollection was of following some other men into a lifeboat, still very dazed. By this time the ship was burning furiously and enveloped in smoke, and I think it can be taken that the casualties on the starboard side must have been very heavy, and those on the port side almost 100%. I was told that twenty seven shells were put into the ship, but this I cannot vouch for. I do think, however, that none hit her below the waterline because she was still visible and burning at nightfall. The japs did not lower any boats.*

*A large lifeboat had been slung outboard on the lower deck, and this was later seen to have capsized, and there were many men in the water, presumably from those on the lower deck, none of whom were Cable & wireless to my knowledge. The port side lifeboat was smashed by gun-fire and never lowered. The starboard life-boat was cast adrift with about her normal complement of passengers which was seventeen. We drifted around picking up other survivors until we had thirty – three or thirty -four in the boat, and could not possibly take any more, as the boat was leaking badly, and only had about three to four inches of freeboard...” (Banks).*

A pre-war photo (above) shows the bridge ladder at the rear of the bridge and cabin structure as well as the portside life boat on davits towards the stern of the ship (the port quarter) and presumably there was another on the starboard side on davits towards the stern as well. The lifeboat "... *chocked up on the foredeck ...*" referred to by Mr. Robertson above was probably an additional lifeboat taken aboard to cater for additional passengers during the evacuation. This foredeck lifeboat would have been damaged by shellfire since people "... *were jumping overboard from the forward end of the ship ...*". The portside stern quarter lifeboat would have received the direct shellfire hits from the destroyers since they initially appeared on the port side of the 'SS. Redang'.

All this is pretty much confirmed in the NIRC report "... *the port lifeboat was broken by shellfire and was not used and the spare lifeboat carried on the foredeck was later seen capsized close alongside the ship. The starboard lifeboat got clear with 33 occupants including two badly wounded who died and some rescued from the sea...*" (NIRC).

It is also corroborated in the explanation of another Bata employee , Cervinka, to Kos in Muntok internment camp whereby he explained that "... *as their lifeboat was leaving the ship, Cervinka noticed that an officer was trying to lower another lifeboat, but the ropes were entangled and it was impossible. Phlon and Smrzak [ two casualties in the sinking] were seen heading to that other lifeboat. The third lifeboat available was made useless as it was damaged by shelling...*".

The log of the IJN destroyer 'Asagiri' shows that, from the 13<sup>th</sup> to the 15<sup>th</sup> February 1942 it assisted the destroyers 'Yura' and 'Fubuki' in attacking Allied shipping fleeing from Singapore and they sank four vessels (including, research has revealed, the auxiliary merchant ship 'HMS. Giang Bee' on the evening of 13th February and the Chinese River steamer "Li Wo" on 14<sup>th</sup> February after both ships had escaped from Singapore) with great loss of civilian life.

This was a cruel mismatch in the extreme – these destroyers of the 'Fubuki' class in the Imperial Japanese Navy were, at the time, amongst the biggest, fastest, most advanced destroyers in the world at 2090 tons, capable of 38 knots and armed with six five inch guns, plus over thirty AA guns plus six powerful torpedo tubes ([www.combinedfleet.com](http://www.combinedfleet.com))



Imperial Japanese Navy Destroyer "Asagiri"

[Photo Source: Wikipedia]

The unarmed little "Redang" did not stand a chance against two or three extremely powerful destroyers, each of four times its size and eight times its speed.

Mr. Robertson explains what happened in the case of the only lifeboat (the starboard quarter lifeboat) to get away from the ship;

*"... I estimate that about 20 people were in the boat when we pulled away from the ship's side, and apart from a few burns here and there I managed to escape injury. We picked up another 13 people from the water until the boat was dangerously overloaded – amongst these was Mr Thompson [Henry Thompson was First Radio Officer on the ship] who was pulled over the stern of the boat by one of the Danish members of the crew [probably either Jorgensen or Andersen] and myself.... [there is then a detailed explanation of the injuries which resulted in the death of Mr. H. Thompson] "*

The account of there being about 30 passengers who survived in a lifeboat (including four women and three children) is restated widely (angelfire.com; archives of John D. Stevenson AMI. Mar. E; "Escape from Singapore"; and "Sea Breeze".)

Captain Rasmussen recorded *"... I estimate 62 lives were lost in the attack, either killed by splinters, burned to death or drowned ... two young ladies said to be from Mansfield Co.'s Singapore office were instantaneously killed whilst by a direct hit while typing out the passenger list in the Chief Engineer's cabin. The Chief Officer, Mr Riemise (a Dane), the Chief Engineer, Mr Dean (of Straits Steamship Company) were also killed instantaneously, most of the passengers rushed below in the 'tween deck when the attack began, and were killed either by splinters or burnt to death ..."* ( [www.merchantnavyofficers.com](http://www.merchantnavyofficers.com)).



The identity of the two young women from Mansfield Co.'s, Singapore office mentioned by Captain Rasmussen would appear to have been two telephonists from Mansfield's who were travelling with their mother, Mrs George.

Given that Captain David Nelson recorded that there were six children on board and the only record of children surviving are the two children of Mr & Mrs Chong Kiat, then we must assume that four children lost their lives in the attack on the ship and/or during the sinking. One or two of these children would have been a daughter or two daughters of Mrs George.

Elsewhere the number of people killed is stated to be 58 (BM) but, simple arithmetic based on Mr. D. Robertson's report of the some twenty 'deserters' making a late boarding suggests that up to 75 - 80 people lost their lives in the shelling and sinking. Of these the two largest groups would have been about twenty Australian (and Empire) soldiers plus some twenty men employed by Cable & Wireless Ltd.

Of the crew the Danish Chief Officer and a British Lt. (E), plus the five known Royal Navy/RNVR Ratings were killed. Interestingly four out of five of the Able Seaman and Ordinary Seamen all came from Glasgow and Dundee and presumably stuck together as a group when they were assigned as crew from "HMS. Sultan" (the shore base in Singapore), onto the undermanned merchant ships which were attempting to hurriedly evacuate people from Singapore prior to the Surrender.

The survivors from the ship amounted to less than a third of those on board. The NIRC report clearly states "... Concerning the 33 persons who were in the lifeboat, the following details are known;

- 2 died in the lifeboat (see above)*
- 12 are in the male internment camp*
- 3 Danes see above, released*
- 2 Czechs, named, see above (this refers to Plhon and Smrzak).*
- 4 released [researcher note: must be Cervinka, Zelnicek and two others?]*
- 3 ladies in the female internment camp Palembang (Mrs. A. Laybourne, Mrs N.W. Nailer, Mrs E.M.C. Pugh)*
- 1 Petty Officer [indecipherable word] Navy*
- 3 Australian soldiers in the service camp Palembang (names known to Lt. Cmdr. J. N. Hancock, RNVR (Malaya)*
- 3 British soldiers, as mentioned above.*

[Not mentioned in the above list - although they may be two of those in the 'released' list - are 'Chong Kiat, wife and two children' recorded as also being in the lifeboat personnel picked up by 'HMS Tapah'].

It would seem that of those on board it was the people at the stern (rear) of the ship who survived whilst those in the engine room and, those below decks and those at the front of the ship lost their lives from shells hitting the ship and being trapped by the burning of the ship. Mr. Robertson again;

*"... Mr. Thompson lost consciousness about 6 or 7pm; before that he told me that he had been hit whilst running aft and that a lot of people were killed on the foredeck including Mr. Rickwood of C. & W...." (DR).*

As stated above, two lifeboats, one dedicated to the Australian soldiers and the one for the Cable & Wireless employees were damaged by shell fire or the burning ship and were never launched or immediately sank. Therefore, the deaths in these two groups were very high.

*"... It was only possible to lower one of the lifeboats and thirty-two survivors from the attack abandoned Redang. It took all that remained of the day and all of the next to reach Sumatra whereupon the unfortunate survivors were captured by the Japanese ...' (BM possibly quoting Captain Rasmussen).*

In Muntok internment camp Messrs Cervinka and Zelnicek told Mr Kos *"... The only surviving lifeboat carried 33 people. The crew was rowing to as far as possible from the ship, which caught a big fire in the meantime. None of them saw the other lifeboat around so it probably never successfully left the sinking ship. They were taking turns in rowing. Strangfeld was sitting with his head down and had his briefcase by his legs. His neighbour was however complaining about it, and after a while he threw it into the water. Strangfeld died in the afternoon of 13<sup>th</sup> February, and it took a while before the others realised it as he was sitting motionless with his head down. The captain, who was present in that boat, decided to throw the body overboard. Before they did it Cervinka cut off a small pouch that Strangfeld had around his neck and kept it. They did not search Strangfeld's pockets, though. While they were rowing another man and a child died. They rowed all day and night, before they reached a beach on 14<sup>th</sup> February..."*

The mention by the Bata men of a child dying in the lifeboat is the only record of that death of a child. It is unknown whose family lost a loved one at that point.

Douglas Banks fills in this part of the events" *... The Cable & Wireless personnel in this boat were La Nauxe (sic) Tisshaw, Banks Hunter, Gardiner, Furneaux, Worster, A. N. Laybourne, Mrs A.N. Laybourne, E.B. Laybourne, Hoy and Mrs Nailer. The Captain instructed us to row in a westerly direction, saying we should make land in four to five hours, running as we were with a strong current. After four hours, we enquired where we were as no land was in sight, to which he replied there were trees ahead, and we carried on. Shortly after this a passenger died from wounds and he was buried over the side. He was the Manager of Bata's Shoe Company in Singapore. (Mr Thompson of the Marconi International Marine Company of Singapore died the following morning at approximately 11.00 hours and was buried in a similar manner). After an hour or so the 'trees' resolved themselves into four Japanese destroyers and two cruisers. As we approached three of the destroyers weighed anchor and left to intercept another ship which we could see, following up on the 'Redang's 'course. Although they passed us at about one and a half cables, they ignored us. At this time six Hurricanes were seen coming into land, presumably at Palembang, and upon this the two cruisers and the fourth destroyer left hurriedly, also without paying us any attention. We continued rowing through the night, eventually making landfall at about 14.00 hours on Saturday – very exhausted and hungry. In spite of this, the only food we could spare was two tablespoons of brackish water from a small keg from the lifeboat and one Marie biscuit per*

*head. We could find no water or food, and it was necessary to cut down palm trees in order to get the nuts for the water, and the tree hearts for food. The water in the beaker was sufficient for about three days at about two tablespoons per head per day. The mouldy ships biscuits were sufficient for about two small handfuls each per day for the same time. The nights were made hideous by sandflies and mosquitoes and sleep was impossible.*

Mr. Robertson gives his brief description of the efforts of those in the lifeboat to reach land; *"... We cleared the ship, which was blazing furiously down to the waterline, about noon, and decided to make for the coast of Sumatra (which incidentally. Had the Naval authorities not sent us on a deep sea course, would have been much closer than it was). From then until we landed 26 hours later it was a constant battle with choppy seas and heavy swells; the boat was so overcrowded that continuous bailing was necessary and it was impossible to make sufficient room to hoist the sail. In fact, it was only with the greatest difficulty that we got at the fresh water barrel for a sip of water, which was all we had between leaving the ship and landing on the beach..."*

As mentioned above by Douglas Banks, the lifeboat reached the coast of Sumatra at around 2.00 pm on the afternoon of 14th February 1942, only to be met by a desolate scene described now by Duncan Robertson;

*"...four hours later [i.e. after the death of Mr. Thompson at 10.00am] we landed on the coast of Sumatra where there was, except for about a dozen coconut trees, nothing but mangrove swamps – no fresh water; no inhabitants. That night we slept on the beach but, despite the exhaustion caused by many cramped hours on the boat, everybody was up and patrolling the beach from about 4 am owing to the swarms of sandflies making further sleep impossible..." (DR).*

The survivors had only 10 tins of evaporated milk, a small quantity of old ship's biscuits and half a barrel of fresh water and introduced drastic rationing. Two search parties struck out along the coast and apart from endless mangroves they made contact with a Malay fisherman who agreed to take them to Palembang but then disappeared.

At about 09.00 hours (Banks) on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> February, a small ship appeared off the coast and anchored about two miles away just around a spit, where the survivors could just see her masts. The survivors were unsure whether the ship was an Allied or enemy vessel so did not immediately make contact but later that day – on the afternoon of Monday 16<sup>th</sup> February they decided to make contact rather than almost certainly starving to death on the beach. The ship was "HMS. Tapah" a Straits Shipping Company vessel converted into a minelayer which had anchored up close to the beach but had become stuck in the mud when the tide had gone out.

The "SS. Redang" survivors were taken on board the "HMS Tapah" and welcomed with a meal and cigarettes; but with only one tide per 24 hours in that region the "Tapah" did not get underway again until 5 pm on Tuesday 17th February. Later that day 'Tapah' made for a more suitable anchorage in another estuary of the river 'Moussi' [ actually the called the river 'Moesi' in southern Sumatra in 1942 and now spelt as 'Musi'] picked up some of the civilian survivors of the sinking of the "HMS Giang Bee" which had left in the same large convoy from Singapore and

which the 'Redang' survivors had seen intercepted by the IJN destroyer 'Asagiri' and other warships.

At about 18.00 hours (Banks) the 'Tapah' left for a night journey through the Banka Straits and hugged the coast of Sumatra right up to the entrance of Banka Straits, by which time it was dark, and it then opened to full speed (11 knots) on a course through the Straits. As both Douglas Banks and Duncan Robertson then record at about 23.00 hours "*... We had only been going one hour when a searchlight was switched on and swung around until its beam rested full upon us, and shortly after a Japanese boarding party arrived ...*". The first instruction was to 'Proceed until told to stop for examination' and then the order to 'Stop' was received by 'Tapah' between 02.00 and 03.00 on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> February.

Most of the survivors of the sinking of the "SS. Redang" were now internees of the Japanese in Sumatra for the next three and a half years. Initially, they were taken ashore at Muntok and after three weeks of overcrowding, only rice for food, and a severe outbreak of dysentery the Japanese finally separated the camp into 'Services', 'Civilians' and 'Women and Children'. men and women separated – each group to endure years of privation, sickness and desperation that would result in many losing their lives.

Some of the crew were of course from neutral countries and there was (in the understanding of the Japanese) some confusion over whether the Czech men were on the Axis side or otherwise since Czechoslovakia had been overrun by the Nazis at that point in time. The NIRC report tells us "*... Captain Rasmussen and two officers and two Czechs, V.A. Zelnick (sic) and H. Cervinka, both of Bata Shoe Company Singapore were later released...*" (NIRC).

This document has identified some 50 people on the ship leaving around 60 people yet to be identified. It is speculated that those yet to be identified will include British and Australian soldiers, some employees of Bata Shoe Co. Ltd (and perhaps a few Czechoslovakian residents of Singapore), plus one or two crew.

Later that year there was some justice when the IJN destroyer "Asagiri" was attacked by US Marine Corps SBD Dauntless dive bombers on 24 August 1942 north east of Savo Island and sunk with the loss of 122 lives (both ship's crew and soldiers on board).

Any corrections, additions or suggestions to the content of this memorial document would be most welcome by the researcher, Michael Pether, 2/23 Sanders Avenue, Takapuna, Auckland, New Zealand. 0622. Or email [mncpether@gmail.com](mailto:mncpether@gmail.com)

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Thanks,

Michael Pether.

## Sources:

- **Banks** = report by Douglas Banks dated 4<sup>th</sup> December 1945 on the voyage and the fate of Cable & Wireless Ltd personnel (supplied to the researcher by Amanda Pain, the granddaughter of Herbert Pain who was killed in the attack. Report was contained in a letter received by her grandmother Phyllis Amy Pain after the war from Douglas Banks).
- **BPPL** = A secret list of people from Singapore and Malaya with their last known situation prepared in Changi Prison Internment camp during 1942 by Mr. Jack Bennett (aged about 45 years and described as a merchant with the General Import/Export Borneo Co., internee # 386 in Changi) from debriefing internees in Changi Civilian internment camp and POWs and Internees passing through that camp in Singapore during 1942. The list is recorded in tiny "Pin point" writing on eighteen sheets of 'Jeyes' toilet paper that is unreadable to the naked eye. It is held in the National Archives of the United Kingdom and is a unique and invaluable record of the last known sightings of many missing men.
- **BM** = Billy McGee on website [mercantilemarine.org](http://mercantilemarine.org)
- **COR** = Colonial Office representative list of Sumatra internees on 'SS. Redang' from Cable & Wireless compiled from internees passing through Singapore immediately after the Japanese Surrender, letter dated 27.11.45
- **CORD** = Colonial Office Death Register
- [www.combinedfleet.com](http://www.combinedfleet.com) – an excellent database on Japanese warships and submarines and their logs during the War
- **CWGC** = the website of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission
- **DN** = Captain David Nelson "The Story of Changi"
- **DR** = Mr. Duncan Robertson, Singapore Depot Manager, Marconi International Marine Communication Company Ltd letter to MIMC Ltd October 1945. Marconi Veterans Association website.
- **JB database** = the database of Malayan Volunteers of the FMSVF, SSVF etc. compiled by the late John Brown.
- **JME** = author and researcher Jonathan Moffatt's database on Evacuees from Singapore (on the website of the "Malayan Volunteers Group").
- **JMM** = author and researcher Jonathan Moffatt's 'Malayans' database
- **Naval-history.net** – under British Casualties During WW2 and listed under "SS. Redang" on 13/2 and 15/2.
- **NIRC** = Netherlands East Indies Red Cross in Palembang internment Camp – report compiled and dated 9.2.43 with all names of survivors and deaths witnessed and signed by passengers on the ship.
- **MS** = Margaret Sypniewska on her website [www.angelfire.com](http://www.angelfire.com)
- [www.merchantnavyofficers.com](http://www.merchantnavyofficers.com)
- [www.wrecksite.eu](http://www.wrecksite.eu)
- **SCAND** – an article in ScandAsia dated 17 December 2006 by Gregers Moller being based on a report written in 1955 by Christian Frederik Schiopffe who had lived through the war in Siam (Bangkok).

- SFPMA = “Singapore Free Press and Mercantile Advertiser” newspaper archives at the Singapore National Library.
- ST = The “Straits Times” newspaper archives at the Singapore National Library
- HMS Tapah List = list of people in lifeboat from “Redang” picked up by “HMS Tapah” on 16 February 1942
- THBM = an article titled “The History of Batamen in Malaya” was published in the “Batanagar News” (Vol IX, Nr. 40 dated 6.10.1845) in India and preserved by Mr Stanislav Jednovnický when he provided it to be translated and placed on the internet in 1993 whilst he was living in Sydney, NSW, Australia.

### Passenger List:

[Note: survivors of the actual sinking are shown in [green font](#).]

Civilian and military passengers;

- **ANSON – see HANSEN.**
- **BANKS – Douglas Banks** (‘Tapah’ list); **BANKS D.** [Douglas] *Cable & Wireless Engineer*, aged 48 in 1942, on HMS Tapah 2.42. Palembang, **Sumatra internee**. Repatriated to the UK on Antenor, arriving Liverpool 27.10.45 (JMM). He wrote a full report on the voyage and sinking and copied this to Mrs Phyllis Amy Pain, the wife of Herbert Pain of Cable & Wireless who was killed in the attack on the ‘Redang’.
- **BASSETT** - L.G. Bassett, Cable & Wireless Ltd., “*believed missing or died on ship*” (COR); Lionel George Bassett, died on or about 13.2.42 in the Bank Straits, presumed lost his life in the sinking of the “SS. Redang”, (CODR, M1, folio 162, serial # 896, source C. in C. ALFSEA, ref. 19/10260/46).; **Mr. Lionel George Bassett**, b.1905 Honiton, Devon. Electrical Engineer, Cable & Wireless. Lost at sea 13. 2.42 on the SS Redang. (JMM). In November 1945 there Appeared in the magazine of the ‘British Malaysians’ the following notice “... *We regret to announce the death in February 1942 (reported drowned at sea in ‘SS Redang’ at the fall of Singapore) of Lionel George Bassett of Cable & Wireless...*”.
- **BENNETT STEVENS (see also STEVENS)**
- **BOLTER/BOULTER/BELTER – Boulter**, Chiropodist, Battery Road, Singapore died on “Redang” (Palembang list); J.R. Belter,” ... *wine & provision merchant S’pore ...*” seen on board the “SS. Redang” by Mr D Robertson and signed to that effect (NIRC); it may be that the witnesses were confused between John Bolter and his father, whose name was Henry Bolter and who had run an Import Business in Singapore before being interned with his wife in Changi. John Bolter also had a brother named Max who was journalist with the “Straits Times:” and who died as POW on the Burma Railway. It is possible that there is another member of the family involved – a Norman Bolter who appears to have died on 13.2.42 (JM Malaysians); Mr. **John Seigbert Bolter**, Chiropodist. Son of Henry. Brother of Max. Lost at sea on the SS Redang 13.2.42. Wife J.(JMM); passenger lists for the UK/Singapore voyage in 1940 show John Bolter (b. 1910) and his wife Daisy (nee Jacobs) born 1909, they had been married at Hampstead Heath in 1935; John Siebert Bolter, Chiropodist, Singapore died on or about 13.2.42 in the Banka Straits presumably as a result of the sinking of the “SS.

Redang" (CODR M1, 211, 1053, date of death notice 24.5.46 source C in C ALFSEA, ref 19/10260/46)

- **BOXALL – Mr Loraine Ronald Tivadar Boxall**, United Kingdom, civilian, age 30, Civil Defence Force, son of Leopold and Theodora Boxall (nee Kaan), 10 Fitzwilliam Avenue, Richmond, Surrey. Believed to have been on the "SS. Redang" and died 15.2.42 (CWGC); he was born on 21.2.11. The 'British Malaya' journal of June 1945 had the following "... Missing – reported missing, RONALD BOXALL, any information gratefully received by his mother Mrs. Boxall, 10 Fitzwilliam Avenue, Richmond, Surrey ...".
- **CAMERON – L.Cpl. James Wallace Cameron**, #6169, 1<sup>st</sup> (Perak) Battalion, FMSVF, lost in "SS. Redang" (Siam) 15.2.42, husband of Sydney Sybil Cameron of Biggin Hill, Kent (Column 391, Singapore Memorial); another source says "... Beld. Left ship with F/L Whittaker, aged 34 ..." (the database of Malayan Volunteers compiled by the late John Brown); also "... CAMERON JW TEKKA LTD WITH MG UNIT B. MATI LEFT..." (BPPL); his father-in-law Mr. John Whittaker (below) also lost his life in the sinking of this ship; James Cameron was the Acting manager of Pusing Rubber & Tin Ltd, Perak (JM Evacuees).
- **CERVINKA – Hynek Cervinka, Czech** ("Tapah" list); Mr Cervinka is shown in a Bata Shoe Co. Ltd., staff photo in an article in the "Straits Times" in 1940 when Bata is stated to have had 800 employees in Malaya (ST. 21.1.40); Mr and Mrs Cervinka were attendees at the funeral of a Czech identity in Singapore in 1941 with Mr. J. Strangfeld also from Bata in attendance (ST. 4.7.41); Mr. Cervinka was in the only lifeboat to successfully leave the ship (THBM) and was briefly interned in Palembang internment camp (NIRC); nothing is really known of what happened to him after his release and return to Singapore, but after the war he did have a conversation with Mrs Smrzak to tell her that her husband had been part of the Bata escape party and had lost his life on the ship (Olga Rihova email July 2015); presumably he travelled to India. After the war, he apparently returned to the small town of Malenovice, north of Zlin in the Czech Republic, with his wife (Olek Plesek 2017 email).
- **CHONG – Chong Kiat, wife and two children** ("Tapah" list); it is not clear whether this is the man's full name. There were a number of people with names that included "Chong Kiat" in Singapore prior to the War – and it would have been extremely difficult for any person who was Chinese to board one of these evacuation ships unless they were very well connected and had e.g. supported the war in China against the Japanese, so that they had real reason to escape and something with which to convince the authorities that they should receive one of the scarce passes to board a ship.
- **CHONG – Mrs Chong**, wife of above.
- **CHONG – child of above**
- **CHONG – child of above**
- **CRISP –Albert Ernest Crisp**, Tax Official, Federal Tax Dept., Australia seconded to Straits Settlements Government 1941. **LDC**. Lost at sea 13.2.42[63] on the "SS Redang". Also, on "Kuala" 14.2.42 list at CWGC. Wife Margaret (JM).
- **DELMENICO/DELMONICO –William Henry Delmenico**, Australian, Winch Driver, Singapore Gas Works. Lost at sea 13.2.42 presumed died on the "SS Redang", Banka Straits. Wife Adelaide Priscilla (CODR M1, Folio 220, Serial # 1088, Source C. in C. ALFSEA, ref. 19/10260/46 and JM); Delmonico, Australian Dredge engineer from Siam, latterly employed at Singapore Gasworks (NIRC); he and Quigg and Whittaker

were all 'Volunteer Engineers' on the 'SS Redang' and records compiled in one of the Sumatran internment camps noting this also say that all three men were not seen after the shelling of the ship (NIRC)

- **DELIMINCO/DELMENICO – W.R. Delmenico; W.R. Deliminco**, Straits Steamship Co. Ltd., Singapore, died on or about 13.2.42 in the Banka Straits, presumed to have died in the sinking of the "SS. Redang", Date of Death certificate 19.6.46 (CORD source C. in C. ALFSEA, M1, Folio 228, Serial # 1116, ref. 19/10260/46); **was he a relation of the above?**
- **DORAN – "... A.R. Doran, Hume Pipe Co.,"** is on the list in the UK National Archives as a passenger – no trace of this person has been found. There was an 'A R Doran' who left Australia by the 'Nankin' for Yokohama in 1938 (Sydney Morning Herald 11.11.38) and a person with the same initials listed as a Lightweight boxer in 1936 in Australia 9 The Labour Daily, 21.10.36).
- **ELSTON – Reginald Elston**, British ('Tapah' list); ELSTON R. [Reginald] *Cable & Wireless Ltd.*, Engineer. Cpl Perak LDC. On HMS *Tapah* 2.42. **Sumatra internee.** Wife Kathleen M. evacuated with daughter P.M. on 'Aorangi', arriving Fremantle WA 23.1.42 then to Southend-on-Sea UK. He died in captivity 17.5.45[44] Palembang. (JMM).; his wife was Kathleen May Elston, 27 Hastings Road, Southend – on –Sea and it is written that Reginald worked during internment in Muntok, Palembang and then Belalau camps to make extra money by rolling (in fact tens of thousands) cigarettes. He died in the awful Belalau camp in Sumatra on 17 May 1945 when malnutrition, disease and lack of medicine killed many men and women (muntokpeacemuseum.org).
- **FURNEAUX – Victor Reginald Furneaux** ('Tapah' list); born 1898, the son of Christopher John Furneaux and Elizabeth (nee Baker), he was employed by Cable & Wireless Ltd in Singapore and in 1940 was "... *exempted from all training and general mobilisation ...*" because of his occupation ('Straits Time', 30.6.40). He may have been from South Australia? After being captured at Muntok and surviving the internment camps of Muntok, Palembang and Belalau he married Norah Weston on Malta in 1949, at St Patrick's Church, Sliena, and died in 1971;
- **GAMBLE – J.M. Gamble, Cable & Wireless Ltd.**, "believed missing or died on ship" (COR); **Mr. John Marshall Gamble**, born 3.1.1899. From New Zealand. To Batavia 1939. Engineer, Cable & Wireless. Wife Gwendoline (JMM); his father was W.N. Gamble and they lived in Westbourne Road, Remuera , Auckland ( later in St Marks Road , Remuera) he was clearly bright student for he achieved as 'No. 91 with 1068 marks', a "Certificate of Proficiency with the privilege of free tuition at a secondary school" in 1915 and attended Auckland Grammar School (The New Zealand Herald 2.2.15); whilst at the prestigious Auckland Grammar he was in the top 'A' stream in his 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> form years ; the SFPMA newspaper of the pre-war period report on 27.5.18 (28?) 'to Mr & Mrs. John Gamble a daughter, Bukit Pajang Estate, 'Jeanne' and this is also in the Australian 'Trove' archives (30.6.28), indicating that John Gamble or his wife came from or spent some time in Australia; in 1929 John Marshall Gamble had been commissioned as a 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt in the SSVF (SFPMA 20.4.29) but he could have relinquished this commission because of age or his 'restricted' status as an engineer with essential skills by the time the Japanese invaded in 1941; in 1947 there was a notice published for his Deceased Estate (ST. 17.9.47); there is no CWGC record of his death.



- **GARDINER – Wilfred Rogers Gardiner ('Tapah' list);** W.R. Gardiner, *Cable & Wireless Ltd.*, "Singapore staff who died in Sumatra camp" (COR); **Mr. Wilfred Rogers Gardiner**, *Cable & Wireless*, Penang. Evacuated from Singapore on the MV Redang 12.2.42. Sunk 13.2.42. Rescued by "HMS Tapah". Captured at Muntok 17.2.42. Palembang, Sumatra internee. Lt 4SSVF. He died in captivity 13.5.45[44]. Grave at Jakarta (JM); he rose to Lt. Gardiner, #3351, 3<sup>rd</sup> Btn. SSVF Signal Section whilst he was working for C. & W. Ltd., Penang (JB database); also, **Wilfred Rogers Gardiner**, died on 13.5.45, South Sumatra, of Beriberi (CODR, M1, Folio 113, serial # 677, source Allied Military Authorities, ref. 144/10256/C/45 and 398/ 10256/C/46).; Wife Vida, aged 40, had evacuated on the Empress of Japan. She arrived in Liverpool on 19.3.42 and travelled to Petts Wood, Kent. (JMM)
- **GEIKIE – Mrs. Susannah Geikie**, a 'late evacuee' on SS Redang (JMM).; there was a Miss Sonia Geikie interned in Sumatra who may be a daughter or sister of this person and by way of background Miss Sonia Geikie was photographed at an YWCA dance in 1940 as an attractive young woman (SFPMA 2.9.40) and 'Ancestry.com' show a Miss Sonia Elizabeth Gertrude Geikie born in Sarawak in 1918; almost certainly the same person Sonia Gertrude Elizabeth Geikie, 27 years of age, married James Albert Price, aged 35 years, in Calcutta; in 1948 she became a US citizen and in 2006 she died in San Diego (JM).
- **GEORGE – Mrs George (NIRC)**, and her daughters seen on board ship (Mr Hoy as a



Japanese of the vessel in which he was leaving Singapore, Date of Death cert. 13.9.46 (CODR , source various reports, M1, Folio 258, # 1232, ref 10001/46); he is said to have been “Alexander Malcolm’s (see below) number one engineer” (MS); he was a civil engineer with Malcolm & Co, and his wife Eileen Nancy hand ,aged 34 years had evacuated on the ‘Duchess of Bedford’ which arrived at Liverpool on 4.4.42 ( she then went on to Sheffield) (JMM).

- **HANSEN - Bdr. Arthur Hansen** (not L/Bdr. A. Anson as recorded by the Captain of ‘Tapah’.) #856381, RA. (‘Tapah’ list); his NOK in the Palembang camp register was his Mother, Mrs. L. Ryding, 117 Park Lane, Carshalton, Surrey.
- **HAYES – Gnr. John Hayes, #37718428, RA.** (‘Tapah’ list); Gunner John Hayes, 80 Anti-Tank Regiment, Royal Artillery, aged 23 years died as a POW on 20.10.44 and is buried in plot 1.F.4 at the Jakarta War Cemetery. He was the son of William and Anne Hayes of Liverpool (CWGC) also listed on the Royal Artillery Pilot Roll as being a POW and dying in Palembang (Keith Andrews, July 2015). In the camp register his number is 3771848.
- **HEIM – F. B. Heim, Bata Shoe Co, presumed to have died at sea on or about 11.2.42** while endeavouring to leave Singapore, Date of Death certificate was 15.10.46, source of information was Governor of Singapore (CODR. M1, # 1256, ref. 5 on 10001.46); *Freidrich Heim “... perished at sea ... “which is the same description used for other Czech employees of Bata including Dr. Straussler, Mr. Plhon and Mr Smrzak (THBM); also Bedrich Heim, # 311, Local Defence Corps (Singapore), who died between 1.1.42 and 31.12.42 , husband of Elsa Heim . Column 464 Kranji Cemetery (CWGC); Bedrich Heim is recorded as arriving in Fremantle WA, in January 1934 as a “representative of the Bata Shoe company” (Trove) and then in the New Zealand Archives Passenger lists arriving in New Zealand (aged 26 years old) on the ‘Mariposa’ from Honolulu.;*
- **HENDERSON – A.A. (AIF) Hayes SX10615** (“Tapah” list); this is in fact **Private Anthony Alick Hayes, 2/4 Field Workshop, AIF** also known as ‘Tony’ Henderson, born at Victor Harbour, South Australia on 7.10.19. After capture by the Japanese at Banka Island he became a POW in Thailand. He died on 30.7.98 and is recorded as husband of Olwyn and father of Rosemary and Malcolm. (RSL Virtual Memorial and Trove)
- **HOY – George Oswald Gerald Hoy** (‘Tapah’ list); Hoy was a witness and signatory on the “Redang” survivor and deaths lists compiled in Palembang camp (NIRC); also “... HOY G.O.G. [George Oswald Gerald] b.1903. Accountant, Cable & Wireless. Left Singapore on the SS Redang [sunk]. Rescued by HMS *Tapah*. Captured at Muntok 17.2.42. Palembang **Sumatra internee**. His mother evacuated from Singapore to India on the Felix Roussel. Recovered to Madras ‘DUNEERA’ 28 Sep 45. He returned to Singapore 1946-1960. Died 12.8.1963 [59] Carlisle WA...” (Jonathan Moffatt’s “Sumatra Internees”).
- **HUNT/HUNTER – Ernest Freeman Hunt /Hunter** (‘Tapah’ list); HUNTER E.F. [Ernest Freeman] b.1891 Gilbert Scor Fort, Westmorland. From Ambleside, Westmorland. WW1 Signals Corps veteran. *Cable & Wireless Engineer. Palembang, Sumatra internee*. Wife Winifred evacuated. He died in captivity 13.6.43[53] Palembang, probably of an aneurism (JMM)
- **JOHNSTONE – L/Sgt. Sam Johnstone, #856357, RA.** (‘Tapah’ list); also, on the Royal Artillery Pilot Roll at Kew as in the 5<sup>th</sup> Field Regiment and a POW in Palembang (Keith Andrews, July 2015). In the Palembang camp register he is listed as Sgt S. Johnston,



Royal Artillery, and his NOK is his father ,Mr J. Johnston, 31 Welbeck Road, Hyde, Cheshire.

- **JOYCE** – C.N.W. Joyce, Cable & Wireless Ltd., “believed missing or died on ship” i.e. ‘SS Redang’ (COR); also “JOYCE CNW C & W LEFT ABT 13/2 NEI? ... “(BPPL); **Mr. Charles Norman Wishart Joyce**, from Chislehurst Kent. Cable & Wireless. Formerly a Private in the Scottish Company 1SSVF. Wife Piercy had been evacuated. Sumatra internee. Died in captivity 15.3.43 [53]. Son A.E.W.(JMM); also, Charles Norman Wishart Joyce, died aged 53, on 15.3.43 in Sumatra, son of Mrs. E. M. Joyce, ‘Lynwood, White Horse Hill, Chislehurst, Kent and husband of Piercy H. Joyce. (CWGC). He died in Padang, Sumatra on 15.3.43 according to the CORD RegisterM1, Folio 132, Serial #788. This is backed up by his mention as having “died in captivity in the far east” in a list issued by the Managing director of C & W in September 1945 (‘Advertiser’, Adelaide 25.9.45). There is obviously a contradiction insofar as whether he died on the ship or in internment. The fact of the matter is that he was not in the only lifeboat to get away from the “Redang” and in the account left by John Robins of C & W describing the sinking of ‘HMS Grasshopper’ he records meeting ‘Joyce & Docker’ in Dabo and . that “... They had had a similar experience to our own but had been bombed whilst at anchor at Pompong island ...” – Charles Joyce had presumably evacuated on ‘SS Kuala’ or the ‘SS Tien Kwang’.
- **JOYCE** –E.W. Joyce “: believed missing or died on ship (COR); the researcher has not been able to identify this person
- **LANAUZE –Richard Frederick Lionel La Nauze ( ‘Tapah’ list);** R.F.L. Lanauze, Cable & Wireless Ltd., “Singapore staff who died in Sumatra camp” (COR); the CWGC simply records Mr. R.F.L. La Nauze dying in Sumatra (CWGC); it is interesting to note that during the First World War a Mr. G.H.K. La Nauze worked for the C & W antecedent Eastern Extension Cable Co - he was possibly a father or uncle; during the 1930s there are several references to his daughters Patricia and Beatrice ( known in Singapore newspaper articles as ‘Cherry’ or ‘Cheery’); There is a record of Patricia La Nauze being evacuated with Jimmy and Cherry to Sydney (JME).; researcher Jonathan Moffatt notes that “ ... there is a question over why, if Richard died at Muntok Gaol, he isn’t on the various lists of British internee deaths and burials at Muntok; he is on CWGC register but not on the usually better Colonial Office Deaths Register. McDougall’s diary confirms his death and burial at Muntok. Thanks to Judy Balcombe I have discovered that his body was reinterred at Cimahi cemetery, Java, Indonesia after the War. I’ve still to work out if this was by arrangement between the Dutch recovery team and his company Cable & Wireless, which Judy reckons or my hunch that they looked at the name and thought he was Dutch or similar. He was buried on the same day at Muntok as two Dutchmen. I will check if other Cable & Wireless staff who died in Sumatra are also buried at Cimahi; LA NAUZE R.F.L. [Richard Frederick Lionel] ‘Fred’ b.1891 Mauritius. Family migrated to Melbourne, Australia in 1899. Richard was educated at Toorak Grammar School. He joined Eastern Telegraph and was a Pte in their Special Reserve 1916. In Western Australia 1930s. Manager, Eastern Extension Australasia & China Telegraph Co. Ltd, Labuan then Cable & Wireless Company Manager, Penang. In Singapore, he married Gertrude Moran from Queensland. Survived the sinking of SS Redang 13.2.42. Picked up by HMS *Tapah*. Muntok & Palembang Sumatra internee. Wife Gertrude ‘Jimmy’ & daughters Patricia ‘Pat’ & Gertrude ‘Cherry’ evacuated to Sydney, Australia.(JMM) ; in 2008 the

newsletter of The Friends School in Tasmania records insofar as Old Girls that Patricia ( 'Pattie') and Beatrice ( 'Cherry') went to that school during the pre-war period and after the war returned to Singapore where they both married ,both were widowed and both ended up living in Edinburgh, Scotland; the ST of 30.4.48 records the engagement of Beatrice Kent ( 'Cheery') , youngest daughter of the late R.F.L. La Nauze to Alexander Ramsay and the on 30.7.48 the SFPMA records that Beatrice 'Cherry' Kent la Nauze married Alexander John McGregor Ramsay at St. Andrews Presbyterian Church, Kuala Lumpur on 27.7.48; ; as recently as 2008 Beatrice Kent Ramsay was living in Edinburgh.

- **LEYBOURNE – Eardley Bruce Leybourne / Laybourne** ( 'Tapah' list); **LAYBOURNE B.E. [Bruce Eardley Leybourne]** born in India in 1888. In 1935, he is shown on the Singapore Directory as being Foreign Staff, Eastern Extension (JM) and later worked for *Cable & Wireless Ltd.*, Electra House, 35 Robinson Rd, Singapore. Formerly Eastern Extension Australasia & China Telegraph Co. Ltd. Formerly Private in the 1SSVF. Singapore **LDC**. Left Singapore on the MV Redang; Rescued by HMS Tapah. Captured at Muntok 17.2.42. Palembang, Sumatra internee. Died 13.10.44[56] Lahat, Java. (JMM); and buried in Jakarta cemetery (ancestry.com); his wife was Edith Winifred Leybourne of Perth, WA. (ancestry.com)
- **LEYBOURNE /LAYBOURNE– Algernon Neville Leybourne** ( 'Tapah' list); **LAYBOURNE A.N. [Algernon Neville]** b. India 1891 (ancestry.com); in 1935, he and his brother Bruce were shown as Foreign Staff, Eastern extension (JM). Wife Gladys – also interned & brother G.B. [Eardley] *Cable & Wireless Ltd.*, Singapore. On HMS Tapah. Palembang, Sumatra internees. He died in captivity 28.6.44[54]. Son Maxwell b.1916 Singapore (JMM) ; Mr Algernon Nigel Laybourne, aged 54 years, husband of Gladys Irene Laybourne, died on 28.7.44 at Palembang (CWGC); in conflict with this record is that stating that he was buried at Muntok internment camp on that date ( 'The Lost Graves of Muntok' website) , which sadly means that when the Dutch authorities instructed in 1960 that the remains of all Muntok internees, who had died at that camp , be moved to make way for the development of a service station the remains of Algernon Laybourne were left under this building. NB; their surname is spelt LAYBOURNE on pre-war passenger lists (ancestry.com).
- **LEYBOURNE/LAYBOURNE – Gladys Irene Leybourne**, wife of Algernon Leybourne above ( 'Tapah' list); **LAYBOURNE Mrs Gladys Irene**, wife of A.N. Laybourne, **Sumatra internee**. Died in captivity 1.10.44[53]. (JMM); Mrs Gladys Irene Laybourne, aged 53 years, wife of Algernon Neville Laybourne, died between 1.10.44 -30.10.44 at Palembang (CWGC). Another document in the UK Archives says " Died 29 May 45'.
- **MALCOLM – Alexander Malcolm**, Malcolm & Co. Ltd., date of death on or about 13.2.42, presumed to have lost his life in the sinking by the Japanese of the vessel which he was leaving Singapore (CODR, M1, Folio 128, serial # 767, source Colonial Office Representative in Singapore and other sources, ref. 10001/46); **Alexander A. Malcolm**, United Kingdom, civilian, aged 54 years of Malcolm & Co., located in the Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank Building, Singapore, from Fife, Scotland, husband of Constance Malcolm. Believed to have been on 'SS. Redang', died 15.2.42; Alexander Malcolm was originally from Auchtermuchty in Fife, Scotland and after qualifying as an Engineer he had moved to China around 1916 to establish what became one of the largest engineering concerns in the Far East at the time. The firm's head office was in Shanghai (with branches in Hong Kong, Singapore, Penang and Kuala Lumpur) – they

constructed the major waterworks in Shanghai and bridges, waterworks and other civil engineering projects of significance. He married Constance Stevens in Shanghai in 1919 and they had three children – Nora, William Donald and Elizabeth Malcolm. With most other Europeans, he was driven out of Shanghai and China by the war with the Japanese and by 1940 had relocated in Singapore (his niece Margaret Odrowaz – Sypniewska on angelfire.com); his wife Constance Malcolm remained in the UK during the War.

- **MOONEY – P.O. Mooney, RN** (“Tapah” list); this appears to be a Petty Officer Mooney of the Royal Navy, no other information has come to light and presumably P.O. Mooney was a POW in Palembang and Muntok; to date the only possibility found is a P.O. Mooney, DJ 113482, Royal Navy, of the “HMS Repulse” but this particular Petty Officer is only included with the caveat that there is no direct information confirming that he was on the “Redang”; no deaths of a PO. Mooney are recorded at the CWGC.
- **MUNRO** – L/Bdr. Brodrick Munro, #860336, RA. (“Tapah” list); also, there is an R. H. Munro on the Royal Artillery Pilot Roll at Kew as in the 5<sup>th</sup> Field Regiment and a POW in Palembang (Keith Andrews, July 2015). In the Palembang camp register, he is listed as **Bdr. R.A. Munro, #860366**, and he is recorded as having requested his own demotion from Bdr to Gnr on 9.1.45. His NOK was his mother, Mrs M., Clyne, 4 Glide Street, Inverness, Scotland
- **NAILER** – E.W. Nailer. He had gone to Ceylon in 1928 then to Singapore in 1940 as an engineer with *Cable & Wireless Ltd*. His wife, Maria Christine, was 34 years of age and German by birth. He was lost at sea on the “SS. Redang” but she survived in the lifeboat to be rescued by the “HMS Tapah” (JMM); **Eric Walter Nailer**, died on or about 13.2.42 in the Banka Straits, presumed to have lost his life in the sinking of the “SS. Redang”, Date of Death cert. 30.5.46 (CODR, M1, folio 189, Serial # 980, source C. in C. ALFSEA, ref. 19/10260/46).
- **NAILER – Mrs Marie Christine Nailer**, wife of E. W. Nailer (above). She boarded the only lifeboat to leave the ship and several days later was rescued by the “HMS Tapah”, noted on list as being ‘British’ by marriage (‘Tapah’ list) only to be captured by a Japanese warship on 17.2.42 and interned at Muntok then Palembang (JMM); also listed by Mrs. E. Cross as Mrs Naylor (sic) in Palembang camp. Another UK Archives document says “...Mrs N Naiter, 34 , German , English by birth...”
- **OLD** – George Fearn Old, United Kingdom, aged 43 years, died 15.2.42, husband of Winifred Mary Old of 20 Somers Road, Reigate, Surrey (CWGC); George Old worked for *Cable & Wireless Ltd*, his wife Winifred ‘Mary’ Old had evacuated with their daughter Gillian (aged 9 years); a UK Archives document says “ ...Missing on Sinking...”. in October 1945 there appeared in the magazine of the ‘British Malaysians’ the following notice “ ... We regret to announce the death in February 1942 reported drowned at sea in ‘SS Redang’ at the fall of Singapore of George Fearon Old ( of Cable & Wireless), husband of Mary and youngest son of Mr. F. A. Old ...”, but after the War Mrs. Mary Old returned to Singapore to work as a clerical assistant until 1959. She died in 2001 in Denbighshire. (JMM); other official records show - Old G.F. “believed missing or died on ship” (COR); **Mr. George Fearon Old**, Cable & Wireless Ltd., died on or about 13.2.42 in the Banka Straits, presumed to have lost his life in the sinking of the “SS. Redang”, Date of Death Cert. 7.3.46(CODR, M1, Folio 150, serial # 859, source C. in C. ALFSAE, ref 19/10260/46).

- **PAIN/PAYNE (sic)** – H. Pain, *Cable & Wireless Ltd*, “believed missing or died on ship” (COR); Herbert Pain, Cable & Wireless Ltd., died on or around 13.2.42 in the Banka Straits, presumed to have lost his life in the sinking of the “SS. Redang”, Date of Death cert. 30.5.46 (CODR, M1, Folio 190, Serial 3 983, source C. in C. ALFSEA, ref. 19/10260/46). Payne died on “Redang” (Palembang list); **Mr. Herbert Pain**, b.1910. From Cosham, Portsmouth. To Singapore 1938. Cable & Wireless Ltd, Electra House, 35 Robinson Rd, Singapore. Lost at sea on the MV Redang 13.2.42(JMM); Herbert Pain was married to Phyllis Amy Pain (born 5.7.14 and nee Wanstall) and they had a son Anthony Pain, born 28.9.39 (Herbert Pain’s granddaughter Amanda Pain email November 2018); there is a record of a Mr. H. Pain arriving in Singapore on the “Ranchi” from London in 1934 so maybe he had been in Singapore for some years (SFPMA 23.6.34); another newspaper report is of him leaving Singapore for Europe in 1938 (ST. 3.6.38).
- **PERCY** – George Reginald Percy, MC ED AMICE b.1890. Educated Victoria School, Windsor. Chartered Civil Engineer & Chartered Surveyor. To Malaya 1919 as Assistant Engineer PWD FMS Krian, Perak. By 1940 PWD State Engineer, Johore. Lt Colonel 1SSVF. Evacuated on the MV Redang 12.2.42. Ship sunk 13.2.42. Rescued by “HMS Tapah” and captured at Muntok 17.2.42. POW Palembang, Sumatra. Wife Edith Ella, aged 50 in 1942, evacuated with children George & Gillian, aged 16 and 14, on the ‘Duchess of Bedford’, arrived Liverpool 4.4.42. He died 1947(JMM).
- **PLATT** – “PLATT. C. C & W NEI? ...” (BPPL); but this uncertainty is clarified elsewhere with “... Platt died on “Redang” ...” (Palembang list) and he is listed in the ‘Advertiser’, Adelaide on 25.9.45 in an article where the managing Director of C & W lists him as having been lost of the ‘SS Redang’. He may have been from South Australia; **Mr. Arthur Thomas Platt**. Engineer, *Cable & Wireless*. Lost at sea on the SS Redang 13.2.42(JMM); Arthur Thomas Platt, died on or about 13.2.42 in the Banka Straits, presumed to have lost his life in the sinking of the ‘SS. Redang’ (CODR, M1, Folio 189, Serial # 981, source C. in C. ALFSEA, ref. 19/10260/46); there is a record of a Sergeant A. T. Platt, #11268, 1<sup>st</sup> Btn. SSVF, Singapore Fortress R.E., which is very possibly the same person (JB database) although in 1940 Arthur Platt had been “...exempted from all training and general mobilisation ...” because of his occupation (“Straits Times” 30.6.40).
- **PLHON/PLOHN/ PHLON** – Clement Plohn, Batu/Bata Shoes on “Redang” (JM); **Klement Plhon**, Bata Shoe Co., died on or about 13.2.42 in the Banka Straits, presumed to have lost his life in the sinking of the “SS. Redang”, Date of Death cert. 8.7.46 (CORD, source C. in C. ALFSEA, M1, Folio 239, Serial # 1159, ref 19/10260/46); N. Plhon, Czech from Bata Shoe Co., Singapore death witnessed by Cervinka and Zelnicek (NIRC); Mr K. Phlon is shown in a staff photo of Bata Shoe Co. Ltd., in 1940 when that company had 800 staff in Malaya (ST 21.1.40); he was one of a group of Bata Shoe company employees of Czech nationality who attempted to escape from Singapore on the ship – see also Cervinka and Strangfeld and , Smrzak and Zelnik.; Klement Plhon, # 344, Local defence Corps (Singapore), who died on 13.2.42 , husband of A. Plhon. Column 404 Kranji War Cemetery. (CWGC).
- **POPE** – H.C.G. Pope, *Cable & Wireless Ltd*, “believed missing or died on ship” (COR); **Mr. Harold Charles Geoffrey Pope**, b.1898 Reading. To Singapore 1917. There in the 1920s then Cable & Wireless Engineer, Rhodesia 1937 then Bermuda till 1940 then

Deputy Engineer, Cable & Wireless Ltd, 35 Robinson Rd, Singapore. Left Singapore 11.2.42. Lost at sea on the “SS Redang” (JMM).

- **PUGH** – Mrs. E. C. M. Pugh, British (‘Tapah “list”); **Mrs Mary A. Pugh**, wife of Edward Pugh, she worked at Malaya Command from 4.2.42. Evacuated, aged 36, 2.42 but ship sunk. On” HMS *Tapah* “Palembang, Sumatra internee (JMM). Another UK Archives document states incorrectly that she was “Missing on Sinking” but then records “...Raffles 2 Oct 45...”. Her husband was Edward Cecil Mills Pugh, born in 1901 at Taiping, Perak. He worked as a Tin Dredge Operator, at Bentong, Pahang. He was the CSM, # 5374 4FMSVF Battalion and died in captivity 17.6.43[42] Thailand. Grave at Chungkai (JMM).
- **QUIGG** – **William Munro Quigg**, presumed to have died on 13.2.42 on ‘SS. Redang’ in Banka Straits (‘In memoriam’ notice SMH 13.2.47 – Trove); QUIGG W.M. Anglo-Oriental Mining Ltd. Lost at sea 13.2.42 on the “SS Redang” (JMM); W.M. Quigg, Anglo Oriental Tin Ltd., died on or about 13.2.42 presumed lost his life in the sinking of the “SS. Redang” in Banka Strait, Date of Death Cert. 10.5.46 (CODR, M1, Folio 208, Serial # 1041, source C. in C. ALFSEA, ref. 19/10260/46); Quigg, Australian Dredge engineer from Siam, latterly employed at Singapore Gasworks which is the same description as Delmonico so they presumably knew each other well and in fact both men were ‘Volunteer Engineers’ on the ‘Ss Redang’(NIRC); he was from Parramatta, NSW, Australia (ancestry.com).
- **RICKWOOD** – **William Edward Rickwood**, civilian, aged 56 years, husband of Cordelia Edith Rickwood, 79 Stubbington Avenue, Portsmouth. Died 15.2.42 (CWGC); William Edward Rickwood, died on or about 13.2.42 in the Banka Straits, presumed to have lost his life in the sinking of the “SS. Redang” (CODR, M1, Folio 154, source C. in C. ALFSEA, ref. 19/10260/46).; William Edward Rickwood was born in Portsmouth in 1887 and had served as a Sapper in the Royal Engineers in the First World War. He was employed as an engineer with *Cable & Wireless Ltd* and his date of death on the Colonial Office Death Register is shown as 13.2.42 (JMM); his wife Cordelia, together with daughter Barbara, evacuated on the ‘Ulysses’ arriving at Fremantle, WA., on 31.12.41 She returned to the UK on the ‘Themistocles’ arriving at Liverpool on 8.4.45(JMM); Cordelia Edith Rickwood was born in 1889 and lived at 79 Stubbington Avenue, Portsmouth, in 1943 she was recorded as being in Sydney, Australia (ancestry.com); also W.E. Rickwood “... believed missing or died on ship” (COR); William Rickwood died on the foredeck of the “SS. Redang” with many others as the Japanese shells struck and the ship began to burn (as explained by Henry Thompson to Duncan Robertson before Thompson died of injuries in the lifeboat : DR); His son John Edward Welsh Rickwood, born 1917, was in the Royal Tank Regiment during WW2 and died in the USA in September 1974.
- **RISCOE** – **A. Riscoe**; there was a person by the name of Riscoe who played rugby for the Penang ‘A’ team in 1933(SFPMA 14.12.33 and 28.10.33)
- **ROBERTSON** – Duncan Robertson British (‘Tapah “list”); **Mr. D. Robertson**, Singapore Depot Manager of Marconi International Maritime Communications Ltd, Singapore; Mrs Robertson had been evacuated earlier and reached Australia safely (DR); in November 1935, he had married a Mrs. Jean Pearse (ST 3.11.35) who had an adult married daughter Mrs Hannygton of Teluk Anson whose husband was in the Colonial Service; **ROBERTSON D. [Duncan]** Depot Manager, Marconi, Singapore. Rescued by HMS *Tapah*. Palembang, **Sumatra internee**. Aged 51 in 1942. His excellent account of



this tragic voyage is filed at the IWM. (JMM); Duncan Robertson returned to Singapore with Marconi after the War and retired in 1953, when he moved to his home in the Cameron Highlands to grow roses for sale on 15 acres of land he had purchased prior to the War. He said he had become “...a federal Citizen and had no plans to return to the United Kingdom ...” (ST 16.7.1961).

- **RUSSELL** – Gnr. Jack Russel (sic), JX (sic) 69551 (“Tapah” list); this is in fact Gunner J. A. Russell, NX 69551, 2/15 Field Regiment, AIF. He had been born on 10.12.18 at St. Peters (a suburb of Adelaide) and was living at Arncliffe, NSW at the time he enlisted on 10.3.41 at the enlistment office at Paddington, Sydney. He listed his next of Kin as Jane Russell. In the Palembang camp register his NOK was his mother, Mrs H. J. Russell, 30 Glen Road, Arncliffe, Sydney. He became a POW in Sumatra and was discharged on 14.2.46.
- **SKINNER** – A.R. Skinner, *Cable & Wireless Ltd.*, “believed missing or died on ship” (COR); Alan Percy Skinner, *Cable & Wireless Ltd.*, died on or about 13.2.42, presumed lost life in sinking of “SS. Redang”. Date of Death Cert. dated 20.5.46 (CODR, M1, Folio 210, Serial # 1047, source C. in C. ALFSEA, ref. 19/10260/46); **Mr. Alan Percy Skinner**, b.1907 Lewes Sussex. Engineer, *Cable & Wireless*, Hong Kong from 1931 then Singapore 1941. Wife Kathleen Jean & children evacuated. He was lost at sea on the MV Redang 13.2.42. (JMM).
- **SMITH** – L.W. Smith, *Cable & Wireless Ltd.*, “believed missing or died on ship” (COR) Mr. Leonard William Smith, *Cable & Wireless*. Lost at sea 13.2.42 on the “SS Redang” (JMM); in 1940 he had been “... exempted from all training and general mobilisation...” along with Arthur Worster, Victor Furneaux and Arthur Platt of C& W Ltd who were also on the ‘Redang’ (“Straits Times” 30.6.40). In December 1945 there appeared in the magazine of the ‘British Malaysians’ the following notice “... We regret to announce that Leonard William Smith (*Cable & wireless Singapore*) has been reported drowned at sea in ‘SS Redang’ in February 1942, after the fall of Singapore...”.
- **SMRZAK** – Mr. O. Smrzak was identified as having died on the ship by Messrs Cervinka and Zelnicek (sic) as witnesses to the NIRC document prepared in Palembang camp, the witnesses did not sign the list as others had done because they had already been released by the Japanese (NIRC); **Oldrich Smrzak** is also said to have “... perished at sea...” in an article first published in India in 1943 (THBM.); he is listed incorrectly as O. Sarsok in one of the NIRC documents; his wife Mila and daughter Oldriska had earlier been evacuated from Singapore to India with the wives of other Bata men, and had then travelled inland to live at a town named Nainitalu in the mountainous interior . After the War another Bata employee who had been a survivor of the sinking, Hynek Cervinka, told Mrs Smrzak that he had been with Oldrich when he lost his life but apparently gave no other details( granddaughter Olga Rihova by email may 2015); Oldrich had been born on 14 July 1913 in Uhrice, a small village in central Moravia ( Moravia is a large region in eastern Czechoslovakia which had been one of the three ‘historical regions’ of Czechoslovakia when it was part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire prior to 1918). He was a clever young man and studied at the Bata Shoe Company School in Zlin, where employees were trained to lead Bata factories all around the world. He is remembered as a kind man who loved his family. In autumn of 1939 he, with his wife Mila and little daughter Oli set out for Singapore in the company of other Bata employees and their families. They hoped to escape the

war in Europe and start a better life in Singapore. In Singapore Oldrich was appointed to manage the logistics of part of the Bata factory and Mila was employed sewing shoes in the factory. When war came to Singapore Bata wives with children were evacuated to India whilst the men stayed in Singapore. On 10 February 1942 (according to a conversation Mila had with Mr Cervinka who had been a passenger on the "SS. Redang") all the men were told that it would be better to escape from Singapore. Oldrich Smrzak and a group of Bata men went to find a boat to India. When they had obtained tickets, they went to a bar or hotel and played cards. "... That day my grandfather won a suitcase full of money ... only to lose his life and money at sea ..." (email from granddaughter Olga Rihova, July 2015).

- **STEVENS (See also Bennett Stevens)** – P.B. Stevens, *Cable & Wireless Ltd*, "believed missing or died on the ship" (COR); **Mr. Percival Bennett Stevens**, b.1898 Totnes, Devon. Cable & Wireless. Lost at sea 13. 2.42 [42] on the SS Redang. (JMM); Percival Bennett Stevens, died on or about 13.2.42 in the Banka Straits, presumed to have lost his life in the sinking of the "SS. Redang" (CODR, M1, Folio 184, Serial # 965, source C. in C. ALFSEA, ref 19/10260/46). In October 1945 there appeared in the magazine of the 'British Malaysians' the following notice "... *We regret to announce that in February 1942 Percival Bennett Stevens (Cable & Wireless) was drowned at the fall on Singapore, only son of Mr and Mrs G. Bennett Stevens ...*".
- **STRACEY** – R.J.R. Stracey, *Cable & Wireless Ltd*, "believed missing or died on ship" (COR); **Robert Joseph Ralph Stracey**, died on or about 13.2.42 in the bank Straits, presumed to have lost his life in the sinking of the "SS. Redang", Date of Death Cert. 30.5.46 (CODR, M1, folio 182, serial # 960, source C. in C. ALFSEA, ref, 19/10260/46); Mr. Robert Joseph Ralph Stracey, Engineer, Eastern Extension, Australasia & China Telegraph Co. Ltd, 35 Robinson Rd/ Cable & Wireless, Singapore. Lived at 325 East Coast Rd, Singapore. Lost at sea 13.2.42 on the SS Redang. Wife Ursula [National Probate Register]. (JMM); Robert Stracey was born in India on 20.12.07 and married Ursula Oehlers Bartholemeuz (she was b. 2.10.14 in Singapore and died 15.2.87 in Sydney, Australia). He was an active hockey player for the YMCA during the 1930s in the same team as co-worker at C & W. Ltd, and Sumatra internee Claud Coshan. ([www.genealogy.com](http://www.genealogy.com) and newspaper reports); probate as issued on 29.11.47 (ancestry.com).
- **STRANGFELD –Mr Joseph Strangfeld**, Manager, Bata Shoe Company. Lost at sea 13.2.42 on the SS *Redang*. Wife evacuated to Batanagar near Bombay (JM); J. Strangfeld, Czech manager of Bata Shoe Co, Singapore. Died from wounds in the lifeboat on 13<sup>th</sup> February (NIRC); also, in file ADM 385/2875 as "... *wife in Batanagar near Bombay. He died in a boat on the way to shore ...*"; this is confirmed by fellow survivor and lifeboat passenger, Douglas Banks, in his 1945 report where he records that the Manager of the Bata Shoe Company of Singapore died in the lifeboat after about five hours and "... *was buried over the side ...*". Mr. J. Strangfeld was either Czech himself or, as a result of his employment with Bata Shoe Co. Ltd in Malaya well integrated into the Czech community there, he is recorded as a key attendee at the funeral of a Czech identity and also was an active financial supporter of War fundraising for the Allies (SFPMA 26.6.41 and 14.10.41); he appears to have been in a group of Bata employees who attempted to escape on the "Redang" ( see Cervinka , Plohn, Heim, and Zelnik); Mr. J. Strangfeld, died on or about 13.2.42 in the Banka Straits, presumed to have lost his life in the sinking of the "SS. Redang", date of Death

Cert. 8.7.46( CODR, M1, Folio 172, Serial # 928, source C. in C. ALFSEA, ref. , ref. 16/10260/46).

- **STRAUSSLER – Dr Eugene Straussler**, Medical Officer with the Bata Shoe Co. Ltd in Malaya and Singapore; he is reported by Mr Stanislav Jednovnicky as having ‘perished at sea’, the same description as applied to Mr Heim and also Messrs. Strangfeld, Smrzak, and Phlon who were on the “Redang” (TBHM); all that is known of the last days of Dr Straussler is that he was driven down to the docks in Singapore ‘... two days before the Surrender ... ’ by Leslie Smith , an Optician with Motion, Smith & Co Ltd along with Mr Heim to escape on a ship and they boarded ( on 13<sup>th</sup> February 1942) “ ... the only ship showing any activity ...” after Mr Smith talking to the captain whom he knew , Dr Straussler had been employed at the Bata Hospital in Zlin since 1934 but escaped Czechoslovakia with his wife and two sons as the Nazis took control and resumed work for Bata in Singapore and Malaya. His wife and sons were evacuated to India after the Japanese invasion (email from his son Sir Tom Stoppard June 2015).
- **TISSHAW – Henry Stanley Tisshaw** (‘Tapah list’); TISSHAW H.S. [Henry Stanley] Assistant, Cable & Wireless Ltd. On HMS Tapah 2.42. Palembang, Sumatra **internee**. Wife Phyllis [nee Jarratt] evacuated to Canada. He died in captivity 24.11.44[56] Sumatra.(JMM); Mr. Henry Stanley Tisshaw, aged 56 , born 1888, died in internment in Sumatra on 24.11.44, he was the husband of Phyllis Tisshaw of 4625 Grand Buildings, Montreal ,Canada(CWGC); the ‘British Malaya’ journal of September 1945 had the entry “ ... We regret to announce the death on November 24<sup>th</sup> 1944 in an internment camp in Sumatra of HENRY STANLEY TISSHAW, of cable & Wireless, eldest son of the late Mr & Mrs Tisshaw of Leytonstone, husband of Phyllis ( nee Jarratt)...”. Henry Tisshaw, who had lived at Cyrano, Orchard Road, Singapore died in 1944 at the infamous Muntok internment camp and was buried in the camp cemetery. After the war, all the remains from the camp cemetery were shifted to another site but in 1960 the Dutch authorities instructed that any remains be shifted to another site – most were not and Henry Tisshaw’s remains now sadly lie under a service station built on that land at Muntok.; his probate was issued to Midland Bank for the sizeable sum of 20,000 pounds. In 1957 Phyllis Tisshaw was living in Quebec, Canada.
- **WATT – John Watt**, United Kingdom, civilian, husband of Nannie Watt, 4 Marita Road, Claremont East, Western Australia. Died 15.2.42 (CWGC); he was an engineer with Cable & Wireless (JMM); John Watt, Cable & Wireless Ltd., “believed missing or died on ship” (COR); John Watt, died on or about 13.2.42 in the bank Straits, presumed lost his life in the sinking of the “SS. Redang”, Date of Death Cert. 30.5.46 (CODR, M1, Folio 174, serial # 934, source C. in C. ALFSEA, ref. 19/10260/46).
- **WATT – Meredith John Watt**, United Kingdom, civilian, died 15.2.42 (CWGC) his wife was Kathleen Mary Watt and they had a daughter Jennifer Mary Watt who had been born in 1936; NB. Palembang internment camp list has them also on “HMS. Giang Bee” with Meredith Watt “... accompanied by lady presumed his wife ...” .; Meredith John Barclay Watt was admitted as a partner to the firm of Lean & Co., Penang in 1926 (STA. 21.5.26); Mr. Meredith A. Watt a partner in the share broking firm Messrs. Lean & Co., Penang, his wife and child are noted as returning on leave for England in 1937 (STA. 22.1137); and he was a member of the Penang Turf Club and President of the Penang Swimming Club; in 1942 “...Meredith Watt Mr. (and Mrs.) [deleted] accompanied by lady presumed wife...” were witnessed as last seen on the ‘GB’(NIRC); also “...WATT MEREDITH J B LEAN CO PWG?PNG BVD DROWNED GIANG

B..." (BPPL); but then two records **contradicting** that he was on the 'GB', firstly Meredith J. B. Watt, Lean & Co., 3 A Union Street, Penang – lost with his wife at sea on Redang (MVG); and also Mr. Meredith Watt, United Kingdom is listed as amongst those dying on the "SS. Redang" on 15.2.42 (CWGC); Meredith Watt certainly boarded either the "Giang Bee" or the "Redang" – which were sunk on the same day – but possibly he was accompanied by a woman who was not his wife. His probate was issued in favour of Jane Riley and Benjamin Fester.

- **WATT – Mrs Kathleen Edith Mary Watt** (See above) wife of Meredith Watt (JMM). There is no CWGC record of her death.
- **Watt – Miss Jennifer Mary Watt**, daughter of Meredith and Kathleen Watt (JMM) (above) but there is no CWGC record of her death so she might have been evacuated earlier.
- **WHITTAKER – John Sydney Whittaker**, United Kingdom, civilian, aged 58 years. Husband of Bessie Violet Whittaker, 21 Fairfax Place, Kilburn, Middlesex. Died 15.2.42 (CWGC); he was Resident Manager, Petaling Tin Ltd, Selangor; FMS Chamber of Mines. Lost at sea 13.2.42[58] on the SS *Redang*. Wife Bessie Violet (her maiden name was Sparrow) and daughter I. evacuated on Charon, arriving Fremantle WA 18.1.42. Daughter Sydney Sybil Whittaker had married J.W. Cameron (see above for his entry) in 1940. Bessie died on 6.2.47 in New Zealand. (JMM).; John Sydney Whittaker, died on or about 13.2.42, in the Banka Straits, presumed to have lost his life in the sinking of the "SS. Redang", Date of Death Cert. 13.3.46 ( CODR, M1, folio 157, Serial # 880, source C. in C. ALFSEA, ref. 19/10260/46); he is noted as having been a 'Volunteer Engineer' ( along with Quigg and Delmonico) on the 'SS Redang' but was not seen after the shelling of the ship, also in the same records compiled in internment camps he is noted as having worked for the mining firm Osborne & Chapel in Malaya; it seems that the Whittaker family were from New Zealand - a John Sydney Whittaker is listed as having a 3<sup>rd</sup> Class certification as a ships engineer in New Zealand in 1907 (he would have been 23 years of age at that time) and Bessie Violet Sparrow is listed on the electoral roll in 1911 as living as a 'Spinster' at 623 Andersons Bay Road, St Kilda, Dunedin, NZ.; in 1925 Mr Whittaker, wife and family (then of Petaling Tin Dredging Co.) left Malaya for a six months holiday in New Zealand ; in 1927 Mr Whittaker is listed as arriving ( presumably in Klang where Petaling was based) to take over as manager of Petaling Tin Dredging Co. and the newspaper mentions that he had previously worked for the company for five years; in 1933 he is noted as being with Sungei Way Tin Dredging Co., whilst at the funeral of a Mrs. Ida Taylor ( wife of Mr Ronald Taylor of Petaling Tin Dredging Co) who had been murdered by her 'houseboy' ( SFPMS 20.5.33).
- **WORSTER – Arthur Charles Worster** survived the sinking and was a survivor in the lifeboat, later picked up with the others from the shores of Sumatra ('Tapa' List ); as A. C. Worster he was a witness and signatory to the death of Mr. G.F. Old of Cable & Wireless - who died as a result of the sinking of the ship - in the list prepared in Palembang internment camp (NIRC); A.C. Worster, Cable & Wireless, recd to UK "Antenor" 26 Sep 45 (NIRC); finally the summary of what is known in Jonathan Moffatt's " Malayans" listing, WORSTER A.C. [Arthur Charles ] b.1899 Shoreditch, London. To Singapore 1916. Cable Foreman, Electrical Dept., Keppel Harbour [Eastern Extension Australasia & China Telegraph Co. Ltd 1930s then Cable Foreman/Assistant Engineer, Cable & W. Cpl 10233 Singapore Fortress RE [V]. On HMS *Tapah* 2.42. Palembang, **Sumatra internee**. Repatriated on Antenor from Singapore, arriving Liverpool 27.10.45. Returned to Singapore 1946 on the 'Arundel Castle' as an employee of C

& W and then travelled back to Singapore again in 1950 (ancestry.com). Died 1978 Dorset. Wife Lucy; children Patricia & Roger (b. 1924, d. 2004); despite being a Corporal in the SSVF, in 1940 Arthur had been "... exempted from all training and general mobilisation ..." because of his occupation, along with Arthur Platt and Leonard Smith who were also passengers on the 'Redang' ("Straits Times" 30.6.40)

- **YOUNG** – R.F.S. Young, *Cable & Wireless Ltd.*, "Believed missing or died on ship" (COR); **Mr. Reginald Frederick Scott Young**, Engineer. (JMM); Reginald Frederick Scott Young, C. & W. Ltd, died on or about 13.2.42 in the Banka Straits, presumed lost his life in the sinking of the "SS. Redang", Date of Death Certificate 30.5.46, (CORD, source C. in C. ALFSEA, M1, Folio 216, serial # 1074, ref. 19/10260/45). He was from South Australia and Reginald was remembered in a newspaper article in September 1945 "... Mr. and Mrs. C. F. Young of Prospect Road, Prospect have been advised of the death of their elder son, Reginald, who is believed to have drowned while attempting to escape from Singapore in February 1942. He was for some years before the war a member of the Singapore staff of Cables and wireless limited. He has left a widow and a son, who live in Sydney. His younger brother, Frank, was killed in action at Bardia in 1941, while serving with the AIF ..." ('Advertiser' Adelaide, South Australia, 25.9.45)
- **ZELNIK** – **Vi Zelnik**, Czech ("Tapah" list); in "The History of Batamen in Malaya" he is said to have jumped off the deck of the "SS. Redang" and swum through shark infested waters to the coast of Sumatra (THBM) but he also appears on the list prepared by the Captain of the "Tapah" as being picked up with other survivors in the lifeboat from the shores of Sumatra – it is quite feasible that both accounts are accurate; also mentioned in the Palembang camp lists as Zelnicek but already released by the time the document came to being signed and witnessed (NIRC); so far no record of what happened to Mr Zelnik after his release from Palembang has been located.

#### Crew:

- **ANDERSEN** – **Anker Holm Andersen**, Danish ("Tapah" list); released by the Japanese from Palembang camp (NIRC)); also recorded as "... S. A. Anderson, Deck Hand, repatriated to the UK via 'Tegelburg' 15 Sep 1945..."
- **DEAN/ DEANS** – Lt. (E) Deans, RNR, Chief Engineer, formerly Kudat – missing believed killed (ADM 358/2875) - the 'SS. Kudat' was a Straits Steamship vessel which had been requisitioned by the Admiralty as a Perak flotilla depot ship. It was strafed by Japanese planes on 31 December 1941 at Port Swettenham, caught fire and sank; also T. Lt. (E) Harding S. Deans, RNR, killed (naval-history.net); **Lieutenant (E) Harding Stanley Deans**, Royal Naval Reserve, aged 42 years, died on 13.2.42, "SS. Redang". Son of Harry and Marie Deans, husband of Agnes Mary Deans of Singapore. Panel 2 Col. 1 Liverpool Naval memorial (CWGC); also H. S. Deans, died on or about 13.2.42 in the Bank Straits, presumed to have lost his life in the sinking of the "SS. Redang", Date of Death Cert. 7.3.46 (CODR, M1, Folio 150, serial # 858, source C. in C. ALFSEA, ref. 19/102560/46); ; he was made a temporary Lieutenant (E) in 1941; he had been a competitive boxer in Singapore and in 1940 was recorded as boxing for Loyfat House, St Andrews School; his wife was called 'Aggie' in several newspaper reports of their attendance at the large funerals of the time .( SFPMA



9.12.40). Internment camp records of the sinking contain the comments that “... *Chief Engineer killed by shrapnel ...*” (witnessed by Reginald Elston and recorded before he died in Belalau internment camp).

- **FARQUHAR** – Able Seaman Walter G.R. Farquhar, D/ JX 151791 (Sultan O/P) “Missing Presumed Killed “13.2.42 on “SS. Redang” (naval-history.net); also **Able Seaman Walter George Rutherford Farquhar**, Royal Navy, D/JX 151791, aged 20 years, died on 13.2.42, “HMS Sultan”, nephew of Mrs. W. Rutherford of Glasgow. Panel 65, Col. 1, Plymouth naval memorial (CWGC);” HMS Sultan “was the shore base in Singapore; also in file ADM 385/2875, as Missing Presumed Killed on ‘Redang’.
- **JORGENSEN** – Wilhelm Jorgensen, Danish (“Tapah” list); released by the Japanese from Palembang camp (NIRC); also W.J. Jorgensen, East Asiatic Co., Dan ( Danish) 2<sup>nd</sup> Engineer, to UK ‘Tegelberg’ 15 Sep 45.
- **KELLY** – **Ord Seaman William James Bertram Kelly** , P/JX 161309 ( Sultan O/P), aged 19 years, , son of Alexander and Mary Kelly of Downfield, Dundee, died 13.2.42, recorded as “Missing Presumed Killed” (Portsmouth Naval Memorial ,Panel 65 and Col 3 plus on naval-history.net); also in file ADM 358/2875 as Missing Presumed Killed ; and on CWGC with same details and the notation of “HMS Sultan” which was the shore base in Singapore from where many ratings were assigned to evacuation ships just prior to the Surrender to the Japanese.
- **LANGE** – in a general casualty, missing and dead list of civilians in the UK Archives is the notation “...*Mr Lange (Dane), Seaman in SS Redang, Missing...*”. Also, Lange, M.R. Seaman, Danish, Missing.
- **MALONE** – Able Seaman Peter S. Malone, P/ESDX 1799 ( Sultan O/P, recorded as “Missing Presumed killed 15.2.42 ( naval-history .net); also **Able Seaman Peter Stewart Malone**, Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve, aged 23 years, P/ESD/X 1799, aged “HMS Sultan” [NB: *the shore base in Singapore from where he would have been assigned to “SS Redang*], son of John and Mary S. Malone of Dundee died 13.2.42 (CWGC): City of Dundee Roll of Honour; Portsmouth Naval Memorial Panel 71, Col., 2) ; his nephew states on The Black Watch website that Peter Malone was on “HMS Danae” but taken off to destroy supplies at the shore base “HMS Sultan” in Singapore and then attached to “SS. Redang”; also in file ADM 385/2875 as Missing Presumed Killed on ‘Redang’.
- **MCEWEN** – **Ord Seaman William H. McEwen**, C/JX 262303, (Sultan O/P) “Missing Presumed killed “15.2.42 (naval-history.net); also William Henry McEwen, Royal Navy, C/JX 262303, aged 28 years, died 15.2.42 , “ SS. Redang”, son of Walter and Jean McEwen, husband of Jeanie McEwen of Glasgow . Panel 57, Col 3, Chatham Naval Memorial (CWGC). *The date is patently incorrect for a crew member of the “SS. Redang” who is not listed as being in the lifeboat picked up by “HMS Tapah”.*
- **PHIPPS** - **Able Seaman Graham Phipps**, D/JX 141554, Royal Navy, attached to “HMS. Sultan (the Singapore shore base) died on 13.2.42, son of Herbert Edward Phipps and Hannah Phipps, Plymouth Naval Column Panel 66, Col.2. (CWGC); also in file ADM 358/2875, as Missing Presumed Killed.
- **RASMUSSEN** - Captain S. Rasmussen, Danish, survived and was released as a Neutral civilian (MS); he returned to Singapore; early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century he was Captain of a ship named the “SS. Kitai” (Eastern Daily Mail and Straits Morning Advertiser 21.11.06).; he was aged in his 60s or 70s according to survivor, Duncan Robertson (DR); he was amongst the group of survivors in the lifeboat and was picked up with

the others from the shores of Sumatra by the “Tapah” ( “Tapah” list) and later released as a neutral with two members of his crew from Palembang camp (NIRC); in the ‘ScandAsia’ on line magazine of 17 12.06 journalist Gregers Moller wrote ( this is a Google translation) an article on Dane’s in Siam during the war, in reference to Captain Rasmussen “... On February 13 , 1942 the old UK coastal bath SS Redang was (sunk) off Java on the way from Singapore to java with evacuees, and over 100 Europeans perished, including PRJ Riemke from Copenhagen. The master, Captain R.K.S. Rasmussen rescued himself ashore after several days stay in an open boat, Senius Rasmussen was for approx. half a year a Japanese Prisoner of War on Java and suffered greatly, but he was later released and came to Bangkok; he got a physical and financial break from which he never related and died 6/1 1954 here in the city. At his death, Rasmussen received the most beautiful mention in the daily press and in the master’s magazine (No.2/1954) which was written among others” ... he was therefore a poor and sick man, but he had the credit. He had sacrificed everything he owned for the cause of Denmark...”. The article continues “... So it was written, but no one has thought of the war heroes’ widow. Captain Rasmussen believed that another compatriot perished on ‘Redang’, but he did not know the name...”. The ‘compatriot’ was Chief Officer Paul Richard Jorgensen Reimke. In an appendix to the article in ‘ScandAsia’ is written “... Rasmus Kristian Sinius Rasmussen, born September 7 at Bogo, died January 6, 1954 in Copenhagen, mate of Siam Steam in 1926 and master of shipbuilding \in 1937... he was in his last years employed at EK in Copenhagen...”.

- **REIMKE/REIMISE/RIENSKE** – Chief Officer Mr Reimise (sic) was killed (statement by Captain Rasmussen; but that appears to be a spelling mistake on the record); he is also listed in a missing and dead list in the UK Archives as “... Mr P. Rienske (Dane) Chief Officer of SS Redang, Believed killed...”. more correctly it should be **RIEMKE P. Danish Merchant Seaman**: Mate, Siam Steam Navigation Company Bangkok [1935 Directory]. Chief Officer, the SS Redang. Lost at sea 13.2.42(JMM). In the ‘ScandAsia’ online magazine of 17 December 2006 journalist (now Editor in Chief) Gregers Moller wrote “... **Poul Rickard Jorgensen Reimke**, born February 9. 1898 in Odense, employed at Siam Steam from 1931 until his death...”.
- **THOMPSON – First Radio Officer Henry Thompson** , aged 44 years died on the “Redang” ( Radio Officers Association); E. Thompson age about 48 ,Marconi International Marine Co. died from wounds in the lifeboat on the 14<sup>th</sup> February (NIRC); Radio Officer Henry Thompson, Merchant Navy, aged 44 years, husband of Gladys Thompson, died 14.2.42 ( mercantile marine.org); son of Christopher Henry and Elizabeth Thompson and husband of Gladys Thompson of Hartburn, Stockton – on – Tees, Co. Durham (this is additional information on the CWGC website).; in 1939 Henry (aged 41 years at the time and with the occupation of Wireless engineer ) and his wife Gladys travelled on the “Agamemnon” to Singapore on 19.8.39 at which time they had been living at 97 Lanehouse Road, Thornaby – on – Tees (JM); she was very well known to and a good friend of Mr D Robertson of Marconi Company, who had worked closely with him for ten years( it seems clear from the Robertson report that Henry Thompson was employed by Marconi prior to the War) and they had both sent their wives to Australia at the beginning of February 1942. By 8<sup>th</sup> February 1942 Messrs Robertson and Thompson had moved much of their more valuable household effects to a C & W house that Marconi had rented as a temporary office at 10 Holt Road, Singapore; sadly Henry Thompson was very badly wounded in the Japanese

attack on the “Redang” and, for the purposes of a complete and unflinching historical record, his last two days after being rescued from the water by the surviving lifeboat are included here “... Mr Thompson who was pulled over the stern of the lifeboat by one of the Danish members of the crew and myself. I saw him with the lifebelt on paddling towards the boat and offered up a silent prayer in relief at what I thought was his safety, but as we prepared to lift him inboard, he said “be careful with my backside”. When we got him aboard we found that most of his left thigh was hanging out; there was a groove across his left forearm 1” deep and as straight as a road cutting with the flesh all curled up, and his left leg was shattered at the ankle so that his foot would turn either toe pointing forward or backwards. I think that the salt water had stopped some of the bleeding, and he was then quite conscious. We made him as comfortable as we could and endeavoured to stop what bleeding was taking place, but it was obvious that unless we could get proper medical assistance within a short time, he would not survive his injuries. Mr Thompson lost consciousness about 6 or 7 pm; before that he told me that he had been hit whilst running aft and that a lot of people were killed on the foredeck including Mr Rickwood of C & W. his last words were about his wife and he thanked me - “thanks a lot” he said. It was a very unhappy moment for me - Thompson and I had worked together here for 10 years with perfect understanding. All through that night he was in his death throes: held in my arms to prevent him from dashing himself against the thwarts at each of the convulsive spasms, and not until ten o’clock the next morning did he change colour and pass away. He was gently placed overboard ....” (DR); Mr D. Robertson mentions in his report that, before Mr. Thompson died he gave him the money (\$ 900) he was carrying with him to give to his wife. This money helped keep Mr. Robertson alive during the next three- and one-half years of terrible internment. When Robertson returned to Singapore in 1945, he sent Mr. Thompson’s \$900 to Mrs Thompson in Melbourne (DR).

#### Unidentified passengers;

- Australian soldiers (probably about **twelve AIF**) – it is stated that two launches with some 20 soldiers” ... mostly Australian...”boarded the ship after it was underway. Two AIF soldiers survived the sinking and incarceration as a POW.
- British soldiers (probably either **one or two British soldiers**)– see above
- Chinese woman accompanying the soldiers
- Civilians about **thirty civilians**, apparently all men.
- The woman accompanying Mr. Meredith Watt.
- One engine room hand – likely to be from the Royal Navy.