



Lee Kuan Yew
School of Public Policy



Challenges for Singapore • Political Salaries • 1942: The Fall of Singapore

global-is-asian

Issue 13 • Jan-Mar 2012





"SKETCHBOOK CONFISCATION"

70TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FALL OF SINGAPORE *(through the eyes of a British prisoner of war)*

Des Betanny (1919–2000) was born in the Lancashire mill town of Burnley, the year after the First World War ended. Early in 1939 he joined the Territorial Army (Royal Artillery). Lance Bombardier Bettany fought in France and Belgium with the 88th Field Regiment, Royal Artillery, manning 25 pounder field guns, and after evacuation from Dunkirk, served in various locations in southern England, in preparation for the anticipated German invasion. He was then re-equipped and shipped to the Far East, travelling on the troopship 'Empress of Canada'

via Freetown (West Africa), Cape Town and Colombo, Ceylon (Sri Lanka). In the Malayan campaign he fought the Japanese at Ipoh and Alor Star. He was at Kuantan on the east coast, off which the 'Prince of Wales' and the 'Repulse' were sunk. In the company of the Australian 8th Division and the Indian 9th Brigade, he saw most of the major actions in Malaya until capitulation in Singapore in February 1942.

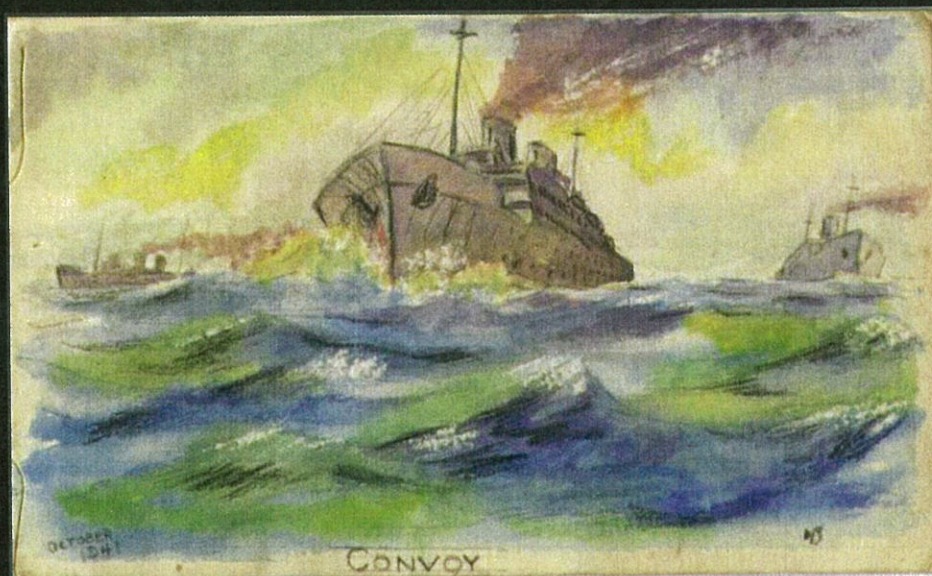
He had small sketchbooks with him, and drew using various media including pencil, ink, water colour and pastel. He continued his artistic

endeavours during his new life as a P.O.W. As well as documentary sketches, he kept spirits up by producing a series of cartoons. A sketchbook was found and Betanny was hauled before General Saito ('the big boss of the prisoners' as a 94 year old ex-POW put it). General Saito warned him not to repeat the offense at the risk of a 'short haircut' with his samurai sword, or a beheading.

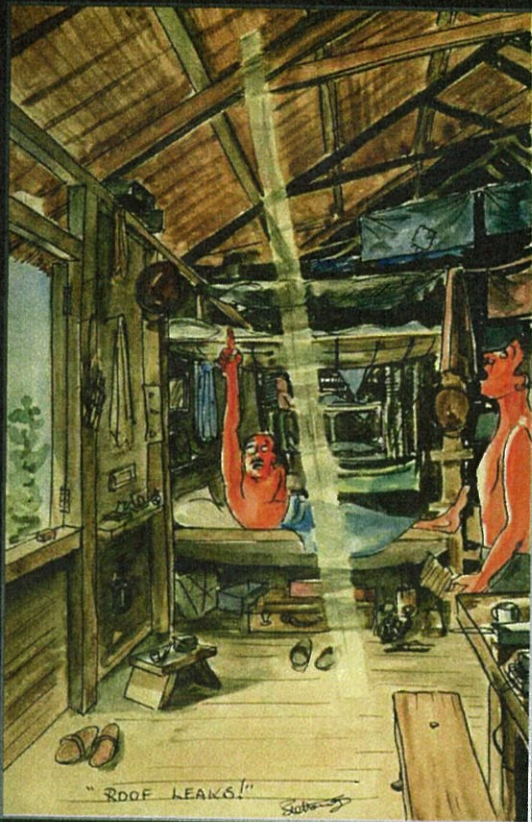
Des Betanny's artwork is reproduced with kind permission of his family. To see more images and read more, go to <http://changipowart.com> **GIA**



"THE GUARD CHANGES AT CHANGI PRISON"



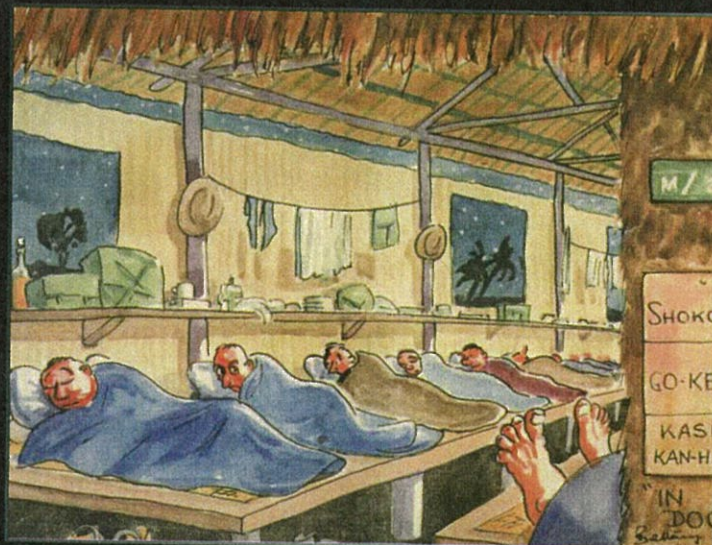
"CONVOY TO MALAYA AND SINGAPORE (OCT 1941)"



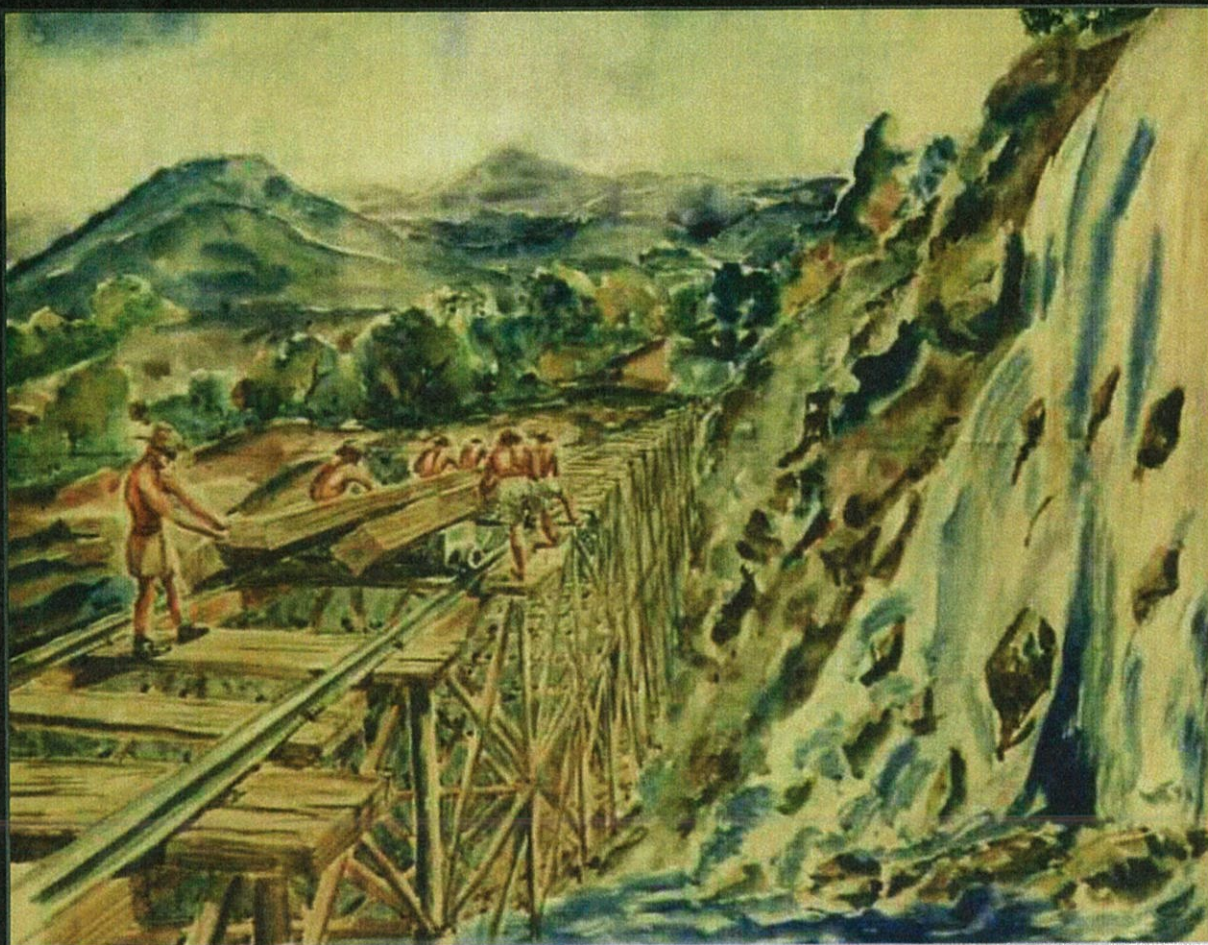
"THE ROOF AT CHANGI PRISON LEAKS"



"TOWNER ROAD P.O.W CAMP (1942)"



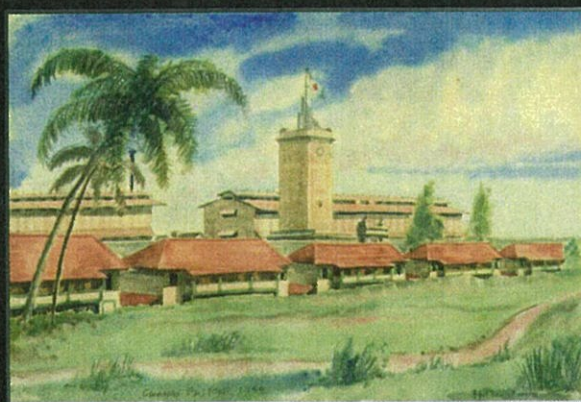
"IN DOCK AT THE CHANGI PRISON"



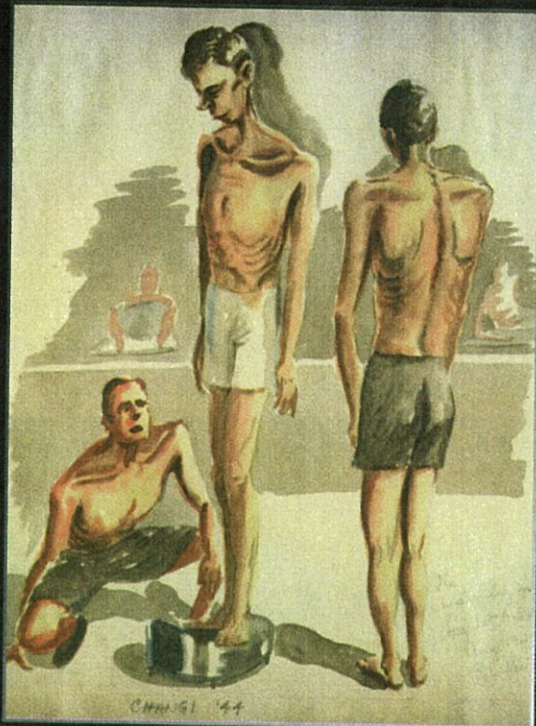
"THE THAI-BURMA RAILWAY CONSTRUCTION, WHERE 12,000 P.O.W.S DIED"



"JAP GUARD"



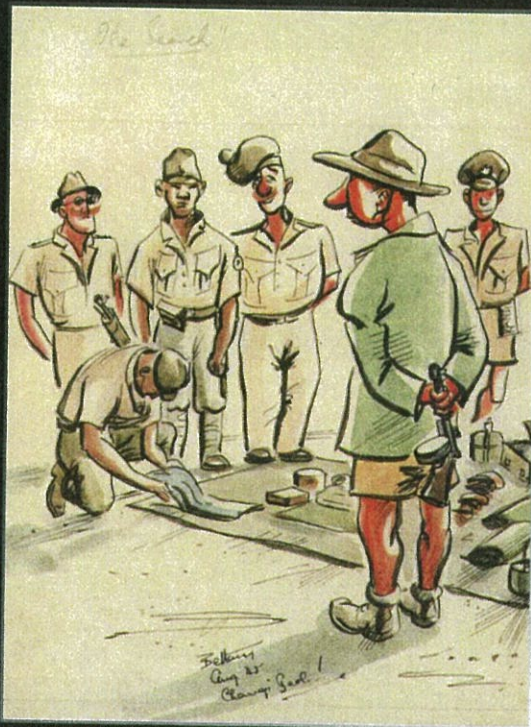
"CHANGI PRISON 1944"



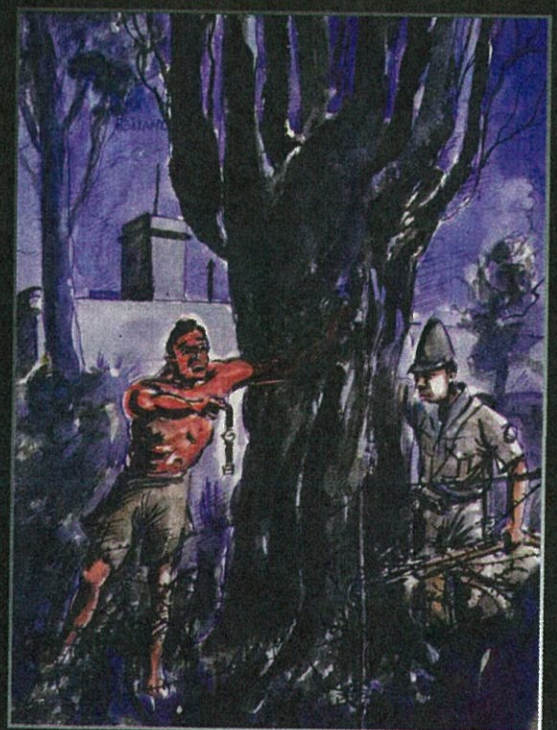
"WEIGH IN AT CHANGI HOSPITAL"



"IMPROVED EQUIPMENT"



"THE SEARCH"



"TRADING WATCH"



"COAT OF ARMS"