

This story was unknown to me 8 months ago & I've been on it full time only for 2 months, hence it's an early attempt. It's select, as the Australian records are too vast to list entirely. The 6 books here seem to be the only ones by/on Indian FEPOWs & the rest of the biblio is primary records, a handful of articles I found useful as introductions to the topic and newspaper reports from that time. Initially I made each item a different Ref, then started grouping various Refs relating to 1 aspect, together – however, each item, even if short, is equally important.

Highlights – Published Memoirs

In WWII in the Far East, the Indian Army served in all the campaigns – Burma, Malaya/ Singapore, Hong Kong and Borneo, extensively covered by historians and British/ Australian participants. These are by/ on Indian participants:

1. Eaten by The Japanese, by John Baptist Crasta, published by Invisible Man Books 1998. From the title I knew he had not chosen it – in fact his son had. Somehow POWs seem to have less bitterness than one would expect. In this little-known memoir he describes so much so well. Sergeant Crasta, RIASC wasn't in the front line but witnessed the chaos in Singapore on Dec 8, 1941, in KL later & back again in Singapore. Describes post surrender Singapore, "Torture ship" journey to New Britain, his horrific time on "Torture Island", terrors of Allied air raids starting Oct 12, 1943, liberation & repatriation – a vivid account of his time in captivity and possibly the only complete manuscript published as is.
2. Three Thousand Miles to Freedom by Brig MM Pillai, MC, Lancer Publications 2009. Lt Pillai was in the Bombay Sappers and was in KROHCOL at the start, Slim River, & later escaped in May 1942. He reached Delhi on Aug 26, 1942 and was recommended for an MC just 5 days later. His 32- page report gave India HQ the first news of the POWs, internees & civilian morale in Singapore & Southeast Asia. Pillai wrote a memoir in 1950, but refused to publish it till he could verify the facts with this report. Unfortunately he died before it was declassified, but his wife's persistence ensured her sons brought it out before she too finally passed.
3. Escape from Singapore by Brig Jasbir Singh SM (his son), Lancer Publications 2010. Captain Balbir Singh of 4/19 Hyderabad Regiment – sent to reinforce Kotah Bahru & then the retreat down the Malay peninsula and escaped in May 1942. In 1988 he retraced his escape route, and the book was written by his son, a military historian.
4. A daring journey to freedom-- escape from a Japanese prisoner-of-war camp: Memoirs of Colonel Gangaram S. Parab, MC / edited by Aruna and Shivaji Seth
5. Indelible Reminiscences, Lancer Publications 2013, by Major-General Gurbaksh Singh, published by his wife after his death. Then Lt Col Gurbaksh Singh Commanded the Jind State Forces – guarding Tengah & Kallang airfields in Singapore & is awarded the DSO just before surrender, learning about it much later. When Bose tries to recruit him into the INA, his CBE recommendation quotes him saying, "if I could betray one master, I could betray another". Though CinC India recommends a CBE for his POW days, he gets "just" an OBE.
6. Chint Singh The Man Who Should Have Died by his son Narender Singh Parmar was published in 2021. Jemadar Chint Singh joined the INA & then left it to spend 30 months in New Guinea. At liberation, he was 1 of 13 survivors out of 2500 (fortunately

191 more had been rescued earlier), provided evidence for many trials & returned to give evidence vs Lt Gen Adachi.

Highlights from the Archives

- Major Dhillon, after a 6-month verification of his debrief of double crossing the Japanese, was awarded the MBE. Though nothing happened, had he planned a Triple Cross all long?
- Lt BP Singh's MBE recommendation highlights him being the only Indian with the British in Changi. He had been captured in Arakan 1943 & to prevent him "infecting" the other Indians with his spirit, sent to Changi.
- The interrogation of Lt Col Kogi Kazuo when he justifies the beheading of Captain Ansari, George Cross, in Hong Kong, based on the Japanese military code that he produces.
- The Buyo Maru in the periscope sights of USS Wahoo, its sunk, killing 194 of 500 POWs
- The Last Word: The illiterate Cook Shaikh Madar's thumbprint on his testimony to ensure his voice is heard, and it is.



Chapter1: Arrival in Doomed Singapore - On the Campaign Trail

The memoirs have little on the campaign. However, 3 other books on Indian Army are:

7. Battle for Malaya – The Indian Army in Defeat 1941-1942 by Kaushik Roy, Indiana University Press, 2019
8. Sepoys Against the Rising Sun – The Indian Army in the Far East and Southeast Asia 1941-1945 by Kaushik Roy, Brill 2015
9. The Testimonies of Indian Soldiers in the Two World Wars – Between Self and Sepoy, by Gajendra Singh, Bloomsbury Academic 2014, a write-up is here:

<https://www.bloomsburycollections.com/book/the-testimonies-of-indian-soldiers-and-the-two-world-wars-between-self-and-sepoy/introduction>

In addition, here are well-known histories of the overall campaign:

- Singapore Burning by Colin Smith
<https://archive.org/details/singaporeburning0000smit>
- The Defense and Fall of Singapore by Brian Farrell
<https://archive.org/details/defencefallofsin0000farr>

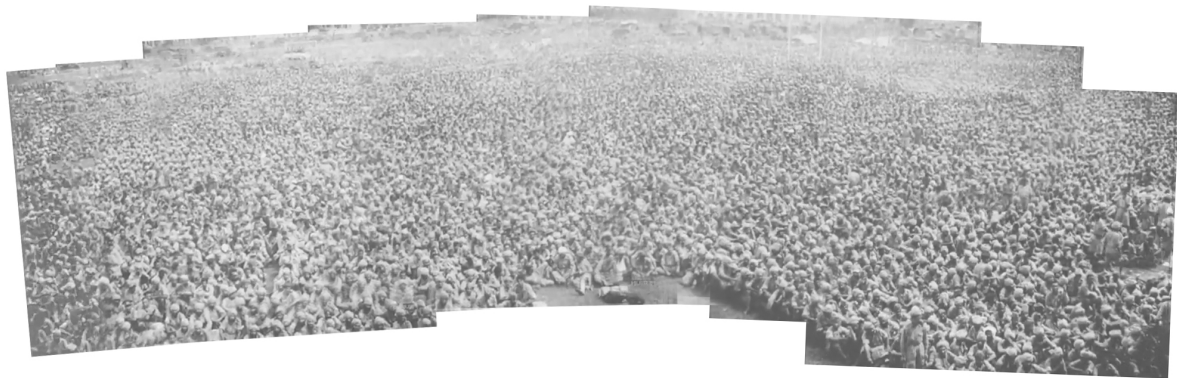
- The Battle for Singapore by Peter Thompson
<https://archive.org/details/battleforsingapo0000thom>
- The War in Malaya by General Percival
<https://archive.org/details/dli.ernet.353/page/n5/mode/2up>
- HMSO's The War Against Japan Vol 1
<https://archive.org/details/war-against-japan-vol-1/page/n15/mode/2up>

Chapter 2: Surrender in Singapore

For the Indians, besides the shock of defeat, Singapore after the surrender was rife with the launch of the Japanese sponsored Indian National Army (INA) to expel Britain from India. All Indian POWs were asked to join this, there were speeches, propaganda, torture, threats (and later enforcement) of forced labour to coerce them.

The more well-known INA histories/ memoirs give one side of the story (see 10-15 memoirs + Histories 16-18), while from the other side of this (Intra-Indian) hill we hear another, very different view – see 1-5 (relatively unknown memoirs), and for the first 25-35 (unpublished archive material).

On Feb 17, 1942, was the surrender ceremony in Farrer Park where the Indians were “handed over” to Japan by Lt Col Hunt (19-21). This created great controversy post war when senior INA officers were tried for treason – the handover was taken by Nehru & the defense team as absolving Indians from their allegiance (22).



TENS OF THOUSANDS OF INDIAN ARMY PRISONERS-OF-WAR GATHER AT FARRER PARK AFTER THE BRITISH CAPITULATION.

COLLAGE OF SCREENGRABS FROM 'MARE SENKI' (1942)

<https://sgfilmlocations.com/2014/09/15/malaya-war-record-a-record-of-the-onward-march-1942/>

Feb 1942:

- In the confusion of surrender and the Japanese being overwhelmed by so many POWs, some escaped and reached home. Lt Col Cumming, CO of 2/12 Frontier Force who won

the VC in early Jan 1942, escaped with some British and Indian officers and Indian ORs. The officers reached Colombo on 14 March, 1942 (see 23)

- Settling down into various camps across Singapore. See 28

March 1942: the first shipments of troops for labour:

- March 21, units of HKSAR (HK and Singapore Artillery) shipped to Philippines (24)
- Gurbaksh Singh told in March to leave for Borneo, that gets delayed & he with 3,000 men go instead to Johore in June (Ref 4 pg96).
- Balbir Singh almost marching off for Andaman's when its cancelled (Ref 3, pg67).
- Pillai (28, App A) says 9,000 troops shipped out by April to Andamans, Hanoi & Thailand. He says HKSAR sent to Andamans, though it went to Phils. However as seen in Balbir & Gurbaksh Singh's cases, things change. Am verifying other details.

May-Dec 1942

- INA propaganda (see 1-4, 25-35) and in August, tortures (see 34,35)
- Syonan Times (English language paper in Singapore to replace Straits Times) reports on India (see 36)
- September 1942 about 20k POWs join INA, wearing badges (see 35)
- Late October 1942 Double Cross by Major Dhillon, RIASC and 2nd Lt Bakhtawar, Bengal sappers. See 30-32. Nothing happened later, but was it a planned triple cross?

End of 1st INA

- 21st December 1942 – 1st INA disbanded by its commander, Cap Mohan Singh, 1/14th Punjab (see 11-14)
- Early 1943 attempts to get recruits back again, see 35.

References (AWM/ some WO at National Archives online, IOR or India Office Records at British Library are not)

10. INA and Its Netaji, by Shahnawaz Khan

https://archive.org/details/inaanditsnetajishahnawazkhan_392_e

11. Report on Cap Mohan Singh WO-283-833 (WO-325-51 with same title has the same title, less the appendices, so WO-283-833 is the one to see)

12. Major Fujiwara Interrogation WO-203-6314

13. CSDIC INA History IOR-L/WS/2/45

14. INA History by Historical Section IOR-L/WS/2/46

15. Dhillon of INA Trials – Interrogation Report NAI

<https://www.abhilekh->

[patal.in/jspui/handle/123456789/2821088?searchWord=dhillon&backquery=\[location=123456789/1&query=dhillon&originalquery=&rpp=100&sort_by=dc.date.accessioned_dt&order=desc\]](https://www.abhilekh-patal.in/jspui/handle/123456789/2821088?searchWord=dhillon&backquery=[location=123456789/1&query=dhillon&originalquery=&rpp=100&sort_by=dc.date.accessioned_dt&order=desc])

16. The Forgotten Army, India's Armed Struggle for Independence 1942-42 by Peter Ward Fay
<https://archive.org/details/forgottenarmyind00pete>

17. The Indian National Army and Japan, by Joyce Chapman Lebra - this one not online, but a similar title by the author (Japanese Trained Armies in Southeast Asia) is:

<https://archive.org/details/japanesetraineda0000lebr>

18. The Springing Tiger by Hugh Toye <https://archive.org/details/springingtigerst0000htoy>
Toye was tasked with interviewing the captured INA soldiers.

19. Farrer Park handover: In most books Hunt's ref to as Lt Col Hunt Malaya Command or HQ. He is in fact Lt William Shapter Hunt, Commander of the 2nd Echelon of Hodsons Horse, Indian Armored Corps (courtesy Jonathan Moffat)
https://lq-cofepow.org/products/hunt-william-shapter?_pos=11&_sid=9377c90c4&_ss=r
20. Recording of Farrer Park at National Archives Singapore Reading Room
https://www.nas.gov.sg/archivesonline/audiovisual_records/record-details/6d81e8f1-1164-11e3-83d5-0050568939ad
21. Timing of Farrer Park (2pm):
https://lq-cofepow.org/products/asani-tirathoas-mulchand?_pos=1&_sid=8ef354c65&_ss=r
22. INA Trial IOR-L/WS/1/1579
23. Cummings VC WO-98-8-746, escape WO-372-63-660 and (courtesy Moffat) CAB-106-196 pg29-34
24. HKSAR sent to Philippines on March 21 (post-war debriefs AWM54 1010/4/164 pgs 73-5, 88-93 etc)
25. CSDIC (Combined Services Detailed Interrogation Centre – it worked with MI9 to debrief escaped POWs) report on Cap Balbir debrief & MC recommendation WO-373-62-600
26. CSDIC report on Cap Parab debrief & MC recommendation WO-373-62-601
27. CSDIC report on Cap Pritam Singh debrief & MC recommendation WO-373-62-662
28. Lt Pillai's 32-page report AWM 54-779-10-4 deserves special mention. He brings the 1st news of conditions in Singapore, Malaya, Thailand & Burma to India HQ. Besides his escape, the debrief covers:
 - Changi civilians, Australians at Seletar, Indians at Bidadari, Nee Soon, Tengah, Tyersall, Buller
 - Shipment of 9k Indian POWs for labour
 - Other escapes
 - Assessment of chance of escape for British/Aus (nil), Indians, good
 - Suggestions on propaganda in Southeast Asia & India
 - Names of those who helped them.
 - Attitude of locals before, during the war & after surrender, assessment of loyalty
29. India HQ Report on Pillai / Radhakrishnan debrief & MC recommendation WO-373-61-980. Gazetted 29 Sep 1942. Note Natarajan stayed behind in Burma.
30. Video Talk on Pillai's escape by his son Adm Pillai
<https://bangaloreinternationalcentre.org/event/escape-from-singapore/>
31. MBE recommendation for Major Dhillon WO-373-62-605
32. Major Dhillons own account IOR-L/WS/1/1576
33. CSDIC report on Lt Bakhtawar Singh debrief & MBE recommendation WO-373-62-598.
34. Major James report AWM 54 1010-4-152 (p3-5 of pdf)
35. Jemader Chint Singh affidavit AWM 54 1010-3-108 (pg 25-6 of pdf)
36. The Japanese renamed Singapore Syonan-To & started an English language newspaper Syonan Times for Propaganda. If you search on The Syonan Shimbun or Syonan Shimbun Fortnightly with relevant date range and key words eg Maru (for ship), Indian etc
<https://eresources.nlb.gov.sg/newspapers/advanced>. Here are some articles:
Reports of India by Japanese internees who were exchanged:
<https://eresources.nlb.gov.sg/newspapers/digitised/article/syonantimes19420920-1.2.16?qt=maru&q=MARU>

<https://eresources.nlb.gov.sg/newspapers/digitised/article/syonantimes19420920-1.2.46?qt=maru&q=MARU>

<https://eresources.nlb.gov.sg/newspapers/digitised/article/syonantimes19420922-1.2.45?qt=maru&q=MARU>

Bose's Indian Struggle printed in Tamil, the language of many Indian POWs and civilians in Malaya/ Singapore

<https://eresources.nlb.gov.sg/newspapers/digitised/article/syonantimes19421221-1.2.20?qt=indian&q=indian>

Japanese air raid on Calcutta

<https://eresources.nlb.gov.sg/newspapers/digitised/article/syonantimes19421222-1.2.17?qt=indian&q=indian>

Chapter 3: The Great Indian Escapes from Singapore

May 4 Escape by Cap Balbir & Gangaram Parab of 4/19 Hyderabad and Cap Pritam Singh 5/6 Punjab. Balbir & Parab reach early Oct 1942. Pritam Singh reaches end October helped by Dhillon (see Double Cross below).

May 7 Escape by Lts Pillai & Radhakrishnan (a Volunteer who had not been interned) and Cap Natarjan, IMS. Though they leave 3 days later, they arrive 2 months earlier on Aug 2. While in hospital, Gandhi, Nehru & entire Congress leadership is arrested, India is in chaos & they are suspects. 5 days after reaching Delhi on Aug 26, CinC recommends MC.

October Major Dhillon Double Cross. In his escape debrief he said he had inveigled himself with the INA/ Japanese, all the while aiming to escape. Earlier opportunities were not safe enough & he finally did it in end Oct 1942. After an investigation, he was awarded an MBE in March 1943.

See 25-33

Chapter 4: Rest of Far East – Borneo, HK, Burma

Sarawak/Borneo (only 1 battalion 2/15 Punjab).

Well documented example of how units get split up and shipped from place to place. 2/15 Punjab Reg surrendered in Sarawak Apr 3 1942. 700 sent to Java, then Singapore, where some remained, some sent back to Java, some remaining in Singapore & some came to New Britain.

37. Havildar Major Maula Baksh detailed account (AWM 54 1010/4/164, pg9),

38. From this group, Captain Sher Dil Khan, MBE for fortitude in captivity in New Britain WO 373-87-347

39. Looking for some evidence from him, found an affidavit verified by him AWM 54 1010/4/170 PG 77

40. For those who stayed behind in Borneo, battalion gets 2nd wartime MBE, Subedar Mhd Hasham at Kuching WO 373-87-344

41. Sekhon's account of Kuching/Sarawak crimes See AWM 54 1010/4/130 pg 11-12

42. Sekhons Questionnaire - beatings to make them join INA in Miri/ Lutong - NAA Series No MP742/1 Control Symbol 336/1/2018 (courtesy Moffat)

43. LABUAN crimes Sepoy Chuni Ram AWM 54 1010/4/120 p80-85
44. Trial held in Singapore for crimes at Lutong Jun 1945 during Allied invasion.
<https://singaporewarcrimestrials.com/case-summaries/detail/092>
<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/964641?searchTerm=indian%20pow>
<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/62861553?searchTerm=indian%20pow>
<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/116618113?searchTerm=indian%20pow>

Hong Kong

Captain Ansari, nephew of Nizam of Hyderabad, was singled out due to his royal blood. He was beheaded 20 Oct 1943. George Cross gazetted 18 April 1946

45. WO 325/ 167 has details of the trial Japan held when he was sentenced.
46. His CWGC grave <https://www.cwgc.org/find-records/find-war-dead/casualty-details/2815107/mateen-ahmed-ansari/>
47. Write-up on him - <https://vcgca.org/our-people/profile/155/MATEEN-AHMED-ANSARI>

HK Escape narratives

48. Multiple escape narratives and award recommendations WO-373-64-702
49. Sepoy Manga Khan escaped 1942, caught & escaped 1944 leading 3 others. WO-373-47-418
50. Jemadar Sher Singh escape narrative WO 373-64-65
51. Akbar Ali + 4 escape narrative WO 373-64-66
52. Numerous other awards in GAZETTE 18 Apr 46
<https://www.thegazette.co.uk/London/issue/37536/data.pdf>
53. Hong Kong Indian Camp Argyle Street WO 361/2048

Burma references:

See 44. From Burma in April 1942, Jemadar Padam Bahadur Thapa and Subedar Tekbahadur Limbu started an escape together, then split up. Thapa's team splits further & he finally reaches India with 4 soldiers. The other part of his team is headed by Sepoy Ganga Bahadur Khettri who has 2 soldiers with him & also reach India. All are awarded. Meanwhile Limbu also reaches India with his team & gets the MC.

54. Escape by Sub Tekbahadur Limbu in 1943, awarded MC, WO 373-62-499

Chapter 5: Hell Ship Voyages

The Japanese use Allied POWs & Asian "romusha" civilians to construct airfields for their attacks, and later in the war for defensive works. They face horrific conditions in the voyages and once they arrive, and moved from place to place in death marches or more hell-ships. The largest number of Indian POWs are sent to New Britain, Burma, New Guinea & Java.

Good Articles to get the big picture:

55. Prof Stanley <https://www.awm.gov.au/articles/journal/j37/indians>
56. Maj-General Hamid https://tribune.com.pk/story/2402061/could-inferno-be-worse?fbclid=IwAR2T-mpKMwDY_041sEXwr3VoU2T2qZDnu_hMsDMA2lpjmqJLI_eIIFcj2qw

Some well-documented Voyages

Sinking of Buyo Maru Jan 27, 1943 by a US sub USS Wahoo with 194/500 people dying.
See 73 (Sen) and USS Wahoo patrol reports US National Archives

57. Pg49/50 <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/74859023>
pg4 onwards <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/101741862>
58. pg7 shooting, "returned by machine gun fire", "proceeded to have a field day"
<https://catalog.archives.gov/id/278490254>
59. <http://combinedfleet.com/googlesearch.php?cx=004186240537787039759%3Abhyj uw5taag&channel=2324678199&cof=FORID%3A10&ie=UTF-8&q=BUYO&sa=Search>
60. Photo from US Naval History and Heritage Command – view from periscope of USS Wahoo of Buyo Maru sinking- public domain
<https://www.history.navy.mil/content/history/nhhc/our-collections/photography/numerical-list-of-images/nara-series/80-g/80-G-30000/80-G-39746.html>
61. <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/263512730?searchTerm=indian%20pow>

Connected to Buyo Maru

62. PACIFIC MARU – tanker with 1500 Indian POWs accompanying Buyo Maru (Sen Ref 73).
63. NAGANA MARU: Buyo Maru survivors taken to Pulau & shipped to New Britain on Nagana

Thames Maru May 1943

64. Pulau Trial says carried 2k Indians, including 520 offloaded at Pulau
<https://www.legal-tools.org/doc/1e100b/>
65. However, this post says carried 520 Indian POWs and 1500 Malay Chinese Javanese labourers http://www.combinedfleet.com/Thames_t.htm

Other Ships/ Refs

66. HIBI MARU (AWM 54 1010/4/170 Pg 91-2 CAP AMS CHARMARETTE 1HYD with 669 in 1 hold and http://www.combinedfleet.com/Hibi_t.htm saying total 3k
67. Other journey description, see Crasta Ref 4.
68. Singapore Keppel Harbour conditions Op Jaywick Debrief NAA – Item ID 235230
69. How Many were shipped? 13-14k men shipped from Singapore. Of these 550 went to Pulau, 2.5k to New Guinea, 10-11k to New Britain. Indian POW Annexure has details of how this is calculated.

Sinkings in 1944 involving Indian POWs (courtesy Peter Cundall)

70. IKOMA Maru from Wewak to Hollandia, sunk 21 Jan 44 killing 418/611 Indian POWs
http://www.combinedfleet.com/Ikoma_t.htm
USS Seahorse Patrol report <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/74844908>
71. On 25 Feb 44 USS Rasher sank Ryusei Maru sailing from Surabaya to Ambon with 1244 Japanese troops, 2865 Indian POWS and 2559 Romusha labourers
http://www.combinedfleet.com/Ryusei_t.htm 4968 men and 31 crew die. In the same action, Tango Maru sunk killing 3000 Romusha's & Allied POWs
USS Rasher patrol report NAID: 78429217, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/78429217>

Chapter 6 & 7: Arriving and Surviving in Hell:

They were liberated by Australia and AWM contains archives of their evidence. After giving them time to recuperate, they made each answer a questionnaire on their time in captivity (this is the document to be used to verify IWPs, hell ship dates). If war crimes were mentioned, then a separate statement needed to be made.

Navigating AWM54 – World War II

- AWM54 779 on POWs and Internees
- AWM54 1010 on War Crimes Trials
- As few Indian POWs are mentioned by name, best way is to search “Indian POW”

From vast archives, these documents are good examples of the 100s of questionnaires & specific statements. The highlighted pages are by officers who provide a big picture narrative of their captivity (also 34/35 for big picture):

72. AWM54 1010/4/164

- Major Rasheed, Bahawalpur State Forces, AWM 54 1010/4/164, pg 24-32
- Jemadar Diwan Singh of 1st Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regt AWM 54 1010/4/164 p94-7

73. AWM54 1010/4/170

- Captain Sen 5/2 Punjab Rifles AWM 54 1010/4/170 p47-53 (sunk by sub)
- Lt Dr Saksena AWM 54 1010/4/170 pg 59-62
- Lt Col Syed Mohd Ishaq Hyderabad State Forces, AWM 54 1010/4/170, p63, p65-9
- LT A.K.DAW Med Officer for SEN AWM 170 pg 156-7

74. AWM54 1010/3/109

75. AWM54 1010/4/179

76. AWM54 1010/4/130

77. AWM54 1010/4/152

78. AWM 54 779/3/102

79. AWM54 1010/9/94 (cannibalism) plus

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/250679514?searchTerm=indian%20pow>
<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/51765058?searchTerm=indian%20pow>

Chapter 8: The Tide Turns

80. First Allied air raids in New Guinea on 17 Aug, 1943 (CS CMB & AWM sources) and New Britain 12, Oct, 1943 (many AWM sources above + Crasta ref 4),

81. First Allied POWs from Singapore to be liberated were 66 Sikhs on March 7, 1944 in Los Negros in the Admiralty Islands, by the US 1st Cavalry Regiment

BL Ref IOR and Article in Yank Magazine Jun 9, 1944

http://www.oldmagazinearticles.com/WW2_Indian-Sikh_Soldiers_in_Japanese_Prison_Camps_World_War_Two-pdf

82. In 1944, Allies landed on New Guinea/ Bougainville in 1944 and this prompts escapes eg:

- Cap JH Patel in New Guinea with 27 others
- Gopal Prasad Jha, Bougainville, Aug 1944
- Cap Pillay, Bougainville in Sep 1944.

(See WO 373-64-76)

More Bougainville

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/130852289?searchTerm=indian%20pow>

More New Guinea: 1944 Wewak, New Guinea, Subedar-Major Baboo Ram, Punjab Regiment

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/42436263?searchTerm=indian%20pow>

Burma <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/91395529?searchTerm=indian%20pow>

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/236529503?searchTerm=indian%20pow>

Meanwhile in Singapore

83. Captain DURRANI Bahawalpur State Forces, George Cross

<https://www.thegazette.co.uk/London/issue/37575/data.pdf>

84. Rifleman Mehraj Din, Rajputana Rifles, escaped from Singapore to KL and set up a tailor shop. He supplied Indian POWs secretly & remaining undetected for the rest of the war. Awarded BEM. WO 373-104-170.

85. There were many others who blended into Singapore and Malaya after escape (interview with Lt Pillai's son, Admiral Pillai)

86. Captains Sudame & Jayaram, RIASC escaped from Singapore separately, caught in Bangkok, brought back. Both awarded MBE WO 373-104-56 and WO 373-104-54

87. Lt Ismail oral history IWM who had remained here. Marvellous tape. 3RD tape, Min 14:00 onwards on Malaya

<https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/80011491>

88. Lt BP Singh, captured at Arakan campaign, staunch anti-Japan, so segregated & the only Indian in Changi with British POWs. Set up radio & found his way out of Changi to pass war news regularly into Indian POW camp to keep their spirits up. WO 373-104-140, his Changi record WO 367/1

[https://search.findmypast.co.uk/record?id=GBM%2FPOW-](https://search.findmypast.co.uk/record?id=GBM%2FPOW-GALLIP%2F101684752%2F00181&parentid=GBM%2FPOW-FAREAST%2F01395467)

[GALLIP%2F101684752%2F00181&parentid=GBM%2FPOW-FAREAST%2F01395467](https://search.findmypast.co.uk/record?id=GBM%2FPOW-GALLIP%2F101684752%2F00181&parentid=GBM%2FPOW-FAREAST%2F01395467)

and liberation questionnaire

[https://lq-cofepow.org/products/singh-baleshwar-](https://lq-cofepow.org/products/singh-baleshwar-prasad?_pos=13&_sid=f9a0e0ac4&_ss=r)

[prasad?_pos=13&_sid=f9a0e0ac4&_ss=r](https://lq-cofepow.org/products/singh-baleshwar-prasad?_pos=13&_sid=f9a0e0ac4&_ss=r)

89. How doctors were managing <https://fepowhistory.com/tag/indian-pows/>

Chapter 9: Liberation

92. New Guinea

Pre-landing

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/250679662?searchTerm=indian%20pow>

Landing Sep 10 (article Wed 12 Sep, landed Monday, hence 10th)

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/91950242?searchTerm=indian%20pow>

Lt-Gen Adachi Surrender

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/250680130?searchTerm=indian%20pow>

How Many Survived?

93. New Guinea 202 (or possibly 204) out of 2500. See separate Annexure, Corroborated

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/146850659?searchTerm=indian%20pow>

Source of figures Japan

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/188768454?searchTerm=indian%20pow>

94. Air Crash of 10 of these survivors

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/91940036?searchTerm=indian%20pow>
<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/44832019?searchTerm=indian%20pow>
<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/250681973?searchTerm=indian%20pow>

One of those who died gave evidence for cannibalism case (see below)

New Britain

95. Gen Imamura surrender <https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/C42257>

96. Crasta says out of 11k, 5.3k survivors (including 1k hospital cases). He was off by just 183.

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/250680130?searchTerm=indian%20pow>

96. Other reports on numbers:

- 6k Indian recovered Rabaul
<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/250680694?searchTerm=indian%20pow>
- Including 300 Gurkhas at Rabaul
<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/103229326?searchTerm=indian%20pow>
- Rabaul 8k Asiatics
<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/972008?searchTerm=indian%20pow>
- 5500 Rabaul
<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/258036146?searchTerm=indian%20pow>

97. Description of Rabaul at liberation by Australian

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/257684298?searchTerm=indian%20pow>

98. Condition of Indian POWs

- Picture Indian POWs at Rabaul
<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/62860968?searchTerm=indian%20pow>
- AIF describes their condition
<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/234642624?searchTerm=indian%20pow>
- "I have waited" words of Indian POW
<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/44829621?searchTerm=indian%20pow>
- Particular about meat in their diet
<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/69090518?searchTerm=indian%20pow>

99. Thanks for the care the Aussie's took:

- Thanks from James (Ref 33)
<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/250681182?searchTerm=indian%20pow>
- Thanks from "your son"
<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/48674939?searchTerm=indian%20pow>
- New Guinea pic <https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/C75978?image=2>
- Wewak thanks to Australians:
<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/250682421?searchTerm=indian%20pow>
- Little India in Brisbane
<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/250680545?searchTerm=indian%20pow>
- Freemantle 100 Indian POWs
<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/38566855?searchTerm=indian%20pow>

100. Liberation in Other Places

- Halmaheras 211 from Sing– 41 died, 16 beheaded, 8 escaped, 153 survivors:
<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/42467485?searchTerm=indian%20pow>
<https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/C376855>
<https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/C376860>
- Singapore 1060 survivors
<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/212282416?searchTerm=indian%20pow>
- Nominal Roll Indian POW Dutch New Guinea = 443
<https://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/SearchNRetrieve/Interface/DetailsReports/ItemDetail.aspx?Barcode=772439&isAv=N>
- Hanoi - Japanese give trouble when Allied plane wanted to land:
<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/229024725?searchTerm=indian%20pow>
- Banjarmasin, Dutch Borneo
<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/144983658?searchTerm=indian%20pow>
<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/203121386?searchTerm=indian%20pow>
- Miri Borneo
<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/964641?searchTerm=indian%20pow>
- Labuan, Borneo
<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/247638604?searchTerm=indian%20pow>
- Lutong Sarwak Borneo 150
<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/971070?searchTerm=indian%20pow>
- Lutong/ Seria, Miri Borneo
<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/970974?searchTerm=indian%20pow>
- Borneo 2/15 PR
<https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/C49865>
- Sourabaya, Dutch East-Indies
<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/12156849?searchTerm=indian%20pow>
- Burma
<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/47725276?searchTerm=indian%20pow>
<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/78789110?searchTerm=indian%20pow>
- HK <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/188747202?searchTerm=indian%20pow>
- HK <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/968797?searchTerm=indian%20pow>
- Manila
<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/17951962?searchTerm=indian%20pow>

Chapter 10: WAR CRIMES TRIALS

After rest & once questionnaires answered & specific statements made on war crimes, courts of inquiry were held.

101. AWM54 1010/4/170 has examples on pg 42-6, and 70-74

Subsequently 100 war crimes trials were held by Australia solely on atrocities against Indian POWs. In 66 of these all or some of the accused were convicted to death or prison. Indian POW Annexure has a note on Legal aspects/ defense by Japanese.

A good starting point are these articles:

102. Sissons, D.C.S. The Australian War Crimes Trials and Investigations (1942-51).
<https://www.ocf.berkeley.edu/~changmin/documents/Sissons%20Final%20War%20Crim%20Text%2018-3-06.pdf>
103. Article on Australian War Crimes Trials with focus on Rabaul
<https://academic.oup.com/book/26719/chapter/195551727>
104. TOKYO WAR CRIMES TRIALS - MARK FELTON YOUTUBE
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=63R2aBqwsPg>

Trials archives:

105. AWM226 items 15, 16, 17
106. AWM54 1010
107. Singapore war crimes trial portal with summary <https://singaporewarcrimestrials.com>
108. It has Links to details in UNs ICWC, search by name of defendant. This has records of all trials across countries, but mainly summaries & judgements, not the transcripts and evidence <https://www.legal-tools.org/>
109. Hong Kong University has a similar website:
<https://hkwctc.lib.hku.hk/exhibits/show/hkwctc/documents> Snapshots of cases can be downloaded. Main records with UK National Archives
110. Some broadcast live
<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/68953782?searchTerm=indian%20pow>

As there were 100 trials for New Britain/ New Guinea, here is a representative sample:

111. Beheading of Cap Nirpal Singh without Trial AWM54 1010/6/100
112. Trial of Captain Taura (said to be the cruelest unit commander on New Britain) AWM54 1010/3/81
113. Based on Taura's conviction, his C/o Col Negishi was tried as well but found not guilty AWM54 1010/6/4
114. Lt Gen Adachi – convicted & committed suicide while serving his life sentence AWM54 1010/3/8 +
<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/63002490?searchTerm=indian%20pow>
<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/81403505?searchTerm=indian%20pow>
<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/245589641?searchTerm=indian%20pow>
<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/190418205?searchTerm=indian%20pow>
<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/81403717?searchTerm=indian%20pow>
115. Mitsuba Confesses
<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/71456737?searchTerm=indian%20pow>
2 death sentences + 3rd sentence of 20 years
<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/206107567?searchTerm=indian%20pow>
Mitsuba hangs himself
<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/158274953?searchTerm=indian%20pow>
116. Cannibalism
<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/229459542?searchTerm=indian%20pow>

For the Australian trials, Chint Singh was prolific. He gave vast amounts of testimony, used in at least 6 trials and was 1 of the few who was brought back to give evidence in court such as at the trial of Lt-Gen Adachi. Besides a book on him by his son (Ref 5), there are:

117. His 61 page record of New Guinea and liberation- A brief sketch of the fate of 3000 Indian POWs in New Guinea. 1943-1945. Pacific Manuscript Bureau.
<https://asiapacific.anu.edu.au/pambu/catalogue/index.php/396y-mwfd-fm7w>
118. Multiple affidavits as evidence in AWM 54 1010/9/79
119. And AWM 54 1010/4/31
120. Chint Singhs handwritten letter thanking 6th Australian division AWM 54-779-1-20
121. <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/144986427?searchTerm=indian%20pow>
122. On his visit 1947 to give evidence
<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/127306959?searchTerm=indian%20pow>

There were 3 trials involving Indian POWs in Singapore, Borneo and Burma

123. Singapore Trial of Gozawa Odaichi & others for atrocities on Hell Ship & on Palua island
 - WO235/813 (5 Indian former POWs returned to Singapore to give evidence in person)
 - <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/50321928?searchTerm=indian%20pow>
 - <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/151457209?searchTerm=indian%20pow>
 - <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/93154531?searchTerm=indian%20pow>
 - The additional set of 30 troops that arrived later, probably came on Macassar Maru that carried a contingent on Gurkha POWs from Rabaul to Pulau
http://www.combinedfleet.com/Macassar_t.htm.
124. Borneo
<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/99111376?searchTerm=indian%20pow>
125. Burma Trial vs COL SUGASAWA Burma Railway - summary
<https://singaporewarcrimestrials.com/case-summaries/detail/095>
 - Trial transcripts
<https://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/SearchNRetrieve/Interface/ViewImage.aspx?B=30297583>

Chapter 11: The Other Side of the Hill – The Japanese View

A good place to find this in the trial transcripts. In addition, see

126. AWM 54 1010/9/22 Affidavits by Japanese at Rabaul, New Britain
127. AWM 54 1010/9/23 Roll of Japanese units at Rabaul, statement by Gen adachi
128. Unpublished manuscript by Japanese commander at Rabaul General Imamura AWM MSS1098
129. Oral History of a Japanese now POW Iwao Muranaka in Changi post war
https://www.nas.gov.sg/archivesonline/oral_history_interviews/record-details/cc2774af-115e-11e3-83d5-0050568939ad?keywords=indian%20POW&keywords-type=all
In Japanese with a transcript – a pilot with Navy Air For& comes to Singapore, they were ready to fight off invasion, as POW, labour works in Singapore, says British guards cried when they left for Japan.

Chapter 12: Going Home

Repatriation:

130. Crasta (1) names his repatriation ship Highland Brigade (HB), and others hospital ship Dorsetshire, Highland Chieftain & carrier HMS Formidable.

131. cOct30, 1945, carrier HMS Formidable and transport Highland Chieftain

- Formidable leaving Sydney Oct 24, see articles on Food below plus this:

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/26159630?searchTerm=HMS%20FORMIDABLE>

- Formidable leaving Rabaul Oct30 - article dt Oct 31 quoting Reuters

Oct30 <https://eresources.nlb.gov.sg/newspapers/digitised/article/maltribune19451031-1.2.15?qt=highland,%20chieftain&q=HIGHLAND%20CHIEFTAIN> (Reuters also says it left

Sydney Oct20, but from other reports it left later. Though its was wrong on this, the fact that it left Rabaul cOct30 seems correct, verified by article below on Singapore arrival enroute India_

- Arrives Singapore Nov 7 enroute to Bombay via

Trincomalee <https://eresources.nlb.gov.sg/newspapers/digitised/article/maltribune19451107-1.2.6>

Articles on Food for Indian POWs on Formidable

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/17957341?searchTerm=HMS%20FORMIDABLE>

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/44826315?searchTerm=HMS%20FORMIDABLE>

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/95610067?searchTerm=HMS%20FORMIDABLE>

132. Hospital ship Dorsetshire sailed Tuesday (articles dt Wednesday 7 Nov 1945)

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/250681399?searchTerm=indian%20pow>

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/47728090?searchTerm=HMS%20FORMIDABLE>

133. Highland Brigade sailed "this week", article dt Friday 16 Nov 1945, so sometime b/w Nov12-15) bound for Singapore and Madras

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/250681821?searchTerm=indian%20pow>

A picture of Highland Brigade hitting a mine near Singapore on the way home on a later voyage

<https://eresources.nlb.gov.sg/newspapers/digitised/article/straitstimes19460120-1.2.5?qt=highland,%20brigade&q=highland%20brigade>

134. Liner runs aground Bay of Bengal:

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/161199527?searchTerm=indian%20pow>

135. Burma Numbers at repatriation

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/78776445?searchTerm=indian%20pow>

Awards for Indian FEPOWs:

For the approximately 30-40k Indian FEPOWs who didn't join the INA, 2 George Crosses, at least 6 OBEs, over 30 MBEs, numerous MCs, MMs, BEMs, Mentions were awarded. Following gazette's include multiple awards:

136. April 18, 1946: Ansari GC, 6 OBEs, many MBEs

<https://www.thegazette.co.uk/London/issue/37536/data.pdf>

137. May 9, 1946: 15 MBEs

<https://www.thegazette.co.uk/London/issue/37558/data.pdf>

138. Sep 25, 1947: over 20 MBEs, 14 BEMs, Mentions etc

<https://www.thegazette.co.uk/London/issue/38079/data.pdf>

Commemoration

139. War Cemeteries <https://www.cofepow.org.uk/war-cemeteries>. Details of each country. Despite this, Is the story known in the to the people?

Their post-war feelings/ impact – The biggest gap, as none of the memoirs cover this.

140. Have started family interviews to try to bridge this gap. Each one has been an incredible learning for me. While writing this I realized, I don't know what talking about it means to the family – must ask next time.

I'm very new to this and welcome any guidance/ help.

Thanks, Gautam Hazarika, ghazarika70@yahoo.com