Ernest Warwick

# Ernest Edward Lawrence Warwick

Ernest Edward Lawrence Warwick was born in Brighton in 1918 towards the end of the first World War. He had a tough upbringing through the slump and poverty of the thirties. The eldest of eight children, with four brothers and three sisters, he was forced to leave school at 13 years of age after his father had been killed the day before in a road accident.

At the outbreak of World War 2 in 1939, he was called up and, after eight weeks basic training in the Essex Regiment, he was posted to the Fourth Battalion of the Suffolk Regiment, HQ Company, Intelligence Section for the duration of World War 2. This formed part of the 18th Infantry (Combat) Division of the British Army.

Serving as a private soldier, fighting on the streets in the brief and bloody 17-day battle for Singapore (which ended in the ignominious surrender of the Island – the 'fortress that never was[1]'), he was wounded in action and taken Prisoner of War on the 15 February 1942. He spent 3 years and 8 months as a Japanese Prisoner of War,[2] the majority of this on the infamous "railway of death" in Thailand. Saved from virtually certain death by the timely dropping of the Atom Bomb on Japan, which led to the almost immediate unconditional surrender of the Japanese. In August 1945 he was flown to a hospital in Rangoon, Burma weighing just over 6 stone (84lbs).
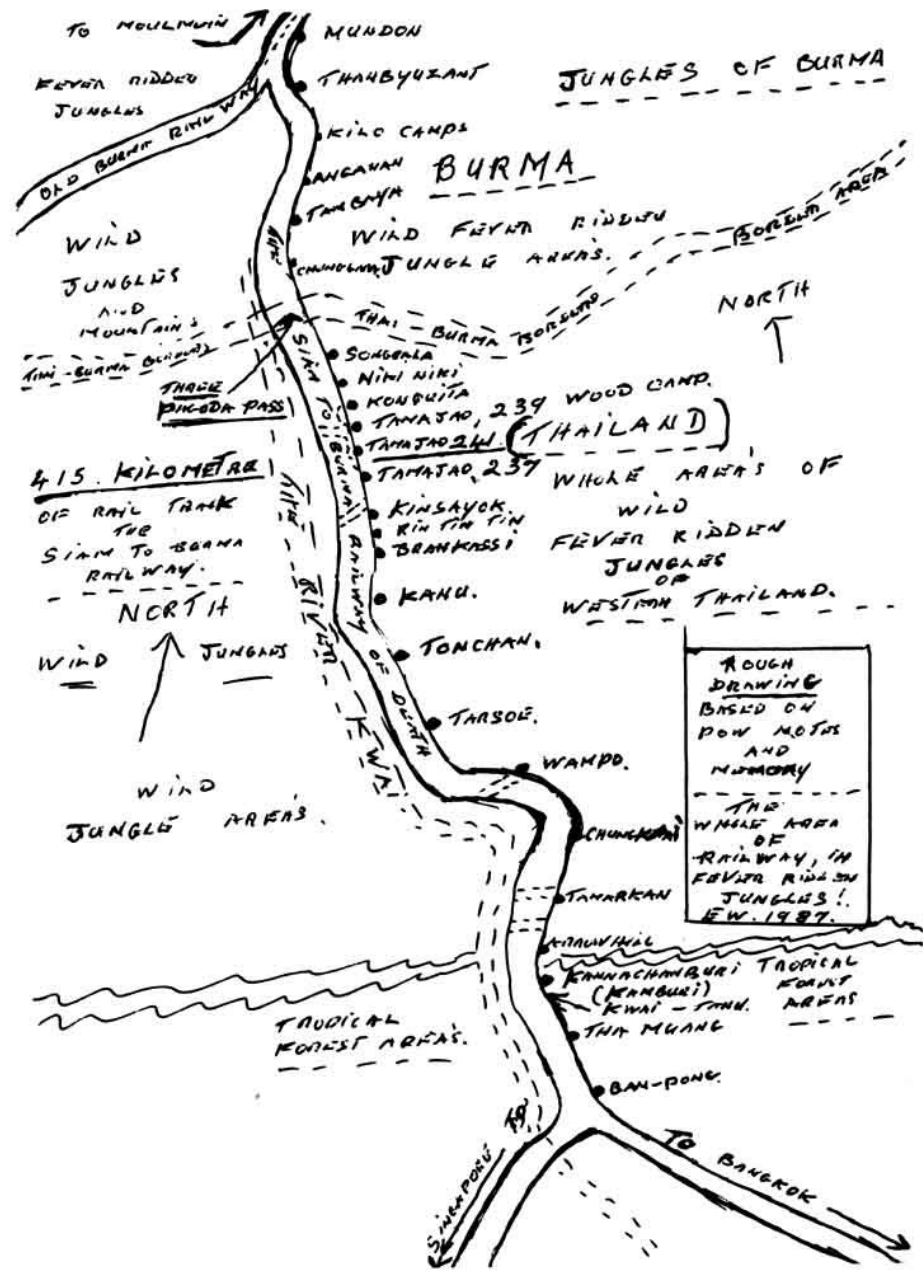
He was awarded The 1939–1945 Star, The Pacific Star (for the 17-day bloody battle of Singapore) and the 1939–1945 War Medal.

Throughout the post-war years he had a variety of jobs in industry, culminating in his position as deputy head porter at the General Hospital in Rochford for eight years until his retirement in 1983. He lived with his family in the village of Ashingdon in Essex.

Ernest was haunted by his years in captivity all his life and was confined to a wheelchair as a direct result of brutal torture and ill-treatment at the hands of the Japanese in the grim jungle death camps alongside the River Kwai.
        (Source: Wikipedia)

# SIAM TO BURMA RAILWAY



(FIRST DRAWN IN CAPTIVITY, 1943)
E.W. 1987.