

FEW ON WHARF TO FAREWELL DUTCH

Very quietly and with little trace of emotion about 600 Dutch men, women and children left Brisbane this morning by HMAS Kanimbla on their way back to their homes in the Netherlands East Indies.

Only a handful of people were on Pinkenba wharf to say farewell, and as the big ship drew away from the wharf only half a dozen streamers broke.

With passengers lining the decks the only sound to be heard as the Kanimbla turned in the river was the fussing of the two tugs, Carlock and Beaver, while from the ship herself came the strains of the Dutch National Anthem.

Among the passengers, except those farewelling Brisbane friends, there was a strange silence. The reason was that the big majority are going back to homes which they have not seen for years.

Recovered from the Japanese by whom they had been held prisoners for many years, the Dutch passengers have been recuperating in Australia for several months.

About 300 came from the South and a similar number have lived in Brisbane during their stay in Australia.

The majority are going to Java. There are many children.

Also on board are 12 Japanese war criminals, including Vice-Admiral Kusaka, once Commander-in-Chief of the Eastern Fleet, who are on their way to Macassar for trial. They are segregated from the other passengers.

A few Australian women farewelled their husbands, and will follow later.

"Australia is a wonderful place, and we have enjoyed our stay here," one woman passenger said. "Still we are going home and that makes us happy. I do not know what I shall find, but I am lucky because my husband is with me. We have not seen our home for a long, long time."