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OPERATIONS IN HONG KONG FROM 8TH TO 25TH DECEMBER, 1941

The following Despatch was submitted to the Secretary of State for War, on 21st November 1945, by MAJOR-GENERAL C. M. MALBY, M.C., late G.O.C., British Troops in China.

SIR,

I have the honour to address you on the subject of the operations in Hong Kong in December, 1941, and to forward herewith an account of the operations which took place at Hong Kong between 8th and 25th December, 1941.

2. In normal circumstances this despatch would have been submitted through Headquarters, Far East, but in the circumstances in which I am now placed I consider that it would be better, after this long lapse of time, to submit it to you direct.

3. Before beginning my account of the operations themselves, I feel it to be my duty, both to myself and the forces under my command, to place on record certain points. Of these you will be fully cognizant, but to compilers of history they may not be so obvious.

4. The defences of this Colony were on a limited scale, with the object of denying the harbour to an enemy rather than retaining the harbour for the use of our fleet. This object, combined with the forces available, necessitated a plan to defend the Island of Hong Kong only. The arrival of two Canadian battalions on the 16th November, 1941, caused me to alter my plan to a certain degree. I placed one brigade, with a proportion of mobile artillery under command, on the mainland to prepare and defend

the so-called "Gindrunkers' Line," with the hope that, given a certain amount of time and if the enemy did not launch a major offensive there, Kowloon, the harbour and the northern portion of the island would not be subjected to artillery fire directed from the land. Time was also of vital importance to complete demolitions of fuel stores, power houses, docks, wharves, etc., on the mainland; to clear certain food stocks and vital necessities from the mainland to the island; to sink shipping and lighters and to clear the harbour of thousands of junks and sampans. It will be appreciated that to take such irrevocable and expensive steps as mentioned in the foregoing sentence was impossible until it was definitely known that war with Japan was inevitable.

5. That war was inevitable seemed clear to me. I had all my forces deployed in their battle positions in ample time, but it was hard to make that definite statement on the information available, with the result that the civil authorities felt that they were not in a position to put into full force all the numerous measures required during the preliminary or the precautionary period of the Civil Defence plan. For this state of affairs, I must blame three factors:—

(a) The general doubt that Japan would declare war against the Allied powers.

(b) The weakness of our intelligence system.

(c) The belief that Japan was bluffing and would continue to bluff to the last. The true gravity of the state of affairs was not reflected in the embassy despatches from Tokyo.

6. That these full Civil Defence measures were not put into effect in time had definite reactions on the subsequent powers of defence and were of assistance to the enemy, e.g., small craft and sampans were available to assist the landings on the island, and supplies were to be found in Kowloon although the roads available to the enemy had been destroyed and were kept under harassing fire. These were not large items in themselves, perhaps, but were cumulative against us.

7. In fairness to the civil authorities I must state that I did say that unless the Japanese launched a major offensive against the "Gindrillers' Line" I saw no reason why the period between their crossing of the frontier and the evacuation of the mainland by my forces should not extend to a period of seven days or more. I gave no guarantee and still maintain that this was a fair estimate and might well have been accomplished had not the key to our position on the mainland been captured by surprise by the enemy.

8. The forces under my command had many limitations and amongst these must be enumerated:—

- (a) Absence of modern air power.
- (b) The weakness of the naval units.
- (c) The paucity of anti-aircraft guns, both light and heavy.
- (d) The lack of any radar equipment.
- (e) The necessary dilution, in order to economise manpower in the arms of the service, by Chinese personnel of unknown reliability in time of war.
- (f) The lack of regular transport driven by disciplined drivers.

Reference 8(a) above, the aircraft here were no match for the enemy fighters and I gave orders that they were not to be employed unless the opportunity occurred either at first light or at dusk for a torpedo attack on any enemy capital ship or large cruiser. In any case, all were put out of action in the first raid made by the enemy, though precautions such as dispersal had been taken. The lack of reconnaissance both landwards and seawards was naturally a serious handicap. Study of the past history of Japanese operations had led me to believe that they were past masters in combined operations, and throughout the period of the siege I always anticipated a landing on the Southern shores of the island; and lack of distant seaward reconnaissance was for me a distinct handicap. Similarly I know that the lack of opposition to the incessant enemy air raids had a somewhat depressing effect towards the end on the troops, and definitely increased the accuracy of the enemy bombing and the material damage done. For similar reasons the enemy's counter battery tasks were very much simplified.

Reference 8(b) above, the forces available carried out their duties in very difficult circumstances with the utmost gallantry and in the true tradition of the Royal Navy. I have nothing but praise for their gallant conduct, and the Commodore R.N. will be submitting his own despatch.

Reference 8(c) above, these few detachments fought with great gallantry and can claim five enemy aircraft shot down, and three others probably never reached their base.

Reference 8(d) above, the survey for these equipments had been made but their installation had not begun when the war started.

Reference 8(f) above, although the R.A.S.C. performed wonders in organising improvised transport and the few regular drivers were never off the road for days and nights on end, the general desertion of local enlisted Chinese drivers (usually after putting their vehicles out of action) was a very serious factor both from the tactical and maintenance aspects.

9. I wish now to make it perfectly clear that I fully appreciate that the demands of Empire strategy made it impossible at the time for full provision to be made for my forces, and I only make these points so that those who may be writing history or wish to criticise the conduct of my forces may be in full possession of the true facts. Further, I submit that although I and my forces may have been a hostage to fortune, we were a detachment that deflected from more important objectives, such as the Philippines, Singapore, or perhaps even Australia, an enemy force that consisted of two first line divisions, one reserve division, corps artillery, about eighty aircraft and a considerable naval blockade force. Strategically we gambled and lost, but it was a worth while gamble.

10. *Appendix A.*

In this Appendix will be found the full account of the events. It was prepared shortly after our capitulation under considerable difficulties. The war diary and messages to and from Battle Headquarters were naturally all destroyed before and after capitulation; Japanese interest in all written matter necessitated various methods of subterfuge to retain anything, and the main credit for whatever has been compiled must go to my G.S.O.I.—the late Colonel L. A. Newnham, G.C., M.C.—who took the most meticulous care to make this account tally with the true events. There are naturally a few blanks owing to the fog of war and the inability to gain contact with all the survivors, but with more information that will become available from formation and unit war diaries it is to be hoped that finally there will be little left for the imagination to fill in.

11. Although this Appendix gives a very full account of events, I would like to comment on several points.

Japanese Tactics.

The salient points of the Japanese tactics were:—

(a) *Nightwork.*

The division which made the initial advance over the frontier and those troops that first landed on the island had reached a high standard of efficiency in nightwork. All were provided with rubber soled boots that made movement very silent, systematically they used the smallest of paths and avoided all the more obvious lines of advance, and their patrols were very boldly handled.

(b) *Rapidity of Advance.*

The pace of the advance was surprisingly fast, the troops were lightly equipped and must have been very fit to accomplish the marches undertaken.

(c) *Agents and Spies.*

It was obvious from all sources that agents and spies had been placed both on the mainland and the island well beforehand. Spies led the leading elements on the mainland, disguised as innocent labourers or coolies. Their patrols advanced by paths which could have been known only to locals or from detailed reconnaissance. Armed agents in Kowloon and Hong Kong systematically fired during the hours of darkness on troops, sentries, cars and despatch riders, but little damage was done thereby beyond straining the nerves of a number of the men. After the landing on the island had been effected, penetration to cut the island in half was assisted by local guides who led the columns by most difficult routes. The possession of these agents and guides with such intimate knowledge counteracted the first great advantage the defence normally has over the attack, i.e., familiarity with the ground.

(d) *Intelligence.*

It was obvious that the enemy system of intelligence was most complete. Marked maps found on dead officers gave a surprising amount of exact detail, which included our defences and much of our wire. Every officer seemed to be in possession of such a map, which was a lithographed reduction of our own 1/20,000 map. They seemed to be in possession of a very full Order of Battle and knew the names of most of the senior and commanding officers.

(e) *Artillery Concentration.*

Artillery and heavy mortar concentrations were very heavy and correctly placed. Those fired before landing on the island and for the capture of Leighton Hill were as heavy as any experienced in France during the war of 1914/18. The range of the heavy mortar must have been about 1300 yards as they fired across the harbour with accuracy and effect. The blast and noise of the bursting bomb was considerable, but the killing power was not high. On occasions artillery fire was most accurate, e.g., all the pillboxes on the north shore, where the landing was effected, were systematically destroyed.

(f) *Maintenance of the Objective.*

This principle seems to have been well understood by their junior leaders. The advance to cut the island in two was carried out regardless of cost to life.

(g) *Air Force.*

The efficiency of the enemy air force was probably the greatest surprise to me. Their opening attack on Kai Tak aerodrome by low level attack down to sixty feet was carried out with skill and marked boldness. Subsequent high level bombing proved to be most accurate, and they confined their attention to military objectives with marked results, such as the naval base at Aberdeen and the island water supply mains. Their evasive tactics and use of low cloud displayed a high standard of training. My general impression at the time was that either the Japanese pilots had reached a surprisingly high standard of training, or that German pilots were leading their flights.

12. *Appendix B—Summary of Casualties.*

An approximate summary of casualties has been compiled by me as far as possible. This is, however, by no means complete, and, owing to the facts that the survivors of this force were divided up from the beginning and that no communication was permitted between camps, the full casualty list cannot be known until all figures have been compiled by the Casualty Bureau. Since capitulation, a number have died from wounds and disease, and many drowned, with the result that it is feared that final and correct figures will take a long time to compile, and the fates of many will never be known.

13. *Conduct of the Troops.*

For the sake of clarity I have confined myself to the bare statement of military facts. I feel it to be my duty, however, to bring to notice the conduct of my troops during this period of hostilities

(a) *2 Royal Scots.*—It was unfortunate that the enemy captured by surprise the most important Shingmun Redoubt and occupied the Golden Hill position. These two incidents were the direct cause of the hasty withdrawal to the mainland. The gallant action of their D Company (Capt. Pinkerton) on the extreme right flank of the Golden Hill position, the later gallant efforts of the whole battalion to recapture the Wong Nei Chong Gap, and their stubborn fighting in the Mount Nicholson and Mount Cameron areas accomplished much to retrieve their prestige. They commenced the siege with a high incidence of sickness, mainly from malaria, and suffered severe casualties during the operations.

(b) *Royal Rifles of Canada and Winnipeg Grenadiers.*—These two battalions proved to be inadequately trained for modern war under the conditions existing in Hong Kong. They had very recently arrived in Hong Kong after a long sea voyage, and such time as was available had been devoted to the completion of the south shore defences and making themselves au fait with and practising the problems of countering a south shore landing. In this role they were never employed and, instead, they found themselves counter-attacking on steep hill sides covered with scrub, over strange country, and as a result they rapidly became exhausted. Many individual acts of gallantry were performed, their stubborn defensive fighting at the Wong Nei Chong Gap and in the area of Mounts Cameron and Nicholson was marked, and the losses they incurred were heavy and are deeply regretted.

(c) *5th Bn. 7th Rajput Regt.*—This battalion fought well on the mainland and their repulse of the enemy attack on the Devils Peak was entirely successful. The full force of the enemy's initial attack on the island fell on this battalion and they fought gallantly until they had suffered heavy casualties (100 per cent. British Officers and most senior Indian Officers being lost) and were over-run.

(d) Of the remainder of my force I wish to say little except to express my tribute to them all for the gallant part they played during a period of intensive fighting against overwhelming odds, with no rest, little sleep, and

often short of water and hot meals. Whether Royal Navy, Royal Air Force, Royal Artillery, Royal Engineers, Royal Signals, Infantry or members of the ancillary services, one and all played their part fully in the true traditions of the services.

The casualties suffered and those inflicted on the enemy speak for themselves.

In closing my despatch I wish to pay a special tribute to the Hong Kong Volunteer Defence Corps. They proved themselves to be a valuable portion of the garrison. In peace they had surrendered a great deal of their leisure to training, their mobilization was completed smoothly and quickly, and in action they proved themselves stubborn and gallant soldiers. To quote examples seems almost invidious but I should like to place on record the superb gallantry of No. 3 (Eurasian) Company at Wong Nei Chong Gap and of No. 1 Battery who undertook infantry defence in the Stanley area, while the efficiency and gallantry of their Signal section and despatch riders were outstanding.

My thanks and deep appreciation are also due to H.E. The Governor who was a tower of strength to me in our trying ordeal; and similarly I must place on record my admiration for all the members of his civil defence services who displayed magnificent fortitude and energy in their multitudinous activities.

APPENDIX A.

WAR NARRATIVE.

This War Narrative of the defence of Hong Kong is built up on the detailed record of Battle (Fortress) HQ kept at the time, minute by minute.

In some cases, where subsequent knowledge of facts has made it possible to insert items to make a clearer picture, this has been done in the text, but care has been taken not to include anything which would have a bearing on possible decisions which might have been taken. Frequently subsequent knowledge has been included in footnote form only. This despatch was compiled in a Prisoner of War Camp under constant fear of observation or search and with no clerical facilities. All maps, plans, schemes, orders, etc., were destroyed on capitulation and the officers and men marched to Shamshuipo, a distance of 5 miles, and were permitted to take only what they could carry on the person. The Fortress HQ War Diary was concealed and brought away. Cross checking has taken place where possible with survivors, but the Canadian troops were moved early to another camp and no visiting was allowed to hospitals, hospital camps or Indian camps. The timings are based on Hong Kong winter time then in force.

PART I.

Own Forces—Before the outbreak of war with Japan.

1. On the outbreak of war with Germany the garrison consisted of three infantry battalions and one machine gun battalion which permitted the employment of only one infantry battalion

on the mainland; its role was to cover a comprehensive scheme of demolitions and to act as a delaying force.

With the arrival on 16th November, 1941, of two Canadian battalions a new defence plan was brought in which had been originally outlined in 1937. It had never been fully practised, as troops had never been available in sufficient numbers. It employed three infantry battalions on the mainland on a front of 10½ miles—the so called "Gindrunkers Line" sited on very commanding country but with certain inherent weaknesses. It had necessarily little depth, which in two localities was particularly dangerous, viz., Customs Pass and the Pass between Golden Hill and Laichikok Peninsula.

2. Owing to the extensive front, each battalion's layout consisted of a line of platoon localities, the gaps between which were covered by fire by day and by patrolling at night. One company only of each battalion could be kept in reserve and this was normally located in a prepared position covering the most dangerous line of enemy approach. The reserve company of the centre battalion (2/14 Punjab Regt.) was employed initially as "Forward Troops" on the Taipo Road to cover the demolitions and to delay the enemy's initial advance.

3. Directly the news arrived of reinforcement by two Canadian battalions, reconnaissance was carried out by commanding officers only, in order to maintain secrecy. The existing garrison carried out detailed reconnaissances down to platoons later, and worked out the exact defence plan for holding the Gindrunkers Line. A considerable amount of work was found to be necessary, for (except for the centre sector) the line was in its partially completed form of three years previously, when the general policy of defence was altered and the Gindrunkers Line abandoned.

4. A few days before the Canadian battalions arrived large working parties were found by the mainland battalions and a little later the three battalions occupied their sectors permanently to push on the work faster.* It was in these battle positions that the 5/7 Rajput Regt. (Right battalion), the 2/14 Punjab Regt. (Centre battalion) and the 2 Royal Scots (Left battalion) were located when war against Japan broke out.

The time was too short, however, for either of the (new) flank battalions to be practised properly in their defence roles by a series of four-day exercises which had been the custom in the past. These battalions, therefore, were not familiar with the successive rear defence positions. It was indeed unfortunate that the timing of events occurred in such a way that the Japanese attack developed when of the six battalions in the garrison, only two knew their roles in exact and practised detail. (The 1 Middlesex Regt. throughout had retained its role of beach defence and the 2/14 Punjab Regt. had been "Mainland battalion" centred on the Taipo Road.)

* The urgent necessity for speed called for this to be done in spite of it being a malarial time of the year. The 2 Royal Scots were in an area which was highly malarial and they had many cases. This weakened them considerably and, the hospital being full, many were sent back without the normal ten days convalescence. The battalion was 771 strong but only 600 effectives

This Island Defence Plan had been developed in great detail in co-operation with the Royal Navy over a period of years. It needed extremely careful study to get full value from every man in the extensive defence sectors (especially in the South East and South West), and it needed careful rehearsals, as had been done in the past. The date of attack, however, forestalled combined training with the Canadian troops.

The change over to holding the Gindrunkers Line necessitated a change of policy re deployment of artillery. Previously it was too risky to deploy any of the Hong Kong Regiment H.K.S.R.A., i.e., the mobile artillery, on the mainland, when the one battalion only could not hope to cause more than 48 hours delay if the enemy attacked in strength.

The new plan deployed the following on the mainland:—

One Troop 6 in. Howitzers—4 guns (2 Scammels for haulage).

One Troop 4.5 in. Howitzers—4 guns (hired vehicles).

Two Troops 3.7 Howitzers—8 guns, one troop only had mule transport.

Troops were sited for support as follows:—

One 3.7 in. Troop to cover the Right battalion.

One 3.7 in. Troop and the 4.5 in. Battery to cover the Centre and Left battalions.

The 6 in. Troop was to cover from the centre of the Right battalion to the extreme left on the Castle Peak Road. Additional support could be given to the Right battalion by two Sections of 6 in. Howitzers on the island.

5. The infantry organisation was also changed. Brigadier C. Wallis was appointed Mainland Commander, and the Island Commander (the two Canadian battalions and the 1 Middlesex Regt.) was Brigadier J. K. Lawson.

6. The evacuation of the mainland battalion under the former plan was the task of the Royal Navy ("Operation W/M"). It was not easy and had been practised three times. There was obviously no opportunity to work out full detail and to practise the new withdrawal operation. It was to the credit of all concerned that the eventual withdrawal from the mainland was carried out without any loss of guns and with less than forty men being cut off and captured.

Communications.

7. The change over to three battalions to hold the Gindrunkers Line necessitated complete reorganisation of the mainland communications and the carrying on of buried routes from the partially completed system that existed. Contracts were not completed when war came, in spite of the best endeavours of the Royal Corps of Signals which did excellent work.

8. It was unfortunate that the equipment situation in other theatres of war had not permitted earlier despatch of the garrison's infantry mortars and ammunition. For instance, the worst case, the 2/14 Punjab Regt. had had one 3 in. mortar demonstration, of a few rounds only. but ammunition in any

appreciable quantity did not arrive until November and then only 70 rounds per battalion both for war and for practice. Hence these mortars were fired and registered for the first time in their battle positions and twelve hours later were in action against the enemy.

The 2 in. mortar situation was worse, for there had been no receipt even of dummies, consequently the men had had no instruction in detonating. There had been no preliminary shooting and the 2 in. mortar ammunition was delivered actually in battle.

For 3 in. mortar there was neither pack mule nor carrying equipment for the men, consequently everything, including ammunition, had to be manhandled.

PART II.

Enemy Forces.

9. Appreciations of the situation at varying times during the preceding two years estimated two to four divisions of Japanese as available for the attack on Hong Kong.

On the evening of 6th December Chinese reports showed the arrival of three Japanese divisions at To Kat 8 miles from the frontier, on the previous day.

Information from the Far East Combined Bureau Singapore showed that attack was likely by one division, with another division in reserve. This I believe to be incorrect, as a Japanese Staff Officer informed me after the capitulation that two divisions had been deployed on the island and a third was held in reserve.

10. Three to four weeks before the outbreak of war all intelligence sources pointed to very unusual activity in Canton and Bocca Tigris, but the best efforts could not ascertain the contents of the shipping employed—the activities being equally explainable by either:—

(a) a concentration for an advance North West from Canton on to Kunming, or,

(b) development of a base of supply and staging depot for attack on Thailand.

The shipping was not universally fully laden towards Canton, and empty outwards. Information also showed that the Japanese defence lines round Canton had been drawn in so as to encircle the city more closely. It is clear that the Field Security Police of the Japanese Army had a high degree of efficiency.

Available information led to the following conclusions. That the:—

(a) Japanese night work was poor.

(b) Japanese preferred stereotyped methods and fixed plans.

(c) Japanese light automatics were not as numerous as ours nor so up to date.

(d) Japanese "Combined Operations" were thorough and that they had excellent boats and equipment but that their successes against the Chinese were flattering as there had never been real opposition.

(e) Japanese Air Force was not up to first class European standards, that their bombing was poor, and that they would not go in for night bombing

(f) Japanese fifth column activities would be encountered, though no actual proof of such organisations existed. The proximity of Formosa, with its mixed population of Japanese and Chinese Formosans, and Canton, furnished the enemy with admirable intelligence bases.

11. About 1st November a Japanese deserter came across the frontier and gave himself up at a civil police post. He gave a certain amount of detail about the Japanese forces, which definitely indicated preparations for the concentration of troops North of the frontier, and the presence of large calibre-artillery, indicating that of a Corps.

12. From Tokyo, ambassadorial cablegrams did not indicate immediate impending hostilities, in fact the telegrams from there were extremely moderately phrased in comparison with those of June, 1940. Consular reports also were not particularly disturbing.

13. Such intercepts of enemy aircraft movements as were received during the weeks previous to hostilities showed no abnormal activity. Intercepts from other sources showed normality.

PART III.

14. During the early days of December as the situation progressively deteriorated so were more and more troops deployed, until on the evening of 7th December all were in their battle positions. By evening very definite reports were received of concentrations of Japanese forces in the villages bordering the frontier. The company of 2/14 Punjab Regt at Fanling had been in position for some days with constant watch maintained from the frontier observation posts.

At 0445 hours 8th December intelligence sources reported hearing on a Tokyo broadcast code instructions to their nationals that war with Great Britain and U.S.A. was imminent at any moment. His Excellency the Governor was immediately warned and the message was passed on to all concerned. The frontier company (Major Gray, 2/14 Punjab Regt.) was telephoned and orders were issued for the forward demolitions to be blown, i.e., to the East and North of Fanling. Subsequent events showed that all these forward demolitions were blown successfully.

By 0645 hours the garrison had been informed that the British Empire and Japan were at war.

Command HQ had moved into the underground Battle HQ.

At 0800 hours Japanese aircraft dive attacked Kai Tak aerodrome (down to 60 feet, showing first class standard) and destroyed and damaged the following grounded planes:—

R.A.F.—3 destroyed, 1 seriously damaged and 1 slightly damaged.

Civil—1 Clipper and 7 others (D.C. 23 Condors, etc.).

Shamshuipo barracks were also attacked and bombed but very few casualties were caused, owing to full deployment.

By 0900 hours Fortress Engineers and administrative services were on the move to their dispersal areas in accordance with plans.

Japanese machines on to Kai Tak and over Kowloon numbered respectively 36 Fighters and 12 Bombers. During the day subversive pamphlets, addressed mainly to Indian troops, were dropped. They were poorly drawn up and carried no weight either with British or Indian troops.

15 *Action of Forward Troops on the Taipo Road*, commanded by Major G. E. Gray, 2/14 Punjab Regt.

At 0800 hours 8th December the Japanese began bridging at Lo Wu and our observation posts reported hundreds of Japanese crossing into Laffans Plain. This was later estimated to be a battalion and it seems fairly certain that a two battalion front was adopted—the other battalion going later straight down the Taipo Road. The tactics were almost invariably to push a strong body up the nearest hill and round a flank directly any line of approach was found to be blocked. The threat of a battalion moving round his right flank was a constant menace, and necessitated Major Gray's decision to make sure of the big demolitions No. 731 and R 94 one mile North of Taipo and not to attempt any real delaying action forward of this. It was thus 1500 hours when the first enemy attacks developed in this area and were beaten off by fire. Outflanking movements developed immediately, necessitating withdrawal to South of the causeway, Taipo.

A platoon had been posted wide on the West flank as left flank guard. A Japanese detachment headed by three women (Chinese) attacked here at 1830 hours. All were shot.

At 1930 hours the mechanised portion of Forward Troops, composed of two armoured cars and four Bren carriers, co-operated most effectively in ambushing a Japanese platoon in close formation. It was virtually wiped out by machine gun and light automatic fire from one hundred yards range. The enemy never relaxed his pressure during the bright moonlight night. It was obvious that his small columns, using cross country tracks, were led by guides who knew the ground intimately, thus enabling the attack to develop quicker than had been thought possible, especially as this was combined with a high standard of night training. I was subsequently informed by a Japanese Staff officer (Major Nishiyama) that a month had been spent on concentrated night training for the attack on Hong Kong. At midnight Forward Troops withdrew to Taipo Mei where an important demolition was duly blown, followed by another withdrawal an hour later to Fo Tan Valley, this being necessitated by small parties of the enemy having reached positions on the road behind the Forward Troops' dispositions.

16. By 0330 hours 9th December all demolitions were successfully blown except one at Taipo where Japanese forward patrols were extremely quick in following up and cutting the leads to the abutments after the withdrawal of the final covering party. The safety fuze used for the piers, however, had burned too far for interruption and these piers were successfully destroyed.

At dawn Forward Troops were on Monastery Ridge just forward of the Gindrinks Line,

where they maintained themselves all day, withdrawing by order at dusk. During the day many excellent artillery targets offered themselves and were engaged with success. The Forward Troops had fulfilled their role admirably, and had inflicted some 100 casualties to the Japanese at no real cost to themselves.

17. On the other main line of approach, viz.: Castle Peak Road, late in the evening 8th December enemy transport was seen banking up at the road bridge North of Au Tau, showing the success of the demolition there. 5.9 in. guns were seen to be tractor drawn up to the bridge and then manhandled into a village to the East. This battery fired at intervals during the next fifty-six hours on Hong Kong Island and was calculated by the Royal Artillery to be on Kam Tin aerodrome. Several shells passed over the main ridge of the island and landed near Aberdeen Reservoir; the firing was at too long a range to be taken seriously and in any case was out of range of our artillery.

At 1340 hours on 8th December a large formation of Japanese planes carried out another raid, this time on Stanley, dropping a few bombs. Little material damage was done.

18. (a) At 0600 hours 9th December I ordered Mainland Infantry Brigade to move the reserve company of 5/7 Rajput Regt. across to fill the gap East of Smugglers Pass, previously only patrolled until the direction of the main enemy thrust should be disclosed.

(b) Enemy action during the day was chiefly confined to patrol action. 2 Royal Scots had strong patrols on the tracks leading South East from the Kam Tin area which confirmed the use of Chinese guides by Japanese advanced troops. Later information from the Chinese member of "Z Force" was to the effect that these Chinese guides were drawn from the village of Tsun Wan Wai which he said was largely pro-Wang Ching Wei. "Z Force" was a band of local volunteers which had been trained beforehand for work behind the Japanese lines and was led by Mr. Kendall. Dumps of arms, supplies, medical stores, etc., had been made beforehand at three points in the new territories.

(c) It transpired at this time that the Japanese scouts and snipers were highly trained and extremely difficult to detect. Their uniform consisting of quilted material with cross stitching was particularly adapted to the insertion of twigs, grass, etc., obtained locally—thus blending perfectly with the surroundings. Others encountered later on the island had a camouflage net rolled up and carried high on the back, from which position it could be quickly drawn over head and shoulders.

(d) The demolitions on Castle Peak Road were blown successfully, except the one at the Dairy Farm, where the leads were cut by a saboteur who slipped in immediately the last sentry was withdrawn. He moved to the next demolition, close by, and was blown up and killed whilst standing on top of it.

(e) During the night 9th/10th arrangements were made with the police to evacuate the villagers from places where the front line posts ran through or too near to villages—a matter of great difficulty owing to the trip wires of anti-personnel mines which had been put out to supplement the thinly held front.

19. At 2200 hours the CNAC planes left for Free China. In one was despatched Lt.-Colonel H. O. Hughes (HKVDC) who was to act as our liaison officer with 7th Chinese Army.

20. At about 2300 hours on the night of 9th/10th December a report was received from the Company Commander 5/7 Rajput Regt. (whose company had been moved across from being reserve company in the Right battalion Sector) that he could hear enemy moving in the Shingmun Valley on his immediate front, and later the nearest 2 Royal Scots Company ("A" Company) reported hearing explosions from one of the pill boxes constituting "Shingmun Redoubt." Within the hour it was clear that Shingmun Redoubt had fallen, including the artillery observation post and the HQ of "A" Company 2 Royal Scots.

The capture by surprise of this key position, which dominated a large portion of the left flank and the importance of which had been so frequently stressed beforehand, directly and gravely affected subsequent events and prejudiced Naval, Military and Civil defence arrangements. The possibility of mounting an immediate counter attack that night was considered with Commander Mainland Brigade but was ruled out as the nearest troops were a mile away, the ground precipitous and broken, and the exact situation round the Redoubt very obscure.

At about 0315 hours an artillery concentration was put down on the area of the western portion of the Redoubt and this was heard to take toll of the enemy.

21. At midnight 9th/10th December I decided to move the reserve company of the Winnipeg Grenadiers across from Hong Kong Island. It was placed at the disposal of Brigadier Mainland Brigade and arrived at his HQ at 0400 hours. Confused fighting took place South of Shingmun Redoubt, and a further enemy advance next morning was stopped by artillery support and by the vigorous action taken by Captain H. R. Newton, commanding the 5/7 Rajput Company there. About one enemy company attacked and was driven back into Shingmun Redoubt which was then shelled by 6 in. Howitzers. Captain Newton was confident that severe casualties had been inflicted upon the enemy.

A counter attack by Captain Newton's Company was considered, but this would have caused a serious gap between the 2/14 Punjab Regt. and Shingmun, where the enemy had already made attempts to effect penetration. The enemy success, however, caused dangerous exposure of the centre ("B") and left ("C") Companies of 2 Royal Scots, and at 1530 hours I sanctioned their withdrawal from the Pineapple Road* and Texaco Peninsula positions (a mile in front now, and with an open flank) to the strong Golden Hill line which reached the sea at the Laichikok Peninsula. This withdrawal was carried out without incident at dusk—though the two companies required a certain amount of adjustment before dawn.

22. 10th December.—During that day I ordered the R.A.F. to evacuate Kai Tak aerodrome and to destroy machines and equipment.

* Running North East from Tsun Wan Wai to Pineapple Pass

I had at no time contemplated the serious use of obsolete 100 m.p.h. aircraft which would have been shot down immediately by modern fighters, but in any case by this time only one machine was fit to operate. Demolitions there were practically completed, and were finished later by No. 1 Company HKVDC allotted for aerodrome ground and air defence (together with 4 Bren carriers). This company under Captain A. H. Penn performed its duties very well. The aerodrome was left obstructed by using concrete sections of drains, railings from the "surrounds" and derelict M.T. Enemy air activity was spasmodic, but our first A.A. success, confirmed from three sources, was recorded; an enemy plane over Causeway Bay was hit and fell into the sea in Tide Cove.

23. By now the special warning system was in operation and proved most satisfactory. The arrival of enemy aircraft was forecast and known to within a couple of minutes.

An intense shelling of Stonecutters Island began during the day. At first the fire was inaccurate but later became extremely accurate and the attack was also taken up from the air. Much damage was caused by 5.9 in. fire in particular, one round landing between the two 60 pounders which had been moved over to Stonecutters a week previously for firing in enfilade down the Taipo Road, which they had been doing very successfully during the past thirty-six hours.

During the day a fair amount of movement seawards was observed—Japanese torpedo boats, minesweepers and one destroyer. Later three more destroyers and a cruiser were observed.

H.M.S. "Cicala" had been covering the left flank of the 2 Royal Scots on the Castle Peak Road during the last three days, and on this day (10th December) discovered a Japanese working party clearing demolitions at Brothers Point. Fire was opened with 6 in. guns and direct hits obtained. Several Japanese attacks from the air were beaten off but eventually the ship received a direct hit which necessitated docking for repair.

At 1742 hours the last of the Eastern Telegraph Company cables between Hong Kong and the outside world was cut by enemy action. Orders were now issued to put in hand, starting with a "Priority A" group, the laying by Royal Engineers of anti-personnel minefields on beaches, etc., on the southern shores of the island.

24. 10th / 11th December.—Intermittent shelling of both mainland and island continued throughout the night, and before dawn the Bowen Road Hospital was hit four times. The first air raid of the day took place at 0800 hours.

25. 11th December.—On the mainland at dawn the enemy opened up mortar fire and then attacked the left flank of the 2 Royal Scots*, driving them back in disorder and exposing the junction of the Castle Peak and Taipo Roads, thus seriously endangering the withdrawal of all the troops based on the Taipo Road (2/14 Punjab Regt., one company 5/7

Rajput Regt., troop 4.5 in. Howitzers, troop 3.7 in. Howitzers). The situation was critical but the company of the 1 Winnipeg Grenadiers and the Bren carriers from Kai Tak aerodrome defences were moved into position covering the gap.

At midday 11th December I ordered withdrawal from the mainland under cover of darkness—except for 5/7 Rajput Regt. detailed under the scheme of defence for occupation of Devils Peak Peninsula. The withdrawal called for a difficult operation by the 2/14 Punjab Regt.—a move by night across the whole front, along the line of the passes (Kowloon Pass, Shatin Pass, Grasscutters Pass) and down the Devils Peak Peninsula—a move not practised beforehand. Brigade Headquarters, 2 Royal Scots and various administrative detachments were to cross from embarkation points on the East side of Kowloon Peninsula. The West side of the Peninsula was free* for evacuation of civilians, civil stores of the food in the Godowns, etc. The notice I could give was regrettably short but unavoidable owing to the rapidity with which the situation had deteriorated. In spite of the short notice the Royal Signals personnel successfully evacuated 49 miles of D8 cable and 20 tons of buried type cable.

26. At 1000 hours 11th December the enemy was reported to be landing on Lamma Island, and guns of Aberdeen and Jubilee Batteries were brought into action. This was followed at 1300 hours by a report that an enemy party in Chinese sampans was attempting a landing at Aberdeen Island. This was driven off by machine gun fire.

Again during the afternoon the Japanese were reported to be concentrating about one hundred junks off Lamma, which our artillery engaged.

27. *Stonecutters Island.*—Enemy bombardment of Stonecutters continued throughout the day, West Fort having forty direct hits before midday. Much material damage generally was caused, chiefly to buildings. Telephone communications were continually cut. In the afternoon, to conform to the withdrawal from the mainland, I ordered the withdrawal from this island and the destruction of guns and all immovable stores, according to a detailed plan previously prepared. This was successfully carried out.

28. During the day 11th December fifth column activities developed in Kowloon. Some of the fifth columnists were armed,† and rioting and looting occurred in the streets. A large number of launch crews and lorry and car drivers deserted, throwing a heavy handicap on the shoulders of the administrative services—civil, naval and military—particularly in view of the large and hurried evacuation for that evening and night.

Throughout the day 11th December Hong Kong was subjected to bombing and spasmodic artillery fire. The R.N. Dockyard, R.A.S.C.

* Except that the Vehicular Ferry gave priority to all military vehicles and guns.

† At noon in Prince Edward Road an ammunition convoy of 2 Royal Scots was attacked; fifth columnists were in dark grey uniform and armed with rifles.

* Killing both the Company Commanders concerned.

Camber and the R.A.O.C. Depot all suffered some damage, though casualties were few. The civilian population in Hong Kong remained calm, though naturally the news of early evacuation of the mainland came as a considerable shock.

29. *Withdrawal of troops from the mainland (11/12th December).*—(a) Careful plans had been drawn up by Brigadier Mainland Infantry Brigade, and all troops were employed on successive positions.

The operation was well carried out. However, HQ details of 2/14 Punjab Regt. and some others came down on to Kai Tak aerodrome by mistake in the darkness and became involved in street fighting in the outskirts of Kowloon City. A launch was sent over at about 0100 hours but could not gain contact with them. The bulk of the Company, however, were taken off at Star Ferry pier at dawn, breaking off a running fight with the enemy as they actually cast off from the pier side.

(b) Battalion HQ of the 2/14 Punjab Regt. and two Companies had been unable to maintain the timed programme during the night owing to enemy action, and at dawn they were withdrawing down the West side of Devils Peak Peninsula. They stayed that day dispersed in the foothills at the southern end, whilst two companies of 5/7 Rajput Regt. held the Ma Lau Tong line as planned, with one company on the rear position Hai Wan.

(c) The personnel of both Indian battalions were in good heart but somewhat exhausted after four days of continuous day and night vigilance and long night carries, over rough tracks and coolie paths, of many machine guns, light automatics and mortars. Owing to the simultaneous withdrawals of all three battalions, the 5/7 Rajput Regiment's transport had not been augmented by mules from the other battalions as planned, and this emphasised the shortage of mule transport which had always been apparent on peace exercises. It will be realised that units were on an improvised scale of trucks, lorries, and mules, as pooling of the inadequate "Colonial" establishments had been found to be necessary. The transport situation had become much worse with the arrival of the two Canadian battalions, for their transport had been shipped in a different vessel, diverted via Australia, and had not arrived before war with Japan broke out.

(d) At midnight 11/12th December the Hong Kong Telephone Company cut all communications between the island and the mainland.

(e) One troop of 3.7-in. Howitzers remained at the southern end of Devils Peak in support of the Ma Lau Tong position. Mainland Infantry Brigade HQ also remained on the Peninsula pending further developments.* Most of the Bren carriers and all the armoured cars were safely evacuated from the mainland.

(f) At 0600 hours 12th December military cables to Kowloon were cut at the R.N. Yard cable hut.

(g) At dawn 2 Royal Scots temporarily took over the North East sector of the island defences, this being largely a precautionary measure only, as the occupation of the Devils Peak Peninsula by the 5/7 Rajput Regt. covered this sector effectively. This North East

sector had previously been manned in skeleton form by some HQ personnel of 1 Middlesex Regt. plus a platoon of No. 3 Company HKVIDC. In the North West sector was "Z" Company 1 Middlesex Regt., consisting of spare men of machine gun companies plus battalion cooks, storemen, bandmen, etc., manning forty machine guns from Fortress reserve stocks. This Company constituted a valuable fighting force enabling *inter alia* the 1 Middlesex Regt. to man the pill boxes on the entire perimeter of the island from 11th to 13th December.

30. Air raids and shelling of the island continued throughout the day 12th December. The North shore Dockyard was badly damaged and also the R.A.O.C. Depot, which was hit on five occasions. Aberdeen and Green Island cables were both cut. By now many coast defence guns, especially 6-in., were being used for landward firing, calculations to hit one hundred points having been worked out in peace time. Harassing fire by night, and counter battery fire and the engagement of observed targets by day, was carried out.

The allowance of 25 rounds per gun for such landward firing was greatly exceeded. High explosive Mk XIII shell of 1918 manufacture was faulty, several bursting immediately in front of the muzzle.

31. *A.A.*—There were insufficient guns to give adequate gun density at any point. More 3.7-in. guns were expected shortly and also more Bofors (the garrison had but two), for "release telegrams" had been received from HQ Far East. The A.A. defences were well known to be inadequate, but I realised that the call for the European and Mediterranean theatres of war had prevented reinforcements. Targets were numerous (12th December) but the A.A. positions extremely few owing to the mountainous nature of the country of Hong Kong Island. The enemy, with such good observation from Kowloon, was very quick on to any A.A. section opening up, and I consider that Lt.-Colonel F. D. Field fought his command very well. The scarcity both of transport and roads severely handicapped the mobility of the guns and also the ammunition supply and administration of the sections. The shortage of British officers was very much felt. During the night one of the A.A. searchlights on Green Island acted as a sentry beam on receipt of a report that the enemy were landing near West Point.

At this juncture Wing Commander H. G. Sullivan, the Officer Commanding R.A.F., offered the services of one officer and 16 N.C.Os. for wireless and telephone duties, which I gladly accepted. They were incorporated with Royal Signals.

The morale of the civilian population had been considerably shaken, and fifth columnists became more active. Rice distribution and the monetary situation caused anxiety and necessitated urgent measures.

32. During the afternoon 12th December the enemy was reported to be occupying George Island (off Lamma) and there was considerable activity seawards.*

33. In the late afternoon a strong enemy attack (about one battalion) developed against the left company of 5/7 Rajput Regt. on the Ma Lau Tong line but was successfully beaten off, assisted by quick support provided by the

* Owing to shortness of time communications in the Devils Peak area were incomplete, but excellent work by Royal Signals provided efficient field cable circuits in time

Royal Artillery. Heavy casualties on the enemy were observed. The 5/7 Rajput Regt. was subjected to dive bombing and heavy mortar fire throughout the day. In view of the weight of the Japanese attack, the rapid development of their heavy mortar fire, the constricted passage across the Lyemun Strait, the shortage of launch crews, and as we now had no footing on the mainland except at Devils Peak Peninsula, I gave orders to Commander Mainland Infantry Brigade that the Ma Lau Tong line should be evacuated during the night.

The first task was to be the evacuation of HQ and two companies of 2/14 Punjab Regt. which had been previously arranged. This was to be followed by the withdrawal of the 3.7-in. Howitzer troop R.A. The second and the shorter of the Devils Peak Lines (Hai Wan) was to be held by HQ 5/7 Rajput Regt. and two companies, the remainder of that battalion being evacuated last. The first withdrawal was timed for 1930 hours.

34. Shell fire died down at dusk (12th December) but the water transport difficulties were serious. Chinese crews deserted in the darkness from the W.D. fleet, though covered by rifles, engineers were deficient, and some launches were found to be in a sinking condition. Administrative officers had been sent out from my HQ to accelerate matters and took personal charge and operated what boats they could, but serious delays occurred. It was not until 0130 hours that the 2/14 Punjab Regt., some 300 men, were all across.

At 0400 hours the bulk of the first troop R.A. (less mules) and one company of 5/7 Rajput Regt. were across, but the Mule Corps was still to come. It was clear that the situation was critical if daylight crossings were to be avoided and I called on the Royal Navy to assist. Their response was prompt. Three motor torpedo boats were despatched from Aberdeen and one more was recalled from patrol in Junk Bay where it had been covering the right flank of the 5/7 Rajput Regt. from possible enemy attack in sampans from Hang Hau area (an operation which had been attempted by night during peace training and found feasible).

The destroyer H.M.S. "Thracian" was also ordered round from Aberdeen but could not be expected to arrive before 0600 hours, 13th December.

I ordered Brigadier Wallis to give full priority to personnel, and that there was to be no question of evacuating the 120 mules and further risking the operation. In any case the mule lighter crew had deserted, and the handling of this craft in the dark by personnel unaccustomed to it was a dubious proposition, and moreover she was badly holed by enemy fire and had to be abandoned in a sinking condition. Meanwhile the W.D.V. "Victoria" had been slowly and steadily evacuating personnel and equipment under Major A. J. Dewar and Captain C. G. Turner. When the torpedo boats arrived at the small pier on the Devils Peak Peninsula it was found that the state of the tide did not permit them to "lie close to"—a risk that had been foreseen and accepted. This meant more delay and ferrying by sampans. Ferry trips were, however, made by the torpedo boats directly H.M.S. "Thracian" arrived, the tide having risen slightly.

35. At about 0400 hours 13th December I discussed with Brigadier Wallis the advisability of also including in the withdrawal the two companies of 5/7 Rajput Regt. holding the rear position. The enemy were in constant though light contact throughout, and after their severe handling would be temporarily disinclined to follow up. The water transport situation had already become more than precarious, it was extremely doubtful if any W.D. vessel, except perhaps the "Victoria" would be available next night, and I thus foresaw the greatest difficulties and even the impossibility of maintaining the 5/7 Rajput Regt. with ammunition and supplies in their isolated position. I decided that the risk was too great, and I also urgently required them to relieve and man the North East sector then held by 2 Royal Scots. This latter battalion was not in good shape, as they had lost many of their best officers killed or wounded, and I judged it to be necessary to withdraw them into reserve so that they could obtain a short respite in which to rest and re-equip. In addition they were unfamiliar with the ground, their previous sector having been the South West. One company of 5/7 Rajput Regt. was therefore ordered to cover the withdrawal of the remainder and then themselves embark in the last flights. Daylight had arrived by then, but they accomplished the evacuation without casualties, covered by artillery fire from various island positions.

36. It was not until 0920 hours that the last contingent of 5/7 Rajput Regt. from the mainland reached Aberdeen. The whole battalion was collected in the Tytam Gap area by noon and given twenty-four hours to rest and re-equip before taking over the North East sector from 2 Royal Scots. The 2/14 Punjab Regt. took over the North West sector. During the night (12/13th December), at the urgent request of the civil authorities, arrangements were made with the Harbour Master to pass 9 tons of dynamite from Green Island to the Star Ferry for collection and distribution.

On its return, loaded, it left Green Island two hours ahead of schedule, with the result that it reached the Vehicular Ferry (not Star Ferry) unexpectedly, and the N.C.O. commanding the pill box there gave the order to fire, as no lights or distinguishing marks were visible. The launch blew up and all on board thus unfortunately lost their lives.

37. At 0900 hours 13th December a launch bearing a flag of truce was seen to put off from Kowloon. It arrived at Victoria Pier with a Staff Officer of the General commanding the Japanese Forces (Lt.-General Sakai) bearing a letter addressed to H.E. The Governor. The letter demanded the surrender of the Colony and threatened severe artillery fire and aerial bombardment in the event of refusal. The demand was tantamount to unconditional surrender and was rejected categorically.

38. During the morning the Japanese were observed to be collecting launches in Kowloon Bay and concentrating them mainly at Bailey's Shipyard near the cement-works. The situation as I saw it was that the enemy, if he attacked from the mainland, might direct his attack on to:—

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| (a) Lyemun-Quarry Point area | } From
Kowloon
Peninsula. |
| (b) Northpoint Bowrington area | |
| (c) Victoria | |
| (d) Kennedy Town | |

(b) or (c) seemed most probable in view of the short distance across, the easy support by artillery and mortars and the possible combination with Wang Ching Wei factions and others in the congested area of the town. The number of derelict craft in the area of (a) lessened the likelihood of attack there.

Any attack from the mainland might well be in combination with an attack on the South shore. My available reserves were:—

(i) 2 Royal Scots, after relief and move from North East sector to the Wanchai Gap-Filter Beds area, but temporarily rested until they could be thoroughly rested and re-organised.

(ii) Two companies 5/7 Rajput Regt. North East sector.

(iii) One company Winnipeg Grenadiers in South West sector.

(iv) Two companies 2/14 Punjab Regt. in North West sector.

(v) "Z" Coy. 1 Middlesex Regt. including one mobile machine gun platoon.

39. A.A.—In the early afternoon 13th December our A.A. guns brought down a large seaplane which crashed into the sea about 3000 yards West of Lamma (confirmed later by the Japanese).

40 During the day the enemy artillery fire increased in intensity (up to 9-in. calibre), one 9.2-in. gun at Mount Davis was knocked out by a direct hit, and at dusk Belchers Fort was heavily shelled and set on fire. Other serious fires were started at West Point and Kennedy Town.

Fifth columnists* had been active during the day and a large number of army transport drivers deserted, some of them taking their lorries with them. Police dealt with these in due course. The civilian population showed signs of strain, and food queues in some districts became disorderly. The question of rice distribution presented a grave problem in the overcrowded quarters.

41. At 0200 hours 14th December great anxiety was caused by the speed of the fires at Belchers and Kennedy Town. The civil fire brigades had been fighting the fires for many hours and asked for military assistance. At various times three parties were accordingly sent but on each occasion were returned without any work having been performed on demolitions (a detailed series of "fire lanes" had been worked out and calculations completed before the war broke out). On the fourth occasion, however, some houses were blown down. Fires were under control by mid-day. Elements of the civil population made these disasters an occasion for disorderly conduct; fifth columnists became more active and great care was necessary in checking telephone calls. The civil police found difficulty in maintaining guards over vulnerable points, and negotiating with the Chungking Government secret societies for assistance.

42. Certain movements of enemy warships were observed during the day (14th December), steaming on far distant courses.

43. (a) There was a marked increase in the intensity and accuracy of hostile shelling on the

14th December. Two 4.7-in. guns at Belchers had been hit and put out of action, and one 9.2-in. at Mount Davis had its communications cut for two hours. Also at Mount Davis, one 3-in. A.A. gun was hit and permanently disabled, causing about 30 per cent. casualties to the A.A. personnel. Many Chinese gunners deserted as a result.

(b) Pak Sha Wan Battery (Chinese volunteers) came in for particular attention, being both shelled and mortared. Its Battery Command Post and all internal communications were destroyed and the Battery Commander was wounded and evacuated. The guns were reduced to independent autosight control. At this juncture owing to an imperfectly conveyed message and an error of judgment of the junior officer left in acting command, the personnel were given the option of going to Stanley. All but two Chinese left; seventeen British and Portuguese stayed. A few regular British gunners were later sent up as reinforcements.

(c) A very heavy concentration on Magazine Gap cut eight main cables involving 195 circuits, severing communications between Fortress Headquarters and all terminals to the South of that Gap. Within 20 hours the Royal Corps of Signals, working magnificently, restored all lines.

44. *Civil Population*—The civil police found their hands more than full in maintaining order in the city but had the situation generally under control except in the A.R.P. tunnels, where in certain cases armed gangs of robbers were operating. Pamphlets were dropped by the Japanese.

45. H.M.S. "Thracian" carried out an excellent operation during the night (15/16th December) making her way past Green Island, across the Japanese front on the Kowloon Peninsula, and then sinking two ferry boats at anchor full of enemy troops one thousand yards East of the Electric Power Station, Kowloon.

46. By now the new organisation of the island defences had been carried out viz.: division into two brigade areas—East Infantry Brigade (Brigadier Wallis) and West Infantry Brigade (Brigadier J. K. Lawson). The North-South dividing line approximated closely to the former dividing line between the easterly and westerly island sectors. At the northern extremity, however, it was placed further East to increase the front held by the 2/14 Punjab Regt. now considered a safer sector owing to the "anti-boat fence" or boom which was in position from Sheung Wan to Green Island. The continuation towards Kellett Island had been prevented by the desertion of Chinese crews and there had been no opportunity of carrying the complete scheme through, i.e., a third portion constructed across to Kowloon Point.

1 Middlesex Regt. was given a small but important sector based on Leighton Hill Ridge-Causeway Bay area. No preparations, however, had been possible on the Ridge before hostilities, except a little wiring and three shell-slits, as the property was Government owned and housed many Government officials who could not be dispossessed or inconvenienced before the "precautionary period" of the Defence Scheme (which actually was never declared owing to the rapid development of full war conditions).

*Fifth columnists attacked the A.A. searchlight position at Sau Ki Wan this night

1 Middlesex Regt. came directly under command of Fortress as "Corps Troops" for defence purposes. This eased the situation for Brigadier Wallis, who had the larger half of the island to command, and for Brigadier Lawson who was unfamiliar with the ground.

During the night 14/15th December the 5/7 Rajput Regt. relieved the 2 Royal Scots in the North East sector. The latter moved later to the area Wanchai Gap-Filter Beds to refit and re-organise, but one company took over a narrow front just West of the naval hospital.

47. During the early hours 15th December a broadcast from Kowloon could be heard of European songs and music; the talks, however, were not clear. They were probably from loud speakers on vans in the streets, as the radio transmitting station in Kowloon had been destroyed before evacuation. Several traitors, with lamps of primitive design operated from a dry battery, with a small but adequate mirror, were reported signalling from the island to the mainland. When these operators were intercepted they were shot.

48. (a) There was a systematic shelling of pill boxes along the North shore during the morning 15th December: three were knocked out and one badly damaged. One had forty holes drilled right through by a high velocity gun of small calibre located on Kowloon Peninsula, firing from a concealed position inside a water front "Godown." The provision of alternative emplacements for the pill boxes of the North shore defences had already been taken up and some ten to twelve were completed. They should of course have been completed in peace time but it would have meant requisitioning valuable "Godown" and office properties, and requisitioning had not been sanctioned by Government until the proposed "Precautionary Period."

(b) By nightfall all military and civil telephone routes in the North East sector, including those to pill boxes Nos. 40 to 53 were severely interrupted. Night repair work was at once put in hand.

(c) Aberdeen Island and the A.A. positions at Lyemun (Saiwan Hill) were heavily shelled, one gun being put out of action temporarily.

(d) At noon 15th December the enemy was observed preparing sandbagged positions on the water front by the Kowloon Godowns, probably for mortars. Later, mortar fire fell in the vicinity of the R.N. Dockyard, Command H.Q., and Lower Peak Tramway Terminus.

(e) By now a "Command Observation Post" with direct lines to Fortress H.Q. was operating well from the Peak, manned by HKVDC, and also two special observation posts (pill box 69 and Kennedy Rd.) manned by 2/14 Punjab Regt.*

(f) Enemy was observed collecting small craft in Kowloon Bay—possibly for a raid; special arrangements were made to counter this viz.: a concentration was fired by 6-in. Howitzers and two craft were set alight. Orders were also issued from Fortress HQ to the A.A. searchlights at Saiwan and Braemar to cease their normal role at any time if they heard con-

tinuous machine gun fire on the North shore and to turn their lights down to illuminate the harbour.

49. At 2100 hours, 15th December, an attempted landing was reported by the Pak Sha Wan Battery (HKVDC). It was ascertained later from several sources that a very bold attempt was made by the enemy who, with small rubber boats and petrol tin rafts for equipment, swam across in fair strength—estimates varied from one to three Companies. All were shot in the water, the depleted battery (see para. 43 (b)) contributing stout defence.

50. (a) For four hours on 15th December Pinewood A.A. Battery was shelled by calibres up to 9-in. One gun was smashed irreparably and the other so badly damaged that it was out of action for the remainder of the battle. All instruments were rendered useless. Casualties to personnel were not numerous and men not hit were employed on salvage, and in an infantry role with 2/14 Punjab Regiment. We claimed two hits on enemy aircraft during the day.

(b) The general impression of Japanese artillery fire was that their gunners were extremely accurate on targets which were obviously well known from our peace time dispositions and under direct observation, but inaccurate in picking up new targets needing predicted fire, in spite of abundant air reconnaissance. About 30 per cent. of the ammunition burst defectively and of the heavier natures at times 50 per cent. failed to explode.

51. During this day (15th December) the last of the "Priority A" anti-personnel minefields was completed by Fortress R.E.

The morale of the civilian population remained shaky, chiefly due to rice distribution difficulties. The Chungking Government representatives had been most helpful in assisting in the maintenance of order.

52. News was received from the Chinese General Staff of the advance of Chinese forces towards Hong Kong. This fitted in with the plans which I had previously received via Chungking of the proposed attack of General Yu Han Mou's 7th Army. However, the information now was modified by the statement that effective assistance could not be available until early January. Information of intended help from Chinese forces from the North was circulated to formations and units.

53. At daybreak 16th December observation revealed no enemy movements along the mainland waterfront between Kai Tak and the Kowloon Star Ferry, but launch activity in Kowloon Bay continued.

54. Bombing and shelling by the enemy were now showing a higher standard of accuracy and increasing in intensity, being confined mainly to military objectives. The first air raid occurred at 0900 hours and lasted thirty-five minutes.

In the afternoon, 16th December, seventeen enemy planes bombed Mount Davis, which was also heavily and accurately shelled: an unexploded 9-in. shell entered the Fortress Plotting Room and damaged the instruments. A bomb dropped in Shauiwan caused 150 civilian casualties. Shek O, Lyemun and Aberdeen were also bombed; some casualties to Royal

* The Peak Observation Post was forced to move three times, for each location quickly came under heavy and accurate artillery fire in spite of every precaution for concealment. Treachery was certain but the source could not be ascertained.

Navy personnel and damage being caused at the last named.

By the end of the day more than half of the pill boxes along North shore from Lyemun to Bowrington had been knocked out. Moves to alternative positions were carried out during the night (sixteen were now prepared but were not yet on the telephone system). The maintenance of communications to the North shore pill boxes, and on other subsidiary routes there, was proving extremely difficult on account of repeated breaks from hostile fire.

55. One enemy plane was seen at 0930 hours 16th December to crash into the sea (three sources confirmed) near Tatong, hit by the 3.7-in section at Wong Nei Chong

At 1030 hours a fighter-bomber was hit by the Brick Hill 3.7-in. gun and crashed in a gully (two sources corroborated).

56. Civilian morale improved somewhat.

The arrest this day of a prominent Chinese merchant for defeatist talk was expected to have a salutary effect—which in fact it did.

Fifth columnists were still active. Their methods consisted of shining lights to bring shell fire to bear on concentrations of transport, etc., sniping, spreading false rumours, inducing desertion from "essential services" and inciting to riot. They also again attacked the isolated A.A. searchlight position at Shaukiwan.

57. During the hours of darkness and early hours of 17th December mortar fire from Kowloon Peninsula continued on to the North shore pillboxes.

A force of 14 Army light bombers made two separate attacks at about 0930 hours 17th December—the first on Shaukiwan and Wanchai, and the second on the Peak Wireless Station, Garden Road, and Central District in Victoria. These were followed by a short but relatively severe artillery and mortar bombardment on Central District.

Shortly afterwards two Japanese launches flying a white flag crossed the harbour. The delegation brought written proposals for surrender, similar to those of 13th December. It was thought that the Japanese supposed our morale to be shaken. The proposals were signed by Lt.-General Sakai and the Naval C.-in-C. Vice-Admiral Niimi. The envoys appeared genuinely surprised and disconcerted when the proposals were again summarily rejected. They left with the hint that future bombardments might not be so discriminate.

This second delegation coming within four days of the first suggested that either (a) they disliked the prospect of attacking across the water or (b) that the Chinese threat in their rear was taking effect, or (c) that it was an attempt to undermine our morale by thoughts of peace and quiet. The Japanese delegation announced on arrival that there would be no hostilities until 1600 hours by which time they expected a reply. Advantage was taken of this very welcome lull to repair communications, etc.

Considerable activity seawards was reported during the afternoon of the 17th December, including a 2,000 ton freighter operating in the shelter, westward of Lamma. On the mainland there was activity round Kai Tak aerodrome, both launch and motor transport and at

Bailey's yard the following were seen—three ferry vessels, three barges, one large water boat, one steam tug, one motor boat.

During the 17th December our artillery suffered no damage or casualties for the first time for many days. Our counter battery fire silenced hostile artillery on Devil's Peak, Gun Club Mill, and also three mortars on the Kowloon waterfront.

58. Aircraft identified to date were of the following types; Navy Reconnaissance Flying Boat, type 94—Heavy Navy Bomber, type 96—Army light Bomber, type 98—Army Fighter, type 97, unidentified fighter, now known to be the Navy O. Heaviest bomb dropped, identified, 250 lbs.—but from deduction (fuze caps, size of crater, etc.) it was considered that some of 500 lbs. were also dropped.

59. Morale of civilian population continued to improve and the rice distribution was getting better.

60. At 2100 hours 17th December hostile artillery fire started a severe fire at the large paint works at Braemar, causing a heavy smoke pall. Owing to its proximity the ammunition of the 18-pounder Beach Defence section nearby had to be moved to an alternative position, and at about midnight the guns themselves were forced to follow to the same position behind the Police station in that vicinity.

The shelling of the North East sector was particularly heavy and lines were being constantly cut and repaired. At 2000 hours many pill boxes were still out of touch and field cable had to be substituted for the buried system that night.

At about 0100 hours Aberdeen came under shell fire from seawards and the Industrial School (HQ of the Aberdeen portion of the R.N. Dockyard) was hit.

61. (a) At first light 18th December a Japanese destroyer was sighted sixteen miles South of Aberdeen.

(b) A considerable movement of small craft between the Kowloon wharves and piers was observed.

(c) In the early hours a 60-pounder gun which had been brought up into the North Point under cover of darkness (Lt. J. S. Vintner commanding) attempted to sink three freighters in Kowloon Bay suspected of being used as observation posts or being prepared as "jumping off places" for an attack. Only shrapnel was available but by obtaining hits on the water line one 4000 ton ship was holed and settled down.

62. At 1000 hours an air raid of considerable intensity developed on the Central District, Victoria. The Anglo-Persian Company's petrol and oil storage tanks at North Point were set on fire and subsequently shelled at intervals throughout the day. The attack seemed to be directed particularly against the Government Offices, where the Secrétariat was hit, and many casualties were caused in the neighbourhood. During the early afternoon Causeway Bay area was very heavily shelled, the water front from that place to Lyemun now becoming a tangle of fallen tramwires and standards and almost impassable for vehicles and despatch riders.

At noon 18th December the Braemar beach defence gun position (para. 60) was shelled, received several direct hits, and the two 18 pounders destroyed beyond repair.

Further air raids occurred from 1500 hours onwards and the Saiwan artillery observation post was dive bombed and also shelled.

Between 1700 and 1800 hours a party of about two hundred enemy was seen working down from Haiwan to Devil's Peak pier and were engaged by our artillery. Just before and after dusk an extremely heavy bombardment by artillery and mortars on Lyemun Peninsula was carried out.

At night fall it was reported that the North Point fixed beam (across to Kowloon Point) could not function owing to the intensity of the heat and the dense smoke arising from the burning Anglo-Persian Company's oil installations. This fire continued for days and was a severe handicap to observed fire.

63. *Landing on Hong Kong Island*—(a) At 1900 hours 18th December three armoured cars of the HKVDC were sent to Tytam Gap to be a mobile reserve in the hands of the Commander East Infantry Brigade at his HQ there, and two other cars remained in hand at Leighton Hill close to 1 Middlesex HQ.

(b) At 1930 hours a report was received that the Saiwan A.A. position and Old Redoubt had been under heavy shell fire (9-in. Howitzer) for half an hour, that the whole fort was badly damaged and that the structure would not stand up to further shelling.

(c) At 2000 hours pillboxes 41 and 42 (Shaukiwan) and also the narrow 2 Royal Scots front at Bowrington were bombarded.

(d) At 2130 hours the Officer Commanding 5/7 Rajput Regt. reported difficulty in getting in touch with the Lyemun fixed beam and asked for illumination in area Quarry Bay-Aldrich Bay. The Braemar A.A. searchlight was ordered to come down on to a shore defence role but (not known till later) the telephone lines to its position were knocked out by shell fire and the motor cyclist despatch rider sent in lieu was badly wounded and never got through. The communications to the fixed beam at Lyemun had been giving difficulty throughout the evening, owing to breaks from shell fire, and Captain C. E. Otway, R.E., had finally been sent to take personal charge there.

At about 2130 hours 18th December the Officer Commanding 5/7 Rajput Regt. moved a reserve company from the area South of his HQ* to a forward area closer to him. The remaining company (B) in battalion reserve was in the Tai Hang Road area, but communications to it had again been cut. Verey lights were seen going up from North Point and Lyemun, and shelling and machine gun fire was heard in considerable volume along the North shore water front and in the area of the Electric Power Station and the Anglo-Persian Company installation.†

(e) It was learnt later that at 2200 hours Captain Otway observed sampans lighting smoke flares in the harbour, and motor boats and small craft plying between Devils Peak and Lyemun pier. His light was twice attacked

by an enemy patrol with hand grenades and after beating off a third attack he left the light exposed, locked the doors, and at about 2330 hours withdrew his six men through the Japanese lines to join the nearest infantry in the defence of the Saiwan 6-in. Howitzer position in Lyemun Gap. When he left, the Japanese were shooting straight down the beam with an "Infantry gun," 50 per cent. of the shots hitting the concrete surround of the light.

(f) The landing of the enemy between Lyemun and North Point appears to have been simultaneous, for at 2200 hours night 18th-19th December pillbox N. 4 at Taikoo was reported in the hands of the enemy and a little later 5/7 Rajput Regt. was overheard reporting the occupation of the Sugar Factory by the enemy.

At 2205 hours 1 Middlesex Regt was ordered to send a mobile machine gun platoon to North Point to form a defensive flank from pillbox 49 (Power Station) to join up with the 5/7 Rajput Company in that area ("D" Company). An armoured car was also sent. Defensive artillery fire was promptly put down on Taikoo Dockyard and the Sugar Factory, and the Commanding Officer of 5/7 Rajput Regt. on the spot reported that the results were most effective.

(g) At 2242 hours pillbox 55 crew in Causeway Bay reported that the alternative position in which they were located was being shelled and also sniped at from their right flank.

(h) At 2330 hours Brigadier Wallis reported that the Officer Commanding 5/7 Rajput Regt. was still at Taikoo HQ and that on the other flank the intention was to recapture Saiwan Redoubt with the bayonet. The 6-in. Howitzer Section on Mount Parker was still in action.

(i) At midnight 18-19th December, B. Company (battalion reserve) of the 5/7 Rajput Regt. was now moving to the area of pillbox 53, a machine gun platoon of 1 Middlesex Regt. was in area of pillbox 50 and one platoon of B. Company 5/7 Rajput Regt was still holding out in North Point area. The Power Station itself was held by a force known as the "Hughesliers", under the Hon. Major J. J. Paterson, which was formed before the outbreak of war from men of 55 and over who felt the call to duty though they themselves were outside the terms of the Compulsory Service Act. It contained many prominent men of considerable standing in the colony and their role was the prevention of sabotage to the electric plant. It was reinforced about the 16th December by 45 Hong Kong Electric Company employees (HKVDC), China Light and Power Company employees, from Kowloon (numbering 30) plus two officers and seven other "Free French." The two officers were Captains Egan and Jacosta. This force was instrumental in holding the Power Station this night and fought in the streets next day until the late afternoon, when the house-to-house fighting and mopping up by the Japanese caused their surrender by encirclement, except for a few who escaped.

The delay the force imposed was very valuable to me.

(j) Just after midnight it was reported that the armoured car sent to reconnoitre towards the Power Station had been knocked out by a mobile anti-tank gun.* It is clear from reports since made that at that time the Japanese

* Near the Police Station, Braemar.

† It was subsequently ascertained that the Saiwan A.A. position was heavily shelled at 2145 hours and Japanese troops rushed it at 2200 hours.

* Lieut Carruthers was the sole survivor (HKVDC)

were in possession of the ridge overlooking and dominating the Power station and the approach along King's Road from the West. It was from this direction that the reinforcing platoon of 1 Middlesex Regt. came, as it was judged that the road nearer the water front was impassable owing to the flames from the Anglo-Persian Company's installations. The platoon ran straight into the same anti-tank and machine gun fire, the Platoon Sergeant-Major and others were killed and the remainder got into action in the vicinity of the Power Station where they fought excellently. When the bulk of the Hughesiliers withdrew, three 1 Middlesex N.C.O.s rallied and collected a mixed party of Regulars and Volunteers, nine strong, and fought till 1400 hours in the main office building of the Power Station.

(k) At about 2200 hours 18th December the Royal Artillery at Lyemun Gap reported that propaganda from a loud speaker from Saiwan Redoubt was being broadcast—"We Japanese have captured Saiwan Hill," "It is useless to resist," etc. The area was promptly put under small arms fire.

At about 0100 hours it was reported that a counter attack by one platoon of Canadians had been carried out on Saiwan Redoubt, organised and led by an Artillery officer. The counter-attack did not succeed, as was discovered subsequently. This officer then took a Tommy gun and carried out active local defence on his own, round the 6-in. Howitzer position at Lyemun Gap, in a most gallant manner.

(l) At 0145 hours the Hughesiliers (see sub-para. (i) above) reported the Power Station surrounded, but were ordered to hold on at all costs as other posts were holding out near them and it was hoped that B Company 5/7 Rajput Regt. (Captain R. G. Course) would at any moment make its presence felt.

(m) At 0200 hours 19th December Officer Commanding 1 Middlesex Regt. reported that B Company 5/7 Rajput Regt. was back in his vicinity South of Leighton Hill—the reason given being that the Company had gone forward into the Braemar reservoir area but had been unable to locate D Company 5/7 Rajput Regt. holding that sector. 1 Middlesex Regt. was still holding pill boxes 53 and 54 (Causeway Bay) and had sent officer reconnaissance patrols forward to North Point where the Hughesiliers had again reported that they were hard pressed.

(n) At 0300 hours R.A. (East) reported two Canadian platoons had tried to capture the Saiwan position about midnight under an accurate barrage on the hill top but that this counter attack was a failure.

The fighting here in the dark was very confused. Later Major Fielden, R.A., reported the road junction at Shaukiwan held by armoured cars and that he was trying to work round West of Saiwan observation post (on the top of the redoubt); he had thirty men covering the 6-in. Howitzer position in Lyemun Gap and he said that pill box 40 was still firing.

(o) Between 0400 and 0600 hours 19th December reinforcing platoons of the Royal Rifles of Canada were sent forward on to the Mount Parker high ground.

(p) To give increased defence in Victoria against possible landing on that water front which, supplemented by fifth columnists, would constitute a grave danger from the West and

perhaps overrun Government House area, a company of 2/14 Punjab Regt. had been deployed on a line running from pill box 63 southwards past and including the Central Police Station. The situation now developing on the East of Victoria was judged to be serious enough, however, to warrant taking risks in the Victoria area, and so this company (about 0400 hours) was called in from its positions to be in hand at HQ of 2/14 Punjab Regt. at Garden Road. "A" Company Winnipeg Grenadiers was already in hand at Wong Nei Chong Gap for emergency use.

(q) Captain R. S. Cole, 5/7 Rajput Regt., during the early hours was waiting for troops of his battalion on the track from Braemar to Mount Butler when a party of Japanese, headed by three Chinese with rifles approached. They were dressed in uniform and obviously acted as guides. He challenged, shot the Chinese, and dispersed the party. This incident corroborates others, accounting for the speed with which the Japanese troops covered country, supposedly unfamiliar, in the dark.

(r) At 0400 hours 19th December I arranged with the Chief Engineer for the despatch of an R.E. party for an infantry fighting role, viz.: to reinforce the Wong Nei Chong Gap area and to come under orders of Commander West Infantry Brigade on arrival there. Seventy British and Chinese was the eventual composition of this party.

(s) Shortly after 0400 hours the Officer Commanding 1 Middlesex Regt. reported the enemy working round the hills by Tai Hang village and going East, that D Company 5/7 Rajput Regt. was still near the Reservoir, that Causeway Bay area was securely held, and that there was no sign of enemy action down the road from Taikoo. At this time I ordered 2/14 Punjab Regt. to send a company forward to help fill the gap between the Winnipeg Grenadiers and 1 Middlesex Regt.

(t) At 0430 hours Major E. de V. Hunt, R.A., reported the situation to be well in hand at Lyemun Gap.

(u) At 0500 hours a small party of enemy was encountered at the Filter Beds. This showed with what vigour the enemy was pressing the attack.

(v) At 0600 hours personnel of Fortress R.E. (see sub-para. (r) above) left, and (so it transpired later) arrived in the vicinity of Wong Nei Chong Gap only to find West Infantry Brigade HQ under heavy enemy machine gun and mortar fire. Three mortar positions were located in folds of the ground but the Royal Engineers had no suitable weapons with which to reach such dead ground. Access to Brigade HQ shelters was out of the question and the Royal Engineers took up a position nearby.

(w) 0650 hours 19th December. I had previously consulted with the Commodore R.N. with a view to active participation by the Royal Navy in the land fighting. He now informed me that arrangements had been completed for the Royal Navy to take over infantry posts in the area Aberdeen-Little Hong Kong. This released A Company Winnipeg Grenadiers* from the Little Hong Kong Sub Sector, and it moved

* No evidence has been obtained as to what happened to this company. It is believed to have reached Wong Nei Chong Gap at first light and to have been ambushed by superior Japanese forces, all remaining personnel being captured.

off at 0500 hours. The Royal Navy however did not take over these infantry posts, for the bulk of the naval party was used in an attempt to reinforce Wong Nei Chong Gap from the South.

(x) At daylight laden junks, barges, motor launches and ferries were observed crossing to the vicinity of North Point, but the exact area of landing was not under observation as "low level" observation posts had been over-run, and buildings, etc., obscured the foreshore from the view of the upper observation posts.

(y) Between 0800 and 0900 hours small parties of enemy were observed on Jardines Look-out, coming down on to Wong Nei Chong Gap. In this area confused fighting was taking place, troops of various units participating, as well as the Canadian Brigade H.Q. staff. Brigadier J. K. Lawson (about 1000 hours) reported that the H.Q. shelters were over-run, firing into them was actually taking place at point blank range and that he was going outside to fight it out, after destroying telephone exchanges, etc. He did so, and I regret to say was killed, together with his Brigade Major. Major Temple and personnel of H.Q. West Group, R.A. were also killed. During the next thirty-six hours the groups of shelters here changed hands several times, but in spite of every effort the enemy secured a definite lodgment.* Part of the enemy attack came on to Stanley Gap and involved the 3.7-in. A.A. Section there. The Royal Artillery of the nearest 3.7-in. Howitzer positions were called on to assist, and leaving their gun position were drawn into the fighting with their small arms. Unfortunately, as it was thought that a temporary counter attack only was involved, steps were not taken to remove small essential parts, e.g., locks, or firing levers, and these guns together with ammunition later fell into enemy hands and were used against us.†

64. The Officer Commanding R.A.F. had some time previously requested that his officers and men should be used for ground defence, and at this time the Royal Air Force were taking up positions with the Royal Navy in the Aberdeen area, where they assisted materially in the subsequent fighting.

65. (a) It now became necessary to form a new West Group R.A. This was done at Wanchai Gap, and communications readjusted by 1500 hours, Major Duncan being appointed Commander. This small group of artillery gave admirable support during the next few days, being continuously in action though repeatedly shelled and dive bombed. Such counter battery work as remained possible was undertaken by R.A. HQ at Fortress HQ.

(b) At 0845 hours, 19th December, the Mount Parker 6-in. Howitzer Section 600 yards North of Tytam Gap was firing with one of its howitzers straight down the road towards Lyemun Gap.

* After the capitulation a Japanese Staff Officer informed me that the Japanese had suffered very heavy casualties in this area.

† Lt. Gen. Kitajama three weeks after the capitulation informed my Commander, Royal Artillery, of this fact. Our defences in the Mount Cameron area also noticed that at one period the enemy artillery fire seemed far more efficient, every round going off, and no "blinds" as customary. A map of artillery dispositions was also shown to the Commander, Royal Artillery, with three regimental artillery areas marked, indicating the employment of the artillery of three divisions.

66. At 0730 hours six motor torpedo boats were sent to the vicinity of Green Island to be ready to attack enemy vessels ferrying troops from the mainland to the island. On the arrival at the rendezvous they were ordered direct by the Commodore to attack in pairs. The first attack by M.T.Bs. 07 and 09 was successful and sank one enemy landing craft, set another on fire and forced a third to turn back (each held about forty troops). Whilst returning 07 was hit and damaged, and was towed in by 09. The second pair of motor torpedo boats had already been ordered to attack, but by the time of their arrival ferrying across the harbour had ceased. Whilst returning M.T.B. 12 was badly hit and ran ashore out of control in Kowloon Dock area. The third pair were ordered not to attack, but by mischance (or deliberately) M.T.B. 26 dived 50 and was sunk with all hands in the middle of the harbour. During these operations these craft came under fire from both sides of the harbour, and in the final stages enemy fighter aircraft joined in by attacking them with light bombs and with machine gun fire. Our casualties amounted to 50 per cent. It was not considered that adequate results would accrue from further attacks by day or by night, the harbour being full of wrecked shipping and underwater obstacles.

67. At 1000 hours, 19th December, Lieutenant Colonel J. L. Willcocks (who as previously arranged, was commanding the Defence Force around Stanley Prison of which he was Superintendent) reported that the Stanley platoon of prison officers was in its prepared position on Stanley Peninsula, covering the batteries.

68. At this juncture I conferred with Brigadier Wallis about the stabilisation of the position. The situation was that at 0800 hours the Royal Rifles of Canada were finding it difficult to maintain their positions on Mount Parker and they were attempting to hold their 6-in. Howitzer positions in that area, together with the R.A. personnel who had taken up local defence dispositions. Some of the R.A. personnel consisted of those from the 6-in. Howitzer Section at Lyemun Gap which had been over-run. No British officer was available for this latter section. Owing to the lack of mobilization transport and the 40 ft. haul up to the road by winch, the guns had been abandoned and small parts removed.

These defensive positions round the Mount Parker 6-in. Howitzer position were obviously not adequate to act as a serious "stop" to the enemy. They had been hastily improvised. Mount Parker not being held by us, they were overlooked by high ground on two sides, and were only six hundred yards in front of the Combined Headquarters of East Infantry Brigade, the infantry battalion in the South East Sector, and R.A. East Group. Infantry available for reinforcing in this area had been employed towards Mount Parker and were now out of touch. There was thus the grave danger if the enemy staged a serious attack here, of the loss of all these Headquarters and the cutting off of all the troops in the area Collins Battery—d'Aguilar Peninsula—Obelisk E included in which were the wireless personnel of the Civil Government at d'Aguilar Wireless Station. Accordingly I authorised Brigadier Wallis to withdraw his HQ to the Stonel

Company HQ and to time his withdrawal so that the last troops left the Tytam Gap area at 1300 hours.

At 1145 hours 19th December his HQ there closed down.

There was the possibility of carrying out offensive operations from the area of Red Hill and the Tytam Reservoirs and connecting up with Wong Nei Chong Gap when cleared. This would involve capture of the important features Mount Butler and Jardines Lookout. The enemy, so far as could be ascertained, was distributed in small groups on that line of high ground and it seemed to me doubtful if their total strength on the island was more than two battalions. It was realised that the alternative might be necessary, viz.: to operate via Repulse Bay area in order to link up with West Infantry Brigade. Shortly after noon a message was received from the Officer Commanding 2 Royal Scots that one company in a counter-attack had reached a point 200 yards northwards of Wong Nei Chong Gap shelters, where they were holding out with only thirteen effectives left. At this time the 3.7-in. Howitzer section at the Gauge Basin was engaging the enemy over open sights, which it continued to do until small arms fire prevented the service of the guns. One gun was brought away.

69. At 1100 hours I ordered Lt.-Colonel G. R. Kidd to counter attack with two companies ("A"* and "D"† Companies) in an easterly direction from Leighton Hill to link up with "D" Company 5/7 Rajput Regt. and enable it to withdraw for more active employment. At the same time such an attack would cut in at the enemy's rear, thus limiting his exploitation and obstructing further landings and movements in and from the North Point area.

70. At 1130 hours 19th December I was visited by H.E. The Governor and C.-in-C. who stressed the importance of fighting it out to the end however bad the military outlook might be. Every day gained was a direct help to the Empire war effort.

71. At 1300 hours a force of R.A.S.C. and details collected in the Pokfulum area, seventy strong, was moved to Bennets Hill to take up an emergency defensive position in case further exploitation by the enemy was attempted: then to move forward to the close support of the Winnipeg Grenadiers at Wong Nei Chong Gap.

At 1330 hours I issued orders for a general advance eastwards at 1500 hours to reach as a first objective Middle Spur—Wong Nei Chong Reservoir—Clementis Ride and then to join up with the objective reached by the 2/14 Punjab Regiment's counter attack already referred to in para. 69. The 2/14 Punjab Regt. was to co-operate by exploiting Northwards to relieve the "Hughesiliers"‡ and others in the Power Station. The central axis of attack was to be Middle Gap—Wong Nei Chong Reservoir—Gauge Basin—2 Royal Scots were to include Jardines Lookout. Only eight field guns were available to support this advance.

* The "University Company" less a proportion of pillbox crews. total 45.

† Kennedy Road—China Fleet Club Company

‡ It was afterwards ascertained that these orders did not reach Colonel Kidd and the two companies which at this time were still operating in the area East of Tai Hang. The spur was captured and occupied for some time but no trace of "D" Company 5/7 Rajput Regt. could be found.

At about 1630 hours 19th December 1 Middlesex Regt. reported that Leighton Hill was being heavily shelled, that "B" Company 5/7 Rajput Regt. was forward on their right and that Major Kampta Prasad's "B" Company 2/14 Punjab Regt. was further to the right.* R.A. reported enemy in the Police Station at Wong Nei Chong Gap, on the ridge just to the North, and moving South of Wong Nei Chong Reservoir. From other reports it became clear that the general advance had not been successful and that the enemy was in greater strength than had been believed.

72. (a) At 1820 hours it became necessary to withdraw the crew from pillbox 53 at Causeway Bay (North East end) as it was isolated much in advance of the general line. The pillbox itself had been destroyed, the officer had been killed, and 50 per cent. of the crew had become casualties.

(b) Enemy transport vessels were still crossing the harbour and artillery action was taken.

73. (a) At 1900 hours the R.A.S.C. personnel at the transport pool at Repulse Bay were ordered to hold on to and defend their transport area and not to withdraw.

(b) At 2000 hours the party of R.A.S.C. moved forward from Bennets Hill. Its numbers had now been increased to about 150. The party, being unable to reach Wong Nei Chong Gap, joined the R.A.O.C. party at the Ridge

(c) At 2000 hours 19th December it was reported that some of No. 3 Company HKVDC who had been surrounded in Jardines Lookout pillboxes, had managed to escape, after fighting all day, to the Blue Pool area. They were ordered to join 1 Middlesex Regt. at Leighton Hill which they did at 0800 hours next morning.

(d) At 2100 hours heavy mortar bombardment of the China Fleet Club area took place.

74. Just before midnight 19-20th December the Commissioner of Police reported that reliable secret information pointed to the likelihood of enemy landings in the Central District and Kennedy Town, and that Police patrols had been sent out. All military units concerned were warned

75 The troops had now been in action eleven days with no respite. Owing to the shortage of hot food and sleep, and the impossibility of providing reliefs because of the lack of troops, signs of strain were beginning to appear.

My A.A. resources were now very reduced—luckily only three raids of any intensity were carried out by the enemy during the day of the 19th, but the last raid on Stanley was very severe. Two Bofors guns were still in action but were powerless to prevent the enemy bombing selected targets. His bombing throughout was confined to day bombing and my A.A. searchlight detachments were never employed in their true role.

76 At 0135 hours the armoured cars of HKVDC at Wong Nei Chong Gap reported that they were in difficulties and had arranged for help from 2 Royal Scots, who had two companies in the close vicinity. In the meantime the Hong Kong Regt., HKSRA, reported that the enemy had been cleared from Wong Nei Chong Police Station.

* This was the company referred to in para. 63 (s) It was confirmed later that this company had earlier in the morning reached its objective successfully.

At 0400 hours 20th December 2 Royal Scots estimated the enemy to be one battalion strong in the vicinity of Jardines Lookout.

North of Wong Nei Chong Gap the situation was as before, viz., a company of 2/14 Punjab Regt. then "B" Company 5/7 Rajput Regt. then 1 Middlesex Regt. on Leighton Hill.

At 0715 hours the Officer Commanding the Winnipeg Grenadiers reported that he was withdrawing troops from the Mount Nicholson area, as two companies* were distributed in many small units and needed reorganising for further employment, especially as they were much mixed up with 2 Royal Scots. He proposed to reorganise on the line held on the day before, viz., Middle Gap, thence South West to Cable Hill.

At 0745 hours it was learnt that the enemy had occupied the large garage at the Repulse Bay Hotel.

At 0800 hours 20th December the Royal Artillery reported two companies 2 Royal Scots digging in on North East slopes of Mount Nicholson.

The Commissioner of Police now reported that a party of enemy had discarded their uniform and had collected in houses in Happy Valley for, he thought, fifth column work. He proposed to round them up.

At about 1000 hours the Officer Commanding 1 Middlesex Regt. reported that the crews of pill boxes 12, 13, and 15, which had been withdrawn to stiffen up the landward defences, were opposing an enemy advance on to Bennets Hill and that the enemy on Brick Hill were moving on Aberdeen. He reported that all pill boxes from Deepwater Bay to Repulse Bay were intact. The Officer Commanding the Winnipeg Grenadiers was authorised to withdraw his platoon from Aberdeen Island to assist in the main defensive positions.

77. At about 1000 hours 20th December orders were issued to 2/14 Punjab Regt. to send a company ("A" Company) to operate through Aberdeen and along Island Road to clear the enemy (estimated at thirty strong) from the Repulse Bay Hotel garage and to relieve the personnel there.

78. *Repulse Bay Hotel*—At about 0930 hours Lt. Grounds, 1 Middlesex Regt., rang up on a civil telephone and reported that the Japanese had surrounded the Hotel. He was ordered to put the women and children on the lowest floor space and to make them lie down, to organise the defence himself and to take full charge with Lt. Tresidder, R.A.S.C., to assist. With him were two or three Royal Navy personnel†, and his own Middlesex machine gunners. Lt. Grounds did excellently until he was unfortunately killed whilst organising an attack on the isolated Hotel garage with the object of driving out a strong enemy party and rescuing HKVDC officers and others imprisoned there.

The area round the Hotel was not finally cleared till the afternoon, "A" Company Royal Rifles of Canada having arrived from the direction of Stone Hill and co-operating in the action. The enemy lost one officer and 25 men killed.

* One company had lost one platoon in a counter attack.

† These R.N. personnel had been manning the mine control station at Chung Am Kok.

At about 1100 hours 20th December a message was received that "A" Company 2/14 Punjab Regt. had reached Aberdeen and was moving towards Shouson Hill, but during the day they could make no progress, as the enemy were in strength around that position, and the company itself numbered under thirty.

79. At 1200 hours Fortress R.E. were reorganised into three sections—two covering Wanchai Gap, the third in reserve. They were ordered to support the Winnipeg Grenadiers in every way possible.

A Japanese monoplane flying over Stanley was hit, was obviously in trouble, lost height and was last seen low behind Lamma Island, and not re-appearing, may be presumed to be a casualty, giving a total of five enemy aircraft shot down during the battle.

80. At 1300 hours the Chinese crew deserted the A.A. searchlight on Aberdeen Island. The five remaining British other ranks temporarily joined the nearest infantry unit.

81.—(i) During the morning several eye witnesses stated that Chinese planes had bombed Kowloon.

(ii) Admiral Chan reported that General Yu Han Mou had wirelessed that 60,000 troops were at Sham Chun on the frontier and were about to attack.*

82. During the midday period 20th December the enemy continued pouring troops and material across the harbour in every type of craft. The North Point area and other likely points were accordingly engaged by our artillery.

In the morning Colonel H. B. Rose, M.C., Commanding HKVDC, was nominated as Commander West Brigade. Its role remained as heretofore—to clear the enemy from Wong Nei Chong Gap and to establish itself on the A.A. position on Stanley Gap high ground.

1400-1500 hours. The enemy were active behind the Repulse Bay Hotel, at Shouson and Bennets Hill, and along the road between Tytam Reservoir and the Gauge Basin. An enemy battery and two platoons deployed near Stanley Mound.

During the day Brigadier Wallis from his HQ at Stone Hill was continuously forward along the Repulse Bay Road endeavouring with Lieut.-Colonel W. J. Home to force a way either West via Middle Spur or North via the gap to join up with the West Infantry Brigade. It was not known till later that the attempts were unsuccessful owing to the strength of the enemy.

At about 1700 hours the enemy was reported to have surrounded the civilian food stores (Little Hong Kong) and to be attacking again at Wong Nei Chong Gap, driving out a company of 2 Royal Scots and some Winnipeg Grenadiers. Some of the enemy moved up towards the high ground, Mount Nicholson.†

* The following message was issued to all units—
"There are indications that Chinese forces are advancing towards the frontier to our aid. All ranks must therefore hold their positions at all costs and look forward to only a few more days of strain."

† Nevertheless later in the evening this company of Royal Scots moved forward from the northern end of Mount Nicholson and occupied a position on the right of "B" Company 2/14 Punjab Regt.—q.v. paras 71 and 76.

83. At about 1930 hours, 20th December, a counter attack, about which I had previously instructed Lieut.-Colonel J. L. R. Sutcliffe and planned for 1900 hours, was launched by a company of Winnipeg Grenadiers from Wanchai Gap via Blacks Link to achieve the objects set out in para. 82 above, and to collect considerable numbers of wounded known to be at Wong Nei Chong Gap. Artillery support had been arranged but nothing was achieved, nor was the preliminary clearing of Mount Nicholson effected.

84. (a) Major C. Manners (retired R.A.) telephoned at about 1900 hours from Repulse Bay Hotel reporting that Canadian troops had arrived.

(b) At 1930 hours East Infantry Brigade was ordered to hold Repulse Bay Hotel at all costs, and Major Young, Royal Rifles of Canada, the Company Commander there, was ordered direct from Fortress HQ to pay particular attention to strong patrolling that night. The company was 140 strong

85. At 2000 hours, 20th December, the Senior Naval Officer Aberdeen reported that "A" Company 2/14 Punjab Regt. was still tied to the ground North of Brick Hill and that Major C. R. Boxer had been wounded—making the third General Staff Officer wounded in that locality that day. It was apparent that there was little chance of getting through to Repulse Bay from the Aberdeen side. (It was afterwards established that "A" Company 2/14 Punjab Regt., only 25 strong, had tried every method of clearing the enemy from the strong pocket in which they were established with at least one machine gun and a light mortar.)

86. Serious fires were now reported in the Central District of Victoria and the Civil Fire Brigade asked for the assistance of troops which under the circumstances I was unable to provide.

87. (a) At 2230 hours I discussed the situation with Brigadier Wallis. A special reconnaissance patrol under Lieut. Bompas, R.A., had located two companies of enemy infantry working their way towards Repulse Bay Hotel, along the catchment from the East, during the afternoon. The road from Stanley to Repulse Bay was overlooked from the high ground Violet Hill and Middle Spur, with two hundred enemy in position, making the road unsafe. The Canadians could not get to Wong Nei Chong Gap by the routes tried this day. Brigadier Wallis considered the enemy to be in too great strength in the Hotel area to be turned out without proper artillery support, now a matter of great difficulty. He believed the enemy were not so strong in the Gauge Basin area and that another plan should be tried, but it was pouring with rain, visibility very bad, the men tired out and they had had little food. I ordered him

(i) to hold what he had got,

(ii) to press on to Wong Nei Chong Gap via Gauge Basin and

(iii) to use Bren carriers boldly in reconnaissance.

(b) By midnight 20th-21st December two 3.7-in. Howitzers had been positioned near Stanley Prison with an observation post on the hill behind, i.e., to the South. These, together

with one 18 pounder from a Beach Defence role (which had to be man-handled and could only fire over open sights from road locations), were the only remaining field pieces in East Infantry Brigade Commander's hands.

(c) Later Commander East Infantry Brigade said that the earliest his attack could be staged was 0900 hours. Contributing factors were.—

(i) lack of transport and administrative facilities and

(ii) delay caused by a virtual breakdown of unit communications. He was unable to help in the last mentioned item, for the Brigade reserve of signals equipment had already been used to replace this unit's signal equipment, lost on the previous night's positions.

88. The company of 2 Royal Scots—see footnote to para. 82—was driven back in the early morning, exposing the flank of "B" Company 2/14 Punjab Regt.

89. Commander West Infantry Brigade arranged for a fresh attack at 0700 hours by the Winnipeg Grenadiers to recapture Wong Nei Chong Gap. "C" Company of that regiment was in position at 0300 hours at Middle Gap, though they reported that they had encountered a party of enemy whilst moving up, and had suffered a few casualties. The attack did not succeed.

90. At about 0700 hours 21st December Major Manners (see para. 84 (a)) rang up again from Repulse Bay Hotel. He said the defences appeared to be quite inadequate, and with the women and children in the Hotel helpless, he viewed the situation with extreme pessimism.

At 0725 hours Major Young at Repulse Bay Hotel was ordered to organise two strong patrols, to reconnoitre Westwards from the Hotel and to clear up the situation at the junction of Island Road with the road to Hong Kong, where some troops who were coming down from "The Ridge" Advance Ordnance Depot had been ambushed over-night.

At 0800 hours a review of the situation was received from Lt. Tresidder at Repulse Bay Hotel:—

Enemy estimated 450 strong on Stanley Mound and over-looking Repulse Bay with HQ at Wong Nei Chong Gap: they had three machine guns and a heavy mortar; they had British and Chinese prisoners with them—some of the enemy were Koreans.

91. At about 0600 hours 1 Middlesex Regt reported enemy attacking near pillbox 14 and on Brick Hill. H.M.S. "Cicala" (gunboat) was ordered to assist land operations in the Deepwater Bay area. Valuable close co-operation resulted.

This ship entered the bay and shelled enemy mortars and artillery, scoring hits. Unfortunately strong air action developed against her, and having been badly holed she withdrew and sank later in the Lamma channel.

92. Meanwhile (see para. 85) "A" Company of 2/14 Punjab Regt. had still made no head way and I ordered a senior officer to be sent at once from the battalion in Victoria. Lt.-Colonel Kidd elected to go himself and collected a few naval ratings in Aberdeen en route, but he was most regrettably killed when putting his own men in to the attack on Shouson Hill in order to clear that area. The

attack failed with twenty-one casualties (out of a strength of twenty-five).

At 0900 hours 21st December Major H. Marsh reported from his machine gun company H.Q. at Little Hong Kong that the enemy could be seen moving from Wong Nei Chong Gap along the crest of the hill westwards. That matters in that area had not progressed favourably was evident when at 1025 hours I learnt that out troops were being pushed back North of Blacks Link* and Mount Cameron. The Winnipeg Grenadiers now in positions on Mount Cameron were ordered to hold on at all costs.

93. A second air raid on the Peak District developed at 0950 hours and a bomb of 500 lbs. was dropped, amongst others, just below Jardines Corner, entirely blocking the road and cutting off communications with Volunteer HQ except by telephone, by which means the Observation Post Commander reported that forty steam launches in line, with steam up, were assembled two hundred yards off shore by Kai Tak aerodrome. Unfortunately, at this time Royal Artillery communications to observation posts were destroyed except the one to High West, and from this observation post the target was invisible.

94. At 1000 hours 21st December 2/14 Punjab Regt. in the Garden Road-Kennedy Road area were ordered to re-orientate themselves to face South East to cover a possible break through from the Wanchai Gap direction. A section of machine guns was sent at once to connect up by fire with the Wanchai Gap dispositions, at which place were located the HQ of both West Infantry Brigade and the Winnipeg Grenadiers. At the same time all garrisons of 2/14 Punjab pillboxes on the North shore were to be withdrawn to Battalion HQ—I had now to take considerable risks on other portions of the island defences in view of the direct menace from the Mount Cameron area.

95. By 1100 hours the enemy had brought a heavy mortar into action just off King's Road near the Power Station, with which they bombarded the R.N. Yard. They also bombed Repulse Bay area and carried out a ground attack on the Little Hong Kong area from the direction of Aberdeen, thus threatening encirclement, at any rate temporarily, of that important area in which was located the new R.A.O.C. Magazine and the main bulk of the remaining ammunition stock. The enemy had landed some troops near Causeway Bay, and the housetops in that area were reported "crowded with them." At noon they were pressing down King's Road and had mounted a gun at No. 163. At this time all the guns at the R.N. Yard were out of action, following a heavy bombardment.

96. (a) At midday 21st December our "line" ran from Little Hong Kong area to the Southern slopes of Mount Cameron. In the former area were located two parties under Major H. Marsh, 1 Middlesex Regt., and Major A. J. Dewar, R.A.S.C., respectively. Major Marsh had one officer (plus a R.A.M.C. officer), eighteen other ranks 1 Middlesex Regt., five men of the Winnipeg Grenadiers and fourteen Chinese of the Medium Detachment of the

HKVDC, and was located in the "Combined Company HQ" of the defence sub sector—one company of the Winnipeg Grenadiers having been withdrawn for the Wong Nei Chong Gap counter attacks. Major A. J. Dewar, with twenty naval ratings, placed himself under the command of Major Marsh and was posted on the high ground (Shouson Hill private houses) covering the East flank. This "Island" of defence resisted all attacks from 20th December to the afternoon of 25th December and fought very gallantly, as did also a similar isolated detachment, viz, the administrative details on "The Ridge" under Lt.-Colonel R. A. P. Macpherson.

(b) During the course of the morning I had issued instructions to withdraw the Middlesex machine guns from the pillboxes between Sandy Bay and Aberdeen, and to put them on a mobile basis as far as possible: a platoon at a time could be "ferried," even though the transport situation was acute. The South West sector of the island defence was therefore completely denuded—another undesirable but necessary risk. A section of machine guns was now sent to supplement the defences in the Aberdeen-Bennets Hill area, under Commander H. C. Millet, R.N. (retd.). A platoon was also sent to the Officer Commanding 1 Middlesex Regt., for the Leighton Hill defences.

97. (a) Mortaring of North shore defences continued at 1300 hours 21st December, and pill boxes were subjected to accurate high velocity shell fire from both Kowloon and positions on their flank on the island. Pill box 59, for instance received thirty direct hits, but the Middlesex sergeant in command personally upheld the defence, though withdrawing the crew temporarily.

(b) Enemy craft were still ferrying backwards and forwards between Kowloon and the Sugar Factory-North Point area.

(c) In the morning a motor torpedo boat had evacuated from Stanley the Commanding Officer of 5/7 Rajput Regt. and the remnants of his battle HQ, and he now took over command of the troops of 5/7 Rajput Regt. who were fighting alongside 1 Middlesex Regt.

98. HKVDC (a) A report was received that No. 1 Company had had heavy casualties in the Stanley Mound area and had lost all their officers. The remains of the company had rallied at Stanley.

(b) The A.A. Lewis gun post of No. 6 Company (Portuguese) at "Watson's," Causeway Bay, reported that they had been captured by Japanese, disarmed, and told to make off towards our lines. They did so and rejoined for duty.

99. 1330 hours. A Japanese destroyer, escorting two merchant vessels, was sighted South of Cheung Chau Island, heading for Hong Kong.

100. 1430 hours. (a) Two companies of enemy occupied the whole length of Mount Nicholson, and brought up a small gun.

(b) A report was received from "A" Company Royal Rifles of Canada that the whole company had moved. One platoon had reached the "Ridge" and another platoon was on Middle Spur though the enemy were still firing from it. The situation at Repulse Bay being so unsatisfactory, I ordered a senior

* Blacks Link—the track leading from Wong Nei Chong Gap to Wanchai Gap.

officer to be sent to take local command there. Major C. R. Templar, R.A. was selected. On arrival he collected two trucks, filled them with Canadian troops and went up towards Wong Nei Chong Gap.

101. At 1600 hours 21st December a telegram was received from the Military Attache, Chungking, that the main Chinese attack could not start before 1st January but "it was hoped that" twenty bombers would operate at once against Japanese aerodromes.

102 The question of the women and children at Repulse Bay Hotel now arose. It was difficult to give a satisfactory answer but I decided that the safest course would be to leave them there for the night. The situation was extremely "fluid," both in this area and the Little Hong Kong area.

103. After dark enemy landing craft operating near the R.N. Yard were fired on from pill boxes and passed West down the harbour, but no actual landing was attempted. Strong Police patrols were sent out in the Central and Western Districts for special reconnaissance to confirm this.

104. (a) During the day 21st December The Royal Rifles of Canada had been trying to force their way north-eastwards as planned—one company and carriers, with No 1 Company Volunteer Machine Gunners in support, up the Tytam Road; a second Company directed across country on to Bridge Hill. These companies made a great effort, in spite of handicaps, but by the late afternoon could get no further forward than Red Hill-Bridge Hill, owing to considerable resistance by the enemy. Volunteer machine-gunners (Nos 1 and 2 Companies) rendered valuable forward support on this occasion.

(b) At 2030 hours 21st December Major C. R. Templar reported an unsuccessful attack on Wong Nei Chong Gap and that there were still about one hundred R.A.S.C. and R.A.O.C. on "The Ridge," with fifty Canadians in Altira House. Further, that sixty to seventy Canadians were in Repulse Bay Hotel, round which sniping was continuing.

105. At about midnight a cable was received from the War Office emphasising the need to destroy all oil installations. This was carried out by artillery fire on the next day (22nd). The Texaco tanks at Tsun Wan Wai, the Shell tanks at Tai Kok Tsui (next to Cosmopolitan Dock), and the R.N. tanks a mile to the South thereof, were all set well alight, but the Socony tanks* at Laichikok could not be shelled as they were close to the hospital establishment in the women's prison.

106. (a) In the evening (21st December) the decision was taken to evacuate "The Ridge," and at about 2230 hours 8 officers and 120 other ranks left, trying at the same time to clear the catchwater in a southerly direction. This, however, failed under enemy machine gun fire. They sheltered for the night in "Overbays", a private house on the edge of Deepwater Bay.

* A demolition scheme had been fully prepared, but the area was over-run too quickly on the morning of 11th December. Luckily this Depot was only half full.

(b) During the evening some Japanese managed to penetrate into the Repulse Bay Hotel but were evicted by prompt action initiated by Major Templar.

107. Night 21/22nd December. Enemy launches kept the North shore defences on the alert, but there were no attempted landings. Sniping occurred from houses round the Race Course and also in Victoria. The civil population observed the curfew well.

108 In the morning the enemy opened heavy fire from Middle Spur and resumed operations on the high ground North of the Repulse Bay Hotel, and at 1000 hours he was reported in possession of two large houses overlooking Deepwater Bay. At 1030 hours 22nd December I placed Stanley Garrison under the direct orders of Brigadier Wallis. By now the intention of linking up East Infantry Brigade with West Infantry Brigade by moving westwards had perforce to be abandoned.

It may be noted that at this time the 3 7-in Howitzers at Stanley had only 45 rounds left in all. This was supplemented later when the provisioning of Stanley garrison was carried out by motor torpedo boats from Aberdeen.

In the meantime the enemy had cut off the water supply in Stanley by the capture of the Tytam Reservoir area machinery. For the forces in the Repulse area there was now only two days' supply of food and water. The evacuation of the civilians was still quite impracticable either by road or by water though I went into the question most carefully.

109 (a) 1030 hours 22nd December—Commander West Infantry Brigade reported that the Canadian troops in the Mount Cameron area were being heavily dive-bombed and mortared. They had no tools with which to dig in (although the rocky ground made this in any case almost impossible), no 3-in. mortars or bombs, there was no shelter, and there was nothing to do except stick it out with small arms fire from behind the rocks. These conditions applied in general to the subsequent fighting on the important high ground there.

Morale now had been seriously affected by the feeling that it was futile to continue resistance with insufficient equipment, with insufficient mobile artillery support, and without both air support and air observation.

(b) At this time, too, 2, Royal Scots were being heavily mortared from the ground near Jardines Lookout. The enemy seemed to have no difficulty in keeping up his ammunition supply across country from North Shore; and evidence was afterwards forthcoming that local Chinese were forcibly impressed as carriers. Much of the Japanese mortar ammunition, too, was of a much lighter nature than the British: one variety was 95 per cent. H.E., thus causing great moral effect, particularly valuable on un-seasoned troops in the opening phases of battle. The Japanese handling of mortars was extremely good. They were very quick into action; were quickly ranged, and accurate concentrations were put down at short notice at ranges of 1,500 yards.

(c) By the early afternoon 22nd December the enemy was consolidating his positions on the northern lower slopes of Mount Nicholson within one hundred yards of the 2 Royal Scots forward defended localities.

(d) The Japanese air force at this time was extremely accurate.

110. 1400 hours. The enemy gradually advanced in the Repulse Bay area. An 18 pounder here, over open sights, knocked out some enemy mortars on Violet Hill. In addition the enemy was infiltrating southwards from the high ground "The Twins" and Notting Hill. The Royal Rifles of Canada's positions on Sugar Loaf and Stanley Mound were precarious.

Commander East Infantry Brigade telephoned that he was hoping to arrange the evacuation of the civilians from the Hotel this night.*

111. (a) During the morning I suggested to the Officer Commanding 1 Middlesex Regt. that he could not long hope to exercise control from so forward a position as Leighton Hill. At 1600 hours very heavy mortar fire developed on this area. HQ 1 Middlesex Regt. accordingly withdrew and established itself in Hennessey Road, Wanchai—the densely populated area West of Mount Parish.

(b) The enemy launch traffic to North Shore, which had been going on all day, increased during the afternoon.

112. In the afternoon 22nd December, Commander West Infantry Brigade considered from the information available that the enemy was concentrating between Little Hong Kong and Mount Cameron with a view to attacking North-West on Wanchai Gap. Counter measures were accordingly ordered by him.

113. Meanwhile I had agreed to an adjustment of the line in the area of the Filter Beds. A gap existed between the right flank of the company of 2/14 Punjab Regt. and the left of 2 Royal Scots, thus giving the enemy a line of attack towards the Race Course, in which area he was already active with fifth columnists. Such an attack would envelop the whole Leighton Hill area, turn the left flank of the 2 Royal Scots and cut straight in to Wanchai, and I had insufficient troops in hand to meet such a contingency. This adjustment was carried out without incident and the company of 2/14 Punjab Regt. (only thirty-five strong) thus freed moved to the area South-East end of the Race Course, thus linking up with the 2 Royal Scots West of Mount Nicholson Camp. The Company Commander on arrival had, however, only eight men with two Light Automatics at his disposal, owing to casualties and dispersal of his men from enemy shelling in the darkness. The enemy attacked the company of 5/7 Rajput Regt. which remained in the area South-East end of the Race Course. Although this company was of a composite nature only—two platoons formed from the remains of "B" and "D" Companies—it held its ground successfully.

114. During the day 22nd December Stanley Mound and Stanley Prison had been shelled and mortared, and at midnight I received news of the enemy capture of the Stanley Mound feature.

115. The isolated troops at "Overbays" (see para. 106) had been in close contact with the

* It was not practicable. The women and children fell into the hands of the Japanese when the troops evacuated at midnight on 23/24th December.

enemy throughout the day and at about 1930 hours the place was evacuated in an endeavour to join up at Repulse Bay Hotel. The majority succeeded in getting past the Japanese. A Warrant Officer of the R.A.O.C., however, telephoned to Fortress HQ at 2000 hours to say that he and four wounded were alone in the house. He was instructed to surrender. There was in point of fact (though this was unknown at the time) a party of thirty others upstairs. This party attempted to surrender at 0800 hours the following day (23rd December) but were hand-grenaded in their rooms and a number were bayoneted. Corporal Jeffery and six men escaped, leaving twenty-eight dead, including four Japanese, in the room. The Warrant Officer and the wounded on the ground floor were not seen alive after 2300 hours on the 22nd, and they were not amongst the eventual Prisoners of War. It can only be assumed that they were burned to death when the Japanese later fired the house.

116. A serious report concerning the water supply came from the Director of Public Works at 0100 hours. No water was coming from Tytam Reservoir, the Aberdeen supply was out of action for at least two days, and only a trickle was coming from Pokfulam. "The town (of Victoria) was now helpless." The fighting troops were also feeling the shortage of water.

117. At about 0130 hours Commander West Infantry Brigade reported the loss of Mount Cameron, that troops were coming back in disorder, and that an effort was being made to rally them at Magazine Gap and Mount Gough. Wanchai Gap was still held.

At 0345 hours 23rd December the Royal Engineers reported their rear party still in position on Mount Kellett and that the Winnipeg Grenadiers were being re-organised in the Gough Hill Police Station area.

At 0430 hours the Royal Engineers and 4 and 7 Companies H.K.V.D.C. were still in position, the Volunteers holding their original line in the area Magazine Gap which they had taken up three days previously.

A new R.A. (West) H.Q. was being established at Victoria Gap. At this critical time the Royal Navy offered valuable help—1 officer and 40 men of the Royal Marines—who were ordered to Magazine Gap to report to the senior officer there (Lt.-Colonel F. D. Field, R.A.) for the purpose of clearing up the situation at Wanchai Gap, now out of touch.

At about 0600 hours it was reported that three platoons of the Royal Navy from Aberdeen had already moved forward to Bennets Hill to reinforce the machine gunners of 1 Middlesex Regt. already in position there.

By 0800 hours 23rd December Lt.-Colonel F. D. Field reported that he had got into touch with 2 Royal Scots at Wanchai Gap and he was instructed to send a fighting patrol to Mount Cameron to ascertain the situation there. It was learnt from him that "A" Company 2 Royal Scots was still in position near St. Albert's Convent, which had been occupied by us as a military hospital.

From now onwards until 1100 hours many conflicting reports were received concerning Mount Cameron, but it was apparent that the crest of this commanding and important feature

remained in enemy hands. Information indicated that the enemy's local HQ and organising centre was at Wong Nei Chong Gap, but owing to the configuration of the ground it was not possible to shell this over the top of Mount Nicholson, for the remaining sections of mobile artillery were in positions in the area Victoria Peak-Mount Gough-Mount Kellett. However I am confident that heavy casualties were inflicted on the enemy on the stretch of Blacks Link between Wong Nei Chong Gap and Middle Gap, for a 9.2-in. gun from Stanley had been engaging enemy in this area for the last two days with immediate observation from Shou-shon Hill nearby. In addition Major H. Marsh had expended some 20,000 rounds from his medium machine guns on very good targets at ideal ranges. It was now learnt that two small ammunition convoys had got through to Little Hong Kong during the previous night and had returned successfully with much needed supplies. At this time Stanley was being supplied with ammunition by motor torpedo boat.

118. Meanwhile the situation to the North was causing me considerable anxiety. The composite company of 5/7 Rajput Regt. much reduced in numbers and short of ammunition and food, had been forced to withdraw at about 0800 hours, exposing the right flank of the Middlesex Leighton Hill position held by Captain C. M. Man's "Z" Company. At 0922 hours he was holding on, though the enemy was infiltrating into the houses and streets around him. He had only forty men, with six machine guns. At 1000 hours the enemy attacked him strongly, and heavily shelled the Bowington area.

At 1100 hours the bombardment again intensified and the positions of one machine gun platoon were completely destroyed. The guns, however, moved into the Lee Theatre to hold the North flank. At Fortress H.Q. fifty Royal Artillery and 2 Royal Scots personnel were collected and sent to reinforce 1 Middlesex Regt.

119. At 1000 hours 23rd December Commander East Infantry Brigade reported that a counter-attack on Stanley Mound had failed. The Royal Rifles of Canada had had heavy losses, the enemy were infiltrating and the Commanding Officer felt he must fall back. The Infantry Brigade was in the process of re-connoitering and organising three defensive positions in depth which were to be held to the last, the most northerly being well forward of Stanley Village. The Canadians felt that they could put up a better resistance on flatter ground, and on a narrower front, where communications would be simpler. The loss of the tactically important high ground was fully realised and very regrettable.

120. At 1000 hours the enemy were attacking Bennets Hill and bombing Aberdeen Dockyard, also A.A. positions in Victoria City.

121. At 1130 hours HQ 1 Middlesex Regt. was forced to withdraw to a prepared position. At noon the line ran:—South-east corner Race Course to (exclusive) Leighton Hill (sixty men of 5/7 Rajput Regt.)—Leighton Hill and northwards (by 1 Middlesex Regt) to pill box 55.

At about 1500 hours the enemy attacked, but was beaten off.

122. At 1330 hours 23rd December communication was re-established with HQ West Infantry Brigade at Magazine Gap and it was learnt that about 250 enemy were round St. Albert's Convent, that our troops on the Northern slopes of Mount Cameron were withdrawing* and that Magazine Gap and Wanchai Gap were being heavily bombed. The positions at every "gap" were unenviable, for the nature of the country was such that local defence was bound to be restricted and confined to the gap itself, thus providing an excellent target for the enemy air force, which did not fail to take due advantage of the opportunity. These positions were originally prepared for limiting any enemy exploitation after a South shore landing.

At 1430 hours our line ran from Bennets Hill to Wanchai Gap, and a patrol of 2 Royal Scots was going out to Mount Cameron.

123. At 1645 hours 23rd December the last Army W/T set was knocked out by shell fire, and communications with the United Kingdom and Singapore ceased except that military messages could be and were transmitted by Royal Navy W/T.

124. At 1730 hours communication was reopened at HQ 2 Royal Scots at Wanchai Gap, who reported that they were holding the western slopes of Mount Cameron.

125. With difficulty eight ammunition lorries had been collected and organised, and during the night six of these managed, with the help of an armoured car of the HKVDC, to get to the Ordnance Depot at Little Hong Kong and obtain some badly wanted gun and mortar ammunition. There were unfortunately no hand grenades there (they were in the other Reserve Depot at The Ridge), for these were now urgently needed in the street fighting which was developing in the area North of the Race Course.

126. Morning (23/24th December) dispositions of West Infantry Brigade were—Brigade HQ Magazine Gap, HQ 2 Royal Scots and Winnipeg Grenadiers at Wanchai Gap, 2 Royal Scots still holding the West slopes of Mount Cameron and patrolling forward, Winnipeg Grenadiers holding down to Aberdeen Reservoir, Little Hong Kong area still holding out, 4 and 7 Companies HKVDC on the new line to which they had been moved (Mount Kellett to Mount Gough).

127.—(a) At about 0400 hours 24th December the Royal Rifles of Canada were back on a line across Stanley Peninsula from near pill box 27 on Tytam Bay, through St Stephens College buildings to West Bay, but the battalion required regrouping. A forward line had been formed through the Police Station manned by "B" and "D" companies 1 Middlesex Regiment, some H.K.V.D.C., prison warders (enlisted as volunteers), and a few other personnel. The 1 Middlesex crews from the pill boxes in the area of Repulse Bay had been ordered to withdraw and had joined the Stanley Forces with all their machine guns, equipment and most of the small arms ammunition—a timely reinforcement and an excellent achievement.

(b) Brigadier Wallis assured me that Stanley Force were in good heart and that he was con-

* It was not till some time later that this statement re withdrawal was found to be untrue.

fidant that if the enemy attacked his three lines of defence they would suffer heavily. He confirmed that he had enough food, water and ammunition, and I ordered him to fight on and not to surrender as long as these conditions prevailed.

128. Information was received in the morning that the enemy held the central and southern portions of Mount Cameron, and that the Royal Scots were on the northern extremity:

At 0915 hours the enemy had reinforced the northern portion of Mount Cameron where he was about 300 strong. The small party of Royal Marines (q v. para 117) was now patrolling the spurs South of Mount Parish in touch with the 5/7 Rajput Regt. who had collected hospital discharges, etc., and formed a third platoon which had been positioned on the Mount Parish spur.

129 Noon.—(a) One of the 6-in. Howitzers at Mount Austin was put out of action by bombing.

(b) Two enemy launches on the West side of the Kowloon Peninsula were set on fire by our artillery.

130. At 1400 hours 24th December about 200 enemy were seen working North West, and an attack developed at about 1500 hours on Leighton Hill after a severe artillery and mortar bombardment, in addition to dive bombing. Attacked from three sides, the garrison was being rapidly surrounded when at 1645 hours it was authorised to escape, if it could, through the streets leading North West to Canal Road. The two officers and 40 other ranks did so, losing 25 per cent. casualties. A most determined and valuable resistance had been put up on this position (and q v. para. 118). These troops withdrew into and assisted the defensive area between Lee Theatre and the Canal Road, already occupied by the reinforcements mentioned in para. 118.

131. This evening a convoy plus an armoured car was again formed to obtain ammunition and bombs from Little Hong Kong. Accompanying the convoy were two trucks with reinforcements from 2 Royal Scots and 1 Middlesex Regt., plus two machine guns. It succeeded, though shot at repeatedly.

132 1730 hours 24th December.—The patrol of the Royal Marines ascertained that no enemy was on the road North East of Wanchai Gap, and that 2 Royal Scots were at the Gap. Posts were to be established on the spur.

133 At 1800 hours Morrison Hill was heavily shelled. Holding this feature were detachments of 1 Middlesex Regt. with seven machine guns. All guns were reported knocked out but the majority of the crews escaped, having been withdrawn to nearby cover ready to repel an attack.

At 1900 hours a party of thirty clerks, spare signallers, military police, etc., was formed at Fortress H.Q. and went under Major R. E. Moody, D.A.A.G., to assist the Officer Commanding 1 Middlesex Regt. This party, with a few others collected on the spot, held Morrison Hill until the afternoon of 25th December.

The enemy now had three guns in action on the water front near the Peninsular Hotel,

Kowloon, and another battery at Tai Hang. At about 1900 hours a large fire broke out on the water front near the China Fleet Club, hindering certain forward movements.

134 At about 2200 hours reports from Aberdeen and Shouson Hill indicated a general move of the enemy from Mount Nicholson/Mount Cameron area northwards towards the Race Course. A possible intention, I considered, might be to turn West and join in the drive along the North face of the island, possibly with the left flank along the line of the "gaps" and the right flank just clear of Wanchai. This would strike a weak place where I had only the Royal Marines patrolling. In hand were less than a dozen men at H.Q. of 2/14 Punjab Regt. unless I drew on the two companies in positions covering Government House, Command H.Q., R.N. Yard, Military Hospital, i.e., our last stand.

135. Night 24/25th December—Between 2200 and 2300 hours the Central District of Victoria came under a 3-in. Mortar bombardment—including the R.N. Yard, Victoria Barracks, and Fortress H.Q. Communications were not affected. The direction of the enemy advance on Wanchai made it possible that the enemy might use the A.R.P. tunnels for infiltration and wardens were warned accordingly. The most important tunnels concerned were those under Mount Parish.

136 At 2300 hours all units were sent such seasonal greetings as were possible from H.E. The Governor and from Fortress H.Q.

137. Around midnight the enemy attacked in the area South of Wanchai Gap and effected a slight penetration.

138. At 0100 hours on Christmas Day Commander East Infantry Brigade reported a series of attacks on his positions at Stanley. The enemy had succeeded in getting behind some of the forward defended localities and were mopping up parties of H.K.V.D.C. at Stanley Police Station. I again instructed him to hold out till the last.

139. The enemy continued pressure North of Aberdeen, reached the North slopes of Bennetts Hill, and "dug in" there, at 0300 hours he was reported to be advancing again. At this time only one of the two 4.5-in. Howitzers at the "Sanatorium" remained in action.

140. *Wanchai*—Before dawn 25th December a successful retaliation to the enemies' light infantry gun* was carried out. A Bofors A.A. gun was taken to a position just South of Morrison Hill and vigorous short range fire silenced the enemy activity in the sports pavilions immediately South of Canal Road. Many calls had been made on the Bofors detachments during the last few days. Besides their continuous day role they had also performed night roles, e.g., beach defence, replacing equipments disabled or knocked out, such as at Belchers Fort, in which area the infantry beach defences had been weakened by 95 per cent in order to find troops for counter-attack.

By 0700 hours anti-tank mines had been laid in the main approaches to Wanchai from

* This was mounted on balloon type tyres, was about 3" calibre, was very boldly handled, and produced most effective results, both material and moral. Each battalion had two.

the East but enemy house to house infiltrations continued to be reported even as far West as the China Fleet Club. This report I discounted, but awkward fighting was developing, for I was unable to employ suitably the available artillery in this street fighting, apart from the desire to escape causing innumerable civilian casualties in such a congested area. The Japanese on the other hand, with their overwhelming superiority of artillery and noted carelessness for loss of life, had no hesitation in putting down in such areas heavy concentrations, with mortars super-imposed, lasting half an hour, and with a rate of fire comparable to those of the Great War.

At 0800 hours the enemy were on a front from the South end of Canal Road to the West arm of Causeway Bay, with snipers in houses further forward.

At 0830 hours, 25th December, the Royal Navy contributed a further small reinforcement which was placed at the disposal of the Officer Commanding 1 Middlesex Regt. (Lieut.-Colonel H. W. M. Stewart, O.B.E., M.C.) who thereupon put in hand the building up of a second line running North from the Mount Parish area—Wanchai Market, O'Brien Street—to the water front ("O'Brien Street Line").

141. At daylight our troops were still holding the eastern slopes of Bennets Hill.

142. At 0900 hours Major C. M. Manners (q.v. paras. 84 and 90) and Mr. A. L. Shields came across from the Japanese lines under a white flag. They had been told that they could talk freely. They informed me of their march with civilians of both sexes from Repulse Bay Hotel via Wong Nei Chong Gap to North point, of the "incredible" number of guns and troops seen during the last half of their "trek" and (in their opinion, *not* put forward by the Japanese) the uselessness of continuing the struggle.

A special defence meeting was immediately called, where it was decided that there could be no talk of surrender.

The Japanese Commander sent one message—that their forces would not initiate active hostilities for three hours. I conformed, including regretfully closing down on a promising counter-attack by Canadian troops on a large enemy "pocket" North-West of Bennets Hill. This impromptu "truce" was difficult to stage, for Japanese planes, operating from Canton, did not conform and bombed Stanley, Aberdeen and Mount Gough. Stanley was also shelled. A constant service of launches was maintained over Kowloon Bay and Japanese artillery continued bombarding the Gaps.

143. At 1030 hours the Royal Marines patrol (q.v. para. 132) reported having established contact with 2 Royal Scots at Wanchai Gap. This patrol had meanwhile been increased by thirty all ranks of Fortress R.E. who were reserved for a minor operation that night, i.e., the mopping up of an enemy post on Stubbs Road. At mid-day Japanese artillery opened up punctually on a large scale, and later hand to hand fighting was reported by 5/7 Rajput Regt. on Mount Parish, where a platoon was surrounded. Shortly afterwards Mount Parish fell into the enemy's hands, and an advance along Kennedy Road was threatened. This put

Fortress HQ area, which had a garrison of only one platoon of 2/14 Punjab Regt., in jeopardy. More road blocks and anti-tank mines were put out.

By 1300 hours, 25th December, the 2nd ("O'Brien Street") line was established, held by some 60-70 men of 1 Middlesex Regt., including small parties of Royal Navy, Royal Engineers, and 5/7 Rajput Regt. The enemy was now in the Wanchai A.R.P. tunnels (q.v. para. 135) but about noon an 18 pounder gun had arrived there, which, mounted in the main street, covered several of the exits. A number of rounds were fired at these exits, more as a deterrent than anything else. No casualties were observed to have been caused, and no enemy emerged.

144. Communications were increasingly difficult to maintain: between 1100 and 1200 hours there were none to Stanley area, Wanchai Gap and Magazine Gap, nor to the 2 Royal Scots.

145. There were, at noon, only six guns of the mobile artillery left in action, with an average of 160 rounds per gun available.

146. At 1430 hours two officers and fifty other ranks of 2/14 Punjab Regt. reached the Officer Commanding 1 Middlesex Regt., who had given warnings several times that his men, though in good heart, were being slowly but surely overwhelmed. A further withdrawal was enforced from the Canal Road area, and the "O'Brien Street line" became the forward active line of defence. HQ 1 Middlesex Regt. withdrew to Murray Barracks.

147. Very heavy dive-bombing attacks were made in the Wanchai Gap area between 1400 and 1430 hours, and shortly afterwards this Gap was reported lost.

Magazine Gap was similarly attacked and incendiaries were dropped—most effectively, for the hillside was set on fire and field cables were burnt. A little later the Gap itself came under mortar and small arms fire, and Commander, West Infantry Brigade, reported that the area could not in his opinion be held for more than 24 hours at the most against a determined attack.

148. At 1450 hours the Officer Commanding 1 Middlesex Regt. reported that his forward positions were being shelled from both Kowloon and North Point and that Captain C. M. Man, the Officer Commanding "Z" Company, had telephoned "the line is breaking." Lt.-Colonel Stewart said he would try to form yet another line East of the R.N. Yard if necessary, i.e., just below, and to the North of, Fortress HQ. The "O'Brien Street line," if seriously attacked, could not hold out long—perhaps half an hour.

149. I had no communications with East Infantry Brigade HQ at Stanley and consequently had no information.

As far as it was known, the force surrounded in Little Hong Kong Magazine area, was still holding out.

Bennets Hill had been heavily attacked, had been completely surrounded and by 1500 hours had been forced to surrender. The Canadian line north of Bennets Hill had been forced to give ground.

150. This advance by the enemy along the line of Gaps, the possession of these Gaps by him, thus giving him an open line of advance to the Central District, the fall of Bennets Hill, the isolation of the forces in Stanley, the deployment by the enemy of such superior forces and armament, the exhaustion after sixteen days of continuous battle with no reliefs for any individuals, our vulnerability to unlimited air attack, the impossibility of obtaining more ammunition for the few mobile guns I had remaining, the serious water famine immediately impending—these were the factors which led to the inevitable conclusion, namely, that further fighting meant the useless slaughter of the remainder of the garrison, risked severe

retaliation on the large civilian population and could not affect the final outcome. The enemy drive along the North shore was decisive.

I asked Lt.-Colonel Stewart, the Officer Commanding 1 Middlesex Regt, how much longer in his considered opinion the men could hold the line now occupied. He replied "one hour."

The Commodore agreed with my conclusion.

At 1515 hours I advised H.E. The Governor and C.-in-C. that no further useful military resistance was possible and I then ordered all Commanding Officers to break off the fighting and to capitulate to the nearest Japanese Commander, as and when the enemy advanced and opportunity offered.

APPENDIX "B".

A SUMMARY OF APPROXIMATE CASUALTIES.

Officers.

Unit or Formation.	Killed or Died of Wounds	Missing.	Wounded.	Total Strength.
H Q China Command	2	2	3	33
H Q R A.	—	1	—	6
8 Coast Regt R A	—	—	3	19
12 Coast Regt R A	1	1	1	16
5 A A. Regt R A	—	8	1	23
1 Hong Kong Regt H K S R A	3	7	3	24
965 Def Bty R A	—	—	1	3
22 Field Coy. R E	—	1	—	7
40 Field Coy. R E	2	—	—	7
R E Services	—	1	1	18
2 Royal Scots	12	4	11	35
1 Middlesex Regt	10	2	4	36
Canadian Staff	2	4	3	14
Winnipeg Grenadiers	6	8	12	42
Royal Rifles of Canada	6	8	4	41
5/7 Rajput Regt	6	4	7	17
2/14 Punjab Regt	3	—	5	15
Royal Corps of Signals	1	—	—	7
R A O C	3	2	1	15
R A S C	2	—	3	24
R A V C	—	—	—	2
R A M C	2	1	—	28
Royal Army Dental Corps	—	—	—	4
R. A P. C	—	—	—	5
Hong Kong Mule Corps	—	—	1	3
Indian Medical Services	—	1	—	5
H K V D C	13	6	13	89
	74	61	77	538

Total battle casualties 212

39.5 per cent.

British Other Ranks

Unit or Formation.	Killed or Died of Wounds.	Missing	Wounded.	Total Strength.
8 Coast Regt. R.A.	19	2	23	285
12 Coast Regt R A	15	2	24	200
5 A.A. Regt. R.A	16	11	10	231
1 Hong Kong Regt H K.S.R.A	2	2	10	30
965 Def. Bty R.A	2	4	8	58
22 Field Coy. R.E	8	20	9	213
40 Field Coy R.E.	2	7	1	220
R.E. Services	2	5	1	54
2 Royal Scots	96	45	188	734
1 Middlesex Regt.	94	25	110	728
Canadian Staff	6	10	5	78
Winnipeg Grenadiers	28	222	60	869
Royal Rifles of Canada	42	157	160	963
Royal Corps of Signals	16	5	14	177
R.A.O.C	13	26	4	117
R.A.S.C.	23	10	11	183
R.A.V.C.	2	—	—	3
R.A.M.C	13	3	3	146
Royal Army Dental Corps	—	—	—	6
R.A.P.C. ...	—	—	2	25
Military Provost Staff Corps	—	1	—	3
Corps of Military Police...	—	—	—	18
Army Education Corps	—	—	—	8
H.K.V.D.C	196	139	135	1,296
	595	696	778	6,645
Total battle casualties	2,069			31 per cent.

Indian Other Ranks

Unit or Formation.	Killed or Died of Wounds	Missing.	Wounded.	Total Strength.
8 Coast Regt. R.A	—	1	4	233
12 Coast Regt R A	3	—	3	187
5 A.A. Regt. R A	24	80	15	332
1 Hong Kong Regt H K S R.A.	144	45	103	830
965 Def. Bty. R A	2	—	4	86
5/7 Rajput Regt	150	109	186	875
2/14 Punjab Regt	52	69	156	932
R.I.A.S.C	—	—	1	13
Hong Kong Mule Corps	1	5	5	250
I M D and I H C	—	2	—	55
	376	311	477	3,893
Total battle casualties	1,164			30 per cent

NOTES

1 All figures are approximate as accurate information can only be obtained when the Casualty Bureau has all facts and figures

2 The wounded does not include lightly, or returned for duty, wounded The total wounded shown is 1,332 but A D M S states that 2,000 wounded men passed through our hospitals alone, and many of the wounded of the 5/7 Rajput Regt fell into Japanese hands and have not been recorded

The final figures will probably be approximately —

	Killed or Died of Wounds	Missing	Wounded.
Imperial Officers	74	61	}
Imperial Other Ranks	595	696	
Indian Other Ranks	376	311	
	1,045	1,068	2,300

3 It has been impossible to collect any reliable data regarding the casualties suffered by the 450 locally enlisted Chinese

4 Regarding Japanese casualties

A local paper reported a Memorial Service held at Kai Tak Aerodrome to 1,995 Japanese who fell in the attack on Hong Kong That figure is certain to be an under rather than an over statement.

A Japanese Medical Major told me early in January 1942, when I was appealing for assistance for my sick and wounded, that he had 9,000 wounded on his hands in Kowloon and on the Island.

Taking the wounded figure to be correct, and remembering that many must have been drowned on the assault on the Island, the averages of the last war should give about 3,000 and NOT 1,995 killed

The Japanese admitted in broadcasts and in conversation to me that they had suffered severe casualties. The Chinese have stated that 10,000 were killed, but this is undoubtedly an oriental exaggeration.

True figures will never be known, but from the above a fair estimate can be made —

Killed	3,000
Wounded	9,000
Total	12,000

And many of the latter died of their wounds, for funeral pyres near their hospitals were observed regularly for some months.

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