

**NOT THE
SLIGHTEST
CHANCE**

THE DEFENCE OF HONG KONG, 1941

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HKU

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Introduction

Not the Slightest Chance is focused on a single month of Hong Kong's short but exotic history — December 1941. The hundredth anniversary of the Crown Colony, this was also the moment when its ownership changed hands for the second of three times in its history.

This work has three aims. The first is to bring together into one volume the salient points of all known accounts of the eighteen-day battle between the Japanese invaders and Hong Kong's garrison, so that the various different versions of the story can be compared and — hopefully — reconciled into a single comprehensive narrative.

The second aim is to establish (so far as it is possible after some sixty years) the exact fates of each of the approximately 1,600 men and women killed in action on the allied side during the battle.¹

Lastly, through the medium of the World Wide Web, a companion site contains the first serious attempt yet made to put together a man-by-man, woman-by-woman listing of the 14,000 or so personnel of this isolated garrison as it stood on the day of invasion, 8 December 1941.

For the story, I have examined almost all known published sources, and all the unpublished sources that I could gain access to. There are many agreements in these documents about events, but many disagreements about times and dates. Even in those cases where all secondary sources agree on a date and time, it is often simply because they all rely on a single source document which may itself have been

written post-war, and whose precision is therefore also questionable. The reconciliation has been attempted by researching all versions of the story, and checking them against movements of forces and personnel. Walking the area where the fighting took place has in turn supported this. As a final check, the accounts have been correlated against the records of deaths at the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, and admission records of the various Hong Kong hospitals.

As an attempt to cover all units equally, this book has been limited by the available documentation. The 2,000 Canadians who joined the garrison just weeks before the invasion are covered in great (though often questionable) detail in many recent works. Coverage of the British units varies from good for the two infantry battalions, through poor for the many supporting units. Documentation on the Indian units — by nationality, the biggest component of the garrison — is almost entirely missing. This cannot help but cause inequalities in the amount of text dedicated to each component of the garrison.

While this book is focused purely on those who actually fought and died during December 1941, this is not the full story. The survivors still had nearly four years of war in front of them. Without a doubt the most unpleasant document I consulted during this research was that entitled 'List of Patients Unlikely to Recover Before 12 Months' (145). It had been laboriously typed in early 1942 on the paper of a long-forgotten Dutch Company, and listed in detail the wounds of men who had been ripped apart by flying fragments of steel slicing into their bodies, and tearing through them quite indiscriminately. No other document exposed modern warfare for what it is quite so viscerally. Many of these men, of course, died of their wounds in the Prisoner of War camps later, and many more died of mistreatment, disease, starvation, or drowning on their way to camps in other countries. For example, of the 144 officers and men of the 8th Coast Regiment Royal Artillery who died before the final Japanese surrender, only fourteen had actually been killed in action in Hong Kong. *Not the Slightest Chance* is just the beginning.

Readers interested in the fatalities listed for each day should note that the details of the deaths are taken, unless stated otherwise, from the records of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC). Those entries followed by a date in square brackets indicate that the date under which the death is listed here is derived from researches for this book, and contradicts the records of the CWGC; the date ascribed by the CWGC is that in square brackets. Occasionally, if a date of death is uncertain, the CWGC may ascribe a range of possibilities, such as 19/25 December.

1

The Background

HONG KONG, 1841–1941

As an island and tiny peninsula on the south coast of China, Hong Kong's one and only asset in the middle of the nineteenth century was the remarkable deep-water harbour for which the 'Fragrant Harbour' was named. It was just what the British needed, as Guangzhou — at that time the only Chinese port at which trade with foreigners was permitted — was a little further up the Pearl Estuary, and they were looking for a good harbour on its doorstep as a staging post for their latest 'merchandise'. This ever-exotic colony was founded on the opium trade

By Britain's military might in the region, China was compelled to sign the extremely one-sided Convention of Chuanbi, which — among other concessions — granted the island of Hong Kong to the British. Despite the British Government disagreeing with the document, the local British commander sent a certain Captain Edward Belcher to lay claim to the island with his ship, *HMS Sulphur*.

As he raised the Union Flag on 25 January 1841, he surveyed a largely 'barren rock' on which an estimated 7,450 Chinese villagers and fishermen lived. He could never have imagined that the establishment of the harbour as a naval base was to be the cause of the Colony's undoing one hundred years later.

While the British Government was slow to recognise the value of their new colony, traders were swift. Within a month, Matheson — soon to be a well-known local name — put up a matshed godown on the middle of the shoreline below present-day Flagstaff House. It was soon converted to stone, which was fortunate as the Colony's first typhoon struck on 21 July and flattened most of the nascent town. Typhoons, plagues, and fires would regularly punctuate the island's history.

Hong Kong grew up as a haphazard settlement, perched on an uncomfortable narrow strip of relatively flat land between the hills and the sea, and administered by sometimes incompetent officials who were often out of their depth. Disease was rife, with the first Colonial Surgeon himself dying within a year, and his successor surviving just eight months. Despite this, by November 1844, there was a population of some 20,000 Chinese and a few hundred British. Growth continued, with the population more than doubling between 1853 and 1859, and reclamation of land from the sea — another recurring theme for Hong Kong — began. As part of this expansion, on 26 March 1860, the area south of a line (today's Boundary Street) drawn between Kowloon Fort and a point opposite Stonecutters Island was granted to Britain in perpetuity.

By 1865 — just twenty-four years after the Colony's founding — the population, a mixture of Chinese, Indians, and Europeans, had grown to 125,504. Four years later, Hong Kong was considered important enough for a royal visit, and the Duke of Edinburgh arrived on HMS *Galatea*.¹ Growth of commerce in Hong Kong thereafter was rapid. In 1876 there were 142 brokers, 215 hong, and 67 marine compradors. By 1881 the figures were 455, 293, and 113 respectively, and the population topped 160,000 for the first time. The terrible typhoon of 1874, the great fire of Christmas night 1878, and the constant outbreaks of cholera and malaria did nothing to stop the population growth.

On 2 May 1888, the Peak Tramway opened and paved the way for the population of the Peak by affluent Europeans who had previously lived in Mid-Levels. Two years later, electric lamps superseded the civic gas lighting that had been progressively installed since 1865, and in 1891 Hong Kong celebrated fifty years as a British Colony. By this time it was an island of great prosperity, admirably positioned to exploit the combined strengths of the British and Chinese in commerce. No one would have guessed what another fifty years would bring.

However, the Colony was severely shaken by an outbreak of bubonic

plague in 1894. The causes were not understood at the time, and attempts to bring the disease under control through destroying buildings in the affected areas were of uncertain effectiveness. Finally, cold weather brought it to an end — but not before 2,500 had died and another 80,000 fled.

On 9 June 1898, China and Britain — not realising that this was to morph into the Colony's eventual death warrant — signed documents ceding the New Territories to the Colony for 99 years, primarily to better enable defence in the event of an attack from the Mainland. The approximately 100,000 Chinese inhabitants of the area (who had of course not been consulted) formed small bands and attacked British positions, leading to an armed confrontation with the militia — the Volunteers — near Kam Tin on 17 April 1899.

By the beginning of the twentieth century, commerce was already dominated by Chinese merchants. By 1900, some 41 per cent of the trade with China passed through Hong Kong. However, the international political situation was beginning to affect the Colony. In January 1902, Britain and Japan signed the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, and two years later Japan attacked Russia, sank its fleet, and emerged as the dominant power in the Far East.

Typhoon, turbulence, and terror struck, with the great storm of 18 September 1906 leaving 10,000 dead, the Chinese revolution of 1911 producing yet another stream of refugees, and an assassination attempt on Governor Sir Henry May at Blake's Pier in 1912.

The Colony was not greatly affected by the First World War, though they had their own tragedy in February 1918 when a fire at the Happy Valley racecourse killed about 600 spectators. By this time the population was an estimated 561,000.

In 1919, following an increase in the price of rice, an organised workforce of local Chinese asked for a 40 per cent pay rise. European intransigence provoked an all-out strike, not settled until the employers grudgingly offered 32.5 per cent. The old balance of power was changing, and a general strike in 1922 led to a longer dispute and boycott of British goods in 1925–6. The Colony was slow to recover financially, and by the time the recession of 1931 struck, the Hong Kong dollar — which had been valued at over five shillings in 1919 — was worth less than one.

Fortunately, these problems coincided with the 1925 appointment of arguably Hong Kong's most intelligent Governor, Sir Cecil Clementi. Fluent in spoken and written Chinese, he was a practised diplomat and

instigated a wide range of improvements, from slum clearances and the foundation of the Queen Mary Hospital to the building of the Shing Mun reservoir and the formation of the Hong Kong Flying Club (in 1929). While the latter point may seem minor, by 1938 Kai Tak was handling almost 10,000 passengers.²

However, by now the rise of Japanese power was a cause for concern in the Colony. Singapore, Hong Kong, and Hawaii were preparing for war. The Sino-Japanese war had begun on 7 July 1937, and within a year Beijing,³ Nanjing, and Shanghai had fallen. In October 1938, 30,000 Japanese troops landed at Bias Bay, just 24 kilometres north-east of Hong Kong. Within two weeks of landing, they had captured Guangzhou. Thousands of refugees fled to Hong Kong — a quarter of a million in the twelve months ending July 1938 alone — and the camps opened to house them were soon to house British and Commonwealth POWs. By December 1938, the total population was estimated at 997,982.

The border became a flashpoint, and Japanese cross-border incursions intensified, culminating in the bombing of Lo Wu in February 1939. In June 1940, the Hong Kong Government suddenly announced the compulsory evacuation of European women and children, and by August, 3,474 had left for Australia.⁴ In July, conscription had been introduced.⁵

Many aircraft were fired upon; Japanese fighters shot down one DC2 of China National Aviation Corporation just after leaving Kai Tak, and on 27 September 1940 — some three weeks after all schools for British children had been closed — an RAF *Vildebeeste* was attacked. Hong Kong's defences were steadily improved meanwhile, with the rebuilding of the Gin Drinkers Line defences in the New Territories, the construction of massive air raid shelters, and fortification of the north shore of the Island. However, the Washington Treaty of 1922, in an attempt to balance the Pacific powers of the USA, Great Britain, and Japan, forbade strengthening the fortifications of any base east of the 110th meridian. Hong Kong's major defences were therefore 'fossilised' in their largely seaward-facing state.⁶

Refugees continued to arrive, with a March 1941 census giving a total of 1,444,337 people in the urban areas, and an estimated further 200,000 in the New Territories.

By mid-year it was clear that war was coming. In October, the Americans placed an embargo on their citizens trading with Japan, and in November the Hong Kong Government issued a circular to the population giving advice in case of attack. That same month, two new

Canadian battalions arrived to bolster the garrison. The strategic locations in the east had been reinforced as far as the fighting in Europe would allow, and everyone settled down to wait.

By late 1941, Hong Kong, still the peaceful and successful trading port that it had been since inception, was celebrating its hundredth birthday.⁷ It was an uneasy celebration. With the Japanese forces just over the border, and the number of cross-border incidents flaring, everyone knew that peace could not last much longer.

THE CAUSES OF THE WAR

By 1941, war with Japan had become inevitable. In the nineteenth century, with the re-establishment of intercourse between Japan and the West, the Japanese had realised the extent of their technical and organisational inferiority. Immediately — and successfully — they set about a programme to reduce this gap, using the dominant European colonial powers as their models.

The brilliance of their achievement was crowned by Japan being both recognised as an ally of the British, and defeating Russia in war, in the first five years of the twentieth century. However, Japan was not recognised as an equal. The Treaties of Washington in 1922 made concessions to Japan by restricting British and American fortifications in the Pacific, but balanced these by setting a ratio of 5:5:3 in capital ships for America, Britain, and Japan respectively.

This was interpreted as a denial of Japan's status as a 'Great Power'. In the 1930s, reactionary and militant forces gained the upper hand in Tokyo. Soon these elements were actively pressing for greater Japanese expansionism, beyond Korea and Taiwan to China and South-East Asia.

In 1931, Japan attacked Manchuria, and established the puppet state of Manchuguo under Pu Yi, 'The Last Emperor'. Japanese troops were landed at Shanghai in 1932, and the Japanese Government's reaction to censure by the League of Nations was to withdraw from that organisation the following year — the year in which they also withdrew from the naval limitation treaties. Japan's argument that there could be no stability in east Asia except under their leadership was threatened by Chiang Kai Shek's success in uniting China.

Japan then (in 1937) staged the infamous Marco Polo Bridge incident, south of Beijing. On the pretext that they had been attacked,

they demanded the withdrawal of Chinese forces. The Chinese refused, and the invasion of China began. The Chinese Government fled to Chungking in the western part of the country, and one by one, starting in the east, the other cities fell. Nanjing was the scene of horrific atrocities, the films of which gave Western cinemagoers in Hong Kong and Singapore much food for thought. In 1938, Guangzhou fell and there was nothing to stop the Japanese from coming south to Hong Kong.

The year 1939 saw the Yangtze and Pearl Rivers being closed in the face of American and British protests. In Japan the decision was already all but taken — they would pre-emptively strike at the existing powers, and present them with a *fait accompli* that they believed would have to be accepted.

The basic philosophy of the Japanese at the time seemed to be that if there were to be colonialists in Asia, they should be Asian colonialists. However, to fuel — literally — their planned domination of the area, they would need to take the natural resources of South-East Asia. Knowing that the European powers, together with America, would not stand idly by (and certainly would no longer provide them with oil), the Japanese carefully planned a numbing blow that would destroy Western naval power and bases in one move. The oil they needed so desperately was available in Indonesia, but the sea-lanes from there to Japan were long and vulnerable. The only way to protect them was to destroy the enemy naval assets first.

In June of 1941, Hitler attacked Japan's old enemy, Russia. With Russia at war on her western borders, Japan felt safe from attack, and by July had made the decision to advance south. By this time, Japanese-American negotiations had reached crisis point. America was demanding that Japan leave China, but Japan regarded this as an impossibility. The Japanese continued their preparations for a simultaneous pre-emptive strike on the Anglo-American naval bases of Manila, Singapore, Wake, Hong Kong, and Pearl Harbour.

In this context we can now understand that whether Hong Kong had been garrisoned by four, six, or even twelve battalions, the Japanese strategy would have been unaffected. Had the Colony been strengthened further, the Japanese would simply have been forced to employ a larger force in their attack. Hong Kong — a major enemy naval harbour — had to be eliminated. With Hong Kong and Manila (the two guardians of the South China Sea) in their hands, Japan's supply of oil would be protected.

On 6 November 1941, the Japanese Imperial Headquarters ordered the China Expeditionary Army to prepare to attack Hong Kong on the understanding that participation in the attack must not imperil the security of the zones already occupied. They were ordered to assemble at Shen Chuan, and to start operations immediately after those in Malaya.

Objective: Neutralise air power and destroy vessels and installations.
Method: after crossing the border, occupy Tai Mo Shan and press forward to the line running east to west beyond the hill. After forcing that line and occupying Kowloon, the main attack would be on the north shore of Hong Kong Island, but preparations should be made to land a detachment on the southern beaches to lead the defenders to believe an attack would be made there. (123)

9

Conclusion

Post-war, the Battle of Hong Kong was largely forgotten about. In British eyes, the fall of Hong Kong had been overshadowed by many greater tragedies closer to home. Hong Kong people themselves either wanted to put the whole experience behind them, or simply had little time for history in the struggle to survive as China went through its upheavals of civil war and communism. For the Indians, the pain of partition in the wake of British withdrawal dominated the immediate post-war period.

In the mid-1950s, the first general account of the fighting was written by Stewart of 3 Company, HKVDC (3). This had a cathartic effect on many survivors, who needed some sort of recognition of what had happened. Within the next decade, popular works by Luff (91) and Carew (94) appeared, and at last the battle was on the historical radar.

The books that appeared later fell into two main groups: biographies or general histories. Neither ever produced truly comprehensive accounts. The former, by definition, were accounts from a single viewpoint, and the latter were generally based on the same timelines (either that of Maltby's despatch or Stewart's work) fleshed out with interviews. If the book was written in the UK, the interviews were naturally generally with British survivors; if written in Canada, they were generally Canadian. Again, neither was likely to give a comprehensive view.

In the 1980s and 1990s, however, the vast majority of new books to

have been written on the subject were Canadian. The majority of these works make almost no mention of any units other than the Winnipeg Grenadiers and the Royal Rifles.

The task of this book, therefore, was primarily to pull together the information in all previous works, reconcile them, and fill in the gaps. With a garrison of only 14,000 defenders, it has been possible to do this — at least in part — at the level of the individual. Completed early in 2002, this is surely one of the last books to be written about the battle with the help of those who were there.

In summary of that battle, General Maltby had been given an impossible task. He was charged with defending a small isolated island, without armour or sea and air cover, against a numerically superior and battle-hardened enemy.

That they held out at all, let alone for eighteen days, is remarkable. Churchill's wish to make invasion as hard as possible for the Japanese — which in the greater scheme of things was an integral part of his eventually successful strategy — was granted. And yet the cost was horrendous.

When I first started this work, in 1990, I came across the documents mentioned in the introduction: 'List of Patients Unlikely to Recover Before 12 Months', and 'List of Patients Unlikely to Become Fit Enough for Further Military Service' (145). At that time the Hong Kong PRO was in Central — in a building now entirely occupied by the Independent Commission against Corruption — and the documents were the crumbling originals. The sense of immediacy I felt as I held them is hard to describe.

In April 2000, I came across those documents again, but this time in the PRO's new purpose-built Kwun Tong offices. They had all been photocopied and bound together in a single 200-page document. Immediacy had given way to convenience, but the content was unchanged. Here are one or two examples from each major unit involved:

Warrant Officer Easterbrook, RN	Peripheral neuritis
Able Seaman Smith, RN	Low wound with faecal fistula
Corporal Green, W. Grenadiers	Shell wound — perineum & rectum
Private Anderson, W. Grenadiers	Great emaciation: fractured tibia
Rifleman Sweetman, Royal Rifles	Depressed fracture of skull

Rifleman Steeves, Royal Rifles	Fractured radius with great loss of tissue and fractured tibia and fibula
Company Sergeant Major Tarrant, RASC	Paralysis — arms and legs
Private Marshall, HKVDC	Haemothorax: general debility
Lance Corporal Long, HKVDC	Amputation of leg
Private Canivet, RCOC	Ununited fracture of humerus; fracture of mandible and general debility
Sapper Moore, RE	Shell wound — left arm: spinal nerve injury
Sapper Stevens, RE	Gun shot wounds — spine
Private Bickley, RAMC	Blinded: both eyes removed
Private Barrett, Middlesex	Loss of patella: stiff knee
Private Wiggins, Middlesex	Amputation of leg
Lance Bombardier Palmer, RA	Multiple wounds — amputation of leg
Gunner Woodfin, RA	Fractured left arm; nerve injury right arm
Signaller Spendelow	Amputation — thigh
Signaller Bates	Shell wounds — shoulder; glenoid cavity
Lieutenant Thompson, RAF	Gun shot wound — neck
Lieutenant Gilmore, Punjabis	Compound fracture of skull
Private Crichton, Royal Scots	Haemothorax; wounds of back; fractured ribs
Private McKay, Royal Scots	Shell wounds — shoulder; paralysis right arm

The last words of this book were written by someone who was there at the time, Inspector Fred Kelly of the Hong Kong Police Force, in a diary he started in January 1942 in Stanley internment camp as a long — and personal — letter to his wife:

All the time we knew, or at least I did, that we were fighting a losing battle. It was so different to what I'd expected. We didn't stand a chance. (141)

Notes

INTRODUCTION

- 1 When numbers of 'killed in action' are mentioned in this work, they include those posted missing who were later declared dead. The uncertainty of the exact number is due to two main factors: firstly, some but not all of the civilians whose deaths are recorded during the fighting appear to have been involved in war-related activities. Secondly, dates of death of members of the Order of St John who lost their lives during the war years in Hong Kong are not recorded; therefore only estimations can be made of the numbers killed in December 1941.

1. THE BACKGROUND

- 1 In a bizarre coincidence, the wartime cruiser HMS *Galatea* was sunk off Alexandria with horrendous loss of life on 15 December 1941, while Hong Kong itself was being bombed and shelled during the lull between the Japanese capture of Kowloon and invasion of Hong Kong Island.
- 2 Kai Tak was Hong Kong's main airport until replaced by today's Chek Lap Kok in 1998. Pre-war it housed the RAF, FAA, and HKVDC Air Unit, as well as civilian aircraft.
- 3 Modern spellings of Chinese names are used throughout.
- 4 Many women — and their husbands — objected vocally to this evacuation.

- Some women joined the essential services to avoid it; others found ways to return to the colony. All these paid the price of internment.
- 5 Thus a significant number of the Hong Kong Volunteer Defence Corps were in fact conscripts.
 - 6 They were built to prevent enemy vessels entering the harbour. However, the majority of guns were able to fire against land targets as well as sea.
 - 7 To put this in its historical context, the retirement of Hugh Dowding — architect of victory in the Battle of Britain — was gazetted on 1 October 1941. This was two months before the Japanese invasion, but a full year after the famous battle had been won over the skies of London.

2. THE BATTLE

- 1 The size of the garrison depends entirely on who is counted. The total of regular servicemen and women of the army, navy, and air force, plus HKVDC and HKRNVR, comes to a little over 12,000. However, if the Hong Kong Police, the Royal Naval Dockyard Police, the HKDDC, and civilians in the employ of the services are included, the total is closer to 14,000.
- 2 A British battalion generally consisted of four companies (comprising a total of sixteen platoons) with a staffing of 30 officers and 992 other ranks. It will be readily appreciated that through disease (malaria and VD to the forefront) and attrition, all Hong Kong's four original garrison battalions were under strength.
- 3 The 5th Battalion of the 7th Rajput Regiment.
- 4 Irresponsible TV journalism in 1990s Canada has suggested that the posting of these two battalions to Hong Kong a month before the fighting started was a British idea. It was not. The idea was that of General Grasett, whom Maltby replaced in July 1941. Grasett, himself a Canadian, lectured the Chiefs of Staff in London, and persuaded them in turn to persuade Churchill to overrule his previous directive that Hong Kong should not be reinforced. The Chiefs of Staff's memorandum to Churchill read, in part: 'The Chiefs of Staff heard an interesting account on the present situation in Hong Kong from General Grasett . . . He pointed out the great advantages to be derived from the addition of one or two battalions and suggested that these might be supplied by Canada' (10 September 1941, PRO WO 106/2409). We now know that with the Japanese strategy being what it was, even 'if all their officers had been Napoleons and all their men veterans of the Guard' (24: 215), the defenders could not have affected the issue. As Churchill himself had said on 7 January 1941, 'whether there are two or six battalions in Hong Kong will make no difference to [Japan's decision on whether or not to attack Britain]'. However, the British were perfectly capable of making worse decisions unaided, as witnessed by the debacle — on a far larger scale — at Singapore.

- 5 This book attempts to leave an audit trail wherever possible for future historians. The first number in parentheses refers to the quoted document, the second — where relevant — to the page. The key is in the bibliography. However, it is not unusual for a description of a particular event to be synthesized from several sources, which may agree on some points but disagree on others. In this case, normally only the most influential source is quoted — despite the fact that the final text may not fully agree with it.
- 6 The background to this change was not understood by all parties. The Winnipeg Grenadier War Diary reads: ‘The possibility of an attack coming from the Japanese occupied territory to the North of Kowloon on the mainland was not apparently given any serious consideration until just prior to the outbreak of war’ (155).
- 7 Wallis was a determined soldier who wore a dark monocle over his left eye (which he had lost in the First World War, in which he had also gained an MC). He had been a trooper in the Royal Horse Guards in 1914, and had transferred to the Indian army in 1917.
- 8 The senior Canadian officer, Lawson was a career soldier who had won the MC at Passchendaele in the First World War.
- 9 The site of which is now occupied by the Central Building on Pedder Street.
- 10 Drummond Hunter states: ‘As Battalion Intelligence Officer [Royal Scots], I had observed troopships crowding into Mirs Bay on the China coast on [the] Wednesday or Thursday, and had alerted my superiors’ (132b: Hunter).
- 11 Some works on the subject erroneously use the term HKVDF (Hong Kong Volunteer Defence Force). In fact the HKVDC remained a ‘Corps’ until a post-war name change on the first of March 1949, to the Hong Kong Defence Force (which effectively amalgamated the HKVDC, HKRNVR, and the HKAAF). A further name change was approved by His Majesty the King on the 1 May 1951, to the ‘Royal Hong Kong Defence Force’.
- 12 Disbanded on the outbreak of war, the Mobile Column under Major H. G. Williams comprised two arms; the Armoured Car Platoon under Carruthers (which was retained as an integral unit) and the Motor Machine Gun Platoon under Captain John Way and Lieutenant Bill Stoker. Personnel from the latter unit generally fought with 2 Coy. HKVDC, although their BSA motorcycle combinations with Vickers guns, and the Bren carriers, were used by other personnel.
- 13 ‘The strength of the division which later landed on the Island was given by the infantry commander, Lieutenant General (then Major General) Ito Takeo as rather more than 20,000 men, and we can assume that the total Japanese force was about 60,000 men’ (3: 7). Although 20,000 may be the total Japanese force to land, far fewer (perhaps 7,000) were actively involved in the fighting. The figure of 60,000 refers to the entire 23rd Army.
- 14 Mabel’s daughter Barbara Anslow tells me that she and her sisters recently published their mother’s memoirs under the title *It Was Like This*.

- 15 Japanese Army Operations in China, December 1941, reprinted as Appendix 6 of (44).
- 16 Compton Mackenzie, in (24: 188), puts forward the interesting idea that, as the Canadian battalions were new to Hong Kong and would have been starting from scratch wherever they were posted, they should have been put on the Gin Drinkers Line while the four original battalions stayed on the island in the positions for the defence of which they had been trained. Hunter of the Royal Scots states: '[As to Golden Hill], after 2 years preparing to defend Hong Kong, I had never been on this piece of ground before' (132b: Hunter).
- 17 One troop of the HK Mule Corps, under Hancock, was attached to the Rajputs.
- 18 The Hong Kong and Singapore Royal Artillery positions, both Mainland and Island, were as follows: the RA Mainland HQ was at the north end of Waterloo Road. The RA East Group was at Tai Tam Gap, and the RA West Group was at Wan Chai Gap. The 1st Mountain Battery held its 3.7-inch guns at Customs Pass, and split its 4.5-inch guns with two at Red Hill and two at the Sanatorium. The 2nd Mountain Battery had two of its 3.7-inch guns forward at Tai Wai and two at Main Filters. Of its 4.5-inch guns, two were forward at Tai Wai, and two at Main Filters also. The 25th Medium Battery had two guns forward and two at Main Polo. The 3rd Medium Battery maintained two guns at Mount Parker and two more at Sai Wan. Finally, the 4th Medium Battery had two guns at Mount Gough and two at Mount Austin.
- 19 Some recent works have criticized the level of intelligence reaching Maltby, and the use he made of it. However, it is interesting to note that — unlike the Americans at Pearl Harbour — Maltby was expecting the attack and had made all preparations almost 24 hours before the Japanese were ordered forward.
- 20 Known as Wong Nei Chong Gap in 1941.

3. PHASE I: THE LOSS OF THE MAINLAND

- 1 (134) 1 October 1957. This was intended to be a secret interview, but was released to the public relatively recently.
- 2 Cuthbertson.
- 3 Burn.
- 4 Probably Lt. George William Bowes, who died as a POW in Japan, 4 March 1943.
- 5 Presumably Maj. Leighton William Walker, who became second in command after Burn's suicide. Doodery he may have been, but he is said to have died in heroic circumstances after leaving the sinking *Lisbon Maru* on 2 October 1942.

The *Lisbon Maru* was a Japanese ship that, in the late summer of 1942, was ordered to take POWs from Hong Kong to camps in Japan. On the night of 1 October, it was torpedoed by an American submarine (USS *Grouper* under Lt. Com. Rob Roy McGregor) with great loss of life. It is worth remembering that by the end of the war, 19,000 allied POWs had lost their lives on these transportations.

- 6 Bill Bethell viewed the arrival of war through a twelve-year-old's eyes. Son of policeman A95, he was to be interned at Stanley Camp. Liberated when he was sixteen, he returned to the UK with his family, to revisit Hong Kong for the first time in 2001. This excerpt is from an interview carried out by the author for TVB Pearl's documentaries of December 2001, *War and Occupation* (169).
- 7 The Battle Box from which the defence of Hong Kong was managed was near the site of today's British Consulate. The bunker was deep underground. Constructed in 1937, it was reached by thirteen flights of 102 steps in total.
- 8 The delaying actions of Wallis's mainland brigade give early clues to his character. The Gin Drinkers Line was already manned (or, to be fair, as manned as it was ever going to be), so delaying the Japanese approach (ignoring the casualties imposed) had no strategic value. On this first day of the fighting (as he will on the last), Wallis shows that he is fighting not to win, but to delay the Japanese victory as long as possible as per Churchill's orders. As Compton Mackenzie says (24: 192): 'It was expected that the Mainland Brigade would hold this line for at least a week or ten days; what advantage would have accrued to Hong Kong itself if this dream had been fulfilled is not apparent.'
- 9 As this incident was recorded by Selwyn-Clarke, it is almost certain to be factual. However, it has not been possible to trace the name of the deceased.
- 10 This was presumably 2nd Lt. C. B. Burgess of 12 Coastal Regt. RA.
- 11 Argyle Street and North Point camps, both later POW camps, originally housed refugees from the Sino-Japanese war.
- 12 The exact position of the boom was presumably across the Tathong Channel (Lam Tong Hoi Hap), the main seaway leading into Hong Kong harbour. It is visible on surviving cine film from the immediate pre-war period.
- 13 Located at the corner of Gloucester Road and Arsenal Street, it was knocked down in 1982. The site was rebuilt as Fleet House and in 2001 this building is known as Mass Mutual Tower.
- 14 Two platoons of 3 Coy. were sent to Stonecutters, from which they were withdrawn to Wong Nai Chung Gap on 12 December Holmes's platoon however, was at North Point, and joined the others at Wong Nai Chung on 15 December (133).
- 15 Before leaving Stonecutters, 3 Coy. were to break into the armoury there and take a quantity of Thompson sub-machine guns. These were to prove effective in Wong Nai Chung Gap (79: 227).

- 16 Lok Lo Ha was a village near the road and railway some two miles north-west of Sha Tin, and the Pai Tau valley was a village area across from the railway station. Presumably both were consumed by the post-war growth of Sha Tin.
- 17 All such Royal Artillery entries are from (93: 171) to (93: 174), though the original data can be found in WO 172/1687.
- 18 Boxer's mistress, and post-war second wife, was the colourful Emily Hahn. Their daughter, Carola, was born eight weeks before the Japanese invasion (48). Boxer himself was an amazing character. His father, like so many, disappeared on the western front in 1915. His mother committed suicide in 1930. Boxer, incredibly, served two years in the Japanese 38th infantry regiment pre-war (67). He passed away in April 2000. The *Guardian* foolishly published a scurrilous article about him in 2001.
- 19 The Precautionary Period was in fact never declared. See (20: 11).
- 20 In other records, 'dawn' is often given as a time stamp. For the purposes of this document, dawn is translated to a reasonably accurate 07.00.
- 21 The Walrus, or 'Shagbat', was Reginald Mitchel's last design before he started on his masterpiece, the Supermarine Spitfire.
- 22 The two other Vildebeestes were destroyed by the RAF later. It is interesting, however, to note Maltby's comment: 'I had at no time contemplated the serious use of obsolete 100 mph aircraft which would have been shot down immediately by modern fighters' (20: 8). A verse by Varcoe expresses the garrison's lack of confidence in these elderly aircraft:

Brave R.A.F., none understands
How you survived the weather;
The termites in the wings joined hands
To hold the things together! (69: 20)
- 23 In (54: 13), Marsman claims that the takeoff of this flight was delayed by his late departure from his hotel. Had he been on time, it would have taken off at 08.00, just as the Japanese aircraft arrived over its mooring.
- 24 Men of the Air Unit fought as ordinary infantry, mainly with No. 1 Coy. However, earlier in the war many had volunteered for RAF duties in the UK. See Appendix 12.
- 25 These were Sgt. Routledge and Signalman Fairley. Fairley died in Bowen Road Hospital on the 22nd, but Routledge survived and was later decorated for bravery in camp. These two were the first Canadian infantrymen to be wounded in battle in the Second World War. The Jubilee Buildings where they were based was an accommodation block situated beside the sea wall of the camp's waterfront. (131) claims that three British Royal Engineers were also killed in this attack.
- 26 Lt. Andrews of the Field Company Engineers recalls: 'We had earlier prepared these bore holes. One of them was in a railway cutting and we had had to make a tunnel into the sandstone some 3 feet high, 2–3 feet wide and 12–

- 14 feet long. Because of the heat we could only work for some 15 minutes at a time and the work took several days. That confined space petrified me' (from a letter supplied by his son-in-law, Dr A. E. Dormer). At time of writing (2002), Andrews — whose father lost his life in the Boer War — is still with us at the ripe old age of 102.
- 27 This was about a mile north-west of Tai Po, near the present Hong Lok Yuen Estate.
- 28 The HKRNVR were responsible for a number of regular standing patrols around the Colony.
- 29 Presumably Lt. J. W. Eastman HKRNVR.
- 30 Japanese figures do not provide an accurate breakdown of their mainland casualties, or any other. These figures seem a little on the high side. See also the entry for 18.30, for which the same comment holds.
- 31 Eight MTBs comprised the 2nd MTB flotilla. Six were built by Scott-Paine, and two were the older Thorneycroft type. The flotilla was commanded by Lt. Cdr. G. H. Gandy RN (Rtd.). They were based at the Kowloon Naval Yard MTB Camber, where the torpedo workshops, torpedo store, and engine workshop for running repairs were situated, together with the flotilla office and crews' and maintenance staff's shore accommodation. The officers lived in nearby boarding houses.
- 32 Appendix 4 lists the pilots involved in this operation.
- 33 Two-gun Cohen, who rose from a background of petty crime in London's east end to become a Chinese general, was one of Hong Kong's more colourful characters of the time.
- 34 This is today the site of the Chinese University.
- 35 On the night of 26 January 1942, *Thanet* was dispatched from Singapore along with the ageing Australian destroyer HMAS *Vampire*. Their mission was to head up the east coast of Malaya to attack a Japanese force consisting of two transports, a cruiser, and four escorting destroyers at Endau. Initially contact was not made. However, in the early hours of 27 January, the two vessels engaged a force of three modern Japanese destroyers. *Thanet* came under heavy fire, and was sunk following hits to her engine room. *Vampire*, after trying to cover *Thanet* with smoke, was forced to withdraw from the area. *Thanet* had fewer than sixty survivors. By coincidence, 100 Squadron (parent of the *Vildebeestes* at Hong Kong) went into attack in the same action, attacking the Japanese landing forces at Endau on the 26th. They lost the commanding officer and more than half their *Vildebeestes* in the process, and the remaining aircraft were lost in later actions.
- 36 MacDonald, who had shared drinks with Boxer and Hahn the previous night (67: 221), wrote an article on his experiences in *The Times*.
- 37 The Commonwealth War Graves Commission has many records of death dated 8 December. In all cases bar Price there is evidence that these fatalities actually occurred later in the fighting. The fact that Price died in hospital in

- Kowloon does indicate that he indeed died before the withdrawal to the Island (12/13 December), but it has not yet been possible to uncover any further details. He may, of course, have died of disease (there is a background noise of natural or accidental death in every garrison). However, the fact that he was an engineer makes it feasible that he was involved in the delaying actions of this day.
- 38 The documents referred to as (126) are internal files of the CWGC, collated during the period 1945–55. Their vintage must be borne in mind as in many cases there have been updates to our understanding since.
- 39 The date of 1 December is clearly wrong. Although there are no guarantees, it is possible — though not certain — that Wong was the unnamed *Cornflower* sailor killed on *Indira*. The ‘bombing’ note tends to support this.
- 40 Lt. Ralph Stephenson RNVR was second-in-command of APV *Minnie* acting in a minesweeping role. He survived unhurt until receiving a flesh wound late in the fighting while acting as an infantryman (132b: Stephenson).
- 41 Lo Wai was in the Lung Yeuk Tau district north-east of the Fan Ling crossroads. The correct name is Lung Kwat Tau.
- 42 (134) largely blames the loss of the Redoubt on Jones’s failure to implement the patrols specified by White. Specifically the one that should have taken place: ‘At about one hour after dark to South and South-West slopes of Needle Hill and the Shing Mun valley making contact with D Company 5/7 Rajput.’
- 43 Wo Liu Hang was a small village in the Fo Tan valley.
- 44 A ‘predicted shoot’ is one based on calculation only, rather than the alternative of observing and adjusting.
- 45 (134) describes the weather as ‘Dark, slight rain and ground mist’.
- 46 (134) points out that had this patrol taken the route ordered by White, it would have detected the Japanese massing for the attack.
- 47 Z Force was a special unit of the HKVDC attached to SOE in Singapore. Its HQ was a bungalow at the Shing Mun reservoir. However, the previous night the entire nine-man force (plus an unidentified Chinese gentleman) had moved to their secret depot — a natural cave some 1,800 feet up Tai Mo Shan.
- 48 Parsons’s brother T. M. was in the HKRNVR and captained MTB 27. Their father, Capt. T. R. Parsons, was also in the HKVDC.
- 49 The runner (Pvt. Wylie, Royal Scots) locked the ‘grille gate’ behind him as he left, thus leaving all those inside with no exit apart from the upper grill (134).
- 50 Basnett died of dysentery and was originally buried in Argyle Street cemetery on 19 April 1942. His brothers Leslie and Robert were also killed during the war. Leslie was in the King’s Own Royal Regiment and died on 14 July 1943. He is buried in Poland. Robert was in the Royal Corps of Signals and died on 15 September 1943. He is buried at Kanchanaburi, Thailand.
- 51 Coyle died in Japan on 7 March 1944. Oddly, he was recorded as belonging to C, rather than A, Company.

- 52 Wounded in the throat, Jardine crawled out of the redoubt and was rescued by L/Cpl Cook of 17 Platoon D Coy. Royal Scots (92: 101).
- 53 Interestingly, at about 01.00, Kendall of Z Force made his way through Japanese lines and contacted Bankier to learn the true state of affairs of the redoubt (134).
- 54 ‘This Royal Scots party must have left their posts almost immediately on the arrival of the Japanese’ (134).
- 55 The Shing Mun Redoubt still stands today, although much of the surrounding soil has been eroded and the concrete structure in places stands proud of the ground. Marks of the fighting — especially damage caused by the British bombardment — are still clearly visible. The observation post is particularly well preserved, with the location of the steel shutter (see next day) unchanged since 1941, and an amazing amount of shrapnel damage inside from the original blast and a large number of grenades (one of which all but blinded Lt. Thomson) thrown in later.
- 56 Appendix E of Wallis’s report states that, during this fighting, two men of the Royal Scots were found AWOL drinking in Wan Chai. Subsequent fighting prevented their courts martial.
- 57 Comments without parentheses following a single name indicate the fate of that individual. Comments in parentheses before a name or group of names indicate their possible fates, or clues there to.
- 58 Haines continues: ‘Civilian Dockyard rating was used to determine service rank. As a junior executive officer, I was ranked 2nd Lieutenant. Senior executives were made Captains, and heads of department, Majors’ (132b: Haines). Thus the Hong Kong Dockyard Defence Corps (HKDDC) — one of the least researched units defending Hong Kong — was formed. See also Appendix 13.
- 59 ‘The whole family of a Y.M.C.A. secretary, except a baby girl, was bombed to death in their home’ (117: 22).
- 60 Wakabayashi himself was later killed in action in Guadalcanal in early 1943 (76: 59).
- 61 The ‘Ls’ refer to Lookouts, and were preconstructed trenches at designated sites. The numbering sequence starts at Junk Bay (Tseun Kwan O) on the easternmost point of the Gin Drinkers Line, and they continue in sequence until the last which appears to have been 140. For reference, Lookout 100 is near the redoubt. They appear to have been only a trench, which could be of varying length from short to long enough to encircle a hilltop. In 1941, all commanded excellent views.
- 62 The captured, including Jones, Willcocks, Thompson, and some twenty-five Royal Scots from inside and outside the redoubt, were taken to Fan Ling. They would rejoin the other POWs in Sham Shui Po on 13 January (89: 225). Although Jones came in for severe criticism over this loss, the Japanese — though somewhat unsure whom they had captured — thought he was a

- 'splendid officer': 'The commander of the enemy defenders on Hill 251, was, I believe, Captain Johnson, a Canadian. As he was wounded, I ordered the medical officer to treat him. He appeared to be a splendid officer' (122). Interestingly, these were not the first of the garrison to be captured. This dubious honour appears to go to Pte. G. S. P. Heywood of the HKVDC, who was checking a weather station on the border on 8 December See the 1992 reprint of his 1938 book, *Rambles in Hong Kong* (Hong Kong: Oxford Univeristy Press).
- 63 This fire came from the 9.2-inch guns of Mount Davis, plus the 6-inch and 60-pound guns of Stonecutters Island (134). The Japanese took this as a signal that the redoubt was fully in their hands: 'the bombardment also was conclusive proof that the rest of the enemy had abandoned positions on Hill 251' (122).
- 64 It is clear that this is Sgt. Robb's party, who then took up a defensive position on the left of D Coy. Rajputs. It was in fact thirteen rather than eighteen men, taking into account the five left behind (134).
- 65 A Court of Enquiry into the loss of the Redoubt was convened at the Argyle Street POW camp on 8 May 1942 (134).
- 66 Though Cpl. Mornington Robertson himself perished on the *Lisbon Maru*, 2 October 1942.
- 67 The reason for the lack of a counter-attack was a focus of the Court of Enquiry held in Camp after the surrender. Rose, in 1957, said: 'Col. White's evidence on this point was also most unsatisfactory but it appears that the real reason [why no counter-attack was carried out] was that most of the Royal Scots had panicked and the troops to the left of the Redoubt were streaming back to Kowloon without ever in fact having been in touch with the enemy. As a result of this the whole defence on the mainland collapsed and the remainder of the Brigade had to withdraw to the Island. Col. White naturally did not want to tell the court this' (134). Rose goes on to point out that D Coy. performed well, and the whole battalion later fought with resolution on the Island.
- 68 In the Police War Diary it appears that this is a euphemism for summary execution.
- 69 William Wilkinson died of diphtheria on 2 September 1942.
- 70 Though Hunter points out that these 'were one or two small, and not every deep trenches. [That was all] — no barbed wire' (132b: Hunter). Hunter was 2IC of D Coy., under Pinkerton.
- 71 Killed by a stray bullet at Port Said in the Suez Crisis of 1956.
- 72 35(M) was a previous designation of 965 Defence Battery.
- 73 The 20 Heavy Battery was founded in 1926 as the 23rd Heavy Battery. This is one of many HKSRA batteries that cannot be reconciled with the batteries that actually existed in Hong Kong at the time.
- 74 (126) also agrees with the date, and adds: 'Buried "A" Shelter Skeet Ground.' Bard notes: 'I knew Jordan well (I played with him in concerts). He had

- that rare condition in which although he could hear music very well, he was somewhat deaf to the spoken voice. So, I believe the sentry story to be true' (132b: Bard). The Royal Scots were certainly alert; Hunter reports: '[On 9 December] I was shot at by my own Royal Scots, as I made my way up the Inner Line to join Don Company. I had to scramble off the track and lie low for a little, after shouting to explain who I was!' (132b: Hunter).
- 75 Wright was in 3 Bty. HKVDC stationed on Ap Lei Chau.
- 76 Hewitt, crossing Golden Hill on his escape some nine weeks later, states: 'We passed a group of concrete command shelters from which a nauseating stench of decaying bodies assailed us . . . Soldiers had been left to rot where they were killed' (13: 33). Other escapees — e.g. Whitehead (30: 83) — reported identical experiences when crossing former battlefields on both the island and the mainland. The problem persisted; a letter in the *South China Morning Post* in 1946 asked when the Government was going to take care of the skeletons in Wong Nai Chung Gap.
- 77 On my first ever trip to Wong Nai Chung Gap, I found a Japanese 6.5 mm Arisaka rifle cartridge hanging out of an earth bank just south of the petrol station on the east side. Immediately I understood that all these 'war stories' were real, and there truly was a story worth investigating.
- 78 Maltby, in the 1957 interview, agrees: 'I am inclined to think that the cause of the panic was the effect of the Japanese 4-inch mortar fire. The Japanese controlling this fire would creep forward, well camouflaged, and dragging a telephone line. Their fire was thus very accurately and quickly directed. The bomb thrown was not effective as a man killer but exploded with a tremendous bang and gave out a terrific blast which was very demoralising' (134). It should be noted in this context that Ford himself was in D Coy., which was not involved in the 'panic' that Maltby describes.
- 79 Executed by the Japanese, 18 December 1943.
- 80 Some sources, such as (91: 75), quote 60 killed. This is more likely to be the total number of casualties.
- 81 'Jimmie Dunlop died on the ridge beside me, calling out "Mother, Mother". I was wounded left arm, and just below right shoulder. Lance Corporal Low dressed my wounds and carried me into the pillbox' (132b: Hunter).
- 82 Executed by the Japanese, 18 December 1943.
- 83 See Appendix 12.
- 84 No doubt the PanAm Clipper. The Supermarine Walrus would have been too small to cause a problem.
- 85 Much of M. Davis fort survives, around and above the YMCA. Shell damage to the Plotting Room and certain gun mounts is still very visible.
- 86 Another 35 Royal Scots appear in hospital records as being wounded between the start of the fighting and 17 December.
- 87 (126) confirms the date, but states 'killed Wong Nai Chung Gap', which is clearly irreconcilable.

- 88 Note for researchers: The CWGC online register (www.cwgc.org) will only show a single day as date of death; only the paper versions show periods of uncertainty. If the paper records show simply 'December', then the web-based system will default to 1 December. If a range is shown on paper, such as 8/25 December the web-based system will default to 8 December.
- 89 Believed to have been the first British soldier to have been killed by a sword in the Second World War, though L/Cpl. Murray had been wounded by such a weapon the previous day (92: 98).
- 90 Maj. Hancock was a British officer in the Hong Kong Mule Corps, an RIASC unit in which only the officers were armed.
- 91 The wife of Briggs of HMS *Scout*, who had escaped Hong Kong with his destroyer on 8 December.
- 92 Birch states carefully: 'gun positions alleged to have been already prepared in peace time in the Kowloon-side godowns, and certainly the Japanese were able to bring heavy artillery into action extremely quickly' (44: 81). Stewart, writing of the shelling of the north shore defences, confirms: 'The most accurate fire came from a high-velocity small-calibre gun hidden in one of the Kowloon godowns' (3: 16).
- 93 Bank of East Asia. HKH is of course the Hong Kong Hotel, and H & SBC is Hong Kong Shanghai Banking Corporation (now HSBC). One original building, The 'Pedder Building', still survives in Pedder Street opposite where the Hong Kong Hotel (The Grips) stood.
- 94 All on board were killed. Well-known Hong Kong philanthropist Noel Croucher had been invited to join the crew, but luckily declined as he had already been on duty all day (94: 49). The *South China Morning Post* of Thursday, 27 September 1945 claimed that fourteen Europeans had been aboard and that the only piece of wreckage found was the steering wheel — in Connaught Road. (110: 113) and (98: 174) show that two Sikh police constables were also lost on the vessel. (28: 31) claims that a 'large party' of troops were also aboard having been assisting with the loading.
- 95 One part of HMS *Tamar* lives on, however: the Anglican cathedral, St John's, which was built in 1849, was badly damaged during the war when it served as an officers' club during the Japanese occupation. Many of the old memorial tablets and virtually all the stained glass windows were lost. However, during its post-war rebuilding, the main doors were created from timbers salvaged from the wreck of HMS *Tamar*.
- 96 Note that the old Kowloon station clock tower, a few yards east of the Star Ferry pier, still shows bullet damage from this encounter (and later damage indicating heavier weapons). One eyewitness (132a: Ozorio) stated that a shell fired from Hong Kong, thus presumably by the garrison after the evacuation was complete, caused the heavier damage.
- 97 Presumably from Green Island, via *Jeanette*.
- 98 This pillbox, PB 63 (manned by Z Coy. Middlesex at the time) was

- demolished in 1995. This was one of the last to survive in urban areas (although many can still be found today in the hills). Demolition of urban pillboxes started immediately post-war. The *South China Morning Post* for 27 July 1947 carried a short column that stated: ‘The clearing away of the pill-boxes left by the war is now almost complete.’
- 99 (154) reports: ‘On the shelling of Lyemun Bks. to-day, Capt. Banfill’s Chinese driver killed’, though there is no proof that this was Cheung Wing.
- 100 (77: 23), by a member of D Coy., states: ‘We had lost one man in Kowloon during the first surprise raid.’ Note, however, that many details in this account are inaccurate. (126) states simply his area last seen as ‘Kowloon Star Ferry Wharf’. As the Winniepegs were withdrawn from Kowloon on the 12th, this is most probably the date on which Gray actually lost his life. (155) notes: ‘Pte Shatford and Pte Grey [sic] were lost on patrol. Pte Grey is presumed to have been killed after reaching Star Ferry Pier. Pte Shatford eventually made his way back to Coy HQ at Wong Nei Chong Gap, having come back to the island with some Indian troops.’
- 101 Note that the CWGC lists of civilian dead in Hong Kong do not generally include anyone other than British or Commonwealth citizens. The vast numbers of Chinese killed in the conflict in December 1941 (as many as 4,000, according to Selwyn-Clarke) are therefore excluded from the figures presented in this book, except those few individually named in casualty reports.
- 102 It has not yet been possible to verify this story.
- 103 Two accounts, (42: 15) and (71: 45), mention a British nurse being killed on the last ferry from Kowloon, though they disagree on some details and provide no name. A more accurate account is probably (86: 146), which describes a nurse called ‘Mrs Hollands’ as being ‘lightly wounded’ on this day while serving as a volunteer on a harbour launch under police control, recovering British troops (Lt. Forsyth and his Punjabis) from Kowloon. (98: 174) specifies that she was wounded in the stomach, and was accompanied by another nurse, Mrs Sando. (131) records: ‘In spite of the two European ladies being made to lie flat on the deck Mrs Holland received a bullet wound in the abdomen.’ Queen Mary Hospital records are unequivocal: she was admitted and was pronounced dead on the same day. ‘Buster’ Holland, ex-HKVDC, when queried on this matter believed that his family were the only ‘Hollands’ in Hong Kong at the time, and had no knowledge of this nurse (132b: Holland). However, HK PRO records show a 52-year-old Mr W. E. Holland living on the Peak, and an A. M. Hollomb (which has been corrected by hand to ‘Holland?’) at Room 509 of the Stag Hotel during the January 1942 ‘census’.

These are all the facts currently available. Mrs Holland may be an unrecognised heroine. The hospital records state that Mrs Holland lived at 6, Minden Avenue, and give her age as 45.

4. PHASE II: THE SIEGE OF THE ISLAND

- 1 Historians have often wondered why the Japanese advance on the mainland — in the light of their vastly superior powers — was so slow. Perhaps the most likely reason can be found in *The Business of War* by Sir John Kennedy: ‘This extraordinarily cautious attitude was strangely out of keeping with the dash and élan shown by Japanese troops in other sectors . . . These troops, too, had been engaged for the last two years in operations against the Communist Fourth Route Army, and there they had learned that too hasty an advance frequently led to disaster. Several references in personal-experience articles written by officers of this unit to the effect that “the situation greatly resembled a communist guerrilla trap” would indicate that this consideration was at least in the minds of many of the officers and may have carried some weight on influencing the attitude of the expedition commander’ (14: 59).
- 2 This is according to surviving hospital records, which may not be complete. This applies to all estimations of wounded.
- 3 Died on board the *Lisbon Maru*.
- 4 Died of dysentery, Sham Shui Po.
- 5 A surprising amount of the damage inflicted at this time can still be seen in modern Hong Kong. The Lions outside the HSBC headquarters, the low wall north of the Cenotaph, a stone wall beneath the Canossa Hospital, steps at Hong Kong University, the First World War memorial in the botanical gardens, and the Legco building all bear the scars.
- 6 (32: 69). He adds that a further 3,000 were severely wounded.
- 7 In 1941, Professor Baxter was a member of the HKDDC.
- 8 Mrs C. R. Lee, wife of the Governor’s secretary, and Mrs MacDonald.
- 9 Here I quote Birch, but the original is in FO 371/27752 at Kew.
- 10 Dew later shot several unique cine films of the Japanese invasion of the Island. These were distributed around the Island and never recovered. A few were entrusted to Victor Needa, a well-known Eurasian jockey of the period. In the year 2000, I received a call from a friend enthusing over a one-woman stage show by a Veronica Needa. I made contact as fast as I could, only to learn that (like so many) Victor Needa — her father — had never spoken about the period. Later I heard that Needa had placed them in the safe of the Repulse Bay Hotel, from where they were stolen later in the war.
- 11 Bailey had little opportunity to take up the offer of a cash prize, as he was killed in Wong Nai Chung Gap on the 19th.
- 12 In 2002, for the purposes of this book, Warwick Ross was kind enough to ask his 90-year-old father Charles ‘Ted’ Edwin Ross of the 1941 Hong Kong Ministry of Information, why the announcement of the loss of the *Jeanette* — which, after all, as the biggest explosion ever experienced in Hong Kong, was a very visible event — was not made until 18 hours afterwards.

- Unfortunately 'he had no recollection about the announcement or why it was so delayed'.
- 13 Dr Bard, a member of the HKVDC Field Ambulance, was stationed on Mount Davis and was first on the scene when the No. 3 gun was hit by a large-calibre Japanese shell.
 - 14 Pardoe was initially buried in the Colonial Cemetery, Happy Valley (126).
 - 15 Although I can offer no definitive proof that this report is of Pardoe, it seems more than likely — especially as the context (the next day mentioned being Monday) indicates that it was made on the Sunday.
 - 16 (37: 58) states that Morgan and Kathleen Thompson were walking in the hospital grounds towards the sisters' mess when the shell landed between them, killing Morgan and injuring Thompson. It goes on to say, strangely, that an ambulance came and took Thompson to the Queen Mary Hospital.
 - 17 Where the East Wing of Lower Albert Road Government Offices is now.
 - 18 HQ of the Royal Artillery units forming part of West Brigade.
 - 19 The Gauge Basin gun position is very well preserved, but extremely overgrown. It can be found atop the hillock immediately north-east of the dam across Tai Tam reservoir.
 - 20 Cooper later died of his wounds, and Palmer lost a leg.
 - 21 Note that the IGH records show that Fateh Khan of the 965 Defence Battery died in hospital. However, correlation with CWGC records based on his serial number (7770) shows they believe that Fateh Muhammad was actually the 965 Gunner (rather than Havildar) who lost his life at Belcher's. Fateh Khan (Havildar, 3147), who also died this day, was — according to CWGC — in the HKSRA 17 HAA Battery and was killed at Mount Davis. It is probable that these two have been transposed, thus Fateh Muhammad was actually an IOR at Mount Davis, while Fateh Khan was a Havildar at Belcher's. Belcher's Battery has now completely disappeared under modern development, though one pre-war gun was preserved on site until recent years when it was transferred to the Hong Kong Museum of Coastal Defence.
 - 22 Firing over open sights; in other words, line of sight.
 - 23 Maltby's despatch handles the rout which followed surprisingly graciously: 'At this juncture owing to an imperfectly conveyed message and an error of judgement of the junior officer left in command [Sleep], their personnel were given the option of going to Stanley. All but two Chinese left; seventeen British and Portuguese stayed' (20: 11). A list of missing 4th Bty. personnel compiled on 17 December reads: '4534 — Gnr WL Chung, 4065 — Gnr Tang H, 4630 — Adrult R J, 3070 — L/Bdr Tam Y K, 4532 — Alaraker J M, 3475 — Gnr Tang K M, 5178 — Bau-Kennedy, 4295 — Toang S.W, 2917 — Chan K C, 4047 — Toang K H, 4270 — Chow K C, 4539 — Woo P T M, 4558 — Chan S K, 4563 — Yee M S, 4615 — Ching A, 4641 — Yee S W, 3493 — Freng Y L, 4275 — Young C, 4535 — Freng K, 3451 — Yung F H, 3432 — L/Bdr Ho S, 2854 — Sgt Yeung, 3477 — Gnr Ho S N, 2676 — Bdr Knox T,

- 4277 — Gnr Kwok K C, 3444 — Kwok M C, 4091 — Lee C C, 3441 — Lam P S, 3446 — Lam P W, 4323 — Lee W C, 3448 — Leung T W, 4561 — Lo P S, 3059 — Lin W C, 4826 — Lewis G M, 4829 — Lo, 3509 — Ma S L, 2621 — Na G K T, 3503 — Pang O L, 3483 — L/Bdr Pau C W, 4105 — Gnr Poun F M, 3796 — L/Bdr Reeo J W', with the note: 'check and report any not at Stanley'. The fact is that these gun emplacements offered almost no shelter for the troops, and the effect of the shells — bursting on bare concrete — was devastating.
- 24 No such unit officially exists. This should probably read 2 Mountain Bty.
- 25 Some Mount Davis fatalities are under 17 AA of the HKSRA, and others under their parent unit, 7 AA Regiment Royal Artillery.
- 26 A wartime rumour said that Burn had been shot by his own men during the Kowloon fighting. If this were true, 14 December would have been too late. However, Wallis' report speculates: 'I surmise that it was a feeling of disgrace that he was unable to prevent his battalion breaking up near the pencil factory on December 11th which caused the late Major Burn 2IC to take his own life.' (134) confirms that he was sent there to attempt to restore order, thus death at his own hand following failure seems credible. (150) briefly notes his suicide. The fact that he has a known grave makes it likely that he did indeed die after the evacuation to the Island, especially as (126) gives his original burial site as 'White house on west side of Tai Hang Road, Hong Kong'. This is further backed up by (155), which notes the arrival at Blue Pool valley of B and C Coy. Royal Scots under Maj. Burn on 12 December.
- 27 (126) gives the date as 11 January 1942. Although the RAMC were referred to as 'Rob All My Comrades' in Hong Kong as elsewhere, Bowen Road Hospital was popular. Later in the war, Rothwell of the Middlesex wrote:
- Lord, do not suffer me to go
 Back to the gloom of Sham Shui Po
 Nor yet direct my stumbling feet
 Within the wire of Argyle Street
 Grant, Lord, that I may pack my grip
 And go aboard some friendly ship
 Bound for London or Southampton
 But, Lord, if this prayer is stamped on
 Then, I pray, make light my load
 And let me stay in Bowen Road. (63: 54)
- 28 (126) gives the date as 24 December.
- 29 Arthur, then with 5 Coy. HKVDC, is post-war the chairman of the Hong Kong POWs Association (132a: Gomes).
- 30 Pinewoods is now a barbecue site, but still retains many of its original features. It can be reached from the Peak, by taking a short path down to the north. In May 2000 it was still possible to find fragments of shrapnel from this bombardment.

- 31 While there are many rumours of the Japanese navy (including destroyers and cruisers) being seen off Hong Kong, and even shelling defensive positions and engaging the Royal Navy, this appears to be one of only two documented incidents (the other being reported from Bokhara). Even in this case, the identity of the engaged vessels is very uncertain. It is generally believed that most of the ‘sightings’ of Japanese ships were in fact of HMS *Thracian*.
- 32 There is no evidence in Japanese accounts of an attack being launched this day. Whether this was a probe too small for their records, or simply Chinese refugees from Kowloon, is unknown.
- 33 This report has sometimes been quoted out of context, as if it was given on December 18th.
- 34 Executed by the Japanese, 18 December 1943.
- 35 (98: 173) claims that Baker was killed by a bomb on 16 December. However, the Police War Diary records: ‘Acting Chief Inspector Baker was found dead in No. 3 Conduit Road with gun shot wounds in the head in circumstances suggesting suicide’ (131).
- 36 (132a: Bethell). Such emergency cemeteries certainly existed. The Police War Diary, for example, states: ‘[The officer in charge at Aberdeen] supervised the digging of cemeteries at Apleichau Refuge Dump and the hill side behind Aberdeen Temple for burial of unclaimed bodies’ (131). From Bethell’s comments it appears he was at the Upper Station — Caine Road — at the time.
- 37 Coates died of these wounds 5 November 1942, MacNaughton died in Japan 25 January 1944, Coleman died of wounds 18 February 1942.
- 38 (139) claims that a wing of this aircraft could still be seen sticking out of the sea on 31 December.
- 39 Killed on the *Lisbon Maru* 2 October 1942.
- 40 The battle damage was widely remarked upon when North Point refugee camp became a POW camp towards the end of the fighting.
- 41 The *South China Morning Post* of Tuesday, 18 September 1945 states that he was killed by enemy action whilst in charge of the ammunition ship *Moa Lee*. This may in fact have been the barge pulled by *Jeanette*, in which case the date of death would be incorrect.
- 42 The *South China Morning Post* of Saturday, 29 September 1945 carried the following notice: ‘NOTICE. Will any person having knowledge of the circumstances under which Captain Jewell and six others were killed in Aberdeen in a tug in December, 1941, please communicate with Major J. C. Riddell, China Command, H.Q. Information is particularly required as to the date of death and place of burial. (J. C. Riddell) Major DAAG, H.Q. Land Forces.’
- 43 This is one of the least certain datings in this book. CWGC records place Cheong’s death on 6 December, which makes no sense whatsoever. Having

- found no mention of Cheong in any official or unofficial documents, I am forced to guess that this is a simple mistyping of '16'.
- 44 (132b: Browne).
- 45 It is amazing to see how much evidence of this shelling is still visible in 21st-century Central. The low north-facing wall of the Cenotaph's enclosure (which was facing open harbour in 1941) has a great deal of poorly patched shrapnel damage, as have the steps on the southern side. The east-facing front of the Legco Building (also damaged by late American bombing) was liberally riveted with shrapnel, which was removed in the late 1970s as it was leaving dark rust stains down the walls. The stone patches that were put in are clearly visible. Most evocatively, the two bronze lions outside the Hong Kong Bank building are full of shrapnel holes. Those who want to know why shrapnel caused such terrible injuries need only see how it has torn through the lions' half-inch thick bronze skin. The eagle-eyed will notice that there are still at least eight pieces of shrapnel — including a fragment of driving band — embedded in the easternmost lion's left rump. Central Police Station is little changed from this time, but the majority of bomb damage was in the compound or in Victoria Prison — off-limits to the more law-abiding of today's population.
- 46 Pre-war, an Olympic swimmer.
- 47 Presumably the Paint and Lacquer works at 704 King's Road.

5. PHASE III: THE INVASION OF THE ISLAND

- 1 However, telephony was still a problem. No. 1 Coy. HKVDC's War Diary reports: 'No. 2 Platoon [Repulse Bay View] had direct communication with me at Coy H.Q. which was entirely satisfactory as far as I was concerned. However, they were under the operations control of [the Royal Rifles] but in order to telephone their [Royal Rifles Company Commander] they had to ring my Coy HQ, ask for D Bn., ask for Fortress, ask for [the Royal Rifles] and ask for their company. This roundabout procedure made telephony practically impossible' (140).
- 2 The Japanese were indeed concerned about the sunken ships, not as hazards to navigation, but as possible strong points to be held by desperate men to interfere with their invasion fleet.
- 3 One of the great myths of the battle of Hong Kong in popular writing is that Maltby believed the attack would come from the south (i.e. the open sea). While this had been the foundation for Hong Kong's defence before the Japanese invasion of China, everything had changed by the time Maltby arrived in 1941, and defence for the north shore had finally been built. Maltby, an Indian Army man to a fault, had placed his most trusted units (the Punjabis, Royal Scots, and Rajputs) across the north shore in readiness,

with the Canadian battalions in the rear. My understanding was clarified when shown a map drawn by a Canadian, showing the Royal Rifles and Winnipeg Grenadiers holding the southern beach ‘front line’ while the Punjabis and Rajputs in the north ‘rested in the rear following their exertions on the mainland’. One can only assume that some officer, whether British or Canadian, had thus tried to bolster Canadian *esprit de corps*. Maltby never forgot that a secondary invasion could land on the southern beaches, but there is no evidence that he seriously expected one.

- 4 Though there is some dispute as to whether these two really were co-located.
- 5 Smith-Dutton was a Gun Layer with the 7 HAA Bty., 5 AA Regiment. This unit suffered severe casualties on the 18th and 19th, at the Sai Wan AA site and the Wong Nai Chung AA position respectively (132b: Smith-Dutton).
- 6 Most histories say that the Rajputs, holding the waterfront, were ‘wiped out’ during this attack. In fact, on the night of 18/19th they lost 130 killed from a strength at 8 December of 892. This is significant number — the 99 lost on the 19th alone being the highest one-day loss of any unit in Hong Kong — but not quite as disastrous as has been portrayed. It is noteworthy, however, that only eleven Rajputs made it to hospital on those two days.
- 7 At around the turn of the century, papers were found in the attic of a Hong Kong house which was being demolished. These consisted of what appears to be the original hand-written message log of Fortress HQ, and also the message log of the Commander, RAOC. In the former, the first message indicating that a landing had occurred was at 21.45. It said ‘Wanchai Gap report M.G. fire from the direction of [North Point]’. In the latter, the first mention is at 24.00 and reads simply: ‘Enemy landed Lyemun and Taikoo’.
- 8 Whitehead later escaped to China and joined Mission 204.
- 9 228th Regiment.
- 10 229th Regiment. Plotting the massacres in four dimensions indicates that the majority, though not quite all, were committed by this unit as it moved south.
- 11 Although the Japanese atrocities in China — Nanjing especially — were well known in Hong Kong, many westerners (in particular, those with experience of Japan) believed that they would behave differently towards them. Ellen Field: ‘I thought, for instance, that the Japanese would simply come up to me and say, ‘We’ve won,’ or something like that, for at this time none of us really feared them. I believed they would behave decently towards British people; that terms would be agreed’ (111: 21).
- 12 I have been unable to establish why the eastern slopes of Mount Nicholson, overlooking the gap from the west, were — with the exception of West Brigade’s bunkers at its foot — not fortified.
- 13 The Hugheseliers were a group of HKVDC men in their 50s and 60s — mainly with First World War experience — who were formed by Lt. Col. A. W. Hughes into their own unit. Wags named them the ‘Methuseliers’.
- 14 The Japanese tactic was to head south to the high ground. The strategy, on

- the other hand, was to take Central. It is interesting to speculate what would have happened had a local commander — like Doi at the Redoubt — decided to act for himself by breaking through the power station defenses and charging west straight towards Central, before most of the garrison even knew the invasion had started.
- 15 Of all the bombings of civilian targets, this one had the most witnesses and was the most widely reported.
 - 16 Both would be dead within 24 hours. Lammert's father, a Hong Kong auctioneer, was interned in Stanley for the duration. It is said that Lammert hoped till the end that his son was still alive, and that internees who knew he was already dead did not tell him.
 - 17 Most likely Sgt. Wilson, RA, and Bdr. Fincher, HKVDC.
 - 18 The exact timing of the landings is the subject of some debate. Lt. Gen. Ito Takeo (138) states that they occurred at 22.00, though the consensus is closer to a starting time of 20.30. It is possible that the earliest reports refer to some sort of 'Beach Masters' landing, though I have seen no corroboration of this.
 - 19 It must be pointed out that, having only been in Hong Kong four weeks, it is questionable whether the average Canadian soldier could distinguish between Chinese and Japanese people. Nurse Kathleen Christie, herself a Canadian, states: 'they had difficult distinguishing Japanese from Chinese and frequently the sentries' challenges were answered in perfect English, only to discover too late that they were Japanese who had reached them' (95: 123).
 - 20 A first walk along Sir Cecil's Ride in the early 1990s uncovered a number of Japanese rifle cartridges, British bullets (.303 and dubiously hollow-nosed .38s), and shrapnel from British shells and Japanese mortars. Unfortunately, since that time much of the path has been paved. However, after rain, such items still wash down from the hillside. On a mildly hungover walk on 1 January 2001 it was still possible to find a perfectly preserved Japanese rifle cartridge at the edge of the path.
 - 21 In fact Rajputs. The 'youngest soldier' referred to is almost certainly 21-year-old Francisco Noronha.
 - 22 Some sources say 22.00.
 - 23 Nos. 2 and 3 guns (15 and 30 metres north respectively) stayed in the hands of 4 Bty.
 - 24 Sgt. David Gow, HKVDC.
 - 25 Some accounts place this attack at 22.30, but it must in fact have occurred prior to the change of duty at 22.00.
 - 26 Bosanquet later escaped from POW camp.
 - 27 Capt. Goldman, the battery commander.
 - 28 Some sources say twenty (27: 26), others twenty-nine (91: 125). The actual number appears to be two killed in the shelling, six in the initial attack on the position, and a total of twenty (fifteen volunteers and five regulars) in the massacre. Bosanquet describes being sent to Sai Wan with a burial party

- approximately one week after the surrender, and finding the bodies of the sentries, others on the road outside, and thirteen more thrown over a wall at the gun site (29: 44).
- 29 This stood on today's Tong Chong Street.
- 30 Some sources quoted by (100) claim that Wallis thought the Lye Mun Gap–Redoubt–6-inch howitzer position were still in Canadian hands. Wallis himself (139) states that this was information given to him by Homes.
- 31 His wife would be murdered at Stanley, 25 December
- 32 Fincher's wife Irene is mentioned at length in (48).
- 33 Manuel's niece Anne Ozorio was a major contributor to this book.
- 34 (126) states: 'Wong Nai Chung AA site. Unburied'. If this were the case, it would indeed be the 19th. However, his colleagues insist he was killed at Sai Wan.
- 35 (126) states: 'Originally buried near pumping station west of Island Road opposite road to Lyemun.'
- 36 (126) notes: 'Possibly buried in communal grave on north east slope of Sai Wan Hill (16 bodies).'
- 37 (126) states: 'Originally buried west slope Sai Wan Hill just above perimeter wire'.
- 38 The fact that the IGH also took in seven wounded HKSRA gunners this day indicates that there was quite a battle for the piece.
- 39 The Punjabis are not generally recorded in action until the 19th. However, the fact that the IGH (close to the landing points) took in fifty-one Punjabi wounded on this day is highly significant. Possibly the Punjabis were in action earlier than believed, but it seems that the following undated statement from Guest holds the clue: 'About a hundred and fifty men of the Punjabis and Rajput regiments had taken shelter from the raid in an underground miniature rifle range and a bomb had penetrated the shelter and had killed or wounded practically everybody in it' (28: 40). Further, Mackenzie in (24: 201) states: 'In a particularly heavy [air raid on 18 December] on the Central District a bomb hit an underground miniature range in which 80 Sepoys of the Punjabi headquarters Company were taking shelter. The walls collapsed; 24 were killed and 36 injured.' Despite the claim in (126) that this happened at HKVDC HQ, when I asked Arthur Gomes about the incident he recalled it occurring at the Murray Barracks (132b: Gomes). The Punjabi War Diary (140) states: '11.00 Hrs. Rear Bde. HQ at Volunteer HQ Garden Rd. was struck by a 500 lb bomb. Casualties 24K 36 wounded.' Whichever version is most accurate, it is probable that all except Tara Singh were killed by this incident.
- 40 The Dockyard Police were raised by separate statute, and there is some uncertainty as to whether they were actually recognized as members of the HKDDC. However, they are attributed to that unit in CWGC records.
- 41 The *South China Morning Post* of Thursday, 27 September 1945 claims that

- he and Willison were killed in Quarry Bay, and that only O'Connor and Post were at Shau Kei Wan. (98: 175) states that Johnson died of wounds sustained in the fighting on Mount Cameron. This would imply 19 December rather than 18 December.
- 42 Geoffrey Wilson confirms that Shau Kei Wan police station was fought over with police casualties (132b: Wilson).
 - 43 Lance Sergeant A. 175 Jack reports O'Connor and Post leading two groups of police on either side of King's Road when they came under grenade attack. He did not see either again (131).
 - 44 *South China Morning Post*, 27 September 1945. However, (98: 175) states that he died whilst being taken to Queen Mary Hospital for emergency treatment, and (131) reports that he was seriously wounded by a grenade near Quarry Bay station.
 - 45 These two ARP personnel were presumably those beheaded by the 228th.

6. PHASE IV: THE FORCING OF WONG NAI CHUNG GAP

- 1 It is difficult to estimate the number captured on the evening of the 18th, though 200 may be roughly correct.
- 2 This AA position is still easily visited. Take the road heading north immediately in front of Park View, and turn left before the bridge instead of continuing on to the service reservoir. At the end of the paved road, force your way through the undergrowth along a little catchwater, and the remains of the position will be on your left.
- 3 In Japanese records, '5-Junction Road' is Wong Nai Chung Gap, and 'Red Pillar Promontory' is Stanley.
- 4 *Butai* is Japanese for 'Regiment'.
- 5 Leading Stoker Tom Middleton joined the complement of *Robin* after *Tern* was scuttled. This was not the first time he had had to swim for it, having been sunk earlier that year — in *Eumaeus* of the Blue Funnel Line — off Sierra Leone by the Italian submarine *Cappellini*. The next ship he would find himself on would be the first transportation (of the 'undesirables', including his friend Bristow again) to POW camps in Japan. This quote comes from an interview kindly conducted for the book by Middleton's son, Tom junior.
- 6 Most of the attackers were buried in a trench there with the remains of the twenty 5 AA prisoners who were murdered (27: 26). These bodies were finally found in 1949 by 2nd Lt. Mike Cotterill, RA.
- 7 These were St John's Ambulance. Their post-war memorial was erected about 100 metres south of the MAP.
- 8 The Indian police constable had been wounded earlier and taken into the MAP. See Sgt. Cunningham's (RAMC) War Crime deposition as reported in

- the *South China Morning Post* for Saturday, 15 March 1947. When Cunningham and the others finally surrendered, they were tied to trees, only to be rescued by a sajput sepoy (also a prisoner) who had kept a knife and cut the others down despite being in the midst of an armed Japanese camp.
- 9 Babin had no option but to turn back. When Bickley was finally treated after the surrender at the Queen Mary Hospital, both eyes had to be removed.
- 10 As a footnote, Ernest Hemingway and his wife Martha Gellhorn stayed at the Repulse Bay Hotel in the spring of 1941 (67). One wonders what would have resulted had they delayed their visit until the autumn months. Gandt (78) tells the following story of Hemingway's visit to the 7th War Zone after leaving Hong Kong, when a Chinese general asked the British opinion of Chinese infantry:
- 'Johnny's all right and a very good fellow and all that', says Hemingway, affecting a British accent. 'But he's absolutely hopeless on the offensive, you know . . . we can't count on Johnny.'
- 'Johnny?' Asked the general.
- 'John Chinaman', said Hemingway.
- 'Very interesting,' the general said. 'Let me tell you a Chinese story. Do you know why the British staff officer wears a single glass in his eye?'
- 'No,' said Hemingway.
- 'He wears a single glass in his eye so he will not see more than he can understand.'
- 'I will tell the officer when I see him.'
- 'Very good,' the general said. 'Tell him it is a little message from Johnny.'
- 11 Pears' brother Peter was the celebrated British tenor, 1910–1986.
- 12 Died on the *Lisbon Maru*, 2 October 1942.
- 13 Interestingly, the official history of the Middlesex notes that 'The two Canadian battalions were in support of the 1st Middlesex' (96: 31).
- 14 Known universally as 'J. J.', Paterson's Christian names were actually John Johnstone. A quite incredible character, Wiseman (who shared a hut with him in Sham Shui Po later in the war) notes: 'And he could look after himself. I remember once watching quite fascinated as he caught, plucked, cooked and ate a sparrow!' (51: 64).
- 15 This unit was formed under Col. A. W. Hughes, chairman of the Union Insurance Co. of Canton (91: 133). He is also recorded as manager of the Union Insurance Co. of Hong Kong (44: 45).
- 16 Pre-war a director of a London grain exporter (91: 48).
- 17 Cooke, Parker, Tucker, and Tunmer survived the fighting but died on the *Lisbon Maru*, 2 October 1942. Meakin died as a POW in Japan, 24 December 1942. The North Point power station was, post-war, dismantled and shipped to China.
- 18 There is some uncertainty about the activities on Mount Butler. Although

- largely credited with its recapture, A Coy. Winnipeg Grenadiers may well have actually recaptured the summit of Jardine's Lookout instead. See (81: 481).
- 19 Some authorities maintain that no assistance arrived. However, it is clear from casualty lists that assistance came from HKSRA, HKVDC, and Winnipeg Grenadiers.
 - 20 The Salesian Mission contained the entire army medical store for China Command, which was moved — via St Albert's Convent — from Kowloon in 1940.
 - 21 Thomas, in the ambulance, confirms that these were Viceroy Commissioned Officers (132a: Thomas).
 - 22 Wife of George Tinson, later killed at Postbridge. Harrop states that eight days after the surrender, 'Alabaster, our Attorney General, has the unpleasant job of breaking the news to Mrs Tinson that her husband had been killed in the battle and that her house had been completely destroyed by mortar fire. When we arrived back at the office we found her in a state bordering on hysterics. No wonder; she had been through quite enough' (49: 100).
 - 23 Fearon had only just arrived from Beijing 'to be safe' (109: 9).
 - 24 Thomas threw himself into the nullah and was shot in the face. He was about to cut his wrists to avoid a lingering death, when Leath crawled over him in an even worse state. This gave Thomas the impetus to survive, and through a series of adventures he evaded capture and ended up joining the BAAG in China (132a: Thomas).
 - 25 Because of his early capture, Banfill did not join the other Canadian POWs in North Point until February 1942. In the meantime, his death had been reported to Canada. On hearing the news, his wife took her own life (63: 35). Seventeen bodies were later found at the massacre site.
 - 26 Lawson had in fact planned to move his Brigade HQ back to the safer Black's Link area this very morning. The speed of the Japanese advance, however, pre-empted that.
 - 27 Shrapnel damage, still clearly visible on both sides of a stone bridge just south of 34 Stubbs Road, is most probably from this ambush.
 - 28 Coleman and Tunmer drowned ten months later on the Lisbon Maru.
 - 29 Died aboard the *Lisbon Maru*, 2 October 1942.
 - 30 Sorby died of these wounds on 15 January 1942 aged 60. Post-war it was revealed that he had left an estate of HK\$327,000 — a very large sum at that time. While he was 'only' a private, it should be remembered that he was also the manager of HK Electric, Ltd. He lived at No. 253, The Peak, with neighbours including on one side Gwen Priestwood (at 153) and on the other Sir Atholl MacGregor (at 372).
 - 31 Daughter of Ferdinand Duckworth, the station superintendent, and wife of Ken Crawford.
 - 32 Some 200 POWs captured on the North Face were held in the station garage

- overnight with no aid to the wounded. Next day they were marched to the Maryknoll Mission with 200–300 Indians, regulars, and HKVDC.
- 33 No. 1, Repulse Bay Road, today one of Macau gambling millionaire Stanley Ho's many homes.
- 34 In 1941 this was known as Stanley Gap Road.
- 35 Collinson survived the fighting. Rather nicely, the hut that later housed Collinson and other senior naval POWs in Argyle Street camp was known as 'The Aquarium'.
- 36 However, there was quite a fight for the position, with as many as 16 fatalities from 5 AA alone. Maltby's despatch notes: 'Part of the enemy attack came on to Stanley Gap and involved the 3.7-inch A.A. Section there. The Royal Artillery in the nearest 3.7-inch Howitzer positions [2nd MB, HKSRA] were called on to assist, and leaving their gun positions were drawn into the fighting with their small arms' (20: 16). Whitehead reported many Indian bodies in the vicinity on 23 December: '[Major Rochford-Boyd and I] were driving near Wong nei Chong towards Tai Tam when heavy firing forced us to leave the truck and seek the shelter of a ridge. As we crawled up a slope I saw, just ahead, Sikhs and Muslims lying down. When we drew nearer, I realized they were all dead' (30: 32).
- 37 It is not clear if this is the case. Stewart confirms that he, CSM White, Sgt. Winch, and four ORs locked themselves in the HQ shelter, but that on the night of the 22nd, 'having been without food for four days and running short of ammunition', they evacuated the position in pairs and returned to lines (3: 29).
- 38 It was realized that the Japanese were firing British shells because the percentage of 'duds' was so much lower.
- 39 This warehouse is probably that north of Park View. Take the road running north immediately in front of Park View. Just before the red fire hydrant, some 20 metres south of the service reservoir, climb the bank to your right. Force your way south through the undergrowth and you will find yourself — eventually — standing on its roof. This is also a prime contender for the site of the 'Black Hole'. However, (79: 247) mentions CQMS Fincher holding out in a 'store-shelter' in this vicinity until the front was blown in by a Japanese mortar bomb on the afternoon of the 19th. This description also fits.
- 40 This is probably the OP that can still be found today just off the track at the top of Jardine's Lookout, underneath the viewing platform immediately west of the trigonometry station. A search of the area in October 2001 revealed one bullet, one broken .303 round, and a large piece of shrapnel — possibly indicative of some sort of action around the position. (148) notes that 'During [20 December], occasionally the peak of Jardine's Lookout received heavy artillery fire from Victoria and Race Course gun positions'.
- 41 These fortifications and the catchwater still exist not far to the north of Parkview estate.

- 42 Leonard was secretary of the British Legion in Hong Kong when this book was begun.
- 43 To trace the Wagstaff story forward and back, the sculptor of the bronze lions (dated 1935) outside today's HSBC headquarters was Wagstaff's father, W. W. Wagstaff. This information was given to me by Wagstaff's son, whom I traced in mid-2001 to a house less than 100 yards from my parents' in a remote north Norfolk village.
- 44 Eager's father Oscar — a former commandant of the HK Police Reserve — was interned in Stanley, where he was killed by the accidental American navy bombing of Bungalow C on 17 January 1945.
- 45 Reginald Barker.
- 46 Tom Duckworth.
- 47 One brigade shelter from Lawson's position still stands near the garage on the west side of Wong Nai Chung Gap Road. It was refurbished for a visit from Canadian veterans in December 2000. The hillside it is on is arguably the most mosquito-ridden in modern Hong Kong. However, rough and overgrown steps to the south of the garage lead up to the point where Lawson was killed, and where the majority of his HQ shelters are just visible protruding from the soil that has tumbled down the hillside. The lintel shows the impact of heavy machine-gun bullets of around .50 calibre. I found just such a bullet on Mount Nicholson in 1996. David Mather — an expert on the subject — tells me that the most likely weapon would be the Japanese 13 mm model 93 AA/anti-tank MG 1933.
- 48 Died on the *Lisbon Maru*, 2 October 1942.
- 49 If he was indeed killed, then Havildar Kishan Singh of 1MB HKSRA would be the most likely candidate. However, it seems unlikely that a havildar would have been in command.
- 50 The RE commander, Lt. Col. Walker, was in fact rescued by Canadians (Lt. Blackwood and Pte. Morris, Winnipeg Grenadiers) and dragged to the shelters, having been wounded in the legs. National Archives of Canada, Ottawa, DHIST 593 (D1) claims that Walker attempted to drive his car through the Gap, got out when he found it blocked by destroyed vehicles, and was then shot.
- 51 This bungalow was at the junction of Fort and Prison Roads.
- 52 Cullum died of malnutrition as a POW, 27 September 1942.
- 53 One of these was Ron Parry, who wrote: 'After the 2 lead lorries were hit we were unable to get past, and we hid under the lorry for about 8 hours before making our way back to our lines' (132b: Parry).
- 54 This source actually says B and C Coys., but (20: 17) and (140) state A and D Coys.
- 55 Wallis in (139) insists that No. 1 Coy. HKVDC's withdrawal was without orders. In fact, he implies that the order had been 'Don't withdraw'. On the same page of his War Diary, he states: '[Wallis] noticed that although he could

- get no information from [the Royal Rifles] troops on Mt. Parker early on 19 Dec, these troops appeared to rapidly receive and comply with withdrawal orders.' Rightly or wrongly, Wallis clearly perceived that the Royal Scots, the Royal Rifles, and No. 1 Coy. HKVDC had all let him down. Wallis's comments about the Royal Rifles in particular aroused much resentment post-war. For a discussion of this in the fullest context, see Appendix 23.
- 56 The clearing immediately north of the upper pillbox is the site of Matheson's old house (78: 120).
- 57 This order must have made sense — to its originators — at the time. This implies that they seriously believed that the Gap was only lightly held by the Japanese. However, it is difficult to understand why this view was held, following the heavy fighting that had been continuous in the immediate vicinity for the previous seven hours.
- 58 Who died of wounds received here, 6 January 1942.
- 59 Although the VC citation puts Osborn on Mount Butler, eyewitnesses claim he was on the southern slope of Jardine's Lookout at the time. The exact position they state is the intersection of a line drawn east from the current reservoir north of the Wong Nai Chung Gap AA position, and north from the westernmost building of Park View. There has been talk of building a memorial at the spot, though at time of writing this is little more than a heap of rough granite cubes.
- 60 Osborn's VC commendation, the only one of the Hong Kong fighting, reads in the *London Gazette* of 1 April 1946, as follows:
- 'At Hong Kong, on 19th December, 1941, a Company of the Winnipeg Grenadiers became divided in an attack on Mount Butler. A part of the Company led by C. S. M. Osborn captured the hill at bayonet point, but after three hours owing to the superior numbers of the enemy the position became untenable. C. S. M. Osborn and a small group covered the withdrawal and when their turn came to fall back he single-handedly engaged the enemy, exposing himself to heavy enemy fire to cover their retirement. Later the Company was cut off and completely surrounded. Several enemy grenades were thrown which C. S. M. Osborn picked up and threw back. When one landed in a position where it was impossible to pick it up, he threw himself upon it and was instantly killed. His self-sacrifice undoubtedly saved the lives of many of his comrades. C. S. M. Osborn was an inspiring example to all throughout the defence, and in his death he displayed the highest qualities of heroism and self-sacrifice.'
- Osborn, born on 2 Jan. 1899 at Foulton, Norfolk, England, had enjoyed a varied career including service in the First World War — in which he was gassed — and a spell in the Merchant Navy. Unfortunately, just days before he sailed for Hong Kong, his five-year-old daughter Patricia had an accident in which her clothes caught fire and she was badly burned (21: 40). Osborn died not knowing that she was off the critical list. A

statue — ostensibly of Osborn, but actually of an unknown First World War soldier — still stands in central Hong Kong, in Hong Kong Park, near Flagstaff House. Interestingly, his service record (National Archives of Canada File number RG24 Vol. 26734, Regt. No. H6008) doesn't list his citizenship in either the Attestation Paper for enlistment in the Active Forces or on the Official Registration of Death (Province of Manitoba). It seems very possible that he still maintained British citizenship at the time of his death. I am indebted to John Mundie in Canada, who located this file for the purposes of this book.

- 61 The Ridge is a commanding position a few hundred yards south of Wong Nai Chung Gap, on the east side of the road. At this time it housed just an RAOC unit. It is first referred to as an RAOC position on 11 December in the Commander, RAOC message log (see n. 7 for Ch. 5). Ridge Court is one of the buildings there today.
- 62 Caroline Hill is today completely flat. However, in 1941 there must have still been some topography as (14) states at 16.30 (approx.): 'Both Coys began the descent of the Eastern Slopes of Caroline Hill.'
- 63 Broadbridge took with him a message: 'From 9 Pl. 3 Coy. HKVDC To Fortress H.Q. "P.B. 1 & 2 W.N.C. still held. No orders to withdraw. Support required urgently. Three stretcher cases."' He phoned this message from a house in Tai Hang Road and was then ordered to report to the Middlesex on Leighton Hill (133).
- 64 Other accounts have implied that the Japanese treated their captives as courageous heroes. This is not so. Sgt. George White offered to carry Hung away after the surrender, but Hung elected to stay in the pillbox where 'he could get medical attention'. Hung was not seen alive again. See *South China Morning Post*, 13 March 1947. Winyard saw the killing of MacKechnie and Gosling through jujitsu, Zimmern reported that Lim was 'trampled on his head and bayoneted'. Survivors were thrown into the 'black hole of Hong Kong' (136). This was not, however, the end of 3 Coy. The two sections west of the Gap regrouped under Cpls. Roylance and Mackay and joined the line in Wan Chai (23: 232).
- 65 In his despatch, Maltby wrote: 'I should like to place on record the superb gallantry of No. 3 (Eurasian) Company at Wong Nai Chung Gap.' The only other two HKVDC units he singled out for praise were 1 Bty. in defence of Stanley, and the Signals section (20: 4). Shoji notes (148) that 3 Battalion, 230th Regiment took 800 casualties in taking the Gap.
- 66 Sutcliffe was to die of beri-beri and dysentery as a POW, 23 March 1942.
- 67 It is often claimed that one aim of this attack was to relieve the Repulse Bay Hotel. However, at the time when these orders were given, the Japanese had not yet reached it. Neither is there any evidence that any reports of them having reached the hotel were received by East Brigade before the attack finally advanced from Stanley View at 08.00 on the 20th. The hotel was

- simply on the road along which this force planned to attack Wong Nai Chung Gap. When Maltby heard that the hotel was surrounded (some 15 minutes before the Royal Rifles left Stanley View), he ordered A Coy. Punjabis to relieve it from the west, this attack becoming bogged down at Shouson Hill.
- 68 See 18th.
- 69 Mt. Blount, from the context, appears to be a part of Jardine's Lookout, possibly near the Wong Nai Chung Gap AA position. The term is not in use today.
- 70 In 1994, a man claiming to be Baptiste turned up in Canada. His story was that he had suffered terrible head injuries during the fighting, and — through a series of adventures including serving in the Korean war — had only recently realized who he was. There appear to be no mentions of Baptiste — nor any 'unknown' man — in POW records. At time of writing, Canadian authorities have not accepted his claim.
- 71 See start of 20 December for details of the 'Black Hole'. It is possible that this death, and others ascribed to that location, actually occurred on the 20th rather than the 19th.
- 72 (126) notes: 'Killed artillery post, Mount Blount'.
- 73 Johnson came from Yarmouth, Norfolk, England. The Canadian units included a number of British and even Americans.
- 74 According to (126), this took place at 'Hong Kong Reservoir'.
- 75 (126) states: 'Mount Blount'.
- 76 (132b: Matthews) states that Roy Land was killed after attacking the Japanese (with rifle fire and grenades) while others were surrendering, having heard of the death of his brother Gordon. (126) states, as with his brother, 'Mount Blount'. The *South China Morning Post* for 11 March 1947 describes the 'Land incident' in the War Crimes Trials as 'the bayoneting of four Canadians'. The 13 Mar. edition contains the quote: '[after surrendering to the Japanese] Lance Corporal Charles Bradbury, Winnipeg Grenadiers . . . saw one of a group of four Canadians about thirty yards away throw a grenade towards where seven Japanese were visible. The grenade exploded, killing at least four of the Japanese. The three survivors, together with eight or ten other Japanese nearby rushed to the spot where the four Canadians were and bayoneted them to death.'
- 77 Which gives an alternative date of 20 December.
- 78 (126): 'Killed Mount Blount'.
- 79 (126) gives its usual 'Killed Mount Blount'. Although this was the only VC awarded in Hong Kong, there were two other recommendations: Gray of the RAF, and Forsyth of 2 Coy. HKVDC. Mackenzie in (24: 216) states that Ansari had been recommended for the VC for valour during the fighting but, credible though this is, no corroboration has come to light as yet.
- 80 (126) 'Killed Mount Blount'.
- 81 (126) 'Killed Mount Blount'.

- 82 Those buried at 562 The Peak were killed by a shell, having set up their radio in a front room — vulnerable to shellfire — rather than the back (118: 36). However, other records speak of burials at 526 Coombe Road. This is a Wan Chai Gap address, and perhaps more credible.
- 83 No. 1 and 2 Craters were in fact bomb craters on Borret Road, just below Bowen Road. These were created by the bombing on 17 December (142).
- 84 CAB 106/88, Captain Scriven 20 December 1941: 'Junction of Deep Water Bay–Repulse Bay road . . . Colour Sgt. Bond was killed and while it is known that a few other ranks escaped, the majority were wiped out.' No other 'Bond' appears relevant, but it is difficult to reconcile these two versions.
- 85 Although there is no proof, it seems reasonable that Minchin died with Lawson on this day.
- 86 (126) 'Killed North Point Electric. King's Road. December 19'.
- 87 Which also gives an alternative date of 18 December.
- 88 (126) 'Missing. Last known at The Ridge'.
- 89 (126) 'Possibly buried in communal grave on north east slope of Sai Wan Hill (16 bodies)'.
- 90 Previously James appeared in both the list of those with known and unknown graves.
- 91 (126) states Kirby was originally buried in the guard room, Stanley Fort, on 21 December.
- 92 (126) 'originally buried junction of Black's Link and Deep Water Road'.
- 93 (126) 'Missing Wong Nai Chung area near Jardine's Lookout'. There is some dispute as to whether RA West was actually co-located with Lawson's HQ.
- 94 More credibly, (126) states that he was killed at the Stanley Gap AA site area.
- 95 See Fincher's account in (136). (126) also records 'Pillbox 1 or 2 Jardine's Lookout', which seems to confirm the 19th.
- 96 (147) for 13 March 1947 claims he was killed at the 'Black Hole' by the mortar attack.
- 97 The *South China Morning Post* for 19 December 1946 carried four *In Memoriam* notices for 1941. That for Hoffman read: 'In loving memory of my beloved husband and our Dear Father James Joseph Hoffman of HKVDC No 3 Machine Gun Coy who died in action 19th December 1941. Always in our cherished thoughts. Inserted by his loving wife, son and daughters: Freddy, Elizabeth, Mabel and Jeanette.'
- 98 (126) 'Missing believed killed at south end Sir Cecil's Ride, WNCG'.
- 99 (126) 'KIA area of village north Jardine's Lookout'.
- 100 Though (126) claims 'KIA area of village north Jardine's Lookout' for both.
- 101 (126) claims 'KIA area of village north Jardine's Lookout'.
- 102 A note from the Manageress of the Repulse Bay Hotel states that an 'Unknown HKVDF [sic] (Grenovitch?)' was buried at the front of the hotel. Grenevitcz was also known as Hryniewicz.

- 103 (126) states: 'Killed in action at Sanatorium Gap. Buried at Mount Parker'
104 Armoured Car.
- 105 Hospital records record him under serial 11151 as Nazrulleh Khan, Naik.
- 106 (126) 'Missing 18 Dec 1941'.
- 107 Holliday had become engaged to nurse Brenda Morgan — killed by a shell on the 14th — in November.
- 108 (145: 131) says he died in hospital. Originally buried behind St Albert's Hospital (126).
- 109 (126) states that Stewart was buried No. 1 Crater, Borret Road 20 December, i.e. he died in BRH.
- 110 (126): 'Killed near Middle Gap area Dec 23'.
- 111 This may in fact have been a Japanese ambush, presumed to be fifth column as no one had expected the Japanese to move so far south so quickly. (126) states that Dickenson was 'Missing The Ridge area' on the 20th.
- 112 In CWGC records as RASC, but presumably Volunteer ASC.
- 113 The unit 'HMS *Hong Kong*' fails to turn up in any official documentation except CWGC.
- 114 HMS *Tarantula*, like *Cicala* and *Moth* an Aphis Class River Gunboat, was built by Wood-Skinner in 1916 under pennant T62. Hulked in 1941, it was expended as a target on 1 May 1946 by HMS *Carron* and *Carysfort*. Why one crewmember lost his life in Hong Kong in 1941 is a minor mystery.

7. PHASE V: PUSHING THE LINE WEST AND ENCIRCLING STANLEY

- 1 These comprised 23 Regular RASC, 19 Volunteer RASC, 38 RAOC, 1 2 Coy. HKVDC, 1 Middlesex, 1 officer of HQCC, and 16 Royal Rifles. A further 15 Royal Rifles who were recorded as KIA in Repulse Bay might also have lost their lives at Eucliffe. Three Artillerymen are also said to have been killed at The Ridge (126), but the dates quoted seem inappropriate. Fifty-three bodies are said to have been found in the Eucliffe area (95: 141), while it is generally accepted that some 30 more died in each of The Ridge and Overbays. The figures match reasonably well.
- 2 Extract from a short but powerful interview of Pte. Clifford L. Matthews, Winnipeg Grenadiers, kindly conducted for this book by his son John Matthews. Here he refers to the effect of the shelling on the 'Black Hole of Hong Kong'. Interestingly, the garrison included a second Clifford Matthews (of the HKVDC) who went on post-war to propose the popular theory that life on earth evolved from traces brought into the atmosphere by meteorites and dust from space.
- 3 Described in the War Crimes Trials as being 'a small building situated at the junction of Stanley Gap Road and a road leading up to Jardine's Lookout'

- (147). It has still not been possible to confirm the exact site, but most probably this was the building in the flat space immediately west of Parkview. In 1990, the building was still there. A few years later, just the floor existed. Today it is grass.
- 4 According to Japanese sources, the area was under artillery fire from the racecourse. Doi: 'The moment they spotted anyone near the [Wong Nai Chung Gap AA] gun position they instantly lobbed shells from the artillery position near the race track.' This would imply that the shell was a 6-inch howitzer fired by 25 Medium Battery HKSRA. On the other hand, at least two survivors of the 'Black Hole' are convinced that a mortar bomb was to blame. 'The prisoners, sick and wounded as well as those physically fit, were herded into a kitchen or mess hall, which was being shelled by our own trench mortars' (Sgt. Thomas Marsh, Winnipeg Grenadiers, reported in the *South China Morning Post*, 13 March 1947).
 - 5 (21: 171) transposes the brothers, but relatives insist that the correct version is the one above. Cliff Matthews (Winnipeg Grenadiers, rather than his HKVDC namesake) survives as an eyewitness. Harry Atkinson, another eyewitness, passed away in early 2002.
 - 6 It is not clear whether Wallis is referring to the GSO 1 (Newnham) or the GSO Intelligence (Boxer). The former is probably more likely.
 - 7 Possibly Lt. Tressider.
 - 8 This was the 1941 spelling.
 - 9 Later Wallis adds: 'It was evident that it had not yet been understood how weak in ability the Canadian troops were and how strong was the enemy strength and positions.'
 - 10 Peak Mansions was on the site of today's Peak Galleria.
 - 11 Today's building is a facsimile of the original, which in a monstrous fit of stupidity, was torn down in 1982. The garage on the opposite side of the road is the original.
 - 12 Usually reported as four naval ratings and one Middlesex OR. The naval contingent was probably HKRNVR, including Harrison, Richard Stuart, and C. R. C. Robinson (114: 48).
 - 13 Interestingly, every account of this engagement differs as to who first saw the Japanese at the garage. The longest account, beginning (114: 44), doesn't even mention Grounds, except, probably, in a reference to 'a mortally wounded British officer'.
 - 14 The version of this story that appears in Emily Hahn's *China to Me* (17) is considerably more romantic, and has Charles taking command of the 'leaderless' Punjabis and being shot leading an attack. Baxter's version is arguably the most credible, as there is no evidence that the Punjabis were leaderless, two officers (Thomson and Forsyth) being present. Baxter's version is also similar to Bennett's, and he shared a hut with Boxer, Price, and other officers in Argyle Street. Note that both Boxer and Bennett were fluent

- Japanese speakers, though the story of captured Japanese soldiers was probably no more than rumour.
- 15 Brigadier Wallis having ridden back to Stanley View on the pillion of a motorcycle in order to convey the order. This gun later also destroyed four mortars on Violet Hill (139).
 - 16 Some accounts refer to Brick Hill falling to the Japanese on this day. However, as any visitor to modern-day Ocean Park will note, Brick Hill covers an enormous area. The Middlesex positions that fell this day were very close to the road to Aberdeen. The HKSRA 17 HAA Bty. positions on the southern tip did not fall until Christmas Day. Holidaymakers should note that after capturing both positions, the Japanese bound and bayoneted the survivors.
 - 17 Presumably this was the composite D Coy. Platoon under Witham.
 - 18 The 228th had in fact prepared to attack that night, but the attack was brought forward to 17.00 because they were able to make use of the fog to hide their progress. They succeeded ‘without any serious resistance’ (122), implying that they simply occupied positions as the Royal Scots left them.
 - 19 Interestingly, the Fortress HQ message log (see Ch. 5, n. 7) only records a single call from Major Manners during the entire battle. This came at 14.10 on 21 December, complaining that firing from Stanley over the Repulse Bay Hotel had hit the servants’ quarters. The CRAOC message log reports one outgoing message to the Repulse Bay Hotel (picked up by Major Manners) from The Ridge at 17.45, also on 21 December: ‘Messrs Johnson & Blaver have arrived at their destination and are awaiting further instructions.’
 - 20 On this day at the Repulse Bay Hotel, Siu-Feng Huang notes (156) that: ‘still we could have our dinner consisting of 3 courses’.
 - 21 Wallis is often accused of a lack of respect for the Canadians in general, but in fact his frustration was mainly with the officers — and most especially with the Royal Rifles’ commander, Home (he actually recommended two other officers, MacAuley and Atkinson, for military decorations). Equally, the Royal Rifles often seemed to lack any confidence in officers, whether Canadian or British. In Wallis’s account of East Brigade, speaking of the Royal Rifles, he states: ‘It was clear from the fighting on 20 and 21 Dec that provided they had good leaders the men were brave enough and would follow.’ Weedon — a highly respected Middlesex officer — backs Wallis in this opinion: ‘[The Royal Rifles] were bewildered and didn’t know whether they were coming or going. But if they found an officer who appeared to be in control of the situation — and apparently I fitted the bill in that respect — they glued themselves to him and fought with quite extraordinary tenacity’ (91: 200). Of this particular withdrawal, Wallis is contemptuous of D Coy’s failure to bring back their 3-inch mortars — despite the fact that they were withdrawing over extremely steep and difficult terrain, in wet and slippery conditions, in the dark, under fire, and a 3-inch mortar barrel weighs over 100 pounds. For the sake of completeness, all such controversial elements

- of the relationship between Canadians and British in Hong Kong have been included in this work.
- 22 In the message log of the Commander, RAOC (see Ch. 5, n. 7), a message timed at 10.35 on 20 December reads: 'From DADOS [MacPherson] Ridge. As result of enemy ambush on Repulse Bay Road, following RAOC w/shop personnel believed missing, Capt Bonny (sic), Lieut Wilson, SM Read, S/Sgts O'Toole, Mecking, Cpl Flass, L/Cpl Colebrook. Remainder w/shop personnel at the Ridge.' As this is a hand-written entry, 'Flass' might possibly be 'Bliss' who is listed as lost on 24 December. The remainder survived the war, though 'Mecking' is in fact 'Meekings'.
 - 23 (126) gives a date of 20 December. Clearly he was brought to BRH, but whether he was DOA, or DOW from Wan Chai, is uncertain.
 - 24 Presumably Overbays.
 - 25 (126) again calls this 'artillery post Mount Blount'.
 - 26 (126) notes 'Killed Blue Pool road area', which is presumably where he was wounded.
 - 27 (126) gives an alternative date of 25 December.
 - 28 A note elsewhere in (126) claims that Grieves was last seen at Wong Nai Chung Gap.
 - 29 (145: 19) claims that Slay and others were originally buried at Repulse Bay Hotel on or about 18 December. A note from the manageress states he was buried outside the 'New Wing Pantry'.
 - 30 The notice in the *South China Morning Post* for this day strongly implies that these three were killed by a shell.
 - 31 While researching the occupants of the Repulse Bay Hotel at this time, I sent a provisional list to one of their number, Gloria Barretto. This quote is taken from her reply (132b: Barretto).
 - 32 Kidd's death is officially recorded as 22 December 1941, one of the 218 apparent errors in CWGC Hong Kong records. Some histories insist that this battle took place on the 20th, others on the 21st; however, the engagement in fact spanned both days. Boxer's hospital record is dated 20 December, and other eyewitnesses also give this earlier date. A check of Punjabi hospital records is shows 17 entries for wounds or unknown reasons on the 20th, and 16 on the 21st. Following Kidd's death, Gray took over command of the Punjabis.
 - 33 The AA positions at the summit of Shouson Hill are little altered from the state in which they were left in 1941. As recently as 2001, a Lewis gun magazine and a mortar bomb (blown up on site by the Explosive Ordnance Disposal) were found there. The steep and narrow steel-railed concrete path up which guns were pulled includes a metal loop showing serious shrapnel damage — as do the concrete walls of the site itself. However, access is difficult and may involve crossing through private property. One of the best ways to view the hillside up which the Punjabis attacked is from the cable car at Ocean Park.

- 34 Wallis had ordered two 2 Coy. machine-gun sections towards Notting Hill to support the advance. He also ordered D Coy. Royal Rifles over Bridge Hill to outflank the Japanese on Red Hill (139).
- 35 In July 1944, Goodwin — a New Zealander — made arguably the most courageous escape from Sham Shui Po camp.
- 36 According to Wallis, during this whole action he was acting as a runner, reporting the actions of the forward troops to Home who was in a house that he had made his headquarters (139).
- 37 (94: 115) maintains that Edwards was killed pulling Houghton to cover.
- 38 (139) reports that a Japanese officer killed in this fighting carried a photo of an Indian civilian, presumably a fifth-columnist.
- 39 Held by A Coy. Middlesex. It holds out until the 23rd.
- 40 (139) goes on to say that the wounding of this officer and F/Lt Thompson, plus the wounding or death of Bompas and all officers of No. 1 Coy. HKVDC in the vicinity, served to undermine morale. Note that later a mortar bomb hit St Stephen's College at Stanley (where Thompson was recuperating), broke his back, and almost killed him. He was lucky to survive the massacre that followed on the 25th (51: 71).
- 41 (139) states: 'Major TEMPLER R.A. had reported to Bde. Under Ft H.Q. Orders to assume command of [A Company, Royal Rifles], the Comdr of which Coy the G.O.C. had learned had been drunk in the R.B. Hotel during the morning [of Dec 20th]. Unfortunately Major TEMPLER let fall certain indiscreet remarks re Canadian inability to fight in the presence of the Adjutant [Royal Rifles].'
- 42 Sources vary over whether these were Bren or Lewis guns. Templer, quoted by Wallis in (139), says Bren.
- 43 Also spelled 'Templar' in some documents.
- 44 Overbays was owned by Sun Fo, son of Dr Sun Yat-Sen. The location is immediately north of the junction of Repulse Bay Road and Island Road. There is still a house there by that name.
- 45 (126) states: 'Stanley area Dec 23'.
- 46 Could be a mistyping for either 1 MB or 7 AA.
- 47 (90) states that 'A fifth battery was added to the 1st Hong Kong Regiment on 1st December 1941'. These are the only two mentions of it found during the research for this book.
- 48 Originally buried No. 1 Crater, Borret Road (126).
- 49 Black's Link fatalities are C Company.
- 50 Lt. Field of 12 Coastal Reg. RA had been injured on 14 December at Belcher's, with shrapnel wounds to thigh and elbow (164).
- 51 The Royal Scots were very familiar with this hill. (92: 89) points out that 'for about two years exercises were carried out in the Mount Cameron area'.
- 52 Penney (75: 31) gives credit for the negotiation of the surrender to Walker of the HKVDC RE. Walker had himself earlier been rescued by two

- courageous Winnipeg Grenadiers (Lt. Blackwood and Pte. Morris), who pulled him, badly wounded in the legs, to shelter. The Japanese praised these defenders, saying: 'The enemy fire from these positions was so heavy that not only was the advance checked but our troops were thrown into confusion' (95: 131). However, D Coy's positions were shelters rather than pillboxes and not designed for fighting from. The Japanese had therefore been able, early on the 19th, effectively to bypass them.
- 53 In the War Crimes trial reported in the *South China Morning Post*, Tamworth recounts that as this group of POWs was marched north, the Japanese singled out and bayoneted two or three men including the Canadian-Chinese chauffeur of Brigadier Lawson.
- 54 The summit of Mount Nicholson can be easily reached by the steps in the concrete catchwater just to the west of the built-up section of Black's Link near Wong Nai Chung Gap.
- 55 The easiest way to reach the top of Mount Cameron is the concrete steps by a waterfall three-quarters of the way along Middle Gap Road (south from Wan Chai Gap). Today the path is heavily overgrown and almost impassible (the only other human being I've ever met up there was also British!) but the first time I climbed it — in 1994 — I found a live .303 round, a spent Japanese 7.7 mm cartridge, and a large piece of Japanese bomb casing. Records show that 1,000,000 rounds of .303 ammunition was delivered to a single infantry battalion on 11 December, thus there are probably many more remaining on the hillsides. The other path, west from Middle Gap itself, is now quite unpleasant due to scree.
- 56 The gun was abandoned at about this time, after being disabled, because of heavy machine-gun and mortar fire (139).
- 57 Presumably Cpl. Goddard's pillbox (C Coy).
- 58 Ride of the Field Ambulance was given permission by the Japanese to search for wounded British soldiers five days after the surrender. In the area around The Ridge, Overbays, and Wong Nai Chung Gap, he found over sixty decomposing bodies of men who had been tied up and shot (57: 10). George Lemay reported, 'we went to a place called The Ridge along Repulse Bay Road 21–23. Near the retaining wall of the tennis court we saw a lot of army clothing lying around. When we looked over the wall down to a gully we saw the bodies that were lying scattered close to the wall . . . there is one in particular that I myself dragged by the legs and it parted in the middle. There was another body that I helped carry . . . and its head came off': WO 235/1030.
- 59 There is still a building by this name at the location.
- 60 See Appendix 17.
- 61 Siu-Feng Huang: 'Luckily we have among the guests a Mr Needa whose father might be Portuguese and mother Jap and whose profession was jockey. It was he who met the first Japs who came to the RBH and who acted as the interpreter for the whole community' (156).

- 62 This led to Riley being interned as a civilian in Stanley, to be repatriated to Canada in 1943 while his more sober comrades suffered in POW camps until August 1945. Interestingly, today he is well remembered by those who were children in camp for his skill in making wooden toys. This was not the first time had been in trouble, as (154) reports that he and Rifleman Wellman were found missing from their posts on 10 December.
- 63 Died as a POW in Japan, 17 February 1943.
- 64 Died as a POW in Japan, 18 October 1942.
- 65 (126) states 'killed Sir Cecil's Ride area' which is presumably where Callender was in fact wounded.
- 66 See also the list of 11 RAOC who died on unknown dates, but are also believed to have lost their lives at The Ridge, Overbays, or Eucliffe.
- 67 There is no record of any fighting at the Repulse Bay Hotel garage on this day. While not totally impossible, it seems that this is a (126) euphemism for Eucliffe. All these HKVDC RASC men were probably killed — like their regular counterparts — at The Ridge, Overbays, or Eucliffe.
- 68 (126) states 'killed Repulse Bay Garage area'.
- 69 See also the list of 13 RASC who died on unknown dates, but are also believed to have lost their lives at The Ridge, Overbays, or Eucliffe.
- 70 Edward and this William Cullen were not related. However, Edward Cullen was the brother of another William Cullen, of the ASC Coy. of the HKVDC, who was killed on 20 December.
- 71 (126) states that he was KIA at Repulse Bay.
- 72 Last seen Stone Hill (126), though (154) states that he was killed while occupying a position on Stanley Mound. It goes on to mention that Skelton was wounded at the same location.
- 73 (71: 238) describes how Dodds and his American wife Alice had come from Kunming in south China to Hong Kong for the Christmas holiday, and when the battle started he volunteered and lost his life. Until Alice was repatriated (probably in June 1942 with the other Americans), their two children John and Jennifer were stuck in Kunming with no idea of their parents' whereabouts.
- 74 (126) concurs: 'KIA at Repulse Bay Hotel'.
- 75 Ray Smith, C Company Royal Rifles, on the Japanese occupation of St Albert's Convent Relief Hospital, where he had been since being wounded by a bomb on 16 December. Luckily for him, the hospital took in and cared for a badly wounded Japanese officer who later died. (37: 64) describes how, when the Japanese took the hospital, a senior Japanese officer stood weeping by the dead officer's body, thus lending credence to Smith's belief that they were related.
- 76 Sister Mary Currie is credited with both following the tradition of wrapping the body in a Japanese flag, and ensuring that the Japanese entering the hospital were made aware of this. She was awarded the Royal Red Cross medal (73: 79).

- 77 Mogra succumbed to his wounds on 4 January 1942 — compound fracture of leg, multiple gunshot wounds, and toxæmia (145: 198).
- 78 The exact location is believed to have been just under today's Hong Kong Country Club.
- 79 The main unit charged with defending Fortress HQ was 17 Platoon, D Coy. Punjabis. D Coy's HQ was at 44, Kennedy Road (140).
- 80 This allowed them to cover Templer's withdrawal to Stanley. Templer's opinion of this platoon: 'A v. good bunch and the only formal unit at the Repulse Bay Hotel' (150).
- 81 This is from (139) which also states that at about 04.00 on 24 December Wallis finally spoke to Maltby about Home's demand. Maltby declined to speak to Home and asked, 'Will the Royal Rifles fight or not?' From all this it is clear again that Wallis's view of the Royal Rifles as a whole was coloured by the fact that he despised Home.
- 82 Mackenzie (24: 210) claims that there were a total of 35 British soldiers in the building at the time: a warrant officer of the RAOC and four wounded downstairs, and 30 men upstairs. Canivet and six men got away, leaving 28 dead. This figure of 28 may possibly (Mackenzie's arithmetic is problematic) include four Japanese.
- 83 There is some uncertainty as to the timing of events at The Ridge, Overbays, and Eucliffe. This book, based (hopefully) on all available information, assumes that The Ridge was overrun on the 22nd, Overbays early on the 23rd, and that the Eucliffe massacre took place on the night of 22/23.
- 84 As late as Christmas 1999, I bought a 1941 Bofors shell case from a junk shop in Hong Kong's Hollywood Road. Its condition indicates that it had been damaged and then corroded by years outside — very possibly having been buried at one of these sites. It stands on my desk as I write.
- 85 The Marines were south of Mount Parish (3: 49). The Punjabis and Rajputs held Mount Parish itself. Mount Parish was where the Wan Yan College stands today, east of the Kennedy Road/Queen's Road junction.
- 86 Demolished in 1991, the site now houses Lee Theatre Plaza.
- 87 Presumably this is Sgt. Richards, who was lost on the *Lisbon Maru* 2 October 1942.
- 88 (60: 154) contains a description of what is almost certainly Maxwell's burial.
- 89 Originally Delcourt was recorded twice in CWGC records, as having a known grave from 23 December and an unknown grave on 21 December.
- 90 'Alex Calman was my chum since school days living in Kowloon Dock staff quarters — West Terrace. He had an elder sister Barbara "Babs". My record shows no number but in No 2 Coy HKVDC. He was listed as M.B.K. [Missing Believed Killed] 23rd December 1941 in Repulse Bay' (132b: Gomes).
- 91 However, (126) maintains that he died of wounds *and* was killed at Wan Chai Gap. My interpretation is that he was wounded on the 19th in Wong Nai Chung Gap and died on the 23rd at Wan Chai Gap.

- 92 (126) states: 'Missing. Last seen at Mount Cameron area.'
- 93 (126) notes: 'Possibly buried in Old Cemetery Stanley, or St. Stephen's College.'
- 94 (126) claims: 'Missing. Stanley. South Bungalow area. St. Stephen's College.'
- 95 This is apparently (126) code for Overbays.
- 96 (126) bears the following note: 'Missing. St. Albert's Hospital. 23 DEC 1941. Taken away by Japanese.' This implies that Ray Smith's fears of being discovered in uniform may have been well founded.
- 97 (131) states: 'Upper Levels, 12.30. A Police Reservist was murdered in Caine Road near Peel Street whilst on Street Fountain duty.'
- 98 To add to the confusion, a Rajput sepoy by the name of Muhammad Khan also had this serial number, but died on 20 August 1943. Mohd, of course, is shorthand for Muhammad. In all cases but this I have converted the name to the longer version. There are other spellings of 'Muhammad' but I have used only this version following the convention used by CWGC. 'Si Pani Mohd' is today buried in Stanley Military Cemetery, with a unique military headstone bearing only the name.
- 99 Rothwell, of the Middlesex, was at HQ China Command where he was involved in the defence of the headquarters building. According to CWGC records, this mortar attack came on 19 December. However, Rothwell places it on 24 December, which is perhaps more credible. 'Sawyer' is Corporal Ken 'Tom' Sawyer of the RAVC (132b: Rothwell).
- 100 This gives an idea of the number captured up to that period, although an unknown number of others would have been at North Point, or held in small groups, at this time.
- 101 Later at Stanley, Leiper noted: 'The names of the nurses who had been raped were known only to the doctors who had taken the necessary action to ensure that there were no living consequences. Their names were never divulged and, by tacit and universal agreement among the internees, there was no speculation on the matter in general conversation' (5: 144). Although it cannot be proven that this is the nurse Selwyn-Clarke refers to, the *South China Morning Post* for 5 August 1947 carried the headline:
 SAW JAP HORRORS
 Former Hong Kong Nurse Commits Suicide
 TRAGEDY IN ENGLAND
 over an article which describes the suicide of nurse Ivy Lily Morgan who had 'suffered neurosis through her experience of atrocities'. Her father is quoted as saying that 'she had really been a war casualty'.
- 102 Interestingly, Allister describes a similar incident immediately after the surrender of Japan when he and other Canadian POWs held in a Japanese camp are successfully distracted by an official as they visit a women's hostel in a half-hearted rape attempt (118: 223).
- 103 It has proven very hard to get an accurate idea of the extent of the fifth-

- columnist problem — despite the fact that they are mentioned so often in the literature. However, Pok Fu Lam seems to have been a hotbed of activity for them, as Wiseman also reports being shot by them there (51: 20).
- 104 During the installation of air conditioning to the China Fleet Club in 1964, a live Japanese shell was found two feet below the reception room on the ground floor. It weighed some 400 kg and was a metre in length. As this was before the 1972 establishment of the Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) unit, it was removed by the police ballistics division.
- 105 Home was, of course, absolutely correct. By this time it would have been clear to everyone that Hong Kong would fall sooner or later. Following Churchill's orders might have sent a 'message' to the Japanese, but could never have changed the outcome of the fighting. Having said this, it is clear that many professional soldiers present never considered that it would be anything other than a fight to the death.
- 106 It is clear from recollections of Canadian ORs that they felt they were bearing an unfair amount of the fighting north of Stanley, while other units (e.g. the Royal Artillery) had troops who were contributing nothing. Wallis was of course using infantry as infantry and artillery as artillery, but bearing in mind that the Royal Rifles were only semi-trained as infantry, it is interesting that he did not consider using the artillery troops as infantry (which he eventually did with 1 and 2 Bty. HKVDC) earlier in the battle.
- 107 This sentence has been quoted out of context many times. In fact, Price is referring to the Royal Rifles bearing the brunt of the fighting up till this time on the East Brigade front (which — together with 1 and 2 Coys. HKVDC — they did), not the Canadians as a whole bearing the brunt of the fighting in the overall defence of Hong Kong. If one equates the 'seriousness' of the 8–26 December fighting with fatalities, one sees that the two Canadian battalions lost very slightly more men than their two British counterparts (the Middlesex and Royal Scots), but as a percentage of their forces the British losses were very slightly higher.
- 108 Stanley Fort was occupied by Japanese troops after the surrender. There were many post-war accounts of the ghost of a Japanese officer — complete with samurai sword — being seen in the officers' mess (118: 2).
- 109 I interpret (139) as stating that these were under Lt. Challinor.
- 110 The Stanley Platoon's unofficial commander was 'Crumb' Chattey, ex-Adjutant to the Middlesex. Pre-war, Chattey had been found guilty of homosexual activities and imprisoned at Stanley. The Governor agreed to release him as a fighting man, and Chattey displayed extreme gallantry in the battle for Stanley, after which he was re-imprisoned (72: 62).
- 111 The oldest surviving police station building in Hong Kong, it was a restaurant until the turn of the millennium.
- 112 Farrington actually survived the war!
- 113 As an indication of how bad the relationship between Wallis and Home had

- become at this point, (139) continues: '[Wallis] stated that he had also considered arresting or shooting Lt. Col. HOME and placing Maj. PRICE (2nd in C) in command.'
- 114 This house was in fact occupied by West of the Middlesex, who later broke out with his men.
- 115 Died on the *Lisbon Maru*, 2 October 1942.
- 116 Fox had been lucky to escape with his life from Jardine's Lookout earlier. The escape from Leighton Hill was — if anything — more difficult. After making it over the border to China, Fox fought with the Chindits in Burma. He escaped with his life once more and, post-war, joined Jardine. His new boss was Field, who had been his commanding officer in 9 Platoon, 3 Coy., HKVDC.
- 117 A 1931 government map shows Morrison Hill in the process of demolition. It was still in this semi-demolished state in 1941, though today it is completely flattened.
- 118 Both men died at the age of 62 during their internment at Stanley. Major (Rtd.) Charles Manners, OBE, died on 22 October 1944, and Andrew Lusk Shields died on 24 July 1944.
- 119 In his usual style, Wallis says: 'All at the Police Stn had held out till the last, except some of the Prison Warders Pl[atoon] whom it is feared were insufficiently disciplined to withstand such an attack' (139).
- 120 Bertram's book, which gives the most personal and atmospheric account of the Stanley fighting, has the advantage of having been written immediately after the eventual Japanese surrender.
- 121 Bungalow C (originally known both as Barton's Bungalow and Bungalow 4) still exists.
- 122 Elsewhere in (126) it states: 'Killed Chung Hom Kok area.' 2 Coy were indeed operating in this area, coordinating with B Coy. Royal Rifles.
- 123 It is not impossible that Onslow was killed at Lawson's HQ on 19 December.
- 124 His body was found post-surrender, with six others, by Pte. Wright (8: 23).
- 125 (126) states: 'Missing Wong Nai Chung area.' May also have been on the 19th.
- 126 Wakefield states that Kelly was killed outright by a stray bomb at Aberdeen (132a: Wakefield).
- 127 Of wounds sustained on 23 December (145: 182).
- 128 Bliss may be the man recorded as 'Flass' in the CRAOC message log, in which case he was presumably lost on 20 December. See n. 22 for 20 December.
- 129 Browne (132b: Browne) describes seven men, including RAVC, Navy, Royal Marines, Middlesex, and Royal Scots forming part of the HQ Defence Force and being killed by a direct hit on their slit trench on 18 December. He goes on to say that the trench was simply filled in at the time, as no identifiable remains were left. (126) confirms 'Buried behind Kennedy Road behind HQCC with Lance Corporal Cheal HKVDC'. Rothwell, an eyewitness, puts the date as 24 December (132b: Rothwell).

- 130 It is not impossible that a Winnipeg Grenadier might have become separated from his unit and ended up at Stanley; after all, from Wong Nai Chung police station to Stanley village is only three miles as the crow flies. But Carcary's involvement in the Stanley fighting is not corroborated elsewhere.
- 131 (133) records a Yip Young of the NSO dying of gunshot wounds at BRH on this day.
- 132 Browne was at HQ China Command, where he was in charge of local defence.
- 133 Foley would die on the *Lisbon Maru*, 2 October 1942.
- 134 The vaguely art-deco building still in use in 2002 is the original.
- 135 The previous day, Hunter — having recovered from his Golden Hill wounds — was being brought by road to convalesce at the Hong Kong Hotel. During an air raid, the vehicle crashed and his back was broken. He should in fact have left Hong Kong on 6 December, and had prepared the marriage certificate beforehand, but had instead been recalled. By luck his fiancée, Peggy Scotcher, had been seconded from China Command to the Bowen Road Hospital and was there when he was brought in. He remained in his plaster for a full year, but did not see his wife again until August 1945 (132b: Hunter). Peggy was the daughter of Capt. W. J. Scotcher, RASC, also of the garrison.
- 136 Probably nearer 22.00.
- 137 Browne: 'Lieut. James T. Prior — King's Own Scottish Borderers. All that I know of him was when I had the next bed to him in Argyle St. A middle-aged man who had been a solicitor in private life. A droll character with a dry sense of humour. His first words on waking up were "One two three up, four five six down" with corresponding movements' (158).
- 138 One of the escapees, Sub-Lt. Brewer, of HMS *Drake* (a Royal Naval Shore Establishment at Plymouth) was killed in a motor accident on Tuesday, 28 July 1942 on the A1 road in England at the start of his leave. He is buried at Gillingham Cemetery, Kent (8: 22).
- 139 Died as a POW in Japan, 7 November 1942.
- 140 Events are here recreated from War Crimes Trials depositions. Existing books describe the massacre as if it all happened at once, with the two good doctors shot at the door. In fact the best way to understand what happened is to remember that the hospital was literally on the front lines. The Japanese soldiers who bayoneted men in their beds were probably being told to 'clear the building, clear the building!' by their NCOs. They did this brutally, but only later did this massacre become deliberately sadistic.
- 141 Although 56 is the most quoted figure, it is very uncertain. Padre Barnett — ordered by the Japanese to cremate the victims — stated that he disposed of over 120 bodies on a makeshift pyre. However, many of these were the corpses of those killed in conventional fighting.
- 142 As a footnote, a friend of the author's who was a student at St Stephen's

- College in the 1980s told that as children they were informed that the murders took place on the hill outside the main block (which they used as a dormitory). However, although the nurses, three Canadians, and some of the stretcher bearers probably met their ends there, the majority of the murdered were lying in beds exactly where my friend slept forty years later. She also told me that there was a tradition of walking around the main block before retiring for the night, and that this was done every evening of the year except for Christmas Eve when the walk was cancelled and each child was ordered to take a Bible to bed.
- 143 Wright-Nooth, interned after the surrender in Stanley's Bungalow C, recorded: 'Our Bungalow, which was called Bungalow C, was in an awful condition. Aside from the graves, the vicinity had live small arms ammunition strewn around like so much confetti; many unexploded grenades (mostly Japanese), mortar bombs and rifle grenades had been left precisely as they had been abandoned. The building itself had a shell hole through the roof, all windows were smashed and the walls scarred by bullets and shrapnel. The water pipes had burst, the drains were blocked and overflowing, blood was spattered everywhere. Grenades had been thrown inside destroying furniture and setting fire to the wooden floor while smoke had impregnated every room with a black, greyish grubbiness. The bathroom was the worst. It contained so much blood, filth and human excreta that a respirator had to be worn when we cleaned it' (72: 87).
- 144 This building was on the corner of Arsenal Street and Gloucester Road. It was demolished in 1982 and replaced with Fleet House. Renamed in recent years, it is currently the Mass Mutual building.
- 145 Died as a POW in Japan, 24 October 1942.
- 146 Also known as Ginsburg.
- 147 Died on the *Lisbon Maru*, 2 October 1942.
- 148 Wright-Nooth continues: 'Everywhere was littered with the debris of war — steel helmets, web equipment, discarded boots and uniforms. A good pair of brown boots attracted my attention and I picked them up to try them for size. I noticed they were of excellent quality, made by Hawkes. Then to my horror I saw the name West marked inside them. They belonged to my friend Captain West of the Middlesex Regiment whom I knew had been killed at Stanley. Months later I learned that he had commanded that part of the last defence line at Stanley of which the bungalow was a part. I could not bring myself to wear them' (72: 87).
- 149 Guest offered Sutton a place in the 2nd MTB flotilla escape later this day. Sutton, however, refused on the grounds of age (he was nearly 60) and unfitness. Sutton died in Stanley camp, 22 October 1944.
- 150 Henderson had been the first Royal Rifle to have been wounded, by a bomb splinter while driving a truck to Lye Mun on 9 December (154).
- 151 The Order of St John lost fifty-four men and women in Hong Kong during

- the war, the majority dying at Wong Nai Chung Gap and St Stephen's College. However, as the dates of death were not recorded (with the exception of Potter who died on the *Lisbon Maru*), they are not listed here individually.
- 152 With the greatest respect to Sir Albert Rodrigues, I must tell the following story: I had spent several hours trying to decode his first handwritten letter to me — which included the above — and mentioned to a mutual friend that Sir Albert could hardly be blamed for his poor handwriting as he was recovering from a stroke. 'Oh no', said the friend, 'Albert's writing was always like that. He's a doctor.'
- 153 (139): 'Contrary to [Wallis's] orders, [Parker] sent only a small portion of his command (what appeared to be a weak Pl[atoon] of 15–18 O.Rs) by the concealed route round the enemy's right flank through TWEED BAY. Most of the Company advanced N.W. and NORTH across the open fire-swept ground and up through the CEMETERY.' Parker's diary explicitly disagrees, stating: 'I was to make a frontal attack and occupy the ridge behind the cemetery and retake the Indian quarters on the right . . . Mr. Breakey had the Indian quarters job on the right, Lieut. Frank Power and Sgt. George MacDonnel led No. 17 & 18 Platoon respectively on the left' (160).
- 154 We now know that S. K. Yee was not killed, and escaped from Hong Kong at a later date.
- 155 In (28) Guest states — very credibly — that the firing came from PB 12.
- 156 Goodwin goes on to describe how she went out to find the body of her husband, who had been killed in the fighting, and was then herself killed by the Japanese. She was almost certainly Mrs Orloff, a nurse whose husband was killed at the Salesian massacre. Bard (see above) describes her as being shot by the Japanese near the university on 24 December, in which case she could not have brought news of the surrender.
- 157 The preferred Japanese method of restraining nurses resisting rape was — it appears — to batter their heads with steel helmets until movement ceased.
- 158 (139): '[Wallis] was also considering blowing up the FORT by detonating the magazine should the enemy penetrate into the whole Fort area. Survivors would if time permitted by [sic] harboured with wounded in cover about 255445 near BLUFF POINT. This matter was a last resort and kept secret.'
- 159 Bliss's wife Phyllis is mentioned at length in (48).
- 160 (126) states 24 December, but this seems unlikely. 'Killed at science block' may possibly be a euphemism for the St Stephen's massacre.
- 161 Possibly 'Tsacharoff' in (42).
- 162 (126) gives a date of 24 December.
- 163 (126) carries the interesting comment, 'possibly escaped'.
- 164 CWGC gives 24 December as the date as they believed Blackaby had been killed at Maryknoll.
- 165 (126) adds: 'Killed rocks West Bay west of sports ground.'
- 166 (126) adds: 'Killed rocks West Bay west of sports ground.'

- 167 (126) adds: 'No. 1 Crater Borret Road', i.e. BRH. It gives a date of 20 December. His serial number is in the list of Middlesex personnel treated in military and civilian hospitals. Uniquely, all the entry has is the number; the name and rank are both given as '?', and a note at the end that says 'Died'.
- 168 (126) adds: 'B Coy. Probable place of burial — Prison burial ground Stanley.'
- 169 (126) simply states: 'Killed. Stanley area.'
- 170 His brother Maurice died in a POW camp in Japan, 29 January 1943.
- 171 (126) notes: 'Missing. Area south of The Ridge.'
- 172 (126) gives the alternate date of 19 December. By the wording, it appears that Matthews was buried at The Ridge, which makes 25 December unlikely.
- 173 According to a letter to his family, Woytowich was with B Coy. and was killed on 22 December during the Japanese attack on Mount Cameron.
- 174 Both Birkett and Fleet were attached to Major Gray's force. Fleet's death was predicted by a clairvoyant, and was said to have occurred after the invasion on 18 December (95: 41). The fact that they were buried at St Albert's Hospital (142) makes the date of 8 December highly unlikely. The 18th or 19th are more probable.
- 175 (126) agrees Maryknoll, but makes no estimate of date.
- 176 Confusingly, the same document also gives 23 December as date of death. He was initially interred at Stanley Manège.
- 177 (126) states that he was killed at Stanley police station, was unburied and possibly cremated.
- 178 It is assumed that these three men are the 'Indian orderlies' mentioned as losing their lives in the St Stephen's massacre on this day.
- 179 (130: 27) states that Forster was injured by a mortar bomb in Aberdeen on 23 December, and died in Queen Mary Hospital a few days later.
- 180 The CWGC originally had entries for him on 25 December as a civilian, and 26 December as a padre. His family was from Middlesex, though (150) notes that the Mr Moreton was attached to the Royal Scots. His biographical details are given as:
- Born 5 October 1905, grandson of the Revd. R. H. Moreton, MMS missionary to Portugal.
- 1929 Didsbury College.
- 1932 Aux Cayes, Haiti.
- 1933 Returned to England and returned to life as a Methodist layman, belonging to the Muswell Hill Circuit.
- 1936 Re-entered the ministry at Liverpool and then Dormanstown in the Redcar Circuit.
- 1938 Accepted call to the English circuit in Hong Kong.
- 'With his colleague Rev J E Sandbach, he worked, not only amongst civilians, but also amongst the men of the Forces, particularly in the Soldiers' and Sailors' Home. Happily married in 1939, his joy became full when a little son was born. Soon after, when the Japanese attack on Hong Kong began,

- Mr Moreton served as an ambulance driver, and in the performance of his duties he suffered a wound on December 18. The wound turned out to be more serious than was at first anticipated, and he died in a Christian hospital [in fact the Royal Naval Hospital in Wan Chai] in Hong Kong on Christmas Day, 1941, having laid down his life for his friends' (65: 164). Today he is buried at Stanley.
- 181 Doddridge took part in D Coy. Royal Rifles' attack on Bungalow C in Stanley on Christmas Day.
- 182 (139) contains this entry: 'As far as [Wallis] can now remember it was late on 24 Dec 41 that he learned with astonishment that some European nurses were at ST. STEPHENS SCHOOL. He had thought this hospital had been evacuated to TWEED BAY and STANLEY FORT and had no idea there had ever been any nurses there at all. An ambulance was detailed to rush to this hospital with water and evacuate all nurses. Three [sic] were brought back to STANLEY. Three others as well as Lt. Col. BLACK and another R.A.M.C. doctor were found to have been killed.'
- 183 The last wounded allied soldier was reportedly found by a burial party, in a hillside gully, approximately a week after the surrender (29: 45).
- 184 (72) mentions that he died in his sister's arms. She was an Auxilliary Nurse at Queen Mary Hospital.
- 185 Possibly a victim of the Overbays massacre, though neither date corroborates this.
- 186 A note in (126) claims that Wragg was originally buried front of the officers' mess, Murray Barracks.
- 187 The date of death of 26 December seems unlikely for all twelve men. This appears to be an attempt to account for certain individuals who went missing at some point and were not recorded at the time. It is also possible that up to five of these men were victims of the St. Stephen's massacre.

8. THE WEEK IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE FIGHTING

- 1 This incident is described in full in *The Road to Inamura*.
- 2 Salter lived in Hong Kong for some time before successfully escaping. See (157). He received much help from the Portuguese wife of Pte. J. Linton of B Coy. Royal Scots, among others.
- 3 He was found at the C Coy. Royal Rifles bunkers at Lye Mun, not at Wong Nai Chung Gap as often quoted. His companion, Gerry Cuzner, was killed (100: 304).
- 4 James Bertram, on this march as a member of 2 Bty. HKVDC, describes how there was a spontaneous three cheers for the Middlesex who led the way. In his own words: 'If any battle honours were to be salvaged out of the mess in Hong Kong, we knew where they should go' (101: 138).

- 5 The letter recommending an MBE for Thompson is in the possession of his son, Peter. It goes on to say: ‘The possession of this money proved of inestimable value, being used for the purchase of food and amenities for prisoners of war, most of whom were destitute.’ The recommendation was approved.
- 6 (44: 119), quoting Japanese sources, states that 11,241 POWs were captured in Hong Kong. Together with the approximately 1,550 who were killed, that would give a garrison of 12,791. It is unlikely that this includes police (who were interned at Stanley), Chinese volunteer sailors who were dispersed before the surrender, and the Chinese and Portuguese soldiers who disappeared soon after.
- 7 Wiseman in (51: 53) describes how his friend I. J. ‘Kiwi’ Blair of the Punjabis (who had helped build up the Z Force stock piles on Tai Mo Shan) had planned to use these to escape, but changed his mind when ‘several “Z Force” men arrived in Camp, having walked out of the hills and given themselves up to the first Nips they had met, on the somewhat dubious grounds that once the dump’s supplies had been exhausted they had no other choice.’ The junior Z Force members were apparently protecting their seniors with this cover story.
- 8 BAAG received a message from Waterton and other ex-GPO staff interned in Stanley, 27 June 1943, stating simply: ‘We and all others of the wireless section are keeping fit. We have received no mail so far. Mrs F. K. Garton died during the hostilities.’
- 9 This, of course, would imply an earlier date.
- 10 (126) gives an alternative date of 24 December.
- 11 Post-war, four bodies were found near Tai Po. Three appeared to be European men, and the fourth a Chinese lady. Some men did simply walk out of North Point (Mulligan, for example). This is speculation, but perhaps Hall, Stokes, and two companions failed on an early escape attempt and met their deaths at Tai Po.
- 12 (155) states that Gunn was wounded by a mortar bomb at 05.00 on 21 December while visiting the LMG position at Wong Nai Chung Gap with Blackwood (who was also wounded).

10. EPILOGUE

- 1 Lord Lawrence Kadoorie, quoted in (97: 159).
- 2 *South China Morning Post*, Saturday, 29 September 1945.
- 3 *South China Morning Post*, front page headline, Monday 1 October 1945. It should be noted that at least as late as February 1947, the *South China Morning Post* still carried requests for information about wartime graves. The Roll of Honour was produced in that year.

APPENDICES

- 1 (126) states: 'Dec 25. Killed west side Wong Nai Chung gap' as 40 Coy. The date makes little sense.
- 2 Activities of this unit during the fighting do not seem to have been recorded. Even its formation, just a few days before the start of hostilities, hardly receives a mention. The next mention of the unit is in BAAG records, thanks to the large number of Hong Kong Chinese Regiment men who escaped to China and rejoined British forces there. Many ended up in Burma with the Chindits.
- 3 However, (126) gives a date of 30 January 1942, and notes that Dixon was buried at Stanley Military cemetery.
- 4 These three records in CWGC now show a date of 1 December.
- 5 As noted in the text, not all HKSRA batteries listed in CWGC casualty returns actually existed. They have been left here for completeness. Key: Plain text — a documented HKSRA unit, underlined text — a regular artillery unit presumed part manned by HKSRA, *italic text* — unknown or errors.
- 6 Note: Indian officers holding the King's commission were equal to their British counterparts. Viceroy Commissioned Officers, however, were equivalent to the following British ranks:

Subadar Major	= Captain
Risaldar/Subadar	= Lieutenant
Jemadar	= 2nd Lieutenant
Other ranks:	
Dafadar/Havildar	= Sergeant
Naik	= Corporal
Lance Naik	= Lance Corporal
Sepoy	= Private
- 7 See Appendix 17 for Police Launches.
- 8 These are the two most likely VCOs mentioned. However, a third possibility would be Jemadar Ratan Singh.
- 9 Witnesses saw Kilfoyle killed on the march to North Point.
- 10 A third-hand description of this massacre may be found in (42: 241).
- 11 After the surrender, Ride states that he saw fifty bodies on the road, six being Middlesex. These may well have been the Middlesex attached to the Hong Kong Chinese Regiment. CWGC internal records also show that five RAF men disappeared near The Ridge on 20 December.
- 12 It must be accepted that it has not been possible to precisely separate The Ridge, Overbays, and Eucliffe fatalities. This is the best model currently available, though some mistakes are certain to have been made.
- 13 It is uncertain whether the defenders of PB 14 were killed in combat or after.
- 14 Some 75–150 bodies were cremated after the surrender (depending on which

- account is read), but these included soldiers killed in the fighting around Stanley (965 Defence Bty., for example).
- 15 The St John's Ambulance staff killed are recorded on a memorial at today's headquarters. Unfortunately no dates of death are quoted; therefore we cannot say which of the fifty-five listed there died in this massacre. The eight Chinese victims quoted are — as usual — apparently unnamed in British records. The real mystery here is: who are the fifty-six or so claimed killed in bed? It is certainly possible that some deaths recorded at other places on the 25th and 26th (especially the list of Royal Rifles on the 26th) in fact lost their lives here. However, it is strange that this most infamous massacre has been the hardest to match with records.
 - 16 Some sources claim as many as eleven or even sixteen; one source says one captain, four or five lieutenants, three sergeants, two corporals, and one private. It is possible that four members of 8 Coastal Regt. RA lost their lives here too.
 - 17 (139) says: 'It is almost certain that both these officers [Scantlebury and Newman], together with Sjts. Baker, Harvey and Morton, were killed at this stage. No reliable report can be obtained and some obviously coloured stories are impossible to believe.'
 - 18 While all the other pilots were American, Kantzow was Australian. Post war he went on to co-found Cathay Pacific Airways.
 - 19 The difference between this total, 1,526, and that in Appendix 5, 1,589, is largely made up by the civilian deaths recorded in the latter number.
 - 20 The Police War Diary states that — at least at Aberdeen — civilian bodies were also dumped in the sea during the night, when collecting them in the day started to prove too dangerous (131).
 - 21 Alec Maxtone Wright Scott, Pilot Officer, 605 Squadron, killed 2 January 1941.
 - 22 Possibly George Henry Fowler, killed with 136 Squadron in India on 16 September 1943.
 - 23 Pilot Officer Polglase was killed on 3 May 1940.
 - 24 A 'John Frederick Wright' was killed with 56 Squadron, 26 January 1942
 - 25 A Pilot Officer 'William Edgar Peers' was killed on 58 Squadron, 15 January 1941.
 - 26 A 'Jack Canning' was killed as a Sergeant with 424 Squadron, 29 June 1943.
 - 27 A 'David McClean Cameron' was killed as a Flying Officer with 422 (RCAF) Squadron on 19 December 1942.
 - 28 A 'Bernard Castle Curtis' was killed as a Pilot Officer with 99 Squadron on 31 July 1941.
 - 29 A 'David Fisher Davies DFM' was killed with 138 Squadron, 8 January 1944.
 - 30 A 'Frederick George Neill' was killed in 221 Squadron on 12 April 1941.
 - 31 Buried at Kirkwall (St Olaf's) Cemetery, Orkney.

- 32 A 'Robert William Lamont' of HMS *Rosaura* died 18 March 1941.
- 33 A 'W. Milne R.A.N.' died on 12 September 1944, HMAS *Perth*.
- 34 An 'Alan Albert Pollock' of HMS *Landrail* died on 5 January 1944.
- 35 See text for HMS *Tenedos* and HMS *Stronghold*.
- 36 Married to Pte. F. F. A. Dunnett of the HKVDC ASC.
- 37 Married to Engineering Capt. F. B. Minhinick, RN.
- 38 Married to Bennie Proulx of the HKRNVR.
- 39 Married to Wilmer of the HKVDC.
- 40 According to (75: 31).
- 41 Some sources state that a total of four RA officers were lost here.
- 42 Kehmosu was later killed in New Guinea, where the entire battalion was annihilated.
- 43 I am indebted to Tony Williams for filling in many of these details. He points out that the 4-inch (naval) gun's range could be as high as 59,500 feet depending on the mounting, and the shell weight could be up to 35 lb depending on the model. The 4.7-inch QF range could be as high as 50,910, and the 6-inch (naval) range could be up to 77,400 with a 112 lb, shell depending on the model.
- 44 Collinson, Chung Hom Kok, Bluff Head, Pak Sha Wan, Stonecutters, Jubilee, Belcher's Upper.
- 45 Including armed forces. These figures were compiled by the ARP and are quoted in (79: 212).
- 46 During the fighting, the Middlesex lost 131 men dead from a strength of 728, or 18 per cent. The Royal Scots lost 115 of 734: 16 per cent. The Royal Rifles lost 127 of 963: 13 per cent. The Winnipeg Grenadiers lost 131 of 869: 15 per cent.

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