

= Stanley Internment Camp =

Stanley Internment Camp (Chinese : ?????) was a civilian internment camp in Hong Kong during World War II . Located in Stanley , on the southern end of Hong Kong Island , it was used by the Japanese imperial forces to hold non @-@ Chinese enemy nationals after their victory in the Battle of Hong Kong , a battle in the Pacific campaign of World War II . About 2 @, @ 800 men , women , and children were held at the non @-@ segregated camp for 44 months from early January 1942 to August 1945 when Japanese forces surrendered . The camp area consisted of St. Stephen 's College and the grounds of Stanley Prison , excluding the prison itself .

= = Evacuation and arrival at camp = =

In 1939 , the British government had drawn up evacuation plans for the British and other European residents of Hong Kong , which was a Crown colony of the United Kingdom (UK) at the time . The War Office by the Chief of the Imperial General Staff thought the city would inevitably fall to Japanese forces in the event of an attack , so it should not be reinforced with more defensive forces . The presence of a large number of British women and children would have been an " embarrassment " for the government when the Japanese forces take Hong Kong , and additionally it was thought the internment of thousands of British civilians would cause unnecessary suffering and serve the Japanese as propaganda material . In July 1940 , the colonial government of Hong Kong received orders from the UK to proceed with the evacuations . By 3 August , all service families and registered non @-@ service British women and children were moved to the Philippines . However , the hurried compulsory evacuations prompted criticism from many evacuees , their husbands , and their employees , who felt the evacuations were premature and unnecessary . According to Bernice Archer and Kent Fedorowich , respectively of the University of Essex and the University of the West of England , the local Chinese population were angered by their exclusion from the evacuations and condemned the plans as racist . Additionally , the plans excluded British passport holders who were not of European ancestry . Amidst the criticism , the government subsequently made the evacuations non @-@ compulsory . Existing evacuations already ordered were cancelled provided evacuees volunteered for auxiliary roles , such as nursing or administrative work .

On 8 December 1941 , Japanese forces attacked Hong Kong , marking the start of the Battle of Hong Kong . Seventeen days later , on Christmas Day of 1941 , which came to be known as " Black Christmas " , the Hong Kong government surrendered , and Hong Kong came under Japanese occupation . On 4 January 1942 , a notice appeared in an English @-@ language newspaper that all " enemy nationals " were to assemble on Murray Parade Grounds . Many people did not see the notice , but about 1 @, @ 000 people were eventually gathered on the grounds . In addition to those who gathered voluntarily , there were people forcibly removed from their homes .

The people assembled were marched to and initially interned in hotel @-@ brothels on the waterfront near the present @-@ day Macau Ferry Pier . The conditions there were dirty and overcrowded , and the food was poor . After 17 days , the internees were taken by boat to Stanley . The " enemy nationals " who failed to assemble on Murray Parade Grounds avoided internment at the hotel @-@ brothels . However , by the end of January , most of the civilians to be interned were moved to Stanley . Upon arrival at camp , the internees discovered little was prepared for them there . There were no cooking facilities , no furniture , little crockery or cutlery . The toilet facilities were dirty , inadequate , and without water . The rooms were soon overcrowded with random assortments of people unrelated to each other , and with little attention paid to hygiene or public health .

= = Camp grounds = =

The Stanley site was chosen by the Japanese through consultation with two Hong Kong government officials ? Dr. P. S. Selwyn @-@ Clarke , Director of Medical Services , and F. C. Gimson , the Colonial Secretary . Located on Stanley Peninsula , which was about nine kilometres from the city at the time , the camp consisted of St. Stephen 's College and the grounds of Stanley

Prison , excluding the prison itself ; the prison was used by the Japanese authorities to hold what they considered " criminals " from Hong Kong . Several hundred internees lived at St. Stephen 's , while the majority of them lived on the prison grounds . Prior to Japanese occupation , St. Stephen 's was a secondary school whose facilities , in addition to classrooms , included an assembly hall , bungalows for teachers , and science laboratories . Over twenty internees occupied each bungalow , which was built for one family , and more than that occupied each science laboratory , living between partitions of sacking and old blankets . Almost all the buildings in the camp were used for housing .

Certain buildings and areas on the prison grounds had specific functions :

The Prison Officers ' Club was used for multiple functions ; it was used as a canteen , a kindergarten , Catholic church , and recreation centre .

Two main divisions of quarters existed ? the Warders ' Quarters and the Indian Quarters . Before the war , the Warders ' Quarters housed European warders , with large flats designed for one family each , and the Indian Quarters housed Indian prison guards , built with smaller flats . An average of thirty internees lived in each Warders ' Quarters flat , and an average of six internees lived in each Indian Quarters flat .

A building which had housed single Indian warders before the war was turned into a hospital called Tweed Bay Hospital .

Two houses , originally used as homes for the prison superintendent and the prison doctor , were turned into the Japanese headquarters for the camp .

The cemetery on the grounds became a popular spot for quiet relaxation as well as a place for intimate meetings between male and female internees .

= = Life at camp = =

The internees numbered at 2 @, @ 800 , where an estimated 2 @, @ 325 to 2 @, @ 514 were British . The adult population numbered at 1 @, @ 370 men and 858 women , and children 16 years of age or younger numbered at 286 , with 99 of whom were below the age of 4 . The camp was under the control of the Japanese Foreign Affairs Department , but according to historian Geoffrey Charles Emerson , the Japanese forces had not made plans for dealing with enemy civilians in Hong Kong . As such , the camp was provided with few necessities , and the internees were left to govern the camp themselves . Committees were formed for such matters as housing , food , and medical care . The national groups remained mostly independent of each other except for matters of welfare and medical care . Very few government servants were selected to serve on these committees , due to anti @-@ government sentiments ; most internees blamed the government for the quick surrender of Hong Kong .

The biggest concern was food ; ensuring there was enough food occupied most of the internees ' time . Little food was provided by the Japanese authorities , and it was of poor quality ? frequently containing dust , mud , rat and cockroach excreta , cigarette ends , and sometimes dead rats . Everyday , the internees were served rice congee at 8 am , and meals consisting of rice with stew at both 11 a.m. and 5 p.m. Additionally , they relied on food mailed from friends or relatives in the city , Red Cross aid , garden @-@ grown vegetables , and bought food from the canteen or the black market .

Another concern was the health and medical care of the internees . Although medical facilities were inadequate , the internees counted amongst them about 40 doctors , 2 dentists , 6 pharmacists , 100 trained nurses , and a large number of volunteer auxiliary nurses . Because of this , according to historian G. B. Endacott , no major epidemic occurred . The most common sickness amongst the internees were malaria , malnutrition and its associated diseases , beriberi , and pellagra . The shortage of medical supplies and equipment posed a challenge for those in charge of medical care , with the lack of soap and disinfectant being a particularly troublesome concern .

The women and children contributed to a sense of normality as their presence provided conventional social , family , and gender relations . The internees believed the children 's presence made them less selfish , as it forced them to think of the latter 's welfare . The women organised

Christmas and birthday celebrations . Other diversions such as musicals , plays , recitals , and variety shows were also staged . Although the camp lacked books and educational equipment , the teachers and educational administrators amongst the internees were able to provide lessons for the children at the primary and secondary levels . Additionally , extensive adult education was available for the adults : language courses for Chinese , Malay , and French , and also lectures on photography , yachting , journalism , and poultry @-@ keeping . In addition to the personal diaries kept by internees , many of them now held by the Imperial War Museum , a record of life in the camp was created using a double bed sheet . The Day Joyce Sheet was embroidered and appliquéed with 1100 names , signs and figures including a diary in code .

= = Deaths = =

Records show that 121 internees died in the camp , mostly due to illness , with half the deaths being of internees over the age of 50 . There were also a few accidental deaths . Two internees died from falls and one child had drowned . The worst camp accident occurred on 16 January 1945 , when an American plane accidentally bombed Bungalow 5 at St. Stephen 's College , killing 14 internees . These internees were buried at Stanley Military Cemetery .

Another seven internees were executed by the Japanese authorities . These internees had possessed a radio set which they used to pass messages in and out of camp . The radio was discovered by the Japanese and the internees were arrested . The other internees were forced to watch their public torture . Military trials were subsequently held and on 29 October 1943 , some of the internees were executed by being shot and at least one , John Fraser , was beheaded . Aside from this , the Japanese authorities had executed by decapitation , three Chinese policemen for bringing cigarettes and tobacco to the camp 's internees .

= = Escape attempts = =

A number of factors made escape attempts daunting for the internees ; they would have to navigate through Japanese @-@ occupied territory , find food , and , as few internees actually spoke Cantonese , they would also have to deal with language difficulties in Hong Kong if they succeeded in escaping . Despite the difficulties , there were three major escape attempts , with two being successful in March 1942 . One group of eight internees escaped on a small boat to neighbouring Macau . Another group , consisting of two internees , escaped through the New Territories and into mainland China . The third group , four policemen , in April 1942 managed to escape the camp grounds but were caught within a few miles of camp . They were subsequently imprisoned and released back to camp after a few weeks .

= = Early Repatriations = =

Repatriation was one of the two most talked @-@ about subject at camp (the other being the subject of food) . On 6 May 1942 , the Japanese authorities informed the internees repatriation for the Americans would take place on 15 June . Japanese treatment of the American internees improved during this period before the actual repatriation took place ; more and better food was given to them , and they were allowed contacts with Chinese friends outside of camp . American journalists were interviewed by a Japanese news agency and asked questions about the war and the camp . The internees came to find out later the interview became war propaganda for the Japanese , in the form of an article claiming that American journalists had complimented the Japanese military and the camp itself , stating the camp was " probably the most comfortable in the world . " It was not until 29 June that repatriation for the Americans finally took place , after Japanese and Thai citizens held in the US and South America boarded ships in late June in preparation for exchange of internees . Those being repatriated were given smallpox vaccination , cholera inoculation , and thorough medical examinations . No books , bibles , diaries , or addresses were allowed to leave with the Americans , but the remaining internees were each allowed to write a

150 @-@ word letter for the Americans to take with them . The American internees boarded the ship , the Asama Maru , along with other Americans who had been allowed to stay in Hong Kong outside of the camp . After picking up Americans for repatriation from other locations in Asia , the Asama Maru arrived at Maputo , Mozambique (then called Lourenço Marques) on 22 July , where the Americans and Japanese exchanged internees . The Americans were to finally reach New York City on 25 August . Reportedly a total of 377 Americans were repatriated from Hong Kong .

Repatriation of Canadian internees and remaining American internees were announced in August 1943 (not all American internees had been repatriated in June 1942) . Preparations similar to the prior repatriation were made , including messages and reports to be delivered . The ship , the Teia Maru , reached Hong Kong on 23 September , taking on board 73 Canadian internees , 24 American internees , and 13 Latin American internees . The ship sailed to Goa , where an exchange of prisoners and internees with Japan took place .

There were indications and notices to the British internees that their repatriation was possible ; Gimson told them a Swiss Red Cross representative had spoken " encouragingly " about repatriation , the Japanese authorities twice informed them (on 24 May 1943 and 2 November 1943) that they would be repatriated , and 25 May 1943 issue of the Hong Kong News reported negotiations for repatriation were " going on rather smoothly " . Despite this , the British internees were not repatriated until the end of the war .

= = Freedom = =

The internees were freed on 16 August 1945 , the day after Emperor Hirohito broadcast his acceptance of the Potsdam Proclamation in surrender . About two weeks later , the British fleet came for the internees , and several weeks after that , the camp was closed . Many internees went back to the city and began to adjust back to their former lives , and many others , particularly those of poor health , remained on the camp grounds to await for ships to take them away . Historian Geoffrey Charles Emerson wrote the " probable " reason the British internees were not repatriated before the end of the war was related to the Allied forces refusing to release Japanese nationals held in Australia . These nationals were the only sizeable group of Japanese nationals held by the Allies after the repatriation of the American and Canadian internees . They had been pearl fishermen in Australia before the war , and knew the Australian coastline well . Their knowledge would have been " militarily important " to the Japanese if an invasion of Australia was attempted , hence the Allied refusal to release them .

= = Compensation = =

In 1948 , the US government , through the War Claims Act , authorised the payment of US \$ 60 for every month an adult spent in an internment camp , and US \$ 25 per month for child internees . Some also received US \$ 1 per day for " missed meals " . In the UK , from 1952 to 1956 , about 8 @, @ 800 British internees , specifically those who normally resided in the UK when the war began , received a sum of ? 48 @. @ 50 as reparation . Payments for American and British internees were made from the proceeds of Japanese assets seized per the Treaty of San Francisco . Dutch internees each received a sum of US \$ 100 , with the payments funded by a separate agreement signed between the Dutch and the Japanese in 1957 .

The rise of Japan as an economic power and the opening of World War II files at the UK 's Public Record Office created a sentiment in the 1990s that not enough had been done to redress the suffering of internees and prisoners @-@ of @-@ war . In November 2000 , the British government announced a compensation scheme for British civilians who had been interned in World War II . The scheme called for a package of £ 167 million , and by February 2001 , the first raft of payments of £ 10 @, @ 000 were being made . Initially , the plan excluded British persons who had no " bloodlink " to Britain , a point of distinction that was made between those who were " British citizens " and those who were " British subjects " .

In reaction to this , former Stanley internee Diana Elias launched a civil action case against the

British government , alleging the distinction of " bloodlink " made by the compensation scheme was discriminatory , and that the Japanese authorities had made no such distinction in their treatment of the internees . Elias ' family , including her parents and her grandparents , were all holders of British passports . The " bloodlink " distinction , however , made her ineligible for compensation because she is of Iraqi Jewish ancestry . In July 2005 , the High Court in London ruled in her favour , and was subsequently backed by the Court of Appeals when the Ministry of Defence appealed the High Court 's decision . This allowed for hundreds of surviving civilian internees to collect the compensation earlier denied to them by the " bloodlink " distinction .

= = Post @-@ war = =

St. Stephen 's College was re @-@ opened in 1945 after the war . St. Stephen 's Chapel was built on the grounds of the school in 1950 ; the memorial window over its west door was a donation , serving to remember the suffering at Stanley Internment Camp .

= = Notable internees = =

Sir C. Grenville Alabaster ? Attorney General of Hong Kong
Morris Abraham Cohen
Kenelm Hutchinson Digby
Elly Kadoorie
Sir Atholl MacGregor ? Chief Justice of Hong Kong
Lewis Morley
Hilda Selwyn @-@ Clarke
Francis Arthur Sutton