

(c) *Agents and Spies.*

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

(d) *Intelligence.*

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

(e) *Artillery Concentration.*

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

(f) *Maintenance of the Objective.*

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

(g) *Air Force.*

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

12. *Appendix B—Summary of Casualties.*

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

13. *Conduct of the Troops.*

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

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

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

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

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