

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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