

orders, however, did not reach one battalion of the 6/15 Brigade which was left behind.

By mid-day the front ran approximately from the hills east of the Bukit Timah Rifle Range on the right, along the line of the railway, then forward to the junction of Ulu Pandan and Reformatory roads and then south to a point on the coast north of Pasir Panjang Village.

526. By 0700 hrs. it had become clear that a dangerous gap existed between the MacRitchie Reservoir and the Racecourse which was not held by any of our troops. As a temporary measure I ordered a composite unit from the Reinforcement Camp to move up immediately and take up a position at the west end of the Golf Course. Later a troop of our light tanks pushed further west as far as Swiss Rifle Club Hill.

At the same time I ordered the Commander Northern Area to take over responsibility for this sector of the front as far left as a line exclusive Racecourse-Bukit Timah Road, and I ordered the 2 Gordons to move immediately from Changi to the Tanglin area and to come under orders of the Commander Western Area.

527. At 0745 hrs. 11th February Advanced Headquarters Malaya Command closed at Sime Road, which was now closely threatened, and moved to Fort Canning.

528. At about 0800 hrs. the Main Reserve Petrol Depot east of the Racecourse was set on fire by enemy action and destroyed.

529. During the morning a letter from Lieut.-General Yamashita, Commander-in-Chief of the Japanese Army, was dropped from an aeroplane calling upon me to surrender the fortress. I made no reply to this and reported to Headquarters, South-West Pacific Command as under:—

"Have received letter from Commander of Japanese Army asking for surrender of fortress. Letter was dropped by air. Have no means of dropping message so do NOT propose to make reply which would of course in any case be negative."

530. To meet the threat developing from the west, the Commander Northern Area decided to withdraw units from the beaches held by the 18 British Division and organized a force under Brigadier Massy Beresford, known as "Massy Force." It consisted of three infantry battalions, a light tank squadron, a battery of artillery and a detachment of mechanized cavalry. It was given the dual task of (a) securing the pumping stations at the eastern ends of the Peirce and MacRitchie Reservoirs, and (b) filling the gap between the MacRitchie Reservoir and the right of Tom Force. Later in the day, the second task became the more important, but strong patrols were maintained between the two reservoirs to prevent infiltration. Units of the force were moved into position as they reached the rendezvous east of MacRitchie Reservoir.

531. During the morning a strong enemy attack developed against the 22 Australian Infantry Brigade, now reduced to a few hundred men only, which was in position north of the junction of the Reformatory and Ulu Pandan roads (about one mile south of Bukit Timah Village). Fierce fighting went on in this area throughout the day during which the

brigade held its ground most gallantly in face of infantry attacks supported by aerial bombing, artillery, mortar and small arms fire.

532. Further to the south the enemy penetrated as far as the Buona Vista 15 in. Battery which was destroyed, the crew subsequently fighting as infantry.

533. During the evening 11th February Tom Force, which was on a very extended front, was withdrawn to more concentrated positions astride the Bukit Timah Road with the right battalion in the Racecourse area and the left south of Racecourse Village. The gap between Tom Force and the right of the 22 Brigade was filled by an Australian battalion and later by 2 Gordons.

534. In the Causeway sector there was no change in the situation during the morning. Our artillery succeeded in keeping the gap in the Causeway open and at the same time inflicted numerous casualties on enemy parties trying to repair it.

A project to recapture Bukit Panjang Village with the 27 Australian Brigade Group, in order to ease the pressure on the Bukit Timah front, proved abortive. That Group was at this time too dispersed for any co-ordinated action.

During the day enemy troops penetrated between the 28 and 8 Brigades towards Nee Soon Village and at 1600 hrs. the Commander 11 Indian Division was instructed by the Commander Northern Area that his task now was to protect the left flank of the 18 British Division by holding a line from the River Seletar to Peirce Reservoir. He was to take immediate steps to put this plan into effect.

During the night 11th-12th February 11 Indian Division fell back to the line River Simpang-Simpang Village—inclusive Sembawang aerodrome—inclusive Seletar Reservoir.

535. The following inter-formation boundaries were fixed as from 2359 hrs. 11th February:

(a) *Between Northern Area and Western Area.*—The River Namly south of the Bukit Timah Road. Tom Force passed from command A.I.F. to command Massy Force.

(b) *Between Western Area and Southern Area.*—Inclusive to Western Area the Ulu Pandan Road.

536. During the period 9th-11th February the Johore 15 in. Battery and the Connaught 9.2 in. Battery had co-operated by shelling the Tengah, Johore Bahru and, later, the Bukit Timah Village areas. The fire, most of which was with A.P. shells, could of course not be observed but from reports subsequently received it is believed that heavy casualties were inflicted on the enemy by these guns.

537. The loss of the food and petrol depots and dumps in the Bukit Timah area, in spite of all our efforts to hold them, was a very serious blow. We now only had about 14 days' military food supplies in the depots which remained under our control. As regards petrol, so little now remained that I issued an order that no further supplies, either Army, Air Force or Civil, must be destroyed without my permission.

538. The Indian Base Hospital at Tyersall was set on fire by enemy action and practically burnt out. There were a large number of casualties among the patients.