

## British Troops in China <sup>(1)</sup>

Headquarters, British Troops in China

### Hong Kong Infantry Brigade <sup>(2)</sup>

Headquarters, Hong Kong Infantry Brigade & Signal Section

2<sup>nd</sup> Bn. The Royal Scots (The Royal Regiment)

2<sup>nd</sup> Bn. The Middlesex Regiment <sup>(3)</sup>

1<sup>st</sup> Kumoan Rifles, 19<sup>th</sup> Hyderabad Regiment <sup>(4)</sup>

### Other Troops in the Hong Kong Area

8<sup>th</sup> Heavy Regiment, Royal Artillery <sup>(5)</sup>

(H.Q., 12<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup> & 30<sup>th</sup> Heavy Batteries, Royal Artillery and 'X' Heavy Battery, Hong Kong and Singapore Royal Artillery)

5<sup>th</sup> Anti-Aircraft Regiment, Royal Artillery <sup>(6)</sup>

(H.Q., 7<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> Anti-Aircraft Batteries, Royal Artillery)

1<sup>st</sup> Hong Kong Regiment, Hong Kong and Singapore Royal Artillery <sup>(7)</sup>

(H.Q., 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Mountain Batteries and 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Medium Batteries, Hong Kong and Singapore Royal Artillery)

22<sup>nd</sup> (Fortress) Company, Royal Engineers

40<sup>th</sup> (Fortress) Company, Royal Engineers

Hong Kong Signal Company, Royal Corps of Signals

12<sup>th</sup> Company, Royal Army Service Corps

Hong Kong Mule Corps, Royal Army Service Corps

27<sup>th</sup> Company, Royal Army Medical Corps

6 Section, Royal Army Ordnance Corps

Detachment, Royal Army Pay Corps

Detachment, Royal Army Veterinary Corps

Hong Kong Company, Corps of Military Police

The Hong Kong Volunteer Defence Corps (8)

Armoured Car Platoon, H.K.V.D.F.

No. 1 Company, H.K.V.D.F.

No. 2 (Scottish) Company, H.K.V.D.F.

No. 3 (Eurasian) Company, H.K.V.D.F.

No. 4 (Chinese) Company, H.K.V.D.F.

No. 5 Company, H.K.V.D.F.

No. 6 (Portuguese) Company, H.K.V.D.F.

No. 7 Company, H.K.V.D.F.

The Stanley Platoon, H.K.V.D.F.

1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Batteries, H.K.V.D.F.

5th (Anti-Aircraft) Battery, H.K.V.D.F.

Field Company Engineers, H.K.V.D.F.

H.K.V.D.F. Signal Section

Army Service Corps Company, H.K.V.D.F.

## NOTES:

1. China Command was a pre-war independent command, responsible for the British possessions of Hong Kong and Kowloon, and the British concessions in the Chinese cities of Shanghai and Tientsin. Command of the British Troops in China was a Major General's appointment. The Japanese forces attacked on 8 December 1941, and despite gallant resistance, the colony was forced to surrender on 25 December 1941. Few personnel escaped, with the majority facing four years in captivity.
2. The two British battalions were both based at Nagking Barracks on the Mainland. The Indian battalion was based at Whitfield Barracks on Hong Kong island.
3. The 1<sup>st</sup> Bn. The Middlesex Regiment was reorganised as a machine gun battalion in 1938. It had four machine gun companies, and raised a fifth ('Z') Company prior to the Japanese invasion.
4. This battalion left Hong Kong in November 1940. It moved to Rawalpindi, and later served with the 24<sup>th</sup> Indian Infantry Brigade in Iraq and Persia.
5. This pre-war Regular Army regiment was based in Hong Kong. On 16 November 1939, 'X' Battery was redesignated as 36<sup>th</sup> Heavy Battery. On the same date, the 20<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> Batteries transferred to the newly formed 12<sup>th</sup> Heavy Regiment, Royal Artillery, which had been formed in Hong Kong. The regiment was redesignated as the 8<sup>th</sup> Coast Regiment, Royal Artillery on 14 December 1940.
6. This Regular Army regiment had been formed in 1935 in Hong Kong. It comprised the 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Anti-aircraft Batteries, but by December 1941, this had changed to the 7<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Anti-Aircraft Batteries and the 5<sup>th</sup> Anti-Aircraft Battery, H.K.V.D.C. The regiment was captured with the surrender of Hong Kong.
7. The Hong Kong Singapore Battalion Royal Garrison Artillery was formed in 1903 as a local enlisted regiment of artillery. This brigade was formed in 1934, and from 1935 onwards, it comprised two mountain and two medium batteries. It was redesignated as a regiment in 1938, and was captured with the fall of Hong Kong.
8. The Hong Kong Volunteers were originally formed in May 1854, as the local volunteer militia force funded by the British authorities. It was soon disbanded, but then reformed in 1864. In 1917, they adopted the title of 'Hong Kong Volunteer Defence Corps'. The armoured car platoon was formed in 1933 and was equipped with four locally built armoured cars. The infantry companies were raised with volunteers from the various nationalities living in Hong Kong. Again, few escaped with the fall of Hong Kong in December 1941.

Shanghai Area (1)

Headquarters, Shanghai Area

2<sup>nd</sup> Bn. The East Surrey Regiment (2)

1<sup>st</sup> Bn. The Seaforth Highlanders (Ross-shire Buffs, The Duke of Albany's) (3)

Detachment, Royal Engineers

Shanghai Signal Section, Royal Corps of Signals

Detachment, Royal Army Service Corps

Detachment, Royal Army Medical Corps

Detachment, Royal Army Ordnance Corps

Detachment, Royal Army Pay Corps

Shanghai Section, Corps of Military Police

The Shanghai Volunteer Corps

Shanghai Light Horse

'A' Company (British), S.V.C.

'B' Company (British), S.V.C.

'C' Machine-Gun Company

## NOTES:

1. Shanghai was opened up to international trade in 1842 with the Treaty of Nanking. The United Kingdom was one of the countries that took up concessions within the city. To protect British interests, British troops were deployed to Shanghai. With the increased threat from Japanese forces, the British troops were withdrawn from Shanghai in August 1940.
2. This battalion left Shanghai in late August 1940, and moved to Malaya, where it arrived on 1 September 1940. It was destined to remain in Malaya, later coming under command of the 11<sup>th</sup> Indian Infantry Division. It suffered heavy casualties in the retreat down the Malayan peninsula, with the remnants being captured with the fall of Singapore on 15 February 1942.
3. When the British forces were withdrawn, this battalion left Shanghai on 18 August 1940, moving to Hong Kong. It did not remain there long, moving to Malaya in November 1940. It joined the 6<sup>th</sup> Indian Infantry Brigade, but left Malaya in February 1941 to move to India. The battalion later served with the 23<sup>rd</sup> Indian Division in Assam and Burma.

Tientsin Area (1)

Headquarters, Tientsin Area

1<sup>st</sup> Bn. The Durham Light Infantry (2)

Detachment, Royal Engineers

Tientsin Signal Section, Royal Corps of Signals

Detachment, Royal Army Service Corps

Detachment, Royal Army Medical Corps

Detachment, Royal Army Ordnance Corps

Detachment, Royal Army Pay Corps

## NOTES:

1. The Tientsin Area was responsible for the British concession in the Chinese city of Teinstin (now called Tianjin). During the war between Japan and China, the city of Teintsin was captured by Japanese troops on 30 July 1937. Japan, however, respected the foreign concessions in the city and the British troops remained in situ until December 1939.
2. This Regular Army battalion was based in Tientsin, but one company was detached and stationed in Peking. The battalion left Teintsin in late December 1939, and sailed for Egypt, where it arrived on 31 January 1940.

## SOURCES:

Primary Sources

- H.M.S.O. *The Monthly Army List January 1930*  
Available From: Your Old Books and Maps: <http://youoldbooksandmaps.co.uk/british-army-lists-1901-1950.htm>
- H.M.S.O. *The Monthly Army List July 1937*  
Available From: Your Old Books and Maps <http://youoldbooksandmaps.co.uk/british-army-lists-1901-1950.htm>
- H.M.S.O. *The Half Yearly Army List for the period ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 1938*  
Available on-line at: <http://www.archive.org/details/armylisthalfjan1939grea>
- H.M.S.O. *The Monthly Army List April 1938*  
Available From: S & N Genealogy: <http://www.genealogysupplies.com/>
- H.M.S.O. *The Half Yearly Army List for the period ending 31st December 1939*  
Available on-line at: <http://www.archive.org/details/armylisthalfjan1940grea>
- H.M.S.O. *The Monthly Army List April 1940*  
Available From: S & N Genealogy: <http://www.genealogysupplies.com/>
- JOSLEN, Lieut.-Col. H. F. *Orders of Battle Second World War 1939-1945* (London, H.M.S.O., 1960 Reprinted London, The London Stamp Exchange Ltd., 1990) [ISBN 0 948130 03 2]

Secondary Sources

- BELLIS, Malcolm A. *Regiments of the British Army 1939 – 1945 (Artillery)* (England, Military Press International, 1995) [ISBN 0 85420 110 6]
- HUGHES, Major General B. P. *The History of the Royal Regiment of Artillery – Between the Wars 1919-39* (England, The Royal Artillery Institution 1992) [ISBN 0 08 040984 9]
- MILLS, T. F. *Land Forces of Britain, the Empire and Commonwealth.*  
Available on-line at: <http://web.archive.org/web/20070607051547/http://www.regiments.org/>  
[Accessed 19 April 2016]
- u/k *The Royal Artillery 1939 – 45*  
Available on-line at: <http://www.ra39-45.pwp.blueyonder.co.uk/>  
[Accessed 20 March 2016]