

Chronology of Events

British Troops in China

1939

December

British troops withdrawn from Tientsin. 1st Bn. The Durham Light Infantry move to Egypt.

1930

August

British troops withdrawn from Shanghai. 2nd Bn. The East Surrey Regiment move to Malaya, and 1st Bn. Seaforth Highlanders move to Hong Kong, and then move on to Malaya, and then India.

1941

16 November

Two Canadian battalions arrive in Hong Kong.

7 December

All units deployed to their battle positions.

06.45

Declaration of war announced.

8 December

Japanese troops bridge the Lo Wu river and cross into the Laffans Plain.

08.00

08.00

Japanese aircraft attack Kai Tek aerodrome.

19.30

British troops ambush a Japanese platoon inflicting severe casualties.

9 December

Japanese troops advance into Shingmun Valley. Fierce fighting breaks out at the Shingmun Redoubt, defended by the 5th/7th Rajput Regiment.

10 December

Kai Tek aerodrome evacuated. Intense shelling of Stonecutter Island starts. Japanese vessels sighted off-shore.

17.42

Last telegraph cables cut. Hong Kong isolated in respect of communications.

11 December

Japanese attack left flank of positions held by 2nd Royal Scots, forcing them to retire and opening up the Castle Peak and Taipo Roads. This leaves the 2nd Bn. 14th Punjab Regiment and one company of 5th Bn. 7th Rajput Regiment cut off. Counter attack by one company of 1st Winnipeg Grenadiers to fill the gap created by the Japanese advance.

Midday.

Withdrawal from the Mainland ordered by the GOC.

12 December	Most Indian and British troops evacuated safely from the Mainland, albeit they are very tired after four days continuous action.
13 December	A Japanese launch brings a flag of truce. Surrender rejected by H.M. The Governor.
15 December	British troops on Hong Kong island organised as two brigade areas, the East Infantry Brigade and West Infantry Brigade.
18 December 22.00	Japanese troops begin crossing to Hong Kong island. Severe, heavy shelling continues. Landings reported between Lyemun and North Point.
19 December	The Power Station, held by a force called the 'Hughesiliers' and other scratch troops is eventually captured. Leighton Hill is attacked and 'D' Company 5 th /7 th Rajputs is lost. Lyemun Gap is held by British troops.
08.00 – 09.00	Headquarters, West Brigade is overrun by Japanese troops. Brigadier LAWSON is killed, together with most of his staff.
11.00	Counter attack is ordered by GOC for 2 nd /14 th Punjab Regiment to link up with 5 th /7 th Rajput Regiment.
13.00	British troops withdraw from Tytam Gap area.
20 December 07.15	Winnipeg Grenadiers withdraw from Mount Nicholson.
09.30	Japanese troops surround Repulse Bay Hotel. Fierce fighting takes place, with hotel grounds finally cleared by troops from the Royal Rifles of Canada late in the afternoon.
17.00	Japanese troops force the Wong Nei Chong Gap, driving out a mixed force from the 2 nd Royal Scots and Winnipeg Grenadiers.
21 December 1941	Japanese troops infiltrate around the Repulse Bay Hotel.
25 December 1941	With Japanese troops in control of most of Hong Kong Island, the Governor agrees to surrender the colony.