

A True Christmas Story - A letter from George H. Calvert. Ex.Royal Hong Kong Regiment - Christmas Day - Hong Kong - 1941

On Christmas Eve Japanese officers were instructed by their Commander, Lt. General Sakai Takashi, having received personal instructions through Prince Asaka (responsible for the rape of Nanking), to strike terror into the military and civilian population. The orders came from Emperor Hirohito, through the Emperor's uncle, Prince Asaka.

During Christmas morning lone survivors from overrun British outposts were released to bring this message to General Maltby's attention, and to tell how their comrades had all been killed. By the afternoon Maltby could see that his forces were breaking up into pockets which the Japanese would be able to annihilate at leisure. With the approval of Governor Mark Young, General Maltby decided to capitulate. Early in the morning of Christmas day the Japanese captured St Stephen's College outside the walls of Fort Stanley. On its premises, on the orders of General Sakai, they began their occupation of the hospital. On their arrival at the Ed Cross hospital, and without one word of peace-parlay, they immediately shot and bayoneted the two Medical Officers, Dr George Black and Captain Whitney of the Royal Army Medical Corps. Captain Whitney had been walking towards the Japanese Officer in charge and was carrying a white flag plus a Red Cross flag, they were still wearing their white hospital clothing and Red Cross armbands. The Japanese entered the hospital, and amid the screaming, they ripped off bandages and field dressings from the wounded. They then proceeded to bayonet 60 of the 90 severely wounded laying helpless in their beds, one young Chinese nurse was bayoneted along with her patient when she tried to protect him.

Later, four Chinese and seven British nurses were put in one room, about one hundred orderlies, doctors and stretcher bearers were herded into another room. During the afternoon the male captives were taken out, two or three at a time, and were dismembered limb from limb. They chopped off fingers, sliced off ears, cut out tongues, and stabbed out eyes before they killed them, some were allowed to escape in order to tell the Fort Stanley defenders what was happening. In the other room the nurses were screaming, they were tied down on beds of corpses on which they were raped.

At some time in the evening the four Chinese nurses and then the three youngest of the English nurses were put to death by bayoneting. About then negotiations with the defenders at Fort Stanley began to progress, the last four of the elder British nurses were locked in a room and left alone. During the night Fort Stanley surrendered, and in the morning British prisoners were brought into the hospital to clean up. It was then that they released the four surviving, gibbering nurses. The people cleaning up waded in blood as they gathered the corpses from the execution room to prepare them for burial. They carried away an hysterical British Lieutenant who was the husband of one of the three British nurses who had been abused and then killed. For the first of the Allied war captives, the years of imprisonment had begun, and for some of the surviving nurses, years of brothel duty for Japanese soldiers began. Sadly this is not the end of the horror Christmas Story, there were other hospitals, and a Convent, involved in similar atrocities by the Japanese invaders. i.e. Silerian Mission: The Ridge at Wong Nei Chong Gap: Eucliffe Castle: Repulse Bay and the Jockey Club at Happy Valley.