

Pacific Theatre

Part 13: Singapore

*In which we look at “the worst disaster and largest capitulation”
in Britain’s military history.*

by Lestrade aka Unpopular Opinion

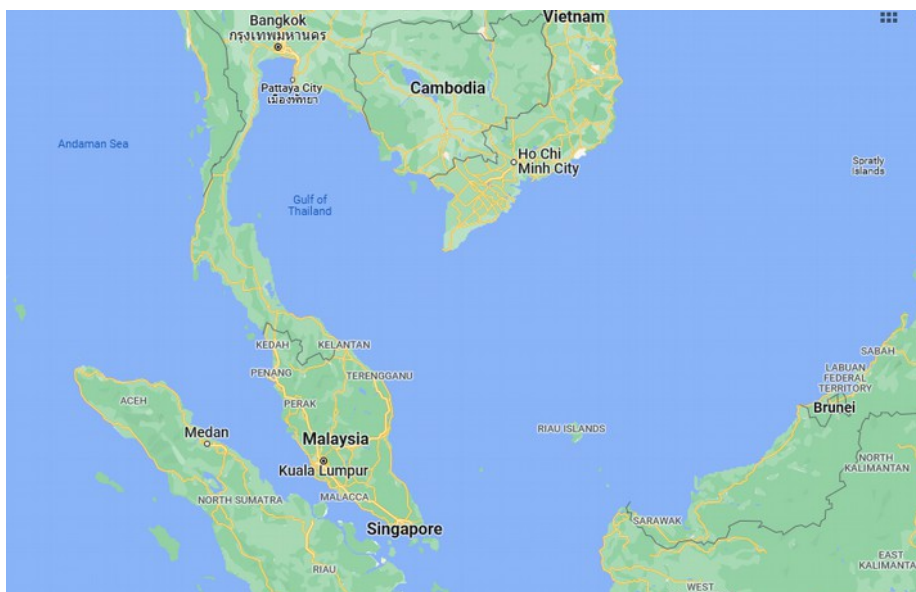


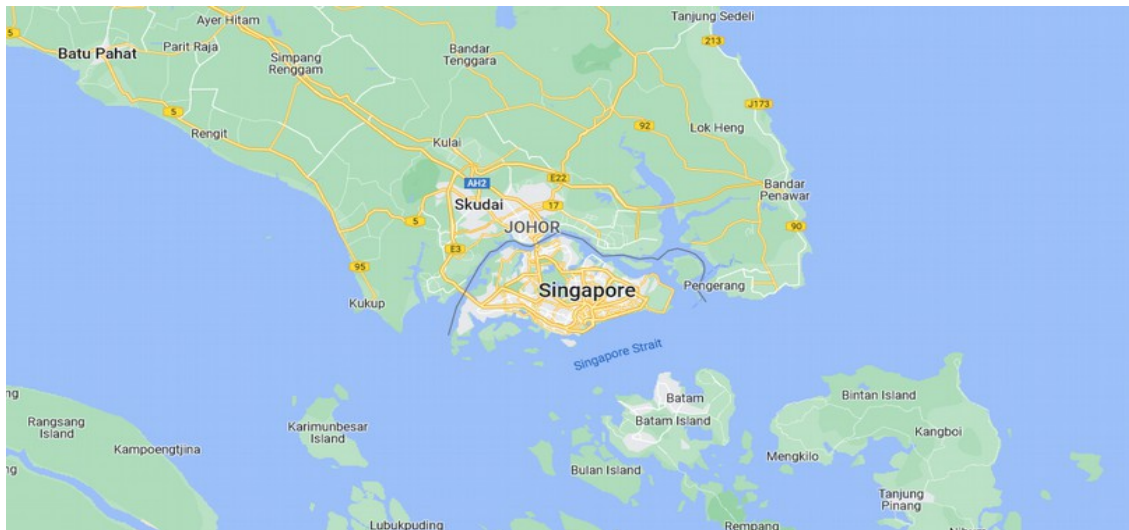
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My unpopular opinion, from internet research anyone can do.

Let us turn to Singapore. No, I’m not bored with this series and I will not stop writing, if only because at this point I am concerned I will incur some sort of astral curse if I don’t give the Muses what they’re asking for: a complete alt-historical analysis of the pacific war. If I stop now they’ll induce a stroke and I’ll be forced to spend the rest of my days writing My Little Pony fan-fiction or, worse, have to sell insurance from a call centre. Again. Don’t worry Muses, I’ll put out.

Imagine you are the Japanese army in 1941. You want to take Singapore. Singapore is, obviously, a port city, on an island, on the tip of Malaysia.





How would you attack this port city? If you said “with my navy, by sea”, then you are an imbecile who knows nothing about military tactics. What a ridiculous answer. The correct answer is of course: you set up a headquarters to plan the operation from Taiwan, store soldiers in Indochina, sail into the Gulf of Thailand, drop off troops ashore in northern Malaysia and order them to slowly walk south-east through awkward jungle terrain. Sort of like what the US troops did in attacking Havana in the Bay of Pigs fake. This gives the enemy camped out in Singapore lots of early warning you are on the way which is only fair. It would be mean to just take the city straight away. Of course, it’s a bit awkward when your troops reach Johor and have to cross the causeway to get into the city proper but whatever, they’ll figure it out.

The Proper Historians over at the [documentary series Battlefield](#) (at roughly the 4 minute mark) simply explain it away by saying the British had several large anti-naval cannon aimed at the harbour. So... you know... no way around that. Forget about amphibious landings, or paratroopers, or bombers, or aircraft carriers, or spies with sabotage, or special forces planting explosives, or just good old fashioned sailing into the harbour full tilt with all your guns blazing with some [suitable music](#) on the battleship speaker systems (objectively the most awesome way to attack Singapore). I was thinking *Ride of the Valkyries*, but either way. No, none of that is an option. You’ve got to walk through Malaysia.

The Proper Historians also explain that the approach was actually very clever of the Japanese to land in northern Malaysia as it meant they had the “element of surprise”. I guess it’s a surprise up until the [Japanese land at Kota Bharu](#) and the beach garrison immediately opens fire and radios for backup but what do I know.

As per Wikipedia, the Americans were devious cads [playing both sides](#):

“By 1941 the Japanese had been engaged for four years in trying to subjugate China. They were heavily reliant on imported materials for their military forces, particularly oil from the United States. From 1940 to 1941, the United States, the United Kingdom, and the Netherlands imposed embargoes on supplying oil and war materials to Japan. The object of the embargoes was to assist the Chinese and encourage the Japanese to halt military action in China. The Japanese considered that pulling out of China would result in a loss of face and decided instead to take military action against US, British and Dutch territories in South East Asia. The Japanese forces for the invasion were assembled in 1941 on Hainan Island and in French Indochina. This troop build-up was noticed by the Allies and, when asked, the Japanese advised that it related to its operations in China.”

Remember that it was the West (specifically the British, French and Americans) who had gone into Japan, forced Japan to open up to the outside world, replaced its leadership in a coup and then built a modern army capable of attacking China. They literally create the Imperial Japanese Army & Navy from scratch using their own technology and fighting doctrines (Boshin War, Meiji “Restoration”). The Japanese would never have been able to do any of this (and, possibly, never even been interested in doing anything to China) without this. They then supply the Japanese with sufficient material to fight China. The Americans (as per the previous paper) placed co-opted Chinese leadership trained and funded by the Japanese and Americans to lead the Kuomintang acting as controlled opposition. They also supplied the Chinese army with thousands of tonnes of supplies via the “Flying Tigers” under the pretence of “mercenary” or “independent” western pilots who just happened to be in the area at the time. In my opinion what you’re actually looking at with China vs. Japan is China getting completely ripped apart and re-formed, by the West, using Japan as the local hub for operations.

This would, then, indicate that East Asia was colonised by the Phoenician Empire quite recently, historically speaking. They had India, they had Singapore, they punch little chunks out of China with Hong Kong and Shanghai as the insertion point. They flip Japan via the Boshin War in 1868. They then use Japan as the crowbar to rip open China and subvert it further. World War 2 – or rather the Pacific Theatre aspect – can thus be seen as essentially the conquest of the Far East. This would be why World War 2 immediately bleeds into the Korean War, by the end of which you have native Koreans in the North digging in against an American (Phoenician Empire) colony in the South. You have Japan and the Philippines as essentially imperial provinces, like Roman Gaul. A very important question would be: given that the Empire was supporting the KMT but the Communists under Mao ended up winning, kicking out the American backed faction to Formosa/Taiwan, which is being used to this day as a new crowbar to force regime change in the area... do we have a holdout country? Is China apart from the Phoenician Empire? Or are we looking at one single global Empire, fully metastasized by the late 20th century? My personal preference would hope the former, as I want the Phoenician Empire to be destroyed and the more holdout countries there are to fight back the better.

Just something to chew on. Sorry, nope. Mao was one of theirs, too. A Phoenician. The current split is all theater, as with Russia. So we can blame things like Covid on the CCP.

There’s [some waffle](#) about not supplying the forces in Malaysia with enough firepower to defend the entire peninsula, which misses the point that: Singapore is the important thing. The port city. The place that allows you to ship in men and material, the link-up between places like India and Australia. Controlling Singapore harbour is the goal, so for that you need a fleet to guard it. If someone takes the city but you control the seas in and around it, the city is still largely cut off and basically useless.

*“Planning for this offensive was undertaken by the Japanese Military Affairs Bureau's Unit 82 based in **Taiwan**. Intelligence on Malaya was gathered through a network of agents which included Japanese embassy staff; disaffected Malaysians (particularly members of the Japanese-established Tortoise Society); and Japanese, Korean, and Taiwanese business people and tourists. Japanese spies, **which included a British intelligence officer, Captain Patrick Stanley Vaughan Heenan**, also provided intelligence and assistance.”*

Wow we can’t even get a couple pages in without tripping over another Stanley. Also a Vaughan.

[Patrick Heenan](#) is a funny guy:

*“Patrick Stanley Vaughan Heenan (29 July 1910 – 13 February 1942) was a captain in the British Indian Army who was convicted of treason, after spying for Japan during the Malayan campaign of World War II. Heenan was **reportedly** killed by his wardens while in custody during the Battle of Singapore.”*



Spook? Spook. From the bloodlines? Yep:

*“Heenan's mother, Anne **Stanley** (born 1882), was not married at the time of her son's birth at Reefton, New Zealand. **His birth certificate recorded her maiden name as his surname, and did not include any information about his father.** A year later, both mother and son moved to Burma with a mining engineer named George Charles **Heenan** (1855–1912). The older Heenan is described by some sources as an Irish republican, although he seems to have had a long association with New Zealand, including selection for regional representative cricket teams in the 1880s and 1890s. There is no conclusive evidence that George Heenan was Patrick's father, or that George and Anne ever married. However, Patrick was baptised in Burma as a Roman Catholic, with the surname Heenan. George Heenan died at Pauk, Burma in 1912. **Patrick's mother then worked as a governess for a family named **Carroll**.**”*

Stanley's and Carroll's and a mysterious unknown father, oh my! **What would our first guesses be? Churchill? Cohen? Goldschmid?**

*“In the early 1930s, Heenan applied for the Army Supplementary Reserve, the only way he could become an officer **without formal qualifications**. According to Elphick, **had Heenan's illegitimacy been known, it would have prevented him becoming an officer.** He was able to join the reserve by **presenting his baptism certificate, along with a certificate signed by his school headmaster, stating that Heenan was capable of performing the duties of an officer.** This was endorsed by the commander of Cheltenham's OTC. In 1932, he was placed on the Supplementary Reserve... **In 1935, Heenan was commissioned into the British Army, with the service number 547AI... In 1938–39, Heenan took a six-month "long leave" (an Indian Army tradition) in Japan.**”*

Of course he did. As with Stilwell and various others he's an idiot from an obscure background, who gets to be an officer in a non-standard manner. He's then given six months to visit Japan of all places. Definitely not a spook off to work in Japan then.

*“During 1941, as fears of a Japanese invasion of Southeast Asia grew, Heenan's unit was sent to Malaya. He was transferred to an Indian Army Air Liaison Unit and was sent to Singapore for training. Following the completion of air liaison training, **Heenan was stationed at Alor Setar, in Kedah, northern Malaya, in June 1941. It was in this area that most of the British Royal Air Force, Royal Australian Air Force and Royal New Zealand Air Force squadrons in Malaya were based.**”*

Which was unfortunate for them. Note that it's early '41 and the Brits are already aware of Japan as a threat. They're not going to actually do anything about that though e.g. Matador.

*“Japanese forces invaded Thailand and Malaya on **8** December. Mr Sydney Tavender, chairman of the Cotswold branch of the Far East Prisoners of War, and who served in the AIL unit with Heenan, **said the Japanese aircraft always seemed to know the correct recognition codes, despite the fact that they were changed every 24 hours. By 10 December, the Japanese had destroyed most of the Allied aircraft in northern Malaya.**”*

The bulk of the Allied air force in Malaya are destroyed in 48 hours with precision strikes. Suspicious? Nah. **The Japanese can't possibly attack that way in Singapore, but it is no problem here.**

*“Heenan was caught during an air raid. **“When we discovered he wasn't in the slit trenches with us we became suspicious,” Mr Tavender reported. “We went to his quarters and discovered a radio, which was still warm. That was the last we saw of him. He was arrested.”** The Japanese air raids were assisted by radio transmissions made by Heenan. Among other espionage equipment, he reportedly had a Morse code transmitter operated by an alphanumeric keyboard — similar to a Traeger Transceiver — which was disguised as a typewriter. Heenan was sent to Singapore, and was reportedly court-martialled in January 1942. He does not seem to have been formally sentenced, but the normal sentence for treason by British officers was death.”*

Waltzing around the air base with a trick typewriter is amusing enough, but the rest doesn't make sense: why would a spy be using the radio DURING the raid? The point would be to radio to the Japanese once the majority of planes (ideally all of them) were parked up and not able to return fire. You'd message them, let them know where and when to strike, then go back to your normal duties. You wouldn't be sitting there tapping away at Morse code while they're outside bombing the field. Of course he doesn't get shot/hung immediately, he gets a trip to Singapore and is held for... what? Questioning?

*“Heenan remained in custody at Singapore **for several weeks.** The Japanese gradually drove the Allies out of Malaya, and on **8 February** they invaded Singapore Island. Within days, it became clear that the battle was being won by the Japanese. In the words of journalist and author Lynette Silver (whose main source is Elphick):*

*By **13** February, **Heenan had become very cocky, taunting his guards... that he would soon be free and they would be prisoners. It appears that... British military police took matters into their own hands.**”*

I'll bet. A good way to get yourself beaten up or killed. You would think instead he would keep quiet and be trying to survive until the Japanese could rescue him.

*“After cards were cut to decide who would... [kill] Heenan, **it is alleged he was taken to the dockside, where a sergeant executed him with a single pistol shot to the back of the head. The body was then dumped in the harbour.**” Elphick also says that Heenan was shot at Keppel Harbour.”*

Right. So, another way to put this... and call me a tinfoil hat-wearing extremist here reader, is that you have this guy who gets trained up as a spook; goes to Japan presumably to learn Japanese properly from natives, gets placed at this important Allied air force base in Malaysia and then helpfully radios in bombing run co-ordinates to destroy all the hardware. He then gets caught because he's an idiot, but after getting made is shipped off to... Singapore... allegedly... and then is never seen again. He's definitely at the bottom of that harbour.

Fake death is obvious. [Anyway:](#)

*"The Malayan campaign began when the 25th Army, under the command of Lieutenant General Tomoyuki Yamashita, invaded Malaya on 8 December 1941. **Japanese troops launched an amphibious assault on the northern coast of Malaya at Kota Bharu and started advancing down the eastern coast of Malaya.** The Japanese 5th Division also landed at Pattani and Songkhla in Thailand, then moved south into western Malaya. **French Indo-China was still under French administration, and had little option but to co-operate with the Japanese. The French authorities therefore submitted to the Japanese military using the territory's ports as naval bases, building air bases, and massing forces there for the invasion.** Japan also coerced Thailand into co-operating with the invasion, though Thai troops resisted the landings in Thai territory for **eight hours.**"*

Ha. I do love the Thai's pretence of resisting. Also the French allowing the troop build-up. "Zer was no'zing we kud dooo!" Really, France? None of your personnel were capable of firing off a quick radio transmission or something? Let the Brits know what was about to happen?

Of course we also have stuff like this online, which doesn't help credibility the Japanese were even in Indochina:



*“World War II: Japanese troops entering Saigon (Vietnam) by bicycle on September 15, 1941.”
(Photo Credit: Roger Viollet via Getty Images) – image from [this page](#).*

Love the cardboard cut-out bicycle infantry. So the Japanese weren't in Saigon then? Or at least not a proper army? Or perhaps they were shy, bless them, and didn't want to have their photo taken and got a fake made instead to commemorate the occasion. **Personally, my favorite is the “Gay Auto”.**

*“The Japanese were initially resisted by III Corps of the Indian Army and several British Army battalions. The Japanese quickly isolated individual Indian units defending the coastline, before concentrating their forces to surround the defenders and force their surrender. The Japanese forces held a slight advantage in numbers in northern Malaya and were significantly superior in close air support, armour, co-ordination, tactics, and experience, having fought in the Second Sino-Japanese War. **The Allies had no tanks**, which had put them at a severe disadvantage. **The Japanese also used bicycle infantry and light tanks**, which allowed swift movement of their forces overland through terrain covered with thick tropical rainforest, criss-crossed by native paths. Although the Japanese had not brought bicycles with them (to speed the disembarkation process), they knew from their intelligence that suitable machines were plentiful in Malaya and quickly confiscated what they needed from civilians and retailers.”*

Those damn Japanese stole my bike! The IJA rocks up to your village, steals everyone bicycles and rides off. Enough bicycles for entire infantry columns.

*“A replacement for Operation Matador, named Operation Krohcol by British Indian Army, was implemented on **8 December**, but the troops were easily defeated by the Royal Thai Police and the Japanese 5th Division. **Force Z of the Royal Navy (battleship HMS Prince of Wales, battlecruiser HMS Repulse, and four destroyers, under the command of Admiral Sir Tom Phillips)** had arrived right before the outbreak of hostilities. Japanese aircraft based in Indochina sank **Prince of Wales and Repulse on 10 December**, leaving the east coast of Malaya exposed, allowing the Japanese to continue their invasion.”*

I talked about Matador and Krohcol/Mini-Matador in the previous paper. The sinking of the *Prince of Wales* and *Repulse* [links us to this](#) article, where we have Terrible Naval Photography:



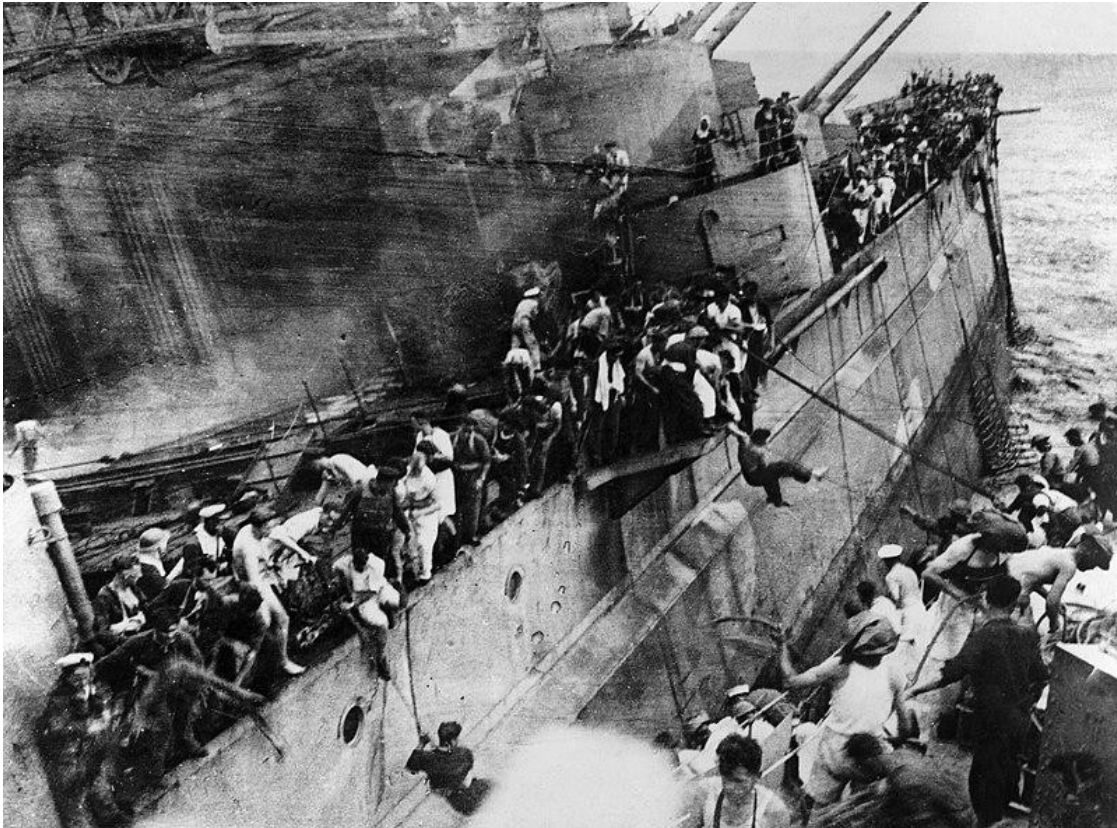
“Japanese aerial photo of the initial attack on Prince of Wales (top) and Repulse. A short, thick plume of black smoke can be seen emanating from Repulse, which has just been hit by a bomb and surrounded by at least six near misses. Prince of Wales can be seen to be manoeuvring. The white smoke is from the funnels as the ships attempt to increase speed.” - original [here](#).

Also this one (my favourite):



"Prince of Wales (left, front) and Repulse (left, behind) after being hit by torpedoes on 10 December 1941. A destroyer, HMS Express, is manoeuvring in the foreground." - original [here](#).

That is a drawing. How do people not see this. **Yep, just awful.**



"The crew of the sinking Prince of Wales abandoning ship to the destroyer Express. Moments later, the list on Prince of Wales suddenly increased and Express had to withdraw. Observe the barrels of the 5.25 in guns, which were unable to depress far enough to engage attackers due to the list." - original [here](#).

Not sure what on earth is going on here but I'm seeing three diagonal bands of imagery, bottom right, centre, top left. Top left section is all faded with what is attempting to be a smoke effect. Nice fat white blob to hide the disconnect between the central and lower right diagonal band. What do you think, Miles? **Yes, definitely some kind of weird paste, partially wiped later to hide problem spots.**



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

P02018.058

"Survivors from Prince of Wales and Repulse in the water as a destroyer moves in for the rescue."
- original [here](#).

Lovely blurry photo, not proof of anything.

[The article on the sinking](#) is long and tedious, so I won't quote it. It's the usual stuff, with mandatory Funny Numbers. I did like this bit:

"The morning after the battle, Prime Minister Winston Churchill received a phone call at his bedside from Sir Dudley Pound, the First Sea Lord.

Pound: Prime Minister, I have to report to you that the Prince of Wales and the Repulse have both been sunk by the Japanese – we think by aircraft. Tom Phillips is drowned.

Churchill: Are you sure it's true?

Pound: There is no doubt at all.

*Churchill: (hangs up) In all the war, I never received a more direct shock... As I turned over and twisted in bed the full horror of the news sank in upon me. **There were no British or American ships in the Indian Ocean or the Pacific except the American survivors of Pearl Harbor, who were hastening back to California. Across this vast expanse of waters, Japan was supreme, and we everywhere were weak and naked.***"

Wow, could that sound more wooden and stilted? Was AI already writing scripts back then? Didn't really take much to defeat the British Navy, did it? Two ships down? Boom. Done. Both [Admiral Sir Tom Spencer Vaughan Phillips](#) (I know, I know, a hat trick; [and another Vaughan](#)) and [Captain John Catterall Leach](#) went "down with the ship".

*"Churchill delivered news of the sinking to the House of Commons before noon on 11 December, which was followed by a full review of the situation in Malaya the next day. **Singapore had essentially been reduced to a land base after both capital ships were lost, being turned into a land fortress, something it was never intended to be, rather than a base from which to project naval power.** The Eastern Fleet spent the remainder of the invasion withdrawing their vessels to Ceylon and the Dutch East Indies. **They were not reinforced by battleships until March 1942, with the***

arrival of HMS Warspite and four Revenge-class battleships. Although all five battleships survived the Indian Ocean raid, **their service in the Pacific was uneventful** and they were later withdrawn to East Africa and the Mediterranean.”

Makes total sense. The British lost two ships, so all the other ships they had were useless and were withdrawn to Sri Lanka. No point in defending Singapore by sea. They still have a fleet but it doesn't really do anything for the rest of the war and even gets to sail to the Mediterranean for a tan and grappa.

By the way, please read the article on Masanobu Tsuji (an important IJA tactician who worked out the Malayan invasion) as it's wonderful:

“Masanobu Tsuji (田中 寿, Tsuji Masanobu, **11 October** 1901 – went missing in 1961) was a Japanese army officer and politician. **During World War II, he was an important tactical planner in the Imperial Japanese Army and developed the detailed plans for the successful Japanese invasion of Malaya at the start of the war.** He also helped plan and lead the final Japanese offensive during the Guadalcanal Campaign. **Tsuji was deeply involved in Japanese atrocities throughout the war, including the Bataan Death March and Sook Ching. He evaded prosecution for Japanese war crimes at the end of the war and hid in Thailand. He returned to Japan in 1949 and was elected to the Diet as an advocate of renewed militarism. In 1961, he disappeared on a trip to Laos.**”

Incredible. Goes back to Japan, gets elected, public figure, no repercussions. How? I missed the bit in 1948 where the Americans packed up and went home and never had any influence on Japanese politics afterwards.

“In mid-1944, Tsuji was sent to Burma, where Japanese forces had been repulsed at Imphal. Tsuji was assigned to the 33rd Army, which faced the Chinese in northeastern Burma. He was an energetic and efficient planner, **if notoriously arrogant, and once helped quell panic in the ranks by ostentatiously having a bath under fire in the front lines.**”

That's given me flashbacks of Orde Wingate munching raw onions and walking around stark naked in front of his men bellowing orders. The horror.

“When the Japanese position in Burma collapsed in 1945, Tsuji escaped, **first to Thailand and then to China**, where he renewed the contacts made in Nanking. He also visited Vietnam, which was in disorder with the Viet Minh resisting the re-establishment of French rule. **In China, Tsuji was both a prisoner and an employee of Chinese intelligence.**”

Big fans of Japan in Nanking post WW2. Those Chinese, they love Japanese war criminals. You turn up at the airport with a thick Japanese accent, they'll shake your hand and give you a nice glass of baijiu. No hostility whatsoever.

“In 1948, **he was allowed to resign from Chinese service and returned to Japan. He began publishing books and articles about his war experiences, including an account of the Japanese victory in Malaya. He also wrote of his years in hiding in Senkō Sanzenri (三千里; "3,000 li (Chinese miles) in hiding", which became a best seller. He was elected to the Diet in 1952, and re-elected twice.**”

This doesn't put Japanese electoral politics in a particularly healthy light. Somehow, it gets more ridiculous:

*“In April 1961, he travelled to Laos and **was never heard from again**. It was thought that he might have been killed in the Laotian Civil War, but there were also rumours that he became an advisor to the North Vietnamese government. **He was declared dead on July 20, 1968.**”*

He vanished in Laos, lads. Must be dead. Wait for it...

*“CIA files declassified in 2005–2006 show that **Tsuji also worked for the CIA as a spy during the Cold War.**”*

Boom. This prominent Japanese strategist who was involved in Guadalcanal, Burma and Malaya was an American intel asset. But don't overthink it, that must have been years later, right? During the war he was on the enemy team for sure.

Anyway, the Japanese land in northern Malaya, they steal bicycles and ride south-east and because... (checks notes)... because they're just really good and the British are really rubbish... they end up in Singapore in about two months. I wish I had more substance to give here, the Battlefield documentary just talks in circles about how the Japanese are ferocious and well trained, whereas the British Empire (despite having roughly triple the manpower even without incorporating local militias) just can't do anything. The Japanese have bicycles! They brought tanks! OK, but these are light tanks primarily used as infantry support, you can disable these. We have these things called mines, or explosives in general. You damage the treads or the engine and the tank is now sat rusting in the jungle. Also, how can a bicycle allow you to navigate a rainforest? Why do the British not have any ability to hold ground? Can you not fell some trees to block the roads at least? Or throw some nails down to puncture the bike tires? No, that kind of monkeywrenching is beyond the British military.

When you look at the Battle of Kota Bharu the British end up falling back despite the numbers being very much in their favour:

Strength	
N/A	1 light cruiser 4 destroyers 2 minesweepers 1 submarine chaser 3 troopships ^[8] 5,300 infantry
Casualties and losses	
68 killed 360 wounded 37 missing ^[9]	3 troopships damaged ^[8] 320 killed 538 wounded ^{[9][10]}

That's Brits on the left, Japanese on the right. No idea why they list British numbers as "N/A" – the Japanese are assaulting a military base / airfield and the article says:

*“The Japanese claim that the landings at Kota Bharu were **some of the most violent of the whole Malayan Campaign**. It is **estimated** that they suffered an **estimated 300 killed and 500 wounded.**”*

So 800 total. The Brits keep falling back and falling back, you get various charts online like this:



When you try and dig in to specific battles you don't have much to work with.

At the [Battle of Kampar](#) you have this:

Strength	
1,300 infantry ^[1]	9,000 infantry
	200 tanks
	100 artillery pieces
Casualties and losses	
150 killed	500 killed
(Japanese estimate)	(Japanese estimate)

Somehow we don't know how many British units were killed? Why is it a Japanese estimate? It's the same with the [Battle of the Slim River](#):

Commanders and leaders	
 Brig. Archibald Paris	 Lt. Gen Takuro Matsui
Units involved	
 11th Indian Division	 5th Division
<ul style="list-style-type: none">  12th Indian Brigade  28th Indian Brigade  15th Indian Brigade  155th Field Artillery Regiment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  41st Infantry Regiment  6th Tank Regiment
Casualties and losses	
500 killed 3,200 captured ^[1] (Japanese estimate)	77 killed 60 wounded ^[1] (Japanese estimate) 4 tanks destroyed 1 tank damaged ^[2]

Again, Japanese estimate. Wikipedia then attempts to clarify:

*“The 11th Indian Infantry Division **had suffered huge casualties, although some would eventually make their way back to join in the fight for Singapore, many more would still be in the jungle after the surrender. Large numbers of these survivors would be captured but a few, like Lt. Colonel Lindsay Robertson (who had strong views about surrendering) and his party of Argylls attempted to evade capture, but were unable to keep ahead of the rapid advance of the Japanese. Robertson was killed on 20 January 1942. The remaining survivors from the two brigades were scattered all over the Malayan Peninsula. Some of the Argylls were still at large by August 1945. A Gurkha NCO, Naik Nakam Gurung, was found during the Malayan Emergency in October 1949, he had been living in the jungle since 1942. The 12th Indian Brigade had practically ceased to exist and the 28th Brigade was but a shadow.**”*

Massive loss of life... possibly... or maybe scattered all over Malaysia... or hiding in the jungle, including living off the land for three years straight evading capture. Right.

*“**Stewart's** 12th Brigade could muster no more than 430 officers and men, with 94 officers and men from the Argylls. Selby's brigade was slightly better off with 750 answering roll call the next day. **In all the 11th Division lost an estimated 3,200 troops and a large amount of irreplaceable equipment. The Japanese had managed to attack through a division along nineteen miles and take two bridges at minimal cost to themselves all before lunch time. General Wavell, after meeting survivors of the battle, was appalled by the condition they were in and ordered the 11th Indian Division out of the front line. This defeat for the British allowed the Japanese to take Kuala Lumpur unopposed, Wavell ordered Percival to retreat into southern Malaya, giving up central Malaya, and then to allow the Australian 8th Division an opportunity to prove itself against the Japanese Army.**”*

OK so it was roughly 3,200 men, we think, maybe. But not sure enough to put that at the top of the article as an official figure/estimate. Note that Kuala Lumpur is taken unopposed, because as with Rangoon and various other battles of WW2 a major city is left largely unscathed from the theoretical apocalyptic fighting. The British are of course fighting in a way [that conveniently allows the enemy to win](#), e.g.:

“If the British artillery (who were not contacted due to the communication lines being cut) had been called in at this point in the battle, Shimada's column could have been easily stopped due to their stacked up and vulnerable position, surrounded by thick jungle on the narrow road. This golden opportunity for the British was lost and Shimada's infantry were able to push through Deakin's Punjabis, while the tanks found an unguarded loop road that enabled them to bypass the destroyed tanks.”

They “cut” the communication lines. Because radio didn’t exist. Or:

*“By 6.30 am, Shimada's tanks were approaching the next battalion, the 2nd Bn, Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders under Lt. Col. Lindsay Robertson. The 2nd Argylls were positioned around the village of Trolak itself and protected Stewart's 12th Brigade H.Q. This was a regular British Army battalion **and very experienced, considered to be one of the best jungle fighting units the British had in Malaya. The Argylls were in a defensive position but without fixed anti-tank obstacles or mines.** They had only a little warning of the rapidly approaching Japanese, thanks to the arrival of a few panic-stricken sepoys from the Hyderabads to erect a roadblock. **Even with that warning, the first four of Shimada's tanks were mistaken for Punjab Bren Carriers and drove straight through the Argylls, neatly dividing the battalion. These four tanks then headed for the railway bridge.** The arrival of the remainder of Shimada's main force and Ando's infantry soon after split the Argylls completely and cut them off from the road.”*

You didn’t use mines or obstacles on a roadblock intended to stop tanks. Also you didn’t know what a Japanese tank looked like. Or:

*“Shimada's tanks **had by now broken through both brigades** and were into the rear area of the **11th** Indian Division, heading for the two bridges. Leaving the rail bridge for Shimada and the main Japanese force, Lt Watanabe headed toward the more important road bridge six miles away. In this attack **Watanabe broke through the artillery, medical, and other support units** in front of the road bridge. **Two British artillery colonels were surprised and killed while driving on the road** in this lightning attack. Upon reaching the road bridge at **8.30 a.m.** Watanabe found it defended by a battery of Bofors 40mm **anti-aircraft guns** from the Singapore and Hong Kong Artillery Regiment. Although two of the guns **managed to lower their barrels quickly enough to fire on the tanks, the rounds did not damage the tanks' armour** and the gunners fled. **Watanabe himself cut the wires to the demolition charges on the bridge with his sword.** It was still only early morning and the Japanese attack had managed to scatter the entire 11th Indian Division, leaving most of its survivors attempting to escape across the Slim River.”*

You defend a road using anti-aircraft guns, which are pointed at the sky. Even when lowered, the Japanese light tanks are impervious to the anti-aircraft gunfire. Right. At least this ridiculous fan-fiction has the beat of the Japanese commander disabling a demo charge wire with his katana. That’s kind of cool.

The [Battle of Muar](#) opens with a description that does not bode well for the British:

*“The ambush was ordered by the head of Malaya Command, Lieutenant General Arthur Percival's own instructions; he strongly felt that **ambush** was the way to fight the Japanese. A multinational force under Bennett, codenamed Westforce, was assigned to defend the Muar area. Westforce took up positions covering the front from the mountains to the shore of the Malacca Straits. **There were two main areas, and both of these were sub-divided into sectors, which were themselves widely separated and linked with each other chiefly by rather tenuous signal communications.**”*

Hey gang, let's split up! With rubbish coms so we can't co-ordinate easily. For our ambush. How did that work out for them?

Strength	
4,000 infantry	8,000 infantry
60 aircraft	400 aircraft
Casualties and losses	
3,100 killed (including 145 prisoners of war) ^[info 1]	700+ killed
	15+ tanks destroyed ^[Note 1]

Ah, reverse 13 killed. I see what you did there. So hang on, only 700-odd Japanese killed? Despite being ambushed by 4,000 troops? Are we looking at an inversion of the previously seen "Iron Man Suit" phenomenon the Americans usually use?

*"The ambush occurred at about 16:00 on 14 January, when Japanese troops from the 5th Division approached, **mounted on bicycles**, and crossed the bridge unharassed. Then came the main column, several hundred strong, also cycling, which was followed by tanks and engineer trucks. **At this point, the bridge was detonated, sending timber, bicycles and bodies hurtling through the air.** B Company, 2/30th Australian Battalion spread out along either side of the road, concealed in well-protected firing positions, then opened fire and the Japanese column took devastating blows **as row upon row of men and equipment were mowed down by machine gun and rifle fire. Most of the Japanese troops tied their rifles to the handlebars of their bicycles making the ambush even more successful for the Australians.**"*

You have to laugh. You see, this is what should have been happening up and down the length of Malaysia. This whole "bicycle shock troop" plot line is absurd. Exactly like this, you'd use explosives, ambushes and machine gun emplacements under cover of the jungle to mow them down side on, either wiping them out completely or as an ambush prior to running away. The Japanese need to win in this plot line though, so:

*"Heavy casualties continued to mount for the ambushed column. **However, the bicycle infantry who had passed through the ambush area discovered the field telephone cable hidden in a patchy undergrowth which linked back to the gun positions, and promptly cut it.** As a result, the Allied artillery **received no signal**, and were not able to support the ambush party."*

Of course. We're looping telephone cable over hill and dale. Like something out of a Tom and Jerry cartoon they can just use scissors to snip the wire and suddenly the plan falls apart.

*"After twenty-four hours of fighting Galleghan withdrew his battalion from the area. **The 2/30th Battalion had inflicted heavy casualties on the Japanese with minimal loss to themselves, suffering in all seventeen killed, nine missing and fifty-five wounded.** In the two days of fighting, at the bridge and on the Gemas road, Australian historians estimate that the Japanese 5th Division had suffered **an estimated 1,000 casualties.**"*

17 + 9 + 55 = **81**. It's weird because that above quote comes from the section on the [Battle of Gemas](#) which is acknowledged as part of the Battle of Muar. Yet we have 1,000 dead (estimated!) and the Muar battle overall has casualties listed as "700+" Japanese killed. To confuse it further, according to "footnote two" in the article:

“The number of Japanese killed and wounded is disputed. According historian Dr Peter Stanley Researchers looking at the campaign say there could not possibly have been 1,000 Japanese casualties.”



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

011299

“Disabled Type 95 Ha-Gō light tank with its crew lying dead.” - original [here](#).

This looks posed. As always, sing it with me, no blood no gore no visible wounds lying down carefully on the ground no dropped firearms. They look like Ross and Joey napping in *Friends*.

Indeed we can tell the above photo is posed as we have this photo:



"Australian anti-tank gunners firing on Japanese tanks at the Muar-Parit Sulong Road" - original [here](#).

Is that a Sheila? What's with the flared Capri pants? That tank in the distance, with the tree that's felled in front of it, is the one the two lads are posing in front of in the previous photo. Note that it's on the "Muar-Parit Sulong Road", as we'll read that during the Battle of Muar we have the infamous [Parit Sulong Massacre](#), in which we learn:

*"During the Battle of Muar, members of both the Australian 8th Division and the 45th Indian Infantry Brigade were making a **fighting withdrawal**, when they became surrounded near the bridge at **Parit Sulong**. They fought the larger Japanese forces for two days, until they ran low on ammunition and food. **Able-bodied soldiers were ordered to disperse into the jungle, the only way they could return to Allied lines. About 150 Australians and Indians were too seriously injured to move, and their only option was to surrender. Some accounts estimate that as many as 300 Allied troops were taken prisoner at Parit Sulong.**"*

They still had time for camera crews and posing in the middle of all this of course.

"The Imperial Guards kicked and beat the wounded prisoners of war with their rifle butts. At least some of them were tied up with wire in the middle of the road and machine-gunned. The Japanese then poured petrol over the bodies, set them alight, and (in the words of Russell Braddon) "after their incineration... systematically run over, back and forwards, by Japanese driven trucks." Anecdotal accounts by local people also reported POWs being tied together with wire and forced to stand on a bridge, before a Japanese soldier shot one of them, causing the rest to fall into the Simpang Kiri river and drown."

But if the healthy troops run away into the jungle and leave the wounded behind to be killed... how do we know what happened? Who is this [Mr. Braddon](#)?

“Russell Reading Braddon (25 January 1921 – 20 March 1995) was an Australian writer of novels, biographies and TV scripts. His chronicle of his four years as a prisoner of war, **The Naked Island**, sold more than a million copies.

*“Braddon was born in Sydney, the son of a **barrister**. He served in the Malayan campaign during World War II. He was held as a prisoner of war by the Japanese in Pudu and Changi prisons and on the Thailand-Burma Railway between 1942 and 1945. During this time he met Ronald Searle, whose Changi sketches illustrate The Naked Island.*

After the war, he went on to study law at University of Sydney. Nevertheless, he failed to obtain a law degree (he maintained that he had lost interest in the subject) and he abandoned undergraduate life in 1948.

*In 1949, Braddon moved to England after suffering a mental breakdown and followed by a suicide attempt. Doctors attributed this breakdown to his **POW** experiences, and urged him to take a year to recuperate. He described his writing career as "beginning by chance". The Naked Island, published in 1952, was one of the first accounts of a Japanese prisoner of war's experience.*

Braddon went on to produce a wide range of works, including novels, biographies, histories, TV scripts and newspaper articles. In addition, he was a frequent broadcaster on British radio and television.”

So let me get this straight: they captured the Allied troops, then beat them up, then tie them up with wire, then pour petrol over them, set them on fire, then run over them with trucks. OK. Question: how do you survive that to tell the tale?

One survivor was Ben Hackney:

*“Lt Ben Hackney of the Australian 2/29th Battalion feigned death and managed to escape. He crawled through the countryside for six weeks with two broken legs, before he was recaptured. Hackney survived internment in Japanese POW camps, and was part of the labour force on the notorious **Burma Railway**. He and two other survivors gave evidence regarding the massacre to Allied war crimes investigators.”*

I imagine feigning death would be quite easy after I'd been set on fire and run over repeatedly by a truck. Nice to see we're getting his blatantly fake testimony to be a foundation for accusations of a war crime later. Also note at how Braddon was held at multiple prisons AND worked on the Thai-Burma Railway. From [the main Muar Battle article](#) it comes at the “massacre” with this description:

*“For the wounded who were left behind, the Japanese, after mistreating them, **massacred all except a handful who escaped**. The killed included members of an Australian ambulance column. With kicks, clouts and curses, blows from rifle butts and bayonet jabs, their captors crammed them all into a couple of small rooms in a coolie hutment at Parit Sulong village on the Muar highway. The wounded lay piled upon one another's bodies on the floor. They were denied drinking water by the Japanese, who mocked them by bringing bucketfuls of it as far as the doorway-and then pouring it out upon the ground.*

The prisoners were soon tied into small groups with rope or wire, pushed into roadside scrub at the point of a bayonet, and machine-gunned. Petrol was poured on the bodies of the shot

prisoners, **some of whom were still alive, and then set alight**, apparently to remove war-crime evidence.

One of the survivors, Lieutenant Ben Hackney of the 2/29th Australian Battalion, crawled away from the area. He found two surviving members of his battalion, one of them Sergeant Ron Croft. Both were soaked in petrol and were among a few who were not tied when the prisoners were shot. They were joined by **an English soldier**. The man who was with Croft died of his wounds the next day. The remaining **three** were given shelter in a Malay house for a while. **Hackney, unable to stand, persuaded the others to leave him while he remained hidden. Croft is thought to have died on 15 April 1942.**

Hackney was soon carried off by the Malays and left some distance from the house. **He was often refused help by Malays, who feared reprisals**, but was aided by local Chinese. He was caught by a party of Malays, one of them a policeman on 27 February, 36 days after he had begun his attempt to escape. They turned Hackney over to the Japanese at Parit Sulong, **and he was beaten up. He survived the war** and provided information about the massacre. **He and Private Reginald Wharton are the only two Europeans who survived the massacre.** Altogether, 145 prisoners lost their lives. Many of the Indian prisoners were **beheaded**.

General Takuma Nishimura was **believed** to have ordered the massacre, despite Lieutenant Fujita Seizaburo **admitting** to have carried it out. **The sworn evidence of two sepoy survivors (Lance-Havildar John Benedict and Sapper Periasamy)** were confirmed by the post-war discovery of the remains. The War Crimes Court, in 1950, sentenced Nishimura to death for it."

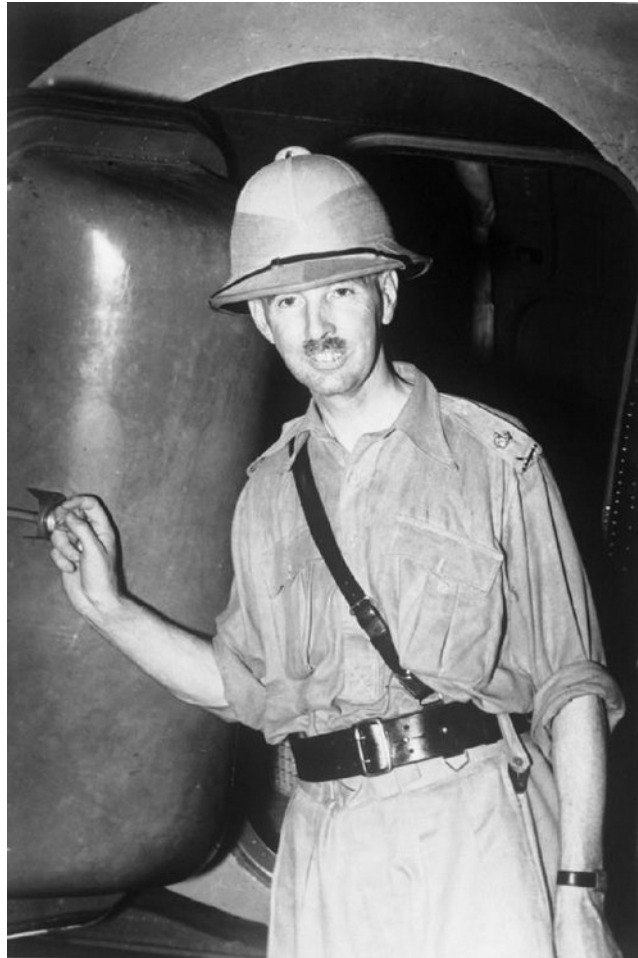
I don't know if you really need me to critique this, it's all so blatantly stupid. Hearsay rumour from obvious nonsense testimony. "I crawled through the bush for six weeks". All this to paint the Japanese as monsters, more war atrocity propaganda.



"Lieutenant Ben Hackney of the 2/29th Australian Battalion, one of only two men to survive the massacre." - original [here](#).

Yeah, he looks like a tough 'un. He survived by crawling to the Gay Auto.

Moving on, the defence of Singapore proper was left to this man:



Lieutenant General Arthur Percival – original [here](#).

Another Hee-Man. I think we begin to see why Singapore fared badly. On first glance, not exactly a leader of men. Honestly, American readers, not all British people look like inbred substitute teachers. Only joking – although with that mouth I do think he’s inbred – this is a fake war with staged, pro-wrestling scripted sequences, so obviously they just needed a good boy to play at “commander who surrenders”.

They admit that the British knew where and how the Japanese would attack the city years beforehand:

*“In late 1937, his analysis duly **confirmed that north Malaya might become the critical battleground**. The Japanese were likely to seize the east coast landing sites on **Thailand and Malaya** in order to capture aerodromes and achieve air superiority. This could serve as a prelude to further Japanese landings in Johore to disrupt communications northwards and enable the construction of another main base in North Borneo.”*

Despite working out what was about to happen, four years prior, the British sit around drinking tea and smoking cigarettes until the enemy was at the gates.

*“The Japanese advanced **rapidly**, and on 27 **January 1942 Percival ordered a general retreat** across the Johore Strait to the island of Singapore and organised a defence along the length of the island's 70-mile (110km) coast line. But the Japanese did not dawdle, and on **8 February** Japanese troops landed on the north-west corner of Singapore island.”*

For context Prime Minister Churchill had pretty explicit orders in regards to Singapore:

*“Churchill instructed its commanders on 10 February to ‘**put aside any thought of saving the troops or sparing the population. The battle must be fought to the bitter end at all costs. The 18th Division has a chance to make its name in history. Commanders and senior officers should die with their troops.**’ The honour of the British Empire and of the British Army is at stake.”*

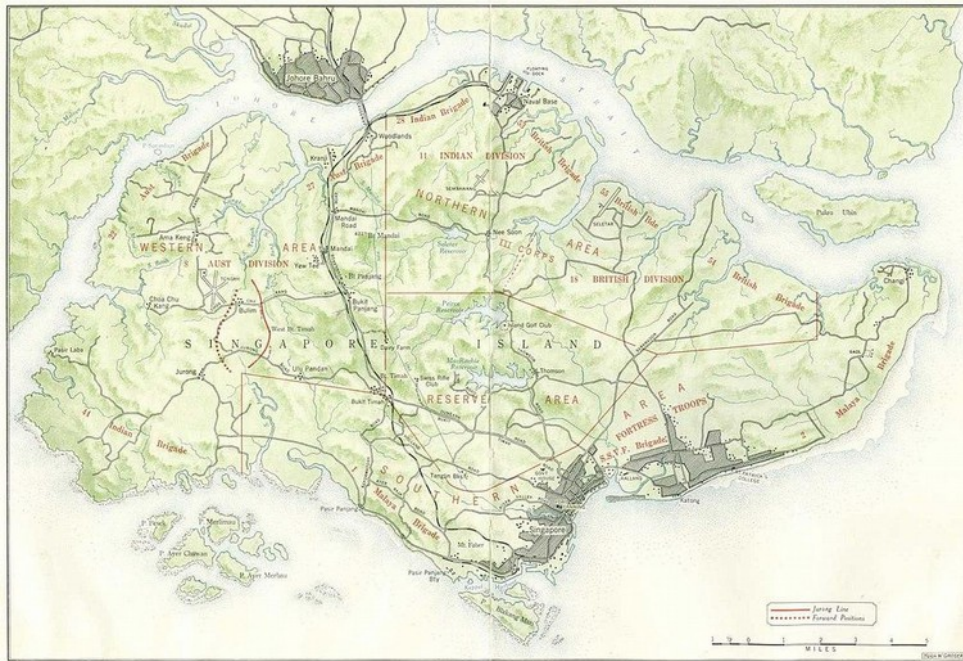
You would expect Singapore, then, to be a truly horrific Stalingrad-esque battle where the Japanese would need to exterminate pretty much everyone and burn half the city to the ground before they, on a mountain of dead, could plant the flag. But no.

*“After a week of fighting on the island, Percival held his final command conference at 9am on 15 February in the Battle Box of Fort Canning. The Japanese had already occupied approximately half of Singapore and it was clear that the island would soon fall. **Having been told that ammunition and water would both run out by the following day, Percival agreed to surrender.** The Japanese at this point were running low on artillery shells, but Percival did not know this.”*

There's this idea that the Japanese “take the reservoirs” in the centre of the island that Singapore sits on, which meant that the British immediately ran out of water, like literally the moment the Japanese reach the lakeside the British go “OK, in 24 hours we have no drinking water”. They've not stockpiled anything, because of course they didn't, nor did they bother to fight for this apparently crucial natural resource. They can't bring in more supplies or evacuate by sea because... you know... those two ships got sunk... so that was that. No Navy. This is despite the British having massively superior numbers to the Japanese, let alone arming the local population to form auxiliaries. From the main Wiki article on the Fall of Singapore:

*“Prior to the battle, **Japanese General Tomoyuki Yamashita had advanced with about 30,000 men** down the Malayan Peninsula in the Malayan campaign. The British erroneously considered the jungle terrain impassable, leading to a swift Japanese advance as Allied defences were quickly outflanked. **The British Lieutenant-General, Arthur Percival, commanded 85,000 Allied troops at Singapore,** although many units were under-strength and most units lacked experience. **The British outnumbered the Japanese but much of the water for the island was drawn from reservoirs on the mainland.** The British destroyed the causeway, forcing the Japanese into an improvised crossing of the Johore Strait. Singapore was considered so important that Prime Minister Winston Churchill ordered Percival to **fight to the last man.**”*

They say “the mainland”, but if you check the maps the reservoirs are on the actual island Singapore is built on. So that's not true.



Singapore, 1942. Original [here](#). The city is on the south-east side of the island. The dark blob above the causeway is Johore. You can see the reservoirs in the centre, east of the main north-south connective roads.

So no, the British are not in a state of “well we lost the mainland so now we’re smoked”. You have the reservoirs, you presumably also have some means of storing water, make use of that. The population of Singapore at the time was nearly a million people, including lots of Chinese. I wonder how many fighting age Chinese lads would have been happy to be given a rifle, pistol or grenade and help out? It’s this or the death camps boys, remember Nanking etc. You can imagine that would be a pretty easy thing to sell. 30,000 Japanese soldiers are not going to be able to take an island with several hundred thousand angry Chinese riflemen. This is simple logistics.

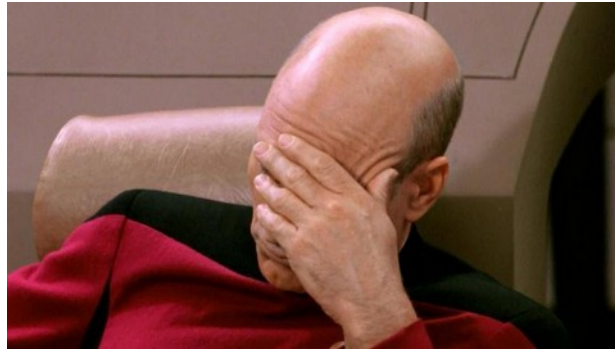
In fact, as Proper Historians will explain, there was indeed an effort to use local Chinese men to fight the Japanese. This would be Dalforce. The article admits the number of men actually trained was tiny (for a city of this size):

*“Dalley had **suggested** creating a guerrilla network in 1940 **but it was not until about a year later, when the Japanese invasion was imminent, did it become apparent that the official recruitment of the local Chinese against the Japanese was essential.** The British Government relented and on **25 December 1941, Dalforce was officially established, ignoring the fact that the existing Singapore Overseas Chinese Anti-Japanese Volunteer Army had been in existence under Chinese leadership since at least 1939.** John Dalley, together with his fellow British officers, **began training in Johore in mid-January 1942 with a force of 200 men.** By the time the Japanese invaded, Dalforce numbered **4,000 resistance fighters.**”*

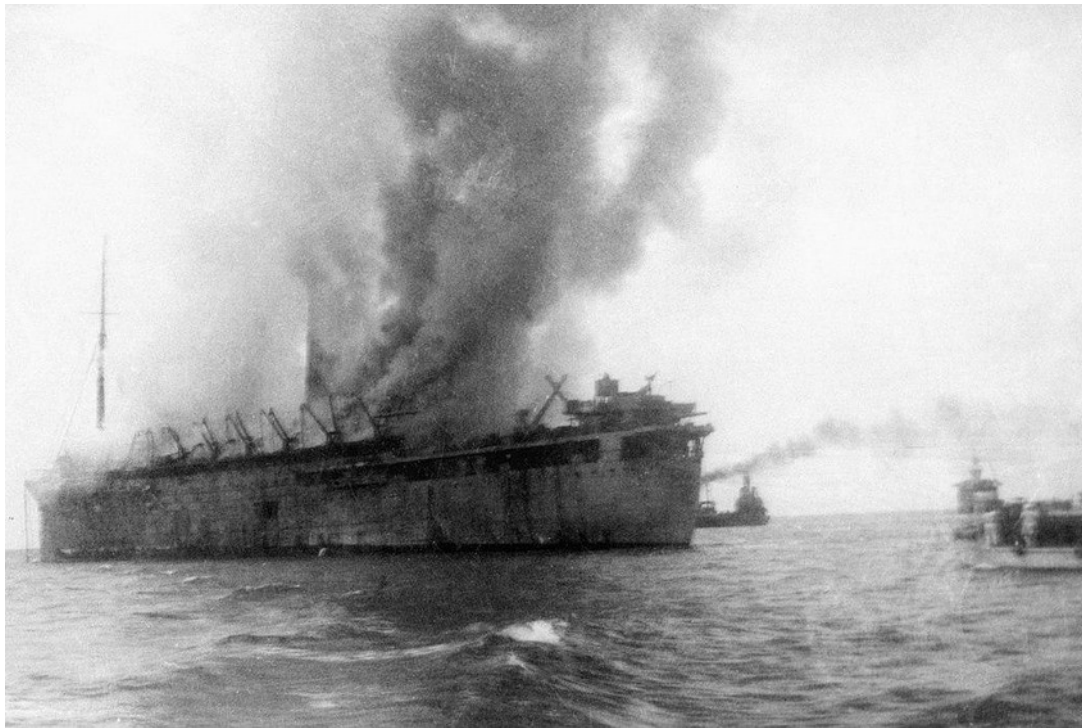
What!/? You only start training in mid-January! The battle is lost in mid-February! Plus, out of hundreds of thousands of people you can only find 4,000 men total who want to fight? That’s pathetic. 4,000 troops is rubbish compared to what this should have generated. And why were they not preparing the minute the Japanese landed up in Thailand and northern Malaysia?

*“The British actually intended to fully equip the troops in preparation for the invasion. **This became impossible when the liner SS Empress of Asia, which carried the supplies, was sunk by Japanese aircraft en route to Singapore from Bombay.** According to officer Frank Brewer, the*

standard issue for each soldier would have been a combat shotgun, seven rounds of ammunition and two grenades.”



We needed supplies to arm them properly, but the key ship with all the combat shotguns sank. I can't bear it, reader. We both know what's coming next. Yes: Terrible Naval Photography.



“The Empress of Asia on fire and gradually sinking after being attacked by Japanese dive-bomber aircraft en route from India to Singapore. To the extreme-right of the photograph, the Sultan Shoal Lighthouse can be seen.” - original [here](#).

Oof. That's a bad smoke insert. And like in old Hollywood movies, the size of the waves doesn't match the size of the ship. Amateur paste, right out of Lookout Mountain film labs.



"The starboard-side view of the burning vessel, showing extensive damage from the Japanese aerial-attack on the ship." - original [here](#).

Shall we have actual structural damage from a bombing run or just generate a ton of fog? We're going with a ton of fog as that's cheaper and quicker? Alright. Yeah, and let's also wipe the film heavily, adding so many scratches it looks like the ship is sinking from cobwebs.

Article quote:

"...with the Empress of Asia on fire, burning amidships, approaching Sultan Shoal. The ship anchored off the shoal with its onboard personnel gathered on the bow and the stern. The escort vessels, HMAS Wollongong, HMS Danae and HMIS Sutlej, stood by while HMAS Yarra's captain, Wilfred Harrington, carefully manoeuvred the bow of his ship alongside the flaming and severely-damaged liner's stern and rescued away 1804 survivors. HMAS Bendigo (J187), which had been in the vicinity, picked up 78 more, while the Wollongong saved the last two persons on the now-sinking ship, its master (captain) and chief-engineer"

Which, naturally, would bring the total of survivors up to 1,884.

"The ship finally sank near the small island of Sultan Shoal (then located in the western harbour-approaches of Singapore, presently between the West Jurong and AlGas Anchorages beside Temasek Fairway) about 8 kilometres (5.0 mi) to the southwest of the western tip of the mainland of Singapore Island. Despite maritime-salvage efforts organized by Robert W. Rankin, all the military equipment and other crucial and vital supplies were lost and declared irrecoverable."

Nice they got that in there.

So the Brits end up blowing up the causeway linking Singapore to the mainland. That's something at least. Causeway aside though, you'd expect some ingenious Home Alone style traps to be in wait

for the Japanese infiltrators. Nah. Defensive measures had not been taken as this would be “bad for morale”:

*“According to one report, **Percival had refused to sanction their preparation**, claiming, ‘Defences are **bad for the morale** of troops and civilians.’ Engineers were rapidly deployed, and barbed wire, mines, and booby traps were laid, but all in haste **at the last minute**.”*

Other important sites were abandoned or left under-defended:

*“During the following day, a half-hearted counter-attack was launched. It failed. The rear lines began to fill with retreating soldiers. Yamashita, realising the lack of coordination among his enemy, ordered his men forward at speed. **When they entered Tengah airfield, they were surprised to find aircraft in good working order, and fresh bread and soup still on the tables of the officers’ mess.** The next major objective was **the one piece of high ground on the island, Bukit Timah**, overlooking the city and harbour of Singapore. **Yamashita anticipated a major battle for this vital piece of ground but the defending forces were so disorganised that only a single battalion of Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders stood between the advancing troops and their objective.** They could not hold them up for long, and the Japanese seized Bukit Timah and **its vast supply dumps of food and ammunition with barely a fight.**”*

Rather than take an hour with a megaphone to rally a couple hundred thousand extra troops and get everyone stockpiling water to get through the... what... a week to kill the Japanese and re-take the reservoirs... despite the Prime Minister himself ordering the British to fight to the last man (as again, Singapore was supposed to be absolutely crucial, the crown jewel of the Empire), Percival basically allows them easy access to the city and promptly surrenders.

The article then pegs the Japanese as having even fewer men, highlighting the outrageous number of Allied troops now captured:

*“The surrender was of the largest number of British-led troops in history – British, Australian, New Zealand, Indian, and Malayan. **About 85,000 men had capitulated to a Japanese force of about 23,000.**”*

And:

*“For the second time since the battle began, Yamashita demanded unconditional surrender and that afternoon, Percival capitulated. **About 80,000 British, Indian, Australian and local troops became prisoners of war, joining the 50,000 taken in Malaya** and many died of neglect, abuse or forced labour. Three days after the British surrender, the **Japanese began the Sook Ching purge, killing thousands of civilians.** The Japanese held Singapore until the end of the war. **About 40,000, mostly conscripted, Indian soldiers joined the Indian National Army and fought with the Japanese in the Burma campaign.** Churchill called it **the worst disaster in British military history.** The Sinking of Prince of Wales and Repulse soon after the Japanese landings on Malaya, the fall of Singapore and other defeats in 1942, severely undermined British prestige, which contributed to the end of British colonial rule in the region after the war.”*


If we take a moment to rattle through the major battles that occurred on Singapore Island, first up we have the Battle of Pasir Panjang, in which we read:

“The Battle of Pasir Panjang, which took place between 12 and 15 February 1942, was part of the final stage of the Empire of Japan's invasion of Singapore during World War II. The battle was

initiated upon the advancement of elite Imperial Japanese Army forces towards Pasir Panjang Ridge on 13 February.

13,000 Japanese troops had made an amphibious landing in northwestern Singapore near Sarimbun (see Battle of Sarimbun Beach) and had started to advance south towards Pasir Panjang. They had already captured Tengah Airfield en route. **The 13,000 soldiers constituted a significant part of the total strength of 36,000 Japanese troops deployed in the invasion of Singapore.**”

I’ll say. Notice how in the different articles we’re getting significantly varying numbers of Japanese troops. One minute it’s 30,000, then 23,000, then 36,000. We get these numbers:

Units involved	
 1st Malaya Brigade	 56th Infantry
 44th Indian Brigade	Regiment, 18th Division
Strength	
1,400 infantry	13,000 infantry
Casualties and losses	
159 killed	Unknown

How were only 159 men killed in “vicious hand to hand fighting with bayonets”? Why would it even come to that given that the Japanese had tanks? **Did they also revert to catapults and moats?** How do we not know the number of Japanese casualties to this day? This battle also involved the Japanese disguising themselves as Indians, getting spotted, getting shot, then running away. No really:

*“The Japanese military pressed on their attack on Bukit Chandu in the afternoon, but **this time they did so under the guise of a deception attempt.** They sent a group of their soldiers, **dressed in captured British Indian troops' uniforms (with their faces and skin smeared with dirt and soot and the wearing of turbans to pass off as Punjabis),** to present themselves as allied Indian soldiers in the British Indian Army. **C Company saw through this trick as they knew that soldiers of the British Army typically marched in a line of three columns while the supposed Punjabi soldiers in front of their lines were moving in a line of four columns.** When they reached the Malay Regiment's defensive line, C Company's troops opened fire, **killing many** disguised Japanese soldiers. **Those who survived escaped downhill back to friendly lines.**”*

Obligatory Japanese barbarian hearsay anecdote:

*“Soon after, with the whole area of Pasir Panjang falling under Japanese control, Adnan, who was badly wounded and unable to fight, was captured. **Instead of taking him prisoner, the Japanese continuously kicked, punched and beat him before tying him to a tree and stabbing him to death with their bayonets (some sources claim that Adnan was brutally beaten up before being thrown into a tied-up gunny sack, which was then stabbed repeatedly by his Japanese captors, while others indicate that they stabbed him to death before hanging him upside down from a tree).**”*


Unclear who witnessed this. Adnan was Officer Adnan Saidi, now a national hero for fighting against the Japanese. His own page admits:

*“Although it is **widely agreed** that Adnan was killed during the Battle of Pasir Panjang, however **the exact details surrounding his death differed between accounts from both sides of the war.** **The actual circumstances of his death were never officially recorded.***

*The Imperial Japanese Army's **official account** indicated that Adnan was **executed and then hung upside down from a cherry tree** after two days of stubborn resistance and refusal to surrender. **Other accounts suggest that he might have been tied to the tree and repeatedly bayoneted to death.** British accounts confirmed that his corpse was found hung upside down after the surrender and this has been repeated in a number of authoritative texts on the Malayan Campaign.”*

Considering the British at the time were falling back or being killed by the Japanese invasion, I'm unclear who had time to inspect the battlefield and determine what had happened to Officer Saidi. What, the Japanese allowed British personnel to inspect the scene? Is this before or after Singapore surrenders to the invaders? Only the IJA official account would track, but then the first paragraph contradicts the second by saying the actual circumstances of the man's death were never officially recorded. So which is it? The IJA wrote "We bayoneted him under a cherry tree"? Or the British found the corpse later? They can't keep it straight.

Prior to Pasir Panjang we have the Battle of Sarimbun Beach, in which we get another... third... of the entire Japanese invasion force hitting one beach. Apparently.

Commanders and leaders	
 Harold Burfield Taylor	 Renya Mutaguchi
	 Takuro Matsui
Strength	
~3,000	~10,000

No casualties even listed here. What happened? They walked past each other? It's supposed to be fierce fighting. Presumably the Australians were annihilated? No idea.

Or you have the Battle of Kranji, which again gives us massive numerical discrepancies and no casualties:

Commanders and leaders	
 Duncan Maxwell ^[4]	 Takuma Nishimura ^[3]
 John Dalley	
Strength	
~2,000 ^[5]	~10,000 ^[6]

Nobody died? Or what, we can't be bothered to note this? Why? We read:

*“In the early hours of 10 February, Japanese forces suffered their heaviest losses during the Battle of Singapore. While moving up the Kranji River, advance landing parties from the 4th Regiment of the Imperial Guard Division found themselves **under heavy fire from Australian machine gunners and mortar teams.** They also found themselves **surrounded by oil slicks, which had been created by Allied personnel emptying the nearby Woodlands oil depot, to prevent its capture.** A scenario feared by Yamashita came to pass by accident; **the oil was set alight by Allied small arms fire, causing many Japanese soldiers to be burnt alive.** Sustaining heavy losses, Nishimura requested permission to abandon the operation. However, Yamashita denied the request.”*

Sounds awful, albeit spectacular. The river is on fire, hundreds if not thousands of corpses floating around. Any photos of this? Nope. Wikipedia, in this very article, does give us this however:



“Australian anti-tank gunners overlooking the Johor Causeway between Singapore and Malaya. The men are manning a 2-pounder anti-tank gun.” - Original [here](#).

Weird. Not exactly... apocalyptic is it? That river looks pretty normal. I guess we could say “Oh that was taken earlier. When they were defending Singapore... at the last minute... but the Japanese hadn’t arrived yet. Except that doesn’t make much sense as the causeway is already destroyed and you can see the smoke clouds on the far bank to indicate some kind of combat. And a 2-pounder? Why not a 6-ouncer? They might as well be throwing shoes at them.

We read on:

*“**Maxwell**, who had limited communications with his division headquarters, was concerned that his force would be cut off by fierce and chaotic fighting at Sarimbun and Jurong to the south west, involving the Australian 22nd Brigade. **Maxwell's force consequently withdrew from the seafont. This allowed the Japanese to land in increasing strength and take control of Kranji village. They also captured Woodlands, and began repairing the causeway, without encountering any Allied attack.**”*

Woah. So, hang on, what was that about a retreat? Or that the Japanese were able to repair the causeway without encountering an Allied counter-attack? Well, if we read on we get this:

*“**Lieutenant-General Arthur Percival, General Officer Commanding of HQ Malaya Command, drew a defence perimeter covering Kallang Airfield, the MacRitchie and Peirce reservoirs and the Bukit Timah supply depot area to ensure the integrity of the city's defence. One line of the north-western defence perimeter was the Jurong-Kranji defence line, a narrow ridge connecting the sources of Sungei Jurong and the Kranji River, forming a natural defence line protecting the north-west approach to the Singapore Town. (Its counterpart was the Serangoon Line, which was sited between Kallang Airfield and Paya Lebar village in the eastern part of Singapore). The troops were to defend this Line strongly against the invading Japanese force. The Line was defended by the 44th Indian Infantry Brigade which covered milestone 12 on Jurong Road, the 12th***

*Indian Infantry Brigade and the beleaguered 22nd Australian Brigade which guarded the northern part of the Line and maintained contact with the 44th Indian Brigade. The 15th Indian Infantry Brigade was **re-positioned near Bukit Timah Road to guard the island's vital food and petrol supplies**. A secret instruction to protect this area was issued to Percival's generals.*

Miscommunication

*Percival's secret orders to withdraw to the last defence line around the city only if necessary were **misunderstood by Maxwell**, who took this to be an order for **an immediate withdrawal** to the Line. [18] As a result, the 44th Indian Infantry Brigade, the 12th Indian Infantry Brigade and the 22nd Australian Brigade, reinforced after their withdrawal from Sarimbun beach in the north-west, **abandoned the Line on 10 February**. Fearing that the large supplies depot would fall into Japanese hands should they make a rush for Bukit Timah too soon, General Archibald Wavell, Allied commander-in-chief of the Far East sent an urgent message to Percival:*

It is certain that our troops in Singapore Island heavily outnumber any Japanese who have crossed the Straits. We must destroy them. Our whole fighting reputation is at stake and the honour of the British Empire. The Americans have held out in the Bataan Peninsula against a far heavier odds, the Russians are turning back the picked strength of the Germans. The Chinese with an almost lack of modern equipment have held the Japanese for four and a half years. It will be disgraceful if we yield our boasted fortress of Singapore to inferior enemy forces."

Incredible. How on earth do you misunderstand the fall-back-in-emergency-only instruction to mean "run away now" and immediately lose sites like the reservoirs and the food storage? I normally leave out the notation numbers when I quote but I kept this one in. Number 18. It's the nod to tell you "of course he could read properly, they are deliberately pulling back to lose".

The final "major" battle of the Fall of Singapore was at Bukit Timah, an important hill. Mentioned previously it was under-defended, the article page doesn't even bother with casualties:

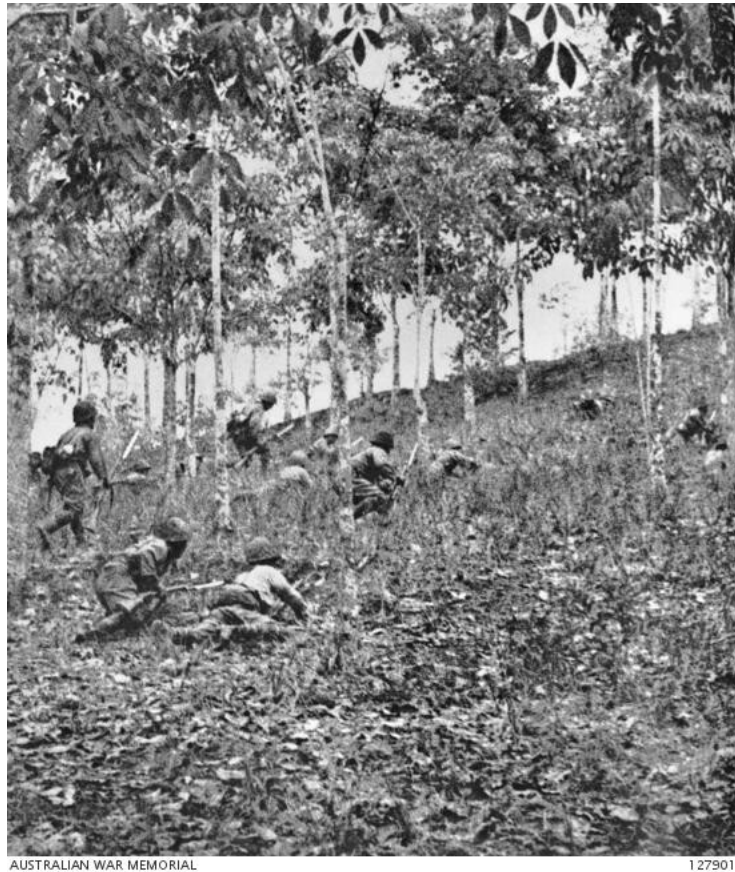
Commanders and leaders	
 Ian Stewart	 Masanobu Tsuji
 Angus MacDonald	
Units involved	
 15th Indian Brigade	 5th Division
 12th Indian Brigade	 18th Division
 22nd Brigade	
 27th Brigade	
 Dalforce	

Spot the **Stewart**. Also remember MacDonald=Stanley. We then get a very short article, I'll quote this bit:

*"As the Japanese began advancing towards the strategically important Bukit Timah which offered **vital supplies including water**, British, Indian, and Australian troops from a variety of units fought actions along the Bukit Timah Road in an effort to blunt the advance. As the Japanese 5th Division, with armoured support, advanced down the Choa Chu Kang Road, British troops and Chinese volunteers from the irregular Dalforce engaged in desperate hand-to-hand fighting, but being poorly equipped, they were forced back and by midnight the Japanese had occupied Bukit Timah*

On 11 February, two British brigades attempted a counter-attack, but this was turned back; the following day, the Japanese Imperial Guards, outflanked the British positions from the north, and forced them to withdraw. Dalforce was engaged in further fighting, which resulted in heavy Japanese casualties; in revenge the Japanese killed a large number of Chinese civilians nearby after the fighting.

We then get this photograph:



“Japanese troops assaulting Bukit Timah hill, under Allied fire.” - original [here](#).

Aside from the poor quality of the photograph and the fact this could be taken anywhere, I’m genuinely baffled by how they didn’t spot the Japanese soldier bleeding through the tree overlay. In the middle. Half-way up. This guy:



He’s in the background but is going in front of the tree that is in the foreground. Look again, see what I mean? In fact all of the soldiers are pasted in, the resolution and shade of them is different to the rest of the image. Plus, who shot this? It would have to be a Japanese cameraman, unless we had photographers embedded *behind* the Japanese.

Anyway, it all goes pear shaped due to ~~deliberate pre-scripted failure~~ the power of Japanese military prowess and we get the surrender at the Old Ford Factory.

“The Former Ford Factory (also Old Ford Motor Factory and Old Ford Factory depending on sources) is located along Upper Bukit Timah Road at Bukit Timah in Singapore. It is the place where the British Army forces surrendered to Imperial Japanese Army forces on 15 February 1942 after the Battle of Singapore.”

We get the photo of Percival walking along (on the far right) on his way to surrender. Because nobody had a car, or they thought a photo-shoot now would be a good idea:



“British Lieutenant General Arthur Ernest Percival (right end), General Officer Commanding Malaya in World War Two, on march towards the Japanese camp to surrender Singapore, bearing the Union Jack and the white flag, on February 15 1942.” (Photo by The Asahi Shimbun Premium via Getty Images)

Terrible posture for military men. I guess the slump of defeat? Or actors, caught out at an angle. Yeah, some people shouldn't wear shorts. I am one of them. These guys are four more.



“Yamashita (seated, centre) thumps the table with his fist to emphasise his terms—unconditional surrender. Percival sits between his officers, his clenched hand to his mouth.” - original [here](#).

So you might be wondering if there was any photography/footage to show us what happened in the Battle of Singapore. Surely there would be loads of photos? I mean, city of nearly a million people, important naval base, someone is going to have a camera. What do they give us? Behold:



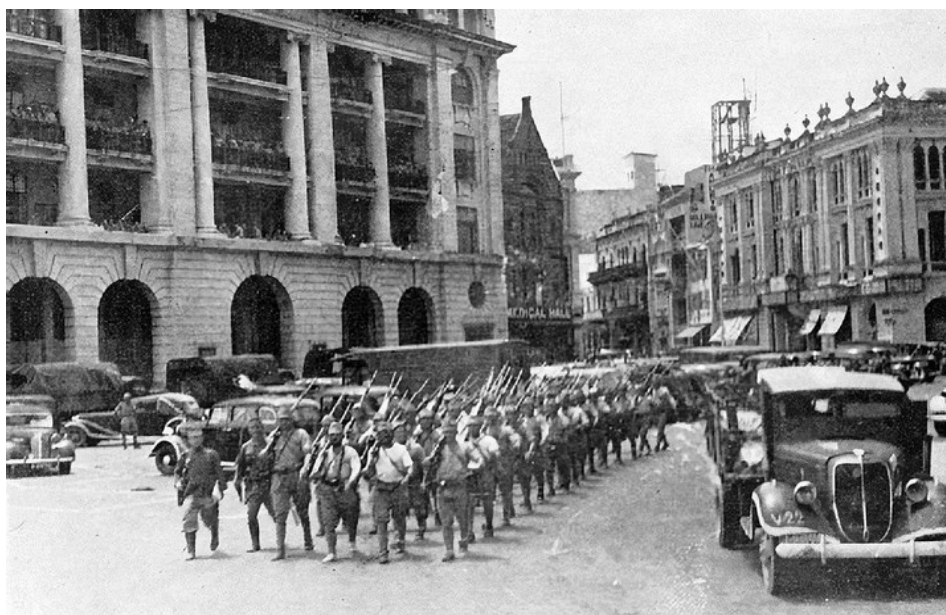
“View of the blown up causeway with the gap visible in the middle, which delayed the Japanese conquest for over a week to 8 February” - original [here](#).

Not really what I was expecting. Is that a collapsed bridge? That shadow in the water is... what... a support column? Where is the rest of it? It completely disintegrated? So when they were talking about the Japanese “repairing” the causeway, they really mean “completely rebuilt from scratch”. It's another paste. The shadow in the water makes no sense. Why is the tower reflecting in the water but nothing else is?



“A column of smoke from burning oil tanks at Singapore Naval Base” - original [here](#).

OK, so shades of the Burma campaign and the British burning oil as they leave Rangoon. Again, not exactly a war zone to look at. No aerial fighting, no panic in the streets, no buildings on fire. And that smoke plume looks fake.



“Victorious Japanese troops march through Fullerton Square.” - original [here](#).

I’m not saying there weren’t IJA troops in Singapore from ‘42 onwards. Of course there were, people saw them and interacted with the regime. I’m just saying this isn’t a war, this is a handover.



“Singapore. Smoke haze over the city after bomb attacks by Japanese. 3 February 1942 (Bottomley, Clifford, Australian War Memorial.” - original [here](#).

This smoke looks dodgy. Paste up, surely? This next one has a great caption:



"Singapore. Neither the cattle nor their attendant seem in the least perturbed by smoke billowing from a nearby blaze, the result of a Japanese air raid." 3 February 1942 (Bottomley, Clifford, Australian War Memorial 011529/30)." - original [here](#).

If there'd been a bombing run from planes or general fire from artillery the cattle would be going crazy with fear. The dude wouldn't be sitting around relaxing out in the open. Either that smoke is pasted in or you're looking at a very controlled blaze. **It's a paste, as they all but admit.**



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

011529/22

"Singapore. Two women sit on the street among rubble and debris wailing and crying, showing their grief for the small child whose dead body lies nearby in front of a damaged rickshaw after a Japanese air attack." 3 February 1942 (Bottomley, Clifford, Australian War Memorial 011529/22)."

So there's been a bombing run, but you don't photograph that (e.g. sky full of enemy planes and AA flak, or a landscape shot showing the city being bombed / on fire). Instead, in the aftermath you have a close shot of... a rickshaw hit by a bomb? Or is this the aftermath of a traffic collision? In the background people are going about their business as usual. **Yet another paste.**

There are other photos of Singapore in World War 2 that exist, I'm not going to show all of them here obviously, but my point is, I'm not getting anything juicy. Fire up a browser search and see for yourself. What's going on? Where is the conflict?

[Here is a link](#) to a short (7 minute) clip from "WW2 Battlefront Pacific", which has footage from the events of the time. Also a hilariously American title sequence which I loved.

At 2:50 you have the excellently named Roger Dingman (a Proper Historian) who explains that when the Japanese landed in the gulf of Thailand they had no opposition. Tell that to the lads at Kota Bharu. We then see colour footage of the Japanese landing! It's interesting to compare the quality of this colour footage versus the usually terrible quality black and white photos we've seen used to push lies.

We get some footage at 3:40 of the bombing of Singapore (albeit mostly of bombing fields next to a building complex), some rather staged-looking shots of soldiers jogging around. At 5:15 we allegedly see Japanese footage of the Prince of Wales getting sunk, which looks rather like a target barge sailing in circles.

An even more interesting clip on YouTube is entitled “1942 The Taking of Singapore – Japanese Footage Only” – this, as it says, is a compilation of Imperial Japanese Army footage as they proceed to Malaysia, land, fight through the jungles and eventually take the capital. At only slightly over ten minutes long it is well worth a watch and gives us some observations:

1. The Japanese are also bringing along film crews to document their conquest. This only increases the strangeness of the lack of coverage of the battles on the peninsula.
2. The arrival of Japanese troops (on a pretty tropical beach in broad daylight) shows them land unopposed, very much like what we see of American troops in the various island battles covered in previous papers.
3. Continuing in this trend, the Japanese then go for a lovely walk / bike ride, stopping periodically to film themselves doing general infantry training / practice fire drills. Again, this mirrors precisely what we’ve seen of American troop activity. The practice drills could be filmed anywhere, frankly, so I have no way of knowing this is even in Malaysia.
4. At the 4 minute mark we also see crowds of locals waving at the Japanese as they pass by. You can say “Oh well this is under duress, at gunpoint” but I take this as indication that this is not a war, this is a procession by land to Singapore later reframed as a conflict.
5. Around 9 minutes you have the entrance to Singapore proper. This is VERY interesting as we see a completely relaxed handover ceremony, rows of Japanese armour rolling into the city (not showing any dirt/mud/chassis damage). The sky is clear blue (no smoke or smog from burning buildings). The buildings are undamaged. The roads are clean and empty. The soldiers are clean and uninjured, uniforms crisp, their body language calm and relaxed. The impression I get is not of troops ragged at the end of a brutal march and series of violent clashes, this is a polite corporate hand-over.

I would be remiss if I didn’t cover some atrocities supposedly carried out in Singapore post-conquest so let me tackle those now.

The Alexandra Hospital Massacre was a ghoulish tale I’d been told about as a boy, so I was a bit disappointed to find out it was all ridiculous nonsense. As per Wikipedia:

“The British Military Hospital, Singapore (now Alexandra Hospital) was the primary military hospital for the British Far East Command and site of a massacre in February 1942 by the Japanese troops during the Fall of Singapore.”

“On 14 February 1942, Japanese Imperial Forces advanced through Kent Ridge down Pasir Panjang Road to the Alexandra Military Hospital. The area was a key Japanese objective, containing the British army's biggest ammunition dump and Alexandra Barracks. The British 1st Malaya Infantry Brigade retreated west through the hospital, setting up machine guns on the first and second floors to cover its retreat. A lieutenant wearing a Red Cross brassard and carrying a white flag walked over to the Japanese troops to announce the surrender of non-combatants in the hospital, but was killed immediately.”

The hospital massacre was a good way to get rid of the “survivors” of the Prince of Wales sinking:

“Among the hospital patients were surviving crew members from Force Z, comprising the HMS Prince of Wales and HMS Repulse, sunk by Japanese torpedo bombers off the coast of Kuantan, Pahang on 10 December 1941.

Japanese troops of the **18th Division[11]** rushed into the hospital wards and operating theatres and bayoneted 250 patients and staff members. Before they could repeat their brutalities in other wards, **an officer ordered them to assemble on the hospital grounds outside.** The troops, however, removed about 400 patients and staff and locked them up in a small fetid room nearby, where many died of suffocation. The next afternoon, a cell door burst open under the effects of incoming mortar fire and some detainees staggered out, though many were mown down by Japanese machine-gun fire.”

Do I even need to comment? I left in the source numeral for obvious reasons.

“Those who escaped are thought to include Privates S.W.J. Hoskins and F.A.H. Gurd, Captain R. de Warrenne Waller, and Medical Corporal G.W. Johnson. Other survivors were taken from their cells in small groups and shot by the Japanese. The bodies were buried in a mass grave. The Japanese claimed that some Indian troops had fired on them from the hospital grounds.”

Walter Salmon of the Royal Signals, wounded by mortar fire, had been taken to the top floor of Alexandra Hospital, then had gone to the canteen, **where he witnessed part of the massacre.** Several men, including Private George Britton of the East Surrey Regiment, had been moved from the upstairs ward to the dining room and were in makeshift beds under the dining table. **Britton later described how the Japanese rushed in, taking all the bread piled on the table. But although an orderly was marched out and bayoneted, those on the floor were ignored.** They were left in the hospital for **three days without food or water** before being moved to the **Changi POW** camp on wheelbarrows, carts, or anything with wheels, as no motorised vehicles were available.”

No bicycle for you, white man.

“Other surviving staff and patients of the hospital were eventually transferred to the Roberts Barracks, where their command was taken over by Colonel Glyn White of the Royal Australian Army Medical Corps. **While a handful of people survived the Alexandra Hospital massacre, the exact number remains unclear.** Survivors included George Britton, Walter Salmon, Fred Shenstone, Arthur Haines, Fergus Anckorn, and perhaps those who managed to escape their cell under mortar fire, S.W.J. Hoskins, F.A.H. Gurd, R. de Warrenne Waller and G.W. Johnson. In a Forces TV news interview, Fergus Anckorn **mistakenly claimed to be the only survivor.**”

You’d think he’d remember the other people who survived with him. Then again:

“After the Japanese surrender in 1945, **a book containing the names of those massacred by the Japanese was kept in the hospital. Its current whereabouts are unknown.**”

Of course. Lost the list. Sailors dead. Japanese bayoneting randomly in between stealing bread. 400 people in a single room. We can also read this amusing account:

“Then the hospital was wrapped in such cacophony that it was impossible to know whether the battle was outside or inside. Shouts and screams followed a battery of explosions and gunfire. Men ran in every direction for cover. **Thirty minutes after the assault, Lt Col Craven, Major Bull and the other officers were finally able to make their way to the ground floor below the C.O.'s office. The scene was a bloodbath. Some fifty dead and many more wounded were strewn throughout the hospital.**”

250 bayoneted staff and patients is now perhaps 50. And:

*“For Captain Smiley and his colleagues in the operating theatre, it had been an exhausting day. The surgical team had continued operating throughout the barrage of shells and bullets. **One of the Japanese platoons climbed into the verandah** between the operating theatre block and the surgical wards, firing into the corridor. **The surgical team tried to carry a patient from the corridor into the operating theatre, but were prevented by a hail of bullets that thudded against the walls.** Captain Smiley approached the doorway and pointed to the Red Cross on his arm, but took cover when a shot whizzed past him and struck Private Lewis in the shoulder.*

*A Japanese soldier entered the room and found the men standing together in the middle of the floor with their hands above their heads. He motioned the men into the corridor. There a dozen Japanese soldiers **set upon them with bayonets.** Dr Rogers was stabbed in the right side of the chest and two more times as he lay on the ground. Dr Parkinson, who tried to run around the corner into the main corridor, was gunned down. McEwan and Lewis were killed by bayonet. The patient in the theatre, who was under anaesthetic, was **bayoneted to death on the operating table.**”*

And now for my favourite bit:

*“**Captain Smiley received a thrust in the breast, which was deflected away from his heart by a cigarette case in his pocket.** He blocked the next thrust with his arm and took the dagger in his groin. The next two thrusts severely injured his right arm and hand. Captain Smiley fell onto Private Sutton, who had thus far escaped attack. **The Captain told Sutton to fall down with him and pretend to be dead.** After the soldiers left, Private Sutton dressed Captain Smiley's wounds. **Both lived to tell of this event.**”*

So... yeah. Absolute nonsense as usual then.

Sook Ching (the Japanese mass execution of anyone they didn't like – primarily Chinese – in a purge post-conquest) is a weird one. The main article explains:

*“After the war, the Japanese authorities acknowledged that the massacre took place, but disagreed about the number of deaths that Japan had caused. **Japan alleged that no more "than 6,000 deaths" had occurred,** while Singapore's first prime minister Lee Kuan Yew, who was himself almost a victim to Sook Ching, stated that verifiable numbers **would put it at "about 70,000",** including the figures in Malaya.”*

Wikipedia then tries to clarify on the top-right information panel that it was 25,000-50,000 killed:

Date	18 February 1942 – 4 March 1942 ^[b] (UTC+08:00)
Target	Identify and eliminate suspected "anti-Japanese elements"; with specific targets for Chinese Singaporeans or others perceived as a threat to the Japanese
Attack type	Systematic purge and massacre ^[c]
Deaths	25,000 to 50,000 (consensus and retrospective analysis) ^[d]
Perpetrators	Empire of Japan ; Kempeitai within the Imperial Japanese Army <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gen. Tomoyuki Yamashita• Col. Tsuji Masanobu• Hayashi Tadahiko

You'll note the executions started on the 18th of February. But only for two weeks or so, then the Japanese sit back and chill? Weird. You'd think the initial wave of executions wouldn't be able to completely weed out all resistance. Also that killing people tends to make their friends and family hate you and motivates them to resist also. So you would expect waves of executions to occur periodically between February of '42 and the eventual surrender in '45.

One of the links from the [d] link above takes us [to this page](#), which explains:

*"Those unfortunate to be selected were loaded into lorries and **taken to remote sites to be summarily executed**. There **was little attempt to conceal these killings**. People living near the massacre sites and prisoners of war were ordered to dispose the bodies. **The Japanese estimated that there were between 5,000 and 6,000 executions, while the local Chinese put it between 40,000 and 50,000** (which **may** have included those killed by shelling and bombardment during the Malaya Campaign). The true numbers are unlikely ever to be known."*

OK so very vague and unclear. This is a secret police round-up with hidden figures denied in a conspiracy to this day (because the Japanese government still won't admit it's 50,000 dead), but it's also done with little attempt to conceal the killings. Back on Wikipedia it tries to point us towards key sites of the massacre:

*"In 1992, the various Sook Ching massacre sites around the country **such as Changi Beach, Katong, Punggol Point, Tanah Merah and Sentosa were designated with historic plaque markers as heritage sites** by the Singaporean government's National Heritage Board, to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the occupation."*

But then if we look at each page in turn we find:

[Changi Beach](#): *"Changi Beach served as one of the killing grounds of Sook Ching massacre for the Japanese Imperial Army during the Japanese Occupation of Singapore of the Second World War, where **66 Chinese male civilians** were killed on the beach by the Japanese Hojo Kempei on 20 February 1942."*

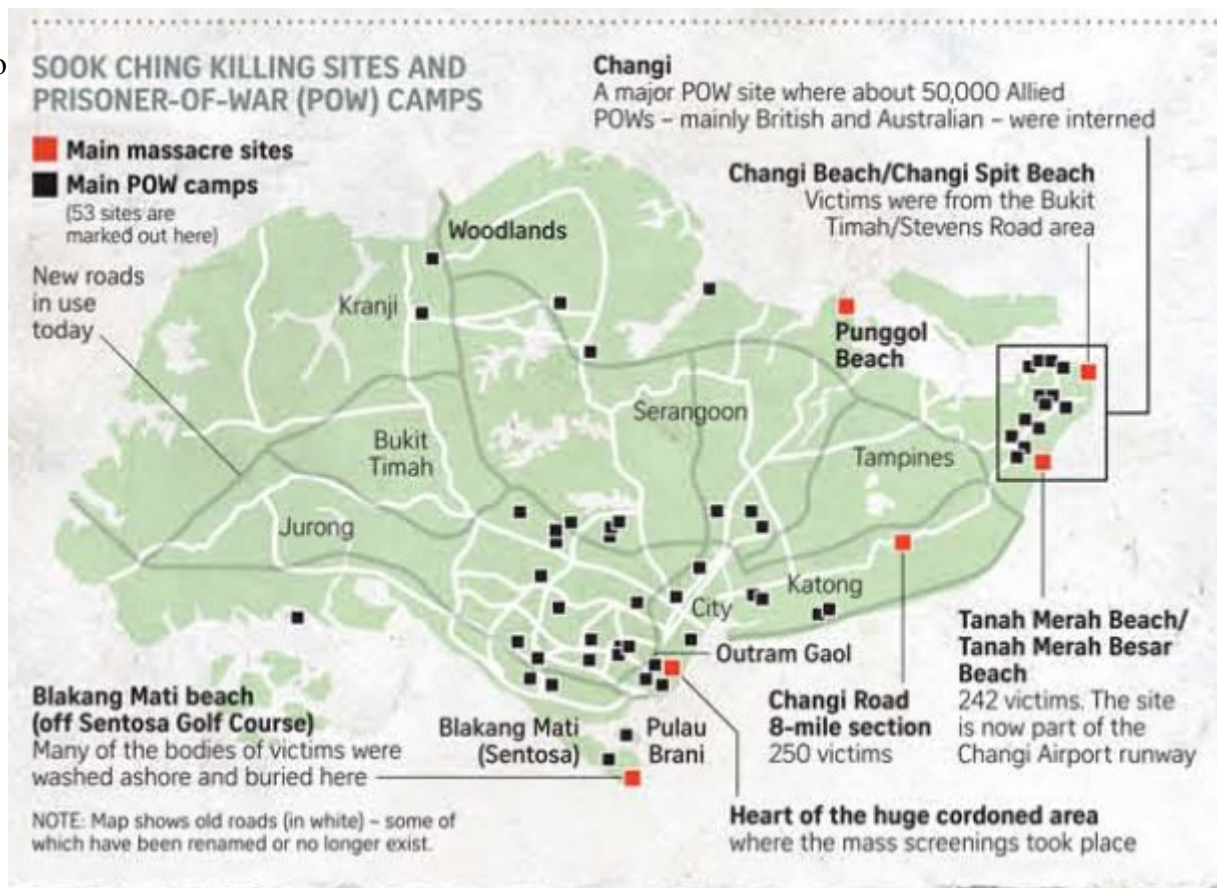
Sixty-six dead. OK. We're starting off small. The Japanese are just getting warmed up. Come on Japan, these are rookie numbers! The same article tells us:

*"Tanah Merah Besar Beach, a few hundred metres south (now part of Singapore Changi Airport runway) was **one of the most heavily-used killing grounds** where **well over a thousand Chinese men and youths lost their lives**."*

Eh... OK. So over a thousand but less than 2,000 at this place called Tanah Merah, which is now an airport runway. Why would you build a runway over a mass killing site? Wouldn't it be turned into a memorial? Was there some kind of massive excavation of skeletons?

We then look at the page on [Tanah Merah...](#) to find no mention of a massacre. At all. Weird. We google to find [this page](#), which gives us this screenshot:

So



Tanah Merah (right side) has... 242 victims. What? This is also repeated [on this page](#) which also gives super low numbers:

“Hougang 8 ms: Six lorry loads of people were reported to have been massacred here.

Katong 7 ms: 20 trenches for burying the bodies of victims were dug here.

Beach opposite 27 Amber Road: Two lorry loads of people were said to have been massacred here. The site later became a car park.

Tanah Merah Beach/Tanah Merah Besar Beach: 242 victims from Jalan Besar were massacred here. The site later became part of the Changi airport runway

Sime Road off Thomson Road: Massacre sites found near a golf course and villages in the vicinity.

Siglap area: Massacre site near Bedok South Avenue/Bedok South Road (previously known as Jalan Puay Poon).

Blakang Mati Beach, off the Sentosa Golf Course: Many of the bodies of massacre victims that were washed ashore were buried here.”

This just gets weirder and weirder. Note how “were reported” or “were said” is not the same thing as “we investigated and found bodies”. This is hearsay.

What about [Katong](#)? Well... nothing. We learn it’s a nice place for the wealthy, with good food and scenery. Nothing about a massacre. Why would that not be mentioned?

The article on [Punggol Point](#) tells us:

“Punggol Beach was one of the sites where Chinese civilians were killed during the Sook Ching Massacre. The location has now been declared as a national heritage site. There is a plaque commemorating the Sook Ching Massacre. The inscription on the plaque reads:

*On 23 February 1942, **some 300–400 Chinese civilians were killed** along Punggol foreshore by Hojo Kempei (auxiliary military police) firing squad. They were among tens of thousands who lost their lives during the Japanese Sook Ching operation to purge suspected anti-Japanese civilians among Singapore's Chinese population between 18 February and 4 March 1942. **The victims who perished along the foreshore were among 1,000 Chinese males rounded up following a house-to-house search of the Chinese community living along Upper Serangoon Road by Japanese soldiers.***

— National Heritage Board.

*The remains of some victims from the Sook Ching massacre would later be discovered by beach goers and fishermen. In **13** March 1977, **a human skull and some bones** was brought to light when a man **dug a hole in the sand** around the area. In December 1997, **a man digging for earthworms as bait found a skull with two gold teeth as well as parts of an arm and a leg near the shore.***

300-400 people killed, roughly. Also people digging on shorelines in an area inhabited for literally thousands of years finds human remains. OK.

Lastly, [Sentosa](#):

*“Following the surrender of the Allied Forces on 15 February 1942, Fort Siloso became a prisoner of war camp, housing Australian and British prisoners of the Japanese. During the Japanese Occupation, under the Sook Ching Operation, Chinese men who were suspected, often arbitrarily, of being involved in anti-Japanese activities were brutally killed. **300 bodies, riddled with bullet wounds, washed up on the beach of Pulau Belakang Mati, and were buried by the British prisoners.**”*

So... they were trying to hide the killings. By throwing them in the sea. But some washed up and they needed to order the Brits to tidy up. Whereas despite being part of the same massacre nearby they would get local people to dig trenches to bury the executed. Were bodies being burned to hide the numbers? Or just buried? If they're buried why were they covered under airport runways and car parks?

We've skipped around all the main sites listed via Wikipedia and we're only looking at a total of roughly... **1,008 corpses**. Well isn't that something. Am I actually the first person to be rude enough to do the Corpse Math?

We also have this photographic evidence of the horrors of Changi Prison:



“British and Australian POWs in Singapore's Changi Prison” - original [here](#).

This would be more impressive if they hadn't pasted in the heads on the bodies. All four heads are floating, the wrong size and a different shade/resolution to the rest of the image. So. Yeah. That's the main “shocking photographs of world war 2” image for Changi. Whoops.

Before I head off I'll touch on the fate of our dear old friend Arthur Percival. After all, given what the Japanese are supposed to be like (vicious cannibal pervert brutes who bayonet nurses and chop the arms and legs off of policemen etc.) you would think they would take a pretty dim view of the poor chap. After all: enemy commander... who surrendered! No honour! What do we think, reader? Eaten alive by scorpions? Fried in tempura batter? Perhaps launched to sea from one of the British naval guns defending Singapore harbour? A grim fate, surely.

Well actually:

*“Percival himself was briefly held prisoner in Changi Prison, where “the defeated GOC could be seen sitting head in hands, **outside the married quarters he now shared with seven brigadiers, a colonel, his ADC and cook-sergeant.** He discussed feelings with few, **spent hours walking around the extensive compound,** ruminating on the reverse and what might have been”. In the belief that it would improve discipline, **he reconstituted a Malaya Command, complete with staff appointments, and helped occupy his fellow prisoners with lectures on the Battle of France.**”*

And:

*“Along with the other senior British captives above the rank of colonel, **Percival was removed from Singapore in August 1942.** First he was imprisoned in **Formosa and then sent on to Manchuria,** where he was held with several dozen other **VIP captives,** including the American General **Jonathan Wainwright,** in a prisoner-of-war camp **near Hsian,** about 100 miles (160km) to the north east of Mukden.”*

Why do I get the sneaking suspicion this is bollocks and he got to relax in a luxury Chinese hotel?

“As the war drew to an end, an OSS team removed the prisoners from Hsian. Percival was then taken, along with Wainwright, to stand immediately behind General Douglas MacArthur as he confirmed the terms of the Japanese surrender aboard USS Missouri in Tokyo Bay on 2 September 1945. Afterwards, MacArthur gave Percival a pen he had used to sign the treaty.”

Incredible.



“The signing of the Japanese surrender; MacArthur (sitting), behind him are Generals Percival (background) and Wainwright (foreground).” - Original [here](#).

*“Percival and Wainwright then **returned together to the Philippines to witness the surrender of the Japanese army there**, which in a twist of fate was commanded by General Yamashita. Yamashita was momentarily surprised to see his former captive at the ceremony; on this occasion Percival **refused to shake Yamashita's hand, angered by the mistreatment of POWs in Singapore**. The flag carried by Percival's party on the way to Bukit Timah was also a witness to this reversal of fortunes, being flown when the Japanese formally surrendered Singapore back to Lord Louis Mountbatten.”*

No comment needed, it's too perfect.

Wrapping up all this nonsense: the Japanese did physically go into Malaysia and Singapore, I'm not arguing that, I'm sure the Imperial Japanese Army were marching (or riding bicycles) around the streets happily by February of '42. That's not the point I'm trying to make: the point is that this was allowed to happen, with the various anecdotes above demonstrating nonsense battles (tanks whizzing past checkpoints unopposed) and a thick syrup of atrocity propaganda layered on top to add emotional gloss so you don't question it. My take would be that the Japanese basically ride into

Singapore (like at Rangoon, or Kuala Lumpur) and the British hand them the baton of local rule, to be later replaced with “independent” rule (still working with the Empire, but now with greater local support). This isn’t a war, this was a (theatrical) changing of the guard – and I’m deeply sceptical of the body count associated with it.

More to come.

Outro Music.

