



<b>Title</b>	<b>Pak Sha Wan battery: a case study of a Hong Kong military heritage site</b>
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# **Pak Sha Wan Battery: A Case Study of a Hong Kong Military Heritage Site**

by

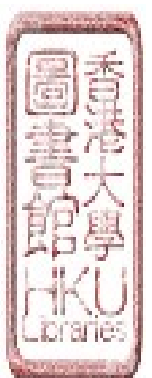
**TSE Tak San**

**HKU Student No.: 2000040074**

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of  
Science in Conservation at the University of Hong Kong

July 2013





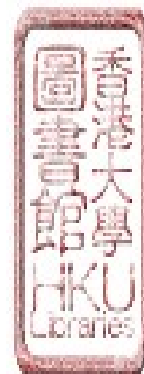
# ABSTRACT

This dissertation focuses on the military heritage in Hong Kong. It specifically covers a case-study military site – Pak Sha Wan Battery on the east of Hong Kong Island, an abandoned defensive mechanism and one of significant battlefields in the Battle of Hong Kong in 1941.

This research dissertation is to examine military heritage as a Cultural Heritage with both tangible and intangible elements. By the Pak Sha Wan Battery as a case study, this is also to recognise the importance of the military heritage site in the history of Hong Kong, and the war relics deserve to be preserved for our future generations.

To a certain extent, military heritage is neglected by people in Hong Kong. Part of the reason is perhaps because of a lack of a local military tradition. There has never been compulsory military service in Hong Kong. Additionally, Hong Kong does not involve in direct war conflict after the World War II. Military and war are concepts far away from Hongkongers. Few people could tell the location of military compounds and battlefields in Hong Kong. Military heritage may not even be considered as an important heritage because those military relics are just pieces of abandoned ruins to them! Owing to being neglected for long time, most of the Hong Kong war relics are overgrown and witnesses of the war become invisible to the people, though some military heritage sites are not actually hard to access, e.g. Pinewood Battery on Victoria Peak and the disused military structure on Devil's Peak, and the former Lyemun military installations at the present-day Hong Kong Museum of Coastal Defence (HKMCD).

As an assistant curator in a military theme museum in Hong Kong, the author find few publications on the Hong Kong military, and it is believed that many military relics in Hong Kong are still to be uncovered and documented. Pak Sha Wan Battery, inside the closed area of the HKMCD, is hardly accessible, and therefore it was least mentioned in publications. Most likely it is just mentioned the location name in publications but few further details information about the Battery can be found. It is hoped that this dissertation with the Pak Sha Wan Battery as a case study could help to document the gap of record in the military history of Hong Kong.



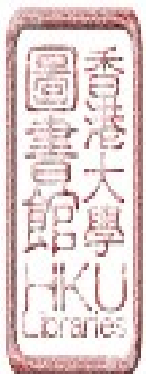
# DECLARATION

I declare that this dissertation represents my own work, except where due acknowledgement is made, and that it has not been previously included in a thesis, dissertation or report submitted to this University or to any other institution for a degree, diploma or other qualification. All illustrations (maps, drawings and photographs) reproduced in this dissertation, except where due acknowledgement is made, are the original work of the author.



*Signed* \_\_\_\_\_

TSE Tak San



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I owe my gratitude to a great number of people who have been most supportive during my happy studies in the Architectural Conservation Programmes (ACP) at The University of Hong Kong. First and foremost, I wish very much to thank my late mother, Madam Hui Yee Mei, who once reminded me to work hard in what I do but enjoy what I do – an advice that I have taken to heart and apply in everything I do in life. My father Mr Tse To Hok, who has been a role model to me, such that I owe my success in life to him. My sister Ms Carol Tse, who has helped take care of the family at time when I was not able to do so – this means a lot to me and I take the opportunity to express my heartfelt gratitude.

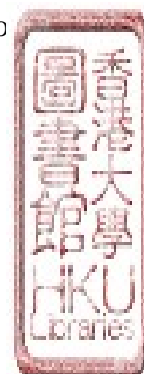
I would like to express my special thanks to three people for their encouragement and support of my studies in ACP: my boss Ms Rosa Yau, Curator at the Hong Kong Museum of Coastal Defence; my supervisor Ms Rebecca Cheung, Assistant Curator at the Hong Kong Museum of Coastal Defence; and my teacher Dr David Pomfret, Associate Professor in the HKU Department of History.

Two people in particular have given me much insight in my research for this dissertation: the prominent local historian Prof Anthony Siu and the Chairman of the Hong Kong Ex-Servicemen Association Mr Albert Lam. They explained a great many things relating to my research and helped open my heart and mind.

I owe a big thank-to my very dear pals of the Ko Shan Friends football team (you know who you are!), my colleagues at the Hong Kong Museum of Coastal Defence (every one of you!), my dear friends in life, particularly, Ms Joey Chan, Mr Issac Ho, Mr Otto Li, Mr Lawrence Chiu and Mr David Ho. Your friendship has enabled me to carry out my studies with almost no stress!

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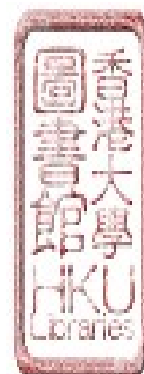
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# CHAPTER ONE

## Dissertation Framework

### Research Scope

This is a research dissertation focusing on military heritages in Hong Kong. It covers a case-study military site – Pak Sha Wan Battery on the east of Hong Kong Island, an abandoned defensive mechanism and one of significant battlefields in the Battle of Hong Kong in 1941.

### Research Issue

Hong Kong is always a key military outpost because of its strategic location, at the estuary of Pearl River in southern China. As early as the eighth century, i.e. Tang dynasty (A.D. 618 – 907), Chinese soldiers were garrisoned at the present-day Tuen Mun<sup>1</sup>. During the Qing dynasty (A.D. 1644 – 1911), fortifications were also built at Fan Lau, Tung Chung, Kwun Chung, Tsim Sha Tsui, Kowloon Walled City and Tung Lung Island to defend any possible attacks from pirates and foreign invaders. Upon the establishment of the British administration on Hong Kong Island in 1841, the British constructed series of forts and batteries on the north shore of the island so as to protect the newly established City of Victoria, and later to both sides of the Victoria Harbour and surrounding waters when Kowloon and New Territories were included in the whole colony.

Japanese attack Hong Kong in 1941 is historic in the local military history: Hong Kong was involved in a modern warfare of the Battle of Hong Kong. British strengthened the military facilities in 1936 for defending a foreseeable attack from Japan. Such military facilities were heavily destroyed during the Battle but the remains are still here today. Not only do those ruins of war identify the level of fighting, but also tell strategies and techniques behind the military set up.

This research dissertation is to examine military heritage as a Cultural Heritage with both tang and intangible elements. By the Pak Sha Wan Battery as a case study, this is also to recognise

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<sup>1</sup> Tuen Mun means “a gate (*Mun*) of being garrisoned (*Tuen* as a verb).” In the Chapter of Geography in *New Book Tang* Volume 43, it mentions “Two government offices: named Suinan and Panyu; regular soldiers were garrisoned Tuen Mun.” (Original text: 《新唐書》卷四十三「地理誌」：「有府二：曰綏南、番禺；有經略軍，屯門鎮兵。」)





importance of the military heritage site in the history of Hong Kong, and the war relics deserve to be preserved for our future generations.

## Literature Review and Research Gap

In 2002, local historian Mr Tim Ko commented that the military sites were significant to help people understand local military history but they had not been properly protected.<sup>2</sup> In reality, by the city development and rapid urbanisation after the war, many military sites disappeared, for instances demolition of Murray Barracks, Victoria Barracks and Wellington Barracks for commercial development in Admiralty.

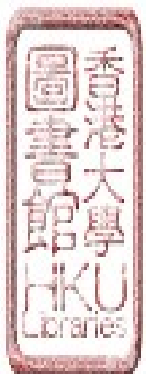
According to the Antiquities and Monuments Office, as at December 2011, only five out of 101 declared monuments in Hong Kong are relevant to the military:

1. Tung Chung Fort, Lantau Island,
2. Tung Lung Fort, Tung Lung Island,
3. Fan Lau Fort, Lantau Island,
4. Tung Chung Battery, Lantau Island, and
5. Fortified Structure at No. 55 Ha Pak Nai, Yuen Long.

To a certain extent, military heritage is neglected by people in Hong Kong. Part of the reason is perhaps because of a lack of a local military tradition. There has never been compulsory military service in Hong Kong. During the colonial era, if one wished to enrol for military service, they could join in the Royal Hong Kong Regiment (Volunteers) or join the British forces in Hong Kong. However, such voluntary military service applied to a small minority of the local people. Hong Kong was used to being protected by the British Forces before July 1997 and by the Chinese People's Liberation Army since then. Additionally, Hong Kong does not involve in direct war conflict after the World War II. Military and war are concepts far away from Hongkongers. Few people could tell the location of military compounds and battlefields in Hong Kong. Military heritage may not even be considered as an important heritage because those military relics are pieces of abandoned ruins to them! Owing to being neglected for long time, most of the Hong Kong war relics are overgrown and witnesses of the war become invisible to the people, the some military heritage sites are not actually hard to access, e.g. Pinewood Battery on Victoria F

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<sup>2</sup> Klaudie Lee, "War relics disappearing under the weight of neglect, historians warn." In *South China Morning Post*. November 2002.



and the disused military structure on Devil's Peak, and the former Lyemun military installations at the present-day Hong Kong Museum of Coastal Defence (HKMCD).

As an assistant curator in a military theme museum in Hong Kong, I find few publications on the Hong Kong military, and it is believed that many military relics in Hong Kong are still to be uncovered and documented. Pak Sha Wan Battery, inside the closed area of the HKMCD, is hardly accessible, and therefore it was least mentioned in publications. Most likely it is just mentioned the location name in publications but few further details information about the Battery can be found. It is hoped that this dissertation with the Pak Sha Wan Battery as a case study could help to document the gap of record in the military history of Hong Kong.

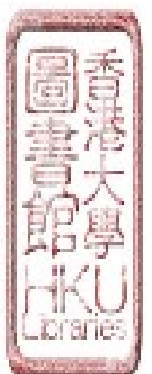
## Methodology – Research Basis and Approach

Could “military heritage” be seen as a cultural heritage? Military heritage includes military structures, defensive mechanism, techniques and landscape. To examine military heritage as a cultural heritage, it is based on the definition of “cultural heritage” according to the *World Heritage Convention* of 1972 (Article 1):

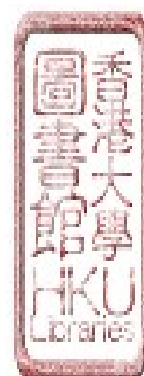
- monuments: architectural works, works of monumental sculpture and painting, elements or structures of an archaeological nature, inscriptions, cave dwellings and combinations of features, which are of outstanding universal value from the point of view of history, art or science;
- groups of buildings: groups of separate or connected buildings which, because of their architecture, their homogeneity or their place in the landscape, are of outstanding universal value from the point of view of history, art or science;
- sites: works of man or the combined works of nature and of man, and areas including archaeological sites which are of outstanding universal value from the historical, aesthetic, ethnological or anthropological points of view.

This research is also to examine military heritage as a part of intangible cultural heritage according to *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* (2003) so as to raise awareness of its importance.

Pak Sha Wan Battery is the case study for the local military heritage in this dissertation. It is to study the Battery to explore its tangible and intangible elements and to understand why military heritage should be conserved on the basis of the *Burra Charter* concluded in 1999.



As there are few publications about the Pak Sha Wan Battery, the main methodology of data collection will be obtained by interview to Mr Albert Lam, the chairman of the Hong Kong Ex-Servicemen Association. A site visit to the locations in this research is to be conducted for seeing the existing environment. Besides, historical archives, government documents will be other primary sources to support the information collected from the interviews. Background information will be supported by the secondary sources such as newspaper clippings, journals and contextual history.



# CHAPTER TWO

## An Overview of Military Heritage in Hong Kong

### Military Fortifications in Pre-Colonial Hong Kong

The modern history of Hong Kong commenced on 26th January 1841 when Captain Charles Elliot, R.N., occupied the Island of Hong Kong. However, it was actually long before the British arrival; Hong Kong had always been an important military outpost because of its location on the main maritime thoroughfare in southern China. The known military establishments built prior to Qing dynasty (A.D. 1644-1911) within the present-day Hong Kong were only found in historical documents because they had long disappeared.

Tuen Mun (屯門) is the first place name in the present-day Hong Kong recorded in the Chinese history book. *New Book of Tang* (新唐書) recorded that there were garrisons in Tuen Mun, a gate to the Pearl River Estuary, during the Tang dynasty (A.D. 618-907) and an important pass en route to Guangzhou.<sup>3</sup> According to the *Tang Huiyao* (唐會要), literally means “The institutional history of the Tang dynasty”, by Wang Pu (王溥) in Song dynasty, there were 2,000 soldiers at Tuen Mun for coastal defence.<sup>4</sup> It reflects that the area of the present-day Hong Kong was already recognised as a strategic location of military defence.

When the Qing government rescinded the “Great Evacuation” policy in 1668<sup>5</sup> (within the reign of Qing Emperor Kangxi (A.D.1662-1722)), the Chicken Wing Point and the Fat Tong Mun batteries were constructed to defend Hong Kong’s eastern and western waters, when the coastal areas were frequented by pirate attacks and the arrival of more Westerners. Later, during the reign of the Qing Emperor Daoguang (A.D. 1821-1850), the Kowloon, Kwun Chung and Tsim Sha Tsui batteries, as well as Kowloon Walled City were added. The construction of these defence facilities indicates the importance of Hong Kong as a key military outpost.

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<sup>3</sup> 《新唐書》卷四十三上 志第三十三上 地理七：廣州南海郡，中都督府。土貢：銀、藤篋、竹席、荔支、皮鱉甲、蚺蛇膽、石斛、沈香、甲香、詹糖香。戶四萬二千二百三十五，口二十二萬一千五百。縣十三：有所二，曰綏南、番禺。有經略軍，屯門鎮兵。

<sup>4</sup> 《唐會要》卷七十三：開元二十四年正月。廣州寶安縣新置屯門鎮。領兵二千人。以防海口。



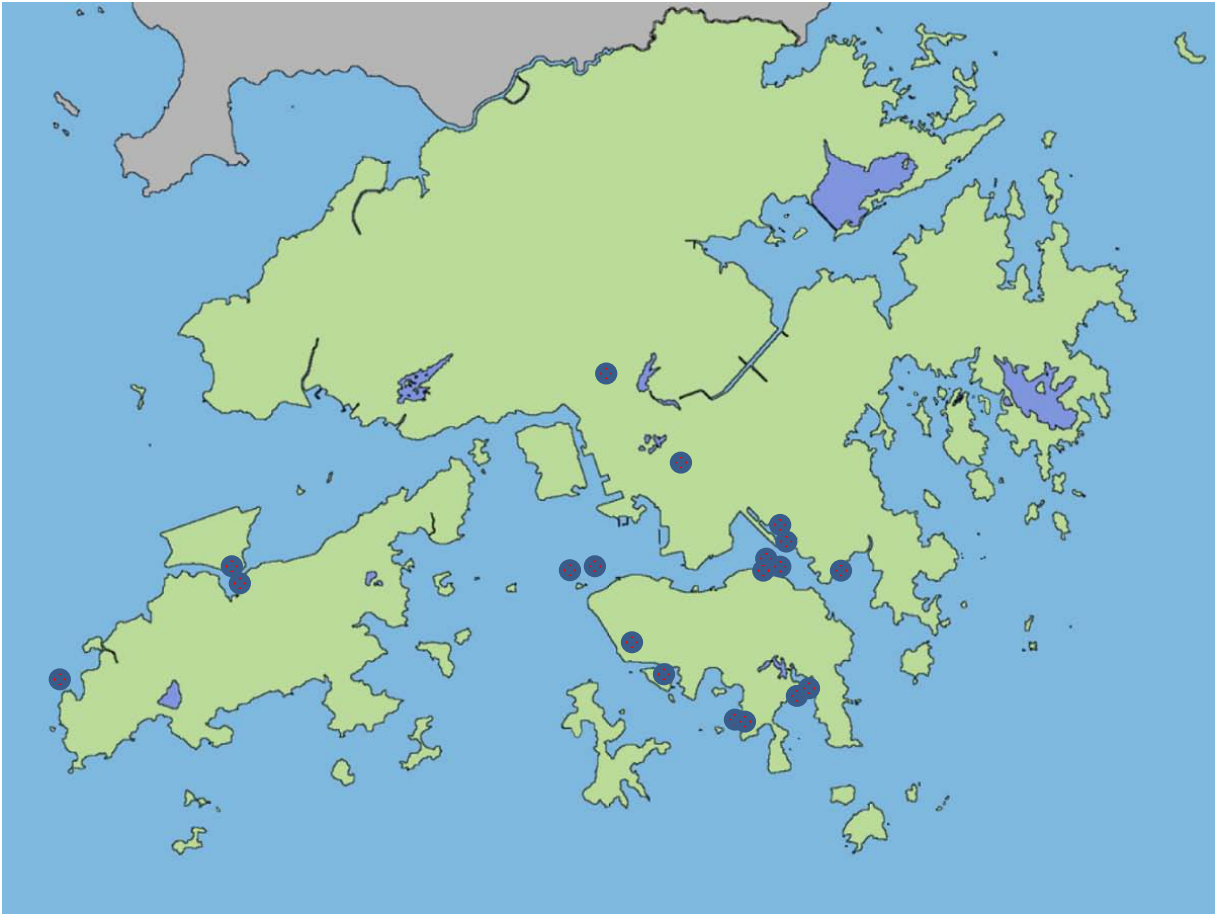
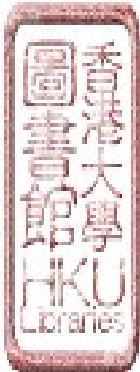
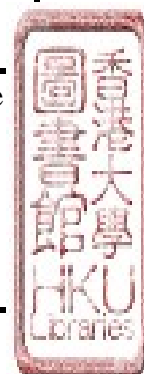


Fig.1 Locations of military heritage sites in Hong Kong. (Source: Map from Wikimedia)



The following is a brief summary of the military establishments built before the establishment of the British colonial rule in Hong Kong and are still physically seen today.

No.	Name	Location	Description
1.	Tung Lung Battery (東龍洲炮台) (also known as Fat Tong Mun Battery (佛堂門炮台)) – built in 1719-1724 (r. Qing Emperor Kangxi)	On the northern end of the Tung Lung Island	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rectangular in shape;</li> <li>• 34 metres long and 23 metres wide;</li> <li>• Walls approximately three metres in thickness and five metres in height;</li> <li>• One gate facing the west;</li> <li>• Two platforms for gun emplacements: one to the south and one to the east;</li> <li>• Housing 15 barracks and eight cannons.</li> </ul>
2.	Fan Lau Fort (分流炮台) (also known as Chicken Wing Point Battery (雞翼角炮台)) – earliest record dated in 1729 (r. Qing Emperor Yongzheng)	Highlands of the Fan Lau promontory at the south-western tip of Lantau Island, overlooking a sea passage leading into the Pearl River Estuary.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rectangular in shape;</li> <li>• Fort measures 46 metres by 21 metres;</li> <li>• Walls built of semi-dressed stone and green bricks;</li> <li>• Abandoned after the lease of the New Territories to Britain in 1898.</li> </ul>
3.	Tung Chung Small Battery (東涌小炮台) (also known as Rocky Lion Foot Battery (石獅腳炮台)) – built in 1817 (r. Qing Emperor Jiaqing)	On the slopes of the Rocky Lion Hill near the port of Tung Chung on Lantau Island	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An L-shaped wall with platform probably for gun emplacement remains.</li> </ul>
4.	Tung Chung Fort (東涌炮台) – built in 1832 (r. Qing Emperor Daoguang)	Sheung Ling Pei village (上嶺皮村) in the Tung Chung valley on Lantau Island.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rectangular shape with walls of granite;</li> <li>• Fort measures 80 metres by 70 metres;</li> <li>• Wall thickness: the northern wall about two metres, the other three walls about one metre;</li> <li>• Three gates.</li> </ul>
5.	Kowloon Walled City – completed in 1847 (r. Qing Emperor Daoguang)	The present-day Kowloon Walled City Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only the South Gate and the unearthed plaques with Chinese characters “South Gate” (南門) and Kowloon Walled City” (九龍寨城) remain.</li> </ul>



## Military Fortifications in Colonial Hong Kong

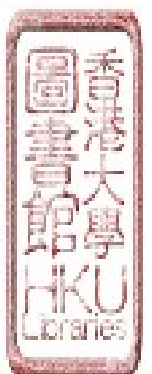
After occupying Hong Kong Island in 1841, the British took the northern shore as the centre of the new colony's urban development. In order to defend the newly named City of Victoria against possible attacks by the Qing army across the harbour, the British constructed various fortifications like barracks and batteries. The Murray Barracks was the first to be completed and the Murray Battery was built on a knoll near the Barracks, between the governor's residence and the government headquarters. Subsequently, the Royal Naval Base and the Royal Battery were built in the middle of the northern shore of the Island, so as to reinforce the defence of the harbour front. In time, more military facilities were built, like the Wellington Barracks and the Wellington Battery built at the waterfront next to the Royal Naval Base, the Victoria Barracks, the West Point Battery in Sai Ying Pun, and the gun battery on Kellet Island off the shore of Causeway Bay.

When the Kowloon Peninsula and the Stonecutters Island joined in the Colony in 1860, the British built the Kowloon East No. 1 Battery, Kowloon West No. 1 and 2 Batteries, Kowloon Dock Battery, the Stonecutters Central Battery and the North Point Battery. In view of the fact that the European powers were scrambling for concession in China and the Far East in the 1880s, the British had to reinforce the military fortifications on Hong Kong Island and the Kowloon Peninsula. The Belcher's Upper and Lower Batteries, Fly Point Battery and Victoria Battery on Hong Kong Island, the Kowloon West No. 2 Battery, the Stonecutters South and West Batteries were built for this reason. The Howitzer Battery at Wong Nei Chung Gap was also built to prevent possible attacks from the south.

In the early 20th century, in order to further strengthen the fortifications of Victoria Harbour, the Pak Sha Wan Battery and the Devil's Peak Battery were built on the southern and northern shores of Lyemun Channel respectively to safeguard the eastern approach to the Harbour. The Elliot, Pinewood, Mount Davis and Victoria Peak Batteries on Hong Kong Island, and Centurion and Albion Batteries on Stonecutters Island were built to guard Kap Shui Mun, the western approach to the Harbour.

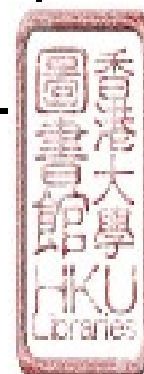
In 1936, the Committee of Imperial Defence of the United Kingdom decided that if war broke the defence of the colony must be concentrated on Hong Kong Island. In order to step up coastal defence, various batteries were added on the Island, and plans for constructing batteries in the New Territories were thus withdrawn.

Many of the military fortifications mentioned above were reduced in scale, demolished or vacated soon after completion, but a few remained in use even after World War II. Because of urban



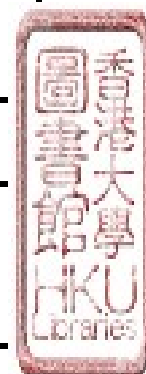
development, most of the military fortifications had long disappeared, traces of which may possibly be found in documents and photographs. Even those that are in existence are mostly derelict and in a state of neglect.

No.	Name	Location	Description
1.	Lyemun Fortification Installations – completed in 1887	A Kung Ngam (the current venue of the Hong Kong Museum of Coastal Defence)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The West Battery was mounted with two 9-inch Muzzle Loading Guns;</li> <li>• the Central Battery was mounted with two 64-pound Muzzle Loading Guns;</li> <li>• the Reverse Battery was mounted with three 9-inch guns;</li> <li>• Lyemun West Quick-firing Battery (also known as the Lyemun Pass Battery);</li> <li>• Redoubt consisting of 18 casemates for barracks, magazine, shells and cartridges rooms and coal store;</li> <li>• Two gun emplacements for 6-inch Breech Loading Disappearing Gun on a hydropneumatic platform;</li> <li>• Pak Sha Wan Battery with three gun emplacements.</li> </ul>
2.	Sai Wan Battery – completed in 1903	Sai Wan Hill (near today entrance of the Lei Yue Mun Park and Holiday Village)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Redoubt;</li> <li>• Gun emplacement;</li> <li>• Tunnel constructed by the Japanese during the Japanese Occupation period.</li> </ul>
3.	Devil’s Peak Redoubt and Battery – completed in 1900	Devil’s Peak at Kowloon East end	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Redoubt at 222 metres;</li> <li>• Gough Battery at 160 metres with two gun emplacements;</li> <li>• Pottinger Battery at 80 metres with two gun emplacements;</li> <li>• Bunkers.</li> </ul>





4.	Pinewood Battery – completed in 1905	Lung Fu Shan Country Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Above sea-level 307 metres, the highest military installation in Hong Kong;</li> <li>• Barracks;</li> <li>• Bunkers;</li> <li>• Gun emplacements.</li> </ul>
5.	Mount Davis Battery – completed in 1912	Mount Davis (next to the Youth Hostel)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Above sea-level 254 metres;</li> <li>• Gun emplacements.</li> </ul>
6.	Jubilee Battery – completed in 1939	Under the junction of Victoria Road and Mount Davis Path	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Three gun emplacements;</li> <li>• Barracks;</li> <li>• Command Post;</li> <li>• Covered by the undergrowth.</li> </ul>
7.	Collinson Battery – built in 1938	Cape Collinson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two Gun emplacements;</li> <li>• The battery is restricted to access and the area is managed by the Correctional Services Department.</li> </ul>
8.	Chung Hom Kok Battery – built in the late 1930s	Chung Hom Kok	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two gun emplacements;</li> <li>• A semi-circular protection cover;</li> <li>• Magazine and bunkers.</li> </ul>
9.	Bokhara Battery – completed in 1941	Cape D’Aguilar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gun emplacements;</li> <li>• Battery buildings;</li> <li>• Restricted area for satellite stations.</li> </ul>
10.	D’Aguilar Battery – built in 1941	Cape D’Aguilar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restricted area for satellite stations.</li> </ul>
11.	Stanley Battery – completed in 1937	Chek Chue Barracks in Stanley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Three emplacements;</li> <li>• Redoubt;</li> <li>• The area is managed by the Hong Kong Garrison of the People’s Liberation Army of China and restricted for public access.</li> </ul>
12.	Bluff Head Battery – built in 1941	Chek Chue Barracks in Stanley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The area is managed by the Hong Kong Garrison of the People’s Liberation Army and restricted for public access.</li> </ul>
13.	Aberdeen Battery – built in 1941	Ap Lei Chau	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abandoned;</li> <li>• Undergrowth.</li> </ul>
14.	Shing Mun Redoubt – built in 1939	Shing Mun Country Park near Shing Mun Reservoirs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Redoubt;</li> <li>• Tunnels;</li> <li>• Ditches;</li> <li>• Bunkers.</li> </ul>



## Air Raid Tunnels

As early as 1938, instructions were given to the Hong Kong government to build air raid shelters in the preparation against possible air attacks from enemies. Air raid shelters were tunnels excavated into hillsides for people to take shelter in during air attacks. Some, however, were built for firearms storage. It was not until late 1940 that the Hong Kong government began the construction of air raid shelters in an extensive scale. Air raid shelters were concentrated in the northern part of Hong Kong Island and the Kowloon Peninsula – the most densely populated areas at the time. Tunnel networks for firearms storage were also built after the Japanese army occupied Hong Kong.

After the war ended, the Hong Kong government launched the rehabilitation programme in the early 1950s, which included the restoration of some of the former air raid shelters for storage by Auxiliary Medical Services and for some other purposes. However, those tunnel networks built by the Japanese army were filled up.

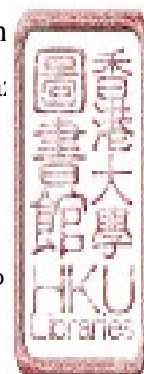
Up to the present day, apart from those reinforced by the government, most of the former air raid shelters were filled up or demolished for land development. Nevertheless, some of these former air raid shelters or tunnel networks were restored or converted for other purposes. Large underground tunnels for firearms storage in Shouson Hill were converted into wine cellars; the tunnel network in Sai Ying Pun is used by the Hongkong Electric Company for its power network, and the tunnel network of the former Lyemun military installations now forms part of the Historical Trail of the Hong Kong Museum of Coastal Defence.

## Pillboxes

The British use of pillboxes can be traced back to the World War, and it is an outdated defence system in the today's warfare. It was mainly built by reinforced concrete and located at strategic points such as road or river crossings, or along coastal and inland anti-invasion lines so as to hinder the enemy attack. Some allowed to equip with machine guns and housed artillery. Along the Gin Drinker's Line, there are 93 numbers of obsolete pillboxes<sup>6</sup>, and they are also found at the ruin the Battle of Hong Kong, for example at Jardine's Lookout, Wong Nei Chong Gap, along Maga Gap Road and Repulse Bay Road on the Hong Kong Island.

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<sup>6</sup> Lawrence W.C. Lai, "Location of Pillboxes and Other Structures of the Gin Drinker's Line Based on Aerial Photo Evidence" in *Surveying & Built Environment* Volume 21 Issue 2, December 2011.



Apart from the British military installation, there was also a discovery of Japanese military installation established during the Japanese Occupation Period in Hong Kong. A Japanese pillbox at the former Tai Hom village in Kowloon was found in 2000, and it was believed that was to look after the security of the Kai Tak airport when it was expanded after the Japanese took over the control.

### **Military Sites as Military Heritage**

Heritage includes tangible and intangible values. *World Heritage Convention* of 1972 (Article 1) defines “cultural heritage”:

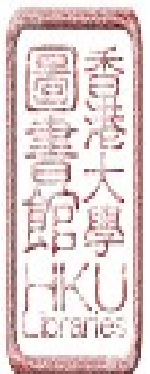
- monuments: architectural works, works of monumental sculpture and painting, elements or structures of an archaeological nature, inscriptions, cave dwellings and combinations of features, which are of outstanding universal value from the point of view of history, art or science;
- groups of buildings: groups of separate or connected buildings which, because of their architecture, their homogeneity or their place in the landscape, are of outstanding universal value from the point of view of history, art or science;
- sites: works of man or the combined works of nature and of man, and areas including archaeological sites which are of outstanding universal value from the historical, aesthetic, ethnological or anthropological points of view.

Hence, the tangible military ruin sites and structures, such as those abandoned gun emplacements, bunkers and redoubts, fulfil the above definition and are seen as a cultural heritage.

Besides, military sites associate with the intangible spirit of the place. The sites served for military purposes and could be battlefields. The sites were those places once garrisoned and fought against the enemy’s attacks and invasion. It involves the strategic consideration, technologies and defensive mechanism. According to *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* (2003), the “intangible cultural heritage” means the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage.<sup>7</sup>

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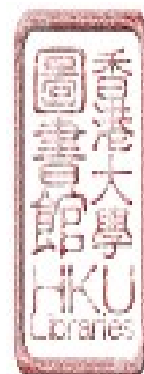
<sup>7</sup> Article 2, *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* (2003).



The surviving Hong Kong military sites are historical records of the Japanese invasion to Hong Kong in 1941, and those ruins are irreplaceable and precious<sup>8</sup>, and therefore those military sites should be conserved as much as possible for future.

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<sup>8</sup> The Burra Charter, 1999.



# CHAPTER THREE

## Pak Sha Wan Battery: Stories from the Archival and Oral History Research

### Location of the Study Site

The Island Eastern Corridor (IEC) – Shau Kei Wan and Chai Wan section divides the Grade I historical Lyemun Barracks compound<sup>9</sup> into two zones: the Lei Yue Mun Park and Holiday Village (LYMP) and the Hong Kong Museum of Coastal Defence (HKMCD). Both are managed by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region.

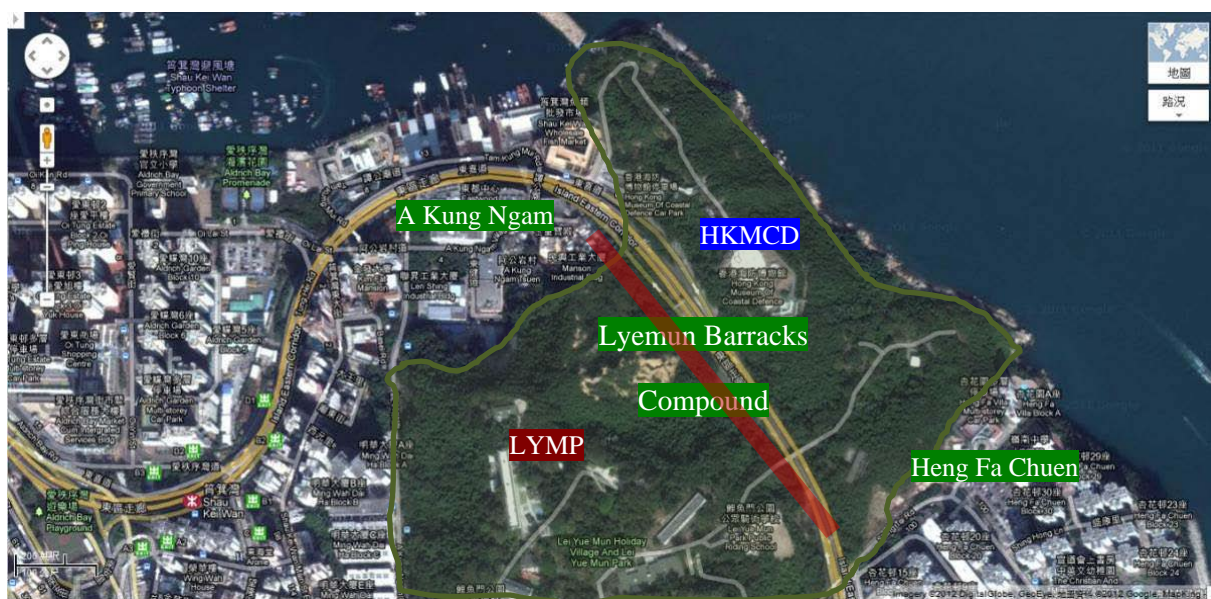


Figure 2: The divided Lyemun Barracks compound. (Source: Google Map, 2012)

Within the boundary of HKMCD, there is a closed area consisting of the Lyemun Barracks ro and the abandoned Pak Sha Wan Battery and Reverse Battery. It was once an important mili

<sup>9</sup> P.5, Annex B to the Home Affairs Bureau's written reply to Legislative Council in December 2006, [http://www.hab.gov.hk/file\\_manager/en/documents/publications\\_and\\_press\\_releases/20061206lcq13historyAnnexE.pdf](http://www.hab.gov.hk/file_manager/en/documents/publications_and_press_releases/20061206lcq13historyAnnexE.pdf).



strategic point and one of the main battlefields when the Japanese invaded Hong Kong in 1941. This heritage site area is closed and pending for development. This chapter will mainly focus on the information of the Pak Sha Wan Battery and account for its inventory.

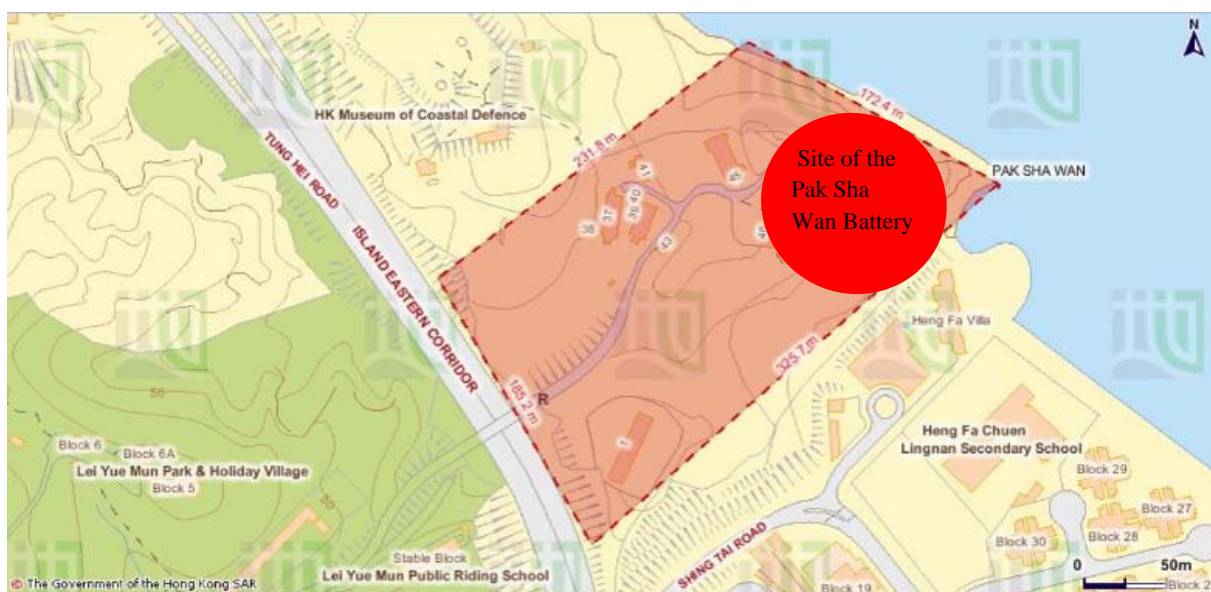


Figure 3: The location of the Pak Sha Wan Battery in the closed area of the HKMCD. (Source: GeoInfo Map, Lands Department, the HKSAR Government, 2012)

### Strategic Location of the Pak Sha Wan Battery on the Coastal Defence

Pak Sha Wan Battery was a part of Lyemun fortifications which was constructed since 1880s. China at the late 19th century suffered the Scramble for Concessions by the Western Powers. The British realised that there had been a need to safeguard the east entrance of the harbour from any potential threat from the opposite of the Lyemun Channel where had still been under the Qing's control, and also to prevent from the potential attack by the Russian from Vladivostok and the French from Tonkin (today's Vietnam).

Pak Sha Wan Battery was a principal battery at Lyemun. Upon the completion of the Battery, there were gun practices in high frequency at Pak Sha Wan.

Government Notification – No.7 issued by the Colonial Secretary's Office dated 8th Jan 1904:

Information has been received from the Military Authorities that Gun Practice will be carried out from Stonecutters Island (East and South Shore Batteries) in a South-West direction at ranges from 600 to 4,500 yards, on the 15th instant, and from Lye



(Pakshawan Battery) in the direction of the entrance to Junk Bay at ranges from 600 to 4,500 yards, on the 16th instant... Practice will commence at 9 a.m. on the 15th instant, and at 9:30 a.m. on the 16th instant, and end at 11 a.m. daily, if the range is clear.

and,

Government Notification – No.46 issued by Harbour Department dated 24th January 1905:

Information has been received from the Military Authorities that Gun Practice will be carried out on Wednesday, the 1st February, 1905, towards the entrance to Junk Bay, as under –

From Sywan [Saiwan], at ranges from 2,000 to 6,000 yards, commencing at 9:30 a.m. and finishing at about 11 a.m.;

From Pak-sha-wan Battery, at ranges 600 to 4,000 yards, on conclusion of above; and

From Lyemun Redoubt [present-day Hong Kong Museum of Coastal Defence], at ranges to 2,000 to 6,000 yards, on conclusion of the practice from Pak-sha-wan.

... Practice will commence at 9 a.m. on the 15th instant, and at 9:30 a.m. on the 16th instant, and end at 11 a.m. daily, if the range is clear.

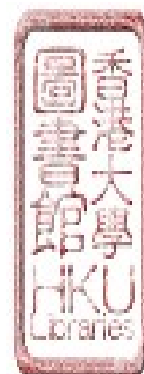




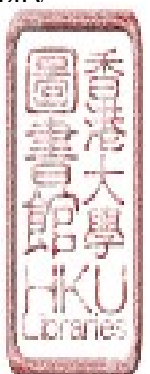
Figure 4: The above plan shows the arc of fire from the Pak Sha Wan Battery. (Source: The National Archives Reference No. WO78/5351)

## History of the Pak Sha Wan Battery

The Pak Sha Wan Battery was completed in 1903. The authority for the construction of the Pak Sha Wan Battery was granted on 20th February 1900. The construction works did not commence until 6th April 1901, and it took near two years of construction time. The actual cost of construction was £3,171, slightly higher than the estimated £3,136.

There were originally four gun emplacements with four numbers of 12-pounder Quick Firing (QF) Guns Mark I, mounted by the 89th Company of Royal Garrison Artillery, but the military authorities revised the plan in 1909, and took about one year and spent another £3,894 to complete the replacement of the four 12-pounder QF Guns with three numbers of 6-inch Breech Loading Guns Mark VII. There were also cartridge and shell stores underground.

BL Gun was invented by Sir William George Armstrong in 1854. Five year later, a rifled breech loader was developed and used in the Second Opium War in China in 1860. Its barrel reinforced by shrinking wrought iron layers onto the tube. A hollow vent piece was also developed





the permitted loading from the rear, or the breech. The projectile was coated with soft lead, making it slightly larger than the bore of the gun. When it fired, the soft lead coating was compressed into the grooves of the rifled barrel. The rotating motion of the fired projectile gave it much better ballistics and a greater range. At the beginning of the 20th century the BL gun became the main artillery for coastal defence.<sup>10</sup>

In 1905, a joint committee between the British Royal Navy and the British Army, known as Owen Committee as it was chaired by Major General J.F. Owen, was held to consider the armaments and the defences of the United Kingdom and its overseas territories, and concluded that it would be subject to three classes of naval attack:

Class A – Attack by Battleships;

Class B – Attack by Armoured Cruisers;

Class C – Attack by Unarmoured Cruisers, Torpedo Boats and Block ships.

As a result the committee decided to equip with new 9.2-in BL Mk X gun against Class A and Class B attacks as it was regarded effective and adequate. For defence against Class C attack, it was required a quick fire with as great a weight of shell as could be provided. It was once considered that the 6-in BL gun Mk VII and the 12-pdr QF gun the most suitable weapon, but the larger size of destroyers with heavier armed resulted the introduction of the 4.7-inch QF gun and the phase out of 6-pounder GF gun eventually.<sup>11</sup>

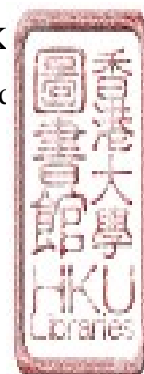
By following the new defensive scheme, the number of battery at Lyemun was later reduced except the guns at Pak Sha Wan Battery, as it was believed that the installation of the 9.2-inch BL Guns Mark X at Gough Battery on the Devil's Peak in 1906, the heavier armament on another side of the Lyemun Channel, could compensate the reduced defensibility at Lyemun. Since then, Pak Sha Wan Battery became the main defensive mechanism at Lyemun.

In 1935, another defensive review by the military authority decided to reduce a gun from Pak Sha Wan and to relocate at the Jubilee Battery. It was reported that the empty gun emplacement was placed a dummy but there is no hint which emplacement it was. Prior to the Battle of Hong K in 1941, the Pak Sha Wan Battery with two numbers of 6-inch BL Guns Mark VII was manne

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<sup>10</sup> Harold E. Rough, *The Victorians at War: 1815 - 1914*; an Encyclopedia of British Military History, p. 27.

<sup>11</sup> Terry Gander, "Twentieth Century British Coast Defence Guns" in *Forlet* Number 2, 2011.



the 4th Company of the Hong Kong Volunteer Defence Corps (HKVDC), a volunteer military service unit in Hong Kong since 1854.

## **Battle of Hong Kong (1941)**

On 8th December 1941, the Japanese troops crossed over the Lo Wu Bridge, passed through the main defence line, known as “Oriental Maginot Line” – Gin Drinkers’ Line and controlled the New Territories and Kowloon efficiently. The Japanese then heavily attacked the defences on the Hong Kong Island, especially to the Pak Sha Wan Battery and Saiwan Hill. Despite heavily attack, the Japanese suffered casualties by the Pak Sha Wan Battery, when attempting crossing the harbour from the east end of Kowloon, and it was not until they destroyed the searchlights at Lyemun. The Japanese eventually landed on the isolated island at three locations, namely North Point, Quarry Bay and Lyemun.

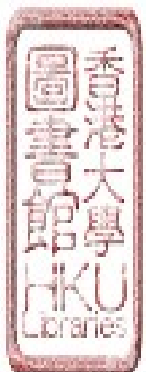
The Pak Sha Wan Battery was controlled by the Japanese on 20th December 1941 when the isolated gunners of the 4th Battery surrendered to the enemy. In the Despatch titled “Operations in Hong Kong from 8th to 25th December, 1941” submitted by Major-General C.M. Maltby, the General Officer Commanding British Troops in China, to the Secretary of State for War in November 1945, it writes:

Pak Sha Wan Battery (Chinese volunteers) came in for particular attention, being both shelled and mortared. Its Battery Command Post and all internal communications were destroyed and the Battery Commander was wounded and evacuated. The guns were reduced to independent autosight control. At this juncture owing to an imperfectly conveyed message and an error of judgment of the junior officer left in acting command, the personnel were given the option of going to Stanley. All but two Chinese left; seventeen British and Portuguese stayed. A few regular –British gunners were later sent up as reinforcements.<sup>12</sup>

Local military historian Mr Tony Banham Below summarises the course of battle and mentions Pak Sha Wan in his publication titled *Not the Slightest Chance: The Defence of Hong Kong, 1941*.

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<sup>12</sup> “Operations in Hong Kong from 8th to 25th December, 1941” in the *Supplement to London Gazette of 27th January 1948* dated 29th January 1948.



### 13th December 1941 (Saturday)

The 4th Battery HKVDC at Pak Sha Wan comes under heavy fire.

### 14th December 1941 (Sunday)

The Pak Sha Wan (4th Battery HKVDC) and Sai Wan (5th Battery HKVDC) areas are heavily shelled, with the Pak Sha Wan Battery Observation Post being permanently knocked out and both guns there being reduced to **Case 1 Action (?)**. Three Other Ranks are killed, and six injured. The HKVDC 4th Battery Commander, Lt Barnett, is also wounded. (11am)

### 15th December 1941 (Monday)

The 6-inch guns fire at a collection of craft in Kowloon Bay, setting two alight and scattering the remainder.

Pak Sha Wan on HK Island raises the alarm after heavy shelling. HKVDC 4th Bty illuminates the water with No.2 searchlight and gives the alert, claiming that a hundred men with rafts and three rubber boats are attempting to cross the [Lyemun] channel. The battery's 6-inch guns fire fifty-eight rounds. No. 2 Platoon Royal Rifles also opens fire on the boats from West Fort of Pak Sha Wan. The occupants are beaten off with heavy loss, but Japanese batteries return fire knocking out the searchlight. (9pm)

Major Bishop, Royal Rifles C Company Commander, no doubt hearing the firing, reports that the enemy has occupied the Pak Sha Wan Battery. The report is later learnt to be false. East Brigade War Dairy claims that the basis of this report was the assertion by retreating Royal Artillery personnel (presumably 4th Battery HKVDC) that, the enemy are as thick as leaves in the battery position. (9:41pm)

Flying Officer Gray in the Sai Wan Redoubt Royal Air Force wireless post reports that landing appears to have been beaten off. (9:54pm)

A second crossing from Sam Ka Tsun Bay (opposite side of the channel) is reported. Second Lt Sleep claims four boats sunk. (10:45pm)



16th December 1941 (Tuesday)

Sai Wan Observation Post reports a big fire in Shau Kei Wan (probably rubber factory) (00:29am)

Pak Sha Wan Battery is back in action with one gun and twenty gunners. (1:12am)

Pak Sha Wan and Sai Wan come under fire. Two other ranks are wounded at Pak Sha Wan. This battery is later reinforced by one sergeant and seven gunners from 20th Coast Battery AA. (6:25pm)

18th December 1941 (Thursday)

The first wave of the Japanese 228th (Doi) regiment embarks east of Kai Tak in several scores of collapsible assault boats. Each boat holds fourteen men and is powered by oars alone (although subsequent waves cross in power boats or collapsible assault boats towed by power boats). The 230th (Shoji) Regiment embarks west of Kai Tak, and the 229th (Tanaka) Regiment embarks at Devil's Peak peninsula. (7pm)

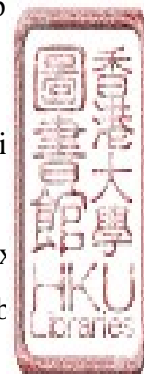
Second Lieutenant Newmen of the Middlesex, in Pillbox 37 at Lyemun, telephones that a number of craft are approaching under cover of a smokescreen. This information is relayed to Lieutenant Colonel Home at the Headquarters of the Royal Rifles of Canada, but he frankly disbelieves it. (7pm)

A. Hutton-Potts at Lyemun: "the barrage was indeed terrific, we counted the number of shells that fell... they averaged... one every four seconds. (8pm)

The Rajputs report that the Japanese, "approaching in small boats towed by ferry steamers – 10 to 12 to each ferry', are about to land at Pillbox 43 and Pillbox 44 in Taikoo Docks. (8pm)

The 230th (Shoji) Regiment land 500 yards east of North Point... The 228th (Doi) Regiment land at Taikoo... The 229th (Tanaka) Regiment land at Sai Wan (Shau Kei Wan)... capture Lyemun Barracks. (8:30 pm)

The 229th attach 4th Battery HKVDC at Pak Sha Wan, overrun No. 1 gun but fail to consolidate their advantage. Lieutenant Huxton collects what men he can find and withdraws towards Lyemun Barracks. However, they are ambushed on the way and Burnett and others were killed. There is only one survivor. Meanwhile, Captain Barnett (just before



from hospital, and commanding 4th Battery) orders the nine remaining gunners to fire at Shau Kei Wan, where he realises the Japanese have landed. Those positions will hold out until 21st. (9:30pm)

The Pak Sha Wan Battery opens fire on some launches heading towards Taikoo. (9:40pm)

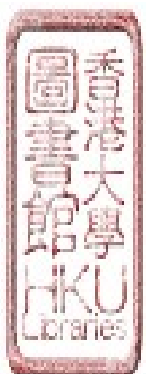
No. 13 and 15 Platoons of C Company, Royal Rifles, attack Sai Wan Fort, but are forced to retreat. (10:35pm)

All Japanese troops are across. (24:00)



Figure 5: the Roll of Honour on display at the Gallery 10 of the Hong Kong Museum of Coastal Defence indicating the sacrificed members of the 4th Company of the Hong Kong Volunteer Defence Corps in the action of the Battle of Hong Kong in 1941.

- Private CHENG Kam Shing
- Lance Corporal LEUNG Chik Wai
- Lance Corporal NG Po Lau
- Private WONG Sing Hoi



## Demolition of Lyemun Magazine of the Pak Sha Wan Battery

Apart from the war, the accident of magazine explosion much damaged the Pak Sha Wan Battery site. The evening edition of the *South China Morning Post* dated 21st March 1946 reported that there was an explosion at an ammunition dump at Lyemun Barracks at noon of the day.

The first explosion occurred almost on the stroke of noon and was comparatively mild, although it could be heard in the city. It was followed by a more severe blast 10 minutes later and even heavier explosion in another 10 minutes. (Quote from *South China Morning Post* dated 21st March 1946)

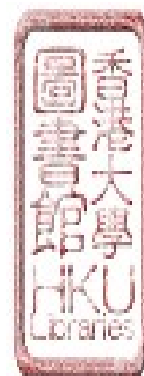
It was also reported in the Chinese newspaper that the explosion was so powerful that could be felt as far as in the Central and Western district, and it heavily destroyed surrounding areas including villages at A Kung Ngam and Shau Kei Wan nearby. Seven soldiers died and two local fishermen killed.<sup>13</sup> One of the deceased was buried in the Hong Kong Cemetery. He was Corporal Joseph Hughes, G.C. (1925-1946), a Scottish driver of the Royal Army Service Corps from Glasgow in Scotland.

Corporal Joseph Hughes was assigned to Lyemun Barracks to help removing unexploded ordnance and disused ammunition left behind after World War II. According to a Hong Kong government record in 1948, it stated that the British military authorities had stored different types and unknown quantity of explosives at Lyemun Magazine before the World War II, and had not removed them before the surrender to the Japanese in 1941. The Japanese also did not remove them during the period of occupation, and the condition of the magazines deteriorated.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> *Wah Kiu Yat Po* dated 22nd March 1946.

<sup>14</sup> Loose minute dated 14th May 1948 from Deputy Colonial Secretary to Financial Secretary at Secretariat No. 1/676/1948 – *Demolition of Lyemun Magazine*, Government of Hong Kong.





符箕灣亞公岩村

三火藥庫爆炸慘劇 火焰冲天彈藥齊發石鐵紛飛 全村廬舍坳塌全燬居民疏散 搬運火藥中七英兵想已罹難 災區廣闊傷者數目尚無統計

隆隆巨响 三庫爆炸

符箕灣亞公岩村三火藥庫之一座，是時因有英兵在該處工作，在火藥庫中，內之第一座，忽然爆炸，此即為爆炸中之第一聲。道不久，附近之其他兩座，亦即明瞭，先後發生爆炸，爆炸力更猛烈，時有火藥庫內之石鐵等物，亦即紛紛飛出，亦有炸彈及地雷等物，此大爆炸，該處情形，其小者，其大者則則被炸連，其威力有如...

烟焰冲天 鐵石飛墜

符箕灣亞公岩村一帶之民房，皆受爆炸之威脅，多被炸毀。中西之樓房亦亦震動。當時軍事地點旁之碼頭，通有七名英兵在該處工作，亦為爆炸力所摧，火藥庫之一座，亦即被炸塌，山石與鐵片相繼飛出，直飛至天空而後向下降。距爆炸處八百餘碼外之符箕灣，亦有波及，有重車被炸，十磅之石鐵入內，火藥庫內，多有炸毀。爆炸地點下飛之海，距爆炸處約數百碼。第一次爆炸後，此等炸彈即紛紛飛出，第二次爆炸後，即紛紛對海飛。該處英兵，亦即被炸死，其死傷情形，亦即被炸死，其死傷情形，亦即被炸死...

如放映原 子彈爆炸

當爆炸時，山石鐵片在空中飛舞，有一四尺徑之石鐵，落在其所立附近。又有一枚子彈，在空中飛舞，其情形有如銀球之飛。當時除火藥及炸彈爆炸外，其中尚有子彈，因是時英兵有搬運之子彈在火藥庫中，向天空射擊，情形有如銀球之飛。當時除火藥及炸彈爆炸外，其中尚有子彈，因是時英兵有搬運之子彈在火藥庫中，向天空射擊，情形有如銀球之飛...

亞公岩村 廬舍蕩然

符箕灣亞公岩村一帶，內有房屋十餘間，有被炸毀者，亦有未炸者。全村房屋，亦即被炸毀，其情形有如銀球之飛。當時除火藥及炸彈爆炸外，其中尚有子彈，因是時英兵有搬運之子彈在火藥庫中，向天空射擊，情形有如銀球之飛...

符箕灣區 損失重大

符箕灣區一帶，損失重大。天金舖門前，有大鐵櫃一個，約三尺高，約二尺半寬，內有金銀首飾，及金銀器皿，價值約一千餘元。此外，尚有金銀首飾，及金銀器皿，價值約一千餘元。此外，尚有金銀首飾，及金銀器皿，價值約一千餘元...

軍警下令 居民疏散

軍警下令，居民疏散。火藥庫爆炸後，在火藥庫中之地下，有炸彈五枚，在內，隨時有引起爆炸之可能。軍警下令，居民疏散。火藥庫爆炸後，在火藥庫中之地下，有炸彈五枚，在內，隨時有引起爆炸之可能。軍警下令，居民疏散...

小學生熱心節約救災

昨收國幣七十餘萬港幣七百餘元。各界僑胞踴躍捐款，救災恤鄰，熱心救災。小學生熱心節約，節約救災。各界僑胞踴躍捐款，救災恤鄰，熱心救災。小學生熱心節約，節約救災...

傷者分送 各院救治

傷者分送，各院救治。火藥庫爆炸後，傷者分送，各院救治。火藥庫爆炸後，傷者分送，各院救治。火藥庫爆炸後，傷者分送，各院救治...

林培生 又捐五萬

林培生，又捐五萬。林培生，又捐五萬。林培生，又捐五萬。林培生，又捐五萬...

金飾業 擴大勸捐

金飾業，擴大勸捐。金飾業，擴大勸捐。金飾業，擴大勸捐。金飾業，擴大勸捐...

雲泉堂 道侶行善

雲泉堂，道侶行善。雲泉堂，道侶行善。雲泉堂，道侶行善。雲泉堂，道侶行善...

受重傷留 醫者名單

受重傷留，醫者名單。受重傷留，醫者名單。受重傷留，醫者名單。受重傷留，醫者名單...

災區視察 港督親蒞

災區視察，港督親蒞。災區視察，港督親蒞。災區視察，港督親蒞。災區視察，港督親蒞...

平香樓 義唱成績

平香樓，義唱成績。平香樓，義唱成績。平香樓，義唱成績。平香樓，義唱成績...

暹華僑運 首批四

暹華僑運，首批四。暹華僑運，首批四。暹華僑運，首批四。暹華僑運，首批四...

香港仔 義賣一天

香港仔，義賣一天。香港仔，義賣一天。香港仔，義賣一天。香港仔，義賣一天...

Figure 7: The newspaper clipping of the Wah Kiu Yat Po dated 22nd March 1946 reports the accident in detail in Chinese.



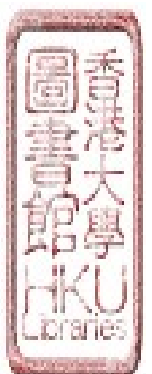




Figure 8: No. T/14858103 Driver Joseph Hughes, Royal Army Service Corps. (Source: Royal Army Service Corps & Royal Corps of Transport Association at <http://www.rascrctassociation.co.uk/hughes.html>)



Figure 9: The grave of Joseph Hughes in the Hong Kong Cemetery (Source: Wikipedia)



On the morning of 21 March 1946, Hughes drove a lorry loaded with explosives and ordnance back to the barracks. Hughes noticed that the lorry was on fire and the load was in imminent danger of blowing up before his arrival of destination. He successfully steered the lorry away from heavily populated areas, but was killed in the explosion.

Hughes was posthumously awarded the medal of George Cross (G.C.), the highest British military honour for valour in peacetime in 1947 for his bravery.<sup>15</sup> Below is the citation of his G.C. recipient:

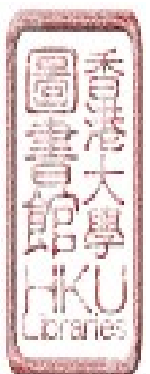
Driver Hughes was driving a 3-ton vehicle carrying ammunition and explosives into the magazine at Lyemun Barracks. As his vehicle was entering the magazine area it started to smoulder and then caught fire. Knowing full well that his vehicle was likely to blow up at any moment, Driver Hughes, instead of running for safety, did everything in his power to put out the fire. Notwithstanding small explosions, he tried to remove the burning camouflage net. He then tried fire extinguishers which failed. A few minutes later his lorry blew up, fatally injuring him. By his action the explosion was delayed and warning was given to troops in the locality who were able to take cover. Accordingly casualties which might have been heavy were negligible, except for Driver Hughes fatal injury. Driver Hughes's courage in remaining at his task, thereby attempting to minimise the danger when he could have run to safety, was an outstanding example of devotion to duty.<sup>16</sup>

The demolition of magazine was eventually completed in 1948, when the Military Authorities decided to demolish the magazine in one-go and carried out the explosion on 2nd July 1948.

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<sup>15</sup> P.2922, *London Gazette*, No. 37996 dated 26th June 1947.

<sup>16</sup> The Scots at War Trust: <http://www.scotsatwar.co.uk/rohprints/h.htm>.



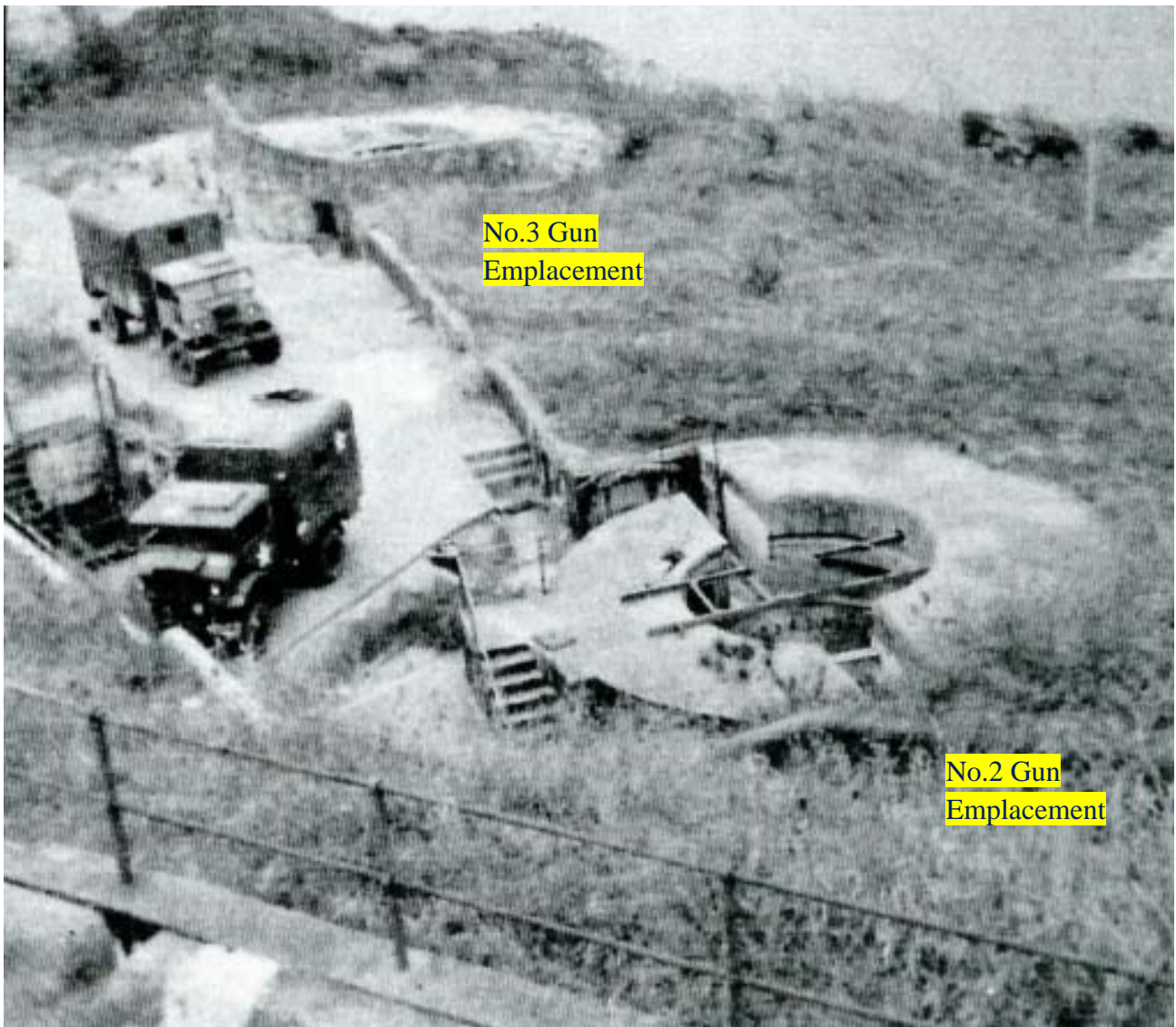
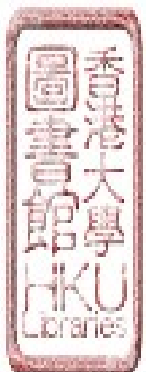


Fig 10: the empty No.2 and 3 gun emplacements of the Pak Sha Wan Battery in 1946 (Source: *The Guns and the Gunners*)

## Depot of the Hong Kong Chinese Training Unit

The use of military site in Hong Kong was changed after the World War II. The defeat in the Pacific War proved that the defensive mechanism at Lyemun was out-dated and the strategic location was lost. Consequently, the Pak Sha Wan Battery, together with the whole Lyem Barracks area, was turned for the use of the Hong Kong Chinese Training Unit (HKCTU) which was formally established in 1948.

HKCTU, later renamed Hong Kong Military Service Corps, was the first regular British military unit formed by local Chinese people. They were assigned at the Lyemun Barracks until the 1980s.



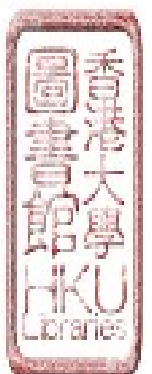
## Home of 2/7th Gurkha Rifles in Hong Kong

Before the handover of the barracks land to the civil government, the Pak Sha Wan Battery within the Lyemun Barracks was once the home for the 2nd Battalion of the 7th Duke of Edinburgh's Own Gurkha Rifles (2/7th Gurkha Rifles) at the turn of 1970s and 1980s.

Gurkhas is Nepalese who has been engaged by the British for military strength for centuries because of their traditional spirit of fearlessness and good reputation at fighting. After the World War II, there was no direct warfare related to Hong Kong, but the British didn't ignore the colony defence in view of the new Communist neighbour and the internal war in Korea. From 1950s, the Gurkhas was several times posted to Hong Kong for defence and security purposes until 1997, and the main duty was to secure the border's safety and anti-illegal immigration.

There were two battalions of the Gurkhas Rifles raised in Hong Kong. The 1/7th Gurkhas Rifle was deployed to the Falkland War in 1982, while the 2/7th Gurkha Rifles was in response to the abolition of "Touch Base Policy". The policy was announced in 1974, allowing those illegal immigrants successfully escaped from police blocks and check points but reached the urban areas to register for the Hong Kong identity card. By the policy abolition, the newly deployed Gurkhas were to reinforce the strength at the Hong Kong-China border so as to deny the illegal immigrants entering and return them to Mainland side without delay.

The 2/7th Gurkha Rifles was disbanded in 1986 when the illegal immigration crisis became less serious and their disbandment caught with the withdrawal schedule of British Forces Hong Kong, and the military land was handed over to the Hong Kong government for non-military development.



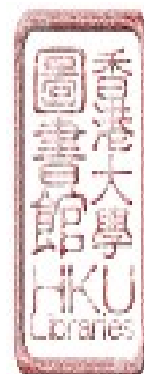
# CHAPTER FOUR

## Pak Sha Wan Battery: Inventory of Heritage Site Elements

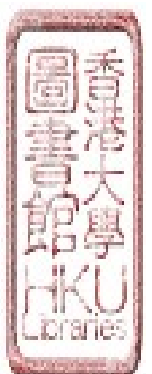
### Inventory of the Pak Sha Wan Battery

#### On the ground

- Three Gun Emplacements
  - No.1 gun emplacement
    - at above the sea level about 102 feet;
    - the arc of fire with 175°15”;
    - three numbers of shell recesses;
    - six numbers of cartridge recesses.
  - No.2 gun emplacement
    - at above the sea level about 70 feet;
    - the arc of fire with 78°35”;
    - four numbers of shell recesses;
    - three numbers of cartridge recesses.
  - No.3 gun emplacement
    - at above the sea level about 70 feet;
    - the arc of fire with 162°15”;
    - three numbers of shell recesses;
    - six numbers of cartridge recesses.



- Barrack Rooms (today's Block 44 of former Lyemun Barracks)
  - War Shelter (1910?)
  - Ablution Room
- Cook House (demolished)
- Officer's Shelter
- Battery Command Post and Electric Light Directing Station
  - Old Electric Light Directing Station
  - Telephone Room
- Surface channel
- Sun Shelter



HONG KONG LYEMUN

No 2 OF SET OF 4

CONFIDENTIAL

RECORD PLAN OF  
PAK SHA WAN BATTERY FOR 3 6<sup>IN</sup> B.L. GUNS MARK VII

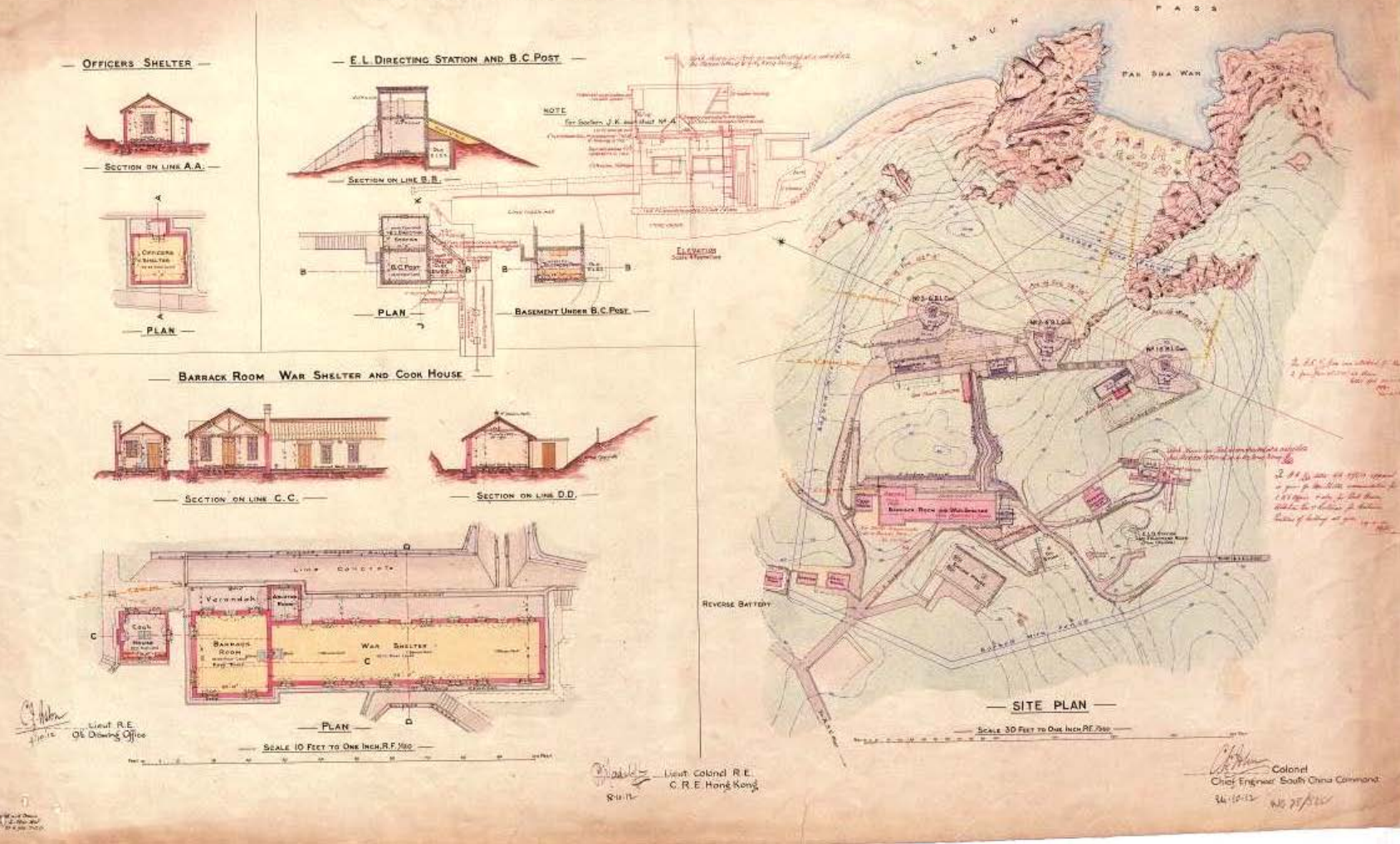
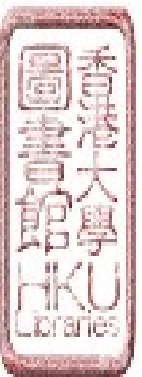


Figure 11: Site plan of Pak Sha Wan Battery in 1912 (Source: The National Archives Reference No. WO78/5351)



CONFIDENTIAL

HONG KONG LYEMUN  
— RECORD PLAN OF —  
— PAK SHA WAN BATTERY FOR 3 6<sup>IN</sup> B.L. GUNS MARK VII —

N<sup>o</sup> 3 OF SET OF 4

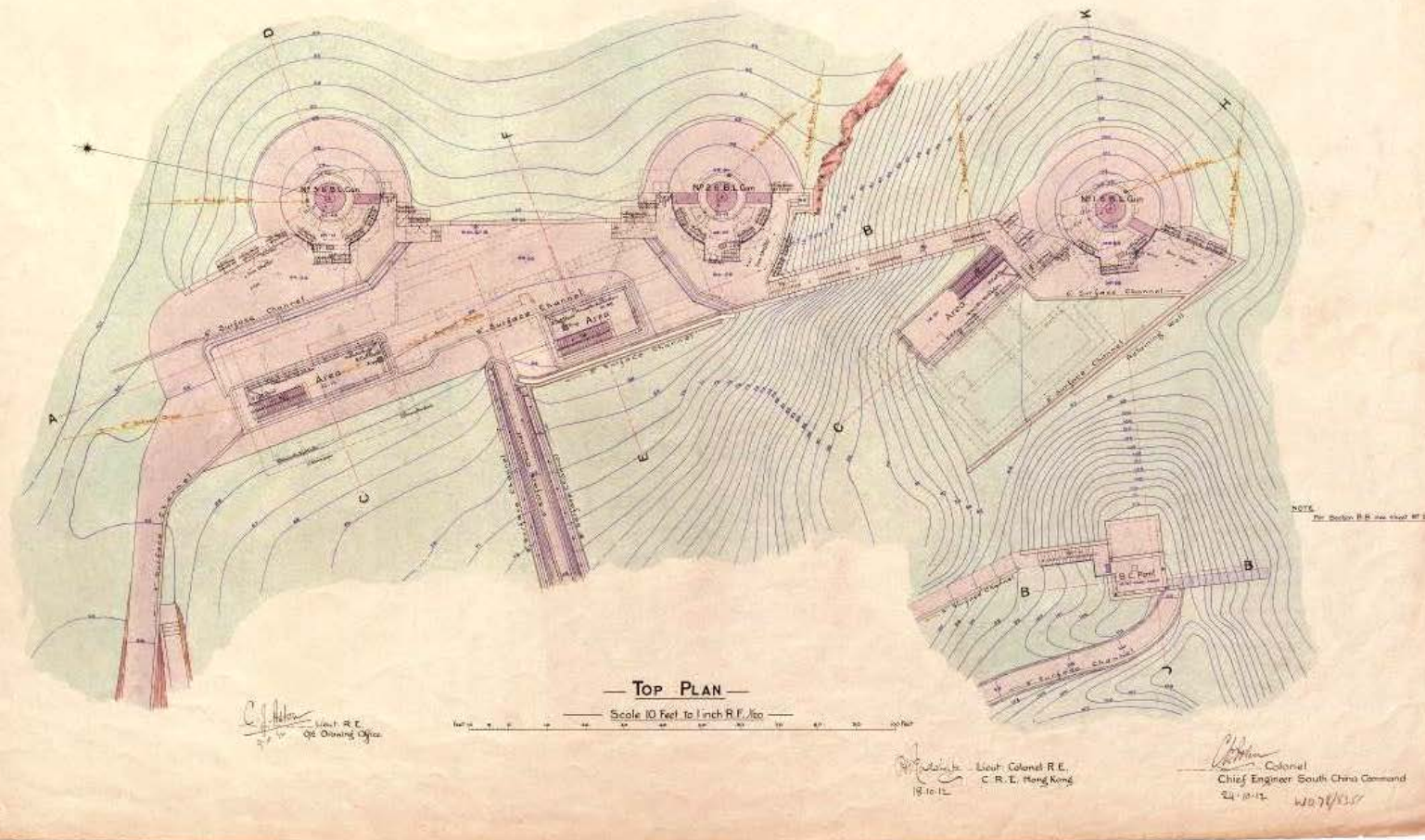
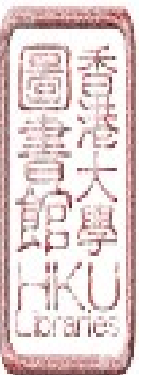


Figure 12: Top plan of Pak Sha Wan Battery in 1912 (Source: The National Archives Reference No. WO78/5351)



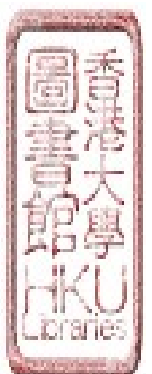


## Underground Magazine

- Cartridge Store
- Shell Store
- R.A. Store (Royal Artillery?)
- Lamp Passage
- Lamp Room
- Area
- Trap
- Band Lift
- Ladder Lift
- Ventilators
- Davit
- Stove Pipe
- Subsoil Drain

## Construction Materials

- Asbestos (wall)
- Concrete
- Earth

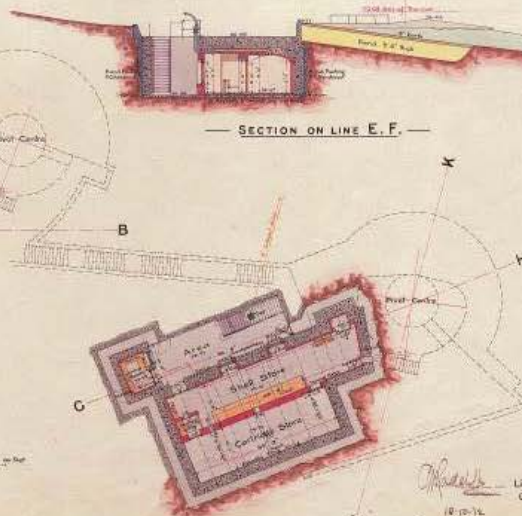
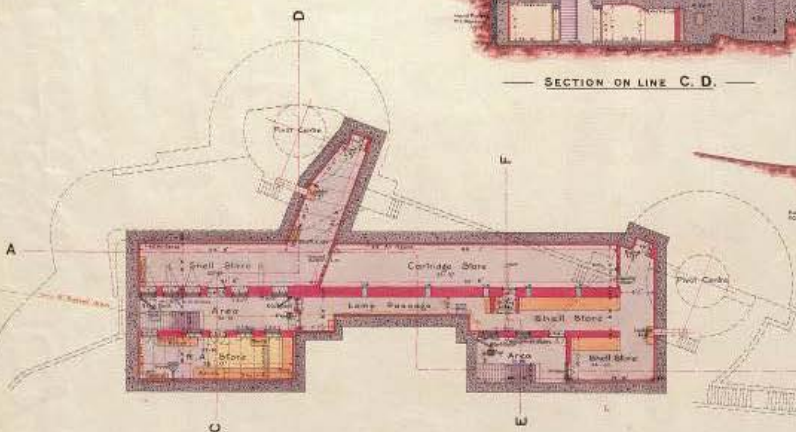
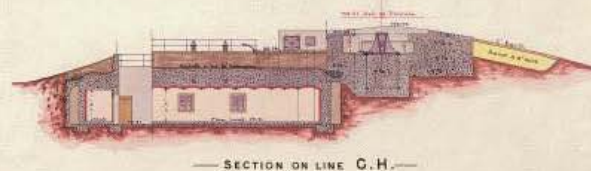
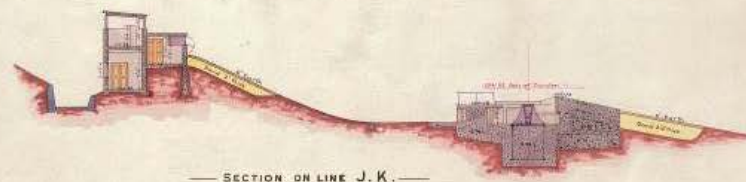
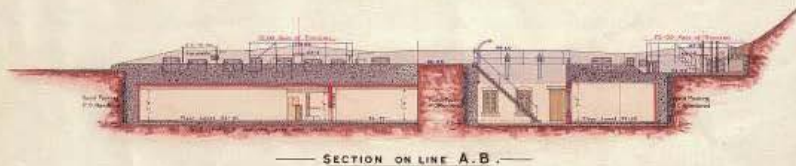


CONFIDENTIAL.

HONG KONG LYEMUN

Nº 4 OF SET OF 4

RECORD PLAN OF  
PAK SHA WAN BATTERY FOR 3-6" B.L. GUNS MARK VII



**REFERENCES**

Date of Authority	W.O. letter Hong Kong 4/173	20	2	1900
Commencement		6	4	1901
Completion		10	2	1903
Estimated Cost		£	336	
Actual Cost		£	3171	
Armament	4 - 12 pr. Q.F. Guns Mark I.			
<b>Revision 1908-10</b>				
Date of Authority	W.O. letter Hong Kong 5/21 (F.W.S.)	25	2	1908
Commencement		16	2	1908
Completion		22	3	1910
Estimated Cost		£	4000	
Actual Cost		£	3834	
Armament	3 - 6" B.L. Guns Mark VII.			
Oppositely Cartridge Stores			3500	
Shell Stores			1800	
<b>War Shelters</b>				
Date of Authority	W.O. letter Hong Kong 5/21 (F.W.S.)	2	4	1910
Commencement		12	10	1910
Completion		31	12	1911
Estimated Cost		£	704	
Actual Cost		£	331	

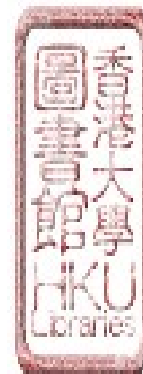
C. E. ... Lieut. Colonel R.E. C.R.E. Hong Kong O/E Drawing Office

Scale 10 Feet = 1 Inch R.F.M.

Lieut. Colonel R.E. C.R.E. Hong Kong

Colonel Chief Engineer South China Command

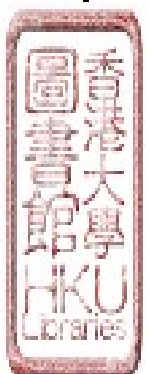
Figure 13: Magazine plan of Pak Sha Wan Battery in 1912 (Source: The National Archives Reference No. WO78/5351)



Pak Sha Wan Battery is now still restricted from public access, and heavily covered by the overgrowth. The site was attacked by the Japanese in the Battle of Hong Kong in 1941 and witnessed the magazine explosion accident in 1946; the ruins of the battery keep status quo since then. It would be a valuable landscape of military heritage in Hong Kong.

In a recent site visit to the Pak Sha Wan Battery, the tangible and the intangible elements are to be conserved or preserved is found as follows:

Types	Tangible elements	Intangible elements
Gun emplacements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No.1 gun emplacement;</li> <li>- three numbers of shell recesses;</li> <li>- six numbers of cartridge recesses.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the gun emplacement situated at above the sea level about 102 feet;</li> <li>- the arc of fire with 175°15”.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No.2 gun emplacement;</li> <li>- four numbers of shell recesses;</li> <li>- three numbers of cartridge recesses.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the gun emplacement situated at above the sea level about 70 feet;</li> <li>- the arc of fire with 78°35”.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No.3 gun emplacement;</li> <li>- three numbers of shell recesses;</li> <li>- six numbers of cartridge recesses.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the gun emplacement situated at above the sea level about 70 feet;</li> <li>- the arc of fire with 162°15”.</li> </ul>
Buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Barrack Rooms (Block 44 and Block 45 of the former Lyemun Barracks);</li> <li>- Engineer Room (Block 46 of the former Lyemun Barrack);</li> <li>- Officer’s Shelter;</li> <li>- Battery Command Post;</li> <li>- Electric Light Directing Station.</li> <li>- Surface Channel</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the Barrack Room once was used as an Ablution Room</li> <li>- Constructed by asbestos and concrete.</li> </ul>
Underground Magazine (remains)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cartridge Store</li> <li>- Area</li> <li>- Trap</li> <li>- Band Lift</li> <li>- Ladder Lift</li> <li>- Ventilators</li> <li>- Davit</li> <li>- Stove Pipe</li> <li>- Subsoil Drain</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Constructed by asbestos</li> <li>- Constructed by concrete</li> <li>- Constructed by earth</li> </ul>



## CHAPTER FIVE

# Conclusion: Military Heritage as Cultural Heritage in Hong Kong

Military heritage includes the tangible and the intangible values of heritage. This chapter is to recognise its importance and it should also be a cultural heritage in Hong Kong.

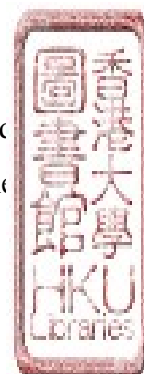
Within the territory of Hong Kong, albeit some military heritages being hidden by the undergrowth with less attention, there are old forts, revitalised or abandoned batteries, forgotten pillboxes, war cemeteries in Sai Wan and Stanley, and the Cenotaph in Central. There are all tangible and there are also intangible spirit and technique behind these architectures.

Ms Lidia Klupz of National Heritage Board of Poland stated in her article “The Spirit of Military Heritage Places” in 2008 that the tangible value of military heritage can be found at military structures and defensive mechanism, such as fortifications, barracks as well as constructions for military purposes; landscape including battlefields, territorial or coastal defence installations and earth works; commemorative monuments, cemeteries, cenotaphs, and others plaques or marks.<sup>17</sup> It is obviously consistent with the definition of the UNESCO World Heritage Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage which consist of:

- **monuments:** architectural works, works of monumental sculpture and painting, elements or structures of an archaeological nature, inscriptions, cave dwellings and combinations of features, which are of outstanding universal value from the point of view of history, art or science;
- **groups of buildings:** groups of separate or connected buildings which, because of their architecture, their homogeneity or their place in the landscape, are of outstanding universal value from the point of view of history, art or science;
- **sites:** works of man or the combined works of nature and of man, and areas including archaeological sites which are of outstanding universal value from the historical, aesthetic, ethnological or anthropological points of view.

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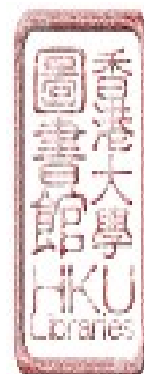
<sup>17</sup> Lidia Klupz, *The Spirit of the Military Heritage Places*, p.2.



Besides, the intangible value of the military heritage should not be ignored when there is a more popular view that it is also an important element in the cultural heritage. Klupz also mentions that the spirit of the military heritage places, “*Genius Loci*”, is associated with the intangible values providing people with a sense of identity and continuity. The spirit of the military heritage is expressed in the oral traditions, in performing arts and in social practices, rituals and festive events.

The Article 2 of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage adopted in Paris in October 2003 defines:

1. The “intangible cultural heritage” means the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage. This intangible cultural heritage, transmitted from generation to generation, is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history, and provides them with a sense of identity and continuity, thus promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity. For the purposes of this Convention, consideration will be given solely to such intangible cultural heritage as is compatible with existing international human rights instruments, as well as with the requirements of mutual respect among communities, groups and individuals, and of sustainable development; and
2. The “intangible cultural heritage”, as defined in paragraph 1 above, is manifested inter alia in the following domains:
  - oral traditions and expressions, including language as a vehicle of the intangible;
  - cultural heritage;
  - performing arts;
  - social practices, rituals and festive events;
  - knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe;
  - traditional craftsmanship.



As at 2008, there have been 877 numbers of defensive structures including towns' walls, city gates, forts, arsenals, and 416 numbers of castles registered as the heritage at national level.<sup>18</sup>

In Hong Kong, there is no lack of military heritage sites but the general public is not aware of their existence or pay attention to it. Many have been neglected for a long time and covered by the overgrowth.

Hong Kong was one of the British Empire's outposts in the Southeast Asia, and therefore the British realised the necessity to establish defensive mechanism upon their arrival in 1840. Due to the city development and urbanisation, some early military set up were demolished or relocated from the city centre. The military authority depended on the politic and military situation to carry out the installation and the demolition of military structures for the defence purpose. The tangible remains of those installations are actually near and accessible from the urban area, and they are mainly seen inside the current boundary of country parks on Hong Kong Island and New Territories. For instance, the Lyemun Fortifications was revitalised as a public museum, the Hong Kong Museum of Coastal Defence opened since 2000. The clusters on Devil's Peak including the Devil's Peak Redoubt as well as the two batteries, namely Gough and Pottinger, under there are next to the Lord Wilson's Trail and near MTR station. Pinewood Battery is inside the Lung Fu Shan Country Park on High West, and many abandoned pillboxes are located within the boundary of Tai Tam Country Park. Most of the pillboxes along Gin Drinker's Line are respectively situated in Shing Mun, Kam Shan and Lion's Rock country parks.

These military sites are associated with the World War II and with those who devoted their lives to protect and defence Hong Kong from the invasion in 1941. The ruins could also prove the level of fighting during the 18-day Battle of Hong Kong. Additionally, it is associated with the spirit of military, telling strategies and techniques behind the military set up.

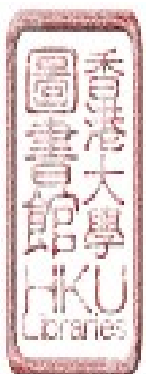
In this connection, the military heritage in Hong Kong is recognised a cultural heritage defined by the World Heritage Convention 1972 and the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage which is to safeguard the intangible cultural heritage.

The Burra Charter further confirms the reason why to conserve the Hong Kong military heritage site:

Places of cultural significance enrich people's lives, often providing a deep and inspirational sense of connection to community and landscape, to the past and to lived experiences. T

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<sup>18</sup> Lidia Klupsz, *The Spirit of the Military Heritage Places*, p.4.



are historical records that are important as tangible expressions of [Australian] identity and experience. Places of cultural significance reflect the diversity of our communities, telling us about who we are and the past that has formed us and the [Australian] landscape. They are irreplaceable and precious.<sup>19</sup>

Hence,

These places of cultural significance must be conserved for present and future generations.

The Burra Charter advocates a cautious approach to change: do as much as necessary to care for the place and to make it useable, but otherwise change it as little as possible so that its cultural significance is retained.<sup>20</sup>

It has been seven decades since World War II was over. The military heritage sites are still available but many people involved in the battle were gone. If there is no record for such heritage and the spirit of the military heritage would disappear in one day. As Timothy B. Smith in his book titled *A Chickamauga Memorial – the Establishment of America’s First Civil War National Park* concludes:

The most important effort on the part of the veterans was not so much preservation or reconciliation, however, but commemoration. These veterans who lived through the war and now had the power to remember their friends who had not survived were bent on doing so. In appropriating money for these battlefields, in marking historic spots, in preserving their fighting areas, these veterans were most importantly remembering what had happened there and those who had fought on those spots.<sup>21</sup>

The above quotation could very well be describing the war heritage site of Pak Sha Wan Battery, a site that is less about preservation but more about commemoration of the effort of soldiers in the defence of Hong Kong. In the words of Timothy B. Smith,

In commemorating their actions, the passing veteran generation wanted to explain to the contemporary world and to future generations not only what they had done but also the significance, as they perceived it, of their actions.<sup>22</sup>

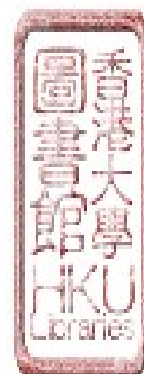
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<sup>19</sup> The Burra Charter, 1999.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> P.146, *A Chickamauga Memorial – the Establishment of America’s First Civil War National Park.*

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*



# Appendix

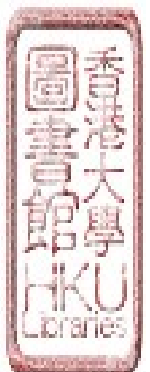
Interview with Mr Albert Lam, veteran of the Hong Kong Military Service Corps (HKMSC) in the British Forces Hong Kong and the Chairman of the Hong Kong Ex-Servicemen Association

Date: 24 June 2013 (Monday)

Venue: Library, the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology

An interview was conducted with Mr Lam, and the summary is as follows:

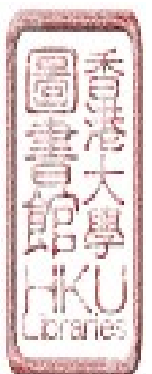
1. When did you join the British Forces Hong Kong?  
I joined the HKMSC in Feb 1973.
2. When did you start to station at the Lyemun Barracks and when did you leave there?  
I did my recruit training for four and half months at Lyemun Barracks. I was posted to 29 Squadron Royal Corps of Transport. I learnt to drive for 10 weeks. The driving school was also based at Lyemun Barracks.
3. What was your post in the Army?  
After driver training I posted to Victoria Barracks, I promoted to be a driving instructor and was posted to Lyemun Barracks in 1978.
4. What was your duty in the Barracks?  
I was teaching soldiers how to drive, started as a driving instructor, then became a classroom instructor after promotion.
5. Was there any use of Pak Sha Wan Battery and its surrounding facilities after World War II?  
There were actually vacated but they would still have maintenance works for the building. The Battery lost its function after the World War II, but was assigned to the HKMSC depot and training ground. The 2/7th Gurkha Rifles were stationed there since 1981, until its disbandment in 1986 and the Barracks' land were handed over to the Hong Kong government.





6. How was the military life in the Lyemun Barracks?

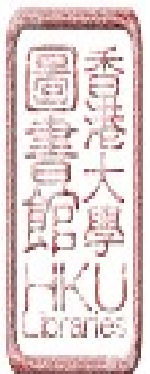
All members of the HKMSC have had very strong connection with Lyemun Barracks; it was the Headquarters and Training Depot. Members have had to attend and pass senior and junior NCO Cadre before each promotion. I have served in many barracks but I loved Lyemun Barracks most.



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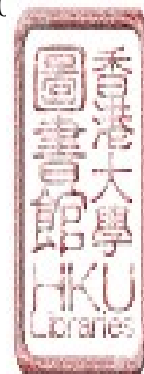
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