



Hong Kong Volunteer and Ex-PoW Association of NSW



OCCASIONAL PAPER NUMBER 2

SECOND WORLD WAR MEMORIALS IN HONG KONG

Hong Kong has a number of memorials to those who died in the Second World War. Best known is the Cenotaph in Statue Square, dedicated to "THE GLORIOUS DEAD 1914-1918 1939-1945". Less well known is a stone gateway in the Botanical Gardens inscribed "IN MEMORY OF THE CHINESE WHO DIED LOYAL TO THE ALLIED CAUSE IN THE WARS 1914-1918 AND 1939-1945". There are others, dedicated to those who served in specific units, such as the St John Ambulance memorial at Wong Nei Chong Gap. In the New Territories are some memorials which honour the guerillas and villagers killed by the Japanese.

Of direct interest to us are the more private memorial plaques in various institutions which include the names of Volunteers. In the King George V School (then Central British School), a plaque headed simply "1939-1945 ROLL OF HONOUR" has 25 names (18 HKVDC). At the Diocesan Boys' School a plaque names 46 Old Boys (35 HKVDC). Five served in the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve, and are buried as far afield as North Africa, Ismailia, Karachi, Budapest and Munster.

It is traditional in the western world for war memorials to be placed in schools in memory of old boys. As far as is known, the only two such memorials in Hong Kong schools are those described above. A number of teachers at DBS also served in the HKVDC, including the headmaster, but happily all survived the war. At St. Stephen's College in Stanley the only memorial is to a Chinese teacher Tam Cheung Huen who was killed while attempting to protect some of his pupils when the Japanese entered the school on Christmas Day, 1941. However, two teachers at the school died while serving in the HKVDC - Arthur Job in No.1 Company was killed in action while John Gaunt in 2nd Battery died as a POW in Sham Shui Po Camp. A teacher in St. Paul's College, Preston Wong, was executed as an agent of the BAAG, but again there is no memorial there.

A plaque in the Hong Kong Football Club names 57 members (29 HKVDC). The Club de Recreio has a plaque with the names of 26 members (all HKVDC). One is Miguel Mendonca, said to have been released from POW camp, but this may be wrong. He spoke Japanese, and acted as an interpreter on occasions when he would be removed from the camp under guard. On one such occasion he failed to return; it was rumoured that he had been killed following a disagreement with his guards.

The Kowloon Cricket Club's plaque has 22 names (16 HKVDC), including A.C.Sinton who won the Distinguished Service Medal in the Royal Navy in the First World War. He was one of the 33 BAAG agents executed on 29th October, 1943.

Eleven names appear on the plaque in the Stanley Prison Officers Club (10 HKVDC), including W.Doxford whose plane disappeared while he was being repatriated from Japan after the war. A memorial plaque in the Marine Department (known then as the Harbour Department) has eight names. Five were killed on the *Jeanette* when it was fired upon accidentally while towing a barge loaded with high explosives and blown up. Two others were executed by the Japanese – Eurasian William White as one of 33 BAAG agents on 29th October, 1943 and James Kim, a Chinese Australian from Casterton, Victoria also in 1943.

The Ohel Leah Synagogue has a plaque which names 13 members of the Jewish community (11 HKVDC), including reporter Reggie Goldman. A plaque in the old SCMP building bore his single name and the inscription "He laid down his pen to take up arms, and wrote his name indelibly". Sarah Gubbay and Leontine Ellis are also named, both members of the Nursing Detachment who died in Stanley Camp (Sarah Gubbay is recorded by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission as Sallie Gubby). In Stanley Military Cemetery there is a memorial with six names of men from the Free French community (five HKVDC), including P.B.Mathieu, accidentally killed on the electrified fence while gardening in Sham Shui Po Camp.