

Battle of Shanghai, 1937

Part 1

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Excerpts from Resistance Wars – <http://www.republicanchina.org/war.html>

Preemptive attack at Japanese in Hongkou and Yangshupu, originally scheduled for the dawn of 13th, was delayed as a result of proposals by authorities of international settlements in making Shanghai an international neutral zone. Sporadic conflicts broke out around Northern Train Station after 9:30 am, and more serious fightings broke out near Baziqiao Bridge and Chizhi University in the afternoon. At 4:01 pm, on 13th, Japanese Marine Headquarters put out a flag as the signal for war.¹ Japanese marines launched several excursions out of the Japanese concession territory, and cannons from Japanese warships blasted into Zhabei residential area and continued through the night.

The initial attacks, with an order of penetration, were hindered by Japanese fortifications, blockhouses and armoured vehicles at each and every street crossings. 88th Division had wrestling fights with Japanese at Japan Cemetery, Baziqiao, Law School and Hongkou Park. One battalion of soliders died in attacking Law School. 87th Division successfully penetrated into Japanese Club and Marine Playground, but failed to sack a four-storey building nearby. Two Japanese counterattacks from south of Marine Playground were beat off. Additionally, 87th Division attacked Hujiang University and Gongda Cotton Mill, while 88th Division beat back a Japanese frontal attack at Chinese positions.

Air battles raged on between the two sides during the same time period. Japanese surface-to-air guns blasted at the skies nonstop. [[[ROC Airforce Day]]]]

Separately, two Chinese torpedo boats, under Teaching Director Ouyang Ge, departed Jiangyin for Shanghai by sailing through rivers and lakes. On Aug 16th, 105th Torpedo Boat stealthily moved into Whangpoo River and fired seven torpedos at Idzumo.

By 17th, three layers of shipping barriers were laid in Whangpu River from Pudong side for preventing Japanese from an upstream sail to threaten Nanshi the southern district of Shanghai.

Zhang Zhizhong's war in Shanghai, after initial breakthroughs, was halted at sunset, on the night of Aug 14th. In the following two days, a lull followed on the ground, during which Chinese side took over Wuzhou Public Cemetery, Patriotic Women's School and Yuedong Middle School. Two companies of soldiers under 259 Brigade of 87 Division at one time broke into Japanese Navy Club. After an order to halt attack for a second time on the night of 16th, Zhang Zhizhong was authorized to continue the general attacks at 5:30 am, on Aug 17th. A

¹ Wu Hsiang-hsiang, op. cit., 1:386

third order to halt attacks was given by the High Command on Aug 18th when Britain, United States, France, Germany and Italy proposed a simultaneous troop pullback.²

On Aug 19th, attacks renewed after undersecretary of Japanese foreign ministry called over British ambassador to Japan and declined the neutralization offer. Wang Jingjiu's 87th Division continued the penetration into Japanese's Yangshupu Concession. At 5:00 pm, Zhang Zhizhong, from 87th Division command center in Jiangwan, ordered a continual attack towards Huishan Wharf, to be reinforced by units from 36th Division and 98th Division. By dawn of 20th, 87th, 36th and 98th Divisions continued breakthroughs southwestward. A tank company chief, with several broken tanks from repair shops, pushed to Huishan Wharf, only to be destroyed by Japanese fire.

On the night of 20th, Zhang Zhizhong, after receiving newly-arrived 11th Division and 2nd Regiment of Nanking's Central Teaching Column as backup force, decided to throw in whole 98th Division against Japanese positions in Yangshupu district, while having 36th Division and 87th Division continue attacks at Hujiang University and Huishan Wharf. At dawn of 21st, 36th Division, under the cover of two tank companies, launched an unsuccessful attack at Huishan Wharf. Tank companies were all destroyed by Japanese gunboat fire. Not much headway was made in fightings that followed. On 22nd, 87th Division took over two Japanese positions in Fineprint Factory and Kangtai Factory. Zhang Zhizhong's troops beat off several Japanese counterattacks at night; however, battles in Japanese concession area and near the Wharf subsided after Japanese amphibious landing on the Yangtze bank to the north,

On the night of 22nd, Japanese made multiple landings at Chuanshakou, Sizilin and Zhanghuabang. At 5:30 am, on Aug 23rd, Zhang Zhizhong received a phonecall about Japanese landing at Chuanshakou and Sizilin from Liu Heding the Yangtze bank commander. News also came that Japanese had landed at Zhanghuabang-Yunzaobang. Chinese airforce bombed Japanese ships in Wusongkou, Liuhe, Sizilin and Baoshan. Since only one company of 56th Division was at Chuanshakou and some constabulary force was at Zhanghuabang, Zhang Zhizhong had to reroute the relief to the Yangtze bank. Having arrived at Jiangwan from Nanxiang by bike at 8:30 am, Zhang Zhizhong ordered that 98th Division Chief Xia Chuzhong lead 11th Division and 98th Division to Luodian, assigned 87th Division Chief Wang Jingjiu the task of frontline commander for Wusong-Shanghai battlefield, dispatched 2nd Regiment of Central Teaching Column to Zhanghuabang, and one battalion from 261st Brigade of 87th Division to Wusong Battery which was defended by 1st Constabulary Regiment.

On this day, Zhang Zhizhong assigned 16th Cannons Regiment and 67th Division to be under the command of 18th Corps Chief Luo Zhuoying, in addition to 11th Division and 98th Division.

Also on **Aug 23rd**, Chiang Kai-shek dispatched Chen Cheng to Shanghai with relief army after learning of Japanese reinforcement landing on the Yangtze bank.

² Wu Hsiang-hsiang, op. cit., 1:388

In the afternoon, a separate Japanese band landed at Wusong. By 5 pm, 11th Division arrived at Luodian and began to drive Japanese herald troops off Luodian. 2nd Regiment of Central Teaching Column, at Zhanghuabang, engaged with 2,000 Japanese. Throughout the night of Aug 23rd, 11th Division pushed towards Chuanshakou after taking Luodian, while 98th Division pushed towards Sizilin and drove the Japanese off. With Baoshan lost, remnants of a battalion from 56th Division retreated towards Zhanghuabang-Yunzaobang where 2nd Regiment was fighting the Japanese who landed there separately.

On 24th, Zhang Zhizhong went to Jiading to see 18th Corps Commander Luo Zhuoying, but was told that Chen Cheng, the undersecretary of Military Affairs Department, had assumed the post of 15th Group Army Commander whose domain was the area to the north of Yunzaobang River, including Xia Chuzhong's 18th Corps and all troops in the area. Being disappointed, Zhang Zhizhong next went to Suzhou for the 3rd War Zone command center, but was reprimanded for leaving the frontline commander post by Chiang Kai-shek in a phonecall.³

On Aug 24th, 2nd Regiment, with help from four regiments of 36th Division and 87th Division, pressed Japanese to a narrow strip along the Zhanghuabang River. At midnight of 25th, Chinese troops, under Japanese warship searchlight and bombardment, continued to attack Japanese at Zhanghuabang and routed several villages. At one past midnight of 25th, Chinese artillery blasted into Zhanghuabang train station. On 27th, 87th Division Commander Wang Jingjiu further pressed the Japanese into the train station. Chinese side incurred heavy casualties under the blanket blasting of Japanese warships. On this day, Japanese also landed at Yinhangzhen.

At Yangshupu, four Chinese regiments finally abandoned lane-to-lane fighting on the night of 24th, and retreated back to the Chinese side. Japanese did not counterattack till the dawn of 27th, by which time 88th Division Commander Sun Yuanliang beat them off. By this time, majority of 61st Division, 2nd Regiment, and 8th and 10th Cannons Regiments had relocated to the hind. On 29th, Japanese reinforced troops at Hongkou and Yangshupu, and then launched a ferocious attack at North Station, Baziqiao and Chinese positions at Jungonglu Road.

On Aug 30th, the Third War Zone command center issued an order to the Wusong-Shanghai-Baoshan-Liuyang battlefield, with a call for intensified attacks at Japanese positions. The next day, Japanese, under the cover of planes and warships, landed at Wusong area again. One regiment from 61st Division, after incurring half casualties, retreated, but the Shanghai 1st Constabulary Regiment still held on to the Wusong Battery. On the night of 31st, 6th Division, on the way of relief to Wusong from Liuhang, encountered Japanese to the north of Yanghang and fought a fierce battle.

On Sept 4th, Japanese relief armies landed on multiple docks of Yangshupu segment of Whangpoo River, and on the night of 5th, landed on Qiujiang Wharf, to the east of Shanghai

³ Zhang Zhizhong took this reprimand so seriously that he requested for a resignation, which was approved on Sept 22nd. In the following years, Zhang barely escaped the punishment for the Arson of Changsha City. One more grievance against Chiang Kai-shek would be over the assignment of accepting Japanese surrender in 1945.

municipality building. On the morning of 6th, Zhang Zhizhong's rightside army counterattacked Japanese at Qiujiang Wharf, and by dusk, cornered them into warehouses.

On Sept 6th, the Third War Zone command center finally ordered a halt of general attacks and issued guidelines for second phase battle plan, namely, withdrawing Chinese troops beyond the firepower range of Japanese warships. The next day, Japanese at both Zhanghuabang and Qiujiang Wharf launched an unsuccessful counterattack. On 9th, Japanese launched an unsuccessful counterattack at Jungonglu Road.

On Aug 30th, Hu Zongnan's 1st Corps, with 78th Division & 1st Division, departed Xuzhou of Shandong and Guide of Henan Province for Shanghai.

On the night of Sept 10th, Japanese breached the positions of 15th Group Army at the beachhead. **15th Group Army retreated to Yuepu-Yanghang line**. On the morning of 11th, Japanese attacked the positions of 9th Group Army to the south of Yunzaobang River. In Shanghai proper, from 7th to 16th, Japanese continued the landing at Qiujiang Wharf. On 17th, 15th Group Army and 9th Group Army contracted the defense line to Luodian-Miaohang-Jiangwan-Shangcaodun.⁴

On Sept 21st, Chiang Kai-shek realigned the Shanghai defense into the left, middle and right flanks of two group armies each, to be headed by Chen Cheng, Zhu Shaoliang and Zhang Fakui, respectively.

⁴ Wu Hsiang-hsiang, op. cit., 1:390