

HOW DID WW1 FAN THE FLAMES OF CONFLICT IN EAST ASIA?

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The Battle of Tsingtao: Video transcript

By the outbreak of the First World War, Tsingtao was thriving. Giving the Kaiser a huge area of operations in the Pacific. It was immediately targeted by Britain and Japan.

British commander: "We command Our Army and Navy to carry on hostilities against that Empire with all their strength"

On September 2nd 1914, an Anglo-Japanese force landed. The Siege of Tsingtao had begun.

Yi Lin - Local historian: "The Germans built really excellent fortifications. Take the fort site of Qingdao Hill Battery. It was the headquarters of the German fortress. But what it lacked was the outside supply and reinforcements."

Chinese labourers - commanded by their German masters - dug trenches, lugged equipment and positioned artillery. On October 31st, the Allied forces closed in. For a solid week, the city was bombarded from sea and land, night and day.

German Soldier: "Unfortunately, we cannot do more...We know that the Kaiser and the Fatherland will look upon us with pride...I will now lie down to rest, perhaps for the last time."

450 men died in the siege, 40 of them Chinese labourers.

Yi Lin - Local historian: "After the siege...the two governments of China and Japan sat down and negotiated the return of Tsingtao... the Japanese had declared that they would hand it back to China. But they didn't keep their promise..."