



## Enhancing the spirit of Anglo-Japanese WWII Reconciliation

### For Mutual Understanding and Promoting Friendship through War history Education

On the 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> of November, 17 delegates from Shonai City, Yamagata Prefecture in Japan will be visiting London and York.



### Ceremonial Events:

10<sup>th</sup>: Observation of "Remembrance Day" in White Hall. Visit National Army Museum in Chelsea.

11<sup>th</sup>: Visit York – York Minster, Kohima War Memorial (Lay wreaths), and York St John University

12<sup>th</sup>: Visit Kohima Museum, Imphal Barracks, and York Mansion House

13<sup>th</sup>: Visit SOAS, and St Ethelburga's Reconciliation Centre in Bishopsgate St., London

### The purpose of the visit from Shonai City is to:

1. Link the Kohima War Museum in York and a Library in Shonai City, Yamagata.
2. Seek to set up Student exchanges between both countries.
3. Create opportunities to hold International Symposiums by universities through study.
4. Create opportunities for local people to visit each other's countries and enhance understanding of culture, industrial/agricultural/commercial business as well as friendship.
5. Promote local "Globalisation".
6. Eradicate misunderstandings, prejudice, and wrong perceptions of both countries.
7. Contribute to "Peace" through understanding of each country through friendship for the future generations.

### About The Burma Campaign Society

From 1983 onwards, the late Masao Hirakubo OBE advocated reconciliation between British and Japanese soldiers who had previously been enemies. Veterans from both countries established the organisation (then Burma Campaign Fellowship Group) to achieve reconciliation based on mutual understanding by visiting each other's countries and holding many meetings as well as joint memorial services in the UK, Japan, Burma and India. We nurture friendship by understanding the differences in culture, history and tradition and continue to pass the veterans' war stories on to younger generations. We offer the international general public historical data, war memoirs of individual soldiers, diaries, photos, films, presentation of academics' research by holding events, exhibitions and discussion forums. We further aim to proactively participate in War Memorial Services in the UK, Japan, and India as well as in Burma, and also broaden our knowledge. (News articles and TV/Radio Reports were mentioned by BBC TV, BBC Radio, Yamagata TV, Mainichi National Newspaper, Sankei Newspaper, Asahi National Newspaper, Yomiuri National Newspaper, Yamagata Local Newspaper, and British historical TV Programme, British Times and Observer and many more.)





# THE BURMA CAMPAIGN SOCIETY



## Burma and India Campaign (Battle of Kohima) Jan. 1942-July 1945



**WHEN YOU GO HOME,  
TELL THEM OF US AND SAY  
FOR YOUR TOMORROW,  
WE GAVE OUR TODAY**



Kohima

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Division, Kohima Epitaph/North East India

**FORGOTTEN  
ARMY**



Kohima

Takada 58<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, /Niigata

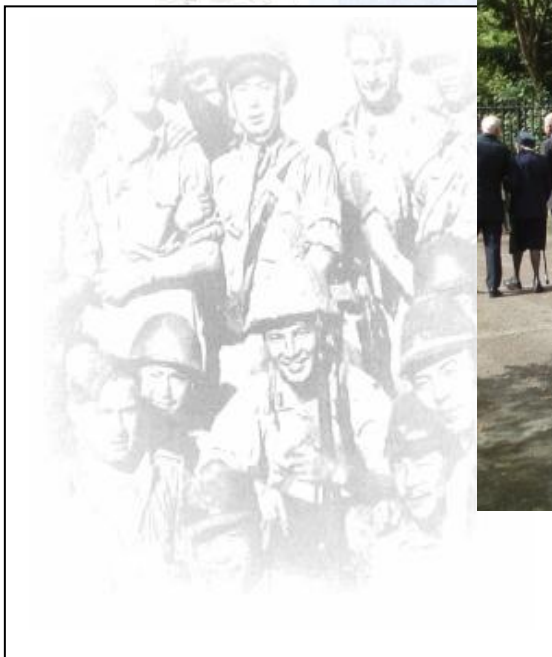




# THE BURMA CAMPAIGN SOCIETY



## Reconciliation 1983-2013







## Turning Point of Burma Campaign 4 April-22 June 1944



### Disobeyed Unprecedented Military Order

For the Sake of Human Lives



### Story about Lt. General Kotoku Sato written by Akiko Macdonald (the Current Chairman of BCS)

Lt. General Sato (buried in Shonai city) was commanding the 31<sup>st</sup> Division in the Imphal Operation (U-go), one of three Divisions (the 33 and the 15<sup>th</sup>) of the 15<sup>th</sup> Japanese Imperial Army. The division consisted of 58<sup>th</sup>, 124<sup>th</sup>, 138<sup>th</sup> Regiments and 31<sup>st</sup> Mountain Artillery Regiment. The battle was fought at Kohima, North Eastern India and went on for nearly 3 months against various British/Indian troops of the 4<sup>th</sup> Corps, 1<sup>st</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> (Royal West Kent Regiment) Battalion, Assam Regiment, Assam Rifles, and later British 2<sup>nd</sup> Div. and Indian 33 Corps. Sato's Division faced a lack of ammunition with only 17 small portable mountain guns against 33 inch mountain howitzers, 48 field guns and two 5.5 inch medium guns as well as bombing from the air by the RAF. The monsoon hit all areas, and the Japanese suffered starvation, malnutrition and caught several types of tropical (some deadly) diseases.

So Lt. Gen. Sato took the unprecedented decision to disobey his superior's order, which was unthinkable according to the Japanese Imperial Military code, and pulled his men out of the battle to search for food and medicines.

The founder of the Anglo-Japan reconciliation movement, the late Masao Hirakubo OBE survived this battle, as did my father Taiji Urayama, Lieutenant of the Mountain Artillery 31<sup>st</sup> Regiment under the command of Lt. Gen. Sato.

(The above memorial was erected using donations from the men of the 31<sup>st</sup> Div., 58<sup>th</sup>, 124<sup>th</sup> and 138<sup>th</sup> Infantry and 31<sup>st</sup> regiment of the Mountain Artillery, 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Field Medical unit and 55<sup>th</sup> Independent Logistics Reg. His mementos and artefacts are kept in the Shonai Library)

Casualties and death count: British: 4,064, Japan: 5,764. Entire Imphal Operation: British 17,500, Japanese 53,879 killed and wounded.