

In October 1945, British Army operations in China primarily involved supervising the surrender of Japanese forces, with a representative signing the surrender documents in Peking on October 10th. British troops were also involved in the subsequent evacuation of Japanese prisoners of war from the region and played a role in restoring order in areas previously under Japanese control, such as Hong Kong and the Chinese concessions. The broader context was the formal end of the war and the beginning of the Allied occupation, with a focus on disarming the Japanese and repatriating surviving prisoners of war. ⓘ



Key events and activities:

- **Japanese Surrender:** A major British representative, Major John E. Stanfield, signed the surrender documents for the Japanese armies in China on October 10, 1945, in Peking. ⓘ
- **Disarming Japanese Forces:** The primary role for Allied forces, including British and Indian troops, was to disarm and control the vast numbers of Japanese troops remaining in China after the official surrender. ⓘ
- **Evacuation of Prisoners of War:** British and Commonwealth soldiers were involved in evacuating their own comrades who had been held in Japanese POW camps. ⓘ
- **Restoration of British Control:** Following the surrender, British forces oversaw the formal handover of Hong Kong back to British control on August 30, 1945, restoring British sovereignty over the colony. ⓘ
- **Logistical Support:** British naval assets were used to support the evacuation of POWs and to assist in the early stages of the occupation. ⓘ

Context and significance:

- **End of Hostilities:** October 1945 marked the immediate aftermath of World War II, with the official signing of the Japanese surrender on September 2nd. ⓘ
- **Allied Occupation:** The presence of British forces was part of the broader Allied military effort to occupy Japan and its former territories, including China. ⓘ
- **Focus on Security and Repatriation:** The immediate priorities for British units in China were to maintain security, disarm the remaining Japanese forces, and facilitate the repatriation of Allied prisoners of war. ⓘ