**Transcript – Captain Shosaku Kameyama, 3rd Battalion, 58 Infantry Regiment, 31 Division, Imperial Japanese Army**

**Warning: This transcript contains descriptions of death and warfare**

**All narration and voices are provided by actors.**

**NARRATOR**

When the 50th Indian Brigade was discovered threatening their flank at Sangshak, the Japanese 58th Infantry was separated from the 31st Division to eliminate the problem.

After the war, Captain Shosaku Kameyama, of the 3rd Battalion, 58th Infantry Regiment, described their first encounter with Commonwealth soldiers in India.

**KAMEYAMA**

“In the evening of 21 March, we occupied the village of Sangshak and found that it was not the main position of the enemy, so we then attacked a hill north-west of the village and occupied the enemy’s south front position.

The enemy mounted a heavy counterattack on us after sunrise. This was the first time we had fought with the British-Indian forces, which was very different from our experience of fighting the Chinese army, which had inferior weapons to ours.

Our battalion commander observed the enemy positions and ordered an attack during the coming night: 8th Company to lead the attack, followed by 5th and 6th Companies.

From our experience in China, we were confident of the success of the night attack, but we had to expect that a mass of bullets from the overwhelming enemy automatic weapons would result in much greater casualties.

When the 8th Company broke through the enemy front line, 5th and 6th tried to advance, but very fierce enemy firing made their progress impossible. Under a strong counterattack the commander and most soldiers of the 8th Company were killed or wounded.

Though we wanted to advance we could not even lift our heads because of the heavy fire which we had never before experienced.”

**NARRATOR**

The Japanese 3rd battalion commander, Major Nagata, insisted the attack should continue, however Kameyama, together with the commanders of other companies, disagreed.

**KAMEYAMA**

“Hearing my report, the commander finally realised that the attack could not be carried out and he broke down in tears, a man weeping in front of his subordinates, saying, ‘Too shameful not to recover the bones of Lieutenant Ban and the soldiers of 8th Company’…

So, we retreated back to a slope facing the enemy hill, under cover of the morning mist. It was the morning of 23rd March.”

Source: Captain Shosaku Kameyama, Tales by Japanese Soldiers of the Burma Campaign 1942-1945 by Kazuo Tamayama