

[MJHW \(Online Meeting\) on British Troops in Japan - Friday, February 5th](#)

Discussion published by Joelle Tapas on Monday, January 25, 2021

Please join us for the next meeting of the Modern Japan History Workshop on **Friday, February 5th at 6 pm JST**. Our presenter this month will be Tom French (Ritsumeikan University), who will present his work on British troops in Japan (details below).

This month's session will be held online through ZOOM, and can be accessed using the following sign-in information:

Meeting link: <https://zoom.us/j/92585886761>

The password for the meeting will be posted at the top of the [MJHW website](#) from February 1st onwards.

The workshop is open to all, and no prior registration is required.

Please direct any questions to Joelle Tapas at tapas@fas.harvard.edu. We hope to see you there!

British Troops in Japan: 1864 - 1875 - Highlighting 'The Thin Red Line' Around Yokohama

Tom French, Ritsumeikan University, Graduate School of International Relations

Between 1864 and 1875 thousands of British troops resided in a purpose build garrison on the slopes overlooking Yokohama. Despite forming the majority of the permanent foreign community for years and being central to many events and developments during their residence, the history of the garrison has been almost entirely unexamined in English. Within accounts of the era the black, white, and grey tones of the diplomacy aspect shine through and the glitter of the silver, gold, and copper of the economic and trading links is reflected, but the "dash of red", then prominent in the landscape, has faded into the background. This paper argues the significance of the British garrison has been underrated within studies of the period and seeks to restore their visibility within the scholarship, alongside highlighting the roles they played in a volatile and dynamic era of Japanese history. A number of fresh interpretations based on hitherto unemployed primary sources are presented, as are some initial assessments of first-hand accounts of participants.