

WAR DIARY.

In lieu of A.F. C 2118.

Month and Year DECEMBER 1944.

Unit:- 2nd Bn The Gordon Highlanders.

Commanding Officer:- Lieut. Col. R.W.M. de Winton, D.S.O.

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	References to Appendices
HOLLAND.	1st to 6th		Bn concentrated in Rest Area at ASTEN. Time spent training, recreation and entertainments. Pipes and Drums play "Retreat". Bn Inter-Coy Football match.	Appx. I - Example of Entertainment Allocation.
	5th		Bde "O" Group. Discussion on future Bde Ops.	See Appx 2.
	6th		Recce party visit KESSEL, prior to taking over from East Lancs of 160 Bde.	
	7th	1200 1910	Bn leave ASTEN for Assembly Area in HELDEN (M.R. 8003). Bn feed and move forward at 1800 hrs to take over from East Lancs. Hand over complete. Standing Patrol on river bank with constant patrolling during night between Coys and to H.L.I. at HORST (M.R. 8502) and R.W.F. at 7998.	See Appx 3. " " 4. " " 5.
	8th	 1930	Slight shelling during day. Div Commander visits Bn Area. (1145 hrs). During day, O.P as shown on sketch, have nothing to report. Many earthworks, trenches and A/tk ditches seen but no movement of the enemy. Thought he rests by day and all movement in darkness. We rest in buildings during day and occupy dug positions after "Stand-to" times, with sentries and O.Ps observing during daylight. Civilians still in occupation of all villages along river. Movement heard on far bank during night.	Appx 6 and 6A.
	9th	0130 0145	Bde HQ report Enemy Patrol had shot up an H.L.I. Contact Patrol, killing one O.R. and wounding 3 O.Rs. Thought that enemy were using Bren. "D" Coy report Standing Patrol at 838010 attacked by Enemy Patrol thought to be using Bren Gun. 1 - O.R. killed. Gunners - 25 lbs and A/Tk 6 lbs snipe Church which was being used as enemy O.P. (845001). Visibility poor but enemy movement observed. Shelling and Mortaring more active.	
	10th	1400	Lt W. Tasker and Lt S.W. Telfer joined Bn. Div Commander visits "A" Coy O.P.	

			Carriers relieve Battle Group of forward position.	
HOLLAND.	11th		Enemy observed during day - Snipers firing on targets when opportunity arose. Heavy shelling during day chiefly in "C" Coy Area - one casualty in "A" Coy Area. Civilians report that enemy probably cross river in area 864030 and 862023. Believe boats are hidden under burnt out barn 86530278 and in Slit Trench 868022.	
	12th		2 - O.Rs return from Hospital. 21 reinforcements from Inniskilling Fusiliers. Between 2000 hrs and 2045 hrs noise of vehs and what sounded like a concrete mixer about 830999. Several illuminating Verey Lights were fired and one Veh moved for a short time with full headlights.	
	13th		2 - ORs return from Hospital. Commanding Officer, Capt McPhail (M.O.), 2886747 Sjt Harris, 2888214 L/Cpl McConnell, 2927095 Pte McLean were presented with Medal Ribbon by Field Marshal Montgomery at Div HQ in ZOMERON. Spectators from the Bn were also present. Awards presented were:- Commanding Officer - D.S.O. Capt McPhail (M.O.) - M.C. 2886747 Sgt Harris C. - M.M. 2927095 Pte McLean J. - M.M. 2888214 L/Cpl McConnell - M.M.	See Appx 7.
	14th	1400	5 - ORs return from Hospital. H.V. Gun fire at O.P. No casualties. Corps Commander visits "C" Coy O.P. Major Duff leaves for BRUSSELS to recce area for Div Battle School. Capt Grose command of "D" Coy.	
	15th		Bn W.E. up to strength, decided to reform "B" Coy, commanded by Major Hutchinson. O.P. observe enemy activity during day. Slight shelling.	
HOLLAND.	16th	1400	Bn draw for Home Leave. During night enemy patrol cross river. Civilians report 3 enemy broke into house at M.R. 853027, crossing river at 852013.	
	17th		Enemy patrol crossed river during night. Offensive activity during day - Jet propelled planes patrolling front. Enemy Rocket-firing plane attacks road leading to "C" Coy Area. "C" Coy Sniper killed by Mortar Bomb.	

	18th	<p>Three enemy patrols were seen during night - a small one at 852024 and 841015 and a strong patrol of 14 at 806980.</p> <p>1 Pl and Battle Group of A & S.H. attached and under command to fill gap left by any Fighting Patrol found necessary to send out during night.</p> <p>Slight shelling during day.</p>	
	19th	<p>Dog reported crossing river during night. No enemy patrol seen. Considerable noise heard during night. 3" Mortar active time engaging targets.</p>	
	20th	<p>Enemy Patrol reported by Carrier Pl. Owing to thickness of Fog, visibility very poor and for a period in the morning when S.P. and Ambush had to be manned.</p> <p>Slight mortaring observed during afternoon when fog rose.</p>	
	21st	<p>Quiet day. Very little shelling. O.P., with "C" Coy, sniped at from far bank.</p>	
	22nd	<p>Commanding Officer, by invitation from the Div Commander, leaves to spend 24 hours at Div HQ.</p> <p>Quiet day. No shelling, and owing to visibility very little enemy activity observed.</p>	
	23rd	<p>During the night "C" and "D" captured 3 and 1 prisoners.</p> <p>A party of two crossed in boat to collect four others who had been on this side of the river all day, hiding in a wood.</p> <p>Commanding Officer returns from Div HQ.</p> <p>Recce party from H.L.I. to see Bn positions prior to taking over.</p> <p>Bde Exercise "Calling for Fire". See Appx.</p>	Appx 8 and 9.
HOLLAND.	24th	<p>Quiet day. No shelling. 10 H.L.I. taking over Bn positions, started with Bn HQ at about 1230 hrs. Relief completed 2100 hrs. No casualties. Capt J.H. Thompson proceeded on Course to the U.K.</p>	
	25th	<p>Bn in reserve at EGCHELHOEK with Bn HQ established at 772038 (Sheet 1/25,000), "D" in HELDEN. Duty Coy provided each day who supply patrols as required by the Left hand Bn of the Bde front.</p> <p>ORs had Xmas dinner. C.O. visited each Coy.</p>	
	26th	<p>Quiet day. Still in reserve.</p> <p>Entertainment at night (Cinema).</p>	
	27th	<p>Quiet day. Still in reserve.</p> <p>Entertainment at night (Cinema). Baths in HELDEN.</p>	
	28th	<p>Quiet day. Still in reserve.</p> <p>C.O. and recce party visit 2 A & S.H. area prior to taking over their positions.</p>	

	29th	Relieved 2 A & S.H. Area BARLOW. Bn HQ established at 853047 (Sheet TEGELEN 1/25,000). Very quiet night. No incidents and no casualties. Disposition of Bn as per trace.	Appx 10.
	30th	Very quiet during the day, when sentries and O.Ps man the posts, others resting in buildings. Standing Patrols along the river bank during the night.	
	31st	Again a very quiet day. No enemy activity.	