

AWM52
2nd Australian Imperial Force and
Commonwealth Military Forces unit war
diaries, 1939-45 War

Item number: 8/3/8

2/8 Infantry Battalion

March - May 1941

JUL 22 1941

Mar 41

ORIGINAL *ack*
FOR MARCH 41

WAR DIARY

Army Form C.2118.

Instructions regarding War Diaries and Intelligence
Summaries are contained in F.S. Regs., Part II.
and the Staff Manual respectively. Title pages
will be prepared in manuscript.

OR
~~INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.~~

2/8 Bn.

(Erase heading not required).

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
<u>LIBYA.</u> AIN EL GAZALA I/100000	March	1st	<p>Lt Col Mitchell detached from this Unit. to 19th Inf Bde temporarily to act as Brig. Major Key commands 2/8 Bn during Col Mitchell's absence.</p> <p>0630hrs Reveille. Breakfast.</p> <p>0830hrs Parties are sent to Aerodrome and near vicinity to collect wood and other material useful for building purposes. Enough materials were collected from Italian Billetts allowing several buildings to be erected in the Bn area. The weather was very unreliable and threatening, and personnel were selected for building suitable offices.</p> <p>1430hrs Issue of new uniforms to C QM Ss in lieu of old uniforms which were collected under Coy arrangements.</p> <p><u>Weather</u> Windy and raining.</p>	
	March	2nd	<p>0830 hrs Church Parade cancelled owing to weather being very bleak and cloudy. Bn rests. Details of N C O course (cadre) to commence 4th March.</p> <p>1700hrs General situation unchanged.</p>	
	March	3rd	<p>0930hrs Coy Parades. Personnel continue to work on buildings. Targets are built and erected on beach. Coys practice both rifle and bren fire.</p> <p><u>Weather</u> Rain has disappeared and in its place dust storms were prevalent.</p> <p>General situation remains unchanged.</p>	
	March	4th	<p>0800hrs Officers of this Unit leave to visit the Battlefield at TOBRUCH and review the part played by Coys during the battle. D Coy move to the Battlefield by M T and reenact their part of the attack.</p>	

2/8 BATTALION
A. I. H. O.
A. I. Hemming

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<u>AIN EL GAZALA</u>				
	<u>March 4th</u>	(continued)		
		<u>0900hrs.</u>	Cadre course for N C Os commences.	
		<u>1810 hrs</u>	Return of parties from TOBRUCH.	
		<u>Weather.</u>	Wind died down a little during the day. Warm and cloudy.	
	<u>March 5th</u>			
		<u>0600hrs</u>	D Coy leaves for DERNA to act as Garrison for a period of nine days.	
		<u>0800hrs</u>	Party of Officers again revisit Battlefield at TOBRUCH.	
		<u>0900hrs</u>	Warning issued to the Bn at large that casualties occurred in nearby Units from Thermos Bombs buried in the sand. The areas concerned in the warning were flagged off.	
		<u>1100hrs</u>	Bde issue warning that our transport will transport the 20th Bde to BEN GHASI on <u>March 6th</u>	
		<u>Weather</u>	Calm.	
	<u>March 6th</u>			
		<u>0630hrs</u>	Bn MT moves to transport the 20th Bde.	
		<u>0900hrs</u>	N C Os. course continues.	
		<u>Weather</u>	Slight wind and warm.	
		<u>1700hrs.</u>	Owing to transport difficulties the Beer issue is stopped stopped for the night.	
	<u>March 7th</u>			
		<u>0900hrs</u>	Coy parades.	
		<u>P M.</u>	Swimming and sports on football ground built by D Coy.	
		<u>Weather</u>	Warm, cloudless skies.	
		<u>1700hrs</u>	General vsituation unchanged.	
	<u>March 8th</u>			
		<u>0900hrs</u>	2 men from each Coy to be trained in sanitary water duties by the R M O.	
		<u>1700hrs.</u>	Situation unchanged. <u>Weather</u> Fine and warm.	

Wt. 13161/317 200/000 5/39 H.E.J.Ltd. 51-3911 Forms C2118/21



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AIN EL GAZALA.	<u>March 9th</u>		0830hrs Unit ChurchParade. Bn rests for remainder of morning. Coy Football Matches are arranged and Tug-of-war. Swimming Weather Fine and warm.	
	<u>March 10th</u>		0900hrs General situation unchanged. Routine training morning. Afternoon Sports.	
	<u>March 11th</u>		0900hrs. Routine training. Message received from Bde and movement order re move to MERSA MATRUH. Situation unchanged.	
	<u>March 12th.</u>		0900hrs Generally unchanged situation. 1200hrs Bn transport returns from transporting the 20th Bde to BEN GHASI. Transport were subjected to one Air Raid during XX journey. No casualties in this Unit. 1800hrs D Coy return from Garrison duties in DERNA.	
	<u>March 13th</u>		0300hrs. Unidentified plane flew low over Bn Area and fired two long bursts of M G. No casualties although two trucks of A S C were considerably damaged. 0930hrs. Coys clean area and prepare for move to MERSA MATRUH. 1100hrs. Arrival of A S C vehicles for transporting Bn to MATRUH. P.M. Sports. Weather: Fine and warm. Dust Storms in evening.	
	<u>March 14th</u>		0500hrs. Advance and Recce party consisting of Major Capes(2i/c) and other Officers leave by M T for MERSA MATRUH. Remainder of Bn prepares to move as a main body.	



2/8 Bn A I F

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
<u>AIN EL GAZALA</u>	<u>March I4th</u>		(continued) <u>0700hrs</u> Main Body of Bn moves midst a violent dust and sand storm. Visilbility very poor almost nil. This causing frequent halts and several breakdowns. Owing to these conditions the Bn did not cover scheduled mileage. <u>I600hrs</u> Bn halts for night at <i>approx 6 miles East of Sollum on coast road</i> Wind, dust and sand still blowing. Advance party make excellent time and decide to go through to MERSA MATRUH that night.	
<u>EGYPT.</u>	<u>March I5th</u>		<u>0600hrs.</u> Reveille and Breakfast <u>0800hrs.</u> Bn embusses and resume journey to MERSA MATRUH. The wind practically diminished completely. Bn make good time considering and travel with little wind and sun. <u>I240hrs</u> Halt for Lunch. <u>I630hrs</u> Bn halts for the night <i>by road approx 30 miles W of matruh.</i>	
<u>MERSA MATRUH.</u>	<u>March I6th</u>		<u>0600hrs.</u> /Reveille. <u>0730hrs.</u> Conference of Coy 2/c and Adjt re Bn moving into Billetts at MATRUH. <u>0930hrs</u> Bn arrives at MERSA MATRUH. Move into the MATRUH Egyptian Barracks. Brens mounted on roofs as A. A. <u>I400hrs.</u> Thompson M G. guns issued to each Coy. Weather. EW Weather: Fine.	
	<u>March I7th</u>		<u>0630hrs</u> Reveille. <u>0730hrs</u> Breakfast. <u>0900hrs</u> Coy Parades. Training is continued according to syllabus. Bn has first instruction on the Thompson M G. Coys went to the sand dunes WEST of barracks and fired into sand. <i>the sand dunes WEST of barracks and fired into sand.</i> Weather: Slight wind , sunny.	



MARCH MONTH

A.I.F. FORM C 2118A

WAR DIARY

(RENDER UNDER SECRET COVER)

UNIT 2/8 Bn.

For material required, see F.S.R. Vol. 1, Sec. 174

1941 YEAR

PLACE	DATE	SUMMARY OF EVENTS Routine training details and information given in Casualty Returns are NOT required	REFERENCES TO APPENDICES	C.O.'s REPORT AND COMMENTS ON MONTH (On Operations, Equipment, Movement, Health, Administration, etc.)
MERSA MATRUH	<p><u>18th March</u></p> <p>0900hrs</p> <p>0930hrs</p> <p><u>March 19th</u></p> <p>0900hrs</p> <p><u>March 20th</u></p> <p>0930hrs</p> <p><u>March 21st</u></p> <p>0900hrs.</p> <p>1900hrs.</p> <p>1700hrs</p> <p><u>March 22nd</u></p> <p>0900hrs.</p>	<p>0900hrs. L.A.D. begins overhaul of Bn Transport.</p> <p>N.C.Os. receive instructions in the manufacturing of A-Tk bombs with gelignite and empty jam tins. Inter Coy Sports in Afternoon. General Situation unchanged.</p> <p>Issue of Anti-gas equipment. Routine training. General situation unchanged. Reinforcements Approx 100 strong, join the Bn at 1900hrs. Many of these men were battle casualties coming back from hospital. Situation unchanged.</p> <p>Reinforcements drafted to Coys.</p> <p>Throughout the day the Bn parading in Coys pass through a Gas chamber and have their respirators tested. General situation unchanged. The Beer issue of one bottle per day through Bn arrangements is proving satisfactory.</p> <p>Bn Route March. Afternoon: Inter Coy Sports. Grenade hidden in a Bonfire of rubbish exploded causing two casualties. Reinforcements undergo medical examination in afternoon.</p> <p>General situation remains unchanged.</p> <p>Routine Training parades: consisting of a Route March for one hour at least. Sports as usual in the afternoon.</p>	<p>Include Captain Robertson (wounded Battle of Tobruk)</p>	<p>Signature.....</p>

218 BATTALION
A.I.F.
A. J. Fleming Lieut.

MARCH MONTH
1941 YEAR

A.I.F. FORM C 2118A

WAR DIARY

(RENDER UNDER SECRET COVER)

UNIT 2/8 Bn.

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MERSA MATRUH.		<p><u>23rd</u> 1000hrs Transport moves out of Camp to ALEXANDRIA. Movement Order issued re move to embarkation point. I O. moves with advance party for RECCE purposes to AMARIYA AMARIYA Bn cleans up area thoroughly and rests for remainder of day. Prepares to move the following morning to MERSA MATRUH Station (as per movement order). Weather: Warm and Fine.</p> <p><u>24th</u> 0830hrs Bn embusses for MERSA MATRUH Station. Bn entrains . 2000hrs Bn detrain at AMARIYA station. Bn march with complete Kit two miles to Bn Area at AMIRYA. Tea is issued but no meal.</p> <p><u>25th</u> 0830hrs. Roving Patrols and A.A. mounted. Those not required for duty rest. Leave schedule to AMARIYA ALEXANDRIA issued. Weather: Hot and dusty. Personnel who did not receive Kitbags at MERSA MATRUH, due to them being mislaid en route receive same.</p> <p><u>26th</u> 0700hrs. Most of Bn go on leave (two days) only essential duties remaining in camp. Weather: Warm and Fine.</p> <p><u>27th</u> Situation unchanged.</p> <p><u>28th</u> Bn on leave. 0900hrs Advance party and A.A. guard leave for wharf and boat at ALEXANDRIA General situation unchanged.</p> <p><u>29th</u> Leave schedule finishes. preparations are made for Boat Trip.</p>		

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Signature

MARCH MONTH
1941 YEAR

A.I.F. FORM C 2118A

WAR DIARY

(RENDER UNDER SECRET COVER)

UNIT 2/8 Bn

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AMIRYA	30th	1400hrs. Bn Parade for presentation of Decorations and awards won in LIBYA. March past C.O. Final preparations made for the morning move to the Boat.		
	31st	As per movement order. 0500hrs Reveille. 0600hrs Breakfast. Bn moves down to AMIRYA Station and await for train. 0700hrs. Bn entrains at AMIRYA station for ALEX. 1000hrs. Bn arrives at ALEXANDRIA Wharf and detrain. This movement was carried with great organisation. This Unit then embarked on H.M.T. PENNLAND. To travel to GREECE. The Boat draws out to centre of Harbour and drops anchor for the night. Unit strength on boat 29 Officers and 619 0 Rs. Balance of Unit travelling by M T Convoy 4 Officers and 101 0 Rs.		

2/8 BATTALION
A.P. Hemingway
60.
A.I.F.

Signature.....

OPERATIONS

EGYPT
GREECE Main body embarked HMT "PENNLAND" from ALEXANDRIA
1 Apr. Arrived PIRAEUS and moved to DAPHNE 3 Apr.

TO VEVE PASS Bn moved out 6 Apr via SERVIA to VERIA pass area
thence to temporary psns at XYNON NERON on 9 Apr.

6-10 APR and occupied psns on right of VEVE pass with RANGERS
and 2/4 Bn on left and Gks on right, 10 Apr.

GREEK
FATALISM Attitude adopted of "We shall die here to the last man".

ENEMY
ATTACK
11-12 First heavy attack on 11 Apr continuing throughout the
following days. Troops were in exhausted condition
due to digging and climbing, and movements were hampered
by heavy snow.

WITHDRAWAL
TO KOUTROULI
13-15 APR commenced at 1700 hrs 12 Apr, GK and English troops
having previously moved out. Defences prepared on east
of KROMION 13 Apr and held until 15 Apr when bn withdrawn
across the ALIAKMON to

DOMOKOS
AREA
16-18 where it remained until 18 Apr. Considerable eqpt had
been abandoned during exhaustive marching.

BN STRENGTH on 17 Apr was 26 Off 507 O.R's. Missing 7 Off. 213 O.R's

BRAILOS
19-22 Apr Area was occupied until 22 Apr when ORDERS for EVACUATION
of GREECE were received. Bn moved to AMFIKLIA on 22 Apr
and destroyed all equipment other than carried on men.

EVACUATION
& EMBARKATION Through ELEFSIS 24 Apr to MILOI 25 Apr and KALAMAI
where unit embarked on "COSTA RICA" "DILWARRA" and
"CITY OF LONDON" 26 Apr.

TRANSPORT
SUNK "COSTA RICA" sunk during bombing and personnel taken
off by destroyers. (This party landed in CRETE)

PALESTINE Details disembark ALEXANDRIA 29 Apr and entrain for
PALESTINE, 30 Apr.

MAPS FLORINA 1: 20000, ATHENS 1: 250000,
ATHENS 1: 100000, KOZAN 1: 100000
SOFIA 1: 100000

REPORTS on Operations by coy and pln comds app.

MEDICAL - OPERATIONS

BN UNFIT R.M.O. stresses point of Reinforcements compris- 2/8 INF BN
ing one fifth of total strength being unseasoned APR 41
and totally unfit for strenuous campaign.
In addition the remainder of the unit had just
returned from heavy campaigning in LIBYA.

(NOTE- Bn left for GREECE at end of MARCH and WAR
DIARY for MARCH therefore had to be taken to GREECE
to be completed. Continuous movement prevented its
despatch. It was being brought back from GREECE ~~when~~ when
it went down with H.M.T. COSTA RICA. This DIARY is
therefore completed as accurately as possible from
the few available records and from memory.)

Cpl. Fleming ^{head.}
10. 2/8/41.

26 ~~MAR~~ - 30 APR 41 ^{ach}
 JUL 22 1941 2/8 BN A.I.F.

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WAR DIARY APRIL 1941

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INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
			<p>[NOTE: Documents and records covering operations of 2/8 BN. A.I.F. in GREECE during April 1941 were lost when COSTA RICA was sunk off GREECE during evacuation Apr 27. This diary, therefore, is compiled from notebooks and a few documents carried on the person, and supplemented, chiefly in the case of the Battle of VEVE PASS, Apr 10, 11, 12, by reports and observations of officers who took part in the action. The chief difficulty has been the co-relation of times, and, in individual reports, discrepancies must exist. In practically all cases times are approximate. Where reports from officers who took part in the actions are not included it is because they are missing or were not available when the diary was compiled. A.P. Fleming ^{lieut} 1.0. 2/8 Bn.]</p>	
	MARCH 26/29		ADVANCE PARTY, comprising 1.0. (Lieut Fleming), Sgt Watt & W.O. Gudgeon left Alexandria by H.M.T. HELLAS MAR 26 ARR ATHENS MAR 29. Next day A-A party (Lieut Christison) arr. Athens. M.T. party (Capt Brahamy ^{& Lieut Phelan}) arrive 1 APR and camouflaging of vehicles begins in Athens factory. 1.0. represents Adv. party at Liaison Conferences at Hotel Acropole.	
	1 APR			
	<u>MAIN BODY OF BN:</u>			
	1 APR	1600	Bn. embarks H.M.T. PENNLAND, strength 29 offrs 619 OR's, sailing from Alex 1600 hrs.	
	2 APR.	1630	Air raid alarm. No attack. Weather fine & warm.	
ATHENS	3 APR.	1600	Weather fine + warm. Arr PIRAEUS and prepare to disembark. Adv. party picks up Bn. with unit tpt near dock. Proceed to DAPHNI 2 CAMP.	
"	4 APR.		M.T. party move Northward. Reinforcements who joined Bn. at Amariya given Bren & A/T instructions. Bn. pde. W. of 5th col. activities. German consulate still operating. Several 1000 Germ. civilians in Athens.	FOR LOCATION OF CAMP AND GENERAL ROUTE THROUGH CAMPAIGN SEE APPX 142 (Europe 1:1,000,000 Athen + Sofia)

A.P. Fleming
 AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE
 2/8 BN.
 1.0.

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2/8 BN. A.I.F. WAR DIARY APRIL 1941



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ATHENS	5 APR	1200 1800	C.O. leaves with Brig. bound for LARISSA by M.T. o Leave party to Athens o Tropical Kit returned to QM o Anti-gas capes & clothing issued. 1800 hrs - Adj r/o to Hotel Acropole for movet orders	
ATHENS	6 APR	1300 1630	News that GERMANY and GREECE are at war o Fighting on BULGARIAN frontier o Patriotic parades in Athens o Bn. leaves DAPHNI IM M.T. and goes to ROUF station o Entrained in goods train o 42 men per truck. Some truck floors covered by wet tar o 1630 hrs train departs o Men & equipt crowd trucks so that there is little chance of sleep o	
LARISSA	7 APR.	1000 1400	Main body arrives LARISSA 200 miles from ATHENS o Mug of tea at station o Begin march thro LARISSA town o which is wrecked by 'quake & air raids o Thunderstorm & downpour o Wet through before reaching EAST edge of town o Lunch in fields o News that tpt will not arrive today o 1400 hrs begin 16 mile march to bivouac area NW of TYRNAVOS on TITARESIOS R. More than 100 men, affected by lack of sleep in train, wetting in morning & cotton Sox drop out on march and picked up later o QM has hot meal ready o Wash in river good reviver o	[SEE MARKED EUROPE 1:1,000,000 - ATHENS SHEET] APPX. 1] SEE MO'S Report APPX. 3
VERIA	8 APR.	0900 1500 1800 1900 2400	Leave bivouac area by M.T., moving via SERVIA and PETRANA to VERIA in TRIPOTOMAS PASS o Distance Approx 80 miles o Rain falls on journey o Road orders to move to FLORINA area under water in marsh area between PETRANA & VERIA o Tents erected in VERIA area as cover from rain o Cars bog on tracks o No skid chains o Orders to move to FLORINA area o Div. comd., Brig., & CO confer by roadside o IO. & Sgt. & Sig offr. leave with recon party (Brig. & B.M.) for FLORINA area o Bn. ready to move, awaits tpt o Traffic on road extremely heavy o Road in poor condition after rain o Bn standing by	[Ref ATHENS 1:1,000,000 MARKED] APPX 1
XYNON- NERON	9 APR.	0300 1000	(Appro) - Tpt picks up Bn. M.T. accidents on road, choked & greasy, heavy with traffic & guns (some Tugo-Slav) going S. Travels via KOZANI, PTOLEMAIS (where picked up by recon party guide) to position N.W. of XYNON-NERON, ARRIVING approx 1000 hrs., distance approx. 60 miles o Bn at 762586 o Coy 1st 2/4 BN. fwd GULEMA ALAVA area; N.Z. MG. Coy behind them & fuel of us o Bn front 1 1/2 - 2 miles o Coys as follows, left to right A, C, D; B Coy & HQ Coy in reserve o Slopes	REF. FLORINA 1:1,000,000 APPX 4

A.P. Fleming Capt. I.O.

2/8 BN. A.I.F. WAR DIARY APRIL 1941

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KYNON - NERON	9 APR CONTD.		steep & carriers assist C.O. & coy comds in retrace & Men carry gear & tools over hills for up to 1 mile to commence digging in & Rain & sleet & Mountain tops disappear under heavy mist in our position & P.M. C.O. makes retrace of VEVE PASS AREA & Greeks appear loathe to leave, saying "We shall die here to the last man if shall be known as Sacrificial Ridge" & Arranged position as follows: 2/8 BN. front at the pass , covering right of VEVE PASS, K.R.R.'s (RANGERS) astride pass on our left, 2/4 Bn. on RANGERS left, Greeks on right & Troops stand to at night at KYNON - NERON position &	
VEVE	10 APR.	0900	COY comds & CO by carrier to retrace coy areas & Bn moves guided by 10 across country toward rear of KLEIDL & (See route marked on map.) & Bty rear of KLEIDL opens fire as we arrive & Coy comds pick up coys & take to rear of GLAVA 1091 (Florina 1:100,000 Ref 820.857) & Greeks decide to readjust their front however, & our position becomes line from approx area spot height 1032 to pass on left - Frontage approx 2 1/2 miles & Troops suffer severely, after lack of sleep & continuous movement, climbing, digging etc of previous days, and many are exhausted & They are moved to Bn line, up sharp slopes, A coy right, D coy centre, B coy left & in contact with KRR's & Total distance of days move over steep country, until coy positions reached - 11 1/2 miles & Many men require treatment by M.O. - altitude exhaustion & Efficiency reduced & Enemy reported 4 miles fwd of pass	FOR VEVE PASS POSITIONS SEE SKETCH MAPS ATTACHED APPXS 9 ^a , 10 ^c , 11 ^a ; FLORINA 1:100,000 APPX 4 & enlarged
		1700	debussing while our troops were still climbing up to their positions & Three Hurricanes fly over - 2 return & 3 out of 6 shells which land 400' rear of B HQ area are duds & Troops digging in - ground rocky & in many instances songars have to be erected instead &	FLORINA 1:20,000 APPX 5 DIV. ADMIN. INST. APPX 6
		2100	First contact & Sec of C coy, digging in on fwd slope near VEVE, captured by enemy patrol about 1 hr after they arrived there & 1 Cpl & 4 OR's & Brushes with enemy patrols during night & Very cold & Practically no sleep for men &	FOR COY & PL REPORTS SEE LIST OF APPXS UNDER 12 APR.
	11 APR	0330 0530	11 Pl. (Lieut Coulston) moved to fill gap between 13 Pl & 14 Pl C coy & Approx 0530 No. 10 Pl (Lieut Burrowes) moves to link left flank C Coy with Rangers & - Snowstorm throughout day. Snow thick on ground & Carriers used to move amm, rations & blankets from KLEIDL over ground muddy & impassable to M.T. - Limited success as carriers bog & much of carrying has to be done by hand &	

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE
2/8 BN
A.I.F.
10

2/8 BN A.I.F. WAR DIARY FOR APRIL 41

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VEVE	11 APR CONTD.	0730	Enemy attempts to dig in in front of C Coy & first most of day and push fwd. Repelled by MG LMG + mortar.	
			Enemy takes advantage of snow to move up into dead ground & dig in during day.	
		1600	12 Pl. moves to left flank position — To prevent infiltration in snow & darkness, C.O. gives order that between 2130 hrs & 0500 hrs men will remain in pits and fire at any movement. Constant firing through night. C.O. also sends message to coys — "You may be tired & you may be uncomfortable. But you are doing a job important to the whole of the rest of our force so therefore you will continue to do that job until otherwise ordered".	
	12 APR	2200	Attack on C Coy repulsed. Attacks on fwd pls. D Coy repulsed at intervals during night.	
	12 APR	0300	" " " " " " Two prisoners from ADOLF HITLER regt. taken. Both wounded. Our troops very exhausted with climbing, digging, carrying, & lack of sleep. Snow + wet ground increases weariness.	BN. STRENGTH 33 OFF 713 OR'S
		0830	Attacks on ^(KRR'S) Rangers, B, C & D coys begin. 14 Pl over-run — Lieut Oldfield wounded & prisoner, greater part of pl. wounded, killed or captured.	FOR DETAIL
		1100	Rangers (KRR'S) evacuate position covering pass. Heavy attacks on our front.	SEE REPORTS
		1400	Counter attack straightens line.	APPX'S AS FOLLOWS:
		1500	Concerted enemy attack.	OFFICERS POSTINGS APPX 7
		1600	Greeks, who had begun moving from right flank earlier in day, have all gone. Enemy is beginning to use HMG's from high feature to left rear, apparently having driven Rangers out, although news of Rangers withdrawing has not been received.	A COY — " 8 B COY — " 9 " Sketch " 9a " 10 PL " 9b " 11 PL " 9c " 12 PL " 9d
		1630	Tanks & infantry in strong attack. Communication with Bde via Rangers cut off.	C " — " 10
		1700	Tanks shelling fwd platoons from close range. Heavy MG fire from left & left rear. Coy limbs conf.	Sketch C Coy 15 PL " 10d " " " Sketch " 10e
		1730	Coy limbs conf. & orders to withdraw from left given. Withdrawal begins approx 1730 hrs. [At time withdrawal began left & left rear were in hands of enemy, tanks were shelling coy positions, right flank was completely open, and communication with Bde cut off.]	D COY — " 11 " " sketch " 11a MORTARS " 12 " " " " 13
		APPROX 2100	Bn moving out struck first supporting line of tanks near SOTER after marching approx 10 miles. Arrived BOZONA road fork & 1 mile to rear embussed approx midnight. Total march out, under fire for first 6 miles, was approx 12 miles.	INT SEC " 14 ADJ " 15 SIG OFFR " 15A



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2/8 BN A.I.F. WAR DIARY FOR APRIL 41

or
~~INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.~~
(Erase heading not required).

AP. Kennon
1.0.
AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE
2/8 BN.

Army Form C.2118.

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
KOUTROULI	13 APR.	0600	Bn arrives via KOZANE to new area at dawn. Portion of convoy takes wrong turning in KOZANE which is crowded with MT in darkness and driver goes over ALIAKMON to Servia & then says he is not certain where the main body of convoy have gone. Capt. Coombes & approx. 50 OR's included in this portion of convoy. Orders to take up defensive position of strength with unit 13 offrs. 193 OR's & OP's established. 5 officers & 97 OR's, separated in withdrawal, report during day. 2/1 M.G. Bn. begins crossing river to take up position between our right flank & river. Our B echelon, which had been sent over ALIAKMON, cut off by from Bn. by blowing of bridge fwd of Servia. Therefore no blankets or cooking material. Tpt available 1 DS car (CO), 2 Carriers. No crossing of river except small boat on rope prepared by engineers. 2 hrs walk from B HQ. Ground toward river cut by gullies & ravines. Weapons few owing to exhaustion of men in withdrawal.	KOZANI 1:100,000 APPX 16 BN. STRENGTH, WEAPONS & ORDERS APPX. 17 Appx. 3
	14 APR		Improve defences. Heavy enemy air activity over whole ALIAKMON area. Enemy seen from O.P. - AFV's, & MT. moving on plain & among villages to NORTHEAST. Our strength 18 offrs + 290 OR's. I.O. 42 personnel leave 11 am & contact B ech. over ALIAKMON at MIKRAVALTON 2230 hrs. B ech. preparing to move back under orders of Capt Coombes and party present also. 26 NZ BN. begins to move across river during night 14/15.	
	15 APR	1900	At B echelon arrangements made to take blankets over mountain by donkey train to ALIAKMON. I.O.'s reconce shows no crossing of ALIAKMON anywhere near Bn. except where RE's are working at footbridge. 26 NZ BN. completes ^(to North side of) over river. Orders to Bn. to withdraw over river - Move begins 1900 by boat & footbridge at Mikravalton . M.T. & carriers unable to cross. Destroyed or sunk. Stiff climb from ALIAKMON via PANAGRAS to MIKRAVALTON.	
DOMOKOS	16 APR	0500 1200-1400	Leave MIKRAVALTON by M.T. for DOMOKOS. Rejoined by B ech & Capt Coombes' party. Road choked with tpt. Bn bombed & M.G'd by aircraft near LARISSA. Several casualties. Bivouac DOMOKOS near road junction - heavy rain - 25 rifles & 25 blankets obtained chiefly from B ech & tpt issued to coys.	FOR POSITIONS UP TO MILOI SEE APPX 18 (ATHENS 1:250,000)
	17 APR		Parties on traffic control duties. Fog. Greek horse-drawn tpt chokes road. Aerial activity but no direct attack on Bn position. Provisional cas return shows 7 offrs + approx 213 OR's missing. Strength 26 offrs, 507 OR's	Total 533

2/8 BN A.I.F. WAR DIARY APR 41



Army Form C.2118.

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INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.
(Erase heading not required).

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
DOMOKOS	18 APR	1600	Orders to move to BRALLOS @ Arr 2100 hrs @ Party of 3 offrs + 20 OR's left at DOMOKOS on road traffic duties @ Also portion of D+A coys who could not be accommodated in unit tpt for move @ B ech. area had been bombed during afternoon @ Convoy attacked for approx. 1 hr. in pass N. of LAMIA @ Padre Forrest wounded + evac ^d ; I.D. slight wound; several OR's wounded @	
BRALLOS	19 APR		Party of 3 offrs + 70 OR's to traffic control duty on THERMOPYLAE pass @ C.O. makes recon for rearguard position on range overlooking THERMOPYLAE plain to N @ Approx 2200 hrs. O/c traffic control party reports to B HQ that a Brigadier in car numbered 94 had given his sqt. orders to withdraw from pass @ check with Bde reveals that Brig. had NOT given the orders - Apparently 5 th col.	
	20 APR	2100	Party of 3 offrs (Maskell, Phelan, Gluth) + 53 OR's detached to 19 Bde for rearguard @ In position by 2100 hrs @ force completely armed + equipped @ Intense aerial activity all around, especially near railway @	
	21 APR		MacDonald force organised as Anti-parachute tps (Major MacDonald, Cpts Braham + Austin, Lieuts Diffey, Thomson, Coulston, Gately) + 80 OR's @ Organisation 2 coys each of 2 PIs each of 20 OR's plus 6 carriers from 2/11 Bn + 6 from 2/1 Bn. Mounted duty 2000 hrs. Force completely mobile - on duty all night @	
		2230	Co. + Adj to Div HQ at 2230 hrs @ orders to take over anti-parachute duties from LEVADIA to BRALLOS (30m.) (During day B HQ area had been M'd by low flying plane @ Much aerial activity @)	
	22 APR		Bn takes up A-P duties as per per marked map @	
		1600	Bn HQ + HQ coy established 2 miles SE of Amfiklia @ Large flight enemy planes M'd roads 1700 hrs @	ATHENS 1:250,000 APPX 18
AMFIKLIA		1800	Orders from DIV. re evacuation from GREECE @	Personnel to Move APPX 19
	23 APR		Positions unchanged @ Orders for move night 23/24 received @	
		2100	Begin move into position for start @ Destroyed some vehicles ^{all} & equipment other than that carried on men @	
		2400	On move @ Column moves swiftly & smoothly @ Greek casualties by roadside result of enemy aircraft @	
ELEFSIS	24 APR	0600	Arr ELEFSIS @ Disperse, dig in, lie hidden @ Planes overall day @ Heavy attacks ATHENS area @ Attached to ALLEN force @ Orders late in afternoon for continuation of move @	Notes from 16 Bde Conf. APPX 20
		2200	Begin move @ Average speed approx 4 m.p.h.	OP. INST - APPX 21

A.P. Hemmings
1.0.

2/8 BN A.I.F. WAR DIARY FOR APRIL 41

Army Form C.2118

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OR
INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

(Erase heading not required).

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
MILOI	25 APR	0900	Arrive MILOI (S of ARGOS) @ Dispersed, dug in, hid @ High flying plane drops 2 bombs in area @ Five ships constantly bombed in neighbouring harbour @ Orders for continuation of move @	ADJT'S NOTES APPX 22 OP. INST. No. 3 APPX 23
		2000	Begin move @ Smooth convoy until after midnight @	
KALAMAI	26 APR		Several blocks in convoy between midnight + dawn @ Providential order for redistribution of loads by 2/1 MG Bn halted convoy (20 miles long) between 0530 + 0600, at time when GERMAN recon plane searched area @ Dispersed, + hid in olive groves at KALAMAI all day @	REPORT TO BDE APPX 24 CONF NOTES APPX 25 EMBARKATION ORDER AND STRENGTH APPX 26
		2130	News that destroyers had arrived @ Destroyed vehicles @	
AT SEA		2200	Moved to beach + found that ESO was calling Bn. serial no. Embarked on H.M.T. CITY OF LONDON (Co's party), COSTA RICA (2 1/2 c's party) + DILWARRA (loading party of 12) @ Great reception on CITY OF LONDON - cigarettes, chocolates, biscuits + tea for each man on boarding ship @	ADJT'S NOTES APPX 27
	27 APR	0500	Sail @ Numerous bombing raids @ Heavy one at 0800 @ 84 automatic weapons on A-A defence @	
		1500	Costa Rica sunk @ Personnel taken off by destroyers (THIS DETACHMENT WENT TO CRETE - SEE MAY DIARY @ APPROX 12 OFFRS + 387 OR'S) Five planes, possibly 6, destroyed by A-A fire @	
	28 APR		On board @ Two more tpt ships + more naval vessels join convoy @	
ALEXANDRIA	29 APR	1100	Arrive ALEXANDRIA (CITY OF LONDON and DILWARRA) - 10 offrs + 159 OR'S @ TO AMARIYA by train @ Issue of clothing + comforts @	
AMARIYA		30 APR	0630 Reveille 0700 Breakfast. 1100 Embus for IKINGI MARYUT @ 1230 entrain for PALESTINE - KHASSA CAMPO	



J. J. Mitchell Lt. Col.

TRANSPORT ACTIVITIES
A-A DETACHMENT

APPX 28
APPX 29

It must first of all be realised that the Battalion was not physically fit to undergo a particularly strenuous campaign in mountain terrain. One fifth of the men were reinforcements only recently arrived from Australia, consequently their feet and general fitness had not reached the degree of hardness necessary. The remainder were stale from a rush campaign in the Libyan desert.

Following two sleepless nights spent in crowded troop decks on HMT Pennant the unit was taken to Daphni Camp, Athens, where they remained four days.

On the afternoon of April 5, Bn. entrained in railway trucks, 42 per truck and spent another sleepless night before detraining at Larissa on April 6. From here they marched 16 miles much of the way in pouring rain. The poor type of issue socks, containing a large percentage of cotton helped to make many men drop out of the column with badly scalded feet and blisters..the number was more than 100. Men had to be picked up by tpt later.

On April 8 the Bn. moved by motor tpt to Veria Pass, arriving in later afternoon. Unfortunately we were forced to move again at 0300 hrs. to a position west of Xyno-Neron where a defensive position was dug and occupied.

April 10 Bn. moves by foot 10 miles across open ploughed ground in the rain to Veve Pass, the latter stages of the march being over rough and difficult country. We reached ~~VerriaxPass~~ Veve pass where another defensive position was dug and occupied. Some 100 men could not keep up with the unit on this march owing to altitude anoxaemia setting in--the symptoms of this were very definite--The majority suffered merely with dyspnoea of varying grades of severity. Many had sharp pains in the chest and felt giddy. Only a very few actually fainted.

Of the 100 40 were able to wend their way slowly ~~back to~~ up to the FDL's after treatment; 60 remained in the RAP until the following day when 20 were evacuated as walking sick, and the remaining 40 were returned to FDL's. I passed these facts on.

The altitude of Veve pass is approx. 4500 ft. above sea level--the FDL's were much higher, and the Bn. had come from Libya direct with no opportunity for acclimatisation. The men had very little sleep during the previous days owing to the many moves from one position to another, and when we finally arrived in position it was during a two day snow storm. The troops, therefore, were physically tired and in many cases exhausted so that, when the time came to withdraw and march for from four to five hours over approx. 12--14 miles of rough country, over ploughed fields and bogs, to reach tpt, it was ~~almost~~ a physical impossibility to do so and carry any equipment.

During the battle 30 casualties were evacuated by stretcher squad or as walking wounded to an ambulance post on the main road below the pass.

April 13: Arrived at Koutrouli--unfortunately the Bn. tpt was not allowed in the position, including the RAP truck. Therefore medical supplies were nil and little could be done for the troops feet which were in a shocking state.

April 15: Withdrew across Aliakmon river over high escarpment and then to Domokhos by MT. Here the RAP truck reported. Two casualties from aerial activity.

April 18: Moved by MT to Brallos. Several casualties from aerial activity.

April 23--26: Moved by MT at night ...dispersed and dug in during the day until KALAMAI reached where we embarked night 26/27.

R.R. Anderson Capt
RMO 2/8 Bn.

2/9 BAI War Diary April 41

A/3/2

APPX 6



6 AUST DIV.

SECRET.
COPY NO. 2
10 April 41

ADMINISTRATIVE INSTRUCTION NO. 17.
Issued in conjunction with 6 Aust Div OO No. 1 of 10 Apr 41.

ADMINISTRATIVE LAYOUT - 6 AUST DIV FORWARD AREA.

Ref Maps - IOANNINA - TRIKKALA OLYMPOS - VOLOS BITOLJ -
KORCA THESSALONIKE - EDESSA.

1. Commencing 10 April 41 Adm Layout of 6 Aust Div is shown hereunder :-

2. DIV. H.Q.

Adv H.Q. is established at PERDIKA N816428. AA&QMG, DAQMG, CRE, CASC, DAPM. A.D.M.S.
Rear H.Q. is established at N970063. DADOS, SOME, DAA G, LSO, Chaplains.

3. WATER.

Water will be drawn by units from existing supplies in their areas after testing by R.M.O's.

4. SUPPLIES & P.O.L.

- (a) Units of 19 Aust Inf Bde will draw 2 days supplies from No.30 D.I.D. on 11 Apr and will ensure that forward Coys maintain a reserve of 3 days supplies and water at all posts.
- (b) Units will draw supplies and P.O.L. by 1st line tpt from No.30 D.I.D. located N8248 until further orders.

5. AMMUNITION.

Units will draw amm by 1st line tpt from No.30 D.I.D. until further instructed.

6. MEDICAL.

The evacuation of casualties from forward area will be through the following channels:

- Forward A.D.S. N.7959
- Forward H.D.S. N.8241
- Rear M.D.S. N.8723 MAURODENDRI
- C.C.S. ELASSON
- Amb Staging Post - PETRANA.

7. PROVOST.

H.Q. 6 Aust Div Pro Coy is located at N.816428.

8. TRAFFIC CONTROL.

6 Aust Div Pro Coy will be responsible for traffic control on main roads leading to 16 Aust Inf Bde area and 19 Aust Inf B Bde area north of and incl R ALIAKMON. All personnel will endeavour to keep main roads clear of civilians and animals. No headlights will be used North of the East West line of KOZANE.

9. POSTAL.

6 Aust Div Postal Unit is established at Rear H.Q. N.970063. Units will collect incoming from and deliver outgoing mails to 6 Aust Div Postal Unit.

P.T.O.

PISA (1)

83 2/27/44
10. P.O.W.

19 Aust Inf Bde will be responsible for establishing a P.O.W. collecting centre. Escorts for prisoners from collecting centre to P.O.W. Cage will be provided by D.A.P.M. who will arrange mutually with 19 Aust Inf Bde.

11. ORDNANCE.

- (a) Fresh indents will be submitted for all deficiencies still remaining on G.1098 scale. Indents will be clearly marked indicating whether replacement or initial issue.
- (b) Units will submit indents for non skid chains showing No of Vehicle, Make and Size of Tyre.
- (c) Indents for sand-fly nets, tins mosquito ointment on the scale of 1 per man will be submitted to D.A.D.O.S. forthwith.
- (d) Indents for tent dye showing number of tents will also be submitted forthwith. Tent dye will be diluted with 100 parts of water.
- (e) All indents will be submitted to D.A.D.O.S. in quadruplicate.
- (f) 19 Aust Inf Bde will arrange for the return of all surplus tentage to A.O.D. LARISSA.

12. MEDICAL AND HYGIENE.

The incidence of Malaria and Dysentery is high in Greece and the following precautionary measures must be taken :-

- (a) Malaria. Use of nets and Dovers Cream must be insisted on. Trousers and longsleeved shirts must be worn and fully buttoned. Nets and gloves should be used by sentries. Quinine prophylaxis will be carried out when ordered by M.O's.
- (b) Dysentery. Drinking water must be sterilized by boiling or chlorinating. Flies must be eliminated and all hygiene routine strictly observed.
- (c) Venereal Disease. All ranks will be warned that brothels used by Greek troops are out of bounds to Australians. Most of the women in these houses are suffering from venereal disease. There is a Greek brothel in Kozane which is forbidden to Australians.

13. RECORDS.

Units will submit daily A.F.W. 3006 to Adv. Div H.Q. (through Bde HQ) (substitute brought into use during campaign in Libya will be discontinued). All units will bring up to date Casualty Returns showing all casualties since embarkation. These will be sent to Austrecords Greece.

14. BOUNDS.

All towns and villages are out of bounds to all ranks after 2100 hrs. Units are responsible for the carrying out of this order.

15. RECOVERY.

L.A.D's will be responsible for 2nd line recovery to post T1376.

16. BURIALS:

- (a) In the forward area, Burials will be concentrated in the Cemetery established by 19 Aust. Inf. Bde. at 7557 FLORINA Sheet 1/100000.
- (b) Isolated Burials will be avoided as far as possible, but in the event of such being necessary advice will be sent to this H.Q. immediately.

(3)

(c) All graves will be clearly marked by a peg showing the number and name of the deceased.

(d) War Cemeteries are undenominational, and Christian, Jewish, and Mahomedan burials will take place in them, in separate plots if possible.

(e) Burial of enemy dead will be carried out as for our own dead, but separate plots will be set apart for these where possible.

(f) A.F.W. 3314 in quadruplicate will be rendered immediately after burial, by officiating Chaplain or Officer or N.C.O. in charge, to this H.Q. Returns for enemy burials will be marked "Enemy dead".

E. Bowser

for Col.
A.A. & Q.M.G. 6 Aust. Div.

DISTRIBUTION: List "B".

C.O. Secn.
Adjt R 12/4
Q.M. _____
M.T.O. _____
R.M.O. RMA 12/4
A/Adjt _____
R.S.M. _____
Q.R.S. _____

2/8 Bn
 Postings of Officers at VEVE

2/8th Bn Wm Querry
 April 41

APPX 7

C.O.....Lieut-Col Mitchell D.S.O.
 2 i/c....Major Key
 Adj.....Capt. Ransom
 A/Adj....Lieut Strong *
 I.O.....Lieut. Fleming

A COY

O/C Major MacDonald
 2 i/c Capt Austin
 7 Pl Lieut Griffiths
 8 Pl. " Gluth
 9 Pl. Sgt. Duncan

B COY

Capt. Coombes
 Lieut. Maskell
 10 Pl. Lieut Burrowes
 11 Pl. " ~~Metcalfe~~ Coulston
 12 Pl. " Metcalfe

C COY

Capt. Robertson
 Capt Howard
 *13 Pl Lieut McCormick
 15 Pl. " Gately
 *14 Pl. " Oldfield

D COY

Capt Simpson
 Capt Braham
 16 Pl. Lieut Diffey
 17 Pl. " Armstrong *
 18 Pl. " Mumford *

H. Q. COY

Actg O/C Lieut Hall
 Mortars " Thompson
 Sigs " Sheedy
 A-A " Christison *
 Carriers " Phelan
 Pioneers " W/O Balfour
 Q.M. Capt Martin
 T.O. Lieut Lowe

ORD ROOM - 3 copies pls.

100

A. Coy activity at Vau Pass.

1st day. Coy arrived late afternoon -
Orders to Pl & Sec commands while
Coy prepared by 21st for occupation
of Pos.

Coy dispositions - Owing to wide
extent of front thru Pls had to
be placed forward & depth
sacrificed in order to cover
approaches into position.

Coy was right Coy and in
close contact with 1st Lt left
flank. This contact maintained
by patrols from right pl.

After sunset troops moved into pos
and digging commenced 2200 hrs
continued digging all night.

Camouflage -

Owing to rocky nature of ground
and lack of tools digging had
to be supplemented by building
up low sangers.

DIVISION APRIL 41

21st BN WAR

APR 8

No enemy activity on plain at
this stage.

During night enemy patrols on Greek
front near boundaries at approx 0200.
Enemy Patrols did not penetrate F.D.L's
Enemy used M.G.'s firing tracers on
our right flank & ~~the~~ Greek left.
German used M.G. to attract fire
of defence and when Greek h.M.G.s opened
he engaged them with mortar fire.
Just prior to dawn enemy patrols
withdrew to forthills vicinity of
KELLE.

No casualties Greek or our troops.
As reported by Lieut Bluth Greeks used
Blank ammunition to scare patrols &
as mentioned above.

Blank was used at night only and
was mixed with ball.

2nd Day. No movement in position.
Coy in observation over plain.
Enemy activity in vicinity of
Flores & Kophoi.

M.T. movement through these towns
R.A.F. bombed Flores & Kophoi.
~~It about~~ At about 2300 hrs
enemy pushed strong patrols forward
and made several vigorous attacks
on other Coy fronts. No activity on
"A" Coy front that night.
Coy "stood its" most of night.

3rd Day Snow storm - no visibility over
50% for most of day.
Coy standing to whole day.
Duties to counter enemy patrols
all ranks remained in posts
& any movement was fired on.
after 2030 hrs.
Snowed during night

4th day

Movement Eastwards of enemy
M.T. Crtz & A.F.Vs.

Sgt Duncan's pl under command
D. Coy.

No attack on Coy front or on Greek
front.

Greks commenced w/drawal &
completed by approx 1600 hrs.

Method of Formations. (Enemy)

Infantry moved in waves slightly
deployed, supported by A.F.Vs.
later recognized as tanks.

Infantry move close to tank &
all round vehicle.

Infantry were moved up fairly
close to start line in troop carrying
vehicles & debussed.

German used white very light to
show advance of forward troops.
Tanks moved with attacking troops
and follow up over w/drawal
Tanks fired a H.E. shell approx
2" calibre.

Strength of infantry accompanying
each tank approx one pl.
Capt Austin & myself failed to understand
why this infantry did not shoot
while we were within 200^x to 300^x
range of tank.

Since return of personnel from
Crete however we think that
possible explanation is that they
may only be armed with weapons
having short range & rely on Tank
with its guns to do the job.

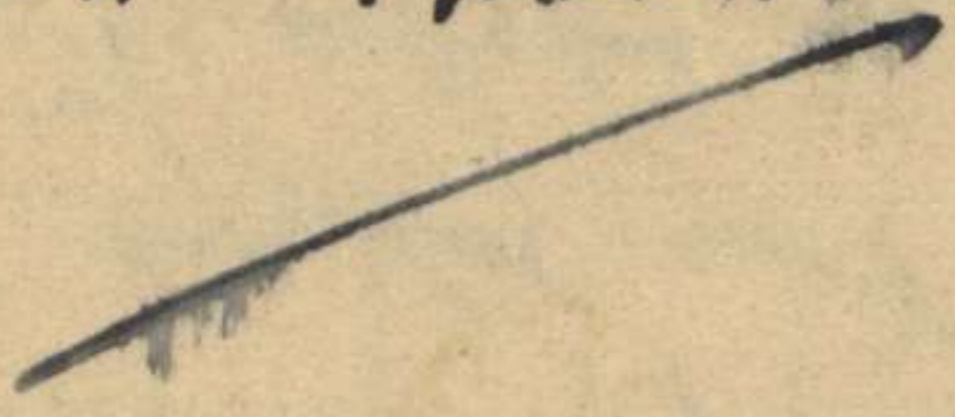
W. H. McDonald
Major
O.C. "A" Coy. 2/8 Bn.
O.C. "A" Coy. 2/8 Bn.

18 JUN 1941

I.C.

As most of the enemy activity was on
left flank and could not be seen from
our position the above is all the information
I have to offer. ~~W.H.M.~~

Lieut. FLEMING.



Handwritten text, possibly a name and rank, including 'Major' and 'Lieut.'.

Greece

A. COY ACTIVITY AT VEVE PASS.

2/8 Bn War Diary Apr 41

APPX 8

1st. Day.

APRIL 10

Coy arrived late afternoon- Orders to Pl. & Sec. comdrd., while Coy prepared by 2 i/c for occupation of Posn. Coy dispositions- Owing to wide extent of front three Pls. had to be placed forward & depth sacrificed in order to cover approaches inot position. Coy was right Coy and in close contact with Greek ~~KEMK~~ left flank. This contact maintained by patrols from right Pl. After sunset troops moved into posn. and digging commenced 2200 hrs continued digging all night. Camouflage- Owing to rocky nature of ground and lack of tools digging had to be supplemented by building up low sangers. No enemy activity on plain at this stage. During night enemy patrols on Greek front near boundary at approx. 0200. Enemy Patrols did not penetrate P.D.L's. Enemy used M.G's. firing tracer on our right flank & Greek ~~left~~. German used M.G. to attract fire. Just prior to dawn enemy patrols withdrew to foothills vicinity of KELLE. No casualties Greek on own tps. As reported by Lieut. Gluth Greeks used Blank ammunition to scare patrols & as mentioned above. Blank was used at night only and was mixed with ball.

2nd. Day.

APRIL 11

No movement in position. Coy in observation over plain. Enemy activity in vicinity of FLORINA & ΔOPHOI. M.T. movement through these towns. R.A.F. bombed FLORINA & ΔOPHOI. At about 2300 hrs enemy pushed strong patrols forward and made several vigorous attacks on other Coy fronts- Activity on "A" Coy. front that night. Coy "stood to" most of night.

3rd. Day.

Snow storm- no visibility- over 50yds for most of day. Coy standing to whole day to counter w enemy patrols all ranks remained in posts & any movement was fired on after 2030 hrs. Snowed during night.

4th. Day.

APRIL 12

Movement Eastwards of enemy M.T. Arty & A.F.V's. Sgt. Duncan's pl under command "D" Coy. No attack on Coy front or on Greek front. Greeks commenced w/drawal & completed by approx. 1600 hrs.

METHOD.

& Formations. (Enemy)
Infantry move in waves slightly diployed supported by A.F.V's. later recognized as tanks.
Infantry move close to tank & all round vehicle.
Infantry were moved up fairly close to start line in troop carrying vehicles & debussed.
• German used white verrey light to show advance of forward troops. Tanks moved with attacking Coys and follow up our w/drawal.
Tanks fired a H.E. Shell approx. 2" calibre.
Strength of infantry accompanying each tank approx. one Pl. Capt. Austin & myself failed to understand why their infantry did not shoot while we were within 200 yds to 300 yds range of tank.
Since return of personnel from CRETE however we think that possible explanation is that they may only be armed with weapons having short range & rely on tank with its guns to do this.

Major.

O.C. A. Coy 2/8 Bn. A.I.F.

As most of the enemy activity was on left flank and could not be seen from our position the above is all the information I have to offer.

ACTIVITIES OF B COY
BATTLE OF VEVE PASS APRIL 10, 11, 12.

2/8 Bn AIF War Diary

April 41

APPX 9

~~APRIL 9~~

APRIL ~~10~~ 9:0300..Coy, after waiting at roadside, near Verria, embuses and moves to Xyno-Neron position. Continuous rain and sleet.

APRIL 10: ~~Arrive Pass~~ March approx. 10 miles to Veve position. Rarity of air, exertion climbing hills, ~~effects~~ become distressing. Many men fall out and join Bn. 2 hours later.

B Coy position: Two pls. fwd and 1 in reserve. 12 Pl. right fwd covering waddi which runs between A and D Coy positions. 10 Pl. left fwd, covering deep waddi between D and C Coy feature. 11 Pl. reserve covering rear of D Coy position.

Men work hard digging pits or building sangars, according to nature of ground until 0130, 11 April.

APRIL 11: After digging until early hours men had to carry blankets from bottom of feature. In state of exhaustion owing to long marches over difficult country, small amount of sleep and difficult weather conditions for last five days.

At 0330 Capt. Robertson comes to Coy H.Q. with information that C.O. had instructed 1 Pl. B Coy to reinforce C Coy as German patrol had penetrated and captured 1 Sec of C Coy. 11 Pl. taken by Capt. Coombes and placed between Lieut. Oldfield's Pl. and Lt.

McCormick's Pl. At dawn No. 10 Pl. was brought fwd and placed in ~~position~~ position in wadi between C Coy on right and Rangers on left. Feature occupied by Rangers overlooked Veve village, which is now occupied by Germans. Approx. 1 hour sleep on average had by men this night.

12 Pl. from reserve position act as carrying party and carry meals and 11 Pl. blankets and amm. to new Coy position. Number of men sent to R.A.P. suffering from exhaustion and lack of sleep.

Approx. 1230 hours sleet develops into snow. Visibility nil.

1600 hrs: Capt. Coombes leads remainder of Coy to new position men carrying blankets, tools weapon and ~~amm.~~ amm. Six inches of snow, going very hard, visibility 10 yds. Takes 2 hours to move approx. 1 3/4 miles.

Party of 25 men go to carriers on ~~roadway~~ railway line for food and stores under 2 i/c (Lieut. Maskell). Party arrived at Coy. exhausted. Owing to nature of the ground after the snow, it was impossible for carriers to bring supplies any closer than approx. 2000 yds., the last 300 yds of which were very steep. Therefore two parties were required ~~xxx~~ daily.

On night 10/11 enemy patrol dressed in allied uniforms had penetrated position. ~~and~~ Several of enemy could speak excellent English. Because of this there was no sleep for anyone night 11/12 April. Order issued that no one was to leave their pits between 2130 hrs. and 0500 hrs. on Apr 12, any movement to be fired on.

Snow, to which none had been accustomed, was trying men severely.

12 APRIL: Enemy attack Rangers on left approx. 0830 hrs. and after severe fighting are driven off. An attack also launched against C Coy and 11 Pl. which was also driven off, 11 Pl. counter attacking.

Throughout morning enemy continued to attack and eventually succeeded in occupying fwd slopes of C Coy. Rangers on left evacuated their position at 1100 hrs. and withdrew completely from area on our side of railway. This enabled large bodies of enemy to move fwd on our left flank overlooking the plain on our left rear. Infiltration by enemy along road and through ~~pass~~ pass on our left. C Coy withdraw to reverse

slopes of their positions.... As B Coy position was lower than ~~position~~ positions previously occupied by C Coy on right and Rangers on left we were now subjected to enfilade fire from left and right and it was necessary to withdraw approx. 150 yds. to high ground in our immediate rear. Numerous attempts were made by enemy to move fwd on our left, right and also immediate fronts, but in spite of heavy casualties we held our own..... At 1400 hrs. a section of N.Z. machine gunners, sent up from rear position near Kleidi, arrived, and with their longer range were able to fire on enemy moving round our left on other side of railway line, apparently attempting to cut us off.... Fighting continued throughout afternoon and enemy tanks could be seen and heard moving up to our front. At 1700 hours Coy comds were called to rear for orders re withdrawal and at 1730 a heavy attack supported by tanks over-ran C Coy position and on our left enemy who had worked thro attacked with tanks (at least appeared early in the attack) supported by ~~amm.~~

some men in what
/in what appeared to be Australian uniforms.

After hard fighting, order was received from o/c Coy
to withdraw.

In withdrawal, like other companies, we were subjected to
heavy tank, mortar and M.G. fire, especially in valley between Veve ridge
and Kleidi ridge.

W. H. Brouncker.
Capt.
O.C. "B" Coy.

Notes on the Greece Campaign. April 1941.

By Comd. 10 Pl. B. Coy.

78
Apr 41
APPX 96

VEVE PASS. Weather. Cold, snowed afternoon of 10th Apl. and continued at irregular intervals until late on night of 11 Apl. Also spasmodic showers of sleet. Snow up to six inches in depth remained in some areas until final withdrawal and on evening of 12th April.

ARRIVAL IN POSITION. I was commanding No. 10 Pl. of B Coy and the company were in reserve behind D Coy when the Bn. first took up its position on 10 Apr. 41. The march to this area was particularly strenuous and route being over very difficult country. Owing to lack of sleep and bitter cold the men were very close to exhaustion, several having to drop out on the way. On taking up our position we either dug weapon pits or built stone sangers according to the ground, which was in most cases too rocky for digging. The blankets had been brought forward as far as possible by M.T. but necessitated a long carry by the men about midnight on the night of 10 Apl. 41.

PHASES OF BATTLE. 11 Apl. 41. At 0300 hrs I was called to Coy H.Q. German patrols had been active during the night and had been patrolling in uniforms identical with those of our own troops, one patrol having captured a section from C Coy. Capt. Robertson O.C. C. Coy had asked Capt. Coombes O.C. B. Coy for a platoon to strengthen up C Coy position. Lieut. Coulston with No. 11 Pl. had been detailed for this task. Firing could be heard both in the vicinity of C and D Coy areas. Lieut. Coulston moved his platoon over to C Coy area and was given a position between Lt. Oldfield's Pl. and Lt. MacCormicks platoon. At dawn Capt. Robertson asked for another platoon to guard the left flank and to link up with the RANGERS. At dawn I took my platoon across and met Capt. Coombes who had gone on ahead and he pointed out my area to me and told me my tasks. I put my sections into temporary positions and went across to liaise with the Company Commander of the Rangers so that both parties could coordinate their fire. During this time there was quite a bit of M.M.G fire and mortar fire falling in the Rangers area while occasional bursts were directed at my own Pl. area. Having made the necessary arrangements with the Rangers I returned to my platoon area and placed two sections fwd and one section to the right rear. This formation allowed me to fire to the right and right front-back across the Rangers front and also in front of C Coy left flank. Snow began to fall about midday and visibility was ent-down to about 10 yds. Up till this time there had been slight air activity by R.A.F. fighters and bombers, but after this time until after the withdrawal from VEVE PASS all air activity ceased.

Late that afternoon Coy H.Q. moved across and took up a position close to my own Pl. H.Q. Shortly afterwards Lt. Metcalf's Pl. moved over to the area and took up a reserve position.

12 April 41. Commenting at first light the enemy attempted a series of attacks both against C Coys front and against the Rangers, finally driving the Rangers from their position with concentrated M.M.G. and Mortar fire. The Rangers having completely evacuated their area by 1100 hrs, and C. Coy dropping back, B Coy had to alter its dispositions. The company withdrew approximately 150 yds to higher ground to our immediate rear with 12 Pl. and the left flank facing the left, my platoon in the centre facing the front and Lt. Coulston's platoon on the right. By this time we were engaging the enemy on two fronts-on on our left when the enemy were occupying a position on the feature which the Rangers had evacuated, and to an immediate front in the area which C Coy had left. I sustained my first casualty then when Pte. Martin was shot. At this time my platoon was greatly under strength, 8 men having been sent back by the R.A.F. suffering from exposure and cold during the previous day. ~~Lack of sleep and the fatigue of the previous day.~~ Lack of sleep and the fatigue of the previous days had taken their toll and the balance of my men were in no fit state for a desperate fight but were doing remarkably well under the circumstances. Early in the afternoon a section of N.Z. ~~M.G.'s.~~ ^{M.G.'s.} joined us and were given a task on our left flank. ~~Our left flank was becoming more frequent now, occupying fire on~~ ^{the right.} We apparently had quietened the frontal fire with our brens as there was hardly anything coming from this direction. Tanks were reported by No. 11 Pl. to be

410

moving towards our position from the direction of VEVE No details were obtainable at the time.

At 30 hrs after a strengthened fire onslaught from the position where the Rangers had been and the arrival of enemy medium tanks I received the order to withdraw. One tank was on the feature held earlier by C Coy and five minutes later another appeared behind it. During our withdrawal we were forced on numerous occasions to go through their M.M.G. fire and mortar fire. The tanks were machine gunning and firing explosive shells at us. Before we withdrew the enemy had moved along the road and through the pass and were in a position to machine gun and harass us from that direction also. My platoon moved back to a point about 3 miles to the rear where the company & Bn., reorganized and moved back in file to the embussing point. A few casualties were sustained in my platoon during this withdrawal.

N.B. When the Germans first moved towards us across the feature, on which the Rangers had been fighting, they forced ahead of them a platoon of captured Rangers who were waving white handkerchiefs or had their hands up. We opened fire at the enemy behind & they went to ground, replying with M.M.G. fire. Some of the enemy appeared to be wearing Australian uniforms.

W. J. M. Jones Lieut.

2/8th Bn was during Apr 41
APPX 9a

VEVE

"RANGERS"

"B" Coy

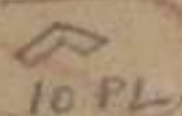
"C" Coy AREA

"D" Coy AREA

"H" Coy AREA

GREEKS

1st POSITION IN PENCIL THIS



2nd POSITION IN INK THIS



RANGERS WITHDREW AT 1100 hrs

"B" Coys dispositions
at VEVE PASS GREECE 10-12 APR 1941

W. G. G. G.
Capt
OC "B" Coy

Activities of No. 11 Pl. B Coy
BATTLE OF VEVE

78th. War Diary Apr 41
APPX 9C

APRIL 9: On arrival Xyno-Neron 11 Pl. was detached and sent to Bde H.Q. as guard. Heavy rain in afternoon. Pl. of Corps Guards arrives to take over. I arrange to hand over to him at 0900 hrs. April 10.

APRIL 10: Using Corps Gd. M.T. my pl. moves with all gear back to Bn. area. Blankets and packs left with B ech. and men take amm. and weapons and begin march across country to VEVE with rest of coy. March across country, over hills and gullies, very trying. Several men had dropped out by ~~XXXX~~ midday. Moved with Bn. through rear of KLEIDI and Pl. comds. were picked up by ~~XXXXXX~~ O/C with carrier and taken on reeve of area. rear of GLAVA.

Troops arrived (those ~~who~~ who had not fallen out owing to ~~exhaustion~~ exhaustion) but readjustment of positions (owing to uncertainty of Greeks position) made it necessary for tps to move $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles to left (i.e. west) closer to pass.

In evening tps reached new position (B coy was reserve ~~my~~ and my pl. reserve pl.). Began digging in. Some attempts at digging in had to be abandoned because of stony ground and men built stone sangars instead. ~~Pl. was not able to dig in.~~

APRIL 11: Pl. had almost completed its digging at 0130 hrs. Men began to sleep, but at 0330 hrs. pl. was ordered to move to C coy area to reinforce C coy, which had lost some men as prisoners. I could hear a lot of firing, and well over to the left could see tracer being fired-- by the Rangers as I learnt later.

By dawn was in position and preparing it. Not a good ~~fire~~ field of fire but owing to fog and light difficult to see a better one, and when daylight came it was impossible to move ~~forward~~ to take up ~~new~~ new position because of enemy fire.

Enemy was moving arty, M.T. and M.C.'s on road in Florina plain fwd of our position. There was soon a few inches of snow on the ground, but men were unable to move about to warm themselves. Rum issue helped to ease slowly freezing limbs in evening, and some saved for morning helped then too.

Some shooting by C Coy pl on my left during night (Pl. took two prisoners--wounded--in when dawn came.).

APRIL 12: Just after dawn remaining rum issued and ration party sent back to carry up breakfast. While they were away Lieut. Oldfield, who had C coy pl on my left came over and suggested that he and I crawl down to a position where we could throw grenades at the enemy whom we could ~~see~~ hear down in the fog. I agreed and we moved to Mr. Oldfield's pl. H.Q.. We were discussing how we would do it ~~when~~ when we saw Mr. Oldfield's ration party coming past ~~my~~ the left hand section of my pl. on its way back. Then I heard rifle and Bren fire. I could hear Germans calling out and ran back to my pl. The pl. was about 60 yds in front of its position chasing the enemy back. There were five dead Germans there and a little further ~~forward~~ two more yelling for mercy. One who could speak quite good English was saying "Don't shoot us. We are wounded."

Just then a light mortar opened up on the position we were in, and one of my men was hit in the shoulder. We went back to our pits and began filling Bren mags., collecting a Spandau M.G. on the way.

I sent back for more amm. and the fog lifted a bit. Our own hows. opened fire and their first six shots (I could see them firing) landed in my pl. area. One man was wounded in the hand. The next salvo went ~~farther~~ fwd near the village of Veve to our left front. Just then two Huns ~~walked~~ ~~XXXX~~ came into view and moved towards us. I shot one with the Sgt's rifle and the other was brought down too. We could hear them attacking a section of C Coy on our left, but they were out of sight of us. In front of my position a German M.G. opened up, apparently firing on C Coy pl. We fired Brens in its direction but it continued. My Sgt said he would go out with a grenade and try to quieten it. Just before he went out a man brought word that the pl. on my left had been over run and half the pl with the pl comd captured. My sgt had moved out only a few yds when a rifleman shot him through the head.

The remainder of the pl on my left had moved back and the Hun was crawling around in its pits. 10 and 12 pls of my company were moving back to a higher position on the ridge in rear so I gave the order for my men to move back to a better position section by section. A German sniper was to our front behind a mound of rock and was potting at our men as they moved out.

....I held my aim on the spot where he was appearing and disappearing and caught him when he came up.

~~We~~ When our withdrawal was completed, and we were in the new position we could hear tanks moving up ~~in the~~ the slope in front of the Bn position. They shelled one pl. of Don Coy off a high feature on our right. By this time we were receiving heavy M.G. fire from our left flank, apparently from the features which had previously been held by Rangers. Then three tanks, with troops dressed in our uniforms (apparently taken from our men who had been captured) started to machine gun and shell ~~our~~ ~~positions~~ ~~our~~ positions.

The order to withdraw was given.

Tanks and M.G.'s were firing at us heavily while we were withdrawing. The men, who had little sleep since we left Daphni were ~~been~~ almost done, and they had not yet had ~~any~~ anything to eat. Some casualties occurred during the first part of the withdrawal over the mountains.

When we reached the flat country ~~around~~ ~~the~~ ~~lake~~ ~~north~~ ~~of~~ ~~Amyntion~~ ~~four~~ ~~tanks~~ ~~on~~ ~~the~~ ~~hills~~ ~~behind~~ ~~again~~ ~~opened~~ ~~fire~~ with machine guns and shells.

We moved ~~and~~ to the road corner near Rodona with the rest of the Bn.

Robertson

O/C No. 11 Pl. B Coy

BATTLE OF VEVE PASS

Activities of No. 12 Pl. B Coy

Wednesday April 9: Took six hours, interrupted by refugee traffic to travel approx. 60 miles. Take up position ref FLORINA 752581. Very cold and windy. Some sleep in rain.

Thursday April 10: Stand to 0600. Bitterly cold morning. Packs and blankets in truck and ready to move at 0900 carrying all 1 am. -- 12000 S.A.A., 4000 .45, 140 A-T, and 40 grenades. Weapons -- 3 Brens, 2 Thompson S.M.G., 1 A-T rifle, 8 picks and 8 shovels.

March until 1800 hrs. with 15 min. halt for lunch to position rear of Glava. Struggle up mountain and prepare to dig in, but owing to Greek dispositions have to move 1 1/2 miles to left. Pl. is reduced to 33 all ranks. Some have fallen out on march but arrive later. Three have been evacuated. We are watching a deep wadi which separates A and D coys. No sign of enemy to my front but aerial and arty bombardment of roads and villages to left front (Florina way). Troops blankets are brought to foot of hill, but it is hard work getting them up. Troops very, very tired. ~~Finally get chance to sleep~~

Friday April 11: Finally get chance to sleep at 0130... Roused again 0330. There has been action on C Coy front. Stand-to till daylight, and dig several gun pits covering wadi. Some M.G. fire to A coy's front. Begins to snow 1230 hours. Visibility nil. Men tired, cold, and miserable. Have carried meals and 11 Pl's blankets to new coy position to left of C Coy. I send three men to R.A.P. in hope that movement and possibility of hot drink will keep them going. At 1600 hours Captain Coombes leads us to new position, carrying all weapons, picks and ~~shovels~~ shovels and blankets. Six inches of snow. No visibility. It takes us two hours to move approx. ~~1 1/4~~ 1 3/4 miles. Then men have to carry food and stores -- a further two hours. Others are occupied digging in in wadi by Coy H.Q. All quiet by 2130. Rum issue. The men are absolutely done in, but it must be a wakeful night, with everyone on the qui vive. Enemy movement and fire during night. Still snowing.

Saturday, April 12: ~~Recoer~~ my position and fog lifts to give me first glimpse of locality. Just finished breakfast when trouble starts. I move 12 pl. fwd of wadi in which Coy H.Q. is located so that I can watch dead ground leading from VEVE village. Time approx. 1030. Snow is melting and men are wet through and slowly freezing. Rangers are being forced out of position on left by shells from a tank defiladed from us, in front of C Coy. Can see M.T. movement along road leading to VEVE. Enemy mortar fire landing on dead ground 800 yds to my left in Rangers area..... Considerable uncertainty as to when last of Rangers left their position and Germans began to appear. A party of approx. 1 Sec. which were pinned down at 900 yds subsequently seen to fly a white flag. Very undecided as to its authenticity and no news through Bn. re Rangers. Later men are observed with hands up in front of party of apparently hostile troops. We fire on the hostile troops -- ~~now~~ obviously Germans now. ~~A party of enemy is moving along road in pass to extreme left~~ A party of approx. 150 enemy moves along road in pass to extreme left ~~where~~ in area where Rangers had been and later party of about 40, in very open formation, moves across road and railway up hills to my rear, distance about 3000 yds. Fire on them with 1 Sec N.Z. M.G.'s but little effect.

Detachment of enemy approach from round rise at front of us. First casualty in my pl. caused by ~~them~~ S.M.G. from enemy at 600 yds. Enemy ~~is~~ repulsed by L.M.G. fire. Evac. cas. and one man who was frozen and ~~useless~~. Enemy L.M.G. fire from left rear at extreme range. Pl. Sgt receives flesh wound in hip and is evacuated. At approx. 1730 hours am instructed to retire. Get out under heavy fire. Troubled by Mortar and Tank Shells on way.

A. J. McKeally. Lieut

O/C 12 Pl B Coy.

78th War Diary Apr 41

APPX 10

ACTION OF "C" COY 2/8 BN. IN GREECE ~~AND~~

9 April. The 2/8 Bn. took up a position above the village of XYNONERON "C" Coy was in the centre and had under command one detachment of mortars and one carrier. The position was occupied and dug by 1600 hrs. During the day a cold northerly wind had been blowing and towards evening this developed in intensity and it commenced to rain. No cover was available and as during the night the rain developed in sleet the conditions were very trying for the men. Their spirits in the morning however were high at the prospect of meeting the German.

10 April. The 2/8 Bn. was ordered to move to a position on the right of VEVA PASS. The move was to be made on foot so blankets and heavy gear was collected and transported by Coy transport the rear of the new position. Capt. W.S. Howard, Coy 2 i/c took charge of the move of the Company the Company Commander moving forward in carriers with the O.C. to make a rece., of the ~~new~~ new position. ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ The position was a series of features the C Coy was to occupy the left feature on the right D Coy had a dominating position and on the left was a further feature occupied by the K.R.Rs. The company arrived in rear of the position at about 1500 hrs in a very exhausted condition owing to the long cross-country march at the high altitude. They were so exhausted tht they had been forced to drop out during the march. These men rejoined the company in the evening and during the following day. The position was occupied 1800 hrs-15 platoon took up a position in the gully between the features occupied by D Coy and my feature. 14 Platoon was in position on the left hand slope of the feature ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ covering the gully between my feature and that held by K.K.R. and 13 platoon was in reserve on the reverse slope of the feature (see sketch No. 1) At about 1900 hrs the Coy Comdr. of the K.R.R. Coy on the left was contacted and it was found some of his sections were actually in position on the forward slopes of the feature I had occupied. This left a gap in the line of F.D.Ls on the right of the K.RRs which the enemy may have penetrated through endangering their right forward sections. This gap I consented to close with my reserve platoons for the night until a readjustment could be made in the morning. During the occupation of the position our artillery was engaging enemy motorised troops which were debussing in two villages well forward of our position. 13 platoon did not take up its position in the gap until after dark as it was on the forward slope in view of the enemy. At about 2100 hrs while this platoon was digging in one of its sections was approached by a party of about twenty soldiers talking English and asking for food. They quickly surrounded the section and took them prisoner. A section of New Zealand Guns and a section of the K.K.Rs were also taken prisoner at about the same time similar tactics being employed by the Germans in all cases. Throughout the night there was considerable enemy patrol activity, patrols varying in size from one or two men to parties of twenty or more. The small on several occasions penetrated between section posts, which owing to the few troops and the wide frontage were widely idpersed and working round in rear fired a few shots from "Tommie Guns" When engaged by our troops they withdrew. Throughout all operations both day and night the German showed a complete understanding and appreciation of the use of ground. In the early morning in order to prevent this infiltration I asked the C.O. for a platoon from the reserve company B Coy to fill the space between my right and left platoons. This he consented to and Lieut. Coulston was now as shown in the attached sketch 2. During the night it was attempted to bring up rations and blankets by carrier but this was found to be impossible owing to the mud and the steep climb to the position. Carrying parties had to be sent to Bn. H.Q. They took a long time to perform this duty as the distance was about 1500 yards over very rough and boggy ground and the return necessitated a climb of about 500 feet. The parties suffered very much from the exhaustion caused by climbing in the high altitude of the Pass after ~~K.R.~~ being accustomed to the Western Desert. It was found possible to bring up only a few blankets.

April 11. During the morning the C.O. made an inspection of the position and decided to bring in the remaining platoons of B Coy on my left to connect with the K.R.R.s. The K.R.R.s in the meantime were to pull back in line with us. Throughout the morning and early afternoon a lively small arms battle took place between my troops and the K.R.R. and German troops which during the night had taken up position in an around the Village of VEVE which was directly below my position. The enemy shelled the positions to my left around the mouth of the pass but did not come as far right as my position. ~~The position was then as shown in sketch 3.~~ One detachment mortars was placed under C Coy. At about 1500 hrs several shells from our own artillery landed in the middle of the company position and shortly afterwards it commenced to snow heavily. It snowed heavily all through the afternoon. The conditions were particularly trying as the men had very few blankets and it became impossible to bring up hot food. A number of men had to be evacuated to the R.A.P. suffering from exhaustion. The anti-gas capes were used with great effect and contributed considerably to keeping the men dry. Fatigue was great as very little sleep was had the previous night owing to the preparation of the defence and enemy action. And on the commencement of the snow a continual "stand-to" was ordered. Owing to the infiltration of the night before it was ordered that nobody was to leave his section post after 2100 hrs and that all movement was to be fired on. At about 2200 hrs the enemy of strength about a platoon attacked the left platoon of C Coy and again attacked at about 0300 hrs. Both these attacks were repulsed with several casualties to the Germans and one to ourselves. Two German wounded were brought in the morning. Prior to the second attack one of the sections was addressed in a cultured voice by a German who denounced "Put down that gun" Put down that gun I tell you" When repulsed the second time the Germans dug in in some dead ground about 200 yds forward of the platoon position. Too close for our mortars to deal with. Had 2" mortars been available the tasks could have been accomplished.

April 12. At about 1000 hrs our own artillery once again shelled C Coy position, one shell landing in Coy H.Q. and destroying the telephone. Almost at the same time the enemy attacked in considerable numbers and overran the left platoon (14) causing a number of casualties and taking some prisoners among whom was Lieut. Oldfield. He had been wounded after shooting several Germans with his pistol. The remains of 14 platoon fell back and took up a position on the reverse slope of the feature. As the enemy came over the hill to attack their new position and that of 13 platoon they encountered heavy fire from D Coy whose position overlooked the hill. After suffering a number of casualties the enemy were forced to withdraw. C Coy then reformed a line across the hill and joined up with B Coy in the left who had also withdrawn a few yards to gain better fire positions on the higher ground. Further troops were moved onto B Coys feature to give C Coy more fire support. The time would now be about 1530 hrs. No further attack was made by the enemy until 1700 hrs. when combined with a determined push on B Coy they brought up a tank onto C Coys feature and shelled the supporting troops of D Coy in the right and machine gunned C Coys position which was undug. The company was forced to withdraw with the general withdrawal of the Battalion. The actual withdrawal was carried out with complete order but the company got somewhat disorganised and suffered some casualties when crossing an open valley in rear of the Bn. position which was being swept by enemy machine gun fire. Beyond the ridge behind Klidln the remnants of the company were reorganised and amounted to one officer and 30 other ranks. The withdrawal was carried on another twelve miles and after moving over water logged ground, crossing a river and being harassed by the enemy tanks finally reached the reserve position just after dark in a completely exhausted condition.

(Capt Robertson of C Coy)

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Original with original war diary
AM 40.

Action of "C" Coy 2/8th Bn in Greece + Crete.

Capt W.T. Robertson

9 April. The 2/8 Bn took up a position above the village of ~~XXXX~~ KYNO-NERON. "C" Coy was in the centre and had under command one detachment of mortars and one carrier. The position was occupied and dug by 1600 hrs. During the day a cold northerly wind had been blowing and towards evening this developed in intensity and it commenced to rain. No cover was available and as ~~the~~ during the night the rain developed in sleet the conditions were very trying for the men. Their spirits in the morning however, were high at the prospect of meeting the Germans.

10 April. The 2/8 Bn was ordered to move to a position on the right of Vevi Pass. The move was to be made on foot so blankets and heavy gear was collected and transported by Coy transport the rear of the new position. Capt W.P. Howard, Coy 2/c, took charge of the move of the Company the Company Commanders moving forward in columns with the CO. to make a recon. of the new position. The position was a series of features. The "C" Coy was to occupy the left feature on the right "D" Coy had a dominating position and on the left was a further feature occupied by the K.R.P.s. The Company arrived in rear of the position at about 1500 hrs in a very exhausted condition owing to the long cross-country march at the high altitude. A were so exhausted that they had been forced to drop out during the march. These men rejoined the Company in the evening and during the following day. The position was occupied 1800 hrs — 15 platoon took up a position in the gully between the feature occupied by "D" Coy and my feature. 14 Platoon was in position on the left hand slope of the feature covering the gully between my feature and that held by K.R.P. and 13 platoon was in reserve on the reverse slope of the feature. (~~see sketch~~) At about 1900 hrs the Coy. Comd. of the K.R.P. Coy on the left was contacted and it was found some of his sections were actually in position on the

April 10. forward slopes of the features I had occupied. This left a gap in the line of F.D.L's on the right of the K.R.R. with which the enemy may have penetrated through endangering their right forward sections. This gap I consented to close with my reserve platoons for the night until a readjustment could be made in the morning. During the occupation of the position our artillery was engaging enemy motorised troops which were debussing in two villages well forward of our position. 13 Platoon did not take up its position in the gap until after dark as it was on the forward slope in view of the enemy. At about about 2100 hrs. while this platoon was digging in one of its sections was approached by a party of about twenty soldiers talking English and asking for food. They quietly surrounded the section and took them prisoner. A section of New Zealand Machine Guns and a section of the K.R.R. were also taken prisoner at about the same time similar tactics being employed by the Germans in all cases. Throughout the night there was considerable enemy patrol activity; patrols varying in size from one or two men to parties of twenty or more. The small patrols on several occasions penetrated between section posts, which of ^{owing to the few troops and the wide frontage} necessity were widely dispersed and working round in rear fired a few shots from "Tommy Guns". When engaged by our troops they withdrew. Throughout all operations both day and night the Germans showed a complete understanding and appreciation of the use of ground. In the early morning in order to prevent this infiltration I asked the C.O. for a platoon from the reserve company, "B" Coy, to fill the space between my right and left platoons. This he consented to and Lieut. Coulson and his platoon came under my command. ~~The position was now as shown in the attached sketch 2.~~ During the night it was attempted to bring up rations and blankets by carriers but this was found to be impossible owing to the mud and the steep climb to the position. Carrying parties had to be sent to B.H.Q. They took a long time to perform this duty as

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April 11. During the morning the CO made an inspection of the position and decided to bring in the remaining platoons of 'B' Coy on my ~~right~~ left to connect with the K.R.R.s. The K.R.R.s. in the meantime were to pull back in line with us. Throughout the morning and early afternoon a lively small arms battle took place between my troops and the K.K.K. and German troops which during the night had taken up positions in and around the Village of Veve which was directly below my position. The enemy shelled the positions to my left around the mouth of the pass, but did not come as far right as my position. ~~The position was then as shown in sketch 3.~~ One detachment motor was placed under 'C' Coy. At about 1500hrs. several shells from our own artillery landed in the middle of the Company position and shortly afterwards it commenced to snow ^{heavily}. It snowed heavily all through the afternoon. The conditions were particularly trying as the men had very few blankets and it became impossible to bring up hot food. A number of men had to be evacuated to the K.A.P. suffering from exhaustion. The anti-gas capes were used with great effect and contributed considerably to keeping the men dry. Fatigue was great as very little sleep was had the previous night owing to the preparation of the defence and enemy action, and on the commencement of the snow a continual 'stand-to' was ordered. Owing to the infiltration of the night before, it was ordered that nobody was to leave his section post after 2100 hrs. and that all movement was to be fire upon. At about 2200 hrs. the enemy of strength about a platoon attacked the left platoon of 'C' Coy. and again attacked at about 0300 hrs. Both these attacks were repulsed with several casualties to the Germans.

April 11 and one to ourselves. Two Germans wounded were brought in in the morning. Prior to the second attack one of the sections was address in a cultured voice by a German who demanded "Put down that gun! Put down that gun I tell you" When repulsed the second time the Germans dug in in some dead ground about 200 yards forward of the platoon position. Too close for our mortars to deal with. Had 2" mortars been available the task could have been ~~dealt with~~ accomplished.

April 12. At about 1000 hrs. our own artillery once again shelled "C" Coy position, one shell landing in Coy HQ, and destroying the telephones. Almost at the same time the enemy attacked in considerable numbers and overran the the left platoon (14) causing a number of casualties and taking some prisoners among whom was Lieut Oldfield. He had been wounded after shooting several Germans with his pistol. The remains of 14 platoon fell back and took up a position on the reverse slope of the feature. As the enemy came over the hill to attack their new position and that of 13 platoon they encountered heavy fire from "D" Coy whose position overlooked the hill. After suffering a number of casualties the enemy were forced to withdraw. "C" Coy then reformed a line across the hill and joined up with "B" Coy on the left who had also withdrawn a few yards to gain better fire positions on the higher ground. Further troops were moved into "B" Coy's position to give "C" Coy more fire support. The time would now be about 1530 hrs. No further attack was made by the enemy until 1700 hrs. when combined with a determined push on "B" Coy they brought up a tank onto "C" Coy's position and shelled the supporting troops of "D" Coy on the right and machine gunned "C" Coy's position which was undug. The Company was forced to withdraw with the general withdrawal of the Battalion. The actual withdrawal was carried out with complete order, but the Company got somewhat disorganised and suffered some casualties when crossing an open valley in rear of the Bri. position which

April 12. was being swept by enemy machine gun fire. Beyond the ridge behind Kheh? the remnants of the Company were reorganized and amounted to one officer and 30 other ranks. The withdrawal was carried on another twelve miles and after moving over waterlogged ground, crossing a river and being harassed by the enemy tanks finally reached the reserve position just after dark in a completely exhausted condition.

3 copies.
Separate from
preceding

Notes on "C" Coy's Activities in

Crete

(See 1/8 Bn War
Diary for May.
As officer had left Bn. soon after
the war, written it was not
possible to get his signature on copies.
Therefore original is kept here)
off

April 27. "C" Coy embarked from Greece aboard the "Costa Rica". During the day commencing at 0700 the ship was raided four times and finally at 1600 hrs a bomb landed so close to the stern that the plates were sprung and the ship began to sink rapidly. All troops were ordered on deck where they formed up in ranks away from the ship's side. Their discipline was magnificent and when the destroyers came alongside they calmly awaited orders to abandon the ship. On arrival at Suda Bay as many as possible of the Company collected together and were marched about twelve miles to the 19th Pole Area. All equipment arms and personal belongings were lost on the ship.*

May 1st. Moved to Kalibis on the coast by Suda Bay where the Bn. took up a defensive position covering two roads leading to Suda Bay. "C" Coy covered the left road near the coast. One pl. was forward overlooking the road, one pl. continuously patrolled the valley through which the road passed and the third was in reserve and allowed to make as much use as possible of the beach. The roles of the ~~third~~ platoon were changed each day. The lack of activity during this period gave the men a much needed rest although there was little comfort attached to it as neither blankets nor mess tins were available and all manner of things were used as eating utensils.

* Insert.

The company was brought up to strength by the addition of transport personnel.

May 8. Company moved with the Bn. a distance of about 14 miles to Georgeopolis where a defensive position was taken up. "C" Coy was on the left next to 2/7 Bn. and covered a frontage of about 1300 yards. In the period between May 8 and May 20. the company was occupied with digging with the few tools available (6 picks and 10 shovels) and erecting wire entanglements. One pl. of HQ Coy was put under command of "C" Coy to thicken up the defence.

May 20. The company moved by M.T. through Suda Bay, to a position near the village of Trournies. A position was taken up with "C" Coy on the right. The enemy positions could be seen by his signals however, contact was not made.

May 21. * The company moved further to the right and filled a gap between "B" Coy and "A" Group. To contact with enemy.

May 22. Moved forward to a new position about 1000 yards to the right of the village of Peravolia. "C" Coy was on the right occupying some steep country and two hours. In

May 23. The 2/7 Bn. moved in a occupied position on right of "C" Coy and to its front taking over the right platoon position. "B" Coy. was withdrawn to reserve position late this night.

* Insut A fighting patrol of one platoon strength (15 pl.) under command Sgt Clarke W. was sent out during the morning to go through the village of Trournies. He struck some opposition and suffered one casualty. He remained out until 1600 hrs attempting to work round the enemy position.

7.

May 24. B. pl. was put under command Capt Combes B Coy and took up position in the village of Pygros. 14 pl. constructed a road block in the village of Mourmies which they manned with one section. 15 pl. patrolled the front in conjunction with 2/7 Bn during the night.

May 25. 15 pl was placed under command Capt Combes to strengthen his front.

May 26. Company under my command was now reduced to two sections. At the beginning of the main German attack these two sections were sent into the village on the left to try and locate an enemy MMG. which was in position there. At about 1700hrs the Bn was withdrawn and the Company assembled in its old position near Mourmies. This position was occupied by R.M's so the Company was moved over to the left where together with ~~the~~ "B" Coy it thickened up the 2/2 Field Regt. At 2200 hrs withdrew to Refreshment Camp Area where the troops rested for the remainder of the night.

May 27. A defensive position was taken up at dawn "C" Coy in reserve and on the left of the main Suda Bay - Camara Rd. At about 1030 hrs. the enemy attacked and 2/7 Bn counter attacked. Two platoons of "C" Coy namely 13pl. & 15pl. were moved over to the left to support this counter-attack with fire but owing to the thickness of the trees this was found to be impossible. About 1300 hrs it appeared possible that the main German attack would develop on the right and two platoons (13, & 15) were put under command of "B" Coy and pushed out on the right flank. During the fighting of this day the enemy seemed to attack by fire a great deal of which seemed to be unaimed and designed to affect the morale of our troops by the use of explosive bullets and mortars. The Company withdrew at 2200hrs back to Leon Khovian a distance of 14 miles. They arrived arriving there at about 0400 on May 28. Stand-tee was at 0500 and the lack of sleep was being to tell on the men.

May 28. Owing to the enemy attacking early in the area of near Khorion the Coy. moved back with the Bn at about 0930 hrs to a position in rear of the Commandos at Babali Inn. The task was the protection of the left flank. The company was reorganised into two platoons only about fifty men being left. The platoons were under command of Sgt Blake & Sgt Puringer. At about 1400 hrs. these two platoons were sent to assist B Coy with the thick ground on the left flank. No contact was made. Withdrawn at 2100 hrs. to a position near Kerates.

May 29. Further withdrawal was carried out at 1200 to Syn Koumardaris where the troops benefited greatly from the plentiful water and green surroundings. Food was short. At 2100 hrs the Bn was withdrawn to take up rearguard position at Spakia Beach. It was a long difficult and tiring march along overcrowded roads. Finally about 0400 hrs a halt was called and the men slept by the road among the rocks till dawn. No more than seven hours had been had by the men ^{with the last of the day} who had marched forty miles. On the way to Spakia a number of automatic weapons were collected from the troops embanking which doubled the normal quota.

May 30. At about 0800 CO. and Coy Command made recon. of new position and the troops finally reached the area after crossing some very difficult ground at about 1500 hrs. "C" Coy taking up a position on left of Spakia Gorge. Rations had now been finished.

May 31. Day was uneventful for "C" Coy. At 2400 hrs an orderly withdrawal to the beach & embankments were carried out.

W. T. Robertson
Capt.
"C" Coy Command.

YF Am War Diary
Apr 41

BATTLE OF VEVE PASS..APRIL 10,11,12.

APPX 10^d

10 April 40:15 Pl. arrived in position approx. 1700 hrs. One coy K.R.R.'s on left of C Coy and D Coy on right. I took up a position in a small wadi on left of No. 17 Pl. ,task to protect D Coys left flank, and to cover some dead ground on D Coy's immediate front. Began to dig in with few tools available but had to resort to rock sangars chiefly. Had some protection by dark. Our arty began to fire at approx. 1800 hrs. on enemy who were observed debussing in a village several miles in front (Lophoi).

~~After~~ 13 Pl had moved fwd to fwd slope to dig in but ~~at approx 2130 hrs~~ between 2130 hrs. and 2200 hours ~~and~~ a man from 13 Pl. arrived at my pl. H.Q. and reported that 1 sec. of 13 Pl. had been surrounded by the enemy and captured. I gathered that the Hun had approached the position while the sec was digging in ~~the~~ dressed in Greek uniforms. They approached the post calling out in good English, leading the section to believe that they were a friendly patrol, and then surrounded it.

Patrols from my pl. which moved along our front during the night contacted enemy patrols several times. On each occasion they opened fire on the enemy ~~which~~ who then withdrew.

The enemy patrols were usually about 80 strong and all armed with Tommy guns. The number sounds large, but the tactics of the enemy were to move fwd practically in column of threes, making little attempt to remain quiet. When they met opposition they quickly deployed. Some would infiltrate through the forward zone and suddenly blaze away with Tommy guns.

11 April: Early in the morning the enemy were reported to be dug in with L.M.G.'s and mortars in dead ground to my immediate front. Almost immediately he tried to get his L.M.G. up to a firing position where he could cover us. We opened fire, single shot with one Bren, and knocked over 6 Huns. No further attempt was made to get a gun up but constant firing from 14 Pl. (Lieut. Oldfield) on my left front and 17 and 18 Pl. on my right indicated enemy activity on my left front on ground which was dead to me. Snow began to fall about 1030 and visibility was almost nil. My men were feeling the effects of severe cold and were rapidly becoming tired and exhausted due to 1. No blankets; 2. Number of men required for carrying parties for food, amm. etc. 3. Lack of sleep.

Re 1: It was impossible to get blankets up to the position as it would have required a larger carrying party than would be spared when we were in contact with the enemy and had such a wide front to cover. Re. 2: Due to severe exhaustion experienced ~~after~~ after exertion it was necessary to send a larger carrying party than was normally necessary for rations and amm. Re 3: My men had had no sleep whatever since the night of April 7. All day on April 11, the enemy continued to test out our position and drove in a strong attack on the K.R.R.'s forcing them back. That night a local arrangement was made to counteract the enemy patrols and we received orders that we were to remain in our pits and fire on anything that moved between 2130 hrs. and daylight. Constant firing was heard throughout the night from our left and it was reported that the enemy was bringing up reinforcements and digging in on dead ground to our front.

APRIL 12: At daylight the enemy launched a strong attack supported by heavy mortar and M.M.G. fire which lasted about 2 hrs. and subsided. We inflicted numerous casualties when he came over the top in close formation to attack 17 and 18 Pls. So far it seemed that my position had not been pin-pointed by the enemy and I was not getting much fire from him. I found that 14 Pl., ~~comprising~~ ~~after~~ ~~casualties~~ ~~inflicted~~ ~~by~~ ~~the~~ ~~enemy~~ ~~and~~ ~~5~~ ~~OR's~~ had been over-run, and its remnants, 1 sgt. and 5 OR's had been driven back to ~~the~~ ~~vicinity~~ a position in the vicinity of Coy. H.Q.

10 a.m.: Our arty opened up and shelled our own position with the first rounds. The enemy had just begun another attack. Coy H.Q. and the greatly weakened 13 and 14 Pls. were pushed back. But it was necessary to cover D Coy's flank, so I moved one of my sections higher up the hill, and one section to the rear to keep a route of withdrawal open if it became necessary. The movement of my sections was heavily machine gunned by the enemy. In addition, machine guns from the valley in the rear opened up on us. (I believed at the time that they were our own guns and have learnt since from the I.O. that they were two N.Z. MG's in position just in front of Kleidi.. See I.O.'s notes).

Noises from our front and reports from arty O.P. indicated that enemy was bringing up tanks, but at 11 a.m. he launched another attack which lasted for 2½ hours and then withdrew after we had inflicted heavy casualties. At 1400 hours a Pl. from A Coy under Sgt. Duncan arrived and went into position on my left connecting with a B Coy pl. under Lieut. Coulston. To regain the ground from which 13 and 14 pls. had been pushed we launched a counter attack covered by fire from my right sec. Some of the ground was regained and the ~~pls. on my left flank were able to~~ pls. on my left were able to swing fwd.

Each time the Hun thrust fwd he was forced to fall back.

At approx. 1730 the enemy tanks began to take effect. Two tanks about the size of our cruisers came across my front and proceeded to shell 17 and 18 pls. (D Coy). They were chopping up the ~~the~~ sangars and weapon pits. They had at the same time got through the KRR's and were now behind us.

The signal to withdraw was given and I immediately commenced to thin out, withdrawing the troops on my left and then my own pl. Route of withdrawal was down the wadi at my rear which was kept open by the sec. previously posted there. On reaching the valley in ~~the~~ rear we came ~~to~~ under heavy M.G. fire from enemy tanks and MG's which had worked through on our left. I immediately ordered my men to keep going and we turned left and followed a small creek up to BHQ, ~~from~~ whence we turned right and followed the Bn. route out.

I at once opened fire with the
A/26 Rifle at a range of 200'
Six shots were fired none of which
appeared to have effect.

Gately. Revell.

ACTIVITIES OF D COY 2/8 BN.
BATTLE OF VEVE PASS

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APPX II

April 10: Move with Bn. from Xyno-Neron to Veve Pass area. In position at approx. 1700 hrs., C Coy on left, A coy on right, and B coy in reserve behind. Weather fine and warm, evening cold.

Reserve pl. (18) used on night to carry food and blankets. Four trips necessary. Going down hill to the meeting place not difficult but the return journey up steep and slippery sides and across deep gullies, loaded up, most difficult. (During our stay at Veve carrying parties of 20 men were supplied morning and evening for meals and water and additional parties had to be supplied for ammunition. The men were very tired when they arrived in the position, but ~~having~~ having got there, there was less chance than ever to have a rest or a sleep.)

April 11: 0200 hours 16 Pl. open fire on enemy patrol in front of their F.D.L.'s. Effects of fire not known. Patrol was moving along E-W road.

1000 hours: 16 Pl. ~~extracted~~ ~~Exo~~ ~~Exo~~ ~~Exo~~ ~~Exo~~ ~~Exo~~ ~~Exo~~ ~~Exo~~ ~~Exo~~ ~~Exo~~ gave strong covering fire while F.O.O. 2/3 Fd. Regt. who was in danger of being cut off by enemy patrols, withdrew and joined No. 2 section position

17 Pl. was believed to be in a position unknown to the enemy, and food, therefore, was taken to the Pl. only in the dark.

April 12: Lieut. Armstrong, 17 Pl., reports that one N.C.O. (Cpl. Millay) had been killed during night (details obscure).

Approx. 0900 hrs.: 17 Pl. under mortar and S.A.A. fire, engaging enemy in return with S.A.A. F.O.O. escorted by Lieut. Diffey to 17 Pl. area so that he could direct fire on Veve. (18)

About this time Bn. H.Q. orders reserve Pl. to be moved fwd to right of 17 Pl. Captain Simpson puts Captain Braham in charge of co-ordinating two platoons and Captain Braham moves 18 Pl. to fwd slope and engages enemy who were advancing on reverse slope of C Coy. Enemy replied with heavy mortar and S.A. fire.

Arty communication failed at this time, and while F.O.O. was at Coy. H.Q. trying to get through, his N.C.O. reported to Capt. Braham that that line had been cleared again, and Capt. Braham, from a ~~new~~ ~~new~~ ~~new~~ position ~~new~~ on the slope ~~right~~ ~~fwd~~ 17 Pl. gave him observations which enabled arty fire to be brought to bear on enemy in front of C Coy. S.A.A. fire was also directed at enemy, who was approx. 350 strong. Enemy then retired..... During this action a Pl. of A Coy which had been a carrying party moved across behind us to support C Coy.

Approx. 1300 hrs. Coy H.Q. personnel get food and blankets to 18 Pl.

Sections of 18 Pl. re-organised as 40% had become casualties chiefly from mortar fire, some from S.A.A.

At approx. 1200 hours the plain below our position (that is, in a general area about 2 miles away) became alive with A.F.V.'s, M.C.'s, and M.T. carrying troops. Many vehicles were hauling guns. They were assembling in a depression ~~on the plain~~ ~~on the plain~~ ~~on the plain~~ about 2 miles fwd of ~~us~~ us. Other vehicles moved straight toward us over ~~the~~ ploughed ground, gullies etc. to dead ground below our position about 1400 hours. They included tanks. It was hard to estimate the number because of difficulties of observation. The arty was inadequate for dealing with them. When new targets were mentioned the arty had to report that its hands were full.

At approx. 1500 hrs. the enemy again attacked up the gully toward C Coy. with between 150 and 200 men that we could see. D coy engaged him for about an hour, until he pulled back.

Capt. Braham moved round hill to face enemy movement and reported three tanks and enemy M.T. debussing troops in area C (see sketch). F.O.O. with Bren gun and crew and A/T rifle ~~was~~ moved to observation position. Time approx. 1630.

A few minutes afterward, an enemy tank which had apparently moved up re-entrant between ~~the~~ C and D Coys, opened fire with M.G. and shell. ~~from~~ ~~the~~ ~~coys~~ ~~area~~ Our fire had no effect on him at all. He continued to hit ~~the~~ 17 and 18 Pl. ~~with~~ ~~very~~ ~~accurate~~ ~~fire~~. The two Pls. were ordered to withdraw by sections. ~~One man who stood up~~ ~~in~~ 18 Pl. ~~was~~ received a direct hit from the tank gun.

When tank attack began between 400 and 500 infantry were moving with tanks.

16 Pl Comd ~~was~~ ~~asked~~ ~~whether~~ ~~he~~ ~~could~~ ~~hold~~ ~~his~~ ~~position~~ was informed of the position and, to avoid becoming isolated, withdrew his platoon to area nearer coy H.Q. to whom a message to withdraw had been sent.

18 Pl. had moved back, but 17 Pl. had not yet withdrawn. A runner was sent and returned stating that the Pl. Comd. had received the order to withdraw. ~~to~~ ~~the~~ ~~position~~ ~~near~~ ~~the~~ ~~coy~~ ~~H.Q.~~

Capt. Simpson returned from Coy Comds conf. and gave the order that the Bn. was withdrawing and that the coy. was to move out.

17 Pl., according to previous arrangement, had an alternative line of withdrawal ~~through~~ ~~the~~ ~~re-entrant~~ at its rear.

The Pl., however, was over-run by tank and infantry. Lieut. Diffeys moved out with ~~remaining~~ his last section in rear of company ~~and~~ in the comparatively open ground that followed the main creek line E-W, which was being covered by German fire from the former Ranger position and from the German tanks. He collected a number ~~of~~ stragglers, ~~he~~ ~~was~~ ~~joined~~ ~~by~~ ~~Major~~ ~~MacDonald~~ ~~and~~ ~~Capt~~ ~~Austin~~ ~~of~~ ~~A~~ ~~Coy~~ ~~Lieut~~ ~~Howard~~ ~~and~~ ~~McCormick~~ ~~of~~ ~~D~~ ~~Coy~~ ~~Lieut~~ ~~Mumford~~ ~~of~~ ~~D~~ ~~Coy~~ ~~and~~ ~~Lieut~~ ~~Fleming~~ who were almost exhausted. The main body of the Bn. had by this time passed out of sight over the ridge that rose up on the south side of the creek.

~~At~~ ~~this~~ ~~stage~~ Lieuts. Howard and McCormick who had been at rear of C Coy and Lieut. Mumford of D Coy ~~joined~~ ~~the~~ ~~party~~ ~~near~~ ~~the~~ ~~church~~ ~~Florina~~ ~~805651~~ ~~after~~ ~~we~~ ~~had~~ ~~been~~ ~~held~~ ~~up~~ ~~by~~ ~~sweeping~~ ~~mortar~~ ~~gun~~ ~~and~~ ~~M.G.~~ ~~fire~~ were met in area near church (Florina 805651). Major MacDonald and Captain Austin (A Coy) and Lieut Strong (A/Adj.) who had been near B.H.Q. directing movement of rear parties and Lieut Fleming (I.O.) who had been further west toward pass directing men who had straggled or had been cut off ~~by~~ from direct route out by tanks, arrived in area near church. The route from our former positions and the area near the church were being covered by heavy fire of all types. ~~Men~~ who lay down to avoid this fire had to be brought to their feet and made to move on. ACCOUNT BY LIEUT. DIFFEY

The party moved from Church up ridge past ~~the~~ ~~church~~ ~~position~~ ~~abandoned~~ ~~early~~ abandoned Greek gun position and on to slopes on high ground. When we still had approx. half a mile to go to get off the high ground on to the lake plain below more stragglers had appeared. I told the party that I would gather them up with the assistance of Pte Cleland. While this was being done a German tank ~~moved~~ ~~along~~ accompanied by infantry moved along parallel to the route taken by our party. I made the exhausted men discard their equipment and moved down to where the rest of the party had been, only to find a number of them coming back. These men informed us that a tank had cut them off. Among them were Lieut. McCormick and Mumford, who said that ~~Capt~~ ~~Howard~~ and Lieut. Strong were also cut off. The last two did not join us.

The party was now about 20 strong. It waited in a wadi for approx. 3/4 hour until it became reasonably dark. Then we moved off intending to follow a route decided on from the map. Lieuts. McCormick and Mumford became separated from us while coming down a steep scrub ~~covered~~ ~~slope~~ and were not seen again. Our party skirted the two villages on the route and made in the direction of where we could see our arty gun flashes. At approx. 0200 April 13 we came to a line of A.F.V.'s, thinking these to be the enemy we spent a lot of time trying to find a way round, and as we couldn't, decided to find a way through. We were detected and fired on. We then heard men in the A.F.V.'s talking English and yelled out that we were Australians. I was then directed to where the Bde staff was nearby and was escorted to Brig. Vasey. In the morning we rejoined the Bn. at the Aliakmon.

*Braham Capt
2 1/2 "D" Coy.*

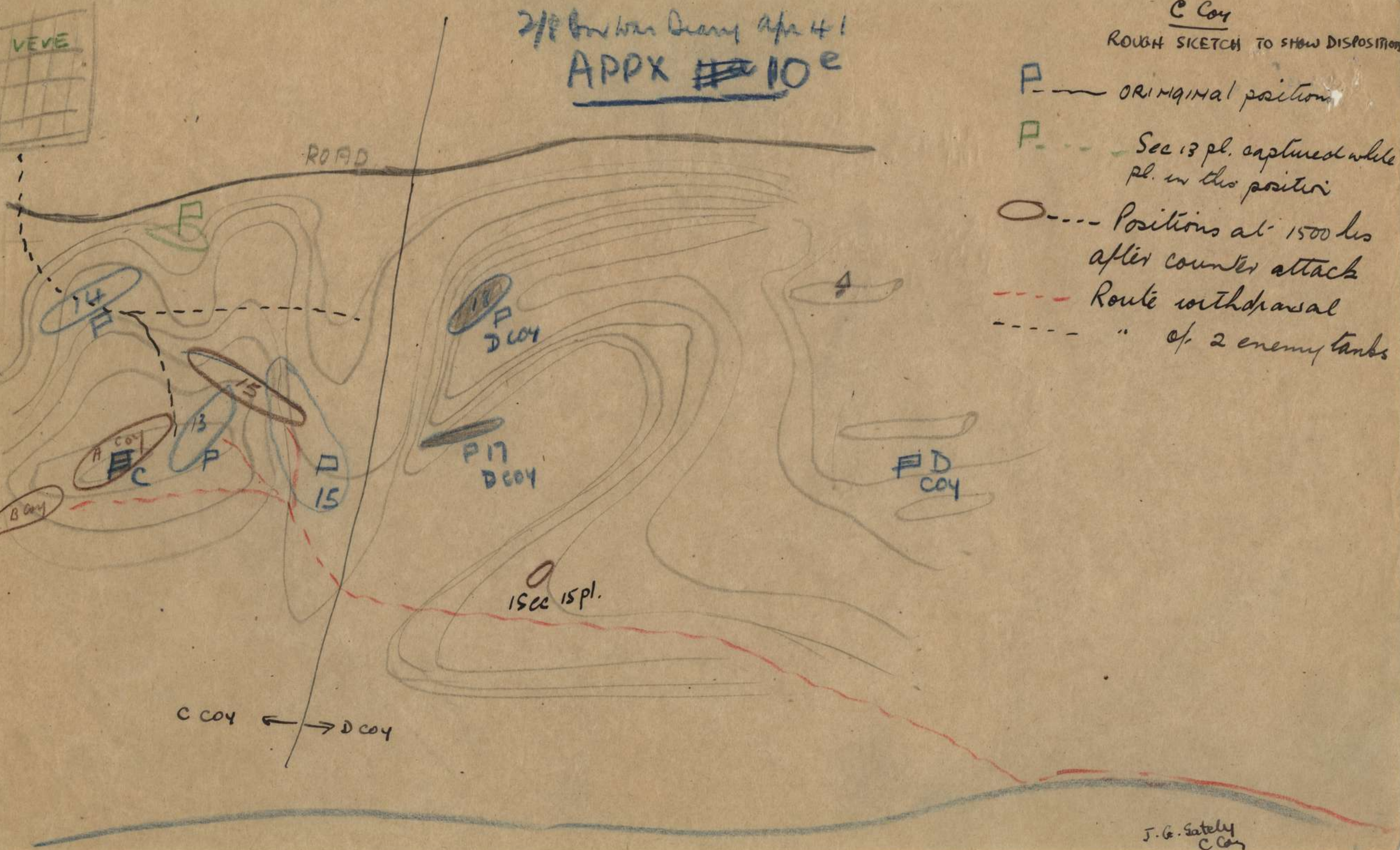
Diffeys Lt.

VEVE

2/18 [unclear] [unclear] Apr 41
APPX #10^e

C Coy
ROUGH SKETCH TO SHOW DISPOSITIONS

- P — ORIGINAL position
- P — See 13 pl. captured while pl. in this position
- O — Positions at 1500 hrs after counter attack
- Route withdrawal
- " of 2 enemy tanks



J. G. Sately
C Coy

D Coy

ROUGH SKETCH TO SHOW DISPOSITIONS.

3/8 BN
WAR DIARY
APR 41
APPX

11a

MOVEMENT OF ENEMY AFU'S AND M.T.



G

Fired on enemy patrol here NIGHT 19/11 0

ROAD

DEAD GROUND

R. COY

C COY

D COY

A COY

REFERENCE

- F Position occupied by 2 SECS. 16 PL. night 10/11
- B Position FOO exercised morning 11th
- C Dead ground used by enemy as forming up place
- D Position 2/10 directed ARTY FIRE morning 12th
- E Area ARTY FIRE put FIRE morning 12th
- F Position of enemy tank when shelling 17 PL/18 PL/19 PL
- G Depression approx 2 miles away used by enemy as assembly area.

- ① 16 PL. LINE OF WITHDRAWAL
- ② 18 PL. " " "
- ③ 17 PL. PREARRANGED LINE OF WITHDRAWAL

--- COY BOUNDARY

C. Duffey
D Coy

78th was diary Apr 41

GREECE.

APPX 12

BATTLE OF VEVE PASS.

Report by Lieut. C. Thompson. O.C. Mortar Pl.

The Bn. left Daphni camp on 6th April travelling North for 4 days arriving at VEVE Pass on 10th April.

These were 4 days of only a few hours sleep, long marches and general fatigue which put the troops in very low condition physically & mentally.

The Bn. took up its position on the night of 10-4-41. At 0400 hours on 11-4-41 the mortar Pl. was taken forward to a position in the "Waddy" in rear 200 yds. of "C" Coy H.Q.

To help in getting the mortars to their position 2 carriers were sent to my aid. These proved valueless owing to the wet & sticky condition of the ground. This meant man-handling the mortars & Bombs for about 2 miles mostly up steep mountain passes. This added to the already fatigued condition of the men left them far from fighting fit on arriving at our position at approx 0700 hrs. 11th April.

Shortly after our arrival a report came through to Capt. Robertson "C" Coy from Capt. Simpson "D" Coy that the Enemy were crawling up dead ground on "C" Coy front. Capt. Robertson called on me to stir them up.

As each bomb exploded, Bren gun fire was heard from "D" Coy and it was not long before the enemy retreated. The rest of the day was quiet.

One mortar was left in the original position the other was attached to "D" Coy. The night was quiet. One Sec. of C. Coy was captured.

11 Apr. Early this morning it started to rain by 1100 hrs snow was falling this lasted all the afternoon & into the night. Enemy annoyed us with Patrols throughout the night.

12 Apr. Early this morning there was a fog which lifted at approx. 0800 hrs. This is when the Battle started. The Enemy were held up and on occasions driven back. At approx. 1100 hrs mortars withdrawn to H.Q. Coy Pioneers area, due to expenditure of all ammunition. Then the enemy threw in everything and came at us again. They were held for some time. At approx. 1400 one mortar was taken up to "D" Coy. Whilst I was on recon., I could see enemy coming up on "C" Coy in very large numbers. They were coming up a Waddy in what appeared to be column of roots, then defiling into sections and spreading out fanwise with sections in extended line. There seemed to be a never ending stream of them.

The mortar was taken up to a position on ridge 200 yds. left on Trig. Point. Fired on their column inflicting heavy casualties.

By this time "C" Coy had started to withdraw closely pursued by the enemy.

Two tanks appeared out of the same Waddy as the column, moving towards Rangers, across "D" Coy front.

One tank was firing across the road towards Rangers area and while it was firing it continually reversed back towards Waddy.

We fired our last 6 bombs, which was enough for their mortars to have us ranged, they landed their first bomb 10 yds to our left. Received message that 3 sec. of enemy were approaching toward trig. Point on our right so moved back behind "D" Coy was about to engage this party when ordered by Captl Simpson to withdraw. at approx 1715 hrs 12 Apr.

We started to withdraw carrying all mortar gear & bombs. On reaching area between B.H.Q. & Creek we came under heavy machine gun & Tank fire. It then became impossible to move & carry such a heavy load so the heavier parts were dumped.

By this time the Enemy mortar bombs were bursting on our line of withdrawal. Continued the backward move for approx. 14 miles where we rested then moved another 2 or 3 miles where we were picked up by transport and taken to Katroulie where we rested for several days.

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NOTES ON MORTAR PL. ACTIVITIES-

BATTLE OF VEVE PASS. APPX 13

1. XYNON NERON.

Occupation of positions.- Both detachments were placed under command "C" Coy in this position. Transport of men and stores to Mortar Posns. was comparatively easy as tpt., was enabled to get close to base plate posns., selected. No digging was done, under orders O.C. "C" Coy, but all arrangements were completed to enable the dets., to answer any C.P.F. given. Targets were selected on a feature 8000 yds., distant and commanding the position occupied by "C" Coy. Dets. were also ready to neutralise the dead gd. behind this feature. Cover was good and covered lines of approach for rations, etc., very convenient. There was no contact with enemy whilst in this position.

WITHDRAWAL. Amn., was dumped at positions, Replenishment could have been effected with little difficulty. Transport, after unloading stores, was sent to "B" Ech. area, where it was within close call. Personnel were affected by cold temperatures and high altitude.

2. VEVE + KLIEDL. OCCUPATION OF THE POSITION:- Both dets. were again ordered fwd. in support of "C" Coy on the left flank. Owing to the terrain, the men were required to march from Nerlon, carrying the greater part of their kit and blankets. The steep gradients and high altitude inflicted a tremendous strain on them, and they arrived at the assembly point in a "played out" condition. Owing to delays in arrival of tpt. due to road & track conditions, it was impossible to get the Dets. and further fwd. than B.H.Q. by dark. Permission was obtained for them to join fwd. Coys. at first light. The pl. bivouaced at the creek crossing for the night and later, when the vehicles came up unloaded all stores and had them ready for moving fwd. Vehicles then returned to "B" Ech. up to "C" Coy as early as possible. Accordingly two carriers were used to carry the stores from the creek to the vicinity of B.H.Q. and from there the Mortar Pl. assisted by the Pioneer Pl. did a "long carry". The distance to "C" Coy was approx. two miles by the most practicable route. the first half being down hill but very sodden and the second half steep and over rock-strewn ground. The darkness the weight carried by each individual, and the physical condition of the men necessitated frequent halts. The party reached "C" Coy at approx. 0700 hrs, and as things were then very quiet - a reconnaissance was made before opening fire. This recce. failed to locate any targets suitable to the Mortar and no tasks were dealt with until a Hun attack was made on the left flank of "C" Coy. One Mortar was then employed, and fired 18 rds. H.E. on to the fwd. slopes of "C" Coys feature. The attack slackened a little later and was not renewed. Owing to the F.D.L.'s. being on reverse slopes, considerable difficulty was experienced in trying to locate an O.P. from which the mortar could be controlled. All possible O.P.'s were found to be so far in front of our F.D.L.'s that control would be impossible unless the weapon were brought so far forward as to ignore the principles of its use in defence. The use of a telephone here would have been a boon. Later on the same day on Det. was moved to "D" Coy feature in an endeavour to solve this problem, but met with no success. During the day, spasmodic firing by both Dets., was done, mainly on the dead ground in front of "C" Coy. Both Dets., concentrated in rear of "C" Coy H.Q. for the night.

The next day lack of amn. at first restricted activity to one Mor. and this very soon used all available stocks. Amn. was available at the creek but the difficulty was to get carrying parties on transport. One load was sent off by carrier early in the morning but the carrier became bogged and never reached its destination. Later, amn. arrived per the Pioneer Pl. and Mor. Pl. carrying parties and a Det. was sent up to "D" Coy under command.

Lieut. Thompson tells the story of this Dets. actions.

The other Det was left under Sgt. Davis at the pioneer Pl. posn. By this time, animal pack ppt. was delivering amn. and about 12 rds H.E. were received by this method.

At the time that the order to withdraw was given to Coys. the writer was with Sgt. Davis Det. and received the order there. Capt. Simpson undertook to warn the Det. under his command. Davi's Det. had been ordered to withdraw and concentrate SOUTH of the CHURCH RIDGE when the writer noticed Huns crossing the flat some 1200 yds away across the Rly. line in considerable numbers. As there were still three H.E. bombs left in the area an attempt was made to engage this target, but as the men were assembling the Mortar, the area was swept by M.G. fire, apparently from the ridge, and as it was thought unwise to risk the whole det. for three bombs the order was given to carry on with the withdrawal. As it once became apparent that the men were in such a condition as to make the extrication of the mortar impossible, and so it was ordered to be abandoned.

(It is not thought necessary to go into the question of physical condition here, no doubt the R.M.O. has dealt with this subject)

AMMUNITION: was at all times a grave problem, and it would appear that an animal tpt. would effectively solve the problem in this situation.

RATIONS: were naturally always cold when received.

TRANSPORT: our wheeled tpt. was of no use whatsoever, except to get the Dets. into the area, Tracked vehicles were essential, and even they became bogged.

PERSONNEL: The men were imbued with the right spirit- a determination to do the utmost damage to the enemy. Although both Mortars were abandoned, this was done, each case, only on the order of an Officer.

Hell Hall Unit.

(I.O., Sgt. Watt and W.O. Gudgeon had gone as adv party ex Alexandria Mar 26, arr Piraeus 0700 29 Mar for recce and to arrange reception of Bn. at Daphne.... Normal activities via Larissa, Veria. I.O. and Sgt. Watt (who was attached to I Sec for training) leave Verria with Brig and B.M. on recce via Ptolemais, Perdika to Xyno-Neron night 8/9 April. Bn. recce party meets Bn. between Perdika and Rodona and guides to Xyno-Neron position.)

10 Apr: Approx. 0900 hrs. , while coy comds go by carrier for recce Veve area I.O. leads Bn. across country (east over railway line, the general direction north to rear of Kleidl, avoiding road under instructions), At Kleidl Coy Comds pick up coys. Our arty at Kleidi already in action. 1700 : Sec begins O.P. work with one O.P. owing to difficulties of communication and distances. Enlarged map Bn. area prepared and situation plotted on it.

11 Apr: Snow prevents successful use of O.P. and maps suffer as result of snow, sleet and rain. Groundsheet is chief cover available.

12 Apr: Approx. 0800 hrs: I.O. goes to C Coy and collects two wounded prisoners taken in attacks overnight. Both prisoners from Adolf Hitler regt. Div. and Bde informed. One prisoner has diary for year. Prisoners taken to ambulance at road bend near Kleidi and handed over to Bde I.O.

Two men detailed to accompany 2 i/c to recce Aliakmon position. Approx. 1000 hrs. I.O. instructed by Adj. to collect all men with one or two exceptions at BHQ and get amm to coys. Party of approx. 20 men taken to amm point at mouth of C and D Coy wadis. Carrying parties organised and amm, which had been dumped just fwd of Kleidl; carried approx. half mile to amm point as carriers or vehicles could not cross boggy rough ground.

While these arrangements were being made, MG's from position between Kleidl and main road opened fire. I looked to see what they were firing at and could see only our own troops moving on the position we held. I sent the RSM who had been attending to the amm dump, to stop the MG's which had no observation to fire at anything but our own tps. (Later I sent a message advising them to move fwd to support our tps on Veve ridge where their longer range and opportunities for enfilade fire would assist in slowing up the German advance to our rear over the Rangers position. The two guns--NZ. MG's--with approval of BHQ, moved to B Coy's area, their being taken up by a detachment of my party helping to carry up the guns and amm.)

Amn was sent up from dump established at wadi mouth to B, C and D coys. Approx. 1400 hrs. Lieut. Lowe (TO) arrived with four pack horses which had been abandoned by Greeks and we loaded these to carry both SA and mortar amm. They assisted also in getting the NZ MG's up the steep slope to B coy area.

As pressure on our position was increasing I arranged a defensive position with all available men in area to cover pass and general area of left flank. B Coy's phone with an orderly had been moved to a position near me and as sniping at us was becoming more frequent (apparently from across the railway line in foothills) I rigged a stone shelter round the phone orderly and was able to transmit reports and observations to BHQ.

Amn was still being sent to coys. About this time (approx. 1530 hrs.) a detachment of Rangers in six carriers appeared fwd of Kleidl, east of railway line and rear of amm point. Their carriers all bogged and were abandoned after being put out of action completely. Guns were collected and detachment dismounted reported to my area, o/c stating that they had been sent to cover pass, but had had to abandon carriers.

After reference to BHQ I placed detachment in position on s pur below D Coy covering pass.

Amn point, which was completely dominated by slopes of Trig 1009 feature on west of pass was now subject to intermittent bursts of MG fire, source of which could not be located in scrub and foothills. Guns were apparently heavy MG's.

"I" personnel were at this time engaged in helping with amn supply. Between 1530 and 1600 hours I could see infantry deployed and in large numbers moving south up ~~slopes~~ fwd slopes of Trig 1009 feature i.e. slightly ~~left~~ rear left. This was reported to BHQ. Increased firing by MG's from that area, from positions even further to our rear than where infantry were visible moving up slope, confirmed that Huns had over-run fwd ~~slopes~~ slopes of feature at least, although we had had no word of Rangers withdrawing. The slopes offered plenty of cover and it was almost impossible to locate enemy MG's firing at us.

Coy Comds conf. had been called for 1700 hrs at amn point and just before 1700 hrs. message came through from D Coy that tank was "in amongst fwd platoons".

Adjt represented CO at conf (see Adjt's report) and orders for withdrawal had just been completed when a particularly heavy burst of MG fire were directed at area. First burst badly wounded a man standing by.

Coy comds moved to take charge of their coys in withdrawal and Adj returned to BHQ.

As B coy moved out ~~with them~~ party established to cover pass moved out in easterly direction ^{with them}

As I stayed for some time in this position to guide stragglers or men who had been cut off by tank fire I had a good opportunity to observe enemy ~~movements~~ movements within the limits imposed by his continual raking of the entire rear of our position.

Four tanks appeared on the ridge vacated by B coy and fired on our withdrawal, but were apparently searching for a route down the steep slope as they moved out of sight again.

(Note: A/T guns, which had formerly been in position in valley to our rear and fwd of Kleidi covering pass had been withdrawn early in afternoon).

At same time, more MG posts had been established on feature west of Kleidi and were dominating valley. Enemy infantry, supported by at least one tank was moving through pass into my view about 800 yds. away to the west. Enemy infantry was also moving from the trig 1009 feature across the road toward Kleidi and ~~from~~ judging by the strike of shells their appeared to be at least one tank in Kleidi.

After the area had been cleared of our personnel I moved along a dry creek bed east and joined Major MacDonald and Captain Austin (A Coy) and Lieut. Strong (A/Adj) ~~who had been directing~~ ~~in~~ near BHQ. We moved across to church area (Ref Florina enlargement, 804650) picking up Lieut. Diffey on the way (see D Coy report).

~~Party~~ Party swung ~~south~~ in southerly direction from church, which was under heavy mortar and MG fire.

~~Approaching~~ As stated in Lieut Diffey's report a tank (probably the one which had reached Kleidi earlier) appeared and shelled the party. Major MacDonald, Captain Austin and myself had just moved on to an open stretch of ground leading to the down slope about 100 yds away when the tank opened up from a range of about 500 yds. The tank was surrounded by infantry. As there was no cover we kept on walking and the shells missed. On the track south of ~~the~~ Petrais we joined the main body of the Bn. which was moving by coys on the flat east west of the lake.

The Bn. was again shelled from tanks on the ridge between Petrais and the main road.

Near Soter the Bn. met the covering line of tanks.

All Int. Sec. sketches and maps and documents were destroyed when it became clear that the withdrawal would be made under pressure. The log diary, however, was brought out safely. (It was destroyed later in the sinking of the Costa Rica).

A.P. Remington

I.O. 2/8 Bn.

Events between 1200 hrs. and 2200 hrs. 12 Apr. 41

1. The Bn. was holding a defensive position ~~between~~ along ridge East of Veve and in direction of Kelle.
2. The enemy was exerting considerable pressure on our left coys. and on the Rangers on our left. This is borne out by the action of the Rangers who withdrew about midday to a position south of the road. The Rangers informed 19 Bde H.Q. that the enemy were in considerable strength on the southern slope of our ridge. Bde asked for confirmation of this about 1400 hrs. and I was able to state that this was not so as we were using the slope for amn. supply etc.
3. Orders for withdrawal, to commence at 1900 hours, were received and the C.O. called a conference of Coy Comds. for 1700. Location of conference Amn point at rear of C Coy wadi.
4. During the afternoon there was a considerable ~~ammunition~~ movement of Greeks retiring across our right rear. We received no news from the Greeks of their intentions.
5. At approx. 1640 message was received from A Coy stating that Greeks had withdrawn and that Bn's right flank was wide open. C.O. decided to remain at B.H.Q. in case of anything developing out of this withdrawal of Greeks and to contact Bde. (It was about this time that telephone communication with Bde. through Rangers was found to have ended, apparently because phone at Ranger H.Q. to our left rear was no longer manned. See sig. officer's report). The C.O. sent the Adj to represent him at coy. comd's conf.
6. Coy Comds assembled at R.V. and were immediately shelled by tank from top of C Coy wadi and machine gunned from feature which Rangers had been holding (S. of road bend.)
7. At the same time the enemy attacked B Coy (left coy.) from three sides and the coy. was forced ~~with~~ to withdraw. In view of the fact that the enemy were advancing down the road toward Kleidl and were at least half a mile behind the position held by the Bn., and, in addition, as the right flank was completely open, it was decided to withdraw in succession from the left and to attempt to find a route out ~~through~~ across country to Petrais. This was carried out under harassing fire from enemy tanks, mortars and M.G.'s. The first part of the withdrawal was covered by a detachment of Rangers who came from bogged and ~~was~~ disabled carriers that had come to cover the road. In addition there was a party collected by the I.O. from B.H.Q. which had been working on the supply of amn. The second stage of the withdrawal was covered by the A-A pl., dismounted.
8. After crossing the open country between the Bn. position and ridge running eastward from Kleidl the Bn. crossed two ridges -- Kleidl ridge and one just south of it.
8. At this stage there was some confusion, as enemy tanks were still maintaining contact and were continuously shelling. The white very light of the enemy's leading troops ~~was~~ was going up on the road at least two miles south of the main body of the Bn. I had become separated from the C.O. during a particularly heavy burst of shelling and took it on myself to reform the unit. This was done and B Coy occupied a position to cover the rest of the unit who moved out by pls in the general direction of Petrais. When the other coys were clear B Coy withdrew. At this stage I was joined by the R.M.O. and some of his S.B.'s and we came out at the tail of the column after I had destroyed all my papers. I did this as I considered ~~that~~ it likely that the enemy would swing toward Lake Peteresko and cut us off.
9. At approx. 1915 the tail of the column was on the high ground West of Petrais and I could see six vehicles near the village. I left the R.M.O., to wait for several stragglers and made direct to the vehicles which turned out to be a British A-T troop. The Comd. -- 2 Lt. -- had orders to wait until 2000 hrs. before moving but as I was able to give him the picture and to inform him that the bridges had all been blown, he decided that he would attempt to get clear. The time was approx. 1930. This officer offered ~~me~~ to lift as many personnel as could get on the tpt and this was done as soon as the tpt reached the column. The C.O. and several other officers were also picked up. An enemy tank appeared at the top of the ridge and shelled the M.T. as it moved along the road toward Amyntion. There were some casualties. On arrival at Amyntion it was found that the bridge had been blown and tpt was abandoned and the Bn. moved across ~~the~~ country to Soter where we were met by the T.O. and Carrier Pl Comd. in a Carrier. They informed ~~me~~ C.O. of location of tp carrying tpt. C.O. and Adj. reported to Bde H.Q. & Bn. eventually got on to tpt and moved to Aliakmon river.

N.F. Ransom
Capt

2ND DAY AT KOUTROULI

All Camp: Bn HQ

17 17

1+

Ad

Challenges

1. Password - "Have you seen the
Kiwis."

Answer - "There are swarms
of them about."

2. Have you adequate resources of
D.A.A.

3. D. Coy will provide standing patrol
on Road 200 yds. N. of B Coys
F.D.L's.

~~John~~
Coy

7/8 Bn War Diary
Apr 41

APPX 17

BRALLOS

APRIL 22

ADJ'S NOTES

Personnel to move

530
400
300
200
100

B. HQ	50.	3/30.	
HQ Coy.	43.	2/30.	
A }	80	4/30.	2/1 ton.
B }	95.	4/30.	3/1 ton.
C }	80	4/30	2/1 ton.
D. }	83.	4/30	2/1 ton.
	<u>431</u>	<u>21/30.</u>	<u>9/1 ton.</u>
	<u>24</u>		
	455.		

A, C, D. - Spare 30 each.

D. 2 / AMSC

C 1 / -

B 4 / -

A. 3 / -

This is Tpl. distribution for move from BRALLOS to AMFIKLI.

~~A~~

John War Deary

APPX 19



ADITT'S
Notes from
Conference at

16 Bdc. H.Q. 24/5/41

(Brig. Allen)

Route P. Position.
Elifis. ✓
Maqava. ✓
Korinthos. ✓
Khalav. ✓
Medhiom. ✓
Argos. ✓
Miloni. ✓

90 miles
30 Proves
on Traffic.

Speed. 12 & up. Protection Sq. D.94.
Density 40.

10 day.

Lights on -

Red Tail Lights removed.

2nd Stage.

Kalamai

Petrol Tins - All to Q.M

off & H.C.O.

Covercoat - Warm.

Blanket - 1 tied on pack

Marching Order.

Rations - Three days

Water - bottles filled

P & Shovel on each. Y.

Weapons & Ammun. Taken.

Move

Seven days per man. (3 days a man)

4 days 19.00 Ration Pt. - Div Area ^{200x} RH: side. Sol Div.

Petrol. 30/cwts 2 over Full Tank & 6 Cases

1 ton &

1

- & 4 -

Cas &

-

- & 2 -

Drawn. - ~~II~~ Reccourse P. of Rd

Medical - Mobile. Sec. in Rear.

Order of March

S.T. 21.30.

S.P. E 1753. ^{R&R X}

A 16 Bde

} L.O. - 4x

Spare Vehicles

B 17 Bde

} Div. Tps.

C Div Tps.

← Rear-guard.

2/3 on

Report Centre at Head of CA

Corps Sign

Destruction - Order from 16 Bde

1/2 PM AIF was busy
Apr 41

APPX 20

24 Apr 41.

Op. Instruction no. 1.

2/8 Bde Lt Col. Mitchell

1. Under instructions from Brig. at 2/8 Bde comes under cond. 17 Bde Gp.
2. Your role in to-night's march is to provide a rear gd. behind "C" Gp. Div. Gps. (Lt Col. Gouch, cond.)
3. The head of the force passes S.L. (E 1753) at 2130 hrs. as per copy of order attached.
4. Would you please arrange to contact Lt Col. Gouch 2/1 MCBde who is cond. Div. Gps. so that you follow in rear of his Gp. We unfortunately cannot give you timings as we do not know their strengths.
5. On arrival you will come within the area of 17 Bde Gp. and would you then provide us with a runner to remain at this H.Q., together with a statement that all your Gps. have arrived or otherwise.

Stan Lawry
Brig

17 Bde Op. Inst. No. 2. 24 Apr 41

1. The ~~Bde~~ gp to which is attached 2/8 Bn will move tonight to MILDI and will follow Gp "A" (16 Bde gp)
2. 2/8 Bn will form a rear gd + march behind Gp "C" (Div. Hqs) who follow 17 Bde Gp
3. S.P. for main column rd + ry crossing K145's
S.P. for Gp "B" (17 Bde gp) is 16 Bde turnoff.
4. Gp "A" pass S.P. at 2130 hrs 24 Apr.
5. Route. Present form - ELEYSIS - MEGARA -
BORINTHOS - KHILIO MEDHION - ARGOS - MILDI.
6. 6 chut Div. P.S. Coy will provide T.C.P. along route.
7. 2/3 Bn provide anti-sabotage guards in pass at D 94 and CORINTH CANAL.
8. Density night 40 v.t.m. day 10 v.t.m.
9. Speed " 12 m.p.h. " 20 m.p.h.
increase if practicable.
10. Parking lights will be used but red rear lights will NOT be shown.
11. 7 days rations to be carried - 3 on the man.
12. 2/2 7th chut will provide one ant. for Div Hqs.
Gp to report to Lt Col. Couch.

13. Security, comd, and supply of tools as laid down in yesterdays order.
14. All units on arrival at destination send runner to Bde H.Q. with report of arrival complete or otherwise.
15. Report centre head of coln.
16. No vehicles are to be destroyed except on written order of Brig. or B.M.
17. Order of march.

Bde H.Q.

2/4 B.M.

2/2 7d Coy.

2/2 7d Amb.

2/1 4d Regt.

2/6 B.M.

Each unit to liaise with unit preceding it in order of march for time to join coln after last vehicle of preceding unit has passed.

Brook

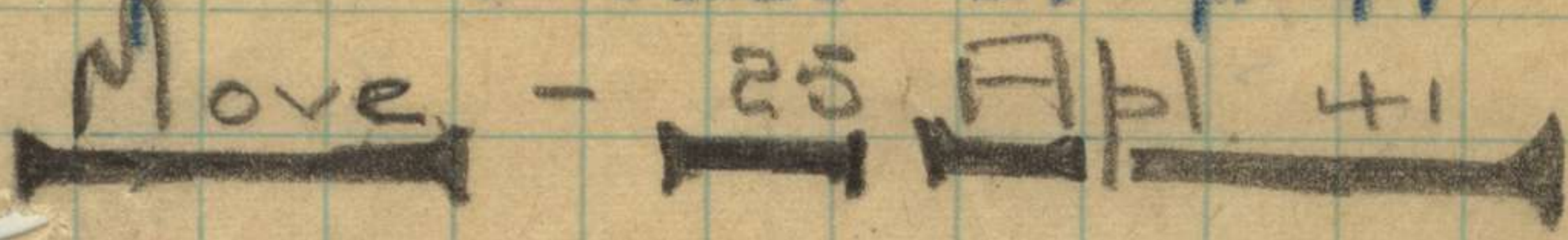
78 In war diary Apr 41

APPX 21

2/8/50

21

Bde. Conf at MOLOI 25 Apr 41



Bde Gp. 0.0 No. 3.

Move tonight. - Following Gp A (16)

- D. Corps Tps.
- C Div.
- A 16 Bde
- B 17 Bde.

Bde HQ. 34 V. Capt Cox, i/c.
 2/8 Bn. Bn HQ, HQ. ~~C B A B~~
 2/1 Fd Regt. CDAB.
 2/2 Fd Dmb
 2/6 Bn
 2/7 "
 2/5 "
 Mob, 19th, Sect.

Route. Miloi. Trippolos Megalopris
 Kalamas,
 S.P. Unit. Turn Off.
 Density etc. as per last night
 Tools. - -

Break & blocks, - Vehicle Control.

L.O. to Bde. for time of Start

Bde HQ has 34 Vehicles. Cpt
Co.

Runner to Bde. at destination
tomorrow morning

2/5 Bn. strips tht busting thru.

2/2 ^{Fd Coy} clearing Road.

Recce Party, - 1 off reports Bde.
19.00 hrs.

Moving on after blocks, - Officer
or N.C.O. dismounts.

Lying doggo - extreme care,
must hide.

T.O to tell drivers

1/8th War Heavy Apr 41

APPX 22

17 Inst Inf Bde of Inst no 3 25 Oct 41

1. The Bde to move on tonight following the A
(16 Bde to) order G/D G/C G/A G/O

2. Order March G/S.

Bde HQ

2/8 BN

2/1 72 Regt

2/2 72 Bde

2/6 BN

2/7 BN

2/5 BN

Mob. Bde Sec.

3. Route MILDI - TRIPOLIS - MEGALOPOLIS - KALAMAI

4. SP units own turn offs

5. Speed, density, cond, security, tools as in op
instr no. 2.

6. Each unit MUST liaise with preceding unit
for time of start.

7. On arrival at destination send runner to Bde

8. 2/5 BN station one off with 15' ent track of C.R.s
to prevent any other off breaking into coln.

9. Recce track out from present posn.

10. 2/2 72 Coy one preceding coln to clear rd.

11. Recce party moves under Maj. Bishop.

Brook

1/8th was heavy Apr 41

APPX 23

1/2
1/4
1/8
1/16
1/32
1/64
1/128
1/256
1/512
1/1024

3. 1/2 mile - 1/2 mile - 1/2 mile - 1/2 mile - 1/2 mile
4. 1/4 mile - 1/4 mile - 1/4 mile - 1/4 mile - 1/4 mile
5. 1/8 mile - 1/8 mile - 1/8 mile - 1/8 mile - 1/8 mile
6. 1/16 mile - 1/16 mile - 1/16 mile - 1/16 mile - 1/16 mile
7. 1/32 mile - 1/32 mile - 1/32 mile - 1/32 mile - 1/32 mile
8. 1/64 mile - 1/64 mile - 1/64 mile - 1/64 mile - 1/64 mile
9. 1/128 mile - 1/128 mile - 1/128 mile - 1/128 mile - 1/128 mile
10. 1/256 mile - 1/256 mile - 1/256 mile - 1/256 mile - 1/256 mile
11. 1/512 mile - 1/512 mile - 1/512 mile - 1/512 mile - 1/512 mile
12. 1/1024 mile - 1/1024 mile - 1/1024 mile - 1/1024 mile - 1/1024 mile

HQ 17 Aust. Inf Bde.

288 B.

NR36.

26.

Bulk of B. has arrived
 in dispensary area. 8 vehicles
 carrying personnel were stopped
 on other side of town. Arrangements
 are being made to bring men from other side
 of town to Bn. area. This
 will be done quietly & in small
 groups. I will report when
 unit is complete. Strength
 of unit when complete will be
 22 Officers + 440 O.R. plus
 1 Officer & 5 O.R. attached
 from A.F.S.C. I will
 advise you of our location.

Sent to Bde on arrival at Kalamai.

78 km War Diary Apr 41

APPX 24

Serial 78 Journal no 24 1941

Notes. by adt.

1. Remain present location. ~~do move~~
2. Tps, may move this afternoon to beach area. per boot.
3. Drivers remain with vehicles until other orders issued.
4. Tps. move with 3 days ration. Remainder left on vehicles.
5. Move in parties of 40.
6. No. Veh. destroyed without order in writing from Brig. or B.N.
7. Stand by for any eventuality.
8. No firing at aircraft unless ordered by C.O.

Notes from N de Camp at KALAMAI
26 Apr 41

Provide praguet-Docks. Tonight, 0
(Lt. Griffiths)
Selected Offr. reports. Mjr Julif.

at Docks 17-45. to obtain
Nos. etc. No more until Offr.
vectors

Surplus	<u>Rations</u>	} Dump in area. Notify Bde when estab, quantities of each location.
Boxed	<u>Amn.</u>	
Surplus	<u>Petrol</u>	

Petrol. - 50 Cases.
SFAA. 10 boxes.
Rations. Nil. 3 days on man.

Batt. H.Q. remains as present.
Not known when we embark.

Daily Strength State. — Embarkation — 06:00

Drivers w/ vehicles. — Separate.
Ration Return. — Not now

On embarkation

Been Gun Parties. — prepared for

AA Use. —

Riflemen likewise. — Tripods

Medical — 2/2 Fd Amb at Bde
Evac. — Creek Hosp, & left behind.
R.M.O. — may be detached

Wart Gps — 1 & 50 — organized
now. —

Picquet, — Embark after Ditch
Guard w/ mortar.

exclude.

5 6 7 P.M. Coy each 40

reinforce.

→ 25,000

—
soldiers & supplies

7/8th War Diary Apr 41

APPX 25

Serials

24 - 519

Order of Embarkation:

2/1 Fd.

2/2 Fd Coy

13 te. HQ.

8 Am

6 "

7 "

8 "

440

35

23

498

37

463

55

518

Drivers & Op. HQ

EMBARRATION STRENGTH

Bn. HQ

5

36

41

HQ Coy

4

86

90

AASC

-

26

26

C

3 ✓

65

68

D

3

69

72

A

3

74

77

B.

4

89

91

Drivers.

1

25

26

23

~~498~~

491

2/18 AIF War Diary

APPX 26

Notes by Capt Ramsey Sharp's Adj. - Orders

B. N. Q. ^{issued at} ~~135~~ Capt Bennett } In charge
 HQ ^{T/S Comp.} ~~135~~ " Rowell } deck sects.

C.
B
A
D.

4 T6 Deck

Sections:

	Sect.	Cabin
Ep. { Mr. Morvell.	1	16
Legs { Capt Galley.	2	33
Mr. McDonald.	4	31
Capt. Rowan	5	32

Breakfast. Tea Bread Butter & Jam.

~~Sect.~~ Tea - In Bolls. Food Galley.

Dry - Butchers Shop

Aft well Deck P.

Nos in
Sections
430
600
600
450
1000

	B'fast.	
1.	08.00.	13.00
4	08.20.	13.20
2	08.40.	13.40.
5	09.00.	14.00
Deck.	09.20.	14.20

3080

Mess Orders 1 per 20 min.
Obtain Containers. & Return.
Returning Containers.

Dinner

In Bulk from Food Galley

Staggered. 24 per B'fast.

Tea — Draw as for B'fast.

Sweeping & Cleaning Parties
below decks. — Officer i/c
— of each Section.

Cleaning Party — Around Galley
1 & 1 & 12. 2/5 Bn.

Morning & Mid-afternoon
Sweeping P. Food Well 2/5. 1/1/6
Prom. 2/8. 1/1/12
Aft. Well. R.E. 1/1/6.

Washing — Browns, etc.
— No 4 Sect. — Stoves below
Mess Deck

1st Army War Diary Appx 1

Appx 27

TAMO (19 Bde)

PISA (2/8 Bn)

NR 16

14

Strength

with

Unit

off

OR

Total

18

290

308

Weapons

Rifles

90

Brens

12

A/T Rifles

2

Thomson Guns

13

Bren Mags

~~_____~~
~~_____~~
~~_____~~
A/T

~~SECRET~~ AT KOUTROULI

TAMO.

PISA.

NR 16

14.

Strength. with Unit.

off.

O.R.

Total.

18

290.

308.

Weapons

Rifles.

90

Brens.

12

A/T Rifles.

2.

Thompson. Guns.

13

Bren Mags.

(approx
per gun)

~~SECRET~~
A/T

~~SECRET~~ AT KOUTROULI

D. H. H. H. ABCD Coys

Att

MR. 13.

14

- 1. Today is to be spent in improving defenses. Weapon pits are to be extended into section post. Reserve Ammn, ^{including Grenades} & Nations will be distributed to Section posts. @
- 2. N.Z. M.G. Coy is in position on our forward right flank. 2/4 Bn. is in position on our left flank. @
- 3. Coys. will submit by 15.00 hours today. nominal casualty rolls as under.

No.	Rank	Name	Coy	Plac.	Reported By
-----	------	------	-----	-------	-------------

Killed

Wounded & Evacuated

" " - Thought to be prisoner

" " - Known to have been taken prisoner

" " - Missing but believed to be safe

" " - Missing

~~SECRET~~
 [Signature]

7/8 Am War Diary, Apr 41
APPX 28

TRANSPORT ACTIVITIES IN GREECE.

1. Preparation for shipment of vehicles to Greece was an operation which was carried out with unusual efficiency and vehicles were very well handled ~~XXXX~~ both in loading and also unloading. The result of this good work was that vehicles did not suffer in any way from the move and arrived in Greece in excellent condition.
2. On arrival indents were submitted for skid chains which from reports of the country were absolutely essential for wheeled vehicles. Although time and great care was put into these indents the chains did not arrive.
3. The move forward from the Athens area was not good. Road control was lacking. One night was spent with vehicles parked at twenty yards intervals on the road. This incident was caused by the leading vehicles just stopping without warning and sitting down for the night at approx., 2000 hours when it became apparent that the correct destination could not be reached by all vehicles in the convoy. The rear vehicles of the convoy did not move till 1000 hrs the following morning thus forming an excellent target for aircraft. This could not be avoided because in no case could vehicles leave the road and being a one lane road vehicles could not pass thus closing the road for approx., 11 hours.
4. On arrival at our destination Veria the Bde. Comd., allotted an area for the Bn., This area was occupied by the M.T. awaiting the arrival of the troops. M.T. had not been in position an hour when a unit of the 16 Bde. commenced to move into the same area. This incident is mentioned to point out the apparent lack of co-ordination in the move. The incident occurred at the Verria Pass.
6. No sooner had the position been occupied than another move as commenced. This time the unit had to take up a position near the Veve Pass. Troop carrying vehicles arrived some 8 hours late and although the Bn. was expected to ~~XXX~~ be in position by daylight in fact the move had scarcely commenced at that time.
7. ~~At~~ Veve Pass M.T. was practically useless except on the main road. Carriers had to be used to carry meals to troops. Carriers were successful ~~XX~~ to an extent in this work but the splash boards of the machines, which cover the track, caused mud to block up and so eventually to stop the tracks from functioning.
8. During the withdrawal from VEVE the same lack of road control was apparent as in other moves.
9. The Bn. then took up a position N. of the Alakman River with transport on the opposite side, T.O. having received orders from the S.M. to proceed to Mikra~~Valton~~ area. At approx., 1400 hrs on the day after the withdrawal when returning to the unit with essential stores the only bridge across the river was blown although no enemy were in the vicinity for at least 48 hours later. This action completely cut off communications with the unit and as mentioned previously essential stores such as arms ammn., and food could not be transported to the unit. A pontoon bridge capable of taking wheel vehicles up to 3 ton ton capacity was also blown approx., one hour later.
10. The Bn., eventually withdrew from the position and were picked up by unit M.T. which had moved well to the rear dumped their load and returned.
11. A series of ^{ROAD} withdrawals then started with no co-ordination whatsoever.
12. At Brallos orders were issued to destroy all vehicles which were not required to lift troops and their personnel gear. This was carried out and approx., $\frac{1}{2}$ the unit M.T. was destroyed.
13. The first night's withdrawal was the most successful road move ever known in the unit. Everything went to schedule and after driving continually all night the column pulled under cover at daybreak to rest for the day. On the two following nights the convoy was not under cover for two hours at least after daybreak. However enemy air act-

tivity was nil so that no harm was caused by this action.

14. Next came embarkation and destruction of the remaining vehicles.

Howe

Lieut.

T.O. 2/8 Aust. Inf. Bn.

21 April (Continued)

Went with these cable parties owing to the likelihood of their being attacked by enemy patrols which had been active during the darkness. No opposition was encountered and all returned safely having successfully completed their task. The men of this platoon were now suffering acutely in some cases from extreme cold and exposure. Many of them had to receive attention at R.A.P. as they were in an exhausted condition.

14 April Enemy attacks were heavy and sustained right from break of dawn on this day. Fortunately line communications did not suffer any dislocation from shell fire or direct enemy action except in case of C Coy (see Capt. Robertsons report) again on this day at approx. 1600 hrs communications to Bde. ceased. Two men were immediately despatched to investigate and did not return. It is assumed that on approaching the village of KLEIDL they were either killed or wounded and taken prisoner by enemy tank (or tanks) later seen there.

At 1630 hrs approx. I became apprehensive at no return of linesmen and continued failure to get into contact with Bde. H.Q. As enemy forces were seen to have made a considerable break through Ranger's lines on left and posn appeared threatening. I ~~was instructed~~ was instructed by C.O. to endeavour to reach Bde H.Q. contact BDE. Commander and explain seriousness of situation.

Before I gave Instns. to Sig. Sgt. to destroy the main exchange and all telephonic equipment at hand in the event of a withdrawal being ordered. Time of departure approx. 1645 hrs.

Enemy arty; mortar & M.G. fire encountered on way to village across open flat was fairly heavy and judged from direction of strike on ground judged to be coming from ridge overlooking the pass from left.

When about to enter village a medium sized enemy tank bearing what appeared to be large white cross on port side of turret was observed standing on lower road facing south. Time approx. 1700 hrs. Light van which may have been W/T tender in flames 60 yds in rear of tank and evidently as a result of attack from this A.F.V. No sign of Sig. personnel was seen either two Bn. linesmen or W/T crew.

Report on activities of Signal Pl. (2/8 Bn) in operations leading to and during Battle of VEVE Pass 10-12-4-41.

10 April. At approx 1700 hrs Sig Pl was ordered fwd to commence laying of cable to coys then moving into allotted positions:- A Coy right D coy centre C coy left. B coy in rear of Bn.H.Q. back of rd (coy in reserve) Work particularly arduous owing to approaching darkness, steep terrain and falling sleet. Communications L/T opened to coys through exchange at Bn. H.Q. 2130 hrs approx. Operation of line communications continued satisfactorily throughout night. Constant patrolling of lines necessary owing to increasingly heavy snowfall and barring of line at crossings chiefly caused by passage of carriers along front of revine slope. Position of Bn. here referred to was that first taken up on night at pass and about 1 mile Mortar of Kleidl. Up till this time there had been no loss of personnel.

11 April. Further heavy snowfall during morning and telephone system kept in operation only with difficulty due to wet and muddy condition of ground at this stage I was suspected that deliberate attempts were being made to destroy communications to rear. On two occasions lengths of cable measuring from nine to ten yards were found to have been cut from the line (BDE) at points on far side of creek. During the afternoon arty communications to F.O.O. 2/3 rd Regt. (located D coy) having been severed the Bn. circuit was used for passage of fire control orders to and from Bty. posn. At approx. 0330 hrs 11 Pl. B Coy received orders to move up and reinforce C Coy by taking up posn Left 14 Pl. (Lieut Oldfield) 10 Pl. (Lieut Burrows) also moved up to extreme left posn in contact with Rangers' Rig flank. Cable parties were dispatched at this hour to provide telephonic communications with B Coy H.Q. No 10 Pl. H.Q. & 14 Pl. H.Q.

12 April.. Skirted village and followed road on left slope as shells (enemy) were falling up as far as dy Stn on road, after passing village enemy troops were seen descending slopes previously held by Rangers on rd. Rangers in some cases even retreating along dy line and rd. in southerly direction with several bodies of enemy troops armed with S.M.G. in close pursuit. From this posn whilst proceeding along slope I drew continuous S.M.G. fire from enemy on rd. approx. 10 mins later I gained the shelter of a British L/Tank standing astride rd. M.G. fire from which dispersed enemy troops at a distance of approx 250 yds I then proceeded to fwd troop of 2/3 rd. Regt and informed Tp commander of situation. At that moment troop posn came under enemy M/G fire from ridge on left front indicating that enemy had gained the ridge of Ranger's posn. in force. Tp commdr then loaned me a carrier in which I drove to Bde. H. commdr was informed of the situation. Remainder of Sig Pl. withdrew under directions from Adj. at Bn. H.Q. Missing personnel and where possible circumstances attending their disappearance have been notified.

2/8 Bn War Diary April 41

APPX 15A

Report on activities of Signal Pl (2/8 Bn) in operations
leading up to and during Battle of Dove Pass 10-12/44

10 April:

At approx 1700 hrs Sig. Pl was ordered to commence laying of cable to Coys then moving into allotted positions. — A Coy Right, D Coy centre C Coy Left. B Coy in rear of Bn H.Q. N.S. of Rd (Coy in reserve). Work particularly arduous owing to approaching darkness, steep terrain and falling sleet. Communications L/T opened to Coys through exchange at Bn H.Q. 2130 hrs approx. Operation of line communications continued satisfactorily throughout night. Constant patrolling of lines necessary owing to increasingly heavy snowfall and boring of line at crossings chiefly caused by passage of carriers along foot of reverse slope. Position of Bn here referred to was that first taken up on Right of Pass and about 1 mile North of KLEIDL. Up till this time there had been no loss of personnel.

11 April

Further heavy snowfall during morning and telephone system kept in operation only with difficulty due to wet and muddy condition of ground. At this stage it was suspected that deliberate attempts were being made to destroy communications to rear. On two occasions lengths of cable measuring from five to ten yards were seen found to have been cut from the line (Bde) at points on far side of creek.

During the afternoon early communications to F.O.O., 2/3 Fd Regt (located D Coy) having been severed the Bn circuit was used for passage of fire control orders to and from Bde post.

At approx 0330 hrs 11 Pl B Coy received orders to move up and reinforce C Coy ~~post~~ by taking up post Left 14 Pl. (Lieut Oldfield). 10 Pl (Lieut Burraives) also moved up to extreme left post in contact with Rangers Right Flank. Cable parties were despatched at this hour to provide telephonic communication with B Coy H.Q. — No 10 Pl H.Q. + 14 Pl H.Q.

11 April. (cont). I went with these cable parties owing to the likelihood of their being attacked by enemy patrols which had been active during darkness. No opposition was encountered, and all returned safely having successfully completed the task.

The men of this Pl were now suffering, acutely in some cases from extreme cold and exposure. Many of them had to receive attention at R.H.P as they were in an exhausted condition.

12 April.

Enemy attacks were heavy and sustained right from break of dawn on this day. Fortunately line communications did not suffer any dislocation from shell fire or direct ^{except in case of C Coy (see Capt Robertson's report)} enemy action again on this day at approx 1600 hrs communication to Bde ceased. Two men were immediately despatched to investigate and did not return. It is assumed that on approaching the village of KLEIDL they were either killed or wounded and taken prisoner by enemy tanks (or tanks) later seen there.

At 1630 hrs approx I became apprehensive at non return of linemen and continued failure to get into contact with Bde H.Q. As enemy forces were seen to have made a considerable breach through Rangiers' lines on left and soon appeared threatening, I was instructed by C.O to endeavour to reach Bde H.Q, contact Bde Commander, and explain circumstances of situation.

Before leaving I gave instrs to Sig Sgt to destroy the main exchange and all telephonic equipment at hand in the event of a withdrawal being ordered. Time of departure approx 1645 hrs.

Enemy arty, mortar & M.G fire encountered on way to village across open flat was fairly heavy and judged from direction of strikes on ground judged to be coming from ridge overlooking the pass from Left.

When about to enter village a medium sized enemy tank bearing what appeared to be large white cross on both side of turret was observed standing on lower road facing SOUTH. Time approx 1700 hrs. Light van which may have been W/T tender in flames 60' in rear of tank and evidently as a result of attack from this P.F.V. No sign of Sig personnel was seen either two Pn linemen or W/T crew.

12 April (cont)

Skirted village and followed road on left slope as shells (enemy) were falling up as far as Ply Stn on road. After passing village enemy troops were seen descending slopes ^{previously} held by Rangers on to Rd. Rangers in some cases were retreating along Ply line and Rd in southerly direction with several bodies of enemy troops armed with S.M.G.'s in close pursuit. From this point whilst proceeding along slope I drew continuous S.M.G. fire from enemy on Rd. Approx 10 mins later I gained the shelter of a British L/tank standing astride Rd M/G fire from which dispersed enemy troops at a distance of approx 250'. I then proceeded to find troops of 2/3 Bde Regt and informed Sp. Comdr of situation. At that moment troops soon came under enemy M/G fire from ridge on left front indicating that enemy had gained the ridge of Rangers' position in force. Sp Comdr then loaned me a carrier in which I drove to Bde HQ. The Bde Comdr was informed of the situation.

Remainder of Coy Pl withdrew under directions from adjt at Bde HQ. Missing personnel and where possible circumstances attending their disappearance have been notified.

L. Sheldy Lieut
O.C. No. 1 Pl.
W. Q. Coy.

2/8 Bn. War Diary Apr 41
Appx 29

2/8 Battalion A.A. Ship Detachment During Greece Evacuation.

NOTE- While the 2/8 Bn. were in Greece a draft of one officer and

2/8 Battalion A.A. Ship Detachment During the Greece Evacuation;

Note- While the 2/8 Bn. were in Greece a draft of one officer and 29 other ranks were sent from the 19th. I.T.B., then at JULIS camp, Palestine to the A.I.F. Staging Camp at AMARIYA. This draft was composed almost exclusively of men on the "X" list being drafted back to the 2/8 Bn. The usual routine of awaiting embarkation was followed until Wednesday 29th April, when similar detachments of Sixth Divisional Units were suddenly sent off in small parties on secret missions. This coupled with ambiguous reports as to the situation in Greece was the first indication that some large scale movement was anticipated. Wednesday 23rd At 2300 hours all officers of 17th and 19th Bdes. waiting embarkation to Greece were paraded to C.O., Staging Camp, and received orders to move at 0400 next morning. Total of 11 officers and 143 O.R's.

Thursday 24th. Moved at 0430. Embarked 0425 and proceed to Wharf at Alexandria. Party split into 11 detachments-1 officer 1 Sgt. 12 O/R's. No 2 party comprised Lieut J.S. Adams, Sgt. L. Pyke and 12 other ranks, all 2/8 Bn.

Orders as issued by a senior staff Officer (Lt.Col. Binns) were short as follows: "You are going on ships in separate parties to provide A.A. protection. It is bound to be difficult and dangerous task"; Then followed some terse advice as to familiarizing men with weapons provided, and a few personal comments. No 2 party were ordered aboard the "Khedive Ismail", 9000 tons, and were towed to ship on a lighter loaded with 4 Hotchkiss aircraft machine guns, improvised mountings. 15000 S.A.A. Ball and a large quantity of provisions. Also were included two officers from NZAMC and 6 stretcher bearers & orderlies.

Owing to pressure of time only personnel plus ~~Brigs~~ S.A.A. etc could be taken on board. The H.M.T. Khedive Ismail immediately proceed to sea and formed a convoy totalling seven transports and a large escort of cruisers and destroyers including the special A.A. cruiser "H.M.S. Carlyle" which had over 100 enemy planes to its credit. The "Khedive Ismail" already carried a section of Sepoys who manned two twin Lewis guns above the bridge. It was decided to mount two Hotchkiss guns abaft the funnel on the sun deck and two on the Poop deck astern on either side of the anti-submarine 4" in. naval gun.

By 1700 hours this was done. The men soon mastered the intricacies of an entirely new weapon. Suitable standing orders were drafted and the first ^{stand to} observed from 1830 till 1930 that evening. Friday 25th April. Stand-to at dawn, Rosters arranged. Further work with sandbags to provide protection. Owing to limited number available only one thickness could be used. Effect more moral than practical. 1100 hrs tested guns. 1 found to be U.S. (firing pin) and beyond repair. No tracer in S.A.A. taken aboard; so borrowed all the Sepoys had surplus, 350 rounds. By 1630 preparations completed as satisfactorily as possible. 1715 hrs Alarm. Convoy bombed from 8-10000 feet by two flights of Italian bombers. No damage except an aerial wire severed by splinter from nearest salvo; Nothing further.

Saturday 26th Usual routine of stand to. At 0815 another alarm. Aircraft identified as Blenheims. 1100 hours. Seventeen aircraft attempt to raid convoy but were driven off by patrol of Blenheims. Aircraft probably Italians operating from Rhodes.

17.15 hours. ~~SEVEN~~ Convoy has broken up. "Khedive Ismail" "Slanatt" & "Glen Royal" with escort of 1 cruiser and 4 lesser naval craft form separate little convoy, destination NAUPLION. We appear to be

to be travelling up a long narrow gulf. 1750 hrs. Khedive Ismail
attacked by 3 Stuka dive bombers. Attack complete surprise as the enemy
machines dropped vertically through thin low cloud but first raider was
engaged by all Hotchkess guns before completing dive. Near miss forward
killing two lascars wounding five, causing number of holes in plating and
a fire in forecastle (lascars quarters) Other two hotly engaged causing
them to miss, the blast from their bombs breaking all glass work on star-
board side. One Stuka abandoned attacks with smoke streaming from tail
but was not seen to crash. ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ The other two pressed in most
persistent attack but were beaten off by S.A.A. fire from ships. One
dropped another bomb missing astern while other dived on Glen Royal and
settled down astern and a destroyer steered by. 2115 dropped anchor off
Nauplia. Port in flames preparations on board for 1700 troops.
Sunday 27th. 0345. Weighed anchored and moved south down gulf. No troops
on board Khedive Ismail. 0640 Attacked by 6 Stukas flying very low
over water. Main attack directed at Slamatt Persistent machinegunning
and bombing by 5 Stukas while sixth machine delivered a surprise attack
from the sun scoring a hit with a very heavy bomb in superstructure
beneath bridge of the ship just above the rail. All forward superstructure
wrecked including bridge and A.A. fire ceased immediately.
The enemy immediately tried surprise tactics on Khedive Ismail but
commendable alertness of detachment prevented success and attack beaten
off. This attack was followed by a highlevel raid by two parallel
bombers. Both sticks barely missed the Khedive Ismail. These highlevel
attacks were repeated with clockwork regularity until after midday, the
Khedive Ismail was the sole target of this persistent bombing and was once
but below the waterline by aerial torpedo which failing to explode only
broke a pipe in the engine room and added several grey bales to the engine
room staff. Another stick of six heavy calibre bombs neatly straddled the
ship but apart from wrecking the sandbagging by blast did no further
damage as most of the fragile material such as glass in the structure of
the ships was already shattered. At about 1100 hours destroyers gave
submarine alarm and dropped a number of depth charges all clear at 1 P.M.
Shortly afterwards rejoined the main convoy. Later another alarm.
Stick burst near stern of Costa Rica which began to settle down astern.
No further incidents.
Monday no outward incidents.

John Adamshead
JAS

27 Apr
31 May 41

MONTH
YEAR

JUL 22 1941

ack
A.I.F. FORM C 2118A

WAR DIARY

(RENDER UNDER SECRET COVER)

UNIT 2/8 Aust. Inf. Bn

For material required, see F.S.R. Vol. 1, Sec. 174

PLACE	DATE	SUMMARY OF EVENTS Routine training details and information given in Casualty Returns are NOT required	REFERENCES TO APPENDICES	C.O.'s REPORT AND COMMENTS ON MONTH (On Operations, Equipment, Movement, Health, Administration, etc.)
		<p>This diary has been compiled completely from C.O.'s Coy & Pln. Comdrs reports & the knowledge of the action by the Acting Intelligence Offr.</p> <p>All the records & Log Diary of the Bn. were lost at SPHAKIA the night before embarkation due to the Pack in which these documents were carried being stolen by some person while the Bn. was halted & resting on the troop congested scarp near this village. An immediate search for these documents was made as the loss was noticed within 10 minutes of the pack being last seen but no trace could be found of them.</p> <p>Thus, the times mentioned in this diary are only approximate, but otherwise the information contained is accurate.</p> <p>In reference to approx. 15 to 18 it is pointed out that 2/8 Bn. Code Name was <u>FANO</u> & H.Q. 19 Aust. Inf. Bde. RUCK.</p> <p>Approx. 14 maps of GEORIOUPOLIS is purely diagramatic as no maps are available for an accurate reproduction.</p>		



Signature *A. J. They* *Major*

Instructions regarding War Diaries and Intelligence Summaries are contained in F.S. Regs., Part II. and the Staff Manual respectively. Title pages will be prepared in manuscript.

WAR DIARY
or
INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.
(Erase heading not required).



Army Form C.2119

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Souda Bay	Apr. 27	1700 hrs	Bn. lands at Souda Bay from destroyers after being rescued from T.S. Costa Rica which had been bombed and was left in a sinking condition	appx. 3.
	27	1800	The bn. marches 12 miles to a posn, $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile North of the village of PROVARMA and bivouacs for the night.	appx. 12
	28		Rolls are called and the following officers and personnel were present.: Maj. A.S. Key Capt. W.T. Robertson Capt. C.J.A. Coombes, Capt. J.A.M. Martin, Lieuts. J.C. Gately T.A. Lowe, H.A. Coulston, A.L. Gluth, J.F. Burrowes, C.L. Thompson, F.I. Phelan, J.M. Maskell J.E.M. Hall Capt. R.R. Anderson M.O. and approx. 378 O.R.'s. The bn. rests for the day. As most of the mens equipment was lost on the T.S. Costa Rica the bn. was very short of L.M.Gs T.S.M.G.s rifles and ammo.. Prior to embarkation of troops from Greece all automatic weapons were collected and put aboard T.S. City of London.	
	29		An issue of clothing is made to personnel to replace portion of gear lost. All remaining equipment and rifles are put into a bn. pool. Orders issued for the bn. to patrol and defend its own area against parachute troops. The bn. is reorganised on a three coy. basis consisting of B Coy approx 140 strong, C Coy same strength, H.Q. strength 100 and E.H.Q. H.Q. Coy composed of medical evacuees from GREECE landed at CRETE, and medically unfit personnel from B and C Coys. Fit personnel from H.Q. Coy went to B and C coys and therefore there was only one really fit platoon in H.Q. coy. The allotment of officers was as follows: C.O. Maj. A.S. Key Adj. Lieut. J.C. Gately Q.M. Capt. J.A.M. Martin, M.O. Capt. R.R. Anderson, O.C. B Coy Capt. C.J.A. Coombes 2i.c. Lieut. J.M. Maskell Platoon Comdrs Lieuts. A.L. Gluth, H.A. Coulston, J.F. Burrowes. O.C. C Coy Capt. W.T. Robertson pln comds Lieuts. T.A. Lowe, F.I. Phelan, J.E.M. Hall, C.L. Thompson. HQ. coy was comd by WO1 E. Balfour and the I.O. was taken over by Sgt. R.H.C. Cardew. The equipment pooled was reissued to rifle coys but there were only enough arms to equip one coy after the addition of a number of rifles issued to us from bde.	
	30		Situation unchanged. Bn training parades from 0900 to 1100 hrs and 1400 to 1600 hrs daily.	
May I			Bn allotted a new area to defend against parachute troops and comes under comd SOUDA AREA FORCE in comd Maj Gen Weston. The bn having been given further rifles and L.M.Gs, enough to equip two coys, moved to the area $\frac{1}{4}$ mile east of KALIBEES. On arrival there B and C coys take up forward posns facing east with B coy on right flank and C coy on left, HQ coy in	Appx. 12.

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WAR DIARY
or
INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.
(Erase heading not required).



Army Form C.2118.

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
			reserve and personnel dig in. (Refer to map posn B)	approx. 12
	MAY 2	1100	Bn parades in M.G. Bn area for address by Maj Gen Freyberg in which he spoke of methods and action to take against parachute tps. The Bn continues preparing a defensive posn, and an O.P. 1 1/2 miles fwd is established and manned by the Int Sec.	
		3	One M.G. pln comes under comd of this Bn and is sited in C Coys area and also B Coys area (one sec to each coy) covering rd blocks and particularly the open ground on the rear slope of the high feature immediately in front of C Coys posn. General situation unchanged. Constant patrolling is carried out of the area fwd of the FDL's. Heavy air activity daily over SOUDA BAY, but to date nothing over our area. Further issue of rifles and LMG's to the Bn.	approx. 12.
		4	BHQ and HQ Coy move from present posn to posn previously occupied by MG Coy just in rear of B Coy. MG pln under our comd and the MG Coy in this area receive orders to proceed to GEORIOUPOLIS and come under comd 19 AUST INF BDE.	approx. 12
		5	Maj Gen Weston visits Maj Key and extends the area of defence of this Bn. This is now the area from KALIBEES to GEORIOUPOLIS, the main task being to block the adv by enemy inf and AFV's along the GEORIOUPOLIS-KALIBEES rd, should the enemy land in the former area. One vehicle is to be attached to the Bn.	
		6	Lieut J.C. Gately and Sgt Cardew proceed to CANEA to see Maj Gen Weston to obtain promised vehicle and maps as these had not arrived as promised and were delaying the task of the Bn. Maj Gen Weston gave more details of the task and it was found that our area extended westward toward SOUDA BAY as far as SOUDA POINT and that we were also to give protection to the CD and AA Btys. The vehicle and maps were obtained.	approx. 12
		7	Maj Key Lieut Gately and Sgt Cardew proceed on recce to GEORIOUPOLIS and while there visit HQ 19 AUST INF BDE. This HQ then issued instructions for the Bn to come under comd 19 AUST INF BDE and to occupy the area at GEORIOUPOLIS previously occupied by the 2/11 Bn (see attached map posn C). The task in this area is beach defence it being expected that enemy will land at this point and drive through to SOUDA BAY.	approx. 14
		8	The Bn marches from KALIBEES to new area; distance 14 miles and bivouacs for the night.	

WAR DIARY

or

~~INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.~~

(Erase heading not required).



Army Form C.2118.

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
GEORGIOPOLIS	MAY 9		Instruction from Bde are to take up the same area and task as previously occupied by the 2/11 Bn. Recce made of the area and coys allotted posns with instructions to dig defensive posns. On our left flank 2/7 Bn in defensive posn (see attached map posn XX). B Coy right flank on high ground overlooking beach; C Coy left flank with BHQ and HQ Coy 200 yards north of LAKE KOURNA.	approx. 14.
		10	Visit from Capt Luxton and later Brig Vasey. His instructions are that the Bn will occupy a smaller area on the right flank of the 2/7 Bn. Coys allotted new areas. The role of the Bn now is one of concealment on the right flank of 2/7 Bn. The object is that if the enemy land and move westward and attack the 2/7 Bn this Bn which is lying concealed will move fwd and attack the enemies flank or rear thus taking him by surprise. The concealment areas allotted to Coys are of no tactical imp importance and therefore no attempt is made to dig in.	
		11	A visit from the BM who has different interpretation of the Brigs orders and thinks that we should have defensive posns. Brig Vasey visits Maj Key and instructs that defensive posns shall be taken up and dug by coys, but that the coys shall occupy their concealment posns until "action stations" are called. Defensive areas are allotted to coys but owing to the area allotted to the Bn by BDE the posns are not entirely satisfactory. * Reasons for taking up defensive posns, although our role was to be one of attack is that the enemy on landing may not immediately move westward towards GEORGIOPOLIS as expected, but move southwards towards the foothills and thus contact our Bn. The date of the intended invasion by the enemy is set down as the 15th MAY and all units are under the state of preparedness "CROMWELL" (i.e. ready to man action station within 1/2 hr).	
		12	General situation unchanged. Coys concentrating on defensive posns and active patrolling carried out on beaches and FDL's. An appreciation of the enemy's tactics for the occupation of CRETE issued and summarised as follows: - "the occupation is expected to take three days D1, D2, D3 - D1 By bombing and machine gunning of area around aerodromes prior to a landing of parachutists. As parachutists land, which they do from a height of 300 feet, continues in a circle but on an ever increasing radius. Parachutists endeavour to capture the drome but whether successful or not air borne inf are landed 1/2 hr later. These combined tps then consolidate the drome and recce planes, ground staff and AA defence are landed on the drome. D2 Air borne inf push on from the drome to capture the posts of SOUDA BAY and HERAKLION. D3 Sea borne arrive with arty and AFV's. This appreciation is based on previous experience of parachutists and from information gained from agents in GREECE.	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
GEORGIOPOLIS	MAY 13		Lieut Phelan and a party of drivers despatched to SOUDA BAY to take over five Bren Carriers for the Bn. This party had to unload these carriers themselves from the ship, the carriers being submerged in 2½ feet of water. Altogether 30 carriers were extricated. General situation unchanged. Air activity over GEORGIOPOLIS nil but increasing air activity over SOUDA BAY, several ships having been struck. Night raids over SOUDA BAY have commenced.	Appx 5.
	14		Situation unchanged. Coys still preparing defensive posn. Four 75mm guns have taken up posns in GEORGIOPOLIS area and can cover portions of our front. These guns are being manned by the 2/3 FD REGT. Two CD 6 inch guns to be manned by the MARINES are expected in this area shortly.	
	15		Brig Vasey issues instructions that all defensive posns to be completed by today. Air defensive system nearing completion. Air raids over SOUDA BAY growing more intense.	
	16		Situation unchanged. One sec MG pln comes under comd of this Bn and is sited in C Coy area. Two A Tk guns Vickers 2 pdrs take up posns between our left flank and right flank of B coy 2/7 Bn comd RETIMO-GEORGIOPOLIS rd.	appx. 14.
	17		Recce made over hills to SW of our posns for withdrawl of this Bn should this become necessary. Instructions from BDE are that our front is to be wired and enough wire for 50 yards of Double apron arrive. C Coy has priority of wire. Concert held for tps in BHQ area by Padre Dakers 2/7 BN. Two carriers arrive for this Bn from SOUDA BAY. Remainder are still to come, the ship they were on having been damaged by bombing.	
	18		More wire arrived and C Coy continues the wiring on their front. Church parade for the Bn.	
	19		Situation Unchanged. No further carriers have arrived.	
	20	1100	Six large tp carrying aircraft, enemy, fly over head from the direction of SOUDA BAY. Information received from SOUDA BAY that parachutists have landed between SOUDA BAY and CANEA. Warning order from BDE to be ready to move. Major Key and Tnt Sgt proceed to BDE, from there CO sent to CANEA to try and contact Maj Gen Weston. Int Sgt returns to unit with instructions for Bn to move by tpt which is being supplied by BDE to an area NW of NEON KHORIAN and there to await return of CO. Tpt guided to wrong area and does not arrive until 1500 hrs. 1510 hrs orders to move cancelled by BDE.	appx. 13.

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
SOUDA BAY	MAY 20 (cont)	1630	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>CONTACT</i></p> <p>Bn ordered to move to posn previously allotted and ¹CO and then proceed to posn west of village MOURNIES (see attached map posn ^D) via SOUDA BAY and CANEA. 2000 hrs Bn takes up posn east of creek just outside MOURNIES with A group on right flank and two Greek Regts on left flank, frontage 2000 yds. Enemy holding two high features SW 2000 yds from our posn, and have approx 100 inf in the village PERIVOLIA 1000 yds from our front. Coys immediately dig in and prepare defensive posns. Active patrolling carried out during night but the enemy not contacted. Information received was that the enemy had landed 1000x parachutists in the areas already mentioned and that the area we now occupy had been in enemy hands but had been recaptured earlier in the day by the MARINES.</p>	<p>" A Group comprises all med unfit personnel from all units awaiting embarkation from CRETE, and also some RASC personnel. Strength approx 180.</p>
		21 0600	<p>Information received from the 2 GREEK REGT was that they were attacking the village of PERIVOLIA during the morning and we were asked to send out a strong patrol to the north of the village to cut off the retreat of the enemy as the GREEKS pushed in from the south. This patrol was sent out but did not contact the enemy although they were fired on by MMG from some distance, the posn of the MMG they could not locate. This patrol reported the village clear of enemy.</p>	<p>approx. 12. maps approx 2.</p>
		0900 A	<p>A fighting patrol from C Coy one pln strength under Sgt Clarke was sent out to patrol the village and information brought back at 1300 hrs was that the pln had engaged the enemy south of PERIVOLIA and was pinned down by heavy MMG fire. To date they had four wounded. B Coy under Capt C.J.A. Coombes was sent out to cover the withdrawal of Sgt Clarke's pln. Delay was caused through the GREEK patrols in PERIVOLIA firing on our men thinking that they were enemy, and B Coy had to move out from the GREEK front.</p>	<p>APPX 6. SGT CLARKE'S REPORT.</p> <p>approx. 2.</p>
		16000 1700	<p>Sgt Clarke's pln returned to the Bn posn, orders sent to B Coy to return. B Coy returned, they received the orders just as they were about to engage the enemy. The GREEK REGT has not yet made contact with our left flank. Active night patrols carried out. More parachutists land in MALEME area. Heavy air activity over whole SOUDA sector.</p>	
		22	<p>Situation unchanged. Heavy bombing and machine gunning on units on our right flank, so far no attention to our Bn area. Active patrolling carried out during day and night. GREEK REGT has still not made contact with our left flank, leaving a gap of a 1000x between themselves and us. Enemy information is that an unknown number of parachutists hold two high features 2000x SW from our posn and are armed with Tommy Guns, rifles and MMG's. (For enemies posn see attached map posn (1)).</p>	<p>approx 12.</p>

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
SOUDA BAY	MAY 23		<p>Maj Key has conference with Maj Gen Weston and Brig Vasey at 2 GREEK REGT HQ. 2/8 Bn now comes under comd HQ 19 AUST INF BDE. Orders for this Bn to move fwd to next creek north of PYGROS village a distance of 1500x from our present posn (see attached map posn E), there to contact left flank of 2/7 Bn (see attached map posn X) and the two 2 GREEK REGT to form up on our left flank (See attached map posn O). During the proceeding days the forces holding MALEME aerodrome have been pushed back and an attempt is being made to make one line- NZ forces on the right, AUSTRALIANS and GREEKS on the left, thus cutting CANEA completely off from the enemy. 1700 hrs Bn moves fwd to this new posn on the eastern side of the creek from PYGROS with our left flank on the northern edge on this village and our right flank at the junc of the creek and the PRISON RD. The enemy are now approx 900 x west of our left flank (see posn (1)). B Coy on left flank with one pln across creek and C Coy on right flank HQ Coy in reserve.</p> <p>Attached to this Bn is one Pk - MG - sited on our left flank.</p>	<p>approx 13.</p>
		24	<p>Active patrolling carried out in conjunction with the 2/7 Bn. Some contact made with enemy patrols, but no serious engagement. Bn area bombed and machine gunned, 16 casualties. Two plns of HQ Coy now come under comd B Coy which has three plns on western side of creek and two plns on eastern side. C Coy one pln fwd over creek. Two 3 inch mortars in possession of this Bn. Base plates which were not issued with mortars have been made by the ENGINEERS. Attempt is being made at dusk to mortar the two high features held by the enemy (see posn (1)), MG's to co-operate. Two ITALIAN FIAT MG's issued to bn. These have been sited in B Coys area. 2 GREEK REGT intends attacking the enemies posn at dusk and has asked for arty support. This is being supplied by one 75 mm gun and therefore our mortars will not function.</p>	<p>approx 2. approx 13 & 7</p>
		25	<p>GREEK attack only partially successful. Conference at GREEK HQ with Brig Vasey. 2/8 Bn given task of capturing the two enemy posns (posn (1)), this to take place at dusk. The attack on these feature is to relieve the pressure on the NZ front as it is expected that they will have to withdraw. On the capture of these features this bn will swing right and move fwd approx 1000 x and link up with NZ front. In support of us is one 75 mm gun. Two hrs before ZERO the attack cancelled by BDE as the NZ have been able to hold their posn.</p>	<p>approx 13 approx 2.</p>
		26 2	<p>Early morning Bn heavily machine gunned and bombed. Reports from fwd plns that enemy appear to be massing for an attack. 1030 hrs enemy attack on left flank aided by mortars. Lieut Gluth and Lieut Thompson's pln pinned down in the village of PYGROS as enemy have worked xxx around through the gap between ourselves and the 2 GREEK REGT and have MMG sited in our left rear. The GREEK REGT had not made contact with our left flank as ordered. Orders for the Bn to withdraw</p>	<p>approx 13 & 7</p>

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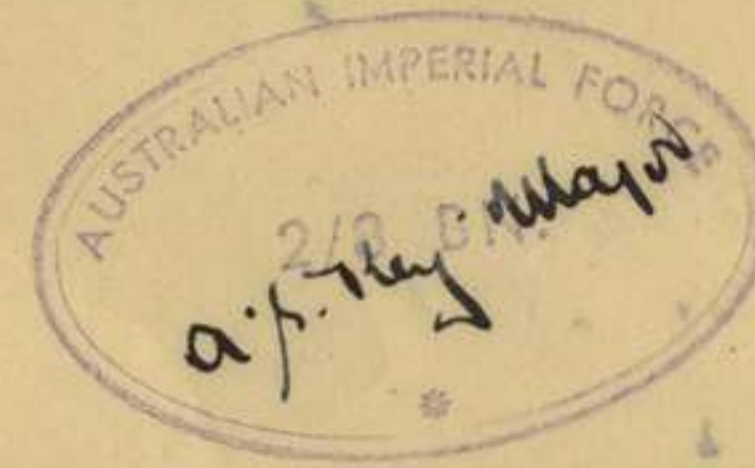
Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
SOUDA BAY	MAY 26 (cont)		to original posn outside MOURNIES (see attached map posn D). Enemy have pushed into northern edge of PERIVOLIA making it difficult for B Coy to withdraw . Bde orders on reaching new posn are to reinforce a coy of MARINES at present holding that posn and to watch particularly our left flank. Coys in posn 2100 hrs. 2245 hrs orders from Bde for this bn to move across country to REFRESHMENT CAMP area (see attached map posn F), and there await further orders.	Appx.13. Appx.13.
	27	0100	Bn reaches new area and rests until 0600 hrs. Orders are then issued for the bn to take up a defensive posn xxxxxx with the right flank astride the CANEA-SOUDA BAY Road, and left flank to link up with 2/7 Bn (2/7 Bn see attached map posn XY),, a frontage of 500x. This posn was occupied by daylight and the coy areas are as follows;- Initially B Coy forward, with two plns left of rd and one pln on right. This posn was strengthened by plns from C Coy mainly on the left of B Coy filling in the gap between this coy and the right flank of 2/7 Bn. HQ Coy in rear with two plns on the right side of the road reinforcing B Coy. At 1000 hrs NZ troops which have been resting in our area move to the rear and take up a second line of defence. Enemy mortar fire commences in this bn area and some casualties are sustained. 1030 hrs enemy attack on our centre and left flank under cover of heavy mortar, MMg and LMG fire. This attack however swung onto the right flank of the 2/7 Bn and heavy fighting ensued. The 2/7 Bn counter attacked with their D coy and pushed the enemy back until they were level with the right flank of the MAORI Bn who then carried the counter attack on from there. The enemy was pushed back altogether a distance of approx 1 1/2 miles. The 2/7 Bn actually reached a posn approx 1/2 mile fwd of their original posn but consolidated a new posn 200x in front of their original posn. The counter attack by the 2/7 Bn was covered by fire and ably assisted by our B Coy. The C.O. of 2/7 Bn asked that we move our line fwd to come level with his but this was found to be unsatisfactory to us as it would weaken our posn tactically and also leave our right flank without protection. By mutual consent a pln of the 2/7 Bn was put in to fill the gap of 200 x between the 2/7 Bn right flank and our left flank. Throughout the whole day enemy activity was constant on our front this front being under MMG, LMG and mortar fire practically the whole time . B Coy and attached plns LMG'S were kept busy for the period. We were advised that the enemy were expected to break through on our right flank and tps moving on that flank were fired on, but they turned out to be tps evacuating CANEA HOSPITAL.	Appx.13. Appx.2. Appx.3. Appx.4.
		2000	The bn has orders from bde to withdraw at 2100 hrs to a posn 1 mile north of NEONKHORIAN (see attached map posn G)., and is to move via the SOUDA BAY road. At the same time orders were also issued for the evacuation of the island as it was thought that we could no longer hold the enemy. All forces in SOUDA BAY are to proceed to SPHAKIA on the south coast of the island via NEONKHORIAN to embark. 2200 hrs the Just as the bn is about to move a pte of this bn who had been taken prisoner earlier today managed to escape and rejoin the unit with the information that	Appx.12.

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INTELLIGENCE - SUMMARY --

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
SOUDA BAY	MAY 27	cont.	<p>the enemy knew of our intention of evacuating the island and also that the point of embarkation was SPHAKIA. Also the pte stated that on our immediate front was one bn of enemy inf. Deductions made from the information was that the enemy had become used to a withdrawal on the part of our forces at 2200 hrs during the proceeding nights, and that this pte was purposely allowed to escape with the information he had in the hope that our forces would delay their withdrawal and thus give the enemy time to bring up reinforcements. Maj Key conferred with C.O. 2/7 Bn, who was to withdraw immediately after us. The reason for delay in the bn withdrawing at the time ordered 2100 hrs, is that the enemy again became very active on our front particularly with LMG and MMG fire and it had been decided to hold this line until the front became more quiet. 2200 hrs it was decided by Maj Key and the C.O. 2/7 Bn to withdraw the above deduction from the pw statement being considered correct. The bn withdraws along the rly line to the junc rly line and SOUDA BAY road and thence via this road to NEONKHORION a distance of 14 miles.</p>	Appx.12.
	28	0400 1100	<p>Bn takes up posn astride rd KALIBEES-NEONKHORION with frontage facing North. Two coys fwd, B and C with HQ coy in reserve, Bn rests. 0800 hrs. To the west of our posn the 2/7 Bn (see attached map posn XXXXX XZ), have come in contact with the enemy but there is no enemy activity on our front. Bn has orders to withdraw through NEON KHORION to take up a posn with the LEAFORCE at ESTRATIOS and come under comd of Col Young. 1200 hrs. The bn moves to the new posn while C.O. goes fwd to contact Col. Young. When 1 mile from ESTRATIOS the B.M. orders the bn to halt and to take up a posn in the immediate vicinity. In the meantime the C.O. has made arrangements with Col. Young to take up a reserve posn in his area. The bn is ordered to move fwd to this new posn (see attached map posn H), 1400 hrs. Enemy begin machine gunning left flank of LEAFORCE. C.O. Moves B Coy up to left flank of LEAFORCE to watch the bank of creek that now runs in front of B Coy and continues on southwards into the foothills. 1420 hrs. Col. Young asks for more reinforcement to his left flank as it is thought that the enemy will try to move down the creek and cross on the left and attack our rear. C Coy is moved onto the left flank. M.G. pln under our comd is sited on high feature 500x in rear of BHQ which gave them comd of left flank and good overhead fire to cover the withdrawal of the whole bn along the main rd. Enemy mortar fire heavy in village of ESTRATIOS, and on centre of LEAFORCE posn. 1500 hrs. Lieut. Phelan F.I. wounded by mortar in village while his two carriers were patrolling the main rd ESTRATIOS-VRYSES. 1600 hrs. Orders issued from bde for the bn to move at 2100 hrs. The 2/7 Bn which was immediately in rear of our posn had orders to withdraw and move from this posn at 1300 hrs. 2100 hrs. Bn withdraws from posn and moves to an area allotted on the VRYSES-SPHAKIA ROAD 12 miles south of ESTRATIOS. (see attached map posn J) This posn is known as KERATES. On passing through VRYSES our LO from bde Lieut. Rumley contacted the C.O. and took fwd by transport our wounded and intelligence personnel the latter to act as guides to xxx W.P.</p>	Appx.12. Appx.12. Appx.12. Appx.12.

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
KERATES	MAY 28	cont	and bn area. We had been given the information that from VRYSES southwards water was very scarce and that as much water as possible was to be carried by the bn from this posn southwards.	
	29	0200	Bn arrives at W.P. and fills all containers available. 0500 hrs. Bn arrives at allotted area and rests for remainder of night. 1000 hrs. Recce party moves fwd to SYN AMMOUDARI and at 1200 hrs the bn moves fwd to this posn (see attached map posn K). As the 2/7 Bn have elements fwd of this posn i.e. northwards, to engage the enemy no tactical posns are taken up by this bn. 1500 hrs. The bn receives instruction that it is part of the 19 AUS. INF. BDE in conjunction with the MARINES and will have to fight the rearguard action on the beach at SPHAKIA. 1600 hrs. Recce party with representatives move fwd to beach area to make recce of new posns. Orders are for the bn to be clear of village SYN AMMOUDARI by 2100 hrs. 2030 hrs. Bn moves from this area and owing to the congestion and lack of cooperation by units formed up on the only road to the beach awaiting to embark we have at times to leave the road and make detours and are also stopped and hindered by these tps.	Appx.12. Appx.14. (inset) Appx.2.
SPHAKIA	30	0315	Bn halts on scarp road owing to congestion of tps fwd and rests for remainder of night.	Appx.14. (inset)
		0530 0900	Bn moves to bivouac area $\frac{3}{4}$ mile fwd having covered distance of 10 miles from SYN AMMOUDARI. Bn moves fwd to take up a posn on the left flank and to the rear of the line held by the 2/7 Bn and the MARINES. This posn covered a ravine through which it is expected that the enemy would advance along towards the beach and try to outflank the rear guard. B Coy was on left mouth of ravine and one pln on right mouth near O.P.. C. Coy to the left of B coy and HQ Coy in rear and in a posn where it could give good support to both coys. 1400. hrs. A patrol was seen by the O.P moving down the ravine from the direction from which the enemy was expected. They were seen to be wearing steel helmets blue jackets and khaki shorts. There was some uncertainty as to whether there party was GREEK air force personnel who wore the uniform mentioned above and who were taking cover from a/c in the ravine or if they were enemy. It was decided to treat them as enemy and fire was opened. As soon as possible identification discs were taken from the dead and wounded and it certified them as being Germans. 1600 hrs Orders for this bn to embark tonight. Orders to embark cancelled by FORCE HQ. No further enemy activity. Apparently this had been a large patrol and on being fired on had withdrawn leaving 84 dead. Rations on scale of $\frac{1}{2}$ tin bully beef and one packet of biscuits issued. No enemy activity during the night. Portion of MAIORI bn had taken up posn on crest of ravine on left. One pln of MAIORI tps patrolled the ravine for two miles without contacting the enemy.	Appx.2. Appx.4.
	31		No enemy activity on our front. Bn rests in posn. 1600 hrs. Orders for bn to embark tonight.	

MONTH

A.I.F. FORM C 2118A

WAR DIARY

(RENDER UNDER SECRET COVER)

UNIT

YEAR

For material required, see F.S.R. Vol. 1, Sec. 174

PLACE	DATE	SUMMARY OF EVENTS Routine training details and information given in Casualty Returns are NOT required	REFERENCES TO APPENDICES	C.O.'s REPORT AND COMMENTS ON MONTH (On Operations, Equipment, Movement, Health, Administration, etc.)
<u>SPHAKIA</u>	MAY	31.contd. Bn. now comes under command 5 NZ Bde. and we are to embark immediately following this Bde. Time to move from this area is 2100 hrs. 2030 hrs Bn forms up. 2130 hrs Bn moves off in rear of the 5 NZ Bde. to the embarkation beach and embark on the H.M.S. PHOEBE at 0130 hrs 1 Jun 41. Approx. 203 all ranks in this unit were evacuated.	C.O., Coy & Pln. Comds. Report. C.O. Appx. 1. OC. B. Coy 2. OC. C. Coy 3. No. 11. Pl. 4. Carrier. Pl. 5. No. 15. Pl. 6. No. 3. Pl. Mortars 7. OC. HQ. Coy. 8. No. 2. Pl. HQ. Coy. 9. Routes & Distances. 10. No. 13. Pl. 11. Map of Area SOUDA VAMOS 12. CANEA SOUDA BAY. 13. GEORGEOPOLIS. 14. Messages relating to action. 15. 16. 17. 18.	

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Signature *A. J. Key - Major*

REPORT ON THE CRETE CAMPAIGN.METHOD OF ATTACK BY THE ENEMY

This can be divided under two headings of

- (i) Landing by parachutists
- (ii) Attack by formed bodies of parachutists and airborne troops.

As regards (i) above, observation of this by this unit was made on one occasion only and then at a distance of approximately 10 miles. On this occasion approximately 600 parachutists were dropped from a considerable height, the probable area being MALEME aerodrome. It was considered most of these parachutists were dropped from troops carrying planes.

As regards (ii) this type of attack is the only type experienced by this unit and the following points were noticed.

- (a) Recce made in which they endeavoured to find our forward lines, but without contacting it.
- (b) They then treated this line and the area immediately behind with harrassing fire by Mortars, HMGs and LMGs.
- (c) Contact by ground troops with our line would be made much later. On this contact being made he then looked for weak points where he could infiltrate. However any attempt at this infiltration was prececed and covered by mortar, HMG LMG and submachine gun fire. The fire of these submachine guns however very rarely appeared to be directed on any definite target i.e. the fire from these weapons was high and passed overhead of forward troops and even BHQ sited in rear.

Deductions from these points are that by a great volume of fire the method of intimidation was employed. When these methods failed, as invariably they did, very little attempt during daytime was made to penetrate fronts of our positions, but it was apparent that energetic recce on his part was being carried out on his part with a view to finding our flanks and a route around same by which he could come in behind us.

It is apparent that the German had picked troops highly trained in the use of ground and cover both by day and night, for this purpose. ~~xxxxxx~~ Also it was noticed that he did not confine himself only to movement by day.

In the various withdrawals that were fought his forward elements invariably contacted us generally by fire only early the next morning on the position we had withdrawn to.

The most effective answer to his method of infiltration on the immediate front was an immediate counter attack, this was borne out in SOUDA BAY. It is evident that he still has no great liking to face a determined body of men advancing with the bayonet.

It is to be particularly noted the skilful use made by the German of his mortars both as regards the siting of this weapon and the short time it took him to register and engage his target at which he was very accurate. As was proved in the area INVROS SPHAKIA a very effective counter to his motorcycle combinations was ~~xxxxxx~~ found in the use of a small body of light tanks and two Bren Carriers which delayed him seven hours from gaining contact with our forward elements astride the road on SPHAKIA ridge.

By the reports obtained from the carrier personnel engaged in this operation it is apparent that he still retains his system of advancing in mass to within a short distance of our FDLs as on several occasions German infantry marching in threes were encountered by these Bren Carriers.

TACTICS OF ENEMY AIRCRAFT IN CRETE.

The following points were noted of enemy aircraft tactics in CRETE.

Low level flying was indulged in considerably, accompanied by bombing from such heights by Stuka dive bombers and machine by Messerschmidts

and Dorniers. It was very noticeable that a very considerable amount of machine gunning from the air was never directed at a target but appeared to be done as a method of intimidation, possibly to try and drive troops out into the open and thus disclose their position.

It was noticed that extensive use of recce planes was made this plane flying at a very low level, but it is considered that ~~xx~~ very little information was gained as only ~~on~~ one occasion was such a recce followed by ~~an~~ a deliberate attack. Numerous cases of spiteful bombing of towns and villages was observed and many cases occurred of enemy planes diving and flying around positions with sirens screaming but no actual bombing or machinegunning being indulged in.

TACTICS EMPLOYED BY THIS UNIT.

Information.

Information prior to any operation or the taking up of a defensive line generally was rather vague or, as in the earlier stages, when in co-operation with a certain Greek unit, misleading and confirmation of these reports ~~was~~ hard to obtain. Such confirmation in the earlier stages invariably proved that the information supplied was highly coloured and generally dependent on reports received from individual Greek soldiers coming back from the front areas with no attempt of some competent authority to check this before it was sent on. Example of this was information with regards Ruin and Castle noles, SOUDA BAY area MOURNIES.

Lack of information on other fronts was generally scarce although some information as regards location of units in the area was supplied. Operations orders for occupation of positions at KALIBEES were received two days after issue, although certain verbal orders were received at the time of action.

Intercommunication.

This was generally bad. Transport for means of contact was scarce the most useful transport being the motor cycle but this was rarely available. W/T and R/T NIL. Line was available on two occasions only. The use of LOs was very rare.

Q.

Under such conditions arrangements worked as reasonably as could be expected. It is pointed out that during the last two days that rations which were landed by the Navy did not always appear to be ~~ix~~ issued to troops ~~was~~ most vitally in need of same. (2/7 Bn. on SPHAKIA Ridge, the ration issue they received) Stragglers and deserters were first allowed to help themselves to these rations on the beach.

Water.

Although anticipated that water would be scarce over the last three or four days very little trouble was experienced by this unit in obtaining water. A scarcity of water bottle and containers presented a ~~manor~~ problem but this was easily overcome. It is pointed out here that in the SPHAKIA area the salt content of water was very low which was evidently recognized by the Germans as most prisoners taken carried a small tube of powder for increasing the salt content of any water they drank.

General.

It is necessary before commenting on the tactics employed by this unit to give the organisation of this unit on CRETE.

The approximate numbers landed on CRETE, including personnel evacuated from Hospital in GREECE was 390 all told. This included two rifle Coys B and C practically complete in numbers that left GREECE. A small proportion of personnel from A & D Coy and HQ Coy, the latter having a strength of approximately 80.

When this unit was informed that it would become portion of the CREFORCE it was then organised on the following basis: Two rifle Coys B & C at approximately full strength. To organise these two Coys on an efficient fighting basis, any personnel of the above not likely through either physical condition or lack of training (reinforcements) were withdrawn from these Coys. These vacancies were then filled by the transfer of personnel of HQ C

and details of A and D Coys. Such people transferred out of ~~XXXXX~~ B and C Coys were then taken on the strength of HQ Coy. The remaining personnel of HQ Coy proficient to take their place in the field comprised no more than the strength of two rifle pls. ~~XXXXX~~ Personnel transferred from B & C Coy pls additional personnel already in HQ Coy were then organised to be used as:

- (i) Details for No. 6 Pl. as carrying parties ammunition etc.
- (ii) As Stretcher bearers
- (iii) For various orderly duties between BHQ and Coys.

This left a total fighting strength in the unit of approximately 350 all ranks.

Tactical dispositions of this unit.

During the initial phases of the campaign in CRETE this unit had to adopt a defensive position in three areas, namely KALIBEES, MOURNIERS, PYGROS-GALARIA, these positions covered a frontage varying from ~~2000~~^X to 700^X. The disposition of the unit under these circumstances involved the siting of two Coys forward leaving a very small inadequate Bn. reserve with no depth whatever to the area held. These positions and the holding of them was therefore dependent on the following factors

- (i) Close liason with flank units.
- (ii) Constant patrolling well forward of our positions in order to ascertain probable strength of enemy forces and his probable line of advance.

It is emphasised here again that in the areas MOURNIERS - PYGROS-GALARIA there was never close co-operation with the units responsible for the area on our left flank. That information as obtained from this area was very misleading and considerably difficult to confirm. The whereabouts of troops on this flank could never be determined accurately although several endeavours were made by this unit to liase with troops on our left. Assurances were given that the co-operation required would be carried out. However, subsequent events proved such was not to be the case.

Turning to the second phase of this units operations in CRETE, namely the withdrawals from MOURNIERS - SOUDA BAY - NEON KHORION - ESTARTZ - BABLI INN - IMVROS and SPHAKIA the following points are here recorded.

MOURNIERS. A straightout approach march from MOURNIERS to SOUDA BAY.
SOUDA BAY. Contact with the enemy was obtained ~~xxxx~~ at approximately 1030 hours and broken off at 2200 hours that same night when the withdrawal to the second position commenced.

This action is probably the best action fought by this unit in CRETE, the following reasons for this are as follows:

The forces concerned in this action comprised a NZ Bde, 2/7 Bn, AIF and this unit. Perfect co-operation and understanding between unit commanders throughout this action. The effective use of the immediate counter attack was clearly brought out during the operations in this area. Information was more extensive and accurate, and communication was good under the circumstances. Liason between units as regards security of flanks was particularly good.

Counter MG and LMG fire proved effective in stopping and breaking up several organised attacks which developed during the day. As this unit was small in numbers it was necessary during the day to strengthen the right flank with the addition of the Bn. reserve, slightly less than two platoons had to be used for this purpose, thus leaving only two Carriers that were not committed on the Bn's immediate front. The function of the MG Pl under command of this Bn; was that of a supporting fire role, its primary task being to watch right flank with its arcs of fire concentrated on likely enemy assembly positions. The function of the carriers in this engagement was to hold the CANEA - SOUDA BAY Road against any AFV or motor cycle combination attack.

It is to be noted here that such attack was threatened during the day but the employment of anti-tank rifles which were pushed well forward and which were evidently observed by the enemy stopped such movement.

Earlier in the day these carriers also co-operated on the left flank of the 2/7 Bn; when an attempt was made by the enemy to break through at that point.

NEON KHORION - This was the area to which the unit withdrew from SOUDA BAY. Whilst a tactical role was allotted to this and Coys were disposed for such no actual contact was made with the enemy, although the 2/7 Bn. on our left earlier that morning was subjected to long range MG fire.

This unit received orders to withdraw from its position during the morning and proceed to ESTARTZ and come under the command of "D" Bn; of the Commandos, Lt.Col. Young being in command.

ESTARTZ - BABLI INN - On reporting to the C.O. of the Bn. of the Commandos the unit was allotted the reserve area immediately in the rear of the above unit. An endeavour was made to use the MG Pl. on the right of the Commando's position. This however was found to be impracticable and this Pl. was then allotted a reserve area.

The Carrier Pl. with two carriers immediately adopted a role of road protection against AFVs and motorcycle combinations of which a report had been received. Contact by the Commandos with the enemy was obtained shortly after the unit arrived and for the remainder of the day this unit which moved from its reserve position came into position on the left of the Commandos and held that area until ordered to withdraw at 2100 hours that night.

No definite thrust was made by the enemy that day, his main tactics being that of harrasing fire with mortars HMGs and LMGs.

Information was obtained that during this day the advanced enemy AFVs and motorcycle combinations were repeatedly broken up by two cruiser tanks operating forward of this position.

KERATES - IMVROS - This was the area through which the unit withdrew from the last position, no tactical role for this position was ordered, the only orders being for this Bn; to clear the IMVROS road area by 2115 hours. Prior to this the above area was subjected to long range mortar fire. Both this unit and the 2/7 Bn. who withdrew later cleared the area without any difficulty.

During the whole of this move the progress of this unit was considerably impeded by personnel being marshalled for evacuation plus a large number of vehicles transporting wounded for the same purpose. This road congestion became so pronounced at about 0200 hours the following morning and combined with the physical condition of the troops and the complete blockage of the road, that when about a mile from its next area, the unit was ordered to halt and sleep off the road.

This was definitely the worst night move during the withdrawals and in my opinion could only be attributed to bad staff work in the case of the officers concerned in the evacuation of these casualties and others plus the fact that no consideration was given to this or other units moving back to become the rear guard for the withdrawal. Orders were actually given by a senior British staff officer at IMVROS that this unit was to move off the road and halt until all ~~xxx~~ these people for embarkation had been cleared to the beach, a distance of approx. 8 miles. This however was not done, the procedure as outlined above being carried out.

At daybreak the same morning, the congestion on the road having cleared, the unit moved into an area allotted and about two hours later received orders from Ede that it had become the reserve unit of the rear guard, its role and task being to adopt a tactical position in an area in rear of forward Bns and to be responsible for the protection of the left flank of the forward line.

This role was carried out and the unit continued this task for the next two days during which an attempt at penetration on the left was effectively stopped. At this stage it is interesting to note that the physical condition ~~xx~~ of the men was considerably weakened. Rations were very light and water although plentiful had very little salt content and movement of any troops even for a few hundred yards entailed in most cases a state of physical exhaustion in the men.

This unit embarked on Sunday morning 1 June at approx. 0130 hrs after considerable re-arrangement of the orders of embarkation. Again it is pointed out that the staff arrangements for embarkation at SPHAKIA to the beach area were bad, control was practically non-existent as it was necessary for the units concerned in this embarkation to take the necessary measures to secure a passage down to the beach and keep back personnel of all arms and services who threatened

at various times to break through the line of troops at embarkation.

Mention is made here of the appreciation of the efforts made by Brig. HARGEST of 5 NZ Bde and other NZ C.Os who were largely responsible for arrangements on the beach which enabled this unit to ~~XXXXXX~~ commence embarkation the moment we arrived on the beach?

The unit was embarked mainly on the A.A. cruiser H.M.S. PHEOBES a small number being embarked on the destroyer H.M.S. JACKAL.

The voyage across to EGYPT was uneventful and the unit disembarked at approx. 1730 hours at ALEXANDRIA.

A. J. King

Major

C.O. 2/8 Detachment in
CRETE.

APPENDIX 1.

ENEMY WEAPONS.

The following brief notes are made on the characteristics of enemy weapons as experienced by this bn.

HMG's

Maximum range approx 4000x. Explosive and tracer bullets used.

LMG's.

SPANDAU approx rate of fire 1500 r.p.m. Sighted up to 2000 x. Extremely accurate with small beaten zone. Belt fed-air cooled-interchangeable barrels-calibre approx .30-recoil operated-weight 30 lbs.

Sub Machine Gun:

Similar to our own - bakelite fittings - short range - about .38 calibre - not as efficient as our own.

Rifle:

Snipers rifle fitted with telescopic sights - very accurate.

Grenades:

Two types - stick and oval type. Stick type string operated - oval type approx 1 lb. in weight lever operated. In Greece it was noticed that certain men carried nothing but grenades in a bag slung around their neck.

Pistols:

LUGER 9 mm knee action - magazine holds eight rounds.

Bayonet:

Two sizes - short approx 10" long - long type approx. 2" longer than our own - short type double edged. ~~xxxxxx~~

Daggers Knife type:

Two kinds - long and short blade.

Tools:

Parachutists carry light entranching tools with convertible head.

Demolition Box: Hexagonal box about 4' long one end being a T handle the other end had an aluminium cannister 8" in diameter which acted as a cushion on the box on hitting the ground. The box when opened contained 4 pneumatic type drills which were fitted to the container with bayonet joints. Contents were explosives; factory made bangalore torpedoes in lengths of about 4' which could be connected together with bayonet joints thus making the torpedo to any length required. The ignition already fitted up with safety fuse ~~2x~~ 2' long, one end of the fuse with a bakelite attachment fitted with a detonator; the other end had a non-flash ignitor. The box also contained 200' of rubber covered F.I.D. which was of a very flexible nature and even if knots were tied in it it would explode. Further contents of the box were a box of explosives ~~xxx~~ in metal boxes of 2 and 4 lbs weight. In the end and two sides of the ~~xxx~~ ^{blocks} were threaded recesses into which could be slipped a detonator and attachment thus making these into anti personnel or anti-tank mines. Colour of the box is grey.

German Light Mortar:

1. Characteristics
 - Range. Is reputed to slightly exceed 4000 yds.
 - Maximum range is very definitely in excess of 1500 yds.
 - Calibre- Examination of recovered tail fins indicates about 3.7.
 - Danger Area. Appears to be less than that of 3" light mortar. A number of dud bombs were observed to fall at Sphakia by Sgt Cooper & Cpl. Quirk.
 - Rate of Fire. Identical with that of our mortar.

2. employment. (a) Hun mortars always appeared very soon after enemy forces had made contact. At K Neen Kherien the attacking force were motorcyclists, yet they had a mortar with them. This argues extreme mobility of weapon and crew.

(b) Application of fire- The Hun seems to expend the greater proportion of his amm by single rounds, fired with a considerable space of time intervening, and with the point of aim altered each time- in fact, a sort of harassing fire. When concentrations were brought down on apparently observed targets, the rate of fire was not as rapid as we should use.

(d) Ammunition supply- There is ~~not~~ consistent reports of P.O.s being forced to carry amm. Also pack animals were often used. One escaped P.O.W. reported that he saw "one horse and six donkeys" carrying bombs.

(d) Accuracy- Our tps seemed to have an exaggerated idea of the accuracy of Hun Mortars. It is not known on what base this idea.

(e) Concealment- at various times a number of Hun support weapons were seen to be operating (in Crete) without much regard to cover or concealment. This was no doubt due to our lack of arty. & aircraft, and is hardly to be found to be a regular practice.

Apparent Lessons.

1. Harassing fire- From the effect of this fire in our own areas, it would seem profitable to adopt its use.
2. Ammunition supply- we must exploit all avenues of supply- man, vehicle, animal or other- and be prepared to at once convert to our own use any suitable means of tpt. available. Mor Dets should be taught how to lead pack animals.
3. Physical Fitness- It is essential that mortar personnel be at the peak of physical fitness in action to ensure that mobility is not lost.

A. J. King

Major.

O.C. 2/8 Detachment CRETE

W.D. 2/8 Bn

APPX 2

Ed

"B" COY WAR DIARY.

SUBJECT:- Tactics employed by (a) Enemy and (b) Own tps., during battle of CRETE 27 April 41.

April. 27 At approx., 1800 hrs 2/8 Bn. (less details) disembarked at SOUDA BAY CRETE, after being rescued by destroyed from T.S. COSTA RICA, which was sunk as result of enemy bombing.

Bn. marched 12 miles to a bivouac posn. near village of PROVARMA where we bivouaced for the night 27/28 Apr. 41.

April 28 Roll call showed all "B" Coy Officers present i.e. O.C. Capt. C.J.A. Coombes, 2/1/C. Lieut. J.McL. Maskell, No. 10 pl. Lieut. J. Burrowes. No. 11 Pl. Lieut. Coulston. H.A. (Lieut. Metcalf of No. 12 Pl. was with the remainder of Bn. on other boat)

Men rest during day, most rifles and equipment lost on T.S. COSTA RICA.

April 29 Bn. allotted area of responsibility against expected landings by enemy parachute tps.

Bn. organised on 3 Coy basis.

"B" Coys strength approx. 140 men (composed of the fit men of "B" "A" and "D" Coys)

Officers of "B" Coy O.C. Capt. C.J.A. Coombes, 2/1/C. Lieut. J.McL. Masckell, No. 10 Pl. Lieut. J. Burrowes, No. 11 Pl. Lieut. H.A. Coulston, No. 12 Pl. Lieut. A.L. Gluth.

April 30 Training for 4 hours and lectures on methods to be used in combating para tps.

May 1. Bn. moved to new area KALIBIES and come under Command Major General Weston. Frontage facing WEST. Two Coys Fwd. "B" right "C" left H.Q. Coy reserve.

May 2. Bn. continued digging in and at 1100 hrs Bn. Pde. and address by Major. General Freyberg.

Digging & wiring of defensive posn. continues, "B" Coy contacts 2/8 Field Coy on our right flank.

Road block on RETIMO - KALIBIES Road constructed and manned by No. 10 Pl.

Pl. of 1 M.G. Regt. came under command of Bn. and 1 Sec. allotted to "B" Coy.

May 3. Active patrols prior to dawn, at 1500 hrs and at dusk from "B" Coy.

Position improved and much wire scrounged from vineyards etc.

May 4. Position strengthened, active patrols,

May 8. Bn warned to move to GEORGE OUPOLIS.

On evening of 8 May 41 Bn. marched from KALIBIES - GEORGE OULOLIS a distance of 14 miles and took over position previously held by 2/11 Bn.

"B" Coy right fwd Coy.

May 9. Bn. position revised to give us smaller frontage. 2/7 En. on our left.

May 20 Two positions prepared. One for concealment and other our defensive position to be occupied only if attacked.

Active patrolling of beach by night, observation posts by day.

Trenches dug and position wired Bayonet & weapon training.

Our role two fold.

- (1) To combat paratroops who land in our area.
- (2) To be prepared to lie low & then counter attack if sea borne invasion should come.

Precis of "B" Coys encounters with enemy

May 21

At 0200 hrs "B" Coy received orders to join with 2 Greek Bn. in an attack on RUIN and CASTLE HILLS START TIME. Greeks 0500 hrs "B" Coy 0530 hrs, difference in S.T. because of further distance Greeks had to move to objective. 2 Greek guides to report to "B" Coy

Greek attack did not eventuate so "B" Coy did not attack.

At approx. 0800 hrs Greeks decided to attack & Lieut. Gluth took two pls of "B" Coy forward of our area in order to assist Greeks attack and cut off any enemy who attempted to escape from PERIVOLIA

This patrol did not contact enemy, but were fired on by M.M.gs.

Patrol moved through village of PERIVOLIA which Lieut Gluth was able to report clear of enemy.

During afternoon "B" Coy moved out on left flank to assist in extricating a "C" Coy patrol under Sgt. Clarke which had been pinned down. Coy was unable to find Sgt. Clarke, but engaged enemy located positions with all our Brens at ranges varying from 1700'-2000' and return to Bn on orders received from Major Key.

May 22

Active patrolling carried out and defensive position improved Patrols led by Lieuts Gluth and Coulston contact enemy and cause casualties to his patrols.

No 10 Pl fire on enemy patrol crossing our front.

Active patrols by night.

Listening posts established .

May 23

Bn. moves forward approx. 1500' and occupies new defensive position

Lieut. Gluth with No 12 Pl. moves to village of PYGROS and maintains standing patrol to prevent enemy entering village in search of food and water

"B" Coy left fwd Coy.

2/7 Bn move in on our right flank.

May 24

"B" Coys dispositions now.

No 12 Pl. Village of PYGROS.

No. 11. Pl. West side of Greek on left flank attached pl. of H.Q. Coy under Sgt. Mosely in centre on EAST side of Greek.

No 10 Pl. Right on EAST side of Creek. Active patrols by day and night in conjunction with C. Coy and 2/7 Bn.

May 25.

Lieut Thompson's Pl. from H.Q. Coy under command "B" Coy and despatched to reinforce Lieut. Gluth No. 12 Pl. who have countacted enemy and prevented him entering PYGROS after inflicting casualties.



"B" & "C" Coys to attack RUIN and CASTLE HILLS S.T. 2045 hrs. Attack cancelled at 1900 hrs as N.Z.'s. have held their line.

Active patrols. Enemy bombed Coy area, several casualties

May 26

The whole Bn. area heavily bombed and machine gunned from air.

Lieut Gluth reports enemy massing for attack.

At approx. 1030 hrs enemy attack under cover of long range (4000') mortar fire, also M.M.G.'s.

Greeks on left flank appear to have given ground and enemy works round our left flank making position of No. 12 Pl. and Lieut Thompson's Pl. in PYGROS VILLAGE awkward.

1200 hrs orders to Lieuts Gluth and Thompson to withdraw from PYGROS VILLAGE and adopt position on EAST side of Greek to watch rear of No. 11 Pl. where enemy is attempting to work through along CREEK Enemy MORTAR, M.M.G, L.M.G. and sub-M.G. fire intensified several casualties "B" Coy.

Orders received to withdraw to previous position approx. 1500' in rear. Outside MOURNERS.

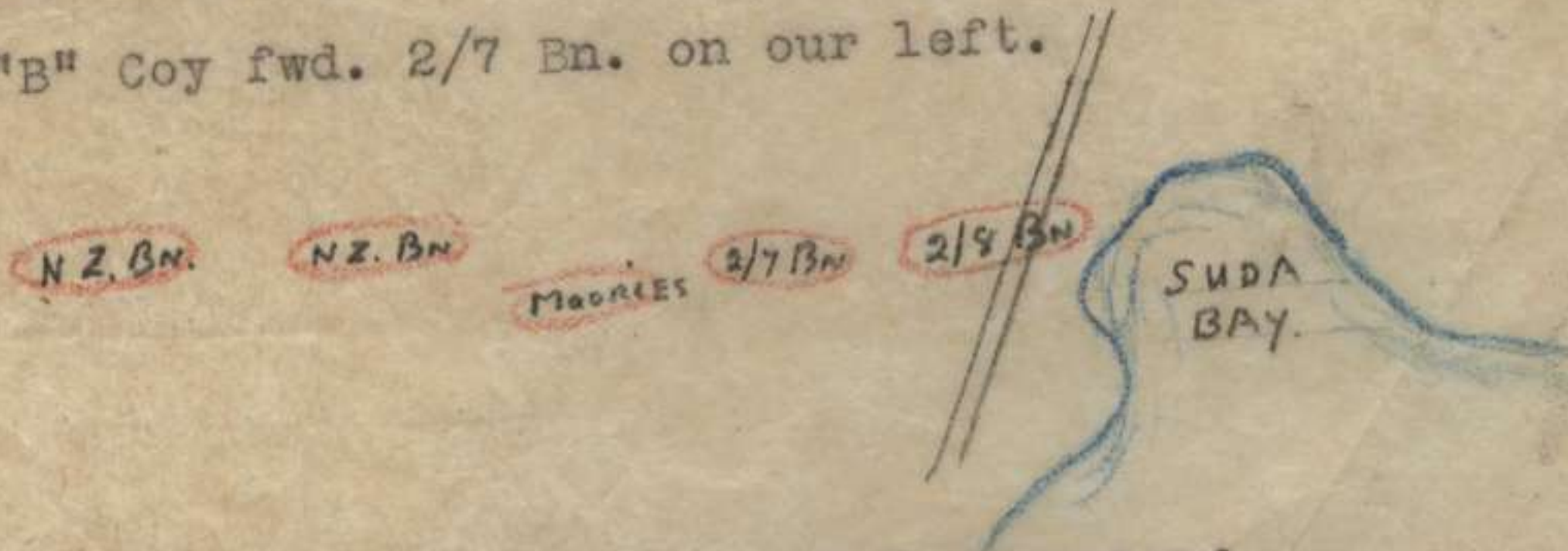
Marines found in our old position, we strengthen Marines.

2245 hrs new orders from Bde. Bn. moved to new area REFRESHMENT CAMP and bivouaced.

May 27

Bn. occupies new position on right flank with SUDA BAY as our right flank.

"B" Coy fwd. 2/7 Bn. on our left.



1030 hrs enemy attack N.Z.S. repulsed.
1100 " " " 2/7 Bn and counter attacked.

1200 enemy attack "B" Coy who are strengthened by two pes from "C" Coy. Enemy attack against us continues till we withdraw.

2100 hrs. Pls withdraw to Coy assemble area.
New orders received to remain in present posns.
Pls. return to old position and re-engage enemy who are feeling fwd.

Fierce fighting has taken place all afternoon. Pte. Elmore who was taken prisoner early in morning escapes and informs me enemy strength on our front and flank approx. 700-800 men.

2200 hrs. Bn. withdraws along RLY LINE and COAST ROAD past SUDA BAY a distance of 14 miles to NEON KHORIAN.

May 28

0400 hrs. Bn. occupies defensive position astride Rd. KALIBIES) REON KHORIAN, facing north "B" Coy on right "C" Coy on left.

1100 hrs. Bn. withdraws to village of ESTARTZ and occupies a defensive position on left flank of COMMANDOS under Col. Young.

Two Pls. of "C" Coy under command of "B" Coy.

Bn. withdrew 2100 hrs. March 12 miles over very hilly country along Rd. VYREES- SPAHKIA to approx. top of PASS Bivouac night.

Lack of water causes many men to collapse Bn. very tired.

May 29

Bn. moves over PASS and down into valley to VILLAGE of SAN AMMOUSARI. Two Coys fwd. "C" Coy right "B" Coy left.

2030 hrs. Bn. moves to take up rearguard position on heights overlooking SPAKIA BAY. Our move to this position hindered and occasionally blocked by thousands of non-combatants & British tps., whose manner was belligerent toward us who were going to cover their withdrawal, they thinking we were stealing a march on them to the boats.

Bn. halt and bivouaced on road because of congestion now approx 0300 hrs had covered 10 miles.

May 30

Coy. Comdrs. receive orders from Major Key for occupation of position we are to hold in rearguard action.

SPAKHIA RAVINE inclusive to "B" Coy "C" Coy on left.

"B" Coys dispositions.

10 Pl. on right on top of ravine.

11 Pl. in ravine.

12 Pl on left on left bank of ravine.

At approx. 1500 hrs. No. 10 Pl. (Lieut Burrows) sighted British troops coming along ravine hand held up in Surrender. Closely following these troops came others dressed in Green Grey ~~XXXXXX~~ Tunics and Khaki Shorts, steel crash helmets. Fire was opened on the enemy patrol and later investigation for identification showed 25 dead Germans.

During night listening post of No. 11 Pl. in ravine heard movement in ravine, informed Lieut Coulston who ordered fire. Following morning revealed total of over 100 dead Germans in front of our position. "B" Coy had accounted for over 90. N.Z. patrol for 12 whom they found lighting fire.

Moaris patrol ravine in force

May 31

No further enemy activity on our front. Evidently loss of 100 men in ravine convinced enemy, posn. was strongly held.

Withdraw to Coy assembly area 2030 hrs.

March to Beach & embark on H.M.S. PHOEBE at 0130 hrs.

Cpt. Burrows

Capt.

O.C. "B" Coy. 2/8 Bn. A.I.F.

(R)

P2

PRECIS ON GERMAN METHODS ETC. ON CRETE.

1. PATROLS.

German patrols are invariably strong (up to 30 men) and I consider work in two bodies. One party covering the advance of the other.

Our patrols were instructed to do likewise and with benefit, in that one more than one occasion they met and engaged enemy patrols causing casualties. If a patrol operates in one body it is likely to be ambushed, whereas if in two parties even if leading party are engaged rear party can then contact enemy with advantage of element of Surprise. This is copying the German's tactics.

German troops appear to have reached a high standard of individual training their use of ground and cover is very good. Their tactics always appear to be to feel for the flank and make their attack at this point. Their attack is always supported by heavy Mortar & M.M.G fire.

The advancing enemy appears to fire his Submachine Gun whilst advancing. His aim your general position, idea apparently to intimidate and to force you to keep your head down.

When our patrols clashed we were always the victors. In these brushes we did not lose one man, but inflicted losses each time on the enemy. Our casualties were mainly Mortar fire.

The German will still advance steadily against small arms fire, but at the first threat of the bayonet he will withdraw and if it were possible to exploit this trait of the German character by a strong immediate counter attack supported by Arty. or Mortars & M.M.G's. I am of the opinion that success will invariably be achieved.

During the Crete Campaign the men marched over long distances and whilst the "Blitz" was on, the inability to change socks and boots or to leave them off during rest caused a lot of foot trouble which is serious when a unit cannot be relieved.

Fighting by day, patrols by day & night ~~and~~ withdrawals prevented men from obtaining necessary rest and particularly during the last week it was only sheer doggedness that kept the men going. When the men embarked they were absolutely worn out both physically & mentally.

The large scale aerial attacks did not cause many casualties in comparison to the number of planes used & bombs dropped. Aerial Machine gunning does not appear to hit anything & is apparently used mainly to intimidate.

The slit trench is adequate protection against aerial warfare.

W. J. B. B. B.

Capt.
O.C. "B" Coy. 2/8 Bn. A.I.F.

NOTES ON C COY ACTIVITIES. IN CRETE.

April 27. C Coy embarked from Greece aboard the "Costa Rica". During the day commencing at 0700 the ship was raided four times and finally at 1600 hrs a bomb landed so close to the stern that the plates were sprung and the ship began to sink rapidly. All troops were ordered on deck where they formed up in ranks away from the ships side. Their discipline was magnificent and when the destroyers came alongside they calmly awaited orders to abandon the ship. On arrival at Suda Bay as many as possible of the company collected together and were marched about twelve miles to the 19th Bde. Area. All equipment arms and personal belongings were lost on the ship.

May 1. Moved to Kalibes on the coast by Suda Bay where the Bn. took up a defensive position covering two roads leading to Suda Bay. "C" Coy covered the left road, one platoon continuously patrolled the valley through which the road passed and the third was in reserve and allowed to make as much use as possible of the beach. The roles of the platoon was changed each day. The lack of activity during this period gave the men a much needed rest although there was little comfort attached to it as neither ~~xxx~~ blankets nor mess tins were available and all manner of things were used as eating utensils. The company was brought up to strength by the addition of transport personnel.

May 8. Company moved with the Bn. a distance of about 14 miles to Georgepoulis where a defensive position was taken up C Coy was on the left next to 2/7 Bn, and covered a frontage of about 1300 yards. In the period between May 8 and May 20 the company was occupied with digging with the few tools available (6 picks 10 shovels) and erecting wire entanglement. One platoon of H.Q. Coy was fwd. under command of C Coy to thicken up the defence.

May 20 The company moved by M.T. through Suda Bay to a positions near the village of Mournies. A position was taken up with C Coy on the night. The enemy positions could be seen by his signals however, contact was not made.

May 21. The Company moved to the right and filled a gap between B Coy and A Groups. To contact with enemy.

May 22. Moved forward to a new position about 1000 yds to the right of the village of Perovelias. C Coy was on the right occupying some thick country and two houses.

May 23. 2/7 Bn. moved in a occupied positions on right of C Coy and to its front taking over the right platoons position C Coy was withdrawn to reserved position late this night. A fighting patrol of one platoon strength (15 pl) under command Sgt. Clarke W. was sent out during the morning to go through the village of Mournies. He struck some opposition and suffered one casualty. He ~~was~~ remained out until 1600 hrs attempting to work round the enemy position.

May 24.¹³ B platoon was put under command Capt. Coombes B Coy and took up position in the village of Pygros. 14 pl. constructed a road block in the village of Mournies which they manned with one section. 15 platoon patrolled the front in conjunction with 2/7 Bn. during the night.

May 25. 15 Platoon was placed under command Capt. Coombes to strengthen his front.

W.D. 2/8 BN.

APPX 4.

Part taken by No 11. Pl. B Coy 2/8 BN; during CRETE CAMPAIGN from 7 Apr. 41. - 1 Jan 41.

We landed at Suda Bay on evening of 27 Apr 41., from there we went by road to an area West of Neon Korion, there we stayed for several days, thinking the whole time that our unit being split up the way it ~~was~~, would be given priority in getting off the island -but no! our unit or the part there, was formed into two Coys of fighting strength, we were armed with automatic weapons etc. from then on we were on the war path for paratroops and airborne troops. Various units were allotted to guard certain areas of the island.

We had ~~taken~~ taken out several patrols, dusk and dawn, we got word we were to go to another area up near Kalibes, there we also took out patrols. The country around this area was more open though quite a number of rough hills were in the vicinity.

From there we were marched to an area, ^{near GEORGIOPOLIS} ~~up towards Retimo~~ ~~aerodrome~~, which had been vacated by the 11th Bn. In the early hours of the morning we moved into an area East of Georgeopolis on the right of the 2/7 Bn. Later in the day we were given our Pln. areas, my platoon's area was on the right flank of B Coy as fwd Pl, we were dug in to our positions in several places, plans were changed and we were withdrawn to an area where if required we could be put in to reinforce C Coy or counter attack a feature to our ~~right~~ front with a large block house unit. While in this position we carried out patrols of Pl. strength down to the beach and over an area slightly to our right. During all these movements etc air raids over Suda Bay were increasing daily until it extended almost back to our position. On the morning of 29th May the troop carrying planes appeared over head, eleven in the flight that passed over us, huge black planes. The air raids became more intensified and more and more troops were landed in or about Maleme aerodrome West of Suda Bay. During all these preparations we were led to believe that we had ample aircraft on the island and it was being held till the vital moment, when it still didn't appear, much to our disgust. ~~That~~ That afternoon we were taken ~~by~~ by transport back towards Maleme late that night we were given our Pl. areas near a village (not certain of name) ^{MOUNTIERS} next morning there was to have been an attack on the village (I think it was Paravolies) unfortunately this attack didn't eventuate, this meant that more reinforcements would be dropped as they were, all day we were subjected to air raids, the fiercest of which was in ~~the~~ over the area held or occupied by the N.Z's. and a force known as "A" group. The whole time from dawn till dusk this area was heavily bombed and M.G'd. also back areas towards Suda Bay and Canea were bombed. It was decided to move our unit fwd 1300 yds, beyond an area which was covered by patrols of our Coy earlier in the day. Before dark we were in posn, my pl. was the centre of our Coy which was on the left flank of our unit. The Greeks were on our left, or were supposed to have been. No 12 Pl. under Mr. Gluth occupied and patrolled a small village on the left of our area. Bombing and machine gunning by enemy aircraft continued, and more troops were landed. I took out a patrol of two sections to try and locate a M.G. post our front, bullets from this post used to come over our way quite often, fired aimlessly I think. My patrol contacted about 12 Germans going into a stone building where the M.G. post must have been. One of my bren gunners is certain he got two of the patrol. I reported the matter when I returned, that night we were reinforced by a pl. from H.Q. Coy and a few strays. This pl. was moved into my position and I was moved over to the left and forward to contact No. 12 pl. by dawn, we were dug in in a vineyard. All that day the air activity was still at a high pitch. That night some M.M.G's. were going to do a shoot also some Mortars which had been attached to us, but on their way out to my Pl. they

were put out of action by several bombs, this was very unfortunate because the M.M.G. post on a high feature to our left flank gave us a few uneasy moments next day.

The enemy who had apparently mustered sufficient forces by now launched an attack early next day under cover of his mortar. He almost got onto my pits with it during the afternoon, a lot of his troops could be seen beyond range and go our right flank. Jerry had broken the line on left of No. 12 pl. and began to come ^{up} a creek running just behind my position late that afternoon I got the order to withdraw, I withdrew back to Coy H.Q. and from there we moved back to the position we left several days previous, the marines were there, we stayed there for several hrs after dark and got orders to be ready to move at a minutes notice, later in the night we got the order to move, and with the rest of the unit we moved back to a place called ~~Mournies~~ ^(REFRESHMENT CAMP AREA, SOUBA BAY), we slept just off the road and later shook into our pl. areas, my position was on the left of main road in centre of coy. the 7th Bn. are on our left flank with some Maoris on there left, some ~~SSSSSS~~ English units came back through us they said it was hopeless trying to hold the enemy, but we felt very confident, later that morning my pl. was moved fwd onto right flank of 7th Bn. slightly in front of my other position, there was a bayonet charge on our left by the Maori's, the whole time we were there (this posn. was the best I had been in for the whole campaign) there were bullets flying overhead in the branches of the olive trees, very few came lower until later, just after midday we could see Germans infiltrating through the trees about four to five hundred yds. in front. My bren gunners got onto these during that afternoon one of them fired sixty mags of his gun, thirty of which were on repetition one of the best afternoons sport we have had one of my bren's had been giving me trouble this gun I had returned and the gunner got a rifle. Soon after this the enemies mortar got onto us, he landed 8 bombs in my platoon area killing one Cpl. and wounding a Pte. still his push on our front didn't continue as was probably expected so he tried more of his cunningness, using several prisoners he tried to get a big force of men to close quarters by crawling along a ditch on the road. When he came up close to us (200 to 300 yds) we shot them up, one of the prisoners getting away I had sent back for more men and these gave me much more fire power, just on sundown we could see his men running back apparently had enough. There was a terrific belt of fire down there, we only had to hold him until dark or 2100 hrs then we were to withdraw. Hold him we were determined to do and we did, the order to withdraw came but owing to something we had to stop there for a while longer, this we didn't mind as the planes had ceased at dark and we were more than a match for his men. That day we got word that we were going to evacuate the island ~~from Mournies~~ we marched back to Neon Khorion where we arrived not long before dawn, we could still hear M.G. fire so dug in thinking we would have at least one days rest as the men were feeling the strain. About 1000 hrs we got word to prepare to move as we may get cut off in the next pass. It was a very hot day we marched until forenoon when we arrived at ~~Pygros~~ ^{BABALI INN} here we took up positions behind some Commandos only a few mortars and a stray round of M.G. fire came our way, although forward of us a bit there appeared to be a bit of fighting going on. At 2100 hrs we again withdrew this time marching well through until just before dawn when the C.O. led us off into a re-entrant to camp for a while during this march several men failed from exhaustion. The men had little rations most of their feet were in a terrible state. Next day just before Llo/c we set off again this time going only a few miles into a valley where there was ample shade and plenty of water. We rested there for the afternoon thinking we would be due to embark that night, but no about 1900 hrs we got word to say we were to take up

rearguard positions with 7 th Bn. and N.Z. this we didn't mind as we all had confidence in each other a bit downhearted and with very short rations if any. We set off. At this stage my pl. had one bren several Tommy guns and rifles we were told we were to march four miles and take up our position. On the road there were thousands of troops lined up for embarkation, all along the column we asked for bren guns and Tommy gun amm. rifle amm in bandoliers before we had gone very far there were pickets who wanted to stop us thinking that we would get their seats on the boat, however we got through and marched on and on several times the four miles we thought. We were loaded to the ears with bren guns and amm. my platoon alone had six bren guns and five Tommy guns and each man had about 500 rounds men with Tommy guns were also carrying rifles. I had a rifle and 500 rounds of bandolier amm. That night or at least next morning we lay on boulders on the side of the road until dawn. When we set off again and found our guide and some water all men filled their bottles and containers, several hours were spent in resting and cleaning of the weapons we had got from the night before. At 11 o/c we were taken to our position which necessitated covering some very rough and steep country, there was no road at this place it had been finished up on the side of the hill. On this trip I lost about six men who were simply exhausted and their feet were by now in a shocking state. No rations but water, my pl. position was in a very deep canyon running back into the mountains where it came down to the beach it was more open. No 10pl. was on my right and high up in the hill some N.Z's. slightly forward and on my left when I got into position I had eleven men, but three brens and several tommy guns still had heaps of amm.

I had just got into posn. when a German patrol was seen to come round a bend in the gorge about 400 yds in front of our posn. at the same time the two platoons on my flanks opened fire on them. They were easy picking and only a few shots came in answer to ours. There was a N.Z. soldier perched on a large rock above them, he picked off several at close range and later joined my platoon and remained with us. That evening just before dusk I got orders to send a couple of men fwd. to the dead Germans and get something off them for identification, I warned the pln's on my flanks and sent out the men, when they were near the Germans the N.Z's. fired several shots at them luckily nobody was hit, the men brought back some identity discs and papers etc. also the news that a Greek soldier was at the front of the patrol. That night I was reinforced by a section from another Coy these men were well armed, in the early hours of the morning there was a N.Z. platoon commander reported to me with his pl. to reinforce my posn. I told him it was hardly necessary just then so he spread his men across the gorge behind my line and remained there until dawn and when another Pl. from H.Q. Coy 2/8 Bn; arrived to reinforce the posn. they also had plenty of automatic weapons I forgot to mention that about 2330 hrs the night before there was a distinct noise in a gorge ahead of where my pl. was, a couple of bursts from the bren soon quietened this a little later we heard someone calling, a couple of Maoris came down the wadi soon after dawn and told us there were a lot of dead Germans in the wadi we got two Spandau machine guns from them with some amm. These we mounted to cover any approach from the wadi while in this position we were issued with some light rations these were very welcome. Air activity had almost ceased except for a few fighters. In the afternoon about ten Stuka's flew out to sea, that evening we got orders to withdraw the most welcome of all orders, as the men were very tired their feet benefited a little by the rest in this last position. We moved down to Coy area at 2030 hrs from there we moved with the rest of the unit down to the beach, here I was put out of column to check out the 2/8 Bn. We were the last to come down to the beach from that point The Commandos who stayed there were given some of

our bren guns and amn. up till then my Pl. ~~again~~ still had the extra amn. I didn't see my platoon again until we arrived at Amirya to come back to Palestine. The date of landing of paratroops may not be accurate but is as near as I can recollect the same with the names of the villages.

(signed) VX 6406

H. COULSTON. Lieut.

O.C. No. 11 Pl. B. Coy 2/8 Bn;

H. Coulston

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(signed) VX 6406

H. COURTSON, Lieut.
O.C. No. 11 Pl. B. Coy 2/8 Bn;



I4/6/41

Carrier Platoon Report on Crete Campaign
2nd 8th. Battalion.

On April 13 th Lt. Phelan O.C Carrier Platoon was instructed by 19 th Brigade to proceed from Georgioupolis to Suda Bay with a party of men to take over five Bren Carriers for the battalion.

At Brigade H Q Lt. Phelan was put in charge of personnel from other units of the brigade who were detailed to collect carriers.

Our party consisted of five carrier personnel, six transport and one intelligence personnel; On arrival at Suda Bay at 2145 hrs we came under the command of the Royal Marines at the Refreshment Camp mainly for the purposes of feeding all personnel and having sleeping quarters there. Lt. Phelan immediately reported to the C.O. of the New Zealand Armoured Division to get instructions and all information he could as regards taking over the machines. The following morning Lt. Phelan informed me that the machines were on two merchant ships anchored in the harbour and unloading of them was hoped to begin in the late afternoon of that day. No definite numbers of machines could be given, but the general opinion was in the vicinity of about sixty. Information was given me that the Aust. R.E. were in charge of the unloading of stores of all ships and parties of Palestinian troops were engaged in keeping the wharf clear of all stores. Unfortunately loading never began till late in following day (15th). This was due to the Palestinian troops on their slowness and inefficiency who hampered operations of the R.Es who were doing a sterling job, and partly to the harbour officials who could have made use of other craft to unload from one of the ships that was still at anchor. However by 2000 hrs. seven machines had been unloaded for this brigade of which this battalion was allotted two. Under orders from Lt. Phelan I proceeded to brigade H. Q. with the machines. We spent the night at rear brigade H.Q., and reported to brigade at 0900 hrs. next day. Brigade then drafted us to our respective units. At battalion headquarters the machines were serviced and overhauled ready for action. Brigade restricted our training to night movement owing to fear of aircraft observation during the day. During the next three days I had reported to Lt. Phelan to enquire re the unloading of the remaining machines. He informed me that the ship at anchor had been partly sunk by bombs during a raid on shipping by enemy aircraft. It was believed that the carriers in the ship could be salvaged although some were partly submerged by water. Again the harbour officials were slow to take steps to unload the ship, so at the time the invasion commenced there were still machines ~~unloaded~~ unloaded. Personnel of this brigade took part in the unloading of this boat by barges, resulting in as far as I know about five machines.

Late in the afternoon of the 16th of May we were ordered to proceed immediately to Suda Bay area with the battalion. During this movement one machine went forward of the column, and one at the rear. We reached our allotted area at dark and dispersed under the cover of trees. We were asked to carry out a patrol that night of an area to the left front of our lines, but we were unable to do so owing to the nature of the country.

Later on one machine with the C.O. coy. Comndrs. and a New Zealand officer had moved forward and made a recce. of the bn. area. During the remainder of the night one machine was engaged locating ammunition dumps and transporting any ammunition that could be obtained to B.H.Q. During the following day the machines were well camouflaged under the cover of trees, and any servicing that was necessary was carried out. On the morning of the 21st the C.O. asked for a machine to give assistance to Sgt. Clarke's platoon across the creek on our left flank provided that I could cross the creek. I made my recce. and found it impossible to do so. I was then sent by another route leading in the direction of the main Canea Road. On my way down I came in contact with a major of the R.M. As they were occupying an area with their right flank almost resting on the main road I gathered from him that the creek could be negotiated and that he had two forward platoons fighting the enemy in the area which I had intentions of taking my own machine through and give assistance to our own troops on patrol. There was only one way open to me; and that was to proceed well to the rear of the enemy that the R.M. were engaging. Considering the time it would take and having only a faint idea of the nature of the country and the big risk of encountering unknown enemies position I decided to report back to the C.O. and give him my information. On the morning of the 22nd. Lt. Lowe and my driver and myself proceeded in the direction of Suda hoping to obtain Bren magazines. Eventually we went into Canea and was successful in obtaining a box of 180 Bren magazines and then returned to BHQ. On the 23rd. the machines moved to Pygros independently and were on several occasions impeded in their movements by enemy a/c. However the trees offered a good protection from view; and we arrived in the bn. area on the following morning;. During our time there our role was more or less to carry out work such as transporting weapons ammo. and taking officers on recce. etc. Under orders I took my machine to Lt. Gluth who had his platoon on the left flank of the village. As enemy aircraft was continuously active during day we had to move by bounds from cover to cover or wait till the planes had more or less passed. I got the machine as far as I could into the village and could only carry out any dismounted action against any likely quarters of hostile fire. Any opportunity that I could take in helping Lt. Gluth was done by moving our guns (Dismounted) up to the posn. of the platoon as we did when we gave covering fire to the Greeks when they attempted an attack on Ruin Hill and Castle Hill. On several occasions we joined in with his platoon in carrying out sniping with rifle fire. Four heavy Fiat machine guns were allotted to the bn. and I had got them in order for firing and carried them from BHQ. to Lt. Gluth's pln. for his use. After getting one complete gun to him, and on arrival back with the remaining guns the enemy launched an attack with both land and air forces. Eventually the order to withdraw came through and Lt. Gluth sent my machine and driver to report to me at BHQ; In face of this the Fiats never had time to fire a shot. The 2/1 M.G. Bn. were last to withdraw and I received orders to remain until such time as I could take their weapons back to our new posn.. Although we were hindered by A/c we managed to move back. This posn. was occupied for the night and the following day, our role there being to cover the main road with the Boys Rifles should the enemy use AFVs to attempt to break through. We also had pre-arranged posns. to take up to give supporting fire to C Coy should the enemy break through our lines.

The enemy AFV was seen to approach around the bend in the road in about 1200 x away. This was about 2000 hrs. and the enemy landing smoke bombs on the road about 200x away from our front I fired three shots at the AFV. Although it was at extreme range and observation not the best WOI Balfour O.C HQ Coy. through his binocoulars noticed the machine make an attempt to move away but only moved a short distance. A shot from the A/T may have penetrated the vehicle but I cant definitely say. Prior to our withdrawal that night one machine under Cpl. Quirk, under orders from the C.O. was detached to report to Brigadier Hargest 5th N.Z. BGDE. in Suda Bay, so as he could have means of transport to make his recce. etc/ The remaining machine left with the bn. carrying M/G stores and crew to proceed to our new posn. past Neonkhorian. After passing through Neonkhorian we came in contact with Lt. Phelan and Sgt; Cooper. They had obtained a carrier from Suda Bay before leaving, and the bn. now had three carriers including the one detached to the 5th N.Z Bde; -The following day we collected ammo. and petrol supplies and moved further on to a position in rear of the Commandos Force. During operations there Lt. Phelan suffered a severe wound to his leg and head which necessitated his evacuation; The role of the machines on this day was primarily patrol work on the left rear flank and covering a road against any A F Vs. During the day the enemy aircraft fighters came over our area on several occasions Making best use of shade and and whatever cover offered us we managed to avoid attentions. On the movement back that evening to KERATES one machine mounting a M.M.G and crew apart from its own armament patrolled the road in front of the bn. while the other machine followed in rear to guard against attacks form that quarter. After a breif stay on the following day on the summit of a mountain pass we moved down to a village and bivouaced for the remainder of the day. That evening during our move towards Spakhia General Weston gave instructions to report to Major Keith of the 3rd. Hussars (Light Tank Regt) at dawn on the following morning. We were to meet him in the vicinity of the village of Embros. Having reported to the 7th. Bn; to dispose of the M.M.G. stores and crews we finally reported to Major Keith in the arranged area about 0500 hrs. Here the other Bn; carrier rejoined us from the 5th. N.Z. Bde. Whilst on our way to this area our two carriers and the one reporting back from the N.Z bde encountered enemy a/c necessitating frequent halts for cover. As we were preparing to take up action positions a 2lb shell struck one of the 3rd Hussars light tanks wounding the commander and driver and putting the machine out of action. Our rearguard force now consisted of two light tanks and our three carriers. Each tank had a crew of three men; and our carriers had a crew of two men each. Owing to the fact that this action was fought almost entirely in a mountain pass the vehicles were unable to move off the road and our movements were visible to the enemy so carefull use of the machines and what cover there was had to be exercised Major Keith explained that our task was to hold the enemy from a line that was being established near the coast until 1700 hrs. that night. Our tactics here were as follows: The tanks and carriers leap frogged through one another to various points of cover and engaged the enemy with M.G. fire until the position became untenable owing to light and heavy M.G. fire and also the light gun the Germans had, beleived to be a 2 pounder that was capable of firing an a/t shell such as knocked the light tank out. We first engaged the enemy by dismounted action in the pass north of Embros, where Sgt. Cooper and Cpl. Quirk took up a position on the left of the pass, and Pte. Downie and myself took up a position on the right. Owing to the enemy outranging us with his M.G. fire, we retired on the orders of Major

PH

Keith
to the village of Embros, where we took up another position and awaited the enemies advance. Two guns with Sgt. Cooper, Pte. Marshall and myself took up a dismounted position on the left of the road and slightly forward of the village, while Cpl. Quirk Ptes; Downie and Keith covered the gully on the right of the village from the carriers. The tanks took up a position in the rear to cover the gully and another likely line of enemy advance along the side of the ridge. We were in this position some time when we noticed small groups of troops moving towards us. They were dressed in khaki, and some carried M.G.s while some appeared to be unarmed. As they wore no distinctive uniform and approached so openly we held our fire as we beleived they were possibly our own troops. They were between 50 and 100 yards away before we were able to definately establish that they were enemy, and as they observed us at the same time we opened fire almost ~~together~~. Sgt. Cooper, Pte. Marshall and myself had open ground between ourselves and the carriers, but owing to the fact that our fire had caused the enemy hastily to take cover his aim was not the best and we managed to make the carriers who by this time were facing about and had their engines running ready to move. The carriers and tanks gave excellent covering fire to us during this action, and from our observations we beleived that the enemy suffered heavily in this encounter. One of our Brens was so damaged by M.G. fire that it was unfit for further use, but as we had salvaged a Bren along the road we still had all the carriers armed. We then moved along the road into the main pass leading to the coast, and took up a position around the bend in the road behind a protecting wall of rock. The tanks which had covered our withdrawal from the village also took up a position here. Sgt. Cooper Cpl. Quirk and myself went forward on foot with the Brens and took up an excellent position on top of the hill above the road. It was from here that we inflicted the heaviest casualties on the enemy as he came into range with troops in trucks followed by columns of walking personnel at various stages. They were an easy target; and the first column when fired upon scampered for cover while their trucks tore down the road and gained cover. One of our tanks on the road to the rear of our position brought his M.M.G. to bear on the enemy also. The enemy began searching fire with mortars and M.G. but failed to locate us. A column of marching troops came into range on the road soon after, and we dealt with them in a similar manner to the last column we saw. The enemy again commenced his searching tactics with heavy mortar fire and caused us to vacate our position on the hill. As their fire came close we were able to make full use of the dust so caused to affect our withdrawal to the road and back to the machines. While here the drivers had an opportunity to refill all empty Bren magazines. We intended to hold this position as long as possible as we had observed a D.R. moving back along the road presumably to hold further troops from advancing. As we beleived that there were troops out of our sight in a bend further along the road Sgt. Cooper Cpl. Quirk and myself followed one of the light tanks on foot carrying our brens. As we rounded the bend another smaller body of enemy were observed coming towards us. As the enemy were caught by surprise our brens and the Vickers in the tank caused extremely heavy casualties among them. After this incident the enemy did not concentrate his advance along the road but moved a body of troops with M.G.s to the hill on our left so as to outflank us and cover the road with fire. A few enemy ^{troops} were observed in the gully below the road, but as cover was too scarce they mainly concentrated on the opposite hill. From here onwards we saw very little of the enemy although we were almost always under fire; The cover on the hill on the left was excellent for the enemy and it was only at odd intervals that we sighted individual troops moving, and then only at

extreme range. While we were still here the enemy gave up firing at us with his light gun and mortars and concentrated that fire on the road near our own forward lines. As the only enemy we sighted were out of Bren range most of the firing here was done by the tanks Vickers; We remained in this position till almost 1700 hrs. keeping a strict lookout on the gully beneath so as the enemy could not filter through in that area. We then received the order to retire to the beach from Brig. Vasey through Major Keith. Owing to the enemy having passed us on the left flank we had almost a mile of fire swept road to negotiate. The enemy were using heavy as well as light M.G.s, and although the carriers were continuously being struck no bullets penetrated either the side or the front armour, although the side armour was heavily dented by the heavy M.Gs. Sgt. Cooper and Pte. Marshall dismounted from their machines believing themselves to be out of range; but Pte. Marshall suffered a bullet wound in the arm and Sgt. Cooper was struck in the arm with a piece of mortar splinter also. Cpl. Quirk and Pte. Downie who were in the leading carrier ran on to a section of road that had evidently been ranged on by the two pounder and had four shells fired at them in rapid succession narrowly missing the machine. From the rapidity of fire it appeared that the two pounder must have been automatic or at least semi-automatic. Under orders from Major Keith we ditched our machines in a suitable spot as we were then behind our established line, and proceeded to the beach later rejoining the battalion for the evacuation;

J. H. Asthorne Sgt. VX6300
A/O.C. Carrier Platoon 2/8 Bn.

- NOTES -

It may be seen from the above report that the carriers were almost entirely restricted to road work. The carriers used by this battalion were Universal Bren Carriers Mk.I 1940 and gave excellent results.

J. H. Asthorne

W.D. 2/8 B.N.

APPX 6

REPORT- CRETE CAMPAIGN.

15 Pl. C. Coy.

First contact with the enemy was made at PERIVOLIA on 1100 hrs by means of a Pl. fighting patrol, sent out to clean up an area known to be held by parashoot troops of approx. 70 or 80 strong. The pl. was to be supported by a full battalion of Greek & supporting weapons. Arriving at the rendezvous it was found that 8 Greeks formed the Unit armed with rifles. With the natives acting as scouts, a reconnaissance was made, & then decided upon to proceed towards the enemy occupied areas. The ground patrol covered, was particularly difficult ground ~~ground~~ for approach or fire. The hills rising in terraces & very heavily timbered the range of observation at times limited to 50 or 60 yds. When nearing the objective, ground, the Greeks fell back to the rear, leaving our own scouts to guide the patrol. I immediately, after this, ^{saw} 2 enemy scouts, or decoys, as was found out later were sighted in position behind cover about 30 yds from a creek in front of enemy area. While one section operated fire to keep the scouts down, the other two were sent around the flank to pin them with their fire to enable the centre sec. to close on them while this was taken place, the enemy, taking advantage of all cover available, double on their tracks to the creek. The two forward sections closed on the bank of the creek in open formation behind cover & opened fire on movements on the hill, over the creek. The enemy returned the fire intensely with L.M.G. rifle & mortar the estimated number at the time being at least 40 or 50 in number, but were later an estimate at over 100 by B. Coy. After fire being exchanged for approx. 2 hrs. during which time we had sustained 4 casualties we had succeeded in quieting numerous positions from which fire had been directed at us, it was decided to withdraw as the enemy were far superior in fire power & positions, so with the aid of covering fire from therear, we carried our wounded out to a safe area. In getting the wounded out, Pte. Barker S.Q. was conspicuous by his gallantry in carrying Pte Gillespie. J. who later P.O.W. across an enemy fire covered area. Their wounded men were then sent back with an escort to R.A.P., the rest of the patrol moving round to a flank of the enemy, to try & penetrate there. The afore said Greeks in the early part of the action had moved down on the Right flank to a house in the creek. Two of them managed to get out, the remainder being blown up by the enemy mortar. After appreciating the the position on the flank which was not a very happy one considering the ground etc the patrol adopted a standing patrol formation for observation. At 1500 hrs a formation of planes came over, and over 600 para troops were dropped approx 2 miles from our position in direction of the aerodrome. The attached 1 Sec man was sent back to H.Q. with information gained, the patrol following a few hours later without further incident.

On 23rd 5-41. 8 Sec. was ordered to make contact with N.Z's, on R. flank. Done.

At 1600 hrs a standing patrol was posted around withdrawn at 2100 hrs D Coy 7th Bn. taking up defensive position in area Ptn withdrawn to new defensive position.

24-5-41 Pl. fighting patrol left defensive position at 2300 hrs returning to area at 0330 hrs. Information received at B.H.Q. that 7th Bn. had troops erecting wire forward of B Coy 2/8 Bn. positions across creek with enemy on Castle Hill approx. 1 1/2 miles.

The patrols job was to pass through our wire & proceed in direction of Castle Hill till 1500 yds had been covered & the second creek on the route had been reached. This creek to be patrolled & contact to be made ~~XXXX~~ for information situation of enemy force not being too strong. Own arrangements to be made times etc. of passing in & out own lines. The area stated above was patrolled but enemy not contacted patrol was not successful in fulfilling its object so returned to area.

25th 1 Sec. on road block duty at Pyrgos. Bombing raid 9 men casualties 2 killed Pte Vale & Thomas. Remainder of Pl. on same job all night.

26th Pl. moves down to B Coy to strengthen line and withdraws from defensive position with rest of B Coy at approx 1600 hrs to support artillery 2 casualties.

W. Dalach Sgt.

W.D. 2/8 BN

APPX 7.
ACTIVITIES IN CRETE.

No. 3. Mortar Pl.

GEORGIOPOLIS- On arrival in Crete, after the sinking of the "Costa Rica" it was found that only two trained Mortar personnel were with the Bn. These were Cpl. J.H. Neven and Pte. G. Webb both of whom were convalescent from Greece.

A few days after arrival at Georgiopolis, two mortars, each less baseplates were delivered to the Unit. Volunteers were called for from Rifle Coys and the training of two Dets. was commenced at once.

On the opening day of the blitz, their trng. was still very much incomplete and base plates were still lacking, as also was amm.

On taking up the defensive position at MOURNIES the dets. were used as riflemen, but after the advance to PYGROS, extemporised base plates and ammunition became available. The base plates were clumsy and heavy. They consisted a sheet of $\frac{1}{2}$ " mild steel, to each side of which had been bolted pieces of timber approx. 3" X 4". Unfortunately, the timber on both sides was laid in the one direction thus giving rigidity in one direction only

SUDA-BAY- CANEA AREA. Training of the Dets was suspended with the opening of the blitz, on the assumption that neither base plates nor amm., were available.

On the arrival of both, however training was resumed in spite of continued interruption from enemy air activity, and eventually the dets., reached a stage at which they could be expected to deal with simple problems at least. They were accordingly both allotted to "B" Coy - the Bn. was on a one-Coy front- and moved up into posn.

C.D.F. tasks were allotted, and all arrangements made to deal with these tasks. 43 rounds of H.E. were available for each Mortar.

Owing to the close cover and the lack of means of communication, the Mort., had again to be very close to the F.D.L's.

On the day the unit withdrew from PYGROS an attempt was made to engage an eny., "Infantry cannon" which had been located at a range of approx. 1000 yds on the right flank.

After the second rd. however the base plate was found to have started to "fold over" laterally, due to lack of cross rigidity before mentioned. It was also found that there was a considerable lack of accuracy, due to the smooth under-surface of the plate. No doubt if more time were available for the careful digging-in of such a plate, better results could be obtained.

At this stage, the Pl. in front of this Det. withdrew, and the Det. had, of necessity to go with it. The Mortar and some of the ammunition was carried out, and the Det., less three men who became separated from there moved back in order, after loading its own gear on a carrier. The other Det. acted in a similar manner.

Owing to lack of tpt. very little amm., was brought out of this posn., and the Mons. were not employed again in Crete.

The personnel formed part of one of the Rifle Pls. in H.Q. Coy.

CASUALTIES- Although employed well forward both in Greece and Crete, very few casualties were suffered by Mor. Pl. They were:-
VEVIE - Cpl. Neven- walking wounded. Two wounds. Neck & back.
NEON KHORION - Pte. G. Webb, Drv. T. Heenan. Pte. Groves missing.

COMMAND. Mor. Pl. was commanded in Greece by Lieut C.M.Y. Thompson.
In Crete by Lieut. J. W. Hall.

2/8th Bn.

REPORT BY A/O.C. H.Q.Coy. W.O. 1 E. Balfour

CRETE

- April 29 Bn. reorganised, H.Q.Coy. commanded by W.O.1. E Balfour, made up of unarmed, unequipped and personnel classed as medically unfit to act as carrying parties and duty Coy to the Bn. The Coy. consisted of three platoons commanded by Sgt. Watson, Sgt Perry and Sgt Cooper.
- May 1 Coy. moved to an area a quarter of a mile east of KALIBEES and is issued with 3 Bren Guns and 20 rifles and acted as reserve Coy with rear protection to the Bn.
- May 8 Coy. marches from KALIBEES to GEORGEIOUPOLIS area and bivouacs for the night.
- May 9 Coy. takes up a defensive position, one platoon forward covering the gap between the two forward companies, the remaining two platoons in reserve
- May 13 All carrier personnel detached from the Coy. under Lieut. Phelan.
- May 14 All mortar personnel attached for training under Lieut. Hall.
- May 15 The Coy. is reorganised. ~~xx~~ Now consisting of two platoons of 19 and 20 each, commanded by Sgt Watson and Sgt Perry. Arms consist of four Bren Guns, three Thompson sub machine Guns and twenty nine rifles.
- May 18 Engineers controlling the demolition of the bridge north of LAKE KOORNA come under the command of the O.C. H.Q.Coy for the time of blowing.
- May 20 Coy. moves by transport to position West of MOURNIERS and takes up a defensive position on the left flank of "B" Coy. The Greeks did not contact Coy. At approximately midnight the Coy. was ordered to stand to due to heavy S.A. fire from the direction occupied by the Greeks. No action was ~~xxx~~ taken.
- May 21 C.S.M. Sullivan was evacuated.
- May 23 The Coy. moves forward 1500x and takes up a defensive position protecting a right flank and rear of Bn. area.
- May 24 Both Platoons under the command of "B" Coy. Coy. H.Q. under the command of "C" Coy.
- May 26 Bn. has withdrawn to old position at MOURNIERS Coy. reformed with Lt. Hall O.C. W.O.1 Balfour 21/c
This report should now be read in conjunction with that of Lt. Hall.
- May 27 At approx. 1500 hrs Lt Hall moved out with reconnaissance party. Both platoons in forward position on right flank and in contact with the enemy. L.M.G. fire has the enemy pinned to the ground. At approx 1800 hrs enemy puts down a smoke screen. Platoons report that they can see through the smoke and continue to fire at the enemy where last seen. At approx 1830 enemy A.F.V appeared on the road and stopped approx 1200x away. After half hour is past a Boys rifle is brought into action result of fire could not be determined owing to heavy dust. A.F.V. withdrawn at approx 2100 hrs. H.Q.Coy withdrawn on the order from the Bn at approx 2145 hrs to the line NEON KHORIAN.

The Coy arrived at the embarkation point in a bad way physical condition, due to long night marching, lack of sleep, limited rations and in most cases footwear was in a bad state of repair.

E. Balfour

W.D. 2/8 B.N.

APPX 9.
Report No. 2. Platoon H.Q. Coy.

REPORT CRETE CAMPAIGN.

The duties of the Platoon until May 19th are contained in O.C. H.Q. Coy's report.

May 19th. No. 2 Platoon was attached to C. Coy. We were given a posn., as one of C. Coy's forward platoons with the beach as our immediate front.

May 20th. Assisted in carrying Anti-Personnel mines. 1100hrs sighted enemy troop carriers for first time. 1600hrs moved to Mourniers with C. Coy. Approx. 2400 hrs. came under command B. Coy and placed in posn., on their left flank. Excellent weapon pits already prepared. Only action throughout night being intermittent S.A. fire by Greeks on left flank.

May 23rd. Moved forward with H.Q. Coy 1500 yds. Take up defensive posn.

May 24th. Come under command B. Coy Placed in posn. forward of village of Pygros. This position being under observation and fire from enemy positions on Terraced Hill. (Ruin and Castle Knolls)

May 25th. As a result of air raid one of our ration carriers, Jones. P. wounded. Spent major portion of night erecting wire in imm. front.

May 26th. Subjected to very heavy aerial strafing. 1400 hrs. come under heavy fire, both mortar and S.A. from infantry. Effectively returned this fire quitening M.G.'s. On withdrawing we again drew heavy fire from both air and ground forces. Proceeded to our old position at Mourniers without casualties. Returned to command of H.Q. Coy.

May 27th. 0100 moved with coy to Suda Bay area. Placed in position on right flank. 1500 hrs. contacted enemy 700 yds to front. Successfully engaged same and spent remainder of daylight in contact. 2145 hrs. withdrew with Coy to Neonkhorion line.

May 28th. Platoon takes up several positions on right flank of C. Coy and is then attached to Lea Force as reserve platoon.

May 29-30th. Covered by Lt. Hall's report.

May 31st. Attached to Mr. Coulston's Platoon (B. Coy) No enemy action. 2000 withdrawn from position and embarked with B. Coy.

E. Watson. L/Sgt.
A/O.C. No. 2 Ptn. H.Q. Coy.

W.D. 2/8 Bn APPX 10.

Routes and Distances Covered by

2/8 Bn Creforce Detachment.

Distance.

April 27th

Bn arrives at Souda Bay and marches to first position near village of Provarma. 12 Miles

May 1st

Bn moves to new position at the village of Kalibes. 11 Miles

May 8th

1700hrs Bn moves through to Georgiopulis arriving at Approx 2359hrs. 14 Miles

20 May

Parachutists land near Canea area. 1700hrs Bn moves by M T to a position near Mournies. Takes up defensive role. 40 Miles.

May 22nd

March to the position near the village of Perivolia. 14 Miles

26 May

Move back to village of Mournies. 2300hrs Bn moves to Refreshment Camp area and rests for night. 6 Miles

May 27th

From Refreshment Camp to Neon Khorion at night after fighting all day 14 Miles

May 28th

Bn moves along Road to village of Estarts at 1030hrs. 2100hrs. Withdrawal from left flank of Comandos along Vyres-Spahkia Road over very rough ground and severe lack of water. 4 Miles
12 Miles

May 29th

1100hrs Move from position on top of Ridge to the valley town San Ammousia. 5 Miles

May 29th. (continued)

2100hrs. Withdrawal to take up rear guard posn on the heights overlooking Spahkia Bay. Road very congested making movement slow and tedious.

10 Miles

May 31st

Bn move to embarkation point on Beach.

3 Miles

=====

W.D. 57

Box 11

CRETE CAMPAIGN.

REPORT BY SGT. CMDG. No. 13 PLATOON.

No. 13 Platoon contacted the enemy on two occasions during the Crete Campaign, namely PYGROS and SOUDA BAY. YN

PYGROS. At 2030 hrs approx. on 24 MAY 13 Pl. then attached to Capt. Coombes proceeded to the village of PYGROS to strengthen the left flank of "B" Coy. Under directions from Lieut. Gluth (12 Pl.), two sections were disposed in sniping positions facing and 900 yards distant from RUIN HILL. Harassing fire was brought to bear on the enemy occupying that feature during daylight of 25 MAY and until ordered to withdraw on the following day. The withdrawal of the Platoon to "C" Coy area was accomplished without loss at 1600 hours under heavy aerial and ground M.G. fire and mortar bombardment.

The men werewell fed and in fairly good condition but lacked equipment necessary to carry sufficient Bren Mags. and amunition. SOUDA BAY.

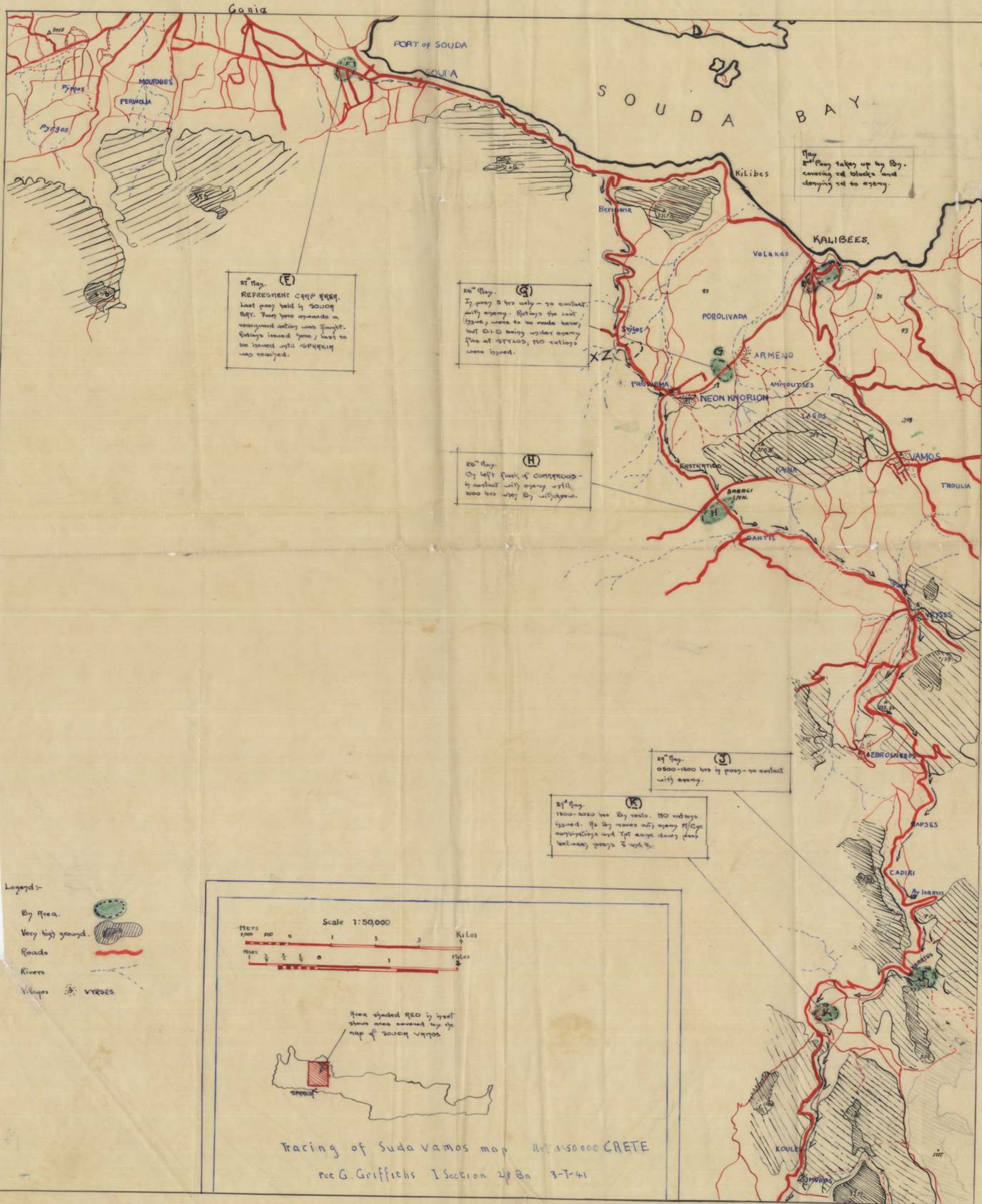
At SOUDA BAY, 13 Pl. was again in support of 12 Pl. under Lieut. Gluth. On this occasion the two platoons formed the right flank of "B" Coy in a defensive position astride the road. On the afternoon of 27 MAY enemy activity was sighted to the Pl. front 700 yards distant and small arms fire was exchanged but inaccuracy on the part of the enemy indicated that our position had not been definitely established. At the same time British troops were observed on the extreme right, withdrawing under M.G. fire to the spit of Land north of SOUDA BAY where they were subject to heavy bombing attacks. Towards evening our area was intensively searched by mortars - probably 3.7". Both percussion and air bursts were observed, the former predominating. The situation at this stage was serious but temporary cessation of the Pl. L.M.G. fire had the almost immediate effect of diverting the enemy's mortars to other areas during the remainder of the action, although our fire was quickly resumed and maintained until 2100 hours when the general withdrawal took place. Throughout this engagement no casualties were sustained by the Platoon.

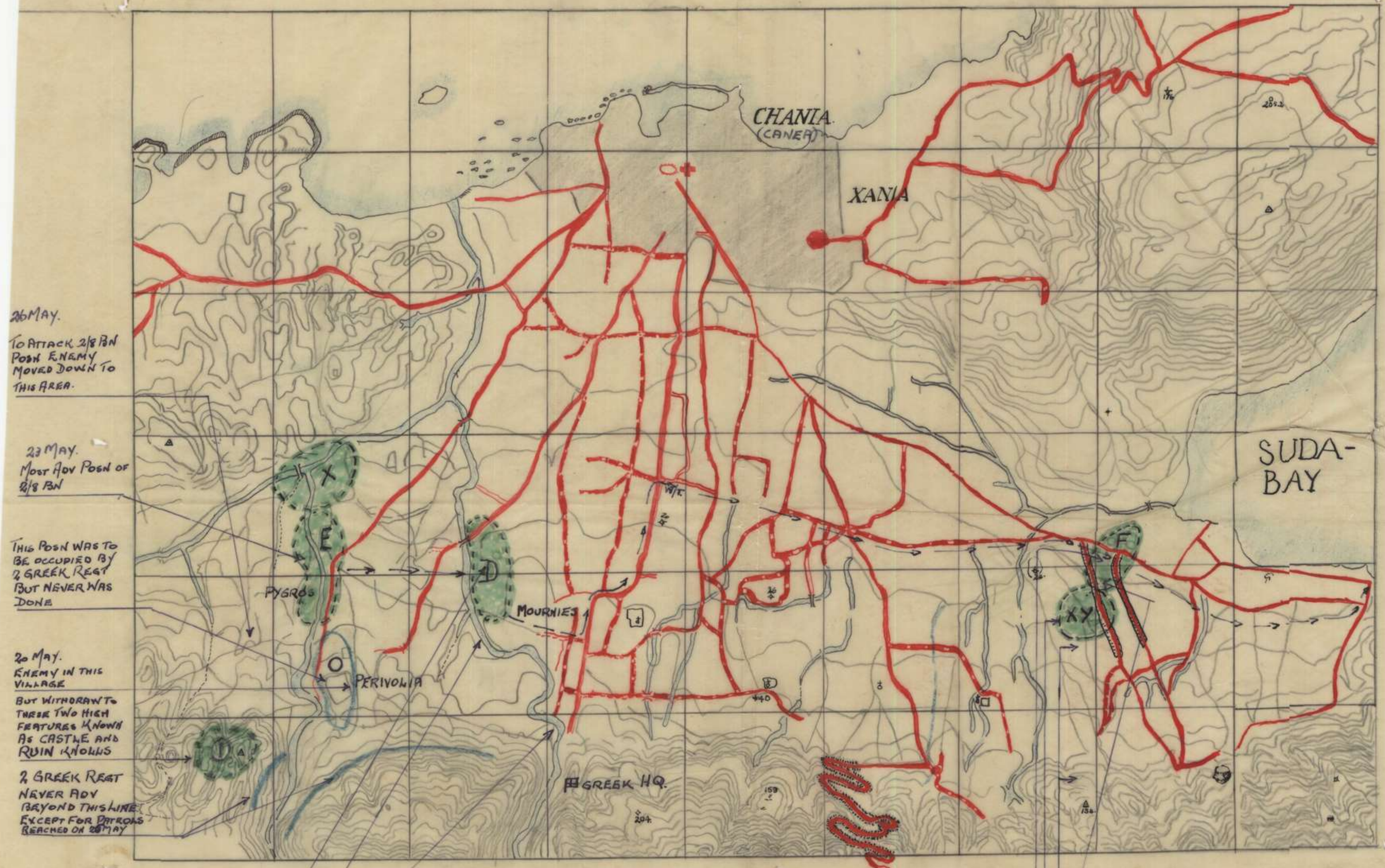
13 Pl. was never again in contact with the enemy although it was involved in each of the defensive positions taken up until eventual embarkation with the remainder of the unit at SPHAKIA.

W.D. 57
13 Platoon

SUDA VAMOS

50,000 CRETE





26 MAY.
TO ATTACK 2/8 BN
POSN ENEMY
MOVED DOWN TO
THIS AREA.

23 MAY.
MOST ADV POSN OF
2/8 BN

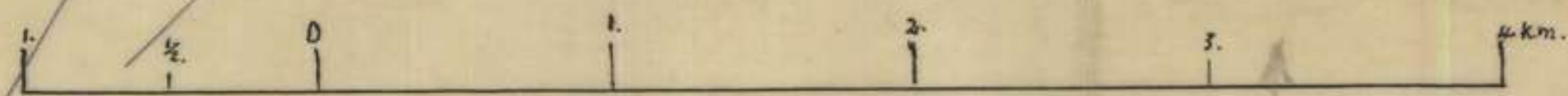
THIS POSN WAS TO
BE OCCUPIED BY
2 GREEK REGT
BUT NEVER WAS
DONE

20 MAY.
ENEMY IN THIS
VILLAGE
BUT WITHDREW TO
THREE TWO HIGH
FEATURES KNOWN
AS CASTLE AND
RUIN KNOWNS

2 GREEK REGT
NEVER ADV
BEYOND THIS LINE
EXCEPT FOR PATROLS
REACHED ON 20 MAY

20th MAY.
FIRST POSN TAKEN UP BY BN
IN SUDA BAY..
GREEKS WERE TO MAKE
CONTACT AND DEFEND THIS
LINE. THIS WAS NOT DONE.

27 MAY
REFRESHMENT CAMP AREA
2/8 BN RIGHT FLANK
2/7 - CENTRE
NZ FORCES ON LEFT TO FOOTHILLS.



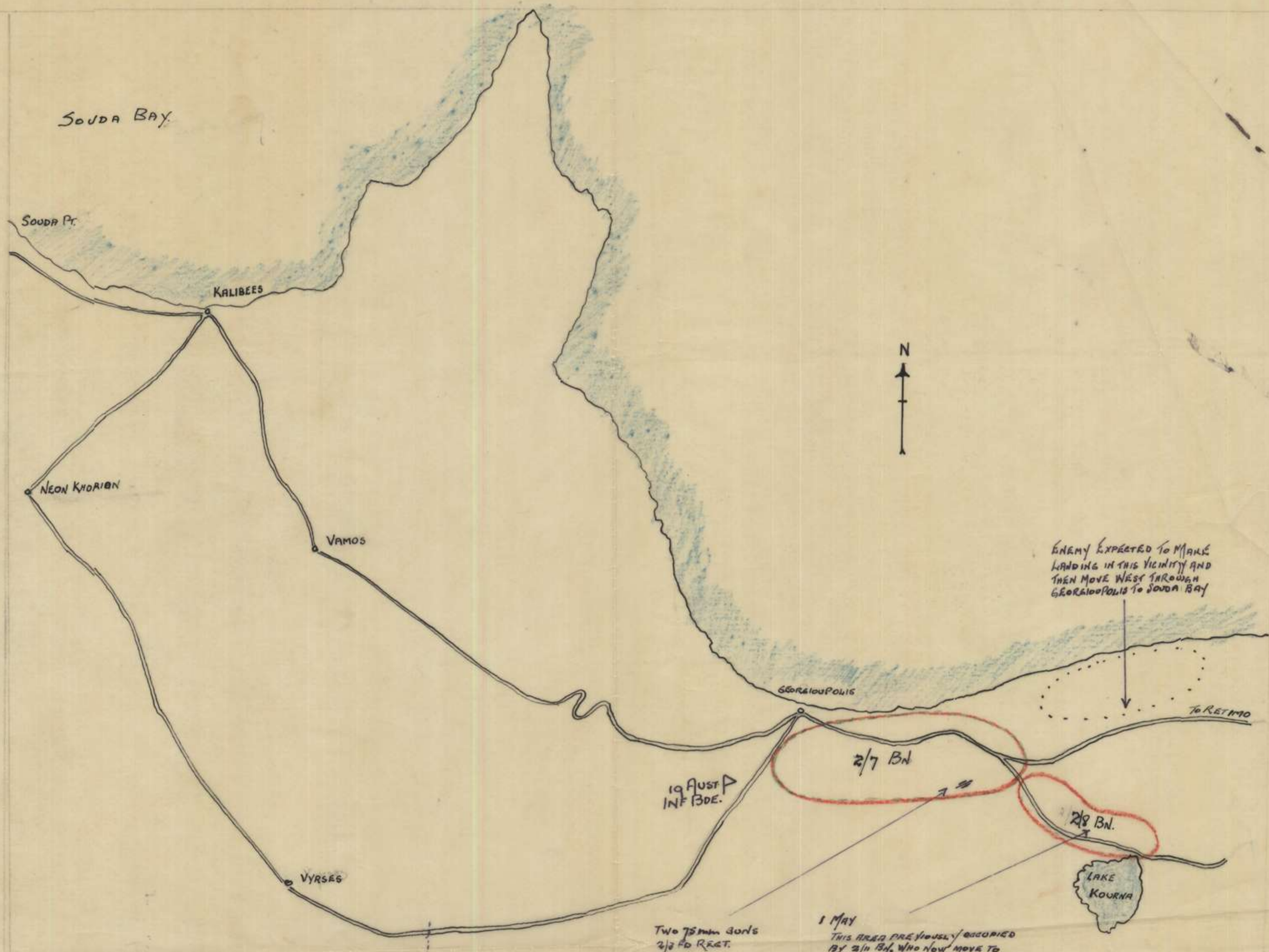
1:30,000 SUDA-BAY. (CRETE)

R. J. Williams

37

#PPX 14.

Diagram of VAMOS and GEORGIPOULIS Area.
NOT to Scale.



ARMY EXPECTED TO MAKE LANDING IN THIS VICINITY AND THEN MOVE WEST THROUGH GEORGIPOULIS TO SOUDA BAY



19 AUST INF BDE.

2/7 BN

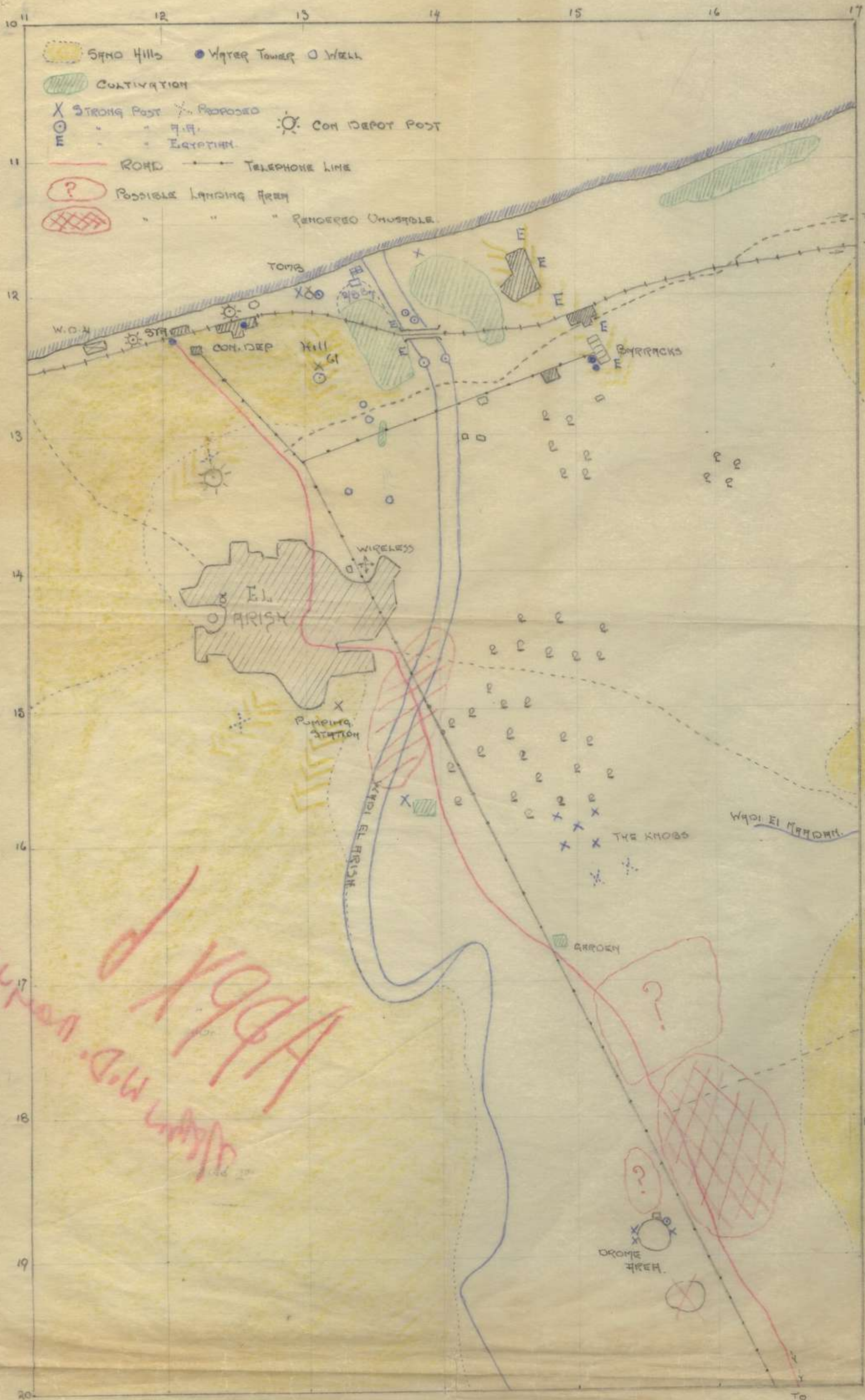
2/8 BN

LAKE KOURNA

Two 75mm GUNS 2/8 TO RECT.

1 MAY
THIS AREA PREVIOUSLY ESCORTED BY 2/4 BN, WHO NOW MOVE TO RETIMO SECTOR. 2/8 BN IN ROLE OF CONCERNMENT UNTIL ENEMY ATTACK 2/7 BN.

TO RETIMO



Abd. M. D. ...

TO RAFA.
TO HAIFA

TO EL AWEIQA.

Traced by R.W. M. Donald.
9/8 B. 1st Dec.
7-7-41

El Arish. Enlarged from El Arish 1:100,000.
[Original Map NOT Gridded. GRID Numberings on this Map are therefore UNOFFICIAL.]

KOVA, KITO FOAM HICK
RRNO JIGG MONT FANO
SELO CLEO.
V MONT.

Flac. 20.

bitrep @ RAFT reports

situation seems in
land at 11:30 hrs @
sketch map in German
has been found on
soldier in Greek uniform

@ Patrol investigated
reported landing of

several parachutes
containing German
clothing @ bitreps

required from 5:00
hourly.

W.D. 1/8 Bu.

APPX 18.

no r/8 Bn.

APPX 15

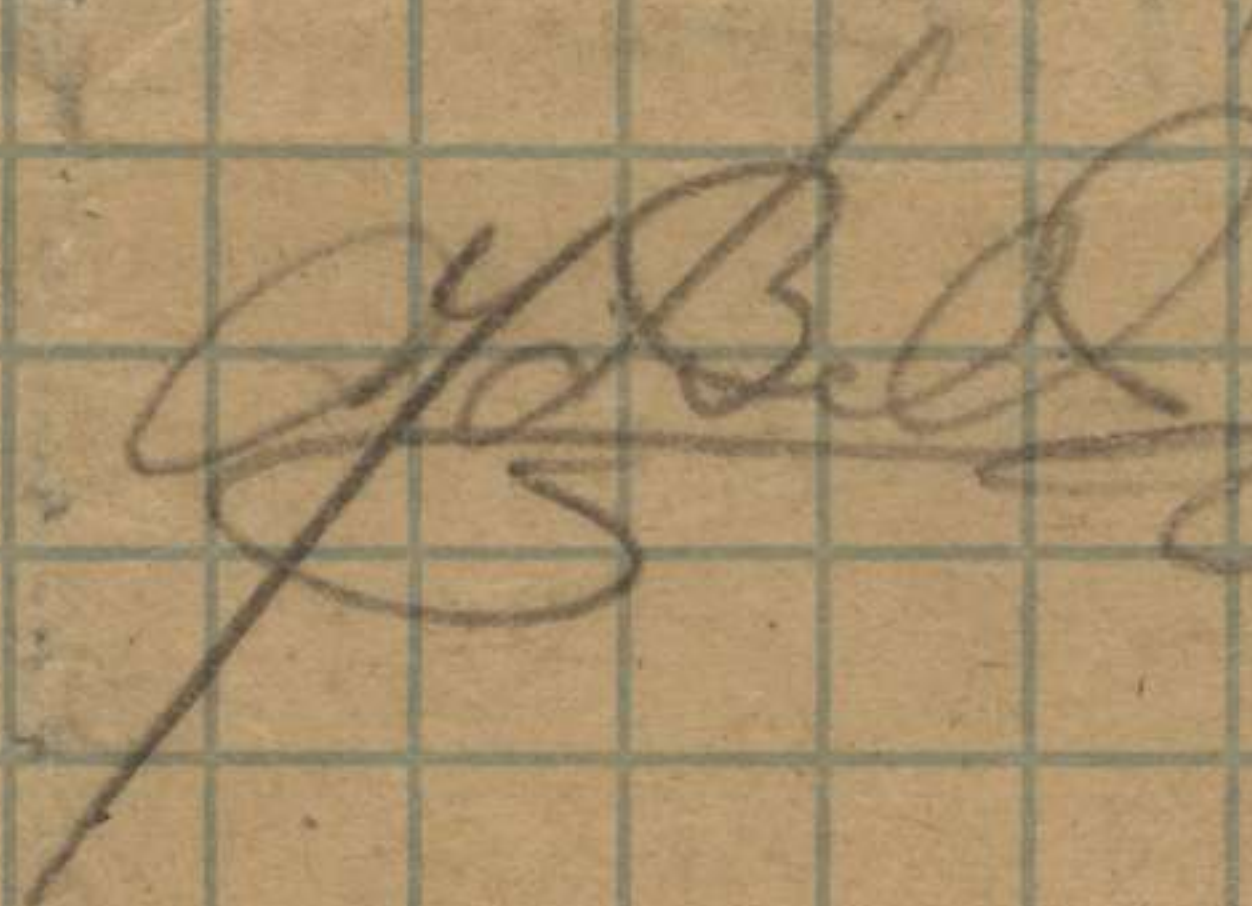
To FAND

From RUCK

0148

28

FAND will bivouac area rd and track
Junc 280 337 @ location known
to Lieut RUMLEY @ Subsequent move
will be notified @ if possible move
will be delayed until afternoon depending
on enemy adv @ rations at bivouac area @
collect water at pt indicated by
Lieut RUMLEY


Cpt
1800

34

250

Rations at this point

W.D. 1/8/30.

APPX 16

MOUNT ARNO ARNO
ROCK

ROAD BLOCKS to be established
all roads to halt and
search all traffic forthwith
mines will NOT be laid
CREEK officers carry green
pass with photo other
tasks of pass but no photo
escort all suspicious character
this H.Q.

1120
1140.

N.T.R.
B.

25 V afternoon
move to old
area we were in
T Bde of 4 area
Near Korion

wait major ref

B

H R
B H R

di Xaqa A

di Xaqa A

W.D. 2/8 BN.

APPX 17

RAFT	TUCK	FOAM	RITA
H. CK	FRNO.	WIGG	MONK
FRNO	SECO	LEO	ROSS
RUCK			

IL0 20

SITREP @ 1035 ~~from~~ troops reported by GREEK to have landed between EPISKONI

and BRISTOL @ on troops reported S.W. RUCK at 1000 ~~has~~ approx distance 2000 3 miles @ Ruck's

investigating

1100

1110

B.

B H Q

H Q Coy

C Coy

vehicles,

C - 6 + 1

H Q - 3

B H Q - 4

} 1K

B. 6 + 1

100' between vehicles,

AUSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES.

ROUTINE ORDERS.

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Lieut-Colonel J.W. Mitchell D.S.O.
Commanding 2/8 Battalion, A.I.F.
Part I No. P.I/4I.

Wilson Lines,
Khassa Camp.
2nd. May 1941.

1. Duties.

The following duties will mount at Retreat on 2nd. May 1941.

Bn. Orderly Officer. Lt. Metcalfe. N.F.D. Lt. Griffith
" " N.C.O. Sgt. Hunnam. to detail.

Bn. Guard. I Sgt. 3 Cpls. 24 O.R. "A" Coy.
N.F.D. "D" Coy.

Guard will mount 4 fixed beats for 24 hours. From retreat to reveille 2 pairs of roving patrols will operate. Details of beats & patrols have been issued separately.

2. Time Table.

The following time table will operate forthwith.

Reveille.	07.00
Sick Parade.	07.30
Breakfast.	08.00
Dinner.	12.30
Tea.	18.00
Retreat.	19.00
First Post.	21.30
Last Post.	22.00
Lights Out.	22.15

3. Pay.

Pay may be drawn from Field Cash Office in McNicoll Lines. Personnel who have lost their pay books will be issued with pay after identification by an Officer. The Field Cash Office will exchange Greek money for Palestinian, up to the amount of pay drawn in Greece.

4. Postal.

Postal Corporal is operating in Bn. H.Q. Block & will accept mail & cables. It is anticipated that inwards mail will be distributed shortly.

5. Church Services.

A special Jewish Service will be held in Writing Room, Royston Lines, BEIT JIRGA, at 11.00 hours 3rd. May 41. No transport is available.

6. Canteen Hours.

Dry.		Wet.	
12.30	13.45	18.30	21.00
16.45	17.15		
18.30	21.00		

AUSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES

ROUTINE ORDERS

7. Leave. No leave outside camp area will be granted at present. It is permissible to attend the Picture Show at Julis.

8. Security. The necessity for strict attention to security of arms & ammunition is brought to the attention of all ranks. Rifles left in tents must be chained to the tent pole by chains provided. It is the duty of all ranks to remove, by force if necessary, all civilians who are not in possession of a current pass for these lines.

Adjt. 2/8 Bn. Capt. [Signature]

The following time table will operate forthwith.

07.00	Reveille.
07.30	Stack Parade.
08.00	Breakfast.
12.30	Dinner.
18.00	Tea.
19.00	Exercise.
21.30	First Post.
22.00	Last Post.
22.15	Lights Out.

Pay may be drawn from Field Cash Office in Moulton. Personnel who have lost their pay books will be issued with pay after identification by an Officer. The Field Cash Office will exchange Greek money for Latakian, up to the amount of pay drawn in Greece.

Postal Corporal is operating in Bn. H.Q. Block & will accept mail & cables. It is anticipated that inward mail will be distributed shortly.

A special Jewish Service will be held in Writing Room, Hoveton Lines, BELT JIRGA, at 11.00 hours 3rd May 41. No transport is available.

18.30	19.45	20.30
21.00	21.15	21.30
21.00	21.15	21.30

AUSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES.

ROUTINE ORDERS.

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by
Lieut-Colonel J.W. Mitchell D.S.O.
Commanding 2/8 Battalion, A.I.F.
Part I No. P. 2/4I.

Wilson Lines.
Khassa Camp.
3rd. May 1941.

I. DUTIES.


To mount at Retreat 3rd. May 4I.
Bn. O.O. Lt. Griffith. N.F.D. Lt; W.H. Duncan.
Bn. ORD.N.C.O. Cpl. G. McBride. N.F.D. Cpl. E. Hedger.
Bn. Guard. H.Q. Coy. N.F.D. "A" Coy.

2; CHURCH SERVICES. Sunday 4th. May.

C. of E. Communion. 07.30 Hrs.
Church Parade - Voluntary. 10.15 hrs.
Both services will be held at Camp H.Q.

3. AMMUNITION.

All ammunition, including Grenades, with the exception of .303 S.A.A. 10 rounds per man on guard, ~~XXXX~~ ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ & 4 mags., per L.M.G. on A.A. duty; will be returned to Q.M. forthwith. Guard Commander will hand over ammunition held by Guard to oncoming Guard Comdr. Certificate of handing over will be included in Guard report.

 Capt.
Adjt. 2/8 Bn.

4 May 41.

ADMINISTRATIVE INSTRUCTION.

No. PI/41.

I. LEAVE.

Leave to Jerusalem & Tel-Aviv will be granted in accordance with schedules issued periodically.

2. ONE DAY LEAVE.

Buses depart from Brigade H.Q. at 07.30 hours & commence return trips at 17.00 hours.

Fares. Tel-Aviv. 145 mils.

Jerusalem. - ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~
200 mils.

3. TWO DAY LEAVE.

Buses depart from Bde. H.Q. at 13.30 hrs. & commence return trips at 10.00 hrs. on the second day thereafter.

Fares. Tel-Aviv 145 mils.

Jerusalem. - Included in tariff of Fast Hotel

4. ACCOMODATION.

Tel-Aviv - at Soldiers Club - 2 nights - no meals. 220 mils.

Jerusalem - Aust. Soldiers Club - "Fast Hotel" - includes bus fares, meals, & sight seeing tours-750 mils.

5. BOUNDS.

All ranks must make themselves familiar with out-of-bounds areas & are not to enter same.

6. DRESS.

Shirts, Shorts, Hats, Boots, long stockings, gaiters; belts stripped. Necessities will be taken in Pack or Haversacks.

7. CONDUCT.

The conduct of men on leave directly reflects on the Bn. & it is the duty of all ranks to ensure that nothing is done which will bring discredit on to the Unit.

8. PAY-BOOKS.

Must be carried.

9. LEAVE PASSES.

These will be issued by Coys. & must be carried.

10. SECURITY.

A man in each bus will carry Rifle, Equipment & 10 Rds. S.A.A. On arrival these will be deposited for safe custody at Military Police H.Q.'S.

II. PROCEDURE

(a) Nominal rolls, in duplicate together with cash for fares & board will be submitted to Bn. H.Q. by 15.00 hours on day prior to leave.

(b) Parties will be paraded by Coy N.C.O.'s. to Bn. H.Q. one half hour before buses leave Bde. H.Q. Personnel will be inspected by Orderly Officer & will then be marched by N.C.O. i/c Leave Party to Bde. H.Q. N.C.O. i/c will hand to Officer i/c Leave Party at Bde. H.Q. a nominal roll of party & money for fare & board.

Buses depart from Brigade H.Q. at 07.30 hours & commence return trip at 17.00 hours. Fares Tel-Aviv. 145 mila. Jerusalem. - 200 mila.

3. TWO DAY LEAVE

Buses depart from Bde. H.Q. at 13.30 hrs. & commence return trip at 10.00 hrs. on the second day thereafter. Fares Tel-Aviv 145 mila. Jerusalem. - Included in tariff of East Hotel. Capt. Adj. 2/8 Bn.

4. ACCOMMODATION

Tel-Aviv - at Soldiers Club - 2 nights - no meals. 220 mila. Jerusalem - Anat. Soldiers Club - "East Hotel" - includes bus fares, meals, & sight seeing tours-750 mila.

5. BOUNDS

All ranks must make themselves familiar with out-of-bounds areas & are not to enter same.

6. DRESS

Shirts, shorts, Hats, Boots, long stockings, gaiters; belts stripped. Necessities will be taken in Pack or Haversack.

7. CONDUCT

The conduct of men on leave directly reflects on the Bn. & it is the duty of all ranks to ensure that nothing is done which will bring discredit onto the Unit.

8. PAY-BOOKS

Must be carried.

9. LEAVE PASSES

These will be issued by Coy. & must be carried.

10. SECURITY

A man in each bus will carry Rifle, Equipment & IO Rds. S.A.A. On arrival these will be deposited for safe custody at Military Police H.Q.'s.

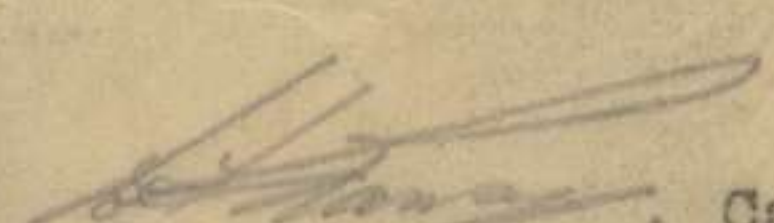
9/8 Bn. A.I.F. MARS D/M

OPERATION INSTRUCTION No. P2/41.

SECURITY MEASURES.

ARMS & AMMUNITION.

- I. Each individual officer and soldier is personally responsible for safeguarding arms and ammunition, government or private, as may be issued to or belong to him.
2. (a) In tents, arms will be chained up and bolts removed.
(b) In the field when arms are piled an armed sentry will be posted and M.G's will be locked in boxes.
(c) When sleeping in the field all ranks will have arms and ammunition securely attached to them.
3. Under no circumstances will the arms of drivers or other individuals be left on unattended vehicles.
4. Loss of arms or ammunition will be immediately reported to Bn. H.Q. in all cases number of arms to be quoted.
5. Weapons & S.A.A. are the chief attractions to the thief, these must be guarded at all times.
6. Daily check of all arms must include check of numbers.
7. All villages are placed "out of bounds". When it is essential that a party enter a village, the senior will be responsible for discipline.
8. Security of Information - It must be remembered that a considerable percentage of the population has only lately arrived from Northern and Central European countries, and while they are not treated with suspicion, care must be exercised in conversations with civilians.


Capt.
Adj. 2/8 Bn. A.I.F.

Handwritten red text: "KAMIA 9444" and "HPI 1441" with a large red 'X' over it.

AUSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES.

ROUTINE ORDERS.

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by
Lieut-Colonel J.W. Mitchell D.S.O.
Commanding 2/8 Battalion, A.I.F.
Part I No. 3/4I.

Wilson Lines.
Khassa Camp.
8th. May 4I.

I. DUTIES.

The following duties will mount at Retreat
8th. May 4I.

Orderly N.C.O. Cpl. Perry.
Guard. "A" Coy.

N.F.D. Cpl. Middleton.
N.F.D. H.Q. Coy.

2. DRESS.


(a) Pistols & ammunition will be carried
at all times by all Officers & Warrant
Officers, Class I.

(b) Short putties may be worn by other
ranks in lieu of Gaiters when the order
of dress is Shorts with Long Stockings.

3. COMFORTS FUND.

The following goods have been received from A.C.F.

Tobacco.	Tins.	I60
Cigarette Papers.	Packets.	I60
Cigarettes.	"	I80
2 Packets writing paper.		
I Box of Envelopes.		
6 Draughts.		
6 Dominos.		
I4 Packets of Cards.		
3 Bottles of Ink.		
2 Loto.		
2 Tri Tactics.		
I Game of Holyland.		


Capt.
Adj. 2/8 Bn.

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ROUTINE ORDERS.

Wilson Lines.
Khassa Camp.

by
Lieut-Colonel J.W. Mitchell D.S.O. 9th. May 41.
Commanding 2/8 Battalion, A.I.F.
Part I No. 4/41.

I. DUTIES.

The following duties will mount at Retreat
9th. May 41.

Orderly N.C.O. Cpl. Middleton. N.F.D. McEwen. Cpl.
Guard. H.Q. Coy. N.F.D. "A" Coy.

2. DRESS.

Shoulder Titles - I.M. "Australia's"- will be worn on shirts by all ranks. These will NOT be replaced, if lost or given away, & in addition to being debited with the cost of the titles, personnel who become deficient of this article of dress will have disciplinary action taken against them.

3. CENSORSHIP.-

All ranks are again reminded that NO reference to Casualties is permitted in letters. Personnel may say that they have been to Greece & have returned safely.

4. RANK BADGES.

N.C.O'S. chevrons must be sewn on to shirts & jackets. The wearing of armllets is not permitted.

Capt.
Adj. 2/8 Bn. A.I.F.

AUSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES.

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ROUTINE ORDERS.

Wilson Lines.
Khassa Camp.
10 May 41.

by

Lieut-Colonel J.W. Mitchell D.S.O.
Commanding 2/8 Battalion, A.I.F.
Part I No. 5/41.

I. DUTIES.

The following duties will mount at Retreat
10 May 41.

Bn. O.O. Lt. J. Adams.
Ord. N.C.O. Cpl. McEwan.
N.F.D. " Butler.
Guard. "A" Coy.
N.F.D. H.Q. Coy.

2. SALVAGE.

The following articles will be salvaged by
Unit salvage organisation.

1. Wastepaper, cardboard, cigarette packets,
2. Silver paper, tin foil, toothpaste tubes etc.
3. Scrap metal.
4. U.S. petrol tins, drums etc.
5. Rags, string, twine, & cordage.
6. Bottles & jars.

VX 6566 Sgt. DaFonte is appointed Bn. Salvage
N.C.O. Each Coy will detail an N.C.O. as Coy.
Salvage N.C.O. These N.C.O.'s will report to Sgt.
DaFonte at 16.00 hours 10th. May 41. for instructions.

3. CHURCH PARADES -

Sunday 11th. May 41.

Unit Parade. 07.00.

Dress - Shirts, Shorts, Hats? Long Stockings,
Boots, Gaiters. Belt & Side-arms where issued.

Markers to R.S.M. 06.45.

Coys March On. 06.50.


C. of E. Holy Communion at Camp H.Q. 07.30.

R.C. Mass.

10.30 - hrs. Line 7 Khassa.

4. BLACK OUT.

This is NOT being fully observed. The move-
ments of tent's occupants in some areas have been
clearly visible at 300 yds. distance. This means
the light must be visible for some miles.


Capt.
Adj. 2/8 Bn. A.I.F.

AUSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES.

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ROUTINE ORDERS.

Wilson Lines.
Khassa Camp.

by

Lieut Colonel J.W. Mitchell D.S.O. I2 May 4I.
Commanding 2/8 Battalion, A.I.F.
Part I No. 6/4I.

I. DUTIES.

The following duties will mount at Retreat
I2 May 4I.

Bn. O.O. Lt. J. Adams.
Bn. Ord. N.C.O. L/Cpl. Middleton.
N.F.D. Cpl. Rowlands.
Guard. "A" Coy. N.F.D. H.Q. Coy.

2. CINEMA.

Cinema at Julis will have two sessions.-
one at 18.00 & one at 20.00 hours.

Khassa Camp has been allotted sessions as under.

I2 May.	Early session.
I3 "	Late "
I4 "	Early "
I5 "	Late "

Personnel are not permitted to take bottled
liquor into the cinema. Personnel from this Unit
attending Cinema are NOT to visit canteens at JULIS.

Capt.
Adj. 2/8 Bn. A.I.F.

AUSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES.

ROUTINE ORDERS.

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by

Lieut-Colonel J.W. Mitchell D.S.O.
Commanding 2/8 Battalion, A.I.F.
Part I No. 7/4I.

Wilson Lines.

Khassa Camp.

13 May. 4I.

I. DUTIES.

The following duties will mount at Retreat
13 May 4I.

Bn. O.O.
N.F.D.

Lt. E. Metcalfe.
Lt. J. Griffith.


Bn. Ord. N.C.O.
N.F.D.

Cpl. Middleton.
Cpl. Turner.

Guard.
N.F.D.

H.Q. Coy.
"A" Coy.

Guard will mount in Drill Order from
13 May 4I. onwards.


Capt.
Adj. 2/8 Bn. A.I.F.

off mess

AUSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES.

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ROUTINE ORDERS.
by

Wilson Lines.
Khassa Camp.
I4 May 4I.

Lieut-Colonel J.W. Mitchell D.S.O.
Commanding 2/8 Battalion, A.I.F.
Part I No. 8/4I

I. DUTIES.

The following duties will mount at Retreat
I4 May 4I.

Bn. O.O.	Lt. J. Griffiths.
N.F.D.	Lt. J.S. Adams.
Bn. Ord. N.C.O.	Cpl. Turner.
N.F.D.	L/Cpl. May.
<u>Guard.</u>	"A" Coy.
N.F.D.	H.Q. Coy.

2. TIME TABLE.

The following amendments to Time Table will
operate from I4 May 4I.

Tea	I7.30 hours.
Retreat	I8.30 hours.

3. CANTEEN.

The Sergeant i/c of Canteen has been instructed
that the Regulation regarding the removal of all beer
bottle tops before sale is to be strictly observed.

4. CORRESPONDENCE WITH BRITISH PRISONERS OF WAR IN ENEMY HANDS.

Under no circumstances will A.I.F. personnel
communicating with British prisoners of war in
enemy hands disclose Army number, unit or service
address.

For purposes of reply, the address of a civilian friend
or of the British Red Cross, 8 Sharia Malika Farida, Cairo,
Egypt, can be given. If the latter course is adopted,
the sender should register his or her name with
the Officer-in-Charge, Prisoners of War, Wounded and
Missing Bureau, at the abovementioned address so that
any replies may be forwarded.

Letters should be short to facilitate censorship
and avoid unnecessary delay.

5. HONOURS & AWARDS.

The following member of 2/8 Battalion has been
mentioned in the Commander-in-Chief's Despatch on the
operations in the Middle East, August 1939 - November
1940.

VX 9772 Sgt. H.L. Rasmussen. 2/8 Bn.

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AUSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES.

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ROUTINE ORDERS.

by

Wilson Lines.
Khassa Camp.
15 May 41.

Lieut-Colonel J.W. Mitchell D.S.O.
Commanding 2/8 Battalion, A.I.F.
Part I No. 9/41.

I. DUTIES.

The following duties will mount at Retreat
15 May 41.

Bn. O.O.		Lt. S.C. Diffey.
N.F.D.		Lt. J.S. Adams.
Bn. Ord. N.C.O.	VX65I2	L/Cpl. May.
N.F.D.	VXII582	L/Cpl. Martyn.
Picquet. - Martin Lines.		H.Q. Coy.
N.F.D. Mounts Retreat 17 May.		A Coy.

2. FIELD CENSORSHIP - PHOTOGRAPHY.

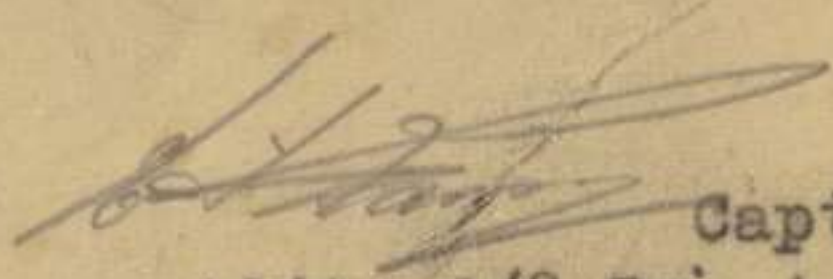
All persons are forbidden, unless in possession of a special permit issued by the Ministry of National Defence, to take photographs, or make sketches or drawings, within or near a prohibited Military Zone:-

For the purpose of this Proclamation the following are prohibited Military Zones:-

1. Military works, buildings or fortifications; aerodromes; batteries, searchlights; barracks, camps, bivouacs, cantonments.
2. Arsenals; munitions or supply depots; buildings, establishments or yards performing work or national defence.
3. Telegraph, telephone and wireless stations; water, gas and electricity works or systems; gasometers; petrol and oil installations, tanks and systems.
4. Port areas and everything contained therein, the Suez Canal, installations thereon, boats and ships navigating therein; bridges, locks, and waterways generally in relation thereto.

Photography or sketches of the following are also forbidden.

1. Naval, Military or Air Force units or formations of the Egyptian or British Forces; their ships, aircraft, tanks, artillery, vehicles, weapons and equipment.
2. Hospital trains, ambulances, casualties.


Capt.
Adjt. 2/8 Bn. A.I.F.

18
(c) Individuals described in para (b) above, subparagraphs (i) and (iv) do NOT enjoy the privilege of free postage accorded to troops in certain parts of the command. (To be repeated in all unit orders)

4. ADJUTANT GENERAL'S AND QUARTERMASTER GENERAL'S STAFF HYGIENE

PREVENTION OF BILHARZIA.

All troops will be warned that most of the natural sources of fresh water in the Middle East are infested with Bilharzia.

Bathing, wading or washing in any such water is prohibited unless it has been declared safe by the medical authorities.

5. DRESS - COLOUR PATCHES.

(a) Unit colour patches are authorised to be worn at the sleevehead of jackets SD, and greatcoats and on the right hand side of the hat. The wearing of colour patches on jackets, khaki drill, officers, and on the cap SD, is forbidden and will cease forthwith.

6. PAY - LEAVE PERSONNEL.

Attention is drawn to the fact that no pay is available in Jerusalem for personnel on one day's leave. Pay is only available for those on leave for two or more days.

L. Shudry.

Lt.
for Adjnt 2/8 Bn.

AUSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES.

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ROUTINE ORDERS.
by

Wilson Lines.
Khassa Camp.
17 May 41.

Lieut-Colonel J.W. Mitchell D.S.O.
Commanding 2/8 Battalion, A.I.F.
Part I No. II/41.

I. DUTIES.

The following duties will mount at Retreat on
17 May 41.

Bn. O.O.
N.F.D.

Lieut. E.C. Metcalfe.
" J. Griffith.

Bn. Ord. N.C.O.
N.F.D.

Cpl. Griffith.
" Hedger.

Guard. H.Q. Coy.
N.F.D. "A" Coy.

Picquet Martin Lines. H.Q. Coy.

2. CHURCH PARADE.

Combined.

Markers. 06.50
March on. 06.55
Parade. 07.00

Conducted by Maj. Trestrail.

R.C.

R.C. times to be notified later.

L. Shady.

Lieut.
A/Adjt. 2/8 Bn. A.I.F.

Notes Book

AUSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES.

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ROUTINE ORDERS.
by

Wilson Lines.
Khassa Camp.
19 May 41.

Lieut-Colonel J.W. Mitchell D.S.O.
Commanding 2/8 Battalion, A.I.F.
Part I No. 12/41.

I. DUTIES.

The following duties will mount at Retreat
19 May 41.

Bn. O.O.
N.F.D.

Lieut. J.S. Adams.
" E.C. Metcalfe.

Bn. Ord. N.C.O.
N.F.D.

Cpl. Perry.
L/Cpl. Leishman.

Guard.
N.F.D.

H.Q. Coy.
"A" Coy.

2. TENTS.

It has been noted that tents have been left in an
untidy condition during parade hours.

All tents will be left in inspection order
between 09.00 hours & 16.00 hours daily, except on
Wednesdays & Sundays when blankets will be aired.

3. COURT OF INQUIRY.

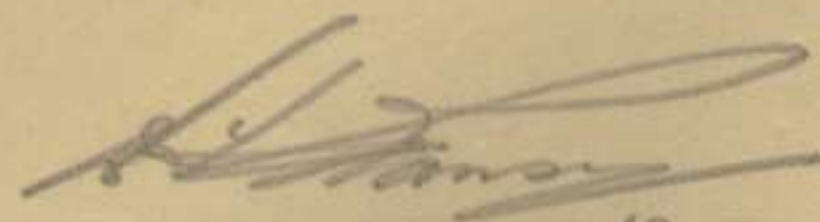
The undermentioned Officers will constitute a
Court of Inquiry to assemble as directed by the
President to inquire into & report upon the theft of
side walls of E.P.I.P. from Wilson Lines, Khassa on
the nights 1/2 May 3/4 May.

President.

Major. H.H. McDonald.

Members.

Capt. D. Braham.
Lieut. J.S. Adams.

 Capt.
Adj. 2/8 Bn. A.I.F.

adj

AUSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES.

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ROUTINE ORDERS.
by

Wilson Lines.
Khassa Camp.
21 May 41.

Lieut-Colonel J.W. Mitchell D.S.O.
Commanding 2/8 Battalion, A.I.F.
Part I No. 13/41.

I. DUTIES.

The following duties mount at Retreat 21 May 41.

Bn. O.O. N.F.D.	Lt. Griffiths. " J.S. Adams.
--------------------	---------------------------------

Bn. Ord. N.C.O. N.F.D.	Cpl. Cameron; L/Cpl. Martyn.
---------------------------	---------------------------------

Guard. N.F.D.	H.Q. Coy. "A" Coy.
------------------	-----------------------

2. IDENTITY DISCS.

All ranks will wear their identity discs at all times.

Failure to comply with this Order will be treated as a serious breach of discipline and will be so dealt with ~~by Commanding Officers.~~

3. SECURITY INFORMATION.

It has come to notice in certain cafes and other places personnel have written their names and military particulars (such as number, Units and ranks) on the walls, furniture or fittings. It has also been reported that similiar particulars have been written in Visitor's Books. These practices will cease forthwith. Any contravention of this order will be dealt with severely.

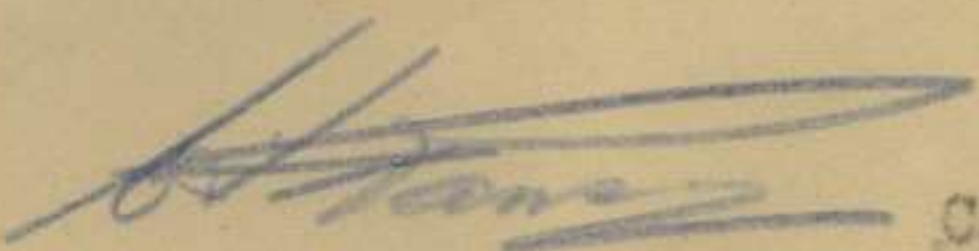
4. CENSORSHIP - CABLES.

No mention of the Unit or Palestine may be made. Reference to a successful evacuation from Greece is permissible.

5. BOUNDS - GAZA TOWN.

GAZA TOWN is OUT OF BOUNDS to all other ranks except personnel from I Aust Gen Hosp who must possess special leave passes for the purpose.

Swimming parties proceeding to and from Gaza Beach are NOT permitted to halt within the town limits nor are they permitted to visit DPINNEY'S CAPE.


Capt.
Adj. 2/8 Bn. A.I.F.

1944

S E C R E T.

Copy No. 10.

OPERATION INSTRUCTION. No. P.I/4I

Ref. Map. GAZA.
I:100;000.

Khassa.
23.5.4I.

- I. It is considered likely, that the enemy might attack this area from the air.
2. 2/4 & 2/II Bns. are providing protection on our flanks.
3. 2/8 Bn. will undertake anti-air defence of Wilson Lines, Khassa Camp.
4. H.Q. Coy will provide a platoon of two sections (I N.C.O. & 9 men in each) under command of an Officer.

A. Coy will provide one Pl. - strength. I Officer.
30 O.R.

These parties will be as completely equipped as possible & will carry I Thompson Gun with 150 rds. of amm^o. per. section & two bren guns with 250 rds. of amm. per. Platoon. Each man will carry one Grenade & 50 rds? S.A.A. (if available).

5. A. Coy will provide an O.P. consisting of I N.C.O. & three men.
6. All parties mentioned above will take up previously prepared positions on receipt of warning order.
7. ALARM. - The following whistle or siren signals will be used.

AIR RAID - Succession of short blasts.

PARATROOPS - Continuous Long blasts.

ALL CLEAR - Two Long blasts repeated at 5 second interval.

8. Action on alarms.

(a) Warning order.- Coys will issue amm. etc to outpost platoons & issue 50 rds. S.A.A. to all other personnel who carry arms & equipment until further orders are issued.

(b) Air Raid.- All troops go to slit trenches.

(c) Paratroops.- All troops; except out post platoons, guard & others specially detailed will move to Bn. mobile reserve area: i;e; area S. of Tent. C.I.

(d) All Clear.- Resume normal duties.

Distb.

1. C.O.
2. Adjt.
3. Q.M.
4. H.Q. Coy
5. A.
6. B.
7. C.
8. D.
9. War Diary
10. File ✓
11. 2/4 Bn.
12. 2/II Bn.

Adj. 2/8 Capt. Bn. A.

AUSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES.

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ROUTINE ORDERS.
by

Wilson Lines.
Khassa Camp.
24 May 41.

Lieut-Colonel J.W. Mitchell D.S.O.
Commanding 2/8 Battalion, A.I.F.
Part I No. 14/41.

I. DUTIES.

The following duties will mount at Retreat 24 May 41.

Bn. O.O.
N.F.D.

Lieut. J. Griffiths.
" J.S. Adams.

Bn. Ord. N.C.O.
N.F.D.

Cpl. Marum.
L/Cpl. May.

Guard.
N.F.D.

A Coy.
H.Q. Coy.

2. CORPS GUARDS Bn. - Special Wing.

A special wing of the Corps Guards Bn. is being formed. Applications will be accepted only from personnel in categories set out hereunder.

- (i) "B" Class personnel.
- (ii) Men over the age of 35 years.
 - (a) Married Men with families.
 - (b) Married Men.
 - (c) Men with long service abroad.

3. FIRE ORDERS.

The attention of all ranks is directed to Unit Fire Orders.

Smoking is prohibited in all stores & the Bn. Post Office.

Safety precautions for the prevention of fire must be observed by all ranks.

4. FIRE-ARMS, DISCHARGE OF.

The indiscriminate discharge of firearms by individual members of the A.I.F. is prohibited. Except when in action against the enemy or in carrying out authorised training or testing etc., with live ammunition, fire-arms will be discharged only when necessary for self defence or for the protection of Government property. Apart from the exceptions mentioned in the preceding sentence, in all instances where shooting takes place the firer will be required to justify his action to the satisfaction of higher authority.

All cases of indiscriminate firing are to be reported to the nearest HQ by the Senior Officer or other rank witnessing the occurrence. When possible the rank, name, and Unit of the firer, together with the names of any other witnesses will be included. The HQ to which the report is made will arrange for the occurrence to be investigated without delay, and take such action as may be appropriate in the circumstances.

Where a sentry or prowler picquet is concerned.

OVER

I. ORGANISATION.

The Bn. (in Palestine) will temporarily be organised as under.

Bn. H.Q.
H.Q. Coy.
A. "
D. "

Postings of Officers will be issued separately.

2. TIME TABLE.

The following time table commences to operate on 26 May 41.

Reveille.	06.00	
Check Parade.	06.15	Check on arms etc.
Breakfast.	07.00	
Bn. Parade.	08.00	
	08.15	
	08.15	
Tng.		
	11.30	
Lunch.	12.00	
	14.00	
Parade.		
	17.00	
Tea.	17.30	
Retreat.	18.30	
First Post.	21.00	
Tattoo.	22.00	Check roll call.
Lights Out.	22.15	

3. TRAINING.

Syllabus of Training will be issued separately. Coys. will ensure that all instructors have access to the syllabus & that preparation for instruction ~~have access to the syllabus that~~ is carried out thoroughly. Stores required must be drawn & ready before the time set down for the commencement of the lesson.

4. TATTOO ROLL CALL.

Coys. will ensure that this is carried out thoroughly. Reports will be submitted to Bn. O.C. at Bn. Orderly Room as soon as the check is completed.

5. SECURITY OF ARMS.

The instructions previously issued re security are to be promulgated to all ranks.

6. STANDING ORDERS.

The details of Bn. S.O's are to be promulgated to all ranks.

 Signed.
Adj. 2/8 Bn. A.I.F.

2/8 Bn WAR DIARY
MAY 1941

APPX IV

Reville 0600
 Lick Pde 0630
 Breakfast 0700
 Fatigue 0800
 Lunch 1230 ^{1150 beer work}
~~July~~ ^{Ar 1430}
 Tea 1700
 Tea 1800
 Retreat 1830
 High post 2200
 Post Box 2115
 Lights out 2130

21
AUSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES.

ROUTINE ORDERS.

by

Lieut-Colonel J.W. Mitchell D.S.O.
Commanding 2/8 Battalion, A.I.F.
Part I No. 16/4I

I. DUTIES.

The following duties will mount at Retreat 26 May 4I.

Bn. O.O.		Lieut. E. C. Metcalfe.
N.F.D.		" W. B. Downing.

Bn. O. Sgt.	VX6III	L/Sgt	Johnston. K. T.
N.F.D.	VXI757I	"	Neil. J.

Bn. O. Cpl.	VX6308	Cpl.	Turner. H.
N.F.D.	VX70II	"	Colley. L.

Guard	A. Coy.
N.F.D.	D. "

Canteen Picquet. (1 Cpl. & 6 O.R's.)	H.Q. Coy.
N.F.D.	A. Coy.

Canteen Picquet will mount duty at Canteen at 18.00 hours & will be dismounted at 21.30 by Bn. O.O.

2. CANTEEN.

In future no beer will be sold to individuals from the canteen.

Personnel requiring beer will apply to their Coy. Q.M.S. by 14.00 hours daily of their requirements.

They will pay in advance for beer applied for. C.Q.M.S. will purchase beer from Canteen Sgt. & will issue to personnel after 18.00 hours. The daily quota will be 2 bottles per man. Disciplinary action will be taken against non-drinkers who, by purchasing beer for drinkers, assisting personnel to obtain more than the daily quota.

3. 2/8th. BATTALION LADIES COMFORTS FUND ASSN.

The sum of £137-10-0. (Aust), has been received from the members of the 2/8 Battalion Ladies Comforts Fund Association. This money is being held and will be expended in such a manner that all ranks of the Bn. will benefit.

A message of thanks & appreciation, on behalf of the Bn. has been sent to the members of the Association.

4. OBSCENE LANGUAGE.

The loud-voiced repetition of a certain type of filthy language is prevalent in the Division. This is not the normal language of Australians, and the practice is to cease.

OVER

5. CONGRATULATORY MESSAGE.

"The Minister for the Army expresses his deep appreciation of, and conveys his congratulations to, the Commander, Staff and all ranks of the A.I.F. who fought in GRE CE, on their magnificent conduct of operations and their bearing under the trying circumstances and conditions with which they were confronted".

6. PARADE.


The G.O.C. 6 Aust. Div. will inspect the Unit on 28 May 41.

All personnel who marched into Camp from 19 I.T.B on 26 May 41, will be paraded by Coys. on Bn. parade ground at 09.30 hours.

Dress - Drill Order. Shirts, Shorts, Stockings.

All N.C.O's. will be paraded by A/R.S.M's. on Bn. parade ground at 10.15 hours.

Dress - as above.


Capt.
Adj. 2/8 Bn. A.I.F.

AUSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES.

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ROUTINE ORDERS.
by

Wilson Lines.
Khassa Camp.
28 May 4I.

Lieut-Colonel J.W. Mitchell D.S.O.
Commanding 2/8 Battalion, A.I.F.
Part I No. I7/4I

I. DUTIES.

The following duties will mount at Retreat 28 May 4I.

Bn. O.O.
N.F.D.

Lt. R.E. Pape.
" C. Diffey.

Bn. O.S.
N.F.D.

Cpl. N.H. Griffiths.

Guard. H.Q. Coy.
N.F.D. A. Coy.

A.A. Guard (I N.C.O. 3 O.R.) H.Q. Coy.
N.F.D. A. Coy.

Canteen Picquet. I Cpl. & 6 O.R. H.Q. Coy.
N.F.D. A. Coy.

2. MESSING.

Each Coy. will detail two Mess Orderlies daily. Mess Orderlies are to be changed at Reveille each morning. Mess Orderlies will be responsible for the cleanliness of their Coy. mess tents.

Each Coy will detail two men as permanent cooks mates.

3. TRAINING CLASS.

Training classes for Officers & Sgts. will be held in tent adjacent to Bn. H.Q. on nights shown below, commencing from 28 May 4I.

Officers.

Sergeants.

Monday
Wednesday
Friday

Tuesday
Thursday
Saturday

Classes will assemble at 20.00 hours & will continue until 21.30 hours.

Capt.
Adj. 2/8 Bn. A.I.F.

AUSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES.

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ROUTINE ORDERS.
by

El Arish
30 May 41.

Lieut-Colonel J.W. Mitchell D.S.O.
Commanding 2/8 Battalion, A.I.F.
Part I No. 18/41.

DUTIES.

The following duties will mount at Retreat 30 May 41.

Bn. O.O.	Lt. J.S. Adams.
N.F.D.	Lt. E.C. Metcalfe.
Bn. O.S.	Cpl. L. Colley.
N.F.D.	Cpl. W. Butler.
Guard. (I Sgt. I Cpl. 18 O.R.)	D. Coy.
N.F.D. H.Q. Coy.	
A.A. Posts (2) (each I N.C.O. 3 O.R.)	A. Coy.
N.F.D. D. Coy.	

2. TIME TABLE.

Reveille.	06.00	Check Parade.
Sick Pde.	06.30	
Breakfast.	07.00	
Coy Parades.	08.00	
Cease Work.	11.30	
Lunch.	12.30	
Parade.	14.30	
Cease work.	17.00	
Tea.	18.00	
Retreat.	18.30	
First Post.	21.00	
Last Post.	21.15	
Lights Out.	21.30	

3. BOUNDS.

The following places are out of Bounds.

El Arish
All Villages
Canteen at No. 5 Con. Depot.
Picture Show at No. 5 Con. Depot.
Native Gardens

4. CLEANLINESS OF LINES.

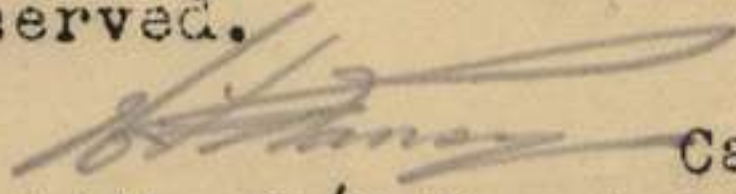
The necessity for strict attention to Hygiene is again brought to the notice of all ranks. Rubbish is NOT to be thrown into the circular holes in the ground on which the Unit is camped. These holes are prepared for palm trees & must not be interfered with.

5. TREES.

No trees, large or small, are to be cut or damaged in any way. Strict disciplinary action will be taken against offenders.

6. BLACKOUT.

This MUST be strictly observed.


Adjt. 2/8 Bn. A.I.F.

For official use only.
Not to be published.

ROUTINE ORDERS.
by

El Arish.
31 May 41.

Lieut-Colonel J.W. Mitchell D.S.O.
Commanding 2/8 Battalion, A.I.F.
Part I No. 19/41

1. DUTIES.

The following duties will mount at Retreat 31 May 41.

Bn. O.O.	Lieut. E.C. Metcalfe.
N.F.D.	" C.E. Diffey.
Bn. O.S.	A/Sgt. Capes.H.
N.F.D.	A/Sgt. Neil. J.
Guard.	H.Q. Coy.
N.F.D.	A. Coy.
A.A. Posts.	D. Coy.
N.F.D.	H.Q. Coy.

2. CHURCH SERVICES.

Unit Church Parade - 08.30. Padre. Stewart.
Markers to R.S.M. 08.15 hrs.
Coys. March on. 08.25 "

Poly. Communion in Recn. Tent at 09.15 hrs.
Evensong. " " " " 20.00 "

R.C. Services at No. 5. Con. Depot.

Mass. 08.00
Confession before Mass. Special dispensation applies.

Night. service at 08.15 hours.

C of E. Service at No. 5. Con Depot.

Communion Service.	07.30.
General Service with Communion	
Service later.	09.30
Night service.	18.15

3. TIME.

All watches will be synchronised at the following times each day.

08.00 Signal. - Fall in on Bugle.
18.00 Signal. - Mens Mess Call.

4. CAMOUFLAGE.

Coys. will take immediate steps to camouflage., with mud, all tents & tent walls which have not previously been treated or on which the previously applied mud has worn off.

5. BOUNDS.

Egyptian Guard tent & barracks are out of bounds to all ranks.

6. A.C.F.

The following goods have been received from Australian Comforts Fund.

800 Pkts. Cigarettes.
300 2 Oz. Tobacco.
1600 Pkts. Cigarette Papers.
4 Cases of Vegetables.

[Signature]
Capt.
Adj. 2/8 Bn. A.I.F.

FIELD RETURN OF OFFICERS,

2/4 B.W. (Unit.)

PART A.—STRENGTH, SURPLUS OR REINFORCEMENTS REQUIRED.

1	2	3	4
Ranks.	Posted strength counting against authorised establishment (excluding attached).	Surplus to Establishment.	Reinforcements required (i.e., deficits on establishment).
*			
*			
*			
*			
Lieut.-Colonels ...	1		
Majors ...	2		
Captains ...	6		
Lieutenants...	13		13
2nd Lieutenants ...			
Quartermasters ...	<i>(included in Captains)</i>		
District Officers ...			
TOTALS ...	22		13

* Insert detail of higher ranks as necessary (e.g., Major-General, Brigadier, etc).

PART B.—PARTICULARS OF OFFICERS JOINED OR QUITTED DURING WEEK.

Officers JOINED during week.

Rank.	Name.	Corps.	Date.	Cause.
Lieut	DUNNAN	W.N.	1 Aust	Promoted from Sgt.
	ADAMS	J.S.		"

Officers QUITTED during week.

Rank.	Name.	Corps.	Date.	Cause.
Capt	HOWARD	H.S.	12.4.41	
Lieut	McLennan	I.G.	12.4.41	
	STRONG	J.H.	12.4.41	
	CHRISTISON	P.S.	12.4.41	
	MURPHY	D.T.	12.4.41	
	McDermid	P.C.	12.4.41	Wounded - returned Prisoner of War
	ARMSTRONG	G.C.	12.4.41	Prisoner of War
	FLEMING	A.P.	12.4.41	Wounded
	DUNNAN	W.N.	5.5.41	Reinstated R.A.G.H.

PART C.—DESCRIPTION OF OFFICERS WHOSE RETURN TO THE UNIT IS PARTICULARLY REQUESTED.

Rank.	Name and Initials.	Corps.	Remarks (e.g., present whereabouts, if known).

PART D.—NOMINAL ROLL OF OFFICERS ON STRENGTH.

(i) Officers posted to Unit (Total to agree with column 2 of Part A).

1	2	3	4	5	6
Substantive Rank.	Higher acting or temporary rank, if held.	Name and Initials.	Corps.	Whether present with Unit (Insert Yes or No.)	If not present with Unit, state how employed.
LT. (A)	VX 40	MITCHELL J.W.	11th Lt.	YES	G.O.
Major	VX 48	KEY A.S.	"	No	In Crtd
"	VX 49	MCDONALD H.H.	"	YES	OC. 'A' Coy.
CAPT	VX 55	COOMBS C.F.A.	"	No	In Crtd
"	VX 82	MARTIN J.A.M.	"	No	In Crtd
"	VX 66	SIMPSON C.L.	"	YES	OC. 'D' Coy.
"	SA 1451	BRAMM D	"	"	2/c 'D'
"	VX 244	AUSTIN H.M.P.	"	"	2/c 'A'
← Lt. Col	VX 214	MASKELL H.J.M.	"	No	In Crtd
"	VX 282	BURROWS J.F.	"	"	"
Capt	VX 7619	RANSOM N.F.	"	YES	Adjutant.
Lt. Col	VX 4598	DIFFY S.C.	"	"	Pt. Comdr.
"	VX 523	PHELAN T.I.	"	No	In Crtd
"	VX 5649	LOWE S.G.	"	"	"
"	VX 5009	SHEEDY L.T.	"	YES	Sig. Officer
"	VX 1566	GRIFFITH J.H.	"	"	Pt. Comdr.
"	VX 1568	GATELY J.C.	"	No	In Crtd
"	VX 4513	METCALF E.C.	"	YES	Pt. Comdr.
"	VX 4522	GLUTH A.L.	"	No	In Crtd
"	VX 4406	COULSTON H.A.	"	"	"
"	"	THOMPSON	"	"	"
"	"	DUNNAN W.W.	"	YES	Pt. Comdr.
"	VX 4401	ADAMS J.S.	"	"	"

(ii) OFFICERS ATTACHED FROM OTHER CORPS.

Substantive Rank.	Higher acting or temporary rank if held.	Name and Initials.	Corps.	Date of attachment.	Nature of attachment.
Capt.	VX 6522	ANDERSON R.R.	1 Aust.	15/4/40	Medical Officer (C. Coy.)

2/8 Bn. AIF.
(Unit.)
22 May 1941
(Date of Despatch.)

[Signature]
(Signature of Commander.)
19 Aust. Inf. Bde. 6 Aust. Div. AIF.
(Bde., Divn., Area, etc., with which Unit is serving.)

Lt. Col.

2/88N. PALESTINE DETACHMENT

MAY. MONTH

A.I.F. FORM C 2118A

WAR DIARY

(RENDER UNDER SECRET COVER)

UNIT 2/8 Bn

1941. YEAR

For material required, see F.S.R. Vol. 1, Sec. 174

PLACE	DATE	SUMMARY OF EVENTS Routine training details and information given in Casualty Returns are NOT required	REFERENCES TO APPENDICES	C.O.'s REPORT AND COMMENTS ON MONTH (On Operations, Equipment, Movement, Health, Administration, etc.)
<p>EN ROUTE TO PALESTINE. Ist Palestine. KILO 89. KHASHA.</p>		<p>0700hrs 2/8 Bn (minus 2/8 Bn CREFORCE Detachment) consisting of II Officers and I6I O Rs arrive and detrain at KILO 89. Where I9 I T B. are estab. Hot meal provided by I T B. Weather Fine and warm. 0930hrs Bn embuss and proceed to KHASHA. Arriving 1100hrs. Foster party supplied by — prepare meals and supervise Camp arrangements.</p>		
	2nd	<p>0700hrs Reveille. 0800hrs Breakfast. Pay parade and exchange of money. Mail issued. 1830hrs Bn mount own duties at retreat.</p>		
	3rd	<p>General situation unchanged. Issue of clothing. All arms and Amm withdrawn. Foster party depart to join their own Unit.</p>		
	4th	<p>1030hrs Voluntary Church Pde. Weather: Fine and warm.</p>		
	5th	<p>Generally situation remains unchanged. Situation generally unchanged. Information received indicates that remainder of Bn (CREFORCE Detachment) under command of Maj Key landed on CRETE without casualties. No other reliable information received as yet. Party of Officers depart on Cairo leave.</p>		
	6th	<p>General situation remains unchanged. Leave schedule issued for O Rs. First party leaves for leave in JERUSALEM.</p>	<p>ADMINISTRATIVE INSTRUCTION. No PI/4I APPX I</p>	
	7th	<p>Situation generally unchanged. Further Parties depart for leave in TEL AVIV and JERUSALEM. Weather: Fine and Warm.</p>		<p>Signature.....</p>



MAY MONTH

1941 YEAR

2/8 Bn PALESTINE DETACHMENT

A.I.F. FORM C 2118A

WAR DIARY

(RENDER UNDER SECRET COVER)

UNIT

For material required, see F.S.R. Vol. 1, Sec. 174

PLACE	DATE	SUMMARY OF EVENTS Routine training details and information given in Casualty Returns are NOT required	REFERENCES TO APPENDICES	C.O.'s REPORT AND COMMENTS ON MONTH (On Operations, Equipment, Movement, Health, Administration, etc.)
KHAUSA.	8th	<p>(Lieut. Adams) 1100hrs I Officer and 29 O Rs join Bn after acting as A A. guards on evacuation Boats from GREECE. General situation unchanged.</p>		
	9th	Series of short Route marches are begun for any personnel not on duties. Weather: Hot winds: Heat intense. Leave still available.		
	10th	Strict Black out must be kept, general order promulgated. General situation unchanged.		
	11th	0700hrs Church Pde. Situation unchanged.		
	12th	Continuation of Route marches. Clothing issues. No further news of CREFORCE Detachment.		
	13th	Leave still available and plentiful. general situation unchanged.		
	14th	Situation generally unchanged.		
	15th	Routine training parades. All ranks informed that pay will be fortnightly from APR 23rd.		
	16th	Situation remains unchanged. <u>Weather</u> : Fine and warm.		
	17th	Orders issued re security of Arms. Situation generally unchanged.	OPERATION INT. No P2/4I APPX 2.	
	18th	0600hrs Reveille. 0700hrs Church Pde. Weather: Fine and Hot.		
	19th	Leave still being granted to TEL AVIV and JERUSALEM. Situation unchanged.		
	20th	Information received by the C O. and forwarded on 1st MAY indicates that 14 Officers and 14 ^{APPROX 34} O Rs of this Unit are on CREFF as part of ^{part of} the CREFORCE. They		



Signature.....

1941 May MONTH
YEAR

A.I.F. FORM C 2118A

2/8 Bn PALESTINE DETACHMENT

WAR DIARY

(RENDER UNDER SECRET COVER)

UNIT 2/8 Bn

For material required, see F.S.R. Vol. 1, Sec. 174

PLACE	DATE	SUMMARY OF EVENTS Routine training details and information given in Casualty Returns are NOT required	REFERENCES TO APPENDICES	C.O.'s REPORT AND COMMENTS ON MONTH (On Operations, Equipment, Movement, Health, Administration, etc.)
<u>KHASSA</u>	<u>20th</u>	(continued) landed with only what they stood in . Bn roll Book however was saved. Later information reveals that these Tps are undergoing a very trying time being without Blankets, and living on scanty quantities of dry rations. General situation unchanged.		
	<u>21st</u>	Bn is working on training schedule issued from DIV. Situation remains unchanged.		
	<u>22nd</u>	Information received through the United States Embassy at ANKARA indicates five Officers namely, Lieuts Strong, Armstrong, McCormick, Mumford, and Capt Howard all late of this Unit are PWs in BULGARIA. Routine training continued as usual.		
	<u>23rd</u>	General situation unchanged. Leave xxx available still to all Ranks. Operation Instruction No P.I/4I issued. (see APPX attached).	APPX. 3.	
	<u>24th</u>	Orders AND INSTRUCTIONS ARE ISSUED for precautions against fire. Application called for from Unit to form special Wing of Corps Guard. Padre Stewart joins Bn strength.	ADMINISTRATIVE INSTRUCTION P3/4I	
	<u>25th</u>	0700hrs Unit Church Pde. 1130hrs 3 Officers - (Lieut Fleming Lieut Bate and 185 ORs xxxxxxx join Bn. General situation unchanged.	and Lieut Downing)	
	<u>26th</u>	0600hrs Reveille. 0700hrs Breakfast Training Period begins for reinforcements whilst remainder of Bn begins recapitulation.	APPX 4.	



Signature.....

MAY MONTH

A.I.F. FORM C 2118A

WAR DIARY

(RENDER UNDER SECRET COVER)

UNIT

1941 YEAR

For material required, see F.S.R. Vol. 1, Sec. 174

PLACE	DATE	SUMMARY OF EVENTS Routine training details and information given in Casualty Returns are NOT required	REFERENCES TO APPENDICES	C.O.'s REPORT AND COMMENTS ON MONTH (On Operations, Equipment, Movement, Health, Administration, etc.)
<u>KHASSA</u>	<u>27th</u>	<p><u>1100hrs</u> G O C. inspects reinforcements and xxxxxx X List personnel.</p> <p>General situation remains unchanged.</p>		
	<u>28th</u>	<p><u>2300hrs</u> Bn leaves KHASSA for EL ARISH by special train. Move made on few hours notice on instructions from 6 AHST DIV.</p>		
	<u>29th</u>	<p><u>0430hrs</u> Arrive EL ARISH. Camp area in Palm grove between railway line and Beach (Sea) on WEST Bank of WADI EL ARISH. Requests for sand-bags, A/T and S M G amm. Chief tactical features in Area to be guarded-- Railway bridge 600^x EAST of EL ARISH Station. Two Aerodromes (Civil and one Military) Six Kilos SOUTH of EL ARISH.</p>	<p>Map: EL ARISH I/I00000 Ungridded. <u>APPX 5.</u></p>	
	<u>30th</u>	<p>Rear Rail party arrive with stores. Road party with Officers Mess Stores arrives. C O. visits Governor of Sinai Hammersley BEY, to co-ordinate defence arrangements.</p> <p>25 Brens, II SMGs, 4 A/t Rifles arrive but no cleaning rods or brushes with Brens. No Signal Equipment, Mortars Transport ,field cooking gear, as yet.</p>		
	<u>31st</u>	<p>Detailed RECCE of area for defence. General Plan .(see sketch Map)</p> <p>Apprehensive about fate of 2/8 Bn Detachment in CRETE.</p>	<p><u>APPX 6.</u> B R Os. Field Returns.</p>	
			<p><u>APPX 7</u></p>	



Signature.....

PRO FORMA UNIT WAR DIARY

UNIT:- 2/8 Bn.(Inf) 6 AUST.DIV.

COMMANDING OFFICER:-LT-COL.MITCHELL.

FOR PERIOD:- 12 APRIL TO 13 APRIL 1941.

PERIOD COVERING :- VEVE PASS -GREECE

DIARY OF EVENTS BY A/SGT.LONGHURST.F.J.(VX4832)

VEVE PASS. -12 April 41:- There were repeated German Attacks throughout the day.
Men had not slept for 24 hours and carriers became bogged bringing up supplies./in/
Fire from German tanks and Mortars caused many casualties, and, at 1300 hrs all men/the Bn.
including transport personnel and office staff were brought into action.
The Greeks on our Right reported heavy Enemy attacks on them, and at approx. 1500 hours, the
Greeks fell back, following an Enemy attack using tanks.
At 1700 hours the Bn. withdrew Coys covering one another to effect the withdrawal.
Some forward sections were Cut Off, and taken prisoner, and there was some confusion during
the withdrawal, particularly after dark, owing to German penetration.

13 April 41.:-The C.O.(LT-COL MITCHELL), 2 Coy Commanders, Sig. Officer and approx 150 OR'S were cut off
at the ELIAKMON river for two days, and, eventually joined the Bn. near LARISSA on the night
of 15 April 41.

VX4832
A/SGT. Longhurst
A/SGT. A/SGT.