

(d) The Japanese air force at this time was extremely accurate.

110. 1400 hours. The enemy gradually advanced in the Repulse Bay area. An 18 pounder here, over open sights, knocked out some enemy mortars on Violet Hill. In addition the enemy was infiltrating southwards from the high ground "The Twins" and Notting Hill. The Royal Rifles of Canada's positions on Sugar Loaf and Stanley Mound were precarious.

Commander East Infantry Brigade telephoned that he was hoping to arrange the evacuation of the civilians from the Hotel this night.*

111. (a) During the morning I suggested to the Officer Commanding 1 Middlesex Regt. that he could not long hope to exercise control from so forward a position as Leighton Hill. At 1600 hours very heavy mortar fire developed on this area. HQ 1 Middlesex Regt. accordingly withdrew and established itself in Hennessey Road, Wanchai—the densely populated area West of Mount Parish.

(b) The enemy launch traffic to North Shore, which had been going on all day, increased during the afternoon.

112. In the afternoon 22nd December, Commander West Infantry Brigade considered from the information available that the enemy was concentrating between Little Hong Kong and Mount Cameron with a view to attacking North-West on Wanchai Gap. Counter measures were accordingly ordered by him.

113. Meanwhile I had agreed to an adjustment of the line in the area of the Filter Beds. A gap existed between the right flank of the company of 2/14 Punjab Regt. and the left of 2 Royal Scots, thus giving the enemy a line of attack towards the Race Course, in which area he was already active with fifth columnists. Such an attack would envelop the whole Leighton Hill area, turn the left flank of the 2 Royal Scots and cut straight in to Wanchai, and I had insufficient troops in hand to meet such a contingency. This adjustment was carried out without incident and the company of 2/14 Punjab Regt. (only thirty-five strong) thus freed moved to the area South-East end of the Race Course, thus linking up with the 2 Royal Scots West of Mount Nicholson Camp. The Company Commander on arrival had, however, only eight men with two Light Automatics at his disposal, owing to casualties and dispersal of his men from enemy shelling in the darkness. The enemy attacked the company of 5/7 Rajput Regt. which remained in the area South-East end of the Race Course. Although this company was of a composite nature only—two platoons formed from the remains of "B" and "D" Companies—it held its ground successfully.

114. During the day 22nd December Stanley Mound and Stanley Prison had been shelled and mortared, and at midnight I received news of the enemy capture of the Stanley Mound feature.

115. The isolated troops at "Overbays" (see para. 106) had been in close contact with the

* It was not practicable. The women and children fell into the hands of the Japanese when the troops evacuated at midnight on 23/24th December.

enemy throughout the day and at about 1930 hours the place was evacuated in an endeavour to join up at Repulse Bay Hotel. The majority succeeded in getting past the Japanese. A Warrant Officer of the R.A.O.C., however, telephoned to Fortress HQ at 2000 hours to say that he and four wounded were alone in the house. He was instructed to surrender. There was in point of fact (though this was unknown at the time) a party of thirty others upstairs. This party attempted to surrender at 0800 hours the following day (23rd December) but were hand-grenaded in their rooms and a number were bayoneted. Corporal Jeffery and six men escaped, leaving twenty-eight dead, including four Japanese, in the room. The Warrant Officer and the wounded on the ground floor were not seen alive after 2300 hours on the 22nd, and they were not amongst the eventual Prisoners of War. It can only be assumed that they were burned to death when the Japanese later fired the house.

116. A serious report concerning the water supply came from the Director of Public Works at 0100 hours. No water was coming from Tytam Reservoir, the Aberdeen supply was out of action for at least two days, and only a trickle was coming from Pokfulam. "The town (of Victoria) was now helpless." The fighting troops were also feeling the shortage of water.

117. At about 0130 hours Commander West Infantry Brigade reported the loss of Mount Cameron, that troops were coming back in disorder, and that an effort was being made to rally them at Magazine Gap and Mount Gough. Wanchai Gap was still held.

At 0345 hours 23rd December the Royal Engineers reported their rear party still in position on Mount Kellett and that the Winnipeg Grenadiers were being re-organised in the Gough Hill Police Station area.

At 0430 hours the Royal Engineers and 4 and 7 Companies H.K.V.D.C. were still in position, the Volunteers holding their original line in the area Magazine Gap which they had taken up three days previously.

A new R.A. (West) H.Q. was being established at Victoria Gap. At this critical time the Royal Navy offered valuable help—1 officer and 40 men of the Royal Marines—who were ordered to Magazine Gap to report to the senior officer there (Lt.-Colonel F. D. Field, R.A.) for the purpose of clearing up the situation at Wanchai Gap, now out of touch.

At about 0600 hours it was reported that three platoons of the Royal Navy from Aberdeen had already moved forward to Bennets Hill to reinforce the machine gunners of 1 Middlesex Regt. already in position there.

By 0800 hours 23rd December Lt.-Colonel F. D. Field reported that he had got into touch with 2 Royal Scots at Wanchai Gap and he was instructed to send a fighting patrol to Mount Cameron to ascertain the situation there. It was learnt from him that "A" Company 2 Royal Scots was still in position near St. Albert's Convent, which had been occupied by us as a military hospital.

From now onwards until 1100 hours many conflicting reports were received concerning Mount Cameron, but it was apparent that the crest of this commanding and important feature