

attack failed with twenty-one casualties (out of a strength of twenty-five).

At 0900 hours 21st December Major H. Marsh reported from his machine gun company H.Q. at Little Hong Kong that the enemy could be seen moving from Wong Nei Chong Gap along the crest of the hill westwards. That matters in that area had not progressed favourably was evident when at 1025 hours I learnt that our troops were being pushed back North of Blacks Link* and Mount Cameron. The Winnipeg Grenadiers now in positions on Mount Cameron were ordered to hold on at all costs.

93. A second air raid on the Peak District developed at 0950 hours and a bomb of 500 lbs. was dropped, amongst others, just below Jardines Corner, entirely blocking the road and cutting off communications with Volunteer HQ except by telephone, by which means the Observation Post Commander reported that forty steam launches in line, with steam up, were assembled two hundred yards off shore by Kai Tak aerodrome. Unfortunately, at this time Royal Artillery communications to observation posts were destroyed except the one to High West, and from this observation post the target was invisible.

94. At 1000 hours 21st December 2/14 Punjab Regt. in the Garden Road-Kennedy Road area were ordered to re-orientate themselves to face South East to cover a possible break through from the Wanchai Gap direction. A section of machine guns was sent at once to connect up by fire with the Wanchai Gap dispositions, at which place were located the HQ of both West Infantry Brigade and the Winnipeg Grenadiers. At the same time all garrisons of 2/14 Punjab pillboxes on the North shore were to be withdrawn to Battalion HQ—I had now to take considerable risks on other portions of the island defences in view of the direct menace from the Mount Cameron area.

95. By 1100 hours the enemy had brought a heavy mortar into action just off King's Road near the Power Station, with which they bombarded the R.N. Yard. They also bombed Repulse Bay area and carried out a ground attack on the Little Hong Kong area from the direction of Aberdeen, thus threatening encirclement, at any rate temporarily, of that important area in which was located the new R.A.O.C. Magazine and the main bulk of the remaining ammunition stock. The enemy had landed some troops near Causeway Bay, and the housetops in that area were reported "crowded with them." At noon they were pressing down King's Road and had mounted a gun at No. 163. At this time all the guns at the R.N. Yard were out of action, following a heavy bombardment.

96. (a) At midday 21st December our "line" ran from Little Hong Kong area to the Southern slopes of Mount Cameron. In the former area were located two parties under Major H. Marsh, 1 Middlesex Regt., and Major A. J. Dewar, R.A.S.C., respectively. Major Marsh had one officer (plus a R.A.M.C. officer), eighteen other ranks 1 Middlesex Regt., five men of the Winnipeg Grenadiers and fourteen Chinese of the Medium Detachment of the

HKVDC, and was located in the "Combined Company HQ" of the defence sub sector—one company of the Winnipeg Grenadiers having been withdrawn for the Wong Nei Chong Gap counter attacks. Major A. J. Dewar, with twenty naval ratings, placed himself under the command of Major Marsh and was posted on the high ground (Shouson Hill private houses) covering the East flank. This "Island" of defence resisted all attacks from 20th December to the afternoon of 25th December and fought very gallantly, as did also a similar isolated detachment, viz, the administrative details on "The Ridge" under Lt.-Colonel R. A. P. Macpherson.

(b) During the course of the morning I had issued instructions to withdraw the Middlesex machine guns from the pillboxes between Sandy Bay and Aberdeen, and to put them on a mobile basis as far as possible: a platoon at a time could be "ferried," even though the transport situation was acute. The South West sector of the island defence was therefore completely denuded—another undesirable but necessary risk. A section of machine guns was now sent to supplement the defences in the Aberdeen-Bennets Hill area, under Commander H. C. Millet, R.N. (retd.). A platoon was also sent to the Officer Commanding 1 Middlesex Regt., for the Leighton Hill defences.

97. (a) Mortaring of North shore defences continued at 1300 hours 21st December, and pill boxes were subjected to accurate high velocity shell fire from both Kowloon and positions on their flank on the island. Pill box 59, for instance received thirty direct hits, but the Middlesex sergeant in command personally upheld the defence, though withdrawing the crew temporarily.

(b) Enemy craft were still ferrying backwards and forwards between Kowloon and the Sugar Factory-North Point area.

(c) In the morning a motor torpedo boat had evacuated from Stanley the Commanding Officer of 5/7 Rajput Regt. and the remnants of his battle HQ, and he now took over command of the troops of 5/7 Rajput Regt. who were fighting alongside 1 Middlesex Regt.

98. HKVDC (a) A report was received that No. 1 Company had had heavy casualties in the Stanley Mound area and had lost all their officers. The remains of the company had rallied at Stanley.

(b) The A.A. Lewis gun post of No. 6 Company (Portuguese) at "Watson's," Causeway Bay, reported that they had been captured by Japanese, disarmed, and told to make off towards our lines. They did so and rejoined for duty.

99. 1330 hours. A Japanese destroyer, escorting two merchant vessels, was sighted South of Cheung Chau Island, heading for Hong Kong.

100. 1430 hours. (a) Two companies of enemy occupied the whole length of Mount Nicholson, and brought up a small gun.

(b) A report was received from "A" Company Royal Rifles of Canada that the whole company had moved. One platoon had reached the "Ridge" and another platoon was on Middle Spur though the enemy were still firing from it. The situation at Repulse Bay being so unsatisfactory, I ordered a senior

* Blacks Link—the track leading from Wong Nei Chong Gap to Wanchai Gap.