

~~INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY~~

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(Erase heading not required)
1st Bn., ESSEX SCOTTISH REGIMENT

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks, references to Appendices and initials
SANTON WOOD	1 APR	44	Another month is under way. Reveille was early for Capt Johnston and his recce party who went ahead to recce the conc area NW of Hastings at Darwell Hole. At 1052 the Bn left Slinfold Camp and due to several delays in the convoy, the conc area was not reached until 1530 hrs. Maj Jones was A/CC as LtCol Macdonald was detained at camp by other duties. HQ was set up in wood at 132367 and an 'O' Gp was called at 1800 hrs. Permission was given for ten percent of personnel to be out of conc area until 2300 hrs and several availed themselves of the opportunity. Rain began to fall early in the evening and the weather became disagreeable. Back in Slinfold Camp A, C and 2 pls from D coy prepared for Ex "Sham". This Ex is designed to test the H.G. of Horsham. At 1900 hrs, patrols against various important points began. Maj H.W.F. Thomson was in charge of one group with HQ at Warnham Fk and Maj H.C. Laird was in charge of another group with HQ at Watling Fm. Maj D. MacKenzie was chief umpire of the Essex Scottish Tps. The patrols were quite good and although the H.G. knew it's job well, all of the patrols were able to get to their objectives. Sgt Kitchen and Sgt H.J. Ivison were placed under arrest for drunkenness while acting as umpires on Ex "Sham" and spent the night in 'durance vile'.	JF
	2 APR	44	At 0200 hrs, Britain went on Double Summer Time and time pieces were moved ahead one hour. Reveille was at 0745. The morning was wet and foggy but breakfast at 0830 helped to warm everyone up. At 0930 hrs Maj Jones and Lt Wilson went to Bde HQ but found no change in situation. Father Dalton held a little service for RC personnel in the open air at 0930 hrs. Back at Slinfold Camp Ex "Sham" continued with an attack being put in by 'A' coy from NW of Horsham and by 'C' coy from the SE. The Ex finished at 1300 hrs and the H.G. then treated the Essex Scottish tps to beer and sausage rolls at the Drill Hall. In the afternoon the various coys on Ex "Step" organized tours for the men into the historic town of Battle. Around 2000 hrs, the remainder of the Bn arrived in the conc area. Accident reports on "Sham" incl Sgt C.V. Lucas, fractured collar bone as a result of a fall or push, Pte Baylis deep cut on rt arm. The inebriated Sgt umpires received a severe reprimand from the C.O.	JF
	3 APR	44	At 1200 hrs, the Bn moved off behind the RHLL. The picture as far as the Exercise went was that 2 Can Inf Div was pushing westward to break out of the brhead formed by 50 Br Div and 30 Br Div. 6 Bde was leading the adv followed by 4 Bde and then 5 Bde. The adv continued throughout the day with 6 Bde being held up several times by enemy mines and demolitions. In the afternoon, it started to rain. Maj MacKenzie with a recce party went ahead to the area of Stone Cross. Around 2030 hrs, the Bn moved into	JF

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			this area and took up a defensive posn. The enemy had withdrawn across the R Cuckmere and 6 Bde now occupied the ground along the East bank of the river. 'A' Ech had difficulties due to the muddy nature of one of the parking areas and did not get supper up to the tps until about 2330 hrs. The night was wet but a number of the tps were able to get some shelter, in barns. During the night, A & C coys sent out patrols but no enemy were encountered.	
	4 APR 44		During the day the sun shone most of the time and as the regt remained in the Stone Cross area, there was a chance for everyone to get blankets and clothing dried out. A rum issue at breakfast did much to put everyone in a good mood. The main action of the day was with 5th Bde which prepared to cross the R Cuckmere with 6th Bde acting as firm base. In the evening 'Y' Superv Al Menzies was able to get a film shown for the entertainment of all.	FS
	5 APR 44		'Stand to' was at 0600 hrs with breakfast at 0615. The Bn moved off early. A slight gap appeared in the line of march when one of the pls was lured into taking a round-about route by an Umpire who was trying to test their knowledge as to route. The advance continued through Polegate and finally the Bn reached the area of Long Barrow Hill south of Wilmington. It was very foggy and cold on the downs so that everyone was soon busy digging in, to get warmth. The COs carrier was put out of action by a broken clutch. In the afternoon, the CO and IO went to an 'O' Gp at 2 Div HQ in Winton. The Bn moved fwd late in the afternoon and concentrated on the East side of the Downs just West of Alfriston behind 5th Bde. At Bde 'O' Gp during the evening it was learned that 4th and 6th Inf Bdes would attack the enemy posn on the high ground Bostal Hill, Celtic Fields, Heighton Hill and Denton Hill, with 4 Bde rē and 6 Bde lt.	FS
	6 APR 44		'Stand to' was at the usual hour. The 'I' Sec spent a busy morning constructing a sand model of the area which the attack was to take place on. Early in the afternoon, the C.O. held an 'O' Gp at the model. The remainder of the day was spent briefing all pls. In the evening the scout pl and pns made a recce of the enemy posn and found that there were no mines.	FS
	7 APR 44		It is Good Friday and a holiday in most parts of the world but not in the army. At 0745 hrs, LtCol Macdonald went up on Bostal Hill to watch the proving of the arty. The morning was hazy so 'H' hr had to be postponed. Finally 1300 hrs was decided on. Fourth Bde attacked in 2 phases (1) Bostal Hill Spur (2) Celtic Fields. The Essex	FS

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			Scottish Regt was given the task of doing phase 1. In this attack we were sp by two fd and one med regt of arty, one coy MMG and one pl 4.2" Mortars all firing impressive barrages and cones and one tp of A tk guns. The attack went in well, with C coy rt fwd coy and B coy left fwd coy. Col Pawle who has taken a keen interest in the trg of our regt during the past year accompanied B coy in it's attack. On reaching the objective the bn consolidated. The RRC moved through us and took on Phase 2, the Celtic Fields, while RHLI was firm base. On "cease fire" a rum issue was given to the tps. About 1800 hrs the Bn moved off by MT for camp, arriving there about 2045 hrs. Everyone was glad to get back for a hot shower and we realize just how much we miss this luxury when deprived of it. The padre held a short Good Fri service, during a lull in the battle, in the open. About 300 men attended.	
	8 APR 44		SAT was spent as a day of rest and adm. SUN hours were observed. The Easter ban on holiday travel kept everyone from going away over the week end, but many visited Horsham to enjoy the cinema and the pubs.	FF
	9 APR 44		It's Easter SUN and reveille is at 0700 hrs due to the Church parade. At 0830 hrs the Bn was formed up on the parade ground. It was a special parade to do honour to those who were mentioned in despatches at the time of the Dieppe Raid, who were BSM Campbell, CSM Donaldson, Sgt Cousineau and Ptes Carley and Brown. Brig Lett presented the Oak Leaf to these personnel. After this the Bn moved off by MT for Christs Hosp grounds, where 4 Can Inf Bde was formed up in an open square inn. The service was conducted by the Padres of the Bde and H/Capt J. Cardy preached an inspiring Easter Sermon. The sky was threatening but the rain held off throughout the service. The 2 Can Inf Band provided music for the singing and a choir of about forty voices was made up from personnel of the RRC and Essex Scottish Regts. After the service there was a march past with Brig Lett taking the salute. At 1100 hrs, the BG held their Easter Service in the 'Y' with Father Dalton taking the service. The remainder of the day was spent in recreation. It was announced that all leaves were cancelled indefinitely and that henceforth there would be a strict censorship of mails.	FF
	10 APR 44		Another week began with PT at 0700 hrs. Trg for the day consisted of 30 yd range and gas trg for B, C & D coys. Sp coy carried on maintenance while the Rft coy went to the Sun Oak Grenade Range. LtCol Macdonald and Maj MacKenzie attended a conference on coming Ex "Last ". In the evening Capt Root, scout pl comd of L Edmonton Regt who has	FF

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			spent some time in Sicily and Italy spoke to all offrs and Sgts. His talk was quite interesting and instructive. At 1600 hrs, the padre utilized his weekly hour for the purpose of a communion service. He reported a good attendance (about 150 were at the service and 50 received communion).	
	11 APR 44		Sleep throughout the camp was interrupted at various intervals as pls and coy a chose early hours for a start on the 40 mile route march. The Scout Pl left camp at 0200 hrs, Sp coy at 0300 hrs and the rifle coys around 0800 hrs. The route was from Slinfold Camp to Billingshurst, Wisbrough Green, Petworth, North Chapel, Chiddingfold, Pickhurst, Dunsfold, Cranleigh, Bucks Green, Broadridge Heath, back to camp. It was indeed a grind in the true sense of the word and many feet took a beating. However, the physical condition of the regt is of A-1 calibre when one considers the very small number who fell out. The scout pl made the route in the excellent time of 14 hrs, 45 min or 12 hrs marching time. The best time for rifle coys was made by D coy which took 15 hrs, 50 min. The C.O. had to be away on a recce for Ex "Last" part of the morning but got back in time to join in with D coy and completed the march with them. Even the 2 i/c and Adjt were in there pitching and came through in good form. BnHQ and HQ coy did a 25 mile march and finished it in excellent time with only 5 casualties in the group of adm personnel. During the evening, almost everyone enjoyed the luxury of bed-room slippers, a glass of cool ale and then to a very welcome bed. All coys had completed the march well within the 18 hrs which Gen Montgomery says trained tps require. All rifle coys finished in less than 16½ hrs incl halts and meals, and most were fighting fit at the end.	J.F.
	12 APR 44		Reveille was at 0800 hrs with breakfast at 0830. The day was given over to rest, and judging by the number of persons who had developed a limping walk, it would be used to full advantage. In the morning the C.O., 2 i/c, Adjt and Maj MacKenzie attended a meeting at 4 Bde HQ. At 1400 hrs a meeting of all offrs washeld in the mess and the C.O. informed the offrs of the likelihood of a move for the regt within the next week. Security was stressed. It was decided that Capt Burgess would take over the job of completing preparations for an offrs dance to be held in the mess on SAT evening, 15 APR 44.	J.F.
	13 APR 44		Today the bn was back to normal routine except for that half of HQ coy who did their 25 mile route march yesterday. For them it was their day of rest. Preparations for the anticipated move began by the taking of kit inspection, checking of pay books and	J.F.

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			other adm problems, of personnel nature. The C.O. & I.O. along with a skeleton BnHQ went out on an Exercise "Last". It is a corps exercise down to Bn level. Down to and incl Bde level it is a full size exercise. For bns it is a skeleton exercise. With the departure of the C.O. & I.O. on this exercise, it was their final departure from Slinfold Camp. When the exercise is completed we will be in our new home, quite a few miles from here.	
	14 APR 44		Today the adjt left early for Aldershot and vicinity. The object of his trip is to visit 2nd Ech and the rft unit to clear up many small but annoying matters that have been hanging over and also to try to take care of the bn by prevailing upon 2 CIRU to push out some desirable reinforcements. The report upon his return was that the trip was more than satisfactory. In the coys adm work in anticipation of our move continued. Security must be good for while a move is expected, not even the batmen or the habitués of the local pubs can tell us the location of our new area.	FS
	15 APR 44		The advance party for our new camp depart tomorrow. It is to be 'B' coy under Major Laird. They are kept busy throughout the day loading vehicles, cleaning billets and area, returning stores, burning straw and getting the men fully prepared for their new home. The other coys continue with their preparations for the move, serene in the thought that they have at least a few more days. At night a dance was held in the offrs mess. The C.O. showed up for it leaving Ex"Last" to get along as best it could without him. The dance was a huge success. Everyone voted it so but couldn't say exactly why it should be such a huge success. Perhaps the knowledge that it would be our last for some time brought about a spirit of abandon that is sometimes missing. The high spot of the evening came when Tom Stewart, returning home about 0330 hrs, picked up an arty jeep, whose driver had been injured and was now being driven by a thoroughly lost American soldier. Lt Stewart relieved him of the wheel, brought the American to camp and sent him home in one of our trucks. Now we have an extra jeep belonging to the arty. If there is an ordnance inspection before we get it returned we will have to bury it. (Figuratively speaking), otherwise we will have to make explanations and they will have to be good ones.	FS
	16 APR 44		Outside of 'B' coy and other members of the advance party who were scheduled for an early departure, the camp was slow in coming to life today. Actual physical efforts towards our move were few but the coy comds did get around to further planning so that the present camp would be left in good condition, a minimum of eqpt taken to the new	FS

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			area and that they could establish themselves in the new camp in short order.	
	17 APR	44	One task only occupied the bn now. Preparations to move, after almost seven months in one camp reveals accumulations of almost everything. No one wishes to accept anything. Maps, for the I.O., that extra suit of denim must go back to the Q.M., orders to return excess amn. Personal accumulations are perhaps the worst, and all are taking drastic measures to lighten their load. Even the officers' trunks with their treasured (but excess) possessions are being packed to be shipped to kit storage.	FS
	18 APR	44	As from this A.M. the camp is C.B. Trucks are loaded toady, and preparations to move out early tomorrow morning are being made. Evidence of everyone getting rid of everything is brought out in that we have an issue of 28000 rds .303 in excess of our G1093 holdings. We neither want or need it, but bde says we take it, so we do. Towards night things settle down in general. Except perhaps for the offrs who are still working on their own eqpt, the bulk of the camp was in bed early, in anticipation for the early reveille that is necessary to cross the S.P. on time, on the day of our departure from SLINFOLD CAMP.	FS
	19 APR	44	Reveille seemed to come mighty soon this a.m. It was at 0500 hrs with an equally early breakfast. The convoy left camp at 0730 hrs and hit the S.P. on time to the minute but were held up there as the R Regt C had not entirely cleared the S.P. Then our slow-but not too monotonous journey started. It is 94 miles to the new camp at WOOTON FL and DENTON PK. Speed is not over 12 1/2 m.i.h. but because of numerous halts from preceding units the average time will be less. In fact we did not arrive until almost 1700 hrs giving us an all over speed for the journey of about 11 m.p.h. ample proof of the difficulties of moving an inf div by road. The trip was marred by two MC incidents, with other vehicles. Both were of a minor nature but road accidents must be reported in as great detail even for a scratched paint incident as for a head on collision and the detail involved is one heartily disliked by the adjt and T.O. Arrival at the new camp was NOT inspiring. Strictly in the open, the bn is split into three areas. Canvas is limited, in fact Sp coy have only two marquees and the men are forced to improvise. The scale of canvas puts eight men or four offrs into a tent. We have running water (cold only) open air ablution rooms) and NO showers. Nearest towns are DOVER, FOLKESTONE and CANTERBURY, each being eight miles away. There is one consolation (but a poor one). Of the many camps in the area, each appears to be equally uncomfortable. But the men take it in their stride, and before darkness falls most men have made	FS

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			<p>themselves reasonably comfortable, and even Sp coy with no canvas have improvised some ingenuous bivouacks. Around 2100 hrs, the C.O., Maj MacKenzie, Lts Wilson and Webster with a party of 13 ORs arrived at the camp. They had been taking part in Ex "Last", and Ex involving practice in sigs and int at higher levels and down to and incl Bn HQs.</p>	<p>FT</p>
	20 APR 44		<p>A few drops of rain at 0645 hrs was sufficient to eliminate PT for the day. Throughout the day the various coys took time to get their areas cleaned up and lines organized. It is quite a change for everyone to be out in the open again after the Nissen hut comfort of Slinfold Camp. The adjt was kept busy with road accident reports but the Bn OR tent was soon set up in a comfortable efficient manner. One end is Bn O.R. while the other end is a combined sigs and int office. The C.O. went to an 'O' Cp at Bde HQ at 0830 hrs. Some indication of tpt difficulties was seen when his veh was prevented from going out the gate due to the mud. A jeep finally settled this problem. Cpl Barry, the new Bn Educ Cpl went to Div HQ with Lt Wilson to 'get in the picture' on his duties with the unit. Div HQ is on the NORTH edge of DOVER and occupies an area of reatly constructed houses. In the evening many of the offrs and men visited the towns of FOLKESTONE and DOVER. The Adjt and I.O. went to Bde HQ at 2000 hrs and afterwards made a short recce of DOVER area.</p>	<p>FT</p>
	21 APR 44		<p>Coys carried out route marches and although the number of OS-117 'A' Map sheets was quite limited everyone seemed able to keep direction and got around the prescribed courses. The C.O., Adjt, I.O. and one signal Cpl spent the day at Bde HQ taking part in a recorded sigs exercise intended to mislead the enemy as to our whereabouts when broadcast. Preparations were made for the Ex to be held on Assault Boat landing on the R MEDWAY the following day. In mid afternoon D coy with Maj Wansbrough as O.C. left for the HALLING on the R MEDWAY. Several offrs and NCOs from other coys were att for the trg, so that they would have the knowledge to pass on to their own coys. On arrival at the R MEDWAY the coy bivouacked for the night. In the evening the C.O., 2 i/c, Adjt and I.O. had dinner and spent a social evening at the Crypt in DOVER and enjoyed one of those rare delicacies, a fried egg. The realization that the unit is now nearer the front line was brought home by the sight of debris from a building which had been struck by a shell from across the channel during the duel of the previous evening.</p>	<p>FT</p>
	22 APR 44		<p>In the morning the usual SAT interior economy was carried on. More bumpk concerning Ex 'Kate' arrived and it is beginning to look as though the trg during this Ex should be rather interesting. At HALLING, D coy was given instrs in handling assault boats</p>	<p>FT</p>

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			by offrs from the Black Watch Regt. Instruction incl loading and unloading boats from trucks, turning boats, carrying, dragging and launching. The trg was new and although strenuous everyone found it interesting. Movement in the mud of the river bankd was a novel experience and several persons got a coating of the slimy substance before the afternoon was over. Some went over their heads in the water and some to their arm pits in the mud. Other offrs incl the C.O., 2 i/c arrived around 0830 hrs to witness and participate in the trg. At 1600 hrs the coy returned to DENTON CAMP. The special increment coy went on a conducted tour of Canterbury Cathedral in the afternoon. At 1930 hrs, the C.O., I.O. and one DR left camp for GOOLE, the area in which Ex "Kate" is to take place. They travelled through LONDON and spent the night near Haileybury College, Hertford.	<i>FJ</i>
	23 APR 44		Altho the day is SUN there is little rest as perparations to move off on Ex Kate must be completed today. In the morning three truck loads of men & offrs went to Canterbury Cathedral for the service. All were impressed with the beauty and dignity of this famous church and the service was an inspiring one to the men. The camp was C.B. until 1700 hrs after which time the men were permitted out as trucks were loaded and we were ready to move off at half an hours notice. Capt Hayes is to be O.C. rear party and the rft coy remain with him. It is only a question of a few days before he loses all the first line rfts for we have been warned that they are to go back to a proper depot. The arrival of the authority to move them will see them despatched forthwith. LtCol Macdonald & Lt Wilson arrived in the area of BROUGHTON and made a recce of the bivouac area to be used by the Bn.	<i>FJ</i>
	24 APR 44		Reveille at 0600 hrs this morning and immediately after breakfast the blanket lorries areloaded. There is a final cleaning of coy areas and at 0840 hrs we start off for the north of England on Ex Kate. The trip will be approx 240 miles so it will take 2 days. There are eighty one vehicles in our convoy which incl 30 RCASC veg for lifting personnel and stores plus six vehs of the Fd Amb. We are behind the R Regt C and at first there are numerous non-scheduled halts, due largely to the narrow and winding roads used as a by-pass to the city of Canterbury. Finally the convoy shakes itself out and we drive at a speed of almost 20 m.p.h. to average our 12½ m.i.h. Shortly after 1300 hrs we arrive at the R.V. to meet the London Metropolitan Police who will guide us thro the world's largest city. We arebroken into blocks of not more than 25 vehicles each and led by one constable on a MC we start off thru the big city. It is hard to believe that one man can not only control the entire 25 veh, but keep our	<i>FJ</i>

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			block clear of all civilian veh. It is a thrill to see him, by hand and arm signal only, to give us complete right of way, and to see civilian traffic figuratively at the lift of a finger, head for the curb and stay put until we have passed. Out of London the convoy reforms once more as a complete group and heads north. The speed now is steady and as the road is almost perfectly straight the miles slip by. Outside of Amptill we are met by Capt Burgess who has gone ahead to make a recce of the bivouac area. He leads us into our overnight camp, a large pasture field with a fringe of woods, and soon our vehicles are parked, guards posted, supper served and the bn settles down for its night rest.	FF
	25 APR 44		Truly we are becoming gypsies. The Bn moved off 1 hr and 10 min after reveille at 0500 followed by breakfast loading of vehicles and forming up. The day was uneventful. Just a question of sitting in your vehicle and watching the miles roll by and getting out every two hrs for the 20 min break. At 1600 hrs, at SCAWBY we again met Capt Burgess who led us to our camp site. This time it is two large pasture fields, ideal for sports with a generous wood. The bn soon settles in, our few tents are pitched, supper served and the C.O. calls a meeting of coy comds. BOR was sited several hundred yds from the remainder of the bn, for the purpose of peace and quiet, but apparently the sheep with their numerous lambs who also occupy this field don't understand, for half way thru our meeting, they insist on stampeding back and forth around us, letting out numerous plaintive BAAS of what we consider to be sheep cries of distress. Our meeting concludes about 2300 hrs with plans completed for tomorrows trg.	FF
	26 APR 44		All the rifle coys this morning practices man handling and launching of stormboats on River TRENT near BURTON UPON STATHER. The boats are heavy - 780 lbs each and their weight increases with use up to 1100 lbs. They are a heavy load for 14 men and if more are used to carry, then the men get in the way of each other. Sp coy trained on the far back of the river on the man handling of A tk guns over the dykes and trying to solve other problems peculiar to their coy and which would be encountered after being landed from boats. In the afternoon the rifle coys also went to far bank to carry on trg in their action having landed. At the coy cmd meeting the C.O. pointed out that while trg had not been as satisfactory as desired today it should be pointed out to the men that much of this work is new and experiments must be made in order to find out what are the best ways of doing a job, in order that a satisfactory drill may be evolved. Plans were completed for tomorrows trg and then the C.O. went to Bde. Before his return a call came in for 11 of our 12 rifle coy pls to be employed from 1800 hrs	FF

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	27-30 APR 44		<p>hrs tomorrow for 5 Can Inf Bde, on their exercise. It looks as tho our well made plans will be rapidly revised on the C.Os return.</p> <p>Comd Diary att as Appx '5' is a detailed log of bn activities during this period.</p> <p><i>B.J.S. Macdonald</i> (B.J.S. MACDONALD) LtCol, Commanding Officer, ESSEX SCOTTISH REGIMENT.</p>	<i>gH</i>