

fidant that if the enemy attacked his three lines of defence they would suffer heavily. He confirmed that he had enough food, water and ammunition, and I ordered him to fight on and not to surrender as long as these conditions prevailed.

128. Information was received in the morning that the enemy held the central and southern portions of Mount Cameron, and that the Royal Scots were on the northern extremity.

At 0915 hours the enemy had reinforced the northern portion of Mount Cameron where he was about 300 strong. The small party of Royal Marines (q v. para 117) was now patrolling the spurs South of Mount Parish in touch with the 5/7 Rajput Regt. who had collected hospital discharges, etc., and formed a third platoon which had been positioned on the Mount Parish spur.

129 Noon.—(a) One of the 6-in. Howitzers at Mount Austin was put out of action by bombing.

(b) Two enemy launches on the West side of the Kowloon Peninsula were set on fire by our artillery.

130. At 1400 hours 24th December about 200 enemy were seen working North West, and an attack developed at about 1500 hours on Leighton Hill after a severe artillery and mortar bombardment, in addition to dive bombing. Attacked from three sides, the garrison was being rapidly surrounded when at 1645 hours it was authorised to escape, if it could, through the streets leading North West to Canal Road. The two officers and 40 other ranks did so, losing 25 per cent. casualties. A most determined and valuable resistance had been put up on this position (and q v. para. 118). These troops withdrew into and assisted the defensive area between Lee Theatre and the Canal Road, already occupied by the reinforcements mentioned in para. 118.

131. This evening a convoy plus an armoured car was again formed to obtain ammunition and bombs from Little Hong Kong. Accompanying the convoy were two trucks with reinforcements from 2 Royal Scots and 1 Middlesex Regt., plus two machine guns. It succeeded, though shot at repeatedly.

132 1730 hours 24th December.—The patrol of the Royal Marines ascertained that no enemy was on the road North East of Wanchai Gap, and that 2 Royal Scots were at the Gap. Posts were to be established on the spur.

133 At 1800 hours Morrison Hill was heavily shelled. Holding this feature were detachments of 1 Middlesex Regt. with seven machine guns. All guns were reported knocked out but the majority of the crews escaped, having been withdrawn to nearby cover ready to repel an attack.

At 1900 hours a party of thirty clerks, spare signallers, military police, etc., was formed at Fortress H.Q. and went under Major R. E. Moody, D.A.A.G., to assist the Officer Commanding 1 Middlesex Regt. This party, with a few others collected on the spot, held Morrison Hill until the afternoon of 25th December.

The enemy now had three guns in action on the water front near the Peninsular Hotel,

Kowloon, and another battery at Tai Hang. At about 1900 hours a large fire broke out on the water front near the China Fleet Club, hindering certain forward movements.

134 At about 2200 hours reports from Aberdeen and Shouson Hill indicated a general move of the enemy from Mount Nicholson/Mount Cameron area northwards towards the Race Course. A possible intention, I considered, might be to turn West and join in the drive along the North face of the island, possibly with the left flank along the line of the "gaps", and the right flank just clear of Wanchai. This would strike a weak place where I had only the Royal Marines patrolling. In hand were less than a dozen men at H.Q. of 2/14 Punjab Regt. unless I drew on the two companies in positions covering Government House, Command H.Q., R.N. Yard, Military Hospital, i.e., our last stand.

135. Night 24/25th December.—Between 2200 and 2300 hours the Central District of Victoria came under a 3-in. Mortar bombardment—including the R.N. Yard, Victoria Barracks, and Fortress H.Q. Communications were not affected. The direction of the enemy advance on Wanchai made it possible that the enemy might use the A.R.P. tunnels for infiltration and wardens were warned accordingly. The most important tunnels concerned were those under Mount Parish.

136 At 2300 hours all units were sent such seasonal greetings as were possible from H.E. The Governor and from Fortress H.Q.

137. Around midnight the enemy attacked in the area South of Wanchai Gap and effected a slight penetration.

138. At 0100 hours on Christmas Day Commander East Infantry Brigade reported a series of attacks on his positions at Stanley. The enemy had succeeded in getting behind some of the forward defended localities and were mopping up parties of H.K.V.D.C. at Stanley Police Station. I again instructed him to hold out till the last.

139. The enemy continued pressure North of Aberdeen, reached the North slopes of Bennetts Hill, and "dug in" there, at 0300 hours he was reported to be advancing again. At this time only one of the two 4.5-in. Howitzers at the "Sanatorium" remained in action.

140. *Wanchai*—Before dawn 25th December a successful retaliation to the enemies' light infantry gun\* was carried out. A Bofors A.A. gun was taken to a position just South of Morrison Hill and vigorous short range fire silenced the enemy activity in the sports pavilions immediately South of Canal Road. Many calls had been made on the Bofors detachments during the last few days. Besides their continuous day role they had also performed night roles, e.g., beach defence, replacing equipments disabled or knocked out, such as at Belchers Fort, in which area the infantry beach defences had been weakened by 95 per cent in order to find troops for counter-attack.

By 0700 hours anti-tank mines had been laid in the main approaches to Wanchai from

\* This was mounted on balloon type tyres, was about 3" calibre, was very boldly handled, and produced most effective results, both material and moral. Each battalion had two.