

Second World War Unit War Diary - 2nd Bn. Scots Guards, March 1945 - Lieut. Gow

The following is from the National Archives WO 171/5149

Sheet 5.

WAR DIARY
or
INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

Army Form C. 2118

Unit 2ND BATTALION SCOTS GUARDS
Commanding Officer LT. COL. H.N. CLOWES

Month and Year MARCH 45

(Erase heading not required).

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information.	References to Appendices.
	8	0900	<p>Bn 'O' Group held.</p> <p>Considerable shelling on the Coy posns the previous day which during this morning was ascribed to an O.P. in the steeple of a church in ALFON. This steeple was dealt with by our S.P. troop who hit the mark with 22 47-pdr shells out of 22 fired but failed to demolish it.</p> <p>The morning and early afternoon were given over to preparing for the 'Battle of the ROMER Bridgehead' and for once everyone had sufficient time to make their arrangements.</p> <p>A spandau firing at the br from a South-easterly direction was quietened on the approach of the tks and at 1630 hrs the leading Coy (L.F.) doubled across NIGEL and formed a close brhd on the other side, closely followed by R.F. and "G", whose first objectives were KUHNEN and WEGERSHOF respectively. R.F. were unfortunate in losing Lieut. W.A. ELLIOT M.D. wounded, shortly before crossing the br and Lieut. I.G. GOW was killed by the blast of a shell in KUHNEN. "F" Coy were last over the bridge and made off in a south-easterly direction towards the stream.</p> <p>All the Coys having crossed over the sqn of 2 W.G. tks started to follow, but soon the laconic message 'NIGEL is crumbling' came over the air and only three troops managed to get over before the bridge became too dangerous for any more. These three troops attached themselves one to "G", one to R.F., and one to L.F., and on the code word being given began shooting these Coys into their final objectives. The first objectives had all been captured without much difficulty a considerable number of P.W. being taken by "G" Coy in WEGERSHOF, and there is no doubt that the tk sp greatly helped the inf in winking out the GERMAN parachutists. Many houses were set on fire by the tks who were very liberal in the use of their B&G amm. R.F. and "G" Coy pushed on up to the EAST-WEST railway while L.F. tried to get up to the NORTH-SOUTH rly, but the light began to go rapidly and the tks were unable to perform at the end thus denying us command over the rly embankments. If there had been half an hour more daylight the Coys could have established themselves on the rly but were now unable to do more than cover it. "G" Coy came under spandau fire from the rly junc and L.F. having started to advance beyond WEGERSHOF had to fall back to the area of the village and "F" Coy found that they could not sit on the high ground NORTH of the stream.</p>	Map at App 'K'
			Contd/..... Sheet 6.	

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Sheet 6.

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information.	References to Appendices.
	8		<p>Meanwhile Bn H.Q., except for the tail end, had crossed the bridge, which gave way after all the important vehicles had crossed, and after spending some time on the road at 144327, moved into the southern-most house in KUHNEN.</p> <p>The Coys, having got as far as they could, dug themselves in, and began to spend an uncomfortable night full of mortaring and a certain amount of spandau fire.</p> <p>During the operation 110 P.W. were taken, identifications being mostly from 22 and 24 Para Regts. Our own casualties were one officer killed and five wounded (incl Lieuts. N.T. TORRANCE ("G"), J. SWINTON (L.F.) and M.S. MACDONALD (L.F.) not mentioned above), and 7 O.Rs killed, 4 missing and 53 wounded.</p>	
	9	0700	<p>During the night a Bailey br was built over the ROMER on the site of the old br at 144329.</p> <p>Bde 'O' Group held and plans for the day arranged. 4 KOSB of 52 Div will attack and capture HAUS LOO 1653 starting at 1000 hrs, and 5 C.G. will pass through us and clear the area bounded by the rly and road in front of us.</p> <p>There was still considerable mortar and shell/oh all Coy posns, most of the trouble coming from the S.E. from the area of the factory at 458326 where several S.P. guns were operating. These guns could be seen by "F" Coy but owing to their proximity to the leading elts of 52 Div who were not more than 300' away from them and yet did nothing about them, our own guns were not allowed to fire. These S.Ps were most active during the morning and anything that moved in "F" and L.F. localities was shot at. The Bde Sigs Offr (Capt. R. SYKES) was wounded outside Bn H.Q. by one S.P. stonk.</p> <p>At 1000 hrs the KOSB attack supported by tks of 2 W.G. began, but progress was extremely slow, though HAUS LOO was eventually captured. On this place being taken, 5 C.G. were able to begin their attack and passed through us at 1600 hrs. This was entirely successful, objectives being taken after about 40 mins, with a large bag of P.Ws. To add to the excitement, some American Thunderbolts appeared and dropped bombs on the Coldstream and on the town of ALFON which was firmly in our hands.</p>	Casualty List (App 'C') Roll of Honour (App 'D')
			Contd/..... Sheet 7.	

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