

1st/6th BATTALION, EAST SURREY REGIMENT
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January

ATHENS, GREECE

Jan 1st

Bn remained in position and continued search of area. Thanksgiving Service held by inhabitants of Nea Smirni outside the Nea Smirni Club (used as Orderly Room at B Echelon) as a mark of their appreciation of the efforts of the British Forces in clearing their country of the Germans and the district of the ELAS forces. The crowd was addressed by local Church Dignitaries, the speeches being interrupted at intervals by cheers from the crowd. The Square was renamed 'Churchill Square' in honour of the Prime Minister's efforts to make possible a peaceful settlement of the political and military situation in Greece, and his visit to Athens during the Christmas period. At the close of the proceedings Major PM Plastow, MC (as the representative of the military authorities in the area) was seized by members of the crowd, and carried shoulder-high round the square at the head of the procession, surrounded by the flags of Greece, Great Britain and the USA. Lt RA Brissenden posted to HQ 4 Brit Div for tour of duty as Def PI Comd wef 1 Jan. Received from Bde a) Authority for appointment of Major PM Plastow MC to be Bn No 2. b) Notification of the immediate award of the following decorations: Capt. JE Hatt-Cook Military Cross, Sgt S Gibbs Military Medal. c) Letter – Method of countering enemy use of sewers. Message, KKE slogans.

0630: Sitrep to Bde – NTR.

0830: Sitrep from Bde – Much SA fire about 0001 hrs proved to be New Year's Greeting. 4 shells landed at 375431 at 0015 hrs.

Otherwise no incidents.

1400: IO, Pioneer Sgt and one OR went to investigate sewer system in Bn area on Bde's instructions. Manholes did not appear to have been lifted for some considerable time, and civilians confirmed this. The parts that were searched were found to be clear.

1805: Sitrep from Bde: Search of present area during day 58 persons taken and sent to PW CP. No change to locations. No incidents.

2030: Intentions 2 Jan – 6 Surreys come under command 28 Inf Bde on move to new location by 1430 hrs 2 Jan. "O" Gp report to HQ 28 Inf Bde at 0830 hrs 2 Jan No further orders will be issued for the move. 2 Coys 147 Greek National Guard, at present under command 6 Surreys, come under command 2 DCLI wef 0800 hrs 2 Jan, and are responsible for area previously held by 6 Surreys.

2330: From 28 Inf Bde: 6 Surreys pass to command 28 Inf Bde at 0830 hrs and move to positions in Ghoudi area. 6 Surreys, on arrival, will take over responsibilities for patrolling perimeter wire along Mesoyion Street within Bde boundaries. Bn will also be prepared to take over responsibilities for defence of sector at present held by 2 Kings and 2/4 Hamps on orders from this HQ (not before 1800 hrs 2 Jan). Boundaries with 3 Greek Mountain Bde – rd from 41554520 – x-rds 413453 thence Levandhias St. - x-rds 407552 – to exc Key 108 thence Hvrou St. x-rds 397441 thence Potamos Ilissos with ARKFORCE

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all excl 28 Inf Bde Leoporos Alexandras to X-rds 402453 thence Leoporos Vasilissis.

Jan 2nd

0745: Sitrep from Bde. Quiet night NTR.
0800: CO left Tac HQ to attend 'O' Gp at HQ 28 Inf Bde.
0830: Bn came under command of HQ 28 Inf Bde.
1000: Orders issued to Coys to move to 28 Inf Bde area.
1015: Sgt Deane took signs to mark route as far as Stadium
1100: Further orders issued to Coys to move to 28 Inf Bde area.
1200: CO returned from conference.
1230: Marching personnel left Tac HQ under Sgt Thomas.
1300: Adjts party and Tac HQ vehicles left Tac HQ
1430: Bn arrived in area Goudhi Barracks, and Bn HQ established (with "C" and "D" Coys) in Building 41 (412457). "B" Coy established in Building 85 (409459) and "S" Coy 414453. 2/4 Hamps were in occupation, and moved out during the afternoon to prepare for next operation. 6 Surreys were in Reserve to hold a firm base for the operations of 28 Inf Bde (Goudhi Barracks 416453 – Key 41 (4145) – Key 85 (4045)) to prevent ELAS infiltration from North East and to patrol the perimeter wire. Evening meal cooked at B Ech and brought up in Jeeps. Lt RH Greenwood admitted 10 Fd Amb (sick).
1500: All Coys reported in locations.
1700: Op Order No 11 received from 28 Inf Bde.
1800: Responsibility for defence of 28 Inf Bde assumed by Bn. Other units in the area will be responsible for their own local protection
1900: One pl "C" Coy now at 40384535 and one pl "D" Coy at 41574498 (Bde informed)
2300: 28 Inf Bde attack commenced. Heavy machine gun fire swept the area of the barracks. Received from 10 Inf Bde – Political Discussion. Issued to Coys – Exchange of Notes HQ LF and ML(G) and ELAS Central Committee.

Jan. 3rd

0700: Sitrep to Bde NTR
1800 Sitrep to Bde NTR
2230: Sitrep from 28 Inf Bde. 6 Surreys locations unchanged. NTR.
158 Greek Nat Guard came under command and concentrated in barracks 416454 with one Coy under command 6 Surreys.
Bn remained in position. PW Collecting Point established in barracks – 470 PW brought in during the day as a result of 28 Inf Bde operations. A1 Ech (cooks' vehicles) moved up to Coy positions. New soup kitchen opened at Zoudhokospiyi by Capt. LE Penn serving an average of 20,000 meals a day.

Jan 4th

0300: From 28 Inf Bde. All ELAS coming over to us will be treated as normal PW. Between 0700 and 0800 hrs 4 Jan pamphlets will be fired at ELAS facing Div sector calling on them to desert.
0700: Sitrep to 28 Inf Bde NTR
1900: Sitrep to 28 Inf Bde NTR

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2115: *Intentions from 21 Inf Bde. Night 4/5 Jan and day 5 Jan 6 Surreys local protective patrolling tonight extend dispositions to include defence of Key 127 4046 wef 0730 5 Jan. 156 Nat Guard one Coy under comd 6 Surreys to remain under comd in area Goudhi Barracks 415453. One Coy to pass to command 6 Surreys early 5 Jan to assist in defence of Key 127 if required.*

2130: *"C" Coy warned to be prepared to move early in the morning. Local defensive patrols continued throughout the night – no incidents. A quiet day – Bn remained in positions.*

Jan 5th

Local defensive patrols continued throughout the night.

0700: *Sitrep to 28 Inf Bde A quiet night NTR*

0730: *"C" Coy moved off to take over key 127 and by 0805 reported take-over complete.*

1300: *Bn ordered to send one Coy to take over Area 401463 from "C" Coy 2 Kings.*

1310: *"D" Coy warned to move immediately to area 401463*

1400: *"D" Coy moved off to take over as ordered, and relief was complete by 1500 hrs.*

1430: *"S" Coy warned to move to hospital key 85.*

1500: *Main HQ moved off and established in Hospital key 85 at 1515 hrs. Tac HQ moved off and established in house at 40764610 at 1520 hrs. "D" Coy report relief complete.*

1515: *Main HQ arrived key 85.*

1520: *Tac HQ arrived house 40764610*

1530: *"S" Coy reported complete in hospital.*

1700: *"D" Coy ordered to withdraw to hospital, and by 1815 hrs Coy was complete in hospital.*

1830: *Orders received from 28 Inf Bde – 6 Surreys to revert to command of 10 Inf Bde 6 Jan. - to concentrate in immediate area.*

1845: *10 Inf Bde Comd. visited Tac HQ and issued verbal orders to CO.*

2000: *CO held "O" Gp, and issued verbal orders for 6 Jan for advance to Khalandri on 6th Jan*

2030: *Intentions for 6 Jan received from 10 Inf Bde.*

KHALANDRI, GREECE

Jan 6th

0630: *Bn moved off – "D" Coy leading – to occupy Khalandri.*

0640: *Tac HQ left present location.*

0645: *Carrier PI passed SP.*

0650: *REs reps joined Tac HQ (one hour late)*

0655: *Tac HQ stopped at Rd Junc. 420470*

0720: *Tac HQ reached road block at 434487.*

0730: *"D" Coy report that they had reached their objective without opposition. Only obstacles were road blocks and mines.*

0800: *All Coys and Tac HQ in Khalandri. Main HQ moved from hospital, and by 1300 hrs was established in house at 442493 with Tac HQ.*

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0845: Sitrep from Bde.

1300: Bn HQ established 442493. Mortars to move to 444494 and "B" Coy to move to area 444494. "D" Coy to move to area 442492.

1600: All Coys have moved into areas allotted to them.

1820: Sit rep from Bde. 6 Surreys occupied Khalandri 4449 by 0730 hrs without opposition. Number of road blocks and mines encountered in town. Locations Bn HQ 442493, "B" Coy 444494, "C" Coy 438488, "D" Coy 442492, "S" Coy 436490. 30 suspects evacuated. Equipment secured included 78 Italian A/tk mines, 76 Tellermines, 36 rifles and 21,000 rounds of SAA.

2050: Orders from Bde. Bde Gp will concentrate in Khalandri. "O" Gp Bde HQ 0800 hrs 7 Jan. Harbour recce parties less 6 Surreys RV Bde HQ 0815 hrs 7 Jan. 2 DCLI to move 1200 hrs to new area 7 Jan, DAA and QMG will arrange transport: 2 Beds & Herts and Bde HQ to move 8 Jan; 6 Surreys to remain in present locations, and A and B Echelons will join units on 8 Jan under Bde arrangements. New soup kitchen opened in Khalandri, serving an average of 15,000 meals a day.

Jan 7th

1830: From Bde Sitrep. 6 Surreys 18 suspects evacuated from Khalandri area, and some equipment and SAA found. No incidents to report. Intentions 8 Jan. Bde HQ closes present location at 1000 hrs re-opens 428499 at 1030 hrs. A Ech 6 Surreys move from present area to join Bn in area Khalandri commencing 0800 hrs.

Bn remained in positions in area Khalandri. No incidents reported. 4 men despatched to "B" Echelon for onward transmission to Greece Base Transit Camp for UK Leave (LIAP). Pte Eldridge emplaned for No 3 Transit Camp Naples for return to UK (PYTHON). Received from Bde: Congratulatory Message from Military Commander, Athens.

Jan 8th

0900: First Party from "A" Ech arrived in area Bn Hq, and established in buildings already allotted

1100: Remainder of "A" and "B" Ech parties arrived in Bn HQ area.

1800: CO attended "O" Gp held at Bde.

1830: Warning Order for move on 9 Jan issued to Coys.

1955: Intentions for 9 Jan received from Bde.

2000: CO held "O" Gp at Bn HQ.

2300: Move Order No 1 (Greece) issued. Issued to Coys: Discipline.

Jan 9th

0630: Harbour Recce Party under Major PM Plastow, M.C. left for Thebes.

1030: Column moved off, and head passed Bn HQ at 1040 hrs, and Bde SP at 430479 at 1050 hrs. "B" Ech and "R" Coy remained in area Khalandri.

1530: Column arrived Thebes without incident, and Bn HQ established 033848 at 1545 hrs.

1900: Instructions received from Bde for patrols throughout the Bn area in Thebes to contact standing patrols of 2 Beds & Herts. 6 Surreys to establish standing patrol on North East and North West

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exits from Thebes until first light 10 Jan. To patrol from standing patrol on North Western exits of town to standing patrol of 2 Beds & Herts. 2 Beds & Herts to establish standing patrol on Southern exits from Thebes until first light 10 Jan. To patrol from position of standing patrol of 6 Surreys on North East exits of town. Defence of Thebes (a) Tps Northern sector – from area North of Bde HQ to rly – 6 Surreys with under command 225 Fd Coy less 2 pls. (b) Southern sector – from area South of Bde HQ to church 0383 to 2 Beds & Herts. (c) Recce of sector will be carried out 10 Jan.

- Jan 10th Recce of Bn sector carried out by Coy Comds. during the morning.
1200: *Civilian reported to Bn HQ that there were a number of armed ELAS in Sirtzi 1091*
1230: *“S” Coy warned to have carriers ready to carry out investigation of civilian report of armed ELAB at Sirtzi 1091.*
1430: *Carriers column left Thebes, but was unable to complete journey in vehicles owing to the very bad condition of the tracks. Continued on foot. Village reached. No ELAS found.*
1800: *Carrier column returned to Thebes. Received from Bde: 10 Inf Bde Op Order No 4 (Greece).*
- Jan 11th A quiet day. No incidents to report. Issued to Coys: Admn instructions. Lt LJ LeGrange despatched by air to South Africa on compassionate leave.
Intentions night 11/12 Jan received from Bde.
1835: *Sitrep from Bde. A quiet day.*
- Jan 12th Received from Bde: Orders for search of Thebes by one Coy 3 Greek Mountain Bde.
1200: *Orders for defence of Thebes (countermanding previous orders). Notes on political and military situation in Greece.*
1802: *Sitrep from Bde. A quiet day. No incidents.*
1830: *“B” and “S” Coys warned to be ready to move to Khalkis at 0730 hrs 13 Jan.*
- Jan 13th 0745: *NORTHFORCE, consisting of “B” and “S” Coys, one Tp tanks and 2 Tps A Sqn 4 Recce Reg’t under command Bn 2 i/c left Thebes. Force entered Khalia 2401 at approx 1100 hrs. No incidents. Proceeded to swing bridge at Khalkis. The bridge was open, cutting off the island of Euboea from the mainland. Bde Comd. met ELAS Comd. and Deputy at 1430 hrs, but efforts to persuade them to lay down their arms in return for a guarantee of safe passage to Lamia were rejected pending orders from ELAS HQ. NORTHFORCE harboured in Khalia 2401 for the night, and blocked road from Khalkis swing bridge.*
Coys in Thebes closed exits from Thebes at 0530 hrs, and at 0700 hrs one Coy of 3 Greek Mountain Bde began a house-to-house search of Thebes. Evacuated during day 80 refugees 38 hostages and 166 PW. Exits from Thebes were closed at 0630 hrs. Many suspects were arrested during the day, and sent to Bde Cage for interrogation.

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About 50 turned out to be ELAS. Approx 10 rifles, 4 revolvers and quantity of telephone and line equipment were found. NORTHFORCE and SOUTHFORCE, under comd 2 i/c 6 Surreys, moved off from Thebes at 0745 hrs to go in area excl Skala Oropou X 48 – incl Khalia Z 20. Entered Khalia approx 1100 hrs No incidents. Swing bridge at Khalkis still open. Force patrolled to Vathi Avlidhos 2893 reported clear. At 1430 hrs deputation of political commissar ELAS Comd and his deputy crossed from Khalkis by boat, and parlayed with Bde Comd. Efforts were made to persuade them to lay down their arms, in return for which we would guarantee safe passage to Lamia. This was rejected on the grounds that they were awaiting orders from their own HQ, and would give a reply at 1100 hrs 14 Jan. Force now harboured in Khalia 2401, and is blocking main road from Khalkis swing bridge.

- Jan 14th NORTHFORCE had a quiet day. Bde Comd. interviewed ELAS Comd. who had decided to evacuate island of Euboea by caique provided sufficient fuel could be supplied. The intention was to evacuate 2,500 armed and 500 wounded ELAS.
1815: Sitrep from Bde. 6 Surreys NTR. Contact made with HMML in Khalkis Straits.
1845: Information from Bde: Truce effective wef 0001 Hrs 15 Jan. No offensive action or patrolling would take place apart from that necessary for local protection. Received from Bde: Internal Security. Details of Truce with ELAS.
- Jan 15th NORTHFORCE. Bde Comd. and party crossed to Khalkis at 1030 hrs to discuss arrangements for evacuation from Khalkis to Volos by caique, starting on 18 Jan. Issued to Coys: Instructions re Truce with ELAS.
1930: Sitrep from Bde. Evacuated today 25 PW all taken yesterday, 193 refugees. Equipment 4 old German rifles found whilst clearing a Greek drain. A letter was brought into Bde HQ this morning by a shepherd from the 2nd Reg't ELAS giving routes of movement from area E 17 in accordance with the truce terms.
NORTHFORCE. Bde Comd and party crossed to Khalkis at 1030 hrs, and talked over arrangements for evacuation of Euboea in ELAS HQ. ELAS stated they would evacuate to Volos by caiques from Khalkis. - Limni 0734 Loutre Aidhip-Sou 8545 and Oreof 8955 starting on 18 Jan. RE rep and civilian rep from Khalkis inspected swing bridge. Discovered mainland side in working order but turntable rail and several gear parts of island side missing. With assistance of local forge bridge was made to work temporarily, and was in place by 1530 hrs. Mainland side of bridge now opened again and controlled by us.
- Jan. 16th Soup kitchen handed over to civil authority and organisation disbanded, having served approx. 400,000 meals in three weeks. Authority for promotion of Capt. GW Ward to Major wef 21 Nov received from Bde. Heavy rain commenced in evening and continued throughout the night.

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Sitrep from Bde.

- Jan 17th CO's comments – Experiences in Street Fighting (Greece) – sent to Bde. Heavy rain continued practically all day.
Sitrep to Bde NTR
- Jan 18th *Sitrep from Bde. 6 Surreys NTR.* NORTHFORCE reported 160 ELAS evacuated today and that only rear parties of ELAS left on island, and should be clear by 1200 hrs 19 Jan. ELAS in Khalkis behaving satisfactorily and situation very quiet. Missing parts of bridge have been returned, and bridge is now in full working order.
ELAS Comd invited British officers to dinner last night. The invitation was refused.
1915: From Bde. Intentions 18/19 and 19 Jan. 6 Surreys will remain present location.
2100: Issued to Coys – Warning Order for move of Bn from Thebes to Khalkis. Received from Bde – Regent of Greece on National Situation.
2330: 10 Inf Bde Move Order Ni 1 (Greece) received.
- Jan 19th 1200: Issued to Coys – Move Order No 2 (Greece) (at 1200 hrs).
Message re. International Red Cross. Assistance to ELAS forces.
2000: *Sitrep from Bde. NORTHFORCE one British PW rescued from caique at Khalkis when it put in to refuel. 6 Surreys NTR.*

KHALKIS, GREECE

- Jan 20th 0540: Coys embussed ready to move.
0545: Column moved off.
0715: Column arrived at debussing point ½ mile West of Khalkis bridge.
0730: Coys marched over the bridge in column of threes, and by 0815 all coys were established in new locations. Bn HQ established in Hotel Palieria 284991.
1100: Bde Comd's. Proclamation read to population of Khalkis. No incidents
1830: Sitrep to Bde. Bn concentrated Khalkis by 0815 hrs. Bn HQ established in Hotel Palieria 284991. Proclamation read to civilians after a speech by the Archbishop. The reception was friendly.No incidents.
- Jan 21st *1835: Sitrep from Bde. Conc in Khalkis completed by 1300 hrs except for 111 Fd Bty who move in tomorrow. No incidents. Units in Khalkis HQ 10 Inf Bde, 6 Surreys, 2 DCLI, one Tp "B" Squadron 46 RTR, 2 Tps "A" Sqn 4 Recce, PI 59 d Coy, "A" Coy Fd Amb.*
Received from Bde: Letter re refugees.
- Jan 22nd *1805: Sitrep from Bde. 111 Bty RA moved into Khalkis 1530 hrs, otherwise NTR.*
Issued to Coys: False Imprisonment. Truce with ELAS (amendment).
- Jan 23rd 1200: 10 Inf Bde Op Instruction Nos 1 & 2 (Greece) received.

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- 1800: Intentions for 24th Jan from Bde – 6 Surreys and 2 DCLI to search Khalkis 2899 as per Op Instr No 1 already issued.
1835: *Sitrep from Bde. 6 Surreys NTR.*
- Jan 24th Proclamation by Military Commander Khalkis (Bde Comd.) read to population.
0800: Search began as per Op Instr No 1.
1300: Search completed – various arms and assorted amn found and disposed of.
1900: *Sitrep from Bde. One Coy 150 Gk Nat Gd moved into Khalkis from Thebes. Whole town searched by 6th Surreys, 2 DCLI and Coy 150 Gk Nat Gd during day. Equipment found shotguns 12, rifles 2 British 5 German 1 Italian 1 other, bayonets 2, revolvers 4, Verey pistol 1, Breda barrels 8, steel helmets 1 German 1 Italian, gas capes 1, switchboard 1, microphone 1, SAA 400 rounds, shells 15, grenades 15, fuse 3 coils, cordite 50 lbs, depth charges 5, bombs 4 Nebel and mortar, Gk identity cards 1 bundle, mines 3. Evacuated from cage today 67 refugees.*
Received from Bde: TEWT – Defence of Khalkis.
- Jan 25th “S” Coy on mainland changed positions with “C” Coy, and Mortar Platoon took over billets in Hotel Palteria with Carrier Platoon in building opposite.
Issued to Coys – Instructions for TEWT. Joining Instructions from Bde Rest camp Athens.
Sitrep from Bde 6 Surreys NTR
- Jan 26th 0330: *Pl of Gk Nat Gd left Khalkis proceeding to Khalia.*
0530: Carrier PI left Khalkis to carry out search of Khalkis with assistance of 1 PI Greek National Guard.
1230: *Carrier PI returned to Khalkis.* Proclamation to population Khalkis. For full report of search see Sitrep to Bde at 1445 hrs.
Proclamation to population of Khalkis (raising curfew restrictions until 2130 hrs) issued.
- Jan 27th 1930: Received from Bde: *No incidents today. Evacuated from cage today 32 refugees, yesterday 28 refugees. Intentions Sun 28 Jan. 6 Surrey with under command one Tp “B” Sqdn 4 Recce Reg’t and 2 Pls 3 Coy 150 Gk Nat Gd will search Loukisia 1601 leaving present location 1330 hrs to return by 1800 hrs. 3594 and Nea Lampsakos 3195. Search will commence a.m. 29 Jan and be completed by 1800 hrs.* Information that 2 MPs would be visiting Bn 28 Jan. Training Programme issued by Bn 2 I.c. 5 OR sent to “B” Ech for onward routing to UK (LIAP). Bde informed Bn that Christmas Day would be celebrated on 3 Feb.
- Jan 28th 0750: Message sent to Coys – MPs will not now visit the Bn.
1300: Force under Capt. JE Hatt-Cook left Khalkis for Loukasia, returning at 1800 hrs.
1830: *Patrol report sent to Bde.*

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1910: From Bde. Intentions Mon 28th Jan. 6 Surreys with under command one Tp B Sqn. 4 Recce Regt and 2 Pls Greek National Guard to search Vasilikon 3594 and Nea Lampsakos 3195. Search will commence a.m. 29 Jan and be completed by 1800 hrs.

Jan 29th

*0800: Forces to carry out search near Lampsakos and Vasilikon left Khalkis, returning at 1300 hrs.
1600: Patrol Reports sent to Bde.
Junior Leaders, Snipers Courses began.
Special Order of the Day from General Scobie received.*

Jan 30th

*1400: CO gave lecture to "B", "D", HQ, "S" Coys in HQ Coy Dining Hall, and read Order of the Day by General Scobie.
1500: CO gave a lecture to "C" Coy in Coy Dining Hall
1910: Orders received from Bde for one Section Carriers to be in position at Bourtzi 3292 by 0730 hrs 31 Jan, returning by 1800 hrs.
Task to intercept commodities being shipped to mainland.
1915: Sitrep from Bde NTR.*

Jan 31st

*0700: Sec of carriers left Khalkis for Bourtzi 3292.
1800: Sec of carriers returned to Khalkis.
1820: From Bde. Intentions 1 Feb. 3 Coy 150 Gk Nat Gd will relieve platoon 6 Surreys at rd block 300984 at 1100 hrs.
1820: Sitrep from Bde. Sec carriers 6 Surreys proceeded to Bourtzi 1292 to investigate report of uncontrolled food traffic from the island to the mainland. No traffic observed. No incidents.*