

1946 REGIMENTAL CHRONICLE
2nd Bn OXFORDSHIRE & BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LIGHT INFANTRY

SUMMARY OF SECOND BATTALION DIARY

During this past year the 52nd has undergone many changes and upheavals. We have lost many valuable officers and men to civilian life and we have led a very unsettled existence which can be expected in this troubled Holy Land.

Perhaps the biggest break with the past for many of us has been our conversion from Airborne Forces to normal infantry. Having been with the 1 Airborne Division in 1940 and then transferred to form part of the 6 Airborne Division on its formation in 1942, the loss of our red berets during the early part of this year came as a rather sudden and unexpected blow.

During our time with Airborne Forces we managed to uphold the fine traditions of the Regiment and to win a good name for ourselves in both training and war. In the D-Day landing in Normandy D Coy and two platoons of B Coy led by Major R. J. N. Howard, D.S.O., had the honour of being the first troops to land on the soil of France. This was followed by the slow arduous battle of the bridgehead with its dull trench warfare and daily toll of casualties.

Later we took part in the Ardennes campaign and at one time found ourselves holding a sector beside the 43rd. After a short period on the Maas in Holland we were withdrawn for the air assault over the Rhine. In this battle the Regiment suffered severe losses but managed to take a leading part in the advance across Germany to the Baltic where we met our Allies, the Russians.

Those of us who were lucky enough to survive these campaigns remember many of the officers and men who did not return from these 'Red Devil' assaults and our loss of association with Airborne Forces will not, we hope, let us forget their gallant deeds. We hope that our achievements as Airborne soldiers during the past war may be added to the fine records of Regimental history.

August 1945 found us preparing for the assault on Japan, but as the Far East war ended during that month we were sent to the Middle East, to Palestine, in October.

Still part of the 6 Airborne Division we were for a short time near Gaza and then at a ghastly camp called Ras El Ein. We were eventually washed out of there and moved to Camp 22 Nathanya where we started the year 1946.

In April of this year we left command of 6 Airlanding Brigade (Brigadier Hugh Bellamy) to join our new brigade 31 Independent Infantry Brigade (Brigadier Roger Bower). Since then we have again been moved to 3 Infantry Brigade and are now members of 1 British Infantry Division.

The splitting up of the 31 Infantry Brigade caused a break in the long and very friendly association between ourselves and the 1 Bn Royal Ulster Rifles. Since our return together from India in 1940 our battalions have been together and there has been a very close and firm friendship between all ranks. In order that the spirit formed in training and matured in battle between the two Regiments should not be forgotten permission has been granted for all officers, in future, to be honorary members of each others messes.

1946 REGIMENTAL CHRONICLE
2nd Bn OXFORDSHIRE & BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LIGHT INFANTRY

The past year may be divided into three separate periods which correspond with our employment and the stations in which we have served. Firstly, January to March as part of the 6 Airlanding Brigade at Camp 22 Nathanya, secondly, with 31 Independent Infantry Brigade at Jerusalem and thirdly, with 3 Brigade at Athlit as part of 1 British Infantry Division.

January-April 1946 Camp 22 Nathanya. Camp 22 is a tented camp but quite a good one having good buildings for messes, dining halls, and NAAFI. Lights for men's tents were a great difficulty. The Regiment put in a lot of hard work on the camp and when we left it was probably one of the best in Palestine, where however the accommodation standards are very low. January to April was a period of intense individual training. Training Coy was formed and carried out series of instructual cadres.

All companies ran cadres in the following subjects:

- Weapon Training
- Fieldcraft
- Physical Training
- Drill and Turnout
- Education
- Specialist Training

In January Lieut/Col H. H. van Straubensee took over command from Major C. H. Styles who had been commanding since Mark Darell-Brown was badly injured in a jeep crash in November.

A few internal security searches of Jewish settlements were carried out and platoons were required almost nightly for road blocks and vehicle searches.

During February we prepared for a Brigade Exercise 'Mountaineer' which was to practice the Brigade in moving and fighting on a single axis in hill country, but fortunately the weather caused the exercise to be cancelled. We all, however, learnt a lot from the study of this difficult operation.

In late February D Coy, commanded by Major John Tillett, were attacked by terrorists while on detachment at Kfar Vitkin. Lieut John Andrews's platoon put in an immediate counter-attack, but unfortunately in the wrong direction, and only succeeded in scaring the terrorists off instead of destroying them.

During March D Coy won the Regimental Rifle Meeting at Givat Olga and two days later the Regiment won the Brigade Rifle Meeting. A Regimental Rifle Club was formed and a separate account of its activities is attached.

The Regiment left 6 Airlanding Brigade and became part of 31 Infantry Brigade. It is interesting to note that we were in 31 Infantry Brigade prior to being Airborne and left it in 1940 when it was commanded by Brigadier Bill Smyth.

1946 REGIMENTAL CHRONICLE
2nd Bn OXFORDSHIRE & BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LIGHT INFANTRY

Officers. Major Harry Styles commanded until Lieut/Col Henry van Straubenzee, D.S.O., arrived in January and Major John Ballard was acting 2nd i/c. Major Rupert Barry was President of a Military Court in Jerusalem for a short time, then left for home. Capt Derek Smith was Adjutant at Division Training Centre while Major Tod Sweeney, M.C., is an instructor at ME School of Infantry with Capt Phil Bordinat. Lieut Joe Judah has departed to Cairo and we welcomed Lieuts Pat Mitchell and Ian Crichton.

During February Capt John Busher won the Division Motor Cycling Trials which was a very fine performance.

A diary of main events during this period follows:

January 10th — Lieut/Col H. H. van Straubenzee takes over command of the Regiment. Major C. H. Styles reverts to 2nd i/c.

January 21st — Regiment under command 9 Infantry Brigade 3 Infantry Division for search of Jewish Settlement of Hadera.

February 4th — Brigade 3-in Mortar Competition won by S Coy 52nd Light Infantry.

February 7th — Brigade Commander's Adm Inspection.

February 8th — Regiment searches orange groves for Jewish terrorists.

February 17th — Preparation for Exercise 'Mountaineer'.

February 19th — Exercise 'Mountaineer' postponed.

February 21st — D Coy, on detachment at Kfar Vitkin, attacked by terrorists. No casualties.

February 22nd — Intelligence Officer, Bill Allardice, to England, Class B Release.

February 26th — Colonel H. van Straubenzee to hospital, command assumed by Major Styles.

February 28th — Exercise 'Mountaineer' cancelled.

March 4th — Warning of move to form 31 Brigade in Jerusalem.

March 6th — Brigade Commander visits Regiment. See C Coy (Major John Ballard) carry out Basis Stroke supervised by Capt Peter Gerahty.

March 7th — Regimental Rifle Meeting at Givat Olga Ranges. D Coy became Champion Shooting Coy, being first in Rifle and second in LMG.

March 12th — Lieut Freddy Turner to U.K. on Class A Release.

March 13th — Lieut Cliff Ursell to U.K. on posting.

1946 REGIMENTAL CHRONICLE
2nd Bn OXFORDSHIRE & BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LIGHT INFANTRY

March 24th — Drumhead Service to commemorate the Rhine crossing.

March 27th — Advance party to Alamein Camp, Jerusalem.

March 29th — Main Body to Alamein Camp.

April-October. Alamein Camp, Jerusalem. Alamein Camp is situated near Allenby Barracks on the Bethlehem side of Jerusalem. Again after a lot of hard work we managed to make it a very reasonable camp in which to live.

Our tour of duty in Jerusalem was devoted almost entirely to guards and internal security duties. For most of our time there all men were on some type of guard every other day and so all training had to be stopped. The guard duties varied from a company guard on HE the High Commissioner's House to foot patrols round the Jerusalem cafes. After the blowing up of the King David Hotel we had to start finding a company guard on HQ, Palestine.

Training Coy was kept going until June and succeeded in training one complete rifle platoon for A, B, C Coys respectively. They were only able to do this through the untiring efforts of Major Tony Mason, Capt Freddy Scott, M.C., Lieut Maughan, and CSM Bill Bailey among others. Education started seriously during this period and a centre was formed in the camp. A staff ably led by Lieut A. M. Turton graded all the men in the Regiment and began a series of courses in basic subjects. Numerous men were sent away on pre-vocational courses.

Many internal security operations were carried out during our stay in Jerusalem the most important being the cordoning and searching of the Jewish Agency building. This was part of a country wide operation known as 'Agatha' and the Regiment had the honour of forming the close cordon of the Agency building. We remained on the operation for ten days working a dawn relief on the cordon daily with the 1 Battalion Royal Ulster Rifles. During another large scale search the Regiment succeeded in finding arms and ammunition in a potash factory on the Dead Sea near Jericho.

In April a ceremonial parade was held at Allenby Barracks in honour of the Regiment leaving the Airborne Forces. Major/General A. J. H. Gassels, C.B.E., D.S.O., GOC 6 Airborne Division took the salute. The following message was received from Lieut/General Sir Frederick Browning, K.B.E., C.B., D.S.O.: 'I am indeed sorry to hear that the Airlanding Brigade has been redesignated and thereby lost Airborne identity, and I wish to thank them not only for the magnificent part they played in Airborne operations, but also to wish them the best of luck in their new role.'

Waterloo Day was spent quietly as most members were rather tired as we had been on an internal security search the previous day. Inter-Coy Sports were held and was won by C Coy.

Lieut/Col H. van Straubenzee left to take over GSO1 of 6 Airborne Division in June and as Major Harry Styles and John Ballard were in England on leave command of the Regiment evolved on Major Tony Mason. Lieut/Col C. L. C. Ward arrived in July and assumed command of the Regiment. Despite guards and internal securities duty the Regiment managed to take a full part in all sporting activities and a full account of these appears elsewhere.

1946 REGIMENTAL CHRONICLE
2nd Bn OXFORDSHIRE & BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LIGHT INFANTRY

Officers. Our Canloan officers Captains Phil Bordinat and John Stone left us, the former to America and home and the latter to the Canadian Regular Army in England. Majors Styles, Ballard, Mason, Tillett and Everitt have all had or are having courses and SEWLROM in U.K. Captains Philip Godsall and Peter Gerahty also have had SEWLROM. Majors Freddy Scott, M.C. and Sandy Smith, M.C. are both demobbed in England. Capt Brian Rutherford went home having arranged to be an agent for the 'Holy Land Stores' in Ireland. Capt Alec Hamilton has gone, and been replaced by Robert Colvile. Major Peter Everett took over A Coy from Freddy Scott, M.C. and Guy Lincoln S Coy. The latter has also now gone home on release. Lieuts Howard Wright and Ted Grant Ives left to join the KSLI. Capt Ted Brennan took over Adjutant from Philip Godsall. There were many new arrivals including Lieuts Loxley, Diplock, Fry, Murphy, Gentry, and Thorne. Capt Tubby Maughan was posted to DCLI, his parent Regiment.

Serjeants — CSMs Stevenson, D.C.M., Byrnes, M.M., Belcher and Flitney have had or are having leave in the U.K. while CQMS Shaylor, Sjts Law, Molloy, Gentry, Jinks, and Dickman were amongst the others to return to civilian life.

Buglers — The buglers worked hard during this period and won the Brigade Bugle competition. They played as a band in conjunction with the 1 RUR at the Victory Parade celebrations and at the King's Birthday Parade.

A diary of main events follows:

April 3rd — Gapt Philip Godsall to U.K. on SEWLROM.

April 20th — Major A. C. Mason and Capt B. Rutherford escort the Patriarch of Greek Orthodox Church during Easter celebrations.

April 25th — Ceremonial Parade at Allenby Barracks to commemorate the Regiment leaving the 6 Airborne Division. Major/General Cassels gave farewell speech.

April 28th — Regimental Rifle Team take part in ME Rifle Meeting at Gaza.

April 29th — Capt Dennis Shaw and Lieut Douglas to U.K. on release.

May 3rd — PI deal with Arab disturbance in the Old City.

May 14th — Lieut/Col H. H. van Straubenzee returns from leave in U.K.

May 16th — Majors Styles and Ballard to U.K. on SEWLROM.

May 21st — Majors Rahr, Nankivell and Tillett mentioned in Dispatches. Both former are now civilians in the U.K.

June 3rd — Capt Alec Hamilton to U.K. on release.

June 6th — Lieut/General Barker GOC Palestine visits the Regiment.

June 7th — Lieut/Col H. H. van Straubenzee to GSO1 6 Airborne Division.

1946 REGIMENTAL CHRONICLE
2nd Bn OXFORDSHIRE & BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LIGHT INFANTRY

June 8th — Victory Day celebrations. The Regimental Buglers sounded Retreat outside HQ, Palestine.

June 13th — King's Birthday Parade. Carriers of S Coy under Gapt Guy Lincoln took part in the march past outside King David Hotel. Detachments of Regiment under Capt Peter Gerahty lined the route.

June 17th — Regiment searched Jewish Settlement Qevutsar Hugin.

June 18th — Waterloo Day. Regimental Holiday and Inter-Coy Sports won by C Coy.

June 21st — Regiment search Jewish Potash factory on Dead Sea. Arms found. Capt Philip Godsall returns from the U.K. Major Freddy Scott to U.K. on release.

June 22nd — Capt Tubby Maughan to command of T Coy.

June 28th-29th — Operation 'Agatha' continuing to July 10th.

July 1st — Order issued 'All ranks to be armed when out of camp and to be in groups of not less than four'.

July 2nd — Lieut D. O. Smith to Brigade.

July 9th — Capt Guy Lincoln to U.K. on Class A Release.

July 10th — Lieuts Murphy and Diplock joined Regiment.

July 21st — King David Hotel blown up. D Coy turned out to enforce curfew.

July 22nd — Capt Busher to command HQ, Coy.

July 24th — Major Styles returned from U.K. and took over from Major A. C. Mason.

July 27th — Cpl Cranwell, C Coy, shot.

July 28th — Lieut/Col C. L. C. Ward arrived and took command of the Regiment.

August 1st — Cpl Eckett of C Coy died.

August 18th — Search of Jewish Settlement Megor Hayima.

September 5th — General Sir Miles Dempsey C-in-C MELF visited the Regiment.

September 27th — Capt Tedd Brennan took over Adjutant.

October 1st — Capt Johnny Busher to U.K. on course.

1946 REGIMENTAL CHRONICLE
2nd Bn OXFORDSHIRE & BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LIGHT INFANTRY

October 8th — Many mines on road. Pioneer platoon under Capt John Andrews clear mines from road to HE's House.

October 9th — Regiment searched Jewish Settlement of Talpiyot and cordon Ramat Rahel and Motsa.

October 10th — Regiment search Motsa.

October 16th — Brigade Commanders Adm Inspection.

October 19th — The Buglers sounded Retreat at Jerusalem Horse Show.

October 23rd — Commanding Officer regrets to announce the death of General Sir John Hanbury-Williams, G.C.V.O., K.C.B., C.M.G.

October 24th — More mines on roads in Jerusalem.

October 30th — Jerusalem Railway Station blown up. Mobile platoon rush to Station but soon withdrawn.

November 1st — Advance Party under Capt John Andrews and Lieut Terry Lovick left for Athlit.

November 2nd — Owing to road mining no vehicles to move after dark unless on essential duty.

November 5th — Lieut N. H. Bower joined Regiment.

November 9th — Move to Athlit. Played out of camp by the pipers of 1 Battalion of Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders.

November-December Athlit Camp. Athlit Camp is about twelve miles south of Haifa and part of the Jewish Illegal Immigrant Clearance Camp. The Regiment stationed here is responsible for ensuring that the inmates do not escape and they are not let out by terrorist elements from outside. As a summer station it is not too bad although very hot and humid. In winter it is very wet and there is no NAAFI for the men. While here we have had a hut built to replace the tents used as an officers mess and have got a hut for a NAAFI but it is still a very bad winter camp.

On arrival here on November 9th we became part of the 3 Infantry Brigade in the 1 British Infantry Division with 1 DCLI and 2 Foresters.

After a few days at Athlit, where we had hoped to get a little rest from internal security, we were ordered out to guard part of the railway line as it was being constantly blown up by terrorists. After a stay of about ten days the Regiment moved to Zerqa in Trans-Jordan for a months training. The Brigade commander ordered that the training was to be on a company level or above and in spite of the fact that we had not done any of this for at least a year the Regiment managed to do well on the set exercises. A full account of our activities in Transjordan is attached.

1946 REGIMENTAL CHRONICLE
2nd Bn OXFORDSHIRE & BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LIGHT INFANTRY

We returned to Athlit on December 23rd and have just finished a quiet Xmas. Football proved the main attraction this year and there were matches on both Xmas and Boxing Day.

The acting commanding officer, Major Harry Styles, and a small party of officers including Majors A. C. Mason, Peter Everitt, John Tillett, Capts Hugh Clark, M.C., and Derek Arkell and Lieuts John Thrabe and Mckomchie (RAMC) went for a quiet swim in the sea after Xmas lunch. The Sjts Mess celebrated their Xmas on Boxing Day in their usual excellent manner.

After much thought and with regret the commanding officer decided to place A Coy into suspended animation early in November. Numbers were so low in both officers and men that this became necessary although greatly regretted by old A Coy members. It is hoped to reform A Coy shortly but with present numbers and the drain of release and LIAP it does not look like being possible unless we get a large number of reinforcements.

On November 20th we welcomed the 52nd Band with Bandmaster Taylor in charge. They have given many good concerts and have a full programme in the future.

Lieut/Col Ward went home on a course and leave on November 23rd and Major Harry Styles is at present in command.

Officers — Capt Bob Colvile left on Python for U.K. Lieuts Tom Ashmore and Vincent Farnell have also gone to U.K. on courses. Capts Dennis Fox and John Busher are still in U.K. Lieut Ian Crichton left to join the Parachute Regiment. Lieuts Diplock and Loxley return to Regiment from LIAP. Major Peter Everett returned from SEWLR0M to command S Coy. Rev Peter Malins was posted to the Coldstream Guards and will be a great loss especially with the rugger season approaching.

Brief diary of events follows:

November 11th — Nonne Boschen Day-Holiday. A Coy into suspended animation.

November 15th-21st — Companies guarding railway to prevent mining.

November 18th — Brigade TEWT for officers.

November 20th — Regimental Band arrive from U.K.

November 21st— Capt R. A. Colvile to U.K., Python.

November 24th — Regiment moves to Zerqa, Trans-jordan. Lieut/Col G. L. G. Ward to U.K. on course. Major Harry Styles assumes command.

November 27th — Tank Demonstration. MI Tent burnt down, 2030 hrs.

December 3rd-5th — Brigade skeleton exercise. All HQ out.

December 12th — Lieut J. Thrabe and 2/Lieut L. G. Bushmore joined Regiment from U.K.

1946 REGIMENTAL CHRONICLE
2nd Bn OXFORDSHIRE & BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LIGHT INFANTRY

December 16th-19th — Exercise Beaver III.

December 20th — Regiment returns to Athlit.

December 25th — Xmas Day. Football B and G v D, S and HQ,. Dog Show. Cinema Show. Concert in the evening.

December 26th — Inter-Coy Football. Fancy Dress and slow bicycle race.

1946 REGIMENTAL CHRONICLE
2nd Bn OXFORDSHIRE & BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LIGHT INFANTRY

SECOND BATTALION LETTER

Dear Editor,

It is now a year and a half since the Second World War finished, the year is 1946, and the month is November and I suppose if we went back twenty-six years to 1920 we would find the Army, or the Regiment, faced with all the same sort of problems; and the atmosphere of uncertainty, frustration and natural desire for the civilian soldier to return to his civil occupation. The greatest difference between 1920 and the present day lies in the fact that whereas then there was no dearth of Regular personnel, to-day the position is reversed and there are at the moment less than sixty Regular or deferred personnel. The reason may be found in the introduction of national conscription, modern reluctance to serve away from home, and the dismemberment of the family life (1939-1945), caused by the war, but whatever the reason the situation cannot improve for some years and we must keep the 52nd standard flying through these transitional years. For this task we are fortified by our great Regimental traditions, our magnificent war record, and the high standard of military efficiency, a legacy of two centuries in 'A Regiment unsurpassed in Arms since Arms were first borne by Man'.

And so our immediate task is 'Team Building', continuity and the resuscitation of the Army in peace. It is of interest to record the various moves of the Regiment under Darell-Brown since the war ended.

(6 Airborne BLA Germany to U.K. Bulford — May 1945-)
(U.K. to Palestine — October 1945.)

Unfortunately after ten days in Palestine Darell-Brown smashed himself up in his jeep and had to be sent home. Harry Styles took over during this time as acting commanding officer until Van Straubensee arrived. The 6 Airlanding Brigade, to which the 52nd belonged, finally left the 6 Airborne Division in April, and took over Jerusalem area as 31 Independent Infantry Brigade. I took over from Van Straubensee in the summer of this year. Finally 31 Infantry Brigade (Brigadier R. H. Bower, late KOYLI) broke up in Jerusalem November 1946 and now we find ourselves, I hope, permanently instituted in 3 Brigade (Brigadier St. Glair Ford, late KOYLI) with the 2 Foresters, 1 DCLI, in the 1 Division under the Command of our old friend Major/General Richard Nelson Gale (late founder and commander of 6 Airborne Division).

Our achievements have been considerable both military and in the field of sport. During the summer months we were visited by General Sir Bernard Paget, Lieut/General Barker and the C-in-C, General Sir Miles Dempsey; all were extremely complimentary.

The situation as regards Regular officers is most encouraging and already more than half our present establishment is, or shortly will be, Regulars.

Zionism has rather curtailed our sporting activities, but in spite of this fine bags of chakoor and duck have been registered. Here at Athlit (12 miles south of Haifa), which looks like being our permanent station for a while, there is a good prospect of sailing. During the winter, expeditions to Lake Huleh and Azrak will be arranged; we have twelve members of the Huleh Shooting Club in the mess.

1946 REGIMENTAL CHRONICLE
2nd Bn OXFORDSHIRE & BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LIGHT INFANTRY

It is a relief to be out of Jerusalem, as duties were very heavy and involved up to 300 men a day. We were privileged to find a guard on H.E. the High Commissioner, Sir Alan Cunningham, and HQ, Palestine in what was left of the King David Hotel after the 'Stern Gang' had finished with it.

I am glad to say in spite of the considerable casualties suffered by the 31 Infantry Brigade, the Regiment had only one fatal casualty. Cpl Cranwell.

We were pleased to be visited by Peter Young, Brigadier Smyth, Tony Read, Jack Ducat-Hamersley, John Miles, also Colonel Maurice Toye at Jerusalem.

No families have arrived out here yet but accommodation is being made available in Sarafand, Jerusalem, and, since the Staff College broke up at Haifa, quarters will be made available at Haifa also; it is expected the first batch will arrive around Christmas and the New Year.

The 52nd Band is at present with us for a short tour and will go with us to our Training Camp in Trans-Jordan. So things are looking up, and we feel that with the band here and the families on the way, we can begin to speak of peace-time soldiering again with all its pleasant aspects.

At 0600 hours on November 21st, 1946 we embussed at Athlit en route for Transjordan, arriving at Camp 6 near Zarqa at approximately 1500 hours. The camp was a beautiful sandy site in a Wadi and the only permanent structure was the 'Sign Board'. Not to be dismayed the Regiment got down to it and made the place habitable. Company commanders started their Recces and prepared their programmes.

Everyone was a little dubious at first about the training as we had not done anything for six months, but the men quickly got into their stride and during the first week were carrying out company field firing exercises with tanks and gunners in support. The battalion finished off Battalion Training with an exercise set by Brigade which was carried out in three phases.

A Night Attack (silent)

Consolidation

A set-piece Daylight Attack: with tanks and artillery and all battalion support weapons.

Considering that this was the first time for two years the Regiment had carried out a field firing exercise of this nature it acquitted itself well, and was congratulated by the Brigadier on the high standard of training.

After a day's well earned rest we then plunged into Divisional Training which consisted of a well conceived exercise named Beaver III of four day's duration. This consisted of 'The Break In', 'The Dog Fight', 'The Break Out', 'The Pursuit'.

The Regiment played the leading role in the exercise, being selected by the Brigade Commander to lead the Brigade on first and last phase. The final phase, the 'Pursuit', was enjoyed by all. The Regiment had under command the supporting arms of the other two battalions in the Brigade, and, together with a squadron of tanks, a squadron of armoured cars and four regiments of artillery, we made a formidable force.

1946 REGIMENTAL CHRONICLE
2nd Bn OXFORDSHIRE & BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LIGHT INFANTRY

The Regiment moved back to Athlit on December 20th, 1946 and found the camp resembling a snipe bog; after two days intensive drainage operations the camp was in reasonable shape for Christmas.

Christmas festivities went off well and the men had their turkey, beer, etc. The Palestine papers made much of the way in which the troops celebrated Christmas, and the wonderful fare provided; what they forgot to mention was the food was purchased from Regimental Funds, as the sole extras from the ration was pork in lieu of beef and a grant of gd. per man.

Yours,
52nd.