



Diary of a Red Devil: By Glider to Arnhem with the 7th King's Own Scottish Borderers

Albert Blockwell, Maggie Clifton

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Many books have been written about the Second World War and the majority of them either concentrate on a particular battle, campaign or unit. Individual accounts are certainly in a minority and those from the lower ranks even more scarcer. Helion and Co Ltd are therefore pleased to announce the publication of Diary of A Red Devil. It relates the war time experiences of a young man, Albert Blockwell from the northeast of England, who in February 1940 was called up for service with the Army.

Initially conscripted into the Royal Army Ordnance Corps and trained as a vehicle mechanic, he was then posted in March 1940 to a prewar Territorial unit - The 7th Kings Own Scottish Borderers, then a home defense unit based near London. His diary is a most interesting account of a young vehicle mechanic who also had to learn to be a infantry soldier. Albert remained with this unit for all his wartime service, later going to the Shetland Islands when the 7th KOSB were part of OSDEF (Orkney and Shetlands Defence Force). Then in late 1943 much to their surprise the unit was posted to Lincolnshire to become the third infantry unit in the 1st Airlanding Brigade then in the process of returning from Italy with the rest of the 1st Airborne Division. Swapping their glengarries for red berets Albert and his comrades had to adapt to their new way of getting to war by glider.

The diary continues with a down to earth account of the highs and lows of the next few months. Then in September 1944 Albert flew to Holland on Operation Market-Garden and his account (written in PoW camp) describes the savage nine days fighting at Arnhem from the slit trench level. Taken prisoner on the last day his account then describes the spartan life in PoW camp without pulling any punches. Sadly Albert died in 2001 but his diary survived and his daughter Maggie Clifton together with help from two published 'Arnhem' authors have edited a unique account of the fighting at Arnhem from the front-line soldier's perspective.

Key sales points: Unique personal account of the formation of Britain's airborne forces and their epic actions during Operation Market Garden, The diary is supplemented by extensive annotations from acknowledged Arnhem expert Niall Cherry providing additional information relating to the units and individuals mentioned in Albert's diary, Features a large number of rare photographs and documents.



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