

1/5th Bn. The Queens Royal Regiment (West Surrey) War Diary September 1942

September 1942

- 1st BARRANI TOMB 2/Lt. D.A. Grant promoted War substantive Lieut. W.E.F. 1/9/42
The enemy attacked in the early hours of 31st August and the battle of BARE RIDGE was fought (see Appx. A.) Except for the carrier pln. which was lent to 133 Inf. Bde. for two days the battalion took no active part in this battle although it was prepared to fulfil various roles should occasion arise. The battalion area was dive bombed on several occasions but suffered only one casualty one. O.R. being wounded. There was some shelling just outside D Coys wire. Although the Bn took no active part in the operation the occupation of the EL KHADIM area by 131 Inf Bde. played an important part in the defeat of the enemy.
- 9th Bn. moved from BARRANI TOMB to area DEIR EL HIMA in rear of New Zealand Div. area.
- 13th Bn. moved to new position in Bde. area between Deir ? ? and Deir EL MUNASSIB known as "HOGS BACK". Bn. HQ was shelled on arrival. No casualties.
- 15th "HOGS BACK" 2/Lt. F.D. OAKLEY promoted War substantive Lieut. W.e.f. 15 Sept.
- 20th 2/Lt. D.A.V. LIVERS leaves admitted to hospital.
- 25/26th Bn. moved to area N. of HOGS BACK preparatory to making an attack on the DEIR EL MUNASSIB.
- 29/30th DEIR EL MUNASSIB The Bn. took part in Bde. attack on the Munassib depression.
1/6 Queen's on the night attacked the Northern edge of the depression and the Bn. the Southern. 1/7th Queen's were in Reserve.
A report on the operation is attached in appendix C.
So far as is known at the present the battalion suffered the following casualties, Capt. A.U. Clark and Lt. L.J. Pound wounded. Major, Dewsnap, Capts Berdoe-Wilkinson D.U. Clark MC, J.T. Salmon, W.J.N. Oswald, Lt. Cole-Biroth, 2/Lts D.J. Mann, D.J. Whittaker, J.H. Jenoure, R.A. Cufley all missing 1 O.R. Killed 15 O.R's wounded and about 180 missing.
- 30th Bn. strength 22 officers and 524 O.R's.

Commanding Officer, Lt. Col. L.C. East

Appx. B 1/5 Queen's Operation order no. 1 dated 27/9/42

Appx. C Report on the attack on Deir El Munassib.

Field Return of Officers 14th August 1942

T/Lt. Col	L.C.	EAST	Queen's.	
Major	R.E.	CLARKE	"	"
T/Major	A.G.	NEALE	"	"
T/Major	J.	DEWSNAP	"	"
T/Capt.	A.U.	CLARK	"	"
T/Capt.	M.A.	BERDOE-WILKINSON	"	"
T/Capt.	D.U.	CLARK MC	"	"
T/Capt.	J.T.	SALMON	"	"
T/Capt.	R.F.H.	COWEN	"	"
T/Capt.	H.C	LEON	"	"

T/Capt.	E.J.T.	ROSCOE	"	"
T/Capt.	H.C.	HOWARD	"	"
T/Capt.	W.J.N.	OSWALD	"	"
Lieut.	C.G.	NAPPER	Kings.	
Lieut.	T.E.M.	ADAMS	Queen's	
Lieut.	J.P.H.	COLE-BIROTH	"	"
Lieut.	L.J.	POUND	"	"
Lieut.	K.	HARDY	Lincs.	
Lieut.	S.G.	DEAR	"	"
Lieut.	V.G.	TWEEDIE	"	"
Lieut.	R.	ELLIOTT	"	"
2/Lieut.	J.R.	MORRISON SCOTT	"	"
2/Lieut.	D.A.	GRANT	"	"
2/Lieut.	F.D.	OAKLEY	"	"
2/Lieut.	D.J.	MANN	"	"
2/Lieut.	B.T.	OPPERMAN	"	"
2/Lieut.	T.I.D	HEATHCOTE	"	"
2/Lieut.	F.P.	TALLENT	"	"
2/Lieut.	D.J.	WHITTAKER	"	"
2/Lieut.	P.R.	NORRIS	"	"
2/Lieut.	J.N.	NIMMO	Kings	
2/Lieut.	J.H.	JENOURE	Queen's	
2/Lieut.	R.A.	CUFLEY	"	"
Lieut.	J.	ALLWOOD	Q.M.	
Capt.	D.	MACRAE	R.A.M.C. M.O.	
C.F. 4.	V.C.	CASTLE	R.A.Ch. D.	Padre

Appx. A

THE BATTLE OF BARE RIDGE

This Summary is intended for the soldiers of this Division, in order to make clear to them the part they played in what the Press calls the Battle for Bare Ridge.

Its contents should either be made available to the troops or explained to them with the help of the attached diagrams.

Since the enemy are only partially aware of the facts stated here and would clearly like to know them in order to counter our further moves, they must be treated as confidential secrets not to be made known outside the division.

INTRODUCTION

The Alamein front stretches from the sea to the almost impassable QATTARA Depression. It is cut by two ridges the RUWEISAT RIDGE and BARE RIDGE, both of which dominate the country both to their North and South.

If the enemy could have got on to RUWEISAT RIDGE he would have found our Army vulnerable at many points to his attack.

Since he realised that this would be his last chance to seize the initiative he attacked in the early hours of 31 Aug 42. His shipping losses, caused chiefly by the Navy, had made him short of fuel both for tanks and aircraft, he had apparently little idea as to our real strength and his plan now appears, was to penetrate our line from the South, make good his deficiencies from booty and, after destroying our Armoured forces, proceed to the conquest of EGYPT either via Alexandria or Cairo.

This much we had anticipated some time previously. The postponement of the attack, it is now believed, by five days, gave our new Higher Commando time to adjust our counter plan to our over growing resources in both infantry and armour.

PHASE 1.

The enemy attacked with two Armoured Divs, a German Light Division and an Italian Corps including at least one Armoured Division.

Our four lines of minefields South of the NZ posn. was only lightly held by mobile forces and Jock Colns. whose orders were to inflict the heaviest possible casualties, while withdrawing under pressure.

Gingerly the enemy felt his way through the minefields and round the South, losing men and tanks as he progressed. Once through, his Armd. forces split up, one coln going North, one South searching for our armour.

The Northern coln found it, not where it expected it to do so, in the broad plain, but pivoting on the infantry axis of the 44 Div posn. on Bare Ridge.

At this time a point attack on RUWEISAT RIDGE from the West achieved a small success but was easily driven off by a counter attack.

PHASE 2

The enemy immediately decided to force a way between the left flank of Armed Force A and 44. Div. This was anticipated and Armd. Force 3 moved into posn. As the 21st Pz Div struck at 133 Bde so Armd. Force D struck at his right flank.

Surprised, the German realised that his only hope of success in this area lay in keeping Force A and B apart. Some 30 of his tanks remained sandwiched in between the two Armoured Forces while his artillery came up to dominate the gap.

Artillery supports were urgently requested from 44 Div Arty and were immediately given, with concentrated accurate fire that rapidly silenced the enemy and on the following day the gap was closed.

Rommel's tank losses are already twice our own and one way North was finally barred. The Colonel commanding 21 Panzer Div was killed in action.

PHASE 3

The enemy now struck round what he imagined was the left flank of Armd. Force A and through the gap between this and the NZ posn, 90 Lt Div supported by Italian tanks and elements of 15 Panzer Div.

This move was again anticipated and Armd. Force C had been moved down to close the gap, The enemy was forced on to the South East corner of the NZ posn. where he was both out-gunned and out-fought, with tank losses.

In the mean time his soft-skinned. MT had been pouring into the Southern desert, dispersing over a wide area against our persistent and extremely successful air attacks. This dispersion rendered him more vulnerable to ground attack and our light forces, equipped with Honey and Cruiser tanks and armoured cars, took every advantage of the opportunity. Jock Columns harassed his flanks, One unit fired over 200 rounds per gun in one day.

One Hussar regiment claimed 120 out of 150 trucks in one area.

So persistent were those attacks that the enemy was forced to withdraw both tanks and anti-tank guns from the battle in order to protect his Southern and Eastern flanks.

PHASE 4

The enemy now found his way barred to the North. His tank losses were by now up to 40% of his strength. He had found no weak spot in our defence. Our Armour, pivoting on infantry bases protected by their guns by day, their patrols by night, could pass in and out of our own minefield gaps and anticipate every move of his.

(SEE MAPS - next page)

1st PHASE

ARMED FORCES

MEDITERRANEAN

AUSTRALIAN DIV

S.A. DIV.

INDIAN DIV

RUWEISAT

NZ DIV

C

BARE RIDGE

4th DIV

A

B

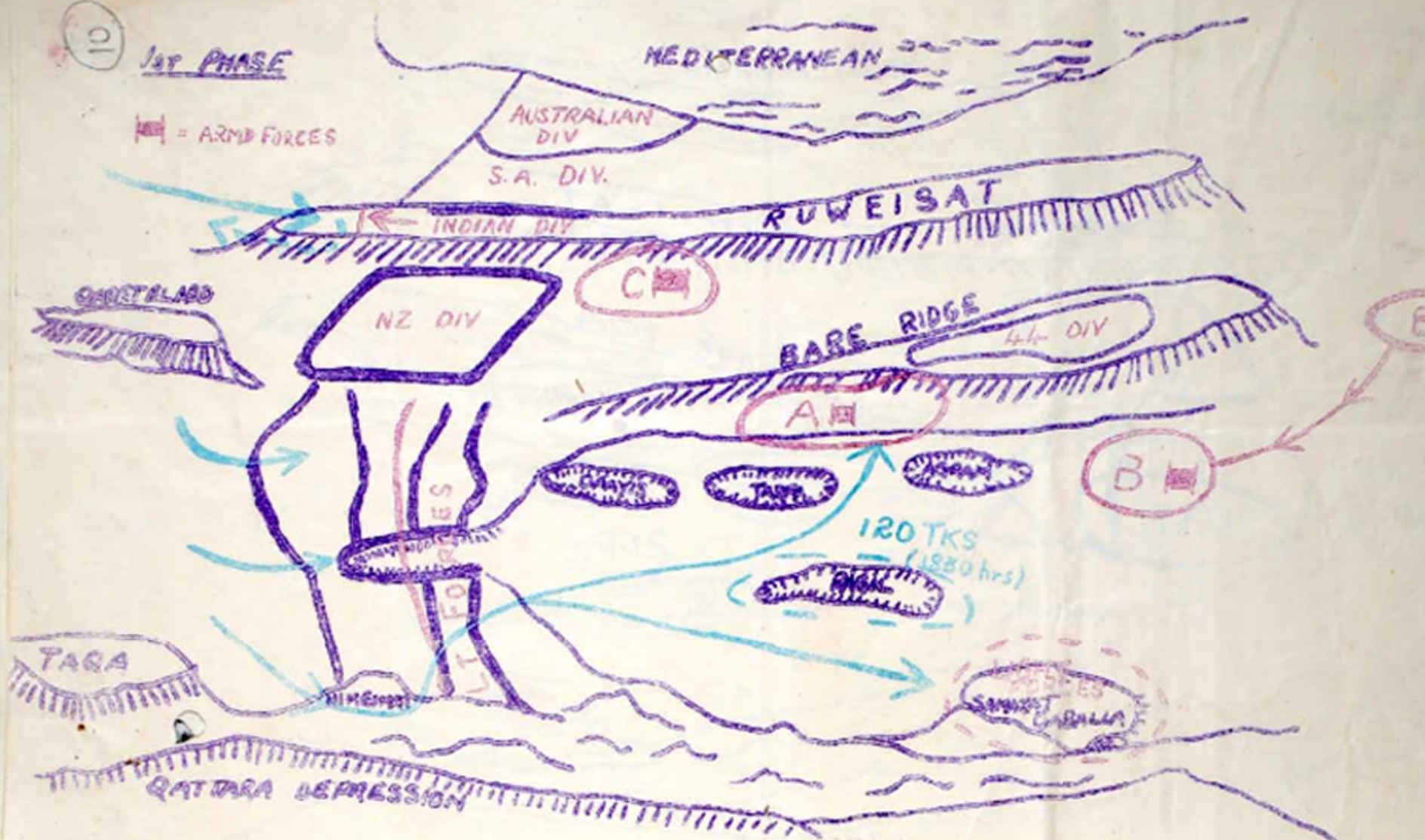
120 TKS
(1830 hrs)

ARMED FORCES

TARA

QATAR DEPRESSION

ARMED FORCES



2ND PHASE

MEDITERRANEAN

 = ARMD FORCE

AUSTRALIAN DIV

S. A. DIV

INDIAN DIV

RUWEISAT

QABET EL ARD

NZ DIV

C 

BARE RIDGE

44 DIV

A 

B 

90 LT

DANIS

TATA

AGRAM

15PZ

RIPE

RAGIL

MT

TAQA

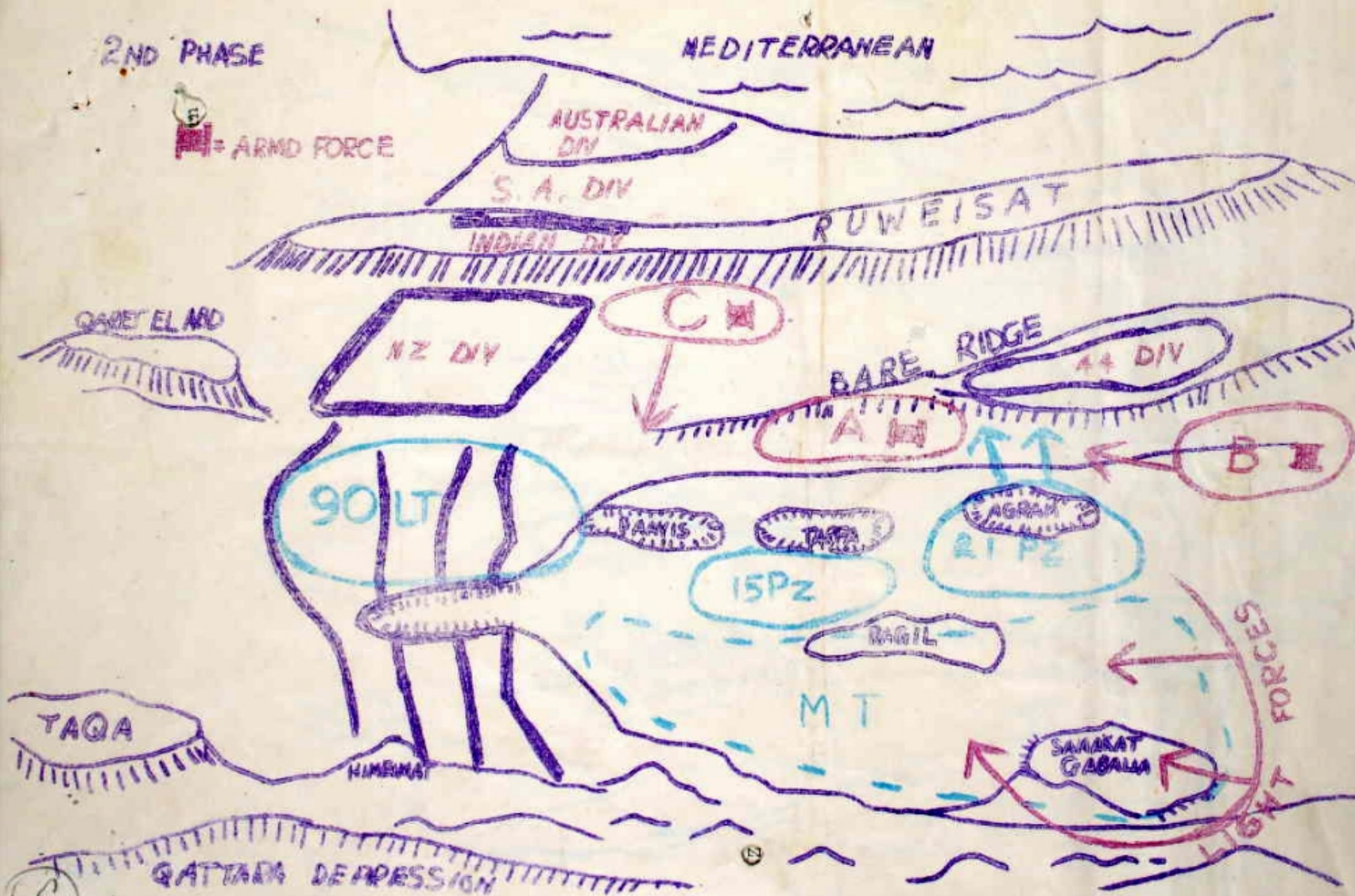
HIMMAT

SAHAKAT
GABALA

QATTARA DEPRESSION

FORCES
LIGHT

(2)



3RD PHASE

ARMED FORCES

MEDITERRANEAN

AUSTRALIAN DIV

S. A. DIV

INDIAN DIV

RUWEISAT

QADAT EL ABD

NZ DIV

RIDGE

44 DIV

HC

ABARE

MB

90 LT

15Pz

21Pz

MT

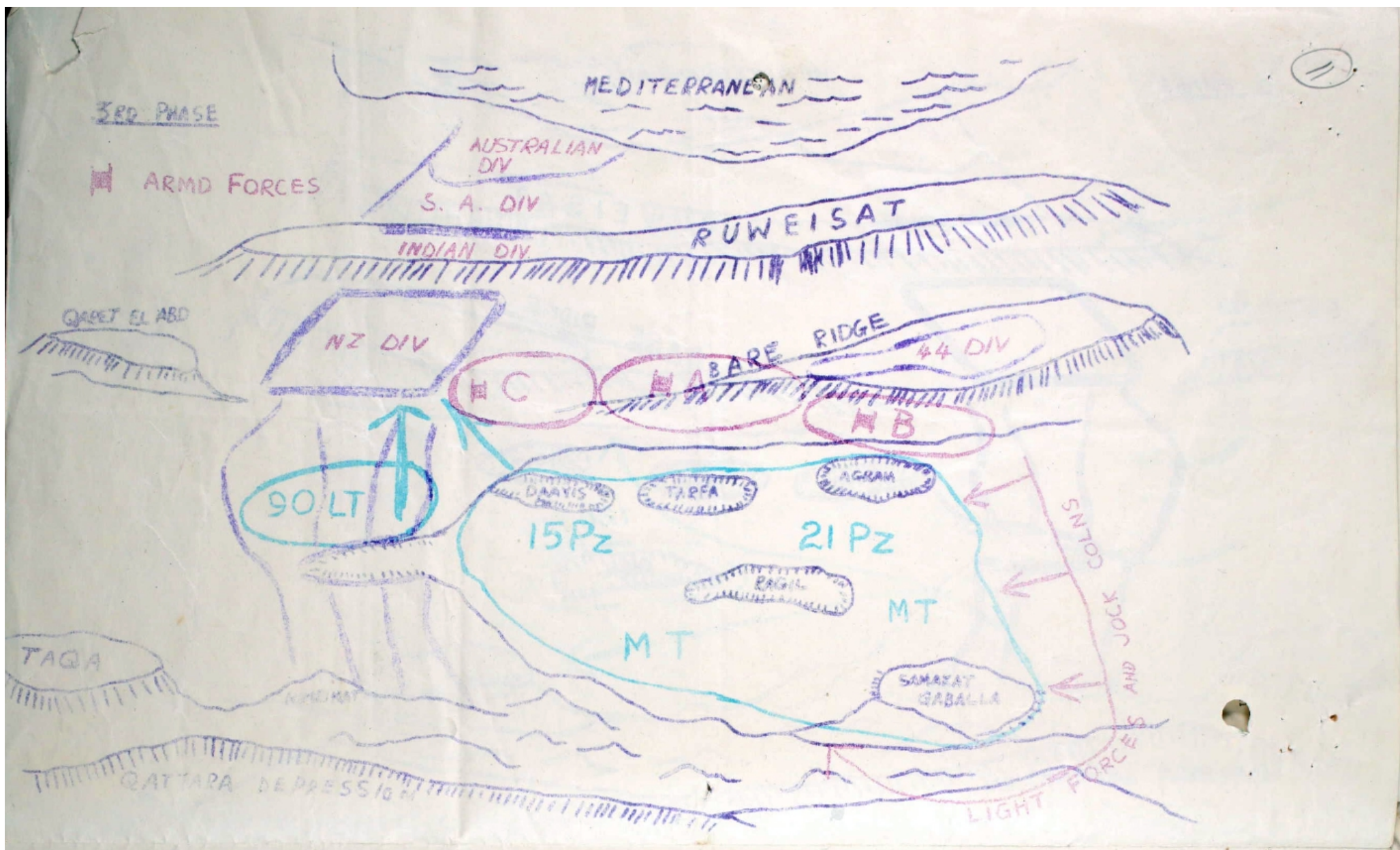
MT

TAGA

SAMARAT
GABALLA

QATTARA DEPRESSION

SNTOC
AND
LOCK
COLNS
LIGHT FORCES



4TH PHASE

ARMED FORCES

MEDITERRANEAN

AUSTRALIAN DIV

S. A. DIV

INDIAN DIV

RUWEISAT

GARET EL ABB

NZ DIV

132 BDE NZ BDE

C

BARE RIDGE

44 DIV

AH

BH

ITALIENS

90 CR

15 Pz

21 Pz

MT

AGRAM

BAGDA

TAKA

MEIMAT

SAMARAT GABALLA

QATTARA DEPRESSION

FORCES AND JOCK COLNS

18

5TH PHASE

ARMED FORCES

MEDITERRANEAN

AUSTRALIAN DIV

S. A. DIV

INDIAN DIV

RUWEISAT

QARET EL ABD

NZ DIV

BARE RIDGE

44 DIV

HC

HA

AGRAM

DAAYIS

TARFA

RAGIL

SAMAKAT GABALLA

TAQA

HIMEIMAT

FORCES

LIGHT

QATTARA DEPRESSION

14

