

1/5th Bn. The Queen's Royal Regiment (West Surrey) War Diary January 1943

JANUARY 1943.

Area TAMET.

- 1st Jan. Reinforcements of 23 O.R's joined the Bn.
- 3rd Jan. 3 O.R's were wounded one dying of wounds by booby trap whilst on working party at TAMET on Landing Ground. Operation Order 8 issued.
- 5th Jan. 1640 hrs. Bde. area was strafed by air from a mixed force of German & Italian aircraft, the latter being identified as MACCHI 202's. No damage or casualties were caused. Later a ME 109F was found shot down in the forward areas and the pilot taken prisoner. It is believed that this aircraft was shot down by S.A. fire from the Bn. which was very considerable at the time of the attack.
- 6th Jan. 2200 hrs. Whilst on patrol from outpost 4 O.R's were wounded (one seriously) by a mine.
- 11th Jan. 1600 hrs. approximately 20 enemy aircraft dive bombed and machine gunned the landing ground at TAMET, 2 of our planes being destroyed. Bn. attacked Raiders with heavy S.A. fire 2 O.R's were wounded by M.G. fire. Operational order No. 9 issued.
- 12th Jan. 0815 hrs. Six enemy aircraft one recognised as FW190 flew over Bn. area at about 1500 ft from the sea and machine-gunned landing ground. Bn. again attacked with S.A. fire. A patrol of Spitfires engaged the enemy, two Raiders being shot down by a Squadron Leader who himself came down in the sea, members of the Bn. swam out to assist in his rescue. Bn. sustained one casualty by M.G. fire.
General Montgomery issued an order of the day on "TO TRIPOLI".
2120 hrs 5 flares were dropped by enemy aircraft over Bn. position.

AREA WADI CHEBIR.

- 13th. Jan. 0700 hrs Bn. left TEMAT area head of column passing starting point at 0830 hrs. Bn. arrived at ref point RX 7867.
A Bde. concentration after crossing the Wadi CHEBIR.
- 14th Jan. Bn. moved in Bde. column to pt. RX 5973 arriving at 0200 hrs. Operational order number 10 issued.

AREA WADI UMMER RAUL.

- 15th Jan. 0800 hrs . Bde. area was attacked by aircraft one ME 109 was claimed as being brought down by the Bn.
0900 hrs Bn. moved and proceeded to ref pt. RX 4571 arriving at 1630 hrs. This area being shelled from the Ridge on the West side of the GHEDDAHIA BU NGEM Rd. Bn. A/Tk guns supported the 1st 5th Bn. the Queens Royal Regt. who were forming an anti-tank screen. 2 O.R's were wounded by shellfire.
- 16th Jan. 0900 hrs Bn. moved and crossed GHEDDAHIA track at RX 4472 and then moved on a bearing of 270° through Wadi UMM-ZEM which was crossed north of BIR GARANIA RX 2173 at approximately 1500 hrs then northwest for a distance of 12 miles to RX 5038.
- 17th Jan. Bn. left at first light on a N.W. bearing aimed at SEDADA. Progress being very slow owing into bottleneck at RR 9509. Bn. leaguered at ref pt. RR 7626 WADI GOBBIN.

AREA SOFFEGGIN.

18th Jan. 1700 hrs. Bn. moved N.W. going was very good and BENI-ULED track was crossed before noon. The going then deteriorated owing to numerous cross wadis and Bn. leaguered at 1700 hrs. in a Wadi at ref pt. RR 36 square.

Area RANLET EL JESCA.

19th Jan. 1700 hrs. Bn. moved along divisional access track to ref. pt. RL 9204 where Bn. took up defensive position facing north and forward anti-tank screen to protect 7th Armoured Div. echelons.

AREA TARHUNA.

20th Jan. Bn. still in position as anti tank screen and at 1700 hrs. moved off to ref. pt. RL. 8616 on CASTEL BENITO - TARHUNA Rd arriving at 2400 hrs.
Rev. V.C. CASTLE rejoined Bn.

21st Jan. 1000 hrs. Bn. moved to ref. pt. RL 7417. The advance meanwhile had been held up by an enemy rear guard force in the defile of RL 6818. Bn. were ordered to attack these positions and moved off midday over the hills South of the road. 143993 Capt. C.A. HOWARD was killed in action by enemy mortar fire 4 O.R's were wounded. Meanwhile the 1/6th Bn. the Queens R.R. made an attack north of the road.

22nd Jan. 1500 hrs. Bn. moved to ref point RL 4745 CASTEL BONITO where night was spent.

AREA CASTELL BENITO.

23rd Jan. 1400 hrs. Bn. moved to area SUANI – BEN - ADEM RL 3750 where defensive positions were taken up.

AREA SUANI BEN ADEM.

24th Jan. Bn. still in same area.

25th Jan. In evening Bn. received warning order to move next day along TRIPOLI - ZAVIER road to make contact with enemy rearguards.

26th Jan 1000 hrs. Bn. moved and preceded to coast road to ref pt. RL 1157 where Bn. debussed north of road.
1700 hrs. Bn. advanced along road to ZAVIA and then north of road to QP 9558. No contact was made with the enemy.

AREA SABRA.

27th to 30th Jan. Bn. moved to ref pt. QP 7564 pt. 32. Lts. S.G. DEAR, J.R. MORRISON SCOTT, and J.H.W. HAYLES rejoined Bn.

Lt. Col. L.C. EAST,
Comdg.
1/5th Queen's Royal Regiment.

31/1/1943.