

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

MAR 1943.

AREA ZEMLET EL LEBENE.

- 1st Mar. Occasional shelling of roads. Patrols at night N.T.R.
- 2nd Mar. Road shelled during the day, "A" Coy moved to (T) E 6487, "B" Coy moved to (T) E 608870. At night "C" Coy laid a minefield between pts. 154 and 150. Enemy expected to attack and 33 1/3% stand to was ordered. Usual patrols at night.
- 3rd Mar. Increased shelling today mainly counter battery. "D" Coy laid mines forward of their positions. Patrols to 563881. N.T.R.
- 4th Mar. Shelling in Bn. area during the day. 2 casualties in Bn. H.Q.  
One enemy 75 mm has a higher percentage of duds which is not uncommon.  
1615 hrs. reported 90<sup>th</sup> Light and 15 Pz. Divs. Arriving S. between MARETH and ARRAM. Patrols to 563881 heard compressors & sounds of digging.
- 5th Mar. 0715 hrs. Counter battery work by our guns increased, increased air activity.
- 6th Mar. 0615 hrs. enemy attacked proceeded by short heavy barrage.  
0715 hrs. Enemy later identified 126 Regt. Spezia Div.) attacked "C" Coy but were driven back with losses, the 3" Mortars were extremely useful.  
The 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> Bn's. meanwhile were heavily engaged by tanks including mark IV's and Lorried infantry.  
PM. Strong attacks on the Coy with heavy shelling and mortaring and though at times they were almost surrounded they held on. Pt. 154 (602883) occupied by enemy but they were driven off by arty. Enemy infiltrated on to pt. 188 (607867) were dispersed by the carriers "D" Coy reported its forward Plns. were overrun the carriers of 1/7th Queen's were sent to help out and by last light the position was stabilised. After last light "A" Coy swept the Ridge and it was constantly patrolled during the night. Lt. OPPERMAN was killed Capt. LILY and Lt. WHEELER wounded and evacuated.
- 7th Mar. "D" Coy were relieved by "A" Coy. Bn. HQ shelled, 1 fatal casualty and except for much enemy air activity the day was quiet. Enemy tank losses in Bde. area were 12 Mk IV specials 12 Mk III specials & 3 Mk III.
- 8th Mar. Slight arty. Stand down at 1100 hrs.
- 9th Mar. Lt. Col. N.D. LESLIE assumed Comd. of the Bn. many enemy recce planes flew over and the road was bombed on two occasions. Patrol laid S mines on Pt. 172 E (585883). 41 reinforcements arrived.
- 15th Mar. Bn. was relieved by 4/16th PUNJABIS and took up a position on there right "B" Coy 602900, "A" Coy 608899, "D" Coy 618892. (Appen A)
- 19th Mar. Coy positions changed, "B" Coy 603901, "D" Coy 607899, "C" Coy 610887, "A" Coy 604883. on recce patrol to Pt. 178 Lt. HAYES was wounded and evac. Appens, G,I, & K.
- 20th Mar. Order of the day from General Montgomery. "Major Cowan and Capt. GILCHRIST (Parachute officer) attached took fighting patrol to Pt. 176 in the bright moonlight, the patrol was seen and forced to withdraw under heavy fire from M.G's and Mortars. Appen B.

21st Mar. PM Bn. relieved the 1/7th A.&S.H. "A" Coy 615976, "B" Coy 599985, "C" Coy 604978, "D" Coy 613986. Appen E

AREA 626867.

25th Mar. PM. Bn. moved to a concentration area at 626867. Appen C

AREA 548773

26th Mar. AM. Bn. moved to 548773 ref map DJEBEL SAIKRA 91 SE 1/50,000 TUNISIA.

27th Mar. 0515 hrs. Bn. moved fwd. to attack and capture the pass in area 4582 supported by one squadron of I. Tanks Bn. reached WADI NEGUEB 5070 where it was pinned down by arty. The afternoon was quiet and "B" Coy went fwd. at last light and occupied the position. The area was badly mined.

28th Mar. Remainder of Bn. moved up to the pass. Patrols with R.E's pushed forward and found the road had been very badly blown.

30th Mar. 1500 hrs. Bn. moved to 565785 leaguered for the night.

31st Mar. 0725 hrs. Bn. moved to area in WADI HADJAR T (2) 390125.

Lt. Col. N.D. Leslie,  
Comdg.  
1/5th Bn. The Queen's Royal Regt.

31/3/1943.