

1/6 Bn. The Queen's Royal Regiment (West Surrey) War Diary November 1942

NOVEMBER 1942

- 1st Bn. informed it was motorised. R.A.S.C. waggons arrived at midday and during the afternoon the troops practised the embussing and debussing. Bn. was ordered to be prepared to move at first light on the 2nd. Rations for 7 days issued to trucks and final arrangements made. Company commanders had reces made of the route.
- 2nd. Bn. forms up at right of Bde at 0900 hrs. "A" Coy forward "B" Coy centre "C" Coy rear at approx. 1000 hrs. Bde. moved across Start Point followed 1/5th Bn. onto Moon track. Breaks were allowed for tiffin and at 1700 hrs. Bn. was just East of South African position. The Bn. leaguered there for the night close to the track.
- 3rd Bn. leaguered throughout the day. C.O. and Coy Comdrs. made a recce of route. C.O. received orders to move the following day.
- 4th Bn. moved off at first light passing through minefield onto the coast road. Bn. turned onto Boomerang Track immediately before the gap at 1300 hrs. C.O. & Coy Comdrs. reced route to leaguer the other side of gap. Bn. moved at 1400 hrs. and arrived at leaguer at 1715 hrs. Bn. received orders to proceed due West the following day.
- 5th Bn. moved off at first light going being very very slow through the morning. Enemy wrecked vehicles were plentiful. Armd. cars on flanks reported small arms fire at 1200 hrs. C.O. ordered carriers out to flanks. At 1700 hrs. Bn. approached minefield closed up into two columns and leagued for the night.
- 6th November. Bn. moved off and had passed completely through the minefield by 0900 hrs. Bn. halted at 1300 hrs. The C.O. reced the route and the Bn. moved off at 1600 hrs. At 1700 hrs. the Bn. was fired on by the enemy and was almost immediately ordered to withdraw by Gen. Harding who informed the C.O. that we had come under fire from enemy tanks who were being engaged by 22nd Armd. Bde. Bn. turned Eastwards for 3 miles and leaguered for the night. At 2000 hrs. a heavy rainstorm started which lasted throughout the night.
- 7th The Bn. moved at 0730 hrs. and advanced towards Fuka airfield. The ground was very very wet making the going bad and practically all the Bn. transport was bogged in a bad strip of ground immediately before the airfield. The Bn. occupied the airfield at 1100 hrs. and by nightfall all the Bn. transport had arrived. An inter-Coy patrol was laid on and Bn. was ordered by C.O. to clean up vehicles and personnel.
- 8th Bn. occupied defensive posns. and took the opportunity to have much needed clean-up. Orders were received at 1200 hrs. for the Bn. to move to a posn. 300 yds. west of their original posn. and take-up desert formation and await orders to move.. This was done and the Bn. leaguered for the night.
- 9th Nov. Bn. received orders to move due West and moved off. British aircraft occupied the airfield as the Bn. was leaving. One fighter crashed on landing and caught fire. The Bn. proceeded roughly parallel with the coast and leaguered for the night at ?. There was little of incident throughout the day except the presence of much enemy material; burnt out tanks and trucks.
- 10th The Bn. moved at 0730 hrs. and made good going, the surface being hard and flat. There was little to report during the day. The Bn. reached BIR-EL-KAMSAR by 1700 hrs. and leaguered there for the night.

11th	During the morning the Bn. received petrol, rations and water from "B" Echelon. The C.O. received orders to proceed to BARDIA. The Bn. moved off at 1400 hrs. and covered 40 miles before leaguering for the night at 1700 hrs.
12th Nov.	The Bn. moved off at first light and crossed the frontier wire into Libya at 1100 hrs. and proceeded N.W. A halt was made at 1500 hrs. The C.O. received orders to make Tobruk the objective. The Bn. moved off again at 1600 hrs. and moved to a position 15 miles East of EL-ADEM where it leaguered for the night.
13th	Bn. moved off at 0730 hrs. and by 1000 hrs. was crossing EL-ADEM aerodrome where a large number of enemy aircraft were observed most of them being wrecked. The Bn. halted at 1100 hrs. while the C.O. and Coy Comdrs. made recce as far as the outer perimeter of TOBRUK. The final entry into the town was made on foot; No opposition whatsoever was encountered. The town was empty except for South African prisoners and was occupied by 1330 hrs. The remainder of the day was occupied in moving into billets and cleaning the town. Bn. HQ was situated in Navy House but later moved into a house on the main road South of the harbour. R.A.F. personnel arrived that evening.
14th	Working parties again supplied for docks unloading barges. Supply columns entered the town. Training routine was established where possible. Some Navy ack ack entered the town at approx. 1400 hrs. Bn. HQ moved to 3 houses near church and move was completed by 1500 hrs.
15th	Working parties again found for docks and debris clearance. Routine training was carried out when possible.
16th Nov.	Working parties found for docks. Routine training where possible. Rations arrived.
17th	Working parties provided for docks. Routine training carried out where possible.
18th	Working parties provided and routine training carried out. Where possible. R.A.S.C. took over main food dump at TOBRUK from "C" Coy. There was no enemy activity.
19th	"C" Coy moved 2 miles further out from Tobruk towards Deina. Working parties supplied and training carried out where possible.
20th	Working parties provided and routine training carried out.
21st	Visit to "C" coy from Y.M.C.A. van and later to other Coys. Routine training carried out and working parties provided. C.O. was informed Bn. would move 24th.
22nd	Church Parades, R.C. and C. E. held. Working parties provided.
23rd	Working parties provided for docks. Routine training carried out. "C" Coy zeroed rifles. Bn. warned to be prepared to move and R.A.S.C. wagons allotted. Packing was completed and Bn. ready to move by 0300.
24th Nov.	Bn. HQ moved off at 0400 hrs. followed by Coys at regular intervals of 15 mins. in small groups i.e. 7 vehicles. Bn. made good going and by-passed Deina turning off coast road at Martuba. Bn. leaguered for night beside the road from Martuba.

- 25th Bn. had breakfast at 0700 hrs. and moved off at 0800 hrs again Coys moving as on previous day at allotted intervals of 15 mins. Again good progress was made and at 1530 hrs. Bn. passed through Barce. Bn. leaguered for the night 22 miles West of Barce along Barce-Bengasi Road. The Bn. H.Q. was in a farmhouse adjacent to the road.
- 26th Bn. moved off at 0800 hrs. in same order as previous day and at same intervals. The Bn. made good going.
The C.O. & I.O. went ahead of the Bn. and received orders of 86 Sub Area (Benghasi) to take up defensive posn. before Sidi Magrun airfield i.e. to S.W. of airdrome. The Bn. by-passed Benghasi and had tiffin 6 kilos West of the town. The C.O. had arrived at defensive position and Bn. arrived at 1600 hrs. The C.O. allotted Coy areas and ordered guards and patrols and Coys dug in.
There was no enemy activity.
- 27th Nov. Water shortage was acute and C.O. ordered I.O. to create wells. One was found available and I.O. collected 400 gallons.
30 men from each Coy moved off at 0100 hrs. to Benghasi under Capt. Johnson and spent day preparing billets and unloading ships. The Bn. moved 2 miles nearer airdrome at 1730 hrs.
- 28th Coys dug in and took up defensive posns. I.O. collected further 400 galls. water which relieved water shortage.
- 29th The C.O. was ordered to recce area West of AGEDABIA and recce party moved off at 1400 hrs. The C.O. reached posn. at 1630 hrs. and laid out Bn. area and Coy posns. The I.O. was informed by Military Police that move was cancelled (2100) and party was to return. Party leaguered on spot.
- 30th C.O. started to return before first light and was back in Bn. area by 0800 hrs. Bn. was ordered to move to area of Benghasi to take up area defensive role.
Bn. arrived in posn. at 1330 hrs. and Coy areas allotted. Bn. dug in. guards were detailed.

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