

1/6<sup>th</sup> Bn. The Queen's Royal Regiment (West Surrey) War Diary October 1943

OCTOBER 1943.

- 1st Oct. 0430 hrs. quiet night little activity by the enemy. Bn. stood to throughout the night.  
0645 hrs. B.P. went forward with instructions to recce until stopped.  
0700 hrs. Bn. continued as day before being held up on left flank by mines and sporadic Nebelwerfer fire.  
1000 hrs. Bn. had reached SAN GIUSEPPE being held up by demolitions along the roads. Bn. continued to advance along the NAPLES road.  
1500 hrs. Bn. occupied OTTAVIANI had four casualties by mines.  
B.P. rejoined Bn. having met no opposition.  
1600 hour's Bn. passed on slowly and at last light Tac Bn. HQ was established at 377523. D Coy went forward to investigate civilian reports of enemy forces with no results. There was no further activity from the enemy during the night.
- 2nd Oct. Quiet night. Coys took up positions off road east of SOMMA VESUVIANA .  
0630 hrs. forward elements of 22nd Armd. brigade who were relieving 131 brigade passed through Bn. lines. Bn. spent the rest of the day resting and cleaning up men, weapons and vehicles.  
Recces were made to note progress on local demolitions and to where enemy who are reported to be in occupation.  
0830 hrs. there was no enemy activity throughout the day.

SOMMA VESUVIANA

- 3rd Oct. Map Ref. 375523.  
0600 hrs. Patrols from B Coy went forward to Recce routes to the main NAPLES rd. Patrols reported all routes favourable and returned with an escaped English prisoner. Patrols returned at 0930.  
Remainder of Bn. spent the day resting and in interior economy. Throughout the day elements of 22<sup>nd</sup> Armd. Bde. and Div. troops were passing through the Bn. area.  
1700 hrs. Bn. warned to be ready to move by 0700 hrs. on 4<sup>th</sup>.
- 4th Oct. Map Ref. 375523.  
0700 hrs. Bn. moved off. B Coy leading. Bn. was Reserve Bn. of Bde. Progress was slow due to heavy traffic on the NAPLES rd.  
1700 hrs. Bn. reached the area of BRUSCIA NO 360580 where it stayed the night.  
1730 hrs. Bn. was on 2 hrs. notice to move and remained so throughout the night.
- 5th Oct. Bn. remained on 2 hrs. notice until 1000 hrs.  
1000 hrs. Bn. placed on immediate notice to move.  
1030 hrs. Bn. moved off.  
1300 hrs. Bn. passed through AVERSA.  
1500 hrs. Bn. arrived at TRENTOLA. 146640 and took up position N.W. of village.

TRENTOLA.

- 6th Oct. A. B & C Coys sent out Recce Patrols to report on condition of minor rds. running West from village.  
They were found to be generally impassible and at best only fit for 4 wheeled drive vehicles.  
1400 hrs. Operations order received from Bde. for the attack on the enemy positions on the river VOLTURNO in the "GRAZZANISE" and "SAN MARIA LA POSSE" area. Bn. to be in Reserve.  
1730 hrs. 60 reinforcements arrived for the Bn..

1830 hrs. Bn. was warned to be ready to move at 0800 hrs. on the 7<sup>th</sup>.

- 7th Oct. 0800 hrs. Bn. moved off to the MASSERIA ARSA area 119688.  
0930 hrs. Bn. arrived at A/M area at 0930.  
1200 hrs. C.O. & I.O. went on Recce to forward areas.  
1830 hrs. Standing Patrols went out from A & D Coys. heavy rain reduced vehicle movement to a standstill.
- 8th Oct. 0600 hrs. C.O. & I.O. went on Recce as far as the river VOLTURNO.  
0800 hrs. "A" Coy sent out working parties to repair the road leading to the bridge over canal. (118708).  
1030 hrs. C.O. held a Coy Comds. conference.  
1100 hrs. One man from A Coy was wounded by an accidental shot from a Bren gun.  
Throughout the day heavy rain reduced the Bn. area to a sea of mud.

#### MASSERIA ARSA.

- 9th Oct. 1500 hrs. C.O. took Coy Comds. on Recce of the forward area.  
1530 hrs. Rifle Coys returned from a 5 mile route march.  
Spasmodic periods of rain fell during the day.  
Transport had much difficulty in morning but preparations for hard tracks were made during the day.
- 10th Oct. Coys carried out interior economy and finished making good the tracks leading to the main road. The Bn. made good use of the sunshine and "dried out".  
Night 10/11th Enemy guns shelled Bn. area. They were presumably trying to knockout the arty which surrounded the Bn. area.  
2330 hrs. rain fell and continued to do so until first light the following morning.
- 11th Oct. 0600 hrs. The morning found that shrapnel had caused minor damage to tentage and vehicle covers. There was no casualties.  
0900 hrs. Coys sent 60 men in two parties of 30 to AVERSA on a short leave pass. First parties returned at 1330 allowing the second parties to go.  
1600 hrs. C.O. attended a Bn. commanders O Group at Bde.  
2130 hrs. Shells landed in Bn. area. No damage done.  
Weather was dry during the night.
- 12th Oct. 0900 hrs. Coys went for route march. Interior economy was carried out during the day.  
1730 hrs. Bn. was placed under 2 hrs.' notice to move.
- 13th Oct. During the early morning the Carrier & Mortar Plns. were placed under command of the 1/7th Queen's Royal Regt. having their HQ at 072774. Bn. did not move. Weather during the day was fine & windy.
- 14th Oct. 125689, 0900 hrs. Bn. moved off the mud to harder ground at 125689. Rain fell best part of the day.
- 15th Oct. 0600 hrs. C.O. & I.O. spent most of the day at Bde.  
Bn. was on 2 hrs. notice to move throughout the day, but no move materialised and the Bn. spent the night in same place.
- 16th Oct. 1030 hrs. Bn. moved to 086761 (HQ) Coys took up defensive positions facing river VOLTURNO to the North 1200 hrs.  
Fairly quiet for the rest of the day. Some shells landed to the Bn. front at approx. 2200 hrs.

Bn. by this time were all in possession of Battle Dress. Weather dry and chilly.

Area 086761 1945 hrs. C.O. held O Group. The following persons attended. O.C. M. Bty. 3rd RHA. Comdr. 257 A/Tk Bty. R.A. Carriers, Mortars, A/Tks C Coy Comdr. B.P. Comdr. R.S.O. Adjutant and I.O. The following orders was issued:-  
Intention to continue advance to S. ANDREA 081822, 1/6th to pass through 1/7th who are consolidating BREZZA 094785.  
The B.P. are to take over from the 1/7th standing patrol on bridge 065800.  
Carrier and A/Tk and M.M.G. platoon to move to BREZZA at 0600 hrs. Reminder of Bn. to wait until called for.

17th Oct. 0500 hrs. the B.P. (led by Lt. NICE?) advanced to the bridge 065800. On arrival they found both spans to be blown leaving 2 x 35 ft gaps B.P. waded across the river and came under very heavy fire from enemy positions on the north bank. B.P. withdrew with five casualties. They were mortared all the way back for 1000 yards initially they took up positions astride a road with an O.P. on the on the right of the road. Signal communications between C.O. and B.P. (2 x 38 sets) failed owing to the sets being soaked in a torrential downpour. After some delay on the bridge the R.S.O. and Mortar officer arrived. Communication was then good being through to all stations.  
At first light the downpour ceased. C Coy moved up and occupied buildings at 091785 with alarm positions outside the house and the enemy was shelled considerably.  
Carrier platoon advanced from BREZZA. TAC HQ. was at 093785. Main HQ was at 086761.

#### Area 086671

18th Oct. Bn. continued to advance slowly along road to S ANDREA.  
0900 hrs. A Coy moved up road through C Coy who were still in position on the canal at 065803.  
After crossing the canal A Coy were sniped very slightly and intermittently shelled with airburst shells. D Coy followed A Coy over the canal and by 1600 hrs. both Coys were in position on the next canal in area 0480 and 0580. During the afternoon a patrol under Lt. VG DOCTON MC went as far as the outskirts of S. ANDREA. Little opposition was encountered but on the return journey progress was slow owing to enemy patrols. Patrols were sent out during the night too S. ANDREA.

19th Oct. Numerous RECCE patrols were sent out during the day with the object of ascertaining the enemy's strength in the village of S. ANDREA. All patrols met determined resistance mainly from S.A. weapons the bridge at 064801 was still uncompleted thus the moving of any transport over the canal was made impossible.  
All the Coys were under spasmodic shellfire during the day.

20th Oct. The carrier officer Capt. KETTLE MC recced alternative routes over the canal (NOUVIA) with the object of getting anti tank guns across. A route was found.  
0900 hrs. fighting patrol under Lt. VG DOCTON went out to S. ANDREA at 1100 hrs. to patrol reported that they were on the northern outskirts of S. ANDREA. Here they were being engaged by S.A. fire the heavy nature of which forced them to retire.  
1130 hrs. the carriers towed the anti tank guns in a circuitous route across the canal to the line of track 056802 066813. Tac HQ was shelled considerably during the day.

#### AREA 045813.

21st Oct. During the day many patrols were out seeking the enemy's strength. All available information was being collected prior to the coming attack on S. ANDREA. Reinforcements arrived for the Bn.. During the night. Weather was fine.

- 22nd Oct. 1030 hrs. C.O. held a conference and gave orders for B & C Coys supported by our own Carriers and 4 C.L.Y. to move into S. ANDREA. The move to begin at 1230 hrs.  
1230 hrs. B and C Coys moved off at 12:30 hrs. with B on the right and C on the left. B were to either attack PIZZONE (the north of S. ANDREA) from due West at no move onto the main road area 0383.  
1530 hrs. B & C Coys started on the final stage of the attack. Some Nebelwerfer and slight shelling was experienced by C Coy but no casualties were caused.  
1615 hrs. both Coys were on their objectives, B Coy having been ordered into PIZZONE. No resistance was offered from the village but there was slight S.A. fire from the road to CAMPRISO (0383). The Coys moved on the outskirts of the village and consolidated their positions. HQ were at --- A Coy 031828, B Coy 031823, D Coy 034818 TAC HQ 034819. 1 P. O.W. a deserter was taken from 129 P.G.R.
- 23rd Oct. 0445 hrs. An enemy patrol which sneaked up unobserved attacked C Coys position. One of our officers together with his Batman and two sergeants and one corporal were captured.  
One other Sergeant was killed.  
0700 hrs. during the morning tanks reced the roads running N.E. and N.W. of PIZZONE. Delay was caused through mines but these were being lifted by the Sappers.  
1200 hrs. D Coy were moved up near the other Coy positions to deepen the Bn. front.  
During the day the enemy shelled and mortared S ANDREA and PIZZONE and also the road running back to BREZZA making it difficult for transport to follow up.  
Bn. HQ mean moved up into S. ANDREA.
- 24th Oct. 0800 hrs. a patrol from D Coy was sent out along the road to CIAMPRISO 024837. At 027836 they were fired on by a Spandau seriously wounding one NCO and one man. The patrol was forced to withdraw.  
0930 hrs. the Carrier Pln. was sent out to patrol N. to the river SAVONE. Many mines and demolitions were encountered during the day. Some small parties of enemy were seen South of the river and a party of 10 were seen on the far Bank of the river. The 4<sup>th</sup> C.L.Y. cooperated with our carriers during the patrol but progress was slow owing to many road and bridge demolitions. These were being lifted by R.E's.  
1230 hrs. A prisoner from 129 P.G.R. was brought in.  
1730 hrs. Bn. was informed that a party of six officers from 2/5th Bn. Leicester would be arriving on the 25th of Oct. with a view to relieving the Bn.  
1900 hrs. C.O. held a conference with Coy and supporting arms commanders.

#### AREA 0831.

- 25th Oct. 0600 hrs. During the day the Carriers were out on Recce. They found many demolitions and the R.E'S were soon out clearing the roads and tracks. The Carriers returned at last light.  
During the day advanced parties from the 2/5th Leicester's came up prior to relieving the Bn..  
0800 hrs. Bn. started to leave the area as the Leicester's came in and took over positions.  
This movement carried on until 0230 hrs. on the 26th.  
The Bn. was finally concentrated in the area 086671 by 0430 hrs.  
There was no activity during the night.

#### AREA 686671.

- 26th Oct. Bn. spent the day in general cleaning up and maintenance.  
1600 hrs. Bn. was warned to move at 0600 hrs. on 27th Oct. to area 1658.

#### AREA 686671

- 27th Oct. 0600 hrs. Bn. moved off I.O. leading.

0730 hrs. As the Bn. came into GUIGLIANO in CAMPANIA (1658) they were met by guides who directed the Bn. to its respective billets. The billets had previously been found by the 2/I.C. assisted by the Bn. interpreter Capt. BROGGIRI. The remainder of the day was spent in settling down and general maintenance.

C.O. had a conference with all commanders within the Bn.

#### Area 1658.

- 28th Oct. 0600 hrs. the Bn. was on a 24 hour notice all day.  
200 men were allowed to go into NAPLES.  
1000 hrs. Transport was supplied for all those leave parties.  
All parties on leave had orders to return by 1800 hrs. (standing order). A recreation room was set up in town behind D Coy.  
1200 hrs. C.O. and I.O. went on Recce to CASTLE VOLTURNO area.
- 29th Oct 0600 hrs. Bn. was on 4 hrs. notice to move. Local leave was allowed from 1400 hrs. until 1800 hrs. Bn. spent a quiet day on maintenance and interior economy.  
1400 hrs. The RSM. Left the Bn. and the new RSM CSM BUNTON held a conference for all senior NCO's of the Bn.  
Weather was fine during the day.
- Oct. 30th. 0600 hrs. Bn. spent a quiet morning of general maintenance and interior economy.  
1500 hrs. Bn. received orders to move at midnight.  
2100 hrs. C.O. and I.O. moved off.  
2400 hrs. Bn. moved out of GARIGLIANO for the new concentration area South of MONDRAGONE 9276.  
The Bn. convoy continued northwards through the night. One carrier (C.O's) was ditched on the way but the remainder of the Bn. came through all right and all were in the concentration area by 0800 hrs.
- 31st Oct. On arrival the Coys debussed and prepared to attack the first objective. A Coy was directed on crossroads at 926790. B Coy passed through to crossroads 924798. C Coy passed through B Coy and were directed at 925803. D Coy then passed through C Coy and took up positions on the saddle at 917803. The carriers were protecting the right flank all the way.  
One carrier was blown up by a mine causing one man to die of injuries with both the feature and the village of MONDRAGONE in our hands the Bn. consolidated and the whole operation was over by noon.

Lt. Col. M. Forrester MC

Comdg.

1/6th Bn. The Queen's RWS Regt.

31<sup>st</sup> October 1943.