

1/6th Bn. The Queen's Royal Regiment (West Surrey) War Diary SEPTEMBER 1943

SEPTEMBER 1943.

Area L 502666.

- 11th Sept. Weather fine & dry.
Bn. were warned they would move on 12th. Packing commenced, passes were issued from 1400-1800 hrs.
- 12th Sept. Weather fine & dry.
Final preparations were made. Bn. moved off at 1730 hrs., the rifle Coys and part of HQ Coy marched to 201 transit camp where they were expected to stay until the 18th of Sept. The transport carrier and A/Tk's proceeded to Tripoli Dock area and embarked aboard ship.
- 13th Sept. Weather fine and dry.
Transport was finally embarked at 0600 hrs. and ships left docks at 0630 hrs. The days journey was uneventful there being no enemy activity.
- 14th Sept. Weather fine & dry.
Again an uneventful day there being no enemy activity. In the evening the convoy passed along the coast of Sicily and through straits of Messina.
- 15th Sept. Weather fine and warm.
The voyage continued and at 1800 hrs. the convoy approached the Bay adjacent to Salerno. Whilst the convoy was passing through the shipping in the Bay there was an air raid. The enemy planes were driven off without causing any damage.
- 16th Sept. Weather fine and warm.
Bn. transport disembarked onto the beach at 0100 hrs. It was a dry landing. The transport then moved to leaguer area N 744264 and bedded down for night. Bn. stood to from 0530 - 06 after 1000 hrs. I.O. went on recce. to F.D.L's at 1300 hrs. Mortars and carriers conducted a shoot against the enemy. It was very successful causing casualties and taking one prisoner who was handed over to 5 RTR. They returned at 1900 hrs.
At 1730 hour's Bn. was warned to be prepared to move at 1800 hrs. I.O. returned from recce at 1930 hrs. Bn. was placed on one hrs. notice.
- 17th Sept. Bn. moved off at 0630 hrs. and proceeded to concentration area and were joined by marching troops who had just landed from L.C.l's at 1200 hrs. At 1900 hrs. Bn. moved to N 798222 and took up defensive positions relieving 2/4th Hants, move was completed by 2100 hrs.

Area N 798222

- 18th Sept. Weather fine & warm.
Bn. stood to 0530 hrs. Stood down 0630 hrs. C.O. and I.O. went on recce and a patrol from D Coy went out to attempt to contact enemy. Reached BATTIPAGLIA area in time to see the USAAF attack tobacco factory 826238.
The patrol returned at 1020. The carrier patrol succeed BATTIPAGLIA area 828236 and reported they consider the area clear. The IO & CO returned from recce at 1215 hrs. and proceeded on another recce at 1515 hrs.
The Bn. was warned to be prepared to move at 1630 hrs. B.H.Q and B & C Coys took up new positions southeast of BATTIPAGLIA. Move was completed by 1730. Bn. stood to at 1900 hrs. and stood down at 2000 hrs.

Area N 828326.

19th Sept. 0530 hrs. Bn. stood to.
0630 hrs. Bn. stood down.
1000 hrs. Bn. warned to concentrate proprietary to a move.
1330 hrs. concentration completed. C.O. held "O" group.
1400 hrs. Bn. moved, off rifle Coys marching.
1600 hrs. M.T. moved off.

Area N 862282

2000 hrs. move completed Bn. in position at Pt. 210 N 862282.

20th Sept. 0130 hrs. A Coy reported Spandau fire from TORELLO area. Standing patrols were out.
0530 hrs. Bn. O.P. manned. Bn. stood to.
0630 hrs Bn. stood down. "D" Coy moved forward a little taking over another feature.
1000 hrs. Patrol sent out under Lt. KIME and Lt. LOGAN.

Area 862282. 1130 hrs. patrols returned with nothing to report.

1230 hrs. "B" Coy patrol advanced to TORELLO and encountered no opposition contacting 44th Recce Squadron.
1530 hrs. patrol returned.
1600 hrs. "B" Echelon strafed. Two vehicles hit (one written off).
1900 hrs. stand to.
2000 hrs. stand down.

21st Sept. 0545 hrs. Stand to.
0645 Stand down.
0730 hrs. C.O. and I.O. went to conference at Bde HQ.
0815 hrs. C.O. and I.O. returned.
1030 hrs. C.O. held "O" group.
1330 hrs. C.O. and I.O. went on Recce.
1530 hrs. "A" Coy sent out patrol to round up suspected Germans disguised as civilians.
1645 hrs "A" Coy patrol returned nothing to report.
1730 hrs. I.O. and C.O. Returned.
1930 hrs. stood to.
2030 hrs. stand down.

22nd Sept. 0545 hrs. stand to.
0645 hrs. stand down.
1100 hrs. C.O. Held "O" group.
1215 hrs. "O" group concluded.
1220 hrs. 11 platoon "C" Coy Cheshire 's attacked.
1915 hrs Bn. stood to.
2015 hrs Bn. stood down.
2030 hrs. Bn. prepared to move at 0700 hrs. 23rd.

23rd Sept. 0630 hrs. Bn. packed and awaiting orders to move. C.O. and I.O. stayed at Bde. all day and at 1800 hrs. returned and held "O" Group. Bn. did not move.

24th Sept. 0900 hrs. C.O. & I.O. Spent the day at Bde. HQ awaiting orders for impending move. Bn. did not move that day.

25th Sept. C.O. and I.O. again spent the day at Bde. HQ. Bn. did not move.

26th Sept. Bn. again remained in readiness throughout the day but did not move. Very heavy rain fell during the night.

27th Sept. 1100 hrs. Bn. warned to be ready to move at 12:30 hrs.
1230 hrs. Bn. moved off and by 2200 hrs. had reached SALERNO N 6532 where they leaguered for the night.

Area 6532

28th Sept. 0600 hrs. Bn. moved off northwards along road. 0900 hrs. Bn. column had reached CAVA Di TIRRENI.
1200 hrs. Bn., column reached NOCERA INFERIORE 536380 without encountering any opposition.
1230 hrs. Bn. took over the position of leading Bn. from 1/7th Queen's.
1245 hrs. Bn. reached PAGANI 520383 and from there a B & C Coys were sent forward to SCAFATI 444327 to capture the bridge.

Area 444327

1500 hrs. "A" Coy reported that they had captured the bridge. 11 prisoners from Hermann Goering Div. were captured.
1600 hrs. "A" Coy strengthened their hold on the bridge and were heavily engaged by the enemy who used mortar and small arms fire extensively.
1620 hrs. a troop carrier and armoured car also attempted to dislodge our bridgehead but failed. There was much close street fighting in which casualties were inflicted on the enemy. At 1700 hrs. the battle patrol carried out an offensive action against enemy troops South of the town with success.
At 1900 hrs. "A" Coy was relieved by "D" Coy and the bridgehead consolidated. The enemy had failed to damage the bridge.
2000 hrs. enemy continued to mortar machine gun and snipe our positions. There had been no casualties in the Bn. and many of the enemy were killed or wounded.

29th Sept. 0100 hrs. there were periodic artillery concentrations laid down by our supporting arms which were answered by spasmodic Mortar fire by the enemy. The Bn. stood to throughout the night.
0530 hrs. Enemy A.F.V's were reported to be along canal more to the West of our positions together with some infantry. There was some promiscuous shelling which caused casualties among civilian population.
Patrols were sent out to report at SAN PIETRO. They returned with a "Nil" report.
Bn. warned it was at half hours' notice to move and was congratulated by Div. Commander for good work in saving the bridge across the canal intact. Enemy continued sporadic shelling
Bn. had no casualties. In the operation of saving the bridge and town and had taken 20 prisoners and caused many casualties to the enemy.
1200 hrs. Bn. moved off with the intention of contacting enemy forces reported at SAN GIUSEPPE and at 1400 hrs. had reached 440413 where they encountered small arms and A/Tk fire, one O.R. was wounded.
1700 hrs. Bn. took up Coy positions, Bn HQ being at PASANTI 420420.
2300 hrs. The enemy practically throughout the night causing four casualties in "D" Coy.

30th Sept. Weather fine cloudy at times.
0730 hrs. Bn. moved forward "A" Coy left "B" Coy Centre "D" Right.
1200 hrs. By 1200 hrs. D Coy was just short of the railway crossing. All Coys. had contacted the enemy.

Progress on Right flank was held up by tanks and Nebelwerfers and M.G's. Heavy fighting took place all afternoon.

At 1300 hrs. a large explosion was heard, and dense smoke seen 425464. Enemy tanks withdrew approx. a mile, intensive shelling followed on our right and centre.

1730 hrs. Dense cloud of dust seen on road between 465508 and 474494. Tanks seemed to be withdrawing toward PALMA. There was diminishing enemy activity throughout the evening.

2330 hrs. Spasmodic Mortar fire which caused no casualties.

Casualties for day, 1 Officer, 40 O.R's, Vehicles – 2 T.C.V's one 15 cwt. P. UP. and one A/Tk Portee.

The Officers serving in September.

Lieut.-Colonel M. Forrester MC
Major J. H. Mason
Major T. J. Kilshaw, (Kings)
Major J. Tack
Capt. R. M. Caton
Capt. W. L. Johnson
Capt. V. R. Goodridge
Capt. K. A. H. Read
Capt. C. J. G. Woolley
Capt. B. G. D. Miller
Capt. R. G. Pearce, MC
Capt. K. D. Kettle, MC
Capt. U. G. Spratt, (Lincolns)
Capt. B. D. Carey
Capt. P. O. Bennett
Lieut. N. G. Buxton
Lieut. H. S. Morshead
Lieut. D. M. Groom

Lieut. A. C. F. Norman
Lieut. C. H. Nice
Lieut. E. R. C. Mayer
Lieut. J. S. Logan
Lieut. C. B. Rodger
Lieut. P. Toolan, (Gordons)
Lieut. N. E. Aldridge, (Royal Fus).
Lieut. H. Broad Davies, (SWB).
Lieut. N. Goodhew
Lieut. D. M. Blessley, (Essex Regt.)
Lieut. P. Kime, (Lincolns)
Lieut. G. A. R. N. Warren, (Royal Berks)
Lieut. H. J. S. Young, (Suffolks)
2/Lieut. C. D. B. Smith, (Devon's)
Lieut. C. W. Litton (Quarter master)
Capt. J. E. Devine (Chaplain)
Capt. J. Geball (Medical Officer)

Lieut.-Colonel M. Forrester MC
Commanding, 1/6th Bn. The Queen's Royal Regiment.

September 1943.