

## 1/6th Battalion The Queen's Royal Regiment (West Surrey) War Diary April 1944

APRIL 1944

- 1st April. Area 076385.  
0830 hrs. The Bn. spent morning preparing for 131 Bde. Exercise "SHUDDER".  
1715 hrs. Bn. HQ left car park.  
1750 hrs. Having formed up in convoy the Bn. moved off from GAYWOOD in the following order:- Bn. HQ. D, A, B, HQ Coy.  
1805 hrs. Bn. arrived in conc. area where "C" Coy and the A/Tk. Pln. Who are both stationed at HILLINGTON were waiting. The Coys debussed and formed up ready to march to ROYDON which for the purposes of the exercise was the Bns. Disembarkation point on the XXX Corps. Beachhead.  
1835 hrs. Tac HQ and the Rifle Coys left the conc. area on foot.  
1900 hrs. Wheeled and tracked vehicles left the conc. area. (Area 163425)  
1900 hrs. The marching troops crossed the railway at ROYDON thus entering the beachhead.  
1915 hrs. Wheeled & tracked vehicles also entered the beachhead. (Area 160418)  
2030 hrs. Wheeled & tracked vehicles arrived at beachhead conc. area. (Area 215320)  
2215 hrs. The marching troops arrived at beachhead conc. area.
- 2nd April. 0100 hrs. Area 202346. The C.O. (Lt. Col. Forrester DSO, MC.) and the I.O. (Lt. H. Broad-Davies) attended Bde. "O" Group.  
0515 hrs. Area 215320. Rev.  
0630 hrs. A Bn. "O" Group was held which was attended by officers from the supporting arms.  
0900 hrs. Area 208313. Marching troops left the Bn. start point.  
0950 hrs. Wheeled and tracked vehicles left the Bn. start point.  
1000 hrs. Area 260280. Marching troops arrived at Bn. start point.  
1050 hrs. The Fwd. Body then formed up comprising "B" Coy, Carrier Pln., 2 detachments of mortar Pln., a Troop of S.P. A/Tk. Guns of the Norfolk Yeomanry, a recce party of the 61 Field Sqn. of R.E's, a M.G. Pln. Of the 5 Northumberland Fusiliers with "M" Bty. Of 3 R.H.A. in support.  
1050 hrs. The Fwd. Body crossed the Bde. start point. The remainder of the Bn. followed at regulated intervals in the following order:- Tac HQ "O" Group, remainder of the mortar Pln., A/Tk. Pln. then the main Body comprising D, A, C, Coys, Pioneer Assault Pln. Main Bn. HQ and A2 Echelon.  
1130 hrs. Area 279249. Fwd. Body reached Bns first report line APPLE.  
1200 hrs. Area 316227. It was reported that 1/7th Fwd. Body had reached the first bound along their axis known as RUM.  
1245 hrs. Area 285228. One of the enemy gave himself up and was identified as belonging to the 155 Arty. Regt.  
1530 hrs. Area 304202. On reaching the Bns. First bound, RUM the Fwd. Body was held up by the bridge over the river being blown.  
1620 hrs. Area 313191. Fwd. reached the third report line PEACH.  
1700 hrs. Area 319177. Having eliminated A/Tk. Gun that was holding them up the Fwd. Body reached the second bound. PUNCH.  
1745 hrs. Area 330165. Fwd. Body reach the third bound WHISKY.  
1830 hrs. 328160. A Bn. "O" Group was held.

1845 hrs. The Bde. Comdr. (Brig. M.S. Ekins) visited Tac H.Q.

1945 hrs. Area 33161. The Bn. leaguered for the night and took up defensive positions. Area 309138. During the night recce patrols were sent out from "A", "C" & "D" Coys to the bridge over STANFORD BROOK. They ascertained that the bridge had been blown.

3rd April. 0515 hrs. Rev. Area 331161.

0800 hrs. Area 326185. The C.O. and I.O. attended Bde. "O" Group.

0900 hrs. Area 331161. The Pioneer Assault Pln. Left the leaguer area followed by Tac HQ then at intervals by "A" Coy, Main HQ. and the remainder of the Bn.

0945 hrs. Area 309138. While the Pioneer Assault Pln. crossed STANFORD BROOK and eliminated several snipers Tac HQ remained at 309141. Main HQ at 312144 and the remainder of the Bn. advanced across country parallel with the rd.

1030 hrs. Under cover of mortar fire "A" Coy followed the Pioneer Pln. Across the Brook and consolidated.

An R.R. party were then able to repair the bridge whereupon the Carrier Pln. pushed on followed by "C" Coy and Tac HQ,

1140 hrs. Area 3413. A report was received from the 1/5th Queen's that they had successfully established a bridgehead across STANFORD BROOK near TOTTINGTON and the 1/7th Queen's reported that the enemy was retreating fast.

1150 hrs. Area 317103. The Carrier Pln. was stopped by 88mm fire from FROG HILL, and it was reported that an Armd. Coy was holding the position. Mortar Pl. and "M" Bty. 3 R.H.A. brought down a conc. on the position.

1230 hrs. The Div. Comdr. (Maj. Gen. G.W.E.J. Erskine DSO) arrived at Tac H.Q.

1305 Hrs. Area 328095. A report was received that the 1/5th Queen's had taken FROG HILL.

The Bn. was informed that the exercise was finished by order of the Div. Comdr.

1430 hrs. 308131. Having conc. and embussed at STANFORD.

1615 hrs. Area 076385. The Bn. arrived back in KINGS LYNN.

Weather , Cold & showery.

4th April. During the day 40 reinforcements had been received in the Bn. from the Royal West Kent Regt. and the 33 R.H.V. had been passed to Coys.

5th April. "X" Pln. which had consisted of men physically or mentally unsuited for further service in the Bn. was disbanded and the 20 N.C.O's and men transferred to the 11th Bn. The Hampshire Regt.

The Col. Of the Regt. (Sir I. Vesey KCB, KBE, CMG, DSO) visited & inspected the Bn. A guest and band night was held in the officers Mess and was attended by the Div. Comdr. (Maj. Gen. G.W.E.J. Erskine DSO) and by the C.O. 1/5th Queen's (Lt. Col. H. Wood).

6th April. 1000 hrs. The Bde. Comdr. Brig. M.S. Ekins held a conference in the Bn. area for all officers on the recent Bde. exercises, "SHIVER" & "SHUDDER".

7th April. The 2i/c (Maj. J.H. Mason) and five other officers attended a Bde. T.E.W.T. down to Coy Comdr. level.

8th April. A party of five officers and 20 OR's mainly senior N.C.O's from 56 infantry Bde was attached for a period of five days to study the Bns training.

In the afternoon the Bde football team played KINGS LYNN F.C. After a keenly contested game the Bn. lost by 4 goals to 3.

10th April. "A" Coy moved out to HILLINGTON HALL (Map ref. 186447) for training and "C" Coy returned to their billets in KINGS LYNN.

12th April. Bn. spent the afternoon preparing for Bn. exercise "X RAY".

1600 hrs. Bn. HQ left for car park.

1620 hrs. Area 101408. The Bn. R.V'd formed up in convoy and moved off.

1715 hrs. Bn. arrived at the conc. area, "A" Coy and A/Tk Pln. having joined the convoy at HILLINGTON.

1820 hrs. "R" Group went to Bde. HQ.

1930 hrs. The C.O. (Maj. J.L. JOHNSON MC) held an "O" Group which was attended by "M" Bty. Comdr. 3 R.H.A.

13th April. 0600 hrs. Rev. Area 278434.

0800 hrs. Area 287426. Bn. formed up and the leading carriers moved off from the Start Point followed by the remainder of the Fwd. Body consisting of "C" Coy A/Tk. Pln. (less 1 sect.) 2 Det. of the Mortar pln. and the F.O.O. these were followed at intervals by Tac HQ "O" Group and the Main Body comprising of "A" Coy, "B" & "D" Coys, (Represented by Coys HQs. Only) remainder of A/Tk. And Mortar Plns and Main HQ.

0845 hrs. Area 262412. Carriers reached the x rds. at GT. MASSINGHAM and began to recce fwd. along two axis towards the Bns. First Report Line "ASH".

0930 hrs. Areas 239420 & 244406. The lead sect. of carriers advancing along the right axis were fired on at ASH. Meanwhile the Section of carriers on the left axis had reached ASH followed by the remainder of the Fwd. Body.

0945 hrs. Arty. fire was brought down on the enemy who withdrew.

The carriers and the remainder of the Fwd. Body continued to advance.

1015 hrs. Area 227409. The two axis converge at the Bns. Second Report Line OAK and on approaching this junction the leading carrier was K.O'd out by 88mm fire. The remainder of the carriers deployed to deal with this gun and with 2 M.G's that had been spotted.

1100 hrs. Area 228411. When "C" Coy attempted to advance they were fired on by enemy estimated to be 80 strong in position on the high ground north of OAK. "C" Coy therefore began a right flanking movement.

1100 hrs. Area 236444. A report was received that 1/7th Queen's advancing along a parallel axis on the Bns. Right flank had reached Pt. 11.

1115 hrs. 237406. An "O" Group was held at Tac HQ as "C" Coy had been held up at 234413 although 1 carrier succeeded in moving round the right flank of the enemy. "A" Coy moved up in support and Main HQ moved up to 242465.

1130 hrs. A report was received that 1/7th Queen's had reached 227442.

1200 hrs. Area 227409. The enemy withdrew and the Bn. consolidated at OAK where another "O" Group was held.

1215 hrs. Area 211442. A report was received that 1/7th Queen's had reached the next x rds. on their axis of advance.

1300 hrs. Area 227409. The Fwd. Body was reformed with "A" Coy in place of "C" Coy and pushed on from OAK followed by the Main Body.

1315 hrs. A Report was received that 1/7th Queen's had reached 188443.

1420 hrs. Area 180410. "A" Coy reached the Bns. Third Report Line, ELM with the

carrier Pln. on their left flank. A firm base was established with Tac HQ at 180410 and Main HQ at 185409.

2 P.O.W's were taken and identified as being from 340 Inf. Div.

1510 hrs. Area 185434. A report was received that 1/7th Queen's had reached pt. 413.

1530 hrs. Area 180410. Bn. advanced from ELM with carrier Pln. leading.

1545 hrs. Area 165414. Carrier Pln. came shell fire from high ground of ROYDON COMMON. "D" Coy moved out on the left flank to POTT ROW (163406).

1555 hrs. Area 160415. Leading carriers passed Bns. Forth Report Line. BEECH.

1620 hrs. Area 149416. Having crossed the railway the carriers were once again pinned down by arty. fire and reported that the railway bridge at 149405 was also being shelled.

1640 hrs. Area 160415. An "O" Group was held at Tac HQ to plan a night attack to clear the enemy from ROYDON COMMON.

1715 hrs. Bn. R.V'd at BEECH.

1730 hrs. Exercise finished.

1745 hrs. Bn. formed up in convoy and began to move off from ROYDON.

1820 hrs. Area 076385. Bn. arrived at KINGS LYNN.

The party of officers & O.R's attached to us from 56 Inf. Bde. left the Bn.

15th April. 0900 hrs. An RSM's Parade was held on the Tuesday Market Place.

16th April. A.M. The I.O. (Lt. H. Broad-Davies) attended 22 Armd. Bde. Exercise no. 4 which was concerned with co-operation between the RAF and Ground Forces.

P.M. 60 reinforcements were received in the Bn. from the East Surrey Regt.

17th April. 1100 hrs. The Bde. Comdr. (Brig. M.S. Ekins) visited the Bn. to watch it at training. The A/Tk. Pln. held a shoot at Holme Range.

18th April. 1115 hrs. the Bn. moved off in transport for Exercise "RAY".

1130 hrs. The column formed up on the KINGS LYNN – WOOTON rd. and thence moved to 241404 via GREAT MASSINGHAM. 1521.

1245 hrs. The exercise commenced with D Coy leading followed by A & C Coys and Carrier & Mortar Plns.

There was no contact with the enemy.

1255 hrs. The acting C.O. (Maj. KILSHAW) called an "O" Group.

1310 hrs. The rifle Coys debused and started to push up the rd. towards the village of GRIMSTON 1840.

A Carrier screen was pushed fwd., and a further screen of carriers and A/tk. Guns was protecting the Bns. Left flank the right being protected by the 1/7th Queen's.

1520 hrs. D Coy reported that they were firmly established at bound )RANGE (195412).

1535 hrs. B Coy reported that they were 500 yds. short of ORANGE.

1545 hrs. Carrier Pln. reported that they were pushing on towards GRIMSTON 1840.

Carrier Pln reported enemy M.G. fire from left flank.

1600 hrs. Carrier Pln. at PEAR 179412.

1715 hrs. By 1715 hrs A & B Coys and Tac HQ had passed PEAR and were pushing towards NUTS (160415)

1720 hrs. Enemy A/Tk. Gun at 173414 was dealt with by "M" Bty. R.H.A.

1725 hrs. A Coy and Carrier Pln. had passed NUTS (160415) and encountered enemy

opposition from high ground 1340.

1805 hrs. Carrier Pln. who had passed the level crossing 157416 had to withdraw back to the crossing under cover of arty. fire.

1830 hrs. The Bn. moved up into the area of ROYDON 1641.

1950 hrs. "O" Group was called, and orders issued for the night attack on the high ground 1340 which was believed to be held in Coy strength.

2000 hrs. The Bn. had a hot meal and settled down for a little rest.

19th April. 0100 hrs. Area 157418. The Bn. assembled on the rd. and moved off to forming up point.

0215 hrs. The Bn. was ready formed up on the F.U.P. D Coy on the right B on the left. A & C Coys being in reserve.

0230 hrs. The Bn. crossed the start line.

0305 hrs. The Bn. was on the objective after a brief resistance by the enemy.

0315 hrs. The position was consolidated and the Carriers and Mortars and A/Tks. Plns. Were ordered to move up.

0320 hrs. Patrols were pushed out along the the line of the railway but no enemy were encountered.

0400 hrs. The A/Tk. And Mortar Plns. Were in position.

0530 hrs. Bn. Stood To.

0630 hrs. Bn. Stood Down.

0800 hrs. Exercise ended.

0830 hrs. The Bn. conc. for move back to billets.

0930 hrs. Bn. arrived back at KINGS LYNN.

20th April. Area 076385. A General of the Russian Army visited the Bn. and was received by a Guard of Honour.

25th April. 1400 hrs. A Bn. Signal Exercise was held to practise officers and S.N.C.O's in the use of the radio.

26th April. 0930 hrs. The C.O. Inspected HQ Coy in billets.

28th April. A reinforcement Coy was formed u/c of Capt. G.A.R.N. WARREN.

30th April 1400 hrs. The Bn. assembled for a lecture by the G.O.C. (Maj. Gen. G.W.E.J. ERSKINE DSO) on future operations.

Lt. Col. M. Forrester DSO, MC.

Comdg. The 1/6th Bn. The Queen's Royal Regt.

30/4/1944.