

1/6th Bn. The Queen's Royal Regiment (West Surrey) War Diary July 1944

JULY 1944

- 1st July. Area 733607.
0500 hrs. Coy Comdrs. and Specialist Pln. Comdrs. of the Bn. of the American 2 Armd. Div. which was to relieve the Bn. arrived at Bn. HQ to recce the posns.
0600 hrs. The C.O. (Lt. Col. J.H. MASON) held a conference for 2i/c's of Coys.
0800 hrs. The Bns. advance party left for the new area under comd. of the 2i/c (Maj. T.J. KILSHAW).
1200 hrs. The Bde. Comdr. (Brig. M.S. EKINS) arrived at Bn. HQ and conferred with the C.O.
1215 hrs. The Bde. Comdr. left Bn. HQ.
1400 hrs. The C.O. held a conference at which he issued his orders for the Bns. relief and move to the new area and informed the officers that the Div. was being withdrawn for a rest with the secondary role of forming a firm base astride the BAYEUX – TILLY SUR SEULLES rd. from CONDE SUR SEULLES 8373 – ST BAZIRE 8271 – FOLLIOU 8171 – JERUSALEM 8172.
1500 hrs. "D" Coy in the reserve posn. was relieved and started to march to the embussing area at LA CARBONNIERE 7165. They were followed by the Carriers Pln. and the M.M.G. Pln. of the R.N.F. u/c. The remainder of the nonessential transport R.V'd at 729622 which they left at 2000 hrs.
2300 hrs. The relieving of the fwd. Coys was commenced. As each pln. was relieved it reported to Bn. HQ and marched to the Check Point at 729622 where Coys R.V'd. when each Coy was complete it commenced marching to the embussing area.
- 2nd July. Area 823709.
0245 hrs. The retiring of the Bn. was complete and each sub-unit had reported to the Check Point which then closed down and proceeded to the embussing area.
0700 hrs. After breakfast the Bn. embussed and left the area
0900 hrs. The Bn. by then had arrived in the new area having travelled vis LA BUTTE 7469 – LA BELLE EPINE 7669 – X rds. 782689 – BERNIERES BOCAGE 7970 – JERUSALEM 8272.
Coys rested for the remainder of the day. Coy posns. were reced giving all round Defence should the need arise for the Div. to operate in its secondary role of a firm base astride the BAYEUX – TILLY SUR SEULLES rd.
- 3rd July. "C" Coy spent the morning in BAYEUX where hot showers & a cinema show were provided. During the day the Coys "Dug in" in their battle posns. In the afternoon the C.O. (Lt. Col. J.H. MASON) attended a lecture by the C-in C (Gen Sir BERNARD MONTGOMERY).
1630 hrs. The Bde. Comdr. (Brig. P. PEPPER O.B.E.) visited Bn. HQ.
- 4th July. Area 823709.
A.M. "A" Coy spent the morning in BAYEUX.
The C.O. (Lt. Col. J.H. MASON) held a Coy Comdrs. conference on the lecture given the previous day by the C in C (Gen. SIR BERNARD MONTGOMERY). Part of the information was passed on to the men by the Coy Comdrs.
The 3rd Wave comprising the Assault Pioneer Pln., B Echelon transport and the residue joined the Bn.
1300 hrs. Enemy planes strafed the Bn. area causing 1 casualty.
1400 hrs. Specialist Training commenced including Cadre and Signal Courses.
29 reinforcements arrived at Bn. HQ.
- 5th July. 0830 hrs. The Div. Comdr. (Maj. Gen. G.W.E.J. ERSKINE CB, DSO) and the Bde. Comdr. (Brig. P. PEPPER OBE) visited the Bn. and watched the training that was in progress.
"B" Coy spent the morning in BAYEUX.

Skeleton Bn. HQ, "A" Coy, Skeleton HQ and a Pln. of "A" Coy spent the day on an exercise with 4 C.L.Y. practising infantry and tk. in operation in the "BOCAGE" type of country. It was attended by the C.O. (Lt. Col. J.H. MASON) the 2i/c, (Maj. T.J. KILSHAW) and the I.O. (Capt. H. BROAD-DAVIES) and in the afternoon by Pln. Sgts. and senior N.C.O's. Other training continued.

- 6th July. "D" Coy spent the morning in BAYEUX.
A Pln. of "C" Coy took part in a similar exercise with the 4 C.L.Y. to that of the previous day.
On the new appointments 2i/c (Maj. T.J. KILSHAW) leaving the Bn. for a new Appointment. Maj. W. JOHNSON MC was appointed to 2i/c and Capt. C. YOUNG promoted Major and appointed to Comd. "A" Coy.
- 7th July. "C" & "D" Coys took part in a similar exercise with 4 C.L.Y.
Part of Bn. HQ personnel went to the cinema at BAYEUX in the afternoon.
- 8th July. The remainder of Bn. HQ personnel visited BAYEUX in the morning.
The exercise with 4 C.L.Y. was again performed, "B" Coy taking part.
2100 hrs. The Bde. Comdr. (Brig. P. PEPPER OBE) visited Bn. HQ.
- 9th July. A.M. The C.O. (Lt. Col. J.H. MASON) went on a recce with the Bde. Comdr. Brig. P. PEPPER) to RAURAY 8865.
"A" & "C" Coys took part in the same exercise with 4 C.L.Y.
1730 hrs. The C.O. held a conference after which the Coy Comdrs. went on a recce to RAURAY.
2000 hrs. A small number of enemy shells dropped in "A" Coys area causing 1 casualty.
- 10th July. The 2i/c (Maj. W.L. JOHNSON MC) and the I.O. (Lt. F.W. HOLDER) watched "A" Coy taking part with 4 C.L.Y. in the Inf. & Tk. co-operation exercise.
1700 hrs. The 2i/c & I.O. went on a recce to CRISTOT 8770 which would be the 131 Bde. conc. area in the event of 7 Armd. Div. having to restore the situation after the enemy had counterattack and broken through to RAURAY 8865 and FONTENAY LE PESNEL 8767.
- 11th July. "D" Coy took part in the same exercise with 4 C.L.Y.
0715 hrs. The 2i/c (Maj. W.L. JOHNSON MC) and the I.O. (Lt. F.W. HOLDER) went on a recce to ST LEGER 8575 – 131 Bde's. Proposed new conc. area.
1400 hrs. The 2i/c, I.O. and the 2i/c's of Coys went on a recce to ST. LEGER 8575.
- 12th July. Nothing of note happened during the day except that the C.O. (Lt. Col. J.H. MASON) attended a Bde. Comdrs. conference.
- 13th July. 1000 hrs. The C.O. held a Coy Comdrs. conference at which a report was given on the situation and the Bns training was discussed.
1130 hrs., "A" Coy went to BAYEUX.
- 14th July. The Bn. cont. its training.
1045 hrs. The Bde. Comdr. (Brig. P. PEPPER OBE) visited the Bn. HQ
- 15th July. Training cont. during the day and "C" Coy went to the Cinema in BAYEUX.
- 16th July. 0900 hrs. A T.E.W.T. for all officers together with representatives from 3 Coy. R.N.F. & 258 Bty. N.Y. was held in the area 8571. The object was to discuss the drill by the Bn. for the adaption of a rapid counterattack screen in open country and its subsequent development into a Bn. firm base.
1100 hrs. A recce party went to ST. GABRIEL 8879.

1400 hrs. The Bns Advance Party went to ST. GABRIEL the Bns next conc. area.

1500 hrs. The C.O. (Lt. Col. J.H. MASON) attended a lecture by the Comdr. 8 Corps at LANTHEUIL 916780.

2200 hrs. The C.O. held an "O" Group at which he issued his orders for the Bns move to its new area on the following morning.

17th July. 0620 hrs. Bn. HQ transport left the Bn. HQ area.

0715 hrs. The head of the Bns. column crossed the Bde. Start Point 821727.

0800 hrs. The Bn. arrived in its new area having passed through CONDE-SUR-SEULLES, NONANT, VIEUX PONT, & VAUSSIEUX.

During the morning Coy Comdrs. attended a Brigadiers conference and in the afternoon, they were briefed by the G.O.C. Maj. Gen. G.W.E.J. ERSKINE CB, DSO on the pending operation "GOODWOOD". The General Plan and the 7 Armd. Divs. Role were later explained by Coy Comdrs. to all ranks.

1800 hrs. The C.O. (Lt. Col. J.H. MASON) held an "O" Group and issued orders for the move on the following day.

18th July. 0800 hrs. The Bn. commenced leaving its leaguer area S. of ST. GABRIEL the order of march being "B" Coy & Carriers, Tac HQ, Support Group, "A" & "C" Coys, A/Tk. Pln., Main HQ, "D" Coy, A2 Echelon. The Bn. moved along the Div. axis throughout the day and by 1900 hrs. the head of the column had reached the outskirts of the village of BENOUVILLE 0974.

1930 hrs. Tac HQ crossed the ORNE bridges at 096743 and 103743 for a Brigadiers Conference.

2015 hrs. The Bn. crossed the ORN bridges.

2100 hrs. The BN. leaguered for the night in an area just E. of the R. ORNE.

19th July. Area 099730.

0700 hrs. Tac HQ and the Bn. "O" Group left the leaguer area and went fwd. on a Bn. recce.

0900 hrs. The fwd. body comprising "B" Coy and Support Group left the leaguer area and Support Group left the leaguer area and proceeded along the Div. axis.

0920 hrs. The remainder of the Bn. followed the fwd. body, the order of march being the same as on the previous day. The Bn. moved S. along the Div. Axis until it reached the village of GIBERVILLE 0967. Tactical defensive posns. were taken up astride the rd. and railway S. of the village to form a firm base for the Div.

1145 hrs. Bn. HQ was set up at 090673.

1200 hrs. A Wounded POW was found in "B" Coy area and was identified as being from 8 Coy II/32 JR, 16 G.A.F. Div.

1300 hrs. 2 more P.O.W's were found in the Bn. area and were identified as being from 16 G.A.F. Div.

1310 hrs. The C.O. (Lt. Col. J.H. MASON) and the I.O. (Lt. F.W. HOLDER) attended a Bde. "O" Group.

1330 hrs. A further 2 P.O.W's were found from 16 G.A.F. Div.

1420 hrs. The C.O. held an "O" Group at which he announced the 7 Armd. Divs. Objectives for the day and the roles of 131 Bde. and 1/6th Bn. The Bn. was to continue providing a firm base while the remainder of 131 Bde. u/c of 22 Armd. Bde. passed through to consolidate and clear ground taken by the Armour.

1700 hrs. 2 Patrols sent out from "C" Coy confirmed that the ground W. of the railway in the area of MONDEVILLE 076670 and S. to the 62 Northing was clear of enemy. One booby trap was found and reported.

2020 hrs. The Bn. area was attacked by about 12 enemy fighter-bombers. The Bn. suffered no casualties, but one tank was brewed up and one man killed both of 3 R.H.A. u/c of the Bn.

2130 hrs. 7 P.O.W's were brought in who had been taken at SOLIERS 0762. They were identified as being from 1 SS Pz. Div.

2145 hrs. The C.O. held an "O" Group.

- 20th July. Bn. held itself in readiness to leave its tactical posns. and move up in support of 22 Armd. Bde. but no order to move was received during the morning.
 1400 hrs. The C.O. and I.O. attended a conference at 22 Armd. Bde. HQ where instructions were issued for the relieving of 22 Armd. Bde. by 1/6th & 1/7th Queen's.
 Coy Comdrs. went fwd. for an "O" Group and received Coy posns. "A" & "B" Coys around FOUR 0962. The Coys embussed and moved up in T.C.V's as far as GREENTHEVILLE 0864 where they debussed and marched to the Coy areas. The Coys were in posn. by 2130 hrs.
 2155 hrs. Bn. HQ left its area.
 Area 077627
 2215 hrs. Bn. H.Q. arrived in its new area.
 Night 20/21 Patrols were sent out by the rifle Coys "A" Coy contacted the Cdns. In posn on the right of the Bn. "B" Coy in SOLIERS contacted "C" Coy in FOUR. "C" Coy put out a standing patrol in the direction of 1/7th Queen's at BOURGUEBUS which had nothing to report. "D" Coy contacted the Cdn. Bde. on the left.
 There was occasional enemy shelling and mortaring but no casualties were caused.
- 21st July. 0900 hrs. The 2i/c (Maj. W.L. JOHNSON MC) & 2i/c's of Coys went on a Bde. recce.
 0930 hrs. A patrol from "C" Coy contacted 1/7th Queen's at BOURGUEBUS 0761.
 1000 hrs. The C.O. held an "O" Group at which he announced that the 131 Bde. was being relieved by 8 Cdn. Bde.
 The Bn. would be relieved by the Chaudière Regt. by 1800 hrs. when it would return to the area of GIBERVILLE 0967. Regarding future operations the C.O. stated that 7 Armd. Div. was coming u/c of 2 Cdn. Corps.
 1100 hrs. A sniper was observed firing from a haystack in the direction of LA HOGUE 0960. He was delt with by 3 R.H.A.
 1200 hrs. A patrol was sent out by "C" Coy with the object of burning the haystacks in front of the Coy posns. but it was decided not to do so as it would have caused smoke to obscure the ground in front of "C" Coy.
 1500 hrs. A small force of Inf. supported by an unidentified tk. was observed by 8 Hussars moving N. from LA HOGUE. At the same time the Chaudière Regt began to relieve the Bn. Artillery fire was brought down which successfully dispersed the attack before it reached of F.D.L's.
 1600 hrs. Bn HQ transport began to leave the area independently to avoid congestion. But the transport of the 8 Cdn. Bde. moving in and 131 Bde. moving out was observed by the enemy. The area of the rd. from SOLIERS to GIBERVILLE was consequently shelled causing a few casualties in the rifle Coys who had been relieved and were just marching out.
 1900 hrs. Bn. HQ and the rifle Coys were complete in the area of GIBERVILLE.
- 22nd July. Area 090673.
 0800 hrs. A small force of ME 109 aircraft strafed the Bn. area but no casualties were caused.
 1400 hrs. The C.O. & I.O. attended a Bde. Comdrs. conference.
 1830 hrs. The Bde. Comdr. (Brig. P. Pepper O.B.E.) visited Bn. HQ.
 1930 hrs. The C.O. (Lt. Col. J.H. MASON) held a conference.
- 23rd July. 1330 hrs. The C.O. & I.O. attended a de. Comdrs. conference .
- 24th July. During the afternoon the pending operation and the Bn's role were explained to all ranks.
 2015 hrs. The C.O. held an "O" Group at which he gave his orders for the Bn's move on the following day.
- 25th July. 0610 hrs. The head of the Bn's column crossed the Start Line 088670, the order of march being Carrier Pln. "A" Coy, Tac Q, Support Group, "O" Gro, "B" & "D" Coy, A/Tk Pln., ain Q, "C" Coy & Sigs., Echelon.

0745 hrs. Main HQ reached the Bn. Assembly Area.

0800 hrs. The C.O. held an "O" Group. 2 Cdn. Div. were held up at VERRIERES 0560 and TILLY LA CAMPAGNE 0760 and were unable to reach their objectives at FONTENAY-LE-MARMON 0358 and ROCQUANCOURT 0558. 7 Armd. Div. were therefore unable to pass through to their objectives. Meanwhile the Bn. was to dig in in its assembly area.

Area 037647.

0945 hrs. Tac HQ joined Main HQ which moved away from the CAEN – IFS rd. into a field on the right.

1430 hrs. C.O. went to 131 Bde. Tac HQ for a conference.

1600 hrs. The I.O. also went to 131 Tac HQ.

1800 hrs. The C.O. held an "O" Group at which he stated that the Bn. would make a firm base round IFS 0463 for the night.

Area 033648.

1830 hrs. Bn. HQ again moved further away from the CAEN IFS rd. and dispersed over a wider area.

1945 hrs. The C.O. went into IFS on a recce.

2015 hrs. Having recce'd the area the C.O. held another "O" Group and issued his orders to Coy Comdrs.

"C" & "D" Coys were to occupy posns. in front of the village of IFS and "A" & "B" Coys behind thus forming a firm base behind 1/5th Queen's who were holding the line of BEAUVOIR and TROTEVAL FARMS 0461 – 0561.

26th July. 0615 hrs. The C.O. held an "O" Group at which he stated that 131 Bde. was forming a firm base behind 2 Cdn. Div. fwd. troops with centre on the line of BEAUVOIR & TROTEVAL FARMS 0461 - 1/7th Queen's left on the line of the CAEN – FALAISE rd. 0563 – 0561 and the 1/6th Queen's Bn. right on the line of the IFS – FONTENAY LE MARMION rd. 03663 – 0361.

0800 hrs. The Coy Comdrs. went fwd. to recce their Coy posns. Having completed their recce's Coy Comdrs. brought up their Coys during the morning.

"B" Coy suffered several casualties from enemy Nebelwerfer fire.

1410 hrs. Bn. HQ taking essential vehicles only, left into area

1420 hrs. Bn. HQ arrived in its new location.

During the remainder of the day there was spasmodic shelling and mortaring in the Bn. area and a few casualties were sustained.

1915 hrs. The Bde. Comdr. (Brig. P. PEPPER OBE) visited Bn. HQ where the C.O. of the Fus. De Montreal was in conference with the C.O. (Lt. Col. J.H. MASON).

Night 26/27 "A" Coy sent out two patrols. The first contacted 1/5th Queen's on the left. The second went fed. Towards FONTENAY-LE-MARMION 0358. When 1500 yds. from the village the patrol came under enemy M.G. fire from a distance of 200-300 yds. The patrol then returned to its own lines.

27th July. 1200 hrs. The C.O. and I.O. went to 131 Bde. HQ.

1800 hrs. The C.O. held a conference at which "A" & "B" Coy Comdrs. were told that their Coys were to move back to the area of IFS 0363 as 6 Cdn. Bde. were taking over their posns.

Night 27/28th. "A" and "B" Coys moved back after dark to their new areas at IFS.

28th July. In the afternoon the C.O. and I.O. attended a Bde. Comdrs. conference.

29th July. Area 040633.

0500 hrs. The 2i/c (Maj. W.L. JOHNSON MC) & the 2i/c's of Coys went as Advance Party to area 7773.

1000 hrs. The C.O. & I.O. attended a Bde Comdrs. conference.

1100 hrs. The C.O. held an "O" Group at which he issued his orders for the Bn. move.

1115 hrs. Having been relieved by the 6 Cdn. Bde. the Bn. left the area of IFS and Bn. HQ moved to area 033648.

1500 hrs. The Bn's assembly area was shelled and 2 men were killed (M. Leadbeater 5950085, Pte.

J.R. AGUTTER 6102658)

1600 hrs. Bn. HQ moved off from the assembly area.

1610 hrs. Bn. HQ at the head of the column crossed the Bn. Start Point at 030650. The Bn. proceeded by easy stages through VAUCELLES and CAEN crossing the R. ORNE by Barrett Bridge.

When the Bn. was completely across the river the column continued along the BAYEUX rd.

Area 770735.

2055 hrs. The Bn. arrived in its new leaguer area.

30th July. 1700 hrs. The C.O. & I.O. attended Bde. Comdrs. conference.

The C.O. held an "O" Group at which he announced the Div. & Bn's. roles in the proposed "Break through" in the CAUMONT Sector.

2130 hrs. The C.O. went to 131 Bde. HQ for further orders.

31st July. 0830 hrs. The C.O. held an "O" Group.

The Bn. spent the day awaiting the orders to move which was eventually received at 2015 hrs.

2030 hrs. The 2i/c (Maj. W.L. JOHNSON MC) left with the Bn. Advance Party to recce a leaguer area N.E. of CAUMONT.

2045 hrs. The C.O. held an "O" Group and issued his orders for the Bn's move.

2200 hrs. The Bn. commenced leaving the area.

2220 hrs. The Bn. HQ left the area.

Lt. Col. J.H. Mason,

Comdg.

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

31/7/1944.