

1st/6th BATTALION, EAST SURREY REGIMENT

1943

Appendix

APRIL

IN TRANSIT BY RAIL

Apr 1st

00:15 Departed Beni Manceur.

(1048a)

06:00 B.B. Arrerriot arrived.

06:15 Departed B.B. Arrerriot.

09:30 Arrived Setif. Breakfast issued.

12:00 Departed Setif.

17:10 Arrived El Guerrah.

17:45 Departed El Guerrah.

18:15 Arrived Ouled Rahmoun.

19:12 Departed Ouled Rahmoun.

19:45 Arrived Kroubs.

At Kroubs Commanding Officer informed Company Commanders that Battalion was scheduled to detrain at Sous El Arba, 50 miles behind the fighting line.

21:45 Depart Kroubs.

GUARDIMAOU, TUNISIA

Apr 2nd

03:35 Arrived Guelma. 7 Officers and 140 ORs of Draft detrained under orders of R.T.O.

(1049a)

05:00 Departed Guelma.

06:30 Duvivier. arrived. 07:00 depart.

09:00 Sous Ahras arrived. 09:30 depart.

13:10 Train crossed frontier from Algeria to Tunisia.

13:25 Arrived Guardimaou. Met by BRASCO and Lt. G. Sloan with guides. BRASCO brought orders for Battalion to detrain and march 4 miles to Concentration Area.

13:55 Commanding Officer issued orders for move to Concentration Area. Battalion detrained and had first meal of the day. Two platoons 'C' Company under command Capt. J.C. Strobe detailed as baggage party.

15:10 Leading Company commenced to march to Concentration Area. An additional groundsheet per man and 39 bivouac tents drawn. Hot meal provided on arrival at Concentration Area by 2 Beds & Herts.

17:00 Message received from Bde that Additional Ordnance Store was available.

17:30 Message received from Staff Captain to draw six M.M.Gs and 32 belts ammunition per gun from Sous el Arba on 3 April, leaving camp at 0900 hours.

21:45 Last load of baggage arrived at camp.

Apr 3rd

02:00 Liaison Officer arrived from Brigade with orders for

(1050a)

Commanding Officer, Adjutant and Q.M. to attend a conference (1051a) at Brigade. Orders: Battalion to move into Battle Line leaving Concentration Area at 1700 hours on 4 April and to take over from Battalion already there on night 4/5 April. One platoon troop-carrying transport R.A.S.C. to lift the Battalion. All Battalion transport to be taken. Battalion transport would arrive in Concentration Area from Bone on 3 April, not before 1700 hours. Commanding Officer, I.O., Q.M., Company Commanders, Signals Officer, A/Tk Platoon Commander and 2 D.Rs to report to Brigade Headquarters at 0800 hours 3 April to proceed to line to take over from Battalion holding it. Transport: Commander Officer's car, Q.M's P.U. and one x three tonner. Rations to be taken for 48 hours. 200 additional blankets for vehicle party to be drawn from D.I.D. Sous el Arba. Rations to be taken by main party up to and including 5 April. Bivouacs and groundsheets to be taken. Battalion kitbags and surplus baggage to be stacked in Belvedere Cafe, Guardimaou.

04:00 Commanding Officer issued orders to 2 i/c, Company Commanders and Q.M. Brigade orders passed on and additional orders given as follows: Each Rifle Company to have as transport 3 x 15 cwt and 1 x 3 tonner. Three x 15 cwts to be allotted to carry M.M.Gs.. Large pack to contain spare pair of boots, spare underwear, greatcoat, spare B.D. and groundsheet.

07:00 Liaison Officer arrived from Brigade with orders for departure of taking-over party to be postponed until 0900 hours and for Commanding Officer, Adjutant and Q.M. to attend conference at Brigade Headquarters at 0830 hours 3 April.

08:30 Brigade Commander gave some details of take-over and position in fighting line. Mountainous area with troops thin on ground. Sector fairly quiet. No transport allowed to move forward of Beja by day. Administration carried out by night. Pack mules used to distribute supplies from Battalion Headquarters to Forward Companies. A few vehicles allowed to remain at Battalion Headquarters. Enemy weak in artillery but active with mortars if any movement seen. Take-over party to proceed to line that morning. Guides would meet the Battalion 1 mile south of Beja. Machine Gun platoon of six details to be formed forthwith.

09:30 Commanding Officer issued orders for Battalion T.O. to proceed ahead of Battalion to ascertain the Battalion Transport Area from Brigade T.O. and then left for line with Q.M. Capt. L Brown (Commander H.Q. Company) and 1 D.R.

10:00 Company Commanders, Signals Officer and Lt .C.W. Deayton-Groome (for A/Tk platoon) left for line.

09:00 2 i/c issued orders to Company 2 i/cs.

14:00 Lt. R.A. Griggs returned without M.M.Gs. To be drawn from BeJa on 4 April. Arrangements made for reception of transport.

16:00 Capt. A. Smart reported arrival of the Battalion transport

less 1 A/Tk Portee broken down at Bone and return of transport party dispatched from Algiers to Bone less two men admitted to hospital.

18:00 Machine Gun Platoon formed under command Lt. R.A. Grigg. Composition: one Sergeant, six N.C.Os, 6 details each of four men. Three rangefinders, one Batman. Re-allocation of loads on transport commenced.

Apr 4th

03:30 Instructions received from Commanding Officer giving details of Order of March of the Battalion. Day spent in preparations for move forward to take over part of line.

09:30 Kit bags and surplus kits stacked for conveyance to Guardimaou.

11:30 2 i/c issued warning admin orders for move.

15:00 Orders issued for move. Battalion to be ready to move by 1700 hours. Battalion to pass S.P. half mile West of Guardimaou Station at 1830 hours.

18:00 Bulk of troop-carrying transport arrived.

19:30 Battalion crossed S.P.

23:50 Convoy arrived at BeJa and was met by Lt L.E. Penn and Lt. C.W. Deayton-Groom. 'A' and 'B' Echelons sent to Admin. Area south of Beja.

SIDI AMEUR, TUNISIA (SPION KOP)

Apr 5th

02:00 Battalion arrived at Sidi Ameur to take over sector in Hunts Gap from 5th Battalion Sherwood Foresters.

05:00 Relief completed.

Locations: Battalion Headquarters 303482, 'A' Company 285513, 'B' Company 29504, 'C' Company 304510, 'D' Company Area Battalion Headquarters.

10:15 – 10:30 Enemy mortar fire on Battalion Headquarters and 'D' Company. No casualties.

18:50 Dogfight overhead between ME109s and Spitfires.

19:00 Mules set out to find Companies with rations and water. No patrols sent out night 5/6 April.

Apr 6th

Defensive Fire tasks arranged with R.A. Limited patrol programme made out for Companies to give them experience in night patrolling. Battalion settling into administration and new life. All movement by day restricted as it drew enemy fire.

Apr 7th

Patrols reported no enemy encountered during night. More ambitious patrol programme prepared for night 7/8 April. 'A' Company to patrol to 302520 and 307521 and observe nature of approaches to top of Spion Kop 93145190. 'B' Company to ascertain whether Old Command Post (314504) occupied by enemy. 'C' Company to ascertain whether Wakeford's Picket (315512) occupied by enemy.

(1052a)

Apr 8th 'A' and 'C' Company patrols reported signs of enemy occupation but no enemy seen. Enemy movement observed by day at farm near Old Command Post. Patrol programme made out to check information obtained by patrols on the previous night. 'A' Company to patrol Spion Kop. 'B' Company to patrol to 317504. 'C' Company to 315512 and Wakeford's Picket. 'D' Company to patrol to Machine Gun Hill (308496) and 3169.

Apr 9th Patrol reports.:
'A' Company - no enemy located
'B' Company - enemy in position 317504
'C' Company - no enemy located
'D' Company - no enemy located.
In view of patrol reports it was doubtful whether the enemy was still in position opposite the Battalion and the patrol programme for night 9/10 April was therefore made put to test this, under Brigade orders.
Patrol program:
'A' Company to patrol gullies from 322350 to 308540 and from 313537 to 313526. Enemy approx. one platoon strong located on Knoll 309535.
'B' Company to patrol to top of Spion Kop and give lamp signal to 'A' and '?' Companies to check that the patrol was really on the top of Spion Kop.
22:00 Light signal received and position of patrol confirmed as correct. 'D' Company to patrol to Hill 314408 and road between excl. Old Command Post to excl. Don Bend 320496. No enemy located.

Apr 10th 07:10 Loud explosions heard suspected to be enemy demolitions. (1053a)
10:00 Commanding Officer proceeded to Brigade to receive orders for daylight patrols to ascertain whether enemy was withdrawing. 10 Inf. Bde Operation Order No 3. attached at Appendix 'A'
11:00-11:30 orders were issued to Companies as follows:
'B' Company patrol TOM. One platoon to proceed to top of Spion Kop under command of Company Commander Major G.G. Maggs M.C. and observe to East and South-East to see if there were any signs of enemy withdrawing.
'A' Company - patrol DICK. One platoon under command of Company Commander Capt. J Watson D.C.M. to proceed to pt. 359 and then if no enemy seen to pt. 544 (313538).
'C' Company to support 'B' Company patrol on to Spion Kop.
Zero 13:30 hours.
14:57 'B' Company patrol occupied Wakefords's Picket. Four P.O.W. captured.
15:19 'B' Company Commander reported that he was on top of Spion Kop and observing.
15:50 Orders received from Brigade for 'B' Company patrol to

remain on top Spion Kop.

16:16 Report received from 'A' Company that it was making good progress, and had taken 8 P.O.W.

16:20 'A' Company captured 2 more P.O.W. Remainder of 'B' Company ordered to join patrol on Spion Kop on orders from Brigade.

16:30 'C' Company ordered to occupy the old 'B' Company positions.

16:35 'D' Company ordered to move to 317489. Preparations being made to remove Battalion forward in anticipation of orders being received from Brigade. Casualties during the day: 5 OR. missing.

Apr 11th

01:00 10 Inf. Bde. Operation Order No 3 received. (Copy attached). Bn., with under command one sub-sec 59 Fd. Coy. ordered to advance at 05:30 hrs.

02:30 Orders issued to 'O' Gp.

Battalion will advance in three columns:

Right - 'C' Company, Battalion H.Q., 'D' Company. - track 321489 – 364570 – along East side of Djebel Grembil to Djebel El Hara from East.

Centre – 'A' Company – 325503 – 331566 – 351572. Thence to move with left column along left side of Djebel Grembil on to Djebel El Hara from the West.

Left – 'B' Company – Line of Djebel Ben Drar and to 351572, Bounds:

1) 327527 – 343504.

2) 322565 – 363538.

3) 351572 – 364570.

Wheel and tracked vehicles of Battalion under Command Capt. L. Brown to advance behind centre column. Transport with the Battalion to be by mule.

04:30 Battalion Headquarters moved from location.

06:30 Leading troops crossed S.P.

09:00 Battalion reported to Brigade 1st Bound clear.

11:15 'A' Company reported 2nd Bound clear.

12:00 'D' Company came under mortar fire at 356545. Right-hand column continued advance.

13:10 Battalion halted at the 3rd Bound. Orders for occupation of Djebel Ben Hara given out at 353570.

Right Column: – 'C' Company, Battalion Headquarters, 'D' Company.

Left Column: – 'A' Company, 'D' Company.

15:15 Battalion resumed advance.

15:45 'C' Company reported that they were under mortar fire in square 3759. Bn. H.Q. and 'D' Company ordered to follow up Left Column. 'C' Company ordered to move through Oued El Hammam (3750) and rejoin Battalion in that area.

17:00 Sound of heavy L.M.G. and mortar firing heard from area

of square 3760. Stretcher bearers report 'A' and 'B' Companies engaged with enemy. No contact could be established with forward Companies by wireless, nor could anything be found out of their location and situation.

19:15 One platoon 'D' Company left in area 364522 to cover withdrawal of Battalion Headquarters and balance of the Company to area 353570. 'A', 'B' and 'C' Companies ordered by wireless to withdraw also to that area unless they were already established on objective, in which case they would remain. Message not acknowledged and it was subsequently discovered that it was not received. Platoon 'D' Company ordered to patrol to endeavour to contact forward Companies.

19:45 One carrier under command Sgt. Bacon joined Battalion. Sgt. Bacon reported that balance of tracked transport was some miles back and was endeavouring to get forward.

20:30 Battalion Headquarters re-established at 353570.

Apr 12th

00:45 Capt. J.C. Strode reported from 'C' Company. He stated that 'A', 'B' and 'C' Companies were together in the valley and gully. Orders sent back to the Companies, via Capt. J.C. Strode, for them to R.V. at Battalion H.Q.

(0672)

06:00 'A' company returned. Casualties 6 dead. 9 wounded. 4 missing.

06:30 'C' Company returned No casualties.

06:45 'B' Company returned. No casualties.

Battalion then waited for Arty. support to move on to objective.

08:00 Third platoon 'A' Company sent to Djebel Grembil.

14:00 Capt. L. Brown and one section Carriers (4 Platoon) sent out to patrol on left flank of Battalion.

15:30 Orders received from Brigade to advance without waiting for Arty. support.

16:00 Commanding Officer issued orders for the advance. 'A' Company will make good the high ground in square 3661 and pt. 521 in the same square. If 'A' Company reached this objective, the remainder of the Battalion would move behind it, probably to area Sidi Bou Toul – pt. 521 – pt. 531 with a view to attacking pt. 373 from the West. Support of whole of Forward Regiment for the attack. (Forward Regiment had by then being placed in support). If 'A' Company were successful the Battalion would advance behind it in the order 'B' Company, Battalion Headquarters Company, 'C' Company. 'D' Company would remain in position on Djebel Grembi to cover move forward of Battalion. Zero hour– 17:00 hours.

18:05 'A' Company met heavy M.G. fire from Sidi Bou Toul (3661) in advancing on to pt. 511. Unable to move. Call for Arty. support but F.O.O. unable to reach target.

18:30 Battalion ordered to withdraw. Battalion stopped at 333503 and was then ordered back to 3570.

19:30 Battalion Headquarters established 331573. 'A' Company

established 570. 'B' Company 354572– 'C' Company, one platoon at pt. 439– Balance of Company at 356704. 'D' Company left on Djebel Grembil.

Apr 13th

07:50 Commanding Officer held a conference with Bty Commander and Company Commanders to learn exact details of the enemy encountered and administration situation of Battalion. Admin. situation: Vehicle transport was unable to reach the Battalion but carriers and jeeps had brought up supplies of ammunition, water, petrol and food. In fact the Battalion based its supply line for the next few days entirely on these vehicles, as the tracks were too bad for wheeled vehicles other than jeeps.

(1056a)

09:00 Commanding Officer proceeded on recce. 172 Field Regiment R.A. and a Medium Regiment put under command to support the advance.

10:00 Order is issued for Battalion to be prepared to move at 12:00 hours. Plan for advance: 'B' and 'C' Companies to advance to pt. 521 and then 2588 with supporting fire from the Arty. Two carriers given to each Company for administrative purposes. Balance of Battalion to remain in present locations, to advance when initial objectives gained. Zero – 15:00 hours.

14:00 'B' and 'C' Companies moved forward in preparation for attack.

14:30 Battalion Headquarter established at 334576.

15:00 Arty. commenced concentrations.

16:40 'C' Company reported position as 369617.

17:06 Air attack on our Arty. positions.

17:30 'C' Company reached objective. 'B' Company at this stage had reached first objective and suffered heavy casualties, but had hoped to reach the final objective with the aid of supporting arms.

18:10 Liaison Officer arrived from Brigade with orders for 'B' and 'C' Companies to withdraw. The Battalion would organise the same attack the following morning with the same supporting arms. Attack would take place as early as possible. For night 13/14 April Battalion was to consolidate on Djebil Grembil and guard against counter-attack. It would be relieved on Djebel Grembil by 16 D.L.I. the following morning.

18:45 Orders passed via F.O.O. to 'B' and 'C' Companies to withdraw. Withdrawal brilliantly organised by Major R.C. Guy.

19:15 2 i/c Major R.O.V. Thompson took five carriers forward to contact 'B' and 'C' Companies, assist in withdrawal and organise collection of wounded.

22:00 Battalion H.Q. withdrew to former position.

21:30 'B' and 'C' Companies returned to Battalion area. 'C' Company brought in 6 prisoners, identified as from 5 Company, III Battalion, Barentin Regiment.

Casualties: Officers – Lt. D.V. Martin and Lt. A.G. Frost missing.

ORs - 7 killed, 19 wounded, 23 missing.

Apr 14th

Message received from Brigade that an enemy wireless has been intercepted. Intercept read 'Lt. Schulsert will attack'. All preparations made to guard against counter-attack.

(1057a)

(1058a)

(1059a)

06:30 16 D.L.I arrived.

08:00 Commanding Officer issued orders for a further Battalion attack.

Plan:

Arty. Field artillery to strafe Northern edge of Djebel Grembil, and pt. 407. Arty. O.P. then to move forward to cover infantry assault on to pt. 407 and observe on to pt. 473. Arty. then to strafe pt.375 and gully. Heavy Arty. to fire on Sidi Msir. Infantry plan: 'A' Company to assault pt. 407, supported by fire from one platoon 'D' Company on Djebel Grembil. Battalion to be ready to move along the South West edge of 489. As soon as 'A' company's attack succeeded, 'B' Company were to move on pt. 473 via the Southern slope. No pause on pt. 473. Battalion would move straight onto objectives – pt. 576 (40.61). Order of march behind 'D' Company – 'B' Company, Battalion Headquarters, 'C' Company.

Timings:

Arty. concentrations start 0946 hours.

'A' Company assault pt. 407 10:15 hours.

Battalion to assemble in present area ready to move by 10:15 hours.

10:00 'A' Company report they are held up on the move to start line by heavy artillery fire.

10:35 'A' Company report that it is held up near the top of pt.407 by heavy M.G. and mortar fire.

10:50 Further from 'A' Company that the M.G. and mortar fire is too heavy for it to reach the top of pt. 407. Company has suffered heavy casualties.

10:55 Company Commander reports that remnants of Company are withdrawing under very heavy fire. Orders issued to 'D' Company to put in an attack round left flank of pt. 407 to relieve 'A' Company. 'D' Company do not advance far owing to the heavy M.G. and mortar fire.

11:00 Mortar fire slackening, but M.G. fire still intense.

11:02 Two section carriers sent up to 'C' Company to assist in the collection of 'A' Companies wounded. A frantic appeal was received from 'A' Company for fire to be brought down on the enemy mortars and machine guns to assist their withdrawal from pt. 407. Arty. contacted but they said they were unable to assist unless the positions were pinpointed when they will bring all their fire to bear. This it was not possible to do. 'A' Company had therefore to get off the hill as best they could leaving their wounded in the more exposed places behind.

11:23 'A' Company ordered to return from foot of pt. 407 to

their original positions in the Battalion area.

11:32 'D' Company ordered to withdraw to their original positions.

12:30 Capt. P.M. Plastow returned with a few men of 'A' Company. Ambulances from the Lt. Sec. Field Ambulance were organised to collect such wounded as it was possible to collect. No Pl. Commanders of 'A' Company had as yet returned. Slight mortaring of Battalion Headquarters area. Battalion Headquarters moved about 200 yards further up gully.

14:00 Commanding Officer proceeded to Brigade to make full report and ask for orders. D.L.I. had taken over our positions and Battalion rested.

18:00 Lt. A.W. Haskins, Lt. H.R. Blackburn, and Lt. G. Bowler, Platoon Commanders 'A' Company returned with a few more men, having lain up on pt. 407 and crawled away in ditches. They reported that a lot of wounded were still lying in exposed places.

19:30 Commanding Officer returned from Brigade with orders for the Battalion to rest that night. The position would be taken over from the D.L.I. the following afternoon. After dusk Capt. P.M. Plastow and Lt. W. Paskins went on a patrol to bring back wounded. Further missing personnel of A Coy. reported back. Casualties in this action: ORs - 5 killed, 23 wounded.

Apr 15th

00:30 10 Inf. Brigade Operation Order No. 4 received, giving instructions for occupation of defensive area (copy attached).

07:00 Commanding Officer proceeded on a recce of the area with Bty Commander and Commanders of A/Tk and M.G. Platoons.

13:00 Commanding Officer issued orders for occupation of Battalion defensive position. Sector divided into three areas:

Djebbel – 'D' company

Ridge Farm – 'B' Company

439421 – 'C' Company

In reserve - 'A' Company with a counter-attack role.

Army: Two O.Ps established: - (1) Wall O.P. at 356579. (2) at 355576.

M.Gs. : Sited in pairs – two in the area of Farm firing North along Valley between the West end of Djebel Grembil and pt. 421 - two in area 338564.

13:30 While orders were being given out, 'C' Company area was shelled by a heavy gun. One landed in the mouth of a cave in which one Platoon of 'C' Company was sheltering. Casualties: 8 killed, 16 wounded.

15:00 D.L.I. moved out and the Battalion occupied defensive positions.

22:00 Battalion stood to and dug and wired itself in.

10 Inf. Bde
Operation
Order No. 4
attached at
Appendix
'B'.

Apr 16th

07:00 Officer proceeded to Brigade to take temporary command.

(1060a)

09:00 Warning Order received that the Sector would be handed over to a Battalion of US troops on night 17/18 April. Battalion Headquarter layout revised.

15:30 Commanding Officer returned from Brigade with preliminary information of move. The Battalion, after being relieved by US troops, would concentrate near Beja. Tactical recce party composed as under to R.V. at Admin Area at 06:15 hours 17 April:

Major A.O.V. Thompson	Major G.G. Maggs M.C.
Capt. J. Watson D.C.M	Capt. J.O. Strobe
Capt. A. Smart	Capt. B.A. Crutchfield
Lt. L.E. Penn	Lt. AS.G. George
Lt. R.O. Baker	

- Apr 17th 11:00 Commanding Officer issued orders for the relief.
18:00 Recce party from 3rd Battalion 22 Combat Group arrived and was shown over Battalion area. Patrols for night 17/18 April were cancelled on Brigade instructions. 3rd Battalion 22 Combat Group did in fact arrive too late for the relief to take place night 17/18 April.
- Apr 18th Day devoted to preparations for a move to rear area and handing over the Sector to US troops. Surplus stores were sent back to rear area in advance by carrier, and Q.M. sent to rear area to organise the arrangements for the Battalion's arrival.
19:00 US troops started to arrive.
20:00 Relief completed. Battalion concentrated in old Admin Area and then marched via Beja road to a Brigade Concentration area near Ksar Mezour.
- Apr 19th 04:00 Battalion arrived in concentration area and rested for that day. Some troops were able to make use of the Mobile Bath Unit near Brigade. (1061a)
11:00 Commanding Officer proceeded to Brigade for orders re further move. He received a Warning Order for the Battalion to move and bussed to a hide North West of Handley Cross (52231).
10:00 Battalion marched out of hide and embussed. Proceeded via Medjez el Bab to Handley Cross.
23:00 Battalion arrived in new hide and was met by 2 i/c Major R.C.V. Thompson and tactical recce party.
- Apr 20th Battalion remained in hide and reorganised.
15:00 'D' Company put under the command 2 D.C.L.I. and sent off to join that Battalion.
20:00 Reinforcements of two officers arrived:
Officers - Lt. K.J. Bray, Lt. G.A. Perry.
22:00 Message received from Brigade that a counter-attack anticipated from enemy during night. Arrangements made to meet it.

Apr 21st

03:30 Message received from Brigade that 2 D.C.L.I. were being counter-attacked. Battalion stood to. Commanding Officer proceeded to Brigade. (1062a)
(1063a)
(1064a)

04:00 Report received from Brigade that enemy tanks had broken through. Battalion ordered to send two A/Tk guns to assist in defence of Brigade Headquarters. Rear Division H.Q. and Brigade Headquarters threatened. A.D.S. at 576247 (sheet 27) overrun. 'C' Company with two details A/Tk guns under command ordered to hold area Handley Cross.

Arty: - F.O.O. allocated to each of 'A' and 'C' Companies.

Tanks: - Advance onto objective would be supported by M.G. fire from one Squadron Churchills from the left flank. Zero 13:30 hours.

05:30 'B' Coy made contact with enemy and sustained a few casualties.

06:00 Com. 'B' Coy reported that enemy raiding party that had attacked A.D.S. now retreating rapidly Eastwards.

07:00 'B' Coy ordered to remain in its present location at 575244 while pursuit of raiding party was carried out by other troops.

08:30 British Inf. Tank Bde passed through Bn. A large scale tank battle developed in the area of The Pass 50.24 through which the German tanks were counterattacking. Message received from Bde that German Mark VI Tiger tanks were taking part in counter-attack. Bombers also took part in the battle.

10:05 Orders issued to 'B' Coy to return to Bn. Area

11:15 Comd. Offr. returned to the Bn. from Bde with information that Djebbel Djaffa (59.23) had been recaptured and the Bn. was to counter-attack it. Comd. Offr. took Coy Comds. forward on recce. Remainder of Bn. under 2 i/c ordered to move to pt. 259 (56.22)

Plan: Bn. would advance from pt. 259 along the Western slope of the hills running N.E. from this point.

Order of March: 'A' Coy., 'C' Coy., Bn. Hq., 'B' Coy. ('D' Coy. were still under comd. 2 D.C.L.I.)

Two dets. of 3 Pl. allocated to each of 'A' & 'C' Coys. Advance supported by M.M.G. Pl. Carriers of 4 Pl., A/Tk guns and balance of carriers of 3 Pl. to move behind B Coy as far as possible, and then to follow up on track at foot of hills on the slope of which the Bn. was advancing.

12:05 Battalion Headquarters left area Handley Cross and advanced on to pt. 259. The F.O.O. did not arrive on time, one reaching pt. 259 just before 1330 hours (this one was allocated to 'A' Company) and the one for 'C' Company did not arrive until sometime later. Consequently it was not possible to liaise fully with them and net their No. 18 wireless sets onto the Battalion frequency as was desirable.

13:30 'A' Company moved off pt. 259 into the advance, followed by the remainder of the Battalion.

14:30 Enemy fire opened on 'A' Company.

14:40 Tanks observed moving up on the left of Battalion Headquarters in area 586236.

15:10 Report received from 'A' Company that its leading platoon was moving onto objective.

15:15 Supporting tanks opened fire. 'A' company advanced on the last stage of the slope of Djebbel Jaffa. They were met by heavy fire and could not advance more than 200 yards up the hill. Four prisoners were captured, identified as from the II/Hermann Goering P.G. Regiment. 'A' company suffered heavy casualties and ran short of ammunition. The company withdrew about 100 yards to reorganise.

17:00 'C' company were ordered to put in an attack on the left of 'A' company supported by fire from 'B' company from pt. 345 (583230). Commanding Officer joined in attack. 'C' Company got to within 20 yards of the top of the ridge. They sustained heavy casualties: - Lt. Col. H.A.B. Bruno M.B.E. and Lt. H.M. Marlow were killed, and Major R.C. Guy was wounded.

Plan: Battalion would advance from pt. 259 along the Western slope of the hills running North East from this point.

Order of March: 'A' Company, 'C' Company, Bn. H.Q., 'A' Company. ('D' Company were still under command 2 D.C.L.I.)

Two details of 3 Platoon allocated to each of 'A' and 'C' Companies. Advance supported by M.M.G. Platoon, Carriers of 4 Platoon, A/Tk guns and balance of Carriers of 3 Platoon, to move behind 'B' Company as far as possible, and then to follow up on track at foot of hills on the slope of which the Battalion was advancing.

18:50 Commanding Officer, before he was killed, issued orders to Major R.C. Guy to withdraw. This withdrawal was effected under cover of smoke from Arty and fire from 'B' Company, and 'A' and 'C' Companies withdrew to an area behind 'B' Company. Major R.O.V. Thompson, 2 i/c, assumed command of the Battalion on the death of Lieutenant-Colonel H.A.B. Bruno M.B.E. and went forward to assist in the withdrawal of the leading Companies. Commanding Officer then went to Brigade to report the situation. While this evacuation was going on, Battalion Headquarters occupied the North West end of Djebbel el Mehiriour.

20:30 Commanding Officer returned from Brigade with orders for Battalion Headquarters and 'A' Company to take up a position for the night in front of the Brigade Headquarters at 558235 – 'B' Company to remain in their present location and 'C' Company to hold an area approximate pt. 243 (5623).

Companies moved into their new positions and were all warned to expect a counter-attack. All companies received a hot meal that night.

Apr 22nd	<p>04:30 Battalion stood to and reorganised. Casualties checked and found to be: Officers: Killed - Lieutenant-Colonel H.A.B. Bruno M.B.E., Lt. H.E. Marlow. Wounded - Major R.C. Guy ORs: Killed 52, Wounded 28, Missing -. 09:00 Commander 'B' Company Major G.G. Maggs M.C. reported that he had patrolled the top of Djebbel Djaffa during the early morning and had found it to be unoccupied. A wounded German found there stated that the enemy had withdrawn at the same time as we had, as their losses had been considerable and they thought that the smoke screen laid down to cover the withdrawal actually heralded another attack. Commanding Officer proceeded to Brigade to report this and ask for orders. 11:00 'B' Company ordered to move up again on to Djebbel Jaffa. 'C' Company took up 'B' Company's old position. Information received from Brigade that 'D' Company would rejoin the Battalion at about 1400 hours, and they were allocated positions to the left of the Pass (pt. 343 582229). 14:00 Battalion Headquarters moved to new location in a wadi at 574243. 'A' Company staying in reserve with Battalion Headquarters. 16:00 Battalion 'A' Echelon Transport arrived, followed soon afterwards by 'B' Echelon. 19:00 Lt. Col. H.A.B. Bruno M.B.E. and Lt. H.N. Marlow buried on top of Djebbel Djaffa. 21:30 Orders received from Brigade for night 22/23 April (copy attached).</p>	<p><u>(1065a)</u></p>
Apr 23rd	<p>Battalion continued to reorganise and check weapons. Battalion warned that it might have to move but no move order received.</p>	
Apr 24th	<p>11:00 March Table received for move of Battalion to a Concentration Area. Order to move later suspended.</p>	<p><u>10 Inf. Bde March Table for move attached at Appx. 'D'</u></p>
Apr 25th	<p>14:00 Orders received from Brigade for Battalion to relieve 2 D.C.L.I. night 25/26 April (copy attached). Major G.G. Maggs M.C. sent off with recce party, followed shortly afterwards by 'A' Company who took over from 2 D.C.L.I. Forward Company to cover move of Battalion. 22:30 Battalion had concentrated and embussed. 23:30 Battalion column moved off to 2 D.C.L.I. area.</p>	<p><u>Orders for concentrati on 10 Inf. Bde attached at Appx. 'E'</u></p>

Apr 26th	<p>01:45 Bn. arrived in new location.</p> <p>Positions: 'A' Company 655298 'B' Company 650290 'C' Company 642294 'D' Company 643291 Bn. H.Q. 644285</p> <p>18:00 10 Inf. Bde Operation Instruction No 3 (copy attached) giving orders for the advance in the event of an advance being possible.</p>	<p><u>10 Inf. Bde</u> <u>Operation</u> <u>Instruction</u> <u>No. 3</u> <u>attached at</u> <u>Appx. 'F'</u></p>
Apr 27th	<p>03:00 Message received from Brigade and 2 DC.L.I. that enemy was counter-attacking Bn. stood to for 45 mins. when message received from Bde that it could stand down. Major R.O.V. Thompson appointed Cmdr. Offr. of Bn. and promoted to be A/Lt. Col.</p>	<p><u>(0683)</u></p>
Apr 28th	<p>15:45 Message received from Bde. for Bn. to relieve 6 Gordons on pt. 144 in sq. 8955 by 00:01 hrs 29 April. Recce Party under Major G.G. Maggs, M.C. despatched immediately.</p> <p>17:00 Further message received from Bde. that Bn. would hand over present positions to 2 Beds and Herts.</p> <p>17:25 Five F.W. 100s flew very low over Bn. Hq. and were hotly engaged by S.A.A. fire</p> <p>18:00 Bn. concentrated and moved by march route to embus.</p> <p>19:00 Bn. moved off by M.T. to new area.</p> <p>22:00 Bn. arrived in new area and put under command 5 Inf. Bde. Met by Recce Party and C.O. took over.</p> <p>22:50 Take-over complete.</p>	
Apr 29th	<p>Coy. Positions: 'A' Coy Pt. 124 (6835), 'B' Coy 689354, 'C' Coy 689358, 'D' Coy 693358</p> <p>08:00 Bn. reverted to Comd. 10 Inf. Bde. Coys and Bn. Hq. were spasmodically shelled and mortared throughout the day.</p> <p>18:00 Orders received from Bde. to send a patrol out in conjunction with 50 Field Coy. R.E. at 20:00 hrs to lift mines on road from 7093353 - 711360.</p>	
Apr 30th	<p>02:15 Mine-lifting patrol successfully completed.</p>	