

1st/6th BATTALION, EAST SURREY REGIMENT

1944

Appendix

February

ATAKA, EGYPT

see January
map

- Feb 1st Capt AWF Paskins (Adjutant) admitted to 13 General Hospital. Lt JE Hatt-Cook assumed duties of Adjutant.
1415: Warning Order for exercise 'Wedding Bells' issued.
- Feb 2nd 1900: Bn moved out for exercise 'Wedding Bells'.
2330: Bn arrived Concentration Area, dug in and waited for transport, which had taken separate route and was crossing desert by compass bearing. Capt FC Ridger admitted to 13 General Hospital.
- Feb. 3rd Bn stayed in Concentration Area all day. Comd Offr went out with Recce party.
1400: "O" Group met.
- Feb 4th 0200: Bn moved out of Concentration Area. Field firing with all supporting arms.
Exercise 'Wedding Bells' ended, and Bn returned to camp by approx 1600 hrs.
- Feb 5th First Bn party proceeded on 48 hrs leave to Cairo.
- Feb 6th Second Bn party proceeded on 48 hrs leave to Cairo. Major GG Maggs, MC admitted 13 General Hospital.
- Feb 7th Third Bn party proceeded on 48 hrs leave to Cairo. 6 Surreys Move Order No 1 issued.
- Feb 8th Rifle Coys, less personnel on leave, moved by rail from Port Tewfik to Amyria, Alexandria, travelling all night.
- Feb 9th Remainder of Bn left Ataka, and moved by rail to Amyria, Alexandria, travelling all night. Accomodation poor. Very Crowded.

AMYRIA, EGYPT

see January
map

- Feb 10th Breakfast served to Bn at Transit Camp near de-training point. Bn moved to Camp by transport.
- Feb 11th Major WVH Robins, KORR, reported to Bn for duty as 2 I/c vice Major JA Garmons-Williams. Verbal orders received that Bn would embark on Feb 14 at Alexandria.
- Feb 12th Bn baggage sent to docks.
- Feb 13th 1000: Church Service held in conjunction with 2 Beds & Herts. Rev Wilson, padre 2 DCLI, officiated. Lt LE Matthew, Union Defence Force, Lt LJ Lagrange and 56 ORs reported to Bn. Officers taken on strength, but 56 ORs, owing to error in posting, returned to ME ITD.
- Feb 14th Bn embarked in HMT A16 (SS Letitia). Strength embarked 36 Officers

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Appendix

(including Pader and RMO) and 790 ORs. Ship left quay at 1230 hrs and laid off in harbour.

- Feb 15th Still in harbour. Fairly crowded, but hygiene arrangements, decent food and promise of various recreations for troops brightened prospects of voyage. CC Troops gave informal talks to troops over ship's broadcasting system during two meals each day. News broadcast once daily.
- Feb. 16th Still in harbour. Boxing on Promenade Deck during afternoon, first round of knock-out competition. Inter-Mess Deck quiz competition commenced in evening. Tog-of-War knock-out competition arranged.
- Feb 17th 0730: Ship left harbour, sailing in convoy of 13 ships.

AT SEA

- Feb 18th Boxing, Quiz and Tug-of-War progressing, with unit faring very well. Concert in evening, with 5 members of unit taking part.
- Feb 19th Another concert in evening. HQ Coy in semi-final of Tug-of-War.
- Feb 20th 1130: Semi-finals and finals of Tog-of-War. HQ Coy winners of final.
1330: Finals of Boxing. Unit won all finals of weights that were contested in competition. "C" Coy's Mess Deck beaten by a half-point in Quiz final.
1830: Passed through Straits of Messina. Coastline, including Messina and Reggio di Calabria, seen clearly, but Mt Etna not visible in cloud.
2130: Passed Stromboli.

NAPLES

see map

- Feb 21st Ship entered Naples harbour. Bn disembarked at approx 1100 hrs. Ship received sudden orders to move out again by 1600 hrs, subsequently loading party were ordered off at 1530 hrs before unloading was complete, and much Bn baggage was left on ship when she sailed out. Bn moved by transport to San Clemente.

SAN CLEMENTE

see map

- Feb 22nd 0400: Baggage party arrived with baggage. Transport unloaded and baggage sorted. Major Allen, 14/20 Hussars, reported to Bn from 10th Infantry Brigade for infantry training.
- Feb 23rd Orders received for Bn to relieve 3 Gren Guards in line. Comd Offr and "O" Op moved off for recce and to take over.
- Feb 24th Bn moved up to take over position.
2305: MMGs in position.
2355: Take over complete.
- Feb 25th Quiet night. Intelligence OP mortared in morning, withdrawn in

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1944

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afternoon.

Feb 26th Weather very wet and cold. Conditions not at all bright.

Feb 27th Lt WC Allan killed night 26/27 when returning with patrol selected from "D" Coy. Bn moved on night 27/28 to lie up area 8701, Turlito.

TURLITO

see map

Feb 28th 0720: Move completed. Bn in lie-up area.

Feb 29th Very wet day. Comd Offr and recce party went forward to Tugo sector. Bde HQ moved to Cheshire.

1620: Bn took over area from 6 Yorks & Lancs at 8702