

1/7th Bn. The Queen's Royal Regiment (West Surrey) War Diary November 1943

NOVEMBER 1943.

Area 006778, (CANCELLO).

- 1st Nov. 1400 hrs. Carrier Pln. contacted 46 Div. patrols at 968868 N.E. FALCIANO no contact with enemy.  
1600 hrs. I.O. visited Rear Bde. headquarters.  
2200 hrs. Message "1/7th Queens revert to 131 Bde. from 2nd Nov".
- 2nd Nov. C.O. & I.O. visited Tac Bde. (131) location 942726 to receive further orders. Warning passed to Bn. to move into 131 Bde. area to relieve 1/6th Bn.  
0900 hrs. C.O. & I.O. reced route to new area 902807 N. of MONDRAGON.  
0920 hrs. 2 escaped Yugoslav POWs arrived at Bn. HQ after being picked up at FALCIANO by Battle Patrol Comdr. They had been imprisoned in a camp near ROME and produce photographs of their prison camp. One such photograph showed them manacled together. They stated that two German deserters we're hiding in FALCIANO. The Germans were found after I search dressed in civilian clothes. On interrogation one revealed that he came from 104 P.G.R. The other did not know his Bn. unit. Yugoslavs and Germans were dispatched to Div. HQ.  
1300 hrs. Bn. left for new location route 022745 941725 rd. junction, S. ANGELO, 9279 902807.  
1600 hrs. Bn. began relief of 1/6th Queens who concentration in MONDRAGONE.  
1800 hrs. Take over completed.  
Location of Coys "A" 898824, "B" 688824, "C" Coy 876837, "D" Coy 879819.  
The move and occupation of the new positions was carried out speedily and satisfactorily if it be remembered that:- (a) The route consisted of a narrow and congested road. (b) The positions were mostly on precipitous mountains rising in some cases to 1400'. The Plns had to scale these mountains in their equipment.  
1900 hrs. The two Yugoslavs referred to above return to the Bn. and were attached to the Battle Patrol after being fitted out B.D. and receiving rifles.

Area 902807.

- 3rd Nov. 0600 hrs. C.O. and I.O. visited "B" Coy and viewed the plain of the R. GARIGLIANO in the gulf of GAETA. Demolitions could be seen at MINTURNO and the river crossing.  
1100 hrs. "D" Coy position shelled by 105 MM HV guns situated on the coast just beyond river MARIGLIANO range 1400X approx. No casualties.  
1500 hrs. Cdn. War Correspondent visited Bn. HQ. and were Interviewed by C.O.  
1800 hrs. "C" Coy shelled by HV gun presumably 88 MM. Location of gun unknown. No casualties.  
On the whole a quiet day. Spent in rest and admin. Donkeys were used to carry food up the mountains to forward Plns. Climb often exceeded 1000 feet.  
1900 hrs. Battle Patrol Comdr reported his activities in MONDRAGONE were where with the aid of the two Yugoslavs he had succeeded in rounding local Fascists 2 of which were imprisoned after consultation with local AMGOT.
- 4th Nov. 0600 hrs. C.O. and I.O. Visited "C" Coy. Capt. J. FRANCIS awarded MC.  
0900 hrs. C.O., 2 I/C, and I.O. visited 22 Armd Bde. HQ latest inf. was obtained.  
1000 hrs. C.O. 2 I/C and I.O. visited "A" and "D".  
1100 hrs. It was revealed from 7th A.D. "I" summary that German docs found in "D" Coy area were of great value.  
1400 hrs. Lt. AC WORRELL Battle Patrol Comdr reported that he had patrolled to area 833922 and had observed enemy on N. side of GARIGLIANO especially MINTURNO area.
- 5th Nov. 0800 hrs. C.O. and 2 I/C visit 56 Div area.  
0900 hrs. I.O. visited Bde. HQ.

1100 hrs. C.O. on Bde. Comdrs conference.  
1400 hrs. "O" Group Bn. HQ. For contents of "O" Group (see APPX Z).

- 6th Nov. 0700 hrs. Small advance party of Capt. COURCHEE and 3 O.R's left for new concentration area VICO EQUENSE.  
1000 hrs. Bde. Commander visited Bn. and spoke to all Officers W.O's and Sgts. For contents of Bde. commanders speech see Appx Z.
- 7th Nov. 1000 hrs. Bn. Church Parade held in Bn. HQ area. Bde. Comdr and Div. Comdr attended. Service held by Rev. CASTLE CF.
- 8th Nov. 0800 hrs. Advanced party under 2 I/C left for VICO EQUENSE. Training was re commenced on an individual basis.  
1500 hrs. M.E. 109's flew along the Gulf of GAETA close to Bn. area at a height of 40 ft. They headed towards FORMIA. The day was cold & wet following a stormy night. The temperature dropped many degrees.
- 9th Nov. 0900 hrs. Lt. J.B.L. AINSWORTH went off to photograph Bn. War Graves on R. VOLTURNO.  
1000 hrs. demolitions seen area MINTURNO and GAETA.  
Weather noticeably colder.
- 10th Nov. Bn. continued cleaning up vehicles and weapons. Allied naval units consisting of destroyers and smaller craft appeared in golf of GAETA and shelled enemy positions around GAETA and FORMIA.  
1000 hrs. C.O. to visit advanced party.  
2200 hrs. Message from Bde. 2 I/C Major J SYKES-WRIGHT to report to 9 R.F. (56 Div.) as C.O.
- 11th Nov. 1000 hrs. Considerable air activity at great height. I fired at German spotter plane. Naval craft in Bay.
- 12th Nov. 0815 hrs. 2 FW 190's attempted to machine gun rd junction near "D" Coy positions. Cannon shells landed on beach.  
1100 hrs. 2 I/C and T.O. from the Irish Regt of Canada visited Bn. HQ to liaise regarding handing over of vehicles and G 1098 stores. Canadians visited Coy positions.  
Coys continued cleaning and checking stores.  
1400 hrs. C.O. visited Bde.  
1430 hrs. Demolitions seen area MINTURNO.  
1800 hrs. Bde. Comdr and B.M. came to dinner at Bn. headquarters.
- 13th Nov. 0800 hrs. Great activity seen on 56 Div. Front ,demolitions and shelling.  
1100 hrs. 2 Canadian Bn. Comdrs visited area and viewed front. Lt. D. L. FENNELL regranted temporary rank of Capt. and appointed 2 I/C of "C" Coy.  
Maj. W.D. GRIFFITH MC moved to Bn. HQ as 2 I/C.  
1530 hrs. Cigar shaped object thought to be submarine surfaced in golf of GAETA and joined naval vessels there. Facts reported to Bde.. It was learned later that naval authorities attached great important to this info. Heavy rainstorm during night.
- 14th Nov. 0800 hrs. Capt. R CARVER MC appointed A/Major vice Maj. SYKES-WRIGHT.  
1200 hrs. Further advance party of 1 Rep of each platoon left for VICO EQUENSE. Six FW 190's passed over Bn. area flying N. and machine gunned forward slopes of "D" Coy aiming at Italian civilians. No casualties.  
1230 hrs. 2 I/C Irish Regt. of Canada and he's advanced party arrived and liaised with Coys concerned.  
1730 hrs. Bn. Front taken over by 46 Div. Recce. Bn's op commitments ceased.
- 15th Nov. 0700 hrs. "C" Coy left for new area.

1300 hrs. C.O. of Canadians arrived for conference with Lt. Col. GORDON. Day spent in preparations for move to VICO EQUENSE. on the following day.

16th Nov. 2/Lt. C. FRY rejoined the Bn.  
 0600 hrs. Maj. W.D. GRIFFITHS MC assumed command of Bn. in the absence of Lt. Col. GORDON who was to command 131 Bde.  
 0700 hrs. Bn. past S.P. (HQ Coy office) following "C" Coy one Cheshire's and proceeded via MONDRAGONE, CANCELLO, VILLA LITTORIO, ALBANOVA, FRIDGENANO, FERTILIA, AVERSA, MELITO di NAPOLI, NAPLES bypass, TORRE DEL GRECO, TORRE ANNUNZIATA, CASTELLAMARE and VICO EQUENSE  
 1400 hrs. Arrived in new area after quick and uneventful journey. Remainder of day spent in settling in new area and requisitioning extra accommodation. HQ "A" "B" "C" Coys housed in the town. "D" Coy housed in huts under the Cliff. Bn. Officers Mess and Bn. Sgts Mess started.

#### Area VICO EQUENSE.

17th Nov. day spent in tidying up.  
 1400 hrs. C.O. to Bde. "O" Group. 1530 hrs. Bn. "O" Group points discussed:-  
 (A). Training every morning on individual and platoon bases. Drill Parade each morning. Route march each week.  
 (B). N.C.O.'s carder course under RSM.  
 (C). Sport every afternoon except Sunday's. Deck Quoits Basketball and Rowing.  
 (D). One Coy to Naples on leave every day.  
 (E). Trips to CAPRI, POMPEII and VESUVIUS to be arranged during weekends.  
 (F). General standard of turn out to be maintained and improved.  
 (G). Lectures on topics of interest. German lessons to be held three times a week.  
 Weather wet. Training took place largely indoors.

19th Nov. Training as before.  
 20th Nov. Training as before.  
 21st Nov. Capt. A.R. LUGG returned to Bn.  
 22nd Nov. Training and other activities as before.  
 1800 hrs. first German class taken by Italian professor. Well attended.

23rd Nov. Inspection of Bn. by Bde. Commander.  
 24th Nov. 0900 hrs. Officers day. C.O. conducted sand table exercise.  
 25th Nov. Training as before.

26 Nov. Leave for officers, WO's and Sgts recommenced. Officers to NAPLES and RAVELLO.  
 1900 to 2000 hrs. observed air raid on NAPLES.

27th Nov. Weather fine.  
 28th Nov. 200 from Bn. went on day trip to CAPRI. Weather fine.  
 29th Nov. Normal training. Weather breaking.  
 30th Nov. Normal training. Weather wet

W. GRIFFITHS MC, Major,  
 Comd. 1/7th Bn. The Queen's Royal Regt.

30/11/1943