

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

OCTOBER 1943

- 1st Oct. 0630 hrs. D Coy with one Tp. A/Tk and Recce Tp. tanks move to X roads 460455 and found booby traps and mines. They advanced on foot too crossroads 460475 preceded by party of R.E's for mine clearing.
0800 hrs. "B" Coy moved on foot N. Towards S. GENNARO.
1100 hrs. A Coy moved to 449473.
1300 hrs. "B" Coy arrive S. GENNARO. Report mines but no enemy. Population very friendly. Many horses and cattle were shot before the enemy left. Carriers arrive at track junction 48504.
1310 hrs. Capt. LUGG evacuated sick.
1400 hrs. Contact made in S. Gennaro with 44 Div. Recce unit from PALMA.
1500 hrs. A Coy move to PIAZZOLLA. X roads 430525 clear of enemy. Attd. one Tp. 260/65 A/Tk. Regt. One Tp. C Sqn. 5 R.T.R.
1600 hrs. A Coy fired on by Nebelwerfer.
1610 hrs. D Coy take up positions in CATEPAN 445530 with Carriers and one Tp. 260/65 Regt. 1700 hrs. C Coy move to 448504. Bn. HQ at 435515. Quiet night with heavy rain but Bn. kept fairly dry.
- 2nd Oct. 0800 hrs. Bn. at two hrs. notice to move.
1000 hrs. Bn. spent day cleaning weapons and arranging general administrative details C.O. visited Bde. at 1700 hrs.
- 3rd Oct. 0800 hrs. I.O. visited 169 Bde. HQ 56 Div. for locations. Rd CAIVANO - NOLA clear.
1030 hrs. Battle Patrol recced area MARIGLIANO – POMIGLIANO.
2230 hrs. Order from Bde. for Bn. to be at S.P. SOMMA 3752 for move to COMIC LEONE.
- 4th Oct. 0500 hrs. I.O. recced route to SOMMA.
0600 hrs. Bn. moved to S.P. SOMMA via S GENNARO 4551 OCTAVIANO 4050.
0700 hrs. Bn. pass through MARIGLIANO.
0730 hrs. Head of column halted behind 22nd Armd. Bde. at CASTELLO DI CISTERNA 3557. 1730 hrs. Column moved to 284614 and Bn. took up defensive positions for night.
2000 hrs. Loud explosion heard in region of 290613. Patrol from C Coy sent to investigate report civilian vehicles blown up on mine and three civilians shot by Germans.
Quiet night N.B. position was confused during day - the Bn. was not in contact with the enemy.
1045 hrs. Immediate notice to move.
- 5th Oct. 1045 hrs. immediate notice to move.
1100 hrs. column on road with head at 283613.
1105 hrs. column on the move to AVERSA.
1145 head of column passed through CAIVANO 2561.
1300 hrs. column pass through AVERSA.
1400 hrs. the Bn. arrived at FRIGNANO MAGGIORE 1566.
Coys took up local positions an Bn. HQ was established in the railway station.
1800 hrs. 25 O.R. reinforcements arrived.
- 6th Oct. 0900 hrs. C.O. and I.O. recced route to GRAZZANISE.
1430 hrs. I.O. attended conference at Bde. headquarters.
1730 hrs. 2 officers and 7 O.R. reinforcements arrived. Orders from Bde. to move at 0615 hrs.
- 7th Oct. 0615 hrs. column on road and moved off in the direction of ALBANOVA.
0815 Bn. arrived area 115694. C.O. & I.O. recced to area 076717.
1400 hrs. Lt. RJ Ashworth (Battle Patrol Comd) reported road along canal 076717 to GRAZZANISE clear of mines and reports town clear of enemy who left early this morning.

River VOLTURNO 150 foot wide with steep banks 10 to 15 foot high. Signs of enemy and M.T. on opposite bank.

1500 hrs. C.O. visits Bde. HQ. heavy rain during night.

- 8th Oct. Lt. A.G. Rich takes over duties of I.O. Owing to heavy rain Bn. transport is bogged and A Coy enlist aid of a Scammell to pull vehicles out in preparation for their move ahead of Bn.
1630 hrs. Brigadier visits Bn. HQ O Group to discuss the Bn. move to GRAZZANISE and forthcoming OPS. "A" Coy move off to take up position in area 0877.
Quiet night with more rain.
- 9th Oct. 0900 hrs. A Coy patrol locate and engage enemy posts killing one sentry and wounding three others.
1000 hrs. remainder of Bn. start moving transport onto road in preparation for move to new area.
1330 hrs. Bn. in column on road ALBANOVA - VILLA LITERNO with head at 095760.
2000 hrs. Bn. in position. A Coy and Mortar platoon (less 2 dets) N. of GRAZZANISE 0877.
B Coy and two dets Mortars E. of town at 0976. TAC HQ and carrier platoon at 095760. C & D Coys in reserve area ALBANOVA.
2015 hrs Major GRIFFITHS MC and Captain N.A.H. MARSDEN recce river in area 0877.
Capt. P.C. FREEMAN and I.O. recce river in area 0977 defined a possible place for an assault crossing.
- 10th Oct. 0600 hrs. Enemy soldier surrenders to A Coy state he crossed river last night on recce patrol (unit 129 P.G.R.)
0730 hrs. A Coy patrols report hearing men S. of river at 085785 and state riverbank is unsuitable for launching assault boats.
1100 hrs. Lt. J.K. WOOD A Coy reced area 086785 and reports two enemy posts at 087784 and 087775.
1500 hrs." "Coy and Battle Patrol fired L.M.G's and two inch Mortars from area 0867792 BREZZA. Fire was turned onto house 090776 and as a result three enemy fled from building.
1800 hrs. Battle Patrol cross river with intention of searching woods and houses 090776. They were covered by E Coy and one M.G. Platoon of Cheshire's. 15 O.R. reinforcements arrive.
1915 hrs. Battle Patrol contact enemy post and engaged same. Patrol was forced to withdraw when Lt. R.J. ASHWORTH (Comd) was killed and two men wounded.
B Coy and MG platoon gave covering fire to the returning patrol.
As a result of this patrol heavy Mortar and shell fire was brought down on all our positions. The enemy fired M.G's all along the riverbank into our forward Coys and he probably thought this was an attempt by us to force an assault crossing.
1930 hrs. the enemy still bringing down heavy shell and Mortar fire on all our positions. Our supporting Arty. reply with fire on suspected gun and mortar positions.
2100 hrs. enemy still very active. A Coy have one man wounded.
2200 hrs. own Arty stonk enemy positions.
2330 hour's enemy is fairly quiet after shelling us for four hrs. Bn. is well dug in and casualties sustained very few.
- 11th Oct. 0130 hrs. More shelling and Mortaring of the Bn. area. Intermittent shelling until 0530 hrs. Quiet day.
1500 hrs. "O" Group at Bn. HQ to discuss following days OPS.
1800 hrs. "A" Coy send patrol to area 086786 N.T.R and standing patrol too riverbank 072778 N.T.R.
- 12th Oct. 0900 hrs. Civilian reports there are Germans on S. Side of the river at 063774. I.O. and Battle Patrol set out to investigate.
1010 hrs. Enemy post located at 063773 enemy reacted with L.M.G. and rifle fire. They were engaged by our patrol and the comd. Lt. AG RICH was wounded.
1200 hrs. One tp. tanks moved up in support and engaged the post with M.G'S and H.E. throughout the afternoon. Further Inf. Support moved up during the afternoon.

1630 hrs. One man killed and another wounded in "B" Coy whilst firing with 2" Mortar the bomb struck a nearby tree and exploded near our men.
 1700 hrs. Final combing of area to ascertain if any enemy still there.
 Two deserters from 129 P.G.R. came through our lines but rest of enemy post withdrew during the night.
 2000 hrs. "C" & "D" move into our forward positions relieving "A" Coy.
 2030 hrs. Preliminary Arty. programme commenced. Heavy concentrations land down on enemy positions.
 2040 hrs. Enemy reacts with defensive fire in GRAZZANISE area.
 2255 hrs. R.E. Party succeeded in tying rope across river in face of heavy air burst fire which made crossing for our pln. impossible. Shelling from 0978 but no automatic fire came from opposite bank. Coys reorganised and prepared to force a small bridge head.

- 13th Oct. 0445 hrs. One platoon reported across river at 085771.
 0500 hrs. Another platoon across at 087768.
 0515 hrs. One pln. M.G's cross river. All crossings were made extraordinary difficult by very strong current. "C" Coy report two killed and 14 wounded.
 Patrols found enemy positions at 063773 unoccupied. Carrier platoon reced river crossing area 084787 during morning and killed 4 Germans. Report crossing for tanks unsuitable.
 1430 hrs. "O" Group to discuss movement of Coys across river.
 1900 hrs. D Coy send recce patrol to area 083788.
 2200 hrs. C Coy and B Coy complete occupation of areas 093774 and 086776.
 2300 hrs. Patrol returned. Report being fired on during river crossing but managed to reach the opposite bank and reported enemy posts on bend.
- 14th Oct. 0300 hrs. Heavy Mortar concentration in area both sides of river approximate 086769.
 0515 hrs. Two to four guns fired concentration into area 082773.
 0835 hrs. Four M.E's attacked target in area 1076 one damaged by light attack fire.
 0845 hrs. 2 POW from C Coy area came from 1.2.9 P.G.R.
 1010 hrs. TAC HQ move to farmhouse in GRAZZANISE 085768.
 1410 hrs. Mortar fire on river crossing 087768. Carriers report location of enemy posts at 083787. 3 heavy Mortars and 1 M.G. in house 088783. 2 POW taken at 088776 (129 P.G.R.)
 2000 hrs. Standing patrol at 083786 heard motorcycle moving in N.W. from BREZZA and shouting in wood 085787.
 2400 hrs. One troop 260 Bty cross river. Enemy guns active during the night.
- 15th Oct. Quiet day. R.E. Bridging party made good progress on pontoon bridge over river. Explosions heard during morning in BREZZA area. Possible demolitions by enemy.
 1500 hrs. "O" group C.O. discussed situation in general and forms plan for the occupation of BREZZA when village is clear.
 2000 hrs. Patrol sent to recce BREZZA area to find out whether the village is still occupied. Reported the place clear at first light. Own Arty. fired short of target area and two men of "D" Coy were killed and two others wounded.
- 16th Oct. A Coy moved into BREZZA and report much destruction. "C" Coy taken up positions area 086785. "B" Coy at 093786. Two more deserters came through our lines.
 1400 hrs. Pontoon bridge nearing completion and H.Q. standby to cross river.
 1520 hrs. Bn. H.Q. cross over bridge and occupy farmhouse in area 088777.
 1800 hrs. Large fires burning in enemy territory. Possible demolition and destruction before enemy retires. Standing patrols at 064801 report bridge blown and enemy sappers laying mines. Slight enemy shelling during the night. Heavy rains during the early morning left the Bn. in an uncomfortable state.
- 17th Oct. 0730 hrs. Bn. HQ moved to house in BREZZA 093784. D Coy move to cover of buildings in village. 8 O.R. reinforcements posted to "C" Coy.

1100 hrs. G.O.C. and Div. Comdr. visit Bn. H.Q. and remarked on the very good work done by the Bn. 1/5th and 1/6th Bn's passed through our positions and pushed on towards canal.
1200 hrs. 1/5th Bn. report meeting opposition 0980 but situation well in hand. 1/6th Bn. pushing along the mined rd. northwest from BREZZA. Quiet day.

- 18th Oct. 0930 hrs. Div. Comdr. visited Bn. H.Q. Bn. spent the day cleaning weapons and arranging admin details. Slight shelling along Rd N.W. from BREZZA but otherwise all was quiet. Our sister Bn's report good progress and are now holding a line along the canal. Quiet night.
- 19th Oct. Intermittent shelling along canal and the road N.W. from the village BREZZA throughout the day otherwise N.T.R. More shelling during the night.
- 20th Oct. 0900 hrs. All quiet. Civilians begin to filter back into the village. 57 O.R's posted to the Bn.
1600 hrs. Enemy fired airburst along line of canal from bridge 064801 to 090804.
1630 hrs. Shelling along rd. N.W. from BREZZA. Several A.P. shells were also fired from high velocity guns probably 88 mm.
1715 hrs. Enemy shells landed in "C" Coy area. One house in which our troops were billeted received a direct hit but we had no casualties. Intermittent shelling of road and canal during the night
- 21st Oct. 0930 hrs. Bde. Comdr. visited Bn. H.Q.
1030 hrs. "O" Group C.O. outlined plans for the immediate future of the 5th Army and lessons we have learned during recent Ops. Intermittent shelling in streets N.W. of BREZZA.
1700 hrs. Enemy shelling X rds. 093784 Bn. H.Q. received some near misses, and a few civilians were wounded. Slight shelling in BREZZA area and along road N.W. of canal.
- 22nd Oct. 1030 hrs. "D" Coy move to line of canal and take up position right of road at 067808.
1400 hrs. Enemy shelled BREZZA area.
1630 hour 's Bde. Comdr. visited Bn. H.Q.
1830 hrs. "A" and "B" Coys move to new positions. "A" at cross road at 065800 B Coy 053806. Carriers move to area 043814. "C" Coy in reserve area BREZZA. Quiet night.
- 23rd Oct. 0615 hrs. Bn. H.Q. moved along road to house at 069798.
1430 hrs. Enemy shelled the road in Bn. H.Q. area for approximate 2 hour's shells landed uncomfortably close but no casualties were sustained.
1600 hrs. a Coy take up fresh positions in area 029821 "C" Coy moved up to area 0380. Quiet night but enemy planes made attack on NAPLES in the early evening and ack ack guns were very active.
- 24th Oct. 0830 hrs. Bn. H.Q. move to "D" Coy area. 067808.
1100 hrs. G.O.C. 46 Div. visited Bn. HQ inspected our positions and outlined the situation on 46 Div. Front. Rest of day N.T.R. and quiet night.
- 25th Oct. During our next operation Bn. will come under command of 22nd Armd. Bde. and C.O. contacted same to discuss the relief of 46 Div. Otherwise N.T.R.
- 26th Oct. 0900 hrs. "O" Group. Today the Bn. relieves the Lincolnshire Regt. (46 Div.) and Coy Comdrs. discuss the movement of Coys to their new areas.
1500 hrs. Bn. H.Q. move to Houses at 003776.
1900 hrs. Bn. Carries out relief of Lincolnshire's. Locations "A" Coy 994788, "B" Coy 003791, "C" Coy 998786, "D" Coy 008798.
2100 hrs. Relief completed.
- 27th Oct. 0830 hrs. Enemy Mortar firing on rd. junction 000787. "C" Coy captures two prisoners on Coy Front from 104 P.G.R.
0845 hrs. slight shelling of areas 0078 and 0076.

0930 hrs. Recce patrol went out to area 000809 but report no enemy movements. Bn. spent the day settling in and arranging admin details.
1800 hrs. "B" Coy established listening posts at 995798 and reported intermittent M.G. fire 500X to right front throughout the night.

- 28th Oct. 0900 hrs. D Coy send patrol to recce area 0081.
1030 hrs. Corps Comdr. visited Bn. HQ. Patrol went out from 992785 to 964793 on preliminary Recce to further patrols.
1100 hrs. "B" Coy send patrol to recce rly. Sta. 976800 and rd. and rail crossings at 969809. 1330 hrs. Above patrol returned and reported rly. Sta. in ruins and several burnt out engines and trucks blocking the track. The patrol was fired on at 15X range from enemy position at 969808 but returned intact. This post was engaged by our Arty.
1430 hrs. The second patrol returned with information on rds. tracks rly. and bridges in areas 9978 and 9679.
1530 hrs. First patrol returned and reported enemy movement at 003814 and M.G.'S in area 002814 and 003816. These areas were shelled by our Arty.
1800 hrs. Standing patrol established at rly. sta. The Bn. had a very successful day on patrols. The enemy was located in several positions on our front confirming the impression that he is holding lateral road 961797 - 969808 - 984810.
2100 hrs. Nebelwerfer fired on area 992808 and an M.G. fired intermittently throughout the night. Our own Arty. put down harassing fire N. of line 800895 - 925800 track running N.E. 950808 thence up to lake 9682 to Div. boundary.
- 29th Oct. 0445 Standing patrol returned from rly. Sta. and reported no enemy movement during the night.
0830 hrs. Battle Patrol went out to observe houses in area 978810.
0900 hrs. Another patrol sent out to observe houses in area 9781.
1400 hrs. Second patrol returned reported no enemy movement.
1530 hrs. Battle patrol returned reported no movement seen.
1745 hrs. Recce patrol sent out to report on bridges and rds. 992819 N. Rd junction 999814 and rd. junction 993817.
2000 hrs. Patrol return and reported being fired on from positions 997811 and 003814. Both M.G. and Mortars opened up on our patrol but our men returned intact.
2245 hrs. Patrol went out to recce houses at 966806 and rd. and rly. crossings at 969808.
- 30th Oct. 0130 hrs. The above patrol returned and reported N.M.S.
0630 hrs. "B" Coy patrol went out to find enemy were still at the tunnel mouth 951826.
1145 hrs. Div. Comdr. visited Bn. H.Q.
1615 hrs. "B" Coy patrol returned and reported being shot up by enemy M.G. posts at the broken bridge 969808. The patrol returned the fire and withdrew undercover of smoke from 2" Mortar to the rly. Sta. 976800. The patrol commander then called for prearranged Arty. fire on the 38 set carried by the patrol. The patrol then proceeded in direction of the post to observe results. Once again the enemy opened fire from the same positions. Our patrol engaged the post until dusk and then withdrew.
1700 hrs. Lt. WORRALL (Battle Patrol) reced the area for his night patrol in the R.A. ariel O.P. 2000 hrs. Battle Patrol went out to recce area 969806 enemy positions previously engaged by "B" Coy patrol and house at 967804
- 31st Oct. 0230 hrs. Battle Patrol returned and reported no enemy movement observed. This report confirmed the impression that the enemy post at 969806 is only occupied by day as previous night patrols have also reported N.M.S. in this area. During the morning our Carrier patrols reced the area of tunnel mouth and made no contact with enemy but the mouth of tunnel is still believed charged for demolition.
1230 hrs. Carriers occupied FALCIANO 955842 and 966822 and 96482 7. One platoon of "A" Coy move to positions in area of FALCIANO. During the day our left-hand neighbours 1/5th and 1/6th Queens occupied MONDRAGONE and RICCARDI MONDRAGONE.

D.S. Gordon
Lt. Colonel.

Officer list as of 30th October.

Lieut.-Colonel D. S. Gordon,	Gordon Highlanders.
Major W.D. Griffiths	Queen's.
Major J. Sykes-Wright,	Queen's.
Major K. A. Jessup,	Queen's.
Capt. P. C. Freeman,	Queen's.
Capt. R. Carver,	Hampshire Regt.
Capt. E. G. Sandys,	Queen's.
Capt. T. H. Kemp,	Queen's.
Capt. E. M. French,	R.W. Fusiliers.
Capt. J. Francis,	Queen's.
Capt. N. A. H. Marsden,	Queen's
Capt. G. H. Courchee,	Essex Regt.
Lieut. E. S. Corbett,	Hampshire Regt.
Lieut. J. M. Skillington,	R.W. Fusiliers.
Lieut. D. L. Fennell,	Queen's.
Capt. J. B. L. Ainsworth,	S/Saffs.
Lieut. D. T. Hodson,	? L.I.
Lieut. A.C. Worrell,	Devon's
Lieut. G. W. Bevan,	Queen's.
Lieut. P. Hoggarth,	Hampshire Regt.
Lieut. E. G. Dever,	Kings Regt.
Lieut. J. K. Wood,	Union Def. Forces.
Lieut. H. T. P. Large,	Union Def. Forces.
Lieut. A. G. Rich,	Duke of W. Regt
Lieut. M. J. Dunston,	R. Warwick Regt.
2/Lieut. J. A. Beard,	Recce Regt.
2/Lieut. W. B. Channell,	Bufs.
2/Lieut. R.A. Hughes	Devon's.
Lieut. W. J. V. Lane,	
Lieut. C. H. J. Stammer, (Quartermaster)	
Capt. J. Sheehan (R.A.M.C.)	

The following casualties had occurred in the preceding week:

Lieut. L. H. Cockroft (Killed in action)	Capt. J. B. L. Ainsworth (Hospital)
Lieut. H. R. Reed (Union Def. Forces)	Capt. A. R. Lugg (Hospital) (Wounded)