

1/7<sup>th</sup> Bn. The Queen's Royal Regiment (West Surrey) War Diary. September 1943

SEPTEMBER 1943.

AREA HOMES.

- 1st Sept. Bn. carried out normal training.
- 2nd Sept. Bn. Training.
- 3rd Sept. 1100 hrs. C.O. presented prizes to winners (HQ Coy) & runners up ("C" Coy) of Bn. football competition. 1145 hrs. Div. Comd. arrived for short visit. Watched demonstration of Patrols by Battle Patrol.  
1700 hrs Church Service: Day of National Prayer.  
2000 hrs. Bn. night exercise. Night attack crossing a minefield. A/Tk., Mortar & Carrier Plns took part.
- 4th Sept. Bn. carried out normal training.
- 5th Sept. Sunday, Routine as usual.
- 6th Sept. Training. For the last four days a very strong NE wind has blown raising quantities of dust.
- 7th Sept. Bn. carried out normal training.
- 8th Sept. Bn. carried out normal training.
- 9th Sept. "O" Group 1430 hrs. at which orders for the Bn. move to TRIPOLI assembly area prior to embarkation to ITALY were issued. Advance Party to move 0700 hrs. Bn. to move 0900 hrs. in order Bn. HQ, A, B, C, D & HQ Coys.
- 10th Sept. Bn. arrived TRIPOLI 1430 hrs. proceeded to settle down in new area which was very hot and fly ridden. Combined Officers Mess started.

AREA TRIPOLI.

- 11th Sept. Day devoted to further cleaning & settling in. Tps. leave to TRIPOLI daily from 1400 to 2200 hrs.
- 12th Sept. Sunday.
- 13th Sept. Coys carried out arms inspection etc.
- 14th Sept. 0830 hrs. Bn. route march 10 miles in TRIPOLI area – returned to camp 1230.  
1400 hrs. Orders for move from assembly area to L.S.T. marshalling area received.  
2115 hrs. "O" Group C.O. explained forthcoming op. 7th Armd. Div. were to land at SALERNO after 46 & 56 Divs. & American 45 & 3 Divs had secured bridgehead in SALERNO plain. Bn. would concentrate on arrival at SALERNO.  
In order to move to ITALY Bn. was divided into 7 groups of personnel & tpt. To be carried on 7 separate L.S.T's.
- 15th Sept. 0930 hrs. Moved to L.S.T. marshalling areas and remained in the area all day. Men bathed.
- 16th Sept. 0800 hrs. first gps. Moved for loading; remaining gps. Followed on. Loading completed convoy sailed for ITALY at 2330 hrs.

#### AT SEA.

- 17th Sept. Sea very calm – voyage uneventful up to now.
- 18th Sept. 1400 hrs. land sighted. Passing through straits of MESSINA.  
1800 hrs. passed REGGIO and MESSINA. Journey was very comfortable.

#### SALERNO AREA.

- 19th Sept. 1245 hrs. Convoy beached at SALERNO – proceeded immediately to concentration area N 782176? A/Tk, Mortars, Carrier Plns. & Bn. HQ tpt. all arrived in area by 1600 hrs. Coys tps. also arrived. Tpt for Coy cooks and stores etc. not arrived as L.S.T's had broken down in TRIPOLI harbour.
- 20th Sept. 0810 hrs. Attack on L.G. near SALERNO by 7 Me 109. 0930 hrs. warning order for move to new concentration area. 1255 hrs. second attack on L.G. 1400 hrs. Bn. H.Q. & A/Tk, Mortars & Carrier Plns moved to N 760262. Coy personal marched – distance 8 miles. 1500 hrs. Bn. in new area. 1840 hrs. Brigadier visited Bn. H.Q.
- 21st Sept. 0745 hrs. C.O. to conference at Bde. Two strafing raids during morning by Me 109 & FW 190 – no damage in Bn. area.
- 22nd Sept. 0800 hrs. Bn. area strafed by 7 Me 109 – no damage. 1400 hrs. Div. Comds. conference. Plan for next attack explained. 7 Armd. Div. with 131 Bde. & 1/7th Queen's leading to burst through TERRINI PASS on 23<sup>rd</sup> Sept. 46 Div. putting in initial attacks.
- 23rd Sept. Bn. remained at one hrs.' notice to move throughout the day.
- 24th Sept. Bn. at 2 hrs notice to move. Training was begun on Pln. & Coy. basis to acclimatize Bn. to new type of country. Lt. S.E. BROWN posted to 131 Bde. HQ.
- 25th Sept. 0900 hrs. Brigadier visited Bn. HQ. Training as before.
- 26th Sept. Training on Coy basis consisted of short marches through weeded country. Notice to move varied from 1 to 4 hrs.  
2100 hrs. heavy rain throughout the night.

#### SALERNO AREA.

- 27th Sept. 0830 hrs. "O" Group fwd. body held in farmhouse. 0930 hrs. orders to move. Head of coln. to be on road by 1130 hrs.  
1130 hrs.. Head of coln. on road. Fwd. body consisting of "A" Sqn. 5th RTR, "A" Coy 1/7th Queen's, J Bty. 3 RHA 69 Med. Op. up 2 Dets. Mortars. Remainder of Bn. with 12 pln. C Coy 1 Cheshire 's and one Bty. 260/65 A/Tk regiment constituted main body.  
1135 hrs. coln. moved off. 1230 hrs. entered SALERNO.  
1700 hrs. entered CAVA DE TIRRENI 5932 and leaguered for the night.

#### CAVA DE TIRRENI AREA.

- 28th Sept. 0515 coln. moved off. Objective of fwd. body high ground 50390.  
1130 hrs. "A" and "B" Coys. occupied objectives unopposed. 1135 hrs. column. moved on to NOCERA 5338.  
1200 hrs. C and D Coys. and Carriers took up defensive positions north of NOCERA.

1230 hrs. enemy straggler taken soldier from 11 Coy 3rd Bn. H. Goering Div.  
 1300 hrs. I.O (Captain AINSWORTH evacuated sick. Lt. P HOGGARTH assumed duties of IO.  
 1600 hrs. DLI began relief of a B, C & D Coys..  
 1730 hrs. relief completed. 1800 hrs. D Coy left for attachment to 23rd Armd. Bde.  
 1830 hrs. remainder of Bn. spent night in buildings in NOCERA. 2000 hrs. "O" group Bn. HQ 2  
 plan Ops. 29th Sept. 2030 hrs. heavy rain and thunder, Bn. well sheltered.  
 Observations on days Ops. Bn. occupied its objectives without opposition. This was a pleasant  
 surprise as strong resistance was expected.

#### NOCERA AREA.

29th Sept. 0530 hrs. B Coy took over advanced guard from A Coy. C Sqn. 5th RTR also took over from  
 "A" Sqn.  
 1215 hrs. coln. passed through SCAFATI 4438, held by 1/6th Queen's and turned north in  
 direction of S. PIETRO 4539.  
 1300 hrs. fwd. body reported MARRA 4642 held by enemy.  
 1400 hrs. "B" Coy debussed at 456417 and advanced on foot.  
 1500 hrs. platoon B Coy reached crossroads 463471 where they forced an enemy tracked  
 vehicle to retire by 2" mortar fire and captured a staff car containing maps.  
 1515 hrs. "C" Coy brought up to support "B" Coy.  
 1600 hrs. two tanks destroyed and one damaged by concealed enemy gun probably SP gun  
 down Rd MARRA - S. PIETRO  
 Lt. LESLIE HERMON COCKROFT was killed when one tank was hit.  
 1800 hrs. "B" and "C" Coys. take up night positions in MARRA which is clear of enemy.  
 1830 hrs. "A" Coy carriers 2 Tps. tanks guard right flank at 458412 whilst A/Tk guns cover Rd  
 MARRA - S. PIETRO.  
 1900 hrs. enemy quiet, uneventful night.  
 since its Observations on days Ops. Today the Bn. was in contact with the enemy for the first time  
 landing in Italy its objectives were reached, however. It was noted that the close nature of the  
 country with its narrow lanes enabled the enemy to conceal A/Tk guns covering the main  
 roads. On the other hand, movement of infantry towards enemy positions was facilitated.

#### S. PIETRO AREA.

30th Sept. Bn. objective POGGIOMARINO 4544.  
 enter 0730 hrs. "A" Coy moving up to 451426 reported canal crossing intact. 0830 hrs. "C" Coy  
 POGGIOMARINO and report town clear of enemy.  
 day. 0900 hrs. heavy enemy shelling of "C" Coy which continued at various times throughout the  
 day.  
 1000 hrs. Lt. A. Reed (UDF) and one O.R. evacuated wounded. Carriers occupied X roads  
 441446. Reported clear of enemy.  
 1130 hrs. "A" Coy move to rd. junc. 444434 then at 1400 hrs. to track at 440350 with Carriers.  
 Coy 1500 hrs. "B" Coy move to X roads 441446 and take up defensive positions. 1600 hrs. "C"  
 move North to road 453457 being shelled during the move.  
 1700 hrs. D Coy returned to Bn. reporting one O.R. killed and one wounded during their  
 attachment to 23rd Armd. Bde. They took up positions at X roads 465436. Uneventful night.  
 Observations on days Ops. Bn. move through difficult country to their objectives. In  
 POGGIOMARINO they were subjected to heavy shell and mortar fire.

D.S. Gordon,  
 Lt. Colonel  
 Comd. 1/7<sup>th</sup> Queen's

#### Officers List at Landing.

Lieut.-Colonel D. S. Gordon  
Major J. Sykes-Wright  
Major K. A. Jessup  
Capt. P. C. Freeman  
Capt. R. Carver  
Capt. E. G. Sandys  
Capt. B. G. Meara, ( Wounded)  
Lieut. D. L. Fennell  
Lieut. D. T. Hodson  
Lieut. P. Hoggarth  
Lieut. E. G. Dever  
Lieut. H. T. P. Large  
Lieut. A. Reed  
2/Lieut. R. J. Ashworth  
2/Lieut. J. A. Beard  
2/Lieut. E. D. J. Martin  
Capt. J. Sheehan (R.A.M.C.)

Capt. T. H. Kemp  
Capt. E. M. French  
Capt. J. Fracis  
Capt. N. A. H. Marsden  
Capt. G. H. Courchee  
Lieut. J. M. Skillington  
Lieut. E. S. Corbett  
Lieut. G. W. Bevan  
Lieut. A. G. Rich  
Lieut. J. K. Wood (Union Def. Forces)  
Lieut. W. J. V. Lane  
Lieut. M. J. Dunston  
2/Lieut. B. M. N. Wurtele  
2/Lieut. W. B. Channell  
Lieut. C. H. J. Stammer, (Quartermaster)

The following casualties had occurred 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)