

1/7th Bn. The Queen's Royal Regiment (West Surrey) War Diary June 1944

JUNE 1944.

- 1st June. 0930 hrs. C.O. to Bde. for conference.
1730 hrs. C.O. spoke to all officers W.O's and Sgts. reviewing course of the war and future possibilities. Today being the Glorious 1st of June a Bn. sing song and concert was held in the dining tents compared by Lt. W.J. LALONE. Beer was provided by P.R.I. An excellent performance which included tongue twisting between officers and O.R's.
- 2nd June. Orders received for movement of personnel on the following day.
- 3rd June. 0930 hrs. Party for Mt 14 including C.O. and Adj. left for camp S. 6. Warley barracks. Party for M.T. 37 under Lieut. CROSS left for camp S. 8.
1700 hrs. Instructions from camp commandant that marching personnel were to move the following morning. Preparations for move included payment of men and changing of currency.
Advance Party sailed in M.T.C. 867 (Danish freighter).
Uncomfortable ship with men sleeping on hatches.
In absence of C.O. Maj. G.H. HODGSON assumed comd. Of marching personnel.
- 4th June. 0600 hrs. Marching Troops divided into parties for ships A. 1. Or A. 2.
A. 1. Consisting of A & B Coys. & ½ HQ.
A. 2. Consisting of C & D Coys & remainder of HQ Coy.
1100 hrs. All marching troops left for TILBURY DOCKS in T.C.V's A. 1. & A. 2. Parties boarded their ships S.S. LEOPOLDVILLE (Belgium) and S.S. CAMERONIAN respectively. Conditions on these two ships were very comfortable except for slight overcrowding. There was a well stocked N.A.A.F.I. for Offs. & Men. There was the usual routine of boat drill. Remained in THAMES estuary for the remainder of the day. Advance party R.V. with other ships of convoy off SOUTHEND.
- 5th June. 0230 hrs. M.T. 14 Party moved in T.C.V's to TILBURY DOCKS.
Boarded M.T. 14. Ships A1. & A2. Remained in THAMES ESTUARY Off SOUTHEND.
- At Sea. News that ROME had fallen received with great enthusiasm on board ships A1. & A2.
2300 hrs. Advance Party passed through Straights of DOVER.
- 6th June. 0900 hrs. A1. & A2. Ships sailed in convoy out of Thames Estuary and sailed past Deal, Dover & Folkstone. A smoke screen was laid by aircraft and warships & smoke floats. Occasional shells from French coast landed wide of the convoy.
News of opening of 2nd Front. All men were fully briefed and put into the general picture.
- 7th June. 0400 hrs. A1 & A2 anchored in Solent.
0600 hrs. M.T. 14 weighed anchor and sailed in convoy through the straights of Dover. Were shelled from French coast.
- 8th June. 1600 hrs. A! & A" Parties were taken off in L.C.A's and waded ashore, landed at LA RIVIERE – 9336 and began march to conc. Area. at one place on route packs were left behind to be picked up later. The weather was warm and their clothes soon dried. Various Groups of prisoners many Russian were seen. These were presumably from 716 Inf. Div. Other troops warned the men of the danger of snipers, even civilian snipers. The welcome from the local French people was not enthusiastic on the whole although a minority showed great warmth & produced wine and helped in any way they could. They waved Tri-colours and gave the "V" sign.

2350 hrs. A1. & A2. Parties arrived in conc. area POULIGNY 8082 where they found the Advance Party which had arrived only just before them. Coys dug defensive posns. as the location of the enemy was not accurately known.

9th June. Area POULIGNY.

1130 hrs. 2 bombs fell in the Bn. area. One probably a 1500 kg exploded and wounded 2 men.

The other failed to explode and the R.E's reported that it was probably dropped to low a height to become armed.

1715 hrs. M.T. 14 off-loaded into L.C.T's at LA VALETTE 9685 and landed. All got safely ashore except one 3 tonner which was drowned and one ambulance which fell into a bomb crater.

10th June. 0800 hrs. C.O. & I.O. visited 6 Bn. Green Howards at DUOY STE MARGUERITA 8573.

1830 hrs. "O" Gp. 131 Bde. re move.

1930 hrs. "O" Gp. Bn. HQ Orders for move following day.

11th June. 0800 hrs. Bn. moved through BAYEUX into BLARY 8075. Defensive posns. were dug.

1100 hrs. Div. Comdr. visited Bn. and gave general situation to C.O.

1200 hrs. C.O., I.O. to Bde, "O" Gp. Plans for future moves S. to Villers BOCAGE were outlined by the Brig.

1430 hrs. C.O. & I.O. visited Gloucester's at PONT DE LA GUILLETTE 8369 to observe attack on TILLY-SUR-SEUILLES. Also visited 5 T/ks. At rd. junction 811712 and Essex at BERNIERS BOCAGE to find out latest situation.

2000 hrs. "O" Gp. At Bde. Brig. Explained that the following morning 1/5 & 1/6 Queen's with Support of 1 R.T.R. 3 & % R.H.A. and 65 A/Tk. Regt. were to take over the advance from the Gloucester's & Essex respectively and push S. in the direction of VILLERS BOCAGE 7157. 1/7 Queen's to be held in Reserve ready to take over from either Queen's Bns. Bde. I.O. gave outline of posns. in 21 Army Gp.

2030 hrs. "o" Gp. Coys. To put these orders into effect.

12th June. 0800 hrs. C.O. & I.O. visited Gloucester's and looked at Coy posns.

1100 hrs. C.O. informed that 1/7 to form firm base at BUCEEUS 8269

1230 hrs. Previous order cancelled. 1/7th to go under comd. of 22 Armd. Bde.

1445 hrs. Bn. moved off behind 4 CLY (with 1 R.B. in Support) in 22 Armd. Bde. column. Order of march Carriers, "D" Coy, 2/Sec A/tk. guns, "O" Gp. Tac Bn., "C" Coy, Mortar Pln., Sec. A/tk. "A" Coy, "B" Coy., A 1 Ech. S. Point 816718. Route LE BAS MONGARD 7474, S. to LA BUTTE and ST. HONORINE de DUCY. Head of Bn. Coln. Halted by enemy A/Tk. gun and Bn. leaguered for the night. Bn. conc. area being round junc. 727632. The day had been long and tiring the route over narrow dusty rds. After quickly digging slit trenches the men fed and were soon asleep.

13th June. 0530 hrs. 22 Armd. Coln. Moved off via LIVRY 7361 and AMAYE-SUR-SEUILLES.

1000 hrs. 4 C.L.Y. entered VILLERS BOCAGE and passed through it towards high ground W. of the city. They were immediately attacked by enemy Mk VI Tks. The 2nd Sqn. remained in the town and 1/7th Queen's were ordered into the town for Support. A/tk. guns and CARRIERS IMMEDIATELY MOVED INTO THE TOWN WHILST REMAINDER OF Bn. debussed at ST. GERMAIN 7857 and moved W. towards VILLERS BOCAGE. Snipers were found in houses and fields and "D" Coy who were leading cleared several houses of snipers and captured a staff car. 3 prisoners belonging to Pz Gren. Bn. of 2 Pz Div. were taken. "D" Coy lost 2 killed & 2 wounded.

Area Villers Bocage.

1130 hrs. "D" Coy entered town followed by "C" Coy. Shortly after entry a Mk VI fired down the main street destroying half a house & wounding Maj. E.M. FRENCH & several O.R's.

Several other tks. Mk. IV & VI's were observed in the town and the troops were ordered to enter houses and stalk the tks. with sticky bombs and P.I.A.T's. Enemy tks. were in the main St. of VILLERS BOCAGE and all exits were soon covered by A/Tk. Pln. & "B" Coy 4 C.L.Y. P.I.A.T's were fired at extremely close range and sticky bombs were dropped from top story window of houses. At least one Tiger & one Mk. IV were K.O'd by those methods whilst Bn. 6 pdrs. Claimed 4 Mk. VI. Coys then moved to cover the main approaches to the village. A Coy attempted to move to station but were held up and Maj. HODGSON being injured. "C" Coy were in N.E. of town and "D" Coy S.E. Bn. HQ was established W. of town and was heavily stonked by 105 mm guns and were continually sniped. 1400 hrs. Remainder of Bde. could not come to assistance as they were being attacked on the flanks at AMAYE-SUR-SEULLES. 1800 hrs. Enemy gps. Of Inf. were infiltrating into the town and it was decided to withdraw the Bn. and "B" Sqn. 4 C.L.Y. Arty. smoke and H.E. was put down to cover withdrawal. 1900 hrs. Bn. was clear of town. A strong defensive posn. was established on hill 174, the fwd. edge of the new posns. being based on the line of sunken track running across the front. 5 R.T.R. took over defence of certain sectors which could not be covered by the Bn. Total casualties were 45 during the days fighting. The area was full of snipers hiding in the long grass and impossible to locate. The night passed quietly except for a small attack on "A" Coy section which was repulsed.

14th June. 1000 hrs. Enemy Inf. of about 2 Coy strength felt their way towards "C" & "D" Coys. Attack in front of "D" Coy developed slowly and enemy withdrew after firing on our FILs. With Spandau's from 100 yds. range. Attack on "C" Coy was pressed fwd. Lt. STIMSON's Pln. being overrun. Mortar and arty. D.F. were brought down with good effect. 2 Mk. IV tks. were seen approaching from BOCAGE but did not approach closely enough to be engaged by our A/Tk. guns. 1100 hrs. Enemy infiltrated to "C" Coy HQ but were beaten off by our counter-attacking with grenades and Sten guns. Enemy losses were heavy. Lt. LARGE H.T.P. in fierce hand to hand fighting. 1400 hrs. Heavy mortar concentrations brought down on enemy mortar posns. 1430 hrs. in view of the enemy's accurate mortar registration "C" & "D" Coys and Bn. HQ withdrew a few hundred yds. under arty. smoke. 1500 hrs. C.O. left for "O" Gp. At Bde. 1600 hrs. 2i/c's of Coys left with Bn. 2i/c to recce new area. 1615 hrs. "O" Gp. Bn. to withdraw to conform to general battle line 1700 hrs. Info. Received that 1/5th Queen's were being heavily attacked by Panthers & Inf. 1/5 were immediately to the rear of 1/7 Queen's. for the next three hrs. a battle raged on the flanks of 1/5th Queen's enemy Inf. also attempting to infiltrate through our flanks which were not covered. Lt. J.R. Conry wounded by shell and died of wounds. Concentrations of arty. fell on the Bn. area from time to time. 2400 hrs. Withdrawal commenced, Carriers & Mortars leading "A" & "B" Coys marched to embussing area 783578. "C" & "D" Coys and Sqn. 5 R.T.R. covered the withdrawal. During this trying period enemy snipers armed with rifles and M.G's continually sniped the column. The Bn. withdrew safely, Maj. P.C. FREEMAN MC being wounded just before leaving the area. Journey to new area uneventful although rds. were crowded and progress was slow.

15th June. Area Hill 174. 0600 hrs. Bn. in new area 7462. Immediate defensive posns. were taken up, the Bde, S. of the TORTEVAL – CAUMONT rd. 26 American Inf. Regt. on right of 131 Bde. The men were extremely tired having been fighting for several days with no break. Rest was organised as soon as defensive requirements had been met.

During two days fighting the Bn. had suffered 120 casualties in personnel as well as losing 3 A/Tk. guns, several M/C's & Carriers.

1500 hrs. Patrol of one off. & two reced area 797638 – 807636 – 803643. No movement seen rd. GRANVILLE – LA CHAPELLE.

1530 hrs. Capt. R. LUGG, Lt. G.I.S. BURNETT & 48 O.R's 1st Line reinforcements arrived. Capt. R. LUGG assumed comd. of "D" Coy. 258 Bty. Of 65 A/tk. Regt. attached to Bn. J. Bty. 3 R.H.A. once more in Support. Gunner O.P. established "A" Coy area.

2200 hrs. "A" Coy established standing patrol on bridge 757637. N.T.R.

During day several fifth columnists were reported by civilians to be living locally. These matters were successfully dealt with by the F.S.S.

- 16th June. 0700 hrs. Recce patrol of 3 report TORTEVAL empty. 3 Germans seen at LA CHAPELLE.
0900 hrs. "O" Gp. Bn. HQ General posn. explained to Coy & Spec. Comds. Tasks to improve weapon pits and maintain patrolling on Bn. front.
1100 hrs. "B" Coy conc. at LA PAUMERIE ready to move to assistance of 1/6th Queen's then to BRIQUESSARD if enemy attempted to infiltrate between 1/6 & 1/5th Queen's.
"B" Coy was temporarily under comd. of B Sqn. 5 R.T.R. B Coy posn. filled by Carriers.
1215 hrs. Patrol of 4 report LA CHAPELLE still empty but snipers in woods to the S.
1600 hrs. Patrol of 3 report 3 enemy and concrete dug-out in GRANVILLE.
1630 hrs. Enemy patrol of 7 observed at 755623. Fired on by "A" Coy.
1630 hrs. Carrier foot patrol report LA COUARDE clear of enemy except for occasional sniper. Spandau post 767637.
1830 hrs. "D" Coy beat off an attack by 20 enemy Inf. inflicting casualties.
2100 hrs. Patrol report movement seen in buildings 755624. Vehs. Observed 758626.
2300 hrs. Standing patrols pushed out in front of "A", "B" & "C" Coys.
- 17th June. 0315 hrs. "D" Coy fwd. Pln. fired on by enemy patrol. No attack developed. Mortar fire later landed in "D" Coy area.
0900 hrs. M/C from Pz. LEHR Div. stopped on rd. by "C" Coy and rider taken prisoner.
1000 hrs. G.O.C. visited C.O.
1100 hrs. Advance party from 1 R.B. visited Bn. and liaised with Coy and Spec. Comds. With a view to taking over posns.
1700 hrs. "O" Gp. At LA PAUMERIE. Bn. to move off after dark and take up defensive posns. between 1/5 & 1/6 Queen's who were considered to have a dangerous gap between them.
2000 hrs. 1/6th Queen's announced attack on their front and possible need of "B" Coys assistance but 1/6 were able to repel enemy without our help.
2100 hrs. Lt. Col. D.S. GORDON DSO posted to Comd. 151 Bde. Maj. W.D. GRIFFITHS MC assumes comd. of the Bn. and Maj. E.G. SANDYS duties of 2i/c.
2300 hrs. 1 R.B. took over our posns. and 1/7th Queen's moved to new posns. which were dug and occupied by first light.
"B" Coy relieved C Coy of 1/5th Queen's in their posn. area 738608.
"A" Coy took up posns. in LIVRY.
"C" Coy round X rds. LA PAUMERIE.
"D" Coy LIGNEROLLES
- 18th June. 1000 hrs. "B" Coy Comdr. report accurate shelling of his fwd. plns. some casualties in wounded and shell shock.
1400 hrs. DAVID HENRY ALCOCK CLEWS, 273208 killed by shell. During day Mortar Pln. laid heavy conc. on enemy posns.

1420 hrs. Maj. BOSANQUET posted to Bn. assumes comd. of "C" Coy. In place of Capt. RICH who was evacuated with an old leg wound.

1730 hrs. C.O. visited "B" Coy and arranged for their relief by "D" Coy. Throughout the day there was frequent shelling and mortaring of Bn. area. Personnel were by now well dug in and there were no casualties. In view of the danger of shells striking trees and bursting over the top of slit trenches overhead cover was quickly improvised. 3 R.H.A. put down heavy cons. On enemy posns.

19th June. Area LA PAUMERIE.

0430 hrs. Lt. HUGHES reported that his patrol had located enemy Spandau's at 738605 & 745607. Enemy posns. were along hedge and track 739604 to 743606.

0500 hrs. The weather worsened considerably and heavy rain began which continued throughout morning.

0600 hrs. "O" Gp. Bn. HQ Orders given for counter attack role of rear Coys (C & D) if 1/6th Queen's were overrun. In case of emergency "C" & "D" Coys were to form up on rd. S.W. of PAUMERIE and track S.E. from rd. junc. 727613 was to be used as centre line.

1000 hrs. Brig. Visited C.O. 6 x 105mm shells landed on "A" Coy area.

1200 hrs. C.O. visited "A", "B" Coys. "B" Coy report enemy in house 746606. Also enemy patrol on track between 746606 & 750609.

1500 hrs. Sgt BEST reported that his patrol had located enemy in area 740607.

1800 hrs. Wireless news listened to with interest. FRANK GILLARD B.B.C. Press Correspondent mentioned clash of 7 A.D. with 2 Pz. Div. at VILLERS BOCACHE.

2000 hrs. Mortar bombs landed near "A" Coy HQ wounding 2 men. Lt. A. REED (A/Tk. Pln. Comdr. promoted Capt.

20th June. 0700 hrs. Message from Lt. Gen. HUGHES ex G.O.C. 44th Div. and one time Brig. 131 Bde. now in M.E. to 1/5, 1/6, 1/7th Queen's "All ranks Queen's Middle E. assembled together on Glorious 1st June send warmest greetings and best wishes"

1100 hrs. "A" Coy report shelling by 88mm.

1200 hrs. 300 rds. of Bn. 3" Mortar fired into suspected enemy M.G. post on sunken rd. 737613 to 743617.

1230 hrs. Brig. Visited Bn HQ.

1300 hrs. Battle Patrol took up posn. on left of "B" Coy to thicken up the line.

1530 hrs. "O" Gp. Bn. HQ to discuss re-shuffling of Coys. Frequent reliefs of the fwd. Coys. Was necessary owing to the great strain on the men in the fwd. Plns. Following changes in Coy posns. were arranged to be completed by first light. June 21:- "A" Coy to be withdrawn and to spend 24 hrs. in a rest area. "B" Coy to remain in present posn. for further 24 hrs. "C" Coy to take over a Reserve Coy posn. from 1/6th Queen's. "D" Coy to move to "C" Coy posn.

L.O. from 24 American Inf, Regt. attd. To Bn. Day was so cold and wet that greatcoats were worn most of the time.

21st June. 1400 hrs. Recce patrol reports noise of hammering from area 747605. 2 lorries passed down rd. S. of BUQUET.

1400 hrs. Cpl. HANCOCK'S patrol (Battle Patrol) report enemy in area 748606.

2300 hrs. "A" Coy take over "B" Coys posns. and "B" Coy come out of the line for a rest.

22nd June. 0145 hrs. 1/6 Queen's report enemy activity on their front. 1/7 fwd. Coys. "A" & "C" warned by Adj. To be on their guard.

Nothing further developed.

0430 hrs. Cpl. Golding of Battle Patrol returning from night patrol reported hammering and shovelling at 747606.

1100 hrs. C.O. & I.O. visited Bde. HQ.
1200 hrs. Mortars fired on enemy M.G. posns.
1600 hrs. Shelling "A" Coy area by 105mm.
Weather improved considerably during day and the afternoon was warm and sunny.
C.O. visited 1/5th Queen's to arrange for "B" Coy to relieve "B" Coy 1/5th Queen's.
1700 hrs. "O" Gp. Bn. HQ. C.O. stressed importance of using imagination in construction of weapon pits and gave as examples of what was needed some German posns. he had seen.
It was necessary to adapt weapon pits to the type of country in which we were operating.
2300 hrs. "B" Coy relieve "B" Coy 1/5th Queen's in area 745612.

- 23rd June. 0330 hrs. Battle Patrol report standing patrol of 5 or 6 men in area track 744609.
1000 hrs. The following officers :- Lt. P.W. ROPER, Lt. H.L. McKENZIE, Lt. J.E. CATLEY, Lt. C.P. CUMMINGS, Lt. N.F. BURRELL and 52 O.R. reinforcements arrive.
1400 hrs. Bde. I.O. visited Bn. and gave out new areas of patrolling responsibility.
2000 hrs. Shelling of "A" Coy area by 105mm guns. 2 killed 4 wounded. The day was warm and sunny and troops were able to dry their clothes and clean up. A number were able to use the bathes at BAYEUX. During the night arty and Mortar conc. were brought down on suspected enemy posns. in front of Bn.
- 24th June 0230 hrs. "A" Coy reported sounds of tracked vehicles to their front. These were probably from the BUQUET area and had often been heard before.
0330 hrs. "B" Coy (1) Patrol which had laid up during the night at 744609 reported movement of horse drawn transport.
0430 hrs. "B" Coy (2) patrol reported sounds of Spandau firing and M.T. movement S.E. of BUQUET.
1130 hrs. Lt. Col. M.F.P. LLOYD assumed Comd. of the Bn. and began inspection of Coy posns.
1800 hrs. G.O.C. 7 A.D. & Brig. visited Bn. HQ to meet Lt. Col. LLOYD.
2145 hrs. Bn. area staffed by 3 x ME 109's (no casualties). Enemy planes were engaged by S.A.A.
2330 hrs. "D" Coy relieved "A" Coy who occupied "D's old area. Battle Patrol moved to a rest area and 1/5th Queen's took over left hand Pln. area.
- 25th June. 0600 hrs. "C" Coy patrol reported N.H.S. BUQUET but sounds of hammering in area 749607. "B" Coy patrol reported similar sounds from area 749605.
These sounds were considered to indicate possible mining or wiring activities.
1000 hrs. Open air Service held at Bn. HQ.
1930 hrs. Bn. HQ shelled with air bursting 88mm.
2000 hrs. Bde. I.O. brought latest information.
2330 hrs. "C" Coy relieved "B" Coy.
The weather was sunny and there was considerable Allied Air activity especially during the morning. Enemy arty. was active during the afternoon. Wiring of Bn. front was continued.
Weapon pits were continually improved.
- 26th June. 0430 hrs. Patrols found from Battle Patrol and "D" Coy reports that an S.P. Gun presumably 75mm moved up to 746607 during night fired shots towards 1/6th Queen's area and then moved off. They also reported sounds of hammering from wood at 745607.
2000 hrs. Heavy mortaring and M.G. fire on "C" Coy posns. from BUQUET.
2020 hrs. Heavy arty. barrage put down on BUQUET.
2100 hrs. 2 enemy approached within 20 x of "D" Coys posn. and were fired on and withdrew.
2200 hrs. Mortars fired on suspected enemy posns. Day was wet and sunless with all tracks turned into quagmires.

- 27th June. 0430 hrs. "C" Coy patrol reported sounds of pickets being driven in and nails hammering between 752617 & 753615.
 1 heavy lorry on tracks W. of 744608.
 1100 hrs. "A" Coy engaged 2 F.W. 190's travelling in S.W. direction.
 1200 hrs. "Lt. BEVAN posted to Bde. as L.O.
 During morning C.O. inspected Coy areas.
 Satisfactory progress in digging and wiring.
 1700 hrs. Shelling of Bn. area.
 2100 hrs. 6 x ME 109's over Bn. area and were engaged by rifles and Brens.
- 28th June. 0930 hrs. Snipers reported at 718604. Engaged by Mortars.
 1430 hrs. Patrols report N.M.S. BUQUET sounds of voices and noises of hammering between 753617 & 754618. M.T. movement heard on rd. S.E. of 744608.
 1130 hrs. Bn. Snipers at 743608 report mortaring wood at 745607. Forced to withdraw. 5 out of 6 mortar bombs failed to explode.
 Occasional bullets flying over the heads of "D" Coy fwd. posns. came from skirmish on right between 1/6th Queen's and German patrol.
 1220 hrs. 2 enemy reported N. of wood at 738605 engaged. Results not known.
 1600 hrs. Firing on "C" Coy posns. from BUQUET S.A.A.
 1630 hrs. C.O. & I.O. visited 1/5 to re-arrange patrol boundaries between the Bns.
 1800 hrs. Lorry load of Inf. (enemy) seen debussing near BUQUET. Heavy arty stonk appeared to score direct hits on Spandau posns.
 2330 hrs. Arty. stonked wood S. of BUQUET.
- 29th June. 0430 hrs. Lt. R.A. HUGHES B.P. Comdr. lay up 741608 during night with patrol. Mortar located area 745607.
 1100 hrs. C.O. & 2i/c's of Coys attended T/k. and Inf. demonstration.
 1230 hrs. 2 x F.W. 190 flew over Bn. area. Engaged.
 1600 hrs. Big conc. on Bn. area. Shells & Mortars. 14 Casualties.
 Durin night enemy conc. by 105mm on area 735612. No cas.
 2300 hrs. "A" Coy relieved "D" Coy.
- 30th June. 0430 hrs. 2 patrols report as follows:- S.P. area 744609 N.T.R. S.P. area 642608 sent recce tp N. of wood 743607 where 2 German posts were located. M.T. & 2 tracked vehicles on rd. S.E. od rd. junc. 744608.
 0600 hrs. Mortar firing in wood 745607. Mortars stonked area.
 1100 hrs. Thunderbolt dropped bomb at 72956148 leaving crater 20 ft. across. No cas.
 1600 hrs. Shelling & Mortaring of Bn. HQ area No cas.
 2030 hrs. Lt. Col. COLMAN 46 Regt. 2 U.S. Armd. Div. visited C.O. and made preliminary arrangements regarding relief of Bn. "A" Coy report firing on enemy patrol to their front. "B" Coy relieved "C" Coy as Left fwd. Coy.

Lt. Col. M.F.P. Lloyd,
 Comdg.
 1/7th Bn. The Queen's Royal Regt.

11th July 1944.

Officer List June 25th 1944

Lieut.-Colonel M.P. Lloyd	R. Fus.
Major W. D. Griffiths, MC	Queen's
Capt. E.G. Sandys	Queen's
Capt. E. S. Corbett	Hamps.
Majoy F. Bosanquet	Queen's
Capt. G. H. Courchee	Essex
Capt. T. H. Kemp	Queen's
Capt. B. G. Meara	S.W.B.
Lieut. J. K. Wood	(U.D.F.)
Capt. D. L. Fennell	Queen's
Capt. J. M. Skillington	R.W.F.
Capt. A.R. LUGG	Hamps.
Lieut. A. Reed	Duke of W.
Lieut. J. B. L. Ainsworth	S. Staffs.
Lieut. P. Hoggarth	Hamps.
Lieut. E.D.J. Martin	Queen's
Lieut. P. Greenall	Queen's
Lieut. L. C. Cross	Queen's
Lieut. R. A. Hughes	Queen's.
Lieut. P.N. Jones	Queen's
Lieut. G.P. Rest	Cdn. Inf. (Wilts.)
Lieut. P.W. Roper	Ox & Bucks.
Lieut. H. L. Hodson	Som. L.I.
Lieut. G. W. Bevan	Queen's
Lieut. H. Lofthouse	Queen's
Lieut. K.L. Mackenzie	Cdn. Inf.
Lieut. A.H. Beveridge	Queen's
Lieut. J.E. Catley	Cdn. Inf. (Wilts.)
Lieut. C.P. Cummings	Cdn. Inf. (Wilts.)
Lieut. W. J. Lalonde	Cdn. Inf. (Wilts.)
Lieut. N.F. Burrell	Ox & Bucks.
Lieut. G.I.S. Burnett	Queen's
Capt. C. H. J. Stammer, (QM)	Queen's
Capt. J. Sheehan,	R.A.M.C.
Rev. J. Macintosh	R.A.Ch.D.

The action by the 1/7th Bn. the Queen's Royal Regiment at Villers Bocage.

At 1500 hours, the 12th of June 1944, the Bn. was placed under command of the 22nd Armoured Brigade, which was ordered to move round the right flank of 30 core. The object of this quick move was to capture the high ground. Northwest of VILLERS BOCAGE by attacking it from the West as little or no progress had been made from the north. This move was made possible by the Americans, who were advancing rapidly on the right flank of the division towards CAUMONT.

The brigade moved off at 1600 hours with 4th CLY leading followed by the Bn. The route was along a series of very narrow and twisting third rate roads and the dust raised by the armoured vehicles was blinding. However, very good progress was made, and every available hour of daylight was used. During the move, contact was made with the Americans advancing towards CAUMONT. Only light opposition was encountered by the leading regiment, but

the armoured Recce Regiment reported enemy tanks and various locations held by the enemy on our left flank which we had bypassed.

By 2230 hours the light was beginning to fade and the brigade commander ordered the brigade to form a rapid Leaguer for the night. Due to the congestion on the 1 narrow road, this took some time and it was zero 100 hours. Before Bn. Leaguer was complete and the troops had had a meal. The first for a good many hours.

On The 13th of June the advance continued at 0500 hours and by 1000 hours 4th City of London Yeomanry had reached Villers Bocage, passed through the town and we're getting onto their objective. The high ground NW of the village when the first serious opposition was encountered. This was the sudden appearance of several Mark VI Tiger tanks.

In the meantime, the Bn. had debussed and was preparing to take up a firm base position on the high ground east of the village when orders were issued to move at once into VILLERS BOCAGE itself and cover its main exits

The carriers and anti-tank guns moved off at once. The leading company encountered a German staff car and two motorcycle combinations which suddenly appeared from a side track. The leading platoon suffered some casualties and when the car and combination had been ditched and the crews taken to fields where they commence sniping. These had to be dealt with before the company could move on. Three prisoners were taken, and the remainder dispersed. On arrival in the village, contact was made with the reserve squadron of 4th City London Yeomanry. It appeared that the leading Squadrons West of the town were facing serious difficulties by overwhelming numbers of Tigers.

A plan was then made to send up one of the Coys. with the Reserve Squadron to go to their assistance, but it was found impossible to get through to them and the plan had to be abandoned. While these arrangements were still being made, a Tiger was seen moving down the main road and blew down a house at the corner of the square where the 4th City of London Yeomanry and the leading Coys. were gathered. This caused some confusion, and the troops were ordered to get into the houses and use their PIATS whilst, Cromwell's and our six pounders covered all approaches into the High Street. Further tanks both Tigers and mark V's appeared in the main St. and some particularly fine work was done by Major French and a party from C Company and Captain Beard and a party from the carriers in stalking these tanks through the side streets and houses and tackling them with PIATS and sticky bombs. This period of tank hunting went on for about 2 hours, by which time at least one Tiger and one Mark IV in the main Street have been knocked out.

Having made certain that the enemy tanks in the Main Street had been well and truly bottled up, Coys. were ordered to get into the original disposition to cover the approach into the village. This was found to be a most difficult task as personal of Coys. have got very scattered throughout the houses in the village. In the meantime, "A" Company was sweeping round in the further outskirts and were directed on the railway station.

Further reports of tanks approaching from the NW and South were received throughout the afternoon. "A" company, meanwhile, had encountered infantry opposition on the further face of the village and were pinned to the ground while a small armoured battle raged for some time.

The Bn. 6 pounders in the area of the station had acquitted themselves well and claimed four tanks, all Mark VI Tigers knocked out and two hit without apparent damage. By the late afternoon the enemy tank threat had been smashed and the serious problem now was some pockets of infantry attempting to work their way through into the village. "A" Company have been driven back from their original positions and there was a large gap between the South and North Western edge which wasn't covered by any of our Coys. and there was no Company available to do it.

During the course of the day, the remainder of the Armoured Brigade still on the high ground behind us had been fighting their own battles against further tanks to the North, East and SW. In addition, they had considerable

trouble with snipers from treetops. In fact, the whole situation was a very confused one, with fighting going all round and behind one.

By 1800 hours small infantry elements had worked their way round to within close proximity of the tanks of 4th City of London, Yeomanry. Bn. H.Q. was almost pinned to the ground and the road leading into the village from the remainder of The Brigade was under quite heavy artillery fire which had knocked out a complete detachment of the mortars and brewed up a carrier.

A decision had to be made as to whether we could hold the village that night or not, whether without further Infantry Coys it did not appear possible, and the Brigade Commander issued orders for the Bn. and a Squadron of 4th County of London Yeomanry to withdraw onto the high ground West of the village from where we had started that morning and there join up in a firm base position with the remainder of 22nd Armoured Brigade. This withdrawal was successfully carried out covered by the 4th County of London Yeomanry. It's attracted a certain amount of shelling along the road, but casualties were very few.

The forward edge of the new positions was based on the line of a sunken track running across the front, both flanks were covered by tanks of The 5th Royal Tank Regiment whilst further behind was the 1/5th Queen's and in the middle was 5th Royal Horse Artillery and TAC Brigade H.Q.

The two main troubles were that fields of fire were restricted from about 50 to 100 yards and the enemy occupied high ground on three sides of the position.

About 1000 hours. 14th June it became clear that enemy infantry were feeling their way forward through the thick cover towards our leading Coys. both Mortars and artillery were used with good effect. By 1100 hours a definite attack had materialised on the left, forward Company "C" Company and a small arms battle of great intensity raged for the next two hours with the machine guns of the tanks lending valuable assistance. The Mortars and 5th Royal Horse Artillery. Were continually in support, switching from one area to another and meeting every call for fire with speed and intensity and accuracy.

At one stage the matter looked serious when one platoon was overrun and there appeared to be a danger of the left flank being turned but "C" Company counter attacked using Sten Guns and Grenades and restored the situation. Bn. HQ was within 20 yards of the frontline and would have been in great danger of being overrun if "C" Company had not secured the left flank. The reason why Bn. HQ displayed such courage in being so close to the frontline was that it was the only place where they were not overlooked from the flanks. "C" Company in particular fought a very fine action that day, and despite their weariness, their tails were much up. They had fought a square fight and very definitely driven the Hun off with heavy loss.

At about 1600 hours orders were received from Brigade that the whole Brigade was to withdraw that night to link up with the rest of the Division. Shortly after orders had been issued for this night withdrawal, the enemy put in a heavy attack on the rear of the Brigade box with two Bn's of infantry. Supported by about 30 Mark VI Tigers. Tac Brigade HQ. 5th Royal Horse Artillery, 1/5th Queen's were mainly involved, though the Bn. had for the first time that day some quite heavy shelling of the area.

In addition, a Company on the right were engaged with infantry patrols. This action lasted about an hour when the enemy gave up, leaving a number of Tigers brewing up merrily around Brigade box. This action delayed the plans for the withdrawal and it was half an hour after midnight before the first unit was leaving. Our two forward Coys. "C" and "D" found the rear-guard with a Squadron of 5th R.T.R. they remained in position until about 0200 hours when the Coys. climbed on. onto the tanks and came back to the new position about 5 miles further north.

These two days of the 13th, and 14th of June will no doubt be remembered by all those who took part in the action. We delivered a heavy on 2nd Panzer Div. which was forced to fight us whilst en route to another objective. The Bn. knocked out four Tiger tanks with its six pounders and shared two more with 4th County of London, Yeomanry. In addition, two were damaged by infantry tank hunting parties. The myth that the tiger was invincible has now been exploded.

The Bn. experienced its first enemy counterattack, which was driven back at a heavy cost to the enemy. The result of that his show that if every soldier stands firm and fights hard with all his weapons. He has nothing to fear in the Hun.

Our casualties in the two days fighting were eight officers and 120. Oh, ours. Sufficient indication that the fighting was hard.

Signed, D.S. Gordon.

Lieut. Colonel.

Comd. 1/7th Bn., The Queens Royal Regiment.

In the field.