

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

MAY 1944

HUNSTANTON

- 1st May. Bn. vehicles were fully loaded & drawn up in "Flights". Marching personnel were paraded in full equipment. Throughout the day the C.O. inspected marching troops & vehicles.
- 2nd May. Brig. Comdr. Inspected Bn. & expressed appreciation at the turnout and the obvious trouble that had been taken to achieve it.
1700 hrs. "O" Gp. Admin. Instructions for complete loading for Bn. Exercise "SHAKER". Bn. to be loaded as if for move.
- 3rd May. Administration.
- 4th May. Administration.
1430 hrs. Bn. Boxing Tournament held on recreation ground. Good sporting contests with many spectators including civilians. Bn. Band in attendance.
1830 hrs. Selected Offs. & N.C.O's attended Civil Affairs lecture at Drill Hall, DERSINGHAM. Given by Corps C.A.O.
- 5th May. Preparation for move. Billets scrubbed throughout.
- 6th May. 1000 hrs. C.O's inspection of all billets.
First Line reinforcements posted from "Z" Coy as follows:- Capt. Lugg, Lts. LANE & BURNETT & 86 O.R's to 41 R.H.U. Aldershot. Lt. CONRY & 15 O.R's to 102 Reinforcements Gp. Gravesend, Lts. REED & ANDERSON and 19 O.R's to 49 R.H.U. BRENTWOOD. Remainder of "Z" Coy to comprise Home details under Lt. BEVERIDGE.
- 7th May. Sunday. General preparations for move continued.
1400 hrs. Final "O" Gp. For Coy Comdrs. & Specialist Pln. Comdrs.
- 8th May. 0630 hrs. Advance Pty. Under Maj. GRIFFITHS MC moved off. Party consisted of 2i/cs of Rifle Coys O.C. HQ Coy, I.O. & Asst. Sig. Officer.
1700 hrs. Advance Party arrived in its conc. Area.
Camp T4. West Ham, in disused Greyhound Racing Stadium.
- 9th May. 0830 hrs. First Flight road pty. moved off behind 1/5 Bn. Queen's.
0730 hrs. Marching troops entrained at HUNSTANTON.
1600 hrs. Marching troops arrived in conc. Area.
Thorndon Hall Park, Brentwood, Camp S. 5. (G). Accommodation in tents. Camp was extremely dusty & troops found it almost impossible to keep clean.
Bathing facilities were non-existent in the Camp itself although after a short while troops were marched to nearby shower/baths. Apart from duty Coy and inlying Pln. Leave was allowed for all ranks every day after 1400 hrs. and transport was arranged between the camp and the nearest London tube Stn.
1700 hrs. Road Party arrived at conc. Area.
- 10th May. 2nd & 3rd Flights left HUNSTANTON for DIDLINGTON, NORFOLK, where they were accommodated in Nissan huts. 1st Flight:- Day spent in Admin & vehicle maintenance. Each morning at 0830 hrs. C.O's conference.

- 11th May. 1st Flight:- Limited training on Coy basis two route marches per week. Waterproofing of vehicles commenced (Stage 1).
Area. West Ham.
Advance party engaged in admin. & waterproofing. Leave was allowed after duty.
- 12th May. 1st Flight & advance party activities as for 11th May.
- 13th May. N.T.R.
- 14th May. 1st Stage W/proofing completed by 1st Flight & Advance Party.
- 15th May. 36 hr. Leave started for 1st Flight & Advance Party.
- 16-18th. Ditto.
- 19th May. 36 Hr. Leave cancelled.
- 20th May. 1430 hrs. G.O.C. Maj. Gen. ERSKINE DSO visited the Bn. and inspected vehicles.
- 21st May. Sunday. G.O.C. visited Advance Party.
- 22nd May. 1000 hrs. Brig. EKINS Bde. Comdr. Addressed all Offs. & N.C.O's down to Cpls. He made the following points:- a. Importance of good driving. b. Need to push on and never "Let up". c. Importance of discipline in the field in such matters as to cleanliness. d. Gave brief outline of role of Bde. in the next campaign and the probable method of working in the field.
He concluded by remarking that it was probably his last address to the troops before the next campaign. Maj. HODGSON transferred from 11th Bn. R. Fus. To 1/7th Queen's. Posted as O.C. "A" Coy. Lieut. LANE posted to 1st Flight from 1st Line Reinforcements.
- 23rd May. 1st Flight vehicles loaded except for blankets and personal kit.
- 24th May. 1100 hrs. "I" Truck transferred to 1st Flight from Advance Party.
1700 hrs. Air-raid warning 1710 All clear – no incidents.
- 25th May. 1130 hrs. C.O. & Maj. JESSUP (Acting 2i/c.) visited Advance Party. Lt. BLANCHARD posted to 101 R.H.U. C.O. left to attend A/Tk. Demonstration at LARKHILL.
- 26th May. 0100 hrs. Camp sealed. Everybody confined to camp.
- 27th May. During the period of sealing which was extremely trying for all concerned every effort was made to keep men occupied and contented. In the mornings Coys went on route marches, bathing parades or to the cinema at BRENTWOOD where special performances were given.
Lectures & discussions filled up odd moments. In the afternoons there were Div. Sports Meetings, cricket, basketball, football, boxing and swimming in a nearby lake. In the evenings concerts and sing-songs were arranged. A Quiz was set to all Plns. In the Bn. on Currant affairs and matters of military interest.
Prizes were awarded for the best answers. Meanwhile the weather was warm & sunny and shirt-sleeves were worn.
- 28th May. During the morning vehicles were finally loaded and marching personnel kept only the equipment they could carry with them.

1945 hrs. All vehicles marshaled outside Camp. Lt. LANE transferred to Div. HQ as L.O. Lt. CONRY posted to Bn. from 102 Reinforcement Gp.

- 29th May. 1130 hrs. C.O., 2i/c, Coy Comdrs., Adj. & I.O. briefed by the Div. Comdr. Maj. Gen. ERSKINE in WARLEY Barracks. Maj. JESSUP posted to home details.
1200 hrs. Marshalled vehicles moved off to Southend By-pass and began loading on to ships M.T. 14 & M.T. 37 at Tilbury Docks. 24 hr. Ration Packs issued.
- 30th May. 1400 hrs. Remaining Offs. of Bn. briefed by Div. Comdr.
1700 hrs. Brig. spoke to all Offs. on subject of Absenteeism and stressed that it was essential that nobody left the Camp.
1730 hrs. C.O. & Coy Comdrs. visited Map & Air Photo Room at the Bde. HQ.
2i/c & Maj. SANDYS visited 1st Flight from Advance Party. M.T. Drivers rtd. from Tilbury Docks except for maintenance party left behind at the quay-side.
Memorandum on Order of March issued by C.O.

Lt. Col. D.S. Gordon DSO.

Comdg.

17th Bn. The Queen's Royal Regt.