

## WAR DIARY

### 2/6th Bn. The Queen's Royal Regiment (West Surrey)

#### Area FRIELLO.

- 1st Dec. Continuous bombing of MONASTERY and whole mountain Ridge to DIFENSA and beyond. No enemy shelling all day. C.O. visits 2/5th Queens to arrange liaison between us for the forth coming (and at the moment highly secret) attack.
- 2nd Dec. Our planes started at dawn to continue their bombing of enemy positions most exciting and encouraging to watch and at 1100 hrs. the operation "CONKER" was made known to troops. 2/6 Queens to send fighting patrol to MONASTERY with diversion patrol in "PIMPLES" area.  
Whole plan very grandiose with an Arty. barrage greater than Alamein. First widespread use of "Terror crashes" - all guns of 5th Army firing on very small area at one time, and this repeated continuously during the night.  
1700 hrs. Arty. fire begins and continues all night tremendous noise and unbelievable number of guns.
- 3rd Dec. No news from SADDLE area. U.S. troops (Special Service) reported on DIFENSA. Points 819 and 722 taken by 167 Bde. 2/5th have Coy on RAZOR BACK. No news of our patrol. Bosch still holding SADDLE and MONASTERY during the day. Diversion pl. in PIMPLE'S area came down at dusk another pl. ready to go up. MONASTERY patrol unable to make any headway owing to determine Bosche resistance from above sheer wall to summit of MONASTERY hill.
- 4th Dec. Sounds of firing in PIMPLE'S area "C" Coy going up to take SADDLE tonight. U.S. troops worried by Sniper and Mortaring on DIFENSA a 2/5 attack MONASTERY but no news of result.
- 5th Dec. "C" Coy have one pl. in PIMPLE'S area casualties from U.S. DF fire against forming up of enemy counterattack during the night 2/Lt. Irish killed by this. Unable to make much progress up over Ridge behind PIMPLE'S rest of Coy began to come down but becomes cut off by considerable number of Snipers who got round onto the southern slopes of the MONASTERY feature. About 14 casualties including Major Ridings who subsequently died of his wounds and Capt. Heles who was shot in the shoulder. 2/5th Coy counter attacked on MONASTERY and pushed off after a very bloody battle with hand-to-hand fighting. 167 patrol to attack MONASTERY tonight. Towards line of PIMPLES to link up with us. "C" Coy now without officers.
- 6th Dec. London Irish did not get 2 COLLE as intended. White flag seen last night on MONASTERY Div. Commander sends message that evening that all Div. objectives taken. Enemy showing signs of having been badly beaten, many enemy casualties and equipment left on his positions.
- 7th Dec. Area 978073 1000 hrs. Tac moves too old "D" Coy HQ at 978073  
1100 hrs. Coy commanders Signal Officer and I.O. go with C.O. to recce mount la DEFENSA area in case Bn. has to take it over. Frightful 4 hour climb up American route passed many American dead some killed by German Mortar fire while we go up. A very

miserable day. Extremely hard going and I cannot understand how the Americans managed to supply themselves at all by that route.

### Area 978073

- 8th Dec. 0930 hrs. I Section on recce of new route to DIFENSA area as other was both impracticable and dangerous. Enemy shell and airburst over MONASTERY hill area. 1130 hrs. Brigadier Tac and C.O's conference afterwards. Bn. may move in a day or so to take over DIFENSA.
- 10th Dec. Bn. to take over DEFENSA from U.S. troops by 2200 hrs. All in position by about 1800 hrs.. Very cold and exposed. "A" Coy at 937098 "B" Coy in area .907 "C" Coy 949905 "D" Coy 959096 and tack at 949098. R.A.P. at top of SADDLE with administration post for equipment ammunition and tores etc. To be dumped by mules and porters for collection by Coys. Owing to time taken in getting into position no guides for porters who dropped their loads all over their countryside and caused the I.O. considerable trouble and no sleep at all in trying to find them. Eventually successful by 1000 hrs. the following morning.
- 11th Dec. Tremendous amount of enemy material discovered, about 30 enemy dead 4 81 mm Mortars about 14 M.G's masses of rifles and ammunition of all kinds and much wireless equipment some of this in good condition. Enemy obviously soundly beaten and very heavily damaged by the tremendous effect of our Arty. "terror crashes". Full reports rendered to Bde. on all this. Rained all night and most of us got wet "A" Coy contacted 6th Lincs. in ROCCA.
- 12th Dec. Brigadier came to the Tac with news that 2/7th would shortly relieve us everybody delighted. Patrol to ROCCA contacts Lincs and big Barrage on 46 Div. front
- 13th Dec. Hard rations - a little better than bully and biscuits. 2/6th now being relieved by 46 Div. one day later than expected relief by 2/7th. Patrol contacts London Scottish in CAMINO village and further patrol contacted K.O.Y.L.I. in area of M. MAGGIORE. Lincs. reported Bosche patrolling each night too COLLE. 1600 hrs. slight shelling of 907. Spotter planes R.A. chased by 4 M.E.s think he got away. Spotters have been almost too daring lately.
- 14th Dec. Increased air activity both sides. Patrol contacted Lincs. who state Germans use COLLE for drinking purposes (??) and have laid mines in wood 907119.
- 15th Dec. Bn. thins out and is eventually relieved by 1 Coy of Yorks and Lancs from 128 Bde. who took over "B" Coy and part of "A" Coy positions. All Bn. back in old area with Bn. HQ at 978073 by early morning 16th Dec.
- 16th Dec. Bde. to move to area FALCIANO SELICE in square 958 three. For. 18th 30th Dec. C.O's conference. Leave to be arranged where possible. Coy commanders and Senior Ranks to have four days leave with truck to go where they like. Cadres for junior and perspective N.C.O's. Christmas Day and Boxing Day as holidays Capt. Charles King stated to have procured 130 turkeys. Baths for the Bn. Promotions considered with Coy commanders.

- 17th Dec. Area 978073. Day for preparation for moved to rest area. 2/I.C (Major F.P. St M Sheil ex GII from Div. HQ posted to us during last battle as Major PINCOMBE is due to go to staff college) goes to recce new area and takes small advance party. Bn. to follow tomorrow morning.
- 18th Dec. Bn. moves to FALCIANO SELICE 9584 all in by 1400 hrs.  
1600 hrs. C.O's conference on training. Cadre to be started for perspective N.C.O's smartness essential, good discipline and drill. Leave to be granted as much as possible with preference to Officers and Senior N.C.O's who have been the hardest worked.
- 19th Dec. Kit checks and settling in new billets. I.O. on leave also three other officers.
- 20th Dec. Bn. Drill parade. Hopeful preparations for Christmas. Chaps to Naples for three days two Coys on alternative days.
- 21st Dec. Junior N.C.O's cadre starts. Heavy rain again as seems to be our usual experience. But it is a great relief to have more the one consecutively night in bed and look forward to at any rate some sort of Christmas.
- 22nd Dec. Still more rain. Takeover from Guards in Left hand Sector of 5th Army front on coast before GARIGLIANO to be reced by C.O. and I.O. before Christmas. Coy commanders after Christmas. C.O. on leave so 2/I.C. and I.O. earmarked.
- 23rd Dec. "I" Section do recce for map reading instructions on carder but still more rain.
- 24th Dec. I.O. and 2/I.C. recce new area during pouring rain. Bn. to take over from 6 Grenadier Guards who were extremely kind to us both.  
Major A. Renshaw M.C. posted as Comdg. officer of the Bn. with promotion to rank of Lt. Colonel from 19th Dec. Christmas eve.
- 25th Dec. The Bn's second Christmas away from home. Marked by a general feeling of weariness and no particular desire on the part of Officers and Men to do anything but eat well which we all did and sleep. Services in the morning by Padre Fairhurst and as per custom Officers and Sergeants waited on the chaps for Christmas dinner.  
Unfortunately, there was no wireless and we missed a spot of Christmas music and the kings broadcast.
- 26th Dec. I.O. to bed with bilious attack. Not repeat not the result of the previous day. I have to mention the I.O. so much as there is nothing else to write about and I am writing this thing anyway.
- 27th Dec. Bn. move to other end of village and takes over from London Scottish to make way for Div. reinforcement camp the object of which is twofold (A) to properly equip men who arrive at odd hrs. and would otherwise reach units under difficult and unsatisfactory conditions and (B) to act as leave camp for some battle weary men unit wish to rest.
- 28th Dec. I.O. acting adjutant and "I" Sgt. on leave hence nothing for war diary. But nothing special happened anyway.

- 29th Dec. Bn. to move on night of 31st Dec. to take over from three Coys of 6 Grenadier Guards (right) and right Coy of 3 Coldstream's.
- 30th Dec. 1300 hrs. recce on new area by C.O., I.O. and all Coy commanders and specialists pl's. 2030 hrs. Bn. "O" group. Bn. to move at 1700 hrs. on 31st Dec. The Africa Star ribbons up.
- 31st Dec. Teeming rain all the morning continuingly through afternoon and during takeover which in spite of adverse weather went very well and everyone is established in Guards old positions by first light 1st January. Tremendous gale during the night blew roofs off and trees down on route 7 must have been Strongest wind for some years in this part of the country. Snow appearing everywhere on the hills. I.O. interviewed at 1400 hrs. by GOC and accepted as instructor on Mortar wing of Div. Battle School. Handing over to Lt. Tompkins.

Lt. D.R. Edwards.  
Intelligence Officer 2/6th Queens

Lt. Colonel A.J. Renshaw MC  
Commanding Officer, 2/6th Queens,