

2/6th Bn. The Queen's Royal Regiment (West Surrey) War Diary July 1944

July 1944.

1st – 7th Jul. ` training continues and one free day in Cairo per week.

- 9th Jul. Bn. standing by to move at 24 hrs. notice.
Advance party has already left under Major KING.
Sports and recreational training have occupied the last two days and we expect to move now either today or tomorrow.
- 11th Jul. Bn. moves at 0315 in the morning arriving PORT SAID at 1600 hrs. Divisional signs have been taken down for security reasons - the first time since we came abroad.
After a long wait on the quayside, we finally embarked on a miserable tub called the BANFORA. She was built in 1914 and subsequently used by the FRENCH. On the fall of FRANCE, the Germans took her over as a submarine base ship and we captured her as a prize of war in naval operations. She is a dreary ship and a strong contrast to some of the others we have been on since leaving England. 2700 troops are packed aboard, and the O.C. Troops tells us in an evening lecture that maximum overburdening has been ordered by higher authorities for operational reasons.
- 12th Jul. At 1600 we sail following the BRITANNIC and the DURBAN CASTLE out of PORT SAID harbour. The ship has a slight list and developed an uneasy motion but the engines are surprisingly good and she keeps a fair speed without too much vibration.
- 13th Jul. We are joined by six other ships off Alexandria. Convoy now numbers 9 including one 3 ???????? impressive as the one which brought us from England.
- 17th Jul. Arrive at TARANTO after an uneventful journey. We did have 3 aircraft alarms on the third day out but no offensive action against the convoy. We disembark in the morning after breakfast I marched to a staging area outside the town. We are to be here for five days and in the afternoon the Co holds an oh group laying on training in two 2 day periods the first four hardening and the 2nd for minor tactical training.
- 18th Jul. March to a beach a few miles north and West of Toronto and spend the morning in swimming and games on the sand followed by a March back to camp again in the afternoon.
- 19th Jul. Same programme as yesterday but breakfast after the March down to the beach.
- 21st Jul. Leave for the new TIVOLI area 12 kilos W. of ROME with the C.O. on an advanced party for a conference which is to be held at division on the 24th. The Bn. follows by rail on the 23rd July. By car we do the journey in two stages sleeping under some olive trees at BENEVENTO and pushing on the next day too TIVOLI. We pass through the ruins of CASINO on the way and find nothing there but a shambles of bricks and twisted still littering the hillside with only an occasional fragment of a wall poking out of the rubble to show what was once there.
The last 80 miles on a flat tyre following two punches but we arrive before lunch on the second day and find the Bn. area situated in the middle of green farmland with the house four officers and sergeants mess and the Bn. orderly room an outbuilding probably once a robinne chamber on the side of a church.

25th Jul. The Bn. arrives at 0830 in the morning and by lunchtime is washed shaved and settled in. 'O' Group at 1400, we expect to be here for a fortnight and training hrs. will be from 0800 two 1300 hrs. daily with at least one free afternoon for every man in ROME.

26 - 31st July.

Normal training continues with the accent still since HELWAN on the pursuit battle so that we begin to think that we are earmarked for a follow through after an assault on the GOTHIC LINE.

Maj. Gen. WHITFIELD has taken over command of the Division from Maj. Gen. TEMPLAR. Maj. Gen. WHITFIELD left England with us in Comd. of 2/5th Queen's. He was promoted Brigadier on the 22nd January and has made the grade from Lt. Col. to Divisional Comdr. within six months.

We have Italian washerwoman just outside the camp who spend half their time show king close in dirty water at a cow trough near Bn. HQ and the other half hanging around the cookhouse begging for food.

Rome is far and away the most pleasant Italian city we have seen yet. The people and the shops are much cleaner and the Italians seem to have a different atmosphere about them altogether. It is surprisingly small for a European capital and from the top of Saint Peters you can see the whole town and quite a lot of the country beyond it without effort. Nearly everyone sees the Vatican and the Colosseum. Saint Peters itself is much too all night for my personal taste but the Colosseum is an amazing building towering above the modern erections round about it and this perfectly preserved as most of the buildings in Pompeii which were protected for most of their lives by the lava on the top of them.

On the 31st a small advance party under major king again leaves to establish a Bn. concentration area between ASSISI and PERUGIA. One day earlier and I would have missed a visit from the KING who inspected the Bn. and had tea with the commanders down to the Bn. commanders on the 30th.

Lt. Col. A.J. Renshaw, DSO, MC.

Comdg.

2/6th Bn. The Queen's Royal Regiment.

Officer List 29th July 1944.

Lt.-Col.	A. J. Renshaw	Queen's R.R.			
Major	F. P. St. M. Sheil	S.W.B.			
Major	P. M. A. Taylor	Queen's R.R.			
Major	A. D. G. Dallas	" "			
Major	C. King	" "			
Major	R.M. Campbell MC	Black Watch			
Capt.	H. F. Hales	Queen's R.R.			
Capt.	A.W. Lavender	" "			
Capt.	G.E. West	" "			
Capt.	T. G. Blumson	" "			
Capt.	G; P. Stevens	R.W.K.			
Capt.	W.M. Frost	" "			
Capt.	J. W. Evans	R.W.K.			
Capt.	W. A. Mills	Queen's R.R.			
Capt.	G. B. Curtis	" "			
Capt.	R. K. Purdon (S. Africa)	U.D.F.			
Capt.	G. E. Smith	Queen's R.R.			
Lieut.	H. L. Bailey	Queen's R.R.			
Lieut.	N.H. Eldridge	R. Warwicks			
Lieut.	J.F.V. Edwards	Queen's R.R.			
Lieut.	M. Metcalf	" "			
Lieut.	I. P. Macgregor	R.A.C.	Lieut.	W. R. Tomkins	(S. Africa)
Lieut.	I.T.J. Boyes	Queen's R.R.	Lieut.	S. N. Penlington	R.A.C.
Lieut.	J.W. Common	" "	Lieut.	J. G. B. Sayer	Queen's R.R.
Lieut.	R.N. Thompson	" "	Lieut.	J. S. Lea-Wilson	R.A.C.
Lieut.	A.J. Tremethick	" "	Lieut.	W. F. Nethercott	Devon's
Lieut.	V.H. Lambert	?	Lieut.	B. Carney	D.L.I.
Lieut.	A.C. Lowe	" "	Lieut.	C.W. Wright	Queen's R.R.
Lieut.	A.R. Maynard	" "	Lieut.	H.A. Tyrrell	" "
Lieut.	L.W. Harding	" "	Lieut.	D.S. Fawcett	" "
Lieut.	T.P. O'Connell	" "	Lieut.	A. E. Sanftleben	" "
Lieut.	H.W. Vipond	" "			
Lieut.	W. Roadnight (Q.M.)	Queen's R.R.			
Capt.	A. R. Elsom,	R.A.M.C			
Rev.	G. B. Fairhurst	R.A.Ch.D.			