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ARMY FORM C.2118

WAR DIARY

or

~~INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY~~

(Delete heading not required)

Unit 2 GLAS. H. H.L.I.

Month and Year JUN 1944

Commanding Officer Lt Col P.U. CAMPBELL

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	References to Appendices
BRIGHTON	3		Fd Return Offrs & ORs to 2 ech	Appxs A & B
	4		CO's Church Parade.	
	6		"D" Day. Orders of the day read to all tps from Gen Eisenhower. Bn addressed by Bde Comd.	
	11		Bde Church Parade.	
NR. EASTHAM FARNHAM	12		Bn tpt & C.O. arrived Marshalling Area " marching tps " " "	
LONDON	15	1800	Veh pty boarded S.S. Empire Brutus	
NEWHAVEN	16		Marching tps embarked L.C.S.	
	17		" " " landed in Normandy and conc. in ESQUAY-SUR-SEULLES.	
		1900	Veh pty arrived off NORMANDY coast.	
	18		Church Service on board ship - Padre R.A.M.C. 8 Corps	
	19		Weather prevents disembarkation	
	20		Weather prevents disembarkation	
	21	2000	Concert for tps on board ship.	
	22		CO left on launch for conf with Div Comd.	
	23		1st veh pty disembarked.	
	24	1800 2300	Last " " ashore Bn moved to FAA - L.O.B.: Major White, Capt Renwick, Lieuts Wallace & Loudon	
	10 & 24	17	Fd Return Offrs & ORs to 2 ech " " " " " "	App C & D
	26	0100 0700	Bn moved up to F.U.P. "H" Hour - Bn attacked & took objective CHEUX. Offr Cas: T/Major Carson, T/Capt Johnstone, Lieuts Hollway, Kehoe, Waldie, Blackadder, Wark - WOUNDED. T/Capt I.P.S. Wood, Lieut Keeble - KILLED.	
	27		Bn relieved by 1 WORC - moved to COLLEVILLE and took over from 2 GORDONS	
	28	1000 1400	Capt Renwick, Lieut Loudon arrive from L.O.B. Lt Loudon killed in repelling enemy attack from direction MOUEN.	

	29		Bn relieved by 10 HLI. Moved to MONDRAINVILLE where heavily shelled by mortars & repelled attack by inf & tks. Rev Jas. S. Taylor killed by mortar fire. Lt T.S. Maw R.A.M.C. wounded " " (replaced by Capt Giles 193 Fd Amb)	
Mondrainville	30/1	0400	Bn relieved 0400 by 4 MONS & reverted to area BRONAY for reorganisation. Total OR cas suffered in action: Killed - 18 Wounded - 177 Missing - 18	

2nd Bn. THE GLASGOW HIGHLANDERS (H.L.I.)

FRANCE ----- JUNE JULY 1944.

1. CONCENTRATION.

The following is a brief account of the happenings to this battalion during its first odd ten days in France, 1944.

The rifle companies sailed from England and arrived off the French coast on the 17th June, disembarking at LA RIVIERE. They concentrated in the area south of VIENNE-en-Bessin and awaited the arrival of the rest of the Bn. These companies were under the command of the second-in command, Major J.C. Davies, M.C.

Bn HQ. with HQ and S. Companies sailed from London on S.S. Empire Brutus and arrived off the French coast about 2100 hrs Saty 17th June. Bad weather held up unloading until Friday 23rd June. It was not until 2200 hrs on the following night that the complete Bn was concentrated. This was half an hour before it moved to an F.A.A. for its first attack.

2. PREPARATION FOR ATTACK

The move to the F.A.A., area of SECQUEVILLE-en-BESSIN, was completed in darkness. The Bn. remained there all 25th June in an over-crowded area as well camouflaged as possible. Church services were held by Padre James Taylor and vehicles loaded for battle. As much de-waterproofing as possible was carried out in the short time available.

3. GROUND AND ENEMY

The objective of the Bn was Cheux, and the route lay through, and just east of LE MESNIL PATRY. It was held by the 12th Panzer Div. The country apart from farm buildings was studded with many orchards and the fields were thick with corn 3ft high. The maps of the area were bad and air photos were used. LE MESNIL PATRY was held by a Canadian Infantry Unit. They had been in the line for some days, but the nature of the country made it difficult to learn much of the enemy positions. O.Ps were extremely difficult to obtain. CHEUX, our objective was about 3000 yards from LE MESNIL PATRY, and there was a valley of dead ground in between, whilst Cheux itself was not visible because of trees and orchards.

There was no knowledge of any enemy mine-fields and little of his strength on the Bn front. Cheux passed under so many different pronunciations that it was decided to call it "CHEWKS", and it has been known as that in the Unit ever since.

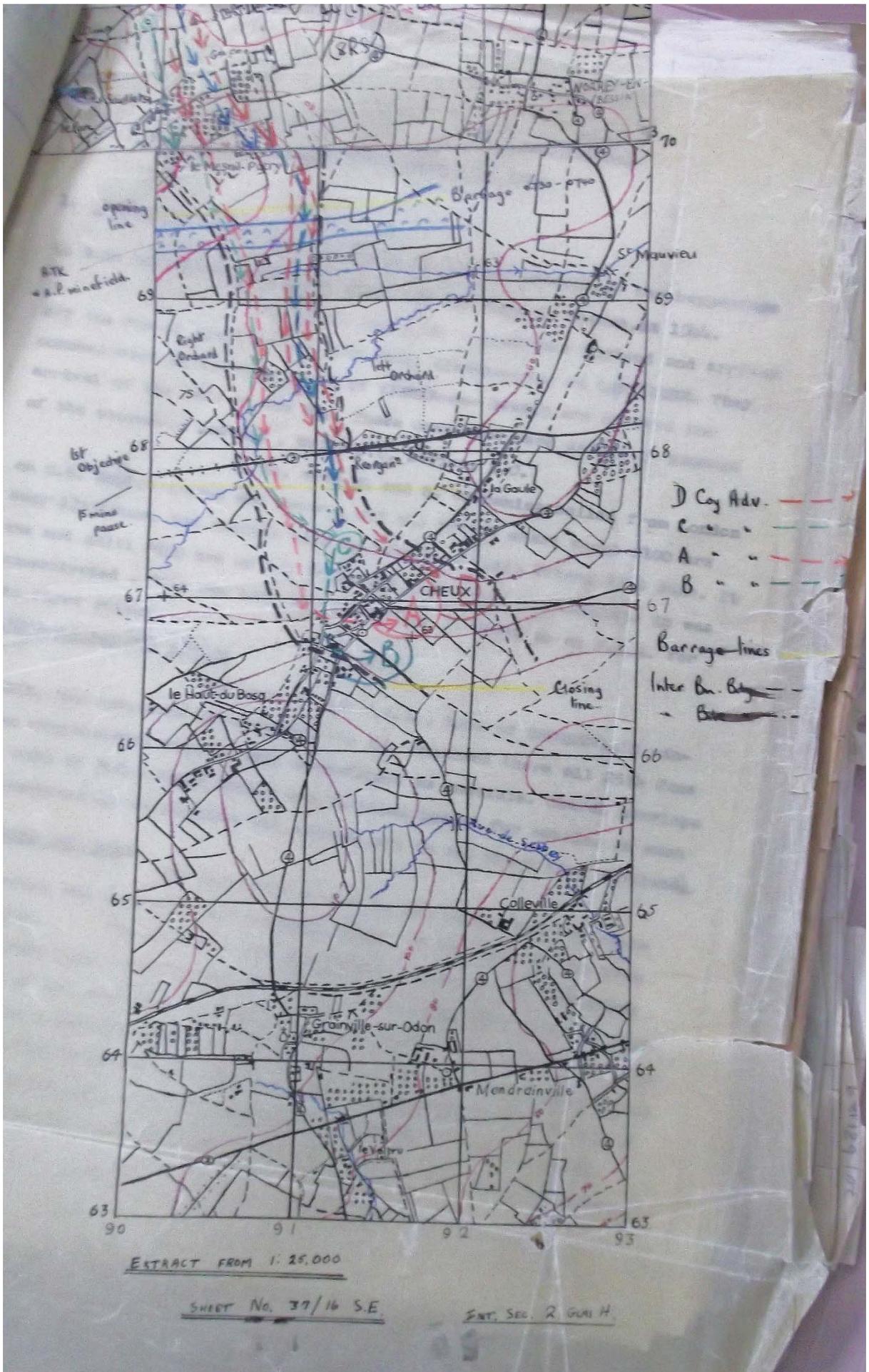
4. PLAN.

(A) The Glasgow Highlanders were to attack between the 9th Cameronians (to its right) and 8th Royal Scots (of 44 Inf Bde, to its left). The boundaries are marked on the trace.

The start line was north of LE MESNIL PATRY and behind the Canadian lines. This meant that it was some 1200 yds behind the opening line of the barrage and gave leading companies one thousand yards advance through the orchards before the barrage lifted: a total of 400 to the objective.

The advance was planned at 100 yds every three minutes, the barrage lifting accordingly. A barrage was used as the enemy positions were not exactly known.

For this operation the division had the support of H.M. ships, between 250 and 400 medium bombers, and 16 squadrons of fighter bombers. The first two were to look after CARPIQUET, to the east, where it was



known that parts of the 21st Panzer Div were with their tanks. The fighter bombers were to look after road approaches from the south and south east.

The barrage and artillery concentrations on the Div front were to be fired by a total of 625 guns.

Each Bn had a squadron of Churchill tanks in support. 46(H) Inf Bde, in addition, had "Crocodiles" and A.Vs.R.E. in support, and ready for calls from Bns. The Glasgow Highlanders had a troop of "FLAILS" under command, for gapping minefields.

(B) The start line is marked on the attached sketch, also the opening line of the barrage. The barrage opened at 0730 on 26th June, remaining on its opening line for 10 minutes and then rising 100 yards in each three minutes until after crossing the main road where it paused for fifteen minutes before carrying on.

(C) The Bn plan was an advance with two companies forward, right "C" left "D", with "A" and "B" following. The latter were to do the mopping up. This task (in second priority to maintenance of momentum) was also given to the reserve plns of forward companies. (LESSON. This does not function in long corn as forward companies must not stop to mop up on the advance and the attack is apt to get pinned to the ground.) Later the G.O.C. decided it would be a better task for a reserve Bn or a reserve Bde.

A carrier- mortar group, under Capt. Johnstone's command, was detailed to watch our right flank and maintain contact with the Cameronians.

The 3" mortars were to remain mobile as the country offered no O.Ps and as there was such a heavy artillery barrage. (In the result this was agreed as right, but mobile fire controllers should still have moved with forward companies in order to get O.P.s quickly on the objective.)

Pioneer assault sections moved with each forward company to deal with enemy mines. They were not actually used as the attacking troops did not stop for any mine-fields.

Bn. six pounder anti-tanks guns were to move up to the objective as quickly as possible behind leading echelons of tanks.

Each forward company had two tps of Churchills in support. One to be up forward whilst the second covered it from the rear. Recces between tp and Pln commanders were carried out closely with this in view despite the difficulty of getting observation over the ground over which the attack was to pass.

The tank squadron commander was in wireless communication with the "Flail" tp. Each Churchill tp had a No. 38 Set netted to the leading Infy. Plns. Rear Companies 38 set nets co-incided with that of forward companies so that in the event of the C.O. having to pass through the rear companies on the intermediate objective (see sketch) infy-tank communications would not suffer. In the event no 38 set to a tank worked. There was no checking of nets in the F.U.P.

(D) Bn Command Post, consisting of the C.O. in his carrier, L.O. in Scout car from Tank Sqdn, and the Artillery Bty Commander in his Scout car, was to move on the left flank from O.P. to O.P. It was quite impossible to decide beforehand exactly where these would be. The Adjnt in a Scout car with the Bde rear link set was to bound behind. A report centre was named in CHEUX, just north of the first cross roads (marked R.V. on sketch).

5. EXECUTION

"H." hr was at 0730 at which time the artillery barrage came down on the opening line, staying there for 10 minutes.

"C" and "D" Coys moved along axis as shown on sketch and were well up behind the barrage by the time it first lifted. They pushed on and met their first heavy opposition well north of the two ("right and left") orchards. The enemy had put a mine-field across the front. Churchills and some of the unit carriers were blown up. Casualties also occurred from anti-personnel mines and MGs. But the troops pushed on and through.

"C" coy on the right became pinned by MG. fire from the many lines of trees on their front and reported this over the No. 18 set link. The C.O. could not produce artillery fire owing to "D" Coys progress. The tanks were being held up to an extent by the mine-field. "C" Coy was told to get on with its own weapons and it got forward to the next hedgerow where it suffered much heavier casualties again being pinned. "A" Coy was ordered forward to make contact with "C". This it did and assisted in clearing hedgerows.

Meantime "D" coy had pushed ahead of "C", and "B" Coy was level with "C". This allowed "C" to get on. "D" Coy suffered their heaviest casualties in the "left orchard", where they came under heavy enemy mortar fire in the area of the bridge. On the further side of this orchard Major Gray had to pause to speedily reorganise his coy into 2 plns. One pln had been left behind mopping up and this was brought forward at this stage to make up the other two before the coy assaulted the wood on the intermediate objective. This wood was captured, but another pause, this time of 20-30 mins, to allow for further reorganisation before "D" coy's advance could continue into CHEUX. The Coy was by now very short of N.C.Os and could only muster 2 plns. The C.O. had arranged an R.V. on the first objective but owing to the mine-field he was not able to meet "D" Coy before it had continued the advance. "D" Coy was ordered to carry on with this over the No. 18 set.

The barrage only paused for 15 minutes on this intermediate objective. This was not long enough in a 4000 yds advance. It would have been better (in order not to expend more artillery ammunition than necessary as it was always a bit short) had some smoke and H.E. been put down here for half to three quarters of an hour. Both forward companies now lost the barrage and had to move in the open.

"C" Coy, with "A" close behind crossed the intermediate objective on the right shortly after "B" Coy had done so on the left. "B" itself was behind "D". The C.O. met the tank Sqdn commander and O.C. "B" Coy just south of the original RV. ---- some high ground over-looking the northern buildings of Cheux, and waited here until the village was occupied. "D" Coy had pushed on and occupied the village. Patrols were sent out to contact the Royal Scots on the left and "C" Coy on the right, but both were fired on by the enemy. Thus "D" Coy was solely in occupation, without support. Success was reported to the Brigadier by wireless. The runner with Verrey pistols had been killed and lost on the way up. "B" Coy was then ordered into the village to move via the "jutting out" portion at 913673 and to occupy the right hand half. This, originally, was "C" Coys objective.

"C" Coy was ordered to take up a reorganisation position in rear of 913673 out of the buildings.

By the time "B" Coy had occupied the village, "D" Coy had cleared the opposition away and had now moved forward of it and started to dig-in. "A" Coy arrived sadly depleted. All officers except one were casualties and the same had happened in the case of "C" Coy. "A" Coy was ordered to join up in front of CHEUX, on the right and later put under command of O.C. "B" Coy.

Bn. HQ opened in a GERMAN dug-out beside the road at the entrance to CHEUX. The supporting tanks came forward and through the

village to take up anti-tank defence until the Bn six pounder guns were in position. Consolidation took some time owing to enemy snipers and the fairly heavy casualties suffered in the advance. The R.A.P. opened in a large barn near Bn HQ and soon found itself dealing with casualties from other units as well. The 7th Seaforths moved through on to high ground south of CHEUX but had to fight for it and were not successful until the following day. The tanks remained close up to the Bn until late that night.

6. CASUALTIES DURING THE ATTACK.

"A" Coy.	(Major Carson in Command.)	Killed. Lt Keeble Wounded Lt Kehoe, Major Carson.
"B" Coy.	Capt Miller in command as Major White was L.O.B.	No officer casualties.
"C" Coy.	Major Lambie in Command.	Killed. Lt Waldie. Wounded. Lt. Blackadder, Lt. Wark.
"D" Coy.	Major Gray in Command.	Wounded. Lt Hollway.
"S" Coy.	Anti-tank Pln. Carrier Pln.	Killed Capt Wood. Wounded Capt Johnstone.
Other Ranks		KILLED. 19. Wounded and Missing. 178.

7. INCIDENTS DURING ATTACK.

Lt Wark of "C" Coy displayed outstanding bravery in mopping up enemy M.G. posts. So also did Cpl Shaw of "D" Coy, who although wounded, destroyed four of an enemy post by himself with hand grenades, and captured four more enemy. C.S.M Tait showed great coolness when so many of A Coy officers became casualties in reorganising the Coy under fire and directing the men on to their objective.

8. CHEUX.

The Bn held the village until relieved the following morning. Constant enemy mortar fire was experienced in and in front of the buildings. Work in the R.A.P. had to continue under intermittent fire. Forward troops were sniped at whenever they moved. It was difficult to take action against these snipers who were hidden in a wood about 200 yds in front, as artillery fire was coming down on it every now and then from our own guns and the Seaforths were forming up there for their attack on the high ground to the South.

9.

When the Bn was relieved by 1st Worcestershires in Cheux it moved back to the orchard at 9168 for a brief reorganising. At 1400 hrs it was ordered to move to Colleville (926648) to relieve the 2nd Gordons of 227 Infy Bde. The route lays through thick orchard land and cornfields and snipers tried to delay our advance. But the Bn pushed on and occupied the village. During the night we again experienced enemy mortar fire including "nebelwerfer" which the "Jocks" named "Moaning Minnie" because of the wailing of the shells as they rushed through the air. The Bn received orders to move the next day -- June 28th -- to Mondrainville, and was just preparing to do so when a counter attack of unknown strength

developed. The Bn formed itself into a defensive position to throw back the attack which was supported by enemy tanks. We gained the support of some tanks of the 7th Armd Div which were in the Colleville area and together the attack was repelled. Our own mortars were given a fire task by the C.O. and our patrols later discovered that they had knocked out two enemy mortar positions.

One enemy wounded was found and was identified as 2nd Bn of Der Fuhrer Regt of the 2nd S.S. Panzer Div.

During the short, sharp fighting, Lt Loudon who had been L.O.B. and who joined the Bn in Colleville was killed, by it is thought a sniper in a cornfield.

The attack was thrown back, and the Bn dug in in its position until it was relieved the following day by the 10th H.L.I. The Bn had been ordered to Mondrainville and on the move "D" Coy came under enemy m.g. fire which was eventually overcome. The Bn dug-in at Mondrainville on June 29th and during the mortar fire which came down on our positions the Padre, the Rev James S. Taylor was killed when a mortar shell scored a direct hit on the R.A.P. truck. The Medical Officer Capt. T.S. Maw was wounded. Late in the afternoon an enemy counter attack supported by tanks over-ran part of the 7th Seaforths' position at LE Valtru and approached our Bn area. The C.O. was successful in securing the support of a sqdn of Churchill tanks and after fierce fighting the counter attack was beaten off. The night was comparatively quiet except for intermittent mortar fire and air burst shelling the following morning. On 30th June our O.Ps observed enemy movement in the area about 1500 yds south of Mondrainville. Heavy artillery barrages were put down on this and patrols later ascertained that many of the enemy had been killed in the woods where movement had been seen. On the night of the 30th we were told that the Bn was to be relieved by a Bn of the Monmouthshires. This relief took place in the darkness between midnight and 0400 hrs on July 1st. While it was taking place an intense artillery barrage was going down on enemy positions. This barrage, we learned later broke up what appeared to be an enemy counter attack as many machine guns were counted knocked and men German dead were counted.

The Bn

On July 1st the Bn moved back to the area Bronay, for rest and re-organisation. On July 2nd a church service was held and a tribute paid to the Rev J.S. Taylor. The Brigadier addressed the Bn and speaking of the weeks fighting said that it had more than maintained the fine traditions of the Regt. "I am proud to have such a Bn as yours serving in my Brigade." he said.

On the morning of the 3rd July the Divisional Commander congratulated the Bn and read the following message from General Sir Bernard Montgomery, C.inC. 21st Army Group.

"I would like to congratulate the 15th Division as a whole on the very fine performance put up during the past weeks fighting. The Division went into battle for the first time in this war; but it fought with great gallantry and displayed a grand offensive spirit. Scotland can well feel proud of the 15th Scottish Division, and the whole Division can be proud of itself. Please congratulate the Division from me and tell all officers and men that I am delighted at what they have done.

Good luck to you all"