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ARMY FORM C.2118

WAR DIARY

or

Unit 1st Bn Middlesex Regt (D.C.O.)

~~INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY~~

(Delete heading not required)

Month and Year JUNE 44

Commanding Officer Lt Col J.P. Hall

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	References to Appendices
BRIGHTON	2/3	2300	Bn carries out Practice Move.	
	5		Bn carried out Gas Chamber Tests.	
	6		"D" Day - Operational maps collected.	
	7		Situation map established (Army Intelligence Services)	
	9		Adjutant issues Escapers Expedients to Offrs & Sgts	
	11		Op. Trace received of conc areas. Movement Orders for B Coy come through.	
	12	0345	"B" Coy move to Marshalling Camp T.6. at PURFLEET arriving at 1500 hrs.	
	13	0400 0520 1210	"A" Coy move to Marshalling camp (WANSTEAD FLATS) Bn HQ move to Marshalling camp (WANSTEAD FLATS) Bn HQ and "A" Coy arrive at Marshalling Area	
	14	A.M 1300 2100	"C" Coy move to Marshalling Camp S.G.H. "C" Coy arrive Camp S.G.H. at BRENTWOOD "B" Coy embark on S.S. FORT BRUNSWICK M.T. 66.	
IN TRANSIT	15	0700 0800 1330 1445 1500 1900 1830 2115	B Coy aboard M.T. 66 move to form part of convoy at THAMES ESTUARY & anchors off SOUTHEND-ON-SEA at 1500 hrs. Bn HQ transport proceeds to Port of Embarkation (MILLWALL DOCK), HQ Coy transport included. Orders received for Bn HQ & HQ Coy to proceed to Embarkation Port. Bn HQ & HQ Coy are issued with life belts + 24 hr packs. Move to MILLWALL DOCK. Embarkation on SS EMPIRE PLOUGHMAN (T59) 'C' Coy Drivers arr Camp S.G.F. and main body arr Camp S3 1830 hrs. T59 weighs anchor and proceed up THAMES to form part of convoy at THAMES ESTUARY.	
IN TRANSIT	16	2015 2050	A Coy proceed to Port of Embarkation and move to mouth of THAMES to take up position in convoy aboard S81 FORT NORFOLK. B Coy arrive off coast of NORMANDY and anchor in "RING".	
	17	1600	"B" Coy embark at TILBURY, main body on MT 56 2 I.C. and 12 Drivers on M.T. 64.	

		1800	Leave TILBURY	
		2000	Lay off SOUTHEND-on-SEA.	
		2000	"A" Coy arrive off coast of NORMANDY and anchor in "RING".	
		1945	T59 (Bn HQ + HQ Coy aboard) weighs anchor & reaches NORMANDY coast.	
		2055	T59 anchors in "RING" MAP REF: 933973.	
	21	1200	"A" Coy commence disembarkation and transfer to landing craft. A delay is caused owing to a head on collision with another vessel.	
	19	2000	"C" Coy reach coast of France and anchor in "RING".	
	23	1715	"C" Coy disembark and establish themselves in region on ST GABRIEL.	
ST GABRIEL	24	1930	Bn HQ & remnants of HQ Coy disembark and set up HQ at ST GABRIEL (7F/1 - 889794).	
SHEET 7F/1 889794	25	1845	B Coy disembarks & proceed to ST GABRIEL area D Coy remains at WORTHING & forms part of Div residue which is not expected to cross the Channel for approx one month.	
	29	1600	Bn HQ move to new location BRONAY 890719.	
SECQUEVILLE 916712	25		No 3 Pl 'A' Coy joined 8 ROYAL SCOTS in Assembly Area Secqueville	
	26	0030	Pl moves up to forming up area S. of rly 916712.	
		0730	Attacks begin - go forward with 8 RS to attack LA GAULE	
		1115	Pl in action at 923675 firing E & S.E. 2 casualties during the action. Sgt Freeman and Pte Preston both wounded by fire from tanks. Subjected to Artillery & Mortar fire from enemy - but no casualties. Numbers of enemy snipers in orchards but did not open fire as they did not present themselves in the arc.	
LE MESNIL	27	0500	Relieved by 8 Mx (43 Div) and move back to Coy Harbour in LE MESNIL	
PATRY	28		Remain in Coy Harbour at 20 mins notice to move.	
	29	0730	Go forward to assist 8 RS in consolidating after an attack S.W. of LE HAUT DU BOSQ. Attack a moderate success, but all objectives not gained owing to heavy enemy arty & mortar fire, and opposition from heavy tanks and infantry. Succeed after greatest difficulty in getting into action on carriers at 897652 with a Coy of 10 DLI (49 Div) Fire for 15 minutes on suspected enemy forming up area in wood. Under arty fire all morning but no casualties.	
		1430	Withdraw to Coy Harbour.	
		1700	Recalled to assist in repelling counter attack against 8 RS & 6 RSF at 899656. Attack never materializes on our sector though Arty & mortar fire is still severe and Pl is under long range fire from automatic weapons (Pte Watts wounded).	

899656		2300	Withdraw to harbour at 906680.	
	30	1300	Go forward to assist 6 R.S.F. in defensive position in orchard at 907657.	
		1430	In action - no enemy appears, though an attack seems to be developing against 6 KOSB in front of Pl.	
	JUL 1	0600	Attack again appears to be developing against 6 KOSB We are under spasmodic mortar fire only.	
		1230	Relieved by 1 Manchesters (53 Div) and move to Coy harbour at 909736.	
	JUN 26	0730	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>No 4 Pl A Coy</u></p> <p>Put in sp of 6 R.S.F. - task of reorganising on objective after the village of ST. MAUVIEU has been captured. Move off to N. NORREY EN BESSIN. As we approach ST. MAUVIEU, extreme resistance is encountered in the shape of large numbers of snipers hidden in the buildings on the outskirts of the village, and it is with the greatest difficulty that the Pl Comd makes his way to the objective of A Coy RSF, a small wood & orchard 934688. A recce is made from one sec position in the fwd edges of the wood, and right & left of track through wood. No infantry, with the exception of one RSF ANTI TANK platoon has reached this area at all. This is presumably due to the presence of at least 6 German snipers & 2 enemy MG positions in the wood at 931687. The D.R. with some difficulty returns to Pl R.V. at Br 927692 and brings up Pl to the wood. The Right hand section is completely unable to take up a position as anyone entering the wood is immediately finished off by the snipers. They are therefore held as a mobile reserve just to the rear. No 2 sec goes into action in the orchard L of track firing centre of arc on MARCELET.</p>	
		1200	<p>Enemy counter attack from area 939657. The R hand sec is brought round into the orchard to reinforce the L flank. This enables the attack to be repelled and it is thought that most of the enemy are wiped out. However a few have filtered through again into the wood. Tanks are periodically being sent into the wood to clear away the enemy but do not seem to have much success.</p>	

		2230	A Coy of KOSB arrive to relieve R.S.F. and it is thought that one of their Pls following 3 Churchill & 2 Crocodile tanks, eventually clear the wood.	
		2300	Pl relieved by 4 Pl 8 Mx.	
	27.		Pl resting in LE MESNIL PATRY.	
	28		" " " " " "	
	29	0630	Pl reports to O.C R.S.F. in area 901686 and are given the task of protecting rear of the Bn against possibility of infiltration.	
		1800	No action in this position. Returned under Coy control to CHEUX.	
CHEUX	30	P.M.	Subject to heavy mortar fire at night - no casualties.	
	JUL 1		Move to 909736 and Coy resting.	
BRETTEVILLE 922728	26		<u>No 5 Pl A Coy</u> Pl is in reserve at Coy HQ BRETTEVILLE.	
		1045	Coy Comd calls for Pl and it takes up a position (913693) near Bde Tac HQ and is given the task of covering a gap between the KOSB & RS. Pl remains in action in this posn throughout the night.	
	27	0600	Pl receives orders to move to Coy harbour at LE MESNIL PATRY and remains throughout day and night.	
	28		Pl Comd is sent for by Coy Comd at KOSB HQ (912664). He remains there throughout the day in readiness to re-organise posn.	
907657	29	1100	Pl occupies a posn in support of 6 KOSB in wood (907657) and is given the task of covering wood (903650) in the event of enemy penetrating through the R.S. & R.S.F. who are in the area.	
		1900	Posn being subjected to heavy mortar fire. Enemy counter attacking on wood & being successfully repelled. Pl returns to Coy harbour.	
	30	0500	Pl proceed to wood 903650 which is now taken over by 6 KOSB and takes up a defensive posn.	
	1 Jul		Enemy counter attacks and pl remains in action under very exacting conditions during attack by enemy tanks and is firing on its fixed line (orchard 901643) when called for by the infantry.	
		1530	Pl relieved by 1 Manchester Regt & proceeds to Coy harbour 909736.	
912680	26	0100	'B' Coy leaves for FUP 891713 S of BRONAY.	
		0730	Coy 2IC moves Coy Rear HQ to 902727 with main 44 H. Bde HQ.	
		1130	Coy advances with leading infantry. Coy Comd (Maj Ellis) injured by falling bough of tree.	

		1200 1300	<p>Pte Walden killed by shrapnel, 300 yards N. of O.C Coy's place of injury.</p> <p>Coy 2IC takes over comd. Major W.D. Ellis evacuated.</p> <p>Plns proceed to S. of CHEUX in accordance with plan, but find no reps from Cameronians to put them in. Very bad posns from M.G. point of view. Whole area subjected to heavy mortar fire, casualties caused:-</p> <p>6 Pl Ptes Breeze J, Royce & Boyce. 7 Pl Ptes Theobald & Brookman.</p> <p>Stretcher bearers Ptes Whiting, Leah showed exemplary behaviour under fire dressing wounds etc., particularly Pte Leah, who himself was slightly wounded. Tiger tank, dug in, reported 150 yds W. of 8 Plns posn.</p> <p>More enemy infantry move up during the night and 8 Pl fire occasionally.</p>	
902698	27	0600 1300	<p>We keep alert, expecting enemy attack.</p> <p>Sgt. Head of 8 Pl is killed in pl area by S.A. fire.</p> <p>Pl from 8 Mx arrives to take over posn.</p> <p>Difficulty experienced in getting clear of posn owing to enemy counter attack.</p> <p>Have great luck in getting through CHEUX, as roads are blocked and carriers are being subjected to fire from Tiger tanks.</p> <p>3 M/cs abandoned N of CHEUX as state of tracks render it impossible for drivers to continue riding them. 8 Pl forced to abandon 1 x 15 cwt when leaving position.</p> <p>1300 Coy re-groups at 902698 S. of LE MESNIL PATRY, main 46 Bde HQ. Coy move in support of 2 Glasgow H. to COLEVILLE 903650 Pte Hore reported to have hit a FW 190 with Bren Gun. This was vouched for by many of Glas. High. in area. C.O. visited Coy. Certain amount of mortar fire at night.</p>	
	28	1730	<p>Heavy mortar fire on position but no other incidents.</p> <p>Lt Handslip, O.C. 7 Pl killed while on recce.</p> <p>6 Pl move to Bridge 916622 in support of A&S High</p> <p>Lt Handslip killed whilst his Pl were supporting an attack by 9 Cams on GRANVILLE.</p> <p>Sgt Drake (7 Pl) injured.</p> <p>Endeavoured to get through to 6 Pl without success.</p> <p>Mortaring of area by enemy multi-barrelled mortar.</p>	
MONDRAVILLE (9164)	29		<p>Move to MONDRAVILLE with 2 GH.</p> <p>7 & 8 Pls occupied various positions covering east & south.</p>	

MONDRAVILLE (9164)			Panic caused by threatened breakthrough of enemy infantry & tanks, which did not materialize. Ptes Probett & Winkworth injured by shrapnel and evacuated. Tank battle towards late afternoon and evening. Endeavoured to contact 6 Pl without success.	
	30		Contacted 6 Pl and about 20 returned after being subjected to intense enemy fire. Position of casualties as yet uncertain as there may be some who are only missing, but there were 12 short.	
	1 Jul	1830	Relieved by 1 Manchesters and Coy moved to rest area 921726.	
FIELD	23	1730	"C" Coy Landed at a posn on coast of FRANCE (7E/5 8586) and proceed to 227 (H) Inf Bde area (7F/1 843780). Arrive at approx 2330 hrs. Coy not yet complete.	
Mt FAUVEL	24	1500 2300	Remainder of Coy arrive this area. Orders arrive from 46 (H) Inf Bde to move to FAA. SECQUEVILLE-EN-BESSIN (7/F1 9274)	
SECQUEVILLE- EN-BESSIN	25	0100 2100 2115 1830	Arrive at FAA No 9 Pln moves to join 7 SEAFORTH in same area. No 10 Pln moves to join 2 GLAS H. in same area. No 11 Pln moves to join 2 GORDONS at VAUX-SUR-SEULLES (7F/1 8377). Adv Coy HQ joins 46 Bde TAC HQ in SECQUEVILLE.	
PUTOT-EN- BESSIN PUTOT-EN- BESSIN	26	0300 1730 1500 1900	Adv Coy HQ moves forward to x-roads (906679) arriving at 0530 hrs. No 9 Pln advance with 7 SEAFORTH (rear Bn) and halted in CHEUX (9167) at 1900 hrs approx. Pln in position at 920770 but did not have cause to fire. No 10 Pln cross start line at 0730 hrs with 2 GLAS. H. and reach first objective at 1400 hrs. Pln reorganise on the objective at 907678. Pln advance and reorganise on second objective SOUTH of CHEUX at 917673. No 11 Pln with 2 GORDONS reach area (905685) SOUTH of LE MESNIL PATRY. In action at 915668 supporting attack by 2 GORDONS on COLVILLE - TOURVILLE. Subsequent situation resulted in orders being received to join 227 (H) Inf Bde TAC HQ. Find this eventually at 0530 hrs on 27th.	
	27		No 10 Pln withdraws with 2 GORDONS to area 920770 and joins 9 CAMS. Pln concentrates at COLEVILLE (9264) No 11 Pln takes up defensive posn with 2 GORDONS in COLEVILLE area. Pln posn on railway embankment (922647).	

		0730 2330	<p>Pte GRAY A. is killed. Pln moves again with 2 GORDONS and takes up defensive posn on main road at TOURVILLE (9264).</p> <p>One carrier hit by shell fire from enemy tank - no casualties Pte Holt evacuated suffering from exhaustion.</p>	
CHEUX	28		<p>No 9 Pln advance from CHEUX and deploy to assist in the clearance of woods to COLEVILLE. Route via HILL 100 - Bridge 919655. Pln takes up posn in MONDRAINVILLE area (9164) until orders are received from 7 SEAFORTH to move to farm (912637). Pln remain in this posn under heavy mortar fire & sniping until relieved by MANCHESTER REGT.</p> <p>No 10 Pln on success of 2 GORDONS attack in GRANVILLE-SUR-ODON move up for reorganisation and take up posn at 909645.</p> <p>No 11 Pln take up defence posns in TOURVILLE in view of suspected counter-attacks.</p>	
CHEUX	29	1600 2100	<p>No 10 Pln in action during morning and evening to repel counter-attacks. No 2 Sec withdraws at 2000 hrs with 'B' Coy 9 CAMS to CHEUX. In the ensuing disorganisation the section reports to a Bn of the WELSH GUARDS and is passed back to 15 (S) Inf Div HQ. On obtaining from this HQ the location of Adv Coy HQ the section rejoins. No 1 sec withdraws with 'A' Coy 9 CAMS to a posn approx 300 yards in rear of original one. After assisting in clearing woods in this area the sec returns to original posn.</p> <p>Sgt Reed, in command of No 1 Sec, showed great coolness and initiative in handling his sec whilst out of touch with his Pln Comd.</p> <p>No 11 Pln - in same posn - goes into action to repel a counter attack from SOUTH WEST.</p> <p>No 11 Pln moves back with 2 GORDONS to resist a counter attack on COLEVILLE. Attack did not develop</p>	
CHEUX	30		<p>No 10 Pln (No 2 Sec) withdraws to area of Adv Coy HQ at road line (924648).</p> <p>No 11 Pln receive orders for continued advance at 0730 hrs. Route: TOURVILLE - Bridge 9363 - LES VILAINS - GAVRUS - Bridge 9162 - preparatory to an attack on MONCEAUX. During the advance the Pln comes under heavy fire S.W. of TOURVILLE (928638) resulting in the following casualties:</p> <p>Wounded:- Sgt HEATH, Sgt WILKINSON, CPL COOK, CPL BLACKMAN, L/CPL CLARK, L/CPL BERRIDGE, PTES GARRAWAY, SEAL, STONE, HILL, LAMBE, NORWOOD, CHAPPELL, JAMES, CRAFT, ROGERS, YOUNG, PITHET, PTE FORD W. MISSING.</p> <p>Pln Comd on his return from Bn "R" Group organises the evacuation of the wounded and vehicles. On orders from OC Coy, Pln retires to Adv Coy HQ area.</p>	

CHEUX			During the period in which the casualties were suffered, PTE BARNES showed exceptional courage and devotion to duty in rendering assistance to wounded men, thus preventing further injuries to those who were unable to move and setting a fine example which was followed by other private soldiers.	
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