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ARMY FORM C.2118

WAR DIARY

or

Unit 15 (S) Recce Regt, R.A.C.

~~INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY~~

(Erase heading not required)

Month and Year June 1944.

Commanding Officer Lt.Col. J.A. Grant Peterkin

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	References to Appendices
Angmering	4		The Div Comdr, Maj. General G.H.A. MacMillan, C.B.E., D.S.O., M.C., visited the Regt and talked to each Sqn regarding forthcoming ops. He lunched with R.H.Q. Mess afterwards. During this period the whole Regt was employed feverishly waterproofing vehs, teams being run as under:- 'A' Vehs - Lieut P.C. Kerridge - (Cars). Lieut R.H. Fleet - (Carriers). 'B' Vehs - Lieut W.H. Rogers. By this date practically all stores were complete and the Regt could have moved at short notice.	
	5		At 2300 hrs a very large formation of Tp Carrying Aircraft passed over Angmering-on-Sea heading across the Channel with their lights on, followed by continual air activity all night.	
Angmering	6		The invasion of France started and the peacefulness of Angmering-on-Sea was not further disturbed until 1900 hrs, when what appeared to be a complete Airborne Division passed overhead.	
	7-10.		Final preparations made and vehs stowed for embarkation. Full loading trials held to discover whether it was possible to carry the mass of useful stores which it was proposed should be taken.	
	11		Lieut J.A. Isaac, Sgt Millroy, J., and Cpl Kay, J., left to join 227 Bde as the Regtl Advance Party.	
	16.		Orders received for the Regt to move to 'A' Marshalling Area near Portsmouth on 17 June.	
	17.		Regt, less 'B' Sqn left for the Marshalling Area, moving via Arundel, Chichester, Midhurst and Petersfield. All vehs, except 15-cwt W.T. G.S. which overturned, arrived safely at the Marshalling Area. Major K.C.C. Smith and 'B' Sqn (Major A. Gordon) remained in Angmering as Comdr Div Residues and Regtl Residues respectively. They moved to Worthing on 19 June.	

Denmead		<p>On arrival at the Marshalling area there was considerable chaos as no Ship Sheet had been sent by Movement Control, and all vehs had to be split up from Sqns and Tps into their Ship Loads, and it was not until midnight that the following Craft Loads were organised:-</p> <p>(a) L.S.T. 1107. O.C. Craft - Commanding Officer. (b) L.S.T. 1108. " - Major H. Mills. (c) L.S.T. 1109. " - Major L. Rowlands. (d) L.S.T. 997. " - Lieut H.A. Green. (e) L.S.T. 998. " - Capt. J.E.F. Lane.</p> <p>The Marshalling Camp was situated at Denmead, 4 miles south of Petersfield, where the vehs remained about a mile from the Camp, where everything was well organised by the Static Staff for the Regt.</p>	
	18.	<p>Early in the morning Embarkation Rations, lifebelts, vomit bags, etc., were drawn up and the Regt was ready to move forward by 1300 hrs, it being thought then that they would move probably that night.</p>	
Denmead	18-26.	<p>Owing to a break in the weather and a very strong gale, this period was spent in the Marshalling Area as practically all movement to France ceased. The Regt, split up into Craft Loads and thus rather disorganised, spent the time doing final preparations to the vehs and kit, letter writing, going to the cinemas and concerts and sleeping. As no move was envisaged by the end of the week, a short trg scheme was carried out on Saturday, with a considerable number of free fights developing between patrols, there being no casualties.</p> <p>The chief difficulty during this wait was to procure enough money for everyone.</p>	
	25	<p>At 2300 hrs the Camp Blower called for Serial 1107, and true to Movement Control form, having spent a week waiting, we were ordered to move in ¼ hr. This Craft Serial passed the S.P. at 0300 hrs on the 26th en route for the Embarkation Area at Gosport, where all vehs safely arrived. Serials 1108 and 1109 followed the next day. About 10 hrs were spent sitting in the streets of Gosport waiting to be called to the hards, orders for which were received at about 1900 hrs for the Regt to go forward at once, no previous notice having been given. Loading commenced at about 2200 hrs and was finished by about 0200 hrs no difficulty being experienced in loading the vehs.</p>	
	27.	<p>In spite of a gale warning and bad weather reports, the convoy left at 1000 hrs to cross, and duly ran into a first-class Channel gale, causing a considerable number of those on board to be very sick. The craft beached at about 1900 hrs that night on a falling tide and vehs commenced to disembark into about 4' of water. Owing to holes</p>	

Field.		<p>in the beaches the Beachmaster ordered unloading to cease till the following morning when the L.S.T. was re-beached and unloaded into about 1' 6" of water.</p> <p>No vehs drowned except one M.5. which went into a hole and the water came in over the back. All Serials disembarked on the beaches at Arromanches and moved forthwith to a Transit Area where first stages of de-waterproofing was completed and vehs re-stowed for battle. The a/Tk Bty did not arrive until 30 June.</p> <p>During this period the 15th (Scottish) Division was leading the fight in the Battle of the Odon, and unfortunately the Regt was not available to take its proper place.</p>	
	30.	<p>The Regiment (less A/Tk Bty) moved forward in Divisional reserve to PUTOT EN BESSIN (9072), when early that morning, immediately on arrival, 'C' Sqn (Major H. Mills) was ordered forward to come under command of 44 Bde (Brigadier H.D.K. Money) to fill a gap on the Corps boundary (30/8 Corps) between 15 (S) and 49 Divs, acting more in the role of an Inf Coy than a Recce Sqn, taking up positions about 1 mile south of HOTE DE BOSQ. This position was in very thickly wooded country where vehs were of little or no value.</p> <p>At about 1335 hrs, R.H.Q. was shelled (25 shells of 10.5 c.m.) this being the first taste of battle which the Regt had had. No casualties were inflicted as a certain amount of digging had already been done. A considerably further amount of digging was done after this incident.</p>	