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ARMY FORM C.2118

WAR DIARY

or

~~INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY~~

(Erase heading not required)

Unit 2 A&SH

Month and Year JULY 1944

Commanding Officer Lt Col J.W. Tweedie

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	References to Appendices
FIELD BRETTEVILLE	1 JUL		First day of reorganisation after Operation "EPSOM". The Comd Offr has written his own account of this battle for Regt Records. Much kit has been lost, some of it unnecessarily. But the chief deficiency was in automatic weapons and instruments. In the very dusty country such as NORMANDY automatic weapons soon become unserviceable unless MOST carefully covered and cleaned when not in use. Everybody felt extreme exhaustion now that the stress of contact with the enemy was past. The Bn was conc in area of a farm la HAUT de BRETTEVILLE - BRETTEVILLE L'ORGUEILLEUSE (CALVADOS) MR CAEN 923728. The first job was to get the Unit re-equipped and since the Div had been given a high priority eqpt began to come in from QRD in great speed. RG eqpt and instruments took the longest to arrive. Much thought given to the subject of salvaging some of the unit tpt and eqpt left on battlefd at GAVRUS. But Bde Comd forbade this hitherto as enemy strength and activities in this area had not been sufficiently examined. Rfts continued to come in at a steady rate. Mostly from O&B.L.I and The King's Regt, as well as our own rfts. Bn strength for w/e 5 JUL is shown on att Appx "A" .	
	2		Visit to Unit by Div Comd, Maj-General G.H.A. MacMillan. He gave a short talk to the troops thanking them for their efforts & explaining the tactical setting to our battles and how 15 (S) Div had drawn, as per plan, most of the enemy armour. The Bde Comd did likewise.	
	3		The Comd Offr addressed the Bn after Church Parade, thanked the troops for their work, but also pointed out some of the most important lessons of the battle. (care of arms & eqpt: sleep when possible: importance of every man looking after himself)	
BRETTEVILLE	6		I.O. rendered a full written report to Bde HQ signed by witnesses, who allege to have seen enemy in BRITISH type steel helmets around our late posn at GAVRUS. Odd shells and rocket	

			bombs arrive in our bn area. One 88 mm shell hit roof of C Coy HQ building to-day. All tps sleep in slit trenches.	
BRETTEVILLE L'ORGUEILLEUSE	7	2000 2200	Reorg continuing and all <u>essentials</u> now completed. One EA [Me 109F] flew over Bn area at about 2000 but was in great difficulties through our lt AA fire. Every day since 18 JUN has been heavily overcast if not raining and ideal for low flying recce & gd attacks by EA. Large scale air attack by RAF Bomber Comd Lancasters on area CAEN-CARPIQUET-VERSON. Plainly visible to all bn. 350-450 British a/c took part. A great tonic as it is the first time we have seen any friendly a/c in strength.	
	8	2030	Still reorganising. No incidents save 4 rds solid shot from 88 mm guns which landed in bn area. Spent rounds.	
	9	1200	Col H. Clarke (GS01 Liaison) 15 (S) Inf Div came to HQ and gave two most valuable talks to assembled tps on the wide-view of the campaign. The greatest worry to date has been lack of infm from the situation on other sectors right down to ignorance about posns of other bns of the Div. The appetite of the tps for news is insatiable, but hitherto infm has been greatly neglected.	
BRETTEVILLE	10	1240 2030 1800	Preparations on foot for another battle. The Bn Order of Battle is as on right →. Major J. Kenneth is att to 10 HLI as 2IC (ex OC A Coy). Bn out on training in area NORREY-en-BESSIN. The Bde Comd arranged this as more practice in fighting in this close country is needed. The junior leaders fight the battles here and the newly promoted NCO's do need practice. One EA flew along line of rly at zero feet and fired on our tps. No casualties. CO and IO to Bde 'O' Gp to discuss Bde move to area VERSON. Forthcoming operations in area BARON - ESQUAY - EVRECY have now reached planning stage. 15 (S) Inf Div now under comd of 3012 Corps for ops. Bn moved out from buildings at le HAUT de BRETTEVILLE into open fields to make room for HQ 30 Corps.	<u>Coy Comds & Specialists</u> CO Lt-Col J.W. Tweedie 2IC Major DR Morgan ADJ. Capt AM FYFE I.O. Capt JDC Graham Sigs Capt DHE Lyon A Coy Major HC Robertson B Coy Lieut P Salmond C Coy Major RM McKenzie D Coy Major FGS Graham T.O. Capt TH Spenceley QM Capt J Kenny M.O. Lieut JT Anderson RAMC Sp Coy Capt LLE Moreton OC 3 Pl Capt W Sloan OC 4 Pl Capt WR Bruce OC 5 Pl Capt W Muirhead OC 6 Pl Lieut RHC Dunning RSM H Thompson
BRETTEVILLE	11	1445	Seven EA [Me 109F] flew over Bde area at about 1,500'. Two definitely destroyed.	

	12	0700 1710	CO and IO off to area BARON - pt 112 for Bde Recce for prepared night attack. Very bitter fighting all around the area and the recce party had no easy task. Very little could be seen of the future objectives. Many dead and burnt out tanks testify to the enemy resistance here. CO 5 Bn The Wiltshire Regt guided party around OPs but little infm was gained. Two salvoes of 6 shells each in area BRETTEVILLE. 88 mm at extreme range. Shellreps are always submitted without delay and do help our CB org with good results. A similar system is being arranged for counter mortar fire.	
BRETTEVILLE	13	0800 1430	CO & IO to Bde Comds Conference for forthcoming op. This will be known as Operation "GREENLINE". Conference attended by all sp arms - 3 Bns Tks, AVRE, "Crocodiles", SP Bty and all gunner and inf comds. Major Hugh Spens M.C. [A&SH] took up duties as BM 227 (H) Inf Bde vice Major J.A. Lochore [K/A 20 JUN]. 2IC, IO, Coy Comds, OC 5 & 6 Pls and Sqn Comds from 147 R.T.R. to BARON to recce for attack. 147 R.T.R. (Lt-Col C. BROWNE) is in sp 2 A&SH. Unable to see ground to objective owing to enemy vigilance, but routes to FUP reced. Map distribution is good now. The 1/50,000 proves quite inaccurate except for main rds. 1/25,000 is up to date and most reliable. All planning is done by air phs which are issued fairly generously in conjunction with 1/25,000 maps.	
BRETTEVILLE	12/13		During the nights 11/12 - 12/13 JUL recce patrols of one offr and two men have been going out from 2 Gordons & 2 A&SH to recce line of R. GUIGNE which lies between our FUP and final objective, to feature Ferme de Mondeville. But on neither occasion did the patrols succeed owing to enemy vigilance [21 & 22 S.S. PGR hold this ground]; our own arty DF fire holding them up, and enemy mortar fire on HQ 5 Welch Regt with whom patrols have been staying during daylight. Lt W.J.D. SWORD (C Coy) led 2 A&SH patrol on both occasions. This river appears no more than a ditch on air phs, but the banks may well be tk obstacles, and almost certainly will hold up towing Carriers of inf bns.	
BRETTEVILLE	14	0800	CO and IO to Bde Conference. Change of plan. 2 GLAS H will capture ESQUAY with one bn Churchills. 2 Gordons will then adv in conjunction with 44(L) Inf Bde to half way to final objective. 10 HLI with B Sqn 147 RTR will capture & hold EVRECY. 2 A&SH with A & C Sqn 147 RTR will then finally cross R. GUIGNE, attack & hold the feature Ferme de Mondeville. The R. GUIGNE still has not been reced.	

		1415	Eight Me 109 F over BRETTEVILLE. Hy flak put up and two seen to crash.	
		1500	CO, IO and Coy Comds to HQ 147 R.T.R. (Cully 911766) for Coy/Sqn Conference.	
		1700	Party returned to HQ 2 Gordons for briefing by Bde Comd. Div Comd gave preliminary address.	
		1850	More EA over bn area assisted by thick & low cloud.	
		2230	Marching part of bn left rest area where we have been since 2 Jul for FAA at BAS de MOUEN (946653). A ¹ & A ² ech of tpt left after M. Pers. Unit shelled fairly heavily all night after reaching conc area. One shell landed less than 5x from RSM THOMPSON H, who was lying in the open. He sustained only a scratched face.	
Bas de Mouen	15	0930	Final "O" Gp for Op "Greenline". Major Charles WILSON R.A. now Comd 495 Fd Bty in sp 2 A&SH vice Major Vyvyan CORNWALL wounded at GAVRUS. Final feeding, recces of tpt FAA and men rested.	
BARON		2000	Whole Unit moved fwd on foot with tpt following to FAA in area BARON. Tps & tpt (F Ech) harboured in small area.	
		2120	Hy enemy shelling of whole bn area commenced and continued until dawn growing heavier and more intense as the light faded. BARON proved later to be a former German Corps HQ and consequently No1 DF task. The arty & mortar fire was the heaviest yet experienced but caused few cas so long as tps remained dug in.	
		2300	B & C Coys (Major H.C. Robertson and Major R.M. McKenzie) started to move fwd through BARON to Start Line behind 2 GORDONS. Objective of their attack was to be the main rd half way to the Ferme de Mondeville feature.	
BARON	16	0130	Hy cas incurred through shelling and mortaring especially in B Coy. Lt P.S. SALMOND badly wounded and died soon after (B Coy). Capt W MUIRHEAD (5 Pl) and Capt Tony Marshall (FOO 495 Fd Bty RA) also badly wounded. Remainder of Bn moved fwd to Start Line. Meanwhile 2 GLAS H. sp by 107 R.T.R. had cleared and held ESQUAY and 2 Gordons had reached their first objective, but were held up on fwd slope by well sighted M.Gs on fixed lines. Not imagining this would be a long delay 2 A&SH moved onto the top of the high ground 400x S.W. of BARON church and waited. Artificial moonlight was laid on by S/Ls of 12 Corps to help tps in direction finding but in fact we were silhouetted.	
		0500	10 HLI and B Sqn 147 R.T.R. moved into posn just ahead of 2 A&SH (lying down in the open) & just short of the Gordons (unable to adv owing to MG fire). The situation at dawn was therefore 227(H) Inf Bde and three Sqns of 147 R.T.R. bunched in an area about 800x x 300x in the open and with no cover.	

BARON		0545	Dawn. Enemy shelling, mortaring and projector firing recommenced. Hy smoke put down by own guns to hide the appalling target we presented. The Churchill tank bn commenced to withdraw, but negotiation of a badly worked British minefd caused trouble. Brig. R. MacIntosh-Walker M.C. (Seaforths) Comd 227(H) Inf Bde was killed during the battle while at Tac HQ at BARON Calvary.	
		0530	Lt. Col. E.C. COLVILLE (2 Gordons) assumed comd 227(H) Inf Bde in his place.	
		1000	CO & IO to Bde HQ for 'O' Gp leaving Major J. Kenneth (A Coy) in comd of the Bn. Plan for next phase: 2 Glas H to hold ESQUAY - 2 Gordons pt 113 - 2 A&SH area Les VILAINS - TOURMAUVILLE Br originally captured by C Coy in June in Op "EPSOM". Bn withdrew under own 2" mortar smoke and was fully harboured in new area by 1700 hrs. Total casualties during the operation in which 2 A&SH had no contact with the enemy K/A 4, wounded 3 offr and 48, missing 16.	
		2300	Spasmodic shelling and mortaring all night. 2/Lieut N.A.C. DUNNING, brother of OC 6 Pl, killed in his slit trench by direct hit from arty shell.	
TOURMAUVILLE	17	2100	Spasmodic shelling all day. 2 A&SH relieved by 5 Welch and marched back to rest area (Le Haut du Bosq, SW Cheux). March without incident. In posn by 1200 hrs. Rest area proved to be a gun area and the noise was incessant.	C.O. Lt-Col J.W. Tweedie 2IC Major J. Kenneth Adjt A/Capt JDC Graham I.O. Lt A. Pierce OC A Coy Maj HC Robertson B Coy Maj A.M. Fyfe
		2330	About 12 twin engined GA flew over bn area dropping bombs, some very close. Large fire started of RA veh.	
	18		Refitting in Rest? Area. Capt C.W. TUNIS & Lt C.M. BROWN rejoined unit from RHU (2i/c A Coy and OC 5 Pl respectively). Both CANLOAN offr.	C Coy Maj LLE Moreton D Coy Maj FGS Graham Sp Coy Capt WR Bruce
	19	1000 2100	C.O.'s Conference. Bn Order of Battle rearranged as above. → First party to 8 Corps Rest Camp at St Aubin s/MER for three days holiday. Major Graham i/c party.	[Major DR Morgan to be Lt-Col Comd 10 HLI.]
Haut du Bosq	20-21		Remained in Rest Area. Occasional shelling and interference by EA. Tps got hold of an unknown drink in a house, which proved later to be brandy. Twenty cases of intoxication resulted.	
	22	2015	CO out all day with Bde "R" Gp recceing new posns for 15(S) Inf Div in the CAUMONT sector where we will relieve the U.S. Army. 227(H) Inf Bde will take over from 11 Inf Regt. V US Inf Div. 2 Pz.Div opposes. Recce Party of 2IC, one offr per coy and one nco per pl moved down to CAUMONT area to liaise with III Bn / 11 Inf Regt in area	

			la REPAS, one mile east of CAUMONT ☉ recess had to be done in darkness as movement on fwd slope in daylight is impossible. Bn 'O' Gp in Haut du Bosq 2300 hrs.	
	23	1030	227(H) Inf Bde moved off in TCVs (20 per bn) with A ¹ & A ² Echcs following. Order of March: 2 Gordons, Bde HQ, 10 HLI, 2 A&SH, 1 Mx B Coy. Bn arrived conc area la VITARDIERE 7262 by 1630 hrs. Everyone greatly affected by seeing undamaged houses & open green fields. Coy liaison with US Comds prior to take over. 2 A&SH took over from III Bn as under. A Coy (Capt TUNIS) - I Coy (Capt Williams) B Coy (Major A.M. Fyfe) - K Coy (Capt Altman) C Coy (Major Moreton) - A Coy/I Bn (Capt Cooper) D Coy (Major Graham) - L Coy (Capt Williams) Comd III Bn was Major BIRDSONG. 2130 Take over of US Coy posns commenced. Guides provided by US Army on scale of 1 per pl.	
la Repas	23	0900	Relief complete. One party of US troops pulling out had a skirmish with an enemy patrol but otherwise everything went smoothly. OP reps in fwd areas remained behind for an additional 24 hrs and all US signal cable was left for us but did not work satisfactorily on D5 phone.	
	24	2300	Bn org complete by daylight. Fwd tps of B&D Coys cannot move by day & feeding &c has to be done entirely by night. B Coy lost 3 men K/A during mortar bombardment in a.m. B Coy 2 Gordons moved in to close gap between C Coy and 43 Div bdy on our left.	
La Repas	25		Visit to bn by GOC 15(S) Inf Div. Recce Patrol sent out at 2330 hrs by Bn. Lt A.W. HADDOW (Canloan offr to "A" Coy). Task: To take one PW, as 21 Pz Div is thought to be conducting a relief. Patrol did not get very far owing to MG fire and lack of time.	
	26	1145	Div Counter Mortar policy started, under direction of an ACMO (Major 1 Mx) att Bde HQ. Action on enemy fire being received by arty, MMGs, 4.2" mortars & unit 3" mortars. Visit by BGS 30 Corps to visit RA Ops. More active patrolling to get PW, but without success. The enemy appears to have pulled back quite a long way & his mortar fire is considerably less now as a result of our CM policy.	
	27		Little activity by day. Considerable enemy tk movements across our flank by night.	Appx "C"
La Repas	28		CO and Adjnt to 153 Fd Amb for rest and CO had slight operation. Some hostile air activity only.	Major B.A. Pearson, att from 30 Corps HQ, reported for duty. Appx A/21C

	29		2 A&SH relieved by the 4th Dorsets. Relief complete by 2130 hrs except for men in extreme fwd areas. Same system used as for 2 A&SH / US Army relief. Bn pulled back to a farm two miles behind La Repas. Major J. Kenneth OC 2 A&SH. Final 'O' Gps & adjustments for Op "BLUECOAT".	See Appx A&B
Caumont	30	0700	Op "BLUECOAT" began 227(H) Inf Bde with in sp 6 Gds Army TK Bde moved fwd to attack ground SOUTH of CAUMONT. Attack preceded by main attack on enemy posns by several hundred RAF Halifax a/c. Stiff opposition encountered early in attack after 2 A&SH passed through 10 HLI & 2 Gordons, and some cas incl Lt DA McCallum D Coy were caused by enemy mines. Many PW taken (C Coy (Major LLE Moreton) took 79 alone). Bn objective LES LOGES captured and occupied by 1830 hrs. The Churchill tanks of 3 SGs who reached the objective 45 mins before the inf were attacked by Tigers or SP guns and lost 6 tks in 2 mins. Bn arrived and dug in with B & D Coys fwd. Total cas during operation in which we advanced through 3 enemy bn posns were 3 killed, 3 offrs and 18 wounded. The bn was thus exposed about 2 miles fwd of other tps & with open flanks. Counter attacks anticipated but not occurred.	
	31		Lt-Col. J.W. Tweedie rejoined and resumed comd of the bn. Fighting continues around & to our rear on 53 Div front but we were left in peace. British armour attacking hard on our right towards St MARTIN de BESACES.	