

= 3rd Parachute Brigade ( United Kingdom ) =

The 3rd Parachute Brigade was an airborne forces brigade raised by the British Army during the Second World War . The brigade was initially part of the 1st Airborne Division , but remained in Britain when that division was sent overseas , and became part of the 6th Airborne Division , alongside 5th Parachute Brigade and 6th Airlanding Brigade .

The brigade first went into action on 5 June 1944 during Operation Tonga , part of the Normandy landings . The objective was to destroy the Merville Gun Battery and the bridges over the River Dives . The brigade achieved all its objectives , and remained defending the left flank of the invasion zone until mid August . They then crossed the River Dives and advanced as far as the River Seine before they were withdrawn . While recovering in England , the brigade was moved to Belgium in December 1944 , to counter the German attack in the Ardennes . The brigade remained on the border between Belgium and the Netherlands carrying out patrols until March 1945 . Their next airborne mission was Operation Varsity , the assault crossing of the River Rhine in Germany . After this , the brigade advanced towards the Baltic Sea , arriving just ahead of the Red Army .

Still part of the 6th Airborne Division , the brigade was sent to the British mandate of Palestine in October 1945 after the end of the war . Carrying out an internal security role with the rest of 6th Airborne Division , it remained in Palestine until it was disbanded in 1947 .

= = Background = =

Impressed by the success of German airborne operations during the Battle of France , the British Prime Minister , Winston Churchill , directed the War Office to investigate the possibility of creating a force of 5 @, @ 000 parachute troops . As a result , on 22 June 1940 , No. 2 Commando assumed parachute duties , and on 21 November was re @-@ designated the 11th Special Air Service Battalion , with a parachute and glider wing .

On 21 June 1940 the Central Landing Establishment was formed at Ringway airfield near Manchester . Although tasked primarily with training parachute troops , it was also directed to investigate the use of gliders to transport troops into battle . At the same time , the Ministry of Aircraft Production contracted General Aircraft Ltd to design and produce a glider for this purpose . The result was the General Aircraft Hotspur , an aircraft capable of transporting eight soldiers , that was used for both assault and training purposes .

The success of the first British airborne raid , Operation Colossus , prompted the War Office to expand the airborne force through the creation of the Parachute Regiment , and to develop plans to convert several infantry battalions into parachute and glider battalions . On 31 May 1941 , a joint army and air force memorandum was approved by the Chiefs @-@ of @-@ Staff and Winston Churchill ; it recommended that the British airborne forces should consist of two parachute brigades , one based in England and the other in the Middle East , and that a glider force of 10 @, @ 000 men should be created .

= = Formation = =

The 3rd Parachute Brigade was raised on 7 November 1942 , under the command of Brigadier Sir Alexander Stanier Bart. Stanier was soon replaced by Brigadier Gerald Lathbury , who in turn was replaced in May 1943 by Brigadier James Hill , previously of the 1st Parachute Brigade . Hill remained in command through the remaining war years until July 1945 , when Lathbury once again assumed command . The last commander of the brigade was Brigadier Francis Rome , who took over on 15 November 1946 .

The brigade was initially composed of the 7th ( Light Infantry ) Parachute Battalion , the 8th ( Midlands ) Parachute Battalion and the 9th ( Eastern and Home Counties ) Parachute Battalion . On 11 August 1943 the 1st Canadian Parachute Battalion arrived in England and was assigned to the brigade , and the 7th Battalion was transferred to the 5th Parachute Brigade which was in the process of forming . At the end of the Second World War , the 1st Canadian Battalion returned to

Canada , and was replaced in the brigade by the 3rd Parachute Battalion , which had previously been part of the 1st Parachute Brigade .

The brigade 's other units were the 3rd Airlanding Anti @-@ Tank Battery from the Royal Artillery , the 3rd Parachute Squadron of the Royal Engineers and the 224th ( Parachute ) Field Ambulance from the Royal Army Medical Corps . During operations the artillery support available to the brigade would also include a battery of howitzers from the 53rd ( Worcester Yeomanry ) Airlanding Light Regiment , although it was not part of the brigade .

On formation the brigade was assigned to the 1st Airborne Division , and as such had to supply reinforcements to make the 1st Parachute Brigade up to strength before they left to take part in Operation Torch . When the 1st Airborne Division left England for operations in the Mediterranean , the 3rd Parachute Brigade remained behind , and was assigned as the first unit of the newly raised 6th Airborne Division . The brigade would remain part of the 6th Airborne Division until 1947 , when it was disbanded .

= = Operational history = =

From June to December 1943 , the brigade prepared for operations as part of the 6th Airborne Division , training at every level from section up to division by day and night . Airborne soldiers were expected to fight against superior numbers of the enemy , who would be equipped with artillery and tanks . Training was therefore designed to encourage a spirit of self @-@ discipline , self @-@ reliance and aggressiveness , with emphasis given to physical fitness , marksmanship and fieldcraft . A large part of the training consisted of assault courses and route marching . Military exercises included capturing and holding airborne bridgeheads , road or rail bridges and coastal fortifications . At the end of most exercises , the troops would march back to their barracks , usually a distance of around 20 miles ( 32 km ) . An ability to cover long distances at speed was expected ; airborne platoons were required to cover a distance of 50 miles ( 80 km ) in 24 hours , and battalions 32 miles ( 51 km ) .

In April 1944 , under the command of 1st Airborne Corps , the brigade took part in Exercise Mush , in the counties of Gloucestershire , Oxfordshire and Wiltshire . This was an airborne military exercise spread over three days involving the 1st and 6th Airborne Divisions . Unknown to the 6th Airborne , it was a full @-@ scale rehearsal for the division 's involvement in the imminent Normandy invasion . In the invasion , the division 's two parachute brigades would land just after midnight on 6 June , while the 6th Airlanding Brigade arrived later in the day just before dark . The division 's objective was to secure the left flank of the invasion area by dominating the high ground in the area between the rivers Orne and Dives . For their part in the operation , the 3rd Parachute Brigade had to destroy the Merville Gun Battery , whose guns were in range of the Sword beach landings , and to demolish bridges across the River Dives to hamper the arrival of German reinforcements from the east .

= = = D @-@ Day = = =

Just after midnight on 6 June 1944 , Albermarle aircraft arrived , carrying the brigade 's pathfinders , a company from the 1st Canadian Battalion to clear the drop zone ( DZ ) of obstructions , a group from each battalion , and brigade headquarters . Some planes got lost and failed to reach the DZ or arrived late . Others were damaged before dropping all their paratroops and turned back , and one returned to base after failing to find the drop zone at all .

From around 00 : 50 the rest of the brigade arrived in Normandy after crossing the English Channel , transported in 108 C @-@ 47 Dakotas , along with 17 Horsa gliders carrying their heavy equipment . The 8th Parachute Battalion , landing on DZ @-@ K along with the brigade headquarters , was tasked with destroying the bridges over the River Dives at Bures and Troarn . The 1st Canadian Battalion , landing on DZ @-@ V , was required to destroy the bridges at Varaville and Robehomme . The 9th Battalion , also landing on DZ @-@ V , had arguably the hardest task ; neutralising the Merville Gun Battery . Due to a combination of poor navigation , heavy cloud cover ,

and several of the drop zones not being marked correctly , the parachute drop was widely scattered . One group of paratroops landed 10 miles ( 16 km ) away , and another landed on the wrong side of the River Orne , only 1 @, @ 200 yards ( 1 @, @ 100 m ) from the invasion beaches . Less than half of each battalion gathered at their individual assembly areas .

In the south , at DZ @-@ K , only 141 men of the 8th Parachute Battalion had assembled . Divided into two groups , they headed for their objectives . One group demolished the two bridges at Bures without opposition . The other group , while on their way to Troarn , intercepted and ambushed a convoy of six armoured vehicles belonging to the 21st Panzer Division . When they reached Troarn , they discovered it was defended by the Germans . A platoon , including engineers , managed to fight their way to the bridge . They found that it had already been damaged , so the engineers planted their explosives and enlarged the gap to around 70 feet ( 21 m ) .

The 1st Canadian Battalion successfully destroyed the bridges at Varaville and Robehomme after landing on the northern DZ . They then withdrew to defend Le Mesnil , where the brigade headquarters and the field ambulance were located . Meanwhile , by 02 : 50 only 150 men of the 9th Parachute Battalion had gathered at their assembly area , with virtually no heavy weapons or supplies . Unable to wait any longer , they headed for the Merville Gun Battery . The battalion captured the battery , but without explosives , could only damage two of its four guns . The battle had been costly , and only 85 men were left to head for their secondary objective , the village of Le Plein . The village was defended in strength by the Germans , and the weakened battalion could only dig in and wait the arrival of commandos from the 1st Special Service Brigade later that day . By nightfall the brigade was deployed facing east , along the ridge of high ground from Le Plein in the north to the Bois de Bavent in the south .

= = = Orne bridgehead = = =

On 7 June the 9th Parachute Battalion , relieved by the Special Service Brigade commandos , moved southwards to the Bois de Mont near Bréville , shortening the front held by the 3rd Parachute Brigade . The 6th Airborne Division 's deployments now had the 6th Airlanding Brigade in the south , holding a line between Longueval and Herourvillette , the 5th Parachute Brigade to the rear just to the east of the River Orne bridge , the attached 1st Special Service Brigade to the north with troops in Sallenelles and Franceville @-@ Plage , and finally the 3rd Parachute Brigade holding the ridge of high ground to the east .

The Germans still held the village of Bréville , between the 3rd Parachute and 1st Special Service Brigades , which gave them a vantage point to observe the airborne division 's positions . On 8 June the Germans launched a two pronged attack from Bréville , against the commandos and against the 9th Parachute Battalion . The German force , comprising elements of the 857th Grenadier Regiment , 346th Infantry Division , were only driven back by a counterattack led by the 9th Parachute Battalion 's Regimental Sergeant Major . The next morning the 9th Parachute Battalion was the target for a heavy mortar bombardment , followed by two further infantry attacks . Later the same morning , the 3rd Parachute Brigade 's headquarters was attacked by German troops who had infiltrated the lines . The brigade defence platoon managed to hold out until a counterattack by the 9th Parachute Battalion cleared the enemy away . On 10 June , 31 men who had landed in the wrong locations joined the battalion , bringing their numbers up to 270 all ranks . The fighting was now concentrated around the Château Saint Come , which was occupied by a German infantry company supported by two self propelled guns . One of the self @-@ propelled guns was blown up by Vickers machine gun fire , but the Germans then mounted a determined infantry assault , and the battalion had to call for support from HMS Arethusa . The leading German troops were undaunted by the naval bombardment , and reached the battalion 's lines before they were stopped . One of the German prisoners was a battalion commander , who informed his captors that the 875th Grenadier Regiment had been virtually destroyed in the previous day 's fighting . That evening the 9th Parachute Battalion captured the Château Saint Come , and was involved in skirmishes throughout the night . The following day , 11 June , the 5th Battalion Black Watch was attached to the brigade to assist in their attempt to capture Bréville , but their attacks were repulsed by the Germans with

heavy losses . They tried again on the 12th , and the German response was an attack by infantry supported by armour , which not only drove the Black Watch back , but almost overran the 9th Parachute Battalion 's position . The situation was only saved by a counterattack by ' A ' Company 1st Canadian Battalion under the command of Brigadier Hill .

During this time the 8th Battalion , located in the thick forest of the Bois de Bavant , were under an almost constant mortar bombardment . Not being directly attacked , the battalion concentrated on night time patrols to harass the Germans , some going as far as the German occupied villages of Troan and Bures .

On 7 June the 1st Canadian Parachute Battalion at Le Mesnil was attacked by units from the 857th and 858th Grenadier Regiments , supported by tanks and self @-@ propelled guns . The battalion inflicted heavy casualties on the Germans , but only managed to drive them back with a bayonet charge by ' B ' Company . The next day the battalion was involved in several small battles , and on the 9 June sent a reconnaissance patrol to check if the Germans were still occupying Bavent . The patrol was driven back by a strong German force , but that night another patrol entered the village and planted explosive charges on weapons and in buildings . Attacks by German infantry and armour continued until the night of the 12 / 13 June , when Bréville was finally captured by the division 's only reserves , a mixed force from the 12th Parachute Battalion and 12th Devonshire Battalion supported by a troop of tanks from the 13th / 18th Royal Hussars . On 13 June the 51st ( Highland ) Infantry Division crossed the River Orne from the west , and took over responsibility for the southern sector of the Orne bridgehead . At the same time the 4th Special Service Brigade was attached to the 6th Airborne Division , which gave them the ability to rotate one brigade at a time out of the front line to allow them to rest . The 3rd Parachute Brigade , having suffered more casualties than the division 's other brigades , was the first formation relieved .

= = = Advance to the Seine = = =

With the capture of Breville the division was not attacked in force again , apart from an almost continuous artillery bombardment between 18 and 20 June . Further reinforcements arrived east of the River Orne on 20 July ; the 49th ( West Riding ) Infantry Division moved into the line between the 6th Airborne and the Highland Division . Then on 7 August , the 6th Airborne Division was ordered to prepare to move over to the offensive , with its objective being the mouth of the River Seine . The three divisions east of the Orne now became I Corps , and when issuing his orders Lieutenant General John Crocker , aware that the 6th Airborne had almost no artillery , vehicles or engineer equipment , did not expect them to advance very quickly . To reach the Seine the division would have to cross three major rivers , and there were only two main lines of advance ; one road running along the coast and another further inland from Troarn to Pont Audemer .

On 17 August the Germans started to withdraw northwards . The divisional commander had already decided that the 3rd Parachute Brigade would lead the advance along the interior road . Their objective was to capture Bures , cross the River Dives and secure the area between there and Dozulé . At 03 : 00 the brigade attacked the retreating Germans . By 08 : 00 the 8th and 9th Battalions had captured Bures , and the 1st Canadian Parachute Battalion moved through the Bois de Bavant . The bridges in Bures had been blown up previously , and it took the brigade 's engineers until the afternoon to build a crossing . By 21 : 00 the brigade had crossed the Dives and halted with the 8th Parachute Battalion out in front at Goustranville . The 1st Canadian Parachute Battalion was behind them , and the 9th Parachute Battalion in reserve . The next day the brigade met heavy resistance just beyond Goustranville , on the Dives Canal and at Dozulé train station . The 1st Canadian Parachute Battalion had taken over the advance and were ordered to seize four bridges crossing the canal . The assault began at 22 : 00 ; at 22 : 35 the railway bridge in the north had been captured , and by midnight all four bridges were secured with 150 prisoners taken . The 9th Parachute Battalion then passed through the Canadians and crossed the next water obstacle without boats , as they found the water was only 4 feet ( 1 @.@ 2 m ) deep . At 01 : 00 on 19 August they reached Dozulé . It was not until 07 : 00 on 21 August that the advance restarted , with the objective of Pont @-@ l 'Evêque on the River Touques . After a hard battle the 8th Parachute

Battalion captured Annebault , and the 5th Parachute Brigade then took over as the division 's lead unit . On 24 August the 3rd Parachute Brigade and 4th Special Service Brigade captured Beuzeville , and the 5th Parachute Brigade reached Pont Audemer , which was the division 's last objective . On 27 August the division was ordered to concentrate in the area between Honfleur and Pont Audemer and prepare to return to England .

In nine days of fighting the 6th Airborne Division had advanced 45 miles ( 72 km ) , despite , as the divisional commander Major @-@ General Richard Gale put it , his infantry units being " quite inadequately equipped for a rapid pursuit " . They had captured 400 square miles ( 1 @,@ 000 km2 ) of territory and taken over 1 @,@ 000 German prisoners . Since landing on 6 June , the division 's casualties were 4 @,@ 457 , of which 821 were killed , 2 @,@ 709 wounded and 927 missing . The 3rd Parachute Brigade had 207 killed . The division was withdrawn from France and embarked for England at the beginning of September .

= = = Ardennes = = =

In England the brigade went into a period of recruitment and training , concentrating on house @-@ to @-@ house street fighting in the bombed areas of Southampton and Birmingham . The training programme culminated in Exercise Eve , an assault on the River Thames , which was intended to simulate the River Rhine in Germany .

By December the brigade was preparing for Christmas leave , when news of the German offensive in the Ardennes broke . As part of the First Allied Airborne Army , 6th Airborne Division was available as a component of the strategic reserve for the Allied forces in northwest Europe . The other two divisions available in reserve , the American 82nd and 101st Airborne , were already at Rheims in northern France , and the 6th Airborne was sent by sea to Belgium to assist the defence . With 29 German and 33 Allied divisions involved , the Battle of the Bulge was the largest single battle on the Western Front during the war . On Christmas Day the division moved up to take position in front of the spearhead of the German advance ; by Boxing Day they had reached their allocated places in the defensive line between Dinant and Namur . The 3rd Parachute Brigade were on the left , 5th Parachute Brigade on the right , and the 6th Airlanding Brigade in reserve . Over the next days the German advance was halted and forced back , until at the end of January 1945 , the brigade crossed into the Netherlands . Here the division was made responsible for the area along the River Maas , between Venlo and Roermond . The brigade carried out patrols , on both sides of the river , against their opponents from the German 7th Parachute Division . Near the end of February the division returned to England to prepare for another airborne mission , to cross the River Rhine into Germany .

= = = Germany = = =

Whereas all other Allied airborne landings had been a surprise for the Germans , the Rhine crossing was expected , and their defences were reinforced in anticipation . The airborne operation was preceded by a two @-@ day round @-@ the @-@ clock bombing mission by the Allied air forces . Then on 23 March , 3 @,@ 500 artillery guns targeted the German positions . At dusk Operation Plunder , an assault river crossing of the Rhine by the 21st Army Group , began . For their part in Operation Varsity , the 6th Airborne Division was assigned to the American XVIII Airborne Corps alongside the United States 17th Airborne Division .

In the British sector the 3rd Parachute Brigade would be the first unit to arrive in Germany . Their initial objective was to secure the western edge of the Schneppenberg woods . Brigade headquarters was fully aware of the expected opposition to the landings , and the commander of the 224th ( Parachute ) Field Ambulance was warned to prepare for around 600 casualties ; almost a third of the brigade 's manpower . On 24 March 1945 at 07 : 00 the 122 C @-@ 47 Dakotas transporting the brigade took off from England in three waves . The first wave carried brigade headquarters and the 8th Parachute Battalion , the second carried the 1st Canadian Parachute Battalion , and the 9th Parachute Battalion came last . The gliders carrying the brigade 's heavy

equipment were scheduled to arrive 40 minutes after the third wave . Nine minutes ahead of schedule , the brigade started landing at their DZs . Their premature arrival stopped the Allied artillery and fighter bombers which were engaging targets in the area , especially anti @-@ aircraft gun emplacements . The descending parachutists were met with heavy fire from the German defenders , causing several casualties . One of the dead was the commanding officer of the 1st Canadian Parachute Battalion . It was during the landing that one of the Canadian medics , Corporal Frederick Topham , won a Victoria Cross , becoming the division 's only recipient of the award during the war . By 11 : 00 the 8th Parachute Battalion had secured the DZ , and the other two battalions headed for the Schneppenberg woods , which were secured by 14 : 00 . The 9th Parachute Battalion dug in within the woods , and the 1st Canadian Parachute Battalion on the outskirts . At 15 : 00 the first troops of the Royal Scots arrived after completing their assault crossing of the Rhine . The day 's fighting had cost the brigade 80 dead and 190 wounded , however they had taken around 700 prisoners .

On 27 March the division started advancing further into Germany . The 8th Parachute Battalion was the first to reach Lembeck , which was defended by two Panzer Grenadier companies . A hand @-@ to @-@ hand battle ensued , lasting 18 hours and eventually drawing in all three battalions ; by midnight the town was secured , with around 300 prisoners taken . The brigade 's next objective was Greven and the bridge across the River Ems . At 21 : 30 the 1st Canadian Parachute Battalion were about 3 miles ( 4 @. @ 8 km ) away from the town . Leaving what vehicles they had behind , they attempted to approach the bridge unseen on foot , and by 23 : 00 had successfully secured the town and bridge . The 9th Parachute Battalion was called forward to continue the advance , but just as they approached the bridge it was blown up by the Germans . In the early hours of the morning , a footbridge across the river was discovered , and the 9th Battalion prepared to carry out an assault . ' A ' Company crossed the footbridge under fire just before dawn , and after a short fight had secured the crossing . After a few hours ' rest the advance continued with the 8th Battalion in the lead , and by nightfall they had reached their next objective , the Dortmund ? Ems Canal . Resting overnight , the battalion crossed the half @-@ empty canal at 10 : 30 the next day . Over the next 36 hours the brigade advanced 70 miles ( 110 km ) to Minden .

The 15th ( Scottish ) Infantry Division then took over from the 6th Airborne Division as the lead formation until 30 April when the Airborne Division once more resumed the advance , crossing the River Elbe over a bridge captured by the Scottish division . The division 's objective was Wismar on the Baltic Sea ; the two parachute brigades advanced on separate routes to Gadebusch , aware that the brigade to arrive first would continue as the division 's lead formation . By this stage of the war the advance was hampered more by refugees fleeing westwards than by any organised opposition . The 3rd Parachute Brigade won the race and led the division to Wismar , arriving on 1 May only 30 minutes before the lead troops of the Soviet Red Army advancing from the east .

= = = Palestine = = =

At the end of May 1945 , the division was pulled out of Germany and returned to England . It was initially intended to send them to India to form an airborne corps with the 44th Indian Airborne Division . The division 's advance party , formed around the 5th Parachute Brigade , had already arrived in India . Following the Japanese surrender , all these plans changed . The post @-@ war British Army only needed one airborne division , and the 6th Airborne was chosen to remain on strength . Reinforced by the 2nd Parachute Brigade , the division was sent to the Middle East as the Imperial Strategic Reserve .

The 3rd Parachute Brigade was the first unit of the Airborne Division to arrive in Palestine , disembarking at Haifa on 3 October 1945 . The brigade then moved to Gaza to acclimatise and regain their fitness after the voyage from England . On 21 October the brigade was deployed around the Lydda district , with responsibility for Tel Aviv and Jaffa . The first incident involving the brigade came on 14 November 1945 , when the Jewish National Council called for a 12 @-@ hour strike , which resulted in rioting in Tel Aviv . By 18 : 15 the Palestine Police Force was unable to cope and sent for reinforcements from the 8th Parachute Battalion . The complete battalion was deployed and

the riot was under control by 21 : 40 and a curfew imposed for the rest of the night . Early the following day the curfew was broken by large crowds gathering to loot and burn buildings , so the remainder of the brigade was deployed to the city under the codename Operation Bellicose . Night time curfews remained in place until 05 : 20 on 20 November , when all troops returned to their barracks . All was quiet in the brigade area until the night of 26 / 27 December , when police stations in Jaffa and Tel Aviv , the railway at Lydda and an armoury at Tel Aviv were attacked . The brigade again imposed a curfew around Tel Aviv . This was followed by cordon and search operations : Pintail on 29 December , Heron on 8 January , and Pigeon on 30 January .

Over the night of 2 / 3 April 1946 , there were several attacks on railway installations around the country . One at Yibna occurred at the same time as a patrol from the 9th Parachute Battalion was entering the village . The patrol 's leading two vehicles exploded mines that had been laid on a bridge , wounding three men . At daylight the tracks of around 30 men were found , and a section from the 8th Parachute Battalion eventually cornered 24 armed men . In the firefight that followed , 14 of them were wounded and the remainder surrendered , with no British casualties . On 29 June Operation Agatha started ; the brigade had been rotated to cover the south of Palestine , and were to search for arms and arrest any members of the Palmach in Givat Brenner and No 'ar Oved . On 22 July the King David Hotel in Jerusalem was bombed , which was the catalyst for Operation Shark , the searching of every house and property in Tel Aviv . For this operation the brigade had all the divisional artillery and the 3rd The King 's Own Hussars under their command . The brigade 's next tasks were Operations Bream and Eel between 28 August and 4 September , which entailed the search of Dorot and Ruhama in the Negev . For the first time army dogs trained in metal detecting were used during the operations , and they located a large arms cache in both settlements .

In January 1947 , the 6th Airborne Division was moved to northern Palestine , swapping locations with the 1st Infantry Division . The 3rd Parachute Brigade took over responsibility for Haifa , which was considered a problem area . The brigade had to guard the docks and port of Haifa , which were the main entry point for immigrants arriving in the country . In addition , the many oil pipelines and installations in the region were a potential target for sabotage . The brigade 's first operation was imposing a curfew on the Jewish quarter after the kidnapping of two Britons in retaliation for the death sentence imposed on Dov Gruner . The next major operation was in July , when an indefinite night time curfew was imposed , in response to several attacks in and around the city . The curfew lasted until the end of the month .

In October 1947 , the War Office announced its intention to reduce the division 's strength by one brigade . The 3rd Parachute Brigade , being more recently established than the other units , was selected to be disbanded . However , instead of disbanding its battalions , it was decided to amalgamate them . The 3rd Parachute Battalion joined with the 2nd Parachute Battalion and was renumbered the 2nd / 3rd Parachute Battalion , and the brigade 's other two battalions were amalgamated to become the 8th / 9th Parachute Battalion . Both of these new units would serve in the 1st Parachute Brigade . The amalgamation of the 2nd and 3rd Parachute Battalions was completed in December , and the 8th and 9th Parachute Battalions in early January . Finally , the brigade headquarters was disbanded at the end of January . During their service in Palestine , nine men from the brigade had been killed .

= = Order of battle = =

Commanding officers

Brigadier Sir Alexander Stanier , Bt

Brigadier Gerald Lathbury

Brigadier James Hill

Brigadier Francis Rome

Units

7th ( Light Infantry ) Parachute Battalion

8th ( Midlands ) Parachute Battalion

9th ( Eastern and Home Counties ) Parachute Battalion

1st Canadian Parachute Battalion

3rd Parachute Battalion

224th ( Parachute ) Field Ambulance ? Royal Army Medical Corps

3rd Airlanding Anti @-@ Tank Battery ? Royal Artillery

3rd Parachute Squadron ? Royal Engineers