|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 01 Jun 1944 | Place: Carter Bks. Bulford.  Weather was clear and hot. All briefing tents and models were ready for the briefing which began today. Movie tonight in the Y.M.C.A. Tent. |  |
| 02 Jun 1944 | Weather clear and hot. Briefing continued. Brigade Commander commended the Intelligence Section on their Briefing preparations, Said "They were the best in the Division." Amateur concert big success. |  |
| 03 Jun 1944 | Weather extremely hot. Briefing continues. All Ranks showing a keen and intelligent interest. A violent storm threatened to destroy models and enlargements in the breifing tents. Battalion proceeded to DOWN AMPNEY Airfield where they saw their aircraft for the first time and drew and fitted their parachutes. |  |
| 04 Jun 1944 | Weather fine. Church Parade in the morning. Aircraft crews came to the Camp where they were introduced to the sticks their planes were to carry. These R.A.F. crews came from every country in the Empire. Their calm certainty of dropping their sticks at the right time greatly reassured the men. Major-General Gale, G.O.C. 6th Airborne Division, spoke to the Battalion of its approaching tasks and wished it God-Speed and good hunting. |  |
| 05 Jun 1944 | Weather was cloudy with a light wind. All Ranks ordered on enforced rest during the morning and the afternoon. Battalion was paraded at 1930 hours in full kit. All Ranks checked and inspected to see if escape kits were well hidden and that no incriminating ~~evidence~~ documents were being carried. "C" Company then left for their airport. Remainder of the Battalion proceeded to Down Ampney Airport where each stick reported to its respective Aircraft. Parachutes were put on and a short prayer was offered for the success of the mission. Battalion emplaned at 2245 hours and were Airborne at 2300 hours in C-47 Aircraft. "C" Company had emplaned at 2230 hours in Albemarles. |  |
| 06 Jun 1944 | The initial stages of operation OVERLORD insofar as the 1st. Cdn. Parachute Battalion was cincerned, were divided into three tasks. The protection of the left flank of the 9th Para Battalion in its approach march and attack on the MERVILLE battery 1577 was assigned to "A" Company. The blowing of two bridges over the RIVER DIVES at 1872 and 1972 and the holding of feature ROBEHOMME 1873 was assigned to "B" Company with under command one section of 3 Para Sqdn ~~KX~~ Engineers. The destruction of a German Signal Exchange 1675 and the destruction of bridge 186759 plus neutralization of enemy positions at VARRAVILLE 1875 was assigned to "C" Company.  The Battalion was to drop on a DZ 1775 in the early hours of D Day, "C" Company dropping thirty minutes before the remainder of the Battalion to neutralize any opposition on the DZ. The Battalion emplaned at Down Ampney Airfield at 2250 hours on the 5th June, 1944. "C" Company travelled in Albemarles and the remainder of the Battalion in Dakotas (C-47). The flight was uneventful until reaching the French Coast when a certain ~~number~~ amount of A.A. fire was encountered. Upon crossing the coast-line numerous fires could be seen which had been started by the R.A.F. bombers. Unfortunately the Battalion was dropped over a wide area, some sticks landing several miles from their appointed R.V.. This factor complicated matters but did not deter the Battalion from securing its first objectives.  Protection of Left Flank of 9 Para Bn - A Company  "A" Company was dropped at approximately 0100 hours on the morning of 6th June, 1944. Lieut. Clancy, upon reaching the Company R.V. found only two or three men of the Company present. After waiting for further members, unsuccessfully, of the Company to appear, he decided to recce the village of GONNEVILLE SUR-MERVILLE 1676. Taking two men he proceeded and penetrated the village but could find no sign of the enemy. He then returned to the Company R.V. which he reached at approximately 0600 hours and found one other Officer and twenty Other Ranks of the Battalion and several men from other Brigade Units waiting. The entire body then moved off along the pre-arranged route to the MERVILLE battery. Encountering no other opposition enroute other than heavy R.A.F. Bombardment at GONNEVILLE SUR-MERVILLE. Upon completion of the 9th Battalion task the Canadian party acted first as a recce patrol to clear a chateau 1576 from which a German M.G. had been firing and then as a rear guard for the 9th Battalion withdrawal toward LE PLEIN 1375. The party left the battalion area (9th Battalion) at LE PLEIN at 0900 hours and reached the 1st Cdn. Para. Bn. position at LE MESNIL BAVENT cross roads 139729 at 1530 hours on the 6th June, 1944.  ROBEHOMME - "B" Company  Two platoons of "B" Company were dropped in the marshy ground south and west of ROBEHOMME. Elements of these platoons under Sgt. OUTHWAITE then proceeded toward the Company objective. Enroute they encountered Lieut. TOSELAND with other members of "B" Company making a total of thirty All Ranks. They were guided through the marshes and enemy minefields to the ROBEHOMME bridge by a French Woman. On arriving at the bridge they met Capt. D. GRIFFIN and a further thirty men from various sub-units of the Battalion, including mortars and vickers Platoons. MAJOR FULLER who had been there for some time had left in an attempt to locate Battalion Headquarters. Capt. GRIFFIN waited until 0630 hours for the R.E.'s who were to blow the bridge. As they failed to arrive explosives were collected from the men and the bridge successfully demolished.  A guard was left on the bridge and the main body withdrawn to the ROBEHOMME hill. Although there were no enemy in the village there were several skirmishes with enemy patrols who were attempting to infiltrate through the village and some casualties were suffered by the Company. An O.P. was set up in the church spire. An excellent view was obtained ~~from~~ the road from PONT DE VACAVILLE 2276 to VARRAVILLE. Artillery and infantry could be seen moving for many hours along this road from the East. It was particularly unfortunate that wireless communication could not be made with Bn. H.Q. as the subsequent fighting of the Battalion was carried out in such close country that observation of enemy movement was almost impossible.  At 1200 hours on the 7th June, 1944, it was decided to recce the route to Bn. H.Q.. Upon the route being reported clear orders were issued for the party to prepare to join Bn, H.Q. Lieut. I. WILSON, Bn. I.O. came from LE MESNIL to guide the party back. The move was made at 2330 hours, the strength of the party by this time being 150 All Ranks, the addition having been made by stragglers of various units who had reported in. The wounded were carried in a civilian car given by the cure, and a horse and cart given by a farmer. The route was BRIQUEVILLE 1872 to BAVENT road 169729, through the BOIS DE BAVENT and on to LE MESNIL cross roads. Near BRIQUEVILLE the lead platoon was challenged by enemy sentries. The Platoon opened fire killing seven and taking one prisoner. Shortly afterwards this same platoon was fortunate enough to ambush a German car which was proceeding along the road from BAVENT. Four German Officers were killed. Bn. Headquarters was reached at 0330 hours on the 8th June, 1944.  VARRAVILLE - "C" Company  The majority of "C" Company was dropped west of the RIVER DIVES, although some sticks were dropped a considerable distance away including one which ~~was~~ landed west of the RIVER ORNE. Due to this confusion the Company did not meet at the R.V. as pre-arranged but went into the assault on the Chateau and VARRAVILLE in separate parties. MAJOR McLEOD collected a Sgt. and seven O.R.'s and proceeded towards ~~Varaville~~ VARAVILLE. En route they were joined by a party under Lieut. WALKER. One of the Sgts. was ordered to take his platoon to take up defensive positions around the bridge that the R.E. sections were preparing to blow. This was done and the bridge was successfully demolished.  MAJOR McLEOD and Lieut. WALKER with the balance of the party then cleared the chateau and at the same time other personnel of "C" Company arrived from the DZ and cleared the gatehouse of the chateau. ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ The gatehouse then came under enemy M.G. and mortar fire from the pill box situated on the grounds of the chateau. The pill-box also had a 75 mm A/Tk. Gun. The whole position was surrounded by wire, mines and weapon pits. MAJOR McLEOD, Lieut. WALKER and five O.R.'s went to the top floor of the gatehouse to fire on the pillbox with a P.I.A.T. the enemy 75mm A/Tk. Gun returned the fire and the shot detonated the P.I.A .T. ammunition. Lieut. WALKER, CPL. OIKLE, PTES. JOWETT AND NUFIELD were killed and MAJOR McLEOD And PTE. BISMUKA fatally wounded. PTES. DOCKER and SYLVESTER evacuated these casualties under heavy fire. CAPT. HANSON, 2 i/c of "C" Company was slightly wounded and his batman killed while proceeding to report to the Brigade Commander who had arrived in the village from the area in which he dropped. "C" Company, together with elements of Brigade H.Q. and the R.E.'s took up defensive positions around the village and a further party encircled the pill-box in order to contain the enemy. A further party of "C" Company under Lieut. McGOWAN who had been dropped some distance from the DZ arrived in VARAVILLE in time to catch two German Infantry Sections who were attempting to enter the town. Lieutl McGOWANSS' platoon opened fire causing casualties and the remainder of the enemy surrendered. This platoon took up firing positions firing on the enemy pill-box. "C" Company H.Q. which was located in the church yard pinned an enemy section attempting to advance in a bomb crater killing at least three. The chateau was evacuated by our troops and left as a dressing station. An enemy patrol re-entered the chateau and captured the wounded including Capt. BREBNER, the Unit M.O., and C.S.M. Blair of "B" Company. This patrol although attacked by our own troops managed to escape with their prisoners.  Heavy enemy Mortar Fire and sniping was brought to bear on our positions from the woods surrounding VARAVILLE. During this time the local inhabitants were of great assistance, the  VARRAVILLE - "C" Company (Cont'd)  women dressing wounds and the men offering assistance in any way. One Frenchman in particular distinguished himself. Upon being given a red beret and a rifle he killed three German Snipers. This man subsequently guided the Brigade Commander and his party towards LE MESNIL. Although it is believed that he was a casualty of the bombing attack that caught this party enroute to LE MESNIL.  At approximately 1030 hours the enemy pill-box surrendered. Forty-two (42) prisoners were taken and four of our own men who had been captured were released. From 1230 hours on artillery fire was brought to bear on VARAVILLE from the high ground east of the RIVER DIVES. At 1500 hours cycle troops of the 6th Commando arrived and at 1730 hours on 6 June, 1944, "C" Company proceeded to the Bn. area at LE MESNIL. The german prisoners giving evident satisfaction to the French population enroute.  VICKERS PLATOON - Initial XStages  The Vickers platoon was dropped in four sticks of ten or eleven each being a total of forty-one (41) A ll Ranks. For the first time their M.G.'s were carried in Kit Bags, a number of which tore away and were lost.  The Platoon was dropped over a wide area, a part of them joining "C" Company's attack on VARAVILLE, part joining "B" Company at ROBEHOMME and part joining Bn. H.Q.. Casualties on the drop totalled twelve missing and three ~~missing~~ wounded. One of the missing, PTE. PHIPPS, was identified in a photo in a German newspaper found on a P.W . After the initial Company tasks had been accomplished the platoon was deployed to the Companies as single gun detachments or as Sections.  MORTAR PLATOON - Initial Stages  The Mortar Platoon was dropped over a wide area and suffered very heavy ~~casualties~~ loss in equipment due to kit bags breaking away and a great majority of the men landing in marshy ground. As the platoon dropped they attached themselves to the nearest company they could find and assisted in the capture of the objectives. One detachment commander landed on top of the German pill box at VARAVILLE. He was made prisoner and spent the rest of the time in the pill-box until the Germans surrendered to "C" Company. A point of interest was that the P.I.A.T. Bombs di definite damage to the interior of the pill-box and had a very lowering effect upon the morale of the defenders.  MORTAR PLATOON - Initial Stages (Cont'd)  Some of the Mortar Platoon which joined "B" Company at ROBEHOMME were detailed to guard the approaches to the destroyed bridge. Three enemy lorries full of infantry appeared on the other side of the bridge. The guard opened fire knocking out one truck killing most of its occupants. The other two lorries were able to withdraw. One of our own men who was a prisoner in the lorry was able to make good his escape.  Upon the detachments arriving at LE MESNIL they were re-grouped as a platoon and given three mortars which had arrived by sea. These mortars were set up in position in the brickworks where they engaged the enemy.  BATTALION HEADQ UARTERS - Initial Stages  The Commanding Officer, 2 i/c Signals Officers and the Intelligence Officer and a small portion of the Battalion Headquarters together with elements of 224 Para Fd. Ambulance and other Brigade Units met at the Battalion R.V. in the early hours of the morning of 6th June, 1944. The Signals Officer was detailed to look after the Enemy Signal Exchange near the R.V.. He went into the house and found a certain amount of Signals equipment which he destroyed but he found no Germans. The Intelligence Officer set out with two men to recce VARAVILLE and bring back a report on the situation. In the Battalion Headquarters meantime the party moved off to LE MESNIL taking with them many scattered ~~remnants~~ elements including a 6 Pdr. A/ Tk. Gun and crew. Upon reaching the Chateau 1574 they encountered part of the Brigade Headquarters. The party, there upon split up into unit parties and continued until they reached the orchards 141729 where they came under heavy sniping fire from nearby houses. This fire caused several casualties including one Officer. The enemy were forced to withdraw from the buildings after an attack by the party. The party reached the Battalion area at approximately 1100 hours on 6th June, 1944 |  |
| 07 Jun 1944 | In the early hours of the morning German infantry of the 857 and 858 Grenadier Regiments supported by S.P. Guns and a number of Mk. IV Tanks attacked "B" and "C" Companies positions. Our mortars in the brickworks were given an ideal target as the German infantry formed up in close groups along a road ~~that~~ in the apparent belief that we possessed no mortars. Heavy casualities were inflicted on the enemy and the main force of the attack broken, however casualities were inflicted on our own Battalion by the S.P. Guns and tanks. One tank penetrated to within one hundred yards of the "C" Company position but withdrew before the P.IA.T.'s could fire effectively on it. S ome of the enemy infantry also attempted to assault our forward positions but were driven off. It was learned later from P.W.'s that the object of the German attack was to secure the brickworks and cross roads at LE MESNIL. The rest of the day was quiet save for activity by enemy snipers. |  |
| 08 Jun 1944 | "B" Company party returned from ROBEHOMME at 0230 hours and were a welcome addition to the Battalion strength. It was decided to clear the enemy from buildings at 144730 to neutralize the harassing fire which was coming from that position. Recce patrols went out from "C" Company early in the morning and confirmed the presence of the enemy in the buildings. At 0900 hours CAPT. P. GRIFFIN with Company Headquarters and 2 platoons from "B" Company, strength of seventy-five (75), went into the assault on the position with the support of a naval bombardment.  The party was split into two sections, the main body consisting of Capt. P. GRIFFIN and one and one half platoons assaulting the position from the front. The balance of Company Headquarters and the ~~XXXX~~ remainder were to go to the BAVENT ~~ROAD EAST OF THE OBJECTIVE TO PROTECT THE FLANK~~ road east of the objective to protect the flank. There were six to eight enemy M.G.'s in the hedge in front of the objective. These positions were abandoned as the assault party went in. The crews withdrawing to ~~pos~~ positions behind the house. A small number of the enemy were found in the house and adequately dealt with. The enemy launched an immediate counter-attack and were caught in the crossfire of the assault party that had withdrawn to the hedge in front of the houses and the flank protection party was still moving along the edge of the orchard 145727 toward the BAVENT road. PTES. GEDDESx and NAVAL with a Bren gun and a snipers rifle killed approximately twenty-five Germans. Total enemy casualties for this engagement were reckoned as approximately fifty dead and an unknown number wounded. "B" Company then withdrew to a hedgerow 141726 that continued to form a forward line of their position.  Later in the afternoon an enemy attack was launched against our left but was driven off by mortar and small arms fire. However they left snipers in the trees and hedgerows who were a nuisance factor until winkled out in the course of the next few days. |  |
| 09 Jun 1944 | W eather was fine. Enemy patrols were active along the Battalion front. Snipers who had infiltrated into the woods near our positions continued to be a nuisance factor. The Battalion sent out patrols both to recce the enemy positions and to deal with these snipers. The bulk of the Battalion had their first opportunity to secure some rest. |  |
| 10 Jun 1944 | Weather continued to be fine and constant patrolling was maintained by the Battalion. During the day the enemy formed up on the glider field for an attack against the Brigade area but this attack~~s~~ was broken up by our artillery and M.M.G.'s before it got under way. Battalion position was shelled and machine gunned by the enemy at intervals during the day. |  |
| 11 Jun 1944 | Weather continued fine. Enemy made probing attacks along the Battalion front but were driven back and suffered casualties. During the evening two patrols were sent out. One supported by one section of R.E.'s went into BA VENT to recce the village and to lay booby traps. The other was to go to VARAVILLE and blow up the bridge that had been repaired by the Germans. "C" Company provided the patrol for BAVENT. They entered the village, laid booby traps and withdrew without making contact with the enemy. The patrol for VARAVILLE was provided by "A" Company, shortly after leaving our forward positions they contacted the enemy along the LE MESNIL - VARAVILLE road and were pinned down by heavy fire and XXXX eventually had to XXXXXXX withdraw back to the Co pany line. |  |
| 12 Jun 1944 | Weather continued fine. Battalion Headquarters moved position to the brickworks across the road. Shelling and mortaring continued. Standing patrol was sent by ~~g~~"A" Company to CHATEAU 147735. This patrol captured an enemy artillery O.P. and ambushed a car containing a Gestapo Officer, Propaganda Officer, a Sergeant and a driver. The Propaganda Officer was brought in as a P.W. and the remainder were killed. Among the documents carried by the Officer was a list of British and Canadian Airborne P.W. Among them were the names of Lieut. *L*. COTE and Sgt. BREEN.  "C" Company sent a fighting patrol into BAVENT to obtain further information about the enemy disposition. The enemy were found to be too numerous for the pa rol to deal with having been reinforced during the night. The patrol withdrew without making contact. |  |
| 13 Jun 1944 | Weather continued fine. During the night a "B" Company patrol ambushed and killed the occupants of a VOLKS WAGEN. Upon searching the car they found that one of the officers was a paymaster with 38,000 francs in his possession. In addition the car contained one days rations for one of the forward enemy companies.  "A" Company standing patrol at the CHEATEAU returned to Battalion lines and reported that an enemy force of approximately two companies strength was forming up for an attack on "A" Company lines. Our artillery was quickly brought into action and laid down a heavy and successful concentration in the middle of the enemy F.*U*.P. inflicting heavy casualtied and completely breaking up the attack. |  |
| 14 Jun 1944 | Weather still continues fine. Battalion continued patrolling activities along its front making little contacts with the enemy . Very little shelling on either side. |  |
| 15 Jun 1944 | Weather broke. Sky overcast and slight rain. Heavy enemy artillery and mortar concentration was put down on our lines at 0430 hours and lasted until 1000 hours ~~at~~. At conclusion of this fire an enemy attack was launched on "X" Company lines supported by several tanks which was driven off after heavy fighting. |  |
| 16 Jun 1944 | Weather continues the same. Sporadic shelling and mortaring during the day. Otherwise there was little or no activity. |  |
| 17 Jun 1944 | Weather fine. Brigade relieved by the 5th Para Brigade and the Battalion moved back to area RANVILLE 1173. No enemy activity in this area except for occasional planes at night. |  |
| 18 Jun 1944 | Weather continued fine. Men enjoying their first real rest since D Day. Only enemy activity is occasional shelling of the main road that runs through RANVILLE. |  |
| 19 Jun 1944 | Weather fine. Battalion continues to rest and infrequent shells from the enemy landed in the village. |  |
| 20 Jun 1944 | Weather hot. Battalion moved at 1000 hours to a rest area by the RIVER ORNE 1176. BATTALION dug in by the evening as the area is occasionally shelled by heavy German guns from HOULGATE. |  |
| 21 Jun 1944 | Weather hot. Battalion started to clean up and draw fresh clothes from their big packs. Bathing parties were organized in the RIVER ORNE. |  |
| 22 Jun 1944 | Weather continues fine. Parties organized for visits to the Army Cinema at LUC SUR MER and sight seeing tours around the beaches at QUISTREHAM. |  |
| 23 Jun 1944 | Weather Continues fine. Parties from the Battalion continue visits to cinema and beaches. Lt.-General CRERAR visited the Battalion area. |  |
| 24 Jun 1944 | Weather continued fine. Enemy planes were overhead during the day and night but caused no damage. |  |
| 25 Jun 1944 | Weather fine. The Battalion moved at 1000 hours back to the crossroads at LE MESNILx and took up positions relieving the 13th Battalion with two companies forward and one in reserve. Battalion Headquarters in the former position~~s~~ and mortars were combined with the 9th Battalion firing from behind the brickyard. |  |
| 26 Jun 1944 | Weather very wet with steady rain throughout the entire day. Enemy mortaring and shelling on our positions at intervals during the day. Battalion conducting a vigorous patrolling programme. The reason - to pin point all enemy positions. |  |
| 27 Jun 1944 | The weather today was qu te warm with an occasional light fall of rain. It~~t~~ was decided to reinforce the "B" Company standing patrol ~~with~~ by sending out a platoon and having the engineers make a strong point of the buildings on that location. During the procedure of this work enemy mortars and snipers kept up a harassing fire resulting in the death of PTE. MOHRING, "A" Company, by shrapnel and the wounding of several others. Enemy snipers accounted for one wounded man.  At 1200 hours the Brigade Commander informed the Commanding Officer that the identification and location of enemy units was very unsatisfactory. As a result plans were made for an attack on a known enemy headquarters in an attempt to take prisoners and locate M.G. and mortar positions. The raid on the buildings was put in at 2230 hours by the 8th Battalion on our right with covering fire supplied by "A" and "C" Companies of this Battalion. The raid proved very successful and much know edge was gained. Our casualties were one Officer and One O.R. slightly wounded. The remainder of the night proved very quiet. |  |
| 28 Jun 1944 | R.E.'s were again active and fortifying "B" Company forward position. Intermittent shelling and mortaring kept the Battalion on the alert throughout the day. Forward O.P.'s reported that there were~~def~~ definite enemy strong points and road blocks being erected in front of our positions. At 1200 hours enemy artillery (S.P.'s) opened fire on "B" Company strong point. S everal minor casualties were reported and dealt with by the R.A.P.. The remainder of the afternoon proved quiet with only minor patrol activity. At approximately 1800 hours PTE. KING, P.I.A .T. Platoon was killed and one man wounded when a lone enemy shell landed near them. The Brigade Commander along with the Battalion Commander made an inspection of the trenches. An enemy shell landing in the Battalion Headquarters area wounded the Battalion Intelligence Officer as well as the Signal Sergeant and two other ranks. A visiting R.E. Capt. was killed by another shell later in the same area. The Battalion mortar battery has been very effective in using counter-fire. As the country does not allow long vision O.P.'s find it difficult to observe fire with the result that ranging must be done by sound and map reference. |  |
| 29 Jun 1944 | At 0530 hours this morning "B" Company forward position received a terrific burst of fire from a 75mm gun firing at approximately 200 yards range using flat trajectory. Several hits were scored on our ~~post~~ position before counterfire could be brought to bear. The enemy appeared to be using A.P. Ammunition as they pierced the buildings and exploded beyond. SGT. MIDDLETON of the mortar platoon was seriously wounded by shrapnel. No other casualties were caused. Battalion mortars ranged on the enemy gun and a continuous barrage of mortar fire forced the enemy to cease fore and take cover. Artillery support was called up and a heavy concentration was laid on the enemy gun. The gun withdrew under fire. Work was carried out on the building defense positions and laying wire. Enemy fire was at a minimum during the day. R.E. party completed laying the flares (trip). Towards last light around 2200 hours a barrage of enemy mortar and artillery fire was laid on and around this battalion position followed by an attack concentrated on our right flank. |  |
| 30 Jun 1944 | Infantry infiltrated through the right but were turned back after a series of sharp encounters. At 0200 hours a second attempt was made to breach our lines but met with no success. Our casualties for the day were twelve wounded and one killed. SGT. MIDDLETON died of wounds. After first light this morning the situation was quieter and up till noon the only activity was an exchange of mortar fire. "A" Company which up until the present has been held in reserve moved up and relieved "B" Company which had been holding the difficult forward position in the houses. Mortar fire on this position caused several casualties among "A" Company personnel. None were serious. Occasional rain made the day mizzerable for those on duty in the open. The remainder of the day proved comparatively quiet.  On the whole the men are in good spirits, earnestly looking forward to the day when they will return to England for a few days leave. Food is good but becoming over monotonous after living on Compo ration for nearly a month. Letters and parcels arrive regularly and quickly and fair facilities for writing have been in order.  "C" Company moved a platoon forward to the position formerly occupied by a standing patrol. During the hours of darkness work was carried on by "A" and "C" Companies, laying wire and trip flares.  *(Lt-Col G.F.P Bradbrooke*  *comd until 30 Aug 44.)*  *signed*  (J.A. Nicklin) Lt.-Col.,  Officer Commanding,  1st Cdn. Parachute Battalion. |  |
| 01 Jul 1944 | Place: Carter Bks. Bulford  Dominion Day in the 1st. Cdn. Parachute Battalion was begun by a series of mortar exchanges. Several heavy artillery shells landed in the Battalion area at approx. 0400 hours. They landed in twos and threes at approx. one-half hour intervals. Stand to was called at 0430 hours. At 0510 hours what was believed to be a 75mm A/Tk. gun opened fire on the house in "A" Company position. A.P. Shot was used and between fifteen and twenty rounds were fired piercing the building. Mortar bombs were dropped by the enemy in hopes that men might be caught escaping. The unit ~~work party~~ mortar battery soon replied and brought fire to bear on the enemy gun uutil artillery support fire forced the gun to withdraw. No casualties were caused among our troops but a Vickers gun was damaged. |  |
| 02 Jul 1944 | At 0200 hours several mortar bombs fell in the area of Battalion Headquarters. No casualties were caused but an R.E. stores was set on fire. Quick work by Battalion Headquarters personnel prevented further explosions and damage to nearby buildings. The ever alert cable crews repaired major lines in the darkness and the remainder of the morning. From stand to in the morning throughout the whole day proved to be the quietest since landing. An unfortunate and careless accident resulted in PTE. SPISAK of the Vickers Platoon receiving a rifle shot through both knees. |  |
| 03 Jul 1944 | Companies continued to occupy their new positions without opposition from the enemy. Slight mortaring and shelling along the Battalion front occured during the afternoon. Rain stoppped and the weather improved. |  |
| 04 Jul 1944 | Weather cloudy with slight rain. The Battalion was relieved at 1100~~0~~ hours by the 13th Para Battalion and marched back to the Divisional Rest A rea on the RIVER ORNE. |  |
| 05 11 Jul 1944 | The battalion spent this week in cleaning up and resting after the tour of duty in the line. The weather was fine and full advantage was taken of the bathing facilities in the river, and in the CAEN canal. There were facilities for the men to see the landing beaches at OUISTREHAM and cinema shows were provided in the nearby town of LUC-SUR-MER. There was no enemy activity in the rest area apart from sporadic shelling and occasional air raids at night. On the two or three occasions when enemy aircraft appeared during the daytime in attempts to ground strafe they were quickly driven off by the fire of the A.A. guns that were heavily concentrated around the crossings of the river and the canal. A Spitfire, damaged in a dog-fight, crashlanded in the area narrowly missing a mine field on 10th July, 1944. The pilot was rescued with slight injuries by members of the Battalion.  The Battalion strength was increased by seven Officers and one hundred O.R.'s who were sent from the C.B.R. Battalion. Although Non-parachutists, these Officers and O.R.'s were an exceedingly welcome addition to the fighting strength of the Battalion. |  |
| 12 19 Jul 1944 | The weather continued to be very fine and the Battalion enjoyed a thorough rest and its progress toward a complete mental and physical recovery was aided by rumors that the Division wa shortly to return to England to reform and refit.  During this period enemy shelling and air raids continued without causing any casualties. The pilot of an American Thunderbolt which crashed in the mudflats of the mouth of the river ORNE was rescued by SGT. R.H. MORGAN of this Battalion and a Pte. from the Commandos. The pilot who had bailed out of his plane and broken his leg on landing was at the time of his rescue under heavy mortar and M.G. fire from the isolated German strong point at the mouth of the river ORNE.  During this period extra pontoon bridges were placed across the River and the Canal and as the new approaches to these bridges led through the Battalion Headquarters area, it was found necessary to ~~remain~~ move and dig fresh slit trenches. The slight annoyance caused by the extra digging was dissipated when the masses of armor and troops began to pour across the River and Canal in the big push south. |  |
| 20 Jul 1944 | Rained heavily all day, flooding slit trenches and soaking all equipment. At 1530 hours the Battalion was informed that it would be returning to the line. |  |
| 21 Jul 1944 | Battalion moved to new position in ~~the~~ BOIS DE BAVENT 1471. Heavy rain continued and all fields and roads were covered in deep mud. This Battalion relieved the 12th DEVONS in the new area and as all slit trenches were flooded new ones had to be dug. Heavy shelling by artillery on both sides continued all evening and night. Battalion was issued with its first rum ration. |  |
| 22 Jul 1944 | Rain continued. Two soldiers from 858 Grenadier Regiment deserted and came through Battalion lines. One was killed by fire from our forward positions and the other passed happily rearwards toward captivity. Remainder of the day was quiet. Battalion I.O. was assigned the task of Brigade C.M.O.. |  |
| 23 Jul 1944 | Rain ceased although the sky continued to be overcast. The counter Mortar work proved successful in the first day of operation, retalitory fire being brought to bear on enemy mortars on an average of three minutes after firing on our position.  Second in command of this Battalion, MAJOR J.A. NICKLIN and one O.R. were evacuated with wounds. |  |
| 24 Jul 1944 | No rain and weather clearing. Occasional enemy mortar and shellfire came over with the usual reply from our artillery and mortars. Enemy aircraft raided the Brigade area during the night dropping A/P bombs but causing no casualties in the Battalion.  G.O.C. Division paid a visit of inspection to the Battalion Area. |  |
| 25 Jul 1944 | Weather clear and the sun shining. Usual enemy mortar and shellfire and occasional M.G. fire on fixed lines. Our rocket A ircraft were active during the evening apparently strafing targets in the vicinity of BURES. |  |
| 26 Jul 1944 | Enemy Aircraft attacked the Battalion Area and vicinity in the early hours of the morning, dropping heavy and A /P bombs. No casualties were suffered although several close misses were registered. Fires were started in dumps to our rear. The weather was again clear with a strong wind. Enemy shelling and mortaring was at a minimum. |  |
| 27 Jul 1944 | Battalion was relieved by the 8th Para Battalion and returned to the RIVER ORNE rest area, arriving at 1300 hours. Remainder of the day was spent sleeping. |  |
| 28 Jul 1944 | A dull sky cleared around noon. Unit spent the day removing mud from clothing and equipment. Slight enemy air activity over the area during the night but no bombs were dropped. |  |
| 29 Jul 1944 | Weather very warm. Battalion occupied itself in washing and resting. A rumor again spread abroad that the Division was to return to England to reform and refit, and at that within the next two or three days. |  |
| 30 Jul 1944 | Sky overcast but weather warm. Church parades were held in the morning and bathing parties in the afternoon. |  |
| 31 Jul 1944 | At 0430 hours orders were received for the Unit to return to the line. At 0900 hours the Battalion moved off along track FIR to area triangle 148705 in the BOIS DE BAVENT relieving the ARGYLL AND SUTHERLAND HIGHLANDERS of the 51st HIGHLAND DIVISION. The enemy opposite were our old acquaintances of the 858 and 857 GRENADIER REGIMENTS of the 346th INFANTRY DIVISION. Enemy Aircraft droppped A/P bombs in the Brigade area during the night causing no casualties in the Battalion.  *Signed*  ( J.A. NIcklin) Lt.-Col.,  Officer Commanding,  1st. Cdn. Parachute Battalion. |  |
| 01 Aug 1944 | Weather fine and clear. Enemy mortar fire on our positions during the day appeared more accurate than usual and any movement of M.T. along roads to our rear brought immediate shell or mortar fire. |  |
| 02 Aug 1944 | Weather is fine. Battalion resumed patrolling activities in an attempt to confirm enemy positions on our front. Enemy mortar fire continued with our mortars replying immediately, otherwise little signs of activity from the enemy apart from accasional bursts of M.G. fire and enemy aircraft at night. |  |
| 03 Aug 1944 | Weather fine. Our two forward companies engaged in digging platoon position in front (approximately 50 yards) of main company lines. Accurate enemy mortar fire continued and the Brigade Commander ordered a heavy artillery shoot on the enemy during the evening. |  |
| 04 Aug 1944 | Weather fine. Reports were received that the enemy might be preparing to move out of his positions and plans were made to persue him. Enemy mortar was augmented by artillery fire and he developed the habit of shelling the cook-house at meal times. The Battalion is patrolling steadily and contacts have been made with the enemy. |  |
| 05 Aug 1944 | Weather fine. Day quiet except for usual exchange of Mortar fire. |  |
| 06 Aug 1944 | Weather fine. Patrolling continued during the night but little fresh information could be obtained. Enemy m rtaring continued. Their bombs landing accurately on our positions. Enemy artillery battery also sent over several salvos during the day. |  |
| 07 Aug 1944 | Weather fine. Mortaring and shelling continued. Propaganda broadcast was arranged during the night in and attempt to obtain deserters so that identifications could be made. Several deserters came in to ~~xxx~~ the units on our right and left. |  |
| 08 Aug 1944 | Weather fine. Shelling and mortaring continued otherwise there was no activity. |  |
| 09 Aug 1944 | Weather fine. Shelling and mortaring continued. No indication could be obtained that the enemy was preparing to move out. |  |
| 10 Aug 1944 | Weather during the day was very nice. It was very quiet during the early part of the day. Enemy dropped the odd mortar bombs and shells in the evening. A recce patrol under LIEUT. STEVENS went out from "A" Co pany at 1900 hours. Patrol ~~succeeded~~ recced a suspected enemy Headquarters but found it unoccupied. The Patrol returned at 2100 hours. Reinforcements arrived from England for this unit and were split up among the companies. More reinforcements expected to arrive in the next few days. |  |
| 11 Aug 1944 | "A" Company sent out xx two patrols during the day. The first patrol under Capt. CLANCY went deep into the enemy lines, and reported that enemy seemed to have moved back. The second Patrol was an ambush patrol which left "A" Company lines at 1830 hours. It moved to 145704 - 1/25000 Dozule sheet. Patrol heard enemy mortar and L.M.G. fire but did not see or hear enemy movement. Patrol returned to "A" ompany at 2200 hours.  Battalion Headquarters was heavily shelled in the afternoon. There were no casualties thirty-nine reinforcments arrived for this unit. Nine Officers and 30 Other Ranks. |  |
| 12 Aug 1944 | There were four patrols sent out . Three from "A" Company and one from "C" Company. "A" Company sent out 2 ambush patrols and one Recce. The ambush patrols were commanded by SGT. PARKER and SGT. EVANS. ~~XXX"~~ "C" Company sent out Recce patrol. Conclusions from these patrols proves that the enemy is not withdrawing from its positions. The enemy sends out patrols of 10 to 15 men which come fairly close to our lines. It was quiet during the early part of the day. Battalion Headquarters advance area was heavily shelled at 1800 hours Enemy sent down two salvos of approximately twenty rounds in each salvo. It was fairly quiet the rest of the day. The weather was very clear and hot all day. |  |
| 13 Aug 1944 | Patrols were sent out by "A" Company and "C" Company. "B" Company patrol under Capt. HILBORN met five enemy personnel. Three of them were walking toward our lines and are believed to have ~~surrendered~~  surrendered to the 9th Para Bn. S tanding Patrol under Cpl. THOMPSON went ot CHATEAU at 14487030. They did not hear or see any enemy. Enemy shelled Battalion Headquarters Administration area at 1800 hours. Enemy brought down two salvos of approximately twenty rounds per salvo. Outside of this shelling it was very quiet. The weather was very clear and hot. |  |
| 14 Aug 1944 | Patrols were sent out from all companies. "A" Company under Sgt. EVANS. The patrols left at 0600 hours and went to the CHATEAU at 14487030 and waited to ambush the enemy till 1000 hours. No enemy were seen during that time. The patrol herd enemy sawing and chopping ~~woo~~ wood. "B" Company recce patrol under LIEUT. SUTHERLAND. This patrol ~~xxxxxxxxx~~ recced area 143705 to 145709 and did not see any enemy. "C" Company sent out ambush patrol under SGT. KELLY. This patrol took up positions 143708 to 145706. No enemy were seen. Enemy M.G. fire heard from CHATEAU at 14487030 at a bearing of 75 degrees M.A.G.. Very clear and warm during the day. The odd mortar bomb dropped in "B" Company positions. Battalion Headquarters was mortared in the evening. |  |
| 15 Aug 1944 | Enemy bombers were active on our front. The enemy bombed to the south of our positions. "A" Company had a standing patrol and an ambush patrol. The standing patrol was at the CHATEAU at 14487030. The ambush patrol was at 143705. "C" Company had an ambush patrol at 143706. No enemy were see or heard. Ten men from this unit went to the 6th A/B Division Leave Camp. There were allottments for E.N.S.A. show. There was also a bath parade for the personnel of this Unit. Battalion position was mortared and shelled during the day. |  |
| 16 Aug 1944 | Clear all day. Enemy shelled and mortared our positions. Patrols were sent out in the afternoon and evening. Patrols reported that no enemy were encountered and it looked as though he was pulling out. In the evening orders were received that the Unit would advance on the following day. W hen the advance was to start was not definite. Enemy aircraft were active during the night. |  |
| 17 Aug 1944 | Clear weather all day. At 0800 hours Companies started the advance through the BOIS DE BAVENT. No enemy were encountered in the wood. "B" Company was delayed in their move by mines and booby traps. "A" Company encountered enemy at PLAIN LUGAN 2072. Battalion Headquarters rear party moved to new position (PLAIN LUGAN) in the afternoon. There was very little shelling or our new positions during the night. |  |
| 18 Aug 1944 | Battalion spent the night and all that day at PLAIN LUGAN. During the day orders were received that this Unit was to attack four bridges at 2372 and 2371. This Unit left PLAIN LUGAN at 2030 hours. Forming up time was at 2130 hours. F.O.P. was at crossroads 2271. Zero hour~~s~~ was to be at 2145 hours. Attack went in at Zero plus three minutes. "A" Company captured their bridge intact at 2300 hours. Bridge named CANADA BRIDGE. Considering the task, casualties were very light. During the night and the following morning approximately one hundred and fifty prisoners of war were taken. Battalion held all four bridges all night. There was no shelling or mortaring of our positions. Weather clear all day. |  |
| 19 Aug 1944 | Clear during the day. All personnel dug in. Companies were in defensive positions. All German equipment that he left behind was picked up and sent to Division. "A" Company position was shelled heavily by S.P. Gun and a few casualties were caused. Battalion Headquarters was shelled in the morning with one casualty resulting. "B" Company position shelled in the afternoon and a few casualties resulted. Enemy aircraft were active over our area at night a few ~~times~~ bombs dropped but no damage was caused. |  |
| 20 Aug 1944 | Clear all day started to rain in the late evening. "A" Company position was shelled in the morning but no damage was done. There was no other activity during the day. |  |
| 21 Aug 1944 | It rained hard all morning. At 1015 hours this Battalion started to move forward. During the advance the enemy shelled the road heavily. The enemy also used rockets. No enemy resistance until the evening. A strong force of enemy was met at LA VALLE TANTOT 4101. At that point the enemy used 81 cm mortars and S.P. guns. Battalion stayed at this position until 0800 hours 22nd August, 1944. |  |
| 22 Aug 1944 | Enemy retreated during the night. This Unit moved to one Kilometre from BOURBEC. All personnel washed and rested all day. At 1730 hours orders were received to get ready to advance to PONT L'EVEQUE. At 1600 hours BRIGADIER HILL visited our Positions and told us to be ready to move on two hours notice. |  |
| 23 Aug 1944 | Clear all day. All personnel on two hours notice to move forward. LIEUT. GENERAL STUART visited Battalion Headquarters. LIEUT. COLONEL BRADBROOKE returned to take a position in the G eneral Staff. MAJOR EADIE assumed temporary command of this Unit.~~at~~ 1430 hours Battalion "O" Group was informed that a parachute jump was to be made behind enemy lines by the 3rd PARA BRIGADE. The Jump was definitely cancelled at 0100 hours 24 August, 1944. |  |
| 24 Aug 1944 | Unit embused in lorries and moved at 1015 hours to VAUVILLE and from there marched to TOURGEVILLE. The Battalion stopped and had a meal. Left TOURGEVILLE at 1430 hours and marched to ST. GATIN,&ST. CROXFORD. PTE. BLANCHARD went to ST. GATIN on a motorbike and on arriving there seven Germans ran out of the buildings and surrendered. While marching into the town a German S.P. Gun fired eight rounds but no casualties were caused by this shelling. The Unit stopped until 0800 hours the next day. Very rainy day. The Battalion slept the night in the town. |  |
| 25 Aug 1944 | Unit started to move at 0800 hours. No enemy met along the advance. At 1000 hours this Battalion arrived at 621080 and remained at that position until 1900 hours. Commandos and the 9th Para Battalion ran into strong enemy position. He kept the roads covered with heavy M.G. fire. At 1900 hours orders were received to move along enemys' left flank and proceed to MON MOUGER 664122. Battalion stayed at 122103 overnight. One casualty was caused by a sniper with a rifle grenade. SGT. McPHEE was the casualty. |  |
| 26 Aug 1944 | Battalion moved at 0300 hours and arrived at 664122 at 0745 hours. Companies took up defensive positions but no enemy were seen. All personnel were given sleeping quarters in buildings on the farms and others slept in the open. No enemy were seen during the whole day. |  |
| 27 Aug 1944 | Clear day. Unit given twenty-four hours rest. The Administration from the rear area arrived at 1000 hours. Large packs were given to personnel. Very quiet during the day. |  |
| 28 Aug 1944 | Clear all day. Twenty-five percent of the personnel were allowed in BEUZEVILLE which was a small town about three Kilometres from our position. |  |
| 29 Aug 1944 | Clear all day. Battalion resting at the same position. A further twenty-five percent of the men were again allowed to go to BEUZEVILLE. No activity during the day. |  |
| 30 Aug 1944 | Rain during the day. All personnel Confined to the Battalion area. Battlion resting. Personnel informed about the move~~d~~ back to England on the 6th September, 1944. |  |
| 31 Aug 1944 | Rained all day. Very windy. Confined to Barracks ruling lifted and again twenty-five percent of the men were allowed in BEUZEVILLE again. Remainder of the Battalion were resting. Preparations were being made for the return to England.  *Signed*  (J.A. NIcklin) Lt.-Col.,  Officer Commanding,  1st Cdn. Parachute Battalion. |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |