

18th June.

0300 hours. The "Cambridgeshire" sailed as escort to a slow convoy.

19th June.

1800 hours. The "Cambridgeshire" reached Plymouth. I went up to the Commander-in-Chief's house where I rang up the C.I.G.S. and reported my arrival in the United Kingdom.

That evening, with my staff, I caught the midnight train to London and reported to the C.I.G.S. at 0900 hours on 20th June.

APPENDIX A.

Commandement en Chef

Du Front Nord-Est.

Au Q.G. Nord-Est 14 Juin, 1940.

10h. 30.

NOTE.

Etat-Major

3^e Bureau

Secret.

No. 2063 3/Op.

Le Général Brooke Cdt. le Corps Expéditionnaire Britannique a pris contact le 14 Juin matin avec le Général Weygand Cdt. l'ensemble des Théâtres d'Opérations et le Général Georges Cdt. le Front N.E. pour prendre des directives en ce qui concerne l'emploi des troupes britanniques en France.

Dans le cadre de la décision prise par les gouvernements britannique et français, d'organiser un réduit en Bretagne, il a été décidé:

1^o. Que les troupes britanniques en cours de débarquement (E.O.C.A. (¹) Brooke, fin de la 52^e division et D.I. canadienne) seront concentrées à Rennes.

2^o. Que les troupes britanniques engagées à la X^e Armée (D.I. Evans, D.I. Bauman et 52^e D.I. non compris ses éléments non encore débarqués) continueront leur mission, actuelle sous les ordres du Général Cdt. la X^e Armée.

Leur emploi dans la manoeuvre d'ensemble de cette Armée devra les amener autant que possible à agir dans la région du Mans pour faciliter leur regroupement ultérieur avec les forces du Général Brooke.

Signé: BROOKE.

WEYGAND et GEORGES.

Pour copie conforme:

Pour le Général Cdt. en Chef.

sur le front Nord-Est.

Le Général Chief d'Etat Major.

APPENDIX 'B.'

SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS OF B.E.F. IN FRANCE FROM 1ST TO 18TH JUNE, 1940.

1. After the evacuation of the main British Expeditionary Force from Flanders in the first week of June the only British troops remaining in France were the 51st Division, which had been holding a sector of the Sarre Front, and the incomplete 1st Armoured Division, which had begun its disembarkation on 20th May and had been rushed up piecemeal in a desperate effort to relieve the sorely tried right flank of the B.E.F. By the 1st June this

attenuated Division, which was incomplete when disembarked and had lost heavily in its first engagement on the Somme, could only muster roughly one-third of its quota of tanks.

2. These two formations, the 51st Division and the 1st Armoured Division, the only British fighting formations remaining in France, were placed under the orders of General Altmayer, commanding Tenth French Army, which held the left sector of the Somme front from Amiens to the sea. The handling of the British troops, which had been delegated to General Altmayer by General Weygand, was co-ordinated and supervised by a British Military Mission at Tenth Army Headquarters.

3. The frontage allotted to the 51st Division on the Somme sector was sixteen miles in extent, an excessive amount, but probably not much greater than that which many French divisions were holding at the time owing to their depleted resources. The Division had already been in action on the Sarre front, and had had a long and arduous journey from the Eastern frontier to its new sector. On 4th June the 51st Division Commander was ordered to carry out an attack on the Abbeville bridgehead, for which operation the newly arrived French 31st Division was placed under his orders, as well as 160 French tanks and a considerable reinforcement of French artillery. The attack, however, was not a success, mainly owing to the difficulty of arranging effective co-operation between British and French infantry, guns and tanks at such short notice, and the 51st Division suffered fairly heavy casualties.

4. On the following day (5th June) the Germans launched a powerful offensive against the whole front held by the Seventh and Tenth French Armies, from St. Quentin to the sea. The 51st Division was by this time in an exhausted condition, after 12 days of continual movement and battle, and was holding too wide a front to be able to resist effectively. The Tenth Army Commander, when asked to relieve the Division from the front, replied that he had no reserves available. The Division fought bravely, but was forced back by German infiltration between its widely scattered posts. Owing to the extent of its frontage the division had no depth in its defences, and had no time to organize rearward defences, nor any reserves with which to counter-attack. It was forced back to the line of the river Bresle, the next natural obstacle, 15 miles in rear.

5. Meanwhile the 1st Armoured Division was re-fitting south of the Seine. Its tanks were in poor mechanical condition, owing not only to battle casualties, but also to the long road distances they had been forced to cover and to the lack of opportunity for adequate maintenance. It was in fact in no condition for offensive operations.

6. On the 7th June the Germans put in a smashing attack with their 5th and 7th Armoured Divisions on the point of junction between the two Corps of the Tenth French Army. This drive was directed from west of Amiens on Rouen and the lower Seine, with the object of splitting the Tenth Army and cutting off its IX Corps between the Seine Estuary and Dieppe. The IX French Corps then comprised the British 51st Division on the extreme left, and then further east the 31st and 40th French Divisions and the 2nd and 5th Light

¹ Eléments Organique Corps d'Armée.