

Second World War Unit War Diary – 9th Queen's Royal Lancers Royal Armoured Corps, Nov 1942 – 2/Lt Milnes

The following is from the National Archives WO 169/4481

| Instructions regarding War Diaries and Intelligence Summaries are contained in F.S. Regs., Vol. I. and the Staff Manual respectively. Title pages will be prepared in manuscript. | | | WAR DIARY or INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY (Erase heading not required) | Unit 9th Queen's Royal Lancers. Commanding Officer <i>Brigadier G.H. Stevenson</i> |
|--|------|------|---|---|
| Place | Date | Hour | Summary of Events and Information | References to Appendices |
| | 1 | | <p>The day was spent in final preparations for the evening's attack. We received three more Shermans, including one from Brigade H.Q. this brings the total up to 30 Shermans and 20 Crusaders C.S. and M.C. III.</p> <p>A trace of the proposed route was issued early in the day, but it was not until 1600 hrs. that all Squadron, etc., Commanders went to Brigade and received final orders from the Brigadier. Written orders were not available. It was arranged for the whole Group, including two Troops of Anti-Tank Guns, to form up at 0130 hrs., with head at the beginning of "MOON" route. The C.O. arranged to give out his final orders at 0215 hrs.</p> <p>Briefly, the plan of the attack was as follows: -</p> <p>151 and 152 Infantry Brigades were to attack from their P.D.Ls. between NORTHINGS 301 & 297 up to EASTING 863, with the support of the 3rd Hussars, Wilts. Yeo. and Warwickshire Yeo. The objective for 2 Armd Bde was the ring contour 85855000 with (leading) 9 L, (right) Bays, (left) 10 H. All guns were to be put down in the gun area in 862299. It was thus hoped that the enemy screen of anti-tank guns would be broken up and the 21 Panzer Div. brought to battle on the morning of Nov. 2nd.</p> <p>The approach march through "BOULMANG" lanes was carried out without incident, and the regiment deployed just before first light under heavy shell-fire. It was soon obvious that 9th Bde were having a terrific battle - A.P. tracer and burning Sherman and Grant Tanks all along the skyline. We pushed on up to them, and they withdrew through us. The rest of the day was quite undoubtedly the most unpleasant we have ever spent. The track from AQQAQIR to SIDI ABD EL RAHMAN was the line held by German A/Tank Guns, with a strong backing of tanks. Being leading regiment we were fired at continually by 88 mm and 105 mm guns from S.W., WEST and N.W., R.H.Q. appearing to be at the apex of all three lines of fire. It was not safe to even look out of the top of a tank, let alone get out; and we were compelled to sit indoors all day with no food or brew-ups.</p> <p>22293 Wt. 33096/1140 1.000m 12/40-MCC & Co Ltd-51-8212 Forms C2118/22</p> | |
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| | | | <p>"B" and "C" Squadrons repulsed no less than six enemy tank attacks during the day; and the regiment finished with a score of 31, of which 21 were set alight, 5 A/Tank Guns (including one 88 mm) and one Roche who had the impudence to ride a motor-cycle across the front of "A" Squadron.</p> <p>The officer-casualties started early: Major C.D. Mayrick was slightly wounded in the head; 2/Lieut. J.T. Milne was also hit and evacuated; whilst 2/Lieut. R. Zissu received a very nasty wound on the jaw from which he subsequently died.</p> <p>The terrific cross-fire took its toll: we lost two of "C" Squadron's Shermans (burnt) and one Cruiser - and five other Shermans were knocked out but recoverable. Only one man was killed (Tpr. Wood of "B" Squadron).</p> <p>We leaguered on the battle-field, surrounded by burning tanks and dead infantry, and were again shelled and machine-gunned most of the night. Rommel's armour must have taken a severe hiding to-day. He seems now to send his tanks in in small parties which, against Shermans, is very convenient - and very fatal.</p> <p>A plan to push on WEST through the enemy's A/Tank Gun screen in the dark was, to our relief, cancelled - we could see only heavy losses as a consequence. The two Sherman Squadrons moved out in line between the Bays on the right and the 10th Hussars on the left. Enemy tanks kept appearing on the crest WESTWARDS and both Squadrons had a lot of shooting. Enemy Infantry and A/Tank Guns were being engaged all day with great success. Ammunition replenishment was extremely difficult, as the lorries had to be kept over a mile behind, and the tanks sent back in pairs. We had to endure heavy shelling all day - and in the evening it fairly rained 105 mm shells. This, unfortunately, killed a number of the infantry dug in round us, and the M.O. was kept busy all day. By evening reports were coming in that enemy movement westward had commenced, and that the R.A.F. were busily engaged in bombing on the DABA - FUKA road. Our bag by dusk was four</p> <p>22293 Wt. 33096/1140 1.000m 12/40-MCC & Co Ltd-51-8212 Forms C2118/22</p> | |
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INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY
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Commanding Officer

Month and Year Nov. 1942.

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| | | | tanks, five A/Tank Guns, three lorries and a quantity of dead Germans. We lost no tanks, and the sole casualty was a piece of shell in Major Price's back. | |
| | | | The situation now appeared good; we had a very large bulge into enemy territory, and the 7 Arm Div. and 4 Arm Bde were sitting behind us waiting to go through. | |
| | 4 | | After a "brew-up" in peace, the Brigade advanced on the AQQAIR feature - leading, Bays; right, 9 L; left, 10 H - and had soon crossed the line of telegraph poles along the track. We went through a great number of abandoned enemy guns, dead tanks, dead men, and a lot of ammunition dumps. "A" Squadron, who were leading, soon reported that they were being fired on by 50 mm guns from the high ground on the NORTH side of the centre-line. The whole Brigade was then halted, and it became obvious that the Germans had put out a formidable screen of guns, covered by his remaining tanks. The morning was spent spotting and destroying the A/Tank Guns. "A" Squadron lost one Cruiser in doing this, Sgt. Frost being badly wounded, and the driver and gunner killed. In return, we knocked out eight tanks ("B" Sqn. 5, "C" Sqn. 3) and approximately twelve A/Tank Guns, including one 88 mm. The enemy shelled us from the N.W. and NORTH fairly consistently - but, apart from stopping us walking about, this was ineffective. "E" Bty. shelled the ridge for an hour, and "A" Squadron's Besas were busy. The enemy infantry began to think they were on a rather "sticky wicket" - which indeed they were - and started to surrender. By noon, the Second-in-Command's tank was obscured by prisoners, and we sent the Carrier Platoon of the Yorks. Dragoons back with eight officers and 159 O.Rs (nearly all of the 21 Panzer Division). The afternoon was uneventful, except for the capture by Lieut. Grant Singer (10 H. Recce Tp) of the Commander of the Afrika Corps - which, after all, doesn't happen every day. A few more A/Tank guns were ranged on and quickly abandoned. We seem to have won a | |

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