

Crossing of the METAURO

On the 24 Aug the bn was conc^o in the area of Barchi 126544 sheet 109 about 2 miles S of the R. Metauro. The stage was set for the first ^{Phase} ~~stages~~ of the attack on the Gothic Line after a period of ~~conc~~ ^{prep} preparation. In keeping with the policy of the ^{Eighth} ~~8th~~ Army all ranks were fully informed as to plans and intentions as well as all available info ~~of~~ ^{about} the enemy. So far our efforts to keep our identity a secret had been successful, ~~with everyone cooperating fully.~~

X-ing^s Patrols had been sent out to recce F.U.P.'s and ~~river~~ ^{river} ~~xings of the river~~ and all was in readiness.

[Tac BHQ moved about midday on the 25th to a posn overlooking our sector of the Metauro. Marching tps were in their F.U.P.'s by 2130 hrs. [The plan was to effect a silent approach and ~~Xing~~ ^{Xing} of the R. Metauro and be in posn to assault the high grd to the N at H hr + 59 (H hr = 2300 hrs). At H + 59 the arty of 3 Divs would fire on posns to the N of Via Flaminia and lift ~~at~~ the rate of ¹⁰⁰ ~~100~~ yds. in ^{four} ~~one~~ minute, under cover of which our inf would advance. [Timed to the second the ~~Arty~~ ^{Arty} barrage started and the two fwd coys encountered but slight resistance during their advance across the Via Flaminia. C and D coys followed closely and by 0355 hrs all obj had been taken. [The bn suffered 3 cas from SCHU mines on the S river bank. [The 7 PW taken were very shaken fellows. Their average age was 17 yrs.

The bn disposn was now A coy Pt 127 at 112671, B coy in the town of Serrungarina 094620, C coy at 097733 and D coy pt 217 103626. [Tac BHQ moved during the afternoon of the 26 to Serrungarina. [Our assault across the Metauro had been well planned and executed but a little disappointing as so little fight had been found in the enemy.

The CO, Lt Col D.H. Rosser, having attended an O gp at 2 CIB HQ, called a ~~an~~ bn O Gp at SERRUNGARINA at 0005 hrs of the 27th. All coy and sp^l pl cmdrs attended. Orders for the next phase of the attack were issued. News that attacks by flanking formations had and were going well was also given. The bn was to attack on the axis Serrungarina Monte della Mattered

0766- M. Croce 0468, one coy up with a series of leapfrog actions to intermediate objectives on the axis of adv, ^{the obj} which were given code names. The system of allotting a familiar name to objectives had proved its value already in the action, and, as those which had ~~already~~ been allotted to the bn by 2 CIB were few, ~~and for between~~ additional ones were laid on by the CO as follows- 067660- PLUM, 064663 - PEACH, 058672 - LEMON, 053677- NUTS, 050690- PATSY, 048693 ROSE, 051692 - PEGGY, 052692 - DOLLY. (all refs sheet 109)

The bn moved off from area Serrungarina at 0230 hrs ^{on} of the 27th to a conc area at 077657 and were in posn there at 0630 hrs when the CO held an ~~order~~ O Gp to issue final instr for the attack. The men were in fine fettle, inspired by their initial easy successes and ready to tackle anything.

The bn was to attack in the order ^{DBCA} C B A D coys At 0645 hrs ^D ~~E~~ coy moved off and ^{secured} passing through PLUM; ~~and PEACH reached their obj NUTS from there sending~~ ^{B adv to LEMON and C Coy to PEACH; C Coy then went} a fighting patrol ^{over sent} across the R Arzilla where the enemy were contacted, ~~for the time~~. 5 PW were taken with no cas to the patrol. B coy following slightly to the right proceeded to take PATSY with no trouble. Acoy reached PLUM at 0800 hrs at which pt D coy ^{advanced to} passed through them to PEACH. [This leapfrog action continued till B coy was on DOBBS 042689. B coy came under heavy Shell fire at this pt, ~~also some SA~~ fire was ^{also} coming from the village of ^{DATE} M. S. Maria 033684. Acting on his own initiative Maj C.M.McDougall OC B coy sent one pl of his coy to take the town. Good covering fire was afforded this attack by our MMG pl, who had man-packed their guns forward through ~~the~~ difficult and confusing entry. All obj were taken by 1745 hrs and fully consolidated with the exception of D coy who had overshot their obj and gone 1000 yds beyond coming under hvy shell and mortar fire. They were forced to consolidate there after suffering 4 killed and 11 wounded.

through LEMON and attached NUTS which the enemy vacated and also secured MONTICELLI;

and by TK's.

The whole of the ridge from ^{ONTE} M. St. Maria to M. Croce was now in our hands from which all of the surrounding ^{ou} entry could be dominated. Although under heavy shellfire the feature was ~~well~~ ^{firmly} consolidated; ~~also~~ at 0430 hrs of the 28th a party of approx 25 ~~strong~~ ^{enemy, under the impression that} believed to be reinforcements believing the ~~village~~ ^{ONTE} M. St. Maria ^{was} still in German hands, entered the village without stealth from the West. The Platoon of B coy in occupation ~~waited~~ ^{the} calmly and when ^{the Germans were} in good range engaged them with SA and grenades. Heavy casualties were inflicted on the enemy, B coy suffering 2 casualties. During the afternoon of the 27th Tac Bn HQ had moved to 060666 and at 0540 hours started off for M.S. Maria. The CO, Lt Col D.H. Rosser, some distance in the lead, was stopped by an exchange of SA fire between a party of enemy and an outpost of B coy. The Scout and Sniper Platoon was rushed forward to deal with the enemy and succeeded in beating them off forcing them to leave one PW and 6 dead. Tac Bn HQ arrived at M.S. Maria at 0820 hrs.

During the afternoon 128 Bde 46 Br Div put in an attack on ~~XXXXXXXX~~ Montegaudio 020863 approx 1 1/2 miles to our left. Enemy retreating from this attack, ran diagonally across our Bn front, our MMG Pl and arty rep had a Field day engaging the enemy with ~~very~~ good effect. *26 mm MG alone used 14,000 rds 50%*

At 1800 hrs it became known that IRC would [?] relieve us during the night. The Bn would move to ~~an~~ Conc Area 099659 to prepare for a new phase of the attack. The 29th Aug was spent in the Conc Area resting and cleaning up. Late in the afternoon a warning order arrived from Bde HQ regarding a move forward ~~later~~ next morning.

II THE GOTHIC LINE

On the morning of the 30th an Adv Party IC Maj R.P. Clark moved off for the next Assembly Area at Ginestreto 051721/. At a conference held that morning at bde the CO was given orders for the next operation. The main defs of the Gothic Line had been reached and all was in readiness for the assault. 1 Cdn Div would attack ^{with} 2 bde Left 3 bde ^{Rt.} Def ^{ou} overprint maps of the Foglia R. and the ^{ou} entry to

the north fairly bristled with red printed enemy strongpoints; the real thing had been reached.

The enemy posns consisted of mutually ~~spring~~ ^{supporting} pill boxes and strongpoints with many MG and ATK posns covering the belt of wire and minefields just to the N of the R. Foglia.

The bn arrived in the area of Ginestreto at 1230 hrs ~~at the~~ ^{on} 31~~st~~ Aug ~~in~~ ⁱⁿ TCV's and took over the area formerly occupied by the Carleton & York Regt. At approx 1400 hrs the CO and Party arrived. Soon after the CO was confined to bed with malaria and the 2IC Maj. R.P. Clark took over command of the bn. He ~~promptly~~ held an O gp at approx 2000 hrs when the plan of attack was laid. Patrols reported the approaches and ~~Kings~~ of the river in good condition just before midnight. Again the plan was to effect a silent ~~night~~ King of the River to be in posn to attack the main defs of the line at first light. Order of march for the bn was C D B A coys

The brhd coys C & D, moved off at 0005 hrs and without opposition were established at trk junc 026751 code name ROSE and 030756 ABBEYVILLE respectively at 0430 hrs. The brhd having been firmly established by the two fwd coys ^{supported} ~~supported~~ by the bn MMG pl, B coy moved from Ginestreto and advanced on their obj Osteria Nuova (Almondstown) 021758 at first light.

The river was negotiated successfully but on passing through C coy, B coy encountered a belt of wire and a mine ^{field} ~~field~~ in front of an ATK ditch S of the lateral rd. **3** cas were suffered King these obstacles and the coy was coming under some SA fire. However the advance was continued and ALMONDSTOWN was reported snug at 0600 hrs. The German had levelled the Village to clear a field of fire but so great had been the element of surprise in our attack that effective fire could not be brought to bear until our troops were safely entrenched in the ruins. Our arty and ATK guns had been active during this advance lacing the commanding heights above Osteria Nuova; A coy had been held in reserve on the N bank of the river. Tac Bn HQ had moved fwd to ROSE at 1100 hrs.

Later the field was found to be 600' deep with debris mounds every 100 ft in add to teller & how mounds

The GOTHIC LINE having definitely been breached, C and D coys were ordered fwd to objectives ~~of~~ the lateral rd. C coy attacked rd and trk junc O15755 at 0930 hrs and after suffering 5 cas in crossing the minefield and ditch carried their obj, taking 96 PW. D coy took hill feature JOHN BULL at O17760 at a cost of 6 cas taking 23 PW at 1330 hrs. A coy was now committed and advanced on the last remaining dominant feature of our sector of the Line; ~~what~~ was to prove to be a key pt at O23768 (HERTZ). Supported by B Sqn 48 RTR A coy attacked ~~frontally~~ ^{left} up the slope of the feature which had previously been heavily engaged by our arty. At a cost of ~~27~~ ²⁷ ~~cas~~ ^{cas} 7 cas HERTZ was taken by 1445 hrs; ~~In conjunction~~ with the ^{help of the} tks 97 PW were taken.

The Bn remained consolidated in these posns during the remainder of the day and night.

Enemy arty had been active all day but had accounted for very few cas. The ability of ~~the~~ ^{the} sp~~s~~ ^s tks to go forward was due to the efforts of ~~the~~ ^{our} Pnr Pl who worked under extreme difficulty clearing a passage through the minefield.

Total PW taken ^{in these actions was} 231.

On the morning 1 Sep orders were received ^{through} ~~from~~ Bde LO for the next phase of the operation. The Bn was to attack slightly to the right of the present location on the axis - POZZO ALTO -

C. Berelli O32794 - to the right of Monteluro.

At 1230 hrs the CO, Maj R.P. Clark, held an O Gp to tee up the attack. The Bn would move that afternoon to codename BALLY BO O34789 at that time held by the Seaf of C and conc there preparatory to the attack. B Sqn 48 RTR would again sp ~~the~~ attack.

At 1700 hrs the Bn moved to BALLY BO by march route and were conc there by 1850 hrs. The area was then under ~~med~~ ^{and} ~~hvy~~ shellfire. At 2100 hrs the CO held an O Gp and gave orders for the attack which was to go in immediately. Again a series of private unit codenames were allotted to intermediate

objectives as follows: ALICE 033794
BLUE 029797, GOWN 024804, BLACKIE 020809,
JOAN 030812, BESSBOROUGH 024813. Order of
march was to be C D B A coys.

No opposition was met by C coy and
their objective BESSBOROUGH was reported snug
at 2340 hrs. D coy passed through C and
took JOAN after having been ambushed by the
enemy and suffering 1 offr and 2 Ors cas.
B coy formed a firm base at BLUE. A coy
with the tks followed up and after ~~some~~ light
opposition secured their objective 034825.

The Bn was re-shuffled to fully
consolidate the posn during the day (2 Sep);
~~and other than~~ ^{except for} intermittent shelling which
caused no damage the day was fairly quiet.
Tac Bn HQ moved during the day from BESSBOROUGH
to S. Stefano 022825 and at 1630 hrs the Bn was
disposed ^{follows:} A coy 034825, B* coy 024837 (Codename
BROADFORD), C coy 031831 (BRIDGETOWN), D coy
N portion of S. Stefano. The enemy had put up
only scattered resistance to our attack and it
was evident that he was withdrawing rather hastily.
^{Two} 88-mm guns had been found by B coy at BROADFORD,
and A coy had captured 2 ration trucks which had
blundered into them during the ~~the~~ advance. Enemy
arty fire had been light and ineffect^{ive} in the
Bn area, making possible the bringing up of A Ech
vehs. The coy kitchen vechs were warmly welcomed.

delete. } Soon after the arrival of Tac Bn HQ at S.
Stefano our acting CO, Maj R.P. Clark, was notified
of his promotion to Lt Col in the absence of Lt
Col D.H. Rosser.

A patrol to Gradara (1084) reported the
town vacated by the enemy as of early that morning
2 Sep.

delete. } The 3 Sep, (the fifth anniversary of the war)
was spent in resting and cle~~an~~ing up. 3 War
Correspondents visited the Bn for stories of the
past actions.

At 1900 hrs Lt Col D.H. Rosser returned ~~at 1900~~ from

~~My~~ illness and ^{took over} ~~resumed~~ command from Maj ~~A/Lt Col~~ R.P. Clark.

A surprise and very surprising visit from the long absent Luftwaffe was experienced during the evening when approx 3 aircraft scattered incendiary and Anti-personnel bombs over the Bde area. No damage or cas were suffered in the Bn area.

On the 4 Sep the Bn moved to Cattolica (001872) for a period of rest which was to last till the 15th. The Bn was billeted completely indoors ^{in the SW end of the town} along a street ~~in the SW end of the town~~ running parallel to the sea ~~which was~~ only 75 yds away. The inhabitants of the town had been forced to evacuate by the Germans and had not yet returned so coys were able to choose billets at will; ~~the~~ evening found the Bn very comfortably settled in various seaside resort hotels and private dwellings. An enjoyable 10 days were spent in these restful surroundings disturbed only by 5 consecutive raids by GAF ^{during} ~~in~~ the first 5 days of our stay in Cattolica.

III THE ST. FORTUNATO FEATURE
On the 14th Sep the Bn was put on 2 hrs notice to move as from 1900 hrs. This was not a surprise, and born of long experience the Bn soon stood in readiness for the orders to move. The CO, Lt Col D.H. Rosser, had attended several conferences at Bde HQ and all details for the next operation were arranged.

At 1400 hrs the CO held a conference of all coy and supporting arms comds. The plan of attack was fully dealt with and the part of each formation comd was explained.

3 Cdn Inf Bde was at that time committed and their job was to clear ~~the way to~~ the line of the railway 843928 (101) to 855946 (101), after which 2 Bde would do the rest, namely clearing the S. Fortunato - CORIGNANO feature to the SW of Rimini and cut north to the coast rd at Celle 835988. A steady pressure was to be maintained by the Greeks on the coast sector. The Patricias in the original plan were to attack left, Seaf of C right with the Edmontons passing through and cutting

the coast rd at Celle after the Fortunato feature was secured. 3 Bde would parallel our attack on the left with 4 Br Div to the left of 3 Bde.

Rimini would be by-passed, ~~therefore it was hoped~~ *in the hope that* ~~to cut off~~ the force holding it ~~would be cut off.~~

At 1215 hrs ^{on} ~~at~~ the 15th the Bn moved ~~off~~ ^{to} a conc area at 940858 by march route arriving there at 1500 hrs. The Bn Supporting arms, B Sqn 145 Regt RAC, 1 pl 4.2 mor, 1 pl MMG (SLI), joined up with the Bn at this point.

The Bn moved off for a new assembly area at 093885 that night and on the 16th Sep crossed the R. Marano to X-rds 879906 (codename ORGANDY) on the N bank. Time was given here for the noon meal and the coys were ordered forward to take up tactical posns to the SE of codename FOXBOROUGH (862924).

The R22R were in possession of FOXBOROUGH (862924), at that time. ✓ Fire plan and other sp plans had ~~previously~~ been laid on at an O Gp held at ORGANDY by Maj R.P. Clark who had been called forward from Main Bn HQ. ~~after~~ Lt Col D.H. Rosser ~~was~~ ~~had been~~ wounded when Tac Bn HQ received a direct hit by a shell. The Bn was coming under severe arty fire which was later found to be the main part of the enemy defence. Orders for the attack were received at 1500 hrs from Bde HQ. PPCLI were to take over WHIPCORD 856928 from the R22R and exploit to the line of railway (ANKER) where we were to conc by 0700 hrs of the 17th and patrol to the ~~R King~~ ^{river crossing (JIG)} at 849939. An order from Bde at 2000 hrs cancelled the attacks ~~to~~ to allow further air force attacks on ANKER. ~~but~~ ^{however} the Bn ~~carried~~ ^{with} out the remainder of the plan, C coy reaching WHIPCORD at 0230 hrs ^{on} ~~at~~ the 17th. The patrol sent out to recce the R King was unsuccessful. At 0200 hrs of the 17th all watches were set back one hr to Standard Time. Twice during the morning C coy reported enemy ~~movement believed to be~~ ^{preparations for a} counter attacks ~~forming~~. They were dealt with by our arty and tks. Some enemy armour was known to be in the area.

As B coy had been ordered forward to a posn between FOXBOROUGH AND WHIPCORD, ~~the~~ the Bn was now in readiness for the attack which was to come. The intense shellfire inflicted many cas even on our well dug in troops.

H hr which had been 0730 hrs of the 18th was changed to 0700 hrs. The attack was to go in at that time to secure to line of the railway and the R King "J."

Tac Bn HQ moved to the Castle at FOXBOROUGH AT 2315 hrs where an O Gp was held by Lt Col R.P. Clark to tee up this attack. Major S A Cobbett was brought fwd as 2ic.

At 0530 hrs 18 Sep, B and D coys moved forward to the attack. Heavy cas were suffered and Maj P.D. Crofton, OC D coy, was wounded. Maj C.M. McDougall OC B coy, took over comd of the remainder of the ~~two~~ coys and continued the advance. ^{without the tks} When finally consolidated 200 yds S of TARA on the railway line B And D coys numbered approx 60. ~~No tks were seen to the right of B Sqn 145 RTR and Maj Ingrham had been killed. ?~~

Capt R.W. Potts had been sent for to take over D coy. On his arrival at Foxborough he was given orders to ^{be carried} take forward to Maj C.M. McDougall B and D coys were to move across ANKER and consolidate there which was accomplished by 1245 hrs. A and C coys were in reserve at WHIPCORD in readiness. An order from Bde HQ cancelled further attacks on the Fortunato feature until further notice. Our A Tk guns had been unable to reach the scene of action due to condition of the rds which were blocked with tks and vehs but by 2230 hrs our A Tk guns and MMGs were established at TARA. All signs pointed to the withdrawal of the enemy to the line of the Fortunato feature.

The only activity on the 19th was the movement of A coy to establish a bridgehead over the R. Ausa ^{river} at King "J" and to consolidate at 848940. The X-ing was made passable to vehs by the RCE by 1600 hrs.

There was no further advance but the Bn was to be ready to attack by 0500 hrs of 20 Sep.

B & D coys were threatened with two C/A which were dealt with most successfully by the Artillery.

moved across the river to fully consolidate the bridgehead held by A and D coys. Tac Bn HQ moved to PIQUE at 2000 hrs. C coy went to 809991 and B coy was given the job of cutting the coast rd at codenamed BRUE 835988. B coy after passing through A coy were forced to fight most of the way to BRUE, encountering pockets of enemy on their axis of advance, but reported BRUE snug at 2230 hrs when they contacted 22 NZ Mot Bn who were also moving on BRUE. B ^{coy} came ^{under command} ~~to~~ this formation and moved with them to 845985 returning to BRUE at first light of the 22nd.

The 22nd brought news from Bde that the 2 Cdn Inf Bde would be relieved by the 2 NZ Div who passed through us that morning to continue the advance.

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A personal message was received from Brig T.G. Gibson, "Congratulations to all ranks on a good job well done under difficult conditions."

We were also notified that the Bde would return to Cattolica for a period of rest and training.

A month of practically continuous action was over for the Bn and a rest was well earned. The opposition had been stubborn most of the way, the enemy's strength lying in his increased arty fire power. The great majority of our cas had been caused by Shrapnel. Actual ground contact with the enemy ^{showed that he was weak in this type of fighting; at the same time there appeared to be a pronounced inclination to desert. This was especially true of 20 GAF Div which contained many Polish troops; to desert.} had been weak on his part, and a pronounced inclination was noticed for the enemy, especially of 20 GAF Div, containing many Polish troops; to desert.

Total cas suffered by the Regt during the period 25 Aug - 23 Sep were as follows:

	Officers	ORs
Cas Killed	3	50
Dead of Wounds	1	8
Missing		6
Wounded & Evac	8	198
" & remained on Duty	4	25
	<u>16</u>	<u>287</u>