

MOST SECRET

PRINCESS PATRICIA'S CANADIAN LEGAL INFLUENCE

App. 10 - October

MAPLE H. HARRIS
(24 AUG 40 - 23 SEP 41)

1. CROSSING OF THE MISTATO.
2. THE SCOTCH LINE.
3. THE SAN FORTUATO FLAINE.
4. CROSSING OF THE MARECHIO.

1. CROSBY 12

On 24 Aug the Bn was conc in the area of BARCHI 126544 sheet 109 about 2 miles S of the R. METAURO. The stage was set for the first phase of the attack on the GOTHIC LINE after a period of Arty preparation.

Comment for
In keeping with the policy of the Eighth Army all ranks were fully informed as to plans and intentions as well as all available information about the enemy.

So far our efforts to keep our identity a secret had been successful.

Patrols had been sent out to recon FUPs and river X-ings, and all was in readiness.

Tac Bn HQ moved about mid-day on the 25th to a posn overlooking our sector of the METAURO. Marching tps were in their FUPs by 2130 hrs.

The plan was to effect a silent approach and X-ing of the R. METAURO, and be in posn to assault the high ground to the N at H hr + 59 (H hr = 2300 hrs).
At H+59 the arty of 2 Dive would fire on posns to the N of VIA FLAMINIA and lift at the rate of 100 yds in four minutes, under cover of which our inf would advance.

Timed to the second the 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's had been taken.

The Bn suffered 3 cas from SCHU mines on the S river bank.

The 7 PW taken were very shaken men. Their average age was 17.

The Bn disposn was now:- A coy Pt 127 at 112671, B coy in the town of SERRUNGARINA 034620, C coy at 037733 and D coy Pt 227 at 103626.

was Bn moved during the afternoon of the 26th to SERRUNGARINA.

The assault across the MONTAURIO 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.E. Rosser, having attended an O Gp at 2 Cdn Inf Bde HQ, called a Bn O Gp at SERRUNGARINA at 0005 hrs of the 27th. All coy and sp pl comds 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 MANTIERA (0766) - MONTE CROCE (0468), one coy up with a series of leapfrog actions to intermediate obj's on the axis of advance; the obj's were given code names. The system of allotting a familiar name to obj's had proved its value already in the action, and, as these which had been allotted to the Bn by 2 Cdn Inf Bde were few, additional ones were laid on by the CO, as follows - 067660 - PLUM, 064663 - PEACH, 058672 - LEMON, 051677 - NUTS, 050690 - PARSY, 048693 - ROSE, 051692 - PEGGY, 052692 - DOLLY, (all refs sheet 109).

The Bn moved off from area SERRUNGARINA at 0230 hrs on the 27th to a conc area at 077657 and were in posn there at 0630 hrs when the CO held an O Gp to issue final instructions 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 A, B, C, A coys.

At 0645 hrs D coy moved off and secured PLUM; B advanced to LEMON and C coy to PEACH; C coy then went through LEMON and attacked NUTS which the enemy vacated, and also secured MONTICELLI; from there a fighting patrol was sent across the R. ARZILLI where the enemy was contacted.

B coy following slightly to the right proceeded to take PATSY with no trouble. A coy reached PLUM at 0800 hrs at which point D coy advanced to PEACH.

This leapfrog action continued till B coy was on DORBS 042689. B coy came under heavy shell fire at this point. SA fire was also coming from the village MONTE 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 tks, and by our MMG pl, who had man-packed their guns forward through difficult and confusing country.

All obj's 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 heavy shell and mortar fire. They were forced to consolidate there after suffering 4 killed and 11 wounded.

The whole of the ridge from MONTE S. MARIA to MONTE GROCE was now in our hands from which all of the surrounding country could be dominated. Although under heavy shell fire the feature was firmly consolidated.

At 0430 hrs of the 28th a party of approx 25 enemy, under the impression that MONTE S. MARIA was still in German hands, entered the village without stealth from the West. The Pl of B coy in occupation waited calmly, and when the Germans were in good range, engaged them with SA and grenades. Heavy cas were inflicted on the enemy, B coy suffering 2 cas.

During the afternoon of the 27th Maj Bn HQ had moved to 060566 and at 0140 hrs started off for MONTE S. MARIA. The CO, Lt Col C.M. Rossie, some distance in the lead, was stopped by an exchange of SA fire between a party of enemy and an outpost of

The scout and sniper Pl was rushed forward to deal with the enemy and succeeded in beating them off forcing them to leave one Pl and 6 dead.

1st Bn HQ arrived at MONTE S. MARIA at 0820 hrs.

During the afternoon 128 Bde, 4th Inf Div put in an attack on MONTE GAUCIO 020853 approx one and a half miles to our left. Enemy retreating from this attack ran diagonally across our Bn front, our Bn Pl and arty reg had a field day engaging the enemy with very good effect. The MGs alone used 14,000 rounds SAA.

At 1300 hrs it became known that the Irish Regt of C would relieve us during the night. The Bn would move to a 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 moving order arrived from Bde HQ regarding a move forward next morning.

2. THE COMING LINE.

On the morning of the 30th an advance party IC Maj R.P. Clark moved off for the next assembly area at GINESTREDO 051721.

At a conference held that morning at Bde the

in readiness for the assault.

1 Cdn Inf Div would attack with 2 Bde left 3 Bde right.

Def overprint maps of the R. T. AREA and the country to the north fairly bristled with red printed strongpoints; the real thing had been reached.

The enemy posns consisted of mutually supporting pill boxes and strongpoints with many MG and A Tk posns covering the belt of wire and mine-fields to the north of the R. T. AREA.

arrived in the area of GINESTRETO at 1230 hrs on 31 Aug in POCs and took over the area formerly occupied by the Carleton and 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 held an O Gp at approx 2000 hrs when the plan of attack was laid on.

It was reported the approaches and X-ings of the river in good condition just before midnight.

At the plan was to effect a night X-ing of the river, to be in position to attack the main defences of the line at first light.

Order of march for the Bn was G, D, E, A coys.

The bridgehead coys, G and E, moved off at 0005 hrs, and without opposition were established at track junc 026751 code name ROSE, and 030756 ABBEYVILLE respectively at 0430 hrs.

The bridgehead having been firmly established, by the two forward coys 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 G coy, B coy encountered a belt of wire and a mine field in front of an A Tk ditch south of the lateral rd. 3 cas were suffered X-ing these obstacles and the coy was coming under some SA fire. Later, the field was found to be 600 yds deep with SCHU mines every two feet in addition to Teller and Box mines. However, the advance was continued, and ALMONDSTOWN was reported snug at 0600 hrs.

The Germans had levelled the village to clear a field of fire but so great had been the element of surprise in our attack, effective fire could not be brought to bear until our troops were safely entrenched in the village.

...this advance facing the commanding heights above
OSTERIA NUOVA; A coy had been held in reserve on the
north bank of the river. Tac BN HQ had moved forward
to ROSE at 1100 hrs.

The GOTHIC LINE having definitely been
breached C and D coys were ordered forward to objs
north of the lateral rd. C coy attacked rd and track
junc 015755 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
017760 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; was to prove to be a key Pt at 023753 (HERTZ).
Supported by B Sqn 48 BTR A coy attacked left up the
slope of the feature which had previously been heavily
engaged by our arty. At a cost of 2 tks and 7 cas
HERTZ was taken by 1445 hrs; 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 ap
tks to go forward was due to the efforts of 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 Bde LG 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 - G. BERELLI
012794 - to the right of MONTELURO.

at 1230 hrs the OC, Maj R.P. Clark, held an
O Gp to line up the attack. The Bn would move that
afternoon to some name BALLY PO 034739 at that time
held by the Germans of C and come there preparatory
to the attack. B Sqn 48 BTR would again support the
attack.

At 1700 hrs the Bn moved to ECH by march route and were close there by 1800 hrs. The area was then under med and heavy shell fire. At 2100 hrs the CO held an C Op and gave orders for the attack which was to go in immediately. Again a series of private unit code names were allotted to intermediate objs as follows - ALICE 03384, BLUE 02972, GOWN 024804, BLACKIE 020809, JOAN 030812, BESSBOROUGH 024813. Order of march was to be C D B A coys.

Comment in Shug
 No opposition was met by C coy and their obj BESSBOROUGH was reported snug at 240 hrs. D co passed through C coy and took JOAN for having been ambushed by the enemy and suffering 1 offr and 2 ORs cas. B co formed a firm base at ECH. A coy with the tanks followed up after light opposition secured their obj 034825.

The Bn was re-shuffled to fully consolidate the posn during the day (2 Sep). Except for intermittent shelling which caused no damage, the day was fairly quiet.

The Bn HQ moved during the day from BESSBOROUGH TO S. STEFANO 022825 and at 1630 hrs the Bn was disposed as follows - A coy 034825, B coy 024837 (code name BROADFORD), C coy 031831 (BRIDGETOWN), D coy north 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 two ration trucks which had blundered into them during the advance. Enemy arty fire had been light and ineffective in the Bn area, making possible the bringing up of a ECH vehs. The coy kitchen vehs were warmly welcomed.

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

illness and took over comd from Maj 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 loss was suffered in the Bn area.

On the 4 Sep the Bn moved to CATTOLICA 001872 for a period of rest which was to last until the 15th. The Bn was billeted completely indoors in the SW end of the town along a street running parallel to the sea - only 75 yards 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; 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 3 consecutive raids by GAF during the first 5 days of our stay.

3. 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.E. Roscoe, 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 section comd was assigned.

1st Lk Inf Bde was at that time comm 855946 and their job was to clear the line on the railway 843928 to 855946 (ref sheet 101), after which 2 Cdn Inf Bde would do the rest, namely clearing the ST. FORTUNATO - CORISMANO feature to the SE of FERRINI and out north to the coast rd at GHI 855932.

A steady pressure was to be maintained by the Greeks on the coast sector.

The objectives in the original plan were to attack left, Seafortas of 7 right, with the Edmontons passing through and cutting the coast rd at GEMLE after the FORTUNATO feature was secured. 3 Bn Inf Bde would parallel our attack on the left with 4 Br Inf Div to the left of 3 Bde. RIMINI would be bypassed, in the hope that the force holding it would be cut off.

At 2215 hrs on the 15th the Bn moved to a conc area at 940858 by march route arriving that area 1500 hrs. The Bn supporting arms B Bn 145 Regt RAO, 1 pl 4 2 mcs, 1 pl 11 (SEI) joined up with the Bn at this point.

The Bn moved off for a new assembly area at 893885 that night and on the 16th Sep crossed the R. MARANO to X-rds 879906 (code name ORGANDY) on the north bank. Time was given here for the noon meal and the coys were ordered forward to take up tactical posns to the SE of code name FOXBOROUGH 862924.

The R22R were in possession of FOXBOROUGH at that time. Lt Col D.E. Rosser was wounded when Tas Bn HQ received a direct hit by a shell.

First plan and other sp plans had been laid on at an G Sp held at ORGANDY by Maj R.E. Clark, who had been called forward from Main Bn HQ.

The Bn was coming under severe arty fire which was later found to be the main part of the enemy defs.

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 river X-ing (JIG) at 849939. An order from Bde at 2000 hrs cancelled the attacks to allow further air force attacks on ANKER.

with C coy reaching WHITCOMB at 0230 hrs of the 17th.
The patrol sent out to recon the river X-ing 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 preparations for a counter attack. 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
WHUPCORD, the Bn was now in readiness for the attack
which was to come. The intense shell fire inflicted
many cas, even on our well dug in troops.

The 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 the line of the railway and the
river X-ing JIG.

The Bn HQ moved to the castle at FOXBOROUGH
at 2315 hrs where an O Cp was held by Lt Col R.F. Clark
to see up this attack. Maj S.A. Cobbett was brought
forward as 2 IC.

At 0530 hrs 18th Sep, B and D coys moved
forward to the attack. Heavy cas were suffered and
Maj P.D. [unclear] CO B Coy, was killed. Maj C.W.
McDougall CO E Coy took over command of the remainder
of the Bn. Coys 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.

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 to Maj C.W. McDougall. B and D
coys were to move across ANKER and consolidate there
which was accomplished by 1245 hrs. B and D coys were
threatened with two counter attacks which were dealt
with most successfully by the arty. A and E coys were
in reserve at WHITCOMB in readiness.

An order from 21st Bn cancelled further
attacks on the FOXBOROUGH feature until further notice.

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 at river X-ing 517 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.

At 2020 hrs B Sqn 48 RTR, VC Maj Joss, married up with the unit.

11 cas were suffered by the Bn during the day.

0830 hrs of the 20th found the rifle coys conc at codeword ALPACA 838942. Tac Bn HQ was at TARA.

At 1400 hrs Lt Col R.P. Clark called an O Gp and issued orders for the attack. FPOLI would pass through the 1st Bn Regt who had reached the crest of the FORTUNATO feature during the night and put in attack on codewords NYLON and PIQUE at 822955 and 819973 respectively. It was also the Patricia's job to establish a bridgehead over the R. MARBOCHIC at 820987. The enemy was withdrawing to the line of the MARBOCHIC but was still strong in arty and had some armour. The plan was for two coys - C and B, to advance to MOINE, held by the LRR, then C coy supported by the tks would take NYLON. D and A coys would firm up on BOVEN 827951.

C coy advanced from MOINE at 1400 hrs but a strong enemy force with tks were encountered at NYLON forcing our troops to withdraw.

The Bn at this point was without A Tk guns as the tks could not negotiate the S. FORTUNATO hill. This necessitated a change in plan and Lt Col R.P. Clark ordered B and D coys to by-pass NYLON and proceed to PIQUE.

Communications were very difficult and relay sets had been sent out from Tac Bn HQ, but it was found that the cause of the trouble was the jamming of the air by sundry stations and the presence of static rather than distances involved.

Cas in the advance to MOIRE had been heavy, the total for the day being 17 killed, 30 wounded.

4. THE CROSSING OF THE MARECCHIA.

B and D coys reached PIQUE without opposition and reported it snug at 0445 hrs. A coy was immediately ordered forward to effect the river X-ing with the support, and again little ground opposition was encountered but some enemy movement was heard to the right and front. A coy reported their obj 820988 snug at 0550 hrs of the 21 Sep, after which D coy moved from PIQUE across the river to their obj 814988.

During the day B and C coys were moved across the river to fully consolidate the bridgehead held by A and E 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 road at code name BRUE 839988. 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 hr. When they contacted 22 NZ Mat Bn who were also moving on BRUE. B coy came under comd this formation and moved with them to 845988 returning to BRUE at first light of the 22 Sep.

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

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 Siragopal. 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 Poles.

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

	<u>Officers</u>	<u>ORs</u>
Killed	3	50
Died of Wounds	1	8
Missing	—	6
Wounded and Evacuated	8	198
Wounded and Remained on Duty	4	25
	<u>16</u>	<u>287</u>

Total number of prisoners taken by the Regt during the period 25 Aug - 23 Sep, was 20.