

June 1944

The order of battle of the 1st Battalion, in Jun 1944 as it set sail to join the war on the continent was:

Battalion Headquarters

Commanding Officer	Lt Col Churcher, JB
Second in command	Maj Turner-Cain, GR
Adjutant	Capt Knyvett-Hoff, GA
Quartermaster	Capt Bryant, TCR
Intelligence Officer	Lt Woolcott, CWP
RSM	WO1 Wells, PD
RQMS	WO2 Rollings, HH

HQ Coy

OC Capt Lloyd GH
Lt Hesketh, RB
Lt Powley, NA
MTO Lt Symonds' FW
RMO Capt Hole, EK (RAMC)
CSM WO2 Williams, EJ
CQMS WO2 Muirhead, A

Sp Coy

OC Capt Fripp, RC
ATk Capt Lench, RW
Mortar Lt Gooderidge, DM
Lt Withey SJ
Carriers Capt Barneby RP
Lt Wardman, AR
Pnr Lt Grady, J
CSM CSgt Benfield EJ
CQMS CSgt Meredith PGJ

A Coy

OC Maj Croome JF
Capt Mason, CM
Lt Glyde SJ
Lt Forques L
WO2 Martin EA
CSM WO2 Toner NJ
CQMS CSgt French J

B Coy

OC Maj Crofts WAP
Capt Lowe CTG
Lt Spittal AJ
Lt Hopkinson G
2Lt Hancox TE
CSM WO2 Mason
CQMS Sgt Grice RR

C Coy

OC Maj Phillips AJW
 Capt Cowan RC
 Lt Mills EL
 2Lt Kotchapaw WJ
 2Lt Pickering RL
 CSM WO2 Biddlecombe D
 CQMS CSgt Coghill D

D Coy

OC Maj Barneby HH
 Capt Northey L
 Lt Criddle CW
 Lt Creamer FB
 Lt Boddy SH
 CSM WO2 Greenhouse AJ
 CGMS CSgt Shanley JF

The Battalion left Aldershot in 2 parties, The vehicle party moved to the London Docks and were loaded to American liberty ships. The second party gathered at a camp at Haywards Heath and embarked from Newhaven on 13 Jun. They landed on MIKE BEACH from Landing Craft Infantry (LCI) without major incident - they were met by the advance party who had crossed the previous day. The vehicle party landed on QUEEN BEACH and both parties made their way to a concentration area in the region of Caint, where it had about 10 days to acclimatise. As Capt Wardman recalled:



We loaded our transport on an American Liberty ship at King George V docks in London, and after a night anchored off the Ford Motor Works at Dagenham sailed for the invasion beached at Normandy. Everyone on board was quite cheerful. they'd held us in the Channel for about three days so that we actually ran more or less out of food. We had boxing matches on the hatch tops and that to keep amused and eventually we got there; we discovered we were going to be offloaded by cranes (because we were dumped in the hold with all the vehicles) onto what was known as a Rhino. Now, a Rhino consisted of big metal tanks; they'd be about 6 by 4 by 4 sort of thing, all bolted together and at the back they ran two big outboard motors.

There were hundreds of ships at anchor, planes overhead and shells from a high German battery of guns situated on the cliff tops to the East of the mouth of the River Orne.

Eventually we were landed and set off for our bivouac area and were there in an orchard for several days.



Lt Ken Crockford crossed the Channel in early July as a reinforcement, but his account is similar to those that crossed in June. *I landed on the open beach in Normandy, the small landing crafty had found it impossible to beach and we had been held at sea for 3 days. I was part of about 400 officers and soldiers from units in England sent out to make good casualty losses - which had been high.*

We were ordered to remain on the beach until we had orders - the incoming tide reduced the space available but we were ordered not to leave the beach due to mines. Two German aircraft appeared and machine gunned the beach causing some casualties. At dawn the next day we passed off the beach through a cleared gap and moved to a concentration area. I joined the Battalion 'at rest' in St Gabriel where they were recovering from their bitter first battle encounter at Hill 112; it was Ken's 21st birthday on the 16th July.

On the 25 June the Battalion received orders for Op EPSOM - the aim being to break out of the bridgehead and cross the Rivers Odon and Orne. On the 27th they advanced to the area of Cheux which was completely devastated; they were then ordered to occupy Tourmauville. They crossed the ODON by a narrow bridge during the hours of darkness and established a precarious bridgehead and came under mortar fire for the first time. Enemy snipers were established themselves in woods and The Herefords were tasked to clear them - D Coy were allocated the task.

The Brigade was to hold this bridgehead until 6 Jul.

The War Diary for June 1944 is reproduced below.

War Diaries and Intelligence
 War Diaries will be enclosed in A.F.
 If this is not available, and for
 Intelligence summaries, the cover will be
 prepared in manuscript.

WAR DIARY or INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

Sheet -2- Army Form G. 4110.
 Unit - 1st Bn The Herefordshire Regt
 Commanding Officer Lt. Col J. B. Churcher.

Month and Year JUNE 1944.

(Delete heading not required)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	References to Appendices
12	12 Jun	0600	Adv Party sailed.	
	12 Jun	2000	Adv Party landed on MIKE beach off LA VALETTE	
	13 Jun		Adv Party moved to Div conc area - LANTHEUIL 923784 sheet 7F/1.	
	13 Jun	1300	Party left Camp 59 and proceeded by road to NEWHAVEN and embarked on LCIs at 1500hrs.	
	13 Jun	2100	MTS sailed from SEVENTHOOTH SOUTHERD.	
	13 Jun	2300	LCIs sailed from NEWHAVEN.	
	14 Jun	1400	Party disembarked from LCIs on JUNG MIKE GREEN Beach. Proceeded by march route to conc area LANTHEUIL via Transit Area LA VALETTE	
GAINET FRANK.	14 Jun		Mqs est GAINET 925770 sheet 7F/1	
	14 Jun	2300	Party in MTS arrived off LION SUR MER.	
	15 Jun		Tpt landed on ROGER GREEN Beach and moved to conc area.	
	16 Jun	1600	All vehs unloaded and in conc area.	

(v) Changes in establishment or strength. As regards casualties the names and ranks of those killed or wounded should be noted.

Instructions for completion of this diary are contained in P.S. Regs., Vol. I. Monthly War Diaries will be required in A.F. Form 1. If this is not available, and for Intelligence Summaries, the cover will be prepared in accordance with the instructions.

WAR DIARY

or INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

(Delete heading not required)

Sheet -3-

Army Form G. 2416.

Unit 1st Bn The Herefordshire Regt

Commanding Officer Lt Col J. B. Churcher.

Month and Year JUNE 14

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	References to Appendices
CAEN FRANCE.	18 Jun		CO attended conference at 8 Corps Hqs	
	23 Jun		Rfts consisting of 3 Offrs and 16 ORs arrived from 33 R.H.U.	
	25 Jun		Op Orders received for Op EPSOM	
	25 Jun	2100	Orders issued to "G" Op for Op EPSOM. Object to (a) Break out of NORMANDY Be-head (b) Cross Rivers ODOM and ORIS and (c) Isolate CAEN.	
			<i>J. B. Churcher</i>	
			Lieutenant Colonel.	
			Cmdt 1st Bn The Herefordshire Regt.	
	26 Jun 44			

Instructions regarding War Diaries and Intelligence Summaries are contained in F.S. Regs., Vol. I. Monthly War Diaries will be enclosed in A.F. C.2119. If this is not available, and for Intelligence Summaries, the cover will be prepared in manuscript.

ORIGINAL
WAR DIARY

or
~~INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY~~

(Delete heading not required).

Sheet I.

Army Form G. 2118.

Unit.....1st Bn The Herefordshire Regt.

Commanding Officer.....Lt.Col.G.R. Turner Cain.

Month and Year.....~~JULY 44~~
JUNE

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	References to Appendices	
Cainet	27	1215	Bn moved to assembly area NORREY en BESSIN, Route CAMILLY		
			SEQUEVILLE en BESSIN, BRITTEVILLE, L'ORGUERILLEUSE, Ref France		
			1/50,000 7F/1		
Norrey en Bessin	27	1415	Bn arrived in assembly area NORREY en BESSIN.		
		1615	Bn rec'd orders to move to area le HAUT du BOSQ. 9066 7F/1.		
		1700	Bn moved by march route with essential tpt.		
		1845	Bn diverted at CHEUX to occupy village of TOURMAVILLE 9362.		
Colleville 922651	27	2200	Bn halted at COLLEVILLE to regroup before further move fwd.		
		2315	Move continued.		
Tourmaville	28	0200	Bn in position at TOURMAVILLE, H.Q. est 934627.		
		28	1305	Number of enemy infiltrated between own and KSLI(4th) posn. D Coy put in attack on wood 9463 7F/1. Wood cleared and 2Ps of W taken.	
					Bn subjected to attack at intervals throughout day by multible mortars.

WAR DIARIES SECTION
No. _____
JUL 1944
G.H.Q. 2nd Echelon

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JUNE July 44.
Month and Year

WAR DIARY or INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

(Delete heading not required).

Sheet -2-

Army Form C. 2119.

Unit 1st Bn The Herefordshire Regt.

Commanding Officer Lt. Col. G. R. Turner. Cain.

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	References to Appendices
	29	1505	Infiltration attempted by enemy on right flank through A and C coys from direction GAVRUS. Situation restored after fire fight with M G and mortar. Considerable casualties in A and C coys due to shells bursting in trees. Need for overhead cover when in wooded area.	
	Night	2200	Enemy reported forming up on our front fwd of B Coy. Attack launched but was broken up by Arty barrage laid down from 1230 to 0430. Enemy very noisy in FUP. Covered his forming up by infiltrating fwd. All spotted by patrols, reported to Bn H.Q. in sufficient time to bring down D.F. tasks before any of his tps had crossed these tasks.	
	30/1			
	July	1200	B Coy supported by Sqn of Churchill tks carried out offensive sweep on high ground ref. 939620. to clear it of enemy who might have remained from previous night's attack and to deny him O.Ps. Sweep entirely successful. One or two M.G. posts mopped up.	