

## The 6th Airborne Division In Normandy.

Webber led this platoon to "A" Coy area which involved working their way through the attacking Germans. The platoon was however not strong enough (It was only about 17 strong) to launch an attack that had sufficient effect on the attackers and in the end reinforced "A" Coy and was itself surrounded. It's presence brought a little relief to the company however. "A" Company had then been fighting for 17 hours, unassisted, against superior numbers of infantry supported by tanks and Self Propelled Guns. "A" Coy destroyed one mark IV Tank and one self propelled gun with gammon bombs. The company was in good heart but tired and further weakened by casualties.

The position at this stage was not very comforting because, although I felt confident of holding off attacks for some considerable time to come, there seemed no prospect of relief for the battalion and I could not be certain how things would go during the night, especially if the enemy made a really determined attack with a large force.

The General Officer Commanding 6th Airborne sent a special Intelligence Officer to G.O.C. 3rd Infantry Division to explain the situation and to urge for relief for the battalion. G.O.C. 3rd Infantry Division immediately visited the area himself and ordered 2nd Royal Warwicks to take over. I understood that 3rd Inf. Div. had been under the impression that the bridges had been re-captured by the Germans and that a large scale attack by them (3rd Div) would be necessary to get them back. This attack was to be put in the following morning. The East Yorks had had very heavy casualties on the beaches and were unable to reach St Aubin, much less relieve the battalion in Benouville.

The Warwicks came up very quickly (Arrived at 2115 hours) but the take over involved an attack to relieve "A" Coy and evacuate their casualties.

The battalion finally passed over the bridge (Canal) at 0100 hours on D plus 1 day after handing over it's positions to 2nd Royal Warwicks.

The bridge-head had been held by the battalion for then 21½ hours.

Casualties are difficult to estimate as the exact strength of the unit was not known at the time of move off from the R.V. and the fact that the casualties were evacuated in two different directions, i/e either over the bridge by 225 Para Field Ambulance or back to the beaches by seaborne field ambulance, they were however estimated at the time as follows:-

Killed	18 (Including 3 Officers, Parry, Bowyer, Hill.)
Wounded	36

Field 29th June 44.

Signed R.G. Pine-Coffin  
Lieut Col. Commanding 7th (L.I.) Bn Parachute Regiment