

NOT FOR PUBLICATION, BROADCAST IN OVERSEAS BULLETINS OR USE ON CLUB TAPES BEFORE 2330 D.B.S.T. ON APRIL 17th. (i.e. FOR TUESDAY MORNING PAPERS.) NOT TO BE BROADCAST IN THE MIDNIGHT NEWS OF APRIL 17/18. THIS EMBARGO SHOULD BE RESPECTED OVERSEAS BY PREFACING ANY MESSAGES FILED WITH THE EMBARGO.

THE ROYAL WEST KENTS IN ITALY

The Royal West Kents have been fighting in Italy under command of both the 8th and 5th Armies.

A unit, now with the 5th Army, landed at Termoli in the first week of October, and though heavily attacked by powerful German forces, including elements of the 16th Panzer Division, stood their ground, thereby greatly contributing to the forcing of the Biferno.

During October the formation with which the unit was serving forced its way up the coastal road, captured Montecilfone on October 19, and repelled subsequent counter-attacks.

The Royal West Kents were in the fierce fighting on the Sangro. They were among the troops who established the main bridgehead across the river on the 23rd of November after one of the most relentless battles of the campaign.

Later, the Royal West Kents fought on the Moro, and then moved across the mountainous spine of the Peninsula to the extreme left flank of the 8th Army in the Alfedena area.

During the third week in February they came under command of the 5th Army, and before the end of the month had taken their place in the San Angelo area on the line of the Garigliano. Here they remained till, in the last days of March, they took their place in the newly won salient to the north of Cassino.

Another unit of the Royal West Kents has shared in the 8th Army's campaign on the western side of the Peninsula since September. It landed at Taranto on the 26th of September, and swiftly made its way up the coastal road. Patrols from the brigade with which it was serving were the first to reach Castiglione on November 9, and on the 26th of the month, elements from this formation crossed the Sangro after stern fighting north of Paglieta.

The Royal West Kents were particularly heavily engaged in the fighting west of the Moro during the last week of the year. They took part in dispersing severe counter-attacks near Villa Grande, on the 26th December; and on the 27th and 28th

/put in

put in a sustained attack which led to the capture of an enemy strong point north of the town.

During January the regiment took part in a successful assault against formidable opposition along the main coastal road leading to Tollo. Later they were moved to the centre of the 8th Army's front, south of Orsogna. They resisted several counter-attacks in this sector.

On the 19th February an enemy patrol was wiped out at Villa Bona by the Royal West Kent's brigade. They remained in this area during March, and were constantly in contact with the enemy forces seeking to infiltrate north-east of Orsogna.

On March 7th, and again three days later, they helped to repel strong patrol attacks, inflicting serious casualties, and throughout the month they held their own against sustained enemy pressure upon our positions in the Orsogna area.

---

MILITARY AFFAIRS