



46th Infantry Reconnaissance Regiment

Following the shambles of the fall of France the War Office took a year to determine the necessary establishments of the Parachute Troops and Renaissance Regiments.

The 46th Infantry Reconnaissance Regiment was formed in July 1941 at Morton Hall in Norfolk. The 2/5th Leicestershire Regiment had previously been at Morton Hall and were commanded by Major Gale. But he had left to join the parachute regiment.



A large number of the men and officers came from the 23rd Battalion of the Royal Fusiliers, and from the 137th, 138th and 139th Brigade Anti-Tank Companies after the completion of Intelligence and other tests set by the commanding officers

as part of 12 Corps. The 46th along with the 56th Regiment, was stationed in Kent and under the competent administration headed by General Ginger Hawkesworth

They benefited however from the attentions of Montgomery, Brian Horrocks likened his arrival to a series of bombs exploding all over this rural corner of Britain. Before his arrival a distinct peaceful atmosphere had prevailed. Officers and Warrant officers were in many cases living with their families and according to Monty 'Commanders and staff were spending too much time in their offices to the detriment of the active training'.

All this changed almost overnight when the first bomb exploded among the wives and families, who were summarily packed off out of command. Monty then spent time weeding out officers whom he thought unsuitable from field command and replaced them with those he considered who did know their job.



Image courtesy of the Maj Douglas Waugh

Description: the Two Pounder anti tank gun, crewed by with Douglas Waugh & John Martin on exercise at Tenteden, Kent.

Date Circa 1941.

Training was substantially completed in the Spring 1942.



The 46th was early on the scene in January 1943 with 1st Armoured in lower Tunisia. Subsequently they were involved in the following actions:

Assisting in the capture of point Djebel Mid November.

Abiod

Tamera

Sedjenane

Green Hill

Baldy

Goubellat Plane the regiment provided flank protection for the 6th Armoured division.

Longstop, Teboura & Mateur

and latter with 8th Army at about the time of the El Hamma battle then on to Cap Bon.

EXPAND AS DATA BECOMES AVAILABLE



In early June 43 the regiment undertook a period of retraining in the use of combined operations, this terminated with exercise 'Conqueror' in which the Infantry Regiment opposed a mock landing by the 1st US Division.

At which time they would have joined 46th Division of 1st Army and moved to Djidelle to carry out exercises with the use of landing craft and to grow tough again in the hills overlooking the Harbor.

In September 1943 they subsequently in the Salerno landing September 43 with British X corps of 5th US army

On D Day, 9 September, elements of both recce regiments had been among the first troops of their divisions ashore. At 4.30pm, B Squadron, 46 Reece, moved into Salerno town. They found very few civilians about and the main streets were blocked by demolitions, so they travelled carefully, ready for ambushes, by side streets to the western edge of Salerno where they met with men of 2 Commando who had landed early that morning and had been fighting for much of the day.
Meeting with men of 46th

On the west coast of Italy, Fifth Army had entered Naples on 1 October but their struggle on the Salerno beaches had been, to paraphrase Wellington, a close-run battle.

The two British divisions of X Corps which had been in the first wave of invaders had included recce regiments in their orders of battle and operating on the centerline of the advance. However in Fifth Army's situation there was little scope for the normal operations of a reconnaissance regiment.

Believing that the Americans were the weak link in Fifth Army, Kesselring had to drive a wedge between the British and American elements on the beaches. The attackers had the line of the River Sele as their axis of advance (or that river marked the inter-Allied boundary in the beach head).

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Moving on through the Vietti defile B squadron entered Cava de Tirreni where Germans were still manning defensive positions. A prisoner was taken in a side street and provided information that 25 tanks with 500 infantry were only one and a half miles away and preparing for a counter attack. With this information the squadron made its way back to Vietri as darkness descended..

During the week of 10 September 46 Reece deployed as infantry in a situation where every available soldier was put into the line with a rifle or a submachine-gun. The anti-tank guns were busily employed too, and the anti-tank troop commander of 46 Reece later wrote an account of some of the actions involving his guns. They were nicknamed the "Troop with the Shiny Barrels" as they had never fired at German armour in Africa.



Salerno presented plenty of opportunities. Their first' was against a Mark IV Special, a tank that "looked like a single-decker tram, with a mammoth's head and a trunk stuck on top." That tank was engaged from the side and put out of action after five rounds from a 6-pounder. Shortly afterward, two Mark III Specials were engaged and knocked out but then two tigers (described in the account as Mark VIs) appeared and the gun detachment tried to get to a better position but the gun stuck in a ditch and had to be destroyed.

Then the troop commander realized that he was stuck in the middle of a tank battle. An LRC had to be abandoned and a retreat made on foot; most of the recce men got away although one was missing and Corporal Fletcher's gun detachment had been captured. "Later we heard that it had been a major attack, with tanks and many infantry, calculated to throw our division into the sea"



Image courtesy of the IWM E 28649

Description: A Humber heavy armoured car of the 46th Recce C Squadron, the Divisional marking of the Sherwood Forrest Oak can be seen on the nearside wing.

Circa 1944

The breakout from Salerno put three recce regiments – 5th, 44th and 46th on the western sector while 56th was advancing on the Adriatic sector.

But there was no possibility of a swift advance up the Italian peninsula. The grain of the country was against the Allies with the Apennine mountains forming a spine and rivers flowing down to either coast. The valleys and hills were custom-made for defense and Albert Kesselring was a master of defensive warfare.



Image courtesy of the Maj Douglas Waugh
Description: Crews of Humber armoured car of A Squadron in Egypt.
The small man 2nd from right is Trooper Sidney Thomas Hall (driver/mechanic)
Who served in Africa, Italy Greece and Austria
Date Circa 1944.



Photo courtesy of the Maj Douglas Waugh
Description: Unidentified Troops of the Recce Corps..
Date: Circa April 1943.

As he prepared a winter line across Italy his rear-guard units took a heavy toll of the advancing Allies; on the east coast Fifth Army's advance to the Volturno river cost 12,000 casualties, most of them from the British X Corps.

As winter set in the Germans established a defensive line across Italy from Gaeta on the Tyrrhenian coast to Ortona on the Adriatic; this was the Gustav Line, whose most famous feature was to be Monte Cassino. Forward of the Gustav Line in the west was the Bernhardt Line anchored on Monte Camino and stretching along part of the Garigliano river near the west coast to the headwaters of the Trigno river which flowed into the Adriatic.

Forward defences had also been created in the Adriatic sector along the lines of several of the rivers on Eighth Army's route; the battle at Termoli had pierced the Viktor Line. A new German army had been created in Italy, Fourteenth Army, to stand alongside Tenth Army in Kesselring's Army Group C. The opposing forces were almost evenly balanced. That gave the defenders a distinct advantage.

At the end of 1943 46 Recce was providing flank protection for its division in the San Martino area in front of the Gustav Line. The first days of 1944 saw the regiment in an infantry role having relieved 16th DLI; its vehicles were left, for the first time, some four miles behind the forward positions. One squadron was in the line while the other two were held in reserve and, for the front-line squadron, life was a routine of night patrols and watching by day over snow-covered no man's land. OPs were set up, but the lack of equipment for such duties was bemoaned, as was the fact that the level of such work had not been anticipated in the UK.



On 5 January 46 Recce passed to 23 Armoured Brigade for a crossing of the Garigliano river. Patrolling continued and, on 19 January, 12 Troop were heavily engaged by the enemy while crossing a valley mouth: four men were killed and eight wounded. But four days later a patrol from 46 Recce made the first crossing of the Garigliano in their sector since X Corps had reached the river line. OPs were still being maintained and occasionally suffered heavy mortaring from the Germans; casualties, however, were light. By the 26th all three squadrons were on the river line with their vehicles still far behind.

Patrolling, defensive infantry duties and OPs continued along the Garigliano into February while C Squadron crossed the river to relieve a Royal Marine Commando "at a high cost in casualties." On 7 February Cottonforce was formed from elements of 46 Recce, King's Dragoon Guards, a platoon of Vickers machine-guns, a section of 4.2-inch mortars and a composite company of 120 anti-tank gunners.

Next day patrols from each squadron crossed the river to check if, as Suspected, the Germans had left San Ambroglio. C Squadron's patrol was fired on before it could cross, A Squadron's crossed by ferry but Was attacked with grenades and returned while B Squadron's saw no enemy at all. The front settled down' for a time although harassing fire continued from the German positions; one man from A Squadron was killed and two others Wounded in the San Nicola area by mortar fire on the evening of the 13th.

A change in routine came with a diversionary 'Chinese' attack across the Garigliano on the night of 17/18 February although this produced little enemy reaction. Three nights later, a patrol attempting to cross the river was stopped by the strong current While on the 21st the war diary notes German abuse of the Red Cross with ambulances being used to carry ammunition. As a result orders were issued to shell German ambulances unless it Was clear that their role was absolutely humanitarian. Patrols sent to establish crossing points along the bank of the river reported nothing of interest; the riverbanks, however, were very steep and up to eight feet high.

The regiment's spell in the front line was drawing to an end and on 27 February came the news that they would be relieved by 2nd/4th Hampshires.

Even at this late stage German patrols seemed "keen to establish the identity of 46 Recce."s That was almost a pointless exercise for on 29 February the regiment Was relieved by the Hampshire's and the following day Was out of the line and "relieved of all tactical commitment, for [the] first time since landing in Italy in September 1943.

The war diary noted that B Squadron had been in the line nearly eight weeks with only ,1 two-day break; The other squadrons had fared slightly better with five-week stints in the line.

And so began Operation PITCHFORK, the move out of Italy. Vehicles and equipment were handed over to 4 Recce before travelling to Taranto.

There, on 8 March 44, black RAC berets were issued; the regiment had learned of the Corps transfer to the RAC on 1 February and generally thought it a positive move.

By the end of March 46 Recce was in Egypt where leave was granted before going to Palestine for training and a short spell of internal security duties. The regiment would not return to Italy until July.



Image courtesy of the Maj Douglas Waugh
Description: The crews of Humber armoured cars of B Squadron pose for the camera..
Date: Circa March 1944



Image courtesy of the David Hill & WW2 Forum

Description: B Squadron of 46th Recce relax in Cairo. Note the newly acquired Black RAC berets
Date April 1944



Image courtesy of the Maj Douglas Waugh

Description: Cairo Egypt, L to R, Hugh Haile, John Fabian, Peter Cochell, Douglas Waugh, John Summerville. Date: April 1944.



Image courtesy of the Maj Douglas Waugh
Description: Major J Langham DSO Relaxing in Egypt.
Date April 1944



Image courtesy of the Maj Douglas Waugh
Description: left Bill Trent, Middle Douglas Waugh, Right Robby Robins.
Date April 1944

As 56 Reece left Italy for Egypt 46 Reece was returning to the peninsula. As well as training and re-organising, the regiment had been engaged for a short time on internal security duties/in Palestine before travelling to Egypt on the first leg of the journey back to Italy. Arriving at Taranto on 3 July the regiment



moved to Villa Volturmo where new vehicles were received and the 6-pounder anti-tank guns were replaced by 75mm self-propelled weapons. On 25 July 46 Reece paraded at Perugia airfield to welcome King George VI on a visit to Eighth Army; by then the regiment was preparing for Operation OLIVE. OLIVE 'was Alexander's plan to break through the Gothic Line and into the plain of Lombardy; it was scheduled to begin at midnight on 25/26

August 1944. At 11.00pm on the 25th, A Squadron foot patrols set out to recce crossings of the Metauro river. The patrols returned by 4.50am and, at first light, 1 and 2 Troops went forward to cross the river. On 2 Troop's axis of advance there was heavy going while 1 Troop ran into mines; a Humber heavy armoured car had a wheel blown off.

A Squadron was in action throughout the morning.

At noon the divisional commander asked for two good crossing places on the regimental front: the recce to meet this request was undertaken by 2 and 3 Troops.

At 3.30pm 2 Troop was engaged by Germans on Monte Bianco. After mortaring the enemy position, the troop attacked and drove the Germans out. A subsequent counter-attack was fought off and the position held until the reconnoiterers were relieved by 5th Sherwood foresters.

On 27 August the regiment, spearheading 139 Brigade, was continuing its advance along the road north-westward through Isola del Piano. Two Troop was sent forward but, when a carrier overturned killing Lieutenant RL.J.Rogan, 3 Troop took over the running. They found the going difficult because of blown bridges and mines but took three prisoners from 191 Grenadier Regiment before further progress became impossible. Under constant shellfire throughout the day, 46 Reece suffered thirteen wounded as well as having two heavy armoured cars, an LRC and a 15cwt truck damaged. A Squadron continued to recce 139 Brigade's axis of advance next morning with 1 Troop pushing forward in spite of craters and demolitions until C Squadron relieved them in mid-morning.

Another river obstacle loomed on the 29th when 46 Reece was warned to be ready to take over 128 Brigade's area, the main feature of which was Monte Gaudio which 1st/4th Hampshires had captured the previous day; the regiment was to protect the division's right flank and report on the Foglia river on the regimental front.

The plan was for 46th Division to attack across the Foglia with Band C Squadrons holding the high ground and patrolling forward and A Squadron in reserve ready to move to Ripi at short notice.

That afternoon Band C Squadrons sent out patrols to find crossings for infantry, AFVs and other vehicles and to report on mining in the area. By 3 0' clock next morning C Squadron had reported neither crossings nor mines in its area. B Squadron was unable to reach the river due to the distance involved but brought back the valuable information that the road from Ripi to the ford was not mined; C reported the river banks to be some 12 to 15 feet high with the river fast flowing.

Further recce'ing of the Foglia was carried out that day and a crossing point eventually found. Although the Germans had been shelling constantly, it was learned that the Gothic Line defenses north of the Foglia were not as strong as had been thought and had been penetrated.

A mobile force was therefore formed to exploit that penetration: the force included 46 Reece; 142 Regiment, RAC; 142nd Field Regiment; 272 Field Company; 152 SP AIT Battery; Reece Troop, North Irish Horse and 5th Hampshire's in lorries. This force was to cross the Foglia, advance and seize crossings over the Ventena river with 46 Reece leading; A Squadron, in the van, would recce three crossings. Events did not go as planned: one crossing was not available to the force when it moved off at 5.40am on the 31st. As 2 Troop approached its assigned crossing German soldiers were spotted in the open and engaged by Bren and Besa fire; about twelve Germans were seen to fall. But the troop then came under such intensive fire from mortars, machine-guns and artillery that forward movement became impossible. On the right, 3 Troop was trying to construct a ford but could not do so even with help from sappers. A modified plan, for a modified force, had therefore to be implemented: the force would seize one crossing with B Squadron covering its right flank.

The crossing was made on the morning of 1 September with 1 Troop, A Squadron assisting 142 Regiment, RAC in supporting an attack by 6th Lincolns. At 2.30pm 6 Troop crossed the Foglia and headed north on the right of the brigade axis. The troop came under fire from four 88s at 1000 yards' range but, although an armoured car was hit, there was only one slight casualty.



Flank protection was B Squadron's task next day as 138 Brigade advanced; the squadron also maintained contact with the Canadians on the right. Throughout the day there was considerable opposition to the forward troops and the CO ordered C Squadron to move up on B's right flank; matters were not helped by bad communications. During the course of the day Colonel Cotton was wounded and Major J.H.Preen took command. Against strong opposition, 138 Brigade had made good progress and further plans were made for 46 Recce to cross the Ventena and Conca rivers and provide a flank guard for an advance to San Clemente.

On 3 September the regiment was stunned by the news that Colonel Cotton had died of his wounds. Struck by a shell splinter which penetrated his skull "he died shortly after leaving the Field Ambulance without regaining consciousness."



Image courtesy of the IWM NA 2199

Description: Lt Col Frederick Cotton (right) of the 46th Recce died from wounds received in early stages of Operation Olive in the last week of August 1944. Here he wears their khaki beret and the Recce Corps lanyard in green and yellow twist. (on the left shoulder for officers)

Circa 1944

During the morning of the 3rd, B Squadron seized crossings over both the Ventena and Conca rivers. With these secure, C Squadron passed through B and took up the lead of 138 Brigade's advance, with 9 Troop in front:

They encountered almost continuous shellfire, especially from enemy SP gun(s), but continued to press on, until they were finally held up by strong enemy positions on a ridge .

During the day they had suffered eight casualties wounded while B Squadron had one killed and two wounded

Next day the regiment was to move further west on to the San Clemente-Coriano road which C Squadron was to recce; the ultimate objective was to seize three bridges over the Marano river. These orders were modified to the capture of one bridge, at Ospedaletto, as 128 Brigade had broken a strong German rearguard position and were crossing the Marano to form a west-facing flank to protect 1st British Armoured Division.

C Squadron got moving after some initial difficulty from traffic congestion and 10 Troop finally pushed forward through the York and Lanes' positions and along the San Clemente-Coriano road. But 10 Troop's advance was stopped when the bridge at Castelleale was blown up as they approached; the troop then came under sustained mortar and machine-gun fire from three sides. For most of that day they stayed in position returning fire with their 37mm and Besa guns until ammunition was virtually exhausted and they were forced to withdraw to San Clemente. Nine Troop had also been held up after detouring westward: two armoured cars had been blown up on mines and, although the troop later advanced by another route, they ran into very heavy shellfire at Il Trebbio and had to withdraw. C Squadron HQ at San Clemente had also been shelled and forced to move.



Finally, at 5.30pm, the regiment was told to stand fast in its positions while 1st Armoured Division took over the advance; next day 46th Division was withdrawn for a rest during which heavy rainfall threatened to leave vehicles stranded in muddy conditions in the squadron areas.

On 9 September the CO gathered all officers and troop NCOs at RHQ to pay tribute to Colonel Cotton and to point to lessons from the rocen I advance which, from the Metauro to the Conca through the Gothic line had been achieved more by infiltration tactics than by the set-piece attack; this method required special emphasis on three principles; Direction by Intention; the maintenance of Intercommunication and the frequent passing back of information and the necessity for Commanders to be well forward.



Image courtesy of the Maj Douglas Waugh
Description: Patrol of Humber & Heavy & Light Recce Vehicles
Date: Circa 1944

The CO also pointed out that the division might well have to break German defensive positions about Coriano and Monte Colombo to allow the armour to smash through into the Po valley. B and C Squadron, were to move to sites more accessible to the main road lest worsening weather should prevent a speedy move out of harbour.

As the 46th regiment looked forward on this day it also looked back: the 46th Division personnel wore oak leaves in their cap badges to mark the anniversary of the Salerno landings.

Orders to move come on the 10th with A Squadron having the task of protecting 138th brigades left flank. To do this 1 and 4 Troops were to relieve 2nd/5th Queens of 169 Brigade on high ground at Fameto at last light while the squadron formed a stop at the head of the nearby valley. Reaching the high ground as planned, the leading elements of A Squadron found it still occupied by the enemy; the Queens were on a knoll lower in the valley which became the troop position. This was subjected to considerable shelling and mortaring but with no casualties.



Image courtesy of the Maj Douglas Waugh
Description: Group shot of the Recce troop
Date Circa summer 1944

Over the next few days 46 Recce carried out holding operations, manned OP's sent out recce and contact patrols and suffered considerable shelling and mortaring which left five dead and many more wounded.

Some forward movement was made when the Germans abandoned Fameto and the ridge was occupied by the Lincolns.

By the evening of the 13th, B and C Squadrons were dug in on the II Tribbio-Farneto spur, securing 138 Brigades left flank and maintaining contact with 4th Indian Division.

As fill' positions were overlooked by German OPs on Points 311 and 402, any movement at all brought down mortars and shells; two of the regiment's 'fatalities were' incurred on the spur.

During the night of 13/14 September 2nd Camerons relieved 46 Recce which was pulled back into divisional reserve ready to take to its feet" for a prolonged infantry role to allow infantry battalion to be released for rest.

The regiment was not to take to its feet as C Squadron was back in action next day assisting units of the 128 Brigade and maintaining contact with 56th Division to the right.

Once again heavy shelling was endured and casualties sustained.
C Squadron assisted 6th Lincolns in capturing Monte Lupo on the 17th although the squadron's part was limited to the anti-tank battery firing on enemies OP's and machine-gun posts.



On the 19th September the regiment was given a recce role for a divisional advance as the Germans were withdrawing to a line from San Marino to Verucchio.

The regimental task was to recce the Domagnano-Borgo Maggiore-Monte Yentosa-Yerucchio road for 128 Brigade.

B Squadron advanced through open and undulating country towards Norgo Maggiore, the main town of the Republic of San Marino which being sited on a large rock feature was being used by German OP's.

As the leading patrols advanced down the road they came under small arms and anti tank fire from the town and a ridge to the west of their axis.

The second patrol commander's armoured car was hit by anti-tank fire and wireless put out of action though the crew were unhurt.

The leading patrol was last observed at the cross-roads coming under from point 433 and though Besa fire was heard for some time afterwards the patrol did not return and was reported missing at nightfall.

Squadron patrols established that Borgo Maggiore was held in strength with German infantry in houses supported by SP guns. Information passed back enabled an artillery bombardment to be brought down on the enemy positions by 172nd Field Regiment and 5th Medium Regiment; B Squadron also took seven prisoners. However, the enemy were still in the town when patrols went out next morning. Contact with 4th Indian Division brought the news that the Indians would attack Borgo Maggiore that afternoon and thus 46 Reece's operations were restricted to lifting mines and maintaining contact with the Indians who took the town as planned.

At midnight the weather broke with rain so heavy that off-road vehicular movement became almost impossible; the roads were unable to handle all the traffic being placed on them. Using the foul weather to best advantage, the Germans withdrew to the Marecchia River before dawn. Patrols from A Squadron nosed forward, taking some prisoners from 3 Company, 992 Grenadier Regiment, but meeting no opposition. Contact patrols were also out and, that afternoon, A Squadron led 5th Sherwood Foresters in an attack on Verucchio which was found to be unoccupied.

Heavy resistance was met on the morning of the 22nd when A Squadron, operating as infantry, crossed the Marecchia. Although the first wave of troops crossed the gravel riverbed unimpeded, the second wave was bombarded by heavy mortar and machine-gun fire, forcing the squadron to take cover in irrigation channels. When a self-propelled gun joined in progress became impossible; the squadron was pinned down for the entire day, withdrawing at dusk as 2nd/5th Leicester's crossed the river to continue the advance.

In the next phase of operations Allied forces pursued the slowly-retreating Germans to the Rubicon river.

Although 46 Reece was to advance as infantry within 46th Division, the regiment instead took over forward divisional positions.

C Squadron relieved 16th DLI of there positions, one of which was particularly close to the enemy; B Squadron relieved 5th Foresters on Point 160 and sent a fighting patrol forward to a spur where they found Germans occupying a house; in the ensuing skirmish two men of 6 Troop were killed.

On the morning of the 28th C Squadron's positions came under threat of counter-attack and B Squadron were mortared heavily. One C Squadron position, codenamed 'Jonson' faced German troops in another house only thirty yards away. 'Jonson' was held by the thirty men of 9 and 12 Troops and when a fierce counter-attack, at about company strength, supported by a Mark IV Special tank, was launched the defenders had little chance of holding out.



Photo courtesy of the Maj Douglas Waugh
Description: Recce car crews of B Squadron, possibly in Italy
Date: Circa 1944-45.



Nonetheless, they fought stubbornly against heavy odds. The house was blasted by the tank, grenades were fired into the ruins and German infantry worked round the flanks. The officer commanding 'Jonson' Lieutenant Talbot, was killed by a mortar bomb and the position was eventually surrounded. Twenty-two men were captured, although three were able to get away; another two wounded were treated by German medical orderlies and left in the house until it was retaken by British troops.

The loss of 'Jonson' meant the loss of the Il Poggetto spur but the Germans had suffered considerable casualties and advanced no further.

Heavy artillery and mortar fire was brought down on Il Poggetto but a recce patrol from C Squadron reported it still held by the Germans at 4.30 next morning.

The regiment continued to receive harassing fire from the enemy and there were also problems in supplying the squadrons as fords on the Rubicon became impassable; at one time B Squadron's rations could only be delivered by porters wading through three feet of water.

At 128 Brigade's request, extensive patrols were sent out on the last night of September to maintain contact with the enemy. One patrol task was to find out if Il Poggetto and Villa Ribano were still occupied by German troops. While the former was reported clear, a C Squadron patrol made contact at Villa Ribano:

The patrol had moved along the road from Il Poggetto without contact and 4 Troop had established a firm base at the road junction 707992 while Lieutenant Crack and Sergeant Fisk approached the house. They saw no enemy around it and found part of the house unoccupied.

They were in fact on the point of reporting it clear when Sergeant Fisk found a room full of Germans, some sleeping and others talking round a candle. One of the enemy opened fire with a machine-pistol and gave the alarm; sentries outside started firing rifles wildly in all directions and others rushed to fire machine-guns on fixed lines. Lieutenant Crack and Sergeant Fisk kept out of the way of the fire and at the same time used their own weapons to good effect in accounting for several of the enemy.

4 Troop however decided to withdraw through Il Poggetto back to the Squadron positions, and the enemy unfortunately took advantage of this move to send out their own fighting patrol which re-occupied Il Poggetto at approx. 0730 hrs.

No casualties were suffered by our own troops in this action, though during the day further casualties were sustained by A Squadron through heavy shelling on their area.

The new German position on Il Poggetto was shelled heavily as was Villa Ribano.

A & C Squadron patrol reported Il Poggetto clear at 11.20am; the wounded men left by left by the Germans two days earlier were then brought back.

At Villa Ribano there were still some Germans and a troop from C Squadron occupied a house there throughout the day.

During the afternoon came news that 2nd Hampshires were to pass through C Squadron after dark and that 46 Recce would be relieved of its front-line commitments by the 1st October.

The relief completed the regiment moved to a concentration area to reorganize in its normal role.

Greyhound armored cars were received for the scout troops who familiarized themselves with the new vehicles over the next week.

There was no return to operations until 8 October when A Squadron moved to protect 128 Brigade's right flank and B Squadron and C Squadron to help repel German attacks on 1st/4th Hampshire's.

Flank protection tasks continued over the next few days with the regiment moving to Canonica on the 10th to protect the divisional right flank. The move was difficult with bad going on the roads: on the 12th the second-in-command, Major Walmsley, was killed when his jeep hit a mine and 8 Troop patrol probing towards Calise also lost one dead and foul wounded.

On 15 October a recce patrol of a sergeant and four men of B Squadron with a REs' officer came under fire from a jam factory as they moved along the road to Calise.



Two troopers made their own way back, the sergeant and the sapper officer continued to Calisee to find the Germans in strength while the other pair of soldiers were reported missing.

Calisee was cleared that afternoon with 6 Troop, later joined by 5 Troop, assisting in the operation.

Further patrols were out: A Squadron found Germans at the Palazzo Rognoni ridge which was cleared by tanks from The Bays infantry from the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry and A Squadron.

Next day the regiment provided cover for sappers working on the bailey bridge until 2nd/4th KOYLI went forward that afternoon.

That bought another spell of intensive operations to an end as the regiment moved back to Serravalle the following day, remaining there until 23rd when moved north of Urbino.

On the divisional front Eighth Army was still moving forward which brought a new task for 46 Recce - providing carrier patrols to help sappers in route recces, mine clearance and 'special tasks.' Six patrols each of two carriers with a No 19 set and a dispatch rider, were assigned to support on 28 October.



Photo courtesy of the Maj Douglas Waugh
Description: Carrier Recce Troop in Italy
Date Circa 1944.

And a new principle of patrolling was also established: if a recce patrol reported an objective clear it was to remain in position while the rest of the troop moved forward to assist consolidation.

The road recce patrols left on 2 November and four days later A Squadron again undertook flank protection for '128 Brigade on the west ridge of Ravaldino while RHQ, A and B Squadrons moved up to take over 1,200 yards of a ridge overlooking the Rabbi river.



A Squadron reported a bridge intact at Fiumana while a German recce patrol was spotted on the Allied side of the Rabbi.

A Squadron was subsequently asked to simulate an attack on the bridge over the Rabbi to assist 128 Brigade attack.

Harassing fire from mortars, 75's and field guns was laid down on information from Italian partisans.

As the advance continued the regiment continued to provide recce patrols, contact patrols with the Polish Corps, and assisted in knocking out enemy positions.

From the 10th November traffic control duties were added, the road recce patrols under the sapper were still out thus giving 46 Recce probably its widest-ever range of duties.

That range was widened on the 21st when the SP Battery and the Mortar Troop joined the MMGs of 9th Manchesters in a harassing fire programme to support a 139 Brigade attack.

That night a fighting patrol of B Squadron, under Lieutenant J.F.Carver, approached a house at Casa Casina where they heard voices and movement. The patrol was unseen until it was virtually at the door of the house. Carver and some of his men rushed into the yard of the house and into a close-quarter battle with well dug-in German defenders. Firing machine-guns and throwing grenades Carver's group killed two Germans and wounded another two before withdrawing with no casualties to themselves.

On the night of 22/23 November 6 Troop captured Casa Casina, taking five prisoners and killing one other German.

The special skills of a reconnaissance regiment were called upon once again when a road recce party under Captain Doug Waugh was attached to divisional tactical HQ on the 25th to recce crossings of the Lamone River forward of the leading infantry.

No easy crossings were found and the party returned after two days.

Then, on the 28th, long range patrols were again out to recce the lateral roads between the Marzeno and Lamone Rivers and any possible vehicle routes to Brisighella.

The patrols, which were still operating on 30 November, found the going very bad: most work was done on foot and a 240-foot gap was reported in the bridge over the Lamone at Brisighella.



The attack over the Lamone involved 46 Recce's SP Battery which, under 169 Brigade, provided harassing fire in the Faenza area. A call for portage parties was cancelled and the bulk of the regiment was resting and carrying out maintenance at ForH in early December.



photo courtesy of the BTM 2986/E6

Description: The Regiments GMC M3 half tracks mounted with obsolete French WW1 vintage 75mm guns that had been bought by the USA at the end of WW1.

Major Douglas Waugh was responsible for these guns and reports whilst in Italy a number of the guns became unserviceable to damage and wear in action. Douglas did however establish that an Italian military museum possessed an example of one of these guns and unsuccessfully set about trying to obtain permission to obtain parts.

After a brief period of resistance from the appropriate authorities, an unsanctioned late night raid was undertaken and the desired parts acquired.

The long range recce patrols were still out as were A Squadron's traffic control parties which returned on 20 December. By then the regiment was at Montefiore where it ended the year. Early in January 46 Recce was withdrawn for operations in Greece: its part in the Italian campaign was over.

Soon after Christmas, in Feb 45, the Regiment moved to Greece where it assisted in preventing the outbreak of a full civil war between the ELAS (Ethnikòn Laikòs Apelevtherotikòn Sýndesmos or National Popular Liberation Army) and EAM (Ethnikòn Apelevtherotikòn Métopon or National Liberation Front).

Both parties remained heavily armed from the war and were reinforced by partisans returning from Yugoslavia in the north. On 4th December, war broke out between the two factions.

The recce corps assisted in assuring that Piraeus was secured but hard fighting in central Athens continued throughout December.

By the 31st December, the Archbishop Damaskinos was inducted Regent of Greece and by the middle of January 1945, after six weeks of hard fighting British forces were in control of all Attica.

A truce was signed on the 11th January, by which all ELAS forces had to withdraw from the neighbourhood of Athens, Salonika and Patras.

The threat of civil war loomed throughout 1945 until on the 18th June 45, the Greek parliament passed a security bill. This established new courts with authority to pass capital sentences for new crimes including membership in armed bands, prohibit public meetings and strikes, and gave police the power to arrest.

In the following Spring the 46th Regiment was en route back for the River Po Line when the enemy surrender came in Italy on May the 2nd.



Photo courtesy of the Maj Douglas Waugh
Description: Loading the 75mm guns and other vehicles onto railway flat cars at Ortona, Italy
Date Circa 1945.



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The 46th recce corps assisted in assuring that Corinth and Sparta was secured, but hard fighting in central Athens continued throughout December.



Photo courtesy of the Maj Douglas Waugh
Description: The Anti Tank Troop at Corinth.
Date: Circa March 1945.

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Following the truce, the regiment was ordered to undertake a torturous march during the night to disarm a band of ELAS rebels held up at Kalamata.



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Photo courtesy of the Maj Douglas Waugh
Description: Sir Antony Eden Inspects the Troops at Corinth.
Date: Circa April 1945.



Austria

Udine, Caporetta Pas, Villach, Klagenfort to meet the Russian Army at Judenberg.

Then Judenberg to Bleiburg to block the border in front of the Croat Nation who were resisting the extension of Yugoslavian rule under Tito.

EXPAND AS DATA BECOMES AVAILABLE



Story courtesy of BBC Peoples War

Contributed by Mr. Boardman on 08 April 2005

From Yorkshire to Germany - My experiences in Reconnaissance Corps.

I was called up on the 12/02/1942 at Scarborough to 63rd Reconnaissance Training Regiment at age 19 years.

Three months infantry and weapons training then 7 days leave. Then a further 3 months vehicle driving repair and maintenance training then 7 days leave.

On returning to Scarborough we were allocated to various Reconnaissance Regiments. I was sent with several others to an independent Recce Squadron at Orford in Suffolk. After some 8 weeks several of us were sent to the 46th Recce Regiment in Kent and I became a member of 6 troop, B Squadron in a village called Lyminge between Folkestone and Canterbury.

The regiment was based in the Lyminge area and after 3 weeks I was granted 7 days leave.

Shortly after returning from leave we moved to the Godalming area for further training.

In October 1942 I was granted 9 days embarkation leave and on the 10th January 1943 we sailed from Liverpool on the Liner Duchess of Bedford and arrived in Algiers on the 17th January 1943 and became part of the 1st Army in North Africa.

We moved up to the fighting area in late January and were involved in the fighting at various places in Tunisia until May 8th 1943, when the Germans surrendered.

We were rested for a while and were then sent back to Algiers and mistakenly thought that we were on our way home but it was not to be. We were moved back again to the Tunis area where we started training for the Salerno landing on September 9th, 1943.

The landing was "Hell on Earth" and a complete shambles for several days as Jerry tried to push us back in to the sea.

But we held on and eventually began our slow advance up Italy and by Christmas 1943 were in the Monte Casino area. In February 1944 we were withdrawn and found ourselves on board ship at Taranto on our way to Egypt and Palestine for a rest and further training. We returned to Italy in late July 1944 and rejoined the fighting a few miles north of Rome and later near Rimini on the east coast.

I was wounded at San Gernano on September 12th, 1944 and lost the use of my left arm for a while but after two operations the use gradually returned and after some 6 weeks I was pronounced fit for active service and rejoined my regiment.

In February 1945 we were once again at Taranto on our way to Greece where, after a few minor problems, the Greek resistance fighters were to lay down their arms.

We returned to Italy in April 1945 and after re-equipping (we had left our armoured vehicle in Greece) we were heading once again for the fighting area when suddenly we were told the war was over and we were instructed to go as fast as we could into Austria to keep the Russians as far to the east as possible.

We met the Russians at a place called Judenberg and eventually settled in a place called Koflak, some 25 miles from Graz. In October 1945 I was granted one month's leave and arrived home 3 years to the week since I left after embarkation leave in October 1942.

I returned to Austria and after our regiment was disbanded in November 1945 I was transferred to the 10th Royal Hussars in Graz and saw service with them in Austria and Germany.

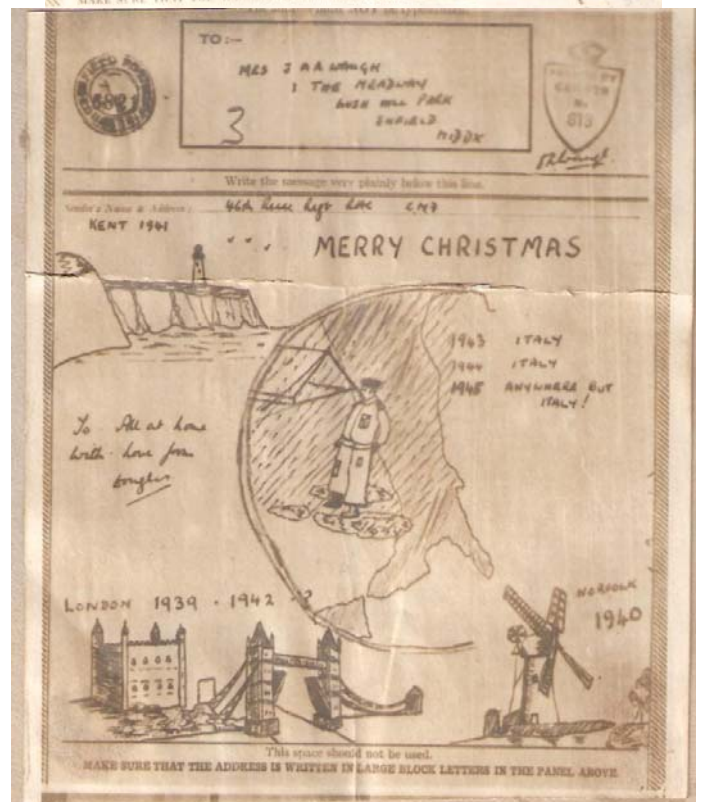
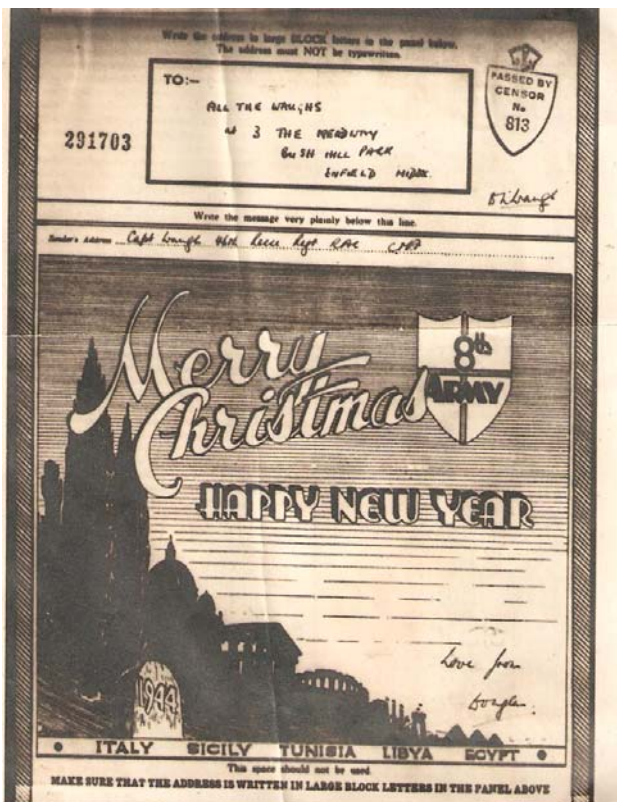
I was eventually demobbed in October 1946 but was officially still in the army until 27/2/1947.



Infantry Recce Corps
The Daimler Fighting Vehicles Project – Part D7f
www.daimler-fighting-vehicles.co.uk

During World War II, the Airgraph was developed to enable soldiers in the field to communicate more quickly and reliably with their family and friends at home. The sender would write their message on the message side of the form and submit it for processing. The form would be processed and a microfilm image created. A film strip with up to 10,000 airgraphs would then be sent via air to its destination. Once received, reduced size (about half-size) prints would be made and these sent to their destination in cover envelopes.

These examples shown were sent by Maj Douglas Waugh as his overseas service continued.





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