

NOTE

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Directorate of History
National Defence Headquarters
Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0K2

July 1986

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Reference Ordnance Survey: Quarter-Inch,
Sheet 12; One-Inch, Sheets 125,126,134,135.

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REPORT NO. 73.

HISTORICAL OFFICER,
CANADIAN MILITARY HEADQUARTERS



South Eastern Command Exercise "TIGER", 19-30 May 42.

1. This Report deals with the participation of 1 Cdn Corps in the important South Eastern Command exercise known by the code-name "TIGER", which took place from 19 to 30 May, 1942.
2. As indicated in Report No. 70, this exercise, set and controlled by H.Q. South Eastern Army, and involving protracted operations between a SUSSEX Army under H.Q. 1 Cdn Corps and a KENT Army under H.Q. 12 Corps, was the culmination of the training programme pursued by 1 Cdn Corps during the winter and spring season. It was one of the largest exercises yet participated in by Canadian forces in this country; in point of number of troops engaged it was probably second only to Home Forces Exercise "BUMPER" (cf. Report No. 49).
3. "TIGER" had a special significance as affording a practical test, not only of the general battleworthiness of the formations engaged and of the results of the training programme pursued in recent months, but also of the physical endurance of the troops, which it was specially designed to try to the utmost. It is probably safe to say that this was physically the most exacting and exhausting large-scale exercise in which the Canadian troops in Britain have yet engaged.
4. The exercise had a further significance in that it provided an experimental test of the "new model" organization for Armoured and Infantry Divisions, under which an Armoured Division consists basically of one Armoured Brigade, one Lorried Infantry Brigade, and a strengthened Support Group, while an Infantry Division consists of two Infantry Brigades and an Army Tank Brigade. This organization was confined in this exercise to the KENT Army, and was not used in Canadian formations; and it now appears that, while it is to be generally adopted in the British Army, divisions of the Canadian Army Overseas will not be so reorganized, for the present at least. This matter will be dealt with in subsequent Reports.
5. The writer had opportunities for personal observation of this exercise, being present in the area on 25-27 May. He paid a number of visits to Control, and also visited H.Qs. 1 Cdn Corps and 12 Corps, and saw everything possible of the actual contacts between the opposing forces.

GENERAL IDEA OF THE EXERCISE

6. For the purposes of "TIGER", KENT and SUSSEX were assumed to be independent hostile countries, separated by a boundary which was the inter-Corps boundary between 1 Cdn Corps and 12 Corps Districts (see Reports Nos. 58 and 72). Lying adjacent was a powerful but neutral state, SURREY, whose threats of intervention in the conflict were frequently utilized by the Director (Lieutenant-General B.L. MONTGOMERY, G.C.C.-in-C. South Eastern Command) for the purpose of influencing the course of the operations. It was largely due to the influence of SURREY that the participating formations covered so much ground during the exercise. The boundary between KENT and SURREY was the north-west boundary of 12 Corps District.

7. STRENGTH AND COMPOSITION OF OPPOSING FORCES. The forces available to SUSSEX and KENT differed materially in kind. The KENT force was very strong in armour, but weak in the air, in artillery and in infantry. SUSSEX, weak in armour, was much superior in all the other three. The relative strengths, as computed at Control for the exercise, were as follows :

In	<u>SUSSEX</u>	<u>KENT</u>
Infantry Brigades	10	5
Guns (Field & Medium)	424	192
Tanks	82/88	367
Aircraft	129	40

The writer was told that the KENT air was further weakened during the exercise by the withdrawal of a bomber squadron required for operations.

8. The major elements in the opposing Orders of Battle were as follows :

<u>SUSSEX</u>	<u>KENT</u>
H.Q. 1 Cdn Corps	H.Q. 12 Corps
1 Cdn Div	43 Div
1 Cdn Inf Bde	129 Inf Bde
2 Cdn Inf Bde	130 Inf Bde
3 Cdn Inf Bde	25 Army Tk Bde
3 Cdn Div	53 Div
7 Cdn Inf Bde	158 Inf Bde
8 Cdn Inf Bde	160 Inf Bde
9 Cdn Inf Bde	31 Army Tk Bde
3 (Br) Div	11 Armd Div
7 (Br) Inf Bde	29 Armd Bde
9 (Br) Inf Bde	159 Inf Bde
5 Cdn Inf Bde	12 Corps Tps (incl 2 Med Regt).
SUSSEX Bde (Br)	
1 Cdn Corps Tps incl 1 Cdn Army Tk Bde (less one Army Tk Bn). 2 Cdn Div Arty also under command.	

9. It will be noted that only some elements of 2 Cdn Div participated in "TIGER". The reason for this is that "unavoidable changes in naval arrangements" had made it necessary for the programme of Combined Operations training for formations of 2 Cdn Div and 1 Cdn Army Tk Bde (see Report No. 70) to begin about 20 May 42 if it was to be completed (Letter from H.Q. 1 Cdn Corps, Trg O-2-1, 12 May 42, C.M.H.Q. file 2/TRNG INSTRN/3). In consequence H.Q. 2 Cdn Div, 4 Cdn Inf Bde, 6 Cdn Inf Bde, and details of Engineer and administrative units left the Corps District for this special training on 18 May. 14 Cdn Army Tk Bn participated in this training and so missed "TIGER" also. (On these movements, see General Report for 1 Cdn Corps for week ending 23 May 42). 3 (Br) Div, less one brigade, replaced 2 Cdn Div in the Order of Battle of 1 Cdn Corps for "TIGER", and took 5 Cdn Inf Bde under command.

10. 1 Cdn Corps was commanded by Lieut.-General CRERAR, and 12 Corps by Lieut.-General J.A.H. GAMMELL, C.B., D.S.O., M.C. 3 (Br) Div is commanded by Major-General E.C. HAYES.

11. The exercise lasted officially from 2400 hrs on 19 May until 30 May, and personnel of either SUSSEX or KENT armies found in enemy territory were liable to capture from the beginning. The situation at the commencement of the exercise was that SUSSEX and KENT were mobilizing their forces in anticipation of hostilities; but no actual overt act had yet taken place, and the two armies were well within their own frontiers.

BRIEF NARRATIVE OF THE EXERCISE

12. The SUSSEX Army concentrated during 19-23 May, with 1 Cdn Div in the area roughly WIVELSFIELD GREEN (7939) - BARCOMBE (8533); 3 Cdn Div immediately to the north in the area HAYWARDS HEATH - FLETCHING (8642); 1 Cdn Army Tk Bde in the area WARNINGLID (6845) - BURGESS HILL; Corps Artillery in the area CRAWLEY - CUCKFIELD (7444); one brigade group of 3 (Br) Div in the WEST HOATHLEY area, and one about CROWBOROUGH, with 5 Cdn Inf Bde near the latter around ROTHERFIELD (9948). The Sussex Brigade (three British Infantry battalions with attached troops) was between HARTFIELD (9154) and GROOMBRIDGE (9656); while on his opposite (right) flank, immediately south of 1 Cdn Div, General CRERAR concentrated a mobile force composed of one reconnaissance Regt, one A. Tk Regt, and one machine-gun battalion. (1 Cdn Corps Operation Order No. 1, Exercise "TIGER", 10 May 42).

13. General CRERAR's plan was to advance upon the commencement of hostilities, and upon gaining contact with the enemy to fight a withdrawing battle, taking toll of the superior KENT armour until he had so reduced it as to permit of offensive action being undertaken. He then proposed to hold with his left and strike with his right, and, pivoting on his left, to advance into KENT.

14. Hostilities being authorized beginning 25 May, General CRERAR on 22 May issued his Operation Order No 2, detailing the action to be taken during the opening phase of operations. This Order provided for an advance

beginning at 0001 hours of 25 May. It was to be made by bounds in three phases, to successive anti-panzer positions. The first objective was a "MONTREAL" line, HORAM (0136) - HEATHFIELD (0239) - MAYFIELD (0249). The second objective was a "QUEBEC" line, BURWASH (1043) - WITHEREYDEN (086452) - WADHURST HALL (0747) - BESTBEECH HILL (0550) - EARLY FM (0351). The third phase involved an advance by reserve brigade groups to a "HALIFAX" line, HAWKHURST (1949) - CRANBROOK STA (1953) - LAMBERSBURST (1155). Provision had already been made in Operation Order No. 1 for the preparation of a complete belt of demolitions to cover the left flank of this advance.

15. This advance duly took place on 25 May, and the second objective, the "QUEBEC" line, was made good. Here or hereabouts contact was made with advancing KENT forces and the SUSSEX advance was suspended. The KENT forces were deployed with 53 Div on the right and 43 Div on the left, while the SUSSEX Army, in accordance with the concentration arrangements above described, had 1 Cdn Div on the right, 3 Cdn Div in the centre and 3 (Br) Div on the left, with the SUSSEX Bde on the extreme left flank. The KENT commander kept 11 Arm Div in reserve well back. It had been intended originally to employ this formation for a thrust in the vicinity of TUNBRIDGE WELLS, but strong resistance presented by the SUSSEX Bde west and south-west of that town led to the abandonment of this plan. 2 Cdn Inf Bde was threatened with encirclement in the BURWASH area in the afternoon of 25 May, but permission to withdraw previous to a general withdrawal was refused by H.Q. 1 Cdn Corps.

16. At 1815 hrs on 25 May, H.Q. 1 Cdn Corps issued Operation Order No. 3. In accordance with General CRERAR's original plan, this provided for withdrawal during the night to the "MONTREAL" position, extending from HORAM on the right to BLACKHAM (9357) on the left. The "QUEBEC" line was to be finally abandoned at 0200 hrs on 26 May.

17. This withdrawal was successfully executed according to plan. During the night of 25/26 May H.Q. 1 Cdn Corps which had been established at PAXHILL PARK near LINDFIELD, returned to its normal "peacetime" position at WAKEHURST PLACE and WORTH PRIORY.

18. During 26 May there was considerable contact with the advancing KENT forces along the MONTREAL line. The writer heard from an artillery umpire at TOWN ROW near ROTHERFIELD that a dangerous KENT attack in this area in the early morning was broken up by a heavy concentration of SUSSEX artillery fire. Some 1900 rounds were fired, and although most of them were in wrong targets - e.g., crossroads which the KENT tank columns had already passed - enough were accurate to ensure success. During the day KENT Churchill tanks in considerable numbers were seen operating in this vicinity.

19. General CRERAR's plan had been not to continue his withdrawal beyond the general line EAST GRINSTEAD - NEWHAVEN. Actually, he had not retired nearly so far, and was already preparing for counter-offensive action (during 26 May 1 Cdn Army Tk Bde was brought up from the rear to a position near CROSS IN HAND, 9941), when Control

