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

July 1986

REPORT NO. 108

HISTORICAL SECTION

CANADIAN MILITARY HEADQUARTERS

26 Nov 49

Operation "JUBILEE": The Raid on Dieppe, 19 Aug 42
PART II: The Execution of the Operation.
Section 2: The Attack on the Main Beaches

AMENDMENT NO. 1

1. This amendment incorporates certain information which has come to light since this Report was originally drafted in 1943.

ACTION OF TANKS ASHORE

2. With reference to paras 75-140 of this Report, there has been considerable further discussion and investigation since it was written.

3. Lt-Col R.R. Labatt, who commanded the R.H.L.I. in the operation, twice visited Ottawa in 1945, after his repatriation to Canada following the end of hostilities, and commented upon this and other Reports. Lt-Col Labatt asserted strongly that only three tanks reached the Dieppe Esplanade at any time during the operation ("I had the whole esplanade under observation and saw only a total of 3 Tanks there") ("Comments by Lt.-Col. Labatt and Major Lazier", 26 Nov 45; original on H.Q. 1451-603/R5, copy on C.M.H.Q. file 24/Dieppe/1).

4. As a result of Lt-Col Labatt's assertions, letters were written to former officers of 14 Cdn Army Tk Regt who were in action at Dieppe. As a result, statements were obtained from Capt (Lt in 1942) Edwin Bennett and Lt A.L. Breithaupt; these are on file (H.Q. 1451-202/14, copies on C.M.H.Q. file 24/Dieppe/1) and support the evidence of Major C.E. Page summarized in this Report. Lt Breithaupt wrote (10 Dec 45), "As far as I can recollect, 13 or 15 tanks crossed the sea wall and reached the Esplanade... Most of these tanks with the exception of the few that were knocked out on the Esplanade, one of which was mine, "Betty", did return to the beach on the order of withdrawal..." Mr. Breithaupt lists a number of tanks known to have crossed the wall, and sums up, "This accounts for ten tanks known to have been on the Esplanade and there were several others." Mr. Breithaupt refers independently to an incident at Oflag VII B mentioned by Major Page: "Major Page had a meeting for all tank officers at which he took down information regarding each individual troop".

5. Capt Bennett, writing on 3 Dec 45, describes in detail the operations of his own troop of tanks, which landed from L.C.T. 7 in the second flight. This troop evidently landed on White Beach, and after moving some distance to the left and finding that the sea-wall was impassable because of the ditch in front of it, turned about and travelled the length of the beach to the vicinity of the Casino, where Capt Bennett's own tank, evidently followed by the other two of his troop, crossed the wall. Many details are given. Capt Bennett writes, "I do know that our Troop 10, "B" Squadron was the first over the wall by the Casino".

6. Capt Bennett's evidence appears to establish definitely the number of tanks which crossed the wall. As noted in para 124 of this Report, Major Page, as a result of the conference at Oflag VII B mentioned above, was able to list 13 tanks which certainly crossed the wall. He believed that two others, "Beefy" and "Bloody", also crossed, but he was not certain of this point. Capt Bennett's evidence establishes that they did cross, for they were in his troop. He states that these two tanks returned from the Esplanade to the beach; his own had been damaged and was left on the upper level. Capt Bennett writes, "In Germany I was in a different camp than the other officers from my regiment". This presumably accounts for Major Page's uncertainty concerning these two tanks. It would appear that we can now say definitely that 15 tanks crossed the sea-wall.

7. The evidence on this point is clearly overwhelming. Lt-Col Labatt undoubtedly believes that only three tanks did reach the Esplanade, but the best evidence on the action of the tanks is that of the men who manned them.

PENETRATION INTO DIEPPE FROM
RED AND WHITE BEACHES

8. More evidence is now available than formerly concerning the various small parties which entered Dieppe on foot during the operation.

9. With reference to paras 52-3, it appears that we must now conclude that the penetration by Lt L.C. Bell's party did not take place. Lt-Col Labatt (who must be assumed to be a good witness on matters connected with his own unit) wrote in connection with these paragraphs, "There is no evidence to support this. It is thought that Lt L.C. Bell was killed before reaching the town proper. He was not seen by anyone who would have known him either in the Casino or in the town." (Comment by Lt-Col Labatt, as above, para 3.)

10. With reference to paras 164-5, it is now clear also that the reported penetration into the town of a party of Les Fusiliers Mont-Royal under Capt G. Vandelaac did not take place. When questioned on this

subject, Capt Vandelaac testified that not only did he not get into the town himself, but he believed that no other member of his company did so, and indeed that no one at all got into Dieppe except Lt Scott of the Essex Scottish (Memorandum of interview with Major G. Vandelaac by Capt J.H.J. Gauthier, 8 Nov 46). This however does not necessarily invalidate the story told by Sgt Dubuc (paras 161-3), for the latter returned to England, whereas Capt Vandelaac became a prisoner and probably would not have known about Dubuc's party. The position with respect to Sgt Dubuc would seem to remain as stated in para 163: it seems likely that he got into the town, although his story in its details may contain some element of embroidery. It may be noted that Lt-Col Labatt considered his story "absolutely preposterous from beginning to end", but this officer could scarcely have any knowledge of the matter.

11. The penetration by C.S.M. Stapleton's party of the Essex Scottish (paras 65-7) is of course well authenticated. It was also reported that another party of the Essex Scottish, led by "Lt Bill Scott" got into the town (letter by Lt J.E.R. Wood, R.C.E., 18 Dec 45, C.M.H.Q. file 24/Dieppe/1; see also memorandum of evidence of Major Vandelaac, above, para 10). This matter was investigated, and a letter from Lt Scott himself seems to leave no doubt that he never got beyond the Esplanade; he describes how he and three men, late in the morning, crawled ("as much for safety, as anything I guess") along a shallow trench which "brought us out at the first street on the town side of the esplanade [presumably the Boulevard de Verdun] where we were a short time later captured" (letter to Lt-Col Jasperson, original on H.Q. 1451-603/E2).

MESSAGES SENT BY BRIGADIER SOUTHAM

12. A memorandum by Major G.M. Rolfe, D.S.O., R.C. Sigs, the senior Signals officer who landed, describes the nature of the communications made use of by Brig Southam. Brig Southam passed his messages to Force Headquarters through a No. 19 wireless set in Major Rolfe's scout car "Hunter". Major Rolfe states that he saw Brig Southam on the beach "about 0630 hrs" and that Brig Southam "spent the remainder of the operation in the vicinity of my scout car". This car was "slightly to the west of the tobacco factory". (Memorandum, 11 Feb 46, H.Q. 1451-202/14.)

13. With reference to para 261, Major Rolfe writes:

Brig. Southam spoke only twice on the air in person during the operation. These two transmissions covering a contact with Green beach shortly after landing and the message detailed at 1243 hrs giving sitrep on White and Red beaches and commending Lt. Millar. All other transmissions and reports were given by me using code name "Bill".

I take no responsibility for the transmissions at 1307 hrs because we had no hope of evacuation.

HONOURS AND AWARDS

14. One additional major award has been made since this Report was written. H/Capt J.W. Foote, who is referred to in para 187, was awarded the Victoria Cross after the end of hostilities (CARO No. 6410, dated 28 Feb 46).

15. It should also be noted, with reference to paras 65-7, that C.S.M. Stapleton was awarded the D.C.M. after his repatriation (CARO No. 6377, dated 11 Feb 46).

C.S.

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REPORT NO. 108

HISTORICAL OFFICER

CANADIAN MILITARY HEADQUARTERS

Operation "JUBILEE" : The Raid on Dieppe,
19 Aug 48

Part II : The Execution of the Operation.
Section 2 : The Attack on the Main Beaches.

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