

‘Beauman’ Division ⁽¹⁾

Headquarters, Beauman Division

‘A’ Infantry Brigade ⁽²⁾

Headquarters, ‘A’ Infantry Brigade & Signal Section

4th Bn. The Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment)

1st/5th Bn. The Sherwood Forester (Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Regiment)

4th Bn. The Border Regiment ⁽³⁾

‘D’ Machine Gun Company

‘B’ Infantry Brigade ⁽⁴⁾

Headquarters, ‘B’ Infantry Brigade & Signal Section

‘A’ Battalion

‘B’ Battalion

‘C’ Battalion

‘Z’ Anti-Tank Company

‘C’ Infantry Brigade ⁽⁵⁾

Headquarters, ‘C’ Infantry Brigade & Signal Section

‘P’ Battalion

‘Q’ Battalion

‘R’ Battalion

‘S’ Battalion

Divisional Troops

2nd/4th Bn. The King’s Own Yorkshire Light Infantry ⁽⁶⁾

2nd/6th Bn. The Duke of Wellington’s Regiment (West Riding) ⁽⁶⁾

Symes Battalion ⁽⁷⁾

‘Y’ Field Battery, Royal Artillery ⁽⁸⁾

‘E’ Anti-Tank Regiment, Royal Artillery ⁽⁸⁾

212th (North Midland) Army Troops Company, Royal Engineers

218th (1st London) Army Troops Company, Royal Engineers

271st Field Company, Royal Engineers

291st Army Troops Company, Royal Engineers

670th Artisan Works Company, Royal Engineers

12th Divisional Signals, Royal Corps of Signals

NOTES:

1. As the German troops cut through France in May 1940, they spilt the operational formations of the British Expeditionary Force (B.E.F.) from its Lines of Communication (L.o.C.). The L.o.C. was divided into two districts. The Northern District was under the command of Brigadier (Acting) Archibald Bentley BEAUMAN, D.S.O., O.B.E., retired pay (Reserve of Officers), who had his headquarters at Rouen. On 18 May 1940, BEAUMAN was ordered to form a force to defend the Rouen area. An ad hoc formation called 'Beau Force' was put together with three Territorial Army battalions employed on L.o.C. duties in the area. A second brigade strength formation was raised from troops stationed at reinforcement depots in France. This was called 'Vic Force' after its commander, Lieutenant Colonel VICARY. A third brigade strength formation was formed by amalgamating several Groups of the Auxiliary Military Pioneer Corps under Lieutenant Colonel L. W. DIGGLE, M.C.. On 29 May 1940, these three formations were combined to form the 'Beauman Division', with Brigadier BEAUMAN being promoted to the rank of Acting Major General to command the divisional sized formation. The division deployed along the line of the River Seine and River Andelles around Paris and Rouen. Between 5 and 15 June, the division faced sustained enemy attacks and eventually fell back. Most of the division's units made for Cherbourg, from where they were evacuated on or about 16 June. On arrival back in the U.K., the division dispersed. Major General BEAUMAN relinquished command on 21 July.
2. This brigade was the original 'Beau Force'. On 4 May 1940, the headquarters of the 25th Infantry Brigade came under command of the 5th Infantry Division in France. At this time, the three existing units in the brigade came under command of H.Q., Lines of Communication, B.E.F.. These three battalions comprised 'Beau Force'. It was retitled Number 2 Lines of Communication Brigade, then 'X' Brigade and then 'A' Brigade. The three constituent battalions were formerly under command of the 25th Infantry Brigade, having been deployed to France specifically for Lines of Communication duties. . Brigadier (Acting) Michael Arthur GREEN, O.B.E., M.C. commanded 'A' Brigade with effect from 27 May 1940. The brigade formed a medium machine gun company with men from the No. 5 Infantry Base Depot. In addition, there was a carrier platoon under brigade command. On 9 June, the brigade was sent north to reinforce the 51st (Highland) Infantry Division. It was sent back to guard the lines of communication to Le Havre (with the exception of the 2/7th Duke of Wellington's Regiment (see below)), from where it was evacuated. The brigade was formally disbanded on 18 July 1940 back in the U.K.
3. On 18 May 1940, this battalion was detached to Rouen where it joined No. 5 Reserve Motor Transport Company, R.A.S.C., and became a motorised battalion. On 23 May, it was ordered to join the 2nd Armoured Brigade near Amiens. The battalion took part in the abortive attack on Abbeville and was then used to protect the right flank of the 51st Infantry Division. 'D' Company was deployed to guard the bridge over the River Bresle at Incheville, which it successfully held for six days until overwhelmed. The rest of the battalion fell back to Le Havre, from where it was evacuated to Cherbourg. On 16 June, it was ordered forward again, but was then diverted to Brest. It sailed from Brest on 17 June to return to Southampton. The 4th Bn. The Border Regiment was replaced in 'A' Brigade by the:
2nd/7th Bn. The Duke of Wellington's Regiment (West Riding)

This battalion had been part of the 137th Infantry Brigade of the 46th Infantry Division. It was cut off from the main division when enemy forces cut through northern France. When the rest of the brigade moved back towards Le Havre, this battalion did not do so and ended up in the perimeter around St. Valery-en-Caux. As it was at the eastern end, near Veules-les-Roses, some men were evacuated successfully from the beaches back to the U.K.

4. Formed by consolidating various ad hoc units, this brigade was raised from personnel based at depots and reinforcement camps in France. Brigadier KENT-LEMON commanded the brigade. ‘A’ Battalion was previously Newcombe’s Rifles (and before that Ray’s Rifles), with ‘B’ Battalion formerly Davies’ Rifles and ‘C’ Battalion were Merry’s Rifles. Other ad hoc units, namely Perowne’s Rifle Battalion and Waite’s Rifle Battalion were broken up and troops distributed amongst the remaining units. The brigade formed an anti-tank company, known as ‘Z’ Company, equipped with two, 2 pounder and two 25 mm anti-tank guns. Each of the three rifle battalions comprised a small headquarters, five rifle companies and a mortar troop of two, 3” mortars. Each platoon was equipped with one Boyes anti-tank rifle and one Bren light machine gun. Perowne’s Rifle comprised about three-hundred men of the Royal Engineers. This was absorbed by Newcombe’s Rifles (also spelt ‘Newcomb’s’) into a unit of about eight-hundred men from thirty-three different units. They were deployed along the line of the River Bethune and later between the Seine and River Somme. Only twenty-two officers and three-hundred and ten other ranks made it back to the U.K. from Newcombe’s Rifles.
5. Formed by units of the Auxiliary Military Pioneer Corps (A.M.P.C.), this brigade was first called ‘Dig Force’ after its commanding officer, Lieutenant Colonel L. W. DIGGLE, M.C.. ‘A’ Battalion was formed with men from Numbers 3, 10, 18 and 28 A.M.P.C. Companies that were based in the Rennes Sub-Area. Lieutenant Colonel F. G. BRITTOROUS commanded the battalion. ‘B’ Battalion (Lieutenant Colonel C. PEPYS, D.S.O., M.C.) comprised men of 5 Company, A.M.P.C., 21 Company, A.M.P.C., 111 Company, A.M.P.C. and a composite company. These companies had been based in the Nantes Sub-Area. ‘C’ Battalion (Lieutenant Colonel C. J. FISHER, D.S.O.) was formed by 4 Company, A.M.P.C., 13 Company, A.M.P.C., 113 Company, A.M.P.C., also from the Nantes Sub-Area. When the brigade was absorbed into the Beauman Division, the three battalions were retitled as ‘P’, ‘Q’ and ‘R’ Battalions. An additional battalion formed from General Base Depot troops entitled ‘S’ Battalion came under command on 15 June. These battalions fought on the front line along the River Andelles between 5 and 15 June. Then they fell back to Brest, from where the survivors were evacuated.
6. These two battalions were Territorial Army units under command of the 46th Infantry Division. This division deployed to France on training and labour duties. They were cut off from the main division by the German advance through northern France, so on 6 June 1940, they were placed under command of this division.
7. This ad-hoc unit was formed in late May 1940 and deployed on the front line less than a week later. It appears it remained as a unit until the division dispersed.
8. These two units of the Royal Artillery were formed by reinforcement depots. ‘E’ Anti-Tank Regiment was equipped with twelve (later fourteen), 2 pounder anti-tank guns and was organised into two batteries. ‘X’ Field Battery was equipped with 18 pounder field guns.

SOURCES:

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