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A CONCISE HISTORY OF:

30th INFANTRY BRIGADE (DEFENCE OF CALAIS)

CHAPTER 2

Chapter 2 of the concise history of the 30th Infantry Brigade during the Second World War in 1940. The brigade defended the French town of Calais against the German forces in May 1940, where it was captured. It was not reformed.

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A Concise History of the 30th Infantry Brigade and the Defence of Calais
Chapter 2. Thursday 23 May – The Arrival of the 30th Infantry Brigade

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2 – Thursday, 23 May 1940 – Arrival 30th Infantry Brigade.

The 30th Infantry Brigade was raised on 24 April 1940 in the United Kingdom. It was initially under command of the 1st Armoured Brigade, from which the two constituent battalions transferred. With the fast-changing situation in 1940, on 16 May 1940 the brigade transferred to the 55th Infantry Division, and then on 22 May 1940 it came under direct War Office control. Based in and around Bury St. Edmunds, with the troops living under canvas, it deployed on coast defence duties. However, the War Office identified it to be a reserve force in the operation for the capture of Trondheim, which was abandoned as too risky.

The commanding officer of the brigade was Brigadier Claude NICHOLSON, *p.s.c.*, who de facto became the Senior British Officer in Calais. Claude NICHOLSON was born on 2 July 1898; being commissioned in the 16th Lancers during the Great War on 19 July 1916. He served in France and Belgium during the war. NICHOLSON became the Adjutant of the 16th Lancers on 1 June 1921, holding the rank of Captain. The regiment was then serving in India, and on 9 September 1922 it merged with the 5th Royal Irish Lancers to form the 16th/5th Lancers, with NICHOLSON remaining the Adjutant of the new regiment. In 1923, the regiment moved to Egypt, returning to the United Kingdom in 1926. In 1928, NICHOLSON attended the Staff College and then held a series of staff appointments, including a period as an instructor at the Staff College. In February 1938, NICHOLSON was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel and assumed command of the 16th/5th Lancers. He was promoted to the rank of Colonel in March 1940, but only a month later on 22 April 1940 he was promoted to the rank of Acting Brigadier and assumed command of the new brigade.

NICHOLSON's Brigade Major was Captain Dennis Edmund Blacquiers TALBOT, R.W.K., *s.c.*. A Regular Army officer in the Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment, he was responsible for all the staff work at brigade headquarters, including the initiation of plans. The brigade's Staff Captain was 725 Major John Henry COXWELL-ROGERS, 3rd Dragoon Guards. He was a Regular Army officer in the 3rd Carabiniers (Prince of Wales's Dragoon Guards). The Brigade Signal Officer was 51464 Captain F. R. B. BUCKNALL, from the Royal Signals, and the Brigade Ordnance Mechanical Engineer was 95853 Lieutenant Albert John PERKINS. Two other officers on the staff of the brigade were 18403 Major George Douglas HILL, 7th Hussars, and Major Ronnie LITTLEDALE who until recently had been commanding officer of 'A' Company of the 2nd Bn. The K.R.R.C.

The two battalions allocated to the brigade from the 1st Armoured Division were:

- 2nd Bn. The King's Royal Rifle Corps,
- 1st Bn. The Rifle Brigade (Prince Consort's Own).

Both battalions were pre-war Regular Army units organised as motor battalions. These battalions were intended to be part of a support group of an armoured division and to operate in conjunction with the armoured regiments of that division. The establishment of the battalions allowed for twenty-five officers and seven-hundred and sixty-five other ranks.

The battalion headquarters comprised the commanding officer, second-in-command, adjutant, and two subalterns. The headquarter company comprised a signals platoon, and an administrative and transport platoon. The former was commanded by a subaltern, the latter by the quarter-master who had a subaltern as transport officer.

There were four rifle companies in the battalion, each composed of four officers, three warrant officers and one-hundred and sixty-two other ranks. Majors commanded three of the companies, with the fourth commanded by a Captain. One of the motor platoons was commanded by a subaltern, the other two having Warrant Officers Class III (Platoon Serjeant-Majors) in command.

Each battalion was supposed to be issued with one-hundred and sixty vehicles, the main truck used by the battalion being the 15 cwt, four wheeled, general service. Each scout platoon had eleven Universal carriers and two scout cars on strength. In addition, each battalion had fifty-seven motorcycles. The main weapon was the 0.303" Lee Enfield rifle, of which the battalion had five-hundred and forty-eight. There were fifty 0.55" Boyes anti-tank rifles and thirty-six 0.303 Bren light machine guns, and twelve 2" mortars. Each scout carrier carried a Bren gun and Boyes anti-tank rifle and two Lee Enfield rifles.

The senior officers of the 2nd Bn. The King's Royal Rifle Corps (also known as the 60th Rifles) on their deployment to Calais were:

Commanding Officer	– Lieutenant Colonel (Temporary) Euan Alfred Bews MILLER, M.C., <i>p.s.c.</i> ,
Second-in-command	– Major O. S. OWEN,
Headquarter Company	– Captain E. R. T. DUNCANSON,
'A' Company	– Major F. L. TROTTER, (Reserve of Officers, T.A.),
'B' Company	– Major J. S. POOLE, D.S.O., O.B.E., M.C. (Captain, Reserve of Officers),
'C' Company	– Captain M. A. JOHNSON,
'D' Company	– Major, The Lord CROMWELL, M.C. (Reserve of Officers).

The commanding officer of the battalion, forty-two-year-old Lieutenant Colonel Euan MILLER, was a Regular Army officer in the King's Royal Rifle Corps. He had been commissioned into the regiment on 17 April 1915, serving in France and Belgium; Serbia and Greek Macedonia during the First World War. He qualified as a staff officer having attended the Staff College at Camberley in 1928. He then served in a succession of staff appointments, including a period as an instructor at the Staff College. At the outbreak of the Second World War, MILLER was promoted to the rank of Acting Lieutenant Colonel on 3 September 1939 on being appointed a General Staff Officer 1st Grade with the British Expeditionary Force. He assumed command of the battalion on 3 January 1940.

A detailed list of officers of the battalion during the Defence of Calais is shown at Appendix 'B'.

The 1st Battalion, The Rifle Brigade (Prince Consort's Own) was a Regular Army battalion. It had become a motor battalion in 1938, and with the 2nd Bn. K.R.R.C. formed the infantry component of the 1st Armoured Division when it was formed.

The officers in the battalion when it deployed to Calais are shown on Page 11 and 12, with further details of the officers of the battalion who served in the Defence of Calais shown at Appendix 'C'. The commanding officer of the battalion was forty-four-year-old Lieutenant Colonel Chandos Benedict Arden HOSKYNS. He was born on 15 September 1895, the son of the Venerable Benedict George HOSKYNS, M.A., who was at one time the Archdeacon of Chichester. His mother was Dora Katherine HOSKYNS (nee FRANKLYN). HOSKYNS was commissioned in the Rifle Brigade with the rank of Second Lieutenant on 15 August 1915, at the outbreak of the Great War. During the Great War, he served in France and Belgium from November 1914 until September 1915. He was seconded to the Machine Gun Corps in March 1916, and later served in Macedonia and Serbia from July 1916 until the end of the war. He was wounded during the war and Mentioned in Despatches on 11 June 1918. HOSKYNS ended the war as a Temporary Major in the Machine Gun Corps, but on 27 February 1919, he reverted to his substantive rank of Captain and returned to the Rifle Brigade. He spent two years as an Adjutant of a Territorial Army battalion, and then four years as Assistant Military Secretary on Malta. HOSKYNS was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel and assumed command of the battalion on 27 August 1938.

Apart from the two infantry battalions that arrived at Calais, the 229th Anti-Tank Battery, Royal Artillery (from the 58th (Duke of Wellington's) Anti-Tank Regiment) also landed with the 30th Infantry Brigade. This battery was a Territorial Army unit under the command of 40416 Captain H. F. R. WOODLEY. It was equipped with 2 pounder anti-tank guns.

The 2nd Bn. The King's Royal Rifle Corps, also known as the 60th Rifles, was based at Bhurtpore Barracks at Tidworth on Salisbury Plain at the outbreak of the Second World War. Upon mobilisation, the battalion closed down its barracks at Tidworth and prepared to move to billets in Dorset. When the battalion moved to Dorset, it was desperately short of vehicles, which was not a good state of affairs for a motorised unit. The move could be completed only by using the officer's personal cars and by hiring in civilian vehicles. During the autumn, the battalion continued training and preparations for the eventual move to France. The unit had a high reputation for marksmanship, which it shared with the sister battalion of the Rifle Brigade. As the armoured regiments were not equipped with tanks yet, the two infantry battalions could only undertake infantry training, route marches, map reading and shooting on the ranges back at Tidworth.

Shortly after the brigade was formed officially, it was ordered to move from Dorset to Essex. On their arrival, the two battalions set about preparing defences on the beaches against possible invasion. After preparing some beach defences, the two battalions concentrated in Suffolk to act as a mobile reserve for Suffolk and Essex in case of any enemy threat. The 1st Bn. The Rifle Brigade took up residence in and around Needham Market in Suffolk, while the 2nd Bn. The K.R.R.C. found in a tented camp near Bury St. Edmunds.

While they were stationed in East Anglia, the scout platoons of the two battalions received eleven Universal carriers each, so training began immediately. Meanwhile, German forces had invaded the Netherlands, Belgium and attacked France, but the men of the 30th Infantry Brigade were able to spend their off-duty time sunbathing and swimming in the warm late spring of 1940.

The War Office ordered the 30th Infantry Brigade overseas on Tuesday, 21 May 1940, and the two battalions quickly prepared to leave Essex. The 2nd Bn. K.R.R.C. travelled in two columns, one wheeled the other tracked, on the main road to London. Due to a confusion in orders, some vehicles travelled without their lights switched on, making the journey potentially hazardous. As they approached London, it began to rain, gently at first but then getting heavier. Soon everyone and everything was soaked, but they kept on going. The columns took the North Circular road around London, stopping at a petrol station to refuel where hot tea was served, much to the pleasure of the soldiers. Proceeding onwards from London, the columns travelled via Staines, Egham, Camberley, Basingstoke, Winchester to Southampton, arriving on the morning of 22 May.

On Tuesday, 21 May 1940, the 1st Bn. The Rifle Brigade were dispersed in several villages in Suffolk. They spent the day constructing roadblocks in anticipation of a possible German invasion, but then at 19.00 hours, they were ordered to move to Southampton immediately. The battalion was on its way at 23.15 hours, in the pouring rain, and they arrived at Southampton at midday on 22 May. The men received a scratch meal, and the vehicles were taken directly to the docks. At about 14.00 hours, the battalion marched in hot sunny weather to the docks, passing the surreal scene of a cricket match under way, a typical scene of peaceful England, as they were off to war.

Before leaving England, Brigadier NICHOLSON went with his Brigade Major, Captain Dennis TALBOT, to visit Dover Castle where Lieutenant General BROWNRIGG was now located. The situation was still confused, and BROWNRIGG added little to assist NICHOLSON, but it was clear he was still thinking of a battle outside Calais to relieve Boulogne.

The two battalions of the 30th Infantry Brigade moved to the docks at Southampton, to be met by the embarkation staff. The sense of their foreboding increased when they were told that few troops were going to France, but that many were expected back from France shortly. One serjeant major told Lieutenant DAVIES-SCOURFIELD that 'his regiment was heading the wrong way'. The 2nd Bn. K.R.R.C. embarked on the 'Royal Daffodil', with the 1st Bn. The Rifle Brigade embarking on the 'Archangel'. Brigadier NICHOLSON and his staff joined the Rifle Brigade aboard the 'Archangel', with two other ships (the 'Kohistan' and the 'City of Canterbury') carrying the brigade's vehicles, the convoy set sail for Calais their destiny escorted by a Royal Navy destroyer.

The soldiers from the two battalions found Calais bearing the scars of war. Most buildings had lost their windows, broken glass lying around everywhere. There were several bomb craters and various bomb damage. Piles of abandoned kit and equipment lay everywhere. In addition, soldiers and R.A.F. ground staff stood and sat in small and large groups around the town.

On NICHOLSON's arrival at about 13.00 hours, he disembarked straight away and went to find Colonel HOLLAND. He realised quickly that the situation on the ground was not as explained to him at Dover. The defence of Calais was becoming more desperate, and he could hear tanks and firing within the area.

Fortunately for NICHOLSON, the German commanders were ordered not to attack Calais immediately, so that no unnecessary losses should be incurred. NICHOLSON assumed command of all British Troops in Calais. The Royal Artillery units lay outside the perimeter of the town, with the Q.V.R. forming an inner perimeter. Having finished his conference with Colonel HOLLAND, Brigadier NICHOLSON gave his orders to the battalion commanders of the 2nd K.R.R.C. and 1st Rifle Brigade. They were to hold the outer perimeter of the town's defences, using the original ramparts and ditches around the town. The front was about six miles long. The two battalions were ordered to block all roads, railways, and other approaches.

Throughout the Battle of Calais, Brigadier NICHOLSON was subject to what can be politely called the 'fog of war'. The chain of command for him was always opaque and changing, and his aim and objectives were likewise unclear and sometimes contradictory. His first objective was to prepare his troops and then concentrate them in the south-west of the town, with a view to advancing inland against light opposition, as at this time it was believed that only enemy armoured cars were operating between Abbeville and Calais.

NICHOLSON's next objective arose due to the worsening supply situation for the British Expeditionary Force, now withdrawing into the Dunkirk perimeter. About 350,000 ration packs had been unloaded at Calais, and it was suggested that the 1st Bn. The Rifle Brigade, should escort these supplies to half-way between Calais and Dunkirk, while the other two battalions held off the enemy from Calais. It was now realised that the enemy forces in the area were much stronger than first supposed, although it was still thought that they constituted light armoured forces.

It was not until the early hours on 24 May, the Brigadier NICHOLSON received orders to defend Calais, and then only for a short time pending evacuation. The order to hold Calais to the end, without the possibility of evacuation, did not arrive until 25 May.

As the four ships arrived, the two personnel ships docked first, with two Army officers helping to tie the two ships up against the dock wall. The men of the two battalions marched off in their companies into Calais town in yet more rain. The two ships carrying the vehicles docked at about 16.00 hours, but there was only one crane to unload the vehicles. The petrol cans were unloaded first, but as the rain cleared the first German bombers of the day appeared over Calais. As soon as the air-raid warnings sounded, the French stevedores stopped unloading and took shelter, apart from one crane operator. This made the unloading of the vehicles and equipment a slow and laborious affair, with precious time slipping away.

The British stevedores had worked for thirty-six hours without rest unloading a supply ship with the rations destined for the B.E.F. at Dunkirk, and these had been loaded onto lorries by hand. As the troops of the 30th Infantry Brigade disembarked, other soldiers and R.A.F. personnel were embarking to be transported back to England. These men looked exhausted, and they did not provide a cheerful welcome to the arriving soldiers.

The 1st Bn. The Rifle Brigade was sent to a dispersal area in the sand dunes to the east of the harbour, while the Commanding Officer was called away to a meeting. Prior to landing at Calais, the Second-in-Command, Major ALLAN, had been detailed to act as the Liaison Officer between Brigade Headquarters and G.H.Q. Channel Ports, which was situated on a destroyer, so Major J. A. TAYLOR, M.C. took over as Second-in-Command and Captain PEEL assumed command of A Company.

The men congregated in their companies, made a hasty meal, and dug trenches for their protection from air attacks. The unloading of the vehicle and equipment ships was slow, with the Rifle Brigade only having the use of one crane. There were many civilians around, yelling 'Les Allemands', and clearly agitated and frightened. The sounds of battle could be heard down the coast towards Boulogne.

The 2nd K.R.R.C. were ordered to the western and southern sides of the perimeter. MILLER located his headquarters on the Boulevard Leon Gambetta. 'C' Company had to march out to a position from the seafront to Bastion 10 along the Sangatte Road. 'B' Company blocked the road from Boulogne as far as Bastion 9. Facing south was 'D' Company, with 'A' Company in reserve. HOSKYNs based his headquarters at Bastion 2 and stationed his companies of the Rifle Brigade on the southern and eastern side of the perimeter. Meanwhile, the unloading of the ships continued, albeit the men brought out from England to undertake that role were by now exhausted. The battalion took up positions in scrubby countryside, facing east.

After only being in their new positions for about an hour and a half, Lieutenant PARDOE was summonsed to his Company Headquarters, where he was told that the German units advancing on Calais were closer than first thought, and that his platoon was now ordered to block specified roads leading out of Calais to the east. Lieutenant PARDOE's platoon was still only equipped with revolvers and rifles, as their Bren gun carriers, eleven Bren guns, and Boyes anti-tank rifles, were still on-board the ship waiting to be unloaded. They marched back into Calais, and although the rain had stopped, everyone was now wet. There was intermittent machine gun fire in the distance, but it was otherwise quiet. They found the French soldiers and civilians very nervous, as rumours abounded of German parachutists having infiltrated the town dressed as civilians. Lieutenant PARDOE deployed 9 Platoon at Fort Risban, with Serjeant DRYBOROUGH-SMITH covering the Calais bridge, Serjeant CROWTHER covering the Sangatte Road, with Serjeant COLETTA being in Reserve.

That evening, there was some intermittent shelling, which merely added a sense of reality into the situation now facing the Riflemen. Colour Serjeant FROST started up the company cooker, and soon the men of 'C' Company were enjoying a hot meal and some strong tea. Around 23.00 hours, a dispatch rider arrived with an order for Lieutenant PARDOE to rejoin his company, which as the shelling was getting closer, was seen as a sensible thing to do. His platoon was now in possession of their Bren gun carriers, which had arrived from the docks. Having met up with the rest of the company again, most of the men took an opportunity to have a rest and some sleep.

While the 30th Infantry Brigade and its constituent units were arriving at Calais, the 1st Q.V.R. and 3rd R.T.R. faced the potential German threat. In the early morning of 23 May, Second Lieutenant DIZER was informed that Sangatte was about to be shelled by the French. Nothing happened, so the platoon again took up its position at the submarine cable terminal. This platoon and the rest of 'B' Company were extremely exposed, but it was necessary for them to be there to guard the anti-aircraft battery stationed at Oyez Farm.

To the south, 'D' Company established two roadblocks on the main roads. 11 Platoon worked hard to create a roadblock at a level crossing. There were two machine guns manned by Belgian soldiers, and one 2 pounder anti-tank gun from the 229th Anti-Tank Battery. 12 Platoon established their roadblock by using a 10 ton R.A.S.C. lorry across the road. At this location, there were some sixty soldiers from the 1st Searchlight Regiment, and a six-gun battery of 75 mm guns manned by French soldiers. These guns were useful when some German tanks approached the roadblock on two separate occasions, but they quickly withdrew.

At 03.00 hours on 23 May, KELLER (the commanding officer of the 3rd R.T.R.) received another message from BROWNRIGG, who was now at Dover, confirming his order for KELLER to make for Boulogne. Major BAILEY, the liaison officer from G.H.Q., continued to insist that KELLER should make for St. Omer, so eventually Colonel HOLLAND came down on the side of Major BAILEY. At 06.30 hours, KELLER send a patrol of three light tanks under Second Lieutenant EASTMAN to accompany BAILEY to St. Omer. EASTMAN soon lost BAILEY in the confusion of the town but continued southwards.

About three miles south of Ardres, he came across a convoy of twenty-five R.A.S.C. lorries under fire from German forces. EASTMAN attempted to escort the lorries to Calais, but found the road blocked. He managed to put out of action two German armoured cars, but then lost two of his tanks to enemy fire. In the end, only one of the tanks made it back to Calais. BAILEY was himself wounded near Ardres but made it back to Calais.

Two more men from the 3rd R.T.R. died in this engagement, namely

- 7883962 Corporal Ralph ARCHER, aged thirty-one years,
- 5618485 Trooper Frederick Samuel HAM, aged twenty-three years, who came from Holsworthy in Devon.

ARCHER is buried in Grave 12 of the Ardres Communal Cemetery, and HAM alongside in Grave 13.

KELLER realised that the situation was deteriorating, and still had most of tanks not yet fit for action. Against his better judgement, he decided to make another attempt to reach St. Omer. Shortly after 14.00 hours, KELLER formed two composite squadrons with the intention of advancing via Guines and Ardres to St. Omer. They set off through a crowd of refugees, but as it was clear there were now more than one German Panzer Division operating in the area south of Calais, the attempt was abandoned.

As the situation was confusing, Lieutenant Colonel KELLER decided that he should attempt to find out the reality of enemy movements in and around Calais. He split up the Reconnaissance Troop and sent Lieutenant MORGAN with five Dingo scout cars north towards Gravelines, and he sent Sergeant Bill CLOSE with the other five to the south towards Guines. The two groups had to negotiate their way out of Calais, weaving through the throng of refugees. A few miles outside Calais, Sergeant CLOSE and his colleagues ran into a German screen of anti-tank guns. Two of the Dingos were hit and two others overturned. Sergeant CLOSE managed to extract one Dingo scout car and made it back to Calais where he reported to KELLER, who was not best pleased to lose so many scout cars just after having landed.

Captain Hugh O'SULLIVAN, the second-in-command of 'B' Squadron, commanded a patrol of three light tanks, three cruiser tanks and a Squadron Headquarters in two A9 tanks. On the Guines road, they came upon a large German mechanized force. The light tanks fired on the lorries, whilst the cruiser tanks took on the German tanks. A couple of German tanks were hit, and one of the British A9's was hit in the suspension and disabled. Another tank was hit with two of its crew killed. The two of the members of the 3rd R.T.R. killed in this incident were:

- 7893349 Trooper Thomas BATT, aged eighteen years,
- 7883183 Trooper Charles Thomas LEWIS, aged twenty-five years.

Both are buried side by side in the Hames-Boucres Churchyard (just to the north of Guines); BATT in Grave 1 and LEWIS in Grave 2.

The surviving British tanks withdrew over a crest, and O'SULLIVAN and his crew started to make their way back to their own lines. He met up with Major HARDCASTLE, the commanding officer of the 1st Searchlight Battery who was with some of his men. Together, they manned a crossroads at Les Attaques as the Germans advanced. They were soon overwhelmed, and O'SULLIVAN was taken prisoner. When interrogated, O'SULLIVAN explained that the whole of the 1st Armoured Division had been landed at Calais, a slight exaggeration to say the least. Whether or not the Germans believed him is not recorded.

Second Lieutenant CARPENDALE led another troop from 'B' Squadron across country. He came upon a column of vehicles, which was stationary. CARPENDALE suddenly realised that they were Germans and tactfully withdrew. Major REEVES received a report of a large column of German vehicles in the next valley. The regimental adjutant, Captain ROSS went up in his A13 tank, and was promptly hit and the tank 'brewed up'. The 3rd R.T.R. went into to attack on this other German column, but the reaction was sharp and intense. The tanks were not supported by artillery or infantry, so KELLER decided to withdraw to a ridge between Coquelles and Calais. His own command tank was hit and damaged. Altogether, the regiment lost twelve tanks in this action.

KELLER decided the order from Major BAILEY was genuine, so as soon as he was able, he sent a patrol of light tanks to St. Omer under the command of Second Lieutenant MUNDY. They found the town empty and in flames, so returned to Calais. They met a patrol from the 2nd Searchlight Battery under Second Lieutenant G. R. G. ANDERSON who had also reached St. Omer. Another patrol from the regiment, under the command of Captain R. H. HOW, which was not prepared to join the main force came across German troops only four miles to the south of Calais. They dispersed some German motorcycles, but then came upon some anti-tank guns. This forced Captain HOW's patrol to return to Calais.

Meanwhile, Lieutenant Colonel HOSKYNS received his orders to facilitate the movement of the lorries containing the rations for the B.E.F. to Dunkirk. He sent out 'A' and 'I' Companies to picket the road for a distance of about twelve miles towards Dunkirk, with 'B' Company being detailed to escort the supply column, with a detachment of the 3rd R.T.R. under command. The column was due to move off at midnight. The Scout Platoon from 'A' Company, under Second Lieutenant ROLT, was made up to strength, moved to its rendezvous location about seven miles to the east of Calais.

A Despatch Rider was sent by Captain PEEL, 'A' Company, telling Second Lieutenant ROLT to withdraw back to Calais, but as these orders were only given verbally, ROLT decided to stay put and set-up a defensive location for the night. The next morning, ROLT skilfully extracted his platoon and brought them back into Calais. Major HAMILTON-RUSSELL, 'B' Company, had four composite platoons now under his command for escort duties, and he was ready at midnight to set off, but the commander of the 3rd R.T.R. detachment insisted on waiting until daylight. The column did not move off until 05.00 hours on 24 May.

The Rifle Brigade companies were still awaiting their vehicles, but enough were found to mount 'I' Company's Scout Platoon (Second Lieutenant SLADEN) in trucks, in which they moved to the east of Calais. They were followed up by the dismounted platoon commanded by Second Lieutenant WELD-FORESTER, who marched up to join the Scout Platoon.

And so, the first full day of battle drew to a close.

Officers – 1st Bn. The Rifle Brigade (Prince Consort’s Own)

Commanding Officer – 9657 Lieutenant Colonel Chandos Benedict Arden HOSKYNS
 Second-in-command – 13878 Major Alexander William ALLAN
 Adjutant – 71213 Captain (Acting) Thomas Heward ACTON
 Liaison Officer – 126540 Second Lieutenant Charles John Jervis CLAY
 Technical Officer – 23835 Lieutenant Richard George Lawrence TRYON
 Medical Officer – 89881 Captain James Clark CAMERON, M.B., R.A.M.C.
 Chaplain – Reverend R. S. WINGFIELD-DIGBY, R.A.Ch.D.
 R.S.M. – 6907671 Regimental Sergeant Major Edward Charles GOODEY

- Headquarter Company

Company Commander – 15191 Captain Harry COGHILL, Brevet Major, Reserve of Officers
 Signal Officer – 55992 Lieutenant Jerome Pender DUNCANSON
 Quarter-Master – 90421 Captain (Quarter-Master) Walter STRAIGHT
 Transport Officer – 95538 Second Lieutenant John Freville Henry SURTEES
 Mortar Officer – 103953 Second Lieutenant Alexander SANDERSON

- ‘A’ Company

Company Commander – 13204 Major John Aldersey TAYLOR, M.C.
 Second-in-Command – 44341 Captain Peter PEEL, *p.s.c.*

1 Platoon/2 Platoon/3 Platoon/4 Platoon – Platoon Commanders¹

- 78432 Second Lieutenant, The Honourable Terence Cornelius Farmer PRITTIE
- 6908671 Platoon Sergeant Major (W.O. III) Ivan John WILLIAMS
- 117303 Second Lieutenant George Ambler THOMAS
- 6792048 Platoon Sergeant Major (W.O. III) Richard Alington Vernon JOHNSTON

- ‘B’ Company

Company Commander – 22389 Major Arthur Gustavus Lindsay HAMILTON-RUSSELL
 Second-in-command – 47682 Captain Charles Michael SMILEY

- 5 Platoon – 72963 Second Lieutenant Edward Arthur BIRD
- 6 Platoon – 58854 Lieutenant William (Willy) Mark WELCH
- 7 Platoon – 72963 Second Lieutenant Fitzroy Thomas Frank Conway Grant FLETCHER
- 8 Platoon – 6908637 Platoon Sergeant Major (W.O. III) James EASEN, M.M.

- ‘C’ Company

Company Commander – 13708 Major 13708 Vernon Cyprian KNOLLYS, Brevet Major, retired pay (Reserve of Officers)
 Second-in-command – 50981 Captain Thomas Robert GORDON-DUFF

- 9 Platoon – 121861 Second Lieutenant George Joseph KANE
- 10 Platoon – 113659 Second Lieutenant Francis REED
- 11 Platoon – Platoon Sergeant Major CRISS
- 12 Platoon – 68166 Second Lieutenant, The Honourable John David Coutson FELLOWS

¹ Which platoon commander was responsible for each platoon is not confirmed.

- 'I' Company

Company Commander – 18579 Major Edward James Augustus BRUSH

Second-in-Command – 89505 Second Lieutenant Adrian John Bates VAN DE WEYER

- 13 Platoon – 77698 Second Lieutenant David Ramsay SLADEN
- 14 Platoon – 85703 Second Lieutenant Charles Robert Cecil WELD-FORESTER
- 15 Platoon – 74441 Second Lieutenant Michael Harold PRICE
- 16 Platoon – Platoon Sergeant Major STEVENS



*A damaged and abandoned A13 cruiser tank of the 3rd R.T.R., bearing the white rhinoceros sign of the 1st Armoured Division.
Courtesy of the German Federal Archive.*