

John Alderson Quikref Diary 1944

Mon 21 Feb. 1944	Inspected by General Montgomery at Hove 1200hrs.
Tues 22 Feb.	Entrained Worthing 1528hrs. arrived Crewe 2250hrs.
Wed 23 Feb.	[Roshven is on Loch Ailort]. Arrived Stirling 0600hrs. Detrained Oban 0930hrs. Had 2 beers with John Harvey. Embarked (5 & 6 Troops) on Quentin Roosevelt 1230hrs. Sailed 1315hrs. very fine: light breeze. Magnificent view up between Mull and mainland and up Glen Etive to Ben Cruachan. Rum (sic) very fine too. Lovely night. Arrived Roshven 1800hrs.
Thurs 24 Feb.	CO arrived 1100hrs: back to Dorlin House by speedboat 1230rs: arrived 1330hrs. Lunch and conference at Shielbridge Lodge: embarked Dorlin House 1645hrs arrived Roshven 1815hrs.
Sat 26 Feb.	Left Roshven 1415hrs., walked up road to Loch Ailort, left road at bridge over Irine burn 1430hrs. At summit of Fhrois Bheinn 28 ft 1620hrs. Left 1625hrs. back at bridge by 1710hrs, at house by 1725hrs. Lots of snow high up, very cold: superb view of Rhum and Coolins.
Sun 27 Feb.	Embarked by cobbles onto HMS Prince Leopold in Sound of Arisaig 1230hrs. Sailed round Ardnamurchan to Loch Sunart. Made two landings from LCAs – one in afternoon and one at night at Laga Bay, east of Borrowdale Castle.
Mon 28 Feb.	Sailed for Oban 0745hrs; arrived Oban 1015hrs: refuelled, sailed Oban 1500hrs: fired ships guns: anchored off Kentra 1800hrs.
Tues 11 April	Mummy and Father come to St Albans.
Friday 21 April	Report 1815hrs. Adj School of M.I. 7, St Peters Terrace opposite Addencrokes (sic) Hospital Trumpinton St. Cambridge between 1400 and 1815hrs. Take bedding, steel helmets & respirator, protractor mapboard, talc & chinagraphs & notebook.
Sat 22 April	Regimental Officers Handbook of German Army 1943. German Illustrated 1943. Periodical notes on German Arms 39 & 40.
Sat 29 April	Meg's wedding.
Tues 16 May	11-12 Dems. 12-1 Tps practise. 1-2 lunch. 2-3.30, 3.30 – 5, 5 – 6 Camouflage. House in state of defence etc. 6 - 7 6 Troop; 7 – 8 3 Troop.
Sun 21 May	Ration Card.
Thurs 25 May	Left Worthing 0548hrs. arrived Southampton 0830hrs.
Sunday 4 June	Overlord postponed 24hrs

Mon 5 June	Left C iBS 1345hrs, arrived W 1530hrs embarked (290 – 509SS 1700hrs.: 1730 hrs & tied up; sailed again 1845hrs: magnificent sight: hundreds of ships: tied up 1935hrs. Slipped finally 2115hrs: v cloudy & rather rough. Not feeling in the best of health! (2hrs sleep)
Tues 6 June	091782. Rougher, cloudy and rough: lots of sickness; landed 1000hrs after being hit by two shells. 19 missing. Overhead twice while trying to get ashore. Moved from Brigade checkpoint 1100hrs over 2 bridges over Orne & canal to Ranville; arrived about 1400hrs: took up defensive position. Little mortaring & shelling: dried out. (2 hours sleep).
Wed 7 June	Lot of firing on both sides about 0300hrs. Paratroop forward position overrun: moved to new position to defend Bde HQ 0330hrs, in position 0500hrs: v. quiet morning: in with 8 – 75mms, have 1 17lb. & 1 6lb.. Ju 88 easily shot up by our fighters: complete air superiority: distinctly sticky afternoon with German tanks: they ultimately retired: seen Spitfire shoot down ME 109F very nicely. 2200hrs moved to new position. (3 hours sleep).
Thurs 8 June	Fairly tricky night. George out on patrol with 15 men: recce ... fighting patrol: considerable enemy infiltration about 0800hrs. Message received that a battalion was about to attack us. Took the Troop and ½ of 1 Troop forward to edge of wood to east: about 49 German prisoners and equal number killed. We had about 10 wounded inc. me, but George was killed. Evacuated to Ranville 95 MDS Air Landing amidst unpleasant mortaring. (5 hours sleep).
Fri 9 June	Left MDS about 1000hrs in very bumpy ambulance to FDS and then by Dukw to Isle of Jersey Hospital Ship, sailed 1400hrs: tied up Southampton 2200hrs. Army makes a bog of disembarkation as usual. Rest leg: trip over. Penicillin hurts like (?billio?). Told situation ofn beachhead very good now by Colonel on Monty's Staff. (4 hours sleep).
Sat 10 June	Off ship 0010hrs in train by 0015 hrs: train moved off 0245hrs!! Arrived Epsom Downs 0700hrs. Arrived Porton Emergency Hospital 0830hrs. Asked for sleeping draught. Slept for 4 hours during the day; am now going on to a base hospital in the Midlands tomorrow. (Day 10/6 night – 11/6 10hrs sleep)
Sun 11 June	Put on stretcher 11.30hrs on train at Tattenham Corner by 1300hrs. Left 1345hrs arrived Sheffield going - through Harpenden and Luton en route – at 2115hrs; in King Edward VII by 2230hrs.
Mon 12 June	Rang up Diana. (7 hours sleep).
Tues 13 June	Diana and her Mother came up to see me.
Tues 20 June	Diana came up. Started sleeping reasonably well for the first time since the invasion.
Thurs 22 June	Plaster off.
Mon 3 July	Allowed up for the first time.
Wed 5 July	Into Sheffield, bloody place; very tired.
Mon 10 July	Came out of hospital.