

te ranga o te rori atu i Patia ki Topuraku kite kati mai i o Patia ki puta ki waho. Ko te tiaoone me haere ki Topuraku kia homo ratou kite roopu o reira e toru tekau ma rima mau to ratou tokomaha. Ko nga Pora hei tiaki haere i te taha mau me muri o matau i kia tuhono te tuano ki Topuraku me te whakawatea i tera takiva ki whakaiti ai ratou ki Ponekahi. Komei te kaupapa i whakaauna mai ki a matou engari kei runga i te ahua pakanga taake me nga mau rererangi. No te aia to 21 ka tae mai te ranga kei te whati te Tiamana me ana taake, ko te rangi kua watea, me hiki whakamua nga hoia kite whakaiti i te kaupapa. I taua ahiahi taua ka tae matou ki muri o Kapuho 10 maero. Ka timata i komei te weheweha i matou o te pirikete tuarua. Ko te rua tekau ma tahi pataranga ka riro kite taha tonga, te rua tekau ma rua, ki nga pakanga rori i Sidi Azeez. Ko te rua tekau ma toru ki te whakakei i Kapuho; ko matou nei ka noho hei tiaki i te HQ ote pirikete. I te aia 21 ka tae mai te ranga kua hinga a Kapuho me tetahi pa ko Musaid. I hinga hauaone noa iho enei pa kaore [i] rori te pu i paika. Tetahi atu te taha maoro taake mouri kei raro i te pataranga hei matau me nga whakakei. He taake enei kaore i rar i te karangatangata Armoured Division.

No te tekau o nga haora e po o te 22 ka homai te waahi kia matou ko te whakakei aite paraki me te taumata o Sulum me kokiri i te po. No te haawhe o te tekau ma tahi ka whakaiti mai matou i runga i o matou rori me a matou pu awhina me te ki mai kei mua a matou taake e tatari arii ana. Tekau ma wha maero e haere ana ka tae ki Musaid ka tukutuku matou. Ko te kaupapa whakakei ko "C" kite katau, "D" mau nga kamupene ki mua, ko "A" ki muri "C" ko "B" ki muri "D" kia taia te paraki kia hiki atu te "B" kite mau o "D" me te whakakei ki te taumata a tae noa ko nga pari kohatu. Ko "A" hei tuara mo "D" me "C". Kia taea katoa ka hoki mai ai a "A" me "B" ki te tiaki i nga taha me mau. Ka muna matou me te putai ano kei hea a a matou take, nga purepo, nga pu mihi muna, nga pu take me nga pu eroperepa. Kaore kua whakanohia i muri kei hoioi ka oho te hoariri. Ka haere nei matou, ano nei kaore he kaahu, e toru maero te lawhiti ki te hoariri. Ka haere nei matou, ano nei kaore he kaahu, e toru maero te lawhiti ki te hoariri. Ka tae kite paraki puta noa kaore he raruraru; ka watea te paraki e 20 iiri pa katuhi ka tukua mai nga...

TRANSLATION

on the Bardia-Tobruk road to cut off Bardia so as to prevent them [i.e. the enemy] getting out. The Sixth [Brigade Group] were to make for Tobruk so as to connect with the 35,000-man force there [i.e. 30 Corps]. The South Africans were to protect our left flank and rear and the Sixth were to link with Tobruk and ensure that position was freed to carry on to Benghazi. This was the plan conveyed to us but in the context of tank and air warfare. On the morning of the 21st we heard the Germans and their tanks had withdrawn and the skies were clear [of enemy planes], so [our] soldiers moved off to carry out the plan. That actual afternoon we reached a point 10 miles in the rear of Fort Capuzzo. Here we, of the Fifth Brigade, began to split up. 21st Battalion went to the south, 22nd to the road junction at Sidi Azeez, the 23rd assaulted Fort Capuzzo, while we remained to protect Brigade HQ. On the morning of the 22nd we heard that Capuzzo and a fort named Musaid had fallen. These forts were taken without difficulty; the guns were not firing for long. At this time 16 large tanks were placed under the control of each battalion and positioned in front for the assaults. These tanks [on this occasion] were not under the authority of the Armoured Division.

At 10 o'clock on the evening of the 22nd our turn came to assault the barracks and the escarpment at Sulum, it was to be a night attack. At 11.30 p.m. we set out on our trucks with our artillery support and with word that our tanks were waiting ahead of us. We travelled for 14 miles before reaching Musaid where we debussed. The plan of attack was "C" on the right, "D" on the left they were the forward companies; "A" was behind "C", "B" behind "D" and on reaching the barracks "B" was to move to the left of "D" for the assault on the high ground until the rocky escarpment was reached. "A" was to support "D" and "C". When they all reached the objective "A" and "B" [companies] were to return to protect the flanks and rear. We lined up asking ourselves where are our tanks, our artillery firepower, our big machine guns, our tank weaponry and our air support. No, they had remained in the rear lest the noise [of their engines] alert the enemy. So away we went, as if we were without clothes, it was three miles to the enemy. Up to the barracks wasn't a problem; for the barracks had been vacated, but about 20 yards further on all the

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Ha ahua hanga te ra i te 25 ka tae mai te kupa kei te whakakihia mai te hauriri e 400 moto roro, ara nga tankes, purupo hoki i te taha tonga o Musaid, me haere au me taku Coy ki Musaid kite tutaki kei puta ki Patia me te ki mai kei reira nga purupo, pu taake hoki hei awahia i [a] mutou. E toru maero te tawhiti atu i te Patiarua me taku tonoa kia Tiri kia homai he pu mihini nuanui hei awahia - he aha te aha - kaiponatia e ia a mutou pu e wha me nga mota 3" toko ono. Tae ata mutou ka tae mai hoki nga purupo, nga pu taake me tetahi panahumau o te 23. Ka ahua ora ako te manawa. Whakakihia mutou kua hoki kite tutaki. Po noa, ao noa te ra kaore i puta. Ka tonoa nga Bren carriers kite matakai kaore i kaitia, ano nei kua haere whakakiteonga. I te tina ka hikitia nga purupo me nga pu taake kite awahi i te 23 i Kapuho e 4 maero te tawhiti; ka noho tahanga mutou. I te wha o nga haora ka puta mai aku carriers - no te 23 - pu kaitia te haere mai me te rota rota mai kia mataara kei te whakaitia mai te hauriri. At 4.15 we saw vehicles spread out on a front of about 500 yds with its directing car about 5 to 600 yds ahead and coming straight for our position. Things looked hopeless but we were well fortified though not wired. I told the boys to let the car come right in which they did allowing it to penetrate right to our reserves when it was shot up and its 8 occupants killed. The convoy halted and then split into three, one going to our right and one to our left. The centre, a left column debussed infantry and came at us from the front in two waves and from the left in a single wave under cover of artillery and mortar fire. The right column had become engaged by mortars from the BN on our right & had halted. We had a "battle royal" for a whole hour when they retreated got on their buses and moved past on our left taking a whole hour to go past. We breathed a sigh of relief for up to then we had no casualties. At seven o'clock, the tail comprising tanks and artillery hit us dead centre and the fun started again. The tanks got right into our

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The sun was almost up on the 25th when orders came that as the enemy was assembling - 400 trucks, tanks, and also artillery to the south of Musaid, my company and I were to go to Musaid to meet them lest they get through to Bardia and we were told there would be artillery, tank support to assist us. We were three miles from the Battalion and I had asked Tiri to give us a light machine gun (L.M.G.) - for whatever reason - he hung on to our four L.M.G.s and our six 3-inch mortars. When we got there our artillery, tanks and a platoon from 23 Battalion were also there to assist us. This gave us a lift. We prepared ourselves and settled down to wait. All night and day nothing appeared. The Bren Carriers were sent out to reconnoitre [the area] but found nothing; it seemed the enemy had gone south. At dinner time the artillery and tanks left to assist 23 [Battalion] at Fort Capuzzo 4 miles away; we were left on our own. At 4 p.m. my carriers appeared - coming from 23 [Battalion] - travelling flat stacks waving their arms to alert us that the enemy was approaching. At 4.15 we saw vehicles spread out on a front of about 500 yds with its directing car about 5 to 600 yds ahead and coming straight for our position. Things looked hopeless but we were well fortified though not wired. I told the boys to let the car come right in which they did allowing it to penetrate right to our reserves when it was shot up and its 8 occupants killed. The convoy halted and then split into three, one going to our right and one to our left. The centre & left columns debussed infantry and came at us from the front in two waves and from the left in a single wave under cover of artillery and mortar fire. The right column had become engaged by mortars from the BN on our right & had halted. We had a "battle royal" for a whole hour when they retreated got on their buses and moved past on our left taking a whole hour to go past. We breathed a sigh of relief for up to then we had no casualties. At seven o'clock, the tail comprising tanks and artillery hit us dead centre and the fun started again. The tanks got right into our...

position and played around but we kept them off the actual pits with tank bombs, grenades and everything we had until one light tank got into a trench and killed two of the boys ^{one of them was} ^{new arrivals} Tanara from Omoro and ^{new arrivals} Heretaunga from Whaka where the boys went mad and went after it. The occupants caved in and were promptly killed. Things got a bit hot for the enemy with our anti tank rifles etc so they withdrew and went the way the others went. By eight o'clock everything was quiet again except for the mopping up parties who were out getting stray Germans who were left behind and were firing flares to show their positions. In the tally up we found the above two and Geo. Hall Chinemutu killed and four wounded while three were missing, presumably collected by one of the tanks. We considered ourselves lucky to get off so lightly. We "stood to" the rest of the night and in the morning we discovered we had got 1 tank, 1 armoured car, 1 Bren gun carrier, 1 ambulance car, 4 staff cars, 1 truck, and 3 light cars plus 5 motor cycles and there were 76 dead Germans while we took 7 prisoners alive. We collected a lot of valuable instruments, maps and correspondence which we sent back to Bn. We got most of the cars & vehicles going including our tank but the armoured car and ambulance were too badly smashed up by our Anti Tank rifles to be of any use. We collected & sorted the gear and then the boys helped themselves to the clothing, boots, and any gear which may be useful to them. We as a Coy became possessed of 7 German Spandau machine guns, 5 anti tank rifles and a 2" mortar besides 15,000 rounds of ammunition of all sorts, which we kept for future use. In the morning our artillery returned plus our anti tank guns and anti aircraft "Bofors" and we were also re-inforced by a Coy of the 23 Bn. Our position became bristling with guns after the show was over. It was just as well for he came back again had a good look at us determined his infantry, waited about an hour and then buzzed off. During this period he was developing his main attack against Kapaho where the 23rd & our Lorry lines were. They sent their tanks there getting in among our own boys causing some deaths & taking 43 prisoners and a few trucks. However they were beaten off by our guns etc and he buzzed off. Our boys (Morris) the 43 who were captured were taken out into the desert a few miles away and released to rejoin

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us again. The report of that engagement is not in yet as Lieut Ulrich commanding our boys was wounded and evacuated to hospital. The boys were wonderful and came through our first tank encounter with flying colours and are now imbued with confidence. There were only two Italians in the mob the rest were Germans. On the 28th we were relieved by the 22nd Battalion who had become isolated and did not know where the rest of the Brigade were. Ma nga Inia ratou i whakaitia mai kia matou. No taea po ka rongu matou e pamarua e "Hawshaw" (i te matou captured radio) kua mau a Hargest me tana Brigade HQ katoa. I te whakahihi ano a ratou kite wehe ia matou i nga patariama hei tiaki ia ratou. Ka noho i konei nga Maori ko te 22 me te 23 kaore he pane. Ka whakaritua ko Col. Andrews hei Brigadier (temp) me te whakataka ia matou katoa ki raro i te mana o tiwhana Inia nama wha. Ko te patariama 21 me te tuwha, kua ono piriketei tae atu kia Freyberg me tana ropu "upoko hapuku" kaore he rongu koreo a me nei na ka rongu kua hoki katoa ki te pumi i Pakihi i te taumaha o nga casualties. On the 29th the Coy made a triumphant return to the BN with all its booty and immediately took up new positions and dug in again. No te tahi o Tiwhana kua tae mai a patariama wahanga o te tiwhana Inia, he pakeha katoa me te kupu me hiki te piriketei kite taha na o Patia ko matou me noko ki runga ite rori atu i Patia ki Topuruka. Te tikanga ia me haere huihui matou engari ite roa ote "change over" kua matou ka mahuetia matou e nga pakeha. No te po matou nei i haere atu ai, a, tae pai noatu. Te mahi ma matou katoa he arai i nga ope haere atu haeremai i Patia ki Topuruka me te torotoro haere i nga waihi e piritia ana e te hoi riri. The 2nd was a quiet day except for an occasional car coming from Tobruk which went into the bag. On the morning of the 3rd a column was reported coming along and astride the road from Tobruk. So we got ready "D" being dug in and astride the road with "A" on their right "C" behind "A" and "B" next "C" to complete a circle which could take on anything approaching at any angle. Tukua mai kia tata was passed around and so it happened as at Musaid. Their leaders were allowed to penetrate our

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On the 29th the Coy made a triumphant return to the BN with all its booty and immediately took up new positions and dug in again. For the brigade to move near Bardia and that we were to position ourselves on the road running from Bardia to Tobruk. We [i.e. Fifth Brigade] were to travel together but because the "change over" took so long with us [i.e. Maori battalion] we were left behind by the Pakeha battalions. It was not until dark that we left and we arrived safely. Our role [i.e. 4th Brigade] was to prevent units coming and going from Bardia to Tobruk and to reconnoitre the places held by the enemy. The 2nd was a quiet day except for an occasional car coming from Tobruk which went into the bag. On the morning of the 3rd a column was reported coming along and astride the road from Tobruk. So we got ready "D" being dug in and astride the road with "A" on their right "C" behind "A" and "B" next "C" to complete a circle which could take on anything approaching at any angle. Let them draw close was passed around and so it happened as at Musaid. Their leaders were allowed to penetrate our

Her hell was let loose and the fun with the 22 Bn having a good view of the show from the escarpment. It was a fair fight. They had no tanks but had artillery and we were likewise situated. It was a BN against a BN, with the advantage of surprise with us. Time and again they came at us only to be knocked back; at midday we went forward a platoon & collected 70 prisoners. They brought up re-inforcements but we tied them to the ground with fire. They had carriers out which were making large rather uncomfortable for us so it was decided to send out the carriers to the flank to encircle them from the rear while a couple of sections under cover of a smoke screen went forward with the bayonet & covered by the fire of the others. The program went according to plan, the sections charged while the rest yelled. That was enough for Fritz who got up & ran until the carriers held them up and the BN collected another 80 prisoners, a few guns and 14 vehicles & gear. We collected about 190 prisoners including the wounded which our "Doc" patched up. Our casualties were 1 killed & 5 wounded. So darkness fell we got orders to pull out & come back here. It was entirely a BN show and all prisoners were Germans of the Panzer Division. The radio had it that "the NZ Div. intercepted an enemy column west of Menaster & captured 100 Italians." The boys were firing. "B & C" Corps took no part in the fight except as full backs. Although we nearly had a show of our own but the enemy stood off us all afternoon & would not attack. We got back here without any further casualties but ran into one of our own shows Indian Div. Calvary and had a bitter gun argument losing 3 trucks and young Logan with a bit of skin off his nose. Her rano matou i naines i te mamo o te "tiwhana" pou tuarua. Kua tae mai a Tim Wilson hei Tamarua ite turanga o Hargest me Dyer ki te patariana. Kua mai te ora o matou ahakoa e rua ano nga kuinga ite me te panikena wai. Ki atu ki a Ramiera ko Tango i roto i te maupe a Hargest; kaore ano kia mohiotia te ratou ahua. Ko Charlie te O.C. o "C", ko Paula te "A" ko Logan te "D", ko Tiwha hei te apika o "B" me aku tamarii he parawete katoa ratou i nga marama e rua na ka taha. Ko te rongu kua riro a matou "titi" i te hira riri. Tena koutou.

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Na to tamaiti na Rangit.

TRANSLATION

...then hell was let loose and the fun with the 22 BN having a grand stand view of the show from the escarpment. It was a fair fight. They had no tanks but had artillery and we were likewise situated. It was a BN against a BN, with the advantage of surprise with us. Time and again they came at us only to be knocked back; at midday we sent forward a platoon & collected 70 prisoners. They brought up re-inforcements but we tied them to the ground with fire. They had snipers out which were making things rather uncomfortable for us so it was decided to send out the carriers to the flank to encircle them from the rear while a couple of sections under cover of a smoke screen went forward with the bayonet and covered by the fire of the others. The program went according to plan, the sections charged while the rest yelled. That was enough for Fritz who got up & ran until the carriers held them up and the BN collected another 80 prisoners, a few guns and 14 vehicles & gear. We collected about 190 prisoners including the wounded which our "Doc" patched up. Our casualties were 1 killed & 5 wounded. As darkness fell we got orders to pull out & come back here. It was entirely a BN show and all prisoners were Germans of the Panzer Division. The radio had it that "the NZ Div. intercepted an enemy column west of Menaster & captured 100 Italians." The boys were firing. "B & C" Corps took no part in the fight except as full backs. Although we nearly had a show of our own but the enemy stood off us all afternoon & would not attack. We got back here without any further casualties but ran into one of our own shows Indian Div. Calvary and had a bitter gun argument losing 3 trucks and young Logan with a bit of skin off his nose. We are now under the command of 2nd South African Division. Tim Wilson has arrived as general and fills Hargest's position and Dyer is in charge of the Battalion. We are all well despite receiving two meals and one water bottle per day. Tell Ramiera that Tango is in Hargest's mob; we do not know yet how they fared. Charlie (Bennett) is O.C. of "C", (Ben) Paula has command of "A" [Rangit] Logan has "D", Tiwha [Bennett] has HQ. I am the only officer with "B" and my boys are all privates and have been for the past two months. News has it that our "mutton-birds" were taken by the enemy. Greetings.

From your child, Rangit.

REFERENCE

Alexander Turnbull Library

Sir Apirana Ngata Turupa Papers, MS-Papers-6919-0346

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