

THE FORGOTTEN BATTLE



OF HEROUVILLE

An Account of the Participation of The 2nd Battalion The
Lincolnshire Regiment in Operation Charnwood,
July 8-9th 1944 Normandy.

By
Edward Dunstan

*To William, Harry and Alice, my three children.
May they always live in peace.*

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Foreword

By Major General R.E.J. Gerrard-Wright C.B., C.B.E., D.L.

This volume by Mr. Edward Dunstan describes in detail the part played by The 2nd Battalion of The Lincolnshire Regiment in the attack on the village of Herouville, Normandy, between the 7th and the 10th of July 1944. It is a valuable addition to our knowledge about this little-known but important action.

The capture of Caen following the D Day landings had not gone according to plan. It was critical to the continued success of Operation Overlord, and the 3rd Infantry Division was given that mission. The role given to the Battalion was to protect the divisional left flank, which task it accomplished at a high cost, but with great distinction.

Mr. Dunstan, a surgeon by profession, deserves high praise as an author. His dedication to this project is evident on every page. He has spent many hundreds of hours researching the records, interviewing those who were there, and travelling as many miles visiting every inch of the land over which the battle was fought. The personal accounts of those who took part serve to bring the whole story to life.

The Appendices complement the text, listing those who gave their lives and those rewarded for gallantry, adding some interesting pictorial dimensions, giving a German perspective, and providing a useful guide for visitors on how best to follow the battle on the ground.

This is altogether a well researched, moving, and readable volume, telling the story of a relatively minor action, which had effects far beyond those that might at first have been imagined.

What shines through it all is the courage, bravery, and enduring good humour of the Lincolnshire Soldier, to whom this book should be seen as a tribute.

Acknowledgements

First and foremost I would like to thank all the veterans whom I have contacted and in particular those who have contributed to this book. Without their help it would have been impossible to try and document the events that took place all those years ago. The helpfulness and enthusiasm that they have shown to me have been quite extraordinary.

Secondly, without the encouragement and advice of the late Michael Colvin (Major Colvin's eldest son) this book would certainly not have materialised. His computer wizardry, used for some of the graphics contained within the book, was quite amazing and will become self evident to all those who read it.

I am also greatly indebted to Peter and Richi Jennings who have edited and formatted my draft documentation, creating a very professional and well presented manuscript.

I would also like to thank Werner Kortenhaus and Hans Holler, two surviving German veterans, whose recollections, documentation and photos have helped give the text a more balanced perspective.

I must also highlight the hospitality and helpfulness shown to me by Maryvonne Lafay and Yvonne Lucas, from the Hotel de Ville in Herouville. Maryvonne in particular has gone out of her way to assist me, not only in locating surviving French residents of the village but also in attempting to find the key for the Church tower! On that note I must also thank Mme. Forestier whose memories, as an inhabitant of Herouville, have been invaluable.

Finally I must thank my wife for putting up with the 'organised' paperwork that I often left strategically placed around our house.

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