

Peter Lewis

Primosole Bridge

And 'B' Company went off into the vines with bayonets fixed, where, of course, the Germans were waiting. Now the front half of 'B', which was about one and a half platoons or something like that, that's my leading platoon plus part of another platoon, got involved in what can really only be described as a game of hide and seek. It was every man for himself. There was no quarter asked, there was none given. It was very difficult in the shadows to see whether you were firing at a friend or the enemy until the very last minute. There were individual fire fights all over the place, hand to hand. And my sergeant-major, Brannigan, who was a great man with the bayonet, was doing a great deal of damage. A lot of 'B' Company were shot down at point blank range, a lot of Germans were. Quite a few of the Paras were lying down and shooting along the vines and we got in behind them and we were able to knock off a few like that. But what some of the Paras had actually strapped themselves up in the trees, in the poplar trees, and they fired from above. Most of them died up there, in fact, because as soon as they gave away their position by firing at somebody, somebody else would knock them down. And, in fact, it was a shot from a paratrooper strapped in a tree that knocked me out.