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Army Form C.2118

WAR DIARY

or

Unit 119 LAA Regt RA

~~INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY~~

(Delete heading not required).

Month and Year December 1944

Commanding Officer Lt Col JF Young RA

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	References to Appendices
PANNINGEN area	1	1300 1400 1500	(approx) E tp deployed round Div HQ, Panningen, 7704 1 sjt and 11 OR joined from 97 A tk regt (being disbanded) Future tasks allotted by CRA (1) neutralization of enemy OPs (towers, churches, etc) on EAST bank of R MAAS, to begin 2 Dec, (2) harassing fire tasks on likely enemy supply routes leading towards EAST bank of R MAAS, to begin at H hour (0745) 3 Dec ☉ For first task, one med gun (59 AGRA) and 129/86 (SP) A tk bty (12 Corps tps) placed in support	
	2	0930 1000 1100 1230 -	W/Lt SHAW (and batman) joined from 97 A tk regt, to take up appointment as tp subn (and batman-driver) in I tp 392 bty. The 11 OR, who joined on 1 Dec, returned to 97 A tk regt on orders from higher authy, in view of alteration in arrangements for posting personnel for training as infantry. hrs approx, engagement of enemy OPs commenced ☉ Also registration with aid of Air OP on future harassing fire targets, but soon abandoned owing to bad weather approx, supporting med gun missed route, in looking for gun posn, and fell into enemy hands, in spite of warning delivered by own fwd tps. One gun of super heavy regt placed in support to deal with very strong tower at 876054, probable enemy OP ☉ Subsequently fired and scored 7 or 8 hits causing damage and fire Regt groundshooting fireplan composed and issued	See Appx J.
	3	0745 1150	Groundshooting programme fired [subsequently extended for further 2 hours, and later extended until amn expended] in sp of 44 Bde attack on BLERICK area 8908-8909 Retaliatory enemy shellfire caused casualties (DC, L sjt & 4 ORs) at E tp groundshooting position After amn expended, groundshooting guns withdrew to previous AA positions ☉ Approx 5000 rds had been fired, and most successful results observed	

	4	1030 1245	G tp came out of action to harbour at B ech, and I tp to conc round 190 Fd Regt who had conc, since 46 bde gp (to whom they were in sp) were going back to rest area and 1810 hrs, shelling of C tp caused total of 3 cas	
	5	1200 - 1315	I tp came out of action to harbour with 190 Fd Regt near ASTEN Lieut MARSDEN (A tp subaltern) rejoined 2 Me 109s engaged by F, A and C tps ⊙ No claims	
	6	1100 1630 -	CO attended CRA's conference and received orders for regt during the division's stay in the area (see RA 15 (S) Div Op Instr No 17) CO holds O Gp to give BCs orders in accordance with those received from CRA ⊙ btys to spend two weeks (each) in the line, and one week back, changing over at the same times as the brigades to which they are respectively affiliated ⊙ Whilst in the line, one tp per bty to give LAA protection to fd arty area of bde gp, one tp AA protection of div HQ, and one tp in readiness for any groundshooting (esp. HF) which may be required ⊙ Whilst at rest out of the line, the first 3 days to be devoted to energetic cleaning, care, and maint of vehs guns & eqpt of all kinds; the last 4 days to be spent in training [gun-drill, aircraft recognition, etc] in mornings and organised recreation after midday ⊙ System of regt echelons to be modified so that B ech, under Lt QM, consists of RHQ 'Q' staff and vehicles, and BQMS with minimum 'Q' vehs and personnel from each bty; remainder of bty HQ to find accn in respective bde areas (when in the line) as near as possible to RHQ ⊙ Accn for bty at rest to be found in PANNINGEN area, and for B ech also - Posting order received for 307087 Lieut A MACPHERSON, but officer not joined	See Appx J (of ORIGINAL only)
	7	-	Recces carried out in accordance with orders cited above	
	8	a.m. p.m.	390 bty HQ moved to 784062 and B ech to 757057 Line laid to 390 bty HQ and to E tp (at which also 391 bty tac HQ) and wireless closed down at 2215 hrs	
	9	a.m.	391 bty HQ moved to 786043, and 392 bty (less I tp) moved to 798078 ⊙ C tp ceased firing in area MAASBREE and harboured at EGCHHELBOEK, prepared to send forward guns for HF tasks when required	
	10	a.m.	OC 391 recced OP at 843023, at instance of OC 131 Fd Regt	
	11	1630	Shell hit building occupied by RHQ officers' mess and batmen's sleeping quarters at PANNINGEN ⊙ One gnr wounded seriously and evacuated	

			391 bty OP manned from before first light till after dark, and to continue to be so manned until further notice	
	12	0955	Two Me 109s in area 8307, at approx 2000 ft, engaged by all guns of A and F tps ☉ 3 hits claimed and one plane last seen diving and emitting smoke ☉ CO subsequently ordered every gun to be manned with minimum det from 0800-1100 hrs daily as planes during morning believed spotting for likely arty targets (normally only one gun per sec is manned with minimum det, and remaining guns in sec have air sentry on gun and det at close call)	
	13	-	391 bty OP ceased to be resourced	
	14	-	Div Comd agreed to policy of leaving LAA (in ground role) to deal with enemy OPs, saving 25 pr amn	(See Appx J)
	15	1000	CRA's O gp, attended by CO 119 ☉ Reserve bde gp to deploy shortly in area held by flanking bde of 53 div ☉ LAA tp to accompany (190) fd regt to new deployment area, leaving only one LAA tp at rest, one harboured but ready to send guns fwd to groundshooting positions, remainder deployed in AA role - 140 rounds fired in ground role at OPs on EAST bank of R. MAAS - One gun attached to B Sqn of 15 (S) Recce Regt for engagement of enemy OPs in area VELDEN 9014	
	16	1430	- 1630 hrs 144 rounds fired in ground role, particularly successful against VELDEN church (47 hits out of 51 rounds)	
	17	0800 1000 1100 1100	2 bdrs, 2 L bdrs, 27 ORs left regt, posted to 46 RHU for training as infantry - all A1, aged 20-25 (or volunteers below 32), to be replaced by lower category personnel onwards, considerable enemy air activity, Me 109s and 262s (jet propelled) in twos and threes flew over div area intermittently throughout the day, sometimes at zero feet ☉ Me 163s also believed seen, but enemy aircraft were mainly Me 262s ☉ Small number of bombs dropped ☉ Approx 1500 rounds expended and several hits claimed I tp deployed in AA def of 190 Fd Regt, area 7698 - 1600 hrs, 236 rounds fired in ground role, included registration by air OP on road targets, and 61 hits on BELFELD church, as well as many on other likely enemy OPs - In view of increased air activity, CO ordered the period during which all guns deployed are manned by minimum manning det (hitherto 0800 - 1100 hrs), to be extended to include all hours of daylight	

	18	0930 1200 - -	hrs onwards, considerable air activity but less than on 17 Dec ⊙ Me 262s (usually in small groups) were the main target, approx 700 rounds being fired, several hits claimed C tp deployed to increase AA def of PANNINGEN area During the day 237 rounds were fired in ground role; 76 hits scored on church at BELFELD, and nearby house set on fire; other enemy OPs and MG posts also engaged, and casualties caused Capt HOGG (Regt MO) left, posted to 31 FDS, replaced by 226544 Capt WALKER, W.A.	
	19	- 0930 - 1500	Groundshooting cancelled owing to misty conditions making observation impossible C tp deployed one sec 7102 (later, 7294) in defence of guns of 59 med regt engaged in calibration ⊙ Sec remained on this task till midday 20 Dec A tp officially credited with one Me 109 category 2 at 1000 hrs on 17 Dec Arrival of 18 gnr rfts, ex-116 LAA Regt ⊙ Few duty gunners (which was main requirement), mainly drivers, motorcyclists, storemen, etc	
	20	- 1100 1130	Capt Walker (Regt MO) left, posted to 162 Fd Amb replaced by Capt Willbush [attached pending arrival of 306068 Lieut Hicks AC posted from 153 Fd Amb. Tps reverted to normal state of manning - one gun per sec, only, manned after 1100 hrs daily - 1330 hrs, E tp fired 50 rounds at road and rly targets in VENLO ⊙ Results not observed because of mist	
	21	1400 1600	B ech, forced to move owing to arrival of HQ 8 AGRA, joined 390 bty HQ at 793078 Five rfts arrived from 31 RHU, all either of rank or of trade such as to be surplus to regt WE.	
	22	- 2030	General concern owing to boldness of enemy patrols and raiding parties on WEST side of R MAAS ⊙ Defence plan for whole of PANNINGEN area coordinated at higher level ⊙ RHQ given a sector of village perimeter on which to dig [and, in emergency, to man] defence posns ⊙ Area of responsibility also allotted to scattered secs, bty & tp HQs ⊙ Work of digging was begun p.m. Maj HOOS and Lieut HOWARD injured when their jeep collided with bren carrier in SEVENUM area ⊙ Both officers evacuated through 23 FDS ⊙ Replaced by Capt Sargeant and Lieut Goodman who, with det of G tp, att themselves to 181 Fd Regt for possible ground tasks	

	23	1015 1700	CRA 15 (S) Div presented C-in-C's certificates [for good conduct] to RSM Carr and Sjt Standen at a representative parade of all ranks from all sub-units - 2300 hrs RHQ and tps in immediate vicinity of PANNINGEN sent out patrols intermittently to round up civilians not in possession of passes authorising them to be out after curfew ◉ Civilians handed over to FSP	
	24	1000 1300 2215 -	- 1100 and 1530 - 1630 Groundshooting at targets on EAST side of R MAAS ◉ 100 rounds fired Orders from RA to maintain increased state of vigilance for 48 hr period commencing 1600 hrs today, in view of possibility of enemy across R MAAS GOC, CRA and other offrs of Div HQ visited offrs mess and remained till 2330 hrs - During the day Lt Partridge left the theatre to attend photo interpretation course at School of Mil Int, Matlock	
	25	-	Excellent Christmas dinner enjoyed by all troops and HQs ◉ Civilians everywhere helped to give extra cheer by providing hospitality, etc ◉ Nothing further to report	
	26	1415	All guns put on the alert when report was received of 300 enemy fighters approaching area ◉ Fighters did not appear	
	27	0905	Two Me 262s, flying over area, at extreme range, engaged by C E & F tps without any hits being claimed	
	28	1030	CRA requested one section for demonstration of ground firing for CCRA 8 Corps on 1 Jan 45 ◉ Also directed two sections to be available as mobile reserve, with 102 A tk Regt, in case of enemy attack across R. MAAS	
	29	-	Intermittent shelling of PANNINGEN - HELDEN area during afternoon and evening	
	30	1100 1300 1600 1300	Trial demonstration [for CRA] of groundshooting with sec of 3 guns (ground and air OPs) in preparation for demonstration before CCRA, arranged for 1 Jan 45 Three shells [122mm] fell behind buildings occupied by RHQ in PANNINGEN ◉ One OR cas evacuated RHQ moved to join B ech at 793078 One gun in ground role silenced enemy mortar, and engaged tpt (by sound bearing) during the day.	
	31	-	Groundshooting during the day by one gun	