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ARMY FORM C.2118

**WAR DIARY**

or

Unit 2nd Bn A. & S.H.

**~~INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY~~**

(Delete heading not required)

Month and Year FEB 45

Commanding Officer Lt/Col D.R. Morgan, M.C.

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	References to Appendices
GOIRLE 148278	1		The acting CO went on a recce for op VERITABLE, In the meantime the bn continued trg with "funnies".	
do	2		All coys except C coy had their photographs taken. The Bde comd addressed all coy comds in the model room at Div HQ and gave the bde outline plan for op "VERITABLE". In the evening the officers held a dance at 120 Wilhelmina Park, Tilburg. The party was upset by getting tied up with a large tank convoy which retarded the collection of the ladies and the officers. Capt T.H. Spenceley, in a moment of highland enthusiasm, ended up on the floor with his kilt about his ears when trying to foxtrot too fast for his "tender years".	
do	3		More planning and trg with funnies. A demonstration was given by the A.V.R.E. to coys.	
do	4		All officers were addressed in the Tilburg cinema by 30 Corps comd, Gen. Horrocks, and given the main outline plan for op VERITABLE. The lecture was given excellently and everyone felt in quite high spirits at the end and one felt that everything possible had been done to ensure the success of the op. Owing to the continuous rain most of the day the bn did little outdoor trg. Capt J.D.C. Graham returned from U.K. leave and took over comd of "D" coy with the rank of Major. "C" coy had their photograph taken.	
do	5		The bn prepared to move to the conc area for op VERITABLE. The bn was put at 3 hours notice to move from 1200 hours. The bn moved to NIJMEGEN 7162, at about 1600 hours. Roads were very full of traffic and the going was very slow. The bn arrived at its billets at about 0200 hours on the Tuesday morning.	
NIJMEGEN	6		Reveille 1100 hours, breakfast 1200 hours. The day was spent in preparation for the coming battle. Everyone was full of expectation and one felt as though it was "D" day all over again. The 2ic and coy comds went on a recce to the forward edge of the woods at 7457 and even further forward to 753568 where all had a good view of the	

		coming battlefield. The Reichswald Forest seemed as though it was very much overlooking the advance of the div but the reason for these impressions was no doubt because we had all been in Holland and had not seen hilly country for so long.	
do	7	Frantic last minute rush to sort out the final details. Admin "O" gp at 1030 hours. The C.O. returned from U.K. leave but remained at Div HQ as the Div comd thought that as the 2ic Major Goodwyn had planned phase 1 he should remain in comd of the bn for this phase of the battle. Final "O" gp at 1800 hours. The security of the op was admirable, except that until the briefing of officers on 4th Feb, the only officers who were allowed to be briefed were the CO and the 2ic. For future ops of this kind it is essential that the IO should be in on it at a very early date in order that the specialist work such as study of photographs etc can be done before the frantic rush and issue of maps and photos is made. The issue of maps for the op was on a very good scale. PERSONAL MESSAGE FROM C IN C.	See APPENDIX J
do	8	Reveille was at 0300 hours and the bn moved off in tanks to FAA at 0500 hours where the troops had breakfast. Remounting their tanks the bn was filmed by Gaumont-British as they moved down to the FUP. The barrage was terrific and the thunder of the guns unbroken. Bofors and MMGs fired "pepperpot" tasks. Leading coys detanked and deployed and negotiated the first obstacle - our own minefield which lay on our side of the start-line. The tanks had some bad luck. The Scots Guards tanks got through alright but the Flails, Crocodiles and AVREs on which so many hopes had been built, were delayed first crossing a stream and then a series of boggy patches, and they were never able to catch up with the battle. What was worse, all the carriers stuck in the narrow gap in the minefield, already churned up by the Churchills, so that when the tanks and infantry moved forward at 0930 hours they went without any of the Sapper or Pioneer stores necessary for gapping the minefield or expected wire obstacles. Until the barrage halted for half-an-hour on the German frontier, all went more or less according to plan. On the right "B" coy was held up for a time by a thickly-sown A.P. minefield and for a short time fell behind the barrage. It was here that Sjt Page lost a foot in a gallant attempt to lead his platoon through and the coy lost in all one killed and six wounded before a gap was found. On the left "A" coy successfully passed the minefield but ran into some heavy enemy DF which killed Lt Hutton and wounded the coy comd, Major Bruce and several others. CSM Green very coolly and gallantly rallied the coy however and brought them	

KRAMENBURG		<p>through to the first objective, for which he was awarded an immediate DCM, the ribbon of which Field Marshal Montgomery pinned on to him a fortnight later. Moving on to German soil, "B" coy took the lead and captured some eighty PsW in what was intended to be the strong point of ELSENHOF, suffering only one casualty - a chance splinter from our own barrage. "C" coy mopping up behind then took as many PsW but had a rougher time from the enemy's DF. On the left the HLI went forward to attack and capture KRAMENBURG. The tanks were in a bad way due to the mud and only the Squadron Leader's tank went with the HLI through Kramenburg. On the last leg through Kramenburg station and along the railway to the final objectives, enemy resistance stiffened and all coys had to fight their way in, though without heavy casualties. "B" coy were again lucky in being able to slip in close behind the barrage while "D" and "C" coys cleared a number of MG posts on the right. The HLI worked forward through Kramenburg behind them. By about 1700 hours the Cameronians on our right had cleared the high ground and life became more peaceful around Kramenburg. There was no sign of a counter-attack. Instead a steady trickle of Germans with white flags came in to our forward platoons. Towards last light four game tanks got up to "D" coys forward position. The CO who had followed the bn throughout the attack on foot had already come up to the station and taken over comd from Major Goodwyn, and by darkness the bn was securely dug-in for its first night on German soil.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Addendum</u></p> <p>On its way down to the FAA the Bn nearly lost its breakfast as the 3 atk guns towed by Lloyds stuck in the mud and it was only when the bty Comd's half-track (Warspite) saved the situation by towing them out. It seemed fantastic that the operation should have been jeopardised by the lack of foresight in making up the tracks to the FAA.</p>	
KRAMENBURG 8056	9	<p>The bn remained at its positions at KRAMENBURG 8056. Bn HQ at factory 806557, "A" coy local defence Bn HQ, "B" 813554, "C" 810548, "D" 813550. 44 Bde passed through the bn and breached the Siegfried Line with few cas. Quite a large number of PsW came out from the building in front of our forward coys. For the two days, 8th and 9th the bn took about 250 PsW. The bn was in high spirits as everyone seemed proud that their job had been well and truly done. The Padre went out [and] buried the dead. All known dead were accounted for. Pte of coy was reported missing on the previous day. Today he was found by the REs in a slight hollow in</p>	

			the minefield with a foot off. He was still alive and the doctors said that there was every chance that he would recover which was amazing seeing that the night in question was exceptionally cold.	
MATTERBORN 867548	10		The bn was ordered to take over from 44 Bde on the MATTERBORN feature. This they did in daylight, after a somewhat halty start as 43 Div were on the main axis to CLEEVE. The bn halted temporarily at NUTTERDEN prior to moving through the wood to the Matterborn feature. It was an interesting feature in that there was an enemy gun park in front of our coy posns. The regular pattern of our own arty shells was remarkable and the guns had been left intact with the exception in some places where the breach blocks had been removed. Some of the bn lived in dugouts which were very comfortable. Each had bunks and electric light, a stove and wooden flooring. Our own arty seemed to have forgotten that there is such a thing as crest clearance after being in Holland for so long, as they landed many shells unpleasantly close on the ridge in front of "C" coy.	
DONSBRUGGEN 869573	11		The bn moved to DONSBRUGGEN after having cleared the western edge of the wood STAATSFORST TIERGARTEN, that is the wood West of track junc 872562 to track junc 878572. The op was uneventful. The bn was then billeted in DONSBRUGGEN in what was left of the houses. A2 echelon, which had remained by the station in Kranenberg woke up in the morning to find the river had flooded them out. The vehs were moved on to the platforms, and it took about three days to tow them all out. This was done with the aid of a German tracked veh of a new pattern.	
do	12		The day was spent in cleaning up. The bn remained in the same location.	
do	13		The bn was at 2 hours notice to move to CALCAR 0050. Stand down came at 1700 hours.	
do	14		The bn was at 30 minutes notice to move to capture CALCAR. After standing to most of the day the op was cancelled as the opposition was too great and the flanking troops had not made enough progress. In addition the sector was being taken over by the 2nd Canadian Corps.	
do	15		No move. Coys did P.T.	
do	16		No move. Planning and preparations for attack on the West corner of GOCH 9042.	
DONSBRUGGEN	17		Bn prepared to attack and capture N.W. end of GOCH 9043. The bn was told to stand down as 43 div had made unexpected progress and were on what was to have been our start-line.	

do	18	Church parades were held. Bn was at two hours notice to move from 1300 hours. The op was put off as 44 Bde were making good progress in GOCH. Instead we were due to pass through 5 DCLI (43 Div) in Kangaroos and take BUCHOLT 9543.	
Near CLEVE 929495	19	Reveille 0530 hours. Owing to a last minute change in plan the op was postponed until the following day. The bn moved instead to a conc area 929495. The CO and IO went on a recce to the SCHULE 945453 and on the way back shells were falling about 100 - 200 yards away. A final conference was held at Bde to tie up the Bde plan. The bn did not operate with the Scots Guards as they were still with the Canadians. Instead we had the 5 Coldstream Guards.	
BUCHOLT 9533	20	The bn moved off to pass the start-line at 1030 hours the objective being BUCHOLT 9533 which was captured in the early afternoon and our total bag of PsW was 194. In this attack the bn was mounted on Kangaroos, and proved to be very effective.  There were two interesting features of this battle. The first being direction. In spite of the fact that coy comds were given the opportunity to see the ground it was found very difficult to keep direction in the mist and smoke and some cas were caused through the Kangaroos firing wildly as a result. The second point being that it appears that the funnies seemed to be frightened of taking risks of war. They did not appear to realise that they were there to help the infantry and to get them fwd. This seems to be the universal moan of these specialists. They do not realise that there is no such thing as a battle to suit their own book tactics and whatever they do the infantry still have to go on with or without them, cas or no cas.	
do	21	Enemy activity was confined to shelling and mortaring which was exceptionally heavy on the fwd coy areas, particularly A and B coys. There was a marked increase in air activity by German jet propelled planes as they flew right across the battle front on several occasions. During the night while some [of] our bombers were returning from a raid on the Rhine, a bomber dropped a stick of bombs right across the fwd coys, again too close to the unfortunate A coy, luckily causing no cas.	
do	22	Shelling and mortaring by the enemy was again very heavy. A Nb.W was active on our front. A P.W. stated that it was fired mounted on a veh and after firing a few salvos moved back. A great deal of trouble was taken to evacuate civilians from the area of Bn HQ and the fwd coy areas. C coy lost its ammunition carrier when it received a direct hit.	

do	23		There was still heavy shelling and mortaring which was due to the activity of the rest of our div which was attacking through the forest to our right. News came through that we were to be relieved that night by the Coldstream Guards (the inf of the Guards Armoured Div). Harbour parties were sent to recce a conc for the night at 9244. The relief was due to be carried out about 2230 hours but they arrived very late and it was not completed before the early hours of the morning. "D" coy went under comd of 2nd Gordons to act as counter-attack coy.	
	24		Div would not release the bn for a rest until the evening as the div could not be relieved until it had reached its final objective which was approx 975410 to wood in bend of river at 943395. Two harbour parties were sent off (1) to Louvaine, which was later cancelled and (2) to Tilburg. The bn was not required to help 44 Bde but was doubled-up with the Lincolns (3 British Div) which was relieving the rest of the div.	
TILBURG	25		The bn moved in TCVs to new area in TILBURG. They arrived at approx 1400 hours and were concentrated in the area 177325. Most of the troops were billeted in civilian billets and the people were delighted to meet their liberators once again.	
do	26		Reveille 1100 hours and first meal at 1200 hours. The rest of the day was spent in cleaning up. Entertainments were laid on for the evening.	
	27		Troops received pay, exchange of clothing. Day spent in general admin.	
	28		A rehearsal was held for the General's inspection. Turnout was good. The officers held a dance in the evening. A surplus of ladies made it rather embarrassing for the IO, which was aggravated in no small measure when Capt Brown arrived with half-a-dozen Canadian nurses who had come from TURNHOUT.	