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ARMY FORM C.2118

WAR DIARY

or

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

(Delete heading not required).

Unit Headquarters 227 (H) Inf Bde

Month and Year JANUARY 1945

Commanding Officer Brig EC Colville, DSO

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	References to Appendices
HELDEN	1	-	<p>The enemy opened the New Year with a well planned raid on 10 HLI outpost on the bank of the R MAAS at 828999. Starting at 0230 hrs a box barrage was put down around the post and then the position was attacked by at least 12 enemy. Four HLI men were missing after the raid, presumably PW.</p> <p>The Commanding Officer visited the area at 0030 hrs when all was quiet. At 0230 hrs the outpost reported being fired on from the West bank of the river. Section of the rear platoon was immediately ordered forward by the Coy Comd, but on approaching the post they came under fire from each flank of the position and were pinned down. The reserve platoon of 2 A & S H, under comd 10 HLI, were then sent forward but on reaching the post found no trace of the enemy except a stick grenade.</p> <p>No one was seen to cross or recross the river in the vicinity of the outpost although this part of the river was under observation the whole time. It was thought that the enemy must have been lying up on the West bank of the river.</p> <p>During the morning there was considerable enemy air activity over the Div Front and of the 30 enemy planes seen five were shot down and two more damaged by AA fire.</p> <p>At 1715 hrs the enemy put down 50 shells in 15 minutes on the HELDEN (7804) area. No damage or casualties were caused by the shelling except 2 Gordons had one three-ton vehicle damaged.</p>	
HELDEN	2-20	-	<p>Then followed a quiet period, with heavy snow storms proving the worst enemy.</p> <p>As the Bde area had not been thoroughly searched by the units previously in this sector, it was arranged that members of the Interior Military Forces of the Netherlands should be given this task, and on 9 Jan they swept the woods in the area but found no trace of the enemy.</p>	APPX 'J' Folio 5

This spell of quietness was enlivened by a mock crossing of the river staged by 2 A & S H, who launched a boat from the slipway in KESSEL (8200) at 2057 hrs on 11 Jan. There was only slight reaction from enemy guns and mortars, but the enemy appeared to 'Stand To' all night and there was considerable MG fire.

Comd 8 Corps, Lt Gen EH Barker, CB, CBE, DSO, MC, visited the Bde area on 14 Jan and went round Coy areas. He also visited several OPs. One OP in the Kessel area was hit by mortar bombs half an hour before the Corps Comd arrived there. Lt Gen Barker had lunch at Bde HQ before leaving the area.

Later in the day the Bde Comd left for HQ 15 (S) Inf Div to take over comd of the Division while the Div Comd was absent on leave. Lt Col HP Mackley, OBE, OC 10 HLI, arrived at Bde HQ to assume comd of the Bde.

COs Conference was held at Bde HQ at 1000 hrs 15 Jan to discuss the relief of the Bde by 1 SS Bde and plans for training.

A small party of RAF pilots and air gunners paid a two-day visit to the fwd bns, 10 HLI and 2 Gordons, from 16-17 Jan to see how the infantry live in the line. On their return they gave a very appreciative account of their visit.

On 17 Jan Brig EC Colville, DSO left for leave to ENGLAND.

The Bde was relieved by 1 SS Bde on 20 Jan, 6 Cdo relieving 10 HLI at BAARLO (8604) and 45 (Marine) Cdo relieving 2 Gordons at KESSEL. The relief was completed without incident, and the Bde then moved to the SEVENUM (8114) area to relieve 44 (L) Inf Bde. 2 Gordons relieved 6 RSF in BLERICK (9009) and 2 A & S H relieved 6 KOSB North of BLERICK in area (8912), 10 HLI being in reserve at MAASBREE (8207).

During the Bde's stay in the BAARLO- KESSEL sector, a fairly comprehensive picture of the enemy 'layout' on the East bank of the River was built up due to the excellent reports from OPs.

The Bde spent only six days in the BLERICK Sector before being relieved by 6 Air Landing Bde of 6 Airborne Division on 26 Jan.

APPX 'J' Folio 1

APPX 'J' Folio 7

		<p>On 24 Jan six Spitfires (believed to be enemy) and two FW 190s attacked tpt in the area of 2 A & S H Comd Post and also along the SEVENUM - BLERICK rlyw causing damage and casualties. 2 A & S H had one driver killed and two Jeeps and one 15-cwt truck damaged, and 6 Air Landing Bde had two men wounded and two Jeeps and three 3-ton vehicles shot up.</p> <p>10 HLI were relieved by 6 Armd Recce on 24 Jan and moved to rest area at MERXPLAS (9910) in BELGIUM.</p> <p>Bde HQ moved to GOIRLE (1427), south of TILBURG, but Bde Tac HQ did not leave SEVENUM until 26 Jan, when 2 Gordons and 2 A & S H were relieved. 2 Gordons moved to area NW of MERXPLAS at 9715 and 2 A & S H moved to GOIRLE (1427)</p> <p>The Div now came under comd 30 Corps and on 29 Jan Lt Gen BG Horrocks, CB, DSO, MC, Comd 30 Corps, visited Bde HQ, where he met the Bde Comd, Brig EC Colville, DSO, who had returned from leave during the day, Bn Comds and also Coy Comds.</p> <p>The Div Comd attended the Bde discussion and cloth model exercise on the "Assault against Fortified Enemy Defence Positions" held on 31 Jan.</p>	APPX 'J' Folio 4.
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