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ARMY FORM C.2118

**WAR DIARY**

or

Unit 15 Scottish Reconnaissance Regt

**~~INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY~~**

(Erase heading not required)

Commanding Officer Lt.Col. K.C.C. Smith

Month and Year Sep 44.

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	References to Appendices
B.L.A.	1		The Regiment under command 53 Div moved up at first light to the area of MARLERS. We arrived there about 1500 hrs having met no opposition on the way and having liaised with the Canadians who were on our left and who appeared to be doing very well.	
	2.		Regiment at rest in MARLERS Area and awaiting orders for the next phase, having reverted to the command of 15 (S) Div.	
	3.		5th Anniversary of outbreak of war. Regtl Church Service to commemorate this. Div Comd called and stayed to lunch. He warned us to be ready to move on or about 5 Sep. The Commanding Officer held a conference of Regtl Officers to discuss Regtl matters.	
	4.		The day was spent in briefing and preparing for the next battle, or rather chase. We were briefed for the flank protection of the Div in the advance to ROULERS in BELGIUM. The Commanding Officer attended a Div 'O' Gp at 1500 hrs.	
B.L.A.	5.		The Regiment moved up to the area of HOUVAIN. This was a peace move, the Regiment merely catching up the lag between ourselves and the Armour.	
	6.		The Regiment moved off at first light via ARRAS to BELLEGHEM, crossing the BELGIAN Frontier at about 1000 hrs. 'B' Sqn cleared an FAA for the inf in the area at BELLEGHEM. 'A' & 'C' Sqns recced out on the flanks, 'A' Sqn in the area of KIRKHOVE (0152) and 'C' Sqn at AVELGHEN (9750). 'A' & 'C' Sqns operated during the day and reached the general line COURTRAI - WAERGHEM - CRUYSHAUTEN. Pockets of enemy were encountered but no definite movement was discernible as the enemy appeared to be very disorganised and moving in all directions. Considerable execution was done, particularly by 'A' Sqn, who took a fairly large number of prisoners (about 130) and had a generally good day. Regtl locations as under:- R.H.Q. - BELLEGHEM (8751)      'A' Sqn - KIRKHOVE (0152) 'B' Sqn - BELLEGHEM (8751)      'C' Sqn - AVELGHEN (9750)	

B.L.A.	7	<p>Regt still in same locations. 'C' Sqn re-checked their area up the main COURTRAI Rd and met comparatively little opposition. 'A' Sqn, who were virtually operating with 4 Armd Bde had difficulty in moving northwards as the 4 Armd Bde were occupying most of the area and were in contact with fairly strong enemy forces. 'A' Sqn had a fairly successful day taking 40 prisoners and doing some execution among soft tpt.</p> <p>'B' Sqn operated in the area EAST &amp; WEST of COURTRAI and met fairly stiff opposition at DEERLYCK and HARLEBREKE, but managed to report on the crossing over the R. LYS. During the afternoon a severe gale was blowing and RHQ were forced under cover. During the evening 4 Armd Bde withdrew back to the line of the ESCAUT Canal into Armd Regtl blobs, 'A' Sqn operating with 44 R.T.R. in the defence of KIRKHOVE Br, 'C' Sqn with the Scots Greys at AVELGHEM Br. During the night a fairly stiff attack was put in on the KIRKHOVE Br and 'A' Sqn spent a restless night. The attack was driven off and from the questioning of PW it would appear that a large party of enemy, about 2,000 strong, had attempted to cross the ESCAUT Canal to get home to the "Fatherland". They were unable to do so.</p>	
B.L.A.	8	<p>The only Sqn allotted a specific task was 'B' Sqn, who were given the task of moving in front of 44 (L) Inf Bde on the centre line COURTRAI - GHENT (J.1980). 'B' Sqn were also given the task of protecting the right flank of the Bde. Leading troops crossed the S.P. X Rds HARLEBEKE at 0800 hrs. At 0900 hrs leading elements were still on the start line, and on enquiries being made it was discovered that the troops had encountered slight opposition which they had quickly mopped up, and were now embroiled in collecting PW. The rate of progress was not increased until it was firmly impressed upon the Tp Leaders that it was their job to reconnoitre and <u>NOT</u> to collect PW. 'B' Sqn patrols finally contacted 7 Armd Div in GHENT, who were greatly relieved to know that their left flank was covered. The troop of 'B' Sqn doing right flank protection met opposition at DEERLYKE which was finally cleared up, and by 1800 hrs the Sqn having done all that could usefully be done in this area, was ordered to concentrate at OYCKE (J. 0562). During the day the Sqn reported all Brs over the R. LYS between COURTRAI and DENTZE were blown, the enemy being seen on the NORTH Bank. 'C' Sqn had 3 Officer patrols out during the day and reconnoitred the area of VICHTE which was held. They operated in that area during the day and had a fairly successful day, capturing VICHTE themselves (!) and some 18 to 20 prisoners, and killing a fairly large number of enemy and shooting up a number of soft vehicles. 'A' Sqn were ordered to recce a Regtl</p>	

		harbour at OYCKE. The Regiment concentrated there in the evening and spent a quiet night.	
	9	A day of rest, maintenance being first priority. Church Services were held in the evening and a Regtl rep went to Div HQ at ORDENARDE to receive orders for a move to an area NORTH of BRUSSELS next day.	
B.L.A.	10.	The Regiment moved up to a new area BREENDONCK (J.6277) arriving there about 1500 hrs. The route was via ALOST and HAECHE. From 1600 hrs the village was "en fete" and a Dance was arranged for the Regt. During the evening the C.O. attended a conference at Div HQ. Information was extremely scanty, especially with regard to 30 Corps on our right and the position on the ALBERT Canal. The Regt was to send patrols into this area next day to obtain all available information. 'A' Sqn was to do this job with Armoured Cars. 'C' Sqn were to be prepared to provide 2 Officer patrols if required.	
	11 Sep.	'A' Sqn operated in the area of the ALBERT Canal from excl ANTWERP to incl HERENTHALS. A great deal of useful information was gained about the enemy and our own troops. A summary of patrol report is attached as Appendix 'A'.	
B.L.A.	12	'A' Sqn carried out the same task till relieved by a Bn of 227 Bde who were to move up during the day. The Regt moved up to a new harbour in the area of VEERLE, crossing the S.P. at 1105 hrs and arriving at 1455 hrs. Locations:- RHQ & 'A' Ech - VOORST 103791. 'A' Sqn - 105793. 'B' Sqn - 107791. 'C' Sqn - 105791. 'A' Sqn did well. Report having met no opposition of an aggressive nature. They only fired at some enemy at long range and despite "stooging" failed to draw any serious fire. Contact with flanks of 50 Div and 53 Div was established and the Sqn duly returned to harbour of 2100 hrs, having been relieved by 2 Bn Gordons. The C.O. attended a Div 'O' Gp at 2045 hrs. The Regtl tasks were as under:- 'C' Sqn to recce the area of the ALBERT Canal Bank from incl 121823 to the Class I Br. 'B' Sqn to similarly recce from incl KAPEL 0286 to the inter-Div Bdy. 'A' Sqn - maintenance.	
B.L.A.	13.	The day developed very differently from what was expected and the Regt did far more than on previous occasions when it has been possible to fully brief Sqns and patrols the night before. 'C' & 'B' Sqns moved out at 0715 hrs and it soon became obvious that the situation had considerably altered during the night and the enemy were in nothing like the strength they were supposed to be. At 0830	

B.L.A.			<p>hrs the C.O. gave fresh instructions to 'A' &amp; 'B' Sqns. 'A' Sqn were to recce Brs 1193 and 0793 and the area between them. 'B' Sqn to recce the area between the two canals excl GHEEL and up to RETHY. 'A' Sqn patrols met no opposition until approaching the Brs. Both brs were blown and a considerable amount of opposition was encountered on the far bank of the canal, but comparatively little on this side.</p> <p>'B' Sqn met no opposition until approaching MOLL at about 1415 hrs, where a battle took place and lasted some considerable time. However, a by-pass was found by which the tanks and inf could go round to seize and hold the br at DONCK. A loud explosion had been heard by 'B' Sqn at 1530 hrs, which was, in fact, the blowing of the Br at DONCK. This infm was not confirmed until 1830 hrs. The Div Comd wanted the area between MOLL and GHEEL to be combed and the Canal searched for any likely bridging sites. 'C' Sqn was allotted this task at about 1400 hrs and reported that a certain amount of opposition was met on both sides of the canal although all the Brs were blown.</p> <p>Rep was sent to recce a Regtl harbour area in MEERHOUT 1484 and at 1530 hrs the C.O. decided it was advisable to get the whole Regt across the ALBERT Canal and therefore ordered the Regt to harbour in MEERHOUT that evening. All Sqns concentrated at dusk. Locations:- RHQ, 'B' Sqn, 'A' Echelon - 152858. 'C' &amp; 'A' Sqns - MEERHOUT.</p>	
B.L.A.	14.		<p>'B' Sqn were ordered to recce the Brs between the ALBERT Canal and the JUNCTION Canal on the Canal D'EMBRANCHEMENT. All Brs on this canal were reported to be blown. The C.O. attended Div 'O' Gp where it was stated that the 7 Armd Div were coming up on our left flank to the area SOUTH of HERENTHALS and that 15 Div were most anxious that no enemy should escape EAST from HERENTHALS before 7 Armd Div arrived. 'B' Sqn were ordered to do this job and to contact 7 Armd Div tomorrow, 15th. 'B' Sqn were also ordered to send a patrol to accompany an RE Recce Offr to examine the Br at 2594.</p>	
	15		<p>'C' Sqn were ordered to watch the area SOUTH of the JUNCTION Canal to prevent any infiltration between the DONCK Br and the 44 Bde B'head at 0792. They remained there during the day.</p> <p>'B' Sqn carried out the task of contacting 7 Armd Div and returned to harbour having completed the task of handing over to 7 Armd Div by 1500 hrs.</p> <p>Field Marshall Sir Bernard L. Montgomery, DSO, MC, visited Div HQ to present medal ribbons awarded in earlier battles. The Regt formed</p>	

			the Guard of Honour which was commanded by Capt L.T. FORD. The Div Comd complimented the Regt on the high standard of turn-out.	
B.L.A.	16		<p>A quiet day for the Regt, except 'C' Sqn who continued their task of watching the JUNCTION Canal from incl 117938 to 206960. Small parties of the enemy only were encountered and the Sqn remained on this task during the day.</p> <p>The Padre left us for 193 Fd. Amb. on temporary attachment.</p>	
	17		Similar to the 16th with 'C' Sqn continuing with their task of watching the JUNCTION Canal. The Assault Tp of 'A' Sqn was placed under command of 'C' Sqn to assist them. 'B' Sqn provided an escort to RE Br building at 200928.	
	18		'C' Sqn were again allotted the task on the JUNCTION Canal. Higher authority were very worried about this area and a composite force - 6 Royal Scots, 'C' Coy 1 Mx (MGs), Pl 'D' Coy 1 Mx (Mortars) with considerable arty support was put under comd of the C.O. The enemy was fairly active in patrolling during the late afternoon and captured 2 men from 'C' Sqn.	
	19.		The C.O. remained in command of assault forces watching SOUTH bank of Canal. Nothing of interest happened.	
B.L.A.	20		<p>Nothing of operational interest.</p> <p>Lieut. Colonel J.A. GRANT PETERKIN was posted to 43 Div as GSO 1, and Major K.C.C. SMITH assumed command of the Regt. Major P.T.I. MacDIARMID was appointed 2 i/c of Regt and various other internal alterations were made.</p> <p>The Regt was ordered to move up to HOLLAND (STEENSEL area) tomorrow.</p> <p>'B' Sqn were to remain and help 44 Bde in the MOLL area watching the SOUTH bank of the JUNCTION Canal.</p>	
B.L.A.	21		<p>The Regt arrived in HOLLAND and were harboured in the HEIKE area about 4000 yards WEST of EINDHOVEN. 'C' Sqn sent out Officer patrols to the line of the WILHELMINA Canal to contact U.S. Forces in the area of EINDHOVEN and SON (ZON). 'C' Sqn recced the brs SOUTH of BEST and OIRSCHOT. They contacted the 502 Parachute Inf Regt, U.S. Army, in the SON (ZON) and EINDHOVEN areas and tied up with them. The Regt, less one Sqn ('B' Sqn) under command 46 Bde Gp which was going to attempt an assault crossing of the WILHELMINA Canal tomorrow. Regtl re-organisation completed as under:-</p> <p>Major K.C.C. SMITH assumes command.</p> <p>Major P.T.I. MacDIARMID to 2 i/c Regt.</p> <p>Lieut G.R. BLOUNT to be Capt &amp; Adjt.</p> <p>Capt W.B. LIDDELL to be 2 i/c 'C' Sqn</p> <p>Capt L.T. FORD from 2 i/c 'C' Sqn to O.C. 'HQ' Sqn.</p>	

		Major G.A. GADDUM from O.C. 'HQ' Sqn to O.C. 'A' Sqn.	
	22	<p>46 Bde Gp were involved in the BEST area and were to inform the Regt when it was safe to cross the Class 9 Br and carry out tasks as follows:-</p> <p>'A' Sqn to move NORTH via BOXTEL and in the event of all well to carry straight on to HERTOGENBOSCH, 44 Bde following them up.</p> <p>'B' Sqn in support of 46 Bde, as soon as the situation allowed, to pass through 46 Bde and recce on their front to OIRSCHOT and then along the main Rd running NE and to the SOUTH of this road.</p> <p>'C' Sqn to recce the area between the main BEST - HERTOGENBOSCH Rd and the BEST - OIRSCHOT - TILBURG Rd.</p> <p>As there was only a Cl 9 Br, the 2 Staghounds of 'B' Sqn could not cross, and therefore they were ordered to move on 30 Corps Maintenance Route via SON (ZON) and St OEDENRODE and to join their Sqn by coming down the St OEDENRODE - BEST Rd.</p> <p>46 Bde were seriously involved in BEST and it was not until 1400 hrs that they considered it reasonable for 'A' Sqn to commence their advance Northwards across the Br. 'A' Sqn quickly made contact with the enemy who were holding strong posns across the main Rd about 4000 yds NORTH of BEST. They patrolled EAST and WEST but could find no way round and it soon became evident that it would require a considerable force to clear this posn up. The other two Sqns remained on the SOUTH side of the Canal and 'A' Sqn were drawn back at night. R.H.Q. was established at AACHT (3922) with the Sqns harboured on either side the main Rd.</p> <p>'B' Sqn Staghound patrol made very slow progress owing to considerable traffic congestion, but eventually contacted the Americans at St OEDENRODE and got very valuable information on the general situation on the St OEDENRODE - BEST Rd. It was clear that the enemy were in the general vicinity of this rd although they were not taking a particularly active part. This patrol withdrew back into St OEDENRODE for the night.</p>	
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	23.	<p>The plan of the 22 Sep was to be put into operation in the event of it being feasible, but again 'A' Sqn were held up in a similar position to the day before, having crossed the Br at 0600 hrs. 44 Bde following up 'A' Sqn made abortive efforts all day to clear up the situation and allow 'A' Sqn to proceed.</p> <p>'B' Sqn's Staghound patrol repeated yesterday's performance.</p>	
	24	<p>'A' Sqn continued patrolling on the front of 44 Bde but could make no progress and were then ordered to commence patrolling down the main Rd BEST - St. OEDENRODE. 'C' Sqn were ordered to take over the</p>	

B.L.A.			close protection of the Cl 9 and Cl 40 Brs at BEST, so relieving the inf who were holding them.	
	25.		'A' Sqn continued to patrol in the bridge-head and moved up axis Rd BEST - DONDENDONK - St OEDENRODE. Enemy reported in fairly large numbers in the woods NORTH of Rd 3830 - 3930. 'B' Sqn ordered to recce to the Rly line NORTH of BEST to see if there had been any withdrawal by the enemy. If possible they were to try and recce the tracks to the WEST. The enemy were still covering the Rly so it was impossible for 'B' Sqn to make any progress.	
	26		R.H.Q. moved up to LE VEULT (25,000 Sheet 5 (Holland) 389284). 'A' Sqn reced the general area of large woods 3830 - 3930. 'B' Sqn moved up to St OEDENRODE and reced the area on the EAST of 'A' Sqn along the line of the R. DOMMEL towards LIEMPDE. 'C' Sqn remained in close protection of the Brs. In the evening 'A' Sqn were moved to the X Rds at BEST to take over their protection from 6 KOSB.	
B.L.A.	27		'A' Sqn relieved of BEST X Rds by 2 GORDONS and moved up to LE VEULT area to fill the gap between 2 GORDONS and 2 A & SH. 'B' Sqn continued recce role on right flank, working from their base at St OEDENRODE. 'C' Sqn relieved of Br protection by RE at 0800 hrs and rested until taking over from 'A' Sqn in LE VEULT area at 1600 hrs, when 'A' Sqn went into reserve SOUTH of the canal.	
	28		R.H.Q. same location. 'A' Sqn rest SOUTH of the bridge-head in AACHT area. 'B' Sqn continued patrolling on the right flank and they gained very valuable and accurate information. 44 Bde attacked in this area and gained a certain amount of ground. 'C' Sqn remained in LE VEULT area holding the gap. About 1730 hrs the Div were most anxious about enemy reported forming up in wood 3931. This was dealt with by Arty and after reced by 'B' Sqn patrol. Div were still most unhappy about the position but later the C.O. discovered it was adequately protected by 2 Searchlight detachments and crews on both sides the wood.	
B.L.A.	29		R.H.Q. static in same area. 'B' Sqn continue patrolling in St. OEDENRODE area until relieved by 'A' Sqn in the late afternoon. 'B' Sqn remained in this area. 'C' Sqn holding the gap in LE VEULT area.	
	30		R.H.Q. moved to St OEDENRODE. 'A' Sqn in support of 158 Bde carried out recce on EAST of R. DOMMEL. They gained valuable information during the day. They moved forward to 426328 where they acted as "long stop" to 158 Bde who were very spread out. 'B' Sqn resting in St. OEDENRODE area. 'C' Sqn in LE VEULT area.	