

Instructions regarding War Diaries and Intelligence Summaries are contained in F.S. Regs., Vol. I. and the Staff Manual respectively. Title pages will be prepared in manuscript.

ARMY FORM C.2118

WAR DIARY

or

Unit 279, Field Coy. R.E.

~~INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY~~

(Erase heading not required)

Month and Year SEPT. 1944

Commanding Officer Maj.P.T. WOOD M.C.R.E.

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	References to Appendices
ANDE	1	2100 2300	Day of orders & counter-orders. Weather showery with bright spells Lt. Haines off to CRE to receive briefing on route recce Lt. Haines returns	
	2	0830 1230 1800	Lt. Haines with 1 Sec of 3 Pln off on Route Recce 1 Sec of 1 Pln off to H.Q.R.E. to Recce new harbour for H.Q.R.E. Lt. Haines returns having completed half of task & reported result to C.R.E.	
FEUILLY	3	0530 0830 1055 2030 2100	Lt. Haines with 1 N.C.O. & 6 men from 3 Pln off to do further Rd. Recce. Coy move off to new area under Cmd for move 44(L) Inf. Bde Arrived at harbour 482155 Orders recd to move to new area 2100hrs Coy move off.	44(L) Inf. Bde Move order 10 (1)
WANNEL	4	0125 0800	Coy arrive at new harbour. Take over maintenance of Cl.18 br. at LONG.	
LIGNY	5	0300 0830 0920 0930 1220 2315	Move orders recd from C.R.E. Coy move off to new harbour area Crossed R. SEINE 1 Pln handed over mce of LONG br. to 70, Fd Coy RE. Arrived at new locn 099017. O.C. off to Bde "O" Group	05 (2) PT Wood Major R.E. O.C. 279th Field Company R.E.
RONQ	6	0250 0840 2010 2345	O.C. returns with Bde Movement order. O.C. off to Bde. Arrived at temporary harbour 758487 O.C. to Bde "O" Group	44 Bde Move order No. 13 (3)
	7	0130 0600	O.C. returns, Coy "O" Group. Verbal. Intention 279, Fd.Coy.RE to take up defensive position on R. LYS from br 757541 incl to Rly br 742536. Method No.1 Pln. No.2 Pln. No.3 Pln. All tps to be in position by 0700 hrs. Plns left to take up defensive posn in MENIN	

		0650 0700 1000 2200	O.C. off to see Plns. Lt. Haines off to C.R.E. as L.O. Lt. Haines returns. Plns withdrawn from defensive posn having seen no enemy all day. Verbal orders from 44 Bde to conc at Coy HQ locn for the night & move to BELLEGHEM at 0930 hrs on 8 Sep.	PT Wood Major R.E. O.C. 279th Field Company R.E.
BELLEGHEM DESSELGHEM	8	0930 0941	Coy move off to new area Crossed frontier into BELGIUM Arrived locn 852514. Moved off to new locn. Arrived at new locn 931610.	
	9		Day of rest. Fine day but rather cold.	
MALINES	10	0010 0815 1010 1610	Move order recd. Lt. Boardman off to recce new harbour Coy left for new area. Coy arrives at harbour 680732	44 Bde Move order No. 14 (4)
	11		Very quiet day, sunshine but a little chilly.	
WESTERLOO	12	0300 1200 1440 1800	Orders recd to move to Albert Canal area Left for new area Arrived at new locn 030800 No.2 Pln off to take over mtce of Cl. 9 F.B.E. br at 071843 from 233, Fd. Coy. R.E. Nos.1 & 3 Plns off to take over protection of br.	H.Q.R.E. 150/RE (5) PT Wood Major R.E. O.C. 279th Field Company R.E.
GHEEL	13	1345 1610 1650 1720 2300	Orders recd to move forward. Coy moved forward. Crossed ALBERT CANAL. Arrived at harbour area 073868 K Pln F.B.E. arrive under Cmd.	
	14	0600 2000 2220	1 & 2 Plns off to 44 Bde with FBE Pln to assist in forcing crossing over JUNCTION CANAL. FBE raft constructed at 075927. In between concentrated enemy shelling 2 A/Tk guns ferried across Ferrying discontinued as 8 R.S. did not require further vehs across. Day of very tiring & trying work. Under shell & mortar fire the whole time.	
	15	0020 0200	A Pln of 278 under Cmd of Lt. Murray placed under Comd. Following discussion with Brig. 44 Bde, it was decided to increase the ferrying facilities. Pln of 278 was therefore ordered to construct Cl.9 Shore loading raft 10 yds upstream of existing raft. FBE ferries brought down & unloading commenced. Slow progress owing to heavy shellfire	

		0815	4 Assault boat ferrys opened & maintained salvage ops not very successful 2 half floaters were disconnected whereupon the remaining 60ft of raft sank in approx. 2½ fathoms.	PT Wood Major R.E. O.C. 279th Field Company R.E.
		1700	Ferry service operated all afternoon. Handed over responsibility to 278 Fd. Coy. R.E.	
	17	0915	O.C. off to O Group to C.R.E. HQ	
		1240	O.C. returns.	
		1740	Church service held in camp. Day of rest & checking of stores.	
	18	1000	O.C. off to Bde.	
	19		Very quiet day of rest.	
	20	1115	1 Pln off to canal site to construct Cl.9 ferry to ferry 44 Bde vehs back	
		1215	Unloading commenced	
		1400	Ferry completed 1 Pln hand over to 2 Pln under Lt. NGW Haines	
		1700	No.2 Pln return having ferried 25 carriers back	
		1730	No.3 Pln off to continue ferry	
	21	0130	No.3 Pln return having ferried back 11 carriers plus guns. Tps also ferried there being no bridgehead left raft abandoned after salvaging ½ Floating Bay.	
		0530	44 (L) Inf. Bde Op Inst No.6 recd.	44 Bde Op Inst No.6 (5)
		1000	Coy moved off	
		1150	Coy arrived at conc area 182920	PT Wood Major R.E. O.C. 279th Field Company R.E.
		1810	Moved off. Hold up due to large priority convoys on rd. Whole Bde group delayed for 3 Hrs.	
GINDEBUITEN LOMMELSCHEHUT 311989		2000	Crossed Belgium-Dutch frontier into Holland - very heavy traffic on rds.	
		2200	Advance abandoned due to very heavy traffic on rds. Bde dispersed & Coy harboured at WAALWIJK 348088. A quiet night.	
WAALWIJK	22	0030	Orders recd from 44 Bde for continuation of advance. K.O.S.B. to lead in advance to contact formation, ready to move 22 1200, Coy to be at 30 mins notice from 22 1200.	
		0815	Orders recd from 44 Bde - advance may commence 22 1100.	
		0930	O.C. departs for O Group at 44 Bde HQ.	
		1030	O.C. returns. Lt. Scanlon & recce pty depart for K.O.S.B.	
		1230	C.S.M. Fahy & harbour recce pty depart for new locn. Capt. Ramsay R.E. leaves for hospital with complaint of back trouble & temperature. Lt. K.W. Bennett assumed duties of 2i/c.	PT Wood Major R.E. O.C. 279th Field Company R.E.
		1330	Orders recd to move immediately - O.C. departs for Bde.	
		1430	Coy leaves harbour and proceeds to S.P. STEEHSEL 3411	
EINDHOVEN		1600	Coy arrives new locn 411199.	
		2300	44 Bde O.O. No.7 recd.	O.O. No.7. (7)

	23	0630 1200 1500 2200 2330	C.S.M. Fahy & recce pty depart to join 6 R.S.F. Coy at 30 mins notice to move from 0800 hrs. Take over mtce of Cl. 40 br over canal at 390250. 1 Pln arrives on site. Close imprest account in Belgium currency and exchange for Dutch money. 2 Pln take over mtce of Cl. 40 br. Br area being subjected to spasmodic & inaccurate shelling. C.S.M. Fahy returns. 15(S) Inf.Div Op.Instn. No.28 recd.	15(S) Inf.Div.Op.Instn. No.28 (8)
	24	0400 0900 1100 1600	3 Pln take over mce of Cl. 40 br. Wear deck of Cl. 40 br completed & br handed over to 280 Fd Coy R.E. 3 Pln returns. Lt. P. du Vivier & recce party leave for R.S. Lt. P. du Vivier & pty return - no work to do. Raining heavily. Coy prepares for a very wet night.	
	25	0800 1330	It rained very heavily & approx 60% of Coy soaked. Rum issue authorised at 2330 (reached us 0045 - too late to be of use). O.C. wants to find dry billet for the men. General move commences to billet in Phillips factory building which is just across the rd. Here, at least, we shall be dry. Still having heavy periods of rain.	
	26	0900 1500 1630 2100	Rained heavily last night - management & personnel of Phillips factory have been most kind and co-operative & have spared no pains to help us. Visited by C.R.E. O.C. & 1 Sec of 3 Pln depart to remove a few trees from rd in area of 44 Bde HQ. O.C. & sec of 3 Pln return - no work necessary. Receive orders from C.R.E. to give close protection to Best Cl 40 & Cl.9 Brs. (Letter 159/RE attached).	PT Wood Major R.E. O.C. 279th Field Company R.E. Letter 159/RE (9)
	27	0730 0915 1230	Personnel move out to take on protection of bridges. Method :- 2 Pln rly br - relief by 3 Pln at 6hr intervals. Local protection of Cl.40 & Cl.9 brs by 1 Pln - 2 secs up at a time. Visited by Lt. Work who brought news of slight change of plan. Lt Work left to contact O.C. at Cl.40 Br. 3 Pln depart to take up reserve posns in BATA factory. Plan now becomes 2 Pln close protection of Rly br with posts on NORTH bank of Canal and 3 Pln in reserve, with 1 Pln still giving close protection to Cl.40 B.B & Cl.9 br. The posn on our L flank (Westerly) seems a little vague & there appear to be no tps to the West or S.W. of us.	PT Wood Major R.E. O.C. 279th Field Company R.E.
	28	0800	A quiet night at the br sites. Weather getting much colder at nights & showers & heavy rain frequent. The occasional shell	

		<p>still drops between the Rly br and the Cl. 40 B.B. German Tps can be seen moving about 2000 yards away. The gunners have a go at them and movement is not so obvious.</p> <p>1600 Most of the Coy had a bath today at the MUNICIPAL BATHS EINDHOVEN. Apparently we are the only British Tps between Jerry & Div.HQ. I understand Div HQ is a little perturbed</p> <p>1930 O.C. departs to be on site during the night</p>	
	29	<p>0900 Report from 1 Pln to say nothing to report</p> <p>1000 O.C. returns</p> <p>1300 Lt. Boardman departs to recce br over R. DOMMEL at 399321</p> <p>1515 Lt. Boardman returns - 2 assault boats reqd by RSF to ferry supplies</p> <p>1700 Assault boats arrived from 624 Fd Pk Coy & Lt. Boardman takes them to the site.</p> <p>1930 O.C. departs for site of defensive posns.</p>	<p>PT Wood Major R.E. O.C. 279th Field Company R.E.</p>
	30	<p>0800 Report from 1 Pln nothing to report</p> <p>0930 O.C. returns. Lt. Boardman departs to classify br over R. DOMMEL at 408822</p> <p>1100 Lt. Boardman returns. Br Cl.5 15ft span (4 No.) ⊙ Timber beams on pile bents 10ft(w)</p> <p>1945 O.C. departs for defensive posn.</p>	<p>PT Wood Major R.E. O.C. 279th Field Company R.E.</p>