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ARMY FORM C.2118

WAR DIARY

or

Unit 190 Field Regiment.R.A.

~~INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY~~

(Delete heading not required)

Month and Year Jan 45.

Commanding Officer Lt.Col.R.J.STREATFIELD.RA.

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	References to Appendices
HOLLAND	1.		The regiment was still in action near ROGDEL 7598. The New Year was ushered in by harassing fire from the Regt as the clock struck twelve. The more alert outposts on the MAAS stated the noise of Boche carousing ceased abruptly on receipt of this unwelcomed gift. During the day the CCRA, Brig. A.G. Matthews of 8 Corps visited the Div Arty. The CCRA came to the Regt in the afternoon and toured the bty areas, inspecting gun posns and meeting offr & men, in particular those who had recently come from 50 Div & 59 AGRA. Afterwards he was entertained to tea at RHQ.	
	2.		530 occupied the new Harassing Fire position at 744969. Shooting was still restricted to hostile mortar and battery tasks, with a very few observed tgts. Today the CO visited 31 RHU at Bourg Leopold in search of possible additions to the regt and returned with a new BSM and Maj EDC Campbell late BMRA of 55 Div. It was the CO's policy now that UK leave had started to have a few offr & NCO's surplus to WE who could fill up the places of personnel on leave.	
	3.		Overnight and during the day a thaw set in which cleared the roads of their icy cover. In the morning the CO had a conference with Sjts who had occupied forward OPs on the MAAS, discussing the advantages and disadvantages of each position and putting right anything that had gone wrong so far. As a rule forward OPs in forward infantry localities should never be occupied unless the observer is accompanied by the relieving infantry section.	
	4.		A quiet day with little shooting. A small party of Offrs & NCO's visited the Mines Museum at Bourg Leopold where there are good facilities for all sorts of mine training.	
	5.		The great work of today was the organising of the "42 CLUB" a regtl rest centre to be established in Heijthuisen 7196 near the CO's Tac HQ where Lt. Herbert the IO could keep watchful eye on it. The interpreter found a suitable place and a small staff was selected. The capacity of the club was 12 and the period of rest 24 hrs to be	

			extended probably to 48 hrs as things settled down. In the evening the CO went to HQRA for a discussion on Fire Plans.	R Streatfield
HOLLAND	6.		The cold returned and snow threatened. The 42 Club was opened in the evening when the first batch from 529 & 531 btys visited it. Its varied amenities include table tennis, darts, a wireless set, a gramophone and a piano.	
	7.		A very quiet day with scarcely any firing. The CRA paid a brief visit prior to his going on leave, to devolve certain responsibilities on the CO during his absence.	
	8.		To-day it snowed heavily. In the morning 529 bty relieved 530 bty in the harassing fire position. Major JHM Stephenson of 530 bty departed on a "Half-track" course to RHYL. Owing to the small number of offrs now left in 530 (2 being on courses, 2 in hospital and one on leave) Maj Campbell took over BC temporarily. In the afternoon the Div I.O. Capt Rosdol gave a talk on the current situation.	
	9.		A very quiet day with only a little hostile mortar shooting. In the evening there was an offrs conference at RHQ. The subjects under discussion were the line communication layout, the local defence scheme and the infantry dispositions and patrols. The first was found to be uncommonly complex and a more simple layout was evolved. Flaws in our own local defence were brought to light and a more comprehensive and foolproof plan was made.	
	10.		During the day RHQ moved from the Brunhold area to Ophoven 754980 where accommodation was better both for vehs and men. Another "Shampoo" exercise practising infantry control of artillery fire was carried out. A further simplification of line layout was made afterwards to avoid repetitions of certain errors which occurred in the passage of orders from infantry to gunners OPs. It was decided that in a fairly static position it is always better to employ an exchange at the main OP of a battery rather than have three or four "tees in".	
	11.		A very quiet day with only a little hostile mortar fire.	
HOLLAND	12.		Another quiet day marked by a short period of thaw in the middle of the day. Capt JFB O'Shea MC, Tp Comdr "A" Tp departed for England on a Photographic Interpretation course. Lt. Herbert started a fortnight's Regt signalling course for beginners and potential signallers.	R Streatfield
	13.		Chief events of the day were the practise of working out and firing Quick Barrage and Oboe smoke screen carried out by the CO. Visibility was poor. The results undoubtedly mystified the Hun.	
	14.		An uneventful day.	

	15.		531 bty occupied the harassing fire position and 529 returned to their old position at Brunhold. In the evening there was an officers' conference at which the regtl procedure in Quick barrage and Mike tgts was reviewed and discussed.	
	16.		In the early hours it was intended that the 9 CAMS would send their first fighting patrol over the MAAS. Everything was carefully practised and a fire plan was laid on in case of accidents. 61 Med Regt were to participate in this as well as ourselves. Unfortunately the assault boat was damaged and the patrol was called off. During the day the CO, CO2 and other offrs attended 2 lectures at Division on the organisation and tactical handling of 79 Armoured Division which is equipped with specialised weapons such as Crocodiles, Kangaroos, Flails and Buffaloes.	
	17.		During the day the CO went to a demonstration of the T97 V.T.fuze at Lommel ranges. This fuze is new to Field Gunnery, having originally been produced for A/A work. It is a "Proximity Fuze" exploding on coming within approximately 30 feet of a solid object. Their action produces a most effective air burst under most conditions though this fuze is liable to explode too soon in bad weather.	
	18.		In the early morning it was hoped to send the patrol from the 9 Cams over the MAAS. A repeat performance of the previous show was arranged, but the attempt was finally given up when the flares of an allied air raid illuminated the scene too much. The day that followed was quiet.	
HOLLAND	19.		An original item in the day's limited shooting was the firing of some propaganda shells over the MAAS. Our OP's were unfortunately unable to observe any reactions. A feature of the day was the show produced by Capt PMC Whitten of 531 Bty in a hall at Roggel. He scoured the regt for talent and two performances of a first rate variety show were given. The latent talent brought to light on this occasion was quite surprisingly good and it is hoped that there will be many more similar efforts.	R Streatfield
	20.		This was a very quiet day. The CO Lt.Col. R.J. Streatfield departed on UK Leave and Major T.P. Keene second-in-command assumed command of the Regt.	
	21.		A recce party consisting of one rep per bty and RHQ with Major Wingate of 531 bty in charge set out to recce a supposed rest area in the vicinity of LIERRE in Belgium. In the evening Maj Wingate returned to the regt to report on the excellence of the area to the CO.	
	22.		Plans for rest area were changed and Major Wingate departed to get new orders at Herenthals and to warn recce party of the change. At	

			the regt there was little happening though visibility was better than normal.	
	23.		Recce party moved from Lierre to Tilburg to receive a new area in the town itself. It was not a good area but it was considered the regt could squeeze in. On the MAAS the infantry of the Division was relieved by the 6th Airborne Div and it was expected that our regiment would be relieved by the 4th RHA. Lt. JJ McNinch of 531 Bty left the regiment to go on an Air OP Course in England.	
	24.		The Division less 190 Field regiment moved to the Tilburg area. The regt sent harbour parties to help the recce party in the new area. It was not expected that the 4th RHA would relieve them until the 27th January.	
	25.		At midday the regiment was suddenly ordered to move and the 13 RHA of 11 Armd Div appeared to take over from it. With great speed everyone packed up and by tea time the whole regiment was on the road. A hazardous journey on very slippery roads was accomplished with only one small accident and the regt was comfortably installed in Tilburg soon after nine o'clock at night.	
HOLLAND	26.		The day was spent chiefly in sorting out the new areas and generally settling down and cleaning up after the move. The troops were delighted to be in civilian billets after so many months in barns and dugouts. It was hoped that everyone would get a substantial rest and clean up.	R Streatfield
	27.&	28.	Two quiet days with nothing outstanding to report. By now everyone was well and comfortably settled in. The people of Tilburg certainly showed their delight at entertaining their liberators.	
	29.		We had our first regimental church parade in a church since we started the campaign.	
	30.		The only feature of the day was an Officers' Dance held in Tilburg. Officers of the regiment competed hard to produce the finest specimens of Dutch beauty.	
	31.		The month ended very quietly. A most remarkable fact is that throughout the month the regt received no casualties from enemy action. <u>CO's opinions</u> Counter Mortar is still in its teething stages. This month gave ample opportunity for testing it. At present it has too many masters and lacks good communications. The Results are slow and uncontrolled. My suggestions are that this most important weapon should be handled on a Div level. The Div CMO should have under his command (call it a Bty) 2 Radar dets, 2 Four Pen Recorders Dets and	

		<p>3 ACMO Detachments with a small line party. There should be two wireless nets, i.e., a Fwd Link and a Rear Link. The object being to speed up Retaliation on active enemy positions, especially the Mobile Nebelwerfer. Good communications are the essence of this problem coupled with unified control of these main means of detection.</p> <p>The past month is still noteworthy for the exceedingly slow procedure of getting personnel back to the Regt who have been wounded, sick, on courses or compassionate leave. The lack of a sense of urgency on the part of RHU staffs is quite deplorable, there is no doubt this laxity hampers the efficiency of the war effort and causes grave discontent.</p>	R Streatfield
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