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Army Form C.2118

**WAR DIARY**

or

**~~INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY~~**

(Delete heading not required)

Unit 102 (Northumberland Hussars)  
Anti-Tank Regt RA.

Month and Year February, 1945.

Commanding Officer Lieut-Colonel R.W. JELF RA

OBE

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	References to Appendices																		
	1		<p>Transport still causing trouble. Unable to get vehicles from Wksps. Regt offered a quantity of champagne at 130 Belgian francs and white wine at 50 Belgian francs.</p> <p>Capt ROBERTS called to see Major BARNETT to discuss future operations. Sgts SPOWART, CULLEN and HYNES called to say goodbye - a sad blow to the Regt after such long and good service.</p> <p>SCRA visits Regt to put us in the picture - we still find we are looking through dark spectacles after he has gone.</p> <p>C.O. goes to HQ RA.</p> <p>Adjt returns from leave after being A.W.O.L. one day.</p>																			
	2		Locations unchanged.																			
	3		<p>Major RA BARNETT accompanied by Major TA WIGGLESWORTH went off and did a recce of the area allotted for our two SP Tps which are taking part in the "Pepperpot" fire plan. Rather unsuccessful as the area had already been allotted to Fd Regts in the Gds Armd Div.</p> <p>Major FW WARD reced assembly area for Tac/Main RHQ and A Bty. This is in the middle of a town and is going to be very cramped. Space for the forthcoming operations is going to be at a premium, and as much as possible is to be left back in the Admin Gp area which is being established for the Div in this area.</p> <p>We are leaving personnel and vehicles behind as follows :-</p> <table style="margin-left: 40px;"> <tr> <td>RHQ/LAD</td> <td>12 Vehs</td> <td>21 O.Rs</td> <td>107 Bty</td> <td>3 Vehs</td> <td>12 O.Rs</td> </tr> <tr> <td>99 Bty</td> <td>3 "</td> <td>12 "</td> <td>288 Bty</td> <td>3 "</td> <td>15 "</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>289 Bty</td> <td>4 Vehs</td> <td>19 O.Rs.</td> </tr> </table> <p>Until some progress is made with the battle it is going to be very difficult.</p>	RHQ/LAD	12 Vehs	21 O.Rs	107 Bty	3 Vehs	12 O.Rs	99 Bty	3 "	12 "	288 Bty	3 "	15 "				289 Bty	4 Vehs	19 O.Rs.	
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	4.		<p>Lt-Gen HORROCKS Comd 30 Corps addresses all officers in 15 (S) Div in the ENSA Cinema, TILBURG, at 1030 hrs. He outlines the plan for future ops. This is the first time 15 (S) Div have been in 30 Corps. Maj-Gen BARBER gives a short address after the Corps Commander. Major BARNETT holds a B.C's Conference at 107 Bty HQ in</p>																			

		<p>TILBURG at 1200 hrs. (After Corps Comd's talk). Major BALFOUR of 288 Bty tells Major BARNETT detailed plan for 46 Bde's effort. 288 Bty are moving up to assembly area tonight.</p> <p>Capt ROBERTS outlines 289 Bty's part in 227 Bde's effort. Arrangements for the Admin Gp are laid on.</p> <p>Still no sign of the Regt getting the various vehs of which it is deficient, i.e. 4 Carriers, one 3-tonner, 2 Jeeps. This is rather serious as we now no longer carry spares - having reduced our spare vehs over the past couple of months since joining 15 (S) Div.</p> <p>288 Bty move off with 46 Bde Gp to assembly area in NIJMEGEN. Night move. Regt is still short of 4 Carriers Mortar, 1 Carrier AOP, 1 Jeep, 1 3-tonner 4x4.</p> <p>This is now getting serious as time is short. The position is aggravated by the fact that 3 of the Regt's 4x4 15-cwts are now only 4x2 because of shortage of spare parts of Cdn 4x4, which is chronic.</p>	
	5.	<p>Preparation for move. Move order received from HQ RA stating RA Gp and HQ RA move tonight. There is doubt as to whether this includes RHQ and 99 Bty. I.O. goes off to HQ RA, to find out. Meanwhile we prepare to move. I.O. returns from HQ RA and announces that we do not move until Div Tps move tomorrow night.</p> <p>289 Bty with 227 Bde Gp move during night to assembly area in NIJMEGEN. Release for 1 Jeep and 3 Carriers (2 Mortar and 1 AOP) came through.</p> <p>Capt LESLIE spent the whole day getting them. The AOP had no towing attachment. It is disgraceful that in the sixth year of war vehs are still being issued to units about to go into action without towing attachments.</p> <p>As we are still short of 2 Carriers and 1 3-tonner 4x4 it is decided to send Capt LESLIE with the necessary driver to Veh Park at 30 Corps to wait for release coming through, while EME goes to Rear Div ADOS to sit there and wait for the release. Everyone is moving or has moved and it is now imperative to get these vehs. All the Regt's spare carriers etc have been handed in and if these vehs do not come through before the battle starts we may have to begin with a gun short.</p>	
	6.	<p>Major BARNETT leaves RHQ at 1100 hrs to attend a CRA's Co-ordinating Conference at NIJMEGEN.</p> <p>107 Bty goes to NIJMEGEN with 44 Bde Gp.</p> <p>RHQ and 99 Bty leave HILVARENBEK at 1900 hrs and proceed to NIJMEGEN, arriving at 0700 hrs 7 Feb.</p>	

7.		<p>Concentration of the Regt now effected in NIJMEGEN. EME and Capt LESLIE report to RHQ at 1840 hrs having brought remaining 2 Carriers from OFP. Unfortunately these are Lloyd Carriers and are likely to be more trouble than they are worth. So far the Regt had succeeded in avoiding these gun towers like the plague.</p>										
8.		<p>1030 hrs. 288 Bty move with 46 Bde. SP Tp is moving with 2 Bn Glasgow Highlanders. 289 Bty move with 227 Bde. The roads are in very bad condition and it is almost impossible to move 6-prs. Lt L.B. BATES of 289 Bty SP Tp is wounded and 2 O.Rs are also wounded. Valentine of 289 Bty is written off on a mine. Lt WRIDE takes over SP Tp.</p> <p>107 Bty move to forming-up area. Bty HQ at SCHILDBROEK 783554.</p> <p>2345 hrs. Plan of attack for 44 Bde changed and Axis switched from 'AYR' route to 'PEARL BLACK' route. 'AYR' is impassable owing to mud. Tp of 289 Bty 6-prs gets completely bogged.</p>										
9.		<p>Lt WARD collects a replacement Valentine for 289 Bty at GRAVE at 0800 hrs. Major BARNETT goes off at 0730 hrs to visit Btys forward. He found the going very bad indeed - the roads are in bad shape.</p> <p>Lt WRIDE of 289 Bty badly wounded in the head by mortar splinter. 289 Bty also have 2 O.Rs wounded.</p> <p>288 Bty HQ established in GROESBEEK MR 745560.</p> <p>2200 hrs. 107 Bty HQ established in NUTTERDEN 8455.</p>										
10.		<p>Major BARNETT goes off at 0745 hrs to visit Btys. Going now worse than ever. Major BARNETT goes off at 1315 hrs and visits 107 Bty, 288 Bty and 289 Bty, who are located at :-</p> <table> <tr> <td>107 Bty</td> <td>...</td> <td>843577</td> </tr> <tr> <td>288 Bty</td> <td>...</td> <td>742566</td> </tr> <tr> <td>289 Bty</td> <td>...</td> <td>835554</td> </tr> </table> <p>One 6-pr Tp of 289 Bty is completely bogged in the middle of a minefield and is unable to move.</p> <p>43 Div start to pass through 15(S) Div.</p> <p>1500 hrs. 44 Bde with 107 Bty in sp ordered to take CLEVE.</p>	107 Bty	...	843577	288 Bty	...	742566	289 Bty	...	835554	
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11.		<p>C.O. arrives back from leave at 1330 hrs.</p> <p>Tac RHQ moves forward to area NUTTERDEN 8455 at 1000 hrs.</p> <p>Main Div and HQ RA move at same time but HQ RA only allow us to send a Tac. Tac consists of Maj BARNETT, Lt MARRIOTT and 10 O.Rs, M.14 and 2 Jeeps.</p> <p>C.O. leaves RHQ at 1500 hrs to take over from Major BARNETT at Tac HQ. Situation in CLEVE is still obscure.</p>										

		<p>An attack is laid on to take place this afternoon. 227 Bde with 289 Bty attacking from NW and 44 Bde with 107 Bty from West. 46 Bde with 288 Bty are moving up this afternoon to take over the ground East of NUTTERDEN.</p> <p>Usual heavy rain falling in intermittent showers of about 2 hours duration. Conditions for movement very bad. All roads from NIJMEGEN to KRANENBURG impassable except for the main road NIJMEGEN - CLEVE.</p> <p>6 German Para Div has put in an appearance at CLEVE and is fighting well.</p> <p>Message received from Tac to send recce parties from Main RHQ and 99 Bty to Tac at 0930 hrs tomorrow.</p> <p>Div is being relieved by a Cdn Div and is going into Corps reserve. Regt is going to concentrate in NUTTERDEN/KRANENBURG area.</p> <p>288 Bty HQ established in NUTTERDEN 854555.</p>	
	12.	<p>Only 3-tonners can now make the journey from NIJMEGEN to NUTTERDEN. Floods across road are up to 3 ft deep. Recce party consisting of 15-cwt, Jeep and M/C set off. 15-cwt just managed to get through the flood. Jeep, M/C had to come back.</p> <p>Move now out of question owing to floods. 15-cwt unable to come back because of floods. Water rising 1" per hour. Recce party except for driver of 15-cwt hitch-hike their way back on 3-tonners and DUKWs. Tac RHQ have a few requests. 2 i/c of 119 LAA Regt who have borrowed a Weasel take up a few things for us. Lt QM sets off in a 3-tonner with various things they require but after spending 5 hours on the road is turned back because floods are now impassable even by a 3-tonner. 43 Div, who have passed through 15 (S) Div and gone South of CLEVE, bump into 116 Panzers who have come up from VENLO area.</p> <p>Major APT MASON arrives. He has been posted to us from 31 RHU. He is ex-97 A Tk Regt RA. There is actually no vacancy for him as both Majors DUNKERLEY and PUMPHREY have been posted back by War Office and will arrive at end of this month.</p> <p>Capt J. LESLIE (T/Adjt) leaves for a 6-weeks course at RHYL followed by his leave.</p> <p>288 Bty SP Tp moves under comd Coldstream Gds (Tanks) for a mobile column role. 288 Bty HQ at CLEVE 876553.</p> <p>116 Panzer Div identified on 43 Div front in area of CALCAR and HAU.</p> <p>107 Bty recce area of BRESSERBURG as long stop.</p> <p>289 Bty deploy round 227 Bde HQ area 8656.</p>	

13.		<p>Water still rising. 3-tonners not able to negotiate the floods. Amphibious vehs only. Locations as follows :-</p> <table border="0" style="margin-left: 40px;"> <tr> <td>Main RHQ ) NIJMEGEN</td> <td>Tac RHQ</td> <td>NUTTERDEN</td> </tr> <tr> <td>99 Bty )</td> <td>107 Bty</td> <td>NUTTERDEN</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>288 Bty</td> <td>882570</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Regtl Residue GOIRLE nr TILBURG</td> <td>289 Bty</td> <td>DONSBRUGGEN 8657</td> </tr> </table> <p>Battle going reasonably well in spite of floods. 289 Bty have a 15-cwt stolen in NIJMEGEN. 289 Bty 6-pr Tp at last gets out of bog and rejoins Bty.</p>	Main RHQ ) NIJMEGEN	Tac RHQ	NUTTERDEN	99 Bty )	107 Bty	NUTTERDEN		288 Bty	882570	Regtl Residue GOIRLE nr TILBURG	289 Bty	DONSBRUGGEN 8657	
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14.		<p>Still cut off by road from Tac RHQ in NUTTERDEN. Official mail received from HQ RA by DUKW DRLS. Amphibious vehs only able to maintain service between the forward tps and echelons, but it looks as if "peak flood" has been reached. 288 Bty move East of CLEVE 916537.</p> <p>44 Bde with 288 Bty in sp attack towards MOYLAND. Bty deployed on right flank of Bde as flank protection. Very heavy mortaring and shelling by enemy. 288 Bty have an SP knocked out by a direct hit. No casualties. 107 Bty HQ move to CLEVE.</p>													
15.		<p>Orders received from HQ RA via 119 LAA Regt that RHQ and 99 Bty will move up from present locn NIJMEGEN area to area of CLEVE. Owing to flooding route will be MALDEN - MOOK - HEKKENS - MATERBORN - CLEVE. At 1640 hrs further order received stating no move today but to be ready from 1800 hrs on 16 Feb.</p> <p>A detachment of 288 Bty surprise a party of Boche and take 17 prisoners. Enemy still shelling and mortaring heavily. 288 Bty lose a 6-pr from shell splinters.</p>													
16.		<p>Leave to U.K. postponed further 24 hours.</p> <p>Leave parties assemble at RHQ at NIJMEGEN and are despatched to Residue at GOIRLE.</p> <p>Orders received that we shall move off past SP in NIJMEGEN at 2245 hrs. We follow 119 LAA Regt. We move off at 2245 hrs and are met at DP by Major BARNETT and Lt MARRIOTT. Arrive in new location at 0315 hrs. RHQ and whole Regt now in GERMANY less for residue parties at GOIRLE. 288 Bty take a further 7 prisoners. 288 Bty lose another 6-pr, this time mortar splinters. Shelling and mortaring continue on a heavy scale. Valentine of 289 Bty goes up on a mine. Detachment get out but SP unapproachable owing to heavy MG fire.</p> <p>227 Bde with 289 Bty in sp given outline plan to capture GOCH, but this is later cancelled.</p>													
17.		<p>Locations as follows :-</p> <table border="0" style="margin-left: 40px;"> <tr> <td>RHQ 888560</td> <td>:</td> <td>99 Bty 893566</td> </tr> <tr> <td>107 Bty -</td> <td>:</td> <td>288 Bty 915537</td> </tr> </table>	RHQ 888560	:	99 Bty 893566	107 Bty -	:	288 Bty 915537							
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		<p style="text-align: center;">289 Bty 863567</p> <p>GOCH is to be assaulted tomorrow afternoon and we are to supply two SP Valentine Tps to take part in the "Pepperpot" shoot. Tps concerned are 99 Bty's SP Tp and 289 Bty's SP Tp. 2250 rds reduced charge HE 17-pr are to be dumped on gun posns. Majors MASON and WIGGLESWORTH attend conference at HQ 119 LAA Regt (who are also shooting) during afternoon. Major MASON attends final conference at HQ 119 LAA Regt at 2100 hrs for final laying of pepperpot party.</p>	
	18.	<p>46 Bde is to take MOYLAND. 288 Bty's SPs in sp. Party called off and Bde Gp concentrate in CLEVE area. 44 Bde start attack on GOCH with 107 Bty in sp. 289 Bty's SPs fire an indirect shoot. Two guns fire 260 rds each. 99 Bty's SPs also fire indirect shoot.</p>	
	19.	<p>288 Bty organising and doing maintenance in CLEVE. Bty area heavily shelled. Trucks are parked very close together and several amn and petrol dumps in area go up along with half a dozen Cdn vehs. 288 Bty personnel O.K. as there are good cellars, but B.C. decides vehs must be moved and moves Bty to an area 2 miles away. 44 Bde clear GOCH. 99 Bty relieve 289 Bty and 289 Bty go to CLEVE area and take over 99 Bty's billets. 99 Bty in sp 227 Bde for an attack to area of SCHLOSS CALBECK 941430 and rly crossing (941422). 99 Bty HQ established by 1200 hrs at 922471.</p>	
	20.	<p>288 Bty SP Tp takes part in an indirect shoot and fire 350 rds HE in sp 44 Bde. 107 Bty remains in area of GOCH. Mortaring and shelling fairly heavy. 227 Bde attack towards SCHLOSS CALBECK starts at 1030 hrs. Lt GERRARD of 99 Bty is slightly wounded but remains at duty. Heavy shelling and mortaring.</p>	
	21.	<p>A dry sunny day !! 44 Bde area have good deal of bombing by jet-propelled fighter bombers. M.O. inoculates a large number of 289 Bty.</p>	
	22.	<p>46 Bde attack woods East of GOCH with 288 Bty in sp. Major GR BALFOUR MC slightly wounded but remains at duty. 44 Bde with 107 Bty in sp prepare for an attack through 46 Bde. Objective GOCH - UDEN roads.</p>	
	23.	<p>It is now known that 15 (S) Div is to be relieved by 3 Brit Div during the period 24 - 26 Feb. It is anticipated that the Div will move to TILBURG area where for a period of 14 days it will</p>	

		<p>rest and re-fit. It is considered likely that the regt will re-organise on to an establishment of one Bty SP Valentine and three Btys of two Tps of towed 17-pr and one SP Valentine 17-pr_Tp. All Tps will be three-gun and the number of guns in the Regt will be reduced to 36.</p> <p>No-one is pleased at the idea of either three-gun Tps or towed 17-prs.</p> <p>44 Bde pass through 46 Bde. 288 Bty concentrate guns in Tp areas. 107 Bty Valentines get a few shots at a Panther and an SP gun but results not observed.</p> <p>107 Bty area subjected to fairly heavy shelling and mortaring all day.</p> <p>99 Bty and whole area round SCHLOSS CALBECK heavily shelled. Several guns of 99 Bty have to be withdrawn slightly owing to the shelling and mortaring.</p> <p>Recce party from 45/20 A Tk Regt arrives in 99 Bty area.</p>	
	24.	<p>107 Bty area still being heavily shelled and mortared. A 15-cwt of Bty HQ gets a direct hit from an 88mm.</p> <p>Recce parties of 20 A Tk Regt (3 Brit Div) move in to start taking over from us. One casualty in 107 Bty. 289 Bty revert to 227 Bde for move out of area.</p>	
	25.	<p>RHQ, 99 Bty and 289 Bty leave CLEVE/GOCH area at 0930 hrs and proceed to TILBURG area via S'HERTOGENBOSCH. Village of HILVARENBEEK is to be Regtl Area and RHQ will be returning once more to billets. We left on 6 Feb to take part in the attack on CLEVE and the breaching of the Siegfried Line. We have now returned after "hanging up our washing" and arrive in HILVARENBEEK at 1700 hrs.</p> <p>Flying bombs continue to fly over regularly with the odd one dropping in the neighbourhood. TILBURG seems to be one of the objectives. Lt J. DAY joins Regt as a reinforcement and is posted to 288 Bty. Three casualties in 107 Bty during morning. Area still under heavy shell and mortar fire. Relief of 107 Bty completed by nightfall by Bty of 20 A Tk Regt.</p>	
	26.	<p>288 Bty move out with 46 Bde and proceed to DIESEN in HOLLAND, SW of TILBURG.</p> <p>107 Bty move off with Bde Gp to DIESEN.</p> <p>99 and 289 Btys in HILVARENBEEK. Maintenance.</p> <p>B.C's Conference at RHQ in HILVARENBEEK. C.O. tells BCs of the new establishment, i.e., one bty of nine SP Valentines and three btys of one tp of three Valentines and two tps of three towed 17-prs.</p> <p>99 Bty is to be the reserve and SP Bty.</p>	

	27.		The unanimous opinion of all officers of experience in the Regt is that it is not a good establishment to say the least. The towers for the 17-prs are to be M.14s. This would seem to be an improvement on quads. The present period is to be one of rest and maintenance. It is hoped to get every-one in the Div off for 48-hrs to BRUSSELS.	
	28.		Locations remain unchanged.	