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ARMY FORM C.2118

WAR DIARY
or
INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

Unit HQ 227 (H) INF BDE

(Delete heading not required).

Month and Year FEBRUARY 1945

Commanding Officer Brig EC Colville, DSO

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	References to Appendices
GOIRLE	1		<p>Planning for OP "Veritable", which had started soon after the Bde's arrival at GOIRLE (1527), was in full progress, and an outline of events at the end of January was as follows:-</p> <p><u>Jan 28</u> The Acting Bde Comd, Lt Col HP Mackley, OBE, 10 HLI, carried out a recce from OPs in the KAMP (7656) and GROSSBEEK (7555) area and selected FAA and Start Line.</p> <p><u>Jan 29</u> The Acting Bde Comd gave outline plan to Comds of Bns and Sp Arms. The Bde Comd returned from leave in the evening</p> <p><u>Jan 30</u> The Bde Comd and Lt Col Mackley went to the OPs North West of GROSSBEEK</p> <p><u>Jan 31</u> A cloth model discussion on "The Attack on a Strongly Fortified Position" was held, followed by the Bde Comd's first "O" Group</p> <p>During this period, conc areas in NIJMEGEN (7082) and routes forward to the FAA were recced. Routes presented a serious problem as the roads were very narrow and tree-lined and a complete thaw at the end of January, made the going, which had previously been extremely hard, very soft. In addition, another problem arose over the many minefields between the FAA and Start Line; but Cdn troops on the ground undertook to lift these prior to "D" Day.</p>	Exact details of time and place of these conferences are shown in Appx "D", Folios 1 & 5
GOIRLE	2		The Bde Comd's Briefing Conference took place at Main Div HQ at 1400 hrs, after which Bn Comds' Briefing Conferences were held. An excellent model was used.	
GOIRLE	3		Unit recce parties moved to NIJMEGEN	

GOIRLE	4		All Officers of the Div attended briefing by Corps Comd and Div Comd in TILBURG (1632) at 1100 hrs	
GOIRLE	5		The Bde Gp moved from GOIRLE to NIJMEGEN in accordance with Movement Order No. 19. In several places the bottom fell out of the road, and the last vehicles did not get in until after first light on 6 Feb	Appx "D", Folio 12
NIJMEGEN	6		The Bde Comd held his final "O" Gp at 1000 hrs and then made recce with Bn Comds	
NIJMEGEN	7		<p>The weather continued to be wet and it was questionable whether the operation could be carried out with full tank & "Funny" support; but after trials had been carried out, the plan remained unchanged. However, it was decided that the inf and their "F" vehicles should move in front of the tanks and "Funnies" from the conc area to the FAA to reduce the possibility of a bogged vehicle delaying the whole column</p> <p>While Coy and Platoon Comds were making their recces, there was slight activity by enemy aircraft in the GROSSBEEK area.</p> <p>At 1830 hrs Tac Bde HQ moved down SKYE Route to HUIZE RHATIA (752566) and arrived in time to see the bombing of CLEVE (8955) and EMMERICH (9660). By 2359 hrs the Defence Platoon was dug in and the Comd Post established in a cellar. This HQ, which was shared with a Bn HQ of the Cdn HLI, was surrounded by MGs Mortars and A Tk guns employed on "Pepper Potting" and was 600 yards in front of the gun area</p>	
NIJMEGEN	8		<p>The Fire Plan was carried out as in Op Order No. 5, and there was only very slight enemy reaction. The noise was deafening and most reassuring.</p> <p>Despite all difficulties Bns reached their FAAs on time and 2 A & S H crossed the Start Line early and were well up behind the barrage having crossed our own A Tk minefield west of the KAMP-WYLER road.</p> <p>All Flails were bogged and first casualties were suffered getting through the enemy A Per and A Tk minefields East of this road; but the tanks had soon made a way for the inf</p> <p>The going was extremely bad, our Bde axis, SKYE Route, almost non-existent, and several vehicles were bogged. In spite of the going and the water-filled A Tk ditch West of the town, 10 HLI entered KRANENBURG (8056) as planned. Fewer demolitions had been carried out than was expected and the tanks entered the town via the main road.</p> <p>Both Bns reached their objectives on time. There was heavy mortar fire and shelling from the high ground in the REICHSWALD area.</p>	Appx "D", Folio 9

			<p>SKYE Route was quite impassable and Bde Tac HQ moved up to KRANENBURG at 1800 hrs on 46 Bde axis, AYR, and were established at 801558 by 2000 hrs.</p>	
KRANENBURG	9		<p>2 Gordons moved forward from KAMP during the night via the WYLER-KRANENBURG road which had not been cleared and encountered many obstacles.</p> <p>Under comd 44 Bde they breached the SIEGFRIED LINE at first light, taking up positions in the NUTTERDEN (8455) area</p> <p>During the afternoon 10 HLI moved forward and took up positions at 846552 on the right of 2 Gordons.</p> <p>At about 2015 hrs a heavy gun scored a direct hit on 2 Gordons Comd Post. The Sp Coy Comd, Signal Offr and nine ORs were killed, the Int Offr and two ORs wounded.</p> <p>Main Bde HQ joined Tac HQ in the evening.</p>	
KRANENBURG	10		<p>There were many changes of plan, but finally the Bde was ordered to clear the roads to allow 43 Div to pass through, as little opposition was expected in CLEVE.</p> <p>In the afternoon 2 Gordons took up positions just West of the TIERGARTEN at 854559 and 2 A & S H relieved two Bns of 44 Bde on the MATERBORN feature, area 870546, to allow them to assist in the clearing of CLEVE.</p> <p>Tac Bde HQ left at 0830 hrs for NUTTERDEN and took over 2 Gordons HQ at 838557. Main Bde HQ joined at 1500 hrs.</p>	
NUTTERDEN	11		<p>10 HLI followed by 2 Gordons moved down the DONSRUGGEN-CLEVE road and by last light were engaged in clearing the North of the town, where 2 Gordons succeeded in gaining a bridgehead over the canal at 901557.</p> <p>Bde HQ moved to DONSRUGGEN and was established at 856573.</p>	
DONSRUGGEN	12		<p>The Bde was now pinched out of the battle. 10 HLI and 2 Gordons remained in CLEVE and 2 A & S H moved to DONSRUGGEN.</p> <p>The Bde stayed in this area until February 19, during which time several operations were planned; but did not take place.</p> <p>The floods which had hitherto been contained by the road and railway embankments on our left flank began to spread and it was only with difficulty that the Bde A2 Ech vehicles were extricated from KRANENBURG.</p> <p>The road at this point became passable only to DUKWS and "Weasels", which were engaged in bringing up supplies and evacuating casualties and prisoners.</p>	
DONSRUGGEN	14		<p>Several jet propelled aircraft flew over the area and bombed CLEVE</p>	
DONSRUGGEN	15		<p>Field Marshal Montgomery visited Bde HQ at 1230 hrs.</p>	

			<p>10 HLI were placed under comd 46 Bde and advanced down the road to CALCAR, and by first light were within a mile of MOYLAND (9651) and had taken 80 prisoners. Thereafter the Bn captured the high ground South West of the village against very heavy opposition and beat off counter attacks supported by SPs.</p>	
DONSBRUGGEN	19		<p>The Bde Group, less 10 HLI, moved to PFALZDORF (9147), and Bde HQ was established at 917473.</p> <p>The Bde column was shelled when travelling through CLEVE, but there were no casualties.</p> <p>10 HLI were relieved at night and went to rest area in CLEVE.</p> <p>2 Glas H were placed under command of the Bde.</p> <p>An operation was planned and an "O" Group held at 1400 hrs for the capture of BUCHHOLT (9543), SCHLOSS CALBECK (9443) and the high ground in between.</p> <p>2 A & S H, on the left, were to capture BUCHHOLT, 2 Gordons SCHLOSS CALDBECK and 2 Glas H, on a narrow front, were to push through in the centre. The Start Line was approximately the line of the GOCH-CALCAR road.</p> <p>The tanks of the Coldstream Gds were placed in support for this operation and Kangaroos were allotted to the Bde.</p> <p>At the same time, 4 Som LI, in order to conform with the Bde's attack, were to secure HALVENBOOM (9645).</p>	
PFALZDORF	20		<p>The first Bn, 2 A & S H, crossed the Start Line at 1100 hrs and secured their objective by 1300 hrs. 2 Gordons were on their objective by 1530 hrs and 2 Glas H by 1700 hrs.</p> <p>4 Som LI, of 214 Bde, 43 Div, conformed by capturing HALVENBOOM by 1330 hrs.</p> <p>Initially, enemy opposition was fairly light, except from snipers, and almost 300 prisoners were taken, but all Bns, particularly 2 Gordons, encountered heavy and concentrated arty and mortar fire once on their objectives.</p> <p>In addition there were a few casualties from mines of all types.</p> <p>During the night SCHLOSS CALBECK was subjected to particularly heavy arty fire; one shelrep sent at midnight reported 200 shells.</p>	
PFALZDORF	21		<p>6 RSF came under command of the Bde and were ordered to make a bridgehead and clear the woods South of the bridge at 941421. The attack went in at 2000 hrs and by 2030 hrs had reached their objective. Fierce counter attacks were immediately launched against them and it was decided to withdraw into a tight bridgehead</p> <p>Bde Tac HQ was established at 933445.</p> <p>During the night enemy aircraft bombed the area and several sticks fell close to Bde HQ.</p>	

PFALZDORF	22	<p>10 HLI reverted to under command of the Bde and relieved 2 Glas H, who reverted under command 46 Bde.</p> <p>46 Bde attacked through the Bde, and one coy of 2 Gordons with tk sp attacked along the railway to capture the area of the farms SCHLUBECKSHOF and PLEESENHOF (9442). The coy was counter-attacked immediately after reaching its objective and another coy with tank support had to be put in to restore the situation</p>	
PFALZDORF	23	<p>During the night the Coldstream Guards, of 5 Gds Bde, Gds Armd Div, relieved 2 A & S H.</p> <p>10 HLI sent out a fighting patrol to the farm of HERRING-SCHENHOF (9643), where they patrol secured captured 12 prisoners.</p>	
PFALZDORF	24	<p>9 Inf Bde, of 3 Brit Div, moved into the area to relieve the Bde, less 2 A & S H.</p> <p>At 2130 hrs fire broke out in the farm at Bde HQ. The farm was burned out, but there were no casualties and all vehicles parked in the area were quickly driven to safety.</p>	
PFALZDORF	25	<p>The relief of the Bns was completed by 0600 hrs, and Bde HQ moved at 0730 hrs to rest in TILBURG, where they arrived at 1500 hrs.</p> <p>Throughout Op 'Veritable' over 1000 prisoners were taken by the Bde. The magnificent sp of 3 Scots Guards played a great part in this achievement.</p>	