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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 May 1945.

Commanding Officer Lt.Col. R.J.Streatfield. R.A.

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	References to Appendices
GERMANY	1.		We were in action in square 8240. The opposition which had to a certain extent hindered the initial operations had now practically ceased and there was very little firing to do. We did fire one small fire plan to help the 6 KOSB of 44 Bde into the village of BRUNSTORF 7847. In the evening Major G.S. Cole, acting CO, gave orders for future Ops. 46 Bde was being relieved that night by a Bde of 5 Division and the next day was to take part in the clearing by 15 Div of the large SACHSENWALD. To support this we were to occupy an area round the village of WORTH 7744. A recce of the area was done that evening. During the day Capt The Hon L.G.B. Brett RA left the regiment to take up a staff appointment at HQ 8 Corps.	
	2.		At 0600 the regiment moved forward to WORTH and were in action when operations started at 0800 hrs. Things progressed very favourably with little opposition apart from small isolated posts and SP guns. Before midday the acting CO2 Capt J.H. Bradley and the RSO recced a new area in the village of DASSENDORF 7547. Recce parties joined them there and during the preparation of the gun areas they were harassed by a most persistent gun. Sgt Summers of F Tp was wounded in the arm. The regiment moved up to the new area at 1700 hrs. The infantry operations continued until dusk when the whole Forest was cleared. Plans for next day were that we should move up to the general area of TRITTAU 7760 with the Bde Group. The move would be semi tactical and the guns would occupy an area 7754 to cope with any trouble en route. 529 Bty would stay behind in the old area in the beginning to support the 9 Cameronians who were staying back as initial flank protection.	
	3.		Recce parties left at 0800 hrs to prepare the new position and the two batteries and RHQ moved up via SCHWARZENBEK 8248 arriving in the area at 1000 hrs. As was anticipated there was no firing to do and about 1100 hrs recce parties went forward to the TRITTAU area. This new area was at first prepared as a gun position, but before the recce was complete we were ordered to go into harbour only. Very	

GERMANY		comfortable billets were obtained and it was hoped that our stay would be of several days duration. We later learned that we were to move again the next day with the Bde group and the regimental area was west of the village of SCHONBERG 7767. In the evening Lt.Col. R.J. Streatfield DSO RA rejoined the regiment, returning from his course at Larkhill.	
	4.	The new area was reced in the morning and the regiment moved in about 1100 hrs. 531 Bty was deployed in action on the west of the area and at about maximum range would have been able to reach Divisional Headquarters. In the evening we heard on the wireless that all German forces in North West Germany had unconditionally surrendered to 21st Army Group. The cease fire was to take effect from 0800 hrs on the 5th May. The news was received almost quietly by most men, but as the evening wore on the wonderful realisation gradually sunk in and the day ended on a note of rather riotous jubilation.	
	5.	At 0800 hrs the cease fire was given and we were ordered that no further advances would be made until further orders. The day was generally treated as a whole holiday. What our future would be no one could envisage.	
	6.	Everyone started a great maintenance drive as we expected to be in the present location for several days. In the afternoon the CO went to an "O" Group at HQRA and heard that it was likely that the regiment would move with 46 Bde to occupy the KIEL area.	
	7.	The CO held an all officers conference to explain the decisions of the "O" Group. Now that hostilities were at an end we were to pay utmost attention to immaculate turnout and endeavour in any way to impress the Germans without fraternising with them. To this end it was proposed to start an officers' marching drill class to refresh our memories.	
	8.	Today was Victory in Europe day; on the whole it was not such a boisterous day as May 4th. An O Group at 46 Bde was held in the afternoon. It was still not certain if we would proceed to KIEL with the Bde group.	
	9.	A rather more disconcerting rumour was heard today; it was suggested by HQRA that the regiment might be required to establish a large camp for SS prisoners. Anyway we would not be going to Kiel with 46 Bde.	
GERMANY	10.	A quiet day. We were still rounding up large numbers of soldiers who were attempting to get to their homes. So far there had been no instances of violence.	

	11.		The LAD started a six-monthly inspection scheme to cover all vehs in the regt. In the large wood factory opposite RHQ the carpenters of the regt started to construct the "UBIQUE" THEATRE, for regtl concerts, film shows and other entertainments.	
	12.		Batteries and RHQ had by now each organised Rest camps in the area of the lakes about 3 miles away from the Regtl area. Boats had appeared as if from nowhere and everyone was taking full advantage of the hot weather to get in as much bathing as possible. In the evening the Divisional Concert Party the TAM O'SHANTERS gave a performance in the Theatre which had been completed that afternoon.	
	13.		A regtl church parade was held in the theatre in the morning.	
	14.		In the morning Brigadier L. Bolton DSO, CRA of the Division made a working inspection of the regiment. The Batteries were engaged in all types of training and maintenance and the CRA was very satisfied with all he saw. In the afternoon the CO2 started his Marching Drill class for Officers and Senior NCO's. This course was to last a week with four hours a day.	
	15.		The regiment was given a new area of responsibility which involved the moving of some of the Batteries. Also we learned that we would have to establish a large camp for the reception of 15,000 SS troops in transit. This would be located somewhere near the Elbe between GEESTACHT and BERGERDORF. Today Major JHM Stephenson BC of 530 was awarded the MC for his gallantry at the Stadensen "affair" of April.	
	16.		530 Bty moved into the village of LUTJENSEE, two miles west of their old area. The CO, with the CRA went to recce a site for the P.O.W. camp, near the village of ALTENGAMME 6940. 531 Bty would be responsible for the establishment of the camp.	
GERMANY	17.		A further recce was done by the CO and Major Dyas of 531 Bty to fix the site and choose an area for the battery.	
	18.		Today a further development was that we were to take over the large Concentration camp and Brickworks 6640, now filled with Russian, Displaced Persons, for our prisoners. The whole regiment would be required to run the camp and the first arrivals were expected about May 26th. The marching drill class ended in the afternoon, the CO coming to the "Passout" Parade. Capt. JFB O'Shea went to HQ 8 Corps on a Staff attachment.	
	19.		CO and CO2 went in the new area to look over the camp and recce an area for RHQ. The Camp consisted of a concentration camp, an SS Barracks and a Brickworks. The Concentration camp and the Brickworks would be used for prisoners and run by 530 and 529 Btys respectively. 531 Bty would be the General Admin Battery. R.H.Qs	

		area was fixed in the village of CURSLACK 6542. It was proposed to move the regiment about 26th of May.	
	20.	Further recces were carried out in the new area.	
	21.	Today we sent a draft of thirty men on a Pickfords posting to S.E.A. Comd. Capt Thompson and Lt. H. Crossman both of C Troop also left the regiment having volunteered to serve in the same Command. 531 Bty moved from the SCHONBERG area to its new area in NEUENGAMME. The object of the move was to complete the takeover of the camps from the Battery of 67 Medium Regt RA who were previously administering them and to prepare them for the reception of the SS. The Camps already had considerable defences in the shape of watch towers, electrified fences and alarm systems, but considerable work was needed to make the system satisfactory and foolproof. The Signal Offr undertook the task of repairing the electric fence and of repairing and improving the lighting arrangements in the camps. Fortunately the electricity supply from Hamburg was reasonably good and it was not necessary to use the emergency generators in the camp.	
GERMANY	22.	In the SCHONBERG area we were responsible for making lists of all foreigners not wishing to be repatriated immediately. Sweeps of the area were carried out by the two batteries remaining and several suspicious characters and numerous German soldiers were secured. Apart from these activities all were preparing for the move to the new area which was to take place on the 25th.	
	23.	We received an intake of 33 OR's as replacements for the Pickfords personnel dispatched 2 days before. We now knew that the regiment would be used for purely occupational duties and that we would have to hand in our Gunner eqpt sometime shortly.	
	24.	Final packing up took place and the general area tidied up in preparation for the move. One troop of 529 moved off in advance and so too did the Q Echelon.	
	25.	The day was chiefly spent in moving to the new area. The move was accomplished without incident and everyone was soon comfortably established again. No time was wasted in starting work on the two camps. Work was however hampered by the fact that a large number of Russians, displaced persons were still on the camps.	
	26.	Final preparations for the intake of the first SS on the 27th were completed and in the evening there was a trial of all the lighting systems in the camps. We had attached to us to act as escorts when the SS were moved away from us, two troops of 15 (S) Recce Regt and "C" Coy of 7 Seaforths.	

	27.		Today we received five train loads of SS from the US Ninth Army area. The first train load which consisted almost entirely of Lithuanian and Latvian SS were sent away immediately under escort to a 2nd Army P.O.W. Cage. They numbered about 2800. The other four trains yielded 8150. Considerable organisation was required to march the prisoners from the station of HOLTENKLINKE 6645 to the camp, a march of 3 to 4 miles. Everyone showed remarkable zeal in policing the route and the whole operation was completed without major incident. The last train load arrived after dark but large numbers of veh headlights were used to illuminate the scene and nothing untoward happened.	
GERMANY	28.		One train arrived today with 2580 SS on board. They were treated in a similar manner as those on the day before. So far there had been no trouble in the Camp. One very unfortunate incident was that Sgt Stone of 530 Bty accidentally touched the electrified fence and was killed by the shock.	
	29.		The Seaforths and Recce escort took away 2500 today to the 2nd Army P.O.W. cage. There was no further intake. In the afternoon the 8 Corps Comd Lt.Gen. E.H. Barker CB, CBE, DSO, MC visited the camps.	
	30.		In the morning the Divisional Commander Maj.Gen. Barber visited the camps. A road party of 540 prisoners arrived in the afternoon and also an unexpected train load of 1500. The total of prisoners now in the camp was 10,460.	
	31.		On the whole a quiet day. Another unexpected party turned up in the afternoon in some 20 of their own trucks. They numbered about 450. The camps were now running well and the prisoners were being used extensively to make them cleaner, particular attention being paid to the drains which had always been badly choked.	