

WAR DIARY

UNIT : 7th (Galloway) Bn K.O.S.B.

or

Month and Year SEPT 1944

~~INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY~~

COMD OFFICER LT COL R PAYTON REID

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	References to Appendices
KEEVIL	1	1100	The CO held an "O" Gp conference on Operation "LINNET". Loading of gliders was completed today.	
	2	2200	<p>All coys were briefed. The Divisional General paid a visit to the bn at 1400 hrs. During the afternoon a compulsory rest period was observed in preparation for the operation, as Reveille was timed for 0030 hrs and take-off at 0600 hrs tomorrow.</p> <p>About 2200 hrs a message was received stating that operation "LINNET" was cancelled. Apparently weather factors in addition to the amazing speed of the advance of our armour to LILLE rendered the employment of the Division in that area unnecessary. During the morning the CO returned from Bde at BRIZE NORTON.</p>	D. 1.
	3	1245 1800 2230	<p>At 1245 hrs the Bn was assembled and the CO spoke to all ranks explaining the situation. He expressed his satisfaction on the manner in which the preparation and loading for the operation had been done. The CO felt that it was good sign to see the coolness with which it was carried out and that the excitement which was naturally felt during preparations for the initial operations "WILD OATS" was replaced by an attitude which would serve everyone very well for future and pending operations at very short notice. It was again stressed to all ranks that by the nature of our reserve role our employment in the battle could only be where and when it could be a decisive factor.</p> <p>The CO, IO, and FOO attended a Bde "O" Gp. The Brigadier explained that at very short notice a new operation was to take place and we were to emplane by 1200 hrs on the 4th Sept. The operation was to include the 82nd and 101st US Airborne Divisions and the three Divisions were to land in a line EAST of the MEUZE between LIEGE and MAASTRICH. 1 Airlanding Bde was allotted the area of BILSEN 8 miles EAST of MAASTRICH with 7 KOSB at WALTWILDER. The CO held an "O" Gp including all officers on his return to KEEVIL at 2230 hrs, giving out his orders for the bn as far as possible as it was not expected to obtain the LZ area and maps for several hours yet. Arrangements were completed for the Bn to leave camp at 0830 hours for the airfields.</p>	

		2345	About midnight an order was received cancelling the operation and keeping the bn at short notice. The weather continued to be wet and windy.	
	4		The camp was unsealed during the afternoon and recreational facilities granted to the bn.	
KEEVIL	5		Orders were received to collect operational maps at 1200 hours at NEWBURY Map Depot and for the CO to attend a conference at CORPS HQ at 1000 hours 6th Sept. In the afternoon the bn carried out RV and check point drill. During the evening operational maps were prepared for issue. An advance party was standing by to proceed by plane to BRICK and RIVENHALL in ESSEX to where the bn was to fly before leaving on operations and thus increase the range of flight. About 2245 hrs an order was received cancelling the move to ESSEX.	
		0200	About 0200 hrs orders were received for "A" Coy (without supporting arms) to proceed to BLAKE-HILL FARM.	
		0530	By 0530 hrs they left camp for the airfield and emplaned at 1000 hrs for HARWELL where they were to regroup and receive their orders and be briefed. The CO attended a conference at CORPS HQ MOORE PARK where he was given the plan of the operation. He then proceeded to HARWELL where he briefed "A" Coy Comd in his coup de main task. This Coy was to emplane at 0100 hrs on the 8th and land at 0430 hrs within 2000 yds of the traffic bridge at NIJMEGEN which was their objective.	
		1800	From HARWELL the CO then proceeded to Bde HQ BRIZE NORTON where he was joined by the IO and FOO at the Brigadier's "O" Gp. The Bde was to seize and hold the bridges at GRAVE, NIJMEGEN and ARNHEM to enable 30 CORPS to continue their advance from ANTWERP region and sweep into the RUHR.	
		2115	The CO briefed the "O" Gp on the plan and arranged to give the Bn plan by the morning.	
	6	1030	An "O" Gp was held and the CO gave out the Bns plans for operation "COMET". Briefing of Coys continued until 1500 hrs when the Bn less "A" Coy prepared to move to the airfields.	O.O. No.1. attached
		1600	The remainder of the Bn at KEEVIL moved in two groups, the larger one to DOWN AMPNEY and the other to BLAKE-HILL FARM. Final arrangements were made there to emplane by 0400 hrs on the 7th Sept. Meanwhile "A" Coy were at HARWELL where they were to emplane by 0100 hrs and land in the dark about 0430 hrs on the 7th Sept. The landing was so arranged that they were to be released between 6,000 and 7,000 feet and to glide several miles to enable them to make a very close approach to the bridge at NIJMEGEN.	D. 2.

BLAKEHILL FARM		2300	<p>To assist them in landing in a confined space a parachute was attached to each glider to enable them to pull up quickly on touching down.</p> <p>About 2300 hrs orders were received that the operation was postponed for 24 hrs. This was apparently due to the fact that 30 CORPS were in need of more time to re-supply and also on account of weather conditions in HOLLAND.</p>	
	7	2130	<p>Road walks and games were arranged in the morning and entertainments for the troops in the afternoon. The CO went round the various camps visiting the unit commanders and liaising with the RAF and glider pilots.</p> <p>Orders were again received postponing for a further 24 hrs.</p>	
	8		<p>The CO visited Bde and Coy Comds making further adjustments to the Bn plan in the light of fresh information. Maintenance of guns, etc and vehs was carried out as far as possible in the gliders. In the late afternoon orders were received postponing the operation 24 hrs.</p>	
	9	1600	<p>On SATURDAY the 9th Sept the postponement was ordered for 48 hrs and gliders were unloaded that evening and the following morning, with a warning order to reload on MONDAY. Games and entertainments were arranged for the troops of the camps.</p>	
BLAKEHILL FARM	10		<p>Church Parades were held in the morning and the GOC Major General URQUHART attended the service. Unloading was completed during the morning. Infm was received in the afternoon that the operation was cancelled. It had become increasingly apparent that the advance of 30 Corps was delayed on the ALBERT CANAL by the rapid and indeed remarkable regrouping of the GERMAN forces EAST of the canal. The GERMANS had counter-attacked and although gaining only temporary success had slowed down the impetus of the advance. Meanwhile airphoto interpretation and infm from DUTCH ground forces completed the picture. The line of the MAAS - WAAL CANAL was being fortified and manned and the NORTH bank of the WAAL from the canal junc to the EAST was being fortified and manned. The high ground SOUTH of NIJMEGEN was also being prepared as a strong point while the flak in the area was also considerably increased. The garrison in the area was estimated to be of Divisional strength.</p>	
	11		<p>The Brigadier addressed the Bn at DOWN AMPNEY and the Bn thereafter moved back to KEEVIL where it was again concentrated.</p>	
KEEVIL	12		<p>Administration and maintenance was carried out and preparations made for a Bn exercise tomorrow. During the evening a warning order was received to be prepared for a short leave.</p>	
	13		<p>The CO and Adjt attended a conference at Bde HQ on the leave question. The Brigadier announced that the proposed leave was</p>	

			cancelled and that an operation "MARKET", a development of "COMET" was now planned to be carried out.	
	14		The CO planned the Bn operation.	
	15	1000	The Bn "O" Gp was briefed by the CO and further planning done on the receipt of air photos. Loading of gliders was completed at the airfields.	
	16		Briefing of the Bn for operation "MARKET" was completed, and during the afternoon the Bn moved in groups to their respective airfields. Bn HQ, HQ and A Coy with elements of HQ and Sp Coy to BLAKEHILL FARM, and B, C and D and remainder of HQ and Sp Coy at BROADWELL Transit Camp for emplaning at DOWN AMPNEY.	
DOWN AMPNEY AND BLAKEHILL FARM AIRFIELDS	17	1000	Off at last. After having been briefed for so many operations which have been postponed and eventually cancelled, the Bn really got away this morning. Operation "MARKET" in which we are taking part is designed to seize the river crossings at GRAVE, NIJMEGEN and ARNHEM, and to hold them until 30 Corps of the 2nd Army comes up to take them over and use them. 1 Airborne Div is to seize and hold the ARNHEM bridge and form a bridge-head NORTH of it around the town. There is a scene of suppressed excitement as we embark in our gliders at DOWN AMPNEY and BLAKEHILL FARM Airfields. Most of the Bn are flying from the former, but the CO, part of Bn HQ and A Coy Group go from the latter. Soon after 1000 hrs all are airborne and our great adventure has started.	D. 3.
	17	1000 to 1330	Our flight is a good one, though ground mist between the airfids and the coast makes it difficult for the glider pilots, and a few gliders have to pull off and land in ENGLAND to prevent accident. We cross the coast of EAST ANGLIA, a long and impressive stream of aircraft, and head for HOLLAND. The DUTCH coast is struck slightly SOUTH of ANTWERP and it is seen there that the islands have been completely flooded. One glider makes a forced landing there but seems alright. We expect flak now but none comes, only some small arms fire. We fly inland a little and then swing in a Northerly direction towards our goal.	
		1330	We release some two miles from our LZ and glide in. Still no flak. Most of the gliders make good landings, though in a number of cases the undercarriage sinks in the soft ground causing a minor crash. Two gliders dash into the wood on the edge of the LZ and are smashed, but with only one fatal casualty. It is an impressive sight seeing these dozens of gliders nosing their way in, but there is no time to watch it as unloading has to be proceeded with at once.	
		1500	The Bn commenced its fwd movement. The LZ and RV drills were carried out with precision and despatch. There was no interruption	

EDE AREA	1500	<p>from enemy fire. Infm from local inhabitants indicates that there are few GERMANS in the immediate vicinity. The DUTCH seem delighted to see us. Out of our original strength of 56 gliders, 8 have failed to arrive. One Atk gun is broken up in its glider and unserviceable. A check up of our strength on landing shows the following state :</p> <table border="0" data-bbox="622 371 1655 517"> <tr> <td>Bn HQ - Complete</td> <td>Sp Coy -</td> </tr> <tr> <td>"A" Coy- Complete</td> <td>Mortars - Four dets short</td> </tr> <tr> <td>"B" Coy- Short of one Pl</td> <td>MMG - 1 Pl short</td> </tr> <tr> <td>"C" Coy- -ditto- (coming in 2nd lift)</td> <td>Atk - Three guns short</td> </tr> <tr> <td>"D" Coy- Short of one Pl.</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Bn HQ - Complete	Sp Coy -	"A" Coy- Complete	Mortars - Four dets short	"B" Coy- Short of one Pl	MMG - 1 Pl short	"C" Coy- -ditto- (coming in 2nd lift)	Atk - Three guns short	"D" Coy- Short of one Pl.		D. 4.
Bn HQ - Complete	Sp Coy -												
"A" Coy- Complete	Mortars - Four dets short												
"B" Coy- Short of one Pl	MMG - 1 Pl short												
"C" Coy- -ditto- (coming in 2nd lift)	Atk - Three guns short												
"D" Coy- Short of one Pl.													
EDE AREA	17	1500	<p>"A" Coy was first to move, going off on its independent role of taking up a posn on the main rd EDE - ARNHEM. This it succeeded in doing, though it met opposition including an armoured car. The Coy inflicted several casualties on the enemy and took a number of prisoners. One Pl, with Atk gun was pushed out to the edge of the wood towards EDE, overlooking DZ "Z", which it was the Bn's task to protect.</p> <p>The remainder of the Bn started in adv to contact fmn towards DZ "Z" without opposition. A few stray GERMANS were captured. On reaching the DZ, "B" Coy Gp and "C" Coy Gp proceeded to direct to their pre-briefed posns on the WESTERN side of it, to cover the approaches from EDE. Bn HQ was established at the SOUTHERN end, just SOUTH of the huge motor road which is under construction there.</p>										
	17	1900	<p>This rd is built up like a high rly embankment and runs right across the SOUTHERN end of the DZ. "D" Coy were kept in reserve in the vicinity of Bn HQ but one pl, under Capt GOURLAY and Lt MASON was sent out to seize and hold a group of houses in the middle of the DZ. This turned out to be a small settlement occupied by refugees from ARNHEM, but the CO decided it should be held in order to prevent the enemy occupying it.</p>										
		1900	<p>By nightfall the Bn's dispositions to protect the DZ for the Parachute landing next day had been completed according to plan and digging was well advanced. Infm from prisoners suggested that some 600 enemy tps had been occupying the barracks in EDE and that there were other reinforcements available further NORTH. One prisoner taken was a girl, a GERMAN WAAF. She was sent to Bde HQ.</p>										
	18	0430	<p>Vigorous patrolling was carried out by all Coys, throughout the night, by B & C Coys towards EDE, and by D Coy to the SOUTH and EAST. Lack of communications proved a great drawback, both now and</p>										

EDE AREA	18	0600	<p>later. Owing to the thick woods the wireless sets would not function over the distances between Coys. Line was laid but, being of assault cable, was also unsatisfactory owing to distance and breakages.</p> <p>During the night the Pl of A Coy (under Lt STRANG) which was on the main rd was repeatedly attacked by a party of enemy which advanced with an armoured veh, carrying a Hispano type of gun firing explosive cannon-shell. Their tactics were to shine a searchlight on the Pl posn and then rain cannon-shell and MG gun fire into it whilst the inf infiltrated round it. Lt STRANG's Pl withstood three such attacks but they were severely shaken by them.</p>	
		0700	<p>Though, owing to lack of comms, the CO was not aware of the details of these attacks it became apparent to him that the small wood at the NORTH end of the DZ was being occupied by the enemy in some strength. He, therefore, in the early morning, ordered OC D Coy (Major SHERRIFF) to carry out an attack on this wood and to seize and hold it. The plan was to make Capt GOURLAY'S posn in the settlement a fire base and for the rest of the Coy (two Pls) to work up through "A" Coys Pl and attack from a NORTH EASTERLY direction. Fire sp was also to be given by "A" Coy Pl and by "B" Coy Gp, which incl MMGs and Mortars and was firmly established at the NORTHERN end of the wood WEST of the DZ.</p> <p>This operation did not go according to plan. When Major SHERRIFF went fwd to contact Capt GOURLAY in the settlement he was greeted by outbursts of fire both from the edge of the wood on the EAST of the DZ and from the vicinity of the settlement itself. It then became apparent to him that the Pl there was closely surrounded if not already overrun. On his reporting this to Bn HQ the CO ordered C Coy, who had not yet been engaged, to send a Pl out into the DZ to engage the enemy forces surrounding the settlement. This was only partially successful owing to the long range and the fact that folds in the ground afforded the enemy a considerable amount of cover.</p>	
		0900	<p>Major SHERRIFF decided now to bye-pass the settlement and carry on towards his original objective. That was the last seen or heard of him for the rest of the day and the CO was left, owing to failure of R/T, without further knowledge of his movements, though sounds of heavy firing came from the woods.</p> <p>About this hour it became apparent, from sounds of firing, that the enemy were advancing SOUTHWARDS through the wood in the EAST, - where D Coy was, - and several attempts to gain touch with that Coy failed. The CO had now no reserve left except a composite Pl made up of 17 men of Sp Coy. This he sent into the wood under Major HR HILL, OC Sp Coy, to investigate. There followed increased sounds of</p>	

EDE AREA	18	1500	<p>firing, both MG and rifles. When Major HILL returned, some two hours later, he reported having engaged the enemy who were infiltrating through the wood, and inflicted casualties (two to his own rifle).</p> <p>The 4th Parachute Bde were due to make their drop at this hour and their appearance was anxiously awaited. At this time the situation was reasonably well in hand. "B" Coy Gp were inflicting severe casualties on enemy parties on the main rd where at least six armd tracked vehs were knocked out by their atk gun and their occupants eliminated by the fire from MMGs. They were also mortaring and shooting up the Arty Barracks in EDE, and mortaring the wood at the NORTH of the DZ. "C" Coy were covering the SW portion of the DZ and engaging any enemy seen in the open. On the EASTERN side there was the unknown factor of "D" Coy, but they appeared to be containing the enemy, and Major HILL'S small force had the situation in hand in the SE. At the SOUTHERN end Bn HQ were holding a firm base.</p> <p>Unfortunately, however, the aircraft did not appear at their appointed time.</p> <p>There followed now a difficult period during which the enemy pressed in all sides. Steps were taken, by using every man and weapon, to keep him in check and these were so successful that he eventually drew off the majority of his force NORTHWARD. Therefore, when the Parachute drop did eventually take place, between 1400 and 1500 hrs, the DZ was completely clean and fire on it came from only a few isolated enemy weapons situated at a distance.</p> <p>All parachutists down, with very few casualties. Brigadier HACKETT, Comd, 4 Para Bde, specially thanked the CO for the protection provided. The Bn has thus accomplished its first task successfully.</p> <p>During the intensive clearing of the woods just prior to the drop, the whole of Bn HQ was actively engaged. Unfortunately whilst crossing the embankment of the motor-road a party which incl the CO and Major HILL came under enfilade MG fire and Major HILL was shot through the head. His loss is a grievous one as he was a cool and courageous leader.</p> <p>"A" Coy under Major BUCHANAN, had, during this day, a very uncomfortable time. Lt STRANG'S Pl was eventually forced, by dint of enemy pressure and sp weapons, to fall back on the main Coy posn at PLANKEN WAMBUS.</p> <p>The enemy followed up closely and attacked this posn repeatedly, but A Coy held on, inflicting heavy casualties on the enemy and taking a number of prisoners.</p>	
----------	----	------	---	--

			<p>During the forenoon the 2IC, Major COKE, was sent back to recce the route to our next posn. At Bde HQ he was informed that the 1 Para Bde, - a small part of it, - had seized the ARNHEM bridge and was holding the NORTH end of it, though cut off from the remainder of the Bde. The GOC, as well as Comd 1 Para Bde, was missing and Brigadier HICKS, Comd 1 Airdlg Bde, had assumed Comd of the Div.</p> <p>These circumstances necessitated some alteration in plan and the G1 came up, at the time of the parachute landing, with orders. One Bn of 4 Para Bde, - 11 Para Bn, - was to go to the assistance of 1 Para Bde, whilst the remainder were to proceed with their original task of clearing and holding the NORTH of ARNHEM. 7 KOSB, having completed its task of protecting the DZ, was to seize and hold the high ground in the woods about Pt 56 (698797) and Pt 54 (704801). Infm was that these were strongly held by enemy outposts.</p> <p>The CO, having co-ordinated plans for the move with Comd 4 Para Bde, ordered the start to be made at 1900 hrs. This enabled the adv units of 4 Para Bde to get clear and also gave time for our men to prepare and eat a hasty hot meal from their 24-hr packs, - the first since landing. Much to the CO's satisfaction D Coy turned up again at about 1800 hrs, having been engaged in close combat with the enemy in the woods all day. Major SHERRIFF had been slightly wounded in the arm, but was carrying on, and Lt KIPPING had been killed. About the same time certain sub-units which had come in on the second lift appeared. These inc Lt DOIG'S Pl (B Coy) and Lt WAITE'S Pl.</p> <p>The Bn moved off in the semi-darkness in the order: B Coy Gp (Maj FORMAN), D Coy, Bn HQ, Sp Coy, C Coy (Maj DINWIDDIE). The route lay along the NORTH side of the rly till past WOLFHEISEN, then in a NORTH EASTERLY direction towards the objective.</p> <p>There was considerable congestion on the route, owing to the number of units and sub-units, incl tpt and guns, of 4 Para Bde, who were using the same one for the first part of the way.</p>	
		1700 to 1900		
		1900		
JOHANNA HOEVE	19	0100	<p>About this hour the Bn drew clear of the units of 4 Para Bde and adv straight on its objective. "C" Coy was directed on Pt 56 and B Coy on the rd junc at 702801. The main axis followed B Coy, which was given the village of JOHANNA HOEVE 6980 and the farm at 695802 as preliminary bounds. There was a certain amount of enemy MG and gun fire, and also air-strafig, during the move.</p> <p>B Coy's move was rather slow as the Coy Comd was intent on thoroughly clearing the route, until the CO took a hand and pushed them fwd more rapidly. JOHANNA HOEVE and the farm buildings were seized without incident, except distant MG fire, and the Coy pushed on towards the rd junc. Here they met stiff opposition from enemy</p>	

<p>JOHANNA HOEVE</p>		<p>MGs well dug in in fully prepared posns, and in the dark were unable to locate them sufficiently accurately to assault.</p> <p>After a number of attempts and suffering casualties, incl Lt MURRAY who was missing, the CO decided that it was not a feasible proposition in the dark. As daylight was approaching he decided to est the Bn in a posn based on JOHANNA HOEVE.</p> <p>This was carried out, and by daybreak digging had commenced. C Coy meanwhile, had reached the high ground and was in close contact with the strong enemy MG posts about Pt 56 which he was threatening. OC C Coy was ordered to est himself in his present posn and continue the action in daylight.</p> <p>Daylight found the Bn est as follows : Bn HQ and B Coy - vicinity of JOHANNA HOEVE C Coy - about Pt 56 D Coy about 691807 and A Coy, with whom close contact was now made for the first time, about 686813.</p> <p>During the morning Comd 4 Para Bde informed the CO that the Bn was now under his comd. His orders were that we had to hold a firm base on our present posns, and also, later in the day, to carry out our pre-briefed task of protecting LZ "H" during the arrival of the tpt of the Polish Para Bde. Meanwhile 156 Para Bn was to adv round the rt flank, through C Coy, and 10 Para Bn to adv round the left flank, directed on Pt 54.</p> <p>In order to carry out the LZ protection task, D Coy was moved to the wood at 688808 to protect it from the NORTH, and B Coy to the wood at 678805 to protect it from the SOUTH and WEST. Meanwhile close touch was kept with 156 Para Bn and 10 Para Bn in order to assist them in any way possible. C Coy Comd was ordered to conform his movements to those of 156 Para Bn and to consolidate their gains. The situation at this time was well in hand and the Bn suitably disposed for its LZ protection task and for assisting in any fwd movement. No other type of movement was visualised and everyone was in very good heart.</p> <p>During the morning and early afternoon Bn posns were subjected to concentrated shelling, which set fire to most of the houses in JOHANNA HOEVE, and to a very determined cannon-fighter attack from a sqn of ME 109s, which caused a number of casualties. The two Para Bns put in a number of Coy attacks on enemy posns on the high ground, but these were only partially effective and both were eventually held up and started to consolidate short of their objectives. Infm was received of tanks and SP guns approaching the locality and our atk guns were ready to receive them.</p>	<p>D. 5</p>
--------------------------	--	---	-------------

<p>JOHANNA HOEVE</p>	<p>19</p>	<p>1400 1500</p>	<p>About this hour the glider landing took place on LZ "H". It was greeted by very heavy flak but little close range fire, and the gliders appeared to land well, though there were casualties to aircraft which carried out also a jettison drop. As the loads were tpt vehs of the Polish Para Bde, with few personnel, B Coy and part of D Coy went to their assistance in unloading and in clearing and collecting the re-supply containers of the jettison drop. From the Bn's point of view there was nothing, at this time, to indicate that we had more than a temporary check, nor that any change of plan was imminent.</p> <p>About this hour, after all gliders had landed, the CO was called urgently to HQ 4 Para Bde. Here he was given by Brigadier HACKETT very quick orders for an immediate break-off with the enemy and withdrawal SOUTH of the rly. WOLFHEISEN was said to be in enemy hands, whilst enemy reinforcements were reported advancing along the rly from the WEST. It was to be a case of getting out quickly before the latter, combined with enemy pressure from the EAST and NORTH would catch the Bde on two, or three sides, simultaneously. The Bn had to find a Coy for protection of a RE det which had to prepare a crossing for vehs over the rly at a point EAST of WOLFHEISEN. The crossing for tps was to be at 673801 and the Bn was then to concentrate, after having covered the rest of 4 Para Bde across the rly, at 674792, coming back under Comd of 1 Airdg Bde. The move was to be made within half an hour. As B Coy's posn was in the vicinity of Bde HQ the CO decided to detail that Coy at once as the RE protection Coy. The Coy Comd and a proportion of the Coy were still employed in helping to clear the LZ but the CO contacted Lt DOIG, who was there with part of the Coy, and explained the situation to him. The RE offr who was to construct the crossing was present and it was arranged that B Coy should move with him forthwith as his protection party. Lt DOIG went straight away to convey these orders to the Coy 2IC Capt DUNDAS. The CO then returned to Bn HQ where he found a desperate battle in progress. Just after he left for Bde HQ the posns held by Bn HQ, D and A Coys had been strongly attacked and close and fierce fighting was still in progress. The situation had therefore to be faced of a withdrawal whilst in close contact with the enemy. The CO got out his orders to Bn HQ personally and to A, C and D Coys on the 18 set. C Coy, which was still in close contact with 156 Para Bn was not being engaged and was ordered to co-ordinate its withdrawal with that of that Bn, which it did successfully. D Coy which was closed engaged, but was in the Bn HQ vicinity, was ordered to beat off the opposition and co-ordinate its withdrawal</p>	<p>D. 5</p>
--------------------------	-----------	---------------------------	--	-------------

<p>JOHANNA HOEVE</p>	<p>19</p>	<p>1500</p>	<p>with that of Bn HQ. It was impossible to get OC A Coy (Maj BUCHANAN), or any other offr of the Coy on the set, as that Coy was closely engaged. 10 Para Bn was, however, withdrawing through his locality, so orders were conveyed to him through the operator to co-ordinate his withdrawal with that Bn and join up at the RV SOUTH of the rly. There was no time to do more since the time laid down for the move was already passed. This very tricky situation was saved by the tremendous knock which the Bn delivered on the enemy attack. What occurred on A Coy front is shrouded in mystery since no representative of that Coy appeared at the RV and it can only be assumed that they, together with some portion of 10 Para Bn, were overrun by superior numbers. C Coy made an orderly and comparatively easy withdrawal along with 156 Bn. Bn HQ and D Coy laced into the enemy attack with everything they had and inflicted very heavy casualties on him. Major COCHRAN and Drum Major TAIT for example, each accounted for twenty GERMANS by Bren gun fire.</p> <p>The enemy met such a devastating volume of fire and suffered such casualties that he was first checked, then held and finally drew right off. This gave us our opportunity and D Coy and Bn HQ were enabled to get out at almost the correct time ordered. The CO and 2IC (Major COKE) saw everyone clear of these posns.</p> <p>There now ensued the confusion inevitable in a quick withdrawal action under such conditions. It had been impossible to brief everyone as to the RV, with the result that certain parties went straight across the rly instead of proceeding WESTWARDS to the RV, and were probably lost in the woods. There was a confused intermingling of units, inc the Poles who had just landed. Some of the tpt instead of proceeding to the prepared crossing place, attempted to cross the rly with its high embankment, elsewhere and either got stuck or shot up. Some went right past the crossing place and through WOLFHEISEN, where they were fortunate enough not to run into the enemy who were said to be there.</p> <p>When the CO reached the RV there was no member of Bde Staff present so he took charge and organised the re-assembly of units. The Bn, which was to cover the RV was got into posn to do this, whilst other units were collected and despatched to their own assembly areas. Gradually order began to reign over considerable general chaos and units and sub-units were despatched one by one to their respective appointed places.</p>	
		<p>1730</p>	<p>By about this hour the RV was beginning to be cleared leaving the Bn holding it. A quick check up showed that C Coy was reasonably complete, also D Coy who were now, however, reduced to two pls and Bn</p>	

OOSTERBEEK		1900	<p>HQ. Of A Coy there was no sign. Elements of B Coy were present and the CO acting on infm conveyed to him by a Sjt, went off in search of the remainder. A lengthy search failed to disclose them in the area in which they had been reported and the CO narrowly escaped being cut-off by the enemy during his return journey.</p> <p>When all other units were clear the Bn commenced to move to rejoin 1 Airdg Bde, the 2IC being sent ahead for orders and recce. There was some shelling on route but contact with the enemy had been broken off.</p> <p>Just as it was getting dark the Bn arrived in the vicinity of Div HQ 693784. Major COKE had received orders from Bde HQ which was nearby and these were confirmed to the COY by a G2 of Div HQ. The Bn was to hold the right flank of the Div posns, covering the rly to the NORTH of Div HQ. There were already parties of glider pilots, RE, and Independent Para Coy in that area and the Bn was to prolong EASTWARD the line held by them.</p> <p>The CO chose from the map his locality, which was a small wood area lying immediately EAST of 21 Indep Para Coy area. It was already dark when he, and the 2IC set out to contact the Indep Para Coy and make a recce, the Bn being ordered to follow under Major COCHRAN. It was found during the recce that the area chosen consisted of the grounds and gardens of two large houses. It was a well defined and convenient area to occupy in the dark and covered the Bn's allotted tasks.</p>	
OOSTERBEEK	20	0100 0430 0430 to 0900	<p>By this hour the Bn's new posn had been occupied and digging in was in progress. It was held in the form of a perimeter def. C Coy which was strongest held the WESTERN face and part of the NORTHERN and SOUTHERN faces. D Coy held the remainder of the NORTHERN face and the whole of the EASTERN face (having a party of Glider Pilots under Comd). B Coy which was very weak held the remainder of the SOUTHERN face. Mortars were centrally situated and atk guns covered every face and rd approach. MMGs were in D Coy area. Patrols were sent out during the night to the rly embankment, and among the houses in the vicinity.</p> <p>Morning "Stand To" started. A Pl standing patrol under Lt KAUFMANN, of C Coy was put out on the rly, together with a sec of MMGs to enfilade the embankment.</p> <p>The day started off quietly, the enemy not having yet located us since the bulk of his forces in this area were apparently still NORTH of the rly. This gave us an opportunity to re-adjust our defensive layout by daylight. It was found, that, on the whole, the posns occupied during darkness were satisfactory. D Coy had the most</p>	D. 5.

OOSTERBEEK	20	0900 to 1300	<p>difficult task since its sector included the larger of the two houses - the "WHITE HOUSE". This stood on dominating ground covering a cross rds at the NE corner of the perimeter, but it, and the area around it, were clearly visible from the other houses outside the perimeter and also from the trees of the surrounding wooded area. Taking our front as the rly, ie, the NORTH we had no touch with any unit to our rt flank. Our nearest own tps, to that flank, were the Recce Sqn who, we were informed by an officer of that unit who visited us, were based on wood at 698787, ie echeloned back on our rt rear, and were patrolling the road running NORTH from there to the rly at 699791. In the vicinity of the latter place there was infm of a strong GERMAN standing post with MGs.</p> <p>On our left, or EAST, flank there was a gap of some 400 yards of wooded country before reaching the first posts of the 21 Indep Para Coy whose HQ was in the house at 693792, and contact was made with them.</p> <p>To the NORTH, between our posn and the rly, which was about 300 yds distant, were a number of large houses with gardens. It was not possible, with our reduced numbers, to hold all this area, but standing patrols were stationed in certain of these houses to watch the rly and the approaches from it. These were under command of Lt J HUNTER of D Coy. C Coy similarly posted standing patrols in the houses to the WEST and SOUTH.</p> <p>The CO, having made a detailed recce, during "Stand To" held a co-ord conference at 0600 hrs. At this he reviewed the whole situation, commended the Battalion for dealing in such a decisive manner with the enemy attack at JOHANNA HOEVE the previous day, and outlined the posns and disposns detailed above. He explained that the loss of A Coy Gp and part of B Coy during yesterday's move, and the circumstances of the move, had resulted in some temporary disorganisation, but ordered that this must be rectified at once, that the perimeter now occupied must be held inviolate and that every opportunity must be seized for offensive action though, on account of our reduced numbers, this could only be of a limited nature. He also discussed adm problems and authorised the issue of rations from the Compo Packs on a one-third basis. The RAP was to remain, meantime, in the WHITE HOUSE, where it was already established.</p> <p>By 0900 hrs the enemy had become very active. Our MGs and the standing patrol on the rly were the first to make contact, - with a strong enemy party based on a wood just NORTH of the rly. In order to meet this threat, Maj DINWIDDIE took Lt CREIGHTON out to est a mortar OP. This was done and effective mortar fire brought to bear</p>	
------------	----	--------------------	--	--

OOSTERBEEK	20	1300 to 1900	<p>on the enemy posns but shortly afterwards Lt CREIGHTON was shot by a sniper and killed. The enemy now commenced to out-flank our MGs, which had to be withdrawn to prevent being over-run, and came back into D Coy's section of the perimeter.</p> <p>Our atk guns were active during the morning. The first "kill" was an armoured car which was blown up and set on fire by the atk gun covering the NORTH face. Later another atk gun under Lt HANNAH, and escorted by a Pl of B Coy, went out to watch the rd leading SOUTH from the rd and rly crossing at 699791. Soon after it was in posn a TIGER tk, towing a flame-throwing apparatus, appeared and a spirited action took place. As a result of the courageous behaviour of our atk gun crew, and of Cpl WATSON and Pte McWHIRTER in particular, the TIGER tk was completely knocked out and the crew killed.</p> <p>As the enemy began to locate our posn, shelling, mortar fire and sniping began, and this continued with ever increasing violence throughout the day. It soon became apparent to the CO that the WHITE HOUSE was a danger point, so he ordered the removal of the RAP to the other house in the perimeter, which was in a more covered posn but had the disadvantage of having no water supply. Progress to and from the WHITE HOUSE later became a case of running the gauntlet of very accurate sniper fire and in doing this the 2IC (Major COKE) was hit in the leg and put out of action.</p> <p>Early in the afternoon the enemy brought fwd a SP gun which, while remaining out of sight of our atk guns, shelled our posns at close range. In doing so it scored a series of direct hits on the WHITE HOUSE, partially demolishing it and causing D Coy HQ and its other garrison to vacate it after having suffered casualties. The fire-fight continued all afternoon, our mortars, atk guns and MGs replying strongly whenever an opportunity or target offered. We had, owing to the break-down of comms, no arty sp but the FOO, Capt J WALKER, RA, proved himself a man of many parts and took an active share in inf fighting, acting as 2IC of D Coy. Anti-sniper ops were carried out actively. These incl the use of the PIAT, which proved an invaluable weapon, on houses suspected of harbouring snipers. Since the enemy were also shelling certain houses and setting them on fire it began to appear that there would soon be no whole houses left in the district.</p> <p>This caused the CO and MO concern for the wounded who were by now in considerable numbers in the RAP, so it was decided that the latter should be moved to another house outside the perimeter and the immediate fighting area. Unfortunately when this was put into effect the party, which was moving under a Red Cross Flag, ran into an enemy</p>
------------	----	--------------------	---

		<p>patrol which captured them. The MO and the walking wounded, incl Major COKE were thus lost, but the stretcher cases still remained with us. Until evacuation became possible these, and other subsequent casualties, were cared for by the Padre, Capt Morrison, together with Sjt HYSLOP, the Regtl Med Sjt, one RAMC Med Orderly and our SBs. During this period a glider pilot attached to the Bn, Sjt TILLEY, made his presence felt and was of very great assistance in keeping the wounded comfortable and cheerful.</p> <p>1900 Before dark the CO called for an O Gp and gave orders for night to disposns. During the evening "Stand To" these were taken up. They 2400 constituted a "tight" perimeter defence, so far as the limited numbers available allowed. After dark the CO, accompanied by the IO, went round the whole Bn defs to check up. C Coy's portion of the perimeter was satisfactorily secure, being strongly held and having the additional aid of a strong wire fence which would be an obstacle to any attackers. D Coy was not so satisfactorily placed since its area was more open and was overlooked by the surrounding woods and houses, some of the latter on fire and lighting up the area. The WHITE HOUSE proved a problem. It was so situated that it dominated a considerable part of the Bn posn. On the other hand it had already shown itself to be a "cock-shy", and holding it meant occupying slit-trenches situated in an exposed posn overlooked by, and in dangerously close proximity to, the surrounding woods. The Coy Com, Maj SHERRIFF, was very much in favour of holding a shortened line, further back, from which he could cover the WHITE HOUSE and would then have a good field of fire on the area surrounding it, as well as being able to present a more continuous front. After examining the situation in detail the CO agreed to this suggestion for daylight disposns but ordered that the WHITE HOUSE and its vicinity must be held during the hours of darkness. These altered daylight disposns were also calculated to assist B Coy, who were very thin on the ground and were continuing with the perimeter from D Coy's rt to C Coy's left with a rather short field-of-fire between them and a possible enemy forming-up posn. The WHITE HOUSE itself, which was, this night, a very "eerie" place, battered as it was by enemy shelling, and close to woods known to harbour enemy, was garrisoned by a weak sec, under comd of Capt WALKER, RA, who volunteered to stay there.</p> <p>Whilst the CO, OC D Coy and the IO were discussing the above matters, standing within our own perimeter, they were approached by a soldier whose appearance in the dark did not differ from that of our own men. When he spoke, however, it was in GERMAN and, without</p>	
--	--	---	--

OOSTERBEEK	20	1900 to 2400	<p>hesitation, Maj SHERRIFF jumped straight at his throat and, after a struggle eliminated him. During this it was impossible to get a shot into the GERMAN without the risk of hitting Maj SHERRIFF but when, presumably, a stick-grenade was thrown by another GERMAN who must have been lurking close by, everyone jumped back and shots were fired. This was followed by a fearful wailing, as of somebody in death agonies, but, on investigation, it was found that someone had shot a goat ! The second GERMAN, or some other member of their patrol, had, however, got in a shot and the IO., Lt MACKENZIE was wounded in the leg.</p>	
	21	0001 to 0430 0430	<p>Patrolling during the night was carried out between all posts, and fighting patrols were sent out by C and D Coys. The former, under Lt J TAYLOR (Cdn) proceeded in a SOUTHERLY direction with the object of trying to locate the MO and walking wounded, and of reporting on enemy activity in that direction. No sign could be found of the MO's party, but it was discovered that the enemy was in strength in this direction and that his activity appeared to indicate that he might be preparing to attack. D Coy's fighting patrol, under Lt J HUNTER discovered strong parties of enemy in the houses and gardens to the NORTH - near the rly - and in the woods to the NORTH-EAST.</p> <p>Morning "Stand To". The infm from patrols was utilized and the areas in which the enemy had been reported were heavily engaged by our mortars and MMGs. Whether on this account, or for some other reason is not known, but the expected attack did not materialise and the Bn stood down at 0630 hrs.</p> <p>Immediately after "Stand Down" the CO authorised another issue of rations, - still at one third scale, - and ordered that all ranks should get a hot meal without delay. While this was in progress a Carrier Patrol under CSM DRUMMOND went along the rd on WEST of our posn, moving SOUTH towards HARTEJTEIN, to try to locate the MO and wounded and to see whether the rd was clear for the evacuation of casualties. CSM DRUMMOND returned with the report that he had contacted a sniper of ours who was stationed in a house, who stated that the MO and his party had run into a GERMAN patrol the previous afternoon and been taken away by them. He also reported that the rd towards HARTEJTEIN was clear, though there were enemy parties in some of the streets leading EAST from it. The CO on receipt of this infm, decided to try evacuating the casualties. Two Jeeps, flying Red Cross Flags, were sent back as a start, carrying stretcher cases. These returned alright, so evacuation by this means was continued all day.</p>	

OOSTERBEEK	21	0900	<p>About this hour the enemy commenced to be very active. There was considerable shelling and mortaring and he moved snipers and MGs through the woods to posns in the vicinity of the WHITE HOUSE, from which they could fire into our position, and enfilade the rd running along our NORTHERN face. In consequence of this the team manning our atk gun near the NORTH gate was heavily machine-gunned and all became casualties. Despite this Sjt KEYES crawled out to the gun and prepared it for movement. He then dashed its jeep out, limbered it up and got it away to take up another posn.</p> <p>D Coy spent the morning in efforts to deal with the situation. After several attempts to clear the enemy out by fire, incl PIAT fire and by infiltrating small parties towards the woods in order to locate the enemy, it was decided to drive him out by a local counter-attack. OC C Coy was ordered to attach a Pl to D Coy for this op and he sent a Pl commanded by Sjt WILSON, who proved himself a courageous and capable leader. The plan was for Lt HUNTER'S Pl (D Coy) to reoccupy the WHITE HOUSE and act as Fire Pl whilst Sjt WILSON'S Pl did a rt flanking attack to clear the enemy MGs and snipers from the vicinity. This op succeeded in removing the enemy posts on the EAST and causing him to take to the houses and gardens along our NORTHERN front, where he was severely machine-gunned and shot up by PIAT fire. It was not, however, without casualties to ourselves, incl Lt J HUNTER who was killed by a sniper whilst carrying out a recce from the WHITE HOUSE. Sjt GRAHAM Provost Sjt, was very outstanding during all this fighting and proved an inspiring example of courage and fearlessness.</p> <p>As a result of the above op the afternoon was quieter, though enemy shelling continued and sniping kept breaking out from various different quarters. As a consequence our casualties continued to mount. During the afternoon the CO was visited by a rep of the 21 Indep Para Coy, and of the Recce Sqn. The latter brought a message from Bde HQ warning the Bn that it should be prepared to move to a posn in a still more constricted Div perimeter and asking if this could be done. The CO replied in the affirmative, but it was arranged that any such move would be co-ord with 21 Indep Para Coy in order to avoid leaving them unsupported.</p> <p>At this hour the CO held an O Gp in order to reorg the Bn after the casualties it had received, to appoint new Coy Comds in place of those who were casualties, and to arrange disposns for the night. It was decided to post all HQ personnel and any surplus Sp Coy personnel to the three rifle Coys, and to cut Bn HQ down to a bare minimum. B Coy to remain under comd of Capt DUNDAS, who had been commanding</p>	
		1200		
		to		
		1630		
		1630		

OOSTERBEEK	21	<p>since Major FORMAN went missing on 19 Sept; C Coy by Capt LIVINGSTONE, Major DINWIDDIE having been wounded this morning; and D Coy by Lt LAMOND, Sigs Officer, in place of Major SHERRIFF, who had received a second wound in his arm this afternoon, this time a severe one. His CSM, - CSM SWANSTON, though slightly wounded, insisted on staying on and he did most outstanding work throughout. Capt J WALKER, RA, who, when his comms broke down, had been acting as 2IC D Coy and doing excellent infantry work, had now managed to establish comm with his guns and was carrying out his normal function.</p> <p>During this conference, which was attended by Major COCHRAN, as 2IC, Capt CLAYHILLS, Adjt, and Major SHERRIFF, who had not yet been evacuated, - as well as by those mentioned above, - enemy activity increased and a very heavy mortar concentration was brought down on the posn, many of the bombs falling within the perimeter.</p> <p>Finally the CO decided to cut the conference short and to see what was afoot. He found that the enemy, who had been forming up under cover in the woods to the NE, was just starting an attack on our own posn. This attack came in strongly, being made by fully a Coy of SS troops. The enemy got as far as the WHITE HOUSE and the slit-trenches which we had vacated in that vicinity, but every move he attempted to make beyond there was frustrated by a deluge of fire from the Bn. Every weapon was got into action, the MMGs, which simply belched forth unceasing fire, proving particularly effective. Once the enemy had been checked, the CO arranged a two-minutes "crescendo", - 3" Mortars on the woods, MMGs on the trenches, and atk guns on the WHITE HOUSE, - at the end of which he led the Bn in a bayonet charge which swept any remaining enemy off the field. The WHITE HOUSE and nearby trenches were filled with the bodies of the dead GERMANS, with many more lying all over the open. The GERMAN attackers, except for those who had fled, were killed to a man.</p> <p>"The battle of the WHITE HOUSE", as this will be known, will live in the memories of all who took part in it. It came at a most opportune moment, so far as the Bn was concerned, when everyone had reached a state of extreme exasperation at the continuous shelling and sniping. As a result, when the GERMANS showed themselves the BORDERERS rose in their wrath and slew them, - uttering the most blood-curdling howls meantime. The enemy were picked SS troops and put up a most gallant fight to the last, but they had taken on rather more than they had bargained for.</p> <p>Our own losses were not light and incl some of our best leaders. Major COCHRAN fell dead, with a dead GERMAN at his feet. Sjt GRAHAM,</p>
------------	----	--

OOSTERBEEK	21	<p>lion-hearted as ever was killed in the midst of the fray. Major SHERRIFF, who should have been in the RAP, rushed into battle despite his two wounds and received a third, and severe, one about the thigh. The RAP was completely filled up again, but fortunately at this moment a new MO, Capt BUCK, who had been asked for earlier in the day, arrived, and he soon had the situation well in hand.</p> <p>Having driven out the enemy with such gusto the Bn would liked to have followed them up, but the CO, having in mind the message from Bde, about another move and having made a quick estimate of our casualties, decided that now was the moment to initiate the move, when the enemy had been knocked off his balance and while there was still daylight. He therefore ordered B and D Coys to cover the EASTERN flank, in which direction the enemy had withdrawn, whilst the remainder of the Bn prepared to side-step and make a continuous front with 21 Indep Para Coy, 300 to 400 yds to our WEST in a wood, with whom the anticipated move to a new posn was to be co-ord. This proved a wise decision since much eqpt would probably have been lost had the ultimate move been attempted in the dark and, had the enemy been given time to recover from his set-back it is doubtful whether the Bn would have got out since this posn was pin-pointed and easy to surround. Also, the RAP was now set on fire by a jeep which was hit and burning furiously outside it whilst the amn it contained went off creating a fearful din.</p> <p>All casualties were successfully removed and evacuated by jeep either direct to the MDS or to the 21 Indep Para Coy's RAP. The whole move was executed successfully and with precision, all moveable eqpt being taken, but a number of jeeps were found to have been put out of action during the battle by shell or small arms fire. Capt CLAYHILLS, who now became 2IC, recced the new posn and this was occupied, and digging commenced, by the time darkness was falling.</p> <p>Our two days in the WHITE HOUSE posn were ones of strenuous fighting and cost us heavily in casualties, among whom were the following :</p> <p><u>KILLED</u> : Major COCHRAN, Lt CRIGHTON, Lt J HUNTER.</p> <p><u>WOUNDED</u> : Majors DINWIDDIE and SHERRIFF (twice) - 3 times? Major COKE, Captains COULTHARD and BANNATYNE, Lts MACKENZIE, HANNAH, KAUFMAN and SHARPLES (who later died)</p> <p>Sjt GRAHAM who was well on the way to winning a VC was killed.</p>	
------------	----	--	--

		1800 to 2130 2130	<p>There were now no Coy Comds, or CSMS (except CSM SWANSTON, who though wounded remained on) and few senior NCOs left in action.</p> <p>As was expected, our stay in this new posn was a short one. Almost as soon as we arrived there the 21 Indep Para Coy received its orders to withdraw to another posn, and, after a long and fruitless attempt at a wireless conversation, Bde sent a LO (Lt MACDUFF-DUNCAN) up with a trace showing the new disposns.</p> <p>The Bn moved off, through the woods, at this hour, without incident, to a posn in the NW corner of HARTESTEIN village. Disposns here were made as follows :</p> <p>B Coy HQ - rd junction 694787; Coy responsible for street running WEST as far as x-rds 693788.</p> <p>C Coy HQ - rd junction 691788; Coy responsible for street along to B Coy.</p> <p>D Coy HQ - rd junction 691786; Coy responsible for street running EAST from there.</p> <p>Bn HQ - in the centre of above triangle on a small street not shown on the map.</p> <p>Mortars placed centrally; MMGs in wood on WEST flank, firing NORTHWARD; Atk guns covering rds leading into and towards posn from the NORTH and the streets running EAST and WEST.</p> <p>On our left, or WESTERN, flank we had the Glider Pilot Regt, in the wood there.</p> <p>On our rt, or EASTERN, flank we had elements of the Recce Sqn, continuing the defence of the village, and, beyond there, elements of 156 Para Bn.</p>	D. 5.
OOSTERBEEK	22	0100 0430 to 0630	<p>By this hour the Bn was est in this new posn, and was digging-in and improving defences of houses.</p> <p>Coys were made responsible for maintaining touch with the units on their flanks, and with each other, also for patrolling to their fronts. The defence was based on the houses but supplemented by fire-trenches dug in their vicinity. Owing to shortage of numbers many of the houses were only garrisoned by two men, acting as snipers.</p> <p>Morning "Stand To". The CO made a minute inspection of the Bn layout, and of the disposns of Coys and sp weapons. Several adjustments were made to improve the defences, incl the occupation by C Coy of the tongue of wood immediately to the NORTH of Coy HQ. This was taken over by Lt J. TAYLOR's Pl. Work was put in hand to improve the defences all round and these were co-ord with the units on our flanks.</p>	

		<p>0630 to 1900</p> <p>1900 to 2400</p>	<p>The Bde Comd - Brigadier P. HICKS, DSO, MC, - visited the Bn during this period and walked all round the posns. He told us we might expect a trying day, but that the 30 Corps armour was well on its way and might be expected to cross to our side of the RHINE tonight.</p> <p>Contrary to expectations this day passed off more quietly than we have become accustomed to. There was a good deal of 20 mm cannon fire directed at the roofs of the houses in order, presumably, to prevent our observing from them. These weapons make a most alarming noise but appear to be fairly ineffective. Shelling and mortaring increased as the day wore on and the village, which was inhabited and untouched when we arrived, began to show a number of scars. The inhabitants either departed or took refuge in their cellars. B and C Coys dealt effectively with small parties of the enemy who attempted to approach their posns, and carried out patrolling in their vicinities.</p> <p>Night disposns were made with a view to preventing the enemy penetrating under cover of darkness. All houses along the NORTHERN street were garrisoned by one or two men who were visited frequently throughout the night by patrols. Offensive patrolling also took place, with minor clashes with enemy patrols.</p>	
OOSTERBEEK	23	<p>0001 to 0430</p> <p>0430 to 0630</p> <p>0630 to 1300</p>	<p>Apart from the above, the night continued to be comparatively quiet, but it was felt that the enemy were making recces to locate our posns more definitely.</p> <p>Morning "Stand To". The CO visited posns and found all personnel in good heart. He ordered that all should shave and have a hot meal before the enemy started his day's activities. Water pipes in the village had been put out of action, but there was a pump from which all Coys had drawn water during the night.</p> <p>In contrast to yesterday, today started with a very heavy morning "Strafe" at about 0730 hours and enemy activity of all kinds increased from hour to hour. Sniping and machine-gunning into the area showed a marked increase. B Coy was attacked in the forenoon by a tank, sp by SP guns and infantry, and the houses occupied by the Coy were battered at close range so had to be temporarily evacuated.</p> <p>During this encounter the atk gun with B Coy was put out of action by having a tree knocked down over it, rendering it immoveable. Several of the crew became casualties. In face of the tank attack the Coy had to withdraw from its houses, but it retained its hold on its slit-trenches and later reoccupied its original posn, having meanwhile inflicted considerable casualties on such enemy infantry as appeared.</p>	

		1300 to 1900	<p>About the same time enemy infantry infiltrated fwd through the woods to C Coy's posn, and, under cover of 20 mm fire, shelling and mortaring, succeeded in establishing themselves within the fringes of that Coy's area. Lt TAYLOR's Pl, in the tongue of the wood, was attacked by armoured cars which approached down the clearing and, were therefore, out of view of our atk guns. These fired their 20 mms straight into the Pl's trenches, some of which had to be temporarily vacated. This activity developed into a really determined effort on the part of the enemy to establish his infantry, under cover of SP gun fire, and armoured cars, within our area. In this he was, despite the local counter-attack by sub-units of C Coy and a det of mortars, partially successful. The tongue of wood fell into his hands and he established an MG post near the rd junction which enfiladed the street leading towards B Coy. The situation began to look very serious but the CO, who had arrived on the spot after having seen B Coy's posn re-established, ordered C Coy to counter-attack and arranged mortar and MG fire to sp this. Capt LIVINGSTONE, OC C Coy, put this in hand and once more re-established his posn. Lt TAYLOR led his Pl in an assault on the enemy infantry who had occupied the tongue of the wood and drove them out, inflicting severe casualties. In this assault he lost a number of men, and was himself, along with six of his Pl, wounded. The Adj, Capt CLAYHILLS, whilst carrying out a recce, came under MG fire at this period and was hit in three places so had to go to the RAP. During the rather confused fighting the CO, accompanied by Sjt TILLEY, Glider Pilot Regt, who as now acting as RSM, walked straight into an enemy party in trenches, but both managed to escape unscathed. C Coy took a number of prisoners, during these Ops.</p> <p>Although C Coy's posn had been satisfactorily re-established, this incident had cost us a number of casualties and there were still enemy snipers and MGs which had, under cover of these activities, worked themselves into posns from which they could bring fire to bear on our area. The afternoon was spent largely in attempts to locate and deal with these, and in clearing and occupying certain houses into which his snipers had infiltrated. Good work was done by Sjt NATTRASS at this time.</p> <p>During all this period our MGs and atk guns were active. The former inflicted many casualties on the enemy, both on our own front and that of the Glider Pilot Regt. The remaining atk guns scored several hits on tanks and armoured cars which came within their arcs, and also executed great destruction of his infantry in the woods, by use of HE amn.</p>	
--	--	--------------------	---	--

OOSTERBEEK	23	1300 to 1900 1900 to 2400	<p>In the afternoon our posn was subjected to very heavy shelling by 88 mm, and larger guns, in the course of which a slit-trench in which the CO, Capt STEER and Drum-Major TAIT were talking, received almost a direct hit by two shells in succession. The CO was slightly wounded, but carried on, Capt STEER was severely shell shocked and Drum-Major TAIT was wounded and had to go to the RAP. Capt WALKER, RA, was also hit about this time, in the head, by a sniper, but his steel helmet saved him and he only suffered a minor wound. The RAP was now becoming very full since the MDS could accept no further casualties, having fallen into enemy hands. Capt BUCK, the MO; Capt MORRISON, the Padre; Sjt HYSLOP, Med Sjt, and all the medical orderlies and SBs carried out excellent work. Up to the present the enemy had been behaving very properly towards the wounded, but today three of our SBs were hit by snipers whilst attempting to collect the casualties. As a result several of C Coy's casualties could not be got back until nightfall.</p> <p>Darkness brought some relief from noise, shelling and sniping, which was welcomed after a day during which there had not been a moments peace, and during which there was fresh activity and close fighting continuously. All ranks were undoubtedly beginning to feel the strain, especially since, despite the Brigadier's optimism of yesterday, there still seemed to be no sign of our ground forces joining us.</p>	
	24	0001 to 0430 0430 to 0630 0630 to 1300	<p>Although it started off quietly, the night developed into one of considerable activity. Shortly after midnight it was found that an enemy party was digging-in quite close to B Coy's posn, and that enemy patrols were active along the whole front. Immediate steps were taken to deal with this development. Our own patrols had several encounters with those of the enemy, and a fighting patrol, under Capt DUNDAS and Lieut LAMOND, went out to deal with the enemy digging party, which it drove off.</p> <p>Morning "Stand To". The usual early morning quiet period, followed by the normal morning hate.</p> <p>It was soon discovered that the enemy night activity had served as a cover to work snipers and MGs into posns from which they could bring fire to bear into most of our area. This was made the easier for them because the Recce Sqn, which had moved out the previous afternoon to carry out a mob op, had not returned, so that our rt flank was open. The morning was spent in active offensive action on our part against any enemy who could be located and in sweeping the area for any who might have infiltrated into it during the night.</p>	

OOSTERBEEK	24	1300 to 1900	<p>This resulted in diminishing the enemy fire, but was not accomplished without casualties.</p> <p>Notable among these were CSM SWANSTON, and Sjts NATTRASS and WILSON, all of whom had been doing most excellent work. (N.B. CSM SWANSTON and Sjt WILSON were actually wounded yesterday.)</p> <p>There had been no resup of rations for some days and, despite having been carefully conserved, those we had were now finished. From now onwards the Bn had, therefore, to subsist on vegetables dug from the gardens, supplemented by stores found in the DUTCH houses. Sjt TILLEY proved extremely enterprising in providing hot meals for the whole Bn out of these materials which, together with his infectious optimism, was a great help to general morale.</p> <p>In the afternoon OC Glider Pilots requested that the Bn might be disposed in more depth and less linear width in order to tie up more closely with his posn in the wood. Since touch had already been lost with the unit which had been on our rt flank, and as this arrangement would make the whole posn much stronger, this suggestion was agreed to by the CO. B Coy was, therefore, brought in from its somewhat isolated posn, and our defence was organised in three rows of houses which we were prepared to hold to the last. B Coy held the fwd row, ie the NORTH side of the centre rd; D Coy, the second row, - the SOUTH side of the centre street (incl the RAP) - and C Coy the rear row, - the NORTH side of the rear street. Only about six houses in each row were held, owing to the shortage of numbers, but these three rows constitute a "block" in which, while the Glider Pilots were holding the wood on our left, it was felt we could put up a stiff defence and from which we could inflict considerable casualties on any enemy moving in the vicinity. By this time, however, the Bn had been reduced through casualties, to 7 Offrs and under 100 ORs, all of whom were suffering, to a greater or less degree, from strain, lack of sleep and shortage of food, water, cigarettes and all other amenities. The house in which the RAP was est was now full to overflowing, as well as all the outhouses nearby. Fortunately, however, it had so far avoided receiving a direct hit from a shell, which had been the lot of practically every other building in the area.</p> <p>Meanwhile enemy activity was increasing with ever-gathering velocity throughout the whole of the Div area. The BORDER Regt, holding the EASTERN side of the Div perimeter, appeared to be subjected to repeated attacks, whilst Div and Bde HQ were being constantly and heavily shelled. In our own sector enemy shelling and</p>	
------------	----	--------------------	---	--

OOSTERBEEK	24	1900 to 2400	<p>mortaring was continuing with increasing violence, destroying the houses and inflicting casualties.</p> <p>Shortly after midnight the Glider Pilots were very heavily shelled in their posn in the wood on our left, which they evacuated, taking up posns in the row of houses behind the Bn. This move placed us in a very precarious posn since the enemy could now form up under cover within about 50 yds of us. Our mortars were active in endeavouring to prevent this and kept bombing likely forming-up places.</p> <p>We had also now some arty sp and fortunately had Capt WALKER, RA, to direct it, as he had 'escaped' from the RAP and was now actively employed, not only at his own job but also acting as Adjt.</p> <p>An enemy attack, however, seemed imminent and smoke was put down by him from the wood on our left. The Bn stood to until after dark awaiting it, but, although there were signs of activity, it did not materialise.</p> <p>After dark there was the usual period of quiet, which we had come to expect, - and also suspect. Our patrolling had, owing to shortage of numbers, to be confined to keeping touch between posts and local patrolling in the vicinity.</p>	- midday, GPs say
OOSTERBEEK	25	0001 to 0430 0430 to 0630 0630 to 1300 1300	<p>The night passed off quietly, but, in view of the signs of the previous evening and our now difficult posn, it was felt that the culminating point of the enemy's offensive had arrived, and the dawn was awaited with some trepidation.</p> <p>Morning "Stand To". Despite our gloomy forebodings the day started surprisingly quietly. Advantage was taken of this to improve the defences of the houses and other posns, and to imbue all ranks with an offensive outlook.</p> <p>The quiet period continued until about 1100 hours, not even snipers being active. But, as was to be expected, this proved to be the prelude to an extremely heavy concentration of shelling. This was no doubt designed to be the "softening" process for an attack since enemy parties of considerable strength were to be seen, apparently concentrating in the wood to our left. Every move of his was, however, frustrated by our sniping and machine-gunning from the houses, and by mortar and arty fire. In this way many casualties were inflicted on him, and encouraged by this success, the Bn began to take on a new lease of life. Pte HOLBURN is worthy of mention here, as he had been sniping on his own for four days and accounted for 15 GERMANS.</p> <p>A Bde O Gp was called at this hour, to which the CO went by carrier. At this the Bde Comd gave the infm that, owing to the delays and to the conditions of the rds SOUTH of the RHINE, the</p>	

OOSTERBEEK		<p>1300 to 2115</p> <p>2115</p>	<p>attempt of the ground forces to join us had been abandoned, and that the Div was to be evacuated SOUTH of the river tonight. The Bn was to leave its posn at 2115 hours and pass the Bde RV - rd junction 692773, - at 2215 hours, then to proceed to the river bank, as guided, and cross in assault boats. Wounded, except walking wounded, were to be left in RAPs which would be cleared next day by our own Fd Ambulance personnel, who were remaining behind to attend to all our wounded. The importance of silence during the evacuation was emphasised. All ranks were to be armed, but no surplus eqpt carried. Everything left behind was to be destroyed so as to be rendered unusable.</p> <p>The CO returned to Bn HQ, conveyed these orders to Coy Comds and initiated all arrangements for the move. He emphasised that all ranks must be warned to be careful of their conversations, and that on no account must the enemy be allowed to infiltrate near or approach our posn. All ranks must muffle their boots in strips of blanket before leaving and must have the route explained to them in case of going astray. The orders regarding evacuation of our present posn were also given. The Bn order of march was to be, - C Coy and Bn HQ; D Coy and walking wounded; B Coy, who were to act as rear-guard. Orders re forming-up were given in detail. The whole Bn was to be formed up ready to move at 2115 hours precisely. The Bn would move off at that time and there could be no delay to wait for any one.</p> <p>The CO also visited the RAP and explained the orders in detail leaving the MO and Padre to make their domestic arrangements. He explained that the majority of the wounded would have to remain, with sufficient medical staff to look after them, but that any walking wounded who could make the journey were to move with D Coy.</p> <p>Many casualties were inflicted on the enemy during the afternoon and he was not given any opportunity to close on our posn.</p> <p>The Bn formed-up according to plan, except that it subsequently transpired that the walking wounded had not, apparently, joined D Coy's column. Exactly on time the Bn moved off, being guided through the gardens by Cpl MUNRO, of the Int Sec, who had previously reced this route. The rd was avoided in order to keep clear of enemy patrols reported on it and of MG fire directed along it. Soon after the Bn started it ran into an extremely heavy shelling concentration, which had the effect of splitting the column since there were a number of casualties and some personnel stopped to take cover, thus becoming cut-off from the remainder. The main portion continued on its way but, on reaching the woods, was led astray by the guide of a</p>	
------------	--	---	---	--

		<p>2215 party of parachutists who lost himself after leading the whole party deep into the wood. The CO decided then to march by compass, which was done, - Capt WALKER being of great assistance, - and the Bn crashed its way through the woods, eventually striking Bde HQ posn. From there we soon reached the RV, - which was passed exactly on time !</p> <p>2215 From the RV the Bn was directed along white tapes towards the river bank. On the flats alongside the river we joined a queue who were waiting for the boats, and lay there for 3½ hours until our turn came. The ground was dead flat without cover, but fortunately the enemy did not appear to realise what was going on and there was a constant stream of shelling from our own guns on the SOUTHERN side which drowned all other noise. It began to rain, everyone was freezing cold and the wait seemed interminable.</p> <p>0200</p>	
NIJMEGEN	26	<p>0200 At about 0200 hrs the Bn reached the head of the queue and commenced to cross. Once on the other side it seemed one had reached a haven, and, despite mud and fatigue, all trudged the four miles to DRIEL with light hearts if somewhat heavy footsteps.</p> <p>0600 Near Driel tea, rum and blankets were dished out, under excellent arrangements made by 30 Corps, and all were most acceptable. From there to NIJMEGEN was then traversed, partly on foot and partly by MT.</p> <p>At NIJMEGEN the survivors of the Bn were welcomed by our own 'Seaborne Tail', under Major RD SELTON, who had made most detailed preparations for their comfort and well-being. All were soon refreshed, fed and sent to bed to enjoy their first real sleep for 10 days.</p> <p>A check-up at NIJMEGEN showed the total strength of the survivors of the Bn from the ARNHEM operation to be :-</p> <p style="padding-left: 100px;"><u>OFFICERS</u> : C.O. - LT COL R PAYTON REID Capt JS LIVINGSTONE Lt WJM LAMOND Lt CM PELISSIER</p> <p style="padding-left: 100px;"><u>OTHER RANKS</u> : Sjts.....2 Cpls.....12 Lcpls and Ptes.58</p> <p style="padding-left: 100px;">TOTAL : <u>4 OFFICERS and 72 OTHER RANKS</u></p>	

	27		Survivors of the Bn from operation are refitted with clothes at NIJMEGEN.	
	28		Bn moved SOUTH to LOUVAIN and was billeted in a BELGIAN Cavalry Barracks for one night.	
	29	1515	Survivors plus administrative personnel left LOUVAIN by air and landed in base area at 1715 hrs.	
	30		Bn Administration, fitting of personnel with clothing, questioning of survivors for news of personnel left behind.	