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Army Form C.2118

WAR DIARY

or

Unit 4th BN K.O.S.B.

~~INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY~~

(Erase heading not required)

Month and Year FEB 1945

Commanding Officer LT COL C.L. MELVILLE

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	References to Appendices
OBSPRINGEN 8076	1	a.m. 1700	C Coy, with aid of CA, evac civs from farmplace 819793. "O" Gp : orders for handover to 4/5 RSF. Bearing taken on heavy gun which sent over occasional shell into area well to rear of Bn - probably Siegfried gun - active three or four times during night.	GWH
WALDFEUCHT 7775	2	0915 1125 1315 1600 2130	Bn ADV Party left for WALDFEUCHT, and ADV Party 4/5 RSF arrived Bn HQ. Civs streaming into C Coy area from KARKEN - they reported that Green Police had come across the ROER to evac KARKEN 8377, but many civs preferred to evac to British lines. About 100 Wehrmacht alleged to be mining KARKEN area. C.O. requested Bde Comd to get air and arty fire down on the village. B, D, SP and HQ Coys handed over and free of area CO 4/5 RSF assumed cmd - ordered A Coy send offr patrol up to KARKEN - Lt BEATTIE carried out this patrol, but found no enemy in village, nor any trace of mining. A and C Coys both settled in at WALDFEUCHT - delay due to very bad state of roads. - Period at WALDFEUCHT very quiet. Ops role twofold : a) def of the town ; perimeter naturally quadrilateral, each Coy responsible for one sector b) C.A - period so short that no one definite CA worked out in detail. Men given as much rest as possible, and parties attended Cinema Shows at Bde Cinema in BOCKET 7874. Working parties kept busy on road maintenance under Bde control.	GWH
	5		Following offr appointments and promotions approved by C.O. :- 1. Capt A.P. INNES promoted T/Maj and appointed O.C. B Coy. 2. Capt F.H. COUTTS " " 2i/c B Coy. 3. Lt G.W. Halliburton " T/Capt " " O.C. Mor Pl. 4. Lt A.S. ROSS " T/Capt 5. Lt D.J. URQUHART " I.O. 6. Lt R. STEPHENSON promoted T/Capt and appointed 2i/c A Coy.	GWH
STOCKHEIM	6	1120	Lt Col BAIRD of 36 U.S. Inf Regt arrived with his Bn recce party	

6071		1330	prior to takeover from us. Takeover by U.S. Bn complete and Bn on move to STOCKHEIM 6071 on W side of MAAS, S of MAESEYCK.	
		1800	Bn settled in at STOCKHEIM. Maj G.H. DAVIDSON in cmd while C.O. on 48 hrs leave.	GWH
	7	0930	Bn Adv Party moved off, arriving GUN 8724 at 1500 hrs.	GWH
	8	1700	A/I.O. returned to STOCKHEIM from GUN with infmn about that sector of MAAS line which Bn were to takeover from 2nd Bn K.S.L.I.	
		1730	"O" Gp : orders for move to GUN, and for takeover from 2 K.S.L.I.	GWH
GUN 8724 HQ: 873244	9	0630	Head of Bn coln moved off from STOCKHEIM, arriving GUN area 1335 hrs.	
		1700	C.O. arrived HQ and took over cmd from 2i/c.	
		1745	Admin HQ set up under Adjt at TIENRAIJ 8523	
		1915	2 Carr Secs and 2 Mor Dets badly bogged, causing some delay in takeover.	
		1945	Carrs and Mors both reported in posn.	
		2040	D Coy reported takeover complete : i.e. whole Bn in posn. Layout as follows: A Coy 888255 ; B (in res) 868251 with 4 mors & 2 ATK guns ; C Coy 895249 with 2 mors ; D Coy 883262 with 4 ATK guns ; under comd - 4 Dutch Coy (young soldiers in trg) 885237 ; 5 Dutch Coy TIENRAIJ. Capt COUTTS placed in charge of admin and trg of these Coys.	GWH
	10	1110	O.C. 80 Fd Regt visited HQ - discussed DF plan.	
		1200	Infmd by BM that Boches had blown the last ROER dam - floodwater expected in MAAS at VENLO by midday. Coys warned to be prepared for emergencies.	
		1240	Lt Col Turner 5 KOSB, Acting Bde Cmd visited C.O. at Bn HQ.	
		1812	RMO reported shelling in area 867229 - prob'y attempt at C.B.	GWH
	11	0535	MAAS risen very slightly, but no cause for alarm.	
		1145	6 Mor bombs landed in C Coy area - no cas.	
		1550	8 mor bombs, or 7.5 shells, landed just S of Bn HQ.	
		2000	Int OP report for the day : occupied dugouts observed at 894261, 892262, 891263.	GWH
	12	0015	Following flood report to be rendered to Bde each morning at 0700 hrs :- A. Is river overflowing. B. Is there an area of shallow water on WEST bank. C. Are the roads saturated. D. Has strength of current increased. E. Is there any flooding on enemy side of river.	
		0050	Veh mov reported by 156 Bde on Steam Train Road (main road running along E side of MAAS.) Warned Coys to make an immediate report on any such mov heard. Thought to be supplies and possibly reinforcements going North against tps of 1st Cdn Army on REICHSWALD front.	
		0135	D Coy reported mov on Steam Train Road - Gunners took much too long	

		<p>in bringing DF down - T.O.T. was actually 0200 hrs.</p> <p>0235 Mov heard again - DF fire much quicker this time.</p> <p>0528 Fire again brought down on traffic mov.</p> <p>0600 CO rendered flood report in accordance with demand earlier during night - answers were A. Yes B. Yes - 100 to 300 yds in width C. Very much so D. Not appreciably E. Yes - up to 100 yd.</p> <p>1225 Spandau fire across A Coy front from 893264 - own mors replied.</p> <p>1525 Capt COUTTS reported inter Coy relief complete between 4 and 5 Dutch Coys. One pl of 5 Coy to take up posn in A Coy area, one in C Coy.</p>	GWH
	13	<p>0450 Int OP reported lights and sounds of MT on Steam Train Road - no more seen or heard after an almost immediate gunner shoot.</p> <p>0700 Flood water risen 6 inches during night.</p> <p>1030 Acting Bde Comd visited HQ - 155 Bde ordered to obtain identification by first light 15 Feb : 7/9 RS to cross from BLITTERSWIJK 8727 ; 4 KOSB also to make a river crossing. CO nominated C Coy to find patrol under Lt KENDRA. I.O. contacted 5 Dutch Coy in search of local knowledge.</p> <p>1200 D Coy reported further flood rise of 6 inches since daylight.</p> <p>1400 Lt KENDRA, accompanied by Bde I.O., flew over enemy lines in R.A.A.O.P.</p> <p>1625 All arrangements for identification patrol cancelled by Bde.</p>	GWH
	14	<p>0030 Recce party for move to Conc Area further north to stand by for further orders. Considerable flare activity during night - own AC towards the RUHR ; also gun flashes - REICHSWALD battle.</p> <p>0740 Flood water risen approx 12 inches overnight.</p> <p>1650 Flooding increased further 12 inches in D Coy area - position in process of becoming an island.</p> <p>1700 Adv parties to be prepared as from midnight to move. Probable that we take over from Polish Forces W of S'HERTOGENBOSCH, while U.S. forces take over from us. This almost immediately contradicted - Bn to move on 15th to a posn behind 1st Cdn Army.</p> <p>1450 U.S. Adv Party arrived, under Bn C.O., Lt Col MARUN. Identity of the Unit not given, since it was part of a security formation.</p> <p>1600 Pnr Off reported that a suspect mine area between GUN and 5 Dutch Coy was clear of mines.</p>	GWH
	15	<p>0240 Tracked mov heard on Steam Train Road - gunners already pulled out, and contact with 79 Fd Regt through Bde too slow - engaged with own Mors.</p> <p>0715 Bn recce party left for new locn.</p> <p>0730 Further rise of 12 inches in flood water.</p> <p>0900 "O" Gp : offrs of both our own and U.S. Bn were present. Final details of takeover settled.</p>	

		1150 Lt Col TURNER left Bde to take over 5 KOSB. As result of Div reorganisation, 5 KOSB now in 157 Bde, 6 HLI taking their place in 155 Bde. Lt Col PERCIVAL, 6 HLI, now Acting Bde Cmd. 1600 Handover completed. 1830 Bn settled in to new Conc Area at WANROIJ	GWH
	16	1000 2i/c and small recce party went up to HEIJEN 7941 to look over Bn Assembly area along main road immediately N of that village. 1000 CO and I.O. to Bde for Conf on Op VERITABLE. 1400 C.O.'s Prelim "O" Gp for this Op. 2115 C.O. and I.O. left for Tac HQ, 155 Bde at GENNEP.	GWH
HEIJEN 7941	17	0400 A/I.O. and Coy guides preceded Bn to Assembly Area. 0815 Bn concentrated in Res Area. 1000 "O" Gp : Plan is as follows : H hr 1530 hrs. 6 HLI to capture GROOTE HORST 8639 ; 7/9 RS to take up posn in res around 840388 ; 4 KOSB to pass through 6 HLI and capture the area of X Rds 879404. 1100 C.O. summoned to Bde. GOC passed through Bn locn and intimated change of plan. 1430 "O" Gp : 6 HLI as before ; 7/9 RS to capture ground overlooking SLUICE at ATK ditch at 835388 ; 4 KOSB to cross ATK ditch, capture, hold and clear woods in square 8437. Patrols to contact 6 HLI when posn firmly secured. 1830 Bn moved off on foot to fwd Ass Area 810412. 2000 Bn dug in on Assembly Area, which thereafter became F.U.P. 2200 6 H.L.I. passed through Bn 810414.	GWH
	18	0045 I.O. set off and contacted C Coy 7/9 RS 825392, whose Bn had been held up by enemy strongpoint around farmhouse 836395 then returned to report their locn to C.O. 0130 Bde Cmd arrived HQ to convey new orders - Bn to make good the line of main road REMPELD - BLIJENBEEK. I.O. departed to recce A and C Coy areas on that line, approx 0400 A and C Coys guided into posn by I.O. A. 825387 C. 830388. 0530 B, D and Tac HQ guided also into posn by I.O. Bn layout then as follows :- HQ 825389, A 825387, B 826389, C 830388, D 826390. 0800 Half an hour's heavy arty fire on Bn objectives ; one Tp Crocodiles and AVRE's knocked out by SP guns. A and C Coys suffered heavy cas in this fire which continued throughout the day, thickened up by mortars. 0900 Lt T. GRAY wounded in the left foot. 1400 Capt D. COLVILLE fatally wounded by observed Spandau fire. Evac of cas particularly difficult and dangerous, but extremely well carried out by Regtl SB and Bearer Sec under Capt HILL and Lt R.	

			MAJOR.	GWH
	19		Bn during the night were still under effective shelling and mortaring which however was less intense. A and C Coys put patrols fwd to Anti-Tank ditch, and gained the infmn that it was on an average 5ft deep with a width of 18/20 ft and had normal sloping banks. 0600 A and C Coys withdrawn by Bde order to wood edges at 825388. D and B to 826391. Bn HQ to 824391. During day Bde Cmds 156 and 157 visited area on recce tasks. Spasmodic shelling continued and cas mounted. 1115 Lt K. WILSON evac as a battle shock case. 2230 Very heavy shelling and mortaring, incl Nebelwerfer, of whole area until 0430 hrs. Many cas sustained.	GWH
	20		A and C occupied original fwd posns by night. B Coy contacted 52 Recce on the left. 1500 Lt E. KENDRA severely wounded in the head by shell fragment. Bn HQ moved again to 825393. B and D occupied the fwd posns 1730 KASTEEL BLIJENBEEK bombed and badly damaged by Typhoons.	GWH
	21		Bn occupied same areas and were still under heavy fire, though fewer cas were now being suffered - posns by this time being more shellproof. Bde demanded report on battle exhaustion cases. Quieter night with noticeable and welcome decrease in enemy shelling.	GWH
	22		D Coy patrolled to KASTEEL and found no sign enemy in outer buildings. 1030 Typhoons again dealt with KASTEEL : causing heavy damage. 1400 Relief by 6 HLI commenced ; Bn moving back into posns vacated by HLI area sq 8240. ATK and Mor Pls remained in posn under comd 6 HLI.	GWH
	23 &	24	Bn rested in a close area approx 821408 and rehabilitated.	
	25		Following offrs posted to Bn : Capt WILSON, 2/Lt J. ROSS, and 2/Lt TESKEY. 1430 Maj Gen C.M. Barber D.S.O., G.O.C. 15 (S) Div visited C.O.	GWH
	26		Bn placed on 10 minutes notice to move - destination or objective most obscure - probably to assist 6 HLI and 5 KOSB in their attack on Lt Col C.L. MELVILLE, O.C. 4th Bn KOSB, was awarded the DSO. Capt R STEPHENSON awarded the M.C.	GWH
	27	0700 1030	Bn still standing by. D.J. Urquhart Lieut Bn stood down to one hour's notice. for O.C. 4th K.O.S.B.	GWH