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ARMY FORM C.2118

WAR DIARY

or

Unit 1st Bn K.O.S.B.

~~INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY~~

(Delete heading not required)

Month and Year March 1945.

Commanding Officer Lt. Col. W.F.R. Turner

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	References to Appendices
Field.	1		In the early hours of the morning the enemy pulled out of KERVENHEIM and later on 2 LINCOLNS secured the remainder of the town. Otherwise a quiet day.	
	2		In the morning 9 Bde started an attack from the area 975386 with WINNEKENDONK as the final objective. The Bn crossed the start line - the road SOUTH WEST from RENNINGSHOF 978387 - at 0715 and by 1000 hrs the leading coys were on the final objective - on the Right A Coy in area of REYSHOF 979371, and on the Left B Coy at 984379. Shortly afterwards 2 RUR passed through and by 1400 hrs had secured their objective of the main road running NORTH-SOUTH in the area 993364. At about 1600 hrs the Bn passed through 2 RUR in Kangaroos and had cleared the wood up to the Southernmost edge at 002354 by 1700 hrs with no opposition except for a certain amount of mortar and shell fire. The Comd Offr went forward to plan for the attack on BRUCH and RAHMEHOF in area 3360. The attack was laid on for 1830 hrs with one Sqn of Churchill tanks, but had to be postponed as 2 LINCOLNS had arranged all the arty support for their attack on WINNEKENDONK. The enemy must have seen some of the forward troops on the edge of the wood and heard the tanks as he shelled and mortared the SOUTHERN half of the wood fairly heavily till dusk. The tanks and Kangaroos withdrew to the NORTH of the wood. At 2115 a concentration was laid on BRUCH and RAHMEHOF, and A and B Coys moved up to the forward edge of the wood taking over C and D Coys positions. At 2130 C and D Coys attacked RAHMEHOF and BRUCH respectively and in silence. Both coys achieved total surprise and captured several prisoners. In the morning the positions were visited by several enemy who were unaware of the situation. The 2 LINCOLNS having captured and consolidated WINNEKENDONK during the night, an armoured div was due to pass through and break through to the RHINE. At about 1000 hrs the Bn changed dispositions, which were then as follows:- HQ 001367, A Coy 008362, B Coy 007359, C Coy 004351, D Coy 002350 and the RAP remained where it had been throughout the battle, at 991367. Civilians encountered were all farmer type and interested in	

			nothing much else. During the morning the RUR passed through WINNEKENDONK and took up position in the woods to the SOUTH.	
Field.	4		The day was spent in cleaning up and recuperating after the battle, and everyone was very glad of the rest. The civilians were confined to one part of the houses occupied by the troops, and gave little trouble.	
	5		A Coy and B Coy were given the job of guarding at bridges in their areas against possible saboteurs. A quiet day.	
	6		Another quiet day much appreciated.	
	7		Nothing to report.	
	8		Conference at Bde HQ on lessons learned from operation "HEATHER."	
	9		At 1000 hrs a discussion was held for all officers of the Bn on lessons learned from operation "HEATHER." The Army Kinema Service showed some films in a barn in A Coy area. The Bn was told to be at 24 hrs notice to move. Points raised at the above discussion may be found under Appx "A".	Appx 'A'
	10		A Bde Comd's 'O' Gp was held at Bde HQ. We were to take over a sector of the River RHINE from a troop of the 43rd Recce Regt. Our role was primarily to stop the enemy from even setting foot on this side of the River, and secondly but none the less important, the job of providing as much information as possible about the troops on the opposite bank, their dispositions and particularly their defences and any obstacles which they had erected.	
	11		The recce party set off for the area of APPELDORN. This party consisted of the CO's 'R' Group and Pl Sjts who reced their Coy areas, which all contained a number of comparatively undamaged houses. The party spent the night in what was to be Bn HQ at 059491.	Movement Order No 4 under Appx 'B'
	12		The Bn arrived shortly aver 0830 hrs and by 1030 hrs was completely established in positions as follows:- Bn HQ at 059491, A Coy HUSEN 086501, B Coy 072505, C Coy 075503, D Coy in reserve at 065487. One platoon from B Coy was in position at REESERSCHANZ 074513 during the day and the position was occupied by the whole Coy at night. OPs were established at various points covering the whole front. During the afternoon enemy movement was seen in the area of van WILLICHSHOF 095511.	
Field.	13		OPs saw movement mostly at 1050 and 0951. A considerable amount of civilian movement was also seen round the farms on the EAST bank of the river. One section of German soldiers were seen at 094513 and engaged by 33 Fd Regt and also by 3 inch mortars. The steam tram was seen in the area of HALDERN 1153. The enemy were seen to be occupying positions in REES itself and also constructing positions both EAST and WEST of the town near the river bank. During the day a number of RE officers,	

			and a few high ranking officers visited the OPs and looked across the river.	
	14		There was a thick mist all day which restricted visibility to less than 100 yards, except for short intervals at midday when the right bank of the river could be seen. Individuals, probably civilians, were seen on the road from REES to HAFFEN 1149. Otherwise there was nothing of interest.	
	15		The Carrier Pl position in the Farms at 087493 was taken over by B Coy 2 LINCOLNS who came under command. Visibility was restricted during the day owing to smoke which was drifting across our front from the NORTH-WEST, but in the afternoon it was bright and clear and considerable movement was seen. Movement in the WEST edge of REES suggested a platoon position with its forward position along the BUND 200 yards from the edge of the river and extending EAST into REES and NORTH to the embankment at 072523. Civilians were seen in STEPENHOF 095501, but it is a suspected enemy section position. Otherwise slight movement in ESSERDEN 0653 and on the REES-HAFFEN road.	
	16		Visibility nil all day owing to continuous thick smoke screen, making it very unpleasant in the forward coy areas. Two secret agents came across the river and were brought in by C Coy.	
	17		At 0740 hrs ME 109 flew up the River at tree top height. The enemy seemed anxious to know what was going on on the left bank of the river. During the night the Pl at 075514 saw a small boat in the river at 075516 going down-stream, and about an hour afterwards two figures were challenged approaching along the bank from the WEST, who made off again without a word. Otherwise a quiet night.	
Field.	18		In the morning all buildings in the Bn area were searched, but no enemy were found. A recce was made to accommodate the whole Bn in NDR MORMTER area. Excellent visibility produced good results from the OPs, and considerable movement was seen on the whole front, especially in the ESSERDEN area. At 1610 hrs a party of about 80 enemy were seen approaching ESSERDEN from the SOUTH and were engaged by 33 Fd Regt with good results. The enemy tried to lay a smoke screen, which only brought another concentration down on top of him. Altogether 200 rounds were fired into the ESSERDEN area during the day. The enemy were still building a strong-point position in the ESSERDEN end of REES round a brick tower, which had already been observed as a MG position. Just before dark a light track vehicle was seen moving from a house at 066528 and engaged - unfortunately results could not be observed. Lt Col R.C. Macdonald, DSO, left us to command 2 R. WARWICK Regt in 185 Bde. Lt Col W.F.R. Turner, formerly commanding 5th Bn The KOSB took over command. B Coy was relieved by D Coy.	

			The Pl at 075503 had a clash with a patrol of five enemy, who made off when fired on. Nothing further was heard of them.	
	19		The Bn moved to the forward positions in NDR MORMTER. Bn HQ to 069504, and Coys to 068512, 075514 and 082508 at night. Owing to future operations it was essential to stop any enemy coming across the river, and standing patrols 200 yards apart lined the bank of the river at night. Smoke was laid and visibility was nil. During the night 4 enemy were found lying up in a haystack. They had been there over 24 hours and were getting ready to re-cross the river. Identification was of 3 Coy 7 Para Eng Bn. This was the first identification of 7 Para Div.	
Field.	20		Visibility was restricted owing to slight fog and smoke drifting from some distance away to the NW. However, enemy movement was seen at 069521, 072521, 070524, mostly being odd soldiers walking about. At night vehicle movement was heard in REES from 2000 hrs to 0430 hrs. During the night the 2 LINCOLNS captured 11 Prisoners, whose identification confirmed the presence of 7 Para Div in the area.	
	21		Concentrated smoke was emitted all day in the Bn area, causing considerable discomfort to the forward coys, and cutting out all observation from OPs. During the night 2 RUR captured two PW and killed one other as they were attempting to land from a boat. The interrogation confirmed 7 Para Div as being in the REES area. Slight enemy arty activity.	
	22		Again smoke was laid and visibility was nil. A slight increase in enemy arty activity.	
	23		During the previous few days a large number of Fd, Med and Heavy Regts had moved into the sector. H hour for operation "PLUNDER", which was the crossing of the RHINE and the breakthrough into Central GERMANY, was 2100 hrs. The CB programme was fired from 1900 to 2000 hrs. The answering fire was light. At 2000 the 51 (H) Div passed through us, crossing the RHINE at 2030 hrs in buffaloes and amphibious craft, aided by searchlights on General Grant tanks, and with a terrific barrage. There was a little shelling and some mortaring on the forward coys and especially on the Ferry House 075514, and an enemy aircraft dropped three bombs in that area at 2245 hrs.	
Field.	24		In the early morning there was considerable mortar and spandau fire in the area 0751 and two bombs were dropped in that area by enemy aircraft at 0600 hrs. The glider-borne troops passed over the Bn area shortly after 1015 hrs. During the day there was occasional shelling in the Ferry House area. Owing to an enemy strong point holding out in the WESTERN end of REES a bridge could not be built from the Ferry House to the town, but one Cl	

		15 bridge was built 500 yards further WEST. The Bn occupied day positions permanently except for a D Coy Pl at the Ferry House. There was MG fire from the strong point in REES during the night.	
	25	Task of the Bn to protect RHINE crossings in case of serious threat. Nothing of interest to report.	
	26.	A quiet day with nothing to report.	
	27	At 1700 hrs the Bn crossed the River at REES over LONDON Bridge (Cl 40) and concentrated in the area EAST of REES and NORTH of the ALTER RHINE. Dispositions as follows:- Bn HQ 095524 and Coys at 095523, 099525, 100522 and 100524. A quiet night.	
	28	Preparation for the attack on HALDERN. Patrols were sent out at midday and found HALDERN unoccupied. The Bn moved at 1600 hrs and was settled in the "F" Echelon transport by 1900 hrs. The 2 LINCOLNS passed through. Orders were given at 2100 hrs for the move forward to capture WERTH 1558.	
	29	At 0100 hrs the Bn set off with a Pl of 253 Fd Coy RE moving in front of B Coy, the advance guard, clearing the mines. The Bn reached WERTH 1558 at 0400 hrs and was complete by 0530 hrs. Capt MacKay of "A" Coy was wounded by a trip wire mechanism. The civilians were a surly and hostile crowd. 7 PW were captured during the day, all stragglers of odd units sleeping in barns. Orders were given out at 1900 hrs for the Bn to carry out Phase III of the Bde attack and capture the bridge at 182628.	
Field.	30	The Bn did the attack as planned and found that the enemy had gone. The Bn formed up with positions as follows:- Bn HQ at 183631 and Coys at 178635, 178628, 188631 and 185635. The Guards Armd Division passed through the forward Coys shortly after 0900 hrs. By 1130 hrs the route was opened and the transport came up under Capt Pullman, OC HQ Coy. While waiting for a bridge to be built Capt Palmer of 33 Fd Regt blew himself up by treading on a schu mine. The Bn settled down to rest and refitting.	
	31	A quiet day. The Bn task was to protect the L of C of the Guards Armd Div. Casualties were:- Killed Nil and 8 Wounded 4 and 34 of which 3 and 5 have since rejoined.	