

Instructions regarding preparation of War Diaries; (which will be kept from first day of mobilization, creation or embodiment); are contained in F.S. Regs. Vol. 1.

Title pages will be prepared.

WAR DIARY OR INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

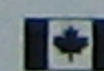
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M.F.M. 11
40/P & S/37

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Page One 1st Bn The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada (AF)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks, references to Appendices and initials
M SI KERSEL MR 003437	1 Mar 45	0800	Reveille - Cloudy and cold Coys still in area KIRSEL. ' Cdn Inf Bde in reserve Second Div who are on edge of HOCH WALD Forest.	786
		1800	Bn assembles in area BHQ, KIRSEL for second part. OP "BLOCKBUSTER". British rocket projectors are still active on our front. Summary - Catwire fence Amendment - Location statement	786 Appx 5 Appx 6
KERSEL	2 Mar 45	0200	Reveille - Cloudy and cold. Bn moves to Assembly Area sq 0040. Ref sheet UDEM and digs in. Location P.W. Cage 3 Cdn Inf Div	786 Appx 7
SH Sq 0040	3 Mar 45	0700	Reveille - Cloudy and cold "C" Coy moved towards S.L. area. UDEMERBRUCH in rear "A" Coy. "A" Coy runs into anti personnel mines and opposition consisting of small arms and mortars.	786
		1000	"D" Coy moves to S.D. in reserve of "B" Coy with three tanks in support and commences house clearing. Very heavy enemy mortar and arty fire on leading company's front. Clearing of woods BALGERWALD was very slow owing to infiltration tactics. "D" Coy arrives first objective at approx 1600 hrs and digs in MR 043382. "C" Coy on left flank could not proceed owing to "D" & "B" Coys meeting opposition, so "C" Coy digs in with "A" Coy for the night. Appx "A" & Trace "P" for BLOCKBUSTER Location Statement Location Statement - 8 Cdn Inf Bde Location Bde P.W. Collecting Post Target list	786 Appx 8 Appx 9 Appx 10 Appx 11 Appx 12
BALGERWALD 4	Mar 45	0800	Reveille - Fair & Cold Enemy shelling bn posns very heavy with multiple barrell&d mortars and 88 mm guns. Bn is to clear remainder of woods.	786
		1300	Companies have first hot meal since beginning of attack. Roads are very poor owing to incessant rain making it impossible to get rations and supplies up to company areas on schedule. Quartermasters are resorting to horse and buggy transportation, sometimes even this was not successful owing to stubborn disposition of horses in this neighborhood.	786

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(Con'd)	4 Mar	45 1600	Clearing remainder of woods begins. "A" Coy reaches objective MR 06053825 at 1730 hrs meeting no opposition. The coy had 8 wounded during the entire operation but took 45 PWs and killed approx 60 enemy during second part of OP "BLOCKBUSTER". "C" Coy arrives objective after encountering enemy MG and Mor fire. "D" Coy arrives objective MR 058380 after successfully using PIATS on enemy MG 42's. "B" Coy arrives MR 059389 after encountering light enemy small arms fire. There was heavy enemy shelling during night.	986
		1900	Ninth Cdn Inf Bde moves through our posns and clears area SE of Forest BALBERGER WALD "I" Summary 8 Cdn Inf Bde Map UDEM 1/25,000 with A rty targets Map XANTEN 1/25,000 with Arty targets Map UDEM 1/25,000 with Bde axis of advance	Appx 13 986 Appx 14 Appx 15 Appx 16
BALBERGER WALD	5 Mar	45 0800	Reveille - Cloudy with rain BHQ at MR 04603850. "A" Coy - 06053825, "B" Coy 05903890, "C" Coy 05783800, "D" Coy - 05503810. Enemy still shelling area heavily.	986
		2000	Bn moves to SDG posns in front of BALBERGER WALD to area BOGEL KATH. Ref sheet XANTEN MR 063378 Map XANTEN 1/25,000 with Bde Axis of advance "I" Summary 8 Cdn Inf Bde	986 Appx 17 Appx 18
BOGEL KATH	6 Mar	45 0800	Reveille - Cloudy and cool. New positions are an improvement, compared to old ones in forest. Bn is in buildings and farm produce is plentiful. BHQ at MR 063378, "A" Coy - 062378, "B" Coy 067372, "C" Coy 058375, "D" Coy 055373.	986
BOGELKATH	7 Mar	45 0800	Reveille - Fair and mild. No enemy shelling on area during the night. Coys cleaning weapons and maintenance on vehicles. Roads are still very bad, and showing no signs of improvement. Air photographs of BALGERGER WALD Fores/- Control of German civilians	986 Appx 19 Appx 20

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M SI	BOGELKATH	8 Mar	45 0800	Reveille - Cloudy with rain Coys doing general clean up, and have arms inspection. 8 Cdn Inf Bde are in reserve at present time. "I" Summary 8 Cdn Inf Bde	986 Appx 21
	BOGELKATH	9 Mar	45 0800 1400	Reveille - Cloudy and cool Bath parades at SONSBECK. Show held in barn opposite BHQ "Sensations of '45". Companies having practice shoots with 2" mortars and PIATS. C.M. INTELLIGENCE Summary	986 986 Appx 22
SH	BOGELKATH	10 Mar	45 0800 0200 1630	Reveille - Cloudy and cool. Major H.E. Dalton, 2 IC, visits companies to talk on last operation and praises companies on their showing on last operation. Coy Comd's "O" Gp at BHQ. Bn receives orders to be on one hour's notice for moving.	986 986 986
SI	BOGELKATH	11 Mar	45 0300 0400	Reveille - Fair and cool. Bn vehicles form up in convoy in preparation of move to REICHS WALD Forest. Coys travel in TCV's. Convoy leaves area BOGELKATH and travels north through BALBERGER WALD Forest along railroad tracks, via UDEM, KEPPELN, HALVENBOOM, MATERBORN to REICHS WALD Forest. Convoy arrives at destination at 0730 hrs and all coys commence building dug outs. BHQ at MR 635504.	986 986
	REICHSWALD FOREST MR 635504	12 Mar	45 0630 0800 1800	Reveille - Fair and mild. Coys parade and carry on with trg syllabus. Dugouts and huts of many weird and wonderful shapes, are making their debut in the bn area. Show by K of C "Ministry of Fear" and beer issue of two pints per man. Study Periods - 8 Cdn Inf Bde	986 986 986 Appx 23

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks, references to Appendices and initials
REICHSWALD 13 M FOREST SI MR 635504 Sheet 4202	Mar 45	0630 0800 1400 1800	Reveille - Fair & Mild Coy parades. Maintenance on vehicles especially jeeps and carriers, which bore the brunt in the last operation. Pay parades to exchange Dutch currency into German. Show by K of C "Ministry of Fear". Narrative Phase 1 BLOCKBUSTER	786 786 786 786 Appx 24
REICHSWALD 14 FOREST MR 635504 Sheet 4202 SH	Mar 45	0630 0800 1600 1800	Reveille - Fair and mild. The bn was awakened by the bugler this morning for the first time in a good many months. Coy parades in preparation for Brigadier J A ROBERTS, DSO, visit this afternoon. Bn is inspected by Brig J.A. ROBERTS, DSO, Comd 8 Cdn Inf Bde. He talked to the majority of the men during the inspection which lasted two hrs and commented on the last operation. Cinema by K of C "Ministry of Fear" Notice to Civilian population	786 786 786 786 Appx 25
REICHSWALD 15 FOREST MR 635504 Sheet 4202 SI	Mar 45	0800 1330 1800	Reveille - Fair & Mild. Coys parade and carry on with trg syllabus as laid down. Coys on route marches and bath parades. Show by K of C "Dark Waters". "I" Summary 3 Cdn Inf Div	786 786 786 Appx 26
REICHSWALD 16 FOREST SHEET 4202 MR 635504	Mar 45	0800 1330 1800	Reveille - Fair & Mild. Coy Parades. Inspection of weapons by RCOG. Coys on route marches, "D" Coy - practice "Coy in the attack" in their area with tank support. Show by K of C "Dark Waters" held in the open. Map CLEVE 1/25,000	786 786 786 Appx 27
REICHSWALD 17 FOREST Sheet 4202 MR 635504	Mar 45	0800 1800	Reveille - Fair and mild. Coy parades. Coys firing 2" Mortars at range and commence construction of rifle ranges. Show by K of C "Dark Waters". Lessons learned "BLOCKBUSTER"	786 786 Appx 28

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	Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks, references to Appendices and initials
MR Sh	REICHSWALD FOREST SHEET MR 635504	18 Mar 4202	45 0930 0945 1230 1800	Reveille - Cloudy and mild Protestant Church parade held in BHQ area. RC Church Parade. Coys send limited number of men in trucks to spend day in NIJMEGEN. Show by K of C. Canteen selling chocolate bars etc. Message from C in C	<i>JSB</i> <i>JSB</i> <i>JSB</i> <i>JSB</i> <i>JSB</i> Appx 29
R F M SH FC ME	REICHSWALD FOREST SHEET MR 635504	19 Mar 4202	45 0800 1800	Reveille - Cloudy and mild. Coy parades. Bn jeeps looking spick and span in their new coats of paint. Coys issued with sniper jackets which beside being good camouflage are quite serviceable and water-proof. Show by K of C - "Dark Waters".	<i>JSB</i> <i>JSB</i> <i>JSB</i>
RE FC MR	REICHSWALD FOREST SHEET MR 635504	20 Mar 4202	45 0800 1330 1800	Reveille - Fair & Mild Coy parades. Route marches, bath parades. CSM Martin, CC, of "A" Coy awarded XXX DCM. Coys practicing attacks with co-operation of tanks. Briefing room established in BHQ area, for future operations. Show by K of C "My Pal Wolf".	<i>JSB</i> <i>JSB</i> <i>JSB</i> <i>JSB</i>
SI RE FO MR	REICHSWALD FOREST SHEET MR 635504	21 Mar 4202	45 0800 1800	Reveille - Fair and Mild Coy parades. Painting of bn vehicles completed to-day. Show by K of C "My Pal Wolf"	<i>JSB</i> <i>JSB</i> <i>JSB</i>
	REICHSWALD FOREST SHEET MR 635504	22 Mar 4202	45 0800	Reveille - Fair & Mild Coy schemes "Co-operation of tanks and infantry". Maps & air photographs issued to coys for coming operation. Target list "PLUNDER"	<i>JSB</i> Appx 30
	REICHSWALD FOREST SHEET MR 635504	23 Mar 4202	45 0800 1400	Reveille - Fair & Mild Coys cleaning weapons and equipment. ENSA show held in BHQ area for all ranks 4 Cdn Div Pepper pot trace Arty Targets "PLUNDER"	<i>JSB</i> <i>JSB</i> <i>JSB</i> Appx 32 Appx 31

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REICHSWALD 24 Mar 45 MR FOREST SHEET 4202 SH MR 635504	24 Mar 45	0800	Reveille - Fair & Mild Bn on 12 hrs notice to move. Coy Comds begin briefing plans for role in coming operation. Word is received that 41 Highland Div have crossed Rhine River at REES AND MET ONLY moderate opposition.	786
		1200	Bn vehicles receive serial numbers for purpose crossing Rhine River as number of vehicles to be taken on operation is limited. Coys commence packing.	786
REICHSWALD 25 Mar 45 FOREST SHEET 4202 MR 635504	25 Mar 45	0800	Reveille - Fair & Mild Bn still on 24 hr notice to move. Coys packed up in preparation, so carry on with trg.	786
		1800	Show by K of C. "My Pal Wolf"	786
REICHSWALD 26 Mar 45 SH FOREST SHEET 4202 MR 635504	26 Mar 45	0800	Reveille - Fair and mild. Bn on 24 hr notice to move. Coys firing brens & rifles at ranges.	786
		1800	Show by K of C.	786
REICHSWALD 27 Mar 45 FOREST SHEET 4202 MR 635504	27 Mar 45	0800	Reveille - Fair and mild. Bn on six hrs notice to move. "A" Ech to accompany bn on move to REES area.	786
		1200	Recce sent to REES area.	786
		1600	Bn receives orders to move. Rifle Coys to travel in TCVs.	786
SI REICHSWALD 28 Mar 45 FOREST SHEET 4202 MR 635504	28 Mar 45	0200	Convoy forms up in bn area, in REICHSWALD FOREST? SHEET 4202, 1/25,000.	786
		0230	Convoy leaves area, and proceeds via CALCAR to REES, crosses RHINE River over LAMBETH BRIDGE, then moves NW from REES to field at MR 055537 SHEET REES 1/25,000.	786
		0700	Coys dig in and breakfast is served. Weather is fair & mild. The surrounding area has been very heavily bombed by Allied aircraft, as there isn't many buildings left intact.	786
		1600	Bn leaves present area and proceeds to area DORNICK sq 0158 SHEET 4102.	786
		1700	Bn convoy arrives "A" Coy MR 007586, "B" Coy 017587, "C" Coy 012583, "D" Coy 014583, BHQ, 013584. Supper is served and bn digs in for the night.	786
			SHEET 4203 CALCAR 1/25,000	Appx 33
			Marshalling areas, 1/50,000	Appx 34
			SHEET 4204 REES 1/25,000	Appx 35

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks, references to Appendices and initials
MR 013584 Sheet 4103	29 Mar 45	0630	OPERATION "PLUNDER" Reveille - Fair & Mild. This area was shelled considerably during the night by enemy arty.	
		1200	Bn on $\frac{1}{2}$ hr notice to move.	
		0200	CO's recce to Cdn Scots in EMMERICH area.	
		1445	C & A coys move along dyke road to Cdn Scots area, and reach destination MR 987606 at 1630 hrs. Defence posns are taken up and supper is served.	
		2200	Area is shelled by our own 25 pdrs. One casualty resulting. BHQ now at MR 982605 Sheet 4102. Report lines "PLUNDER" SHEET 4103/4	
SHEET 4103	30 Mar 45	0400	Very heavy enemy arty shelling in this area. Counter attack from north has been reported.	Appx 36
		0430	Shelling ceased. Stand-to until 0700 hrs by all coys.	
		1830	North Nova Scotia Highlanders arrive in this area.	
		1900	Coy Comds "O" Gp at BHQ at MR 982605 sheet 4102.	
		2130	Coy "O" Gps for pl Comds. Sheet EMMERICH 4103 1/25,000	
SHEET 4103	31 Mar 45	0200	"A" Coy moves through "C" Coy to take first objective, no opposition as yet. Bn proceeds NORTH WEST of EMMERICH, mostly bush clearing.	Appx 37
		0400	24 PW taken, majority of prisoners were from 858 Gren Regt and had been stationed in Arnheim.	
		1415	Coy Comds "O" Gp at BHQ.	
		1520	Leading coys cross Start line. Enemy sniping very active, making advance very slow.	
		1630	Coys reach objectives with aid of tanks and flame throwers. NSR passes through on our left flank. "A" Coy at MR 953623, "B" Coy at 956622, "C" Coy at 944627, "D" Coy - 954619. Tac HQ 965608, Rear BHQ 465605. "Sp" Coy HQ 954561. This area was shelled very heavily by enemy mortars during night. SHEET 4102 - 1/25,000	

(H E DALTON)

MAJOR

T/Comd 1st Bn The Q O R of C



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1ST BN THE QUEEN'S OWN RIFLES

APPX. 39

753/1 - 39-1 - Mar 45
1ST BN THE QUEEN'S OWN RIFLES
OF CANADA

APPX. 399

OPERATION "BLOCKBUSTER"

24 February, 1945

War Diary
Ser. 75-3
Appx. 39

MAR 1945

On 24 Feb 45 this Bn began its briefing on operation "Blockbuster." The purpose of this operation was to assault the enemy line of defences before CALCAR and UDEM (CALCAR & UDEM sheets: GERMANY: 1/25,000) and break through to sweep the area west of the RHINE clear of all enemy resistance.

Units to participate in this operation were Second Cdn Corps and Thirty Scottish Corps.

Eight Cdn Inf Bde with supporting tks was to launch the preliminary assault, this Bn commencing the operation at 0430 hrs, 26 Feb 45 in a before-dawn attack on enemy paratroop positions in the area immediately north of KEPPELN (squares 9846, 9847, 9946, 9947). The Bn Start Line extended from EBBEN (977486) to GOTTEM (975464), F.D.L.'s of the North Nova Scotia Highlander, Ninth Cdn Inf Bde.

25 February, 1945

On the 24th and 25th the Coy Comdrs and Pl Comdrs went fwd to this area to make the preparatory visual reconnaissance. Considerable enemy fire of all types hampered their movements but sufficient knowledge of the ground was gained to enable them to plan their routes to the S.L. and to the first objectives.

The country was flat and dotted with numerous groups of farm-buildings. It was in and around these farmbuildings that the enemy was dug-in. These paratroopers represented the cream of the fast-dwindling German Army and their Artillery support was intense. That the battle would be severe we all realized.

The Bn began to move fwd before nightfall of the 25th. A mist-like rain began to fall after dark, but in the glare of the search-lights providing artificial moonlight the entire area was almost brilliant. The Assembly Area was reached without difficulty and the Coys dug themselves in near their supporting tanks to await the morning.

26 February, 1945

Those who slept, slept fitfully. At 0330 hours the men were roused to hot coffee or rum, and sandwiches. Equipment was donned, final instructions given, and at 0400 the barrage began.

For us there had been no precedent to this. As the lead Coys, Charlie and Dog, moved in extended line formation to the S.L. the night was alive with light and noise. A.A. guns pumped incessantly long, whipping lines of tracer overhead; machine guns hammered and criss-crossed out into the darkness; behind them the sky was silver

with the glare of searchlights, trees and buildings stark against it; out forward in the blackness the lines of the enemy flared on their length like typewriter keys under the pounding fingers of shelling.

The fwd Coys, each with a tp of tanks in their rear, followed white tapes that had been laid down the evening before. And then there was no more tape. Our artillery was falling just a few yards ahead. It lifted. The hour was 0435. The attack began, Charlie right, Dog left, Able right reserve, Baker left Reserve.

The first objectives were four gps of farmbuildings, Charlie Coy's at 97854620 and 97854605. Dog Coy's at 98004645 and 98104665. The enemy, they soon discovered, was determined to fight to the end.

On the right Charlie Coy, nearing the first gp of bldgs, came under vigorous M.G. cross-fire. The fwd platoons pushed on. 15 Platoon on the left, in face of a withering defence from an M.G. and grenades was pinned just short of the bldgs until one section finally filtered around the right flank, cleared through the bldgs, and attacked this main opposition from the rear. Casualties were severe and included the Platoon Comdr.

14 Platoon on the right had bypassed this gp of bldgs to attack another just beyond. In this movement they were subjected to considerable S.A. fire from the first bldgs but were able to continue on successfully. Here the enemy was overrun before he could put up serious resistance.

The remainder of the Coy and the tank support moved up to consolidate. Enemy mortar and Arty fire began to fall in a constantly increasing weight. Casualties at the first were heavy. 14 Platoon Comdr and Sjt were both victims of the first barrage.

It was about this time that Dog Coy on the left began to find serious trouble.

At the outset 16 Platoon on the left and 17 Platoon on the right were successful in reaching their first groups of bldgs. 16 had had no difficulty, but 17 had encountered opposition and suffered five casualties.

It was then the plan for the reserve 18 Platoon to break left through 16 with the supporting tks. In the darkness and confusion the tks veered off to the right, and 18 Platoon followed.

Then the newly-won positions were blasted with an Arty and Mortar concentration. At its conclusion the enemy in strength began to filter from the left into 16 Platoon's area. Casualties were severe, but the Platoon, obtaining the assistance of one of Baker Coy's tanks, counter-attacked violently. A sudden barrage cut down one entire section and killed the Platoon Comdr. The Platoon was forced to retire into 17 Platoon's area.

The enemy re-occupied their houses and then began to move in on 17 Platoon.

Finally one section of 18 Platoon was located and brought into the

battle. Another tank was brought forward and with the two the remnants of 16 Platoon led by the Sjt attacked again to re-occupy one bldg and capture 20 of the enemy.

With this it seemed the tide was turned. A part of the objective at least was consolidated. At the coming of dawn Baker Coy came to their aid. Pushing through this meagre firm base they cleared the rest of the objective, thus establishing the S.L. for their attack on the second objective. In this action they suffered minor casualties.

By this time Able Coy was pressing home on the right to take their objectives of phase 2. These objectives were three groups of farm buildings at 981458, 983456, and 984455.

The Coy had assembled in Charlie Coy's area as this Coy was consolidating. They suffered seven casualties under the intense fire of all types raking this position before they were ready to move across the S.L.

8 Platoon led the Coy. With great difficulty they took their first objective but were forced to retire to the fringe of it by what appeared to be our own Arty fire. 7 and 9 Platoons were then brought forward, the former on the right supporting 8 Platoon directly and the latter on the left, to secure these limited gains and prepare to attack through. The tanks moving up came under fire from an enemy S.P. gun. One was knocked out and the others forced to retire in the darkness. The S.P. gun inflicted severe casualties on the Coy but with the light of dawn it withdrew.

7 Platoon then attacked through 8 Platoon. They were raked with murderous M.G. and S.A. fire and casualties included the Platoon Comdr and Sjt. The second gp of bldgs however was taken.

Because of the severe loss of men the Coy had to be organized into two Platoons and sit tight on these gains to await reinforcements.

In the meantime Baker Coy had forced fwd to their own objective, bldgs at 984,462. By 0820 they had completely cleared their S.L. and by 0830 after meeting little resistance were consolidating on their objective. Enemy mortar and Arty began to hammer into the position and severe casualties were suffered.

At 1330 they were ordered on to the final Bn objective, originally Dog Coy's, a group of farm bldgs at 989465. By 1500 hrs this objective was taken and secured with no casualties, though 50 of the enemy were taken prisoner.

It was not until this time in the afternoon that Able Coy could proceed with reinforcements to clear the remainder of its part of the second objective.

With the aid of two Wasps and five M10's, one of the composite Platoons moved in on the last strong point of the enemy. The enemy fought ferociously using bazookas and M.G.s. The Wasps were able however to set the bldg on fire and the M10's poured H.E. and A.P. into the structure. Resistance was smashed and from that area 60 of the enemy were taken prisoner.

With the final securing of the second objective Able Coy was ordered on to the final objective on the right, STEEG (990456). No enemy was encountered and the Coy consolidated immediately.

Now Charlie Coy moved fwd to consolidate on Able Coy's former objective. Dog Coy had already consolidated in Baker Coy's first positions.

Thus the Bn completed their first part of the operation against some of the most violent opposition yet encountered. The total enemy killed, wounded, and prisoner was impossible to check because of the confusion and length of the battle. But the area was strewn with the German dead, and the wounded were not all evacuated by night fall.

As the day had lengthened more units had been committed to battle. The North Shore and Regiment de la Chaudière on our right had gained their objectives and KEPPELN was taken. The Second Division on our left had raced fwd. Tank assault groups had fanned out in front of us and the main battle was far ahead. As a result there was no Arty or Mtr fire on our positions after 1600 hrs and the night was spent in comparative quiet.

27 February, 1945

The following day, 27 Feb 45, the Bn moved fwd to take over high ground captured by the 4 Cdn Div in area of KIRSEL (0043). This served only as a firm base position and the Bn rested here for two days and nights with only slight shelling.

The enemy was fighting desperately to keep his bridgehead secure until the last possible moment. In the Hochwald Forest and the Balbergerwald Forest he had secured the pivot of a last line of defences. From the Bn's vantage point on the high ground they watched the battle move fwd against this line and stop. The tanks were unable to break through. Before the operation could continue the Hochwald and Balbergerwald had to be cleared.

In this endeavour 8 Cdn Inf Bde was called to clear the Balbergerwald while units of the Second Division were to clear the Hochwald (XANTEN sheet: GERMANY: 1/25,000).

1 March, 1945

On the evening of 1 Mar the R. de C. began the operation. Working south from the GOCH-WESEL railway which bounded the Balbergerwald from the Hochwald they had encountered opposition. It was not until early afternoon of the 2 Mar 45 that they had reached their final objectives and cleared a S.L. (GELEMANNSHOF 033391 -- WESSELSHOF 046396) for this Bn and the N.S.R.

The plan then was to proceed south from this S.L. to the southern edge of the forest, N.S.R. left in the centre of the forest bounded by the main road, Q.O.R. right on the western edge of the forest. The final phase then was to shift direction and clear eastward, R. de C. on

753/-39-5-Mar 45

the northern edge, N.S.R. on the southern edge, and Q.O.R. moving into centre position.

2 March, 1945

At 0200 hrs on the morning of 2 Mar 45 the Bn moved to the Assembly Area. At 1000 hrs the order came to proceed, but due to the difficulties in clearing the S.L. it was not possible to begin the attack until approx 1500 hrs. With Charlie Coy right fwd, Baker Coy left Fwd, Able right reserve, and Dog left reserve the clearing began. A tp of tanks moved with each Coy.

Progress was slow because of the difficulties of control. Shelling was reported only in Baker Coy's area. Charlie and Able Coys proceeded as planned without meeting any opposition and by night fall were consolidated on the edge of the forest. Baker Coy soon lost contact with the N.S.R. on their left flank and then at approx 1845 hrs were pinned down by fire from this side. Dog Coy had now lost contact with them but proceeded on to the edge of the woods. Baker Coy with the use of tanks was finally able to disengage from the harassing enemy and proceeded to the edge of the woods on the left of Dog Coy.

Here the night was spent. From beyond the woods to the south the enemy kept up a sporadic M.G. harassing fire into our positions all night, but there was no shelling. Due to congested roads outside the forest and torn up tracks inside the forest no meal was able to be brought forward.

3 March, 1945

On the morning following, 3 Mar 45, the last phase of the clearing began. Because the N.S.R. had not succeeded previously in the clearing as far as the southern edge of the woods it was necessary to alter the plan in part. Clearing east the N.S.R. were now to move in the central position and the Q.O.R. were to clear along the southern edge of the forest. With Able Coy left fwd, Charlie left reserve, Baker right fwd, Dog right reserve the Bn moved at 0730 hrs to its S.L. the main road.

This was the area not cleared by the N.S.R. In the advance to the S.L. both fwd Coys ran into dense fields of A/Tk and A/Per mines. Casualties were heavy, and three tanks were put out of action. Then Able Coy ran into a strong point. With the aid of tks this was smashed and prisoners taken. The bulk of the enemy retreated across the road. Arty and Mtr fire during this time was heavy and casualties were severe.

At approx 1200 hrs a gp of four of the enemy were seen infiltrating between the fwd coys. A platoon of C Coy, despatched to plug the gap, took these four prisoners and, in pressing on to the road, routed an enemy position on the far side by fire.

By 1300 hrs the attack was ready to proceed past the S.L. Due to the dense undergrowth here and the soggy condition of the ground the

753/1-39-6-Mar 45

tanks were not committed but held in reserve. Dog Coy took over the fwd Coy role from Baker Coy on the right flank. The shelling on this flank was most severe.

The attack went on. Able and Charlie Coys on the left moved fwd together. Though they met some fire the enemy seemed to withdraw as they advanced. They were finally held down by Dog and Baker Coy's inability to proceed further on the southern edge of the forest.

Dog Coy had been almost immediately engaged by fire after crossing the S.L. They continued to press on however, sustaining heavy casualties from sniping action. Finally both lead platoons were pinned down. The reserve platoon in attempting a flanking movement were themselves pinned. Then the enemy counter-attacked, bringing an M.G. into position on the right flank. PIAT bombs neutralized the M.G. and the attack was taken care of by the reserve platoon.

A tp of tanks were then brought fwd to assist the Coy. Though the enemy was engaged by fire from these tanks he could not be flushed. The ground was impassable for the tanks and when one lost a track finally, the other two withdrew. There was no possibility of proceeding because of the intense enemy sniper and M.G. fire.

Baker Coy in the meantime, behind Dog Coy and closer to the edge of the woods, had also beaten off a counter-attack. It had come under heavy M.M.G supporting fire. Few men were able to observe. The advance however was spotted by a Bren gun crew who switched to a flanking position and opened up. Two of the enemy were killed and the remainder forced to retreat.

At nightfall it was in these positions that the Bn found itself -- unable to advance, and isolated from contact to the rear. The Coys consolidated in all-round defensive positions and spent the night on constant guard. M.G. fire harassed the positions from three sides most of the night. The shelling had lessened.

4 March, 1945

The next morning, 4 Mar 45, the Coys began moving to storm this last resistance from the flank; that is, from the north instead of the west. 24 Hour packs were distributed early to ease the hunger and at 1300 a hot meal arrived for all. There was no waste!

By mid-afternoon the Bn was in position and the supporting tanks were ready. Baker Coy held a firm base position in the area previously occupied by Able Coy. Able, Charlie, and Dog Coys attacked in line -- Able Coy on the western fringe of the forest, Charlie centre, and Dog on the right from the firm base position.

But the enemy had withdrawn in the morning. The attack met no opposition and the forest was completely ours. Under enemy M.G. harassing fire and Arty shelling the Coys consolidated in the south-western corner of the woods. By nightfall the positions were secure.

753/1-39-7-Mar 45

- 7 -

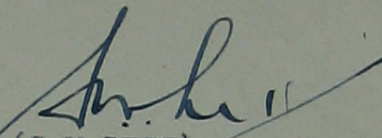
In the darkness the Ninth Cdn Inf Bde moved through us and attacked across the fields and over the hill beyond.

5 March, 1945


By morning the battle had moved far ahead. Only slight shelling hampered us. Rations began to arrive regularly, and of all things that was to us the most important.

That evening, we moved fwd again to occupy positions in farm bldgs captured by Ninth Bde just beyond the forest to the south. Here the Bn rested for three days until finally moving back to a rest area in the Reichwald Forest.

Our part in the Operation "Blockbuster" had been completed, and had been successful.



(S M LETT) Lt-col
Comd 1st Bn The Q O R of C

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Reference number/no de référence: RG 24 V. 15170

To: - Adj. ✓
From: - "A" Coy.

APPX 28

Lessons learned from "Blockbuster", chiefly confined to "Night Attack" and "Woods Clearing".

Night Attack

Very good over flat open country as infantry were able to work in close before heavy S.A. fire opened.

Supporting tanks not bothered by enemy guns. Not practicable in wooded area as no visibility.

Control

Control was difficult and more time than usual must be spent in briefing the men. Otherwise they have a tendency to lose their way. Team work on a section level more essential than usual. Practice advisable if possible.

Artificial Moonlight

Artificial Moonlight Silhouettes attacking infantry to enemy in elite but does enable men to see what they are doing. Advantages greater than disadvantages.

War Diaries
Ser. 753
Appx. 28

Woods Clearing

Not practicable at night.

MAR 1945

Use of artillery restricted due to air burst from trees. Enemy in close contact could not be engaged.

The Enemy

The Enemy defended road and track junctions and clearings leaving many soft spots on flanks. Quick penetration of these soft spots essential to quick clearing of the area.

Tanks

Tanks and infantry were good but pioneers or engineers should travel with forward companies to clear mines immediately they are encountered.

Anti-Tank Guns

Anti-Tank Guns could be useful in vicinity of clearings and tracks.

Pioneers equally essential to forward companies who have anti-tank guns under command.

Communications

Communications difficult but no new lessons learned.

Enemy Artillery and Mortar.

Air burst from trees not very effective. Causes very few casualties. No more than in open country.

Loading Wave

Loading Wave of infantry ~~xxxxxx~~ should be fairly well spaced. Otherwise they get in each others way when fired on.

Control

Control is difficult but no new lessons learned.

Rations

It is difficult to reach companies. Men should carry as much food as possible.

J.L. Pond Capt.



A. M. S. M332 (G.S.G. S. 4414)

Scale 1:25,000

ARMY MAP SERVICE, U. S. ARMY, WASHINGTON, D. C. 15410

Prepared under the direction of the Chief of Engineers, U. S. Army, by the Army Map Service (S.E.S.), U. S. Army, Washington, D. C., 1944. Compiled from Germany 1:25,000, König, Preuss. Landesaufnahme, sheet 4202, 1920; Netherlands 1:25,000, Topografische Dienst, sheet 46, 1938-39; Netherlands 1:50,000, Topografische Dienst, sheet 46, 1938-39. Principal communications revised from Automobile Map of the Netherlands, 1:250,000, N.A.C., 1937; Railroads and Waterways of Holland, 1:250,000, G.S.G.S., 1942; Intelligence Reports, 1942. Partially revised from aerial photography 1940, 1941, 1942 and 1943.

Base: Classification is M3 based on measurements. Reliability is as follows:
Near: Highways, Railroads, urban areas, etc.
Germany: Reconstructed; indirect, with scale marks.
Netherlands: 1:50,000, with scale marks.
1:25,000, with scale marks.

Roads: 8-10 m. wide or over. Metalled.
Roads: 4-6 m. wide or over. Metalled.
Roads: 2-4 m. wide or over. Metalled.

Water: Meads and canals. Width variable.
Not shown: meadows and other uncultivated.
Floods: Less than 4 m. wide. Metalled.

Standard Gauge Railroads, two tracks or more.
Standard Gauge Single Railroads, single track.
Standard Gauge Electrified Railroads, single track.

Trams, Street or Electric.
Tramway: Street or Electric.

Railroad symbols do not agree with those in the adjacent G.S.G.S. M332 series which is based on Ration German 1:25,000 sheets.

Canal: Canal under construction.

Canal under construction.

Canal under construction.

Canal under construction.

Canal under construction.

Canal under construction.

Canal under construction.

Canal under construction.

OVERPRINT REFERENCE

AIR PHOTO INFORMATION IN BLUE AS AT 14 JAN 45
GROUND INFORMATION IN RED AS AT 14 JAN 45

LEGEND

Shoreline Contour Line

Shoreline at High Tide Mark

Shoreline at Low Tide Mark

Shoreline at Mean Tide Mark

Shoreline at Mean Tide Mark

Shoreline at Mean Tide Mark

Shoreline at Mean Tide Mark

Shoreline at Mean Tide Mark

Shoreline at Mean Tide Mark

Shoreline at Mean Tide Mark

Shoreline at Mean Tide Mark

Shoreline at Mean Tide Mark

CONTOUR INTERVAL IN HOLLAND 10 METERS WITH REGULAR INTERVAL OF 2.5 METERS
CONTOUR INTERVAL IN GERMANY 10 METERS WITH REGULAR INTERVAL OF 2.5 METERS
DATUM IN HOLLAND AND GERMANY MEAN SEA LEVEL AT AMSTERDAM

The Nuremberg grid on this sheet is based on the French Geographical System or grid. The geographical values of the sheet corners and grid ticks marks on this sheet are based on the French Geographical System or grid. To convert German Geographical values to French Geographical values subtract 1.3" from German Latitudes and add 3.15" to German Longitudes.

NORD DE GUERRE ZONE (Blue)

Phonetic: (Blue)

Phonetic: (Blue)

Phonetic: (Blue)

Phonetic: (Blue)

Phonetic: (Blue)

Phonetic: (Blue)

Phonetic: (Blue)

Phonetic: (Blue)

GLOSSARY

Am: Am. Air

Am: Am. Air

Am: Am. Air

Am: Am. Air

Am: Am. Air

Am: Am. Air

Am: Am. Air

Am: Am. Air

REFER TO THIS MAP AS:
HOLLAND 1:25,000
SHEET NO 4202
DEFENCE OVERPRINT
20 JAN 45

Area indicated on reliability diagram revised from Air Photographs, December, 44 by 21 A Gp. Air Survey Group

INDEX TO ADJOINING SHEETS

INDEX TO ADJOINING SHEETS

INDEX TO ADJOINING SHEETS

INDEX TO ADJOINING SHEETS

INDEX TO ADJOINING SHEETS

INDEX TO ADJOINING SHEETS

INDEX TO ADJOINING SHEETS

INDEX TO ADJOINING SHEETS

INDEX TO ADJOINING SHEETS

INDEX TO ADJOINING SHEETS

INDEX TO ADJOINING SHEETS

CLEVE, GERMANY
N5142-E600/6x10

DEFENCE LEGEND

For annotation of enemy defences in Western Europe
Edition of December 1944

The choice of Colour(s) for annotation is NOT limited, but the meaning of each colour used will be stated clearly on the map-sheet.
Additional symbols NOT appearing in this legend will be explained on the map-sheet on which they are used.

1. General

Unconfirmed (on left of symbol)	?
Unoccupied	U
Dummy (on left of symbol)	!
Under Construction	UC
Constructional Activity	WK
Camouflaged	Cam

2. Defence Works

(a) Field Defences

Strongpoint	*	(C)
Gun-emplacement (see also under Weapons)	⊕	(C)
Railway-gun turntable	⊕	(C)
Weapon-pit (see also under Weapons)	⊕	(C)
Observation Post	△	(CT)
Artillery O.P.	⊕	(CT)
Fire-trench	⊕	(CT)
Communication trench	⊕	(CT)
Dug-out shelter	⊕	(CT)
Fireholes	⊕	(CT)
Vehicle Rays	⊕	(CT)

(b) Concrete Defences

Fort	⊕	(C)
Strongpoint in concrete	⊕	(C)
Concrete shelter (type-number shown on left of symbol, e.g. 502)	⊕	(C)
Concrete shelter (under construction)	⊕	(C)
Concrete shelter with cupola	⊕	(C)
Gun-casemate (see also under Weapons)	⊕	(MB)
Pillbox for infantry weapon (see also under Weapons)	⊕	(MB)
In the case of large casemates and pillboxes with several embrasures the number of weapons should be shown by a corresponding number of weapon signs in the direction of fire, e.g.	⊕	(C)
Concrete shelter with emplacement on roof (weapon-sign on top of symbol, see also under Weapons)	⊕	(C)
Concrete O.P.	⊕	(C)
Concrete Artillery O.P.	⊕	(C)

3. Weapons

(a) Artillery

Artillery Weapon (unspecified)	LL	Med	Hy	In open position	In concrete or armoured turret	(MB)
Fixed coast gun	⊕	⊕	⊕	⊕	⊕	(MB)
Fixed coast how	⊕	⊕	⊕	⊕	⊕	(CO)
Mobile gun or gun-how	⊕	⊕	⊕	⊕	⊕	(MB)
Mobile How	⊕	⊕	⊕	⊕	⊕	(CO)
AA Gun	⊕	⊕	⊕	⊕	⊕	(MB)
AT Gun	⊕	⊕	⊕	⊕	⊕	(MB)

Note: 105mm coast gun (fixed) are light 105mm mobile gun-hows are light 105mm mobile guns are medium.
Calibres will always be annotated in millimetres.
Number of guns written below symbol, calibre written on left of symbol, e.g. 150 = "four 150mm howitzers".

The gun-emplacement symbol (⊕) alone indicates "unoccupied", e.g. "four unoccupied emplacements".
For self-propelled guns with SP after calibre.
Railway gun.
Railway gun on turntable.

(b) Projectors

Multi-Projector (Wardens)	LL	Med	Hy	In open position	In concrete or armoured turret	(CO)
Multi-projector, anti-aircraft	⊕	⊕	⊕	⊕	⊕	(CO)
Multi-barrelled Mortar (Mortar)	⊕	⊕	⊕	⊕	⊕	(CO)

(c) Infantry

Infantry Weapon (unspecified)	LL	Med	Hy	In open position	In concrete or armoured turret	(MB)
M.G.	⊕	⊕	⊕	⊕	⊕	(MB)
Mortar	⊕	⊕	⊕	⊕	⊕	(CO)
AA MG	⊕	⊕	⊕	⊕	⊕	(MB)
Flamethrower	⊕	⊕	⊕	⊕	⊕	(MB)

The weapon-pit symbol (⊕) used alone indicates "unoccupied".
Note: The symbol ⊕ may be used to indicate any weapon-pit whether occupied or unoccupied. This must be stated on the map sheet concerned.

(d) Searchlights

Searchlight	⊕	(C)
Searchlight	⊕	(MB)

Exact Position of Weapons and Strongpoints

1. Wherever possible the middle of the tank is the exact location of the weapon or strongpoint. The base of the symbol is considered to be the bottom of it as indicated in the legend below. In the examples an arrow has been drawn to indicate the exact location.		3. Certain symbols are of such a shape that the base is difficult to define, these for the most part are symbols of various shapes with the base symbol. In these cases the exact position is the middle of the symbol.	
2. Where one symbol is used to denote a battery of several weapons the exact position of each weapon is signified by a dot. If these dots are some distance from the symbol a line is drawn to connect each dot to the symbol. When the exact position of each weapon is not shown the base of the gun symbol is placed to the centre of the battery.		4. For clarification the following code has been placed against each of the symbols below. Denoting main position is the Centre of Symbol.	(C) (MB) (CT) (CO)

4. Obstacles

Wire	XXXXXX	Single fence	—X—X—X—X—
Concurrence Wire	XXXXXX	Double etc fence	—X—X—X—X—
Road-block (movable)		Single fence	—X—X—X—X—
Road-block (fixed)		Double etc fence	—X—X—X—X—
Anti-tank obstacle (unspecified)			X
Dragon's teeth			^ ^ ^ ^
Anti-tank ditch			^ ^ ^ ^
Covered Tank-Trap			^ ^ ^ ^
Anti-tank wall			^ ^ ^ ^
Anti-tank escarpment			^ ^ ^ ^
Steel anti-tank obstacle			^ ^ ^ ^
Foundations			^ ^ ^ ^
Anti-airlanding obstacles			^ ^ ^ ^
Beach underwater obstacles			^ ^ ^ ^

5. Minefields

Mines	nnnnnnnn
Minefield	nnnnnnnn
Number of rows and names of types to be written alongside	

6. Demolitions

Demolition or crater site	⊕
Demolition or crater site (with charge laid)	⊕
Cratered or demolished site	⊕
Demolished area	⊕

7. Naval

Booms and Nets	⊕
Mine Booms	⊕
Wreck, Blockship	⊕

8. Reprisal Weapon Installations

Site (unspecified)	⊕
Flying Bomb Site	⊕
Rocket Site	⊕
Ammunition Dump	⊕
Stores Dump	⊕

9. Signals Installations

Signal Station (unspecified)	T	(MB)
Line-telegraph station	⊕	(MB)
Wireless station	⊕	(MB)
Wireless and line-telegraph station	⊕	(MB)
Radar Station (unspecified)	⊕	(CT)
Radar Station (coast-watching)	⊕	(CT)
Radar Station (aircraft reporting)	⊕	(CT)
Anti-aircraft W/T reporting station	⊕	(CO)
The following to be written on left of appropriate symbol -		
Jamming Station	J	
Beam	B	
Direction Finding	DF	
Medium Frequency	MF	
Very High Frequency	VHF	
Ground or overhead cable	⊕	
Buried cable	⊕	
Junction box	⊕	
Overhead Power Cable	⊕	

10. Personnel Accommodation

Barracks	⊕
Hutted Camp (number of huts shown on left of symbol)	⊕
Area in military occupation	TPS
Hospital	⊕

11. Storage Facilities

Dump (unspecified)	⊕
Ammunition Dump	⊕
Ordnance Dump	⊕
Engineer Dump	⊕
Supplies Dump	⊕
Petrol Dump	⊕

For other types of storage, write "Med" "CW" "Map" etc on left of basic dump symbol.

12. Airfields

Airfield	⊕
Landing-ground	⊕
See plane base	⊕

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