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ARMY FORM C.2118

WAR DIARY

or

Unit 2nd Bn The Gordon Highlanders

~~INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY~~

(Erase heading not required)

Month and Year November 1944.

Commanding Officer Lt Col R.W.M. de Winton D.S.O.

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	References to Appendices
HOLLAND	1		Bn still in area sq. 6511. During night 3 P.W. walked into our lines, in very poor condition, 1 Polish, who seemed to be very pleased to be in our hands. He reported that most, if not all, of his coy were either killed or wounded, and that our shelling had been most effective. Heavy shelling during day caused casualties. Lt Griffiths, Sjt Anderson and Sjt Chell were killed. Patrolling during night.	Appx 1. Coy locations.
Holland	2	0930	Patrols during night showed signs of enemy moving back. Bn in series of coy attacks supported by tanks, moved forward to area of PEEL Xtracks, with H.L.I. moving up on the right. At the same time 44 Bde moved to 692086. Our coys reached their objective meeting no enemy. A short time after the attack slight enemy shelling of "D" Coy area slightly wounded Major Duff, who remained on duty. Appx 1 shows disposition of coys. During the day, pioneers cleared several mines from the tracks, some of which were found to be Booby trapped. At M.R. 667105 our gunner OP carrier blew up on a mine, killing one OR.	Appx 1.
	3		Quiet day with no shelling, coys sending out of line a platoon each day to rest and bath. During day Bn rest with OP's and Bren screen for protection.	
	4		46 Bde having reached MOOSDIJK forced enemy to withdraw from our front Sq. 6908 (Sheet 27 NW 1:25000) leaving behind him mines both A/Tk and A/P and cratering the main road at 681086. Only necessary to have small protective screen on ground. Bn resting in local buildings with parties to ASTEN for baths. Meals served in daylight. Very bad weather and tracks becoming very difficult for vehicles.	

			Lt Arnall joins Bn and posted to Pioneer Pl. Quiet night with contact patrols to H.L.I. only.	
Holland	5		R.S.F. take over from H.L.I. and 2nd Gordons at 1400 hrs. Recce party left for ASTEN where we were to take over A & S.H. old billets. These billets were not found suitable so Bn moved to HELMOND, arriving at 1630 hrs. Coys billeted in private houses with Bn H.Q. in town Post Office.	
	6		Bn resting in HELMOND. Baths and entertainment during day. Party of 300 in TCV visit EINDHOVEN to see ENSA show. Bde "O" Gp and Recce to American Battle HQ where it was expected we should relieve them the following day. A & SH take over in area OSPEL during evening and come under comd of 51st Div.	
	7		Bn in HELMOND. Baths and entertainment. Warning order. See Appx. Baths and Cinema during day.	Appx II.
	8		Bn takes over from Seaforths area NEERKANT Sheet 27 NW/W. See Appx III. Take over completed by 2400 hrs with no incidents. No patrols out during night. Enemy patrols reported seen by "D" Coy. A little shelling but no casualties.	Appx III
Holland	9		The country in this area being very flat and open made observation for both sides very easy and consequently any movement by day drew mortar fire so feeding and movement restricted to hours of darkness. Patrolling during night for contacting enemy and recce for mines. Mine clearing by Pioneer Pl along tracks, finding Tellermines and Tin Box Mines. Very little enemy activity. Thought that he had withdrawn to far bank of canal, and sending out recce patrols and a patrol to destroy one of our bogged tanks.	
	10		Draft of three officers and 58 OR's join Bn. Lt Prentice joined and posted to "D" Coy. Bn relieved by 8 R.S. See Appx IV. Sp Coy take over in daylight drawing little mortar fire on Bn H.Q. Bn in HELMOND by 2200 hrs occupying same billets as on 6 Nov. Major Henderson (2IC) command of Bn during absence of the Commanding Officer on leave in Brussels.	Appx IV
	11		Bn in HELMOND. 1000 hrs Corps Commander visits Bn. Cinema in evening.	
	12		Bn visit to demonstration of L.V.T. (See Appx V) Bn tea dance 1500 hrs to 1800 hrs.	Appx V
Holland.	13		Instruction on mines in morning by RE's. Take over from 2 A & SH. See Appx VI. C.O. returns to Bn.	Appx VI

			<p>Minimum tpt used owing to 51 (H) Div using axis and bad condition of roads.</p> <p>Coy position see Appx VII</p> <p>No patrols sent out. Very little enemy activity.</p>	Appx VII
	14		<p>Feeding by darkness and very little movement by day. Slight shelling on Coy forward area. Gunner O.P. with "C" Coy. No enemy movement observed during day, thought that he had moved out, leaving a fantastic number of mines along the whole front, both A/Tk (Tellermine and Box Mines) and A/P Schu Mines. During the day the Pioneers cleared many mines. The Pioneer Officer, Lt Arnall lost a foot on a Schu Mine.</p> <p>During night, a Recce Patrol leaving from the Sausage Wood at 681072 (Sheet 27 N.W.) to area 695053 saw no signs of enemy although several slit trenches and equipment.</p>	Appx VIII. Mine and Enemy positions.
Holland	15		<p>Quiet day on our front, with 51(H) Div advancing under heavy barrage along South of canal to GALGENBERG with very little resistance.</p> <p>Pioneer and Coys clearing mines from area to make shorter communications between coys. Possible to move by day without drawing fire party from each coy. Visit Bde demonstration on "Lifting a Schu Mine". Bath parties to ASTEN. Coy of Seaforths under Comd.</p>	
	16	1800	<p>Relaxation in alertness. Food brought up by daylight. H.L.I. advance to MEIJEL after confirming by Recce that town had been evacuated. Found to be heavily mined and booby trapped. 51 (H) Div reached canal running N to S. To fill gap between the two we sent two pls of Seaforths and 1 Pt of "D" Coy to area of ROZZELSEHEDINK in square 7004. Div Comd visited Bn in morning. R.E. party contacted 49 Div clearing main road at 658013 which was very heavily mined. Finding that the road had been cleared and bridging equipment already on road, the party returned. Difficulty during night in keeping touch with forward pls. Wireless communication not very successful.</p>	
Holland	17	0800 0810	<p>C.O. visited forward pl and bridging site at 710040. Bridge was completed by 1030 hrs with one coy of 51(H) Div over canal at 725035, meeting no resistance.</p> <p>Forward pl relieved by Recce Regt. Bn rest in coy areas leaving double sentries at pl positions until 1400 hrs when Bn moved back to HELMOND occupying previous billets. Seaforth Bn under comd relieved by A & S.H. at same time. Bn at three hours notice to move.</p>	

	18		Bn resting at HELMOND. At three hours notice. Baths and entertainment.	
	19		Bn in HELMOND. Preparation for next action. Evening entertainment.	
Holland.	20	0700	Bn move in T.C.V.s to MEIJEL (M.R. 712067, 1:25000 27 N.W. E. Half) and then on to BERINGEN on foot where Bn prepared for the advance to the River MAAS. Bde Gp moved at 1400 hrs with ourselves in the lead followed by the A & S.H. and H.L.I. Bn order of march, "D" Coy, attach. H.Q., "C" and "D" Coy, Sup Coy. First Bn objective, high ground in area 7708. Recce working in front contacted enemy in this area. "D" Coy with left flank Sqn Scots Guards Tanks in support attacked, taking 43 prisoners. Casualties 13 slightly wounded. Bn consolidated for the night, sending out patrols to contact enemy and find out if bridge at 782104 had been blown. Bn H.Q. situated at 764084.	
	21		Bn moved forward with Carrier Pl leading to area of bridge at 782104 which had been blown during the night. Carrier blown up on mine across track. Pioneers sent ahead of tpt to clear road while "C" Coy crossed stream and formed small bridgehead on far side. R.E.s constructed bridge and Bn moves forward to SEVENUM supported by tanks. The enemy had left but leaving every possible obstacle to clear in the form of road blocks, blown bridges and the church at SEVENUM. We found that all our possible O.P.s had been blown down. Bn consolidates at SEVENUM for the night, sending out patrols to the enemy line. Shelling during night.	See Appx XII for route and bounds.
	22		Bn moved forward to HORST, with H.L.I. and A & S.H. leading. No enemy resistance with exception of obstacles. Few enemy found hiding in houses. Shelling during day and Lt Stewart wounded.	
Holland	23		1 P.W. taken from house. Owing to difficulty of communication and supplies Bn remained in HORST during day sending parties to fill craters and clear mines from axis at 823204 to allow R.E.s to construct bridge during night. Patrol out during night did not contact enemy.	See Appx XIII. Corps Comd's message.
	24		Bde at 833204 constructed at first light allowing the Brigade to continue their advance, Bde objective TIENRAIJ 6523. Bn in reserve at DIJK. As enemy was not contacted was decided to push forward to SWOLGEN with Scots Guards in support. Enemy seen leaving as forward elements approach SWOLGEN. Bn	

			consolidates for night, sending out patrols. Shelling becomes a little acute. No casualties.	
Holland.	25		<p>Was decided to send out small recce parties to contact enemy. Coys brought up at intervals to sort out any opposition encountered. "D" Coy reached OSTERBOS where they found an O.P. overlooking the river into Germany. "C" Coy made their way forward to BROEKHUIZERVORST meeting slight enemy resistance. As light was failing Bn consolidated in their positions with "A" Coy back at SWOLGEN. Patrols out during night. 2 enemy walked into "C" Coy lines.</p> <p>Order came through that the Bn had to get forward to line of river before first light. "C" Coy after sending forward fighting patrol, found BROEKHUIZERVORST clear and consolidated on South side of village. "A" Coy moved forward to North side of village, and "D" Coy to OIJEN at 904243. Bn occupied positions overlooking the river by night and rested in the buildings by day.</p>	
	26		The enemy do not appear to know that we occupy the position overlooking the river as during the day digging and visits from officers seen on far bank, also ferry at 911221, still working. Gunners put ferry out of order in afternoon.	
Holland.	27		<p>Enemy still using ferry at 911221. "C" Coy send fighting patrol into BROEKHUIZEN but were held up by mines losing 3 OR.s killed and 2 wounded from "S" mines. The outbuildings of a farm were also blown up on approach; it appears the enemy meant to hold this small bridgehead as long as possible and using every means to do so, laying mines a foot apart.</p> <p>Two Pioneers clearing mines from 4022 area were reported missing and presumed P.W. During the night the gunners gave BROEKHUIZEN and the ferry all their attention. R.E. section cleared path to our two killed and S.B. carried them in with the loss of one S.B. who was killed by an "S" mine. The R.E.s found that they could not manage to clear all the mines by night.</p>	
	28	1800 2230	<p>46 Bde reached STOKT from the South but were held up by m/g fire from KASTEL and houses in 9021 area. During morning Battle Gp and Carriers supported by tp of tanks raided the KASTEL area taking prisoners, 1 officer and 4 OR's. Shelling and mortaring very heavy during day.</p> <p>Bn relieved by 159 Bde of 11 Armd Div.</p> <p>Bn relief complete and in ASTEN for a rest period. Capt Buchanan (CANLOAN) rejoins from hospital.</p>	Appx XIV

	29		Bn in ASTEN. Baths and entertainment. Visit from Div Comdr. Pipes and drums play retreat.	
	30		Bn resting in ASTEN. 8th Corps Commander visits Bde H.Q. before leaving his comd to go to India. Arrival of new draft of 55 OR's. Posted to coys.	