

THE LOYAL EDMONTON REGIMENT

REPORT ON OPS

7 APR 45 - 23 APR 45

ASSAULT OF RIVER IJSSEL

PURSUIT TO BARNEVELD

1. On the 7 Apr 45 the bn was rudely awakened by a 5 AM reveille prior to moving from the sylvan surroundings of the REICHSWALD to a concentration area centred on MR 934 846 Sheet 6. Everyone was slightly apprehensive about the future for we knew that this was to be our first big league show. Various RCEME and RCASC personnel of the famous "water rat" division passed us the infm that over here was the real thing, when compared with the bow and arrow campaign of ITALY. So as new boys we boarded our tp carriers at 1030 hrs 7 Apr and headed into the great unknown.
2. A visit to the Duke of York's Hussars (3 Cdn Div Recce) afforded an excellent opportunity to not only gain infm that enemy activity over the IJSSEL was negligible but also to get a very good idea of the ground ahead of us. At this time the battle for DEVENTER was in full swing, but the tempo of the general action seemed quite leisurely and our recce was never rushed.
3. On the night 8 Apr the Scout Offr with two scouts and two Dutch civs, crossed the river and patrolled to MR 940020 Sheet 3703. The object of the patrol was to find out if enemy occupied the area and if possible to bring back a Dutch civ who had infm of German activity on the WEST side of the river. Enemy were seen and heard in the area of 940020 and the patrol recrossed the river with that infm and also excellent data regarding banks and current of the stream. Generally the enemy situation seemed quite satisfactory, the Hun being quiet even to a very restricted arty harrassing programme.
4. On Apr 9 the bn made a short move to a new conc area, MR Sq 9700 Sheet 3803 ZUTPHEN.
5. The Bde op commenced 11 Apr. The initial Bde intention to cross the IJSSEL on a two bn front and exploit fwd to the rd WILPE-VOORST from the 04 northing south to 01 nothing was carried out by the PPCLI right, SEAF OF C left, the L EDMN R role during this phase being (to use a 'Bogertism') nebulous.
6. At 2300 hrs 11 Apr the Bde Comd ordered the bn to cross the river. It was then we had our first experience of another iron animal of war, 'The Buffalo'. The excellent organisation of the Buffalo Herders made the crossing as simple as an army exercise and by 0330 hrs 12 Apr all coys were in posn. Locns at that time, BHQ GRADS MR 928018, A COY WINNIPEG MR 936024, B COY KENTS MR 925025, C COY BOND MR 920015, D COY RIDEAU MR 931022.
7. Vehs poured in at a great rate, the engrs having completed a br at MR 945025 by 0230 hrs.
8. At 1430 hrs 12 Apr a series of small coy attacks to the SOUTH gained some prisoners and at 1900 hrs the bn was in the following posn; BHQ BOND MR 920015, A COY OXFORD MR 922002, C COY BOND MR 920015, B COY on the DYKE MR 914007, D COY DYKE and RD CROSSING MR 915003.
9. At 2030 hrs Bde ordered an attack at first light 13 Apr on a two bn front, PPCLI right L EDMN R left, to the BUSLO-APPEN VOORST highway. Both the enemy and ourselves did considerable patrolling during the night of 12 Apr and although not much infm was forthcoming regarding enemy str we est that the rd through the woods from 914003 to 909997 was clear of mines and that the Start Line for the mornings op was securely in our hands.
- 10 At 0500 hrs TAC moved to OXFORD MR 922002. Bn plan was as follows:

SL	-	Dyke bet 914003 to 914996.
Coy Boundary	-	Rd from 915003 to 905997 rd incl to C Coy on left
Objectives	-	B Coy right to 903004. C Coy left to 905997
Fire Plan	-	2 tps tanks open fire at H-5 to H with

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HE on outskirts of wood. At H 3⁰⁰ Mor, 4.2⁰⁰ Mor, 1 Regt 25 prs open fire on line 300 yds ahead of SL, lifting 100 yds in 4 mins for 10 lifts. NO smoke to be used. Tks to move down centre of two fwd coys, one tp to each coy when objectives reached.
H hour - 0600 hrs.

11 At 0555 hrs 13 Apr, fire opened and at 0600 hrs B and C Coys crossed SL. Everything went according to plan. Two objectives were reached without incident although comm failed for some mins. The situation was so satisfactory fwd that TAC HQ moved to SCOTT MR 950997 at 0645 hrs. Patrols by carrier pl and on foot investigated VOORST 9098, the bn expanded in that area during the daylight hrs of 13 Apr.

12 On 14 Apr C Coy was ordered in to the area 909974 to seize the intact brs over the canal at 912968 and 909965 and also to make a diversionary effort to assist the SEAF OF C attacking HOVEN 9395. D Coy was moved to VOORST to assist C Coy if necessary. C Coy met by oppsn at the rly X-ing 910968 but by using flame throwers and arty sp, were able to cross the rly during the late evening of 13 Apr and secure the brs. These were deloused of mines by the pnr pl and at 2200 hrs conditions were firm in the area. D Coy during the afternoon had done excellent work on the rt flank of C Coy, having crossed the rly at 904972, killed and captured several enemy and had firmed up in that area. Since the commencement of ops our bag of Psw was now at over 100, with 20 or 30 enemy killed incl 8 crisped with flame from 'Wasps'. Two German 15cm HOWs were overrun and a 6 pr with DS amn (presumably German booty from ARNHEIM) was captured in tact in APPEN.

13 Apr 15 started with miserable weather, rain and an overcast sky having a dampening effect on any desire to leave est HQ. However at 0800 hrs the CO attanded an O Gp at Bde and was ordered to take over HOVEN frpm SEAF OF C and commence patrolling SOUTH aith a view of clearing the enemy from the area between the rly from HOVEN to DIEREN 8784 on the right, and the IJSSEL on the left.

14 With the carrier pl plus SLI MMG carriers with 1 sec 6 pr Atk guns and one coy of inf swept SOUTH from HOVEN at 1400 hrs. By 1500 hrs BRUMMEN MR 9188 was liberated and the CO went fwd to receive the adulations of the liberated population. There was some sniping in the area but by night fall everything was snug around the town and patrols went fwd as far as the canal X-ing at 847849.

15 On Apr 16 a mobile patrol went fwd to DIEREN 8784 and found the place evac by Germans. Once again the populace was most demonstrative, pressing tulips and similar flower offerings on the tps. The Intelligence Officer acted in a most embarrassed manner but one may be sure that he enjoyed his local popularity.

16 At 1115 hrs the 49th Brit Div (West Riding) arrived at DIEREN and that area was handed over to them, our patrols reported back to BRUMMEN at 1200 hrs.

17 The Bde, as a whole, was still working to the NORTH of our area so orders were issued to the bn to move into the area of VELDHUEZEN MR 8394 to secure a brhd on the WEST of the APELDOORN CANAL. At 1430 hrs the carrier force reached VELDHUEZEN and by 1500 hrs TAC HQ opened at BODEN MR 839950. Coy locns for the night 16 Apr; C Coy with TAC HQ, A COY CATALINA 825947, B COY at the Rly Sta 832937, D COY at ABBEY 841944, all patrolling out from their area with NO enemy reported.

18 During our enjoyable period of 'swanning around' the PPCLI and SEAF OF C had been busy on our rt capturing hundreds of wandering

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enemy with so much loot that most of the Patricia's were offering to resign their posn as Ptes and go home to live in a manner befitting their status as millionaires. The L EDMN R, living up to it's reputation of scrupulous honesty, was still sending the odd PW back to Bde (complete with valuables) when orders were received to be prepared to pass through the PPCLI in the area of HOENDERLOO 7293 and push along the rd to BARNEVELD.

19 Bde named a series of report lines, first MONDAY 68 EASTING, TUESDAY HARKAMP 6494, WEDNESDAY 615930, THURSDAY 5994, FRIDAY 5794, SATURDAY BARNEVELD 5295. Infm regarding the enemy was sketchy, thousands being reported in the woods near HOENDERLOO 7293 and it was expected that certain oppsn would be met. 5 Cdn Armd Div was reported SOUTH of the rd with adv elts in BARNEVELD. A strong VANGUARD consisting of carrier pl, SLI MMG pl, 1 tp tks, Fd Arty FOO, Med Arty FOO, Pnr Party, Eng party, 1 tp SP Atk guns and A Coy L EDMN R pushed ahead at 1815 hrs 17 Apr and passed SP at 2000 hrs followed by the main body of the bn.

20 Wireless comm was terrible and it was not until the main body caught up with the vanguard at TUESDAY that it was known that a rd block at 635943 was holding up the adv. Once this was cleared the whole column proceeded towards BARNEVELD in convoy under the protection of the 'Mighty Maroon Machine' who had been holding the area for the last 24 hrs. Arriving in BARNEVELD at 2300 hrs difficult was found in obtaining accomodation as 5 Div HQ was est with it's mobile bath etc. thereby causing us as much confusion as if we had had to fight, TAC opened at 527958, the bn taking up posns in that area.

21 Apr 18 was a clear warm morning that quickly dispelled the stiffness of joint caused by the cold ride of the night before. At 1115 hrs the bn was ordered to take posns to dominate the X-rds at 509994. TAC opened at 1430 hrs locn 514990, coys at 507995, 514995, 507992 and 515985.

22 The next day Bde infm the CO that approx 1000 enemy were in the area 433995 and wished to surrender. A force composed of D Coy 6 carriers plus SLI MMG Pl, one tp tks, one tp SP Atk guns and the pnr sec all under comd of the CO, went fwd to that area to investigate. On arriving in area HOEVELAKEN, by SP fire, sniping and Mor quickly dispelled any hope that this journey was a picnic. However the opportunity was taken to partially remove a reinforced concrete rdblck at 437999. The force was withdrawn at 1730 hrs and 'Phoonies' gave the wood their attention about 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ hrs later.

23 During the next two days the bn gradually improved it's posns and is now at TAC HQ 452983, A Coy 459977, B Coy 432000, C Coy 435975, D Coy 430985. Faced by a stubborn enemy, activity is limited to patrolling. Patrols, mostly defensive, remind the tps that there is still a war on even in a land of milk, butter and eggs.

24 So ends this phase of our first contact with the big league. Cas have been light, fighting negligible and with very little discomfort or fatigue. Leaves to Canada and UK come and go with regularity rfts are well up to standard and the morale of the bn was never higher. We await further developments.

APPENDIX "A"

LESSONS LEARNED

1. River crossings are comparatively simple with good eqpt and proper planning. BUFFALOES landed every man 'dryshod' and with NO 'mix-ups'.
 2. The carrier pl, at last, came into its own and carried out all preliminary reeces for the bn.
 3. The bn complete, plus tks and sp guns, takes the place of a reece regt very well. Most of our work has been of this nature in HOLLAND.
 4. Comm by wireless is NOT of the best over wooded areas. Control centres must be well fwd to keep within range of even the 22 set.
 5. The Pioneer Pl is still one of the most important pls in a bn and must be included in any vanguard.
 6. WASPS proved their worth, instilling terror into the enemy and also causing casualties.
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