

WAR DIARY  
OR

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

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Page I

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1st BN., THE ESSEX SCOTTISH REGIMENT  
CANADIAN ARMY (OVERSEAS)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks, references to Appendices and initials
West of DELSENHOF Ref UDEM  1:25000	1 Mar 45		<p>Finally our thick skinned friends arrived on the scene and were briefed by their respective coy comds and the second phase of the attack on the HOCHWALD began. As previously reported the enemy were in considerable strength with crawl trenches and barbed wire entanglements covered by machine gun fire which proved to be a tough proposition as far as 'C' Coy was concerned. 'D' Coy under the command of Major CROPP reached their objective in the edge of HOCHWALD with few casualties - however the going was far from easy. 'C' Coy on the left met very stiff opposition. However, under the outstanding leadership of Major TILSTON they finally secured their objective on the edge of the HOCHWALD to the left of 'D' Coy. Major TILSTON personally replaced the wireless set and brought ammo to his men with complete disregard for his own safety. He was wounded once slightly and carried on until he had to be evacuated with a second, more serious, wound in the leg. It was largely due to 'C' Coy Comd's outstanding bravery that the coy was successful. Although they suffered heavy casualties they remained on their objective with the help of the Carrier Pl. After these positions were firm 'A' &amp; 'B' Coys passed through 'D' &amp; 'C' Coys respectively and took up positions beyond in the woods. Their objectives were taken with comparative ease. Inter-unit contact patrols were maintained during the night as well as a contact patrol from Calgary Highlanders to 'D' Coy. As a result of the day's fight we had taken about 100 prisoners, captured 3 88mm guns, a medium mortar and many automatic weapons. Our own losses were 8 offr and 130 OR casualties.</p>	RWM
At HOCHWALD Ref UDEM  1:25000	2 Mar 45		<p>At dawn the RHLIs with an Arty Barrage started another phase of the operation. Our 'B' Coy had to withdraw into the area of 'C' Coy within the safety line. Two coys from the RHLI moved up to the area of start line and the remaining coys passed through to their objectives. Around 40 PsOW were taken and objectives were captured quite easily as the defences of the enemy seemed to have broken. The RCEs at this time were repairing the crater on the road at the entrance to the HOCHWALD. Our sub units received some shelling; however no enemy were seen by our troops. The RRC moved through both units and reached their objectives - clearing the 4 Bde part of the HOCHWALD.</p>	Appx. 'A'  RWM

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks, references to Appendices and initials
AT HOCHWALD REF UDEM 1:25,000	3 Mar 45		Today the weather was overcast and raining slightly - found the 4 Bde firm in all positions of the HOCHWALD and all our coys withdrew with the exception of "A" Coy - who was considered necessary in defence - re-counter attacks. Numerous mor-reps and shell reps were passed last night and passed on to Bde. However during the late morning all enemy fire ceased. Numerous patrols were sent out by RRC's and RHLI and reported no enemy and no mines.	Appx 'A'
At HOCHWALD Ref UDEM 1:25000	4 Mar 45		During the night intermittent shelling and only 'A' Coy occupying original position. With reference to previous shellreps - arty was brought down in vicinity of MARIENBAUM with desired results. Our British friends on left reported progress in direction of MARIENBAUM. Around 0930 hrs 'A' Coy withdrew and bn was conc'd in area before HOCHWALD. The CO and IO went to 'BALLS' at Bde at 1320 and on return called and 'O' Group at 1500 hrs to discuss future plans.	RWM
At HOCHWALD Ref UDEM 1:25000	5 Mar 45		Weather dull and chilly with inclination to rain. Bn enjoyed a day's rest to re-organize and get a few missed meals tucked away. Wally GRAW organized a picture show in each coy area and the chaps enjoyed a few minutes recreation. No likely move until tomorrow in the meantime there was a good opportunity to re-organize for next operation.	RWM
At HOCHWALD Ref UDEM 1:25000	6 Mar 45		The day was fair and it appeared we were to get some good weather. During the morning the C.O. made an air observers trip over the area of XANTEN which was to be our next objective. 'A' Ech also moved up in an area almost behind us. CO was called to Bde around 1550, the IO was not required.	Appx 'A' RWM
At HOCHWALD Ref UDEM 1:25000	7 Mar 45		The day was fair and it appeared we were to get some good weather. The IO went to Recce at new Tac HQ in the SSR Area and also to glean some first hand information. The 'I' Sgt plus a party went along to set up the HQ and remain there. The plan was to have a conc area and a Bn HQ previously recce'd by Major THOMSON, east of the HOCHWALD but behind the new battle area. Marching tps moved off at 1230 hrs while the vehicles moved at 1300 hrs. The C.O. and the I.O. proceeded to	



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Nr XANTEN Ref XANTEN 1:25000	9 Mar 45		Weather was fair and revealed a badly battered XANTEN which was ours. Tac HQ moved to 'C' Coy HQ who had moved to new position to cover right flank - due to RHLI losses. At 1645 Bde notified us that representatives of support arms were to report to parent unit (arty, A.tk). We learned from 6 Bde that time bombs set by Germans the previous day were exploding and all personnel were duly warned.	RWM
Nr XANTEN Ref XANTER 1:25,000	10 Mar 45		Weather cool and somewhat cloudy. During the previous night intermittent shelling and mortar-taring were experienced in area. That afternoon and evening the YMCA put on a show for coys - "The Mask of Demetrius." During the afternoon the SX arranged a Bde Burial service where H/Capts JOHNSTON, CARDY and MURPHY conducted the services. The SX Pipe Band was in attendance and played the appropriate tunes (see att)	Appx 'A' RWM
Nr XANTEN Ref XANTEN 1:25,000	11 Mar 45		Weather was clear and cold. At 0945 a recce party left to look over our new re-organization area. Around 1545 three FW straffed our aerial observation plane and vehicles in our area.	RWM
Nr XANTEN Ref XANTEN 1:25,000	12 Mar 45		At 0450 the Bn moved off in TCV's to the new conc and rest area which is in NW tip of REICHWALD near KRANENBURG. Bn dispersed at 1715 and began settling in. The YMCA again produced a show for the evening with 'A' & 'B' Coys attending. Standing Orders were published.	Appx. 'A' RWM
REICHWALD Ref CLEVE SHEET 1:25,000	13 MAR 45		The weather was cool and somewhat cloudy which later turned to sunshine holding high promise for the 44 men who left this AM on 48 hr leave to BRUSSELS. The YMCA had another show for the boys "Seven Days Ashore". A sports meeting also took place in the evening, at which an hour a day was set aside to give the boys a laugh.	RWM
REICHWALD Ref CLEVE SHEET 1:25,000	14 Mar 45		The weather was warm and clear making our rest and training more enjoyable. War correspondents visited us gathering information on the exploits of Major TILSTON as well as other news. The laugh for today was the "Greased Pole Act" which was a hilarious success.	Appx. 'A' RWM



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REICHWALD Ref CLEVE SHEET 1:25,000	15 MAR 45		Weather was cool and cloudy which dampened our spirits slightly. The "Pipe Band" appeared in new kilts and played the "Regimental Airs" in the Bn Area. During the afternoon the "Bandoliers" came out and provided a show for the boys, however, it rained but the show went on. Recreational trips to NIJMEGEN for the boys and half the Bn were allowed to go.	RWM
REICHWALD Ref CLEVE SHEET 1:25,000	16 MAR 45		Weather still cool and sky overcast. Training was carried as usual with nothing out of the ordinary to report. The IO and the Doc made a recce for the pig in order to have a greased one for the "laugh a day". However the laugh was on us for the pig refused to run and "SP" Coy walked off with the "Bacon". A Mess Dinner was held in a familiar spot in Nijmegen. A lovely meal was provided and various toasts were drunk. Various presentations were made and Major THOMSON took a great delight in pinning the noble medal of "The Beer Shifter" on Joe Pays chest. However Joe Cardy at the end of Joe Pays speech got up and presented Major THOMSON with "Ye Old Tale Medal" much to affable Second-in-Commands consternation. Shortly after dinner the officers went various ways to places of entertainment in the city to continue their good time.	RWM
REICHWALD REF CLEVE SHEET 1:25,000	17 MAR 45		Weather still cool and cloudy. The 'I' Sec proceeded to Bde to start a two day course. An 'O' Group was called where the CO outlined possible operations for the Bn; also informed coy comds that bn would be supplying picquets for the CLEVE - XANTEN Highway. During the evening the CO, IO, OC 'Sp' Coy and OC Mortars attended a Bde bridge party.	Appx. 'A' RWM
REICHWALD REF CLEVE SHEET 1:25,000	18 MAR 45		Weather was bright and sunny. The CO and Adjt proceeded on leave to PARIS and BRUSSELS respectively. Church parade was held by Capt Cardy in the amphitheatre near 'B' Coy area. Quite an uneventful day with not a great deal to report.	
REICHWALD REF CLEVE SHEET 1:25,000	19 MAR 45		Weather again warm and clear making everyone feel happy and spring is definitely here. The 'I' Sec proceeded to Bde to attend the second day of their course. A sports meeting was called to assemble 'Sp' Coy where plans were made to have a sports afternoon. Recreational trips were sent into NIJMEGEN in the evening.	RWM
REICHWALD REF CLEVE SHEET 1:25,000	20 MAR 45		Weather was warm and clear. Recce parties were sent out to liaise with the RHLI in order to obtain the set up for picketing the NIJMEGEN - CLEVE - XANTEN Highway. Sports meet was held and 'Sp' Coy carried off the honours.	RWM

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REICHWALD REF CLEVE SHEET 1:25,000	21 MAR 45		Weather was clear and warm. At 0950 word arrived from Bde saying we didn't have to picket the road. Inter coy softball championships were being played with heavy hitting laid on by all ranks. In the evening the WOs and Sgts held one of their usual and very successful parties.	Appx 'A'  RWM
REICHWALD REF CLEVE SHEET 1:25,000	22 MAR 45		Today was the warmest day we've experienced yet making our rest and training programme very enjoyable. Coys carried out their training dealing mostly with the firing of the 2" Mortar and Piat as well as extensive use of the ranges. During the afternoon the Bn softball championship was played between HQ team and "D" Coy with the HQ team emerging victorious. Recreational transport was again provided for the lads wishing to go to Nijmegen. "B" Coy held a party in "D" Coys recreational tent and it was a great success.	   RWM
REICHWALD REF CLEVE SHEET 1:25,000	23 MAR 45		Weather was again fair and warm. The CO attended an 'O' Group at Bde where the Brig. outlined future Ops and the general situation at the present time. The Signal section carried out training on procedure with the 18 sets. In the evening a successful Bn Mess dinner was held in Nijmegen. Lt Col P.W. Bennett and Col L.A. Deziel were the honoured guests. After the usual toasts the IO was "Blitzkrieged" and the shorts he wore under his kilt were forcibly removed by Capt Grandjean much to the amusement of the rest of the officers. However many of the other kilted officers had worried looks on their faces thinking of course they might be investigated next. However, they were quite safe as Maj H.W.P. Thomsons' fifth column activity did not extend that far. The remainder of the evening was spent in telling jokes, singing and listening to Pipe Major Stoker play the Scotch airs. Capt Joe Cardy and Capt Doc Richardson lead singing assisted by Capt "Bob" Meanwell and Capt "Bob" Learn and needless to say new songs were learned as well as the old ones sung again. Pte Parker "A" Coy played the piano. A new mess committee was also elected with Pres: Major KW MacIntyre, Vice President; Capt C.J. Jeffrey and Treasurer: Lt W.N. McMillan.	         RWM
REICHWALD REF CLEVE SHEET 1:25,000	24 MAR 45		Weather continues bright and clear. Air force were out in great strength today in preparation of the Rhine crossings. A message from Bde advised us that "B" time would come into effect on 2 APR 45 and remain same until further notice. Today was	



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REICHWALD REF CLEVE SHEET 1:25,000	24 MAR 45	(Cont)	"D" Day for the RHINE crossing and news flowed in all day of the successful crossings at WESSEL and REES. Airborne troops were used on a greater scale than any time since the war began and the same applies to the airforce preparation for the crossings. "A" Coy and "C" Coy had their parties in the evening with everyone having an excellent time. Enemy air activity was slight over our rest area - some strafing but no damage was done.	Appx. 'A'  RWM
REICHWALD REF CLEVE SHEET 1:25,000	25 MAR 45		Weather was warm and dry. The sky was particularly overcast and it appeared the lovely weather we had been having might cease. Church services were held attended mostly by Bn HQ and HQ Coy as the coys were on tank training. Great news was received during the evening when reports came in that Gen Pattons' forces had broken out of the bridgehead and had made a rapid advance to ASCHAFENBURG.	RWM
IN REICHWALD REF CLEVE SHEET 1:25,000	26 MAR 45		The weather was cloudy for the first time in two weeks. Training schedules continued as usual throughout the day. In the afternoon the Essex severely trounced the 11th Fd Amb in the Bde finals. At the finish of the game we were surprised with a delightful visit from General Crerar. During the evening the Bn Officers held a very successful dance with guests from the 1 Cdn General Hospital. It was a pleasure to dance and talk to Canadian girls once again.	RWM
IN REICHWALD REF CLEVE SHEET 1:25,000	27 MAR 45		Weather cloudy and a thick mist making it rather damp. Visibility was poor. Training was carried out as usual with a good deal of sports included in the schedule. During the afternoon we trounced the RHLI softball team who had previously taken the RRCs making us Bde champions. The CO and IO attended a conference at Bde where plans were made to occupy Emmerick should the necessity occur. Later, around 1600 hrs Capt D Hunden gave the officers a talk on Army-Air force co-operation. In the evening the usual recreational transport left the Bn lines for Nijmegen.	Appx. 'A'  RWM
IN REICHWALD REF CLEVE SHEET 1:25,000	28 MAR 45		Weather again fair and promise of continued sunshine and warmth. In the morning we same out second best with two points to the RHLI's fourteen in a game of Volley Ball - due of course, to the fact our crack players were on leave. A message from Bde ordered a Maxwell "G" recce parties to be warned and be prepared to move in two hrs as of 1100 hrs this AM. During the afternoon, the CO called a Coy commanders conference to inform them of developments on our front. At 1830 in the evening we were notified that an "O" Group would be held at Bde at 0930 hrs on 29th.	Appx 'A'  RWM

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IN REICHWALD REF CLEVE SHEET 1:25,000	29 MAR 45		Weather was overcast but later was clear and warm. Orders were issued for recce parties to RV at Tac HQ at 1015 hrs to hear the results of the CO's "O" Group at Bde before proceeding to Bde RV. The recce party commanded by the new 2 IC Maj K.W. MacIntyre heard the CO's instructions to the effect that we were to cross the Rhine at REES and concentrate in the area around Millingen. Two pioneers with mine detectors accompanied the recce party. Instructions came that one troops of the 18th Cdn A Tk Battery and one platoon of "B" Coy Toronto Scots were to feed into our Column on the move the following day. The Bn was confined to the Bn area for the evening.	RWM
IN REICHWALD REF CLEVE SHEET 1:25,000	30 MAR 45		The weather was somewhat cloudy and cool but later was clear and warm. The CO called an "O" Group giving the movement order - three rifle coys to ride in TGV's and the fourth to go with Support Coy. At 1152 34 crossed the start point, immediately behind the RHLI's and proceeded along the Kranenburgh, Cleve, Calcar and Rees highway. At 1630 we crossed the Rhine. While crossing the Rhine all marvelled at the ability of the Canadian Engineers who constructed at this point the longest Bailey Bridge on the Western Front. (1/3 of a mile) We were also thankful for the complete domination by the airforce and our AA for not one enemy plane appeared. We arrived in our new area at 1730 and began to settle in.	RWM
IN ISSELBURGH HUETH CASTLE 1:25,000	31 MAR 45		The weather was overcast - not particularly cold and no rain. The castle which we occupied was almost in ruins due to the ravages of war. It was built over 500 years ago and "Frederick the Great" once lived there. The late Baron Von Wittenhurst Zu Sonnsodt was last inhabitant of the place. The Baron died in 1938 and his sons joined the army keeping up the family tradition. It was surrounded by a moat and used to advantage by the Germans who defended it. At 1500 hrs an operational recce party was ordered to recce the area around Wals in Holland. At 1700 hrs a conference was called at Tac where we were informed that we would not move 'till early the following morning and A Echelon was to move with us. The YMCA supplied a movie and curiously enough the leading actress played the part of a refugee from Holland.	Appx. 'A'  RWM
CERTIFIED A TRUE COPY, <i>C. J. Lynn-Grant</i> (C. J. Lynn-Grant) Major, Officer i/c War Diaries, CANADIAN MILITARY HEADQUARTERS			10 APR 45	"JEC Pangman" Lt Col (J.E.C. Pangman) Commanding Officer 1st Bn., The Essex Scottish Regiment.