

## WAR DIARY

THE WESTMINSTER REGT (MOTOR)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks, references to Appendices and initials
Marseilles France	1 Mar 45		<p>Strength Offrs 35 + 5 att.      O.R's. 804 + 35 att.</p> <p>Though the sun was bright, a strong wind prevailed all day, making the camp area miserable with clouds of thick red dust. The carriers were given a move order but this was later cancelled. In the afternoon 100 personnel from Support Coy arrived from Italy.</p>	
	2 Mar 45		<p>Strength Offrs 35 + 5 att.      O.R's. 804 + 35 att.</p> <p>On a further bright but windy day the C.O., Lt. Col. G.C. Corbould, D.S.O. arrived at the staging Camp near Marseilles with the vehicles and the remainder of the unit which was now wholly moved from Italy to France. The carriers were given a move order, were stood down, received an other notice and finally moved at 2200 hrs. Lieut. J.E. Oldfield was again in charge of the party. Orders were received for the unit to move on the following morning and at a conference held at 2200 hrs, Major D.B. McKenzie received more detail. The move time was to be 0730 hrs and the first Staging Camp was St. Rambert, a distance of about 170 miles.</p>	
En Route	3 Mar 45		<p>Strength Offrs 35 + 5 att.      O.R's. 804 + 35 att.</p> <p>The unit was the third in a block of large convoys moving NORTH together. Brig. J.S. Lind, D.S.O. with the B.M., Maj. D. Clarke travelled with the Westminsters who pulled out of MARSEILLES at 0730 hrs. The convoy arrived in St. Rambert at 1815 hrs, approx. 1 hour ahead of schedule. Everyone was under canvass which was fortunate as the weather had changed to a high wind and rain. Orders were to move at 0715 hrs on the next day.</p>	
	4 Mar 45		<p>Strength Offrs 35 + 5 att.      O.R's. 804 + 35 att</p> <p>Capt. K.B. Harrison left early once more with a small advance party of cooks. The remainder of the battalion moved at 0715 hrs, for the next Staging Camp, MACON</p>	

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En Route	4 Mar 45		<p>continued.                      NORTH of LYON a long line of burnt-out enemy vehicles gave evidence of the effectiveness of the Allied Air Forces in the early stages of the French campaign. The wrecks were nose-to-tail on both sides of the road and stretched for miles. MACON was reached at 1630 hrs.</p>	
	5 Mar 45		<p>Strength Offrs 34 + 5 att. O.R's. 804 + 35 att                      At 0730 hrs the Westminsters moved off on the next stage of the journey to BELGIUM and the remainder of 1 Cdn. Army. The route led generally up the line of the RHONE VALLEY, EAST of PARIS and thence to BELGIUM. The destination for the 5 Mar was LES LAUMES, a town on the ARMANCON River where the unit arrived at 1530 hrs.</p>	
	6 Mar 45		<p>Strength Offrs 35 + 5 att. O.R's. 804 + 35 att                      Leaving time was again 0715 hrs, and the unit pulled out of the muddy parking area in a slight, cold rain. The next Staging Camp was MELUN, a large town about 30 miles SOUTH-EAST of PARIS. 1630 hrs was the time of arrival here.</p>	
	7 Mar 45		<p>Strength Offrs 34 + 5 att. O.R's. 804 + 35 att                      Starting once more at 0715 hrs, the unit headed for CAMBRAI, the last Staging Camp of the trip. A U.S. Army M.O. Escort accompanied the unit past all the approaches to PARIS. The unit arrived in CAMBRAI at 1530 hrs and staged a short distance outside the town. At a conference held that night it was found that our final destination was to be a small town called DEYNZE, about 15 miles SOUTH-WEST of GHENT. (See map) Time of departure was to be 0930 hrs. Here it was rumoured that there was to be a change in the organisation of the 5<sup>th</sup> Div in which 12 C.I.B. was to be broken up.</p>	

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DEYNZE BELGIUM MR050726	8 Mar 45		<p>Strength Offrs 35 + 5 att. O.R's. 803 + 35 att</p> <p>Leaving CAMBRAI, the unit travelled through parts of country which had seen Canadians in action in World War 1, and arrived at the dispersal point, AUDENARDE, at 1230 hrs where we were met by the advance party. This group of officers had arrived in the area two weeks previously and had arranged billets for the bulk of the battalion in DEYNZE while the Support Company was 5 miles away in AERSEELE. By 1500 hrs everyone had been put into billets. The town was very clean and the people were exceptionally friendly and helpful. The quarters were good, most of the troops having beds to sleep on for the first time in many weeks. It was know made known that 12 Cdn Inf Bde was to be no more. The Westminster Regt (M) was to return to 5 Cdn Armd Bde under the command of Brigadier Cumberland. Changes were being made throughout the whole division in order to conform to, the organization of the other formations in NORTH-WEST EUROPE.</p>	
	9 Mar 45		<p>Strength Offrs 35 + 5 att. O.R's. 803 + 35 att</p> <p>The weather was back again to sunshine. At 1000 hrs the CO was visited by Brig Cumberland and the <i>DAA &amp; QMG</i> of 5 CAB, J.K. Manuel. The CO and 2 i/c returned with them to HQ 5 CAB which was located about twenty miles away at ISIGHEM. The Brig, wished the unit to be closer to Bde HQ, so it arranged that Advance Parties should go the following day to some small town near ISEGHEM. The unit was to move when the billets were arranged. At last came the news for which everyone had been waiting. Leave to UK had been granted and 70 all ranks were to leave on the 10th of March. The leave provided seven clear days in England. The quota was: 10 Offrs and 60 ORs. The 2 i/c, Adj, IO, Coy Comds and two offrs who had been recently married in UK made up the offrs group while each coy had an allotment of 12 ORs. As part of the reorganization which was taking place, the White Scout Cars were being exchanged for White Half-tracks, an improvement on the older model scout cars. Capt J V H Wilson MC made preparation to leave at 0830 hrs 10 Mar on Compassionate Leave to Canada. Brig, J.S. Lind addressed the battalion in a farewell speech. This marked the end of a successful eight month period with 12 Cdn Inf Bde, which was now being dispensed with from 5 Cdn Armd Div.</p>	

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<p><i>DEYNZE</i> <i>MR046736</i> <i>Sheet 42</i></p>	10 Mar 45		<p>Strength Offrs 35 + 5 att. ORs 803 + 35 att</p> <p>The weather was uncertain in the morning and remained clouded throughout the day. The personnel of the first leave party to UK spent a large portion of the day making hurried preparations. The day was used by the remainder of the battalion in normal training and duties.</p>	
	11 Mar 45		<p>Strength Offrs 35 and 5 att. ORs 803 and 35 att</p> <p>The weather changed for the better with a clear, sunny day and good visibility. Voluntary Church parades were held and were well attended. After such a long time away from the amenities of England, the troops largely enjoyed Belgium with its sociable people and other sources of interest.</p>	
	12 Mar 45		<p>Strength Offrs 35 and 5 att. ORs 801 and 35 att</p> <p>The good weather continued. The CO, Lt-col G.C. Corbould DSO, left at 0815 hrs for HQ 5 CAB where he was to take part in a TEWT, (Tactical Exercise Without Troops); Exercise SHERMAN I (See appx).</p> <p>Orders were received that the unit would move from DIENZE to MEULEBEKE in order to be closer to HQ 5 CAB for administrative reasons. This move was slated for 14 Mar 45.</p>	
	13 Mar 45		<p>Strength Offrs 35 and 5 att. ORs 800 and 35 att</p> <p>Again the weather held fair with good visibility. The day was spent in repacking and preparing to move.</p> <p>Lieut. G.B. Eaton, "B" Coy, had gone ahead of the battalion with a recce party to arrange billets. A move was much more complicated now than it had been in the past due to the requirements of billeting regulations. A great deal more time was taken up now in arranging accommodation, where previously, it had been a simple case of taking sufficient quarters.</p>	
	14 Mar 45		<p>Strength Offrs 34 and 5 att. ORs 796 and 35 att</p> <p>The unit began to roll at 0930 hrs and by 1200 hrs all were established in their</p>	

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<i>DEYNZE 046736</i>	14 Mar 45 cont'd		new billets. HQ and Sp Coys were in the town of MEULEBEKE Sq 8770, "B" Coy at EMELGHAM 835678, while "A" & "C" Coys were in ISEGHAM Sq 8267, the town in which HQ 5 CAB were located. (See att map). The remainder of the day was spent in settling into the new Quarters.	
<i>MULEBEKE MR 877705 Sheet 42</i>	15 Mar 45		Strength Offrs 34 and 5 att. ORs 796 and 35 att A clear cloudless day accompanied by warm spring-like weather. 6 pr, Mortar and small arms ranges were made available and inspected at once. Coy training was laid on accordingly. Training was difficult here as all fields were planted and no other areas were available. However, the company commanders made the best use of the material at hand and made training syllabi as comprehensive as possible.	
	16 Mar 45		Strength Offrs 34 and 5 att. ORs 796 and 35 att The fine spell continued with another clear day. Normal training was carried on by the companies, vehicle maintenance being a priority. It was made known that Field-Marshal Sir B. L. Montgomery was to visit the newly-arrived Canadian troops and was scheduled to arrive in the area on Sunday 18 Mar 45. The Westminsters were to line the road of the route and to this end, web belts and anklets were thoroughly scrubbed.	
	17 Mar 45		Strength Offrs 34 and 5 att. ORs 799 and 35 att The weather was unsettled with poor visibility. At 1100 hrs word was received that the unit was on 48 hrs notice to move NORTH into HOLLAND to take over a static position in the vicinity of NIJMEGEN. By 1400 hrs this had been reduced to 4 hrs and advance parties were warned for 0735 hrs 18 Mar 45. A battalion parade was laid on for Sunday morning when Field-Marshal Montgomery was to drive through the Div area.	
	18 Mar 45		Strength Offrs 34 and 5 att. ORs 797 and 35 att The weather was again cloudy and unsettled. The advance and recce parties left at 0810 hrs. Destination for the Advance Party was VOUGHT 3143 Sheet 5 while the Recce Party left for WIJCHEN E6158 Sheet 5. The route was from MEULEBEKE to	

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<p><i>En route</i> <i>MULEBEKE -</i> <i>ALPHEN</i></p>	18 Mar 45 cont'd		<p>DIENZE, GHENT, ANTWERP, BREDA, TILBURG, HERTOGEN BOSCH, GRAVE BRIDGE to WIJCHEN. The Recce Party reached WIJCHEN at 1530 hrs. The CO reported to HQ 49 (WR) Inf Div under whose command the unit was to come. After this the CO returned to VOUGHT where the Advance Parties had located temporary billets in an old S.S. Barracks.</p>	
	19 Mar 45		<p>Strength Offrs 36 and 5 att. ORs 798 and 35 att</p> <p>The weather improved from the previous day with the sun showing through in the afternoon. Visibility was good. A quiet night had been spent except for a number of V-1 Flying Bombs overhead. The CO with coy 2s i/c left at 0810 hrs to recce the positions held by XII Manitoba Dragoons, II Cdn Corps Recce Unit. Bn HQ was located at GREFFELING 444615 on the bank of the MAAS RIVER while Sp Coy less one A/Tk Pl was to be in area OUDEMAASDIJK 408623.</p> <p>“A” Coy took over a three thousand yard stretch of front at WAMEL 4367 and “C” Coy had about the same frontage at DREUMEL 4163. “B” Coy less its Scout Platoon were placed in reserve at ALPHEN 4360. Sp Coys No 15 Pl A/Tk under Lieut. D.A. Jones with 5 Pl of “B” Coy commanded by Lieut. P.M.T. Skrimshire were under command BROCKFORCE on duty at NIJMEGAN BRIDGE. The anti-tank platoon was on anti-submarine watch as attempts had been made by various means to disable the bridge. Under command of the Westminsters was No 12 Coy Dutch Forces of the Interior, the equivalent of the Italian Partisans and of little more value.</p> <p>The recce parties left at 1730 hrs to return to VOUGHT. The relief was to take place on 21 Mar 45.</p> <p>The bulk of the battalion left MEULEBEKE at 0730 hrs and arrived at VOUGHT at 1640 hrs. This was very good time for a large convoy to cover a distance of 200 miles.</p>	

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<p><i>ALPHEN</i> <i>MR 439605</i> <i>SHEET 5 SW</i> <i>TIEL</i></p>	20 Mar 45		<p>Strength Offrs 36 and 5 att. ORs 798 and 35 att Once again good weather was the order of the day. The troops were busy oiling and cleaning weapons and generally preparing for battle. Sten Machine Carbines were issued to replace the Thompsons which had been withdrawn prior to leaving Italy.</p> <p>The CO with Echelon comds left at 0930 hrs to recce Echelon areas at HERNEN 5861. Notice was received that the battalion would leave to move into the line at 0900 hrs 21 Mar 45.</p>	
	21 Mar 45		<p>Strength Offrs 36 and 5 att. ORs 797 and 35 att The unit left VOUGHT at 0900 hrs and had completed the take-over by 1530 hrs. The CO, Lt-col Corbould was photographed for the news reels as being the CO of the first unit from the Italian theatre to go into action in NW Europe, a doubtful honour, as his leave had been cancelled when the order came.</p> <p>The first leave party returned from England at about 1800 hrs, very surprised to find the unit in action and equally surprised to find such un-warlike conditions did exist. It was quite amazing to find electric light, running water and radios in forward area, where past experience had been that it was difficult to find one Italian farmhouse which was free from shell damage. A check was to be made by the forward coys, "A", "C" &amp; Sp, for a suitable place to show movies when films could be obtained. This, also, was an innovation for the front line.</p> <p>The night duty at Tac-Main HQ was taken by Capt H.E. Smith, A/Adjt and Lieut. J.E. Oldfield, acting as HQ Coy Comd, Sigs Offr etc. It had been a rather difficult week for the A/Adjt as there had been visits from the Corps Commander, Lt-Gen Foulkes and the Army Gp Comd, Fd Marshall Montgomery, an administrative move, and a tactical move. At times he had been A/Bn Comd. Consequently he seemed pleased to see Bn HQ personnel back from leave.</p> <p>The night was quiet with practically no activity except some enemy MG fire.</p>	

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<p><i>ALPHEN</i> <i>MR 439605</i> <i>SHEET 5 SW</i> <i>TIEL</i></p>	<p>21 Mar 45 cont'd</p>		<p>The opposition in this sector was provided by some indifferent DUTCH SS troops who from all reports had neither heavy weapons nor the desire to be very aggressive. This was still to be proven.</p>	
	<p>22 Mar 45</p>		<p>Strength Offrs 36 and 5 att. ORs 797 and 35 att During the night and early morning a number of V-1 flying bombs went over the battalion area en route to ANTWERP.</p> <p>The weather was sunny and warm. The day was again quiet and was taken up by the companies in tying in positions and lising with DUTCH troops in the area.</p> <p>The G-3 Ops from 49 (WR) Inf Div came around in the morning <i>and</i> at the same time Brig. Cumberland arrived. The Brig stayed a few minutes to discuss the situation with the CO, then left to return to HQ 5 CAB.</p> <p>In the afternoon the CO with the 2 i/c Major D.B. Mackenzie made a tour of the companies. In the evening at about 2000 hrs came the first half dozen V-1s with their roar and exhaust flame.</p> <p>There was some enemy patrol activity in C Coy area at 2300 hrs lasting until 0730 hrs. There was some firing but no one was hit and no prisoners were taken. At 0230 hrs some activity in A Coy Area resulted in Pte KOLLER, W.J. being killed, the first casualty of the units first action in HOLLAND.</p> <p>The remainder of the night was again quiet until 0630 hrs when the “buzz-bombs” started again.</p>	

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<p><i>ALPHEN</i> <i>MR 439605</i> <i>SHEET 5 SW</i> <i>TIEL</i></p>	<p>23 Mar 45</p>		<p>Strength Offrs 36 and 5 att. ORs 796 and 35 att</p> <p>The weather continued to be clear and sunny. At 1000 hrs the CO, Lt-col G.C. Corbould DSO, received a visit from the GOC 49 (WR) Inf Div., Maj-Gen McMillan, DSO, MC., under whose command the Westmr R (M) was operating. He had requested that the company commanders be present.</p> <p>In the afternoon a sudden flurry of mortaring caused some rapid movement in Sp Coy area and damaged a range finder. A little later B Coy's 3" Mortars which were attached to Sp Coy located the enemy OP and after this had received a short treatment the hostile mortaring subsided.</p> <p>A raid on the enemy held territory across the RIVER WAAL near TIEL sq 4168 had been scheduled for several nights but each time had been postponed due to the bright moonlight. A battalion of the KOYLI were to do the job which entailed moving down <i>the</i> WAAL from DRUTEN Sq 5303 in Royal Navy L.C.As, landing near TIEL to carry out a task of demolition and return to DRUTEN. This operation was known as EXERCISE "HEREFORD". It was cancelled for the KOYLI and given to the Westminsters and to do the job, the CO chose Major E.V. Ardagh's "B" Coy.</p> <p>Further details were to be made known on the following day by a Naval representative and a company commander from the KOYLI.</p> <p>A sweepstake held that evening on the time of passing of the first V bomb of the night failed to materialize in winnings for anyone as no bombs showed up.</p> <p>The night was quiet with some shelling heard on the left but none in the Bn Area.</p>	

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<p><i>ALPHEN</i> <i>MR 439605</i> <i>SHEET 5 SW</i> <i>TIEL</i></p>	24 Mar 45		<p>Strength Offrs 36 and 5 att. ORs 796 and 35 att</p> <p>The day was clear and warm and visibility was good. At 1030 hrs an officer of the L.C.A. flotilla which was to take part in EXERCISE "HEREFORD" accompanied by Coy Comd from the KOYLI came to put Major E. V. Ardagh in the picture. Practice exercises were to be carried <i>out</i> at times to be arranged.</p> <p>In the afternoon the CO visited the OC of the POLISH SP Anti-Tank Battery which was on the Unit's LEFT flank. Their headquarters was situated in LITH 415587.</p> <p>At 2359 hrs a small enemy patrol penetrated C Coy area at 423663, a thinly held piece of ground between C and A Coys. After a short small arms exchange the patrol disappeared.</p> <p>There was some enemy mortaring and shelling during the night but no casualties were caused.</p>	
	25 Mar 45		<p>Strength Offrs 36 and 5 att. ORs 794 and 35 att</p> <p>The bright weather changed to clouds but visibility was good. At 0500 hrs, a standing patrol from Sp Coy led by Lieut. H.A. Stephens and composed of 8 ORs went out to the FACTORY 391622. They were equipped with a No 18 set netted to a No 19 set and were to stay until 2030 hrs. The day was very quiet for the patrol and they came in with nothing to report.</p> <p>In the morning a visit was paid to Bn HQ by Brig. T.J. Rutherford, ED. former commander of 5 CAB. He was accompanied by the CO 11 CAR (Ontario Tank). At 1415 hrs the CO left Bn HQ to attend a conference of commanding officers. This dealt with both present and future operations. On his return he called a meeting of company commanders at which the information was passed on.</p> <p>At 2130 hrs a fire was started by A Coy's 3" mortars in a factory on the enemy side of the RIVER WAAL at 477687. At 0600 hrs a C Coy man was wounded by a stray round from enemy MG harassing fire.</p>	

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<p><i>ALPHEN</i> <i>MR 439605</i> <i>SHEET 5 SW</i> <i>TIEL</i></p>	<p>25 Mar 45 cont'd</p>		<p>Two small ambush patrols each of 4 men and 1 Sgt sent to 41006475 and 41106475 at 2000 hrs returned at 0200 hrs with nothing to report. A V-1 flying bomb was reported to have landed near A Coy area but on further investigation it was found to have landed across the river in enemy territory. An unusual number of projectiles went over during the night which seemed to indicate that Jerry was using up his stocks before the new Allied offensive, EXERCISE PLUNDER should reach his launching sites. There was some light mortaring in Sp Coy area 400630.</p>	
	<p>26 Mar 45</p>		<p>Strength Offrs 36 and 5 att. ORs 793 and 35 att</p> <p>The grey cloudy weather continued but again visibility was good. It was arranged that Major E.V. Ardagh, OC "B" Coy, which was to carry out EXERCISE HEREFORD, would fly over the ground over which the raid would take place. The trip was laid on for 1400 hrs.</p> <p>There was a good deal of discussion amongst the coy 2s i/c and the Technical Adjutant, Capt R. J. Grinsted regarding 60 Cwt Mobile Kitchen trucks which were to become part of unit equipment. As the vehicles were not satisfactory it was decided that, if possible, they would be turned back in favour of the 60 cwts GS which had been the normal cooks vehicles. There were a number of changes being made in the unit's equipment, including the addition of six WASP Flame Thrower Carriers as well as the 6 LIFEBUOY Manpack Flame Throwers. T16 Carriers were to be substituted for the wheeled Gun-Towers with which the Anti-Tank Platoons were equipped and White Half-Tracks were to replace the Scout Cars. TMCs were withdrawn from the unit before leaving Italy and STEN MGs issued on arrived in NW EUROPE.</p> <p>At 1500 hrs, Pte D. Pastro, an A Coy cook, was hit in the back by a rifle bullet from an unknown source. This made the third casualty since taking over the sector.</p> <p>To the joy of all CQMSs it was found that the Mobile Kitchens were to be returned</p>	

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<p><i>ALPHEN MR 439605 SHEET 5 SW TIEL</i></p>	<p>26 Mar 45 cont'd</p>		<p>A delay was expected in the arrival of other projected vehicle and equipment replacements.</p> <p>The CO Lt-col Corbould DSO left with Major E. V. Ardagh for the 552 L.C.A. Flotilla, R.N. at the NIJMEGAN Power House where they were to have dinner then carry out a rehearsal of EXERCISE HEREFORD. The CO returned at 2300 hrs.</p> <p>Activity on the front started at 2100 hrs when Major W.J. Neill, A Coy, reported a small power boat moving from EAST to WEST in the RIVER WAAL at approx 461683. This was followed by a report that a patrol of 7 enemy had been seen near the FACTORY 446677. This group was fired on by Brens of No 4 Pl and dispersed.</p> <p>A fire had been started in TIEL earlier in the evening by the supporting 4.2 Mortars and at 2140 hrs Major H.F. Hoskin, "C" Coy, reported movement and shouting around the blaze. This was administered by A Coys 3" Mortars and a scale 5 treatment from the supporting troop of 25 prs. Also at 2140 hrs A Coy reported the unidentified river craft to have stopped, so a few rounds of 3" M were placed on the area.</p> <p>At 2145 a flurry of heavy mortar bombs came down on A Coy and the area was shelled causing one civilian casualty. This fire was returned by the 25 prs.</p> <p>At 2300 hrs the enemy commenced to rocket the area. The rockets were of a large calibre and a swell as a heavy HE charge they contained an oily incendiary substance which burned for ten minutes after the explosion. CSM Beltz, C.E. described it as being similar to the explosion of a 77 grenade, except that it was much greater.</p> <p>Harassing fire from enemy MGs was in Sp and C Coy locations all night but no casualties were caused. At this time the enemy force comprised of 83 and 84 Dutch SS P.G. Regts, the dispositions of which were rather uncertain. It was known that they were responsible for the sector on the NORTH side of the WAAL,</p>	

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	<p>27 Mar 45</p>		<p>Strength Offrs 36 and 5 att. ORs 795 and 35 att The sky was grey and a very light rain fell. Visibility was good. The CO left at 0930 hrs on a trip to the coys. On his return he brought from A Coy area the remains of one of the large rockets which had been fired on that company during the previous night. (described 26 Mar 45). This projectile was unknown to Bomb Disposal personnel. At 1345 hrs an unidentified Auster aircraft flew over the forward companies. A plane of this type was thought to have been captured by the enemy and this was thought to be the one as it was painted black and had no allied markings. It was reported to HQ 49 (WR) Inf Div.</p> <p>2015 hrs found TIEL still burning from the previous night's 4.2 Mortar effort. Sounds of shouting and merriment came from the town and to this A Coy's 3" Mortars paid some attention. A loud to explosion from the town did nothing to stop the party. Bren and Mortar fire on known enemy positions brought no return fire so it was thought that operations had been cancelled in favour of the celebration, though A Coy received some mortar and shellfire at midnight. After that time the night was quiet.</p>	

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ALPHEN MR 439605 SHEET 5 SW TIEL	28 Mar 45		<p>Strength Offrs 36 and 5 att. ORs 795 and 35 att</p> <p>Apart from some mortaring on "A" Coy area at midnight the night was quiet. It was cloudy with some rain and visibility was poor. At 1320 hrs another AUSTER aircraft was sighted but it was not known whether or not it was the one reported to be in German hands. The day was quiet with little activity on the' front. The evening was exceptionally quiet, none of the usual enemy harassing fire, until 2130 hrs the first of several flying bombs fell in "C" Coy area. There were a number of flares around "A" Coy but after that the night was quiet.</p>	
	29 Mar 45		<p>Strength Offrs 36 and 5 att. ORs 791 and 35 att.</p> <p>There was a strong breeze with light rain in the morning. Visibility was poor. As usual the day was very quiet. "B" Coy arranged to do some grenade practice at 438598, a field on the MAAS: At 1400 hrs the CO had a meeting of all Coy Comds in order to discuss and draw up a pro forma for orders which was to ensure that no points were missed by junior commanders when giving orders.</p> <p>1800 hrs brought a pleasant surprise in the return of H/Capt D R G Owen. He had gone to hospital on 7 Jan and was not expected to return. All ranks were glad to see him back.</p> <p>In evening Supvr. Hussey of the K of C Aux Ser showed a film at Bn HQ something new for BN HQ while the unit was in action. The night was very quiet, enemy action being limited to a few flares.</p>	
	30 Mar 45		<p>Strength Offrs 36 and 5 att. ORs 789 and 35 att</p> <p>The breeze continued with some rain in the morning. Visibility was good. Lieut. J. Tattersall, a Unit officer attached to HQ 5 Can Armd Div as an LO paid the unit a visit in the morning. As usual the daylight hours were quiet with no sign of enemy activity on any part of the front. In the afternoon the CO attended a conference of Unit Comds at Main HQ 49 (WR) Inf Div.</p>	

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<p><i>ALPHEN</i> <i>MR 439605</i> <i>SHEET 5 SW</i> <i>TIEL</i></p>	<p>30 Mar 45 cont'd</p>		<p>At 2030 hrs 17 Pl, Sp Coy reported shelling by air burst in area 401625. No casualties were caused. "A" Coy reported at 2300 that two Dutch troops dressed in battle dress had attempted to come into an "A" Coy position from the river bank. There were apprehended and one who was found to have been wounded was evacuated. The other on being interrogated stated that they been trying to make their way through the GERMAN lines to see their families in UTRECHT, a city some distance into enemy occupied HOLLAND. He was despatched to the Corps PW Cage for further interrogation. The remainder of the night was quiet.</p>	
	<p>31 Mar 45</p>		<p>Strength Offrs 36 and 5 att. ORs 788 and 35 att A further day of wind and clouds with occasional rain. Visibility was poor during the early hours but improved later in the morning. At 0900 hrs the unit went from under command 49 (WR) Inf Div to 5 Cdn Armd Div operating directly under Div Command, Maj-Gen HOFFMEISTER DSO and 2 bars, arrived at 1130 hrs, had lunch at Bn HQ and spent two hours of the afternoon inspecting company positions. He left at 1530 hrs.</p> <p>Attached as appendix is a copy of the "POLA R BEAR", a daily news summary supplied by 49 (WR) Inf Div. (The name of the sheet was derived from the divisional tactical sign – a Polar Bear). At 1300 hrs leaflets were fired over by enemy guns. (See appendix )</p> <p>1720 hrs found "A" Coy's 3" Mortars actively engaged on TIEL. They were successful once more in that they started several fires. The factory at 446685 was also shot up by "A" Coys .50 Brownings. The only result was some return fire from enemy MG 42 which was in turn silenced by a BREN.</p> <p>Apart from a few flares the remainder of the night was quiet.</p>	

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THE WESTMINSTER REGT (MOTOR)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks, references to Appendices and initials
ALPHEN MR 439605 SHEET 5 SW TIEL	31 Mar 45 cont'd		<p>A farewell message to all ranks of 1 Cdn Corps from Lieut-General R.L. McCreery. GOC 8 Army was received. (Appendix 19). March was an eventful month for the Westminsters. First the departure from Italy and the ensuing trip NORTH from MARSEILLES to BELGIUM. From BELGIUM the first group of fortunates received the long awaited leave to ENGLAND. Finally nine days after arrival in the country, the battalion went into the line under command 49 (WR) Inf as the unit of 1 Cdn Corps to be committed in the NORTH-WEST EUROPEAN THEATRE. Generally, conditions in this country were an improvement on those found in Italy, and this coupled with the prospects of leave to England did much to maintain the high morale of the troops.</p> <p>Some reequipping had been done and more was scheduled.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">(signed D.B. MacKenzie, Major for)</p> <p style="text-align: right;">(G.C. Corbould DSO) Lt.-col., Comd., The Westminster Regiment (Motor)</p>	

THE WESTMINSTER REGIMENT (MOTOR)

LIST OF APPENDICES

MARCH 1 - 31

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Orig</u>	<u>Dup</u>	<u>Trip</u>
Part I Orders	X		
Part II Orders			X
AFVs 3008	X		
AFVs 3009	X		
Patrol Reports	X	X	X
5 Cdn Armd Bde TEWT No 2 Exercise "SHERMAN I"	X		
Personal message from the Commander-in-Chief Field- Marshall B.L. Montgomery	X		
5 Cdn Armd Bde Move Order – MEULEBEKE to GRAVE	X	X	X
Q Move Administration 1 <sup>st</sup> Cdn Army	X	X	X
49 (WR) Inf Div Op Instr No 84	X		
Personal Message from C-in-C 21 A Gp	X		
Patrol Intention for 25 Mar 45	X	X	X
Divisional Conference Friday 25 Mar 45	X		
Relief of Units	X		
Admin Order	X		
Operation "GOLDFLAKE"	X		
Divisional Conference Sunday 30 Mar 45	X		
Maps (2) Scale 1:50,000 and 1:25,000 Nos 42 and 5 SW	X	X	X
Personal Message from 8 <sup>th</sup> Army Comd, Lt-Gen R.L. McCreery d/17 Feb 45	X	X	X
German Propaganda "That's Waht You Think"	X		

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THE WESTMINSTER REGT (MOTOR)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks, references to Appendices and initials
ALPHEN MR 439605 SHEET 5 SW TIEL	1 Apr 45		<p>Strength Offrs 36 and 5 att. ORs 783 and 35 att</p> <p>There was a strong breeze in the some rain. Visibility was poor. Activity on the enemy side of the RIVER WAAL had been limited to occasional flares sent up during the night. The enemy picture was still rather hazy, Dutch SS Troops being the only certain identification. 361 German Inf Div and varying numbers of Paratroops were rumoured to be in the area but this was not confirmed. H/Capt D R G Owen held Easter Services in the coy area at various times throughout the day. At 2000 hrs a small standing patrol from "A" Coy went out to the river forward of the coy posns but returned at 0500 hrs with nothing to report. Both and "A" and "C" Coys Mortars did some harassing fire during the night and brought no return fire of any kind. In the afternoon Lt-col G C Corbould DSO received word from Hq 5 CAD that arrangements had been made for him to fly to England on 9 days leave. He was to leave at 0900 hrs the following morning. In his absence, the 2 i/c Major D B Mackenzie was to take over as A/Comd of the Bn. The remainder of the day and night were very quiet. For the third successive night no flying bombs were sent over. It was hoped that their launching sites had been out-flanked by the 21st Army Gp push forcing Jerry to either cease operations or pause to find new sites.</p>	<i>Locations shown in Appx 6</i>
	2 Apr 45		<p>Strength Offrs 36 and 5 att. ORs 803 and 35 att</p> <p>The poor weather continued with a strong breeze and rain during the morning. Visibility was poor. Brig. I H Cumberland, Comd of 5 CAB and the CO of the 8 NBH, Lt-col Eaton came to Bn HQ at 1000 hrs. The purpose of their visit was to make arrangements for a troop of tanks to move up to do some shooting for the Westminsters. Brig Cumberland remained at Bn HQ while Major D B Mackenzie accompanied Lt-col Paton to the coy areas to take a Recce. The Brig left at 1130 hrs for 5 CAD, while Lt-col Eaton stayed for lunch and returned to his HQ in the afternoon. There was very little activity on the front until 2100 hrs when Sp Coy reported an enemy Mk IV tank stationary at 383633. It was out of range of 3" Mortars and no other fire was available. The tank did not fire however, and by daylight it had moved off. The remainder of the night was quiet, broken only occasionally by some harassing fire and flares.</p>	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks, references to Appendices and initials
ALPHEN MR 439605 SHEET 5 SW TIEL	3 Apr 45		<p>Strength Offrs 36 and 5 att. ORs 802 and 35 att</p> <p>A strong wind blew all day and there was occasional rain. Visibility was poor. There was no activity on the front during the day. At 1700 hrs word received from HQ 5 CAD that a recce offr was to be sent to Hq 5 CAD as soon as possible. This rather suggested a relief but no other information was available. It was arranged that Capt K B Harrison would leave at 0800 hrs 4 Apr to make the recce. A recce patrol from Sp Coy led by Lieut. H A Stephens had been arranged as a covering party for an offr from I.S.9 who was planning the recovery of some Allied prisoners who were in German territory. The patrol was made up per patrol report (Appx 6). The patrol reached its destination, made the recce and were returning having met no opposition when they encountered an enemy patrol of 13. A fire fight ensued in which Lieut Stephens received a bullet wound in the leg and one man and one man suffered wounds from a hand grenade. Casualties to the enemy were thought to have been three killed and two wounded. One prisoner was taken.</p> <p>Note: An attached Dutch soldier of the Dutch Forces of the Interior whose duties took him to HEEREWAAARDEN MR 3860 brought back a civilian report that a second enemy patrol had come to the area and taken out nine dead bodies. The patrol had gone out at 2100 hrs and first ran into trouble at 0100 hrs. They had returned and the wounded evacuated by 0200 hrs.</p>	
	4 Apr 45		<p>Strength Offrs 36 and 5 att. ORs 802 and 35 att</p> <p>The day was dull but the wind and rain stopped. Visibility was good. At 0830 hrs Capt K B Harrison left for Hq 5 Div to report to the BM for further instructions regarding the move. A Dutch LO from Hq 5 Div arrived to interrogate and remove the prisoner taken during the night. At 1100 hrs Capt K B Harrison returned with word that we were to concentrate in the Bde area SOUTH of NIJMEGEN. However as this would mean sleeping in the open under tentage which the unit did not possess, it was eventually decided to move into several villages in the vicinity of APPLETERN 5161. A rumour war afoot that there was another job awaiting the unit though no one seemed quite sure. Recce parties of 3 Bn, 1 Belg Inf Bde</p>	

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THE WESTMINSTER REGT (MOTOR)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks, references to Appendices and initials
ALPHEN MR 439605 SHEET 5 SW TIEL	4 Apr 45 cont'd		<p>arrived at 1130 hrs and were sent out to their respective coy areas. Bn recce parties under Capt K B Harrison had a full day locating billets for the unit.</p> <p>The relieving troops were scheduled to arrived at 1700 hrs but there were numerous delays and it was 0030 hrs before the first parties eventually arrived. There were several vehicle accidents in which some of the Belgian troops were injured. The gradual relief was eventually completed by 0830 hrs. Vehicles had been loaded and the troops were standing by ready to move all night but no move was made <i>until 0900</i> when movement began to the areas reccied during the day 4 Apr.</p>	
ZAND 7571 Sheet 5	5 Apr 45		<p>Strength Offrs 36 and 5 att. ORs 801 and 35 att</p> <p>The poor weather continued with occasional heavy rain and a gusty wind. A few minutes before Bn HQ moved from ALPHEN MR 439605, a message was received from Hq 5 Div stating that reccie parties were to report as soon as possible to Hq 148 Br Bde of 49 (WR) Inf Div at ZAND 7571. Coy Comds were warned to report at 1000 hrs to the new Bn Hq at NIFTIK 575575. The only instructions so far received were to relieve 146 Bde and it was assumed that the unit would be u/c either that Bde or 49 (WR) Inf Div. The recce parties left NIFTRIK at 1030 hrs, proceeded NORTH through NIJMEGEN to Hq 146 Bde at ZAND 7571. Here it was found that the brigade had moved out leaving "B" Sqn 49 Recce, 1 and 4 coys 2 Belg Fus and one platoon 4 Lincolns responsible for the area previously held by both 146 and 147 brigades. The only person left at Brigade Hq was the BM who was in the process of moving off when the Westminster recce parties arrived. "B" Sqn 49 Recce was located in ELDEN 7275 and from here the coy comds were sent to recce their areas. Bn HQ was 731747, Sp Coy was to be located at HUISEN 7672 with one platoon on the ferry landing 778725 and one at the "T" junc 760738. "A" Coy had positions in the area 731747 while "C" Coy had positions in ELDEN 7275 with No 9 Pl commanded by Lieut A W Kipp forward at 737768. "B" coy was on the left at 722755. The two Belg Coys were to be u/c The Westminster Regiment (Motor) and were in positions in factories at 747763 and 758755. The Lincolns platoon was to be relieved and returned</p>	<i>Ref Appx 5</i>

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THE WESTMINSTER REGT (MOTOR)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks, references to Appendices and initials
<p>NIFTRIK 731741 SHEET</p>	<p>5 Apr 45 cont'd</p> <p>6 Apr 45</p>		<p>to its unit as soon as possible. Capt K B Harrison returned to the unit to have it start moving as soon as possible in order to complete as much as possible of the relief in daylight. The Bn left NIFTRIK at 1600 hrs, arriving in the new area at 1800 hrs when the relief began. This area was situated between the NEDER RIJN and the WAAL on a large expanse of low, water logged land known as the "island" and was almost totally under observation from ARNHEM on the heights immediately NORTH of the NEDER RIJN. To counter this, large mobile smoke generators were almost constantly blanketing the whole area in smoke. With the exception of "C" Coy's forward position at 737768 the relief was completed by 1900 hrs. The posns of "C" Coy had to be changed under cover of darkness. The Adj, Capt E B Robertson, brought word that the unit now was u/c 11 CIB who were on the left of the Westmr sector. Prior to this, the only word to this effect was a rumour brought by 11 CIB Sigs Offr. Comms were est to 11 CIB by air and later by line and by 2100 hrs A/CO, Major D B Mackenzie reported the Bn in posn with all the reliefs complete. The relief was scheduled to be complete by 0600 hrs 6 Apr which meant in advance of nine hours for the people moving out. A small party of one NCO and eight men were called out from "A" Coy to cover a party of RCEs who were sweeping a road from 730750 to 742762. The party completed the job and turned by 2300 hrs. Evidently 49 (WR) Inf Div were under the impression that the Westminster Regiment (Motor) was under their command as several times they phoned for sitreps and other information. They were informed of the change. The night was quiet with no reports of enemy action on any part of the front.</p> <p>Strength Offrs 36 and 5 att. ORs 800 and 35 att</p> <p>The weather was uncertain with a few minutes of sun interspersed with spells of cloud and rain. Visibility was generally good throughout the day. Major D B Mackenzie with the IO left for Hq 11 CIB at 0915 hrs where he spoke with Brig Johnson and Maj-Gen Hoffmeister who was also there at that time. Everyone seemed put out that the Westmr R (M) had not been informed of the change in command and a check up was to instituted. Major Mackenzie received some instructions from the Brig and returned to the unit. 3 Coy 2 Belg Fus were to come u/c of the unit and the Bn Hq of 2 BFs was to move in to take over these three coys in order to gain experience for the commander. The whole unit was to be under Major Mackenzie's command. Recce parties were to arrive at approx. 1330 hrs.</p>	<p><i>Ref Appx 7</i></p>

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THE WESTMINSTER REGT (MOTOR)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks, references to Appendices and initials
<p><i>ELDEN</i> 731748 SHEET VI NW</p>	<p>6 Apr 45 cont'd</p>		<p>From 1200 hrs to 1600 hrs there was intermittent shelling by heavy guns and some mortaring in ELDEN 731755. No cas were caused though one 60 cwt was knocked out. Jerry was busy on the NORTH side of the NEDER RIJN carrying out demolitions, possibly of factories and bridges in the area. A crane was busy loading coal at a factory 767758 but several successive arty shoots they finally desisted and shut down operations. At 1500 hrs coy comd from 1 and 4 Belg Coys came into Bn HQ for a discussion with the CO. They were joined by the recce party from 3 coy and the details of getting that coy into the line were tied in. They were to be met by guides at ZAND 7571, march into their positions from there. The CO of the unit had not yet arrived. RCE were engaged in the area on various jobs of mine clearing, demolition repairs and making recce of bridging sites. Covering parties were provided from the unit for most of these tasks. In the Brig's orders has been included the wish to have posns est near 722762. To this end, "B" Coy were instructed to set up a posn in houses at that MR with an outpost in the factory 719766. A recce patrol was to be sent out the night 6/7 Apr to be followed by a stronger party on the 7/8 Apr. At 2045 hrs, 6 Pl "B" Coy under Lieut G B Eaton was reported in posn on the canal bank or "Bund" at 722762 with dug in posns along the bank on either side of the main position. The recce patrol went out to the factory 758766 checked a route and returned. The COs representative from the 11 Army Fd Regt, Major L Hemsworth was replaced by Major Bud Gerou, OC 29 Bty. Capt R Stenbach was a FOO at "B" Coy. The remainder of the night was quiet with little activity on the part of either side. "A" &amp; "B" Echelons moved up in the morning to ZAND 7571. Lt-Gen Foulkes visited the area during the afternoon and stopped at 17 Pl Sp Coy commanded by Lieut A E Hebb.</p>	
	<p>07 Apr 45</p>		<p>Strength Offrs 36 and 5 att. ORs 805 and 35 att It was dull and cold in the morning but the sun was out during the afternoon. Visibility was affected by generator smoke which was constantly blowing through the Bn area. After the shelling of the previous night the factory 767758 was reported by the Belgians to the silent. Several Dutch civilians were picked up by 17 Pl Sp Coy at the ferry site 778725, all seeming very anxious to get to the Allied side of the river. All civilians who were picked up were sent to Civil Affairs for disposal. Apparently there had been a news broadcast in Dutch to the effect that ARNHEM had been liberated and consequently there was a great influx</p>	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks, references to Appendices and initials
<p><i>ELDEN</i> 731748 SHEET VI NW</p>	<p>7 Apr 45 cont'd</p>		<p>of Dutch soldiers who were attempting to go there to see friends or relatives. They were sent back to NIJMEGEN. At 1300 hrs a message from 11 CIB stated that Maj-Gen B M Hoffmeister DSO was on his way to visit the unit but he did not show up. Brig Johnson came to the Bn HQ at 1530 hrs and after discussing the situation with Major D B Mackenzie, he went forward to "C" Coys forward OP manned by Lieut R E Mannering's Platoon at 729756. He returned to Hq 11 CIB at 1630 hrs. Two Wasp Flame Throwers were issued to the unit as the first instalment of the promised six. However they were in such a state of disrepair that they had to be returned. "A" Coy of Kensingtons, a Br MG Bn, moved into the area and dug gun posns in "B" and "C" Coy's areas in preparation for the fire plan of the assault on ARNHEM. Details of this attack were still rather hazy as so much depended on the progress of troops on the flanks and to the NORTH. At present 11 CIB was responsible for holding the start line. The CO of the 2nd Bn Belg Fus arrived at 1430 hrs and talked with Major D B Mackenzie. It was agreed that he would move his Hq up at 1000 hrs 8 Apr. A guide was asked for from Sp Coy to take a party of R N Offrs to 761756 in order to make a recce of the river. At 2100 hrs Lieut J P Cook started out to take up his posn in the factory 719767. He got into posn and est line comn to Coy Hq. At various times during the night tank movement was heard in ARNHEM. There was no location definite to fire on. Reports from Sp Coy indicated that a bridge was to be built over the RHINE at 778725. This intention was later changed and a ferry was installed. Non infm was available as to what troops were on the opposite side of the river, but it was assumed that 3 Cdn Inf Div had advanced that far. "C" coy reported at 2215 hrs that several 25 pr shells had fallen short into their area. No damage or casualties were caused. At 0140 hrs an enemy patrol came in on the "C" Coy pl posn at 736768. Lieut A W Kipp's men fired on them and after throwing a few grenades the patrol withdrew. The line went out and at first it was thought to have been cut but on investigation it was found to have been broken by a mortar bomb. The remainder of the night was quiet.</p>	
	<p>8 Apr 45</p>	<p>Strength Offrs 36 and 5 att. ORs 803 and 35 att The weather was dull throughout most of the day though the sun came out during the afternoon. At 1100 hrs a rocket-type weapon was reported by "A" Coy to be firing from ARNMEM. It was not landing within earshot. The coys were still bringing in occasional Dutch soldiers, who under the impression that ARNHEM had</p>		

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks, references to Appendices and initials
<p>ELDEN 731748 SHEET 6 N.W.</p>	<p>8 Apr 45 cont'd</p> <p>9 Apr 45</p>		<p>(continued.) that ARNHEM had been taken, were making their way there to visit friends.</p> <p>A fighting patrol of platoon strength led by Lieut. E. Hoult was laid on to go out to recce the buildings and area near the RHINE at 737773. The patrol was to go out at 2130 hrs, make a thorough check of the area and return. Notifications was received that three saboteurs had been taken and after interrogation they stated that four more were expected to attempt a crossing of the RHINE, SOUTH of HUISSEN 7672. All coys were warned accordingly. At 1930 hrs, three enemy were seen at 725773 and were engaged by the Arty. "C" Coy reported et 2130 hrs that Lieut. E. Hoult's platoon had passed through on its way out on patrol. At 2145 hrs, two boats were reported in the river at 738773. "C" Coy mortared the area once and had to stop as the patrol was to near the vicinity for safety from shelling or mortaring. At 2230 hrs, 14 Pl. Sp Coy, reported the sounds of tank movement coming from the vicinity of the factory at 767758 All through the night a great deal of tank and vehicle movement was heard in ARNHEM. It seemed to the listeners that the vehicles were moving into town rather than out of or through it. At 0230 hrs the "A" Coy patrol returned having made no contact. Some movement was heard in the river but otherwise all was quiet.</p> <p>At 0130 hrs Lieut L.A. Jones reported that he was in position at the FACTORY 742763. He was to maintain a position there in order to bolster up the Belgium holdings, to offer a certain amount of support to forward "C" Coy position at 736768. Together with the "B" Coy carrier platoon, Lieut Jones's platoon was relieved on the 8 Apr, from their anti-submarine duty on NIJMEGAN BRIDGE. The remainder of the night was quiet.</p> <p>Strength Offrs 36 and 5 att. ORs 800 and 35 att The day dawned bright and clear, though the generator smoke did an excellent job of cutting visibility to practically nil. The morning was quiet. In the afternoon an L.O. from 11 C.I.B. brought news from HQ. 11 C.I.B. that the plan now was for 5 C. A.D. to be relieved in the area SOUTH of ARNHEM and proceed to a concentration SOUTH-EAST of DOESBURG. Companies were informed accordingly. Capt. K.B. Harrison arranged recce parties to be standing by prepared to move at first light 10 Apr 45.</p>	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks, references to Appendices and initials
<p>ELDEN 731748 SHEET 6 N.W.</p>	<p>9 Apr 45</p>		<p>(continued)</p> <p>The broad plan was that 49 (W.R.) Inf Div and 1 Cdn Inf Div were to attack across the IJSSEL RIVER NORTH of ARNHEM, while 5 Can Armd Div would exploit the gains of the more successful of the two divisions. The date of this attack was not yet known but it was thought likely that the relief of the present positions would take place on the 10 Apr. Several times during afternoon "B" Coys forward position in the FACTORY 719767 reported hearing convoys moving WEST out of ARNHEM on the road 726778 - 713774. At 1500 hrs a comprehensive artillery fireplan was fired on the area after which the vehicle movement stopped but loud shouting was then heard. The guns fired again after which all was quiet.</p> <p>At 1945 hrs, several reports of small arms fire from the direction of 4 Coy Belgium Fusiliers, turned out to be the Belgians firing on a small boat which was coming across the river at approximately 747706. It was not known if there were any occupants in the boat but it was reported as in a sinking condition when last seen. Capt. McDonald, from 11 Fd Regt. was attached to the Belgium unit as a F.O.O. and though he spent little time on his own duties he put in many hours daily in the acting capacity of C.O., Adjutant, I.O. and Signals Officer. The training of the Belgium troops been limited largely to that which was necessary to prepare them for guard duty on petrol dumps. Consequently when in forward area's they did occasional odd things such as lighting large petrol cooking fires at night and playing tennis in broad daylight in full view of practically every house in the enemy-held town of ARNHEM. What they lacked in training seemed well balances off in nerve.</p> <p>At 2115 hrs, track movement was reported in ARNHEM at a factory 760775. The target was engaged by the Arty and the movement stopped. This marked the second day of heavy vehicle movement in ARNHEM and seemed to indicate the influx of a goodly number of troops into the area.</p> <p>A release to pick up 28 half-tracks at 1 Cdn Army Vehicle Park was received at 2330 hrs.</p> <p>At 0010 hrs, firing and noise broke out on "B" Coys LEFT. It turned out to be the PERTH REGT platoon position near the railway 706762. A 12 man enemy patrol came in on the position and after a short fire fight the platoon was forced to withdraw. "B" Coys three inch mortars opened up to help them. Information from</p>	

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ELDEN 731748 SHEET 6 N.W.	9 Apr 45		(continued) the PERTH BN HQ was that another platoon had been sent out to check the area. At 0300 hrs, the telephone line between the PERTH RIGHT company and "B" Coy went out it was thought possible that it had been cut. The rest of the night remained quiet.	
	10 Apr 45		Strength Offrs 36 and 5 att. ORs 800 and 35 att The fine weather continued although it was quite cool in the early morning. Visibility was good, the buildings of ARNHEM looking down on the whole area whenever the smoke lifted. It was a constant source of wonder that so much movement could take place under Jerry's nose without bringing down everything from light mortars to heavy artillery. It was surmised that a different type of war-fare existed in Holland than in Italy where the slightest movement brought an immediate hail of mortar bombs. An order received during the night for the unit to draw 28 international half-tracks from 1 Cdn Army Vehicle Park. E. M. E. Capt. A. Caldicott, went to draw the vehicles and after several hours of waiting and telephone calls, the vehicles were finally issued. All were used and some were in very poor condition necessitating work-shop repairs. The problem now was to change the wireless sets the old White Scout Cars into the new vehicles. Time was short as it was expected that the unit would be in mobile action within days. Lieut. J.A. Fowlie, Signals Officer, set to work to carry out the change over. At 1600 hrs an L.O. from HQ. 11 C.I.B. came with word that 11 C.I.B. was to be relieved the night 11/12 Apr. The Westminsters were to remain in present positions and go under command 7 Anti-Tank Regt. R.C A. It seemed rather odd for an infantry unit to be under the command of an Artillery unit in an infantry role. At 2000 hrs "B" Coy picked up two R.C.A.S.C. drivers who, under the impression that ARNHEM was in Allied hands, has made their way forward into "B" Coy's area, left their vehicles and nonchalantly walked forward to the banks of the RHINE. They returned intact and were sped on their way back to NIJMEGAN, whence they had come. During the evening there were several reports of enemy movement on the enemy-bank of the river. A little anti-aircraft fire was observed. In the afternoon 4 aircraft bombed ARNHEM in an effort to draw Jerry's Ack-ack fire but the	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks, references to Appendices and initials
ELDEN 731748 Sht. 6 N.W.	10 Apr 45		<p>(continued)</p> <p>response was very disappointing, as only three burst were observed.</p> <p>A release for 12 motor-cycles was received at 1700 hrs.</p> <p>At 2130 hrs, Lieut. E. Hoult went out with a strong patrol in platoon strength to cover an engineer recce party who were going to look at bridge approaches and roads in the area 743767. The recce was carried out without incident and the patrol was in by 0200 hrs. An artillery fire plan designed to draw the enemy D.F's was started at 2300 hrs. It seemed startlingly successful to the personnel of the "A" and "B" Echelons who were located in ZAND 760720. This area received the bulk of the retaliatory fire and two vehicles were "brewed up", though no casualties were inflicted. The shelling lasted until 0100 hrs. After this effort the night remained quiet.</p>	
ELDEN	11 Apr 45		<p>Strength Offrs 36 and 5 att. ORs 800 and 35 att</p> <p>The weather remained as it had for the past several days.</p> <p>Orders had changed again and the situation now was that on the night of 11/12 Apr the Westminster Regt (M) would be relieved by the 104<sup>th</sup> Bty, 7 A/Tk Regt R.C.A. The unit would concentrate at ANGEREN 7870 and in the morning 12 Apr proceed to the 5 C. A. B. concentration area – 1/50,000 CLEVE Sht 6. Recce parties from 7 A/Tk arrived at 1100 hrs and were shown their area's.</p> <p>Major I.F. Douglas returned to the unit came up to Bn HQ where he stayed to lunch. Lieut D. Leedham came back to the unit at the same time.</p> <p>At 1600 hrs, Lt-Col. G.C. Corbould, D.S.O. walked into Bn HQ, having just returned from leave. After encountering various difficulties, first in locating and then in reaching the unit he arrived in a Q.M. Stores truck which he met on the road.</p> <p>The 11 Army Field Regt. R.C.A. was to remain in this area, so Major Bud Gerou and his party were to remain behind.</p> <p>By 1900 hrs, the 7/A/Tk Regt or the "Bolt action gunners" as field and medium gunners called them, were in the position they were to hold. Support Company and of the remaining coy's had moved out to the new area. A platoon from "B" Coy and one from "C" Coy were to wait until darkness before coming out.</p> <p>1800 hrs brought two sharp mortar stonks on the area 732753. No damage or casualties was caused.</p>	

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THE WESTMINSTER REGT (MOTOR)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks, references to Appendices and initials
ELDEN	11 Apr 45		<p>(continued)</p> <p>At 1930 hrs, Lt-Col W. Greenly, C.O. 11 Army Fd Regt stopped at Bn QM. Bn HQ moved at 2010 hrs leaving "C" &amp; "B" Coy HQ to remain until their respective remaining troops had come in. "C" Coy HQ remained until 0230 hrs waiting for troops of 2 Belg Fus to relieve their forward position. When this had not taken place by 0230 hrs, the platoon was ordered out and with the remainder of the company went to the battalion concentration at ANGEREN. The night was spent quietly with preparations made for a move in the morning to the Brigade concentration area to 9167.</p>	
ANGEREN 7870	12 Apr 45		<p>Strength Offrs 36 and 5 att. ORs 801 and 35 att</p> <p>The good weather continued. At 0830 hrs, Capt. K.B. Harrison left for the new area to complete the recce begun by Capt. W.L. Delaney on the previous day.</p> <p>The unit moved off at 1000 hrs, Tac HQ, Main HQ, Sp, A, B and C Coy's. The route was across the pontoon bridge at 823670, PANNERDEN, ZEVENAAR, DIDAM to the battalion area in square 9176. (See Appx. 8)</p> <p>En-route the adjutant met Brig. Cumberland, Comd 5 C.A.B. who asked for Lt-col. G.C. Corbould, D.S.O. to attend an Orders Group at HQ 5 C.A.B., ACHTERWEHL – 927756 at 1400 hrs. On returning from Brigade an "O" Group was called, attended by all Company Commanders; Maj W.J. Neill from "A" Coy, Maj I.F. Douglas from "B" Coy, Maj H.F. Hoskin from "C" Coy and Maj F. Shawcross from Sp Coy. The Medicals were represented by Capt G Waugh, the Regt's M.O. The adjutant Capt E.S. Robertson, the Signals Officer, Lieut J.A. Fowlie, the Technical Adjutant, Capt. K.B. Harrison, the Transport Officer, Lieut J.S. Moore the Quarter Master, Maj A.W. Harding and the attached L.A.D. E.M.E., Capt A Caldicott were present.</p> <p>Orders were that there would likely be 48 hours before the unit would move during which the change over of wireless sets from the White Scout cars to the new half-tracks would be completed and 13 Honey – tanks were being issued to replace the gun towers of Sp Coy would be equipped with tow hooks. During this short period, drivers for these vehicles were also to be trained. The plan was only an outline for the seizing by 5 C.A.B. of the high ground NORTH of ARNHEM. The attack was to be made through the bridge-head of either 1 Cn Inf Div or 49 (WR) Inf Div which was under command 1 Cdn Corps. More detail was to be made</p>	

## WAR DIARY

THE WESTMINSTER REGT (MOTOR)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks, references to Appendices and initials
MR 915753	12 Apr 45 Thursday		<p>(continued)</p> <p>available later. At 1700 hrs Brig. Cumberland phoned to say the plan was completely changed. No further information was given.</p> <p>Through most of the night the continuous roar of the guns supporting the 49 (WR) Div attack on ARNHEM, was heard.</p> <p>12 Apr was the day of opening of the Canadian 8<sup>th</sup> Victory loan. (<i>Ref Appx 9</i>)</p>	
MR 915753	13 Apr 45 Friday		<p>Strength Offrs 38 and 5 att. ORs 801 and 35 att</p> <p>The weather continued to be good with fair visibility. 6 WASP flamethrowers were received and tested and were to be employed in Support Company. Crews were supplied by the motor companies. There were certain training problems as time was so short.</p> <p>The "HONEY" tanks which were to be used as gun-towers also arrived from the armoured regiments of 5 C.A.B. Crews came with the vehicles and were to train drivers from personnel of the unit. Arrangements were made for the tanks to go to shops in order to be fitted with tow-hooks. In addition to the 12 gun-tower's, Maj. F. Shawcross, O.C. Sp Coy requested 3 more tanks to be used as ammunition and equipment carriers. This request was passed to HQ. 5 C.A. B.</p> <p>Brigadier Cumberland called on the CO., Lt-Col, G.C. Corbould, D.S.O. at 1330 hrs and gave him to understand that the plan of the attack in N.W. Holland was completely cancelled.</p> <p>At 1800 hrs, Capt. J. Biggs, Bde L.O. and Capt. S. Stafford, G 3, paid a call. A short time later they were recalled as there was some information due from HQ. 5 C.A. D. and their presence was required. At about the same time the C.O. received a phone call from the Brigadier to the effect that the unit was to be prepared to move on short notice sometime the following day.</p>	
MR 915753	14 Apr 45 Saturday		<p>Strength Offrs 38 and 5 att. ORs 801 and 35 att</p> <p>The day started with clouds and a light rain. By 0900 hrs the rain had stopped and visibility -improved somewhat.</p> <p>At 0900 hrs the unit was notified to be prepared to move on 2 hours notice as from 1100 hrs with recce parties standing by to move on 30 mins notice.</p> <p>At 1100 hrs the G 3 phoned tb inform the C.O. that an "O" Group would be held</p>	

## WAR DIARY

THE WESTMINSTER REGT (MOTOR)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks, references to Appendices and initials
MR 915753	14 Apr 45 Saturday		<p>(continued)</p> <p>at Hq. 5 C.A. B. at 1430 hrs. Company Commanders were notified accordingly that a battalion Orders Group would be held at approximately 1400 hrs.</p> <p>The Brigadier's orders were that with 1Cdn Inf Div RIGHT and 49 (WR) Inf Div LEFT, 5 C.A.B. with supporting troops would break through in the centre and drive through to the coast of the ZUIDER ZEE. The start time was to be 150630 B and the Brigade was to start moving from present locations at 1530 hrs. Route was from the unit area to WEHL 9574 – KILDER 9672 – BEEK 9470 – DIDAM 8972 – ZEVENAAR 8571 – DUIVEN 8274 – Bridge over IJSSEL RIVER at 775757 to the Brigade concentration area at 747787 (see Appx map8)</p> <p>“C” Coy was to go under command the B.C.D’s and was to join them in ZEVENAAR 8571 at 1530 hrs. As time was short this necessitated a rapid move. The Coy Commander, Maj. H.F. Hoskin D.S.O., was hurriedly given his orders and moved off.</p> <p>The battalion “O: Group was held at 1500 hrs. Orders were given and maps were hurriedly marked. “B” Coy was to join the 8 N.B.H., while “A” Coy was to remain in reserve with the likelihood of joining the LdSH at a later date.</p> <p>The battalion moved off at 1645 hrs with the order of march, Tac HQ, Main HQ, “A” Coy, Sp Coy and the supporting troop of S.P. 17 Pdrs from 4 A/Tk Regt R.C.A. The move was enhanced by constant delays and hold-ups. Enroute the 8 Fd Regt R.C.A., who had been ahead of the Brigade column were stopped to allow the Westminsters to pass. A great deal of confusion ensued as both columns were moving and the road was very narrow. At about 0100 hrs the unit arrived at the area previously recce’d by Capt. E.V. Ardagh. The C.O. reported in to HQ 5 C.A.B. and found that, while 8NBH and the BCD’s would move at 0630 hrs, the remainder of the Bridge was not likely to move before 0800 hrs.</p> <p>The plan was that with the BCD’s RIGHT and 8NBH LEFT, the Brigade would advance with, as their first objective, the high ground in area TERLET 7686 (see Appx marked map) Until such time as it was required, the rest of the unit was to move behind the Brigade. During the night “C” and “B” Coys were to send patrols forward to investigate the road blocks which were in area 7382.</p> <p>Preparations were made for an early move on the following day and troops were instructed to get all possible sleep.</p>	<p><i>Ref Appx 10</i></p>

## WAR DIARY

THE WESTMINSTER REGT (MOTOR)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks, references to Appendices and initials
Bde Conc Area 747787	15 Apr 45 Sunday		<p>Strength Offrs 38 and 5 att. ORs 839 and 35 att</p> <p>The weather was dull and rainy in the morning and visibility was poor. The attack started at 0630 hrs and by 1000 hrs the forward troops had reached their first objective, the ground in area TERLET 7686 known as codename "PAN". The progress of the battle was difficult to follow as communications were not good. By this time a number of prisoners had been taken but an accurate count was not possible.</p> <p>At 1020 hrs, orders were received from HQ 5 CAB., to send forward the reserve company, "A" Coy, commanded by Maj. W.J. Neill, to clear the woods in area 7582. German troops had been observed in the area and they were enlivening our vehicles with fire from 20 mm Flak guns. Bn HQ was to remain in ARNHEM temporarily and move later to a harbour area with Bde HQ at 7785, Capt. E.V. Ardagh, Bn Recce Officer, went forward to guide "A" Coy out of ARNHEM and to recce routes for the next move to be made by Bn HQ. He returned at 1145 hrs with word that "A" Coy was then preparing to commence the woods clearing job with support from some neighboring tanks from the Ontario Tank Regt. "A" Coy had under command a VICKERS M.M.G. platoon from Sp Coy commanded by Lieut. W.C. Brampton.</p> <p>At 1400 hrs Bn HQ moved off from ARNHEM to a more forward position located in a cemetery chapel at 753803. Even at such short range wireless communications were poor due to the heavy woods in the area and to the fact that unit frequencies were so close to each other. The C.O., Lt-Col. G.C. Corbould, D.S.O., went forward in a HUMBER Scout car to contact "A" Coy with orders to disengage as the C.B.H. were to take over and complete the job. By this time "A" Coy had become embroiled in a battle and were unable to disengage so the Coy commander decided to attack the position which contained a large number of enemy troops with 20 mm Flak guns and at least one 88 cm S.P. gun. The attack was put in and 40 prisoners were taken, a number of German troops were killed or wounded and two 2 cm guns and one 88 cm S.P. were knocked out. Casualties to our own troops were 2 killed and 2 wounded. The company then pulled out and prepared to move on.</p> <p>1800 hrs found Tac HQ moving up the Centre Line at high speed to report to Brigade HQ which was located at 763840. Orders now were for the Westminster BN HQ with "A" Coy to move forward to "SKILLET", a wood at 6986, as protection</p>	<p><i>Ref. Appx 10</i></p> <p><i>The tk sp did NOT materialize.</i></p>

## WAR DIARY

THE WESTMINSTER REGT (MOTOR)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks, references to Appendices and initials
	15 Apr 45 Sunday		<p>(continued)</p> <p>for Bde HQ which was to stay there overnight. Maj. F. Shawcross brought up the remainder of Tac HQ and Sp Coy while "A" Coy was sent on ahead to check the new area.</p> <p>With the BCD's, "C" Coy, under Maj. H.F. Hoskin, D.S.O., had reached "PAN" 7686 quite early in the day. Meanwhile the LdSH had pushed on to "WELDER" (OTTERLOO 6591) and "C" Coy now switched horses and went forward to join the "Straths" on "WELDER"</p> <p>"B" Coy under Maj. I.F. Douglas with the 8NBH had pushed as far as "PERU", a high wooded feature at 6387 where they encountered some heavy opposition. It was here that Lieut. J. A. Cambridge, M.C. commander of an anti-tank platoon attached from Sp Coy, was killed while engaged in a woods clearing. Large numbers of prisoners had been taken and a number of weapons and vehicles captured or knocked out while casualties to our own troops were comparatively light. A-1 Echelon moved up with rations, petrol and ammunition to prepare the battalion for the next day's operations.</p> <p>The C.O., Lt-Col. G.C. Corbould, D.S.O., went to Bde HQ for orders. The intention for the second day of Operation "CLEANSER" was to push on the the ZUIDER ZEE. A triangular defence was to be established by the armoured regiments at VOORTHUIZEN 5401 known as "RECORD", PUTTEN 5408 known as "BOWL", NIJKERK 4605 which was codename "ROASTER" and X-rds 510994 called "STEAMER". Bde HQ and Bn HQ the Westminster Regt (M) were to set up in the centre of this defence with the 8 Fd Regt R.C.A.</p> <p>The push was to carry on at first tank light on the following morning. With the morning mist which prevails in this low country, first tank light was about 0630 hrs.</p> <p>The night was spent quietly, everyone making the best of the opportunity to get a few hour's much needed rest.</p>	<p><i>Ref. Appx 10.</i></p>
Codename "SKILLET" MR 6986	16 Apr 45 Monday		<p>Strength Offrs 38 and 5 att. ORs 839 and 35 att</p> <p>The day broke with the sun of the previous few days though visibility was limited by haze and the smoke created by the flamethrowers during the previous days operations.</p>	

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THE WESTMINSTER REGT (MOTOR)

<i>Place</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Hour</i>	<i>Summary of Events and Information</i>	<i>Remarks, references to Appendices and initials</i>
<p>“SKILLET” MR 6986</p>	<p>16 Apr 45 Monday</p>		<p>(continued)</p> <p>By 0700 hrs preparations were complete for move at anytime. At 0730 hrs, Lieut. J. Cook, 8 Platoon, “B” Coy, reported into Bn HQ on his way forward to rejoin his company. He had remained for the night with one troop of tanks on “STOVE”, a feature at 7387. During the night he had collected 40 prisoners and a staff car which had been sent back for the use of the CO. Unfortunately the car was smashed up beyond repair.</p> <p>The C.O. Lt-Col. G.C. Corbould, D.S.O., reported to Brigade at 0800 hrs where he received orders for “A” Coy to go to “PEELER” 6192 where they were to check an area for the HQ of 5 C.A.B, and Westminster Regt (M). The move was to be made at 1100 hrs. An “O” Group was called at 0815 hrs and the C.O. gave the above orders. Order of march was as it had been “A” Coy, Tac HQ, Sp Coy and the attached troop of 17 Pdr S.P’s from 4 A/Tk Regt R.C.A. followed by the medicals.</p> <p>Capt. E.V. Ardagh left at 0900 hrs to recce routes and the area for a HQ at “PEELER”. With him went the Provost Sgt, Sgt. Carpick, on a motor-cycle. At OTTERLOO 6591 they encountered small arms fire and mortar fire from enemy troops who had been passed by the forward troops. After a short battle the recce party withdrew bringing with them 4 prisoners but minus one motorcycle.</p> <p>At 1030 hrs a Sp Coy half-track was ambushed by enemy infantry at 665855. The vehicle had a couple of hits from PANZERFAUST, the German variation of the BAZOOKA, and one man was hurt.</p> <p>At 1100 hrs the C.O. went to Brigade and received orders to move. One Squadron of tanks from the BCD’s was to follow the column. All moves in this area were made at top speed as large numbers of enemy troops were still roaming the country and sniping was prevalent.</p> <p>Large numbers of civilians lined the roads cheering and tossing flowers at the “Liberators”. The new area was reached at 1230 hrs. In checking the locality “A” Coy picked up one aged representative of the SS Police who had become tired of being harried over the country-side and had decided to surrender.</p> <p>It might be noted here that the opposition in this part of the country was made up of odds and sods from up to forty different units, from formations and schools. 346 and 361 V.G. Divs appeared in fair strength as did elements of 6 PARA Div but generally the enemy troops were over-age men of the S.S. POLICE who had been taken from a small arms school, Engineers, Pioneers etc.</p>	<p>All codenames shown on marked map, Appx 10</p>

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THE WESTMINSTER REGT (MOTOR)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks, references to Appendices and initials
<p>“SKILLET” MR 6986</p>	<p>16 Apr 45 Monday</p>		<p>(continued)</p> <p>Several prisoners were railwaymen who had been given an armband and a rifle and were thrown into the line. An accurate prisoner count or description was virtually impossible as they came in such large groups and were from such an assortment of units.</p> <p>At 1500 hrs, the C.O. moved his two Tac HQ vehicles, a half-track and a Humber, to Brigade HQ where he could keep in closer touch with the battle. It was now becoming doubtful whether or not the leading units could reach their final objectives that day or not. The G.O.C., Maj-Gen B.M. Hoffmeister was at Bde HQ and he had many words of praise for the troops who he said were “doing a wonderful job”. He informed the C.O., Lt-Col. G.C. Corbould, D.S.O., that the Westminster Regt (M) had been selected as the one unit to represent 5 Cdn Armd Div in the Victory March through the streets of BERLIN. This was an honour of the highest order as it intimated the esteem in which the unit was held within the division.</p> <p>By 1600 hrs it was definite that there would be no move before the next day. The C.O. was asked to arrange the defence of the area and did so, incorporating six tanks from Bde HQ Squadron with “A” Coy and the attached S.P’s with Sp Coy as a reserve.</p> <p>The situation at 1615 hrs was as follows; The LdSH with “C” Coy had reached “TINKER” 5296 and finding opposition had by-passed the town leaving “C” Coy with one tank squadron to picquet the EASTERN flank of it. The remainder of the “Straths” drove on towards “STEAMER” 509994; “B” Coy with the 8NBH had reached “PLUNDER” 5693 and there were to be relieved by the C.B.H. At 1900 hrs the BCD’s reported firm on “RECORD”. The “Straths” were unable to get on to “STEAMER” due to strong anti-tank opposition and halted for the night about two thousand yards short of the objective. With them was “C” Coy’s Scout Platoon and one Motor Platoon who remained as protection for the tanks.</p> <p>All afternoon prisoners had been streaming in and as usual were from all arms of the decimated enemy forces. They were being captured by the Tech Adj, ration parties, recce parties and anyone who was travelling the roads.</p> <p>During the night, a large enemy force, withdrawing from APELDOORN 7904 attacked 5 C.A.D. at OTTERLOO 6591 and though the attack was unsuccessful and they lost a large number killed, wounded and prisoners, they did manage to cut the road.</p>	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks, references to Appendices and initials
PEELER MR 6192	16 Apr 45 Monday		(continued) In the morning a force of tanks and infantry was sent out to clear out the enemy pocket and the road was shortly opened.	All place names are shown in Appx's as marked on map. <i>Appx 10</i>
	17 Apr 45 Tuesday		Strength Offrs 38 and 5 att. ORs 839 and 35 att The morning was clear and sunny with good visibility. Orders were from Brigade for "C" Coy to rejoin the LdSH at "STEAMER" 509994 and carry on with them to NIJKERK. "B" Coy was to go from the 8 NBH to the BCD's who were at VOORTHUIZEN 5401. "A" Coy with the remainder of the Battalion were to move to the woods 5396 where the Brigade HQ was shortly to set up. The column moved off at 1000 hrs and after another fast run arrived at 535963. "A" Coy patrolled the area and found it to be clear. At this time it was expected that by night-fall all objectives would have been reached and HQ 5 CAB would be established in the centre of the defensive triangle formed by the armour at PUTTEN, NIJKERK and VOORTHUIZEN. Further to this, tentative orders were given for "A" Coy to be prepared to move to 5103 to clear an area for Brigade. However the Straths were unable to get on to NIJKERK and the 8NBH were held up by strong ant-tank defences which were blocking the 8NBH a short distance NORTH of VOORTHUIZEN. At 1400 hrs the C.O. asked to have the unit returned to his command in order to drive through the defenses which were blocking the 8NBH and get on to PUTTEN by night fall. This was not granted at the time but at 1900 hrs "B" coy reverted to command from the BCD's and at 2000 hrs, Tac HQ and "A" Coy moved forward to join "B" Coy in VOORTHUIZEN. "A" Coy now went under command of the 8NBH and moved forward on foot to deal with the opposition which had been delaying the advance for so long. "C" Coy now reverted to command from the LdSH and were on their way to rejoin the unit in VOORTHUIZEN. Maj. I.F. Douglas reported to Tac HQ which was stopped temporarily at 542008. "B" Coy had had a big day, gathering in a large number of prisoners as well as capturing several vehicles and a truck load of liquor. The instructions the C.O., Lt-Col G.C. Corbould, D.S.O., gave "B" Coy were for them to move forward on wheels and join the 8 NBH, to push on, if possible, to PUTTEN.	

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THE WESTMINSTER REGT (MOTOR)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks, references to Appendices and initials
VOORTHUIZEN 5401	17 Apr 45 Tuesday		<p>(continued)</p> <p>Tac HQ moved at 2300 hrs to 546018 where a defense was arranged for the night.</p> <p>Maj. H.F. Hoskin, D.S.O., reported at 2200 hrs and received orders to remain in VOORTHUIZEN over night.</p> <p>Meanwhile "A" &amp; "B" Coy's had reached the 8NBH HQ at 547067 and carried on with them to try to reach PUTTEN.</p> <p>About 30 prisoners filtered back to Tac HQ during the night. One was a young paratroop officer of 6 Para Div, who was still sure that Germany would win the war. Others of his group were equally sure that Germany was already beaten.</p> <p>The remaining few hours of the night went by without incident.</p>	

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THE WESTMINSTER REGT (MOTOR)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks, references to Appendices and initials
VOORTHUISEN 5401	18 Apr 45 Wednesday		<p>Strength Offrs 37 and 5 att. ORs 825 and 35 att</p> <p>A heavy fog blanketed the area cutting visibility to practically nil. In the vicinity of Bn Hq the night had passed quietly though a great deal of battle noises were heard from the direction of PUTTEN where “A” and “B” Coy’s were with the 8 NBH.</p> <p>At 0430 hrs, Maj. H.F. Hoskin, D.S.O. reported for orders prior to moving up. The C.O.’s intention was that at first light Tac HQ would move forward to the 8 NBH R.H.Q. “C” Coy was to follow up and, swinging WEST, cut the PUTTEN – NIJKERK road at 533086. “A” Coy was then to go through to cut the road at 533096 thus sealing the town off on the WEST and NORTH-WEST. “B” Coy was then to push straight into PUTTEN from the SOUTH.</p> <p>Tac HQ moved off from VOORTHUIZEN at 0530 hrs followed by Sp Coy and “C” Coy’s. It was another fast trip in the fog and faint light of dawn. The C.O. on arriving, contacted Maj. I. F. Douglas O.C. “B” Coy and Maj W.J. Neill, O.C. “A” Coy and proceeded to R.H.Q. the 8 N.B.H., where he discovered the situation with Lt-Col. J. Eaton. There had been a battle during the night with a number of enemy infantry and in the confusion of the tanks pulling back, three “A” Coy vehicles were hit by tanks. Several tanks were hit by the enemy troops and two were removed. Several casualties were caused to our own troops while the Germans, as usual, lost heavily in killed, wounded and prisoners.</p> <p>“C” Coy left on their own task of cutting the road at 0630 hrs. One squadron 8NBH was to follow them and consolidate on their position. They reported on their objective at 0830 hrs, their progress having been slow owing to the fog and faulty maps. Some enemy vehicles were seen moving S.W. towards NIJKERK but were gone before the target could be fired by the arty. Otherwise no opposition was encountered though a number of prisoners were taken.</p> <p>An English speaking representative of the local underground came out of PUTTEN at approximately 0845 hrs to say that only about one hundred enemy troops remained in the town and that these were all anxious to surrender. Accordingly “B” Coy was tee’d up to go into the town with one squadron 8NBH. After a great deal of delay one group finally started and moved into town against no opposition. Large numbers of prisoners were taken, remnants of various units and battle-groups which had been formed from other remnants. There were Russian prisoners-of-war from forced</p>	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks, references to Appendices and initials
VOORTHUISEN 5401	18 Apr 45 Wednesday		<p>(continued)</p> <p>labour units, railway employees and may other miscellaneous odds and ends who had been armed and thrown into battle though many had no previous military training.</p> <p>The population of PUTTEN was out in strength to greet the “Liberators” with the usual cheers and flowers. Some made presents to the troops of silver spoons and other tokens which had been saved through the years of Occupation. The people seemed extremely patriotic and sincere in their greetings.</p> <p>Tac HQ moved into town at 1230 hrs and were joined there at 1400 hrs by Main HQ BN HQ was located in the headquarters of the local police at MR 547091.</p> <p>At 1500 hrs Brigadier I. Cumberland visited the C.O. Lt-Col. G.C. Corbould, D.S.O. The task now was for the LdSH to move on to HARDERWIJK, a small port MR 5519. At first it was planned that the Westminsters would take part in the show but this was later changed and instead the unit remained in PUTTEN. There was a rumour of a long move being planned.</p>	
PUTTEN 547091			19 Apr 45 Thursday	
PUTTEN 547091	20 Apr 45 Friday		<p>Strength Offrs 37 and 5 att. ORs 811 and 35 att</p> <p>The good weather continued as did the checking of stores and equipment.</p> <p>Some details of the forthcoming move came. Advance parties were to be ready to go at an early hour on the 21 Apr while the battalion was warned for 1730 hrs on the same day.</p> <p>In the afternoon, the C.O. Lt-Col. G.C. Corbould, D.S.O., and the Adjutant, Capt E.B. Robertson, made a visit to the ZUIDER ZEE stopping at “C” Coy on the return trip.</p>	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks, references to Appendices and initials
PUTTEN MR 547091	20 Apr 45 Friday		<p>(continued)</p> <p>At about 1830 hrs the C.O. was informed that he would be prepared to move at 0430 hrs with a tactical recce party consisting of himself and company commanders to TOLBERT 0709 where they would be met by the Brigade Major. The Battalion move time remained 1730 hrs. TOLBERT is near GRONINGEN 2215, a large town in N.E. HOLLAND. The battalion HQ recce party consisted of the C.O., Lt-Col. G.C. Corbould, D.S.O., the Signals Officer and the I.O. All retired for the few hours sleep available.</p>	
PUTTEN MR 547091	21 Apr 45 Saturday		<p>Strength Offrs 37 and 5 att. ORs 806 and 35 att</p> <p>The weather had definitely changed for the worst when the battalion recce party moved off at 0430 hrs. moved off at 0430 hrs. It was raining heavily and a gusty wind was blowing. It was extremely dark and with the bad weather, some difficulty was experienced in keeping to the proper route. Route signing was not at all as good as had been the case in Italy.</p> <p>After a trip of 180 miles the party arrived at the Dispersal Point (TOLBERT) <i>Appx 12</i> and met the Brigade Major. He had no definite instructions except that the Brigadier was at HQ7 Cdn Inf Bde which formation 5 C.A. B. was relieving. With Lt-Col. Andrew, C.O. The Perth Regt, the C.O. reported to that HQ. The information given was rather vague but eventually it seemed that the Perths and Westminster's were to take over a large sector of N.E. Holland, stretching about forty miles from DELFZIJL 4525 to the RIVER 0425. The Westminster's was a straight holding and long <i>range</i> patrolling role while the Perths had a smaller sector and were to fill in behind 7 C.I.B. as they advanced in a SOUTH-EASTERLY direction to take DELFZIJL and clear out the pocket of Germans which surrounded it. Concentration area's were given but the C.O. decided to move unit directly into the line. The LdSH less one squadron was to move up in support of the Westmr Regt (M).</p> <p>On returning to TOLBERT where the recce party was waiting, the C.O.'s party had a meal surrounded by dozens of local citizens. The recce then left to look over the new area. The Westminster sector was approximately 35 miles by 15 miles and included the defence of GRONINGEN. The chief task was to patrol the area and prevent any attempt to land troops from the FRIESIAN ISLANDS which lie off the NORTHERN coast of HOLLAND. These the enemy held in some strength as protection to the entrance to EMDEN.</p>	

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THE WESTMINSTER REGT (MOTOR)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks, references to Appendices and initials
PUTTEN MR 547091	21 Apr 45 Saturday		<p>(continued)</p> <p>Representatives of the DUTCH Underground came forth and were of great assistance in locating quarters.</p> <p>The recce parties settled down to spend the night in BEDUM 2423 with preparations made to have guides out to meet the unit as a point about 15 miles SOUTH of GRONINGEN.</p> <p>The rain kept up during the night causing the battalion an extremely miserable trip up from the previous area.</p>	
BEDUM 2423	22 Apr 45 Sunday		<p>Strength Offrs 37 and 5 att. ORs 805 and 35 att</p> <p>The unit arrived at about 0200 hrs at HQ 5 C.A.B. where they stopped on the road to wait for guides. They were picked up there quite wet and cold, and taken back to the battalion area. They were met by company guides and taken to their respective locations. BN HQ and the echelons were in Bedum 2423, "A" Coy was in WARFFUM 2134, "B" Coy in UITHMUISEN 2935 while "C" Coy was in WINSUM 1827 and Sp Coy was in ONDERANDAM 2327. Orders there for the troops to first get cleaned up and rested, then start a complete check of vehicles and equipment. All the company's were anxious to start training schools for drivers, driver-operators and other tradesmen. Since leaving Italy the unit had not been static for more than a few days at a time which resulted in a great shortage of all tradesmen and specialists. The anti-tank platoons started to work on their guns, stripping them down in order to give them a complete overhaul.</p> <p>The bridges were not suitable for heavy tank traffic so it was decided not to bring up the LdSH. Some of that unit's light recce tanks were made available to help with patrolling.</p> <p>At about 1600 hrs Brig. I. Cumberland, O.B.E., called at BN HQ. His instructions were that the unit would likely be in the area for some time and that for the time would be responsible for guarding five captured German medical establishments located in GRONINGEN. Two more hospitals were later found and added to the roster. These were all completely equipped and staffed and the patients were waiting to be evacuated. The personnel included the original staff of German nurses. Sp Coy supplied two platoons to do the guard duty.</p> <p>The night passed uneventfully.</p>	<i>Ref. Appx 14</i>

## WAR DIARY

THE WESTMINSTER REGT (MOTOR)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks, references to Appendices and initials
BEDUM MR 2423	23 Apr 45 Monday		<p>Strength Offrs 37 and 5 att. ORs 805 and 35 att</p> <p>The weather had cleared once more &amp; though the sun was occasionally blocked out by cloud, the day was quite clear.</p> <p>At 1000 hrs the C.O. returned from a trip to 5 C.A.B. with word that the unit was to move EAST to take part in a projected attack on DELFZIJL 4626. This was a small harbour, the centre of an enemy pocket still holding out in the sector opposite EMDEN. In this area were a number of naval guns, AA/A-Tk guns and M.G's in concrete emplacements as well as a good number of troops. The Westminsters and two 11 C.I.B. units were to be under command of 5 C.A.B. for this task. This was all the information available at the time. "Prepare to move" orders were given and arrangements were made for the relief of Sp Coy's guard duty platoons. The remainder of the day was spent in repacking and awaiting orders.</p> <p>Some information was received during the day from Lt-Col. J. Mcavitty of the LdSH whose unit was to relieve the Westminsters if and when they were called out.</p> <p>The Brigadier was out all day and it was not until 2230 hrs that a call came for the C.O., to report to HQ for orders.</p> <p>The plan was that the I.R.C and the Perth Regt, the Westmr Reg (M) was to tidy up the line around DELFZIJL and at later date 11 C.I.B. was to take the town itself. Boundaries were to be as per attached map. Two troops of tanks were put under command from 8NBH while the Arty support was to be supplied by six 10.5 cm SHERMANS from the same unit. Fire was to be controlled by a Rep from 8 Fd Regt. One company of the I.R.C. was to be relieved by one company Westmr Regt (M). Move time for the C.O's recce party was to be 0700 hrs while the battalion was to leave at about 0900 hrs. Warning orders were issued accordingly. Sp Coy's hospital guards were relieved at 2300 hrs.</p>	<i>Ref. Appx 14</i>
BEDUM MR 2423	24 Apr 45 Tuesday		<p>Strength Offrs 36 and 5 att. ORs 806 and 35 att</p> <p>It was clear and sunny but cold when the Bn recce party moved off at 0700 hrs. The route was through GRONINGEN to SCHEEMDA 4809 where the C.O. was to check at 7 C.I.B. HQ for information regarding the sector into which the unit was moving which at that time was under their command.</p> <p>"B" Coy was to take over from "C" Coy IRC which was at NIEUWOLDA 4917. The C.O. went with Maj. I.F. Douglas to contact the Irish Regt. The position could not be</p>	

## WAR DIARY

THE WESTMINSTER REGT (MOTOR)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks, references to Appendices and initials
SCHEEMDA 4809	24 Apr 45 Tuesday		<p>(continued)</p> <p>relieved in daylight so it was arranged that "B" Coy would concentrate at NORDBROK 4212 until darkness, Meanwhile Capt E.V. Ardagh's harbour recce party and the remainder of the tactical recce went on to 7 C.I.B. HQ. SCHEEMDA. A temporary concentration area was located in the area.</p> <p>The C.O., Lt-Col G.C. Corbould, D.S.O. arrived and after contacting the Brigade Major, 7 C.I.B., went forward with his party to BN HQ. of the Royal Winnipeg Rifles at OOSTWOLDE 5312. That unit had only come into the area a few hours previously and so had very little information to offer.</p> <p>Capt. E.V. Ardagh had recce'd concentration area's for the coy's. The battalion left BEDUM at 0915 hrs. At 1115 hrs the C.O., with all Company Commanders;-went to the forward edge of town 535129 to have a look at the ground. The terrain was very flat and open with practically no cover at all. Visibility on this clear day was good up to 2 miles. The plan was to start with two company's forward, "C" Coy RIGHT and "A" Coy LEFT. Along the first portion of the route there was some cover which appeared to be sufficient to enable the troops to start NORTH with as their axis the ROAD 542130 to 543150 then DYKE to 533182. "C" Coy was to follow "A" Coy to area 543150, then move EAST across the Dykes to the sea and then push NORTH-WEST. They were to travel on foot followed by their respective Scout Platoons mounted. "A" Coy had attached from SP Coy one M.G. PL under Lieut. W.C. Brumpton. The remainder of Sp Coy under Capt. F.C.B. Cummins was to travel with Tac HQ until required. The two supporting troops of tanks were to remain in OOSTWOLDE ready to move on short notice if and when they were required.</p> <p>The battalion arrived at about 1230 hrs and was put into the concentration area in OOSTWOLDE.</p> <p>At 1800 hrs "A" Coy moved off and at 2020 hrs reported on their first objective "GRANVILLE" a road junction at 543150, having reached that point with no difficulty "C" Coy moved out at about 1930 hrs and took up position in the same area. An occasional round of 8.8 cm was falling in the area but no damage was done. At 2030 hrs Capt. E.V. Ardagh with the Signals Officer, Lieut. J.A. Fowlie, went fwd to locate a Tac HQ and establish line communications to it. This was found at 543137. On the return trip an 8.8 cm round whistled in close causing Lieut. Fowlie a slight facial wound. He remained on duty.</p>	<p><i>Ref. Appx 14</i></p>

## WAR DIARY

THE WESTMINSTER REGT (MOTOR)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks, references to Appendices and initials
OOSTWOLDE 5312	24 Apr 45 Tuesday		<p>(continued)</p> <p>At 2130 hrs, Tac HQ, consisting of the C.O., Maj. F. Shawcross and the I.O. with the Arty Rep from 8 Fd Regt and the representative from the 8NBH moved off. At 2230 hrs "A" Coy called for fire from the guns on two targets in their area which was thought to contain enemy troops. The targets were fired several times and the 8 NBH 10.5's though slow, seemed to perform quite well, as they started a fire in one area.</p> <p>At about 0200 hrs an L.O. arrived from HQ 5 C.A.B with information for the C.O. Some changes were to be made in sectors which switched 5 Bde's responsibilities further to the WEST. The DELFZIJL show was put entirely under 11 C.I.B. thus placing the Westminster Regt (M) under command that formation. The original plan of 11 C.I.B. doing the attack on DELFZIJL still stood, however.</p> <p>At 0100 hrs, "A" Coy starting pushing out to the NORTH and when they were clear "C" Coy started their move to the EAST.</p>	All references and code – names are shown on APPX 14
	25 Apr 45		<p>Strength Offrs 36 and 5 att. ORs 824 and 35 att</p> <p>The night had been brilliantly lit by moonlight and with such good visibility progress was necessarily slow. At first light "A" Coy was on "GRANVILLE" 544151 and "C" Coy was on "HASTINGS" 561156. The only actual contact were sounds of enemy movement heard some distance forward of the leading troops. At 1130 hrs the coy's started moving forward and by 1300 hrs were in positions on "GEORGIA" 545172. At 1430 hrs, Tac HQ., moved forward to 548161 from where line communication was established to Main HQ which was still in OOSTWOLDE at 535122.</p> <p>At 0900 hrs the Westminsters went from command 5 C.A.B. to under command 11 C.I.B. At this time the unit's RIGHT boundary was the 56 EASTING and this was to be moved to the DUTCH – GERMAN border. Elements of 7 C.I.B. which were in that area were to be relieved by an A/Tk Unit R.C.A. which was to come under command the Westminster Regt (M). Relief was to be completed by 0600 hrs 26 Apr 45.</p> <p>Shortly after arriving in the new HQ several salvos of enemy shells fell on the area. It seemed that the roads were under observation as vehicle movement drew immediate fire though none fell on Bn HQ. It was observed that "C" Coy HQ 546172 was receiving direct hits from enemy guns firing from the direction of DELFZIJL. Up to 1700 hrs no casualties had been caused.</p>	

## WAR DIARY

THE WESTMINSTER REGT (MOTOR)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks, references to Appendices and initials
OOSTWOLDE 535122	25 Apr 45 Wednesday		<p>(continued)</p> <p>Movement was almost impossible during the day but after last light "C" Coy started pushing out again across the flat, open "polder" towards the sea, At 0300 hrs they bumped a strong enemy patrol from who were moving S.E. from WOLDENDORP 5220. There was a short fire fight at 549179 and the enemy force withdrew in disorder leaving behind them four prisoners. Their order had been to demolish the houses in the area 545170.</p> <p>At this time, "B" Coy was on the LEFT and had positions at NUEUWOLDA 4917 with one platoon forward at 480180. A recce patrol ordered by Brig. I. Johnson was sent to obtain information about a crossing at 488178. The patrol was led by Lieut. W. McLachlan. They found the crossing to be strongly held and also that it was not suitable for bridging. The patrol returned and Lieut. McLachlan reported to Tac HQ with his infm.</p> <p>There was some enemy harassing shelling during the night.</p>	All references and code-names are shown on Appx. 14
	26 Apr 45 Thursday		<p>Strength Offrs 36 and 5 att. ORs 820 and 35 att</p> <p>The sky was clear but it was quite cold and there was a ground haze during the early hours of the morning.</p> <p>HQ 11 C.I.B. was some distance back and as communications were not very good a representative from each unit had to report there for instructions and infm. The C.O. requested permission to move "B" Coy from the position on the LEFT to a more useful role with the battalion. The I.R.C. were now to move N.E. up to the line of the canal which was the boundary and as this was across the "B" Coy front, the permission was given. The remainder of the Brigadier's orders were that "A" and "C" Coy's must get to the NORTH of WOLDENDORP as soon as possible in order to maintain contact. During the afternoon positions in area 545170 received a severe shelling as did the "C" Coy people, who, trying to get forward across the open country, area 55;8. There were four casualties during the day, three killed and one wounded.</p>	

## WAR DIARY

THE WESTMINSTER REGT (MOTOR)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks, references to Appendices and initials
OOSTWOLDE 535122	26 Apr 45 Thursday		<p>(continued)</p> <p>At 1500 hrs Maj. Gen B.M. Hoffmeister came to Tac HQ to see the C.O.</p> <p>The 17th Fd Regt. R.C.A. now had guns in position which were able to cover the sector entirely with the exception of the area of SPIT 5623.</p> <p>The C.O. intentions now was to move "A" Coy into WOLDENDORP from the SOUTH, pull "C" Coy in from the exposed RIGHT flank and have it follow "A" and have "B" Coy advance EAST towards WOLDENDORP and flank the town to the N.W. Orders were issued accordingly.</p> <p>During the afternoon "A" Coy moved forward to positions at 534186 from where the attack on WOLDENDORP was launched. The shelling continued to be heavy, coming largely from heavy calibre A/A guns on the coast. There was also a good deal of small arms and M.G. o position.</p> <p>Communications deteriorated so a "step-up" station was set up by the Sigs Officer Lt. J.A. Fowlie. At 2300 hrs "C" Coy moved forward to 541179 which was near "A" Coy area and at 0240 hrs the attack went in. With Lt. J. Oldfield's scout platoon shooting up everything in sight and a supporting Arty program as well as a shoot from a troop of 8NBH tanks, "A" Coy rushed into the town and before "Jerry" realized what was happening our troops were established in the NORTHERN part of the VILLAGE in area 529203. They had taken 30 prisoners and killed a large number for no casualties to themselves. However, they occupied only a small portion of the town and the Germans were able to re-occupy some of the area from which they had been cleared. Thus for a number of hours "A" Coy was cut off.</p> <p>Meanwhile "B" Coy had moved through the area 5017 and 5117 and now were established in positions WEST OF WOLDENDORP at 512195. The C.O's intention now was for "C" Coy to move into to WOLDENDORP to join "A" Coy in mopping up operations and for "B" Coy to continue to the N.W. and North of the town.</p>	<p><i>Ref. Appx 14</i></p>

## WAR DIARY

THE WESTMINSTER REGT (MOTOR)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks, references to Appendices and initials
OOSTWOLDE 535122	27 Apr 45 Friday		<p>Strength Offrs 36 and 5 att. ORs 822 and 35 att</p> <p>The weather had now settled down to intermittent rainy spells with an occasional break through by the sun.</p> <p>The morning was quiet. Brigadier Johnson came at 1215 hrs, stayed for lunched and discussed the situation with the C.O. On most sectors of the “DELFIJL POCKET” the going was still quite sticky. Some of the units were suffering heavy casualties from shelling and advances were neither great nor rapid. Consequently the Brigadier was anxious that we on the right should get on to the sea in order to put the pressure on the remainder of the pocket, take a number of very bothersome guns and prevent a large scale evacuation from the small port of TERMUNTERZIJL.</p> <p>At 2023 hrs “A” Coy reported a counter attack in strength coming in on all sides. Some 200 enemy troops were also reported moving towards “B” Coy and another large body was heading for “C: Coy. The attack on “A” Coy was the only one which actually developed, however, and after a hectic hour of firing every available weapon including some of “Jerry’s” own, the attackers were beaten off. The guns of the 17th Fd did a good job as did the supporting troop from the 8NBH.</p> <p>At 2220 hrs “C” Coy started their attack on the town. Progress was slow as the Germans were well positioned and were fighting hard. At 2300 hrs Tac HQ moved for-ward and by 2359 hrs were set up at 526180, a big farmhouse.</p> <p>Maj. I.F. Douglas, O.C. “B” Coy reported at. 0100 hrs for the orders of the push which he was to make on to the NORTH of WOLDENDORP. A fire plan with the ARTY Rep and “B” COY was prepared to move on the C.O’s orders. At 0600 hrs “C” Coy reached “A” and the two coy's started together to complete the clearing of the town. Another counter-attack came in and again was dispatched with heavy casualties in killed, wounded and prisoners.</p>	<i>Ref 14</i>

## WAR DIARY

THE WESTMINSTER REGT (MOTOR)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks, references to Appendices and initials
<p>Main HQ at OOSTWOLDE MR 535122</p> <p>Tac HQ at MR 526180</p>	<p>28 Apr 45 Saturday</p>		<p>Strength Offrs 36 and 5 att. ORs 822 and 35 att</p> <p>In a pouring rain the town clearing carried on and was completed by 1200 hrs. Enemy shelling and air bursting was heavy and many of the flimsy buildings were soon reduced to rubble and ashes. Casualties were light. When "A" Coy HQ building lost all but the basement, Pte Nerada of the "I" Sec was wounded and evacuated. Again there was little action during the day, but plans were made for the push to continue after last light.</p> <p>At 2115 hrs "B" Coy moved off on their attack out-flank the town and push on to the NORTH. The weather was terrible and countless difficulties were encountered. The company had under command one troop of tanks and a section of flame-throwers, and on muddy tracks these had a very difficult task. Craters and blows caused hold-ups but these were either filled or by-passed and the attack moved on.</p> <p>"A" Coy was to move NORTH out of the town with, as their objective, the buildings and road junction 536217. Every effort to move from the town was blocked by extremely accurate fire from the heavy A/A guns which were by now known to be firing from the REIDER SPIT at 557230. However it was also now known that these guns were beyond the range of the 17 Fd guns and the only guns capable of reaching them were the six guns of the 10.5's of the 8 NBH tanks, relatively slow firing weapons and not able to put down the concentration necessary to neutralize the concrete emplaced 12-8 cm's of the German Flak Battery. Naval shells with delay fuses were also causing havoc in the town, one round being sufficient to flatten a house. The situation at first light found "B" Coy in area 525213 with "A" and "C" coy's still in WOLDENDORP which by this time was well flattened.</p>	<p>Ref Appx 14</p>

## WAR DIARY

THE WESTMINSTER REGT (MOTOR)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks, references to Appendices and initials
<p>Main HQ at OOSTWOLDE MR 535122</p> <p>Tac HQ at MR 526180</p>	<p>29 Apr 45 Sunday</p>		<p>Strength Offrs 36 and 5 att. ORs 831 and 35 att</p> <p>During the night "B" Coy took 42 prisoners and a number of enemy weapons. They were not able to evacuate the prisoners, however, until last light. The prisoner count for this operation was now 210.</p> <p>At the Brigadiers' morning "O" Group, the G.O.C., Maj-Gen Hoffmeister; expressed the wish that Westminsters' get through to the sea by first light of 30 Apr 45. The C.O's plan was to push "B" Coy through to TERMUNTERZIJL with "A" Coy moving up on the RIGHT to TERMUNTEN. "C" Coy was to remain firm in WOLDENDORP and patrol to the EAST as far as possible.</p> <p>Delivering rations and ammunition to the forward troops was a problem and caused a great deal of delay to offensive operations. This all had to be done under cover of darkness and as that was not until 2100 hrs an attack could not start until 2145 hrs or later. At 1400 hrs, Maj. W.J. Neill, O.C. "A" Coy, came to Tac HQ for orders. He told of some of the difficulties his troops had overcome in order to enter the town so successfully against an enemy nearly three times their strength.</p> <p>Once more there was little or no activity during the daylight hours, the troops getting what little rest that was possible and preparing for the nights operations. Again it was a wild rainy night when "B" Coy started moving on their part of the attack. A comprehensive artillery fire plan had been laid on to be fired on call by the company commanders. It was breaking day when "B" Coy made a dash across the last thousand yards of wide open marshy fields before TERMUNTERZIJL. They were soon consolidated on the objective with patrols forward to the beach.</p> <p>"A" Coy moved 0240 hrs from WOLDENDORP, followed "B" Coy to road junction 525221 then turned EAST. They encountered a strong enemy force at 536217 and after dealing with this they pushed on to TERMUNTEN where they were firmed up shortly after "B" Coy's arrival.</p>	<p>Ref. Appx 14</p>

## WAR DIARY

THE WESTMINSTER REGT (MOTOR)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks, references to Appendices and initials
<p>Main HQ OOSTWOLDE</p> <p>Tac HQ at MR 526180</p>	<p>30 Apr 45 Monday</p>		<p>Strength Offrs 36 and 5 att. ORs 829 and 35 att</p> <p>By 0600 a troop of tanks had joined the forward troops and the task of mopping up the area began. There was a great concentration of enemy troops here as TERMUNTERZIJL was being used by the Germans as an evacuation point. The prisoners came in in groups of thirty or more to make a total of over 500 for the day. Vehicles, equipment and stores there were in large numbers including several steam engines and boats. By 1200 hrs the area of TERMUNTERZIJL had been thoroughly checked and cleared. The road WOLDENDORP – TERMUNTEN was under observation and moderately accurate fire from the German guns at 558228 was directed against any vehicle movement. The C.O. went forward to visit “B” Coy and enjoyed this experience while both going up and returning. A house on the road was later set alight while occupied by Lt J.A. Fowlie and his “step-up” station. During the darkness this silhouetted any vehicle and so the ration and ammunition trucks also had their share from the SPIT.</p> <p>“C” Coy sent out a carrier patrol under LT. A. Kipp to check the JOHANNES KERKHOVEN POLDER, a large expanse of reclaimed land on the RIGHT flank. The patrol was to work NORTH towards the REIDER SPIT. At the same time foot patrols made good progress though they were fired on several times by the Flak guns on the SPIT. The remainder of the company was now moving and advanced unopposed to 560220 and further to the LEFT to 555224. Six prisoners were taken. In these positions the troops were less than a thousand yards from the German guns and were even able to watch the gunners loading and firing. The only artillery available was now the 10.5 troop and later one 7.2 in howitzer and as the enemy positions covered a large area this number of guns was inadequate. No aircraft were available to bomb the target as the current attack on EMDEN had top priority. Prisoners stated that three hundred troops were on the SPIT awaiting ships and while the majority wanted to surrender, the gunners were determined to stay and fight. Lieut. R.E. Mannering came from “C” Coy to Tac HQ to put the C.O. into the picture as to what the situation really was. The C.O. decided that the exposed positions then held by “C” Coy were too risk as it appeared that the heavy A/A guns could flatten them if they wished, so he gave orders for the company to move back slightly to the line of the canal and dyke in 5521.</p>	<p><i>Appx 14</i></p>

## WAR DIARY

THE WESTMINSTER REGT (MOTOR)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks, references to Appendices and initials
Main HQ at OOSTWOLDE  Tac HQ at MR 526180	30 Apr 45 Monday		<p>(continued)</p> <p>The enemy position was heavily mined and wired-in, which together with the very limited means of approach made a night infiltration unlikely. Though nothing definite was decided upon, it was thought that a two-company attack in daylight with proper artillery or aircraft preparation would be successful.</p> <p>A great deal of harassing fire came from the SPIT during the night, both light and heavy guns spraying the whole area. This continued until about 0300 hrs. A Russian ex-prisoner who had come from the gun site stated that the evacuation of the SPIT was to take place during the night and then the guns were to be destroyed. The SPIT was silent from 0300 hrs onward and the prisoner's statement was confirmed at 1300 hrs 1 May when a patrol from "C" Coy found the place deserted.</p> <p>Thus was concluded the Westminster's part in the clearing of DELFZIJL POCKET. In this week-long operation over seven hundred prisoners were taken and a large amount of equipment and material was captured. The advance had been made across about seven miles of very difficult open ground. As an indication of the ability of the troops and their commanders, casualties had been kept to four killed and fifteen wounded, a very low figure in ratio to the amount of shelling and close fighting which had taken place and to the success gained.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">                     .....                      Lt-Col. G.C. Corbould, D.S.O.                      Commanding Officer                      The Westminster Regt (M)                 </p>	

## WAR DIARY

THE WESTMINSTER REGT (MOTOR)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks, references to Appendices and initials
<u>THE WESTMINSTER REGIMENT (MOTOR)</u>				
<u>LIST OF APPENDICES</u>				
		<u>No.</u>		<u>Original</u> <u>Duplicate</u> <u>Triplicate</u>
			Part 1 Orders	Nil   Nil   Nil
		2.	Part II Orders	X
		3.	AFW 3008 (Wkly Fd Ret – Offrs)	X
		4.	AFW 3008 (Wkly Fd Ret – OR’s)	X
		5.	Map – Scale 1/100,000 – Sheet 5	X
		6.	Patrol Report dated 3 Apr 1945	X   X   X
		7.	Patrol Report dated 6 Apr 1945	X   X   X
		8.	Map Sheet 2a & 3a – Scale 1/250,000	X
		9.	Canada’s Eight Victory Loan	X
		10.	Map – Scale - 1/100 000 (shs 2 & P.I.W.)	X
		11.	Planning Trace “A” Operation “CLEANSER”	X
		12.	Route Card	X   X   X
		13.	Planning Trace – Operation “CLEANSER II”	X
		14.	Map – Sheet – L.1. Scale 1/100,000	X
		15.	Place Name Code Words	X
		16.	List of Enemy Equipment captured or overrun by Unit 29-30 Apr 45	X   X   X
		17.	Message of Congratulation	X   X   X
		18.	State of Officers	X   X   X
		19.	Intelligence Summaries Nos. 225 – 116 to 134	X
		20.	2 New Zealand Div Routine Orders	X
		21.	Copy of Maple Leaf with Ref 1 Cdn Corp arriving in the European Theatre	X
		22.	Letter of thanks from C.O. of the 8 N.B. H.	X
			N. B. Also att to the Original Copy are the following: -	
			<i>Appx “A”</i> – AA1 – Routine Orders	X
			<i>Appx “B”</i> – Army Routine Orders	X
			<i>Appx “C”</i> – GENERAL Routine Orders	X

## WAR DIARY

THE WESTMINSTER REGT (MOTOR)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks, references to Appendices and initials
<p>Main HQ at OOSTWOLDE</p> <p>Tac HQ at MR 526180</p>	<p>1 May 45 Tuesday</p>		<p>Strength Offrs 36 and 5 att. ORs 783 and 35 att</p> <p>It was cloudy and cold but was not raining. Visibility was good.</p> <p>During the morning "A" and "B" Coys reported a little shelling from the enemy guns in the EMDEN area.</p> <p>At 1300 hrs, "C" Coy became suspicious of the lull in firing of the guns at 558228. The area had been smoked off for some time and later when this lifted slightly a white flag was seen flying from one of the gun positions. Maj. H.F. Hoskin, D.S.O., O.C. "C" Coy, sent out a patrol to investigate the position. At 1400 hrs the remainder the company moved up as the Flak site had been found empty. During the night, covered by the noise of other guns firing, the Germans had blown their own equipment and made good their escape. The position was occupied and the remainder of the SPIT was searched but no enemy were found.</p> <p>There was still some fighting on the fronts of the units to the LEFT, but the Westminster sector was now completely cleared. Occasionally the EMDEN guns dropped a few rounds in the area but otherwise all was quiet.</p> <p>At 1530 hrs, the C.O., Lt-Col. G.C. Corbould, D.S.O., visited the company's. The troops appeared to be actively engaged in collecting various pieces of equipment which had been captured in the push.</p> <p>An attached engineer troop working with "C" Coy found that though the area 558228 was the heavily mined, the roads were clear. Captured enemy engineers were later put to work clearing the mines which had been left in large quantities in the DELFZIJL POCKET.</p> <p>Lt-Col. K. Jordan, C.O. the GGHG visited the C.O. at 1300 hrs. His unit was to relieve the Westminster sector on completion of the clearing.</p> <p>The remainder of the day and night was quiet and members of Tac HQ were able to get <i>the first</i> full night's sleep since the start of the operation.</p>	
<p>" "</p>	<p>2 May 45 Wednesday</p>		<p>Strength Offrs 36 and 5 att. ORs 803 and 35 att</p> <p>The weather was uncertain, showers and sunshine being the order of the day. Advance parties from "B" Echelon under Maj. D.B. Mc Kenzie had been for several days</p>	

## WAR DIARY

THE WESTMINSTER REGT (MOTOR)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks, references to Appendices and initials
Main HQ at NORG MR 146976	2 May contd Wednesday		<p>at an area SOUTH OF GRONINGEN and it was to this area that the unit was to move on being relieved. The GGHG's started to take over during the morning and by 1400 hrs the Westminster Regt was ready to go.</p> <p>Movement control would permit no move at that time and it was until 1730 hrs that the battalion moved off. The route was through GRONIGEN TO THE "LONDON DOWN" route to the new location. The unit was scattered in several small towns, BN HQ and HQ Company in NORG MR 1497, "A" coy. in TINARLO MR 2497, "B" coy. In ZEIEN MR 2095, and Support coy in DONDEREN MR 2000. After an uneventful trip the unit arrived at 2200 hrs. Supervisor W. Hussey of the K of C Aux. Services ran a film for HQ company shortly after the arrival.</p> <p>The troops were billeted either in private houses or the local schools and the townspeople seemed anxious to help.</p>	
Main HQ at NORG MR 146976	3 May Thursday		<p>Strength Offrs 36 and 5 att. ORs 809 and 35 att</p> <p>The weather was again doubtful but it did not rain. At 0915 hrs. the CO left for HQ 5 CAB to attend an "O" Group. The area NORTH of GRONIGEN was the responsibility of 5 CAB. To guard this sector each armoured regt. was to supply one armoured squadron while a mobile reserve was to be supplied by the Westminster Regiment (MOTOR). This company was to take over billets in WINSUM MR 1827 and were to be available to deal with any landing which might be attempted by enemy troops from the FRISIAN ISLANDS.</p> <p>To relieve a troop of 4 A/Tk. Regt. RCA, the Westminster Regt. was also to supply one A/Tk. platoon. Brigadier Cumberland mentioned a few administrative points and concluded the "O" Group. On his return the CO called a meeting of company commanders to be held at BN HQ at 1400 hrs. Present were the 2 i/c, Maj. DB MacKenzie, the Adjutant Capt E.B. Robertson, Majors W.J. Neill, I.F. Douglas. H.F. Hoskin DSO, and Major F. Shawcross for "A", "B", "C" and Support Company's and Capt. E.V. Ardagh, OC HQ Coy. "C" Company was to be the first to take over the reserve role and 15 platoon of Sp. Coy. commanded by Lt. L.A. Jones was the A-TK. platoon. This group was move on the 6 May. Training problems were discussed and schools for driver-operators and other tradesmen were arranged. It was decided to start getting the unit in shape for the Victory Parade in Berlin which now appeared to be imminent. The CO also gave orders that all weapons, vehicles <i>and</i> equipments <i>were</i> to be cleaned and checked as the Brigade had to be ready for action in a week.</p>	

## WAR DIARY

THE WESTMINSTER REGT (MOTOR)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks, references to Appendices and initials
Main HQ at NORG MR 146976	3 May cont'd Thursday		<p>Sp. Company had received Stewart M5 (Honey) tanks as replacements for their gun-towers and these required certain modifications. Another question was the question of captured enemy staff cars. Permissions had been granted for these to be used by Company Commanders and above. The Tech. Adj., Capt K.B. Harrison, was busy rounding up the spare parts required to put several of these cars on the road. It was later found that any such vehicles retained were to cover off "Jeep" vacancies on the War Establishment.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Entertainments had been arranged for afternoons and evenings by Supervisor W. Hussey.</p>	
“ “	4 May 45 Friday		<p>Strength Offrs 35 and 5 att. ORs 802 and 35 att</p> <p>The day was wet and a cold wind was blowing. The day was spent by all companys in cleaning and checking equipment. Support Company's guns were all stripped down once more and work being down to fit the "Honeys" with ammunition racks and trail hooks.</p> <p>The was being spent quietly until 2045 hrs. when the BBC announced that all organized German resistance in NW Europe had ceased. Surrender terms had been arranged by Fd. Marshall B.L. Montgomery with Admiral Doenitz, new leader of the German State. Needless to say, this news was received with great excitement by all ranks and parties were immediately organized to celebrate the best news since 1939.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">The remainder of the evening must be described as confused.</p>	
“ “	5 May Saturday		<p>Strength Offrs 35 and 5 att. ORs 8L2 and 35 att</p> <p>The bad weather continued with occasional spots of sunshine during the afternoon. Maintenance occupied the morning with the companys. "C" company and 15 platoon were preparing for the move the day to their respective area's in their reserve role.</p> <p>Dances for BN HQ and HQ Company were being arranged, the Officers to be held the night of 5 May and O.R.'s on the 7 May. The Officer's dance was successful, being attended by a number of the local damsels who had seen very little social life during the years of the German occupation.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">No information was received yet stating what would take place now that the fighting had ceased. It was thought that. demobilization plans would begin very quickly.</p>	

## WAR DIARY

THE WESTMINSTER REGT (MOTOR)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks, references to Appendices and initials
Main HQ at NORG MR 146976	6 May Sunday		<p>Strength Offrs 35 and 5 att. ORs 800 and 35 att</p> <p>The weather improved slightly with a clear day. H/Capt. D.R.G. Owen held a service at 1000 hrs. in the local church. The day was spent quietly.</p> <p>Lieut. R. Ross, a former N.C.O. with the unit and now a member if R.C.E.M.E. paid a visit to the unit in the afternoon.</p> <p>“C” Company and No. 15 platoon left for WINSUM at 0900 hrs.</p>	
“ “	7 May Monday		<p>Strength Offrs 35 and 5 att. ORs 797 and 35 att</p> <p>A bright warm day of brilliant sunshine. Some instructions reference future happenings were received. These gave a few details of the demobilization plans and stated that in future parade hours would be from 0900 hrs to 1200 hrs: and that afternoons would be given over to sports, the intention being to keep the troops smart and physically fit until the various phases of demobilization could take place.</p> <p>The afternoon was given to organized sport. A phone call from the Brigade Major informed the CO that “C” Company had been released from any active role as a mobile reserve and that they would remain where they were and carry on with their normal training and maintenance.</p> <p>HQ Company held a dance in the evening which went off very successfully. A fair supply of beer was laid in through the combined efforts of CSM Hoskin and Sgt. Hicks and this together with a good turn-out of the local ladies went to make a good time.</p>	
“ “	8 May Tuesday		<p>Strength Offrs 35 and 5 att. ORs 796 and 35 att</p> <p>The fine weather continued. In the morning the CO visited “C” Company at WINSUM MR 1826 and went on to the LDSH. HQ at WARFUM MR2133.</p> <p>During the morning training hours the troops carried on painting vehicles in preparation for a mounted march past which was to take place in the near future. This parade was to be for the GOC, Maj.Gen. B.M. Hoffmeister. Another scheduled parade was a battalion ceremonial which was to be held shortly.</p>	

## WAR DIARY

THE WESTMINSTER REGT (MOTOR)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks, references to Appendices and initials
Main HQ at NORG MR 146976	8 May contd Tuesday		<p>At 1500 hrs. Prime Minister Churchill delivered the speech which told of the end of the European War. All fighting was to cease by 0001 hrs. 9 May 1945 and the 8 day of May was declared "Victoria in Europe Day".</p> <p>In the evening the CO LT.-Col G.C. Corbould DSO, was invited to attend with some of his Officers, a Victory Celebration being held in the near-by Dutch town of VEENHUIZEN MR0994. The leader of the Community spoke in English to the Westminster Officers and thanked them for the great part Canadians had taken in the Liberation of Holland. A group of local youngsters did a first-class job of singing "God Save THE King" and the celebration was over. At someone asked one of the Officers for his autograph and this continued for some time, after which the party beat a much-delayed retreat, the first in the history of the unit.</p> <p>Orders had been received from HQ 5CAB that all existing stocks of flares would be used during the night to add to the celebrations which were taking place. This was carried out at 2200 hrs., causing great comment from the civil population. Civilian dancing and singing in the streets went on until nearly mid-night.</p> <p>"C" Company received orders to stand down and were returned to command of Westmr, Regt. (Motor). They were remain temporarily in WINSUN as no quarters were immediately available for them in the Bn. area.</p>	
“ ”	9 May Wednesday		<p>Strength Offrs 36 and 5 att. ORs 794 and 35 att</p> <p>Another cloudless day of brilliant sunshine. The first battalion ceremonial parade to be held since leaving Italy took place at 1000 hrs. at Bn. HQ. Many of the troops had received little ceremonial training and it was evident that some practice was required.</p> <p>Sports programs were carried out in the afternoon. Some of these were difficult to do properly as there was a great lack of equipment but the troops were interested and made the best of these things. Efforts were being made both through 5 CAB and the Auxiliary Services to obtain more equipment but there appeared to be a general shortage.</p> <p>In the evening the citizens went further with the celebrations of the peace.</p>	

## WAR DIARY

THE WESTMINSTER REGT (MOTOR)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks, references to Appendices and initials
Main HQ at NORG MR 146976	10 May Thursday		<p>Strength Offrs 36 and 5 att. ORs 792 and 35 att</p> <p>The phenomenal good weather continued. The three morning training hours were taken up with company parades and vehicle maintenance. The L.A.D. was still at work on the "Honey" tank gun-towers applying ammunition racks and other: modifications.</p>	
“ ”	11 May Friday		<p>Strength Offrs 36 and 5 att. ORs 792 and 35 att</p> <p>A further day of sunshine with a strong breeze in the afternoon. All companys' were occupied with vehicle maintenance and training in the morning and sports in the afternoon. In support of HQ Coy. team the Adj. and I.O. leaned or the tug-of-war team rope and in the trials with the other teams HQ Coy. was very successful.</p> <p>A tabloid sports meet was to be held on Monday 14 May with teams from all Companys competing for prizes of various quantities of beer.</p>	
“ ”	12 May Saturday		<p>Strength Offrs 36 and 5 att. ORs 797 and 35 att</p> <p>A bright sunny day. Majors D.B. MacKenzie and I.F. Douglas were busy organizing a <b>coo</b> committee for a dance to be held in the Officers Mess on Wed. 16 May.</p> <p>An invitation was received from the local burgomaster for the CO Lt. Col. G.C. Corbould DSO, and his Officers to attend a peace celebration to be held in NORG at 1400 hrs. However the CO. was away at a conference at 5 CAB HQ, so it was attended by Maj. D.B. McKenzie and a few conscripted representatives from Bn. HQ.</p> <p>At 1600 hrs the CO held a conference of all company commanders when he passed on to them information which he had received earlier at Bde. HQ. It dealt chiefly with points of administration, dress etc. The equipment of the Division was to be massed shortly for inspection by the GOC and it was to this and that vehicles were to be in first class shape.</p> <p>In the afternoon, GRONINGEN was crowded with parades celebrating the peace.</p>	

## WAR DIARY

THE WESTMINSTER REGT (MOTOR)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks, references to Appendices and initials
Main HQ at NORG MR 146976	13 May Sunday		<p>Strength Offrs 36 and 5 att. ORs 796 and 35 att</p> <p>Sunday was another warm day, Dress regulations had permitted shirt sleeve order within the unit area for several days and this now changed to a brigade order.</p> <p>There was a good attendance at the volunteer service held in the local church by H/Capt. R.D.G. Owen, the Padre. In the afternoon a fire destroyed a garage at the Officers mess. This building was being used a kitchen and when a civilian helper opened a can of petrol near the burner the place caught fire. Damage was complete, though the cook, Danny <i>Danielson</i> managed to evacuate the C.O's accordion. A Court of Inquiry was later called to investigate the affair.</p>	
“”	14 May Monday		<p>Strength Offrs 36 and 5 att. ORs 796 and 35 att</p> <p>The day was clear and sunny, but a strong breeze blew all day. There was some rain during the night 14/15.</p> <p>A battalion ceremonial parade took place in the morning and the tabloid sports meet occupied the afternoon. Support Coy. teams won the beer in the tug-of-war and volley ball while the soft ball game was won by HQ Coy.</p> <p>During the late afternoon and evening there was a gusty rain storm.</p>	
“ ”	15 May		<p>Strength Offrs 36 and 5 att. ORs 818 and 35 att</p> <p>The weather was dull and cold. Forms on which all ranks were to signify their choice of service in the Far East Force, Occupation Force or Demobilization were filled out. The majority of the troops were for demobilization, some decided to go to the East while only a few wished to stay on in the Occupation Force. There was little information available as to the details of any of the alternatives.</p> <p>In the evening, while proceeding in a vehicle along a road near Bn. HQ RSM J. Clifford received a wound from a Sten gun fired by an over-anxious member of the Dutch Underground. The members of the Underground made it a self-appointed task to “guard” bridges in the area and stopped vehicles at will. In this case no challenge was given and the Dutchman opened fire after the vehicle had past.</p>	

## WAR DIARY

THE WESTMINSTER REGT (MOTOR)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks, references to Appendices and initials
Main HQ at NORG MR 146976	16 May Wednesday		<p>Strength Offrs 36 and 5 att. ORs 817 and 35 att</p> <p>In the morning word was received that the Westmr. Regt. (Motor) would represent 5 CAD in a ceremonial parade to be held at the Hague on 21 May. (See appen 8) The pipe bands of the CBH and Irish Regt, of Canada were to accompany the unit. Practice parades were laid on and a Bn. parade was set for Thursday morning. The pipe bands were to report to assist the practices.</p> <p>An impromptu dance was held at the Officers Mess and was very successful.</p>	
“ ”	17 May Thursday		<p>Strength Offrs 42 and 5 att. ORs 845 and 35 att</p> <p>The weather turned once more to heat. A battalion parade was held in the morning. At 1400 hrs a cancellation was received for the Hague Parade. The CBH pipe band had arrived and were dispatched back to their unit. Instructions were received from Bde. HQ that on the 24 May the unit would begin the task of guarding a mass of German prisoners who were being evacuated from Western Holland. The prisoners were to march and were to be escorted over an allotted portion of the route by the Westminsters. There seemed little likelihood that this task would necessitate a move from the present position.</p>	
“ ”	18 May Friday		<p>Strength Offrs 42 and 5 att. ORs 844 and 35 att</p> <p>The hot weather continued. Normal duties carried on during the morning while the afternoon was taken up with sports. A second tabloid sports meet was being arranged for Mon. 21 May.</p> <p>Maj. I.F. Douglas was head of a committee to arrange a dance for Saturday night.</p>	
“ ”	19 May Saturday		<p>Strength Offrs 42 and 5 att. ORs 845 and 35 att</p> <p>A further day of fine May weather. It was learned that Exercise Finale was post-poned until approx. 26 May. In the evening another successful dance was held at the Officers Mess in NORG. Present were Maj.-Gen Hoffmeister and Brig. I.H. Cumberland with members of their staffs. In the afternoon 130 reinforcements arrived. These were to make up a surplus of 20% which units were now to carry.</p>	

## WAR DIARY

THE WESTMINSTER REGT (MOTOR)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks, references to Appendices and initials
Main HQ at NORG MR 146976	20 May Sunday		<p>Strength Offrs 42 and 5 att. ORs 846 and 35 att</p> <p>At 1100 hrs, a Bn. Church Parade was held to commemorate the Officer's and men of the Westminster Regiment (Motor) who had fallen in the fighting in Italy and Holland. The Padre, H/Capt. D.R.G. Owen delivered an excellent service and the CO read aloud the names of the 10 Officer's and 124 other ranks who had died. (See Appen 9)</p> <p>Maj. W.J. Neill and Capt B.V. Morgan reported to the EELDE Airport for duties connected with the preparations for the Divisional Parade which was now scheduled for 23 of May. (See Appen 10)</p>	
“”	21 May Monday		<p>Strength Offrs 42 and 5 att. ORs 976 and 35 att</p> <p>The weather was cloudy and it rained sporadically during the day. In the morning the vehicles went to the EELDE airport where Maj. W.J. Neill and Capt. B.V. Morgan began lining them up in preparation for the GOC's Parade. Only drivers went with the vehicles and they were to remain at the airfield until the inspection was over.</p> <p>The rain prevented sports during the afternoon.</p>	
“”	22 May Tuesday		<p>Strength Offrs 42 and 5 att. ORs 980 and 35 att</p> <p>The weather was doubtful but the sun came through occasionally. In the morning most of the parade preparations were completed and in the afternoon the CO went out to hold a rehearsal. Details of drills for mounting and loading were arranged and companys held individual practices. In the evening Maj. Neill returned with some minor changes which had been made. Details of the move of capitulated German troops from Western Holland to Germany were issued. (See Appen // OP order 8) The route was through the battalion area. Units were to guard their sectors by siting armoured vehicles with interlocking fields of fire while wooded areas and towns these were to be supplemented by personnel on foot. The move was to be started approx. 26 May.</p>	

## WAR DIARY

THE WESTMINSTER REGT (MOTOR)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks, references to Appendices and initials
Main HQ at NORG MR 146976 Sheet 12 1/50,000	23 May 45 Wednesday		<p>Strength Offrs 42 and 5 att. ORs 976 and 35 att</p> <p>The weather was doubtful all day. The companys began shuttling their troops to the Airfield at 0500 hrs. The CO., 2 i/c, Tech Adj, M.O. and L.A.D. Officer left at 0730 hrs to be at the parade area before 0800 hrs when all vehicles other than those on parade where to be clear of the field.</p> <p>The parade went off successfully. Some 1800 of the Division's vehicles were inspected by General Crerar and in the afternoon vehicles marched past in column, two vehicles abreast. The unit was complimented on what was called a "one hundred percent show".</p> <p>The lead vehicles of the battalion reached the unit lines at 1430 hrs though last of the column did not get in until 1900 hrs.</p> <p>Orders were to place a guard of one platoon on the German Staging Camp at 8900. Support Company was detailed for this task. 13 and 14 Pls M.G., under Lieut. Moran were to take over at 1100 hrs the 24 May 45.</p>	
	24 May 45 Thursday		<p>Strength Offrs 42 and 5 att. ORs 972 and 35 att</p> <p>The weather was good in the morning with some rain later in the day.</p> <p>In the morning the C.O. made a recce of the route over which the German troops were to move, The Westminster responsibility was from EEN 0999 to BEETSTERZWAAG 8897. The Staging Camp at ZUIDERHEIDE 9000 was within the unit boundaries and required a guard.</p> <p>An operation order was to be prepared and submitted to HQ 5 CAB by 1600 hrs 25 May 45. (See Appx. // )</p> <p>The 24 May was the anniversary of the Crossing of the MELFA RIVER when Maj. J.K. Mahony won the V.C. and to commemorate this great day a party was held at the Officers Mess. The C.O. of the Lord Strathcona's Horse, Lt-Col. J. Macavitie and several of his officers were invited. The "Strath's" were the tank regiment with which the Westminsters worked in the "MELFA" show and a great friendship had grown up between the two units.</p>	

## WAR DIARY

THE WESTMINSTER REGT (MOTOR)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks, references to Appendices and initials
Main HQ at NORG MR 146976 Sheet 12 1/50,000	25 May 45 Friday		<p>Strength Offrs 42 and 5 att. ORs 972 and 35 att</p> <p>The day was dull and cloudy. In the morning the C.O. took the company commanders over the portion the route which was the unit's responsibility in the move of the German P.W's. "B" Coy was to take care of BEESTERZWAAG 8897, a section of the route to the EAST while "C" Coy was to be responsible for the guarding of the German Staging Camp at ZUIDERHEIDE 9000. "A" Coy took over from "B" Coy and guarded the route to HAULERWIJK where Sp Coy took over to the 8 NBH.</p>	
	26 May 45 Saturday		<p>Strength Offrs 42 and 5 att. ORs 1015 and 35 att</p> <p>Heavy rain fell all day. Training went on in the morning but there was little activity in the afternoon.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Brigadier I.H. Cumberland called in the morning to visit the C.O.</p>	
	27 May 45 Sunday		<p>Strength Offrs 42 and 5 att. ORs 1014 and 35 att</p> <p>Once more rain fell during most of the day and the night.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">"C" Coy was now on duty at No. 12 Staging Camp, guarding a number of German vehicles which had come in during the day.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">"B" Coy moved to BEESTERZWAAG in preparation for the first large body of German troops which was expected to arrive on Monday.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">The Germans were to be responsible for all the administrative details of the move while our own troops were responsible only from guarding them on route and in camps.</p>	
	28 May 45 Monday		<p>Strength Offrs 42 and 5 att. ORs 1014 and 35 att</p> <p>The weather was uncertain in the morning though the sun came through in the afternoon. The C.O. visited "C" Coy at 1330 hrs and for over an hour watched the column of bedraggled German troops and transport as it moved along the road. These troops appeared to be of a very poor class, most of them being very old or very young. Motor transport was in poor condition and consisted of all makes and models of vehicles. This group had a great deal of horse-drawn transport drawn by very good looking horses, some of which appeared to have been stolen as a Dutch civilian came to claim one which he said had been taken from him some time earlier. One of the Germans was found to be carrying a loaded rifle but apart from this the Westminster troops had no difficulties with them. This first group numbered about five thousand</p>	

## WAR DIARY

THE WESTMINSTER REGT (MOTOR)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks, references to Appendices and initials
Main HQ at NORG MR 146976 Sheet 12 1/50,000	29 May 45 Tuesday		<p>Strength Offrs 42 and 5 att. ORs 1014 and 35 att</p> <p>The day was cloudy.</p> <p>“A” Coy moved out to their sector to guard the next stage of the prisoner’s move which brought them to an 8 NBH Camp near NORG.</p> <p>“C” Coy’s camp was re-occupied by a further nine thousand troops.</p> <p>The names of the first members of the Westminster Regiment (N) to be repatriated were received from 2nd echelon. 3 Officers and one O.R. were to go but only two were available, Lieuts N. Topham and J. Wolverton. They were to leave on the 30 May 45.</p>	

## WAR DIARY

THE WESTMINSTER REGT (MOTOR)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks, references to Appendices and initials
Main HQ at NORG MR 146976 Sheet 12 1/50,000	30 May Wednesday		<p>Strength Offrs 41 and 5 att. ORs 1014 and 35 att</p> <p>The weather was doubtful with some sun during the. In the morning the C.O. went to "B" Company which was in <b>BEETSTERZWAG</b>. Maj. I.F. Douglas was writing up a short history or the regiment and this was discussed for the remainder the morning <i>afternoon</i>. A further item for discussion was a very old bottle of "Black and White" procured by Capt. H. E. Smith at a very minor cost. On leaving "B" Company The C.O. visited Major H.F. Hoskin, DSO at "C" Company. Guarding No. 12 German Staging Camp was a busy job as the tail-end of a departing column was little more than clear when the first troops of the incoming troops were waiting to enter the camp. However the camp was well organized and apart from unforeseeable incidents, such as vehicles becoming stuck, all went as smoothly as could be expected.</p> <p>At 1800 hrs., the names of a further draft of men for repatriation were received. Of the total of 35, 19 were to leave at 0800 hrs, 31 May. Though it was short notice the men were eventually rounded up, documented and despatched. These were not volunteers for C.F.E.F., but men with high point scores, such as the mail clerk, Cpl. Gibson A.R., and the C.O.'s batman L/Cpl. Cooper R.W. and others.</p>	
“ “	31 May Thursday		<p>Strength Offrs 41 and 5 att. ORs 1014 and 35 att</p> <p>Again the weather was uncertain. It rained heavily in the afternoon followed by bright sunshine and a clear night. The day was quiet. There was no movement of German troops on the portion of the road affecting the Westminster Regt., so the coy's had a free day. Voting for Ontario Provincial and Dominion Elections was in progress. Capt. J. Eaton attached to "C" Company was in charge of the polling.</p> <p>May had been a further month of notable events. First, Operation "Canada", the clearing of the DELFZYL POCKET had been successfully concluded and the Westminster's moved out to rest. Then the cessation of hostilities in NW Europe followed a few days later by Germany's unconditional surrender. The latest and most interesting to many was the start of repatriation to Canada of the long serving troops. Training now was limited to those activities which would ensure the maintenance of physical fitness and alertness. To this end a comprehensive sports schedule was carried out and an educational program was being arranged. Each morning was devoted to training, weapon and vehicle maintenance</p>	

## WAR DIARY

THE WESTMINSTER REGT (MOTOR)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks, references to Appendices and initials
Main HQ at NORG MR 146976 Sheet 12 1/50,000	31 May contd		<p>Morale had reached a all-time high and there was very little reason for it to be otherwise.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Signed _____                      Commanding Officer                      Westminster Regt. (Motor)</p>	

WAR DIARY FOR MAY 1945  
WESTMINSTER REGIMENT (MOTOR)

<u>Appendices</u>	<u>Orig</u>	<u>Dup.</u>	<u>Trip.</u>
1. Part I Orders	X		
2. Part II Orders			X
3. AFW 3008	X		
4. AFW 3009	X		
5. Map Sheets 2 and 12 1/50,000	X		
6. Intelligence Summaries NO's 135 and 137	X		
7. 5 Cdn Arm'd Bde. Op Instr. No.6	X		
8. Ceremonial Parade THE HAGUE	X		
9. Memorial Service with Honour Roll	X	X	X
10. Exercise Finale	X		
11. Operation Order P.W. No. 1	X	X	X
12. Service of Thanksgiving	X		
13. Personal Message from the Supreme Allied Commander Mediterranean to Commander I Cdn. Corps	X	X	X
14. Personal Message from the Army Commander	X	X	X
15. Personal Message from the Commander in Chief	X	X	X
16. Attitude Toward Germans in Official Contacts	X		
17. Reports of Operations for Period 21 Mar – 18 April 1945	X		
18. Reports of Operations for Period 24 April – 1 May 1945	X		

## WAR DIARY

THE WESTMINSTER REGT (MOTOR)

### Editor's Notes

#### General

The layout of the electronic version has been made as close to possible to the original albeit on 8 1/2 x 11 inch paper rather than 7 3/4 x 13 inch.

Handwritten notes are shown in *Italic font style*, except for a few minor corrections.

In order to match the original, spelling mistakes have not been corrected but errors, for example with place names have been identified below.

Place names were checked against the maps of the day. Any changes to names since 1944/45 have been identified below as well.

Punctuation and formatting have been kept to as close as possible to the original, however there will be some variation in the layout of the strength numbers at the start of each day. As an example, the number of Officers attached are shown with the Officer numbers and not separately as done occasionally in the War Diary.

#### Comments on specific entries

A number of spelling mistakes have been left to reflect the actual record

#### Errata

09 Mar 45 – Isighem should be Iseghem, see below

14 Mar 45 – Emelgham should be Emelghem, see below

15 Mar 45 – Mulebeke should be Meulebeke

18 Mar 45 – Vought should be Vught

18 Mar 45 – Hertogen Bosch should be 's-Hertogenbosch

19 Mar 45 - Mulebeke should be Meulebeke

19 Mar 45 - Vought should be Vught

21 Mar 45 - Vought should be Vught

23 Mar 45 - Maj-Gen McMillan, DSO, MC., should be Maj-Gen MacMillan

31 Mar 45 – POLA R BEAR should be POLAR BEAR

31 Mar 45 – Daily News Summary “Polar Bear” 49 (WR) Inf Div was not included as an appendix

05 Apr 45 – Zand should be Het Zand (south west of Huissen)

05 Apr 45 – Niftik should be Niftrik

05 Apr 45 – Huisen should be Huissen

08 Apr 45 – Nijmegen should be Nijmegen

10 Apr 45 – Nijmegen should be Nijmegen

10 Apr 45 – Zand should be Het Zand (south west of Huissen)

14 Apr 45 – Zuider Zee should be Zuiderzee

15 Apr 45 – Otterloo should be Otterlo

15 Apr 45 - Zuider Zee should be Zuiderzee

16 Apr 45 - Otterloo should be Otterlo

16 Apr 45 – Apeldorn should be Apeldoorn

20 Apr 45 - Zuider Zee should be Zuiderzee

21 Apr 45 – Freisian should be Frisian

22 Apr 45 – Uithuisen should be Uithuizen

22 Apr 45 – Onderdandam should be Onderdendam

23 Apr 45 - CO LdSH was Lt Col James Malcolm. McAvity, DSO MBE

03 May 45 – Groningen should be Groningen

03 May 45 – Stewart should be Stuart (Tank)

24 May 45 - CO LdSH was Lt Col James Malcolm. McAvity, DSO MBE

30 May 45 – Beetsterzwwag should be Beetsterzwaag

31 May 45 – Delfzyl should be Delfzijl

Appendix 9 – to WD May 1945 – Roll of Honour – Sg J.A. Thrasher had not been awarded the Military Medal

## WAR DIARY

THE WESTMINSTER REGT (MOTOR)

### **Place and River Names – further details**

02 Mar 45 – St Rambert d’Albon

04 Mar 45 – St Rambert d’Albon

04 Mar 45 - Mâcon

05 Mar 45 – Armancon River – spelled Armançon

05 Mar 45 - Les Laumes (now probably Venarey-les-Laumes)

07 Mar 45 – Denyze (as per map Sheet 42) now called Denize

08 Mar 45 – Audenarde (French name), also known as Oudenaarde (Dutch name)

09 Mar 45 – Isighem (as per map Sheet 42) now known as Izegem

14 Mar 45 – Emelghem (as per map Sheet 42) now known as Emelgem

18 Mar 45 – correction to place names ie Vught, Hertogenbosch; the 49 (West Riding) Inf Div was then under comd of 1 Cdn Corps

18 Mar 45 – Grave Bridge was not a place name but referred to the bridge at Grave crossing the Maas or Meuse river.

19 Mar 45 – Oudemaasdijk now known as Oude Maasdijk

05 Apr 45 – Neder Rijn now called the Nederrijn

12 Apr 45 – Atherwedl is now part of Wehl

02 May 45 – Tinaarlo is now called Tynaarlo

02 May 45 – Zeien is now called Zeijen

### **Maps**

The condition of the maps in the Museum is varied. There are maps included with the Appendices of the War Diary. These can be viewed on line via the Library and Archives Canada website. A number of maps have been sourced on line.

### **Maps of Holland**

The following are the maps used by the Westminster Regiment in Holland.

Sheet 2 – Utrecht, 1:100,000

Sheet 2A & 3A – Walcheren – Amsterdam, 1:250,000

Sheet 5 – ‘S Hertogenbosch, 1:100,000

Sheet 5 S.W. – Tiel, 1:25,000

Sheet 6 N.W. – Arnhem, 1:25,000

Sheet 12 – Assen, 1:50,000

Sheet 42 – Thielt, 1:50,000

Sheet L1 – Emden, 1:100,000

Sheet PI – W – Bocholt, 1:100,000

## WAR DIARY

THE WESTMINSTER REGT (MOTOR)

### Legend

A/A	Anti-aircraft	DSO	Distinguished Service Order
Ack-ack	Anti-aircraft fire	EME	Electrical and Mechanical Engineers
Adjt	Adjutant	est	established
AFW 3008	Army Form War - Field Return of Officers	Fd	Field
AFW 3009	Army Form War – Field Return of Other Ranks	Flak	Anti-aircraft fire
Appen	Appendix	FOO	Forward Observation Officer
Appx	Appendix	Fus	Fusiliers
Apr	April	Gen	General
Armd	Armoured	GGHG	Governor General’s Horse Guards
Arty	artillery	GOC	General Officer Commanding
A/T or A/Tk	Anti-tank	Gp	Group
Att	attached	GS	General Service
Aux	Auxiliary	H/Capt	Honorary Captain
B	Bravo and also European time (London being A (alpha) time)	HE	High Explosive
B vehicle	Non fighting vehicle	Hrs	hours
BCD	British Columbia Dragoons	Inf	infantry
Bde	Brigade	in.	inch
Belg	Belgian	infm	information
Bn	Battalion	IO	Intelligence Officer
Brig	Brigadier	IS9	Intelligence Section 9 (British)
Bty	Battery	Jerry	Common term for the German enemy
CAB	Canadian Armoured Brigade	Jul	July
CAD	Canadian Armoured Division	Jun	June
Capt	Captain	Junc	Junction
cas	casualties	K of C	Knights of Columbus
CBH	Cape Breton Highlanders	KOYLI	Kings Own Yorkshire Light Infantry
CIB	Canadian Infantry Battalion	LCA	Landing Craft Assault
C-in-C	Commander in Chief	LdSH	Lord Strathcona’s Horse
Cdn	Canadian	Lieut	Lieutenant
CFN	Canadian Forces Netherlands	LO	Liaison Officer
CFEF	Canadian Far East Force	Lt	Lieutenant
COF	Canadian Occupational Force	M	Motor
Comd(s)	Command - Commanders	Maj	Major
Comn (s)	communication (s)	Mar	March
coy	company	MC	Military Cross
cm	centimetre	MG	Machine Gun
Cpl	Corporal	Mk	Mark
CSM	Company Sergeant Major	Mins	minutes
cwt	a hundred weight	MMG	Medium Machine Gun
DAA & QMG	Deputy Assistant Adjutant and Quartermaster General	MO	medical officer
DF	Defensive Fire	MR	map reference
Div	Division	NBH	New Brunswick Hussars (Princess Louise)

## WAR DIARY

### THE WESTMINSTER REGT (MOTOR)

O	orders	Ser	Service
OBE	Order of the British Empire	Sgt	Sergeant
OCTU	Officer Cadet Training Unit	Sht	Sheet
Offr(s)	Officer(s)	SP	self propelled
Op	Operation	Sp	support
Para	Parachute	Sq	square (reference map)
Pdr	Pounder	SS	Schutzstaffel – German unit
PG	Panzer Grenadier	SS PG	Schutzstaffel Panzer Grenadier – German unit
Pl	platoon	Stonk	a bombardment with Artillery fire
Posn(s)	position(s)	Straths	Strathconas (LdSH)
Pr	pounder	SW	Southwest
QM	Quarter Master	Tac	Tactical
RCE	Royal Canadian Engineers	Tech	Technical
RCEME	Royal Canadian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers	u/c	Under command
Recce	reconnoitre	UK	United Kingdom
Regt	Regiment	US	United States
RHQ	Regimental Headquarters	Veh	vehicle
RN	Royal Navy	V.G.	Volksgrenadier
SIW	self-inflicted wound	V1	Germany Rocket
Sig	Signals	WR	West Riding
SP	self propelled	2 i/c	Second in command
Sp	support		
RSM	Regimental Sergeant Major		