S-E-C-R-E-T

HEADQUARTERS ARS/ejm

87TH CAVALRY RECONNAISSANCE SQUADRON MECHANIZED

A.P.O. #257, U.S. ARMY

AFTER ACTION REPORT

FOR THE MONTH OF OCTOBER, 1944

As of 0001, 1 October 1944, Troop B was attached to CCB, Troop D to CCA, and the remainder of the Squadron was in bivouac just west of Duerne, with orders to move to De Rips in the morning. At 0744 Troop C crossed the IP on the march to De Rips and at 0909, squadron minus, less Trains, closed in bivouac there. The same morning, the Squadron commander was called to Division, and upon his return he alerted Troop A for a new mission. This mission consisted in protecting the rear of Division Headquarters along the canal Southwest of St. Antonis, while maintaining liason with Division troops on the right west flank and with CCA on the left East flank. After a personal reconnaissance of the terrain, the troop commander, Captain JOHN W. WELLS, JR., moved the troops up to the canal and reported in position at 1900.

Meanwhile, Troop C was given the mission of patrolling the road from De Rips to Duerne[[1]](#footnote-1), to insure against infiltration by enemy patrols. This mission continued until 1120 the next day, when Troop C was attached to CCR and a platoon of Company F took over the patrolling mission.

In the evening of the 2nd while the remainder of Troop A was continuing its security mission, one platoon from that Troop supplemented by elements from Squadron Headquarters and commanded by the Squadron Executive Officer, Major CHARLES A. CANNON, JR., established an ambush southwest of Duerne. This ambush reported in position at 2130, and returned to Squadron Headquarters at 0430 next morning reporting no enemy seen.

At 0700 on the 3rd, Troop B returned to Squadron control, and at 1041 closed in bivouac vicinity of Squadron Headquarters, taking over the Duerne patrol. The patrols continued all day, and in the evening one platoon from Troop B plus elements of Squadron Headquarters commanded by Lieutenant Colonel VINCENT L. BOYLAN, set up an ambush in the vicinity of Liesel. This ambush likewise failed to trap any enemy.

Throughout the 4th and 5th, patrolling continued without change until 1630 on the 5th, when Troop B was assigned the mission of protecting road blocks on the Division North flank, in the area vacated by CCB. Company F then took over the Duerne patrols.

On the morning of the 6th Major CANNON lead a patrol made up of elements of Troop A and Squadron Headquarters East toward the canal on a reconnaissance mission with the added purpose of conducting Bazooka training. This patrol engaged the enemy at 683271, killing

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one and capturing 23. While they were gone, at 1100, Troop B was relieved of the Road Block mission and closed in bivouac at 1150, taking over the Duerne patrols.

In the afternoon Colonel RICHARD B. EVANS (C.O. Div. Tns.) and Lieutenant Colonel CHARLES E. LEYDECKER (Div. G-3) visited the C.P. from 1500 to 1630 and assigned the mission of patrolling the Division MSR from Duerne (exclusive) to Asten (exclusive). Troop B left one platoon at 684271, to observe enemy action in that area, and with the remainder of the Troop moved out on the new mission. Company F again took over the Duerne Patrols.

Just before noon on the 7th the C.O. was called to Division and sent back a warning order to prepare to move. 1310 head of the column moved out, and at 1830 Squadron Headquarters closed in bivouac ½ km north east of Zommeren[[2]](#footnote-2), with Company F, Headquarters and Service Troop, and Trains.

Meanwhile, at noon the Troop B platoon at 684271 engaged enemy forces at 690269 and drove them back, thus securing a good position at the corner of the canal, from which enemy activity, dug-in positions, and pill-boxes could be observed. They held this position for approximately three hours, then were driven back by heavy enemy mortar and anti-tank fire, losing one armored car. They returned to their original position and held there until ordered to rejoin the remainder of the Squadron at Zommeren.

Early next morning, 8 October, troops A and B were attached to CCB, and formed parts of two task forces organized by the combat command. At 1300, Troop C returned to Squadron control, and with one platoon of Company F attached, was given the mission of providing security for the 440th Armored Field Artillery, vicinity Behelp. This situation remained generally the same, with Troop C pushing patrols generally to the South and East, until 1535 on the 11th, when Troop C was relieved of this security mission and moved to Meijel with the mission of driving out small enemy pockets and patrols and reporting all enemy activity in that area. Company F less one platoon then took over the security of the 440th, remaining platoon providing security for Squadron Headquarters.

In an effort to provide recreation for the troops, movies were shown in the Trains area next to Squadron Headquarters throughout this period and up to the 20th of the month, using the maintenance tent as a theatre. Special Services furnished films, and the Squadron used its own projector and operators, permitting such personnel as could be spared to attend the shows.

On the morning of the 12th, Troop C returned to the vicinity of Behelp with the mission of patrolling the area between the Ospel-Meijel Road and the Canal Du Nord, and the same evening Troop C, Troop A, and Company F (less one platoon) were attached to CCR. This

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left only Squadron Headquarters and Trains at Zommeren, with one platoon from Company F for security.

For a little more than a week, the 87th was a squadron without a troop, then on the evening of the 20th, new operations instructions were received. These instructions assigned to the squadron the mission of establishing a counter reconnaissance screen along the line Liesel, Meijel, Nederweert, and returned troops A, B, C, Company F(-) to Squadron control as of 211200, with responsibility for sector effective same time. A meeting of troop commanders and staff was called at 2000, at which time a verbal order was issued dividing the sector into three zones, with Troop B in the North from Liesel to Heitract[[3]](#footnote-3), Troop C in the central zone including Meijel, and Troop A in the South from a point opposite Stokers Horst on down to Nederweert. Company F was charged with the security of Squadron Headquarters and the 440th. Troop D remained attached to CCA.

At daybreak on the 21st, each troop sent patrols to reconnoiter its zone, and by 1330 the counter-reconnaissance screen was in position, with one platoon of Company F securing Squadron Headquarters 3 km Southeast of Asten on the Asten Meijel Road and the remainder of the company furnishing security for the 440th.

For the next few days there was little activity excepting during the hours of darkness, when our own patrols and enemy patrols were both active. Since the enemy held a wide strip of ground West of the canal, getting across was no problem for them. Our patrols, however, had to slip through the enemy lines to reach the canal, and although the enemy was alert and the patrols were not always able to get through, enough did get through to perform reconnaissance of banks, locks, and bridge-sites. All along the line, listening-posts were pushed forward under cover of darkness and were withdrawn before daylight, and several enemy patrols were detected and driven back.

General LINDSEY MC D. SILVESTER visited the CP at 1130 on the 22nd, and on the 23rd, Lieutenant General O'CONNOR (Commanding General British VIII Corps.) visited the CP on a tour of inspection.

At 0900 the following day, Troop D was released to Squadron control, closing in bivouac with Squadron headquarters at 1215. During the afternoon, Troop D officers reconnoitered the Northern zone and at 1712 the troop moved out to relieve Troop B. The relief was complete at 1950, and late that night Troop B closed in bivouac in the area just vacated by Troop D.

During the same day, civilians suddenly began to leave Meijel in large numbers. Efforts were made to determine the cause of their sudden decision to leave, but although it appeared that the Burgomaster had advised them to leave, the only reason offered was that they were afraid of the enemy artillery. Troop C spent the day improving their positions, while increased enemy activity was reported all along the front.

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In the Troop A zone, Lieutenant GEORGE D. MONAGHAN led a twelve-man patrol, consisting of two sections with six men in each, down to the canal one-half mile from Nederweert. The advance section had small arms and radio, the rear section, mortar and machinegun. This patrol ran into an ambush, was cut in two, pinned by fire, and only one man from the second section escaped. The first section escaped by crawling approximately 1000 yards on their bellies in a small ditch less than a foot deep.

Early in the morning of the 26th Troop C intercepted a three-man enemy patrol, and killed one through the others escaped. Troop B was in reserve, working on maintenance and resupply, with the Squadron staff coordinating the servicing of the troop in an effort to get it finished promptly so that the men might get some rest.

From 1600 to 1745, approximately 130 rounds of enemy artillery fell in the Troop D area, especially along the Liesel-Meijel Road. Troop A reported a 150-man column moving West from Stokers Horst, and adjusted artillery fire on it. Numerous civilians' reports of enemy men and vehicles were received. During the night, listening posts reported sounds of enemy motor and horse-drawn vehicles across the canal, and in the vicinity of Stokers Horst, tank movement and the sound of a motorboat were reported.

At about 0610, a heavy enemy artillery preparation began along the entire front within the Squadron zone, accompanied by increasing small-arms fire. By 0630 it was becoming increasingly apparent that the small-arms fire was coming from West of the canal, and by 0645 this fact was definitely established. Then at about 0700 the artillery slackened.

The town of Meijel was lightly held by the headquarters platoon of Troop C plus one platoon of assault guns from Troop E – a total of 43 men. Visibility was limited to about fifty yards because of a heavy morning mist. Then a few minutes after the artillery stopped, a German officer suddenly stood up about 40 yards from the defensive position, shouting orders. Immediately about 200 enemy soldiers stood up all around him and behind him, and began to attack. They came in three waves, standing up, and they appeared to be drunk or doped. The defenders held their fire until the first wave was within thirty yards, then opened up with every available weapon. The two assault guns were in the line, blasting away at ranges of 60, 50, and even 40 yards. All of the first and second wave were either killed or wounded excepting a few who filtered around the flanks, but the third wave came in throwing hand grenades, and they over-ran the position and gained the houses, from which they opened fire.

Meanwhile, the flank platoon had been called in to support, but as the enemy attack continued the position became untenable and at 0830 it was decided to withdraw and try to save the vehicles.

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About a quarter of a mile out of town, the troop was met by Major CANNON, followed closely by Troop B. The reserve troop formed a defensive line through which Troop C withdrew, then both troops parked their vehicles and organized for a counter-attack. At 0930 Lieutenant Colonel BOYLAN arrived and took command, pushing the attack off at 1010, with the two troops astride the road – C on the North and B on the South – and all four assault guns in support. The two troops pushed ahead side by side until Troop B reached the Eastern edge of the woods just West of Meijel. Here, at the edge of a 500 yard open field, Troop B was stopped by automatic weapons, small arms, artillery, and mortars. They held at the edge of the woods, and Troop C pushed some distance farther, but was forced back to a point on line with Troop B. With the arrival of the light tank company (F/87), Troop C organized for another attack along the same 200 yard front North of the Asten Meijel road. On this attack, the first platoon of the tank company swung wide to the left, protecting the left flank, while the second proceeded down the road, peeling off to the left in direct support, and the third followed down the road in local reserve. The flanking platoon took some prisoners, and one tank from the 2nd platoon was sent over to take them back. On the way across, it was hit by bazooka fire from the rear and knocked out. One after another, three tanks from the first platoon were knocked out in the same way, so that only the platoon leader, Lieutenant ALBERT D. BRYANT, and one other tank were left. These two pushed on into the woods vicinity Hof, and never came back. Meanwhile, two of the remaining tanks of the 2nd platoon were knocked out in rapid succession by an anti-tank weapon, and the attack again fell back to the line from which it started.

At this time, a high explosive shell burst near the Squadron Commander, and the commanders of Troop C and Company F. Captain JOSEPH L. RAMSEY was wounded by flying steel fragments, and replaced. Lieutenant RICHARD MONTGOMERY suffered from the concussion and also had to be relieved. Lieutenant FRED A. LEWELLEN was placed in command of Troop C and organized five ten-man bazooka teams to make a coordinated attack with the remaining tanks. The remaining tank platoon was short one tank, so one of the two remaining tanks from the second platoon was attached, and the five tanks, commanded by Lieutenant CHARLES G. GOOD, moved out supported by ten dismounted men each. The objective was a hedgerow North of the road and just outside the town. This objective was no more than reached, and the men had not yet had time to dig in when a heavy caliber anti-tank gun opened up, and two tanks were burning. Two of the tanks withdrew behind a house South of the road, and the third returned to the shelter of the woods; this left the dismounted men without tank support, under a hail of artillery, mortar, automatic weapons, small arms, and direct HE fire. Lieutenant CARL F. COOKE had been killed, and under heavy fire with their positions threatened on all sides the men became confused and fell back more or less in disorder.

CCR had assumed responsibility for the sector at 1300, but the

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87th continued to bear the brunt of the attack until 1610, when the 48th Armored Infantry Battalion arrived, passing through Troop C and Troop B positions. Troop B withdrew to their right rear flank as ordered. Then enemy tanks and artillery appeared from the South end of town and proceeded up the road, directing a hail of machinegun fire against the positions on either side. When these positions fell back, Troop B withdrew under heavy fire from the front and from the left flank.

The remaining light tanks from Company F resisted briefly, the company commander's gunner bouncing four rounds 37mm AP off the leading tank, but lieutenant GOOD'S tank was promptly knocked out and further resistance was clearly useless. Nevertheless, Lieutenant ROBERT C. OSTDICK refused to leave with the rest, and was left behind.

Under cover of darkness, both troops reorganized, and troop C moved to protect the left flank of Company C, 48th AIB, North of the road. The 1st platoon was tied in with the infantry, the 2nd platoon pushed forward, and the 3rd turned back to protect the extended North flank. Troop B was sent back and across the Willem Canal at bridge 613054 into the Troop A zone, to outpost the Ospel-Meijel Road.

In the Northern zone, held by Troop D, enemy infantry attacked at 0700 enemy infantry attacked in the vicinity of Heitrack; Troop Headquarters was moved up in support of this section of the line, and the attack angled off to the South toward Neerkant, where a simultaneous attack was in progress. At this point the line was seriously threatened, but prompt artillery support plus intensive use of small arms stopped the enemy 100 yards in front of the defensive positions. In answer to a call for support, Lieutenant Colonel JOHN P. WEMPLE arrived at 0830 with one company of medium tanks, one of light, and one of Tank Destroyers. Troop D was then attached to this force, which in turn was a part of CCB. One platoon of mediums was placed with the third platoon near Neerkant, one with the Troop E assault guns at Heitract, and one North of Heitract. The light tank company was in general support in the woods North of Heitract but was almost immediately moved out to provide security for the 440th. The Tank Destroyer company was split up to cover avenues of approach and provide protection against enemy armor.

About noon, a Troop D M8 armored car was hidden behind haystacks and buildings at the Hoogebrug road junction, when three tiger tanks moved slowly down the road, about 300-400 yards apart. The armored car allowed the first Tiger to pass, and then from a range of approximately 15 yards, pumped six rounds of 37mm AP into the rear of the tank. The tank was ditched, and the crew abandoned it. At least one member of the crew was killed as he fled. Meanwhile, the second Tiger continued up the road toward the junction, and the third swung off to the North to flank the armored car. The armored car escaped when the Tiger was within 200 yards. Later in the afternoon three TD's and one medium were sent to get a Tiger; three TD's and one medium were lost.

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Task Force Wemple held until 1645, when a strong enemy force estimated at 20 large tanks, supported by infantry, approached Neerkant from the Southeast. C/48 had moved one platoon East of Neerkant and when the attack came this platoon was cut off along with the third platoon of D/87. One of the supporting mediums was knocked out and the remainder withdrew. The enemy took Neerkant but the Infantry filtered back Southwest to rejoin their company and the reconnaissance platoon filtered back to the Northwest. The line held by D/87 at nightfall swung generally North from Heitrack, which was also in enemy hands by this time.

In the Southern zone, on the morning of the 27th, Troop A was holding the line Stokers Horst – Nederweert, West of Canal Du Nord, with a series of strong points consisting of about eight men each, each point having one light machine gun, and about half having mortars (50 mm and 60 mm). The distance between points was 500, 600, and in one case 800 yards; positions were changed from time to time. Seven men from the maintenance section were securing the bridge across the Willem Canal at 613054, and the maintenance Armored car plus six men from Troop E were holding the road-block on the West side of the canal about ½ mile out of Nederweert. During the night, the enemy moved up dismounted men, and at dawn laid down a heavy artillery barrage. This barrage was laid chiefly on Nederweert and along the banks of the Willem Canal; probably the reason more was not laid on Troop positions was that enemy infantry was too close to permit it. Immediately after bombardment, attacks began in the vicinity of Budschop and Kreijel Nieuw en Winnerstraat. In at least one case the enemy was led by a civilian, and in another case the enemy infiltrated through between the strong points and appeared behind them in British and American uniforms, attracting the attention of Lieutenant WILLIAM H. MCMILLAN and shooting him when he exposed himself. The troop was forced to withdraw to the North, where the men from the strong-points were reassembled and a new line organized. At dusk, task force Nelson from CCA, consisting of 1 Company medium tanks, 1 platoon TD's and one 25-man infantry platoon arrived at bridge across Willem Canal (613054). By 0200 the infantry were in place in the line, but the vehicles remained West of the bridge.

Troop B arrived at midnight, but due to the dispositions of friendly and enemy troops in the area, it was impossible to reach the Ospel Meijel Road with vehicles. The troop commander personally made a dismounted reconnaissance, then dismounted the troop and outposted a portion of the Horic[[4]](#footnote-4)-Meijel road. Even stretching both troops to the limit, however, a wide gap remained between this extended flank and the friendly positions along the Asten-Meijel road. Only swampy terrain and ignorance of this weakness barred the enemy's advance through the gap.

The morning of the 28th brought heavy enemy artillery fire in the sector West of Meijel. Troop C held its positions under this fire until 1000, when about 65 enemy came up in front of the 1st platoon. These were blasted back by artillery fire and assault guns. At 1600 the enemy made a determined attack along this whole front. The line held, except the 2nd platoon, which, being pushed forward

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was flanked on both sides. Moreover, heavy mortar fire caved in foxholes and filled carbines with dirt so that they failed to function. The platoon leader Lieutenant CHARLES A. ROBERTSON, JR, ordered his men to withdraw to a ditch between the 1st and 3rd platoons, while he personally covered their withdrawal with a machine gun. He was wounded at least once but continued firing; he was left behind, and never got back. The platoon (2nd) continued back past the ditch, and the 3rd extended South to close gap. Enemy tanks and infantry over-ran this line, but the troops held their positions and remained through the night although some enemy had got through behind them.

In the Northern zone, the 1st platoon of Troop D had repelled an aggressive enemy patrol during the night, with casualties on both sides. At daylight, the platoon leader's light tank (substitute for M8 Armored Car) was knocked out by an 88, and when a section from the second platoon arrived to support, the armored car of the platoon sergeant who was leading the section was also hit by 88mm fire and burned. Enemy tanks and infantry continued to advance, and Troop D was driven back to the vicinity of Liesel, where the 1st platoon was relieved by Company D 31st Tank Battalion. At this point companies A and C of the 23rd Infantry attacked astride the road, and as night fell Troop D outposted a line from C/48 at Huize De Werf to 23rd AIB near Heitrack.

In the Southern sector, dawn of the 28th brought more enemy attacks, and the second platoon Troop A was isolated. About 0900, Lieutenant Colonel MENTE announced that Troop A was attached to CCA and that Captain NELSON would be in command in that sector. With the help of tanks, the 2nd platoon was extricated, the lines shortened, and the infantry (which had withdrawn) was placed back in position. The tanks were withdrawn, and Captain WELLS moved the assault guns in to replace them and provide support. Troop B maintained throughout the day its positions along the Horick-Meijel road. During the night, the tanks were again withdrawn to the West side of the canal.

It should be noted that during the day a regiment of British twenty-five pounders moved into position near squadron headquarters, lending excellent support. The role of artillery was a major one on both sides throughout the entire action.

During the same night, Troop C reorganized and sent one full T/O platoon to protect the right South flank of the 48th, which was astride the Asten Meijel road. The remainder of the troop, supported by the surviving tanks of Company F, protected the left North flank. In the morning, a considerable gap existed between this flank and the right South flank of Troop D, but by noon the tanks had swung North and contacted the adjoining troop, thus forming a continuous line which was held until relieving units took over. Troop D was able to establish a forward OP from which artillery could be adjusted, and six Tigers were seen to burn. Typhoons were also requested, but when the planes arrived, they accidentally straffed and rocketted the 1st platoon of Troop C, which narrowly escaped casualties. Troop D was

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pulled out of the line at 2030; Troop C remained in its positions on either flank of the 48th until after midnight, when relief arrived.

Troops A and B maintained their positions without further support, despite considerable enemy activity; they were not relieved with the Squadron, but continued their missions under CCA.

When relief of the squadron (less Troops A and B) was complete, Squadron Headquarters moved to an assembly area just West of Maarheeze beginning the march at 0300 and closing in bivouac with Trains, Troops C and D, and Company F at 0600. It was hoped that there would be time for maintenance, rest, and reorganization, but at 2300 the same night the Squadron was again alerted for movement.

Still under CCR control, the Squadron moved out at 0300 on the 31st, with the mission of outposting Nederweert and a portion of the adjoining canal. The zone was divided, with Troop C responsible for the Northern portion and Troop D the South; an attached company from the 203rd, Anti-aircraft Artillery Battalion was divided between them, as was the tank company. Each established four strong points of various strengths, and a Squadron reserve was maintained to reinforce any of these units if need be.

Squadron CP was set up in Nederweert at 0600, and soon after daylight all strong points reported in position. Later in the day, Troop B was released to Squadron control, and the troop less one platoon was called to the Reserve. One platoon was used for local security in the town of Nederweert.

During the day, the town was shelled by enemy artillery, but the CP remained in the City Hall opposite the Church. At 1730, Company C, 23rd AIB moved in and reinforced the strong points for the night. Though the enemy continued to shell the town intermittently through the night, no attack came.

For the Squadron Commander:

(signed)

ARTHUR R. SLADE

Captain, Cavalry

Unit Historian

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HEADQUARTERS

87TH CAVALRY RECONNAISSANCE SQUADRON MECHANIZED

A.P.O. #257, U.S. ARMY

2 December 1944

SUBJECT: After Action Report, Month of November, 1944

To : The Adjutant General, Washington 25, D. C. (Through Channels)

## 1 Nov 44

As of 0001, 1 November 1944, the 87th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron Mechanized (less Troop A, Attached to CCA), was attached to CCR in the vicinity of Nederweert, Holland. At nightfall the previous evening, the Squadron (-) had been reinforced by Company B, 23rd Armored Infantry Battalion, and with attachments occupied positions as shown on the attached overlay (page 2). The morning was misty, visibility poor. By 0830, the mist had thinned enough so that the reinforcing infantry was released, all elements leaving the line by ten o'clock. At 1407, Troop C reported that civilians in that area were moving back, under orders from the Germans to clear the area for three kilometers back from the canal. About an hour later, mortar shells began to land in the Troop C area, at 1527 artillery concentrations hit the Reserve Area and smoke shells landed in front of Rest and Diddle. However, no attack came. The CP in Nederweert was shelled intermittently all day. Promptly at 1630, Company C, 23 AIB arrived at the road junction one-quarter mile West of the church, and by 1800 had been guided into the positions occupied by B/23 during the previous night. There was evidence of considerable enemy activity across the canal, and during the night both Troop C and Troop D called for several artillery concentrations on points where fire or noise betrayed enemy positions.

2 Nov 44

At 0800 relief of the Squadron by the 23rd AIB began, continuing until 1143, when the last elements of Troop C were relieved. Squadron Headquarters remained in Neederweert[[5]](#footnote-5) until about 1300, and upon release by CCR moved to a bivouac area just East of Maarheeze, closing in at 1417. Vehicles were serviced, and that same night a new mission was received. The Squadron was to secure and outpost the Canal Du Nord progressively as CCA cleared the area North of that canal, Troop A to take the first sector cleared, and to revert to Squadron control upon reporting in position.

3 Nov 44

At 0700, the 87th reverted to Division Control. At 0800 Squadron (-) moved from bivouac to Maarheeze to an assembly area Southeast of Zommeren (606106), where the troops remained alert awaiting movement orders for the new mission. The decision to move

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[MAP showing the following positions]

[A/87]

[TIRED]

[DIDDLE]

[REST]

[WILLING]

[RECOUP]

[JOY]

[FREEDOM]

[WEARY]

SITUATION IN CCR SECTOR

as of 31 Oct. 1944

MAP-1/100,000

SHEET 5

LEGEND CCR

TIRED

Rcn Sec

DIDDLE

1/B/23

Rcn Sec

2 Lt Tks

REST

Rcn Sec

1 Rifle Sqd) -2/B/23

1 MG Sqd )

WILLING

2/B/23 (- Dets)

Rcn Sec

2 Lt Tks

1 AG

RECOUP

AA Sec

Rcn Sec

1 Rifle Sqd- 3/B/23

JOY

Rcn Sec

AA Sec

1 AG

3/B/23 (-Dets)

FREEDOM

Rcn Plat

AA Sec

81mm Sqd -3/B/23

CCR RES

A.C.

3 Tks

AG

A.C. Sec

Amb

AA Sec

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was not made until 1631, when Squadron (-) moved to the new area. Troop A was already in position, and under cover of darkness Troops B and D moved in so that the three troops occupied the line Budschop--Waatskamp. The Squadron CP was established in Ospel, with Troop C and Company F in reserve.

4 Nov 44

During the night there was occasional mortar-fire in vicinity Squadron CP, and as soon as it was light, Troop D reported many mines in their area. Anti-personnel mines were found strewn along the shoulders of roads and trails, and in many of the fields. Some AT mines were also discovered, most of them having been removed by the Engineers. At 1035, Troop C was given the mission to take over, secure, and outpost ground taken by Task Force BROWN, and at 1145 Troop A reverted to Squadron reserve and moved to vicinity of Squadron CP. Then at 1230 Squadron was again attached to CCR.

At 1330 Troop B reported trouble with mines and requested engineers to clear area. Later, at 1410, the same troop reported one killed, two wounded and one quarter-ton destroyed by mines. As more reports of mines came in, a warning was broadcast to all troops to warn their men that in all areas where AT mines were found, AP mines should also be expected.

By 1430 Troop C was in position, but not quite abreast of the other troops, as the infantry had not finished clearing the area along the canal. Later in the evening, however, Troop C moved into position on the left flank of troop D. This was completed by 2025.

During the evening, listening posts reported amber flares, sounds of track vehicles, and at 2100 Troop D reported that a 6-man enemy patrol crossed the canal at the blown bridge 629099. The troop outpost there opened fire, killing or wounding two, and driving the rest back. The remainder of the night was quiet except for occasional shelling.

5 Nov 44

Little activity during the morning. There was occasional enemy mortar-fire, and forward observers placed artillery on suspected enemy positions. At 1100, one platoon of TD's was attached to Squadron and held in mobile reserve after reconnaissance in Squadron Zone. At 1345 Troop D reported assigned area checked and cleared of mines. One platoon of 105mm assault guns from the 17th Tank Battalion was attached to the Squadron, and one gun attached to each troop for direct support.

At nightfall listening posts were again established along the canal, but the night passed quietly excepting for one five-man enemy patrol which approached Troop D's position, exchanged fire, and was driven back. One Troop D man was wounded.

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S E C R E T

6 Nov 44

Little activity. At about 1930 the enemy set fire to a house south of the canal by firing a machine gun into it. Rapid combustion indicated that the house had been prepared for burning. At about the same time, a Troop A quarter-ton hit an AT mine at 643005. Listening posts reported one flare shortly after midnight, and some vehicular movement was heard; otherwise no activity was reported during the night.

7 Nov 44

At 0958 Troop C reported contact with Company A, 48th Armored Infantry Battalion, and at noon the Engineers arrived to clear the Troop C area. Intermittent enemy mortar and artillery fire continued through the day, while numerous officers from the 112th British Brigade visited the CP to arrange relief. While relieving units were moving into position, enemy patrols were active in the Troop A and Troop B sectors. All troops reported the British in position by 0400 (8 Nov 44).

8 Nov 44

At 0715, the first elements of Troop C moved out to temporary assembly area South of Maarheeze, squadron closing in at 1145. While in this area, movement orders were prepared for the march to Margraten, Holland.

9 Nov 44

At 0900 Squadron moved out on the march to Margraten. As the column moved South, the beating rain changed to snow. All troops had closed in their respective areas by 1418, and vehicles were completely serviced by 1628. Squadron CP was set up in the town of Margraten.

10 Nov 44 to 21 Nov 44 (inclusive)

The entire day of 10 November 1944 was set aside for maintenance of men, equipment and vehicles, a perimeter defense was set up tying in with CCB and CCR and in compliance with Division Order the following day was designated as a day of rest for the troops. During the remainder of this period in Margraten, training and maintenance were carried on, showers and laundry provided, and for recreation there were movies and passes to Maestrict[[6]](#footnote-6). On the 21st the Squadron was alerted for movement to a new assembly area.

22 Nov 44

At 1130 the head of the Squadron column moved out on the march to the new assembly area just Northeast of Heerlan[[7]](#footnote-7). Troops D and B continued directly to the assembly areas of CCA and CCB respectively, both troops being attached to combat commands effective upon arrival in the new area. The remainder of the squadron closed in the Squadron Assembly Area at 1615, with Squadron Headquarters, Headquarters

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and Service Troop, and Company F in Palemburg[[8]](#footnote-8), and Troop C in Kakert[[9]](#footnote-9), and Troop A in Nieuwenhagen[[10]](#footnote-10).

23 Nov 44 to 30 Nov 44, Inclusive

The new area included excellent terrain for range work and small unit problems, and throughout the remainder of the month full advantage was taken of this opportunity to train replacements in their new jobs, and to further train the old men. Maintenance was continued, and the problem of resupply pushed toward completion. At the same time, the staff studied the terrain and enemy information in an assigned sector, and worked on plans for a probable future operation.

(signed)

VINCENT L. BOYLAN

Lieutenant Colonel, Cavalry

Commanding

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1. Deurne [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Someren [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Heitrak [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Horik [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Nederweert [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Maastricht [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Heerlen [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Palenberg, Germany [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. C/87 Morning Reports gave "Karket, Holland VK7858" on 22 Nov - 8 Dec, inclusive. This was amended in the 9 Dec Morning Report to " Schaesberg, Holland VK7858" with the text: " Station since 22 Nov 44 should have read: Schaesberg, Holland." [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Nieuewenhagen, Holland [↑](#footnote-ref-10)