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1 AIRBORNE DIVISION

REPORT ON OPERATION MARKET

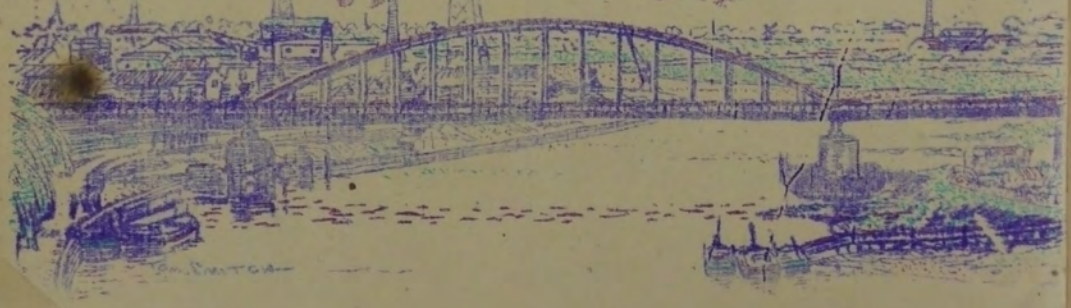
PARTS I. - III.

1 AIRBORNE DIVISION

REPORT ON OPERATION "MARKET"

ARNHEM

17-26 SEPT. 1944



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1 AIRBORNE DIVISION

REPORT ON OPERATION 'MARKET'.

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PART I. SECRET.

GENERAL OUTLINE OF OPERATIONS.

Reference attached G.S.G.S. Map of ARNHEM area.

SITUATION PRIOR TO THE OPERATION.

1. By mid-September, 1944, SECOND BRITISH Army had reorganised after their rapid advance to the BELGIAN frontier and were ready for further advances.

The intention of SECOND Army was to advance north across the MAAS WAAL and NEDER RIJN, form a strong bridge-head north of ARNHEM and continue operations north into HOLLAND and east against the REICH. The main axis of the advance was to be EINDHOVEN - GRAVE - NIJMEGEN - ARNHEM. This axis was allotted to 30 Corps.

2. It was thought that the enemy must still be disorganised after his long and hasty retreat from south of the R. SEINE and that, though there might be numerous small bodies of enemy in the area, he would not be capable of organised resistance to any great extent.

3. It was known that, although the airfield at DEELEN 7285 was not in use, there was a very heavy concentration of flak in its vicinity and in ARNHEM itself.

OBJECT OF THE OPERATION.

4. The airborne force available consisted of :-

HQ British Airborne Corps
1 British Airborne Division
82 US Airborne Division
101 US Airborne Division
1 Polish Para Bde Group.

5. The task of the force was to capture and hold the crossings over the canals and rivers, which lay on 30 Corps' axis of advance from inclusive EINDHOVEN to inclusive ARNHEM.

6. The task of 1 Airborne Division (with 1 Polish Para Bde Gp under command) was to capture the bridges at ARNHEM and to establish a bridgehead round them, so that formations of 30 Corps and SECOND Army could pass through without delay on their advance northwards.

7. 82 (US) Airborne Division was to capture the crossings at NIJMEGEN and GRAVE and to hold the high ground between NIJMEGEN and GROESBEEK. HQ British Airborne Corps was to land with 82 (US) Airborne Division.

8. 101 (US) Airborne Division were allotted the task of seizing the bridges and defiles between EINDHOVEN and GRAVE.

PLANNING AND PREPARATION.

9. The first notification of the operation was received on 10 Sep 44, when a previous operation envisaging the capture of the bridges at ARNHEM, NIJMEGEN and GRAVE by 1 Airborne Division with 1 Polish Para Bde Gp

...../under

under command was cancelled. The information obtained for the cancelled operation was of considerable value when planning Operation MARKET.

10. At that time units of 1 Airlanding Bde and Divisional Troops were in transit camps beside the airfields of 38 and 46 Groups R.A.F. 1 and 4 Para Bdes, with parachute elements of Divisional Troops, were in normal locations in the GRANTHAM area, whence they could move direct to the northern group of airfields being used by the US 9th Troop Carrier Command. 21 Independent Para Coy were at the 38 Group R.A.F. Station at FAIRFORD, which was providing the pathfinder aircraft.

11. A tac Div HQ was established with HQ Airborne Corps at MOOR PARK.

12. The Divisional Commander issued his verbal orders to the Div 'O' Group at MOOR PARK at 1700 hours on 12 Sep 44. The same evening information was received that D Day would be 17 Sep 44.

13. Certain readjustments in transit camps, consequent on a fresh allotment of gliders and troops to airfields, were carried out on 12 Sep. Gliders were loaded, and briefing of troops began on 15 Sep.

14. On 14 Sep the Divisional Commander, accompanied by the CRA, visited the three Brigade Commanders and Commander 1st Polish Para Bde Gp and co-ordinated any outstanding points in the plan.

OUTLINE PLAN.

15. Although the plan is given in detail in the annexures in Part IV, it is appropriate to outline it here. The operation was to be carried out in three lifts on three consecutive days, weather permitting.

16. The availability of aircraft and gliders by lifts, and the troops to be carried in each lift, were as follows :-

(a) First Lift.

12 Pathfinder aircraft of 38 Group R.A.F. (Stirlings).

143 C.47 Parachute aircraft of US 9th Troop Carrier Command.

358 Tug aircraft of 38 and 46 Groups R.A.F. (Stirlings, Albemarles, Halifaxes and C.47s).
345 Horsa gliders.
13 Hamilcar gliders.

These carried :-

Tac Div HQ.
1 Airlanding Recce Sqn.
1 Airlanding Light Regt, RA.
1 A tk Bty, RA.
1 Para Sqn RE.
9 Fd Coy RE.
1 Para Bde.

...../1 Airlanding

1 Airlanding Bde (less certain sub-units).
16 Para Fd Ambulance.
181 Airlanding Fd Ambulance.

(b) Second Lift.

126 C.47 Parachute aircraft of US 9th Troop Carrier Command.
301 Tug aircraft of 38 and 46 Groups R.A.F.
284 Horsa gliders.
17 Hamilcar gliders.

These carried :-

4 Para Bde.
2 A tk Bty, RA.
One Bty 1 Airlanding Light Regt, RA.
4 Para Sqn RE.
133 Para Fd Ambulance.
Balance of Divisional Troops and 1 Airlanding Bde.

Re-supply (35 aircraft).

(c) Third Lift.

114 C.47 Parachute aircraft of US 9th Troop Carrier Command.
35 Tug aircraft of 38 Group R.A.F.
35 Horsa gliders.

These carried :-

1 Polish Para Bde Gp (less its Light Bty).

17. In the first lift 1 Para Bde had as their first responsibility the capture of the main road bridge in ARNHEM, second priority the capture of the pontoon bridge at 736774. 1 Airlanding Bde were to protect the DZ and LZ areas until the arrival of the second lift on D + 1, then to concentrate and form a perimeter defence line on the western outskirts of ARNHEM.

18. 4 Para Bde, in the second lift, were to move eastwards and continue the perimeter line along the high ground just north of ARNHEM, linking up with 1 Para Bde on the main road ARNHEM - APELDOORN.

19. 1 Polish Para Bde Gp, in the third lift, were to land south of the river immediately opposite ARNHEM, cross the river by the main bridge and occupy a position on the eastern outskirts of ARNHEM.

20. It was thus intended to form a firm bridgehead round ARNHEM with a false front position and standing patrols pushed well out in front of the main position. The original plan is shown graphically in the trace attached to Annexure 'N', part IV.

21. All landings were to take place in daylight.

INITIAL FLIGHT AND LANDING.

22. The weather on Sunday morning, 17 Sep, was suitable although there was broken cumulus from 500 to 1500 or 2000 ft. This eventually cleared after passing over the

English coast and thereafter it was fine except for slight haze.

23. The route taken by 38 Group and 46 Group aircraft from their airfields in Oxfordshire and Gloucestershire, was first westwards over the Bristol Channel then, after a 180° turn back over the airfield area, to HATFIELD; thence north east to about ORFORD NESS, where the column crossed the coast.

24. Parachute aircraft from the 9th Troop Carrier Command airfields in the GRANTHAM area flew south east, and passed over the coast at the same place behind the glider force.

25. The air column crossed the Dutch Coast at a point on the island of OVER FLAKEE, then flew eastward, south of the river MAAS, to a point south of HERTOGENBOSCH, where the column for ARNHEM turned north east and crossed the rivers MAAS and NEDER RIJN. Very little flak was encountered, though rising columns of smoke in one or two places gave evidence of effective action by the escorting bombers and fighters.

26. Both gliders and parachute landings were accomplished practically without opposition, and almost 100% on the correct LZ and DZ commencing at 1300 hrs. Glider landings took place before the parachutists dropped. Casualties on the LZ and DZ were slight, concentration in rendezvous was quick and units moved off from 80% to 100% strong. The time taken to concentrate was below, and the high percentage arriving at rendezvous far greater than, anything so far achieved on any exercise or operation.

OPERATIONS OF THE FIRST LIFT UP TO 1500 hrs, 18 SEP.

27. The divisional operations up to 1500 hrs D + 1 were split into two separate parts :-

(a) The capture and holding of the north end of the main ARNHEM road bridge by elements of 1 Para Bde.

(b) The operations of that part of the Division, less 1 Para Bde, which landed in the first lift.

28. This split was inevitable owing to the necessity of dispersing the airlanding bns to guard the LZ and DZ for the second lift on D + 1.

29. The plan of Commander, 1 Para Bde was for 2 Para Bn to capture the bridge, moving via HEELSUM along the road running close to the north bank of the R. RHINE. This Bn to hold the south end of the bridge and the north end, facing west and north west. 3 Para Bn was to move via the road HEELSUM - ARNHEM to assist 2 Para Bn by approaching the bridge from the north, then to assist in holding the north end of the bridge by facing north east and east. 1 Para Bn was to move on orders of Bde HQ, when it was clear that 2 and 3 Para Bns were satisfactorily launched and was to occupy the high ground just north of ARNHEM.

...../The

The capture and holding of the north end of the ARNHEM bridge by elements of 1 Para Bde.

Action of 2 Para Bn on D Day.

30. By 1530 hours 17 Sep, 2 Para Bn had moved off from their rendezvous at HEELSUM 6477, with A Coy leading, along the road HEELSUM - OOSTERBEEK 7078 - ARNHEM. They advanced about two miles before meeting opposition in the form of MG and Mortar fire. This was circumvented by a move to the south and A Coy reached the railway about 712774 without further trouble. Here an armoured car and snipers caused some delay and casualties, but the directing of B Coy on to DER BRINK 7277 and its capture overcame these, and by 2030 hrs A Coy were occupying buildings close to the north end of the main bridge at 7477.

31. Shortly afterwards Lt. Col. J.D. FROST, OC 2 Para Bn, arrived with Bn HQ and HQ Coy and, later the same night, 1 Para Bde HQ also arrived, less however Brigadier G.W. Lathbury, the Brigade Commander, who had remained with 3 Para Bn.

32. C Coy, 2 Para Bn, had been detached to capture the railway bridge at 7076, but this was blown in their faces. They then tried to follow the rest of their battalion, but were surrounded in an hotel which the enemy blasted with tanks and SP guns. They were forced to break out and never re-formed.

Action of 3 and 1 Para Bns on D Day.

33. Meanwhile, 3 Para Bn and 1 Para Bn had moved off from their rendezvous by the following routes :-

(a) 3 Para Bn - Main rd UTRECHT - ARNHEM (UTRECHTSCHE WEG)

(b) 1 Para Bn - Main rd AMSTERDAM - ARNHEM (AMSTERDAMSCHE WEG)

34. 3 Para Bn's task was to assist 2 Para Bn in the capture of the main bridge and then establish a defensive position facing north east and east of ARNHEM. 1 Para Bn were to occupy the high ground in squares 7580 and 7279 so as to deny the enemy direct observation on to ARNHEM.

35. Both bns however, were held up by enemy opposition and by dark had not got beyond about x roads 690784 and Pt 23.2 (6879) respectively.

36. Both the Commander 1 Para Bde and Divisional Commander were with 3 Para Bn at this time as enemy action prevented their return to their own HQs.

Action of 2 Para Bn on D + 1.

37. Two attempts were made during the night 17/18 Sep to capture the south end of the bridge, the first by a platoon of A Coy, 2 Para Bn, attacking across the bridge, and the second by trying to send 1 Para Bde HQ Defence Platoon across the river by boat to attack the bridge from the south. Both, however, failed.

38. During the night 17/18 Sep about 1½

...../platoons

platoons of C Coy of 3 Para Bn managed to reach the bridge. At about 0500 hours on 18 Sep B Coy, 2 Para Bn, less one platoon and some casualties, also arrived at the bridge. Later in the morning a party of about 25 Sappers under Captain O'Callaghan also arrived. These were the last of 1 Para Bde to reach the area of the bridge. Lt. Col. J.D. FROST had by now assumed command of the whole force (comprising 2 Para Bn less C Coy with Bde HQ, some Sappers and elements of the Div Artillery assembled at the bridge).

39. During the morning enemy armoured vehicles tried to cross the bridge from south to north, a total of about 10 armoured cars and half tracks being accounted for - six by 6-pr anti tank guns and four by Ps.I.A.T. In the late afternoon a strong attack developed along the river bank from the east, supported by heavy mortar fire and two tanks. The attack was held after some houses to house fighting and at the expense of some casualties. Both tanks were knocked out, one by 6-pr and one by P.I.A.T.

40. Just before dark several of the houses occupied by 1 Para Bde were burnt down. After dark an attack from the south end of the bridge was repulsed.

41. During 18 Sep and thereafter the area occupied by 1 Para Bde was under continuous heavy mortar and artillery fire, in addition to special close range attacks by tanks and SP guns with a view to setting on fire and destroying the houses held by the force.

Action of 1 Para Bn on D + 1.

42. Meanwhile, during the night 17/18 Sep, both 3 and 1 Para Bns had disengaged from the enemy who had held them on their original routes. 3 Para Bn moved on to 2 Para Bn route and 1 Para Bn approximately on to 3 Para Bn route.

43. At 0100 hrs, 18 Sep, 1 Para Bn (less R Coy, which had suffered 50% casualties and whose whereabouts was not known) moved south with the object of linking up with 2 Para Bn via ARNHEM town. They had no communication with 1 Para Bde HQ.

44. The Battalion was held up in area road junction 709783, where efforts were made to dislodge the opposition.

45. At 0530 hrs a message from 2 Para Bn was received via the F.O.O. asking urgently for reinforcements. C.O. 1 Para Bn decided to by-pass the opposition to the south and move on to the bridge.

46. At 0700 hrs, en route to the bridge, the Battalion picked up HQ Coy of 3 Para Bn, which had become separated from its Battalion during a night march. Soon afterwards 1 Para Bn encountered the enemy in strength along the railway. It appeared that the enemy had now blocked entry to

ARNHEM from the west.

47. At 0900 hours a determined attack was put in to clear the opposition on DEN BRINK. It was supported by light artillery and the mortars and medium machine guns of HQ Coy, 3 Para Bn. This was partially successful.

48. Meanwhile, A Coy of 3 Para Bn (also parted from its Battalion during the night) joined 1 Para Bn. A further attack was put in with A Coy, 3 Para Bn, assisting. This attack was successful and the battalion reached just west of ELIZABETH Hospital 729779 where it was held up.

Action of 3 Para Bn on D + 1.

49. 3 Para Bn on the night of 17 Sep was held up in area of cross roads 690784, in an all round defensive position.

50. During the night there had been no wireless communication. It was decided by the Brigade Commander (who, with the G.O.C., was still with 3 Para Bn) and the C.O., to disengage the Battalion before first light and move south through OOSTERBEEK 7077 to the bridge.

51. By 0430 hours 18 Sep, the Bn had successfully disengaged and moved towards the bridge. No resistance was encountered until after crossing the railway where there was some sniping from the south. Finally the leading Company reached a point 300 yards west of ELIZABETH Hospital at 0630 hours. Here they came under heavy fire. It was then discovered that A Coy, HQ Coy and all the transport (including three out of four anti tank guns and the G.O.C's and Brigade Commander's wireless Jeeps) had become parted. They later joined 1 Para Bn, as has already been related.

52. There was no touch with the missing companies and it was decided to push on. A further 100 yards was made against opposition.

53. At 0900 hrs a German counter attack developed from ARNHEM and, from then until 1600 hrs, 3 Para Bn was attacked at frequent intervals.

54. At 1230 hrs wireless touch was re-gained with the missing 'A' Coy, who were then about to join in 1 Para Bn's attack in the area DEN BRINK. They were urged to get through together with the reserve ammunition, badly required at the bridge.

55. At 1430 hrs the remnants of 'A' Coy and the Bn Defence Platoon (30 - 40 men), under the sole surviving officer, arrived having suffered severe casualties in breaking through. No coherent information could be obtained as to what had happened to 1 Para Bn.

56. It was decided to move what existed of 3 Para Bn through the gardens and houses in the town in the direction of the bridge. At 1400 hrs the advance began. The strength then was about 130 - 140 all ranks.

...../57.

57. The G.O.C., Brigade Commander and Brigade I.O., who had moved into the town with this bn, as they were still unable to reach their H.Qs., went by the road leading to the ELIZABETH Hospital. On the way the Brigadier was wounded and had to be left in a cellar. The G.O.C. and I.O., had to remain hidden in a house until 0700 hrs the next morning, when they managed to get back to Div H.Q. in a jeep.

58. Meanwhile, 3 Para Bn were unable to make any progress and before dark they took up other positions in the houses, little more than 300 yards north of where the fighting had taken place all day.

The Operation of that part of the Division (other than 1 Para Bde) which landed in the First Lift.

59. As with 1 Para Bde, so the remainder of the first lift was quickly concentrated after landing and moved almost without opposition to occupy its pre-arranged positions.

Action of Div HQ on D day.

60. By 1430 hrs, 17 Sep, Div H.Q. had opened at 657799. The G.S.O.2(Int), B.M., R.A., and the Chief Clerk had force landed in the U.K. and came in a later lift. Shortly afterwards the two report centres, who had parachuted after the glider landings, joined up. Communication was established between the Commander's rover set and 1 Para Bde and 21 Indep Para Coy, but was shortly lost with 1 Para Bde.

61. There was intermittent firing in the woods around Div H.Q., and occasional salvoes of rocket-projected mortars, which had the effect of speeding up the digging of slit trenches.

62. The G.O.C. visited H.Q. 1 Airlanding Bde during the afternoon and, later, H.Q. 1 Para Bde and 3 Para Bn with whom, as already related, he spent the night.

63. 1 Airlanding Recce Sqn, less one troop, was to have attempted a 'coup de main' on the main bridge at ARNHEM, but found difficulty in assembling and this plan was abandoned. One troop was sent to assist 1 Para Bde and the remainder held in Div reserve and occupied a position in the woods south of REIJERSHEIDE 6781, with patrols east and west along the road ARNHEM - EDE.

64. Shortly after dark Div H.Q. moved into 4 gliders on the neighbouring L.Z. about 655798.

Action of 1 Air Landing Bde on D day.

65. Meanwhile, by 1600 hrs, 17 Sep, 1 Air Landing Bde H.Q. had opened at 664806. Units were disposed for the protection of the L.Z. and D.Z. for the second lift as follows :-

2 S. Staffords (less two coys).

REIJERS CAMP 6681

7 K.O.S.B.

PLANKEN WANDUIS 6683

1 Border

RENKUM 6276

These positions were held until the next morning.

66. After dark one platoon of 7 K.O.S.B. at 633839 were attacked repeatedly. Patrols of this Bn penetrated into EDE during the night. Otherwise the night passed almost without incident.

67. Communications so far had not worked well, particularly from Div H.Q. to 1 Para Bde with whom, except for one brief period, no wireless contact had been made.

Action of Div HQ and 1 Air Landing Bde on D + 1.

68. On the morning of 18 Sep the situation was unchanged in the Div H.Q. and Air Landing Bde area. At about 0700 hrs Div H.Q. moved to cross roads 665784, with a view to continuing eastwards later along its axis of advance.

69. At about 0820 hrs reports were received at Div H.Q. of enemy in HEELSUM and that one coy, 1 Border, had been surrounded, but as yet were not in serious difficulties. Such little information as came in indicated that 1 and 3 Para Bns were meeting very stiff opposition, as has been described, and that they were needing assistance.

70. As the G.O.C. had not returned from 3 Para Bn and no news of him had been received since 1800 hrs the previous evening, Brigadier Hicks, Commander, 1 Air Landing Bde, took over the duties of Acting Div Commander about 0915 hrs.

71. At 0930 hrs it was decided that 2 S.Staffords (who still had two coys and other elements to arrive in the second lift) should reinforce 1 and 3 Para Bns and assist them towards the bridge by advancing along the main road HEELSUM - ARNHEM.

72. During the morning the engagement by 1 Border at HEELSUM continued and the coy, less its supporting weapons (other than M.M.Gs.), managed to withdraw along the north bank of the river through the other coy positions.

73. To the north 7 K.O.S.B. were involved in some stiff fighting, to protect the D.Z. of 4 Para Bde (who were arriving in the second lift) particularly in the woods about 6382, where bitter hand to hand fighting took place.

74. At about 1115 hrs approximately 20 M.E.109 aircraft strafed the D.Z. and L.Z. areas and several gliders burst into flames.

75. By 1400 hrs 2 S. Staffords (less two coys) were held up about 708782, and it was then decided that the remaing two coys (due in the second lift)

...../should

should join the Bn as soon as they arrived. 11 Para Bn of 4 Para Bde would also be deflected from its planned task with 4 Para Bde and moved south to follow up and assist 2 S. Staffords in their effort to help 1 and 3 Para Bns to get to the bridge. The remainder of 4 Para Bde (10 Para Bn and 156 Para Bn) should continue with the original plan of securing the high ground north of ARNHEM. This decision was communicated to Brig Hackett, Commander, 4 Para Bde, on his arrival with the second lift about 1515 hrs.

OPERATIONS FROM 1500 hrs 18 SEP TO 2359 hrs 18 SEP.

76. The second lift was due about 1000 hrs on 18 Sep but, owing to weather conditions in the U.K., did not begin to arrive until 1500 hrs. As on D day, the drop and landing were very successful. There was slightly more flak, both during the flight and in the L.Z. and D.Z. areas. There was also minor ground opposition in the D.Z. area.

77. At the same time 35 aircraft dropped a small re-supply. This was a scattered drop, but a fair proportion was collected by the Div R.A.S.C. and taken to the Div dump at Div H.Q.

Action of Div H.Q.

78. As the second lift was coming in, orders were issued to move Div H.Q. along the main axis to the area HARTESTEIN 6978. The Hartestein Hotel 693783 was chosen. This had previously been a German Officer's mess. All the offices were installed on the ground floor, Services were placed in the grounds and the tennis courts were used as a P.W. cage.

79. Immediately H.Q. was set up all ranks dug in and digging was more or less completed by nightfall.

80. There was still no news of the G.O.C. The B.M., R.A., and G.S.O.2(Int) arrived with the second lift. At this stage no casualties had been suffered by Div H.Q.

Action of 4 Para Bde on D + 1.

81. The G.S.O.1(Ops) met Brig Hackett, Commander, 4 Para Bde, on the D.Z. at 1515 hrs, 18 Sep, and informed him of the change in plan due to strong opposition to 1 Para Bde.

82. The Brigade Commander issued orders as follows :

(a) 11 Para Bn to move off at once and come under command 1 Para Bde on arrival at HARTESTEIN.

(b) 156 Para Bn to be prepared to lead the advance of the Bde along the line of the railway.

(c) 10 Para Bn to remain firm in area 624842.

(d) Bde H.Q. move as soon as possible to area 634823.

(e) 133 Para Fd Ambulance to follow axis of advance as soon as casualty situation permitted.

...../83.

83. About 1700 hrs Bde H.Q. moved to H.Q. 7 K.O.S.B. at 634822 and released them from their task of protecting the D.Z. 7 K.O.S.B. then reverted to command of 1 Air Landing Bde.

84. 10 Para Bn were then ordered to move behind 133 Para Fd Ambulance as soon as they were able to move and to detach one coy to take over from 7 K.O.S.B. in area track junction 634822. The Bn was then being attacked from time to time in a desultory manner and incurred some casualties.

85. 156 Para Bn got on the move, skirting the D.Z. to the S.W., directed on area 663806. Their axis was the track immediately north of, and parallel to, the railway.

86. As it was getting dark, 156 Para Bn were ordered by H.Q. 4 Para Bde to halt and reorganise, and to push on down the axis of the railway at first light.

87. At the same time, 10 Para Bn was ordered to halt in the area of road and track junction 634823 and reorganise, preparatory to moving along the Bde axis at 0300 hrs the next morning.

88. At about 1845 hrs (just dark) Bde H.Q. moved to area of hotel 647813.

89. About 2300 hrs Commander, 4 Para Bde, went to Div H.Q. and received fresh instructions for the next day, 19 Sep. The intention was to advance between inclusive road ARNHEM - EDE and inclusive railway to secure the high ground KOEPEL 712793, with a firm left flank on the road.

90. 11 Para Bn, which had been sent to assist 2 S. Staffords to reach the bridge, had moved south from WOLFHEZEN 6680 and by the early hours of 19 Sep had contacted 2 S. Staffords about 726778.

Action of 1 Border on D + 1.

91. We left 1 Border extricating their coy which had been surrounded at HEELSUM. By 1700 hrs the coy had fought its way out and rejoined the Bn.

92. About 1900 hrs the Bn moved and spent the night digging in with a coy each at GRAFTCOMBE 6878, WEG 6877, astride main road 679784 and ZILVERENBERG 6778.

Action of 7 KOSB on D + 1.

93. After the second lift arrived, 7 K.O.S.B. were released from their duty of protecting the L.Z. About 1900 hrs the Bn began a night advance towards its objective, the high ground between 54.2(704802) and 56.5(697797) via JOHANNA HOEVE 6979.

94. These positions were very strongly held by the enemy and it was not possible to locate and deal with the opposition in the dark. The Bn, after suffering casualties, took up a position

...../just

just before dawn on 19 Sep, based on JOHANNA HOEVE.

OPERATIONS FROM 0001 hrs 19 SEP TO 2359 hrs 20 SEP.

95. From 19 Sep to 20 Sep the operation fell into three definite phases. These took place concurrently but, for the sake of clarity, will be described separately. They were:-

(a). The action of 1 Para Bde, with 2 S. Staffords and 11 Para Bn, in the bridge area.

(b). The efforts of 4 Para Bde (less 11 Para Bn) with 7 K.O.S.B. to secure the high ground north of ARNHEM.

(c). The actions of the remainder of the Div in the perimeter about OOSTERBEEK.

Operations of 1 Para Bde with 11 Para Bn and 2 S. Staffords.

Action of 2 Para Bn.

96. Our narrative left 2 Para Bn at the point where they still held the north end of the bridge and were suffering heavy mortaring and shelling. The morning of 19 Sep saw the German attack from the east resumed with increasingly heavy mortaring and shelling and attempted infiltration.

97. At midday 3 enemy tanks took up position near the river and shelled some of the houses, making them untenable. Three hits were obtained on the tanks with Ps.I.A.T. and, despite the arrival of two more tanks, they then withdrew.

98. Throughout the remainder of the day attacks supported by tanks and armoured cars continued, and by evening at least five of the houses had been burned down, including a key one just east of the bridge.

99. The enemy had occupied all houses north and west of the position and, although not attempting infiltration from this area, were able to keep our positions covered by automatic fire, to which 2 Para Bn could not afford to reply, due to shortage of ammunition, which was now acute.

100. The numbers of wounded had assumed serious proportions and were all evacuated to the cellars of Bde H.Q.

101. On the morning of 20 Sep (D + 3), the attacks from the east were again resumed. Alternative positions to the houses and ruins had been dug in the gardens. These were now shelled at point blank range by enemy tanks. Our 6-pr. anti-tank guns could not be manned as they were under direct small arms fire.

102. A party of enemy attempted to set charges under the bridge. This party, and attempts at infiltration, were counter attacked. Lieut.

Col. J.D. Frost was wounded and Major C.F.H. Gough took command of the area, referring matters of importance to Lieut. Col. Frost.

103. The Bde wireless set on the Div Commander's wave was in communication and the Brigade Major spoke to the G.O.C. (who had returned from 3 Para Bn) and staff of Div H.Q., giving the situation throughout the day.

104. During the afternoon 4 or 5 enemy tanks crossed the river from north to south. Nevertheless the position held firm and the bridge was covered by fire through gaps between the burning houses.

105. By evening the situation was very serious. Nearly all the houses had been fired. Just after dark Bde H.Q. house was set on fire. The wounded, now very numerous, were moved to another house, but this was set on fire before the move could be completed. There was now nowhere to put the wounded. Lieut. Col. Frost ordered the Bde H.Q. party to move out and then gave the order for the wounded to be surrendered.

106. The strength of the bridge party by the evening was reduced to about 140. A further 50/60 were lost during the night.

107. Darkness and enemy infiltration made the position worse. At 0500 hrs on 21 Sep (D + 4) an attempt to retake some houses failed and it was clear that the end had come. Bde H.Q. and the remnants of 2 Para Bn split into small parties and attempted to break out. The majority became casualties or were taken prisoners during the day.

108. All opposition at the bridge now ceased. The task of this Bde was to seize and hold the ARNHEM bridge. This they had carried out and held for 3 days and until they were physically incapable of further resistance.

Action of 1, 3, 11 Para Bns and 2 S.Staffords.

109. Our account left 11 Para Bn having caught up 2 S.Staffords at 726778 on the evening of 18 Sep. The intention was that these two bns together with the remnants of 1 and 3 Para Bns, should attempt to reach the bridge to reinforce 2 Para Bn.

110. To do this, 2 S.Staffords started to advance at 0445 hrs, 19 Sep through the main street of ARNHEM. They were followed by 11 Para Bn. Remnants of 1 and 3 Para Bns, under Lieut. Col. Dobie, O.C., 1 Para Bn, at the same time started along the river bank. About 0730 hrs, Col. Barlow, Deputy Commander, Air Landing Brigade was sent from Div H.Q. to co-ordinate this movement, but he did not arrive.

111. By 0630 hrs, 2 S.Staffords had reached the Monastery at 734780, but could get no further, and had suffered heavy casualties. Efforts by 11 Para Bn to mount an attack against the high ground north of the railway failed, owing to enemy counter attacks, and by 1100 hrs 2 S.Staffords had

...../exhausted

exhausted their P.I.A.T. ammunition and had been over-run by tanks which had inflicted heavy casualties. It was therefore decided to withdraw to about 725777, where there was an anti-tank screen. Here the Bn was re-organized into a force of five platoons and one M.M.G. platoon.

112. This force immediately attacked DEN BRINK so as to secure a pivot for 11 Para Bn to attack on the line of the road running north and south through DIEPENDAAL 7278 and HEIJONOORD 7278. The attack succeeded but, before troops could dig in, the position was very heavily mortared and shortly afterwards counter attacked by tanks and overrun.

113. About the same time as 11 Para Bn were forming up for their attack, they were also attacked by tanks. As a result their attack never materialized.

114. The result of all these operations was that the remnants of 11 Para Bn and 2 S.Staffords fell back to about rd junc 705774 and OOSTERBEEK Church 696773, where they were organized into a composite force with what was left of 1 and 3 Para Bns.

115. Major R.J.H. Lonsdale, 2 i/c 11 Para Bn, assumed command of this force, which was known as LONSDALE FORCE.

116. So ended a gallant attempt to bring succour to 2 Para Bn at the bridge.

Operations of 4 Para Bde (less 11 Para Bn) and 7 KOSB.

117. We left 4 Para Bde (less 11 Para Bn) on the evening of 18 Sep (D + 1) with 156 Para Bn and 10 Para Bn halted and re-organising.

118. The Bde Commander's plan for 19 Sep (D + 2) was for 156 Para Bn to secure KOEPEL while 10 Para Bn formed a firm base about 693811. 4 Para Sqn, R.E. were to remain in area 638804, with one anti-tank troop, as a back stop.

119. 7 K.O.S.B. at JOHANNA HOEVE were put under command 4 Para Bde. One coy was given the task of protecting the L.Z. for the third lift, containing the Polish glider element, due that afternoon, in area 6880. Another coy was to take over the LICHTENBEEK feature 7079 after capture by 156 Para Bn and act as a firm base for a further advance, while the remainder of the bn remained firm in their present position.

19 Sep 44.

120. Early on the morning 19 Sep, 156 Para Bn put in two unsuccessful attacks on the LICHTENBEEK feature, but were firm on 56.5(6979). 10 Para Bn had also met strong opposition but, by about mid-day, were consolidating in the area 690810. By that time 4 Para Bde H.Q. had been drawn up to road and track junction 685799 and 4 Para Sqn, R.E.

...../to

to 672804.

121. At about 1400 hrs the Div Commander visited the Commander, 4 Para Bde. It was obvious that 4 Para Bde were unlikely to make further progress on their present axis and the Div Commander discussed two alternative plans with the Bde Commander. One of these was for 4 Para Bde to discontinue their present task, disengage and pass through the northern half of 1 Airlanding Bde's position with a view to forming the eastern flank to the Div position on the line road and railway crossings 712784, 715780 and 712774. It was still hoped that 4 Para Bde would by this action join up with 1 Para Bde in the town. Thus the Div position would become a rectangular box with its west and east flanks held respectively by 1 Airlanding Bde and 1 Para Bde, with 4 Para Bde in the centre, the south flank resting on the open ground just north of the river.

122. As a result of this discussion, and on receiving information about 1500 hrs of enemy movement eastward from HEELSUM and RENKUM, Commander, 4 Para Bde, ordered 10 Para Bn to disengage forthwith and withdraw to the WOLFHEZEN crossing, which was to be seized and held as a preliminary in case he was required to move his Bde in accordance with the above plan. Shortly afterwards confirmation was sent to 4 Para Bde from Div H.Q. that this plan was to be put into operation.

123. Commander, 4 Para Bde, then gave orders for an immediate withdrawal. 156 Para Bn were to R.V. south of the railway about 679796. 7 K.O.S.B. were to move to area 20.5(672794), reverting to command 1 Airlanding Bde on arrival. Bde H.Q. were to move to Pt 23.2(672797).

124. 10 Para Bn found considerable difficulty in disengaging, and both other Bns were under considerable small arms, mortar and S.P. gun fire from north of the area.

125. Into this situation there arrived about 1600 hrs the Polish glider element, landing in area 6880. The enemy reaction was violent; pressure and volume of fire immediately increasing. This did not make things easier for 156 Para Bn and 7 K.O.S.B., who had by then just received their orders for an immediate move, and some congestion, splitting up of sub-units and temporary loss of direction took place when they started to withdraw.

126. By 1800 hrs 10 Para Bn had arrived at the WOLFHEZEN crossing, which they found partially occupied, but managed nevertheless to occupy a position just south of it. At the same time 4 Para Sqn, R.E., were engaged in passing the Bde transport through the culvert at 668804; a difficult task owing to deep, loose sand.

127. The enemy quickly followed up these withdrawals, but was not allowed to get beyond the

line of the railway. By nightfall, 19 Sep, 10 Para Bn and 4 Para Sqn, R.E., had reached the points just given. 156 Para Bn (approximately 270 strong) were holding a position from 678799 to 674797, with Bde H.Q. dug in about Pt 23.2 (6879). Some of 156 Para Bn did not cross the railway but moved to a position about 673804, from which only the Q.M. and 6 men ever re-appeared.

128. Meanwhile 7 K.O.S.B. had been able after considerable difficulty to concentrate at its appointed R.V. at 672794, except for A Coy who were being strongly attacked in their detached position about 686813. (4 Para Bde reported that later about 40 men of 7 K.O.S.B. joined the; these may have been some of A Coy).

129. On reaching their R.V., no representative of 1 Airlanding Bde could be found, so 7 K.O.S.B. continued their move until contacting a Coy of 1 Border about cross roads 679784. The Second-in-Command 7 K.O.S.B. had, however, gone on ahead and obtained instructions from Div H.Q. to occupy a position to the right and north of 21 Indep Para Coy, who were about 693793. They accordingly occupied that night the L shaped wood and a small wood to the east of it about 696791.

20 Sep 44.

130. At 0015 hrs. 20 Sep (D + 3), 4 Para Bde reported to Div H.Q. that 156 Para Bn and Bde H.Q. were now located at 682798, 10 Para Bn 670799.

131. This marked the end of efforts to capture the high ground north of ARNHEM.

132. It now remains to relate the events inside the Div perimeter in OOSTERBEEK from 19 Sep.

The action of the remainder of the Div in the perimeter about OOSTERBEEK from 0001 hours 19 Sep to 2359 hours 20 Sep.

(Reference should be made to the map enlargement at the end of Part III).

19 Sep 44.

Action at Div H.Q.

133. At 0725 hours the G.O.C. returned from 1 Para Bde, and Brigadier Hicks returned to command 1 Airlanding Bde. At this stage communications existed with 4 Para Bde, 1 Airlanding Bde and 21 Indep Para Coy. There was still no communication with Corps or Base.

134. Colonel Barlow, Deputy Commander, 1 Airlanding Bde was sent to co-ordinate the efforts of 1, 3, 11 Para Bns and 2 S. Staffords who were attempting to get through to 2 Para Bn on the bridge. He was not heard of again.

135. At 0845 hrs, CRA and GSO1(Ops) visited H.Q. 4 Para Bde and confirmed details of objectives for 4 Para Bde's attempt to seize the high ground north of ARNHEM.

...../136.

136. During the morning there was intermittent strafing by M.Es., but little damage was done.

137. An air supply drop took place at 1600 hours on a pre-arranged DZ on the open ground about 7179. Failure in communications had precluded warning Corps or U.K. that the D.Z. was in enemy hands. There was considerable flak to meet the aircraft and all supplies fell into enemy hands. Every effort was made with Eureka, yellow smoke, verey lights, ground strips and yellow celanese triangles to attract the attention of the pilots and get them to drop their supplies on the area of Div H.Q. 6978. This had only a very limited success.

138. The drop of the parachute element of 1 Polish Indep Para Bde Gp, which formed the major part of the third lift, did not take place on 19 Sep. It was now clear that they could not carry out their original task of landing south of the main ARNHEM bridge, crossing it and occupying their positions east of ARNHEM. It was therefore decided to arrange a new D.Z. for the Polish parachute element , north east of DRIEL 6875 and to give them the task of holding a firm bridgehead on the south bank of the river in the area of their DZ.

Action of 1 Airlanding Bde

139. At 0800 hrs 19 Sep, 7 KOSB passed to command of 4 Para Bde and their efforts to assist in gaining the high ground north of ARNHEM have been related.

140. As we have seen, 2 S. Staffords were under command of 1 Para Bde and were attempting to reach 2 Para Bn at the bridge.

141. The dispositions of the remainder of 1 Airlanding Bde early on 19 Sep were as follows:-

Bde HQ - BILDERBERG 6878.

1 Border - From BILDERBERG to HEVEADORP 6877

Glider Pilots - Area GRAFTCOMBE 6878

M.D.S. - Near cross roads 696784

142. 1 Border had a fairly quiet day until 1900 hrs, when all their coy localities were attacked. They repulsed all these attacks.

143. 7 KOSB reverted to command 1 Air Landing Bde on reaching 696791 about midnight.

Action of LONSDALE Force.

144. We have shewn how, by 2400 hrs, remnants of 1, 3, 11 Para Bns and 2 S. Staffords were organised into a composite force about road junction 705774 and OOSTERBEEK church 696773. The strength of these remnants was as follows :-

1 Para Bn	-	116
3 Para Bn	-	40
11 Para Bn	-	150
2 S.Staffords	-	100
Glider Pilots	-	30
F.O.Os.	-	2

20 Sep 44.

Action of 4 Para Bde.

145. We have seen that, at 0015 hours, the locations of 4 Para Bde were as follows: -

Bde H.Q. and 156 Para Bn - 682798

10 Para Bn - 670799

146. At about 0600 hrs heavy shelling and mortaring of the whole Div area started. At the same time 4 Para Bde started their move eastwards, to enter the Div perimeter, along the route Pt 23.2(6879) - track junction 677794 - BREEDE LAAN - road junction 683785, in the order of 156 Para Bn, Bde HQ and 10 Para Bn.

147. Although 156 Para Bn came under fire almost at once at 678795, they had by 0715 hrs overcome this. Later they again met heavy opposition. A right flanking movement by C Coy almost reached the road junction at 679784 but was held up about 200 yds short of it. However, by 1000 hrs the Bn had closed up and was covering the road and track junction at 682786. At this time the Bn strength was about 90 all ranks.

148. The enemy were now obviously in some strength between 4 Para Bde and 1 Airlanding Bde. 10 Para Bn were therefore ordered to move round the east of 156 Para Bn from track junction 682787 to road junction 687783. This advance entailed clearing away opposition all the way but, by about 1200 hrs, they reported to 4 Para Bde HQ that they had reached the VALKENBERG LAAN 6878 and were moving south.

149. Enemy fire had been growing in intensity all the time, with attacks which were pressed home strongly and, by 1215 hrs, at least two enemy tanks had appeared on the scene.

150. 10 Para Bn were therefore ordered to break through to the main Div position at all costs and at 1310 hrs Lt. Col. Smythe and Major Warre, CO and 2 i/c of the Bn, with about 60 all ranks, the total effective strength of their Bn, arrived at Div H.Q. They were told to reorganise and occupy a position covering X roads 705783 from the east.

151. The remainder of 4 Para Bde continued to be subjected to determined attacks by infantry supported by tanks, which were only prevented from getting right home by immediate counter attacks and grenade throwing.

152. Casualties had been heavy, particularly in officers, and the enemy seemed determined to liquidate the position before dark. The Bde Commander therefore decided to try to break out and make a dash for the main Div position. This was successful and at 1850 hrs Brig. HACKETT reported to Div HQ that 156 Para Bn, about 70

...../strong

strong, were reorganising about 689784; Bde HQ were concentrated about 691785. 4 Para Sqn RE had also arrived in the same area about 50% strong.

153. 4 Para Bde's strength, and events of 20 Sep on the Eastern flank, yet to be described, made it impossible for them to occupy the line originally intended. Therefore, with 10 Para Bn already holding a position round cross roads 705783, 156 Para Bn were given a similar area with its centre at 697787. This they occupied at 1930 hrs.

154. The eastern front of the Div outside ARNHEM was very exposed for the enemy was by this time astride the railway and road approaches between ARNHEM and OOSTERBEEK and prevented all efforts to supply or get physical touch with 1 Para Bde in ARNHEM. There was little or nothing at this stage to stop the enemy if he attacked in the direction of OOSTERBEEK, from the east, where Div HQ and Div troops were situated.

Action of 1 Air Landing Bde and LONSDALE force.

155. In the remainder of the Div area, 20 Sep, was chiefly remarkable as being the day when intense mortaring and shelling really started, followed by determined infantry attacks supported by tanks or SP guns. The results of these were that, on the Eastern perimeter, the line could only be established from cross roads 702684 - OOSTERBEEK Station 703674 and even then the force available was insufficient to prevent infiltration. The MDS at cross roads 697784 was in enemy hands.

156. The Light Regt were very actively engaged all day in support of 1 and 4 Para Bdes. The speed and accuracy with which support was given, both now and later, prevented many incipient enemy attacks from developing.

157. The supply drop took place about 1700 hrs. Opposition was again intense, but the drop was more successful this time and units picked up such containers and panniers as fell in their vicinity. 20 Sep ended with a message from HQ Airborne Corps saying that the NIJMEGEN bridge had been captured intact.

OPERATIONS FROM 0001 hrs 21 SEP TO 2000 hrs 25 SEP.

21 Sep.

158. At 0900 hrs, the Div Commander held a conference at Div HQ and divided the remaining troops into two forces. That under Brigadier HICKS being responsible for the west side of the perimeter, and that under Brigadier HACKETT for the east side :-

Brigadier Hicks.

Recce Sqn	-	694785
7 K.O.S.B.	-	694791
21 Indep Para Coy	-	690789

Glider Pilots - 687787

1 Para Sqn RE)
4 Para Sqn RE) About wood 688785
9 Fd Coy RE)

1 Border - Between KOUDE HERBERG 6676 and HEVEADORP

Brigaider Hackett.

156 Para Bn - 697767

10 Para Bn)
Glider Pilots) - Cross roads 696784

Elements of 1, 3 and 11 Para Bns (Lonsdale Force) - Church 696773

1 Light Regt RA and 2 S. Staffords. (Thomson Force) - 694774

Action of Brigadier Hackett's force.

159. Brigadier Hackett established his H.Q. at 696784. There was heavy mortaring and shelling during the morning, particularly in Lonsdale Force area.

160. 156 Para Bn was attacked during the afternoon as was 10 Para Bn, but both held firm and repelled the attacks. Later a heavy attack, supported by S.P. guns, developed against 10 Para Bn. They were over run and most of their houses were set on fire. There were now no officers in 10 Para Bn and very few men. They managed to come to the surface again and re-established themselves in some of their old houses, where they were subjected to constant attack for the next two days. During the day 30 Corps artillery gave valuable support, particularly in 10 Para Bn's area.

161. During this day Brig Hackett was wounded and handed over command to Lieut. Col. Murray, Glider Pilot Regt.

Action of Brigadier Hick's Force.

162. 7 K.O.S.B. were troubled by snipers who had infiltrated during the previous night, and the morning was spent in carrying out minor attacks to clear them out. About 1630 hrs the enemy put in a determined attack on 7 K.O.S.B. The Bn replied with a vigorous counter attack culminating in a bayonet charge, which completely cleared the enemy from the area leaving large numbers of his dead on the field.

163. This Bn lost heavily in the action. (4 Officers killed and 8 wounded). It was therefore decided to side step and fill the gap between them and 21 Indep Para Coy. This move was carried out without major incident. The Bn subsequently moved to area 693786.

164. 1 Border were also heavily attacked during the day, and again in the evening. One coy were driven from their position about 685770 and, despite gallant efforts to retake it, were eventually forced

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back to the area 692774.

Action of Div HQ.

165. As has been related, the Div Commander held an "O" group at 0800 hrs and reorganised the available forces.

166. At 1000 hrs the heavy shelling and mortaring set the Div ammunition dump on fire and, after strenuous efforts by Div HQ personnel, the fire was brought under control.

167. An air re-supply took place at about midday. The supply aircraft came in "escorted" by M.E.109s and it was not successful. A further supply drop in the afternoon was more successful.

168. There was very little food throughout the Division and scarcely any water. Ammunition was also running very low.

169. During the afternoon advantage was taken of the guns of 64 Medium Regiment, of 30 Corps, who carried out many shoots, breaking up many attacks before they began or could become dangerous. Throughout this and succeeding days the fire of this regiment was of the greatest assistance.

170. The main wireless net was still working, except to Corps. The air support rear link was knocked out by mortar fire, but had at no time been in touch with its control. Every effort was made to contact Airtroops (Rear) in U.K. and re-direct the supply dropping aircraft.

Action of 1 Indep Polish Para Bde Gp.

171. We have seen that the Polish anti tank battery landed in gliders on the 18th and 19th Sep. They were allotted tasks within the Div perimeter.

172. After two postponements of 24 hours each, the parachute element of the Polish Indep Bde Gp took off from the U.K. on 21 Sep. At 1715 hrs they began to drop on the new DZ south of the river. The weather was not good and a number of aircraft returned to U.K. without dropping their load.

173. At 2100 hrs Bde patrols ascertained that the HEVEADORP ferry 6676 had been sunk and the north bank of the river at that point was held by the enemy.

174. At 2230 hrs the Bde L.O. from Div HQ arrived with instructions for the Bde to cross the river, while the Div would endeavour to attack the northern end of the ferry and send over boats and rafts.

175. When the leading elements of the Bde reached the river it was found that neither boats nor rafts had arrived. The Bde Commander therefore decided to move to DRIEL 6075 and establish defensive positions there.

...../22 SEP

22 Sep - 24 Sep.

Action in the Div Perimeter.

176. Some re-adjustment was necessary before first light on 22 Sep. The perimeter was contracted on the northern face and the Recce Sqn came under command Brigadier Hackett's (now Lieut. Col. Murray's) force and, together with 21 Indep Para Coy and 4 Para Sqn R.E were moved over to the eastern flank. The former occupied positions from cross roads 696784 to 695780, and a detachment of Div R.A.S.C. extended the line from 695780 to 695776. 4 Para Sqn were held in Bde reserve near 4 Para Bde H.Q. about 695784.

177. The ground included in the Div perimeter was an odd combination of thickly wooded country and built up areas. The west and centre were well wooded, and the north and eastern flanks rested in the streets and houses. The southern flank was the R. LEK.

178. During 22 Sep the G.S.O.1(Ops) and C.R.E. left to cross the river to contact the Polish Bde and 30 Corps. They returned during the night 23/24 Sep. The British G.S.O.1(L) from the Polish Bde also arrived at Div H.Q.

179. On the night of 22/23 Sep approx 50 men of 1 Polish Para Bde were ferried across as reinforcements and on the next night about 150. These were placed under Brigadier Hicks. That greater numbers were not got across was due largely to lack of facilities.

180. During the evening of 23 Sep a supply drop took place, but only a very small quantity could be picked up. This chiefly due to the wide dispersion and also owing to the activity of enemy snipers. That collected did, however, slightly relieve the food shortage for the wounded.

181. On the night 24/25 Sep, 4 Dorset of 130 Bde (43 Div) attempted a crossing, but the landings made were very scattered, a large proportion being in the area of the HEVEADORP ferry, which was firmly in enemy hands. The Bn never concentrated as a fighting unit after crossing.

182. The prisoners in the tennis courts near Div H.Q. were beginning to feel the effects of short rations and of their own shelling and mortaring, and were beginning to quote Geneva Conventions.

183. From 22 Sep until the morning of 25 Sep it was for those in the perimeter a question of withstanding continuous attacks, mortaring and shelling. The force was dwindling steadily in numbers and strength owing to casualties in officers, men and weapons, and was becoming increasingly short of ammunition. Much patching by small parties and frequent minor re-adjustments of the perimeter were necessary, but, except for the deliberate closing in of the north face of the perimeter, little or no ground was lost

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and the general lay-out remained the same throughout the defence. From this time onwards rations and water were very short and the evacuation and care of the wounded was always a worry, as most of the time the M.D.S. was in enemy hands. Movement became very restricted, owing to infiltration of enemy snipers and, latterly, M.M.Gs. Blocking of roads and tracks by fallen trees, branches and by damaged vehicles made the use of the few surviving jeeps almost impossible.

184. At about 0605 hrs on 25 Sep, the Div Commander received a letter from Commander, 43 Div, which explained that SECOND Army's intention was not now to form a bridgehead over the NEDER RIJN near ARNHEM. It also gave the plan for the withdrawal of the Division south of the river on whatever date should be agreed. The Div Commander therefore informed 43 Div by R/T that the withdrawal must take place on the night 25/26 Sep and this was shortly after agreed. It was to be known as Operation 'BERLIN'.

185. At 1030 hrs on 25 Sep, the Div Commander gave out his orders. Crossing was to start at 2200 hrs, and units were to withdraw on a timed programme, by two routes. In general those furthest from the river were to start first. It was not expected that either of these routes would be free from enemy interference, but they were the best possible: one being on the west and one on the east side of the Div area. 1 Airlanding Bde and 4 Para Bde were to post guides on the west and east routes respectively and Div R.E. were to mark the way to the river from the points where these routes met the open ground north of the river.

186. Units were to move to the river in parties of fourteen, which number was approximately a boatload. Boots were to be muffled so as to deaden the noise and, if fired on, parties were to take evasive action, and only fight if compelled to, so as to avoid the danger of indiscriminate firing. On arrival at the river, parties were to lie down under cover of the bank and await their turn for a boat.

187. The guard on the Div P.W. Cage (all volunteers) was to remain in position till 0130 hours, 26 Sep, when it was to withdraw as unostentatiously as possible. There were about 200 prisoners in the cage at this time.

188. HQ Div R.A. arranged with C.C.R.A., 30 Corps, for a comprehensive artillery programme to cover the whole withdrawal. The efficiency of this when the withdrawal began undoubtedly contributed very largely to the success of the operation.

189. 25 Sep was quieter than the day before, but by the end of the day enemy infiltration was considerable. The enemy were firmly established

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in wood 795777 and a shoot by 64 Medium Regiment was carried out on this area which, it should be noted, was in the centre of the Div position. At many other places snipers and some M.M.Gs. were in position inside our lines, and most units were to some extent encircled and cut off from their neighbours. Such was the position when the withdrawal began.

190. Right from the time of landing, the Dutch population proved themselves most helpful in providing information and guides, and assisting with the wounded. This they continued to do on all possible occasions throughout the operation, though during the close encirclement of the Div perimeter from D + 3 till the evacuation, assistance was inevitably limited.

THE WITHDRAWAL TO NIJMEGEN.

191. At 2145 hrs, 25 Sep the first units to withdraw crossed the starting line, which was the road between road junction 792774 and CHURCH 796774. The enemy was mortaring and shelling very heavily at this time, which made things difficult for the first units to move.

192. However, about 2200 hrs the enemy fire slackened and, though there was a considerable amount of spasmodic shelling, mortaring, MMG fire and sniping, it did not seriously interfere with movement. The enemy made no move himself to prevent the withdrawal, for which 30 Corps artillery concentrations were no doubt largely responsible.

193. The night was dark with an overcast sky, heavy rain and a strong wind; most suitable conditions for the occasion.

194. Ferrying across the river began at 2200 hrs as planned, and continued throughout the night. The behaviour of the troops during the withdrawal and the long wait that most of them had in the cold rain beside the river was exemplary; particularly for men who had been fighting continuously for nine days, and for some who had had practically neither sleep nor food and only very little water.

195. By dawn on 26 Sep, when operations had to cease, approx 1700 all ranks of the Division and 420 Glider Pilots had been ferried across. About 300 men still remained, all who could swim having already done so.

196. After crossing, all ranks marched to a R.V. south of DRIEL, where rum, tea, hot food and a blanket were provided by 43 Div, an excellent and much appreciated reception.

197. Too much praise cannot be given to the excellence of the arrangements made by 43 Div for the crossing of the river and subsequent transport was provided from DRIEL to NIJMEGEN where the

...../remains

remains of the Division were concentrated by 1200 hrs, 26 Sep.

THE RETURN FROM NIJMEGEN TO U.K.

198. At 1430 hrs, 26 Sep, the G.O.C. held a conference at NIJMEGEN, the chief points being the collection and reorganisation of units, clothing of personnel and composition of nominal rolls by units of all those present. Accommodation was allotted on the basis of one building for both Para Bdes, one for 1 Airlanding Bde and a third for Div Troops and Glider Pilots.

199. The 'Seaborne tail' of the Division had already arrived in NIJMEGEN, and had been able to prepare this accommodation. This also meant that the great majority of the survivors received their large packs containing a complete change of clothing.

200. Advance parties were ordered to move early on 27 Sep to GRAVE airfield in order to fly to U.K., prior to the return of the Division by air to its normal locations. On 27 Sep, however, it was found that GRAVE airfield could not be used and so a small advance party under the A.A. & Q.M.G. went by road to BRUSSELS and thence to U.K. by air.

201. The morning of 27 Sep was spent in reorganisation and clearing up prior to the Division being paraded for a visit by Lt. Gen. F.A.M. Browning, Commander Airborne Corps, at 1700 hrs. He visited all three buildings, at each explained the big picture of Operation 'MARKET', and complimented the Division on its achievements.

202. On 26 and 27 Sep the G.O.C. visited 30 Corps, 43 Div and 64 Med Regt, R.A. and thanked them for their assistance to the Division both during the battle and the withdrawal. On 28 Sep G.O.C. visited H.Q., SECOND Army and had lunch with the Army Commander. He then went to Tac H.Q., 21 Army Group where he spent the night as the guest of Field Marshal Montgomery.

203. On the evening of 27 Sep, instructions were issued for the move of the whole Division, including Glider Pilots, by road to DIEST the next day, prior to returning to U.K. by air from BRUSSELS. This move was completed without incident by approx 2000 hrs, 28 Sep, but to LOUVAIN instead of DIEST. The former was much nearer BRUSSELS airfield and had better accommodation. The Division spent a most comfortable night in LOUVAIN, as a result of the excellent arrangements made by Rear H.Q., SECOND Army. The route taken from from NIJMEGEN to LOUVAIN was via EINDHOVEN and DIEST.

204. On 29 Sep, although the weather was unpromising, 420 Glider Pilots were evacuated to the U.K. During the morning, Major General Williams, Commanding General, 9th Troop Carrier Command, flew over in his

...../own

own aircraft to pick up the G.O.C. The latter was met at CRANWELL by Lieut. General Brereton, Commanding General, First Allied Airborne Army, and by Major General Crawford, Director of Air. The weather was not very good until about 1400 hrs, when it cleared sufficiently, and between then and 1630 hrs the whole of the survivors of the Div, less 1 and 4 Para Bdes and R.A.S.C. had taken off. 1 Air Landing Bde went to WOODHALL SPA, within walking distance of their billets and the remainder landed at BARKSTON HEATH and SALTBY.

205. On 30 Sep the remaining survivors were cleared during the morning and were all back in their normal locations by about 1400 hrs.

206. Thus ended operation MARKET, the sixteenth operation planned by the division since 6 Jun 44.

PART II.

ADMINISTRATIVE ASPECT OF THE OPERATION.

GENERAL.

207. As the role allotted to the Division after 6 Jun 44 was in effect that of standing by to carry out at short notice, with or without assistance of U.S. Airborne Divs, operations of widely varying natures anywhere in FRANCE or, later, in the LOW COUNTRIES, any administrative plan had to be:-

(a) Flexible - to cope with the varying types of operations, varying Orders of Battle and the varied numbers of aircraft allotted to the administrative echelon.

(b) Simple - so as to be easily assimilated by units in the short time available for briefing.

208. The continual planning and subsequent cancellation of operations enabled the administrative drill to be worked out and the administrative plan to be thoroughly understood by all. All Administrative Orders were based on two comprehensive Administrative Instructions issued prior to 6 Jun and for operations planned subsequently, the only details to be sent out were :-

(a) Allotment to Transit Camps.

(b) Allotment of troop carrying transport to airfields.

(c) Allotment of aircraft to administrative echelon.

(d) Details of re-supply.

(e) Locations of Div FMC and PW Cage.

(f) Money exchange arrangements.

LAUNCHING OF OPERATION.

209. Transit Camps occupied varied according to the allotment of units to airfields, which was necessarily different for each operation. For operation MARKET both Parachute Bdes, who were taking off from airfields in the GRANTHAM area, utilised their own billets, whilst the remainder of the Division occupied camps on airfields in the South, extending from MARGATE to TARRANT RUSHTON, in Dorset. Allocation of troops to camps is shewn at Appendix 'A'.

210. The movement of troops to transit camps and thereafter to airfields required more transport than could be provided from Divisional resources. Three extra War Office controlled RASC Coys were, therefore, attached to the Div during the preparatory period but, working on an allotment of one vehicle per stick of parachutists, even these might not have been sufficient had the whole Division had to take off in one lift.

MAINTENANCE PLAN.

211. Based on the assurance that the Div was to be linked up with ground forces after four days, the maintenance plan was follows:-

(a). Supplies. All troops to land with two 24-hr rations per man, one emergency ration per man. All gliders to carry one box of Compo.

...../(b).

(b). Petrol. 350 miles per vehicle.

(c). Ammunition. 1st Line Scales plus a considerable amount of certain extra ammunition carried in:-

(i) Spare containers by Units.

(ii) Airborne vehicles of RASC.

(iii) Bulk loaded Hamilcars (see para 216 below).

It was appreciated that the following types of ammunition would be particularly required and these types formed the bulk of the load of the RASC vehicles and Hamilcars:-

75 mm. 6-p 17-pr. 3" Mor HE. PIAT

(d) Ordnance. It was not considered that a large Ordnance detachment was necessary but only sufficient personnel to receive, list and issue stores received by air. A certain amount of space was, however, allotted to ordnance stores in the bulk loaded Hamilcars. See Appendix 'B'.

(e) REME. It was thought that the main task of REME would probably be the maintenance of wireless sets and weapons and that there would be no time or opportunity during the operation for major repairs to vehicles. All jeeps were, however, supplied with spares in order that repairs could be carried out by their drivers.

(f). RASC. One Para platoon dropped or landed with each Bde. Five gliders were allotted to each Para platoon for the carriage of their jeeps and trailers which would be used to carry spare ammunition for the Bdes in the initial stages, but would later revert to control of the CRASC for the use in clearing Div supply drops. The balance of 18 Horsa Gliders were used to transport half one light transport platoon, RASC, who were to carry Div spare ammunition and to carry out normal RASC duties within the Div.

(g). Provost. One Sec of Provost dropped or landed with each Bde and two Secs with Div HQ. Their duties were normal.

ORDER OF BATTLE.

212. For detailed Order of Battle of A/Q Staff and Services see Appendix 'C'.

SUPPLY BY AIR.

213. Before departure, lists of ammunition and stores required for supply by air, based on the figures of aircraft available, had been given to HQ Airborne Troops. Certain SDPs had been pre-selected.

Marking of SDPs was to be carried out by 21 Indep Para Coy using Eurekas on predetermined frequencies. After drop all stores

...../were

were to be cleared to Div Maint Area by RASC and issued to units on demand. Any surpluses built up were to be handed over to HQ Airborne Corps on its arrival.

214. That the re-supply of the Div was unsuccessful can be attributed to various factors, the main of which were:-

(a) In the early stages lack of communications prevented changes in SDPs being notified to Base.

(b) The strength of the enemy Flak defences caused considerable loss to aircraft, forced them to take evasive action and prevented accurate dropping.

(c) The comparatively small size of the Div perimeter, combined with (b) above, meant that the major portion of the re-supply fell into enemy hands.

(d) Lack of communications between ground and air prevented the exact location of SDPs being notified to the aircraft when overhead. Some form of VCP in future is essential.

(e) The constant shelling and mortaring and consequent loss of vehicles made collection and distribution on a Div and even Bde level in the later stages impossible. Units merely recovered what they could from containers dropping in their own area.

215. Details of stores dropped, aircraft losses and approximate figures of the re-supply actually recovered are shown in Appendices 'D', 'E' and 'F'.

BULK LOADED HAMILCARS.

216. A jeep and trailer carried in a Horsa Glider can never really carry economical loads of ammunition and supplies and it had always been appreciated that a supply drop was at best a somewhat chancy business. It was, therefore, decided to experiment in loading three Hamilcars completely with stores and using RASC transport to clear them to the Div Maintenance Area on arrival. For loads carried see Appendix 'B'.

217. All these Hamilcars landed safely and two were completely unloaded, the third falling into enemy hands. The loads of these two Hamilcars proved invaluable and formed the basis of the Div FMCs which were set up early in the operation. With re-supply being the somewhat doubtful factor that it is, the bulk loaded Hamilcars or Horsas would appear to be the solution to the maintenance of Airborne Divisions provided that distances are not too great to prevent stores being ferried from the LZ to the troops.

SEABORNE TAIL.

218. The Divisional Seaborne Tail of 1,000 vehicles had been despatched to FRANCE some six weeks previously. It was loaded with 2nd line ammunition, explosives, 2 days Compo rations for the whole Div, 50 miles of petrol for every vehicle, men's packs, cooking equipment and office equipment. In addition as it was appreciated that supplies of 75 mm How might be difficult to obtain overseas each vehicle carried 12 rounds of 75 mm How giving a total of 4,500 rounds over and above 2nd line allotment. Numbers of vehicles and details of loads carried by RASC vehicles are shown at Appendix 'G'. The Officer i/c Seaborne transport

..../was

was instructed to proceed as close after the leading ground forces as possible and an order of priority for the move for the Seaborne vehicles was laid down.

219. The Seaborne Tail arrived with the forward troops of the Guards Armoured Div early in the Operation, and had they made contact would have been invaluable in replenishing the Div. As it was, they proved extremely useful to HQ Airborne Corps who handed the 75 mm ammunition over to the American Divs and used the medical stores, rum, rations etc., for Units of the Airborne Corps and for maintaining the Div after its withdrawal across the R. LEK.

DIARY OF EVENTS.

220. Day to day account of events as they affected the administrative side is given at Appendix 'H'.

Appendix 'A' to Part II

ALLOTMENT OF UNITS TO TRANSIT CAMPS.

LOCATION	UNIT	REMARKS
KEEVIL	1 Para Bde (Glider Element) 4 Para Bde (Glider Element) 7 KOSB Lt Bty, RA FOU, RA 9 Fd Coy, RE Sec 181 Air Lgd Fd Amb	
HARWELL	Lt Bty, RA 4 Para Bde	
BRIZE NORTON	HQ 1 Air Ldg Bde. 2 S STAFFORDS less two coys MDS and Sec 1 Air Ldg Fd Amb	
BURFORD	1 BORDER Sec 181 Air Ldg Fd Amb	In BILLETS not Transit Camp.
BLAKEHILL FARM	HQ 1 Para Bde 2 Air Ldg A tk Bty, RA 9 Fd Coy, RE	
BROADWELL	21 Indep Para Coy	
DOWN AMPNEY	Div HQ HQ Lt Regt, RA Bty Lt Regt, RA	
TARRANT RUSHTON	1 Para Bde (Glider Element) 4 Para Bde (Glider Element) 1 Air Ldg Bde 1 Airborne Recce Sqn 17 pr Gp, 1 and 2 A tk Btys, RA Aviation Engrs (USA)	
MANSTON	Two coys 2 S STAFFORDS Lt Bty, RA 1 Air Ldg A tk Bty, RA Sec 181 Air Ldg Fd Amb Div HQ (Air Sp Sec - 4 Wacos)	

APPENDIX 'B' to PART II.

HAMILCAR LOADS.

Glider No.1.	75 mm HE Fuze M 54	20 Panniers
	6-pr A tk APCBC	15 "
	3" Mortar HE	5 "
	17 pr AP	60 Rounds
Glider No.2.	RE 10	16 Panniers
	75 mm HE Fuze M 54	10 "
	6 Pr APCBC	10 "
	3" Mortar HE	6 "
	17 Pr AP	30 Rounds
	Barbed Wire	4 Rolls
	Mines A tk Mk 5	40
	Tape Mine	4 Rolls
	Shafts, Pick	4
	Heads, Pick	2
	Signs, Mine	4
	Pickets, Screw	16
Glider No 3.	RE 10	9 Panniers
	6 Pr APCBC	5 "
	3" Mortar HE	4 "
	Ord Stores	30 "

ORDER OF BATTLE - A/Q STAFF AND SERVICES

Serial	Branch	H.Q.	H.Q. Vehs.	Units	Strength of Unit.		Unit Vehs.
1.	A/Q	AA&QMG DAAG DAQMG Chief Clerk A/Q 2 clerks A/Q 3 orderlies	1 jeep & trailer 1 Lt Wt M/c 2 folding bicycles				
2.	Medical	ADMS DADMS 8 O.Rs.	1 jeep & trailer	181 Fd Amb 133 Fd Amb 16 Fd Amb	11 10 10	170 119 110	10 jeeps 6 trailers 5 m/cs * 5 jeeps 4 trailers 2 m/cs 1 Lt wt m/c 5 jeeps 4 trailers 2 m/cs 1 Lt wt m/c
3.	RASC	CRASC 2 i/c RASC Adjt RASC S/Sjt Clerk RASC 3 clerks RASC 2 dvrs RASC 3 O.Rs.	2 jeeps & trailers	250 Lt Coy RASC 93 Coy RASC	6 -	223 10	29 jeeps & trailers
4.	Ordnance	1 offr. 2 O.Rs.		Ord Fd Pk	2	15	4 jeeps & 5 trailers 2 M/cs.
5.	REME	1 offr. 3 O.Rs.	1 jeep and trailer	REME Wksps	2	35	2 jeeps, 1 welding trailer, 1 wireless trailer, 9 M/cs, 18 folding bicycles.
6.	Provost	3 offrs. 12 O.Rs.	1 jeep, 6 M/cs.	Pro Coy	5	64	4 jeeps, 9 M/cs.
7.	Chaplain	SCF	1 Lt Wt M/c.				

* = 2 jeeps and 2 trailers on loan from 250 Lt Coy RASC

APPENDIX 'D' to PART II.

AIRCRAFT LOSSES.

Day	Total a/c on Mission	Type of Aircraft	Number Missing	Percentage loss by Types	Net approx tonnage of Sups dropped	Gross tonnage weight (incl containers, panniers & chutes.)
D + 1 (18 Sep)	33	Stirling 33	2	6%	87	144
D + 2 (19 Sep)	163	Stirling 100 C.47 63	11 8	11% 12.7%	388	594
D + 3 (20 Sep)	162	Stirling 99 C.47 63	11 3	11% 4.76%	386	591
D + 4 (21 Sep)	116	Stirling 63 C.47 53	14 19	22.2% 36%	271	408
D + 5 (22 Sep)			NO MISSION			
D + 6 (23 Sep)	123	Stirling 73 C.47 50	11 4	15% 8%	291	444
D + 7 (24 Sep)			NO MISSION			
D + 8 (25 Sep)	4 (46 Gp from Brussels)	C.47 4	1	25%	8	20
TOTALS	601	601	84	14%	1431	2201

NOTES:- In all drops loads were as follows:-

Stirling = 24 containers, 4 panniers.

C.47 = 16 panniers.

PANNIERS expended = 5572
CONTAINERS " = 8760
PARACHUTES " = 14332

APPENDIX 'E'.

TONNAGE OF RESUPPLY COLLECTED DAILY.

(i) General.

Date	Net approx tonnage of supplies collected	% collected out of total dropped	Source
D + 1 (18 Sep)	14 12	66 14	3 Bulk loaded Hamilcars 33 Stirlings
D + 2 (19 Sep)	21	5.4	Stirlings & C.47
D + 3 (20 Sep)	3 38	10.6	1st drop from a few C.47 Mostly rations from Stirlings & C.47
D + 4 (21 Sep)	11	4	Stirlings & C.47
D + 5 (22 Sep)	NIL	-	No drop
D + 6 (23 Sep)	7	2.4	Stirlings & C.47
D + 7 (24 Sep)	NIL	-	No drop
D + 8 (25 Sep)	NIL	-	4 Dakotas only
	TOTAL SUPPLIES COLLECTED - 106 tons.		TOTAL percentage - 7.4

NOTES

1. It is estimated that another 100 tons approx fell in unit lines and was collected and used by them, especially in the case of units in the neighbourhood of the river. But there are no figures to support this estimation.
2. The rate of collection towards the end fell off steeply as the number of Jeeps and Trailers available for collection decreased. By D + 4 the effective availability had been reduced by half, and on D + 8 only two Jeeps and Trailers remained serviceable.
   The shrinking of the perimeter towards the end also contributed to a decreased rate of recovery.
3. Nearly everything recovered was eventually issued, with the exception of some 300 galls Pet, 17-pr and 2" Mor Smoke. There was also a quantity of RE minefield. panniers left in the dump.

...../(ii). Gun Amn

APPENDIX 'E' (cont).

(ii) Gun Amn.

Date	75 mm	6-pr	17-pr.
18 Sep	80	30	24
19 Sep	250	80	
20 Sep	330	140	
21 Sep	400	170	
22 Sep		NO RESUPPLY	
23 Sep	160	80	
24 Sep		NO RESUPPLY	
25 Sep		NO RESUPPLY	
TOTAL	1220	500	24
COMPOSITION	M.48.960 M.54. 50 Smoke 120 AP. 90	AP CBC 250 D.S. 180 H.E. 70	APCBC. 24

APPENDIX 'F' to Part II.

LIST OF STORES DROPPED ON 1 AIRBORNE DIV DURING OPERATION 'MARKET'.

WEAPONS.

Sten Carbine Mk V c/w Bayonet	18
2" Mortar, Airldg	162
3" Mortar (with modified baseplate)	52
Tripod folding Bren LMG	170
Rifle No.4 Mk I (T)	12
PIAT	87
.303" Rifle	52
Vickers LMG .303"	30
" GO, No.1	6

AMMUNITION AND GRENADES.

Grenade Hand No.82	10240
" " No.79	6840
Signal 2-star (Red-Green) Mk I	14616
75-mm Pack How	19170
20-mm Polsten	6552
Sten Carbine Mk V	96512
.303" Bandolier	1272200
.303" Mk VIIIZ	1641630
.303" Tracer	823756
PIAT	16902
2" Mortar	50352
3" Mortar	30276
.45" Automatic	24000
.38" Revolver	12528
17-pr	1114

SIGNAL EQUIPMENT.

Wireless Sta No. 76W/109/A(Para)	6
" " " 22 (Para)	29
" " " 18 (Airlanding)	55
" " " 68P(Airlanding)	17
" " " 38 Mk II	57

ENGINEER STORES.

Warsop Drills	4

PACKING SETS.

Cushions packing 3" Mortar Bombs: Set A	648
" " " " " " B	648
" " " " " " C	648
Packing for W/T set No.76	6
" " " " " 22	29
" " " " " 18 or 68	72
" " " " " 38	57

VOTE 8 STORES.

Stretchers folding airborne	1272
Valises Rifle	32
Bagssleeping airborne	366
Equipment carrying 3" Mortar and Bombs Sets 1	52
Sets 2	52
" 3	52
" 4	52
Shelter Portable No.12 (Workshop shelter)	31
Crosses distinguishing hospital airborne	30
Ladders rope 22 ft	2
Ropes climbing 125 ft	6

SEABORNE TRANSPORT

APPENDIX 'G' to PART II.

Serial No.	Unit	Jeeps	Trailers	2/4-strs.	Trucks, 15-cwt.	Lorries, 3-ton	Ambulances	M/Cs.	Trailers, Water	Trucks, Water	Trucks, Compressor	Lorries, Breakdown	Lorries, Winch	Tractors, Light	Tractors, Breakdown	Trailers, 6-ton	Lt Recovery Truck	TOTAL VEHS (less M/Cs & Trailers)	Remarks
1 & 2	Div HQ & Def Pl	10	10	6x	5	8	-	20	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	30	x 4-strs G1, A/Q, ADMS, CREME to be regarded as pool.
3	89 F.S. Sec	1	1	-	-	-	-	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	
4	Recce Sqn	8	5	-	-	4	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12	
5	HQ,RA & FOU	12	8	2	1	1	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	16	
6	A Tk Bty(each)	-	-	-	2	3	-	8	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12	
	17-prs	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	
7	Lt Regt	16	16	1	14	12	-	3	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	43	
8	HQ, RE	-	-	2	1	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	
9	RE	31	36	3	9	18	-	38	1	1	1	-	1	2	-	-	-	66	
10	Div Sigs	24	25	2	8	28	-	44	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	62	
11	HQ,Para Bde (each)	5	5	5	5	2	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	34	
12	Para Bns (each)	6	5	4	5	13	-	3	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	174	

SEABORNE TRANSPORT
(cont)

Serial No.	Unit	Jeeps	Trailers	2/4-strs.	Trucks, 15-cwt.	Lorries, 3-ton	Ambulances	M/Cs.	Trailers, Water	Trucks, Water	Trucks, Compressor	Lorries, Breakdown	Lorries, Winch	Tractors, Light	Tractors, Breakdown	Trailers, 6-ton	Lt Recovery Truck	TOTAL VEHS (less M/Cs and Trailers)	Remarks
13	HQ Airldg Bde	4	4	5	6	2	-	7	3x	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	18	x = From Div HQ (Incl Bde Def Pl)
14	Airldg Bns (each)	8	8	3	6	10	-	20	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	81	
15	21 Indep Para Coy	-	-	1	1	3	-	3	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	
16	RASC	65	108	12	19	110	-	58	-	7	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	217	
17	Med	20	22	3	13	24	30	23	3x	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	90	x = 2 from Div HQ Pool
18	Ord	63	64	3	3	25	-	25	3	1	-	4	-	-	-	1x	-	100	x=counted as veh in total
19	REME																		
20	LAD (each)	3	3	-	-	2	-	4	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	2	56	
21	Provost	8	8	-	4	1	-	103	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	13	
22	Postal	-	-	-	3	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	
23	Mob Photo	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	
24	APIS	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2x	x= 1 4-ton
																	TOTAL	1042	

APPENDIX 'H'.

DIARY OF EVENTS AS AFFECTING THE ADM SIDE.

17 Sep. AA & QMG and ADMS landed with Tac Div HQ and set up in wood 658797. Parachute Pl 1 Para Bde landed and commenced to recover Bde res amn dropped in spare containers from DZ. One load of this amn was taken into town in captured German veh and succeeded in reaching br party. Veh however shot up on its return.

Portion of 1 A/L Bde Para Pl landed with Bde and moved into town with I Para Bde to carry out assessment of dumps of pet, amn, stores, etc. in town. This Pl reached the Br area with 1 Para Bde, fought with them, and the greater part were later taken prisoner.

18 Sep. As further quantities of res amn could not be got through to 1 Para Bde this and other amn collected from DZs and LZs was taken to Div HQ at x-rds 665784 where small dump was formed.

DAAG, DAQMG and Staff, together with remaining Heads of Services (CRASC, ADOS and REME rep) and bulk of adm echelon arrived during the afternoon. Div HQ was then in the process of moving to HARTESTEIN 7978.

Two captured German vehicles were put into running order and were used for ferrying amn to DMA and later for delivery of gun amn to Lt Regt. The re-sup of 35 aircraft was carried out in conjunction with the arrival of the 2nd lift but dropped largely on pre-determined SDPs which were then in the hands of the enemy; little could therefore be collected. In the evening at 2030 hrs the DMA opened on main rd 693784. The contents of the DMA came from the balance of the res amn from the 1 Para Bde, from the sup drop amn above, and from the bulk loaded HAMILCARS which had come in with the 2nd lift and two of which had been completely unloaded. The third was captured by the Germans before unloading could take place. No pet was available in the DMA.

Owing to the general situation message was sent to Base changing location of SDP for following day.

Convoy of 6 jeeps and 12 trailers loaded with amn organised and stood by ready to go to 1 Para Bde. This convoy never left owing to the situation, and part of the load was subsequently transferred to 2 carriers which later got through to 2 S Staffords and 1 Para Bn but NOT to br.

19 Sep. All Units informed that Sup drop would take place on following day at 1030 hrs. SDP map ref 685783.

Pet pumps captured at map ref 696782. Units notified to draw up to 8 galls per veh in own jerricans.

Sup drop for 19th dropped on pre-arranged SDP owing to non-receipt of message sent on 18th. Only isolated containers recovered. During this recovery approximately half the RASC Pl was lost in an ambush. Message sent to Base requesting urgent re-sup on map ref 691785 earliest possible 20 Sep. Possible new DMA was reced during morning but found untenable. As it

...../was

19 Sep. (cont). was appreciated the sup drop was not likely to be successful, attempts were made through the Dutch Liaison Offrs to obtain local sups. Only very small quantities could be produced, the main items being a sack of flour and a pig. These were handed over to the ADMS for consumption at the various DSs.

Mortaring and SAA fire caused cas on DMA.

All Units warned utmost conservation amn, sups and pet necessary and re-distribution of remaining Compo on basis of 1/3rd ration per man as far as possible. Units informed that limited quantities of amn were still available from DMA.

20 Sep. Re-sup carried out in heavy flak but fair proportion recovered incl 2,000 rations which were all issued and represented a general ration of 1 between 3. Very heavy mortaring on DMA continued in morning. Cas fairly heavy. As a result of increased SAA fire issues from DMA became impossible and it was moved within Div HQ perimeter.

Further issues of amn made from DMA incl first delivery of gun amn to Lt Regt by RASC. Some units were, however, able to collect additional sups and amn from outlying areas.

MDS captured and majority of cas removed by Germans. Own med staff looking after remainder under ADMS.

Two carriers loaded with amn attempted to reach 1 Bde without success.

Cas in Div area heavy and many RASC jeeps were diverted as Ambs and trailers for carrying water to MDS.

During the evening of 20/21 Sep the bulk of the Div RASC were formed into a platoon under the comd of Capt. J. CRANMER-BYNG, MC., RASC., and took over a portion of the Div perimeter from the 4 Para Bde.

21 Sep. Sup dropped carried out in very heavy flak and with high percentage of RAF losses. Proportion of Sups recovered and issues made from DMA. Special shortage of Sten amn. Remainder limited. Small stock of Pet held.

More gun amn delivered to Lt Regt during the day by RASC.

Div HQ dispersed over wider area in afternoon to avoid possible casualties. Tac HQ remained in house in cellar. During this day heavy shelling and mortaring of the Div HQ area caused fires and explosions in the DMA. These fires were only put out with considerable difficulty.

22 Sep. No Re-Sup.

During the day amn in the DMA caught fire twice as the result of mortar fire and a stack of 6-pr amn exploded as a result of a direct hit. All fires were again extinguished. Issues were made to the 1st and 4th Para Bdes in Bren Carriers. Message sent asking for special drop of PIATs, Mortars and PIAT and Sten amn.

...../23 Sep.

23 Sep. Sup drop carried out despite very heavy opposition, small proportions sups collected and distributed as far as possible. At this stage there were only a few serviceable jeeps and trailers which could be used, the remainder having been rendered unserviceable by mortar and shell fire.

CRASC and DAQMG recced area towards the river for possible DMA without success, owing to blocking of roads by branches of trees, debris, etc.

More very heavy mortaring of DMA after re-sup, amn stacks again catching fire. Very few rations received and all were handed over to MDS's. Stocks of gun amn, PIAT, Mortar and Sten which were in great demand were almost non-existent.

24 Sep. No re-sup.

Almost all RASC jeeps out of action.

DMA now empty except for stocks of 2" Mor Smok. 17-pr amn and Pet.

On the night of 24/25 Sep an attempt was made in conjunction with 43 Div and Polish Para Bde to ferry Sups, Amn, Pet and Medical stores across the river in DUKWS. 9 DUKWS were loaded but opposition was so heavy that only 4 DUKWS succeeded in crossing the river. None of these stores could be unloaded as the DUKWS were under heavy enemy fire and it was impossible owing to the state of the roads to bring the DUKWS up to the Div area from the river bank.

25 Sep. A re-sup drop of 4 aircraft took place. No sups recoverd. When the Div evacuated only 2 RASC jeeps and trailers remained serviceable and DMA was empty with the exception of 2" Mor Smoke, 17-pr and Pet.

PART III.

OPERATION 'MARKET'.

LESSONS.

INTRODUCTION.

221. The following remarks are of a general nature in most cases. The detailed reports of the various Arms can be read in the Annexures.

PLANNING.

222. Seven days were found to be adequate for planning, issue of orders, move to airfields, general briefing and loading of gliders. This assumes that transport is available for such moves and transit camps are ready for the reception of troops.

It is doubtful, however, if this time would be sufficient for a Div which either had not carried out an airborne operation before, or had not had experience of rapid planning and issue of orders. In an emergency, where the plan is simple, troops are at Transit Camps and gliders loaded, an operation has been laid on in 72 hrs. The operation did not take place, but the drill was worked out so that planning was completed in that time.

223. An Airborne Division is designed to fight as a whole. If the Division is split and committed to a 2nd lift some 24 hrs later then, owing to the necessity of allotting part of the first lift to protect the D.Zs. and L.Zs. of the following troops, the effective strength for immediate offensive action of the Div is reduced to that of a Bde.

224. It is considered that we must be prepared to take more risks during the initial stages of an Airborne operation. When the balance sheet of casualties at ARNHEM is made, it would appear a reasonable risk to have landed the Div much closer to the objective chosen, even in the face of some enemy flak. It has always been the rule when planning that the maximum distance from the D.Z. or L.Z. to the objective should not exceed 5 miles. In the ARNHEM Operation this distance was 7 miles and in some cases 8 miles. An extra two minutes flying time in the face of flak, if not too severe, would have put the Div - always supposing the ground was suitable - much nearer its objective. Initial surprise in this operation was obtained, but the effect of the surprise was lost owing to the time lag of some 4 hrs before the troops could arrive at the objective chosen.

A whole Bde dropped near the bridge site at ARNHEM might have been a major factor in the outcome of the battle; longer delay on the enemy would have been imposed and, if the SECOND Army had managed to get through ELST within the first few days, the larger bridgehead formed by the Bde might have made just the difference to the further progress of that Army north of ARNHEM.

225. The forecast of the photographic interpretation and of the 'I' appreciation, both RAF and Army, of the flak defences to be met in the area proved very pessimistic.

The forecast as to the suitability of the D.Z. and L.Z. in the POLDER country was also pessimistic. From subsequent examination it would appear that parachute troops could have been dropped practically anywhere outside the built up and wooded areas. Gliders could also have been landed in places previously considered as quite unsuitable. It is of course realized that a good deal

of dispersion would have been necessary in this case.

AIR SUPPORT.

226. Close air support during the first afternoon of the operation would have been invaluable. If there had been a "cab rank" available then and on subsequent days, the effect on the enemy would have been considerable. Close air support during the period when troops were in movement might easily have turned the scale and allowed the whole of 1 Para Bde to have concentrated near the main ARNHEM Bridge. Air formations must not expect to be given pin point targets always when air support is demanded. It was found that when area targets were indicated, both for medium gun shoots and air support, the results were considerable and the effect on the enemy's morale immense. A near miss within two hundred yds or so has a very shaking effect.

227. The support by Typhoon rocket aircraft was a great success and one could have wished that many more sorties of a similar nature had been forthcoming. There is no doubt that in an operation of this kind, immediate air support must be available at very frequent intervals if weather permits. Tac R aircraft were asked for on many occasions but none were allotted. Both these and Arty, R aircraft are forms of support which should be automatic in an Airborne operation, or any operation for that matter, in the future.

228. It is considered that there should be one to one Signal working between the ground formation and the air formation which is actually detailed to provide close air support on call. A permanent allotment of a VCP to each Div HQ for use on training as well as on operations is a modern necessity.

PERSONNEL and WEAPONS.

229. It was found that the glider pilots, numbering some 1100, who landed with the Division took their part with success in the defensive battle which followed. The benefit of their initial training and their ability to shoot was invaluable. If such personnel had been untrained they would have become a complete liability very early on in the battle. In such numbers, if untrained, it is difficult to see now how they could have been tucked away without becoming a complete menace to our own side and a liability as regards the consumption of the small amount of rations and water which was available.

230. It was found that the RASC and, of course, the RE could take their place in the line of battle with very efficient results. All personnel in the Airborne Division, who are likely to become involved in a battle, must be given the maximum infantry and weapon training that can be imparted in the time available.

231. It is thought that we do not realise our own strength as regards the effect of the weapons which we possess. It was not until the Div was put to it during the defensive battle and in the decreasing perimeter at ARNHEM that many of the soldiers appreciated how easily they could stop the German and destroy him with the weapons they possessed. The converse of course is very soon realised and over exaggerated during the early stages of a battle. A very few Germans with light automatics sometimes managed to hold up troops for much longer than was anticipated.

...../We

We can do this equally as well, if not better, but we must appreciate what our weapons are for and we must learn to do early what we had to do in the end.

232. The value of the P.I.A.T. in thick country and in built up areas as a tank destroying weapon is immense. All ranks have now complete confidence in its use and throughout the battle there was a constant cry for more Ps.I.A.T. and more bombs. An increased establishment of these weapons for Para Bns and an initial allotment for the Lt Regt and A tk Btys is being demanded.

MORALE and DISCIPLINE.

233. Too much emphasis cannot be laid on the necessity for the strict insistence on discipline during training and preparation for battle. It was borne out in every case that the better trained and better disciplined the unit so the better it fought. Where, in some cases, these factors were not as good as they might have been, the results were very quickly shown.

The discipline of units shown during the withdrawal was quite first class and their behaviour on the river bank until light broke excellent.

234. Leadership and determination again showed themselves to the maximum during this battle. Numbers of men are not of the slightest use when the battle becomes really sticky, unless there is an officer or NCO who can, and does, lead them. The success or otherwise of the action always reflects sooner or later the determination and guts of the particular leader who happens to be responsible in that neighbourhood.

235. There is generally a certain amount of stickiness amongst units who are in the battle for the first time. This disappears in most cases when the noises of battle have been experienced. In ordinary formations units are broken in gently wherever possible but this is never the case with an Airborne Division, who generally drop straight into the middle of the battle with little or no time to get its values correct.

236. One way in which this initial nervousness in battle showed itself was in the amount of indiscriminate shooting which went on during the first 48 hrs. Shooting at nothing in particular by individuals is a contagious disease and is extremely annoying to everybody. This must be checked in the very early stages. It must be impressed on individuals that they should shoot only at definite targets or if there is a definite suspicion of a target in their area. This restriction would not, of course, apply when a wood clearing operation or one of a similar nature is taking place, when hosepipe methods or "marching fire" may be just what is required.

The need for pre-battle training under conditions which are as realistic as possible cannot be over emphasised.

TRAINING.

237. More stress must be laid on the training of men to be more individualistic, especially in thick and difficult country. There is always a tendency to bunch together and to look to the local commander before taking any action. We are well behind the German when it comes to infiltration as shown by their snipers. The value of night training was borne out and there we have a tremendous

...../advantage

advantage over the German who very seldom displays any initiative during the hours of darkness. This inactivity on his part during the withdrawal enabled us to reach the river bank. It is probable that otherwise very heavy casualties would have been suffered.

238. There is still far too much respect for enemy property or property of the country in which operations are taking place. This results in a tendency in the early stages for the troops to become road-bound and a failure to infiltrate or manoeuvre in the way that the situation requires.

GENERAL POINTS.

239. R.A.

The value of the FOU was proved. The immediate support given by medium artillery was quite remarkable. To shoot at the range of 19,000 yards on a map reference target which is surrounded by our own troops only a few hundred yards away, and do this without undue danger to them is a remarkable feat. The tremendous confidence of the infantry was such that repeat shoots were continually demanded and the medium artillery never failed in their consistent and accurate support.

The 75 mm gun is not a good anti-tank weapon at short range, owing to the lack of a shield to protect the personnel. It did extremely well in all other instances in the normal role.

The need for a third Anti-Tank Bty was shown. A third bty had been organised out of Div resources before the commencement of the battle and its value was found immense. It was found that anti-tank guns, either 6-pr or 17-pr, cannot be used as sniping weapons. Once in position they must stay in position. If tanks have to be stalked this must be carried out by anti-tank crews armed with Ps.I.A.T. and trained in tank hunting methods. This form of training must be practised.

240. R.E.

It is considered that all R.E. units within the Division should be homogeneous. There is a distinct lack of equipment with the Para Sqn as at present organised.

The value of the sapper as an infantry soldier was proved up to the hilt. They cannot, however, be asked both to fight as infantry and work as sappers. They can only do one thing at a time.

Flame throwing equipment manned by sappers proved useful.

241. Infantry.

The value of carriers to battalions of both Para Bdes and Airlanding Bde were proved. At least two per Bn are essential in future.

242. Royal Signals.

Communications within the Airborne Division and to the Base and the next higher formation need drastic revision and improvement. The sets at present in use are not satisfactory in all cases. The range attributed to sets was nearly always found to be grossly exaggerated.

...../243.

243. R.A.S.C.

The whole question of air resupply needs reorganising. Some reliable method of communicating a change of SDP must be evolved. The VCP control for close support aircraft can be used for controlling air resupply.

Large numbers of jeeps were put out of action by air burst mortar fire and vehicles must be dug in as early as possible in a defensive battle.

There is no doubt that all ranks can fight with much less in the way of supplies than is normally prepared for. We should concentrate on ammunition and be prepared mentally to exist on very little food for considerably longer than is normally the case.

244. Fd Ambs should be homogeneous in future and contain a parachute element, a gliderborne element and a seaborne element. Some medical personnel should be allotted to each unit, however small.

Medical supplies during the battle rapidly became short and in the majority of cases those wounded only received a service field dressing. In spite of little attention for four or five days the condition of casualties remained extremely good.

FINAL.

245. In general the organisation of an Airborne Division showed up extremely well. Except for minor internal adjustments there is little need for alteration.

246. The lessons learnt in many cases are not new and they serve as a reminder for constant attention during the preparation period.

247. The Operation 'MARKET' was not 100% a success and did not end quite as was intended. The losses were heavy but all ranks appreciate that the risks involved were reasonable. There is no doubt that all would willingly undertake another operation under similar conditions in the future.

We have no regrets.

R. E. Urquhart

Major-General,
Commander,
1 Airborne Division.

A.P.O. England.
10 Jan 45.

REU/BB

Johanna Hoeve
Lichtenbeek
Hobbs Wolfbezen
Ommerehol
CEMETERY
Graftombe
Bilderberg
Hill Oek
Sonnenberg
Hartestein
CEMETERY
Valkenberg
Oosterbeek
Heaveadorp
FERRY
Lek
River
Vogelenzang
Scale 1:0.25

80
79
78
Johanna Hoeve
Hotel Wolfbezen
Ommershol
Graftombe
Bilderberg
Hill Oek
Sonnenberg
Hartestein
CEMETERY
Valkenberg

Hill Oak
Sonnenberg
Hartestein
CEMETERY
Valkenberg
78
Oester
Heaveadorp
77
FERRY
Lek
River
Vogelenzang
67
68
69
70
Scale 1:6,250

Sonnenberg
Hartestein
CEMETERY
Valkenberg
Oosterbeek
Heaveadorp
FERRY
Lek
iver
Vogelenzang
68
69
70
Scale 1:6,250

Johanna Hoeve
Lichtenbeek
Ommershol
CEMETERY
Graftombe
Bilderberg
Sonnenberg
Hartestein
CEMETERY
Valkenberg

HOLLAND 1:25000 SHTS 38B & 6NW.
MOVES ON SEPT 17
" " SEPT 18
LZ "Y"
LZ "S"
LZ "L"
DZ "X"
LZ "Z"
LT. REGT
LT. REGT
7K/B
7K/A
7K/C
7K/D
7K/E
7K/F
7K/G
7K/H
18/A
18/B
18/C
18/D
18/E
18/F
18/G
18/H
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GP
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SS
74
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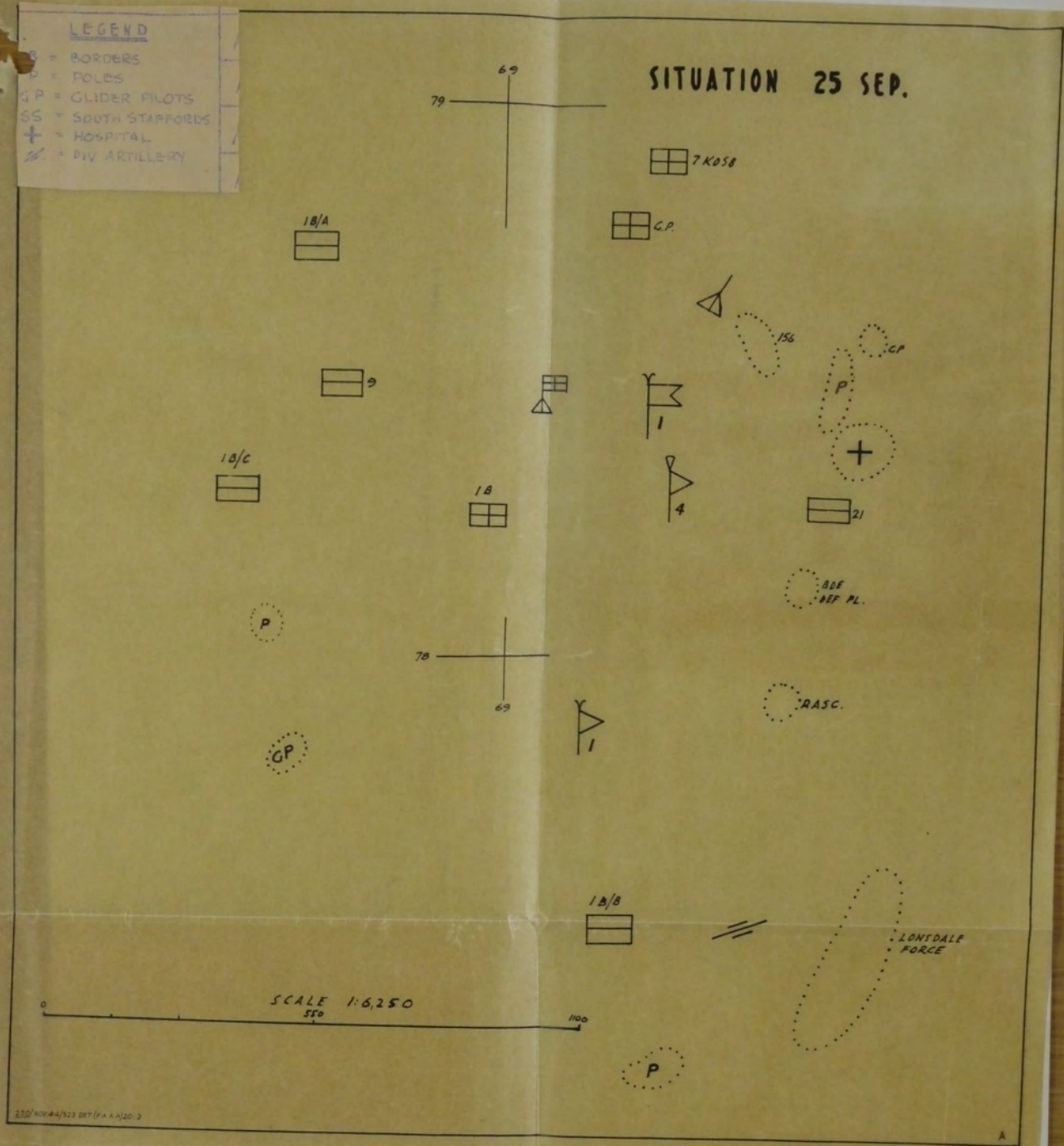
SITUATION 25 SEP.



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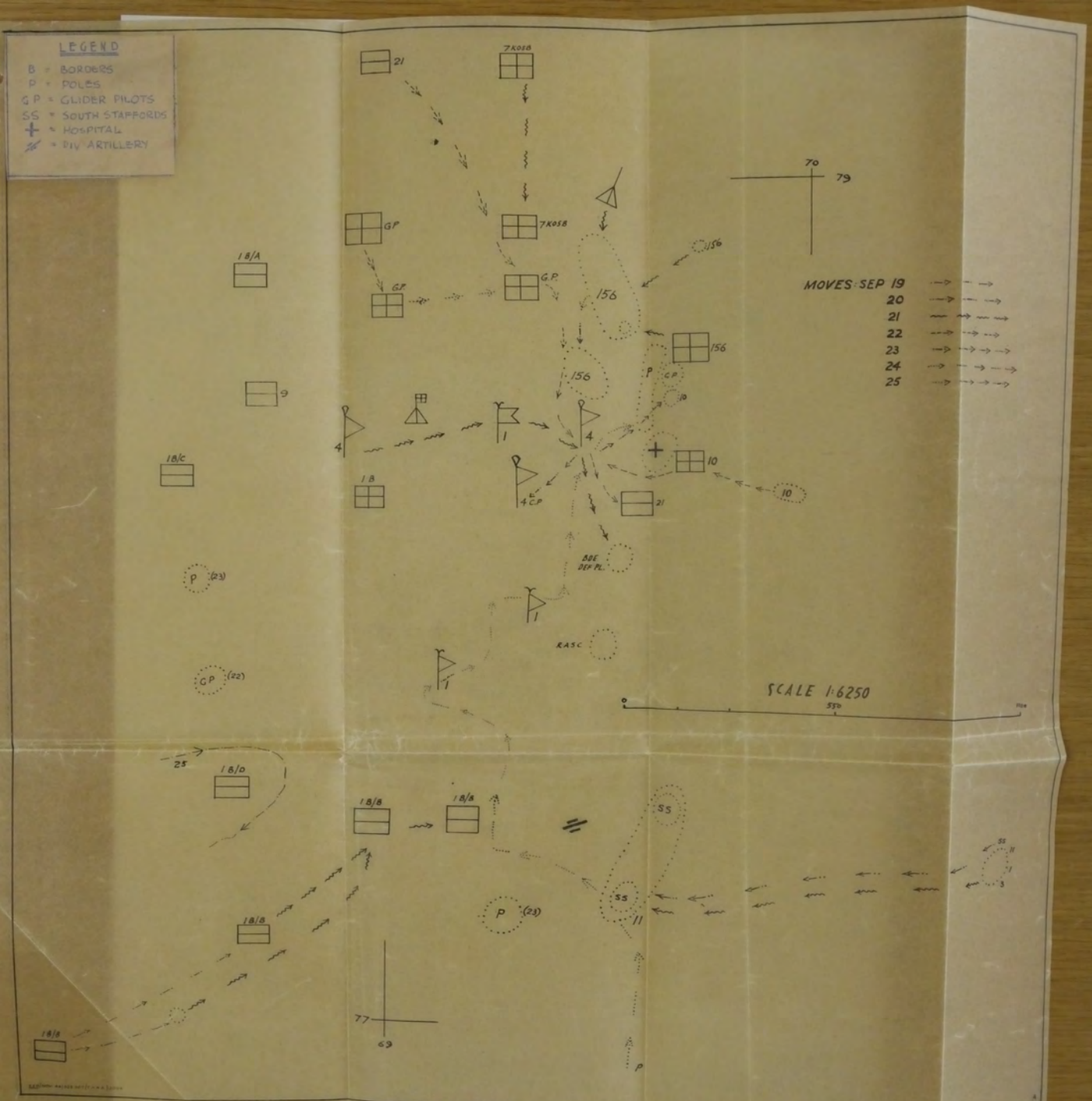
LEGEND
B = BORDERS
P = POLES
G P = GLIDER PILOTS
SS = SOUTH STAFFORDS
+ = HOSPITAL
= DIV ARTILLERY
MOVES SEP 19
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23
24
25
SCALE 1:6250
7KOSB
GP
18/A
18/C
18
18/D
18/B
156
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21
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1
4 CP
BDE DEP PL.
RASC
SS
P
(23)
(22)
70
79
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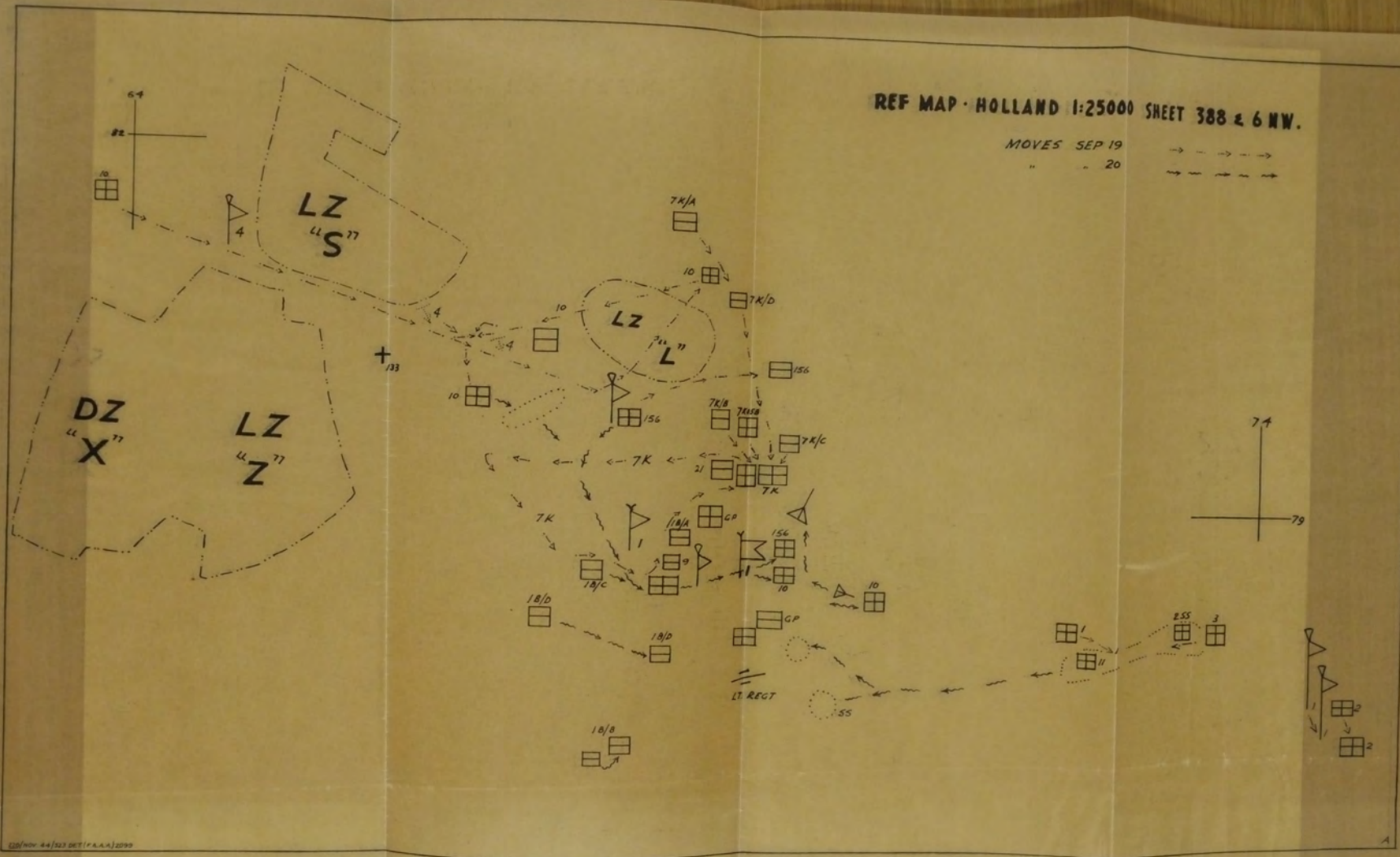
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LZ "Z"
LZ "L"
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7K/B
7K/C
7K/D
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18/A
18/B
18/C
18/D
GP
LT REGT
SS
2SS
3
1
2
10
4
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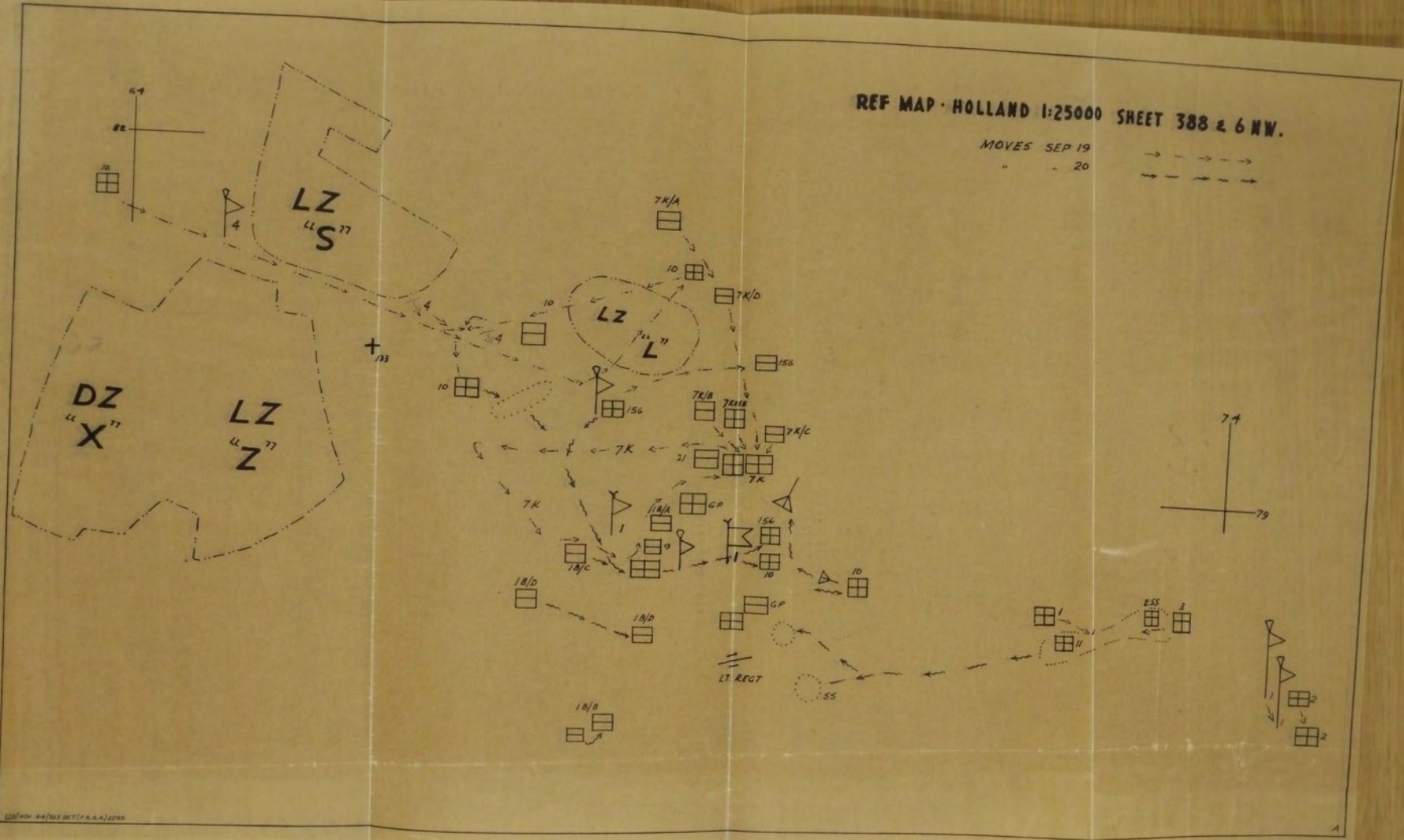
79
64
82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MOVES SEP 19
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7K/B
7K/C
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SECRET.

1 AIRBORNE DIVISION

REPORT ON OPERATION MARKET

PART IV.

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SECRET.

WO 219/5137.

Box 54

1 AIRBORNE DIVISION

REPORT ON OPERATION MARKET

PARTS I. - III.