

1st BATTALION THE HEREFORDSHIRE REGIMENT – NOVEMBER 1944

November saw consolidation and the push to drive German forces to the East of the River Maas OP NUTCRACKER). The ground was low lying and often marshland and most unsuitable for 'modern' warfare. The weather was also turning to winter and operations were challenging. Brig Churcher recalled: *The weather was gradually deteriorating and we had much rain and everything was bogged down. Our slit trenches and foxholes began to fill with water. The vehicle holes in which we had dug the forward vehicles in with wood planking at the bottom were filled with water and the wood planks floated to the top. It was altogether a very miserable period from the weather point of view.*

November was an indication of what life during the winter was going to be like – it was uncomfortable and hard; there was respite with local leave being authorised to Brussels. R&R centres had been created, men could escape the cold, wet, dirt and danger for 48 hours. Their first act was always a hot bath – or often 2! Then to find a café for some real food to eat – hot and tasty – often steak and chips! They might find a bar for a beer but this was not the priority! There were clubs and cinemas and females! Many found the 'luxury' of crisp white clean sheets and soft beds, and the airless rooms not conducive to a good night's sleep and ended up sleeping on the floor! However even Brussels was not totally safe and German aircraft carried out bombing raids and some soldiers on their R&R were killed during these.

WAR DIARY

The Brigade War Diary

Place.	Date.	Hour.	Summary of Events and Information.	Refs to Appendices
Month and Year : <u>NOV 44</u>			<u>WAR DIARY</u>	Sheet 1 In lieu of APC 2118 Unit : Hq 159 INFANTRY BRIGADE (Incorporating 59 Inf Bde Def Pl and L.A.D. att). Commander <u>J.B. CHURCHER, DSO.</u> Brig.
B.L.A.	1 Nov 44		The Bde Gp consisted of the following :- 4 KSLI at VEULEN 7722, 8 RB at IJSSSELSTEIN 7223, with 2 FF YEO with one sqn at VEULEN. 1 HEREFORD at GRIENDTSVEEN 7017, 2 E YORKS from 3 Brit Div 6716, 15/19 H 6716 with sqn in res behind Bde Hq at IJSSSELSTEIN, plus one bty of 119 SP 17 pdr A Tk. During the day 2 FF YEO did some recon of rds across our front. The 15(S) Div continued their advance towards MELVEL, meeting less opposition. Usual standing patrols were laid on. During night the 8 RB reported an enemy patrol of 10 men approached their fwd posn. SAA and mortar fire scattered the patrol. One of their standing patrols encountered the same patrol on its way back, capturing one PW, identified from 180 Fus Bn. Out of the patrol, the Sjt Patrol Leader was killed and 3 wounded. During the day 3 MON took over the posn in IJSSSELSTEIN from 8 RB - completed by 1500 hrs. 15/19 H returned to a res area behind Bde Hq as Div res. 4 KSLI, still VEULEN, reported more enemy shelling and mortaring activity. 1 HEREFORD had little to report. At approx 1000 hrs a Lancaster bomber returning from a bomber raid on DUISBURG crashed. 7 of the crew jumped, 5 landed over enemy lines, the Pilot Officer and rear gunner in the fwd area of 3 MON. The pilot had a broken arm whilst the rear gunner was dead owing to flak in the face. Usual patrols were laid on for the night.	Commander <u>J.B. CHURCHER, DSO.</u> Brig. Refs to Appendices
	3 Nov 44		The Bde remained in same locations. The Bde area was shelled twice during the morning. Orders were issued from Division that 1 WC and 5 GOLDSTREAMS of 32 Gda Bde were coming down to relieve the Inf in the Div. 1 WC were to take over from 4 KSLI - 2 E YORKS to take over from 1 HEREFORD - 1 HEREFORD to go to DEURNE and rest - 4 KSLI to take over from 3 MON in IJSSSELSTEIN. These moves were to take place on 4/5 Nov excepting 1 HEREFORD who were relieved at 1830 hrs by 2 E YORKS on 3 Nov. Bde Hq was to remain in its present location in command. the 8 RB of the Armad Bde were being relieved by 5 GOLDSTREAMS.	
	4 Nov 44		At 1030 hrs recon parties from 1 WC arrived. 2 E YORKS were in GRIENDTSVEEN 7117. At 1500 hrs 1 WC main body arrived in the area, and concentrated in preparation to take over from 4 KSLI at VEULEN. This was carried out smoothly during the night, 3 MON being relieved by 4 KSLI and prepared to move to the GRAVE area for a rest on 5 Nov. Usual patrols were carried out during the night.	
	5 Nov 44		The Bde remained in same locations, 1 WC at VEULEN, 1 HEREFORD ate DEURNE at rest, 2 FF YEO and 4 KSLI at IJSSSELSTEIN, 2 E YORKS at GRIENDTSVEEN, 15/19 H in res NORTH of Bde Hq. During the day the Hum shelled the Bde area quite considerably; it was thought the reason was because a medium gun had been calibrating in line with the Hqs; this was stopped later on in the day. During the night patrols were sent out.	
	6 Nov 44		The Bde remained in same locations; very little activity during the day. At approx 1930 hrs the Hum sent some bombers over, who attacked the area WEST of DEURNE. Patrols were sent out during the night. 1 WC had some success with their patrols, killing at least four Hums and wounding some.	

WAR DIARY

Unit : HQ 159 INFANTRY BRIGADE (incorporating 159
Inf Bde HQ Def Pl and L.A.D. att.)

Month and Year: NOV 44

Commander J.B. CHURCHER, DSO. Brig.

Ref to
Appendices.

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Ref to Appendices.
B.L.A.	7 Nov 44		2 FF YEO moved into Div res with sqn resting in HELMOND, 15/19 H taking over from 2 FF YEO in VEULEN and two sqns in res. During the afternoon 1 WG sent out a fighting patrol to the NORTH of VEULEN, killing 4 Huns and generally beating them up. During the late afternoon some enemy shells landed in the 1 WG's rear Bn area, resulting in seven trucks being brewed up. Patrols were arranged for the night.	
	8 Nov 44		At 0830 hrs 1 HEREFORD took over from 4 KSLI in LUSSELSSTEIN, the 4 KSLI moving to DEURNE Bks for a 48 hrs rest in preparation for taking over GRIENDTSVEEN. Other Bde locations remained the same. Patrols continued during the night. Air Marshal Tedder and General Dempsey visited the HQ and remained talking to the Brigadier for about half an hour.	
	9 Nov 44		The Bde remained in same locations. During the evening, 2 E YORKS were relieved by 4 KSLI. 2 E YORKS moved to DEURNE in preparation for a move back to 3 Brit Div. Little activity reported during the day.	
	10 Nov 44		The Bde remained in same locations. No activity reported.	
	11 Nov 44		The Bde remained. Repts of 3 MON arrived at 0900 hrs in readiness to take over from 1 WG who were returning to their own Bde the next morning. Little activity reported during the day. The rds were in a very much worse condition. The route to VEULEN was almost impassable for wheeled vehs. At last light the hand-over started. By approx 1030 hrs the hand over was completed, the only difficulty being the mud, which bogged quite a few vehs.	
	12 Nov 44		1 WG now in DEURNE - moved off during the morning to rejoin their own Div. The Brigadier left in the morning on 48 hrs leave in BRUSSELS. Lt-Col Turner-Gain took over comd in his absence. Little or no activity reported during the day. The state of rds was becoming impassable. Supplies for the MONs were being arranged to be brought up by horse and cart.	
	13 Nov 44		The Bde remained in same locations. At 0750 hrs the INNS OF COURT LD reported to us that the tp of scout cars on our front reported they had a PW and since then nothing more had been heard. After a certain time a further tp was sent down to investigate, the result being that the PW was a scape goat, the tp having been ambushed, the two Gvrs being killed and the Offr and Opl reported missing presumed PW. The Hun had tried to take the one going scout car away but got it bogged and then set it on fire. Usual patrols were organised, with an ambush laid on around the burnt scout car. By the time our patrol arrived in the area the Hun was already there in some strength. Later on in the night our patrol returned and occupied the posn.	
	14 Nov 44		The Bde Comd returned from his 48 hrs leave. The Bde in the same locations. Little activity reported, but during the late evening shelling and NEWS increased.	(W)

WAR DIARY

Unit : HQ 159 INFANTRY BRIGADE (incorporating
159 Inf Bde HQ Def Pl and L.A.D. att.)

Month and Year : NOV 44

Commander J.B. CHURCHER, DSO. Brig.

Ref to
Appendices.

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Ref to Appendices.
B.L.A.	15 Nov 44		The Bde remained in same locations. The Bde was issued with 15 WEASELS to facilitate cross-country work to help supply the MONS at VEULEN. Patrols carried out aggressive work during the night.	
	16 Nov 44		The Bde remained in same locations. Repts of LINCOLNS of 9 Bde (3 Brit Div) came to get as much info as possible about VEULEN in readiness for a take-over from 3 MON. Little activity from Bde front, although much activity heard from the SOUTH where the 12 Corps attack was being put in.	
	17 Nov 44		The Bde remained in same locations. No activity reported.	
	18 Nov 44		The Bde remained in same locations. No activity reported.	
	19 Nov 44		A conference at the 29 Arm'd Bde HQ was held to discuss the moves, times etc involved in the moves which were to take place, 3 Brit taking the 29 Arm'd Bde front incl VEULEN, commencing on 19 Nov.	
	19 Nov 44		At 0830 hrs 1 HEREFORD moved from LUSSELSSTEIN to DEURNE Bks, being clear by 0900 hrs. During the morning 8 EB moved into the area and came under comd. During the afternoon 23 H took over from 2 FF YEO who moved to DEURNE Bks. During the darkness the 2 LINGS (9 Bde, 3 Brit Div) took over from 3 MON at VEULEN, relief being complete 0930 hrs. 3 MON then came under comd 29 Arm'd Bde. Little or no activity reported on the front.	
	20 Nov 44		At 0900 hrs Bde HQ moved to its new location SOUTH of DEURNE at ZIJBERG 663191. All the units were in their new locations, in readiness for their new advance, 4 KSLI remaining in GRIENDTSVEEN, 15/19 H ZIJBERG, 2 FF YEO and 1 HEREFORD in DEURNE Bks. No activity reported on the front although contact was made with the Hun in the GRIENDTSVEEN area.	
	21 Nov 44		Contact was still kept with the Hun in the GRIENDTSVEEN area, although further to the SOUTH 15(S) Div lost contact. No activity reported on the Div front. In the late afternoon 1 HEREFORD moved from DEURNE Bks to the area 7713, passing through 15(S) Div in readiness for the attack on AMERIKA. The rds were reported as impassable.	
	22 Nov 44		At 0715 hrs 4 KSLI commenced their adv on AMERIKA, followed by 1 HEREFORD on their own objective at ST ANTHONIS HORN. The advance was delayed by mines and weather conditions, rds being impassable to tks. At 0800 hrs Tac HQ moved to GRIENDTSVEEN. 1 HEREFORD reached AMERIKA unopposed and continued the adv on to the original objective of the 29 Arm'd Bde in the area 7819. 4 KSLI then moved to AMERIKA. Owing to the rds, craters, mines blown hrs etc it was impossible to get food up to the units. A party of 60 ORs was organised to carry pack rations fwd. No opposition was reported during the day. Patrolling was carried out by 1 HEREFORD.	(W)

Sheet 4

In lieu of AFO 2118

WAR DIARY

Month and Year: NOV 44

Unit: HQ 159 INFANTRY BRIGADE (incorporating 159 Inf Bde HQ Def Fl & L.A.D. att).

Commander: J.E. CHURCHER, DSO. Brig.

Ref to Appendices.

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Ref to Appendices
R.I.A.	23 Nov 44		Rain continued all day, making the weather more of a formidable obstacle than the enemy. Positions were ordered fwd owing to the condition of the rds. At 1130 hrs the rd. GRIENDESVEEN - AMERIKA was opened. The A Bde of 1 HEREFORD and 4 KSLI were sent forward. Bde HQ moved to AMERIKA. All rds were cratered. By dark, 4 KSLI were in SCHADLOK and 1 HEREFORD in the WOODS to the WEST.	
	24 Nov 44		The Corps Ccmd visited 4 KSLI and 1 HEREFORD. Bde HQ moved at 1430 hrs to METERICOK 807188. During the evening orders were received for the Bde to move back to the HEKMOND area, the 15(S) Div taking over our present posns.	
	25 Nov 44		At 1430 hrs the Bde moved to a rest area for four or five days. 4 KSLI and Bde HQ to HEKMOND, 1 HEREFORD to DEURNE Bks, 3 MON to ASTEN.	
	26 Nov 44		Bde remained in rest areas.	
	27 Nov 44		The Bde was informed that owing to unforeseen circumstances it was to return to the line on 28th to hold sector of the MAAS from approx WESSEBROEP to GRUBBEVORST, with under ccmd 3 MON, 4 KSLI, 1 HEREFORD, 8 RB, 15/19 H, the 29 Armd Bde being withdrawn to the BAKEL area.	
	28 Nov 44		Bde HQ, Tac and Main, moved at 1230 hrs to MELDERSLO 854194, 8 RB, 3 MON and 1 HEREFORD occupying their posns - 4 KSLI and 15/19 H to move on 29 Nov. The line was extremely long, therefore Coys were very strung out. Locations of Bn HQs were as follows :- 8 RB 884232 3 MON 885189 1 HEREFORD 884168 Div HQ moved to the area of KASTENBAAL.	
	29 Nov 44		15/19 H and 4 KSLI moved up into new area. 15/19 H area 884232 862203, 4 KSLI 848184. Certain areas of land WEST of the MAAS were reported flooded. At KASTEL 904217 still reported occupied. Necessary action being taken by us on the 30th.	
	30 Nov 44		The 3 MON put in the attack on the KASTREL 904217 and BROEKHUIZEN 907221 with one sqn 15/19 H in sp, also the Div Arty. The objective proved to be a much harder nut to crack than originally expected. Owing to the two leading Coy Comds being put out of action and certain Pl Comds killed, confusion set into the Coys. When Lt-Col Stockley, his 2 IC, Major Allen and IO, Capt. Gibbs went forward to try and get it once again under control. This move met with failure, all being killed or wounded. The Hun put down considerable arty fire well controlled, also SA fire from concealed posns in buildings. Eventually, all objectives were taken, incl 72 PW, not counting dead and wounded. The 3 MONS THEMSELVES suffered severely in killed and wounded, including the CO and IO being killed.	(W)

The Battalion War Diary

Sheet TWO

Army Form C. 2118.

WAR DIARY
or
INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

Unit: 1st Bn The HEREFORDSHIRE Regt

Month and Year: Oct - 1944

Commanding Officer: Lt Col G. R. Turner, Capt.

Instructions regarding War Diaries and Intelligence Summaries are contained in P.S. Regs., Vol. I. Monthly War Diaries will be enclosed in A.F. C.2118. If this is not available, and for Intelligence Summaries, the cover will be prepared in manuscript.

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	References to Appendices
GRIENDESVEEN (cont:)			weakest point in our lines.) Ident: 100y/22 /489 Regt:	
"		0430	A and D Coys change over posns. <i>2200 hrs killed 5 was wounded by shrapnel at 737174</i>	
"	31		All quiet on our front except for slight shelling. Patrols had nothing to report throughout the night.	
"			B and C Coys change over posns during the morning.	
"		1500	C Coy standing patrol at 702165 kill one, wound one, and capture one of a German approaching patrol. These had civilian clothes under their uniforms and turned out to be deserters.	
"	Nov:			
"	1		Quiet through the 24 hrs: Patrol activity uneventful. Trip flares laid forward of Standing and DF Patrols.	
"	2		Nothing to report:	
"	3		Again all quiet on our front. RECO lay shrapnel mines as follows:- Belt of 25 from 710184 to 713183, belt of 25 from 713183 to 713184 (the track being left clear) and a belt of 30 from 714182 to 717181.	

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Sheet THREE

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Unit 1st Bn. The HEREFORDSHIRE Regt:
R.
Commanding Officer Lt Col G. Turner Cain.

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	References to Appendices
GRIENDTSVEEN (cont)		1830	The whole surrounded by a plain wire fence and marked; Bn hands over the defence of the area to 2 Bn E.YORKS (3 Brit Div) and moves to rest area in DEURNE in coy groups without incident.	
		2230	Bn all settled in billets.	
DEURNE	4		Maintenance, baths, rest and entertainment.	
"	5		Maintenance, baths, and rest. 35 OR's Rfts arrive.	
"	6		Maintenance entertainment and rest.	
			The Comd Officer inspects all Coys. Small route marches and drill under Coy arrangements.	
"	7		Maintenance, entertainment and rest. Recce party to the KSLI area preparatory to taking over tomorrow. (South East of IJSELSTELJN #222)	
DEURNE and IJSELSTELJN	8	0700	Move to area SE of IJSELSTELJN commences.	
IJSELSTELJN		0930	Hand over complete and without incident. Coy areas as follows:-	

Sheet FOUR

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Month and Year NOV 1944

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Army Form C. 2118.

Unit 1st Bn The HEREFORDSHIRE Regt:
R.
Commanding Officer Lt Col G. Turner Cain

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	References to Appendices
IJSELSTELJN(cont)		1900	'A' 738219, 'B' 735216, 'C' 727226, 'D' 732220, Bn HQ 731222. Attempted recce patrol to houses 772193 prevented by SA fire and flares at 757197.	
"	9		All quiet during the day except for occasional shellfire on road forward of our posns.	
		1730/2030	Mine recce patrols went down tracks from X tcks 758216; to X tcks 765205, and from X tcks 744209 to tck junc 756204 and thence to ditch at 757197. Found all recce'd tracks clear of mines. Information on ground obtained.	
"	10		Occasional shellfire during the 24 Hrs.	
		1730/2030	Mine recce patrol from 756204 to 765204 reported tck clear of mines. Recce patrol to BRIDGE 772203 reported Br. held by enemy. Information on ground obtained. Three reinforcements arrived.	
"	11		Occasional shellfire during the 24 Hrs.	
		1730/2130	Mine recce patrol reported ground clear between 756204 and 758197.	

Sheet FIVE

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Unit 1st Bn The HEREFORDSHIRE R t. Army Form C.2118.

Commanding Officer Lt Col G.R. Turner Cain

Month and Year Nov 1944

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	References to Appendices
IJSSELSTEIJN (cont)			Information on ground obtained.	
			"Going" Patrol (recce) met an enemy patrol at 753196 and returned with task not completed. No casualties.	
"	12		No incidents. Patrols uneventful, but further ground information obtained. OP established at ref 744211, to observe any enemy movement on LORBAAN--AMERIKA road.	
"	13	0830	Two scout cars of the Inns of Court Regt ambushed at FARM 731204. 'B' Coy standing patrol 400x to the NE heard nothing, and thick ground mist prevented observation. Forward standing patrols maintained during the day reported no further incident. Visibility poor until 1030 hrs.	
		0930	Clearing patrol along track 716197 to 744209 reported area clear.	
		1630	One pl. of the MMG's of 21Med MG Coy in position.	
		1830	Patrol sent to ambush at 742203 around burnt out recce car	

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SHEET SIX

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WAR DIARY

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Unit 1st Bn The HEREFORDSHIRE R t. Army Form C.2118.

Commanding Officer Lt Col G.R. Turner Cain.

Month and Year Nov 1944

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	References to Appendices
IJSSELSTEIJN (cont)			...found about 20 enemy already there. They returned to their coy and a pre-arranged "stank" was put down on the area by 151 Fd Bty. The same patrol was sent out at 2230 hrs. after a further "stank" and found the area around the car clear.	
"	14		Fire from four NBW's on Log Road 744209 to 758217 and partic- ularly on track junc at 758217 at intervals throughout the 24hrs;	
"	15		A dead Hun was found by Standing Patrol (7) just in front of of their position at 759213. He proved to be a useful identification --a Sgt of 5 Coy II/269 Gren Ers Regt 180 Division. A patrol went to the tek junc at 774195 and heard enemy in occupation. No contact was made. After withdrawing a short distance, a half track vehicle was heard moving North up the road from AMERIKA and it stopped at the tek junc. Sounds were also heard at FARM 771187.	
"	16		Quiet on the Bn front. There was spasmodic shelling on LOG RD;	

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Sheet SEVEN

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WAR DIARY
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Army Form C. 2118

Unit 1st Bn The HEREFORDSHIRE Re

Month and Year November 1944

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Commanding Officer Lt Col G.R. Turner Cain.

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	References to Appendices
IJSSELSTELIJN (cont)			A patrol was sent out to Fm 771187 to clear enemy heard the previous night, but nothing was seen or heard.	
"	17	1600	Heavy fire from NBW's on Log Rd including smoke. It is believed to have been put down to blind our tanks which had been firing during the afternoon. A patrol was sent out to Rd at 775185 and from there North as far as 772202. No contact was made and nothing heard. Ground observation was restricted owing to the extremely dark night. Reinforcements totaling 2 officers and 99 OR's for the unit arrived at DEURNE.	
"	18	1230/ 1330	Heavy shelling on the X Rds 772202 744209. Intermittent shelling on Log Rd all day. A patrol was sent to clear the buildings at 771188 and then to recon rd running south to AMERIKA from a firm base at 776183 to as far as 776176. On reaching 770186 they were fired	

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Sheet EIGHT

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WAR DIARY

Army Form C. 2118

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

Unit 1st Bn The HEREFORDSHIRE Re

Month and Year

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Commanding Officer Lt Col G.R. Turner Cain

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	References to Appendices
IJSSELSTELIJN (cont)			on by rifle and automatics. They observed an 8cm mortar and spandau positions to the South of them. No further contact was made with the enemy and the patrol returned by 0315 hrs;	
DEURNE	19		Bn moved to Camp at DEURNE. Cleaning equipment, baths and rest was carried out during the remainder of the day.	
"	20		Maintenance, baths and entertainment during the day.	
"	21	1730	Bn moves to forming up area NE of HELENAVEEN preparatory to attacking AMERIKA. Route DEURNE - LIESSEL 6714 - through bridgehead over canal at HELENAVEEN 7311 (made by 15 (S) Div) to locations as follows: 'A' 775140, 'B' 773135, 'C' 772133, 'D' 778130, with Bn HQ South of 'B' Coy area. Troops debussed at HELENAVEEN and from there the tck was poor, and only tracks and four wheeled drive vehicles proceeded. No tanks were allowed through. Close NBW fire on route but no casualties. Intermittent shelling and NBW fire during the night.	

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Sheet NINE

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Unit 1st Bn The HEREFORDSHIRE Re

Commanding Officer Lt Col G.R. Turner Cain

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	References to Appendices
HELENAVEEN/ AMERIKA.	22	0800	KSLI to the left commenced advance along DEURNE → AMERIKA Ry; to 75 Easting.	
		0830	Bn first phase of attack commences. Coys reach objectives without seeing any sign of the enemy and consolidated. Coy areas:- 'A' 765158, 765144, 770156; 'C' 758156, 762158; 'D' 765162, 768163, 767162; 'B' 759163, 763161, 759160; No mines met, tcks clear for vehicles but going extremely difficult. BnHQ takes up position at 767154.	<i>in beautiful deep barricade and the stores did not stay long.</i>
		1300	With 'A' Coy as firm base 'B' 'C' and 'D' moved to attack AMERIKA. Again no enemy met and coys consolidated; 'A' moved forward. Coys consolidated in area :- 'A' Ry Stn 776168, 'B' 776177, 'C' 785174, 'D' 784180. No mines met on route followed but demolitions caused delay. During this advance, 15th (S) Div Recce Regt moved up on our right in the direction of HORST.	

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Sheet TEN

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Commanding Officer Lt Col G.R. Turner Cain

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	References to Appendices
		1400	Absence of enemy caused a change of plan, and instead of proceeding in the direction of HORST, this was left to the 15th (S) Div; and we proceeded North.	
		1430	Carrier patrol Recce'd AMERIKA - LORSAAN rd, turned East at 775187, to WOODS area 7818-7819. A few enemy were seen and two were taken prisoner. (Identity XX II/22 Regt) They stated that they had been left as a thin rearguard, and on seeing British tps were to report back to their unit who had withdrawn to the East of the MAAS.	
		1530	Bn moved to the North and Coys consolidated as follows:- 'A' 785190, 'B' 780190, 'C' 790187, 'D' 784184, BnHQ 783187, meeting very slight enemy reaction. During the night four PW's were taken - very poor specimens who gave themselves up. Identity II/22 Regt and 437 Marshe Bn. Continuous rain all day rendered the tracks impassable and supply difficulties very great.	

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(Erase heading not required).

Army Form C. 2118.

Unit 1st Bn The HEREFORDSHIRE Re

Commanding Officer Lt Col G.R. Turner Cain

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	References to Appendices
			All quiet during the night.	
	23	1100	Bn moved to clear track and areas and to consolidate in areas; - approach as follows:- 'A' 795200, 'B' 795205, 'C' 800200, 'D' 802203, Bn HQ 802201. No enemy met and no incidents. Mine boxes seen but no mines in area 802201. KSLI ON RIGHT in area SCHADLIJK, 3(Br) Div had moved East to KASTENRAAI and 15(S) Div had moved towards TIENRAIJ, both with little or no opposition thus "pinching" us out. Soft vehicles were able to reach the Bn during the evening thus relieving the supply situation.	
	24		Remained in same location. Div and Corps Commanders paid a visit to the unit in the morning. No incident during the day and night.	

M324/1218 1260M 10/41 H.B. & Co. Ltd. SI-15411

SHEET TWELVE

Instructions regarding War Diaries and Intelligence Summaries are contained in F.S. Regs., Vol. I. Monthly War Diaries will be enclosed in A.F. C.2119. If this is not available, and for Intelligence Summaries, the cover will be prepared in manuscript.

Month and Year... Nov 44

WAR DIARY

or

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

(Delete heading not required).

Army Form C. 2118.

Unit 1st Bn HEREFORDSHIRE Regt.

Commanding Officer Lt Col G.R. Turner Cain

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	References to Appendices
DEURNE	25	1440	Bn moves to Deurne Camp.	
		1700	Move completed without incident.	
	26		Maintenance, baths and rest.	
	27		" " " and entertainment.	
Houthuizen	28	0730	Bn recon party moves to recon new area to be taken over from Grubbenvorst 7 Seaforths, 15 (S) Div.	
		1245	Bn moves.	
		1600	Bn in posn. Locations, "A" 885156, "B" 897177, "C" 884167, "D" 883172. Bn HQ 885167.	
		1700	"A" Coy moves to Grubbenvorst area for their night posns. standing patrols est at 878179, -889179, -903186, +897165. Contact patrols "D" to "B" Coy, and from Grubbenvorst to "B" Coy. No incidents during night apart from periodical shelling E of Grubbenvorst.	
	29	0730	standing patrols returned. N.T.R. Carrier sec takes over from "A" Coy in Grubbenvorst.	
			"I" OPs est at 897173 and 889150.	
		0830	Enemy arty stonk in "B" Coy area. No cas.	

WL 1774 208 1,000,000 & 12, W. II & S. 514577

SHEET THIRTEEN


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WAR DIARY
OR
INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

Army Form C. 2118.

Unit 1st Bn The Herefordshire RegtCommanding Officer Lt Col G R Turner CainMonth and Year Nov. 1944.

(Delete heading not required).

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	References to Appendices
	29	1700	Standing patrols est as before, but only 1 pl in Grubbenvorst instead of 1 coy. Spasmodic shelling during 24 hours of Grubbenvorst area.	
	30		Same routine as for yesterday, apart from "C" Coy providing pl as firm base at 890163 for standing patrol at 897165. Spasmodic shelling as before.	
 Lt. Col. Commanding Officer 1st Bn The Herefordshire Regt, 2 Dec 1944.				
<small>VL47724 998 2,000,000 S. 48 W. H. A. S. 51/5875</small>				

Wintering on The Maas – Part 2

The period from that 20 Oct until 27 Nov might be called 'Deurne Revisited' with possibly 'Amerika' as a sub heading. It is a monotonous period in the Battalion's story of the campaign. It is a period of Reserve Battalion (in Deurne), patrols, bog trotting, mine laying and pig killing, punctuated by the odd 48 hours leave in Brussels – if lucky. No cryptic 'Q' clerk maintained a record of this period as he did to cover the Battalion's history before the campaign (see 1st Battalion Build Up 1939 – 1944). If he had done it would have read something like this:

1 Nov	Griendtsveen	Pioneers lay trip flares
1 Nov	Griendtsveen	Pioneers trip over them
3 Nov	Deurne	Hasn't changed much
8 Nov	Ijsselsteijn	Neither has this bloody place. More shells and more patrols
19 Nov	Deurne	About time too
21 Nov	Helenaveen	Right in the mud this time. After debogging every vehicle 6 times. Battalion assembled at FUP for attack on Amerika.
22 Nov	Amerika ¹	Village in a hell of a state – not the United States. KSLI attacked down railway from Griendtsveen and from west and 1 Herefords across the peat bogs from south. Village not held, Thankful for small mercies. Pushed on north against light opposition. Never had an army crossed the Heide (marsh) before in winter; Dutch said it was impossible.

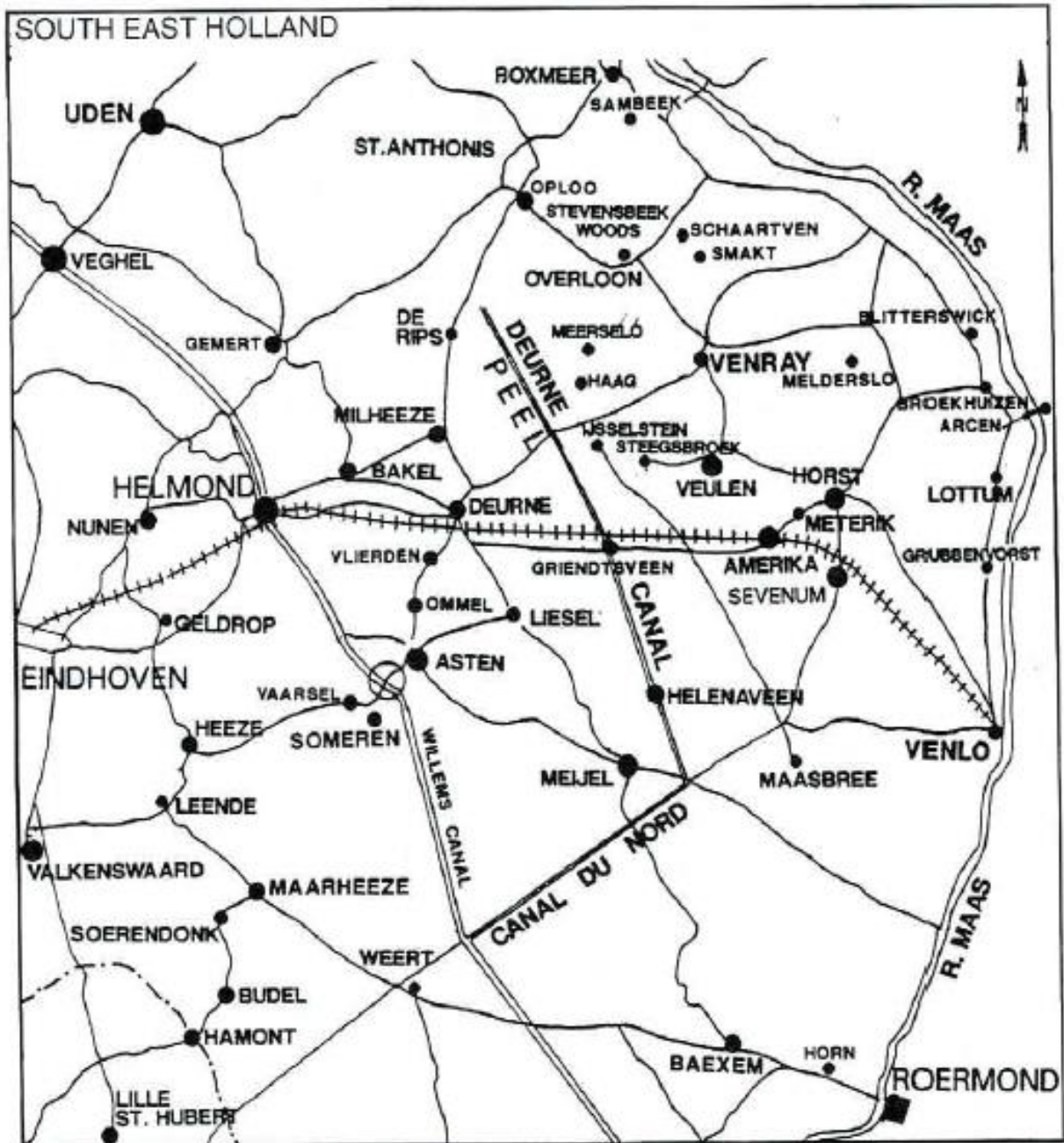
¹ - Spelt Amerika and America.

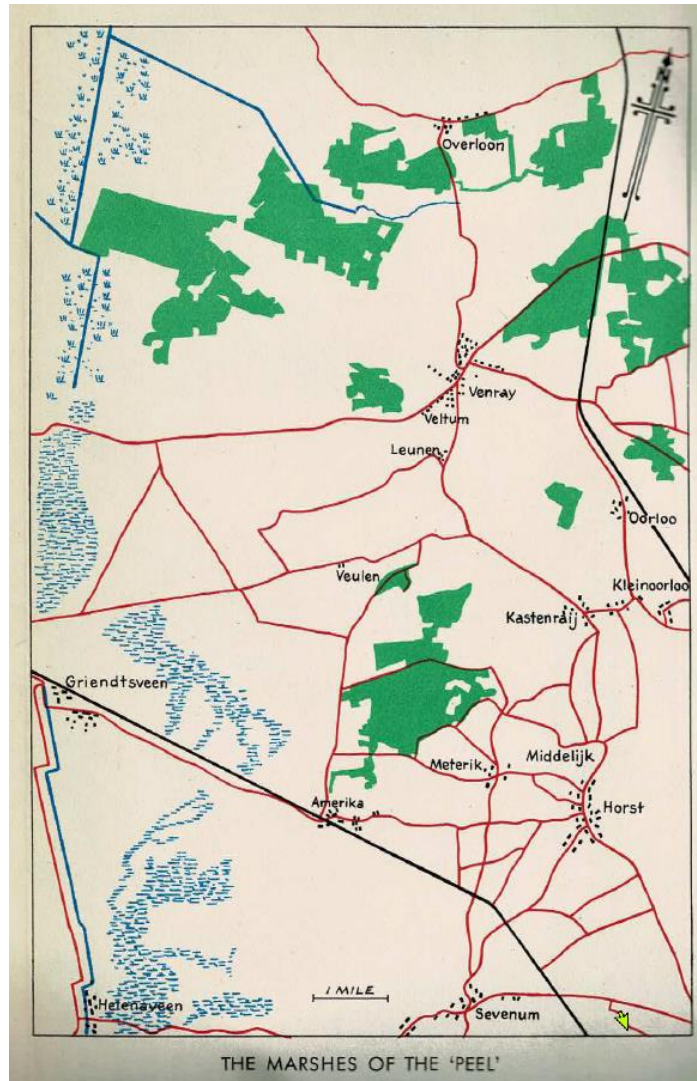
23 Nov Schadijk

0430 hours – food at last, at least tins of it. Owing to mine trouble along the railway which was to be used as maintenance route, supplies could not get through. Eventually a party of volunteers from Bde HQ man handled supplies and for what we were about to receive we are truly thankful. Reached Schadijk sandhills by tracks, trials and tribulations.

25 Nov Deurne

For the 4th and last time.





Brig Churcher recalled the Amerika operation: *The next part of this unpleasant time in Southern Holland was about to take place when the brigade was ordered to advance across the Peel of Holland toward a hamlet called Amerika. We started with our left at the famous Griendtsveen, and on our right was one wobbly road through the marshes which could only take one vehicle at a time. The Germans had it sown with schu mines underwater and we had a number of casualties with troops having their foot blown off and this didn't improve our attitude towards the Germans. Having captured our objective around Amerika, we consolidated there and received orders that we would be relieved by the 15th Scottish Division and return for maintenance and refitting. During these days, at the end of November, the weather, the rain, the floods were almost worse than the enemy. In the operation to capture Amerika and the surrounding area, the troops had to cross the Peel of Holland, and talking to a Dutch officer subsequently, he informed me that he did not know a case in history when armies crossed the Peel in winter. So really it was quite a remarkable operation.*

Sgt Reg Worton remembered racing his carriers round and round the fields to set off the deadly schu mines. Later he saw Jerry helmets in the windows of a house and yelled out at the top of his voice, jumped out ran round the side of the house and bumped into two of them. They turned round one with a schmeisser (machine gun) - he pulled it out of his hand and sent them both to his crew. The German sergeant was running to a zigzag trench. He shouted. He never turned, so he shot him. Sgt Worton was armed with a Yankee repeating rifle he had had since St Lo. The lads had their watches.

The road to Amerika was at times impassable due to the weather and poor road structure, the railway line had been used but was mined and targeted by the Germans. At one stage no vehicle movement was possible and rations and ammunition had to be carried 'by hand'.



A party of Herefords at Amerika railway station

On 28 Nov the Battalion relieved the 7 Seaforths and started its vigil of the Maas itself. The area occupied was Houthuizen and Grubbenvorst, generally known as 'Grub Street', about 2 miles north of the Venlo pocket. There was nothing spectacular about this role.

The most difficult problem was in trying to sort out the civilians to tell the genuine types from masquerading Germans. Even the genuine civilians were not very dependable as the German Border ran parallel to and about 3 miles the other side of the river. It was to be anticipated therefore that some of the natives would have German leanings and would do anything to assist the enemy. Later

the whole area was evacuated of civilians, as much for their good as for ours, as they had suffered casualties from shelling but would not leave their roosts.

The form of defence lay in 2 strong points, one established by B Coy to the north of the area and the other to the south. These were wired in, mines laid and an adequate trench system dug. Areas such as Grub Street which lent themselves to infiltration were mined. By night patrols covered the river to watch for actual crossings and also to link up with other companies. By day Intelligence and Gunner Ops manned various vantage points and kept an eye on enemy movement. The enemy shelled spasmodically and we retaliated on a similar scale - supplies of 25 pounder ammunition being rationed at the time, it was the normal policy to return 3 shells for every one received.

The daily routine on the Maas became repetitive, monotonous with long periods of inactivity – all in fairly unpleasant conditions. A typical daily routine was:

0730 hours	Standing patrols return. Nothing to report. Carrier Sect takes over from A Coy. Intelligence Ops established.
1330 hours	Enemy artillery stonk in B Coy area – no casualties.
1700 hours	Standing patrols established as before but only one platoon in forward, instead of a company. Spasmodic shelling during 24 hours in area. Nothing to report during the night.

Casualties

There were no casualties recorded in November

Wounded

There are no reports of woundings in November

Honours & Awards

There were no Honours or Awards made in November

Officers' Plot

See Separate post

ORs' Strength Return

<i>Date</i>	<i>WO1</i>	<i>WO2</i>	<i>CSjt</i>	<i>Sjt</i>	<i>Cpl</i>	<i>Pte</i>	<i>Bglr</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
<i>Establishment</i>	1	7	6	38	72	689		813	
13/06/1944								913	Rail Party 384; sea party 529
01/07/1944	1	7	7	39	72	673	6	805	
29/07/1944	1	7	8	38	74	594	6	728	
02/09/1944	1	7	9	41	70	582	6	716	
30/09/1944	1	6	13	36	62	539		656	
28/10/1944	1	7	10	39	64	565		686	
25/11/1944	1	6	9	38	70	663		787	