

Briefing For Lieutenant Colonel J.O.E. Vandeleur, Irish Guards Group

Situation – North of Valkenswaard, 1000hrs 18th September 1944

It wasn't until this morning that the Dorsets/Hussars Group was relieved and in turn relieved the Irish Group in Valkenswaard but thankfully, at last 'The Micks' are once again on the road north and the advance has resumed. What is more, the rest of Guards Armoured Division has now managed to break out of the log-jam at 'Joe's Bridge' and is also moving north through Valkenswaard. The Welsh Guards Group has been given orders to expand the corridor to the east and to move north parallel to the Micks, while the Grenadier Group is tasked with doing the same to the west. The Coldstreams are following behind your group at a respectful distance, while the Dorsets/Hussars Group is close behind them.

However, the armoured cars of 'The Stable-Boys' (2nd Household Cavalry Regiment), having moved forward during the early hours of the morning, have reported contact with enemy blocking forces in the town of Aalst. They report *Fallschirmjäger* in approximately battalion strength (probably the same unit we have been sparring with since yesterday), with confirmed support from Panther tanks, SPs and dug-in 88s. Aalst looks like it might be the toughest nut to crack yet. Not to worry – your boys have dealt with worse.

'Up The Micks!'

Mission

You are to overcome resistance at Aalst and push on to relieve the US 101st Airborne at Eindhoven with all due haste

Execution

Artillery support today is comparatively limited, as the 5th AGRA must have shot off its entire stock of ammunition in the colossal shoots of yesterday afternoon. However, air support will be available and the division's 153rd Field Regiment, along with the 50th Division's 90th Field Regiment, have moved forward and are ready to provide tactical fire support.

Tactical air support yesterday was simply outstanding and your RAF 'Tentacle' assures you that he will be able to achieve the same results today. With the RAF's entire No.83 Group overhead, all your boys have to do is lay red smoke onto enemy positions and they will simply be wiped off the face of the earth by the Typhoons. Yellow smoke is to be used to identify friendly units. All tanks and mortars in your group have been supplied with sufficient quantities of red smoke shells.

Your forces are listed in detail below. Enemy forces are expected to consist of the remnants of the paratroop regiment we hit yesterday (identified as *Fallschirmjäger Regiment 'Hoffmann'* – who, despite being heavily stonked, were disciplined enough to mount numerous ambushes on your battlegroup), together with the SP anti-tank company that was engaged yesterday evening and an unknown number of Panthers and dug-in guns, up to and including 88mm calibre.

The 'Welsh' and 'Grenadier' Groups are trying to find a route around Aalst and if possible, you must also try to by-pass the town and find an alternative route north. If we can achieve this, the follow-up troops will deal with Aalst. We **MUST** link up with the Yanks as soon as possible, before the Germans have time to insert even more forces between them and us.

Victory Conditions

Exit the northern edge of the table at Point 'B' with at least six Sherman tanks and nine troop stands by the end of the scenario.

Aalst Map (UK)



Starting Positions and Reinforcement Schedule

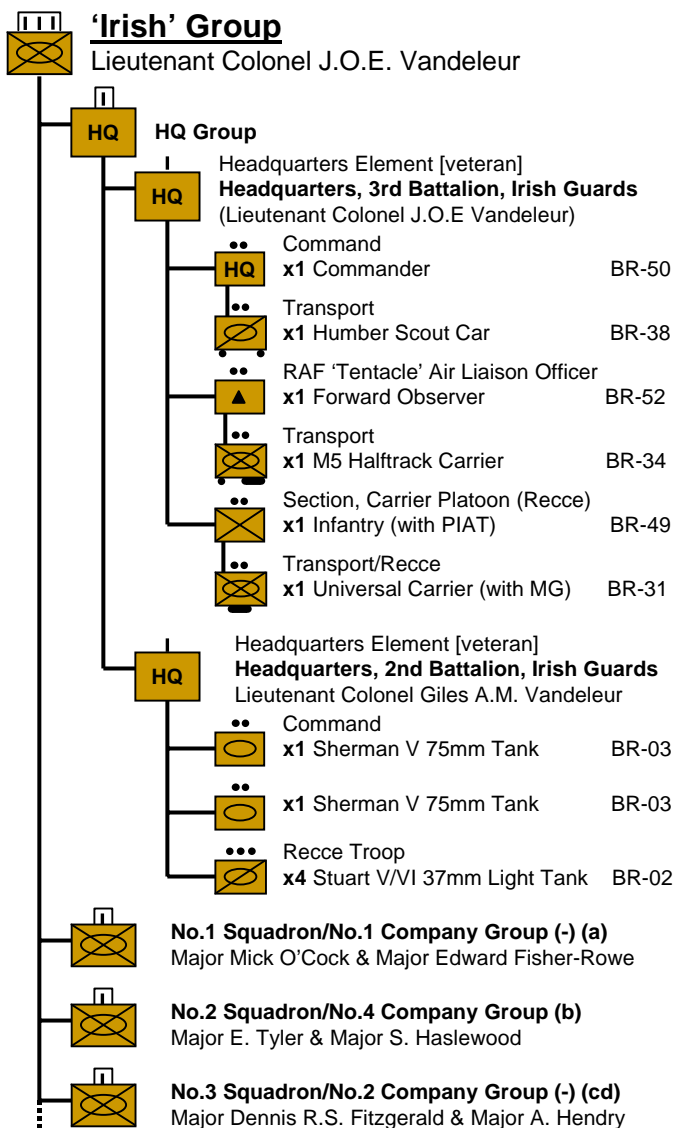
Turn 1	Lt Tabour's Troop, 'B' Sqn, 2nd Household Cavalry Regiment is deployed on-table within the area marked 'X'. No.2 Squadron/No.4 Company Group, Irish Guards arrives at point 'A'.
Turn 4	- HQ/Recce Group, Irish Guards arrives at Point 'A' (2nd (Armoured) Battalion HQ leading the group). - The two Royal Artillery Forward Observers also arrive at Point 'A', attached to either Irish Guards HQ.
Turn 6	Self-Propelled Troop, 21st Antitank Regiment arrives at Point 'A', followed by: No.1 Squadron/No.1 Company Group (infantry support elements leading the group).
Turn 10	No.3 Squadron/No.4 Company Group arrives at Point 'A').
Turn 12	Towed Troop, 21st Antitank Regiment arrives at Point 'A'.
Turn 13	Machinegun Platoon, 1st Independent Company, Royal Northumberland Fusiliers arrives at Point 'A'.
Turn 18	End of scenario.

Terrain and Scenario Notes

- Squares on the map are 480 yards wide (12 inches), giving a total table size of 4x6 feet.
- For the sake of clarity, I have not marked all hedges, ditches and field boundaries on the map.
- However, all roads should be bordered by low or high hedges or brick walls closer to the settlements. Similarly, the open spaces should be crisscrossed by numerous hedges – particularly in the area between the main villages and the Tongelreep stream, where fields and allotments were very densely packed. This was very close terrain!
- Roads are all paved
- Dark grey roads are classified as Streets – dense area concealment and soft cover.
- The Tongelreep Stream and the marshes in the southwest corner of the map are impassable.
- A large railway embankment defines the western table edge.
- Due to the plethora of small ditches in this low-lying area, troop stands (but not guns or vehicles) receive an additional +1 Improve Position modifier.
- All woodland is classed as Dense With Undergrowth and therefore necessitates a bog-down check for all vehicular movement.
- All open terrain is classified as Boggy and thus necessitates a bog-down check for all vehicular movement.
- The tower of Aalst Church (marked with a cross in the centre of Aalst) is classed as being two levels high and is therefore the only high point in the area.
- The game starts at 1000hrs (Turn 1) and finishes at 1250hrs (Turn 18).

British Forces At Aalst: Elements, 32nd (Guards) Brigade

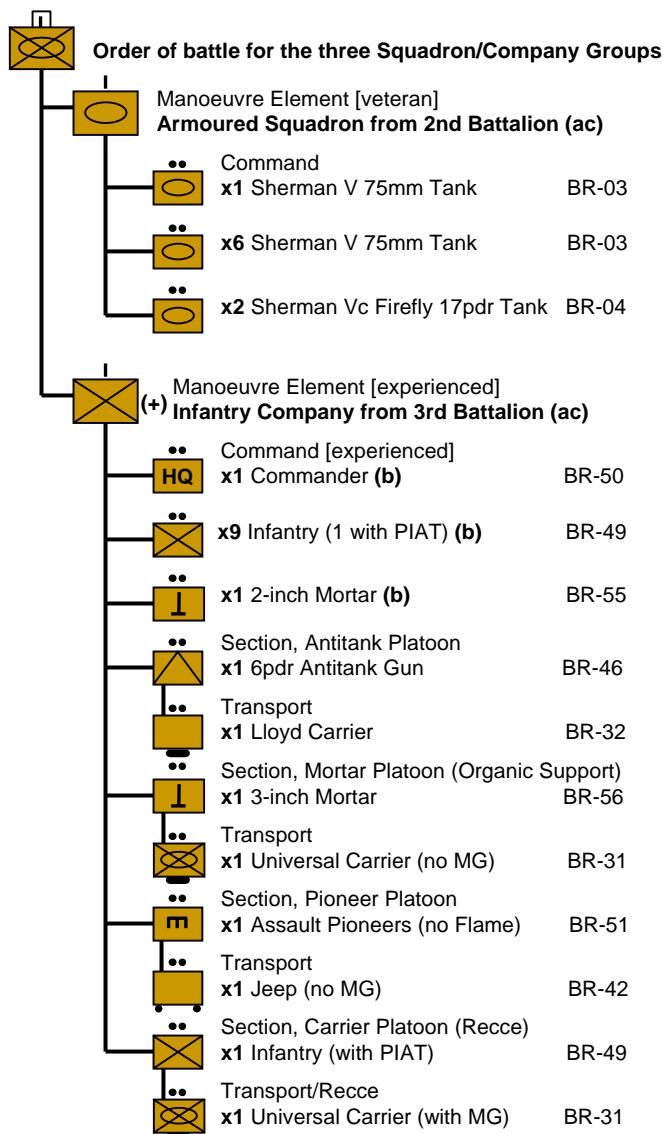
Brigadier G.F. Johnson



SEE NEXT PAGE FOR DIVISIONAL ATTACHMENTS

Notes

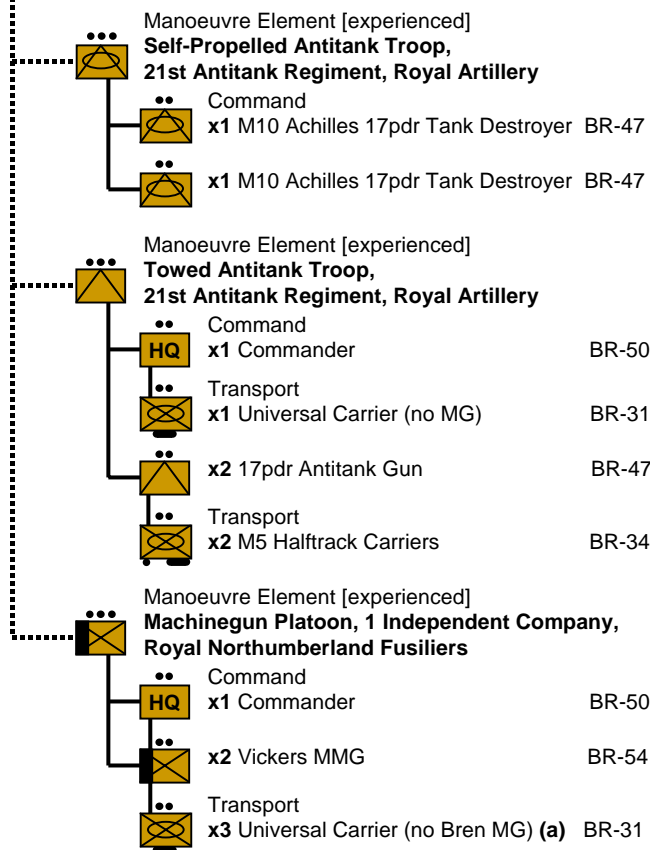
- (a) No.1 Squadron/No.1 Company Group is understrength – remove x2 Sherman V 75mm tanks and x1 Infantry stand from the order of battle. These units may not claim the +1 'no losses' manoeuvre modifier.
- (b) No.2 Squadron/No.4 Company Group is at full strength – exactly as per the order of battle.
- (c) No.3 Squadron/No.2 Company Group is understrength – remove x2 Sherman V 75mm tanks, x1 Sherman Vc Firefly 17pdr tank and x1 infantry stand from the order of battle. These units may not claim the +1 'no losses' manoeuvre modifier.
- (d) Major Michael Dudley's No.3 Company was disbanded after the assault on 'Joe's Bridge', to provide replacements for the other three rifle companies to bring them up to strength for the breakout.



Notes

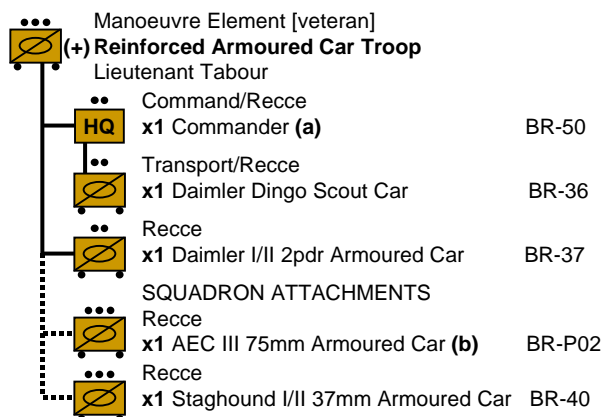
- (a) Command of the group was dictated by the mission; a mobile mission would result in the armoured squadron CO being given overall command and a dismounted mission would result in the infantry company CO being given command. For this scenario, it can be assumed that the infantry COs are in command – not that it matters much in game terms.
- (b) The infantry of the three rifle companies begin the scenario mounted on the tanks (see notes on tank riders in the rule book).
- (c) HM Foot Guards traditionally like to do everything differently – note that they numbered their squadrons and companies, whereas everyone else in the British Army lettered theirs!

Divisional Attachments



(a) The Vickers MMGs may fire from the carriers when mounted

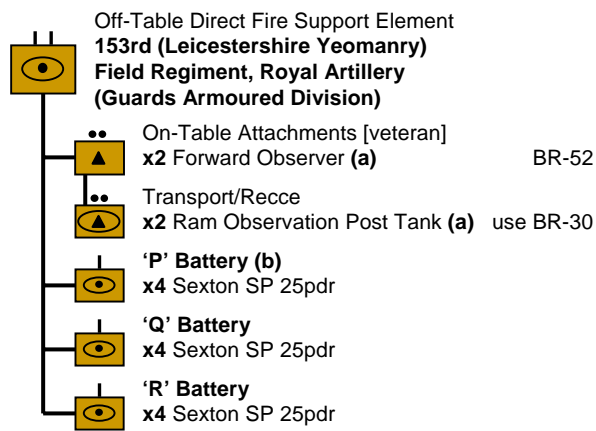
Elements, 'B' Squadron, 2nd Household Cavalry Regiment Major Wignal



(a) Lieutenant Tabour may call for one battery of the 153rd Field Regiment as Direct Fire Support.

(b) A prototype card for the AEC Mk III is supplied.

Fire Support Elements



(a) The forward observers may be attached to either Headquarters, or any of the three Squadron/Company Groups.

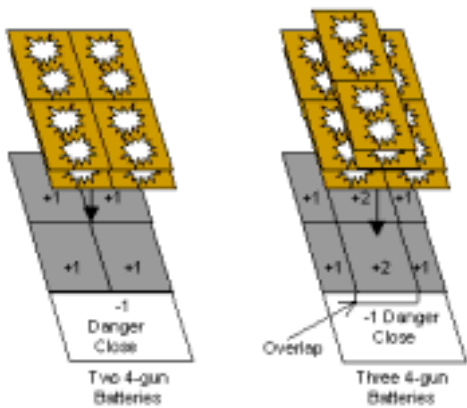
(b) A single battery is available as a Direct Fire Support element to Commander stands of Irish Guards or 'B' Squadron, 2nd Household Cavalry Regiment. No more than three single battery missions may be fired in one turn.



General Notes On Artillery

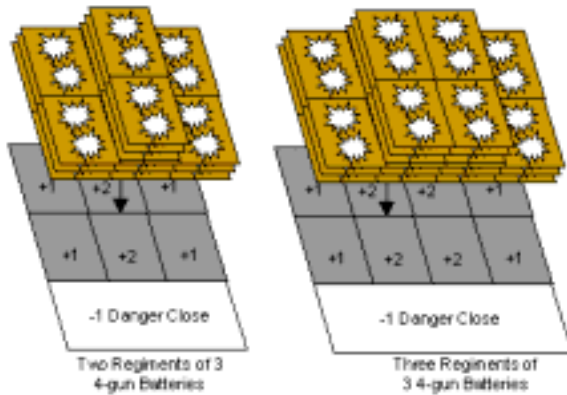
- 25pdr Uses Large Template:
-1 modifier v. Vehicles
+0 modifier v. Troops, Guns & Soft Vehicles
- A single battery shelling, random shelling or smoke mission is 4 templates wide and 1 deep.
- A single battery concentration or mixed shelling/smoke mission is 2 templates wide and 1 deep.
- A 'Mike' Target (a full Field Regiment) may be called by either Royal Artillery Forward Observer stand as **Direct** Fire Support. This means that all guns of 153rd Field Regiment are fired at a single target and no other artillery fire missions may be called in that turn.
- An 'Uncle' Target (two or three full Field Regiments) may be called by either Royal Artillery Forward Observer stand as **General** Fire Support. This means that all the guns of 153rd Field Regiment, Plus those of 90th Field Regiment are fired at a single target and no other artillery fire missions may be called in that turn.

'Mike Target' Fire Missions



British Fire Missions

'Uncle Target' Fire Missions



Notes

- The modifiers listed above are for Troop, Gun and Soft Vehicle targets. Subtract 1 from these for armoured Vehicle targets.
- Note that these large fire missions have an automatic 'Danger Close' from odd shells dropping short.