

2nd Lt. Norman Bradshaw, Royal Corps of Signals.



Norman Bradshaw was the son of John and Sarah Bradshaw (nee Kenworthy) and husband of Daphne Day-Lewis. He was born on the 18th January 1923 in Liverpool, England. He served with the Royal Corps of Signals and was attached to the 6th Airborne Divisional Signals as the Cipher Officer.

Just after his 19th birthday, Norman Bradshaw enlisted into the Army on 29th January 1942, at Prestatyn, and into the 2nd Depot Battalion, Royal Signals. Army Number: 2384893.

On the 3rd July 1942, after basic training, he went on to Catterick, posted to Increment Company, 1st Operators Training Battalion (OTB), 1st Signal Training Center (STC).

Whilst still at Catterick he was posted to 150 Officer Cadet Training Unit (OCTU).

On the 16th March 1943 he was granted an emergency commission and was appointed 2nd Lieutenant, Royal Signals, Regular Army Emergency Commission from OCTU.

Lt. Bradshaw pictured middle row, third from right as viewed. Picture believed to be of OCTU.



On the 7th April, 1943 he was posted to No.3 Intelligence School, Holding Wing.

A bulletin on the notice board stated that the Army was in the process of forming another Airborne Division and any volunteers for this form of warfare should put their names forward.

He volunteered for airborne forces shortly thereafter joined the 6th Airborne Divisional Signals on the 21st May 1943.

6th Airborne Divisional Signals was formed in May 1943. It was initially commanded by Lt Col 'Pigmy' Smallman-Tew, who had previously been second in command of 1st Airborne Divisional Signals, and based at Beacon Barracks, Bulford in Wiltshire.

Lt. Norman Bradshaw was assigned as the cipher officer with 6th Airborne Divisional Signals.

9th September, 1943, Princess Royal visits Bulford.



Plate 15. The Officers of 6th Airborne Divisional Signals—9 September 1943.
Taken at Bulford on the occasion of the visit of Her Royal Highness, The Princess Royal. Seated from left to right: Capt Fenton (Adj), Lady in Waiting, Brig Prescott (CSO Southern Command), Lt Col Smallman-Tew(CO), HRH, Gen Wemyss (Col Comdt), Maj Gen Rawson (Inspector of Signals), Maj Donald (OC No 2 Coy), Capt Holbrook (OC L Sect). Middle row: Capt Hart (A Sect), Capt Austin (OC HQ Coy), Capt Wilkes (OC J Sect), Capt Westwood (Sy), Lt Royle (K Sect), Lt Smith (J Sect), RSM Carr. Rear row: Lt Bradshaw (Cipher), Lt Gladwyn (OC E Sect), Lt Ingham (Pigeons), Capt Curtis (QM), Lt Aitchison (TMO), Lt Gilbert (L Sect), Lt MacMaster (W Sect).

By courtesy of the Trustees of the Imperial War Museum.

Lt. Bradshaw is included in the picture of the Officers of 6th Airborne Divisional Signals with the Princess Royal, taken at Bulford Camp. Rear row, left side as viewed.

30th April 1944 Lt. Bradshaw starts his Parachute Course 114 at RAF Ringway. The course was successfully completed on the 15th May 1944.

06th June 1944 – 27th August 1944 Normandy (Operation Overlord)

Lt. Bradshaw was involved in the D-Day Operation and “Pegasus Bridge”.

Amongst the first glider lift were men of No 1 Company commanded by Major Fenton.

From National Archives catalogue number WO 171/429:

4th June 1944 Parachutes loaded in planes. **Operation OVERLORD** postponed 24 hours due to weather conditions.

5th June 1944 Emplaned and took off from numerous aerodromes in S. ENGLAND. C.O., Adjut, Capt. Pinnell, Lt Jenkins, 36 ORs J and K Secs by parachute; Major Fenton, **Lt Bradshaw**, Lt Bayliss and 57 ORs by glider. [It's believed that Tarrant Rushton was the aerodrome used for this].

Adjutant (Adjut) was Captain Anthony Windrum.

6th June 1944 Landed in NORMANDY area HAUGER-RANVILLE parachutists 0100 hrs gliders 0330 hrs. Div HQ est in LE BAS DE RANVILLE at chateau 106737 by 0700 hrs. Considerable bombardment heard in direction of coast, but little enemy activity locally until attack on RANVILLE sp by AFVs successfully repulsed at 1045 hrs. Comn with 1 Corps est 0716 hours and line comn to 5 Para Bde. Comn est with UK at 0755 hours. 3 Para Bde were deficient of nearly all Signal eqpt on landing and comn was not est until 1235 hours. 6 Airdg Bde and L Sec landed by glider at 2100 hours. Comns est with 6 Airdg Bde at 2150 hours, 50 mins after bde landed. Air resup brought sig stores during night 6/7 Jun having been demanded during day on Q Base link from U.K. Cas Lt Royle and 2 ORs killed, Maj Fenton and 4 ORs wounded, Capt Wilks, Lt Gilbert and 72 ORs missing.

http://www.pegasusarchive.org/normandy/war_signals.htm

Per Captain Anthony Windrum, Adjutant, 6th Airborne Divisional Signals personal account, there is “a photograph of a large glider nose up-ended which made a cosy den for our cipher officer Norman Bradshaw”.

http://www.pegasusarchive.org/normandy/anthony_windrum.htm

Lt. Bradshaw declares slidex and codes compromised when finding vehicle and equipment unattended. “I had to compromise the whole bloody lot” according to his words.

5th September 1944 Embarked NWE with 6th Airborne Divisional Signals. 'E' Party departed for Bulford via Arromanches - Gosport.

8th September 1944 Unit sent on 14 days Disembarkation/Embarkation leave.

After returning to England from France, October, November and December were spent in retraining and making good the deficiencies of equipment. The unit was also brought up to strength by the arrival of more volunteers. Lieutenant Colonel Cole left 6th Airborne Divisional Signals on promotion and Lieutenant Colonel P E M Bradley took over command in September.

Christmas leave 1944, however, never came about. On 22 December orders were received by the Division to deploy as reinforcements to Belgium as a result of the German offensive in the Ardennes.

Reinforcing Tasks 1945

24 December 1944 – 28 January 1945 Ardennes “Battle of the Bulge”

With the Allies at a standstill and forced to bide their time, the Germans prepared a large scale counter-offensive, later known as the 'Battle of the Bulge' in December 1944. The 6th Airborne Division recovering in England after Normandy was suddenly moved to the Ardennes forest area between Belgium and France to help repel the unexpected German counter-attack.

<http://www.paradata.org.uk/events/ardennes>

23rd December, 1944 Embarked from Tilbury with the 6th Airborne Divisional Signals for the operations in the Ardennes (Battle of the bulge).

6th Airborne Division Signals moved by road to Tilbury on Christmas Eve 1944. After crossing the Channel in Landing Ship, Tanks (LSTs), the main body landed at Ostend on Christmas Day. The unit moved in its own transport across Belgium under the Second in Command, Major G S 'Lucky' Fenton to Mettet on 26 December. The Commanding Officer and the Adjutant had driven the 500 miles to Mettet the day before. The unit went straight into action on arrival even before the equipment was completely unpacked.

The weather was exceptionally harsh with snow and ice. The heavy equipment and covered vehicles of an Infantry Divisional Signals were of course not part of the unit's scaling. 6th Airborne Divisional Signals found themselves operating as conventional forces with airborne equipment. Wireless sets were operated from jeeps and open trailers. Many of the sets developed faults largely due to the breath of the operator condensing and forming a seal of ice in the equipment. Linemen and DRs had a

particularly difficult task in the freezing conditions. Corporal Evans was awarded the BEM for devotion to duty during this period.

By the middle of January 1945, the Germans had lost most of the territory that they had gained at the beginning of the counter-offensive. The Division was therefore ordered to move by road to Panningen on the River Maas in Holland. Life in Panningen was more peaceful. Most members of the unit were accommodated in some form of house or building. Training was organised and the unit telephone exchange was established in Panningen Post Office.

On 26 February the whole Division was withdrawn from Holland. The unit moved back to Beacon Barracks in Bulford and started to prepare for further operations being formulated for the final defeat of Germany.

<http://www.216parasigs.org.uk/history/6ads.htm>

His Commanding Officer, Lt. Col. P.E.M. Bradley, was later promoted to Major-General and became the Master of Signals. Peter Bradley became and remained a friend of the Bradshaw family. General Bradley died on the 2nd June 2010. The following is an extract from his obituary as recorded in The Times on the 11th June, 2010:

The 6th Airborne Division was brought over to Belgium from England at almost no notice and ordered to join 30 Corps in attacking the southern flank of the German salient around Bure, only 60 miles southeast of Brussels. The roads in the area were in a vile condition, having been churned up by armour and then swamped by rain, and much of Bradley's divisional signals equipment was fogbound in England awaiting airlift. Knowledge of the enemy's whereabouts was hazy and sparse, making travel behind the quickly changing front exceptionally dangerous. Determined to establish communications with the six brigades under the division's command, Bradley drove relentlessly, crossing and re-crossing the divisional sector, going for several days and nights without sleep and at great personal risk, until he had achieved that objective. Improvisation was essential at every point, as the bulk of his signals equipment was still waiting in England when he got back there to prepare for the parachute assault beyond the Rhine.

Disemplaned U.K. 26th February, 1945

24th March 1945 – 02 May 1945 Rhine Crossing (Operation Varsity)

Emplaned U.K. dated 23rd March, 1945.

National Archives catalogue number WO 171/4163.

23rd March 1945

Place: Bulford New destructor boxes (Unit "B") received and issued. Still NOT complete to Mobilised scale. Three visiting Press operators from FAAA taken on Operation to bring number of operators held nearer to number required.

Commanding Officer: Lt Col P.E.M. Bradley

24th March 1945 Place: Germany

1045 - Landed E of Rhine. Flak light to moderate - Many gliders on fire. Shelling and mortaring of LZ light. Landings scattered and opposed. Cipher Officer seriously injured in crash. Lines Officer missing.

http://www.pegasusarchive.org/varsity/war_signals.htm

Wounded, dangerously ill - W. Europe 23 March, 1945 is how it was recorded in Lt. Bradshaw's service record.

Lt. Norman Bradshaw spent the next many months in various hospital postings.

On 19th November, 1946, he relinquished his Commission on account of disability and was granted Honorable Rank of Lieutenant.

Mr. Norman Bradshaw led a long and successful life until his passing in January, 2001.

"Honours and Rewards" as stamped by the Army Medals Office.

1939-45 Star x 3.

France and Germany Star.

War Medal 1939 / 45.

Operations involved in:

06/06/1944 – 27/08/1944 Normandy (Operation Overlord)

24/12/1944 – 28/01/1945 Ardennes "Battle of the Bulge"

24/03/1945 – 02/05/1945 Rhine Crossing (Operation Varsity)

National Archives catalogue number WO 171/429.

Abbreviation 106737

Ac
Adjt
Adm
ADOS
AFV
Airdg
Airtps
A Per
Armd
Arty
ASSU
A Tk
Bde
Br
Bty
Cas
Cdn
Cdo
C-in-C
CO
Comd
Comn
Conc
Coy
CSO
Det
Dis
Div
DMA
Docs
DR
DZ
EA
Ech
Fmn
Eqpt
Est
Excl
Fwd
Gp
GSO
HE

Hy
Incl
Inf
Infm
Int
LAA
Ldg
LO
LZ
MG
Mor
MT
Mtce
OC
Offr
OP
OR
Posn
PW
RA
RAC
RE
Regt
Resup
Rfts
R Signals
RT
Sec
Sig
Sp
SS
Sum
Swbd
Tac
TAF
Tcle
Tfc
Tp
Tpt
Trg
UG
UXB
Veh
WT
Map Reference
Aircraft
Adjutant
Administration

Assistant Director Ordnance Services
Armoured Fighting Vehicle
Airlanding
Airborne Troop
Anti-Personnel
Armoured
Artillery
Air Support Signal Unit
Anti-Tank
Brigade
British / Bridge
Battery
Casualties
Canadian
Commando
Commander-in-Chief
Commanding Officer
Command
Communication
Concentration
Company
Chief Signals Officer
Detachment
Disabled
Division / Divisional
Divisional Maintenance Area
Documents
Despatch Rider
Drop Zone
Enemy Aircraft
Echelon
Formation
Equipment
Established
Excluded
Forward
Group
General Staff Officer
High Explosive
Heavy
Inclusive
Infantry
Information
Intelligence
Light Anti-Aircraft
Landing
Liaison Officer
Landing Zone

Machine Gun
Mortar
Motor Transport
Maintenance
Officer Commanding
Officer
Observation Post / Operation (if lower case)
Other Ranks
Position
Prisoner of War
Royal Artillery
Royal Armoured Corps
Royal Engineers
Regiment
Resupply
Reinforcements
Royal Corps of Signals
Radio Telephony
Section
Signals
Supported
Special Service
Summary
Switchboard
Tactical
Tactical Air Force
Tentacle
Traffic
Troop
Transport
Training
Underground?
Unexploded Bomb
Vehicle
Wireless Telegraphy

Month and year : June 1944

Commanding Officer : Lt. Col. D.S. Tew

3rd June 1944

Capt McMaster, Capt Westwood and 37 ORs embarked at SOUTHAMPTON. Gliders loaded.

4th June 1944

Parachutes loaded in planes. Operation OVERLORD postponed 24 hours due to weather conditions.

5th June 1944

Emplaned and took off from numerous aerodromes in S. ENGLAND. C.O., Adjt, Capt Pinnell, Lt Jenkins, 36 ORs J and K Secs by parachute; Major Fenton, Lt Bradshaw, Lt Bayliss and 57 ORs by glider. Operation orders attached.

6th June 1944

Landed in NORMANDY area HAUGER-RANVILLE parachutists 0100 hrs gliders 0330 hrs. Div HQ est in LE BAS DE RANVILLE at chateau 106737 by 0700 hrs. Considerable bombardment heard in direction of coast, but little enemy activity locally until attack on RANVILLE sp by AFVs successfully repulsed at 1045 hrs. Comn with 1 Corps est 0716 hours and line comn to 5 Para Bde. Comn est with UK at 0755 hours. 3 Para Bde were deficient of nearly all Signal eqpt on landing and comn was not est until 1235 hours. 6 Airdg Bde and L Sec landed by glider at 2100 hours. Comns est with 6 Airdg Bde at 2150 hours, 50 mins after bde landed. Air resup brought sig stores during night 6/7 Jun having been demanded during day on Q Base link from U.K. Cas Lt Royle and 2 ORs killed, Maj Fenton and 4 ORs wounded, Capt Wilks, Lt Gilbert and 72 ORs missing.

7th June 1944

More eqpt salvaged from DZ. Enemy activity increasing; Div HQ stood to 1145 hrs. Lines frequently cut by shell and mortar fire. Enemy armd UG cable blown by Lines offr. Cas. 1 OR killed, 3 ORs wounded, 7 ORs believed missing now located. Report on D and D + 1 attached.

8th June 1944

Maplay and codewords from 1 Corps compromised. Confusion over codesigns with 3 Br. Div. Capt McMaster and Capt Westwood and 37 ORs arrived 1815 hours as first follow up by sea, which included spare WT sets, cable and MT spares. Maj Donald arriving having landed with HQ 1 Corps. Capt Pinnell and 4 ORs wounded, 9 ORs believed missing now located.

9th June 1944

Attack on RANVILLE sp by hy shell and mortar fire. All available men at fire posns. Very successful repulse of attack by 12 DEVON. Line mtce very difficult under shell fire. Cas 2 ORs killed, Lt Col Tew, Maj Donald and 8 ORs wounded, 3 ORs missing. Lt Gilbert and 7 ORs believed missing now located in UK.

10th June 1944

Jamming experienced on 3 Br Div Link. Second Army slidex keys compromised. Hy shelling of Div HQ 1245 hrs. Attack from E beaten off. Line crew who were in a glider lost at sea returned by sea without

eqpt. Signal office showed up by RE. 51 Div arrived in area. Comn est with them by WT. Cas 3 ORs wounded.

11th June 1944

Pigeons released to base, but nothing heard of their arrival. Cas 1 OR killed, 2 ORs wounded, 1 OR missing, 2 ORs believed missing now located.

12th June 1944

4 S.S. Bde under comd. Quiet day. Intermittent shelling of Div HQ made much line mtce necessary. Cas 3 ORs wounded 1 OR missing 1 OR believed missing now located.

13th June 1944

Div HQ heavily shelled 1120-1150 hours. C.S.O. Second Army visited. Air sp called for an ASSU link against enemy tp conc near BREVILLE. Typhoon rocket planes made successful attack. 6 Gliders reported by PW landed west of VARAVILLE. Cas 4 ORs wounded.

14th June 1944

Exceptionally heavy signal office traffic. Capt Curtis, Lt Aitchison and 43 ORs arrived with seaborne buildup, which included adm portion of unit. Further jamming on Div lateral net. All DR routes now safe. Cas 1 OR killed, 6 ORs wounded 1 OR missing.

16th June 1944

Hy shelling - 0430 for an hour followed by enemy recce in force. Pigeons released. All lines dis after shell burst on test point astride Signal office. Repaired in 2 hours. 13/18 Hussars under comd. Cas Lt Jenkins and 9 ORs wounded. 1 OR missing.

17th June 1944

Smoke shells in area. Cas 1 OR killed, 1 OR wounded 1 OR believed missing now located.

18th June 1944

154 Bde under comd. Pigeon release on 16 Jun returned starving. Considerable use made of German UG cables, which are NOT paper coved and can therefore be used after cutting (e.g. demolition).

19th June 1944

Shelling of Div HQ. Cas 1 OR wounded.

20th June 1944

Practice Stand-To at Div HQ showed 100 out of 150 R. Signals personnel available for defence.

21st June 1944

Cas. 4 ORs wounded.

22nd June 1944

Div dump set on fire by shell.

23rd June 1944

Heavy shelling of Div HQ for 40 mins, causing most lines to be cut. Policy for protection of lines decided on - buried lines where possible for D3 cable will not last in damp ground. Snakes of D3 particular bad for induction. Cas. Lt Moore and 1 OR injured.

24th June 1944

Pass words frequently compromised and substitutes caused confusion. Cas 1 OR wounded.

25th June 1944

Shelling of Div HQ too persistent, so location move to quarries 119758. Lines laid in anticipation of move. F & F swbd used and more German UG cable routes. 13/18 Hussars revert comd 3 Div. 51 Div now assigned def area S of PONT TOURNANT 1074.

26th June 1944

154 reverts comd 51 Div. 1 OR killed 1 OR believed missing now returned.

27th June 1944

CHERBOURG captured.

28th June 1944

Some evidence that Germans dressed in British battledress are directing fire from behind our lines. Some interruption and attempted deception by enemy on mortar - OP group. Conversation finished by enemy saying "OK, Tommy, out".

29th June 1944

Cas Lt Smith and 1 OR wounded.

Month and year : July 1944

Commanding Officer : Lt. Col. E.S. Cole

1st July 1944

Lateral to 3 Br Div closed. Visit by Gen Crawford.

3rd July 1944

Capt Hart (OC B Sec) arrived from UK to comd J Sec. Front very static - enemy digging in and wiring. Flying bomb reported moving from NE to SW. Visit by General Browning. Attempts made to damage brs by enemy with floating mines.

5th July 1944

Enemy interference on RT link to 1 Corps. Captured enemy docs gave evidence of intentions to lay lines for intercepting our earth return circuits.

6th July 1944

General use of passwords now abandoned; for patrols and specific ops only. 35 ORs arrived on loan from Second Army Rfts Pool. Party of 5 Germans found in British denims, one in British helmet.

7th July 1944

Div HQ area strafed by 6 lowflying ac. Hy bomber attack on CAEN by 460 Lancasters, visible from this HQ. Bomb near br WEST of Div HQ.

8th July 1944

Suspected enemy transmission on link to 1 Corps using our call sign. Cas: 1 OR wounded.

9th July 1944

CAEN captured. Cas: 1 OR wounded.

10th July 1944

Report from 1 Corps that signal cable has been found booby-trapped.

11th July 1944

Air activity in area. Ma play compromised 11-14 Jul incl. ME 109 shot down by Div LAA.

12th July 1944

Air cover showed increased flooding of R.DIVES valley. VARAVILLE completely surrounded. Visit from CSO 1 Corps.

13th July 1944

Phone call War Office - 1 SS Bde successfully put through.

14th July 1944

Flying bomb passed over NW - SE. Ten ME 109 over Div HQ - one smoker. Aerial activity at night. Air cover reveals enemy using large bomb craters near MERVILLE bty for mortar posns.

16th July 1944

Investiture at Div HQ by General Montgomery, C-in-C. Cpl Waters (K Sec) received MM for conspicuous gallantry in laying and maintaining line across Pegasus bridge on D day. Maplay compromised to 18 Jul incl. PW infm states:- ASSU intercepted and decoded greatly reduced cas and damage. Also gave posn of Allied fwd tps from bomblines. Time from interception to decoding - 20 mins. (Source - 1 Corps Int Summary No.22).

18th July 1944

Slight bombing and shelling of brs in early hours. Armd break-through by massed Br armour (8 Corps) coming EAST of R.ORNE and then wheeling SOUTH. Much cas caused to lines by new tracks and roads. Considerable infm gained of battle by interception and supplied to Div staff. Very bad tfc blocks. 11 Armd Div came on lateral link. Signal Office sustained direct hit from small bomb which disarranged sandbags but did not penetrate. Iron pipe containing snake pierced and all lines dis. Cas: 1 OR wounded.

20th July 1944

Considerable inductance in F & F swbd caused by damp. Cas: 5 ORs wounded, 5 ORs believed missing now located.

21st July 1944

Line jeep blown up by Hawkins grenade - no cas. 3 Para Bde out of reserve to area ESCOVILLE U 1271.

22nd July 1944

Lt. Col. D. Smallman Tew, Commanding Officer, killed by direct hit from shell on jeep at ESCOVILLE. Canadian ASSU tcle arrived with LO and C9. Col. Moberly CSO Airtps visited unit. Cas: Lt. Col. Tew and Lt Mutch killed.

23rd July 1944

Lt. Col. Tew buried at RANVILLE 111736. Div HQ area bombed, causing line damage. Cas: 1 OR killed.

24th July 1944

Div HQ area bombed. Lt. Col. E.S. Cole assumed comd.

25th July 1944

Cas: Capt Wilks and 1 OR previously reported missing now officially PW.

26th July 1944

Enemy working party of four seen wearing airborne berets.

27th July 1944

Div HQ area bombed with HE and A Per. One EA crashed. Unexploded mor bombs dated 1917.

28th July 1944

Visit from Russian Military Mission.

29th July 1944

EA activity - one EA crashed LONGUEMAR.

30th July 1944

1 Bucks under comd - one comd net.

31st July 1944

148 RAC under comd - on comd net. 1 SS Bde took over from 3 Para Bde. 3 Para Bde took over from 154 Bde. 5 Para Bde into reserve at RANVILLE.

Month and year : August 1944

Commanding Officer : Lt. Col. E.S. Cole

1st August 1944

Front extended so far SOUTH that signal centre was est at RANVILLE 108738. 49 Div took over from 51 Div on right flank. 5 Bde into reserve; relieved by 1 SS Bde. LCV arrived on loan for G branch.

2nd August 1944

Div HQ shelled - all earths out. Breakthrough into BREST peninsular by US forces. Cas 2 ORs wounded. Capt Wilks and 20 ORs officially confirmed PW.

3rd August 1944

Div HQ shelled. Reports from civilians that pigeons have been released from SALENELLES. Cas 2 ORs.

4th August 1944

Considerable use has been made of propaganda broadcasts using loudspeakers in trees installed by bde sig sec. Good results obtained. Div HQ bombed.

5th August 1944

PW states Germans were obtaining much infm from our WT tfc. RENNES captured by US forces.

6th August 1944

Cdn Army ASSU tentacle replaced No 2 ASSU tentacle.

7th August 1944

Div HQ shelled. Sig Centre at RANVILLE moved to HEROUVILLETTE 122723. PW stated much infm obtained by enemy intercept system (1 Corps Int Sum No.34). 5 Bde relieved 4 SS Bde. 1 OR wounded.

8th August 1944

Increased mortar activity as result of Cdn Corps drive SE of CAEN (Op TOTALISE). Cas 3 ORs wounded.

9th August 1944

Maj Donald, RSM Carr and 10 ORs arrived from UK. Pigeons brought by them released. Flank fmn 49 Div bombed by own ac. 49 Div probing forward SE which extends 6 Airborne Div right flank. Maj Gen Laycock visited Div HQ. Div School and Rest Camp est at RIVA BELLA 1078. Intention to give all personnel recreation and basic inf trg.

10th August 1944

Successful propaganda broadcasts made.

11th August 1944

Belgian Bde under comd 6 Airdg Bde and put on their comd net. B ech vehs parked near Div HQ and given line to Div exchange.

12th August 1944

Netherlands Contingent under comd and put on comd net. B ech vehs parked near Div HQ and given line to Div exchange. Cas 1 OR killed.

13th August 1944

1 Bucks under comd.

14th August 1944

Attack on OUISTREHAM expected from sea or across mudflats and comd post (LCV) est, but it did not materialise. Bombing of neighbouring fmn by RAF.

15th August 1944

Shells from A Tk gun and 21 cm rocket projector landed near Div HQ. 1 Bucks no longer under comd. Signs of enemy pulling out on all fronts.

16th August 1944

General advance probable on all fronts. Tac HQ est LE MESNIL 129726. UXB on Div HQ.

17th August 1944

Op PADDLE begun. This op entailed advance of whole Div on axis TROARN - DOZULE - PONT L'EVEQUE - ST. AUDEMER. Move at 0300 hrs. TROARN and FRANCEVILLE PLAGÉ captured. R.DIVES crossed. C33 det arrived from First Cdn Army to work RT link to 1 Corps owing to extreme ranges. ORLEANS captured by US forces.

18th August 1944

Orderly withdrawal of enemy with mines, demolition, rearguards, mortaring and shelling to a definite programme. Tac HQ moved to ST RICHER 186686 and augmented to become Main HQ. LCVs and Sig office dug in.

19th August 1944

Rear HQ moved to LE MESNIL 130728. Switching centre left at ECARDE 119757. PUTOT EN AUGÉ captured by 5 Para Bde. Rate of advance such that no line comn was possible with Rear Div DMA, ADOS and some bde rear echs. CABOURG holding out and by-passed. Cas 3 ORs killed, 5 ORs wounded.

20th August 1944

70 Bde Sig Sec (ex 49 Inf Div) attached complete. Considerable use made of LCVs, White Scout Cars (to bdes) and other eqpt, also personnel almost entirely absorbed into secs for present ops only. PW held in custody by Sig Office Rear Div owing to lack of suitable guard. Slight EA activity. Slidex and Maplay believed compromised to 220200 B from 200845 B. Cdos of 1 SS Bde out of physical contact and therefore batteries could not be sent up, and wireless comn was interrupted. Hy Army line det on loan to assist in extensive and speedy line laying to accompany advance.

21st August 1944

DOZULE captured. Rear HQ combined with Tac and Main HQ at ST RICHER 186686. CABOURG captured.

22nd August 1944

1 corps line det on loan. PONT L'EVEQUE entered by still held by enemy. One-man torpedo dump found. Main HQ moved to CRESSEVEUILLE 306742.

23rd August 1944

Prince BERNHARD of the Netherlands visited. Airborne op planned for 3 Para Bde but cancelled as found unnecessary. PONT L'EVEQUE and HONFLEUR captured. Main HQ moved to BEAUMONT EN AUGÉ 460030.

24th August 1944

Rear HQ moved to 460030.

25th August 1944

Div HQ moved to 598077. Considerable difficulty on all moves owing to lack of tpt. Ferry service always necessary.

26th August 1944

BEUZEVILLE occupied. Enemy in full retreat across SEINE. Recce in PONT AUDEMÉR and whole coast to NORTH firmly occupied. PONT AUDEMÉR evacuated and handed over to 49 Div. Div withdrawn for maximum rest.

27th August 1944

Div HQ moved to rest area. All additional fmns and units (Belgian and Netherlands contingents, RA Regts etc) removed from comd. 1 & 4 SS Bdes remain. ASSU tcle withdrawn. Corps and Army line dets returned. Cas 1 OR missing now confirmed killed.

28th August 1944

49 Div assumed control of Div area.

30th August 1944

Div in 21 Army Gp reserve. No operational commitments but link to 1 Corps maintained as only contact with any higher fm. n.

Month and year : September 1944

Commanding Officer : Lt. Col. P.E.M. Bradley

1st September 1944

Location Canapville St Martin. 'A' Party departs for Bulford via Arromanches - Gosport.

2nd September 1944

'B' Party depart for Bulford via Arromanches - Southampton.

3rd September 1944

'C' Party depart for Bulford via Arromanches - Gosport.

4th September 1944

'D' Party depart for Bulford via Arromanches - Southampton.

5th September 1944

'E' Party depart for Bulford via Arromanches - Gosport.

7th September 1944

'F' Party depart for Bulford via Arromanches - Southampton. Equipment - Only special Airborne equipment and equipment in very short supply brought back to UK.

8th September 1944

Unit sent on 14 days Disembarkation/Embarkation leave.

Appendix "A"

Report by 6 Airborne Div Signals on Operations D Day and D plus 1

That Sigs provide the machinery for comd is an accepted fact. 6 Airborne Div Sigs had to provide in addition to that machinery:-

(i) the means for calling for sp from and firing another div's arty.

(ii) the calling for air sp by joining in on the ASSU net which is normally excl manned by specially trained ASSU personnel.

(iii) the notification direct to England of all requirements for re-sup by air.

All eqpt and personnel had to be transported by glider or parachute and all links had to be through by H hr.

That in a nutshell was what the unit was required to do.

Beside the Para Bde Sig Secs 4 Offrs and 36 ORs jumped with 12 Para Bn, with an initial role of assisting RE to demolish poles on the LZ. In spite of the difficulties of 20 men and 20 kitbags in the Stirlings the two sticks had successful but dispersed lds, the RSM striking a pole and sustaining a muscle injury and there were also sniping cas on the DZ.

Only a few arrived on the LZ before the gliders came in, but numerous individual adventures were met with before this. One man dropped in the garden of an enemy HQ in HEROUVILLETTE, and heard a quiet call of 'Tommy; Tommy'. Suspecting a trap, he threw a grenade, but it turned out to be a partisan armed with a Free French brassard and an early pattern Sten. He joined the party which formed out of other stragglers, but later disappeared, and this party was the first to arrive at the chateau which became Div HQ, but they were disappointed by the absence of Huns. On the way, however, a MG post was silenced at RANVILLE, which was a useful piece of work as it was firing across the LZ.

One offr found himself in a camp full of Polish manned arty, which received the attentions of the RAF while he was there, but the inmates were able to search for him and he took refuge in a tree.

Both the CO and Adjt found lines to demolish on their way in and later a buried cable was found with the aid of the local inhabitants and blown up by the Lines Offr. This was a little unfortunate, for according to the original plan this cable would not be required, although considerable use of it was subsequently made by 1 Corps.

Of the glider party a high proportion arrived with their jeeps and wireless sets intact, but a coy comd who accompanied the GSO 1 landed in a mined area near VARAVILLE owing to the pilot taking violent evasive action and snapping the tow rope. During D day he had numerous skirmishes with a surprising number of snipers, and he was struck by a mortar fragment so violently that his steel helmet was found with an enormous dent and would no longer fit on the head, but the sole injury was a grazed scalp. This coy comd arrived at 3 Para Bde HQ on the way and found that both Sig Offrs were missing and only 3 gliderborne sets had arrived with a few operators. He est vital comns, which gradually built up during the day as more sets were found in containers scattered over the countryside.

Div HQ was set up rapidly, each set to arrive was put on the next most important link irrespective of its normal function, to which end all operators were briefed in all links in UK. Comn with UK was est in 15 mins, and over this Base link demands for replacing losses were sent - the eqpt arriving by air in 12 hrs.

Pigeons were used by a party to announce their capture of the MERVILLE bty.

The Airdg Bde Sec which arrived at 2100 hrs on D day lost very little eqpt, but Para Bdes will probably not trust the uncertain kit bag and again for the majority of their sets.

The ASSU link passed five calls for air sp in the first two days, the most notable of which concerned a large party of cyclists who had come from HAVRE and had intended a vigorous attack from the EAST. This attack was completely broken up by air attack. On numerous occasions this ASSU link worked direct to HQ 2 TAF at UXBRIDGE.

In spite of exceptionally good wireless conditions on all links, a circling Spitfire habitually called for ground sigs at Div HQ every morning, until it was rumoured that it was one captured by the Hun for his own purposes.

If all airborne ops had such successful initial comms as OVERLORD, the battle would be as good as won before it started.

Captain Anthony H. Windrum

Unit : 6th Airborne Divisional Signals.

This account of experiences in Normandy in 1944 is given by Anthony Windrum.

I was then a captain Royal Signals, Adjutant of 6 Airborne Divisional Signals, and was admitted to the planning stage at Syrencote House in February. Many rehearsals and exercises were held and Salisbury Plain was generally kept busy. One moonlit night I led a stick of parachutists in a practice jump and we landed near Stonehenge, but not surprisingly at three o'clock in the morning the troops were not interested in its history but rather had in the mind the march of several miles to our camp at Bulford.

We were paraded before the King and Queen on one occasion and naturally there was growing excitement about the forthcoming D-Day. The task of Div. Sigs. was of course to provide communications for all arms in the invasion force including navy, army and air force, but in addition two sticks were detailed to land at 11 o'clock local time the previous night with the two stick commanders fitted round their waists with 'sausages' of explosive to help in blowing up Rommel's Asparagus, fir poles to deter our gliders landing.

There was a delay of 24 hours due to bad weather, but mercifully General Eisenhower gave the signal to GO! One of the sticks was commanded by Lt. Col. 'Paddy' Smallman-Tew, the C.O. (later killed by a stray shell at Escoville) and the other by myself.

We took off from Tarrant Rushton and I was surprised to see that our pilot was Pip Dale whom I had known at school. The approach was uneventful except that, looking through the 'jump hole' I was amazed to see the vast number of ships of all sizes heading for France. Approaching the French coast there was plenty of flak and the sky seemed full of all sorts of fireworks, causing the pilot to take evasive action and this made it difficult to keep our feet with steel-studded boots on a metal floor, and also made accurate dropping difficult. I mistook the half-hour signal for the get-ready one which was not a help to morale as we had to stand for an unnecessary half hour. On jumping I saw a stream of tracer rather near and curled up my legs seeking to avoid it!

I landed about two miles from where I should have been and did not recognise the area so I shinned up a signpost, which the French had considerably left, and struck a match to locate the spot. The air by now was filled with the sound of thudding army boots as many troops arrived, and it was really Dante's Inferno, with mass bombing and large naval guns hard at it... The first person I came across was Capt. Geoffrey Whiteley lying in a ditch with broken bones, and was only able to comfort him by assuring him that the stretcher bearers would be along soon.

Approaching the village of Ranville I saw the first dead German, who had rashly come out to see what it was all about and was at once shot down. There was little 'Asparagus' in the area and so I blew up a telegraph pole across the road to hinder any possible German reinforcements, which must have been a nuisance to our troops later on when they had to remove it.

Gliders which of course have no engines, soon whistled in, some crashing - one right on a farm building and few occupants survived. I thought I would try and join up with somebody and came across Lt. Col. Peter Luard who was competing with the gunfire by energetically blowing his hunting horn to rally his

men. Altogether the noise was astonishing. He offered me a lift in one of his jeeps but when I discovered that it was going to Troarn to blow up bridges I declined as it was going in the wrong direction for me.

On the way to Ranville, where the chateau was to be our HQ, I came across Gen. Gale the Divisional Commander who had just landed in his glider. It was near a cross-roads and the General ordered a sergeant to remove the men who were gathered there, always a dangerous spot for enemy artillery. The man foolishly ignored him, saying they were not his men, so Gen. Gale, who was of course pretty keyed-up, exploded to his companion: "Shamus, Shamus, there's a man defying Richard Gale". Shamus Hickey, the A/Q, hastily ordered the men away, and a frightened sergeant very rapidly did as he was told.

Going to the chateau Gen Gale knocked on the french windows and the startled occupants let in the unexpected visitors. Being of humbler occupation, I went to the outhouse where the Signal Office was to be set up. Some worrying hours later my C.O. arrived; he had landed in a tree and was so excited he cut his rigging-lines and landed on his head. Thinking he heard Russian spoken he wondered whether perhaps by mistake he had been dropped in the wrong theatre of war, but it turned out to be a Polish unit which had been impressed by the Germans.

D-Day was itself was not very exciting for me except for continuous artillery fire from both sides, the Germans having been thoroughly aroused by now, but I managed to get to the vital Pegasus Bridge where Brig. Lord Lovat was crossing with his piper, a great relief for us as he was leading a sizeable body of commando reinforcements.

I managed to get a little sleep in a farm building on mounds of potatoes which were very knobbly for getting rest, but at least we were in France together with a multitude of other friendly people.

Next day, I went on a reconnaissance and was taken by a Frenchman to a house near the Ecarde quarries and saw a dreadful sight. The whole house had been systematically smashed up - furniture, clocks, windows, everything. It was said to have been the house of a notorious Nazi collaborator and this was the Maquis' revenge, a dreadful one. There was talk of a German tank sculling around on what had been our Dropping Zone - a false alarm but we returned to Ranville nevertheless. Next day was comparatively quiet, and I went on another recce. and examined the tower of Ranville church, but towers were unhealthy as they were assumed to be lookouts, and a few shells drove me down. In the churchyard there were rows of our dead, laid out on stretchers, and I was shaken by the sight of a dead paratroop sergeant staring straight at me with wondering dead eyes.

One day when things had quietened down a bit my C.O. and I went to see the famed batteries of Merville, whose guns were feared as threatening the invasion fleet from deep casemates. They were the target of a coup-de-main party (commanded by Lt. Col. Terence Otway) early on D-Day morning which after much gallantry were captured and destroyed. My C.O. was most anxious to see them, but the visit terrified me as he would keep on picking over boxes of shells, flares, etc. and knowing the habit of booby-trapping these I was on permanent tenterhooks. However, perhaps the German gunners did not have enough time for booby-traps as they were overcome with marvellous gallantry by our troops.

This visit had a sequel. The gun emplacements were liberally supplied with various coloured signalling flares and as I had always loved fireworks I liberated some of these and took them back to camp. But flares are dull things until let off, so one fine afternoon I ignited one glorious purple one. Unfortunately the light breeze carried the purple cloud across the field where our trenches were and went straight

through the hedge across a table full of senior officers having lunch. I expected fearful retribution but they must have had a sense of humour and I heard no more about it.

Life in the quarries at Ecarde was fairly tame in our static role for some weeks, and what I recall by way of highlights was first the use we made of parachutes and pieces of glider, there being no further use for them. The parachutes were a godsend when it came to lining the trenches against damp mud. One day a snake got inside my lining and was quite difficult to remove. I have a photograph of a large glider nose up-ended which made a cosy den for our cipher officer Norman Bradshaw. When I began to dig my trench I came across some 'silver' spoons and forks, but on hearing about this the occupant of a nearby house turned up and explained that he had buried the family silver to keep it from the Germans - very sensible - so he got his property back

Owing to the fact that our forces were held up by fierce German resistance (including the dreadful battle of Breville), it was three weeks before we moved forward. In the meantime we were well dug in and the most vivid memory I have of that time was the constant whispering through the trees of distant German machinegun bullets, particularly at night. The move forward was fairly rapid, with German resistance of course and I shall never forget the sight of the town of Dozule burning fiercely as we approached.

Eventually we were quartered in a cider orchard where trees gave a little cover. The German air force was not inactive, and I remember seeing the wreckage of one of their fighters with gruesome remains of the pilot. Both Paddy Tew and I removed some of the thick perspex windscreen and later carved crucifixes out of the easily-worked material. One day in the orchard a noisy crowd came in, consisting of two or three women pursued and beaten by many others, the women having had their heads shorn as collaborators, desperately trying to escape the vengeance.

At long last, the army moved further towards the Seine, and as expensive airborne troops in September we were returned to England, embarking by scrambling over the Mulberry Harbour which had been damaged in the June gales.

So ended my stay in Normandy and I hope this account is accurate and unvarnished.

National Archives catalogue number WO 171/4163.

Abbreviation 2048

250500

A/C

Adm

Adv

Ae

AGRA

Airfd

Airdg

Airtps

Amb

A/Q

Armd

Arty

Aslt

ASSU

A Tk

Att

Bde

BLA

Bldg

BM

Bn

Br

Bty

Cas

Cdn

Cdo

C-in-C

Cl

Comd

Comn

Comp

Coy

CRA

CRASC

CSO

CV

DD

Def

Det

Dis

Div

DR

DZ

Elt
Eqpt
Est
Fd
Fmn
FOO
FOU
Freq
Fwd
G2
Gd
Gen
GOC
Gp
HAA
HQRA
Hy
i/c
Incl
Inf
Junc
L
Ldg
LE
LO
Locn
Lt
LZ
M/C
MDS
Mech
Med
Minefd
NTR
OC
Offr
OO
Op
OR
Org
Pdr
PI
RA
RASC
Rd
RE
Regt
Rep

Res
Re-sup
RHQ
R/T
RUR
RV
S
SEAC
Sec
Sigs
SP
Sqn
Sta
Str
Tac
Tfc
Tk
Topsec
Tp
Trg
Veh
VHF
WE
Wef
WO
Wrls
W/T
WY

Map Reference
25th March, 05:00

Aircraft
Administration
Advance
Aerial
Army Group Royal Artillery
Airfield
Airlanding
Airborne Troops
Ambulance
Adjutant and Quartermaster Branch
Armoured
Artillery
Assault
Air Support Signal Unit
Anti-Tank
Attached

Brigade
British Liberation Army
Building
Brigade Major
Battalion
British / Bridge
Battery
Casualties
Canadian
Commando
Commander-in-Chief
Class
Command
Communication
Composite
Company
Command Royal Artillery
Commander Royal Army Service Corps
Chief Signal Officer
Command Vehicle
Duplex Drive
Defence
Detachment
Disable
Division / Divisional
Despatch Rider
Drop Zone
Element
Equipment
Establish
Field
Formation
Forward Observation Officer
Forward Observation Unit
Frequency
Forward
General Staff Officer 2
Ground
General
General Officer Commanding
Group
Heavy Anti-Aircraft
Headquarters Royal Artillery
Heavy
In-Command
Including
Infantry
Junction

Lowland
Landing
Land Element
Liaison Officer
Location
Light
Landing Zone
Motorcycle
Main Dressing Station
Mechanic
Medium
Minefield
Nothing to Report
Officer Commanding
Officer
Operation Order
Operator / Operation / Observation Post
Other Ranks
Organisation
Pounder
Platoon
Royal Artillery
Royal Army Service Corps
Road
Royal Engineers
Regiment
Representative
Reserve
Resupply
Regimental Headquarters
Radio Telephony
Royal Ulster Rifles
Rendezvous
Scottish
South East Asia Command
Section
Signals
Self-Propelled / Support (if lower case)
Squadron
Station
Strength
Tactical
Traffic
Tank
Top Secret
Troop
Training
Vehicle

Very High Frequency
War Establishment
With-Effect
War Office
Wireless
Wireless Telegraphy
Worcestershire Yeomanry

Month and year : March 1945

Commanding Officer : Lt Col P.E.M. Bradley

1st March 1945

Place: Bulford

Mobilisation continues from 21 Feb 45.

10th March 1945

Place: Bulford

War Office authorise holding of:-

Trucks 15 cwt 4 x 2 GS - 4

Trucks 15 cwt 4 x 2 water - 1

Trucks 15 cwt 4 x 2 Wireless House - 15

Trucks 15 cwt 4 x 4 Personnel - 15

Daimler Scout Cars - 2

Lorries, 3 ton 4 x 4:-

GS - 9

Comd LP - 9

Comd HP - 2

TEV (Div) - 2

Cipher Office - 1

Signal Office - 2

Trailers, 10 cwt, 2 wheeled, 4.5 kw charging - 2

Surplus to WE. Plus certain additional stores - main items

American Reel Units RL 31

Scaling Ladders RE

2 R 107 Receivers (For use in Security Section which still has establishment of only one officer, one clerk and one driver).

12th March 1945

Place: Bulford

0001 - Mobilisation due to be completed. - Impossible due to lack of volunteers and man power situation. Still deficient 15 OWLs, 1 ES, 2 Dvr Mechs and heavy vehicles.

14th March 1945

Place: Bulford

Bulk of planning for "VARSITY" complete. See Appx "A".

15th March 1945

Place: Bulford

22 drivers for heavy vehicles authorised to be held surplus to War Establishment are to be sent, together with outstanding vehicles, direct to Land Elements in BETHUNE via 21st Army Group.

1700 - Air Support Tentacle, FVCP, arrived. 3 controllers, 6 ORs. 3 WS No.1131 in 3 Jeeps and trailers.

16th March 1945

Place: Bulford

1800 - ASSU tentacles arrive. 1 Sgt, 12 Operators. 4 Jeeps and trailers.

17th March 1945

Place: Bulford

Base communication system complete. See Appx "B".

20th March 1945

Place: Bulford

0755 - Moved to Mushroom Farm Transit Camp preparatory to Operation VARSITY. See Appx "C".

23rd March 1945

Place: Bulford

New destructor boxes (Unit "B") received and issued. Still NOT complete to Mobilised scale. Three visiting Press operators from FAAA taken on Operation to bring number of operators held nearer to number required.

24th March 1945

Place: Germany

1045 - Landed E of Rhine. Flak light to moderate - Many gliders on fire. Shelling and mortaring of LZ light. Landings scattered and opposed. Cipher Officer seriously injured in crash. Lines Officer missing.

1050 - OC "K" Sec killed at RV by shell.

1110 - "A" Comd (Fwd R/T net) opened - Through to 3rd and 5th Parachute Bdes.

1128 - Through to 6 Airdg Bde on "A" Comd. All outstations within radius of 3.1/2 miles comn therefore good.

1200 - GOCs Rover set arrived. Set upon lateral link to XVII US Div Airborne.

1310 - Div HQ established W of HAMMINKELN (189478) in farm bldgs. Average wireless country. Flat (except to 3 Para Bde and Higher fmns who were immediately behind a high hill) but heavily wooded. "Q" Base set arrived and set up.

1315 - "Ground Resupply Spare" set arrived and set up on Rear link to XVIII US Corps Airborne.

1330 - Bdes on all objectives.

1335 - Rear link to XVIII US Airborne Corps through.

1345 - "Q" Base set through.

1432 - Message from CSO 1 (Br) Airborne Corps - Lines Officer, 2 Cipher Ops, 2 Linesmen, 2 DRs, 2 Ops W & L landed by glider NW of XANTEN (W of Rhine) - to be brought in by Land Element. Presence of enemy precludes extensive use of Line or DRs therefore not a great loss at the time.

1515 - "Q" Base lost contact on moving to main bldg. Move imperative owing to intense enemy shellfire and sniping of farm occupied by them.

1520 - Detachment moved into main bldg from nearby farm because of enemy shell-fire and sniping.

1530 - Ground Resupply Set set up.

1600 - Ground Resupply Set through. Lateral to XVII US Div Airborne through.

1700 - "K" Sec (5 Parachute Bde Sec) have only one linesman and NO line stores. Have lost 12 WS No.62. Recovery of sets from crashed craft being attempted but difficult owing to enemy action.

2100 - Line to 5th and 6th Bdes - Line to 3rd Bde impossible due to enemy on route.

2230 - Signal Stores available in Div Dump -
Lamp Sig, daylight No.1 - 1
Btys for 38 sets - 200

2300 - 8 Para Bn ready to clear route to 3 Bde. 'C' Sec line party left one telephone at 5 Bde.

2345 - Comn with 3 Bde not good under night conditions. Cipher endeavouring to tie up what pads and parts arrived safely. Difficult owing to scattered landings by all cipher ops, loss of Cipher Officer etc. Both 1 Coy M 209 machines lost. Initially a cipher op took messages to RA set, and changed settings of their machine to encipher and decipher. Arranged with XVIII US Corps Airborne that all traffic in and out to be in RA settings and op detailed to remain with RA set to encipher and decipher as required.

2359 - Cas in personnel -

Flown in
Killed
Wounded
Missing
- 18 Officers
- 1 "
- 1 "
- 1 "

290 ORs

5 "
24 "
34 "

Personnel available therefore a little under 80%.

Cas in sets -

Flown in

Lost

C 52

12

5

62

54

23

68

20

9

76

10

6

300

27

16

FVCP

2

1

C9

1

-

Total Flown in - 126

Total lost - 60

Sets available were therefore a little less than 53%. Some sets were recovered later from crashed gliders by organised salvage parties.

25th March 1945

0500 - Q Base through.

0845 - "Cab-rank" available.

1000 - Small line det sent to 5 Bde from "C" Section.

1200 - Rear Link CW to XVIII US Corps Airborne set up.

1305 - Rear Link CW to XVIII US Corps Airborne through.

1400 - Rear Link to XVIII US Corps Airborne switched to C52 salvaged from crashed glider.

1500 - OC 2 Coy (Sigs LO with ground forces) and TMO (OC first build-up party) reported. Vehs not allowed to come up until tomorrow due to presence of enemy on road from 3 Bde. Lines Officer and passengers of glider which landed W of Rhine reported in.

1700 - Line to 3 Bde through.

1830 - Line from XVIII US Corps Airborne in.

26th March 1945

0900 - Signal Stores available -

Lamps, Sig, daylight, No.1

Stands

Boxes bty

Wire, electric, D3, single

Cable, assault

W.S. No.38

Btys for 38 set

Btys BA 37

- 1

- 4

- 3

- 3.1/2 miles

- 2 miles

- 3

- 221

- 48

27th March 1945

0230 - 12 HP from Land Element on Rear Link to Corps.

0830 - "B" Comd (Forward CW) opened. Bdes using any set available.

1800 - Main build-up party arrive. Switch from Air to ground scale begins. 3 CVs complete with sets took over immediately. 27th 28th 29th March spent removing sets from trailers etc and mounting in CVs. "A" Comd now entirely C 52 and worked well.

Month and year : April 1945

Commanding Officer : Lt Col P.E.M. Bradley

1st April 1945

Place: Germany

1115 - Moved to road junc 940887.

1255 - Tac at Greven Br. Traffic control net on SCR 300 used. Principle one to four TCPs. Progress of bridging reported over this net and traffic called up. Works well. Br at SCHNIEDEHAUSEN 978893.

2355 - Fwd tps over DORTMUND-EMS canal. LADBERGEN clear.

2nd April 1945

0745 - Tac in LADBERGEN.

1600 - Tac moves to LENGERICH.

1900 - Main moves to LENGERICH. One OR killed by shellfire.

3rd April 1945

0715 - Mopping up woods NE of LENGERICH. 5 Bde to high ground W and NW of OSNABRUCK.

2300 - 3 Bde to WESSINGEN.

4th April 1945

1 Cdo Bde in OSNABRUCK.

1900 - Main and Tac to BLASHEIM.

5th April 1945

1500 - Main and Tac to SUDERFELDE 782193.

1820 - Fwd tps in WIETERSHEIM.

2330 - Comns in 6 Bde to fwd Coy stretched and poor.

6th April 1945

0130 - "G" state roads unsafe due to presence of enemy.

0500 - Fwd tps in LAHDE.

0600 - Raft area shelled but crossing going well at PETERSHAGEN. Traffic control net again working.

1030 - "G" agree that escorts for Drs to come from Def Platoon.

1035 - Cl 40 br at 845208. Cl 9 br at 837183.

1930 - Fwd tps at BIERDE.

7th April 1945

WESER bridgehead - Traffic Control net established.

1530 - Tac to STEINHUDE 1003000.

1900 - Advancing rapidly. Only means to maintain wireless control found to be to allow Tac HQ set to take over control and Bde out stations at step up along up to 50 miles of road.

8th April 1945

3 Bde to WUNSTORF.

1500 - Main to STEINHUDE. German Air Force Wireless vehicle captured. Passed to CSO, 8 Corps - 2 KVA charging engine extracted.

9th April 1945

1215 - CI 40 br complete at NEUSTADT. 3 Bde NUILLENDORF area. 6 Bde NE ENGELBOSTEL.

10th April 1945

ASSU see Appx 'A' (HQ Air Corps/5821/SX of 4 Apr 45 and Sigs 1001 of 10 Apr 45).

1300 - Small civilian house discovered containing much signal eqpt. Equivalent to our SRDE - Passed to CSO, 8 Corps.

16th April 1945

1500 - Main to Kallenbrock. See attached.

17th April 1945

1100 - Tac to LEHMKE.

1245 - Main to ESTERHOLY.

1330 - 3 Bde to MASENDORF. Recce report "large underground wireless station" captured. Investigation shows it to be Hamburg - Berlin repeater station. Handed to Corps, Army, Army Group successively with greatest difficulty.

20th April 1945

5 Div pass through. Trouble on PL allotted -

Corps - Top arm

Div - Second Arm from top (only when leading div uses NO PL except after reference to Corps).

Bde - Third arm from top.

Line comn over great distance almost impossible when PL cannot be used.

23rd April 1945

1200 - Main and Rear to concentration area MELBECK 785125.

24th April 1945

Bde Airborne as envisaged as part of op 'Enterprise'. Planning starts.

26th April 1945

Airborne Op (5 Bde) cancelled. See attached. Appendix 'C'.

27th April 1945

5 Bde move to Div concentration area. See attached. Appendix 'D'.

28th April 1945

1200 - C in C 21 Army Group visiting for investiture.

29th April 1945

0200 - Op 'Enterprise' begins less Airborne side. 3rd and 6th Bdes to final concentration area. See attached. Appendix 'E'.

30th April 1945

CI 9 br at LAUENBERG.

1400 - Movement commenced. Traffic control net in operation.

1900 - Main to BUCHORST. In mobile ops 52 set V adaptor found to be too fragile. R 38A (10,000 ohm bleederresistor) shorts HT to case. Good set for mobile role. WS No.62 - Flick shakes off under these conditions. Connectors etc shake loose. Set shakes off calibration.

Month and year : May 1945

Commanding Officer : Lt Col P.E.M. Bradley

1st May 1945

1400 - Div. H.Q. at BOIZENBURG.

1500 - Under Command XVIII U.S. Corps (Airborne).

1820 - 15 Bde. revert to Comd 5 (BR) Inf. Div.

2nd May 1945

2025 - Div. H.Q. WISMAR.

3rd May 1945

0911 - Fwd. Tps. contact RUSSIANS.

4th May 1945

0900 - Found necessary to order D.Rs to run in Jeeps only and in pairs to counter sniping.

6th May 1945

1100 - Divisional Thanksgiving Service St. NIKOLAIKIRCH, St. NIKOLAIKIRCHOF, WISMAR. Sigs 1011A at Appendix "A".

7th May 1945

Field Marshal Montgomery meets Marshal Rokossovsky.

8th May 1945

0800 - Training begins. "G" do not agree to Staff Trg as future moves not known.

9th May 1945

1200 - "G" agree to Staff Trg w.e.f. 10 May 45.

10th May 1945

0900 - 30 Tons German Signal Equipment collected at 6 Airdg Bde. by "E" Section.

11th May 1945

1400 - 3rd. Para Bde [and Greys?] Parade is WISMAR. Sigs 1256 at Appendix "B".

13th May 1945

1500 - Russian Troupe entertains the Division at THEATRE LICHSPIEL, WISMAR.

17th May 1945

Adv. Party moves to U.K. No Sigs rep.

18th May 1945

0900 - Move to Luneburg.

19th May 1945

1315 - Air Party (54 all ranks) depart for U.K. Sea party departs for Ostend by road.

1950 - Air Party arrives [GRANTHAM?] COMMON (Sigs 1136 of 15 May 45 and Sigs 1136 of 17 May 45 at Appendix "C").

24th May 1945

2300 - Sea Party arrives.

31st May 1945

2359 - All personnel sorted into eligibles and Non eligibles for SEAC and despatched on Leave.

Appendix

6 AIRBORNE DIVISIONAL SIGNALS

OP ORDER No.1 (Issued in conjunction with 6 Airborne Div OO No.7)

INFORMATION.

1. (a) Enemy) At Appendix A
(b) Own Troops)
2. Order of Battle at Appendix B.
3. Location of HQs at Appendix C.

INTENTION.

4. Div Signals will est and maintain comns required to implement the 6 Airborne Div plan.

METHOD.

5. 6 Airborne Div Signals Operational Standing Orders apply where applicable and where they are not at variance with this Order or any orders that may be issued subsequently verbally or in writing.

MOVEMENT.

6. (a) Amended scales of personnel distribution at Appendix D1, vehicles at D1A.
(b) Aircraft and airfield allocation at Appendix D2.
(c) Seaborne tail movement at Appendix D3.

WIRELESS

7. (a) Comns will be est in accordance with Appendicies W1, W2.
(b) Schedule of links at Appendix E.
(c) Frequencies at Appendix F, F1, F2, F3, F4.
(d) Wireless Silence. Airborne sets will open immediately on landing. Sets with the ground forces will opened as ordered by the CSO of the ground formations concerned.
(e) A Frequency will not be used by a set of greater power than that for which it is graded.
(f) All control stations other than 68R and 38 sets, will be set up by crystal-controlled wavemeter. All sets will be netted prior to loading; dials will be locked and sealed. They will be checked by wavemeter on arrival at the RV.
(g) Under no circumstances will a control station allow its net to work on other than the exact frequency allotted. Disciplinary action will be taken against a control set operator whose net is found to be more than 4 kcs off.
(h) Aerials will be reduced to a minimum compatible with reliable comn. If ground wave comn fails, all types of sets will be tried with a wire serial on short range "sky wave" working. Signal Officers and wireless det NCOs must bear this possibility in mind at all times.
(i) Changes of frequency will be made in accordance with 6 Airborne Div Sigs Signal Instruction No.13 dated 28.Sep.44. or 21 Army Group Signal Memorandum No.40 dated 6.Nov.44. Frequency changes in Base Wave to be notified later. All other changes of frequency from day to night and vice-versa where applicable will take place upon orders from the control station/
(j) On arrival at the RV, listening watch will be kept on -
Common Recognition Wave - Kept by all formations concerned in the operation down to Bn level.
(k) RA nets will be operated as ordered by the CRA, based on Method "B" as outlined in this HQ Sigs [100?] of 9 Feb and CSO 2nd Army's "detailed procedure for Airborne Div Arty Support Comns".
(l) Listening Sets at NIVELLES and XVIII Corps on frequency C9 (6 Airborne Div Base Wave) will intercept all traffic on that link and will deliver to the appropriate staff.
(m) NO wireless sets will close down without authority as under:-
Corps links - Signal Officer, Corps
Div links - Comd Gp, Div Sigs
Bde links - OC Bde Sec
RA links - HQ RA
(n) Operators' cards will be prepared and will carry full particulars of every link that is capable of being operated by the same type of set. The cards will be rolled up and concealed in the largest rod of the F-type aerial. It can be recovered by pushing the smallest section through.

LINE.

8. (a) Line communication will be est as soon as practicable. Before a line party is despatched, it will be ascertained from G Branch that the proposed route is clear of the enemy.
(b) (i) The following line labelling system will be used
All lines laid by C Sec will be 6D
(single odd figure for earth return)
6D
(double figures for pairs)
CRA's lines will commence at 51

All lines laid by J Sec will be 3P

	-
K Sec	5P
	-
L Sec	6L
	-
E Sec	53
	-

(ii) Initial labelling Div HQ - 3 Para Bde 6D

	1
5 Para Bde	6D
	3
6 Airdg Bde	6D
	5

thereafter as ordered by Comd Gp.

(c) Fullerphones will be est from Div HQ to Bdes as soon as practicable after line comn is est. Method - series transformer split.

(d) L/T comns to Corps: the necessary Br telegraph equipment and operators have been att to XVIII Corps.

(e) Initially all lines in the Div area will be considered liable to interception of telephone comn and the necessary security measures taken.

(f) American exchanges will be called by their code names (issued to OC 1 Coy separately).

(g) Existing enemy routes (other than permanent cable or UG routes) may be taken into use. C.R. Signals will be informed immediately of any routes taken into use. Those that are used will be isolated from any other enemy comns. See para 8 (i) (Destruction of the enemy installations). No enemy cable routes (other than field cable) will be taken into use without authority of Signal Officer XVIII Corps obtained through C.R. Signals.

(h) It is essential that all Signal Officers ensure that early information of existing enemy comns, routes and installations is obtained and passed immediately to C.R. Signals.

(i) All Signal Officers will ensure that any necessary destruction of enemy comns equipment is carried out in a scientific manner. Wholesale destruction of wireless equipment, exchanges, lines and test equipment and cutting of paper cored cable will NOT be carried out. To render systems inoperative, whilst at the same time providing for quick re-connection for use by our own tps, the following procedure will be adopted -

- (1) Jumper wires will be cut
- (2) Fuses will be broken
- (3) Ringing machines will be disconnected
- (4) Test points will be disconnected
- (5) Power supplies will be cut
- (6) Valves and spare valves will be removed.

On no account will batteries be destroyed or cable heads interfered with.

9. DESPATCH RIDERS

(a) As soon as practicable, OC 1 Coy will est a DRLS. Normal times of leaving Div HQ - 0800 1200 1600 2000. In the initial stages only SDR will be possible and then only when it has been confirmed from G Branch that the route is clear of the enemy.

(b) As soon as practicable, OC 1 Coy will detach one DR to XVIII Corps Message Centre.

10. PIGEONS.

Will not be used.

11. SIGNAL TIME.

The official time will be British Summer Time (designated by letter A). Time will be checked from BBC broadcasts. Time signals are radiated every hour at the hour on 6195 kcs.

12. CODES.

As per Appendices E and S.

13. AIR CO-OPERATION.

As per Appendix H.

14. CIPHER.

As per Appendix G.

15. SECURITY.

This order will NOT be taken by air. No personal papers will be taken other than AF.B.2606 (Revised) by Officers and A.B.64 by O.Rs.

Maps may be taken but will not be marked in any way.

OsC. Coys will make arrangement for the collection and disposal of TOPSEC and SECRET waste in transit camps.

Briefing will be carried out at Transit Camps of personnel going by air. Final briefing of dets with other formations will be carried out by the Signal Officer of that formation. OC 2 will confirm that this has been done.

16. ADM.

In accordance with 6 Airborne Div Sigs Adm Order No.1.

17. ACK.

(signed)
Capt & Adjutant,
6 Airborne Divisional Signals.

14. Mar. 45.

Appendix A to 6 Airborne Div Sigs OO No.1
Ref Maps. GSGS Germany
1/250,000 sheets 2A, 3A, K52.

1/100,000 sheets R1, Q1
1/2500 sheets 4204, 4205, 4206, 4304, 4305, 4306.

INFORMATION

1. Enemy

See latest Intelligence Summaries and ISUMS, available with the Adjutant.

2. Own Tps.

(a) 12 Corps -

(i) 15 (S) Div is aslting on two Bde front in the gen areas BISLICH 1442 and NEHR 1248 - HAFFEN 1149 at H hr on D day. Subsequently 15 (S) Div are capturing brs over R. ISSEL and relieving 6 Brit Airborne Div in area HAMMINKELN 2048.

(ii) 1 Cdo Bde is to aslt in area GRAV INSEL 1841 at H-2 hrs D day and capture WESEL 2240.

(b) 30 Corps is aslting in vicinity KEES 0752.

(c) NINTH US Army is co-operating SOUTH of WESEL.

(d) XVIII US Corps (Airborne) with under comd 6 Brit Airborne Div and 17 US Div (Airborne) is to land at P hrs D day EAST of R. RHINE on 12 Corps front.

(e) 17 US Div (Airborne) is Idg on the right of 6 Brit Airborne Div.

3. Additional Tps.

(a) The following are coming under comd 6 Airborne Div after link up with ground forces in the following priority:-

One sqn Tks (less 17 pdr Tks) equipped with DD Tks.

One SP A Tk Bty (twelve SP M10 17-pdrs)

One fd regt RA (approx D+1).

(b) The following are in sp 6 Airborne Div from P hr:-

52 (L) Div Arty Gp consisting of:-

Three Fd Regts

Two Med Regts

One HAA Bty.

(c) The following are in sp XVIII US Corps (Airborne) from P hr:-

8 AGRA consisting of:-

One Med Regt

One Hy Regt

US 155mm gun gp (36 x 155mm).

4. 6 Airborne Div is seizing, clearing and holding the SCHNEPPENBERG feature 1646 and the village of HAMMINKELN 2048 together with ISSEL Brs at 223485, 217497 and 216500.

5. RIGHT - 6 Airlgd Bde Gp

CENTRE - 5 Para Bde Gp

LEFT - 3 Para Bde Gp

6. Grouping.

(a) 3 Para Bde.

Under comd -

One 6-pdr tp 3 Airdg A Tk Bty RA

One tp 3 Para Sqn RE

224 Para Fd Amb

In sp -

Three fd regts - 52 (L) Div arty gp.

(b) 5 Para Bde.

Under comd -

4 Airdg A Tk Bty RA

One tp 591 Para Sqn RE

225 Para Fd Amb

In sp -

One Med Regt - 52 (L) Div Arty Gp

One Bty - 53 (WY) Airdg Lt Regt RA.

(c) 6 Airdg Bde Gp

Under comd -

3 Airdg A Tk Bty RA (less 2 tps)

Det 591 Para Sqn RE

195 Airdg Fd Amb

In sp -

One Med Regt - 52 (L) Div Arty Gp.

One Bty - 52 (WY) Airdg Lt Regt RA.

(d) Div Res -

Two Lt Tk Tps 6 Airborne Armd Recce Regt

Two Para Pls 716 Comp Coy (Airborne Lt) RASC

One Tp 6-pdr 3 Airdg A Tk Bty RA

One Sec 17-pdr 3 Airdg A Tk Bty RA

After link up of land elt:

6 Airdg A Tk Bty RA

One Sqn 44 R Tks (less 17-pdr Tks)

One SP A Tk Bty

7. Definitions.

(a) H hr is the time of aslt of 12 Corps.

(b) P hr is the time XVIII (Airborne) commences dropping.

8. Landing Areas and Timings.

(a) LZ and DZs to be issued later.

(b) Para and glider Idgs will start simultaneously in the following order:-

(i)

(ii)

(iii)

(iv)

(v)
(vi)
(vii)
Para
3 Para Bde
5 Para Bde
Glider
6 Airdg Bde
Div HQ Gp
RA Gp
Para Bdes Glider elt.
Hamilcar loads

9. Mines.

- (a) All minefds are being fenced and marked in the usual manner.
- (b) Gaps cleared in enemy minefds are being marked in the normal manner.

10. Recognition.

- (a) Recognition between airtps and ground forces will be the displaying of yellow celanese triangles.
- (b) Red berets may be worn after the initial drop as an aid to recognition.
- (c) Ground to air - fluorescent panels.

11. Passwords.

Common passwords and replies for use by airtps and tps 12 Corps will be issued later.
These will be communicated to all ranks in transit camps.

APPENDIX 'B' to 6 AIRBORNE DIV SIGS OO No.1

LOCATIONS OF HQs

HQ 6 Airborne Div
HQ 3 Para Bde
HQ 5 Para Bde
HQ 6 Airdg Bde
Tac HQ 12 Corps
Main HQ 12 Corps
Rear HQ 12 Corps
Tac HQ XVIII Corps (Airborne) (if not with MAIN)
Main HQ XVIII Corps (Airborne)
MDS 224 Para Fd Amb
MDS 225 Para Fd Amb
MDS 195 Airdg Fd Amb
- Bldgs 189479
- Vicinity 1646
- 195495
- 204486

- Vicinity GRINDSDICK 1037
- Vicinity 0732
- WINKLESCHER BUSCH 0633
- In 17 US Div (Airborne) area.
- Area 1037
- Area 157472
- Area 188454
- Area 216484

Appendix "A"

Subject:- Report on Operation VARSITY

C.S.O.

HQ, 1 Br Airborne Corps.

Sigs. 1001

Ref your HQ. AirCorps/5821/SX of 4 Apr 45.

1. I propose as soon as convenient to submit a preliminary report on communications during this operation, which is all I can hope to do at present. It will at any rate provide a basis for any further report and will have been made whilst events are still reasonably fresh in the minds of those concerned.
2. Your Para 2 - Yes, I understand that accuracy was obtained without smoke. Pilots were directed on to targets by a six figure map reference and prominent landmarks. The Pilots concerned were very experienced at close support and their navigation was excellent.
3. Your Paras 3 and 4. The tentacle and FVCP were sited together with one exchange line and a two to one line to G Ops and RA. They had a remote control on the A Comd and in addition when one particular Bde was likely to require air support a set netted on that Bde FOO Net so that immediate cab rank support could be made available to a Bn if necessary. A communication diagram is attached as Appendix A. "Sited by ASSU" I think is dialest for "Sited near ASSU". No particularly special siting of the VHF was found necessary. The G2 (Air) acted as ALO and was at the FVCP.
4. Your Para 5. The suggestion made in this para is ideally that the set to work on the FOO net should be earmarked as part of the air support party and trained with it. Further that the air support parties should carry its own telephones and a certain amount of cable to produce the required special air support lines themselves.
5. Your Para 6. I can give no reason possibly the NCO i/c the party now with you can explain. I agree that the 300w charging set is normally a most reliable equipment.
6. Your Para 7. FVCP did not apparently have the necessary crystals.
7. Your Para 8. It is desirable that all Airborne Equipment be capable of working on the move. It cannot be foretold at what stage in an operation defence of the original objectives may not develop into mobile

operations. It is felt that the possibility of using a normal 'contact car' (white scout) in a Hamilcar is worthy of consideration.

(Signed)
C.R. Signals
6 Airborne Division.
B.L.A.
10 April 45

Appendix "C"

Subject:- Wireless Report No.3
Sigs 1011A
Chief Signal Officer,
HQ 1 British Airborne Corps.

.....

Herewith report on Wireless Eqpt on trial with this fm for the period 24 Mar - 15 Apr 45.

The report covers the initial airborne assault and the subsequent rapid advance, when the Div was often operating over areas 50 miles and more in length and movement was almost continuous. In general skies were clear and climatic conditions good. Interference particularly at night was heavy.

1. Wireless Set C52. - mounted as previously.

- (a) Type of net - A Comd R/T, RA Comd, RA Airborne Support, all Rear links.
- (b) Ranges - no change. Short range sky wave com was not a success owing to increased noise/signal ratio.
- (c) No change.
- (d) No change. It is again emphasised that the V-adaptor is very fragile. A possible remedy is to set it at an angle. The cap shakes off the VIG valve and results in no modulation.
- (e) i. R. 384 - 10,000 ohm bleeder resistance. This resistor is situated directly above the contacts at the rear of the vibrator unit. Due to excessive vibration of the set on the move or clumsy replacement of the vibrator unit, the HT connection on the resistor shorts to the case.
 - ii. 0Z4As still blown in the remote receiver. The turning down of gain controls prior to switching on has not proved a complete success.
- (f) The C52 still proves to be a most successful set and the main stay of the divisional comms front and rear. A modification to the CVLP which is not strictly in connection with the C52, but is worthy of consideration, is that the 1260 watt charging engine should be more easily removable from its compartment, in order to prevent damage by fire after refilling with petrol, with the consequence filling of the compartment with fumes. At present it is very awkward and cannot be quickly removed. Cutting down the engine framework and removal of the lip formed by part of the side wall of the CV where it joins the floor of the cab would effect a remedy.

2. Wireless Set 62 Jeep and Para Stas - mounted in a jeep or as a man pack and ground sta.

- (a) Type of nets - A Comd RT (airborne assault), Bde Comd, Bde FOU nets, RA Air Support net, RE Comd, Traffic control

(b) Ranges - 8 miles by day reduced to about 4 by night using 14ft aerial. On one occasion 15 miles was obtained using a 32ft mast. Again short range sky wave working was not a success owing to increased noise/signal ratio.

(c) Screening and interference - NTR.

(d) Mechanical faults -

i. Battery lead plugs are very liable to loosen. Opening the pins on the plugs helps but does not rectify. Faults in the moulded plug make maintenance very difficult. A different type of power lead is recommended.

ii. Flick mechanism is not strong enough. The set sometimes goes off net when jolted or when switching the flick.

iii. Aerial turning inductance - the roller pick up spindle breaks.

iv. In the aerial coupling condensers, the rotating vanes are screwed by grub screws to the spindle and if forced whilst turning, the positive and negative vanes are liable to short.

v. Crystal - MO switch. This switch has no stop and the rotary leaf is inclined to overshoot the contacts.

vi. The aerial base on the para sta is not strong enough, the aerial "flops" on the move.

vii. Screws fall out of main on/off switch due to vibration causing intermittent fault.

viii. Grid cap comes off V2A due to vibration.

(e) Electrical faults:-

i. C24A - 8 uf 75v bias decoupling condenser has broken down on several sets. Symptoms - excessive drive reading on the meter.

ii. Gang condenser gets dirty and shorting occurs.

iii. Drive adjustment has been frequent. This may have been due to incorrect setting up originally.

iv. Calibration has had to be corrected on several sets - maximum error so far found approx 100 kcs.

v. VT 510 - Several faults have been experienced in connection with this valve.

1. Low emission.

2. Cathode insulation breaking down. The above may be due to a fault batch of valves.

3. The VT 510 is held in position in W.A:62 by means of a locking collar around the base. It has been necessary to warn those concerned not to withdraw the valve without releasing this lock and also trying to replace valves in a similar way.

vi. C 23 A - 8uf 550v H:T: smoothing condenser. This condenser is insulated by a piece of celluloid and held in position by a bracket. This fitting is not sufficiently rigid and the condenser due to vibration, slips out and causes at H:T: short. A remedy is to insert a piece of tape or cork underneath the bracket.

vii. Low aerial rending - meter circuit trouble, thought to be a westector.

viii. Occasionally a loud carrier is heard which can be cleared by turning on/off switch on and off.

ix. "Rec on" switch must be used with caution as it then takes the transmitter too long to warm up when required.

x. The expected trouble with the power unit has been successfully dealt with by the carriage of spare units which are very quickly changed when trouble threatens. An estimated life of the power unit will be provided in my next report, though it varies so considerably that it is difficult to give a figure.

(f) General. This set has been most successful and is undoubtedly the best answer to date for use in airborne operations - a great improvement on the 22 set. The set stood up very well to dropping and very few sets which landed normally were dis on the DZ. Battery drain is heavy with the consequent wastage of man power with the pack stas. In this connection I question the wisdom of the projected use of a 14 ah battery. Jeep stas should include 1 12v 75 ah battery. The set is easy to operate and has gained the confidence of the operators, particularly in the FOU who achieved great success with it in the operation. The new rod antennae is very popular. Performance on crystal working is excellent. It is

unfortunate that the crystal had to be cut above radiated frequency as flexibility in working with other sets on crystal control is lost. There is no question that the great assistance given at the W:O to obtain the set in time for the operation was repaid many fold.

3. SCR 300 - used for odd nets such as TCPs and most successfully as the Div HQ intercom set on the move and in a new location before lines were laid. Nothing new to report on this set. A really good "odd job" set and most promising as a future answer to the short range man pack set in the army.

(Signed)
Lt Col,
C.R. Signals,
6 Airborne Division.
B.L.A.
20 Apr 45.

Appendix "D"

Subject:- Operation VARSITY - PLUNDER.

Report on Communications of 6 Airborne Division.
Sigs 1335
Chief Signal Officer.
HQ, 1 Br Airborne Corps (3).

.....

I submit herewith as requested a report on the communications of this division for operation VARSITY - PLUNDER. It is by no means a complete report, but in the nature of a preliminary survey of what occurred whilst it is still reasonably fresh in the minds of those concerned. Even now it is based on already slightly hazy memory, but is the result of cross questions. I propose to deal first with the general points and to attach as appendices more detailed reports.

A. PLANNING.

1. No difficulties were experienced in the signal planning which was greatly assisted by the fact that I had been in the position to have preliminary discussion with CSO 2nd Army whilst the Division was in Holland and that a draft signal plan had already been prepared for a similar operation with Signal Officer XVIII US Corps previously. Final details were thoroughly arranged at CSO 2nd Army's conference at HQ, 21 Army Group. There is no doubt from CR Sigs Airborne Division's point of view that such a conference where everybody concerned is present makes all the difference in the world. In addition the settlement of so many admin details of mobilization by your office whilst we were still overseas was of great assistance.

2. The signal plan is contained in 6 Airborne Div Sigs Operation Order No.1 (Varsity - Plunder) of 14 Mar 45 as amended.

3. Owing to limited lift, the quantity of signal equipment and numbers of men in the air lift was reduced below the normal 100% reserve coverage. This in fact proved adequate, but ONLY JUST. There is no doubt that at Div HQ in particular we were sailing very close to the wind indeed. If the operation

had not proved 100% successful and air casualties in 1 Coy and casualties on the ground generally had been high, it is possible that communications would have failed when most required.

B. COMMUNICATIONS IN TRANSIT CAMPS. These were first class and adequate in every way. Detailed report is attached as Appendix A.

C. OPERATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS.

1. All landings were opposed and the landings at Div HQ in particular were very scattered with the consequent delays in opening communications from there.

2. However essential communications were quickly established throughout the division as sets became available and on the whole communications worked well. In particular RA support communications throughout and in the rear of division were very quickly established.

3. Detailed reports mostly concerned with the wireless communications are attached as follows:-

Appendix B - HQ, 6 Airborne Div less RA

Appendix C - RA Comns.

Appendix D - Bde Comns.

4. Line was laid to 5 and 6 Bdes on the evening of D Day and to 3 Bde when the route was clear on D + 1. A line came in from TAC 18 US Corps at approx 1830 hrs on D + 1. Bde Sig Secs laid lines as soon as the operational situation permitted and line parties were available. In the case of 5 Bde there was some delay, as their signal gliders were missing. On D + 1 a small dot and the necessary equipment were sent out to 5 Bde from 1 Coy.

5. CIPHER

i. A certain amount of confusion reigned at first over cipher as the cipher operators had very scattered landings and the cipher officer seriously injured. Hence there was slight delay in reporting to higher formation what one time pad ciphers had arrived intact.

ii. Neither of the M209 machines with 1 Coy were available and there were consequent delays on several messages received in that code over the one to one W/T link to XVIII Corps which had to be referred back. As a temporary measure the arty machine and settings were utilised.

iii. No cipher was ever used to Bdes.

6. CODES. Nothing to report.

7. AIR SUPPORT COMMUNICATIONS. One FVCP arrived at the Div HQ RV quite early and was very soon in VHF communication with FCP. The first ASSU arrived later but made contact very soon after setting up station. Signal arrangements for air support worked very satisfactorily - a report on this subject has already been forwarded my Sigs 1661 of 19 Apr refers.

8. PHANTOM. The phantom set arrived at the RV soon after the A Comd was opened and soon had contact with the outside world.

9. COMMUNICATIONS TO LAND ELEMENT. There was no direct communication with the LE as it moved up and I dont think it was really required. Good communications existed from the Division to 12 Corps who controlled its movement. In addition the APM who was early across the river to control LE traffic had a set on the A Comd. Even this set had to be ordered to close down as it "talked too much" and was delaying operational communications. Another set with the LE on the A Comd would have been out of the question. It might possibly have been on the Div - 12 Corps Q link, although this was a W/T link.

D. EQUIPMENT.

1. The main wireless sets used by the division were 38 Mk II, 68R, 62, C52 - a small number of 76 sets were taken for use on the base wave and B Comd. The latter in fact never opened as there was no set available at Div HQ. The lack of it was never felt. In addition all commanders and staffs of 5 Para Bde jumped with SCR 536 on their bodies. They proved absolutely invaluable for immediate communication on the DZ, which were established without having to wait for operators and sets to RV. Its employment of course can only be at the discretion of the Bde Comd concerned as its usefulness is dependent on the Commanders carrying the sets themselves.

2. The equipment used was satisfactory and in my opinion the most suitable at present available for an Airborne Operation.

3. I have submitted a detailed report on the WS 62 jeep and para stations in my wireless report No.3 (Sigs 1011A of 20 Apr). There is nothing to report regarding other sets.

E. CASUALTIES.

1. Total casualties in the unit on D Day were as follows:-

Personnel (incl Attached).

By Air

Killed

Wounded

Missing on D Day

Officers.

18

1

1

1

ORs

290

5

24

34

Wireless Sets. (incl attached)

By Air

Missing on D Day

C52

12

5

62

54

23

68

20

9

76

10

6

300

27
16
FVCP
2
1
C9
1
-

2. The value of scouring the DZs and LZs for equipment as soon as the operational situation permitted was well learnt. A great deal of equipment was recovered in this way, and in addition a great number of glider batteries were obtained which were invaluable. This would not have been possible on the LZs and DZs which remained under heavy fire. The supply drop allegedly contained a good deal of signal equipment, but not much was available in the dump by D + 1.

(Signed)
Lt Col.
C.R. Signals.
6 Airborne Division.
B.L.A.
27 Apr 45.

REPORT ON COMMUNICATIONS AT HQ, 6 AIRBORNE DIVISION

OPERATION VARSITY - PLUNDER
Appendix 'B' to Sigs 1335 of 27 Apr 45.

1. The following report deals with the measures taken to implement the provision of comms at HQ 6 Airborne Div as planned for operation VARSITY and the extent to which these measures were successful. RA comms are not dealt with in this report.

2. The wireless links which were to be established at Div HQ were as follows:-

- (a) 'A' Comd - 62 set.
- (b) Lateral link to XVIII US Airborne Div - 62 set.
- (c) GOC Rover - 62 set.
- (d) 'B' Comd - 76 set.
- (e) Rear link to Br Airborne Corps - 76 set.
- (f) Rear link to XVIII US Airborne Corps (C1) - 52 set
- (g) Rear link to XVIII US Airborne Corps (C2) - 52 set
- (h) Rear link to 12 Corps (Hiform Q) - 52 set
- (i) Common Recognition - SCR 300
- (j) One to one RV - SCR 300
- (k) ASSU - 62/52 sets
- (l) FVCP - SCR 522/1143 sets
- (m) Phantom - C9 set
- (n) Press link - 76/52 sets

As a last minute arrangement it was decided, for tactical reasons that div HQ should have 2 separate RV's, half going to one and half to the other. For liaison between signals at the RVs a one to one SCR 300 net was arranged.

3. The links (a) to (j) were provided by 1 Coy as follows:-

- for 3 WS 62 links 5 sets were taken (60% spare)
- for 3 WS 52 links 5 sets were taken (66% spare)
- for 2 WS 76 links 3 sets were taken (33% spare)
- for 3 SCR 300 links 3 sets were taken (no spare)

Of these 1 x 62 set, 1 x 72 set and 1 x 52 set were "brewed up" immediately after landing. In crashed gliders, 1 x 76 set, 1 x 62 set, 1 x 52 set and 1 x SCR 300 were destroyed. Owing to enemy opposition and the difficulty in unloading, 1 x 52 set was not available until D + 1.

4. The links (k) to (n) were provided from outside sources as follows:-

- ASSU - 2 complete dets (100% spare) 62/52
- Phantom - 1 complete det (no spare) C 9
- FVCP - 2 complete dets (100% spare)
- Press - 1 x 76 set and 1 x 52 set (100% spare)

Of these, although personnel casualties were negligible, only 1 ASSU, 1 Phantom and 1 FVCP reached Div HQ on D Day. The second ASSU set was recovered on D + 1. One FVCP was "brewed-up" on landing. The press 76 set was "brewed-up" on landing and the press 52 set could not be unloaded due to enemy action and was finally "brewed-up" on D + 3.

5. The losses at the end of D Day were therefore as follows:-

- (a) 1 Coy Resources.
 - 2 x 62 set (40% of air scale).
 - 2 x 76 sets (66% of air scale).
 - 3 x 52 set (60% of air scale).
 - 1 x SCR 300 set (33% of air scale).
- (b) Outside Resources.
 - ASSU - 1 x 62/52 sets (50% of air scale)
 - FVCP - 1 x SCR 522/1143 sets (50% of air scale)
 - Press - 1 x 76 set and 1 x 52 set (100% of air scale)

The rear link to XVIII US Corps (C1) was not established till D + 1 and the 'B' Comd was not established until arrival of the build up party.

6. By the early afternoon of D + 1 two more 52 sets and 1 x 62 set were extricated from crashed gliders (these included one ASSU station). The rear link to XVIII US Corps (C1) was established and a 52 set was put on the 'A' Comd.

7. The total signal personnel at Div HQ who took part in the air scale was 9 Officers, and 89 ORs (this included H Sec). By the end of D Day 1 Officer and 8 ORs were reported wounded and 1 Officer and 13

ORs were missing. Excluding H Sec, 8 Officers and 74 ORs came in by air with Div HQ. Of these 1 Officer (Cipher Officer) was seriously injured and 8 ORs were wounded. One Officer (Lines Officer) and 9 ORs were missing. This missing personnel were all passengers of one glider which landed WEST of the RHINE. These personnel joined Div HQ at approx 1500 hrs on D + 1. It was reckoned that 24 was the minimum essential number of operators required to man wireless links. The number taken on the air scale was 32 (25% spare). Of these 4 were wounded and 2 were missing until the afternoon of D + 1. Ten outdoor linesmen were taken in by air - 2 were wounded and 2 were missing until the afternoon of D + 1.

8. The 2 Div HQ RVs were referred to as 'Main' and 'Rear' Div RVs, in general the G links RV-ing at 'Main' and the Q links at 'Rear'. The SCR one-to-one link between the RVs worked excellently and was most useful.

'A' Comd. The first set to arrive at Main was the 'A' Comd set. It opened immediately and on first call (1110 hrs) established contact with 3 and 5 Bdes. 6 Airdlg Bde was contacted at 1128 hrs. Comns were entirely satisfactory during the day but at night was subject to heavy chopping up by interference. A C52 (spare ASSU) was erected as a ground sta on D + 1 and took over the control of the 'A' Comd during the afternoon. It was decided that working crystal control 62s to a MO 52 would be impracticable. The group therefore became MO controlled throughout. The maximum range to any Bde was 3½ miles.

'B' Comd. As only one 76 set arrived, the 'B' Comd was not established until the arrival of the build up party.

Lateral. The GOC's rover (crystal control) on 'A' Comd was the second set to arrive at Div HQ (Main). It arrived at 1200 hrs and opened on its MO controlled flick frequency - the lateral to XVII US Airborne Div. Contact was not established till approx 1600 hrs, communications were intermittent.

Rear Link to XVIII US Corps (C2). A C52 set (Ground resupply spare) was the next set to arrive at Main Div (approx 1315 hrs). It opened as soon as possible on its flick frequency - (C2) and established contact in approx 15 mins (approx 1335 hrs). Contact on this net was never lost.

Ground Resupply. The fourth set to arrive at Main was the ground resupply C52. It had reported in the first instance to 'Rear' Div at approx 1400 hrs when it opened on the resupply net at approx 1415 hrs. Contact was not established before it was necessary to close down the Rear Div RV owing to heavy enemy sniping. The set was moved to Main Div and set up by 1530 hrs. Contact was established at 1600 hrs approx. Contact was never lost.

Q Base. The Q Base 76 set arrived at Rear Div HQ at approx 1310 hrs, set up station and was through to base on first call at approx 1345 hrs. At approx 1515 hrs the set close down in order to follow up Rear Div when it moved to Main. It was set up again at Main at approx 1630 hrs. Contact was not established before approx 250500 hrs, although it could hear Base on and off S/S 2 throughout the night, through heavy interference. Contact was established on the 'day' frequency.

Rear Link to 18 US Corps (C1). This link was manned entirely by US Army Signal Corps Personnel. It was a CW link and all traffic on it was to be cleared in American Army Cipher (M209) and airborne slidex. Two M209's were brought in by air. One of these was "brewed-up", the other was destroyed to avoid falling in to enemy hands. As no M209's were therefore available in the early stages C2 was opened in preference to C1. No C52 set was available until noon on D + 1, when contact was established at 1305

hrs, within 10 minutes of opening up. British cipher and slidex was used on this link until an M209 cipher machine was provided. This net worked excellently until closed.

Common Recognition. Fortunately, an SCR 300 was picked up on the LZ (a 17 US Div Para Bn set). This opened on the common recognition wave at approx 1400 hrs. This net was very useful from an intercept point of view, but was quite useless otherwise since no other formation or unit recognised our HQ Code sign.

9. A summary of times of opening, and contact on the various links, based on a 'L' hour of 1045 hrs - (the time Div HQ was to commence landing) is therefore as follows:-

'A' Comd

Lateral

Q Base

C1

C2

Ground Resupply

Common Recognition

Open.

L + 25 mins

L + 1 hr

L + 2 hrs

L + 26 hrs 40 mins

L + 2 hrs 30 mins

L + 4 hrs 45 mins

L + 3 hrs 15 mins

Contact.

L + 25 mins

L + 5 hrs 15 mins

L + 2 hrs

L + 26 hrs 50 mins

L + 2 hrs 45 mins

L + 5 hrs 15 mins

L + 3 hrs 15 mins

10. Observation.

(a) Netting. All sets on MO were pre-set on flick mechanism by crystal control wavemeter SCR 211 before going to transit camp. They were subsequently checked in camp and found to be "dead on". This locking on flick proved entirely satisfactory in all cases.

(b) Frequencies. Q Base 'night' frequency was always a bit 'gammy'. Otherwise frequencies were very good, particularly the rear link frequencies.

(c) Charging. One charging engine 1260 watt, was brought in by air, in addition to 11 x 300 watt CH's and 2 x 80 watt engines. By the evening of D Day charging facilities were just holding their own against battery consumption, owing to the heavy losses on the air scale and breakdowns.

(d) Only 2 x M209's were brought in by air. Casualties were expected to be heavy and as these were required for the higher formations comd net, and since it is known that the enemy already possesses these machines, more of them should have been brought in by air.

REPORT ON RA COMMUNICATIONS - OPERATION VARSITY - PLUNDER

APPENDIX 'C' to Sigs 1335 of 27 Apr 45

1. 2 FOU.

(a) Planning. No difficulties.

(b) Crystals. Crystals were asked for late but were produced very quickly by Br Airborne Corps and arrived in time. FOU Signallers had no opportunity for practice in the use of them, but they were tested on the final netting and worked fairly satisfactorily. It was found, however, that 52 set crystals differed by about 1 KC from the 52 set crystal calibrator, also that crystal controlled 62 sets were not accurate to more than 2 KCs, and one 62 set was 3 KCs different from the others; also that all crystal controlled 62 sets worked on about 1 KC higher than crystal controlled 52 sets. It was therefore decided to open up 62 sets on crystal control, but to switch to MO as soon as contact was made and to renet. This was done successfully.

(c) Charging. Owing to weight of arty eqpt that had to be carried, the 2 x 52 sets for control of airborne sp net were only able to carry one 300 watt chore horse each. As all 52 sets arrived safely and only one 68 set chore horse was lost at HQRA there was sufficient charging eqpt available, but if there had been a shortage of sets and any chore horses had failed, matters might have been different. Para Bde HQ FOOs took one glider each, and Airdg Bde HQ two gliders. Each glider carried one 300 watt chore horse and spare batteries. 3 Sec's glider got down safely and the Bde FOO was OK for batteries. 5 Sec's glider was lost (as was the Inf Bde HQ glider) and there was serious shortage of charged batteries. This was overcome by using glider batteries and by sending out 2 chore horses one from FOO HQ and one from H Sec. One of 6 Sec's gliders was shot down and one landed 400x from LZ; they were OK for charging. Bn OP batteries were charged at Bn HQs. Chief difficulty was transportation of batteries which had to be done for the most part on foot. Bde HQ FOOs did not send out charged batteries to ops.

(d) Frequencies. Sp net Freq was first class. Bde FOO freq were OK but 6 Sec had greatest distance to work and had highest and worst freq. Recommended that Bde FOO freqs should be lowest possible in 68 set band.

(e) Ranges. Ranges worked were 17,000 yds str five 62 set to 19 HP and vice versa, and 12,000 yds str three 68 set to 19 HP. The only sets through to the guns direct at night on the sp net were 52 set - 19 HP str three at about 10,000 yds, and 52 set - 52 set str four and five at 8000.

(f) Netting. Had to be done prior to move to airfds owing to dispersal of FOU in different airfds. Netting was done by crystal calibrated 52 set sending tuning and netting calls for all sets on all freqs. This was done with 52 sets at 3 miles distance from other sets, 52 set on LP and 62 sets on full radiation. The security risk involved was considered negligible compared with the advantage of being confident that all sets were correctly netted. Every 52 set and 62 set on the FOU and HQRA that was not normally working on sp net had either a crystal or a flick freq netted on the sp net freq. Netting of LO and ground forces was done by checking crystal calibrator of step-up 52 set against airborne sp net control set; step-up 52 set then netted all LO and gd force sets on all freqs at last possible moment prior to the op. Difficulty was experienced in finding a practical way of sealing sets after netting. Apart from locking flicks and giving strict orders against touching tuning dials, the only scaling done was the placing of the wooden fronts over 62 para sets and tying and sealing them in place with string and sealing wax. Care was taken that all sets were switched on for half an hour before netting and results proved that all netting was successful.

(g) Wireless Sets taken. Sets taken were as follows:-

Bn OPs - 1 x 62 and 1 x 68 with 1 Offr and 3 Sigmn.

Para Bde HQ - 3 x para 62 sets and 1 x glider 62 set and 68 set.

Airldg Bde HQ - 4 x glider 62 sets + 68 sets.

HQ 2 FOU - 2 x C52 sets (H Sec) and 2 x 62 sets (in two gliders).

HQRA (H Sec) also took a further 2 x 52 sets and 2 x 62 sets in 4 gliders.

(h) Glider Losses. Glider losses were 5 Sec FOU 1, 6 Sec FOU 1, 2 FOU HQ 1 (broke adrift and landed 4000 yds WEST of RHINE), HQRA one lost and one smashed. The glider that broke adrift carried the CMO but it was a def pl glider in which he was travelling for recce purposes, the glider containing the 52 set with which he would have normally travelled arrived safely. Thus at HQRA the sets available were
H Sec 4 out of 4 52 sets. 1 out of 2 62 sets (the set being salvaged from smashed glider).

2 FOU 2 out of 2 62 sets (carried on jeeps pulling 52 set trailers).

(i) Establishing Comn. Comns were established as follows:- on the sp net:-

3 Sec - P + 15 minutes.

5 Sec - P + 24 minutes.

6 Sec - P + 50 minutes.

HQRA - 25 mins after first div hq glider landed.

At Bde HQs and HQRA the first set to arrive was opened on the sp net. At Bde HQs comns were est on direct sp as soon as second set opened. At HQRA first set to arrive at RV was C52 with OC H Sec; the set was planned normally to work as rear link but being first to arrive it was opened on sp net and heard step-up calling as soon as it was switched on, and made contact immediately. Bde HQs were then called and 3 and 5 Secs answered first call. HQRA took control forthwith, CRA being first to arrive at RV (less crew all of whom were cas) and 6 Sec was contacted ten minutes later. Comns were est on direct sp nets as follows:-

3 Bde HQ - P + 15

8 Para Bn - P + 20

9 Para Bn - P + 25

1 Cdn Para Bn - P + 35

5 Bde HQ - P + 55

7 Para Bn - P + 34

12 Para Bn - P + 43

13 Para Bn - P + 46

6 Bde HQ - P + 60

2 of 6 Bde ops were cas and third one was unable to open wireless comns for a considerable time after landing.

(j) Remarks.

(1) 3 Sec FOU packed 22 A/H batteries in kitbags before moving to airfd, and found on arrival that acid had spilt. Batteries should be checked for tight vent plugs before packing, and if possible be kept out of kitbags until last moment.

(2) Para Bde ops found that a crew of 1 offr and 3 men was not sufficient to carry man pack 62 set sta as well as 68 set, 4 signallers are recommended.

(3) Para Bde ops were foot slogging for 3 or 4 days. 62 set is not easy to work on move as man-pack sta owing to it being a two-man pack, and owing to poor design of battery connector.

(4) Most ops used 68 sets during day time to conserve 62 set batteries.

(5) Personnel should be briefed that glider batteries are available to replace wireless batteries in an emergency. This was not done in all cases.

(6) Para Bde HQ FOO found it impossible to deliver batteries to ops owing to continual moving of Bde HQ and ops. Suggest this difficulty might be overcome if necessary.

(7) All para 62 sets that landed safely worked OK. One set had porcelain ae terminal broken after landing.

(8) Bde HQ FOOs were supplied with 34 ft aes (in glider) but did not use them. Comns were actually OK with 14 ft rod but might have been improved by use of 34 ft ae. FOO states sufficient men not available to erect the 34 ft ae. Suggest inf could assist.

(9) One 6 sec jeep was completely wrecked but set still worked OK.

(10) 22 A/H batteries and chore horses should be incl in the re-sup drop. It was intended that this should be, but none were found.

(11) It was found necessary to send tuning and netting call every half hour throughout the night on sp net, to keep stas on net.

(12) RA sets were not used by G Staff, except by comd 6 Bde whose glider landed on the Div LZ, & to XVIII Corps before C2 was established. CRA detailed Sig Offr and first set to arrive at RV NOT to take part in clearing ops but to concentrate on comns and to remain at RV rather than wait to reach the proposed HQRA locn before opening up.

(13) CM in first 48 hrs was fairly successful on bde level, but non-existent on Div level owing to CMO acting as BM and ACMO landing west of RHINE. Owing to cas at HQRA there were not enough operators to man a CM net in any case.

2. HQ RA.

(a) H Sec's chief commitment was the airborne sp net and report on 2 FOU has covered the chief points. Further to that:-

(b) Charging. Never any difficulty as 2 x 52 sets carried 2 x 300 watt chore horses of which one each was spare, and although 2 gliders carrying 62 sets and chore horses were written off, the set and chore horse was recovered out of one.

(c) Function of sets. It was planned that one 52 set should work on XVIII Corps Arty Liaison freq with flick to Fire Director freq, and the other 52 set on a one-to-one link to the Brit CRA of supporting gd arty. This was carried out, the latter channel only being opened when necessary by passing codeword over the sp net, thus economising in operators. Two 62 sets were brought in, one as control set for CRA Comd net, and one as duplicate or CRA's rover. The first was lost in the BM's glider with Sec Sjt and wrls det. The second was in CRA's glider which crashed. Jeep was wrecked but set worked OK. All passengers except CRA were cas. The CRA comd net was not opened until late on D Day owing to the following facts:-

(i) Both H Sec 62 sets were cas (it took some time to recover the set from the wrecked glider and the crew were not available either for salvage or signalling.

(ii) E Sec lost a 62 set.

(iii) Lt Regt HQ was only 400 yds from HQRA and a line was laid with German Cable (captured) by H Sec.

(iv) A tk RHQ was at HQRA.

(d) Establishing Comn. Apart from CRA's comd net, all nets made contact immediately on opening.

(e) Operators. There were glider seats available for only 2 operators per set. At the last moment 2 extra operators were fitted in, in a def pl glider. We were lucky in that we did not have hy cas, and had bulldozers and POW to do our digging in, and an early link up with the gd forces, but we were sailing very close to the wind. 2 Ops were replaced by American operators for working American rear link.

(f) Netting. CRA comd net had been netted before moving to airfds, but rear link 52 sets relied purely on crystal calibrators. This proved satisfactory.

(g) Line. No line personnel were available from Div Sigs so wrls ops laid to 53 (WY) Lt Regt with captured eqpt.

(h) Remarks. No great difficulties were encountered apart from lack of personnel. There was just enough operators to work sets but not sufficient for salvage work, digging and local protection.

3. 53 Lt Regt RA (E Section).

NETTING beforehand was done by fixing control with an SCR 211 (and netting groups in normal manner.) 5 Sets were flown in netted as follows:-

- (1) Netted on (a) CRA Comd Net) FL
Netted on (b) 53 Lt Regt Comd Net)
- (2) Netted on (a) CRA Comd Net) R.L.
Netted on (b) 53 Lt Regt Comd Net)
- (3) Netted on (a) CRA Comd Net) A/B Sp Net
Netted on (b) Airborne Support Net)
- (4) Netted on (a) 53 Lt Regt Comd) Z
Netted on (b) Airborne Support Net)
- (5) Netted on (a) 53 Lt Regt Comd Net) Z2
Netted on (b) Airborne Support net)

First set to arrive was Z2 which opened up as Control set on 53 Lt Regt Comd net. Second set to arrive was RL which took over from Z2 while Z2 went out to 211 Bty as third 'H' net set since no 211 Bty sets had by that time arrived (approx 1300 hrs). Shortly afterwards a 211 Bty set arrived and Z2 assumed the job of 'Rear Link' on Airborne support net but without success. Z arrived approx 1430 hrs and was used in its normal role. Reasonable comn within the Regt was not established until 1600 hrs. Comn was then also established on the Airborne support net. The greatest mistake made during the operation was to fly in the Bty sets netted on their baty frequencies. If all the sets in the Regt had been netted on the 'H' net comn could have been established much sooner and we should have known what sets had not arrived within the Regt much earlier. But with both Bty net control sets missing much difficulty was found in organising the sets which arrived safely to the best advantage. Two sets failed to arrived in E Sec:-

- (1) F.L.
- (2) Airborne Support Net.

APPENDIX D to Sigs 1335 of 27 Apr 45.

COMMUNICATIONS 3 PARA BDE SIGNAL SECTION.

DURING OPERATION VARSITY - PLUNDER.

BDE COMD NET.

- 1015 hrs - Opened Comns.
- 1020 hrs - 8 Para Bn contacted.
- 1030 hrs - 9 Para Bn contacted.
- 1045 hrs - 1 Cdn Para Bn contacted.

Delay with the Cdns was due to the fact that the man carrying the remaining battery dumped it at the Bde HQ RV, the Cdn Bn allotting this man to their B party, divorcing him from the set itself which was with A party. The Sig Sec was short of aerial rods, and so were the Bns. As many F type rods were broken when the kit bag hit the ground. Communications remained OK to the 8 Para Bn and Cdn Bn throughout the day, communications to the 9 Para Bn being rather difficult for a short period about mid-day as they only had a 68 set and advanced into a very thick wood. The rover set at no time was used.

DIV 'A' NET.

1015 hrs - Opened Comns.

1110 hrs - Div contacted. Sigs LO set was heard and contacted fairly early on and no time can be given.

DIV 'B' NET.

1045 hrs - Opened Comns.

1115 hrs - 6 Airdg Bde heard, no contact. No other station was heard at all throughout the day nor was 6 Airdg Bde heard after the initial call. Both sender and receiver were checked and were definitely OK. Common Recognition Wave no set.

CIPHER.

All three Ciphers ops arrived safely with Equipment. OTP was never used.

EQUIPMENT.

8 Para Bn Para

9 Para Bn Para

1 Cdn Para Bn Para

Bde HQ Para Div 'A'

Bde HQ Para Div 'B'

Bde Comd Set

Rover

Spare 62

Spare 62

Spare 68

62 Set

O.K.

1

1

1

(missing)

1

1

Lost

1

1

1

Batteries

O.K.

1
1
2
2
1
2
2
1
Lost
2
3
2
1
1
2
1
1
2
68 Set
O.K.
1
2
2
Lost
1
2
1

8 Para Bn - Glider. Glider containing COs jeep with 62 set landed in France - arrived D + 3. On D + 1 charging engine less kit plus 3 batteries were collected, the remaining 5 glider borne batteries being lost.

9 Para Bn - Glider. Trailer arrived approx 1700 hrs D Day with 62 set complete less aerial rods, 2 good batteries and 4 which contained no acid, (this was thought to be due to absorption by the new plates). In addition charging engine complete.

1 Cdn Para Bn - Glider. On D Day jeep arrived with 62 set complete, 8 good batteries and charging engine complete.

Bde HQ Para.

Div 'A' - lost battery carried by man who was killed, collected D + 1.

Div 'B' - 76 set and 109 set OK. Pack charging engine arrived OK with this crew.

Bde Comd Set. 1 lost battery with 'missing' man.

SCR 300. 2 lost (one pierced by shrapnel).

MISCELLANEOUS EQUIPMENT AND REMARKS IM and ES (one) arrived safely with kit. The kit of other ES who was wounded recovered D + 1. Of the three folding cycles none arrived. It is questionable whether they were even thrown out. Of the 4 Lightweight m/c's (dropped for 2 DRs) only one was found which ran backwards. Three m/c's were recovered from the DZ on D + 1, all of them useless. The kitbag holding the second portable generator was shot away from the man during his descent. The reason for the losses are numerous. Trees accounted for about a third. Quite a few men have said that although the kitbag straps were tight around their legs yet the kitbag slipped off as they were jumping from the A/C, (this happened although second parties had tightened the straps for them. Ropes broke after the kitbag had fully let down suggesting that a stronger rope is required.

Bde HQ - Gliders. Of the three, the two signal gliders arrived, the Bde Comd's landing to the East of the DZ and was shot up. Loads were approx the same as regards to wireless, each carrying a 62 set, 4 - 12v 22aap hr batteries and a charging engine. In addition the jeeps most of them modified for line, carried a duplicate set of line equipment including seven miles of cable. One 76 set complete and a spare 68 set were also carried.

5 Para Bde Signal Section.

Report on Communications OP VARSITY - ASSAULT PHASE

1. Communications were hampered owing to heavy losses in equipment, particularly in the glider element. However communications were in fact quickly established and maintained.
2. Bde Comd net - SCR 536 were carried by Commanders and Staffs and originally were the only means of comn to Bns. The set operated by the Bde Comd was through to Bns at 1010 hrs, 5 mins after the drop. Communications were maintained on this set until after 1200 hrs when during the move from the RV to Bde HQ, communication to Bns was established on a 62 set on the move on the Bde Comd. Delay in establishment was due to sets arriving at the RV dis or with no audio gear or no batteries.
3. Div A Comd - the first 62 set at the RV opened on the Div A and was through to Div when the latter opened at 1110 hrs.
4. Div B Comd - not opened.
5. Casualties in Sets.

Bde HQ

Dropped

Arrived at RV

62 set.

7

4

12v22AH.

14

5

68 set.

4

2

SCR300.

2

1

SCR536.

2
1

Each Bn dropped with one 62 set and 2 68 sets. 2 Bns arrived with 1 62 set and 1 68 set each, the third with 1 68 set only.

6. Owing to the non arrival of the Sigs glider element, charging facilities and line equipment were non existent. Assistance in both cases was given from 1 Coy resources when called for.

6 Airlanding Bde Signal Section.

Report on Communications OP VARSITY - ASSAULT PHASE

1. Communications were excellent throughout and no difficulties were experienced.
2. Bde Comd - Control landed 1025 hrs and opened immediately. Contact was immediate with 1 RUR. Other stations were through as follows:-

Bde Comd Rover

12 Devon

Oxf Bucks

1030

1040

1055 - with a Bn set as both Bde Sec Sets were lost.

3. Div "A" - a set was not available to start with. It was eventually through at 1128 hrs.
4. Div "B" - no contact - subsequently ascertained no set available at Div HQ.
5. Casualties in sets.

Bde HQ

Taken in Air scale

Arrived at RV

Bns Air Scale

Arrived at RV

62 set.

7

3

6

4

76 set.

2

1

-

-

19 HP.

1

1

-

-

Oxf. Bucks lost both sets.

Report on Comns D + 5 to D + 27 - Div HQ less RA.

Appx A to Sigs 1335 dated 29 Apr 45.

A. Wireless.

1. The main build up party arrived on the evening of D + 3, prior to the first move of Main Div HQ from the LZ area to the area south of HAMMINKELN. Here the switch over from air scale eqpt to Inf Div scale eqpt was begun. Three comd vehs were ready to take over immediately; the remainder had to have sets installed before taking over links. Approximately two to three days elapsed before the switch over was complete with the exception of one set for which there was no veh. It remained in the trailer, but has since been put into a veh.

2. The main sets in use were C52 and these functioned exceptionally well throughout the adv. All sets on the A Comd net C52s. During the adv a Tac HQ was est well fwd prior to nearly every move of Main HQ, very often with the object of acting as a step up and in order that wireless control by the Comd could be assured. On occasions it was at extreme range and comn was difficult at night between Tac and Main. Tac HQ however having taken over control and being well fwd was able to keep in contact with the leading Bdes. The system of establishing a step up was used to maintain contact between Tac and Main. This however was not always possible owing to the presence of enemy pockets along the main axis. To offset this it has been decided therefore that when Tac is expected to be operating at extreme range, it should, if the availability of sets permits, take another C52 set with it to open on a one to one link with Main HQ working on W/T. Normally two Bdes were operating and the third resting in rear which sometimes meant that the div was operating over 50 miles or more of road, which stretched comns to the utmost. It was essential that all stas were at all times prepared to set as relay stas and on more than one occasion comn was maintained through two such relays. Relay drill improved as time went on.

3. The B Comd net was est at the first available opportunity after the arrival of the main build up (approx D + 5). Although the net was equipped throughout with 19 HP sets, the Bdes for various reasons had to interchange the 19 Hps with 62 sets from time to time. In consequence, contact on this net frequently broke down (especially during moves) as the ranges over which the net worked were too great for the 62 set.

4. Having reached the crossed the river LEINE the Div came into Corps reserve and rested. It was not until then that the A/Qs R/T net could be properly est. Although a powerful set was provided as control sta, 62 sets were the only available sets for outstations, in consequence the net did not maintain constant comn. Higher powered sets are now available and the net should improve considerably.

5. On the rear links to higher fmn there has been no difficulty whatsoever except on one occasion when contact on both the R/T and the W/T nets was lost owing to extreme range. Comn on the Corps Q net has been exceptionally good throughout the adv. As sets became available, links to the CE and DDST were est. Comn on these nets has been satisfactory. CRASC Comd net was also est but as the outstations were very low powered sets and operated at extreme range with RASC personnel meaning the sets, the net has not been satisfactory.

6. Throughout the adv, the battle has been fought on the A Comd net. In consequence traffic on it has been very heavy except for brief periods when it has been possible to provide line comn. Traffic on the B Comd net has been practically non-existent. This has been attributable to poor comn and the lack of suitable tfc. The A/Q R/T net when est was little used by the Staff, still less were the remote control facilities used, although always available.

7. River crossings entailed a further wireless commitment in the form of a TCP net. This net was est at all river crossings and the bottle-necks. As many as four stas were provided. The sets used were either 62 sets or SCR 300s. Both sets functioned satisfactorily. In addition special Bridge LOs and TCP stas have been used on the A Comd.

B. Line Comns.

1. Owing to the rapid and constant moving of fmns during the adv, the provision of line comn has been very difficult indeed. The main effort of the line org was directed throughout the adv towards the provision of a main artery, as far fwd as possible, along the Div axis. Two circuits were aimed at, but on many occasions, resources were so strained that one circuit had to suffice, on others, affairs moved too fast and attempts had to be abandoned. As the Bdes moved fwd they were te-ed in on the main artery, and as the Div HQ moved up the Corps lines were strapped through to the main artery, when such an arrangement was practicable. On two occasions only no attempt was made to maintain the main artery. These were during the very long move from LENGERICHE to the MINDEN area and again when the Div HQ moved from RHADE to BILLERBECK.

2. Every opportunity was taken to utilize the GERMAN civil line systems. Underground cable was never used as there was never sufficient time to trace circuits. Overhead circuits however were used to a very great extent. Without them it would have been impossible to maintain the main artery for any length of time. Overhead circuits on the main rds were generally in bad condition. The enemy did not appear to make any attempt to destroy overhead line, but during the course of the fighting along the axis the lines suffered badly. Railway circuits were on the other hand invariably in very good condition.

3. A good supply of D8 twisted cable was brought in with to build up party. This met all needs until the R. WESSER was reached. Supplies from Corps were not plentiful and in fact dropped so low that on one occasion D3 single cable had to be used.

4. Line comn was provided linking up all TCPs on nearly every river crossing.

5. Considering the movement involved the line comns during the period of the adv, were good. As an example for one over-night period line comn was est and maintained to a Bde HQ which was 40 miles away.

C. Equipment - General.

The eqpt available was similar to an Inf Div Sigs and suitable. It is emphasized once more that an airborne div signals to function in such a role must be equipped to a scale equal to an inf div sigs.

D. Personnel.

By withdrawing personnel from Bde Secs and reducing them to Inf Bde Sec strength it was found possible to provide the bare minimum of personnel required to man the comns. In spite of attachments made by CSO Second Army, the Unit has remained approximately 15 OWLs short on its own est and at times this shortage of personnel has been the cause of very real strain with consequent loss of efficiency.

Report on Communications D + 5 to D + 27 Brigade Signals.

Appx 'C' to Sigs 1335 of 29 Apr 45.

1. GENERAL.

(a) The majority of the period consisted of mobile operations and the Bde HQs were not often established in one location for more than 12 hours.

(b) Frequently the Bdes were stretched over a length of up to twenty miles when on the move.

(c) The usual order of march for the Bdes was as follows:

- (1) Leading Bn.
- (2) Tac Bde HQ.
- (3) Two Bns.
- (4) Main Bde HQ.

2. WIRELESS.

This was the main means of comn and generally worked well.

(a) Bde - Bn. Usually Tac HQ consisted of the Bde Comds Rover (62 set) which on many occasions was not powerful enough for comn to Main Bde HQ. It was often necessary for each Bn to act as a step up. It is recommended that the Bde Comds Rover is at least a 19 set or better a 19 HP, provided Power 3 frequencies are available.

(b) Bn Rear Links. On several occasions it was not possible for the White Scout car to keep with Bn HQ due to its size and lack of manoeuvrability and to obstacles such as river crossings. Trouble was also experienced due to the infantry moving at marching speed and over heating of the engine. It is recommended that:-

(1) The White Scout car is replaced by a more manoeuvrable armoured vehicle. This is a matter of general army policy.

(2) Each Bn has 2 x 62 Sets, one being fixed in the vehicle and the other complete and ready as a man pack station for use at river crossings or similar obstacles. The Para 62 set is suitable for this purpose and is already being used in 3 and 5 Bdes but Bns sometimes use the second set as the COs Rover working on the Bde Comd net and expected to be manned by the Bde Signal Section. This set should only be used when it is impossible to keep the vehicle with Bn HQ but both the sets cannot be manned by the Signal Section at the same time.

(c) Bn Comns. The 68 set generally worked well but trouble was experienced during the hours of darkness, owing to high noise level of the receiver and the distance involved. The SCR 300 has given good results on special tasks such as patrols.

(d) Bde Rear Links. The high power sets available were used as follows:-

(1) "A" Comd (C52). Worked satisfactorily and this link proved to be the main comn with Div.

(2) "B" Comd (19HP). Did not work well, partly due to the 19HPs not being available at the beginning of the operation and the lower power sets not making the grade, consequently operators lost confidence. It is most important from a Signal point of view that this net works on mobile operations as it is the only message traffic channel available to the Signal office and it is essential that all stations are "up" at the same time as most of the message traffic is for all Bdes.

(3) The A/Q net (19HP). Did not work well for similar reasons as (2) above. Very little traffic was passed when it was through but it is considered that once the Staff have got confidence in it as a means of comn it will justify its existence.

(e) General points.

1. The importance of siting and using maximum aerial has proved itself while working in wooded country and at extreme ranges.

2. The provision of wireless sets for LOs; 2 jeeps supplied by Bde should be fitted with 62 sets for the use of and manned by LOs.

3. Step-up sets. It has been necessary to use step-up sets on many occasions and it is essential that one is available for this purpose at short notice.

3. LINES.

(a) Owing to the speed of movement lines were not used extensively and Bn lines were only laid when it was anticipated that the stay would be for at least 12 hours. The exceptions were when there was a major obstacle to cross such as a river or canal in which case line was laid to the Bn involved and also lines for the use of the traffic control over the obstacles.

(b) Local PL was used when it was thought to be in good order but much time was wasted in trying to put it through without previous recce of the state of repair.

(c) Considerable overhearing was experienced when using earth return and metallic circuits on the same route.

(d) Close liaison must be kept with C Section on the use of various routes as on several occasions Bdes used circuits which were either in use or earmarked as Div circuits.

(e) Fullerphones. On many occasions there was considerable delay in putting the fullerphone on the Div line. This should be done at the first available opportunity on the line being put through. Exchanges and superposing units should be wired up permanently.

(f) On a few occasions lines were laid to Bde before it arrived at the new location and the recce parties had no telephone available to put on the line. On Bde arriving it was found that the line was "dis" but had a phone been available when the line was laid any fault could have been found as soon as it occurred.

4. DESPATCH RIDERS.

(a) SDRs were used extensively as it was not always possible owing to the frequent moves of units to organise SDS timetable.

(b) It is important that during the night DRs work in pairs due to the possibility of snipers and that they are given all the available information re locations and the presence of enemy pockets.

5. CHARGING.

During the majority of the time charging had to be done by dets and some trouble was experienced with the 300w chore horse. After continuous running for 4 or 5 days it was often found necessary to carry out a complete overhaul. This was due to some extent to the use of red petrol. It is recommended that the issue of 300ws is increased to allow at least 2 per detached set.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE ROYAL SIGNALS TRAINING ORGANISATION IN UK

(EXCLUDING BOYS TRAINING)

The formal training organisation of the Royal Corps of Signals can be traced back to 1869 when, with the support of Sir John Burgoyne, the Chief Engineer, a Signal Wing was formed at the School of Military Engineering at Chatham. Its purpose was to teach electrical and visual methods of signaling. Two key appointments were also established with the Instructor of Telegraphy and the Instructor of Army Signalling. The former was responsible for electrical signalling and the latter for visual Signalling

1875 the Instructor of Army Signalling. moved to Aldershot and was retitled the Inspector of Army Signalling. The Signal Wing at Chatham only instructed RE tradesmen and did not include any visual signalling In 1886 the School of Signalling. was formed at Aldershot for visual signalling Simultaneously, the Signal Wing of the School of Military Engineering was absorbed into the Electrical School.

In 1913 the Signal School at Aldershot assumed responsibility for both electrical and visual signalling and so, once again, both signaling disciplines were collocated. At the time of the First World War it was found that there was no reinforcement training center to prepare non-regulars for war. Under Captain A B Cunningham RE a Reserve Signal Depot (RSD) was formed in Aldershot. Following on from this, in early 1915, Colonel R H H Boys, formed the Signal Service Training Center (SSTC) from RSD. The SSTC HQ was initially at Ridmont and then Bedford. There were depots set in various locations under Territorial Lieutenant Colonels. By 1916 they had the following responsibilities :

- Bedford - Recruit Training
- Hitchin and Stevenage - Holding and Drafting
- Baldock - Unit Forming
- Houghton Regis, Dunstable - Army Signalling. School
- Fenny Stratford - Wireless School (Instructors Trained)
- Haynes Park

In 1918 Brigadier Godfrey-Faussett took command of the SSTC and Depots became Companies and were components of the SSTC. It was also decided to move the organisation to a temporary hutted camp in Maresfield, Sussex. In 1920 1st Training Battalion was set up in Maresfield and 2nd Training Battalion in Crowborough Sussex. Maresfield also included the SSTC and the Army Signal School. Later in 1920 on the formation of the Royal Signals. These were retitled the Signal Training Center (STC) and the School of Signals. The latter was for officer training.

In May 1922 Colonel Commandant WPE Newbiggingss became Commandant of the STC (Brigadier Generals ceased as a rank after WW1). The STC remained in its 'temporary' accommodation until it moved to its permanent location in Catterick, North Yorkshire. The advance party moved to Catterick in 1924 but the units were not fully in situ until September 1925.

The STC moved in to 'S' lines (later Vimy), the School of signals moved to 'R' lines (later Messines), the Depot Battalion to 'U' lines (later Baghdad) and the Training Battalion to 'S' and 'T' lines (later Vimy and Kennel). After this there do no appear to be many major changes to the training organisation until the onset of hostilities in 1939 when there was a need to expand the training capability rapidly.

An early addition was in June 1939 when a Militia Training Battalion was formed in Catterick with three squadrons. The Antiaircraft Militia training Battalion was also formed in Harrogate on a tented site. In September 1939 1st Operators Training Battalion was formed with four companies. Its staff comprised mainly Territorial augmented by Reservists, Regulars and Militiamen. At a similar time, 1st General Trades Training Battalion was formed with five companies including Boys Company. Also in 1939, at Prestatyn in Wales, 2nd STC was formed with 2nd Depot Battalion, and 2nd general Trades Training Battalion. This lasted until June 1943 when its care returned to Catterick.

The final prewar expansion was of 3rd Depot Battalion, 3rd Holding Battalion, 3rd Operators Training Battalion and 3rd General Trades Training Battalion (comprising four companies). Initially, 3rd Operator Training Battalion was established at Whitby in 1939, it then moved to Prestatyn in 1940 and returned to Whitby 1944. In 1946 it formed 3 Training Regiment at Catterick and in 1956 reformed in Lincoln as 23rd Signal regiment.

By 1946 the STC had undergone a series of redesignations and standardisation on trade Training Regiments. These did not last long and by 1948 the set up became :

- 1st Training Regiment. Loos Lines
- 2nd Training regiment. Mons and Cateau Lines
- 3rd Training Regiment. Bourlon Lines had be formed in 1947 from 3 Operators Training Regiment and 1 Operators Training Regiment
- 4th Training Regiment Gaza Lines. Was renamed from 2nd Operator Training Regiment in 1946 and responsible for Operator Training.
- 5th Training Regiment. Comprised three squadrons for Driving, dispatch Riders and Driver Mechanics. It moved from Catterick to Barnard Castle a year later and to Ripon in 1950.
- 6th Training Regiment. In 1947 1st Operators Training Regiment was renamed 3rd but almost immediately be 6th Training Regiment. It became 6th (Boys) Training Regiment at Beverley, Hull in 1950.
- 7th Selection Regiment (later 7th Training Regiment)
- By 1948 7th Selection Regiment was up and running and was selecting and training the recruits.
- These designation continued until 1960 and the end of National Service although there were some minor changes in organisation.
- In 1955 the STC was redesignated 'The Training Brigade Royal signals'. In 1956 3rd Training Regiment was moved to Lincoln.

The reorganisation following National Service resulted in the following by 1959/1960.:

- 8th Signal Regiment was formed from 1st Training Regiment.
- 11th Signal Regiment was formed from 1 Depot Regiment in 1959 and absorbed 26th Signal Regiment in 1961.
- 12th Signal Regiment was formed from 2nd Training Regiment and was in turn absorbed into 8th Signal Regiment in 1961.
- 23rd Signal Regiment was formed from 3rd Training Regiment and was in turn absorbed into 24th Signal Regiment.
- 24th Signal Regiment was formed from 4th Training Regiment and in 1960/1961 absorbed in 23rd Signal Regiment and 25th Signal Regiment from Harper Barracks, Ripon.
- 25th Signal Regiment was formed from 5th Training Regiment. It was absorbed into 24th Signal Regiment in 1961.
- 26th Signal Regiment was formed from 7th Training Regiment and in turn became 11th Signal Regiment in 1961 with the role of Depot and Recruit Training in Helle Barracks.

The last course of Officer Cadets to receive national Service commissions passed out of Officer Training Wing, The School of Signals in 1958 and the unit was disbanded. The last intake of National Servicemen was in 1959.

Throughout the 1960's 8th Signal Regiment was responsible for the training of Linemen, Technicians, Radio Relaymen, Cipher Operators and some specialist skills. 24th Signal Regiment was responsible for Clerks Technical, Drivers, Electrician Drivers, Operators (Telegraph, Radio and Commcen). WRAC Switchboard Operators were trained in the Signal Regiment Training Center WRAC of 24th Signal Regiment. 8th Signal Regiment absorbed 24th Signal Regiment on 1 November 1970. The regiment formed the Trade Training School with two wings - Engineering and Operator/Driving. 11th Signal Regiment continued with Depot and basic training responsibilities.

In 1964 the Royal Corps of Signals was granted the Freedom of Richmond. In 1967 the School of Signals moved to Blandford Camp together with the HQ Officers Mess. The move was initially planned for Middle Wallop but the need for a location for the Army Air Corps arose so the plans were changed. On 1 January 1973 Catterick Camp became Catterick Garrison with HQ Training Brigade, Royal Signals in Vimy Lines.

There were a number of major changes as a result of the Army Review of Training Base and Option for Changes of the early 1990's. Basic recruit training for the Army canted on a number of Army Training Regiments. In 1993 Royal signals basic training was transferred to the Army Training Regiment Basingbourne. It was also decided that all Royal Signals professional training should be carried out centrally at Blandford. Thus, 8th Signal Regiment final parade was on 14 October 1994 and the training function was moved to Royal School of Signals which had been given its Royal honour in June 1992. The name of 11th Signal Regiment was assumed by the School Regiment, Blandford on 5 April 1993.>