

Summary of Infm. on the SOUTH DUTCH ISLANDS and an Appreciation
of enemy intentions as of 181200A Oct 44.

GEN

- 1 The islands of WALCHEREN and NOORD and ZUID BEVELAND form, as a gp, the NORTH bank of the WEST SCHELDE R leading to the port of ANTWERP. Their dominating feature is that they are, for the most part, below high water level. They would be mud banks were it not for the sand dunes and dykes that border them.
- 2 ZUID BEVELAND lies between the EAST and WEST SCHELDE and is flanked in the WEST by NOORD BEVELAND and WALCHEREN. It is linked to WALCHEREN by a rd and rly causeway, and is separated from NOORD BEVELAND by the ZANDKREEK. There is a rd and rly causeway linking it to the mainland. The island is about 23 miles long and about 11 miles wide from NORTH to SOUTH at its widest pt. The main town on the island is GOES 3329 population 7,500.

DETAILS

- 3 (a) Beaches - Generally, the beaches around ZUID BEVELAND consist of sand covered with mud or silt 6" or 8" thick. The beach can generally be considered capable of taking tracked vehs and often wh traffic. Some secs consist of salt marsh with sparta grass. The ground is NOT really firm.

(b) Beach exits - It is reported that the dyke is negotiable at all pts by inf as the seaward slope is moderate and a man could easily pass between the wooden stakes. At high tide, tracked vehs could cross the dyke at most pts and pass inland. The most suitable exits for MT on the SOUTH side are at the small tidal harbours which are reported to have small wooden or stone-surfaced ramps. These are ELLEWOUTSDIJK 273169, HOEDEKENSKE 347209 where there is a steel br on a floating pontoon, BAKENDORP 339191, HANSWEERDE 4022 at the entrance to the ZUID BEVELAND CANAL and at BATH 550172.

(c) Comms -

(i) Rds - The main rd of the island is the continuation of the AUTOBAHN from WALCHEREN. After crossing the causeway, connecting the two islands, it runs through GOES to 355282 where it crosses a canal and rly on a 270 ft br. It crosses the ZUID BEVELAND canal at 409253 and then proceeds to the mainland via the causeway connecting the island to the mainland. Running inland from the coastal villages, are many brick-surfaced rds from 9 - 16 ft wide. The rds cross many minor dykes and canals and are flanked by ditches which would hamper deployment in those areas where cross-country mov would be possible. Rd brs cross the ZUID BEVELAND CANAL, at 410287, at 409253 and at 410219 by a pontoon br. The br at 429253 is double; the southern being the rd br which has been destroyed and the northern half being the rly br now in use by GERMAN vehs.

(ii) Rlys - The rly continues from the WALCHEREN causeways through GOES to the mainland via the causeway.

(iii) Canals - The ZUID BEVELAND CANAL gives access from the WEST SCHELDE through the island to the EAST SCHELDE. It runs NORTH and SOUTH without a bend. It is about 4 1/2 miles long and 130 - 164 ft wide with a depth of 21 ft. There are other minor canals on the island.

(d) Cover - Cover from air observation is practically nil for the enemy have cut down the majority of the few trees for use as air landing obstacles.

(e) Landward approaches - Although there is only one main rd which crosses the bottle-neck side by side with the rly, there are, in fact, other rds except at the WALCHEREN causeway. At the narrowest pt of the isthmus NW of BATH 547172, there is a 2000 yd front with two subsidiary rds to the SOUTH which can maintain inf vehs. Thereafter, there are many routes as the island opens out - all obviously minor but by no means impassible.

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3 (e) Landward approaches - cont'd.

From the above, it may be concluded from the topographical pt of view that sea landings are possible on the SOUTH coast of ZUID BEVELAND; and that landward adv is difficult but NOT impossible.

DEFS

4 The fixed defs of ZUID BEVELAND are very lt. Air pns show thirteen fd bty posns of which all but two appear at the present time to be unoccupied or dummy posns. There is a ditch forming an A tk obstacle half way up the neck at the EASTERN end of the island 5017 - 5020 which runs from the SOUTH shore up to the rd and rail embankment. Beyond this, the only other defs on the island are a few sparsely spaced inf posns as shown on the trace which follows.

5 Four defended lines running NORTH - SOUTH are apparent:-

(i) SOUTH of bay 560203 - probably held against attack from the EAST by a re-inforced pl. In rear however, there are probably three coy posns holding the centre of the isthmus between this line and the next.

(ii) Canal SOUTH of 410308 held by two coys.

(iii) Line of canal from 360335 to 332314 to ACHTHOEK 2930 to bay 3523 which may be held by three coys.

(iv) A strip of the WEST coast limited by a line running from 235310 to 246192. This sec was defended on the EAST by two re-inforced coys and on the coast by an inf coy located between 195240 and 248192. A strong pt area 2130 consisting mainly of LAA and med arty was obviously organized to control comms between WALCHEREN and ZUID BEVELAND. The coastal sec 246192 to 350225 was held by a coy. Apart from LAA guns on the second line, all the arty has been disposed along the WEST coast. This consisted of one tp of 15 cm guns, one tp of 7.5 cm guns and some LAA. Res forces allow for four inf coys strung along the isthmus and two regt coys area 2727. RHQ located at GOES.

INUNDATIONS

6 It was appreciated that the enemy might use extensive flooding of WALCHEREN as one of his means of def for that island. This was frustrated when the dykes were breached by the RAF as part of our adv tactics. On the other hand, the enemy has started the inundation of several areas along the isthmus joining ZUID BEVELAND to the mainland. He hopes thereby to canalize still further any landward approach from the EAST to the main body of ZUID BEVELAND. In the past three days, inundations between the ZUID BEVELAND CANAL and the mainland have adv rapidly and already the enemy has flooded the following areas:- 4129 - 4229, 4128, 4228, part of 4127, 4227, 4226 and NORTHERN part 4225, 4123 and parts of 4122 and 4222. Between these areas, the ground is saturated. Other inundated areas are - 4423, A tk ditch 456237 to 452230 to 457224 and KRABBENDIJK SEHE 454214 to 466202, BATH polder 5519 and SLIKKEN polder 573196 to 570185. Other secs are becoming saturated and the ingress of water is advancing rapidly. This is shown on the trace which follows.

7 Although there are NO signs yet of artificial inundation in the main body of ZUID BEVELAND, the enemy may be expected to commence flooding at any time; particularly as soon as an attack develops into the isthmus. He has already prepared for demolition a breach in the WEST bank of the ZUID BEVELAND CANAL. This, in conjunction with breaching of the coast dykes, would cause rapid inundation of the greater part of central ZUID BEVELAND; many parts of which are already saturated, naturally.

8 If flooding progresses to its fullest extent, it is probable that the only ground left above water will be the dykes carrying rds and rly and the sand dunes and dyke around the coast. It is along these higher levels that the enemy has disposed what defs he has on this peninsula.

ENEMY ORDER OF BATTLE

- 9 Any accurate assessment of the forces defending the islands and their dispositions must await the evacuation of the SOUTH bank of the SCHELDE where 64 INF DIV and elements of other fms are now endeavouring to extricate themselves after suffering by cas.
- 10 Out of the welter and wreck of the XV ARMY which passed through these islands in the withdrawal from FRANCE and BELGIUM towards GERMANY, it is reasonable to suppose that the enemy would retain here only those tps required to carry out the def plans for this sec. It is hardly likely that he will embark at this stage on a new plan and extensive fresh works. Air phs to date disclose NO such intention.
- 11 From one coy in 1941 and a bn in 1942, the fd army garrison has expanded with the defs and before Aug this year comprised a re-inforced div of inferior grade, 165 TRG DIV. Most of this div, refurbished as 70 INF DIV, left the islands in Aug and early in Sep moved towards GHENT but beat a hasty and ignominious retreat towards the SCHELDE. This is the "WEISSBROT" DIV made up of stomach ulcer cases and men on leave in GERMANY. It is composed of three regts each of two bns. 1018 GR moved out of the islands to the area of MERXEM to meet our adv northward from ANTWERP. This regt has suffered very by cas; its remnants being absorbed into the forces now between us and BERGEN OP ZOOM. 1019 GR has remained on WALCHEREN ISLAND but contributed one, possibly two, coys to assist 64 INF DIV in the BRESKENS area. 1020 GR is on ZUID BEVELAND. II BN has been identified in contact with us at the EASTERN end of the isthmus. Under the name of BATTLE GP GRUBER, it is disposed as follows:- four rifle pls, one A tk pl and a sec of FLAK plus two pls from 8 COY in 5319; two pls from 6 COY and one pl of four 12 cm mortars in 4420; two pls from 5 COY 5017 and two pls from 7 COY in 4122. It is reasonable to suppose that the main part of ZUID BEVELAND is the responsibility of I BN.
- 12 Three re-inforced coys representing III BN of 128 GR (48 DIV) are on NORTH and SOUTH BEVELAND. Although elements of 128 GR have been identified in action, NO specific ref has been made to III BN which may still be occupying its original posns. The bn is composed of ARMENIANS.
- 13 It is probable that some low grade tps such as landesscheutzen bns, trg units, etc., were sent to WALCHEREN and ZUID BEVELAND to plug gaps left by mov of 70 INF DIV. Some of these tps may still be in this area.
- 14 In addition to the two divs, 64 and 70 already suggested as remaining NORTH and SOUTH of the SCHELDE, there may also be some small elements of 226 and 712 INF DIVS which have been cut off from their parent fms. The garrison of WALCHEREN and ZUID BEVELAND must incl large numbers of flak, coastal arty and marine personnel that are present in the garrisons of every important port such as ANTWERP.
- 15 Some identifications of units of this kind have already been made and it is possible to estimate the total personnel distributed amongst the four areas to be defended - NOORD BEVELAND, ZUID BEVELAND, WALCHEREN and the brhead SOUTH of the SCHELDE:-

64 Inf Div	4000
70 Inf Div	6500
Elts 226 Inf Div	500
Elts 712 Inf Div	300
III/128 GR (Armenian)	500
202 Naval Coast Bn	900
810 Naval Flak Bn	900
61 Arty Bn (mot)	500
1140 Arty Bn (mot)	400
5 Arty Bn	500
847 Lt Flak Bn	400
Festungs Engr Bn 312	700
One Bn of Festungs Stam Regt	800
FLUSHING Harbour Gd Units	700
Werfer Units	300
Naval	800
Miscellaneous	1000
	19700

- 16 The above figures will probably be distributed as follows:- NORTH BEVELAND - it is NOT considered that this island will be strongly held - Inf 200, Flak 100. ZUID BEVELAND - in the present circumstances, it is believed that the total personnel necessary to man ZUID BEVELAND would be, at the very most, 3,500 tps as follows:-

Inf	2000
Flak and marine	800
Arty	300
Miscellaneous	400

WALCHEREN - from the number of coastal and inland strong pts, the necessary res and the port installations, it may be estimated that the garrison will approximate 11,500. Area SOUTH of the SCHELDE - this leaves approx 4,400 men to fight SOUTH of the SCHELDE. Can in that sec have already been very hy. When things become too difficult, it is likely that as many of these as possible will be withdrawn to WALCHEREN and perhaps ZUID BEVELAND to strengthen the tps fighting there.

ENEMY INTENTIONS

- 17 WALCHEREN is the gateway to ANTWERP. This port, almost unharmed, is the answer to our adm problems of a rapid adv into GERMANY. Time, which is the first requirement for GERMANY whose resources are wearing very thin, can be bought most cheaply by continuing to control the WEST SCHELDE.
- 18 This control is exercised by coastal btys on WALCHEREN covering the estuary mouth and by controlled mineflds WEST and SOUTH of WALCHEREN. Of these, the guns are the ultimate objective. They are sited in btys half on the coast, the balance inland. Fourteen btys are on or within two miles of the SW coast. Apart from the perimeter def of the beaches on the NW and SW of the island, the area around FISHING has been created a fortress.
- 19 The enemy has contemplated attack from the air and provided AA and anti-landing devices. All of these are disposed to meet attack from the WEST. Now, however, instead of being over the NORTH SEA, we are on the mainland to the SOUTH of the SCHELDE and to the EAST of the islands.
- 20 Already he has planned some def NE of EATH 5417 at the narrowest pt of the ZUID BEVELAND isthmus and along the line of the ZUID BEVELAND canal; these he must strengthen. He must defend the causeway to WALCHEREN and the EASTERN shores of that island.
- 21 As to sup, as long as he holds VERE 1835 and NOORD BEVELAND, he can receive some sups by sea from the NORTH.
- 22 The enemy's intention appears to be to hold the islands and the guns of WALCHEREN as the defs are now prepared. With the flooding of WALCHEREN and the preparations for flooding on ZUID BEVELAND, it is unlikely that he will extend his defs against air landings. On the other hand, the enemy must supplement his meagre defs to the EAST by more men and weapons. A limit on these lies in the capacity of his existing posns and the sup situation.
- 23 His defensive posns are definitely restricted to what little high ground there is; these being mainly weapon pits and LAA posns dug in to the dyke alongside the rds.
- 24 Invested as he now is virtually on three sides, with his main sup route (and escape route) out at the EASTERN end of the isthmus, the enemy can maintain his forces only from the NORTH and that by sea. There are NO indications to date of his being able to accomplish this on anything but a very limited scale.
- 25 Judging by the tenor of the resistance put up by 1016 GR, it is very unlikely that the balance of 70 INF DIV will put up a very strong fight in def of these islands; nor is it likely that the miscellaneous tps supporting 70 DIV will have a high grade of morale or much wish to sustain a fight against determined attack. They have not much faith in the lt weapons which they can bring to bear on an attack from the EAST whether it be by land along the isthmus or sea-borne from the SCHELDE.

W. C. M. Drury
Lt Col
G6 - 2 Cdn Inf Div

HSCA/AGH
DRIS/HAND

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Oct 22 2400Lis

Appreciation of the enemy situation SOUTH of BERGEN-
OP-200H and on the SOUTH BEVELAND isthmus.

Side by side with a large portion of 70 Inf Div, 89 Festungs Stamm is assigned the def of WALCHEREN and SOUTH BEVELAND. Since no elements of this fortress unit have as yet appeared SOUTH of BRESKENS or NORTH of ANTWERP, the infm we have on its org and str is, so far, incomplete. IW from 1018 GR, which had previously belonged to 89 Festungs Stamm, have however given us an idea of what we may expect.

Obviously, 89 Festungs Stamm is NOT one of the Führer's favourite units; the bulk of the personnel is over 40 years of age and the rest consists of reclaimed cas from the EASTERN front. In their own words, they classify themselves as "civilian soldiery" and the black stripes they wear on their shoulder straps are allegedly a token of this distinction.

Although the unit is called "abteilung", i.e., "battalion", it actually is of regt size and consists of at least eleven coys each of 130 men or more.

10 Coy is organized as follows:-

10/89 Fest Stamm

Pl Pl Pl Pl

Each pl:- 32-33 men with FRENCH rifles
4-5 LMGs
3 med mortars (FRENCH)
some coys may have 2 to 3
5 cm or 7.5 cm A tk guns

Before withdrawing to the DUTCH ISLANDS, 89 Festungs Stamm was employed for many months in guarding some of the strong pts of the ATLANTIC WALL - deserters from 10 Coy said they had been used for gd duties and working parties of strong pt "ROMMEL" near COXYDR LES BAINS, EAST of DUNKERQUE until the beginning of Sep 44. End of Sep, 35 men were transferred to 1018 GR. Prior to 20 Sep, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 Coys were responsible for patrolling the Canal between VANGUES and KAPELLE D32 but on that date the whole of 89 Festungs Stamm is said to have moved to MIDDELBURG on WALCHEREN. The sheets of water which now ripple over much of WALCHEREN and the corresponding danger of damp feet and Polder Fever may, however, cause these soldiers to return to their original posn on SOUTH BEVELAND.

II BN of 1020 GR 70 INF DIV was identified on the isthmus 11 Oct disposed in depth with Battlegroup GRUBER in the fwd posn made up of one pl taken from each of 5, 6, 7 and 8 Coys plus one A tk pl and a sec of Flak. I BN may well be disposed along the SOUTHERN shore of SOUTH BEVELAND. Flooding of the isthmus immediately EAST of the SOUTH BEVELAND CANAL has progressed considerably since we last discussed the inundations in Int Summary No.13, dated 18 Oct 44. The neck is now almost completely swamped across a band bordering on the EAST bank of the canal and extending to the 44 easting. There are three gaps in this wet area:-

- (i) around the NORTH shore from the MOLEN POUER 4427 past YERSEKE to the NORTHERN end of the canal 4131.
- (ii) from the rd and rly crossing 4225 along the ZANDDIJK SW to the canal 4123.
- (iii) the right-of-way of both the rly and the main rd WEST to the canal 4125 are free, so far, from any signs of flooding or saturation.

This infm, taken from air phs of 211200A Oct, may be changed by the wind and rain of the past 24 hrs.

At the base of the isthmus, some low saturation has been noted from BATH 5417 NORTH to dyke and rly junc 541200. Ground in the triangle NORTH of the rly at that pt is inundated. WEST of the A tk ditch from 456237 to 446222 to harbour 4221 flooding has continued, but the rd and rly are still clear.

The bn disposed along the isthmus, if every man is pushed into the fighting str, may muster 700 men. This could be built up to 1,000 or more by bringing into this area stragglers from WALCHEREN and quite possibly some of the WEHRMACHT who have been driven onto SOUTH BEVELAND by the flooding of WALCHEREN.

It is probable that the enemy will be found to have dug himself into the WESTERN sides of the dykes with all his MGs up. In this way, he will obtain a maximum of 1st automatic fire and at the same time a maximum protection from our arty fire.

It is believed that 1020 GR is responsible for SOUTH BEVELAND with II BN in the isthmus with an effective str of 350 and I BN on the main part of the peninsula with fighting str of 400. Supporting these are 70 FUS BN and 70 FD RPT BN having str of 260 and 300 respectively.

Infm of guns in this sec is scant but it does appear that II/1020 GR has little by sp. Battlegroup GRUBER was said to have one each of 7.5 cm, 5 cm and 3.7 cm A tk guns placed fwd with the A tk pl. Of these, the first has been destroyed already. CB reports to-day indicate that one med gun has arrived on the isthmus. It is possible that other arty pieces are being moved from wet WALCHEREN to this sec which is more immediately threatened by attack. Undoubtedly, his weapons will be sited to cover the three rds leading into the isthmus and along which we must travel.

The gen estimate of guns on SOUTH BEVELAND, as a whole, is:-

19 Fd
20 Med
4 Hy
3 Hy AA
9 Miscellaneous

This list is NOT accurate and may incl duplications due to mov to alternative posns.

Personnel of 70 DIV, with whom we were engaged previously, showed themselves sensitive to attack by AFVs. It is probable that the personnel of 1020 GR, when faced with armed vehs, will keep their heads down rather than use their Panzerfaust or Ofenrohr with aggression. In this respect, 70 DIV will differ from 64 DIV which fought bitterly during our attack to BRESKENS. So far, we have NO evidence of enemy mines in this area or of rd craters other than those of our own making. This does NOT preclude the possibility that the enemy is prepared to put such defensive measures into effect as soon as an attack develops.

Having made a comparison between 70 DIV and 64 DIV, it might be well to draw attention to the fact that the latter, which had been graded as a third rate fm, fought extremely well under the threat by their ofrs of themselves being shot if they withdrew and of their families being shot if they surrendered. As 70 DIV is fighting under the same higher cmd in def of the same port, the tps now opposing us may be driven against their will to attempt similar resistance.

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Our adv NORTHWARD through the polder land WEST of OSSENDRECHT 6215 and WOENSDRECHT 6120 to secure the rd and rail causeway into the EASTERN end of the isthmus, met with stiff opposn. The low land lying between the rly and the dyke in sqs 5720, 5820 and 5920 is believed, from our last identification, to be held by two coys of 6 PARA REGT probably elements of I BN (Coy -4). PW interrogation also indicated enemy posns in area 605215 possibly in coy str although NO confirmation has been received and available as counter attack gr in the event of further adv NORTH of WOENSDRECHT 6120 or adv across the rly area 5820 and 5920. It is possible that enemy posns NORTH of the rly have been

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re-inforced beyond two coy str by infiltration at night during the past week of inf from 1020 GR identified WEST of easting 57. This is NOT considered likely however, since the enemy can probably dispose this str to greater advantage on the neck itself.

Enemy tps in the area NORTH of the rly come under the same comd as those disposed NORTH of WOENSDRECHT 6120 and HOOGERHEIDE 6319, who have contested so strongly our efforts to push further to the NORTH direction of BERGEN-OP-ZOOM. Senior comd in the area appears to be Lt-Col VAN DER HEYDTE and to date his so-called para tps have given a good account of themselves. They are mostly under 25 yrs of age, of 'A' category and, although some are in-experienced as inf, are NOT lacking in the will to resist. Moreover, they have proven to date to be well equipped with automatic weapons and inf A tk eqpt incl Ofenrohr and Faustpatrone.

Ops of the friendly fmn on our RIGHT flank are believed to have resulted in partial diversion of whatever tactical res the enemy was holding to oppose our adv straight NORTH to WOENSDRECHT and HOOGERHEIDE. On 20 Oct, for example, coys of II BN 6 PARA REGT were identified on our RIGHT flank for the first time in this area. The only coys of 6 PARA REGT still to be identified are 13 and 14 whose presence at all in this area has NOT been confirmed up until now. The re-grouping and shifting of res which the enemy has been obliged to undertake during the past 48 hrs makes any estimate of str on our immediate front facing NORTH difficult and unreliable. However, an outside estimate of str would probably be about three under-str inf bns composed largely of personnel of 6 PARA REGT but doubtless incl recently formed battlegroups of coy str such as have characterized enemy order of battle this sec during the past two weeks.

The SP guns of XV ARMY Assault Gun Bn, which have supported the above tps both in def against our attacks and in their counter attacks against us in the areas 6120 and GROOTE MEER 6617, have been turned to meet the armd threat advancing NORTHWARD on our RIGHT. Due to the success of the latter, it is improbable that the enemy will be able to spare SP eqpt immediately NORTH of us.

The arty which has been brought to bear upon us in the gen area WOENSDRECHT, OSSENDRECHT, GROOTE MEER and which, for a long time, was dispersed across our front was a few days ago concentrated into two gun areas - woods 625255 and woods 665255. Guns in the latter area are almost certainly fully engaged with the attack on our RIGHT. Those in the former area will still be available to sp any enemy def in the event that we attack NORTHWARD. It is NOT believed that there has been any arty rft in the past 48 hrs. The marked decrease in enemy activity during this period is probably due to his difficulties of sup.

At the present moment, the enemy must be much exercised by his difficulties in comn and will be "looking over his left shoulder". It would appear that the enemy appreciated that the attack now developed from our RIGHT would pass through us. Now, he is probably wondering from which direction the next attack will develop.

The enemy intends to hold firmly where he stands and will oppose at any cost every effort made by us to seal off completely the SOUTH BEVELAND isthmus. Evidently he will do all in his power to prevent our gaining complete control of the ZEELAND ISLANDS for, when that occurs, ANTWERP is the Allies most valuable port.

The fact that ANTWERP is in the foreground as potentially the most valuable prize of the campaign in the WEST, tends perhaps to obscure the prodigious adm feat accomplished by a highly mechanized army in invading HOLLAND based on a synthetic port a hundred miles SOUTH of a Seine over which every br had been destroyed. Nevertheless, the securing of this port is of the utmost importance and is appreciated equally both by the enemy and ourselves.

W. S. McCall, Capt
for (C M Drury) Lt-Col
GS - 2 Cdn Inf Div

HSCA/AGH
DRLS/HAND

Time of signature... 3304 hrs

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For period to 252400A Oct 44

ZUID BEVELAND CANAL

The following infm has been extracted and synopsized from an engr appreciation of ZUID BEVELAND CANAL by RCE 2 Cdn Corps dated 22 Oct 44.

The land on both sides of the canal is low lying and very susceptible to flooding both by salt or fresh water. The main rds are NOT highly embanked and would flood also.

The land could probably be flooded to a depth of three to eight ft by breaking the dykes giving tidal flooding or by closing the sluice gates at low tide and opening them at high tide. This could be accomplished in approx a week's time. At the present time, the land is flooded on the EAST side of the canal; down practically its entire length. This has probably been effected by preventing natural draining of the polders by keeping the sluice gates closed. The main rds are NOT yet flooded.

The average width of the canal varies from 190 ft to 290 ft. The canal is non-tidal and its normal level is about 1 ft above mean sea level at AMSTERDAM. This level is maintained by locks at HANSWEERT 4022 and at WEMELDINGE 4130. There are NO other locks. The water level of the canal is above the average land level adjacent to it. The minimum level of the canal bottom is 20½ ft below mean sea level AMSTERDAM giving a normal minimum depth of 21½ ft. Thus, by breaking the canal dykes, the adjacent land could be flooded. The canal bank varies from 4 to 5 ft above water level. The slope of the under-water sec of the canal bank is about 1.3, that of the dyke being approx 1.2. On the polder side of the canal dyke there is usually a drainage ditch which may be up to 20 ft in width. The ditch should prove NO problem to infil if the numerous ft brs across it remain.

At the NORTHERN end of the canal, in WEMELDINGE, there is a rd across the lock system consisting of two brs; one across the EASTERN lock, the other across the WESTERN. The former appears, from air phs, to be of steel constr approx 60 ft long and 15 ft wide. The second, apparently a steel swinging br, is 210 ft long and 14 ft wide. Rafting in the town is NOT feasible due to the vertical concrete walls of the locks. In order to effect a crossing in the town by dry Bailey, three separate short Baileys would have to be constructed.

At 411301 and 411299 there are two rds through the EASTERN canal dyke leading down to a quay in the area. This is a possible rafting site but the WESTERN exit would have to be cut through the canal dyke.

There is a swing br at 411286 - 185 ft long 14 ft wide. On the EASTERN side of the canal a small rd circuit starts at the br, runs under the br for about 50 yds along the canal bank and then swings up onto the main rd. From this small rd circuit, a ramp about 50 yds long leads off into the water. This is a feasible spot for rafting but an exit requiring considerable work would have to be made on the WEST side.

At 410254 is a combination rd and rail br. The rd br has been demolished leaving a gap of approx 213 ft. The two rly brs beside it are still intact; that, next to the demolished rd br, has been converted into a rd br 10 ft wide.

Immediately SOUTH of the rd br, is a place where it would be feasible to br with floating Bailey or FBE but this would entail considerable cutting down of the canal bank.

At 411256 a break in the canal dyke exists leading down to the canal bank but work would have to be done on the WESTERN exit.

At 410247 there exists a dismantled pontoon br composed of 6 rafts of two pontoons each. The WESTERN approach, at 409247, is straight and through the dyke; the EASTERN approach is by a 10 ft track from the wharf at 410243. It would be a simple matter to bulldoze the canal bank to form a straight EASTERN approach. This site is feasible for rafting or bridging. The water gap between existing ramps being approx 174 ft wide.

The pontoons tied up nearby are 75 ft long, 17 ft wide. There are quays at 410243 and at 407251; both joined to rds by exits through the canal dykes. The height of the quays above water is 3 ft to 4 ft - making a possible rafting site.

At HANSWEERT, on the SOUTHERN end of the canal, there is NO rd system across the locks but it could be bridged by three short dry Baileys. With the exception of the locks at WEMELDINGE and HANSWEERT, the canal may be crossed with assault boats or kapok.

Demolition of the locks at either end or at both ends would make the canal tidal and would make any floating br much more difficult to construct but should NOT affect assault boats or kapok to any great extent.

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During the past three days, int personnel of this unit have had the opportunity to study at first hand the two extremes of personnel making up the GERMAN Army. It is unusual to find numbers of very different PW passing through a div PW cage who have been captured at the same time in one and the same op.

During the later stages of the hard fighting in our adv NORTHWARD from WOENSCHRECHT 6120 to 6223, a considerable number of PW were taken from 6 PARA REGT. The majority of these men were found to be very good soldiers and, although NOT so well trained, every bit as tough as any of the SS tps whom we fought SOUTH of CAEN. Their spirit was high and even though they claimed that they had NOT had a meal in 4 or 5 days, they appeared clean and fit. The majority of them were thoroughly fanatical Nazis and the div interrogator had more fun than he has had in a long time.

At the same time, our tps thrusting WESTWARD through the mud and water into the ZUID BEVELAND isthmus were sending back to the cage droves of PW from 70 INF DIV. These men seemed to look upon us as their liberators. They were delighted that, for them, the war is over. Compared with the para tps, they made a very poor impression as "soldiers". Reports from the fwd tps indicate that these men continued their fight as long as there was a substantial area of water and soaking wet ground between us and them and so long as their ofrs and NCOs were able to inflict firm control upon them. But, as soon as our tps were able to defeat the ground and get close to them, they came out by sacs and pls with their hands up.

It is apparent that, so far, our chief enemy has been the ground - or the water. It is probable that this will remain our most constant oppcn.

There is every indication that the enemy intends to make full use of the delay imposed upon us by the terrain and by the rd blocks and very large number of glass mines which he has laid across our WESTERN front to fight doggedly until we get dangerously close to him.

Already, 1020 GR with other elements of 70 DIV has suffered quite considerable cas and it is doubtful whether the poor morale of these tps would withstand the attrition inflicted by a really determined attack.

Among the 226 PW of 70 DIV taken to-day, there have been identified twelve from 1018 GR. These men were probably left behind when their regt moved to area MERXEM at the end of Sep and have now been absorbed by 1020 GR. Others may be found in 1019 GR if we make contact with that unit. There are some slight indications that I BN may have crossed to the EAST of ZUID BEVELAND canal in order to sp II/1020 which we are now fighting. If this is true, they will probably be found in the area of the higher ground NE and SOUTH of YERSKE 4428. Meantime, a considerable number of PW have already been taken from div tps of this unit. Tps of 89 Festungs Stamm, with a small number of rfts received by water from the NORTH, will be found disposed along ZUID BEVELAND canal where they may be expected to make a firm stand.

Handwritten signature

GS 2 Cdr Inf Div

ESCA/AGH
DRLS/HAND

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