

In the first phase the Canadian Army attacked from the Nijmegen - Emmerich sector northwards with the 2nd Canadian Corps (consisting of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Canadian Infantry Divisions and the 4th Canadian and 1st Polish Armoured Divisions and the 2nd Canadian Armoured Brigade) on the right and the 1st Canadian Corps (with the 5th Canadian Armoured Division, 49th British Infantry Division and 1st Canadian Armoured Brigade under command) on the left.

On the 8th a special British paratroop force was dropped in the area Zwolle - Meppel and patrols of this force linked up with the Second Canadian Division on the 11th. Zwolle itself was finally cleared by April 19th and the main enemy escape route from western Holland was permanently closed. Meanwhile, the 49th Division had cleared Arnhem and the 1st Division had reached Zutphen by the 11th. The 1st Division turned westwards to take Apeldoorn against stiff opposition on the 17th (having come under command Second Canadian Corps on April 14th). The 5th Armoured Division moving directly north reached the Zuider Zee by April 18th. On the right flank the 2nd Division overcame initial opposition and broke through into northeast Holland, reaching Groningen by the 14th, while the 4th Armoured Division, with the Polish Armoured Division on the left, after clearing the Enschede area, also broke through and, pushing northeastward, reached Kusten Canal, southwest of the German town of Oldenburg, by 14th April.

During the second phase northeast Holland was quickly cleared by the 3rd and 2nd Canadian Divisions, with little opposition except at Groningen which was finally cleared by the 19th. The 2nd Division moved eastwards to a position on the right of the 4th Division, while the 3rd Division cleared the south bank of the Ems estuary and began the operations to clear Leer on the 28th of April. Meanwhile, on 22nd the 5th Division had moved north, coming under the 2nd Corps, and, taking over from the 2nd and 3rd Divisions, mopped up the few remaining pockets of resistance in northeast Holland. The 4th and Polish Armoured Divisions met very strong opposition along the Kusten Canal, but by the 17th a bridgehead had been established and this had been developed a few miles northwards by the end of the month.

To the south the 1st Corps continued to meet stiff opposition in its move to clear western Holland. At the end of the month the 1st Division had reached a point northwest of Amersfoort that was still in enemy hands. A truce was then arranged to allow food convoys to enter this part of Holland to relieve the famine among the Dutch civilians.

(c) AIR FORCE -

A total of 1500 sorties was flown and 5300 tons of bombs dropped by the Canadian Group in Bomber Command while flying against industrial centres, marshalling yards, U-boat pens, shipyards and airfields. No. 405 (Pathfinder) Squadron flew 120 sorties and dropped 450 tons of bombs. Eleven R.C.A.F. aircraft were lost in the course of all these operations.

...../4

Minutes and Documents of the Cabinet War Committee,
Volume XVII, January - May 1945, (R.G. 2, 7c, Volume 17)

PUBLIC ARCHIVES
ARCHIVES PUBLIQUES
CANADA