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S-E-C-R-E-T

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

- I. Summary of Operations.
- II. Operations In Germany
(1-16 December).
- III. Battle of St. Vith
(17-23 December).
- IV. Action at Manhay
(24-31 December).
- V. APPENDIX I, Administrative
and Statistical Summary.
- VI. APPENDIX II, G-2 Notes.
- VII. List of Supporting Documents.

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HEADQUARTERS 7TH ARMORED DIVISION
APO 257 U. S. ARMY

Copy to work 1
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SUBJECT: After Action Report, 7th Armored Division,
Period 1-31 December, 1944.

TO : Adjutant General, Washington, 25, D. C. (Thru
Channels).

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DOWNGRADING COMMITTEE *for*

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SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS.

After nearly a month of rest, training, and maintenance, the 7th Armored Division was in position astride the Holland-German border in the general vicinity of HEERLEN, Holland to GEILENKIRCHEN, Germany, preparatory to participating in the Ninth U. S. Army's drive deeper into Germany. The division itself remained in XIII Corps reserve although component units were committed under attachment to other divisions.

During the first half of the month, the division moved east of the WURM RIVER and prepared to attack to the east, northeast, or north. Extensive plans were formulated for the seizure of BRACHELEN, Germany, but all operations beyond the ROER RIVER, were dependent upon the seizure or destruction of the ROER RIVER dam, south of DUREN. In German hands, this dam could be used to flood the entire ROER RIVER valley, and cut off or destroy any forces therein. Unsuccessful attempts to destroy the dam by aerial bombardment were made each day that the weather permitted, starting on 3 December.

The combat forces of the division were in Germany awaiting destruction of the dam when, on 16 December, the entire division was alerted to move into the area of the VIII Corps of the First U. S. Army. Early in the morning of 17 December, 1944, the first elements of the division began the move southward. Upon arrival in the new area, Combat Command "B", established a defensive line to the east of ST. VITH. Combat Command "A", and Combat Command "R" took up positions in the vicinity of BEHO and south of RECHT, respectively. Little definite information was obtainable about the situation and the movement forward was delayed by the traffic of retreating troops that jammed the roads.

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At ST. VITH, contact was made with elements of the 106th Infantry Division and Combat Command "B", of the 9th Armored Division. With the aid of these, and the remnants of other units in the vicinity, a semi-circular defense line to the east of ST. VITH, was established by the Commanding General of Combat Command "B", 7th Armored Division, Brigadier General BRUCE C. CLARKE.

Combat Command "A", attacked and recaptured POTEAU, on 18 December, and held that town until 23 December. Combat Command "B", withstood continued German attacks to the east of ST. VITH, until 21 December when the enemy broke through the line from the southeast. Combat Command "B", withdrew to a new defensive position on the high ground to the west of ST. VITH. Many units were cut off by the Germans and had to fight their way back through the town.

At ~~20~~22~~30~~ December, orders were received attaching the division to the XVIII Corps (Airborne). The supply routes from the Division Trains had been cut on 20 December resulting in the suspension in the normal flow of supplies until 22 December, when a consolidated column was brought through by a round-about route. The enemy was reported in positions to the south, southwest and to the north and northwest. On 22 December, Combat Command "B", was forced to fall back again. Combat Command "A", continued to hold POTEAU, in the face of attacks of increasing ferocity.

The final withdrawal was on 23 December. It was well planned and well coordinated. The non-essential vehicles had been withdrawn the day before, and with clock-work coordination, the combat commands and attached units passed over the only two bridges remaining across the SALM RIVER, to assembly areas behind the 82nd Airborne Division's line.

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Early on 24 December, the division was again in action defending the town of MANHAY. Combat Command "A", was holding the town and had started a withdrawal to another position when a savage German attack of infantry and armor drove Combat Command "A" from the town with heavy losses. Combat Command "B", was committed and launched an unsuccessful attack to retake the town on 25 December. Positions were consolidated on 26 December and the following day, two companies of the 3rd Bn., of the 517th Parachute Regt., attached to Combat Command "A", recaptured MANHAY. Combat Command "A" and Combat Command "B" continued to defend the town until the night of 29-30 December when the 7th Armored Division was relieved by the 75th Infantry Division. At the turn of the year the division was in Corps reserve performing maintenance of vehicles and rehabilitation of personnel.

OPERATIONS IN GERMANY.

December opened with the 7th Armored Division astride the Holland-German border in the vicinity of GEILENKIRCHEN, Germany, supporting the Ninth U. S. Army's drive deeper into Germany. The division was in reserve for the XIII Corps with the mission of supporting the attack of the 84th and 102nd Infantry Divisions. It was to be prepared to pass through a bridgehead over the ROER RIVER to attack east, northeast or north.

Division headquarters was located in ROBRUCK, Holland. The division order of battle was as follows:

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The mission was to attack southeast from LINDERN, and to seize LINNICH by passing through the 84th and 102nd Infantry divisions. The 814th Tank Destroyer Battalion was to support the attack. However, due to the progress of the infantry divisions, it was not necessary to commit Combat Command "B".

Combat Command "A", under Colonel DWIGHT A. ROSEBAUM, located in the vicinity of HEERLEN, Holland, was undergoing a training and maintenance program pending operations to the east.

On 2 December, Division Tactical Headquarters was established in RIMBURG, Germany. Combat Command "B" moved east of the WURM RIVER. This placed two combat commands east of that river, prepared for immediate operations to the east, northeast, or north. At ~~020115A~~ December, the elements of the 40th Tank Battalion which had been attached to the 84th Infantry Division, were relieved from such attachment. "B" Company of the 40th Tank Battalion was then attached to the 84th Infantry Division.

While prepared to repel any enemy counterattacks, the division units continued with training and maintenance programs. At ~~031200~~ December, the 17th Tank Battalion was relieved from attachment to the 102nd Infantry Division and returned to Combat Command "R" control.

Proposed operations to the east were dependent upon the destruction of the enemy-held ROER RIVER dam, south of DUREN. The enemy was capable of countering an Allied offensive in this area by flooding the ROER RIVER valley. This would result in either destruction of the troops in the flooded region or the cutting of our supply lines. To eliminate this threat, Allied air forces made several attempts to destroy the dam by bombing. The first of the attempts was made on 3 December.

While training and maintenance continued for the division as a whole, various

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divisional units were in action while under attachment to other commands. "B" Company of the 40th Tank Battalion was attached to the 84th Infantry Division from 022230 to 061600 December. "C" Company of the 38th Armored Infantry Battalion was also under attachment to the 84th Division from 032100 to 060015 December. The 48th Armored Infantry Battalion was attached to the 102nd Division from 051400 to 092400 December. The 17th Tank Battalion was attached to the 84th Division from 091400 until 162000 December.

During the period, detailed plans were made for seizing the town of BRACHELEN, Germany. The town was defended by the 694th, 695th and the 696th Regiments of the 340th German Infantry Division. The attack was dependent upon the destruction of the ROER RIVER dam which would isolate the town. When the dam was broken it would take from 4 to 5½ hours for the crest of the flood to reach BRACHELEN, and as the dam could not be bombed before 1000, the attack was to be launched the day after the destruction of the dam.

Combat Command "B" was assigned the job of taking BRACHELEN. The plan of attack was outlined in Operations Instructions 110900 December, known as plan "Dagger." Combat Command "A" was to move east of the WURM RIVER after Combat Command "B's" attack. Both combat commands were constituted as follows:

CCACCBCCR

40th Tk Bn	23rd Arm'd Inf.Bn.	C/33rd Arm'd Engr.Bn.
48th Arm'd Inf.Bn.	31st Tk.Bn.	
A/33rd Arm'd Engr.Bn.	38th Arm'd Inf.Bn.	
D/87th Cav.Rcn.Sq.Mecz.	B/33rd Armd Engr.Bn.	
A/814th TD Bn.	B/87th Cav.Rcn.Sq.Mecz.	
1/Rcn/814th TD Bn.	C/814th TD Bn.	
Det/1/77 Med.Bn.Arm'd.	1/B/814th TD Bn.	
Det/1/129th Ord. Bn.	1/Rcn/814th TD Bn.	
	D/203 AAA Bn.	
	Det/1/77th Med.Bn.Arm'd.	
	Det/1/129th Ord. Bn.	

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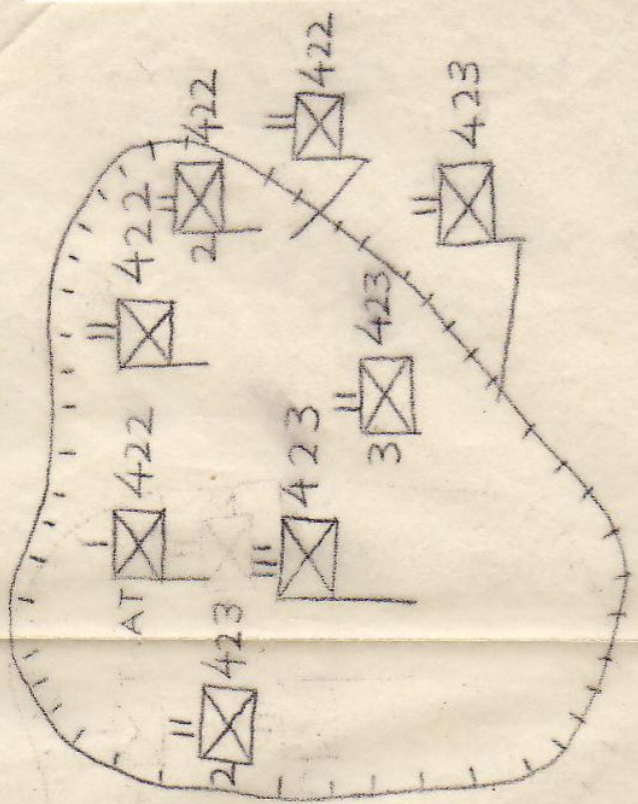
On 10 December, Colonel BRUCE C. CLARKE was promoted to Brigadier General, as Commanding General of Combat Command "B". At 101000 December, Combat Command "B" was placed in Corps reserve, but at 111500 December, Combat Command "B" was released and Combat Command "A" became Corps reserve. Division Main Headquarters moved from ROBROEK to HEERLEN, Holland, on 13 December. The division continued training and maintenance, pending destruction of the ROER RIVER dam and the beginning of the operations "Dagger." On 16 December (beginning of the German counteroffensive in BELGIUM), the division was ordered to move south into BELGIUM.

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SITUATION OVERLAY
 ST VITH AREA UPON
 ARRIVAL OF 7th ARM'D. DIV.
 17 DEC. 44

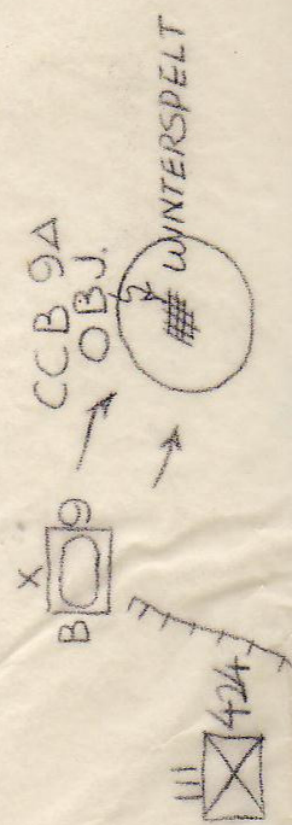
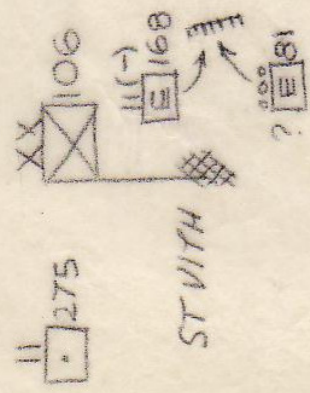
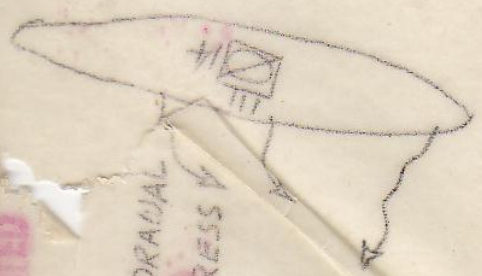
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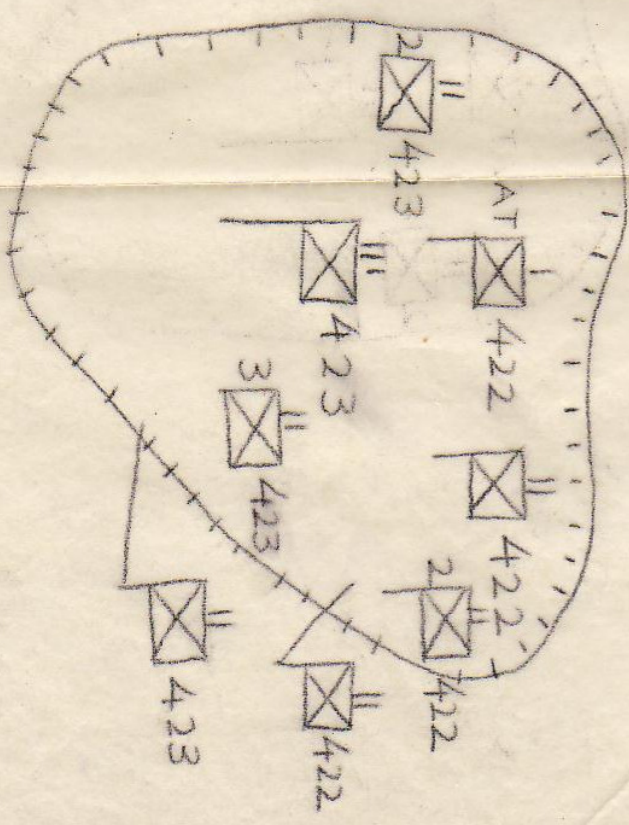
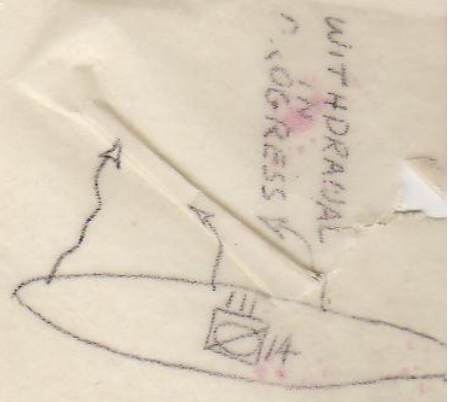
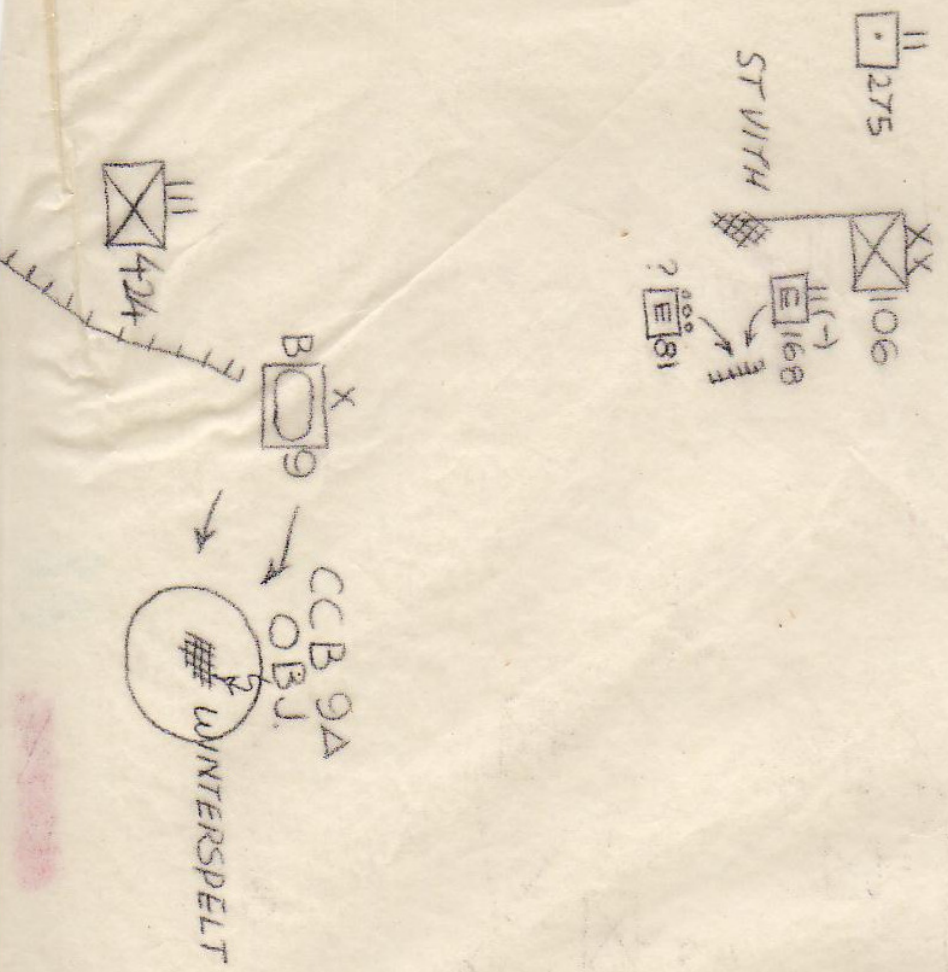
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ARRIVAL OF 7th ARM'D. DIV.
17 DEC 44
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170-24
WALCH
IP
MERKSTEIN

HEERL

AACHEN

4640'
+ 56640'

HERVE

EUPEN

EAST ROUTE
CCR
D/HQ (TAK)
D ARTY
203 AA
D/129 Cml/10K

VERVIERS

WEST ROUTE
S7 KUM
CCB
CCA
B14 TD
DIV HQ (MAIN)
203 Eupen
DIP TNS

POLLEUR

FRANCOISCHAMP

MALMEDY

STAVELOT

OVERLAY # 1

HQ TA 16 2800 DEL 44

ROUTES TO VIELSALM

ST VITH AREA

MAP REF. Michelin Road
Map. 1/200,000
0365 #4238

TROIS-POINT

LIGNEUVILLE

RECHT

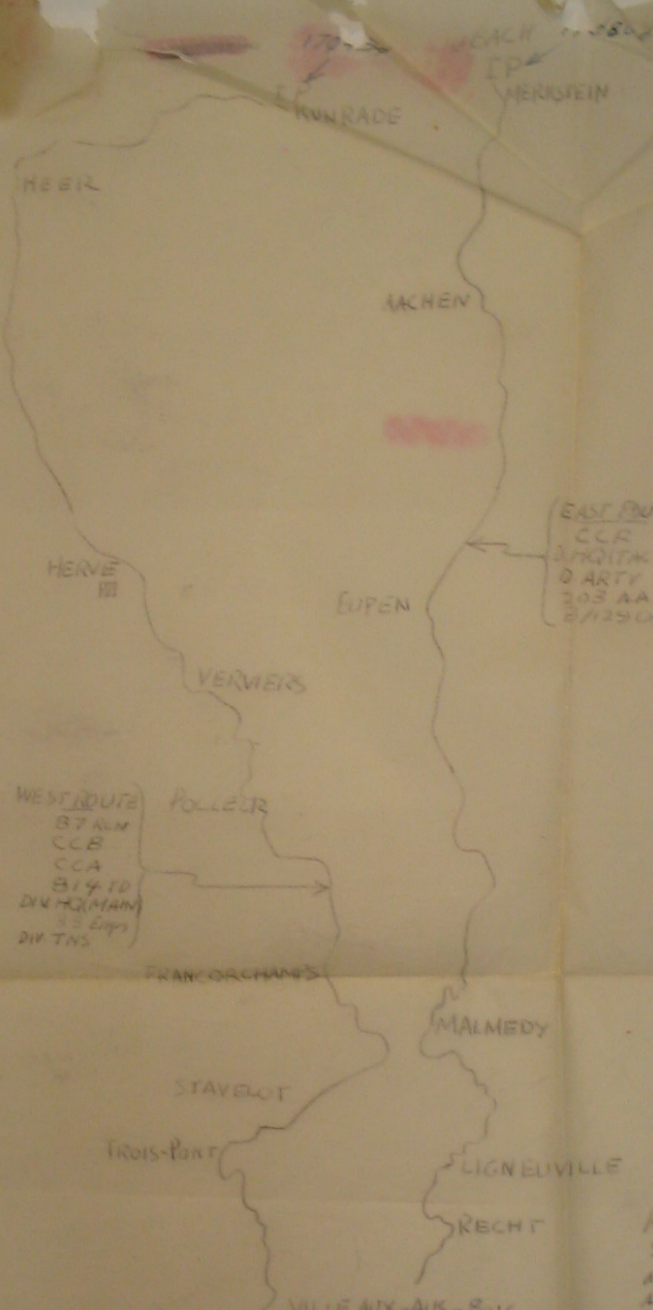
VILLE AUX-AUS-BOIS

4640'
+ 55680'

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CIA
Misc. info
CIA
Other
CIA
RM 1050
on file

SECRET



170-20
BACH IP
MERSTEIN

HERVEIL

AACHEN

4640'
+ 56640'

HERVE

EUPEN

EAST ROUTE
CCR
DIPLO (TAK)
D ARTY
303 AA
D/125 CHLNK

VERRIERS

WEST ROUTE
B7 ALM
CCB
CCA
B14 TD
DIV (H) (MAN)
33 Coy
DIV TNS

POLLEUR

FRANCORCHAMPS

MALMEDY

STAVELOT

OVERLAY # 1

HQ TA 16 200 DELTA

ROUTES TO VIELSALM
ST VITH AREA

MAP REF Michelin Road
Map 1/200,000
OSGS # 4238

TROIS-POINT

LIGNEUVILLE

RECHT

VILLE AUX-AUX-BOIS

4640'
+ 55680'

SECRET

ASIA
MIS

AFRIC SOUTH
E. Africa
IND

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SITUATION OVERLAY
7th AIRBORNE DIVISION
200-2-200
Map Scale 1/4" = 1000'
Grid Zone Designation 18T N
G385 1414

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WIELSALA

LEAD

TF LINDSEY

B

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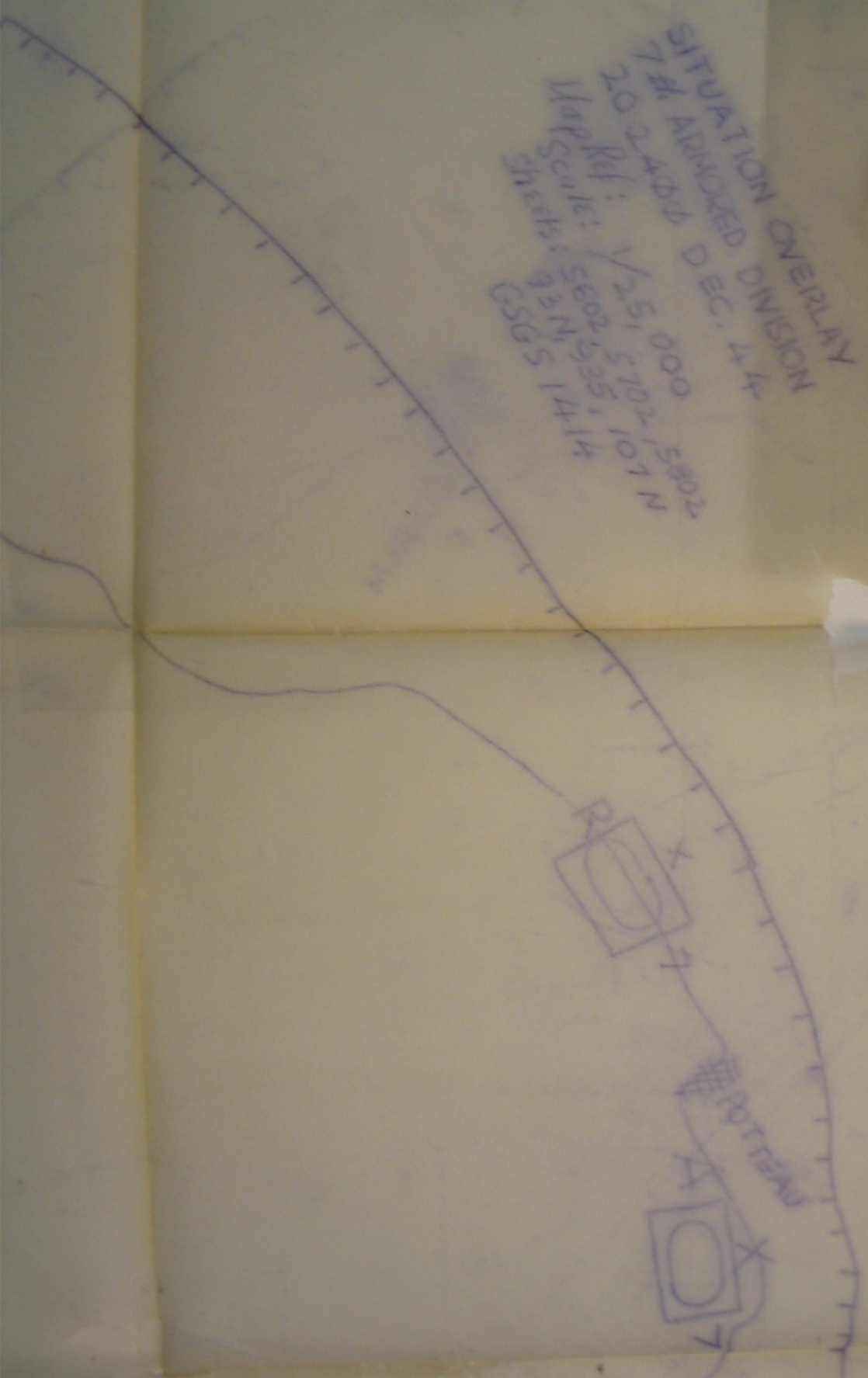
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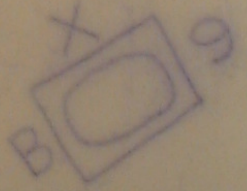
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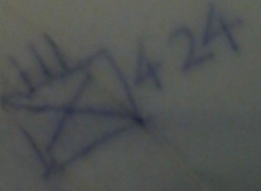




76TH



LINDSEY



B X 9

TF LINDSEY

424

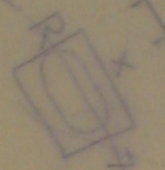
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ATLANTIC OVERLAY
ARMED DIVISION
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Grid: 9514 5555
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VIELSALM

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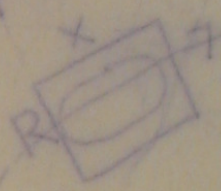


75
+ 95

SITUATION OVERLAY
7th ARMORED DIVISION
20 2400 DEC. 44

Map Ref: 1/25,000
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GSGS 1414

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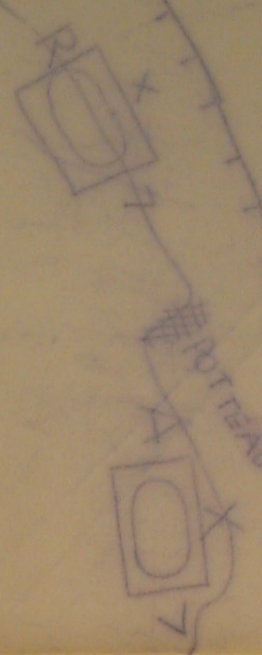


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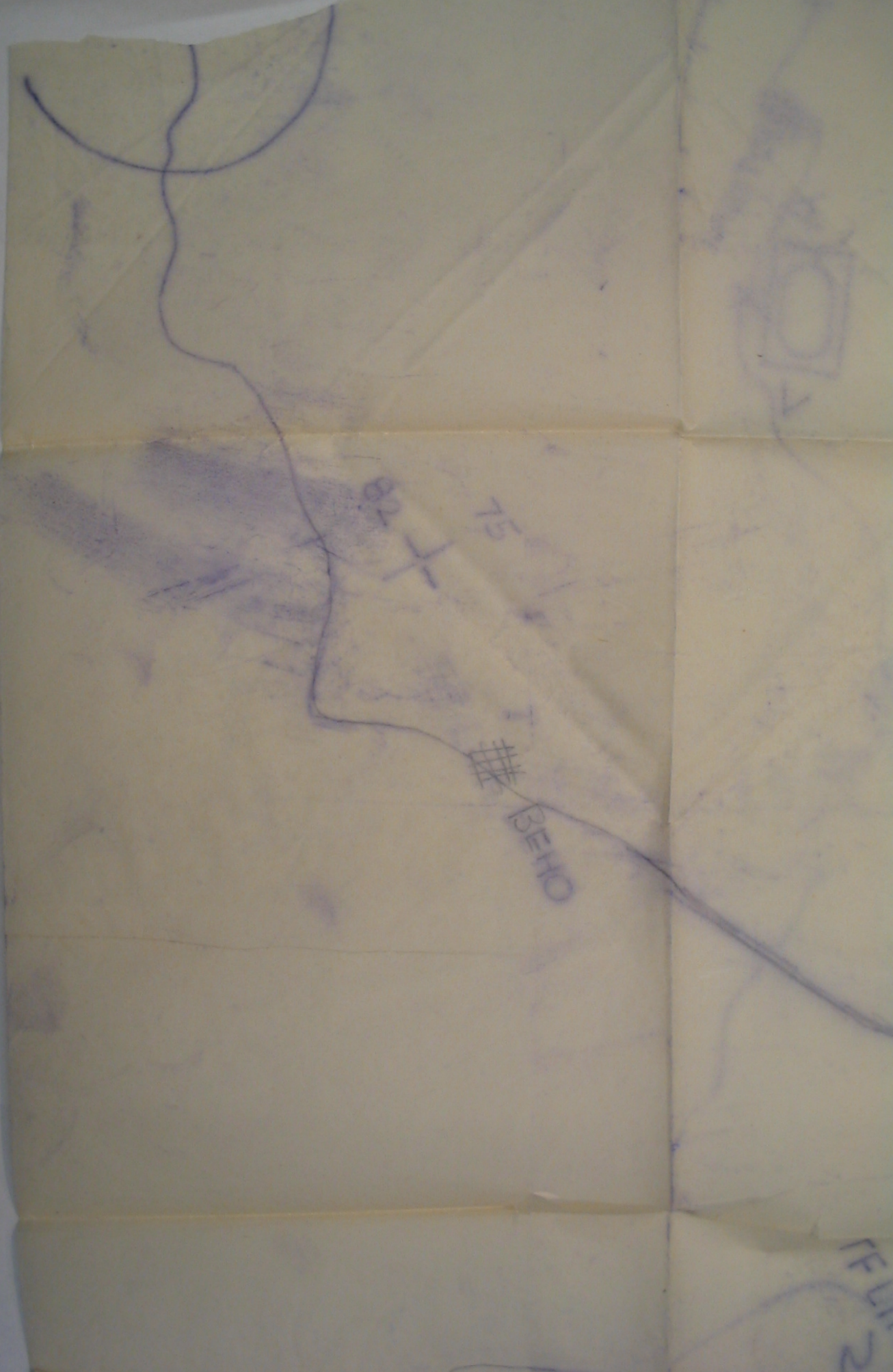
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ADSEY





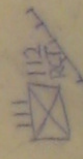
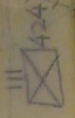
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BEHO

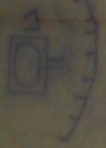
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SITUATION CARBON
 7th AIRBORNE DIVISION
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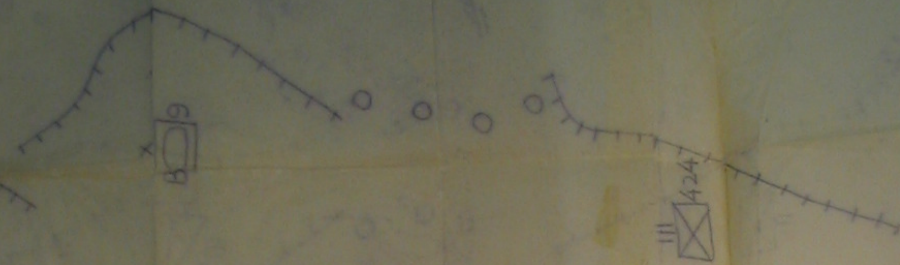


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WILSON

SITUATION, CEN. OREGON
7th AIRBORNE DIVISION
19 JAN 45 Dec. 44.

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Scale: 5000, 5700, 2000,
90 N, 35, 107 N
6505, 1944



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WILSON

SITUATION OVERLAY
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Map Ref:

Scale: 1/25,000

Sheets: 5602, 5702, 5802,
93 N, 93 S, 107 N
GSGS 1414



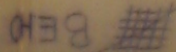


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93N, 93S, 107N
GSGS 1414

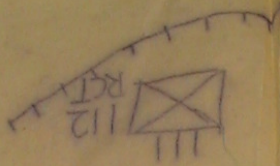
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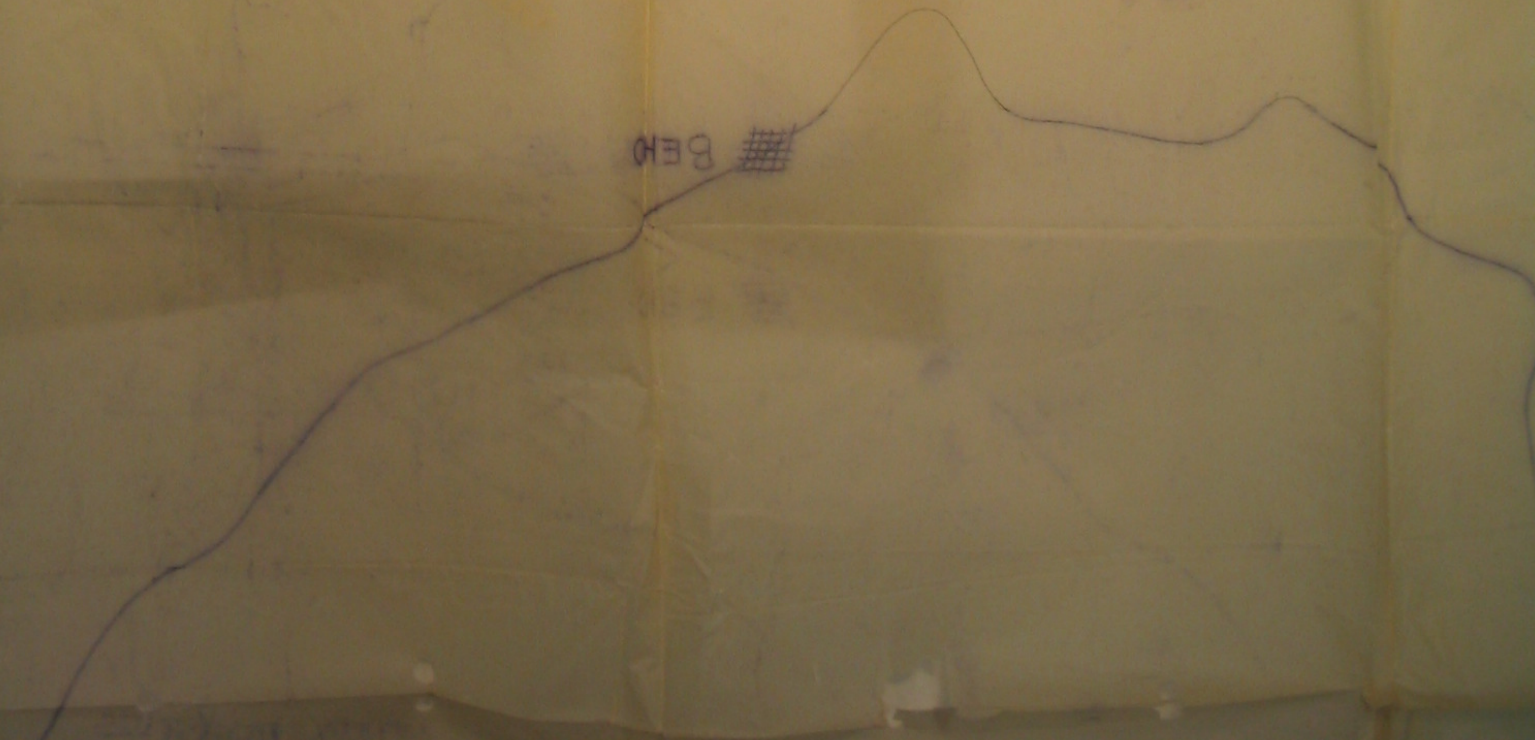

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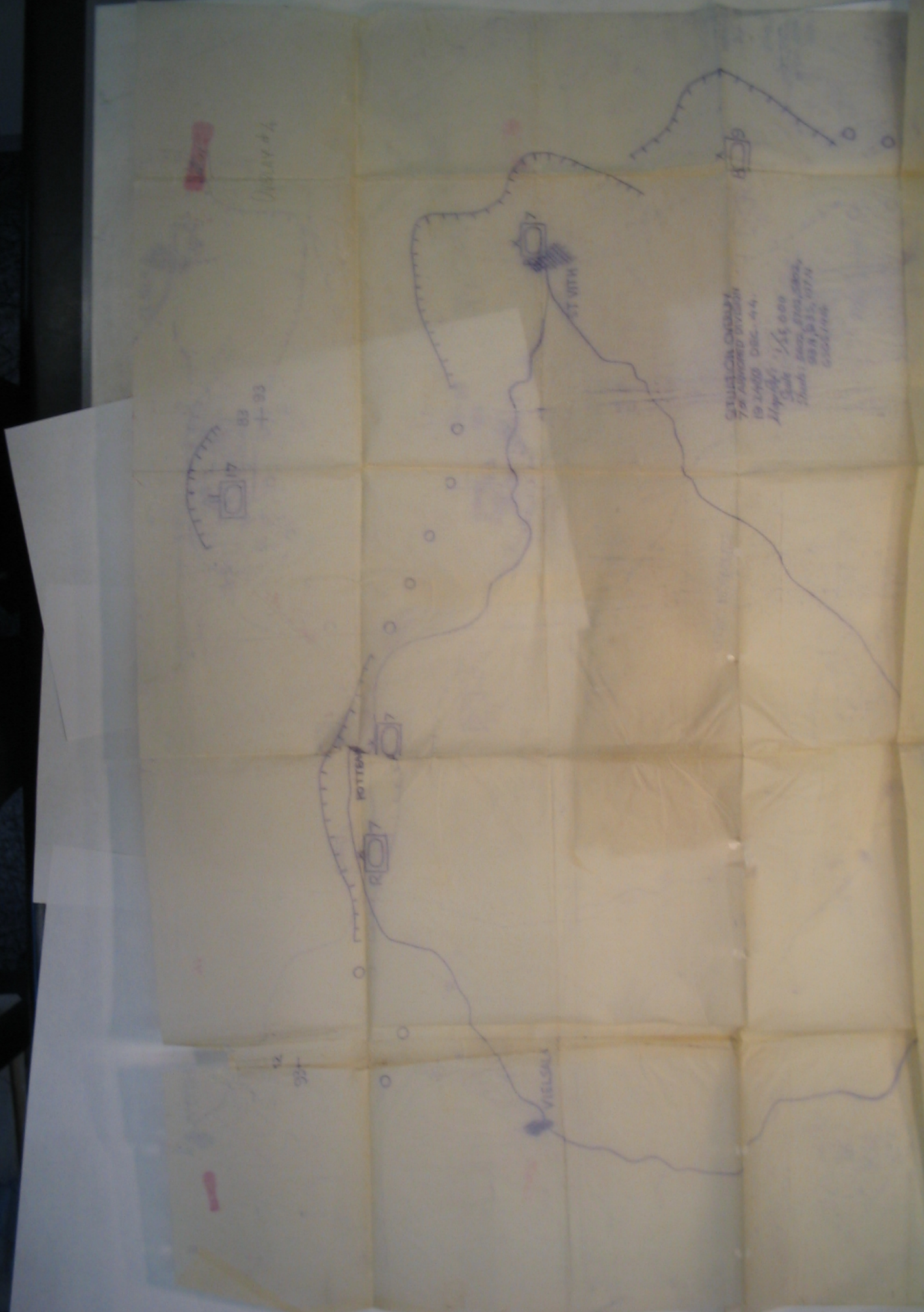


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+ 93

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ST VITH
1944 DEC. 14

Scale: 1:50,000
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POTTEN

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ST VITH

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POTTEN



ST VITH



SITUATION OVERLAY
 7th AIRBORNE DIVISION
 19 JULY 44 DEC. 44.

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 93 N, 93 S, 107 N
 6505/1944

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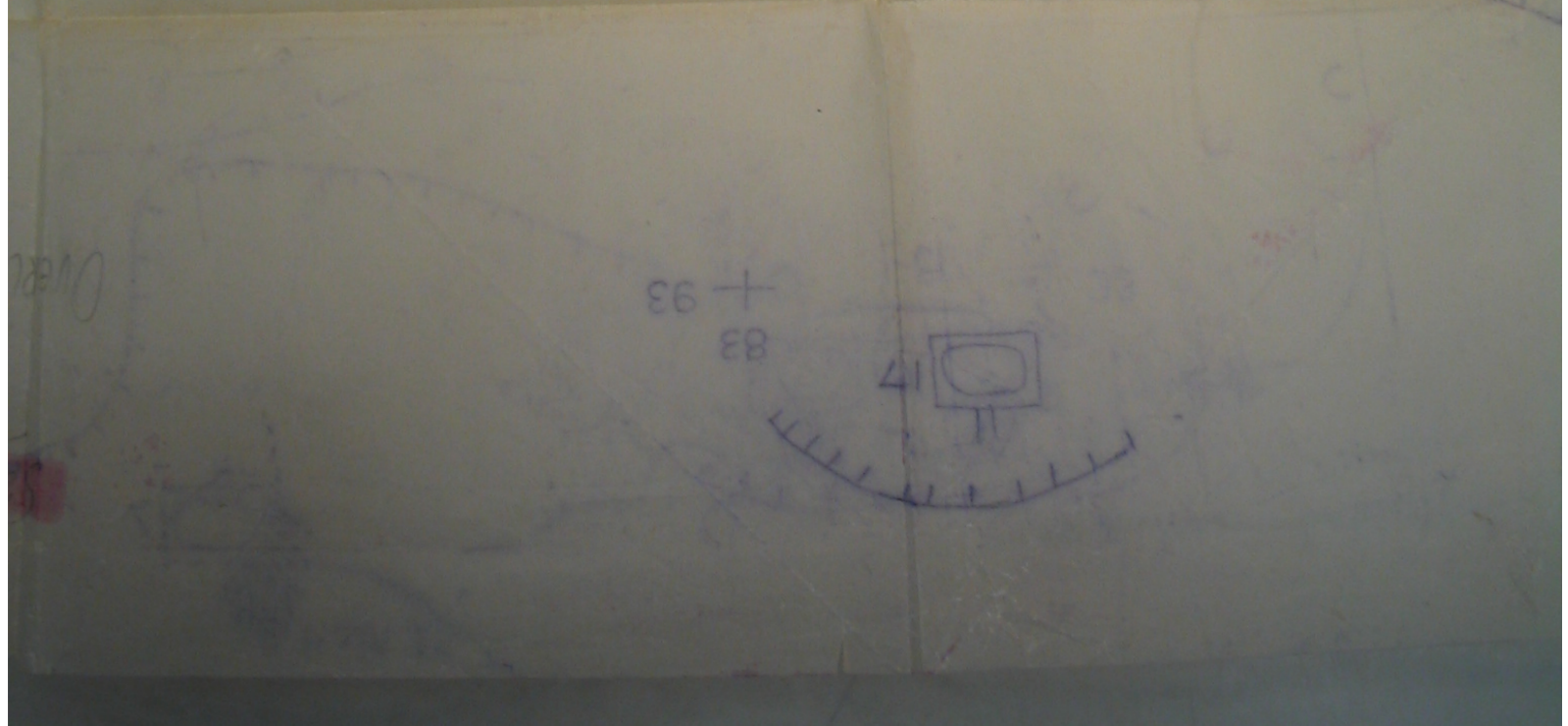
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7th ARMORED DIVISION
19 JAN 49 DEC. 44.
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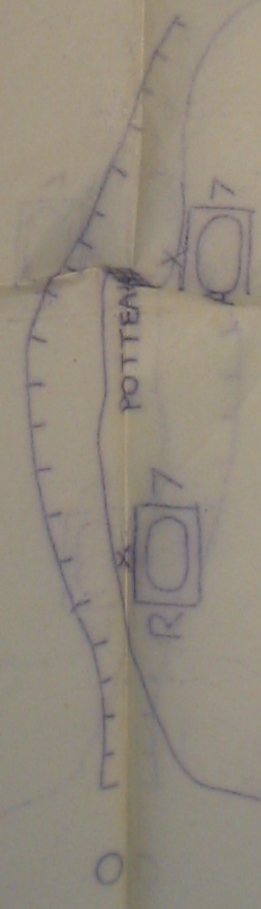


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SITUATION OVERLAY
7th ARMORED DIVISION
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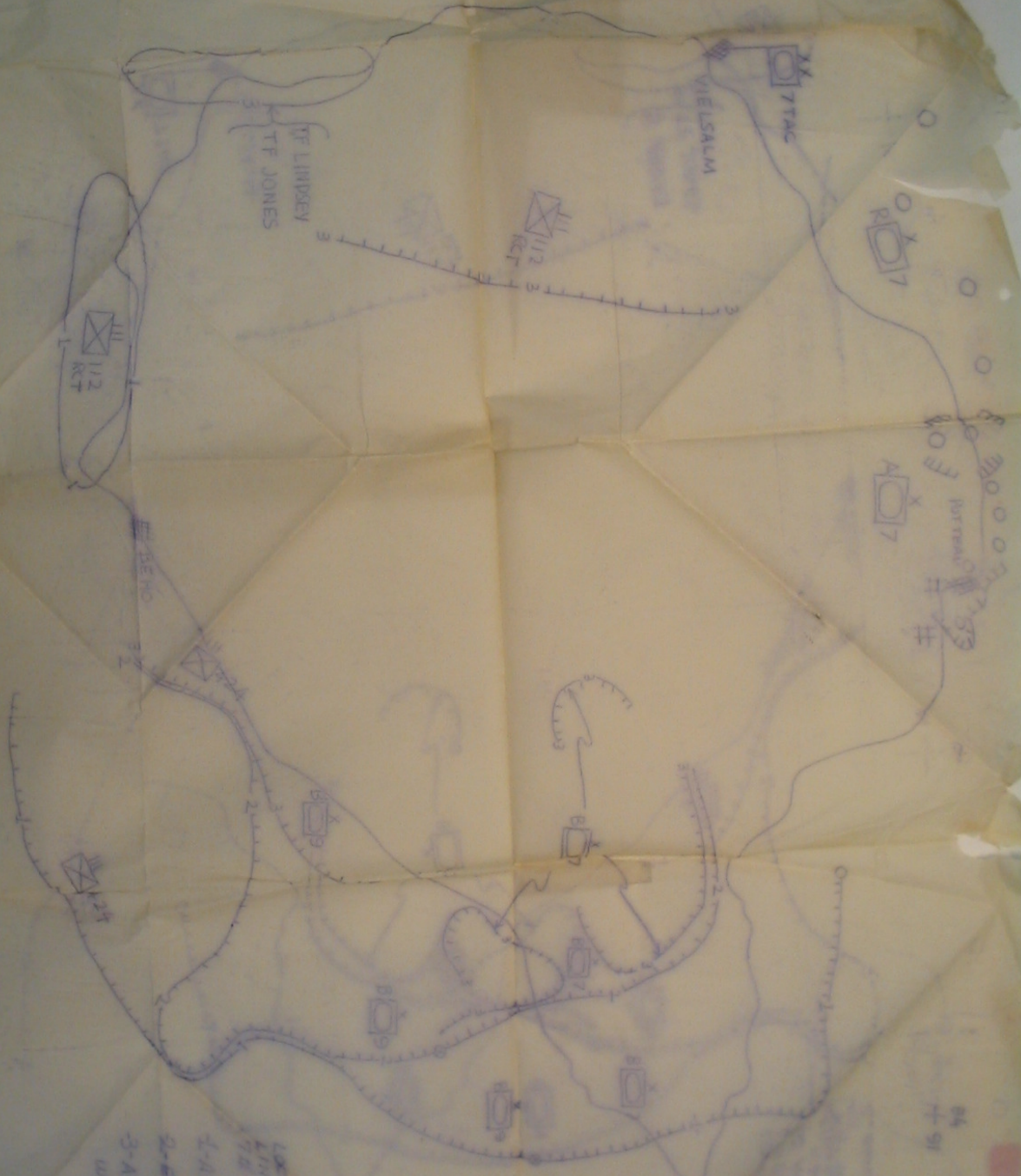
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R107

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TF LINDEY
TF JONES

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R 77AC

R 112
RCT

R 117

R 118

R 124

R 125

R 126

R 127

R 128

R 129

R 130

ST VITH

LOCATION OF SUCCEEDING
LINES OF DEFENSE
BY ARMORED DIVISION
1-AT DAWN 23 DEC.
2-EVENING OF 23 DEC.
3-AT 0700 23 DEC WHEN
WITHDRAWAL BEGAN

91

91

010001/65

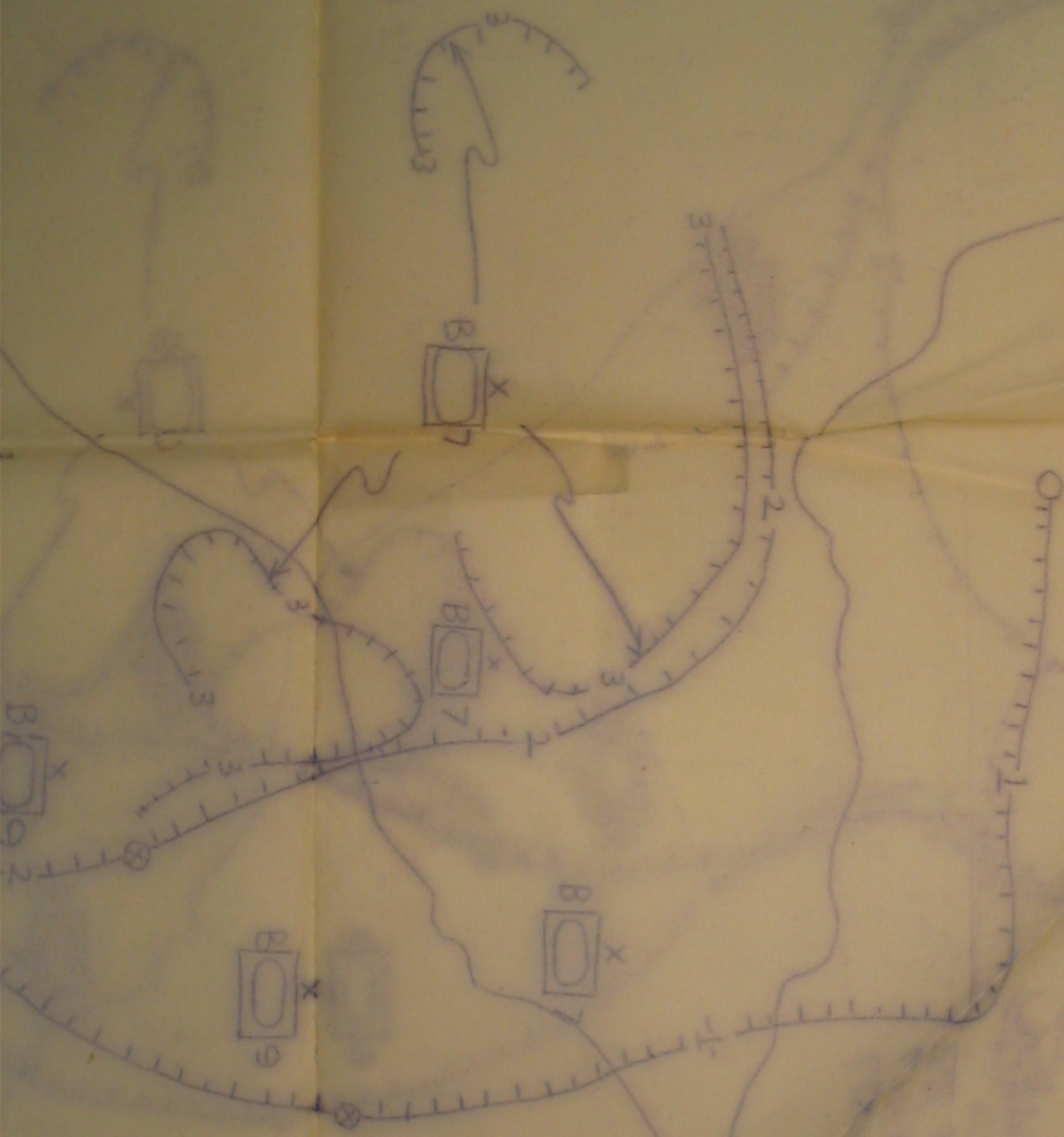


LOCATION of various
 points of interest
 for Army of the
 West
 1862
 ST WILM
 ST WILM
 ST WILM

22 11 14

LOCATION OF SUCCESSIVE
LINES OF DEFENSE
7th ARMORED DIVISION

- 1- AT DAYLIGHT 22 DEC.
- 2- EVENING OF 22 DEC.
- 3- AT 0700 23 DEC WHEN
WITHDRAWAL STARTED



84
+ 91

OVERWAY #6

Secret

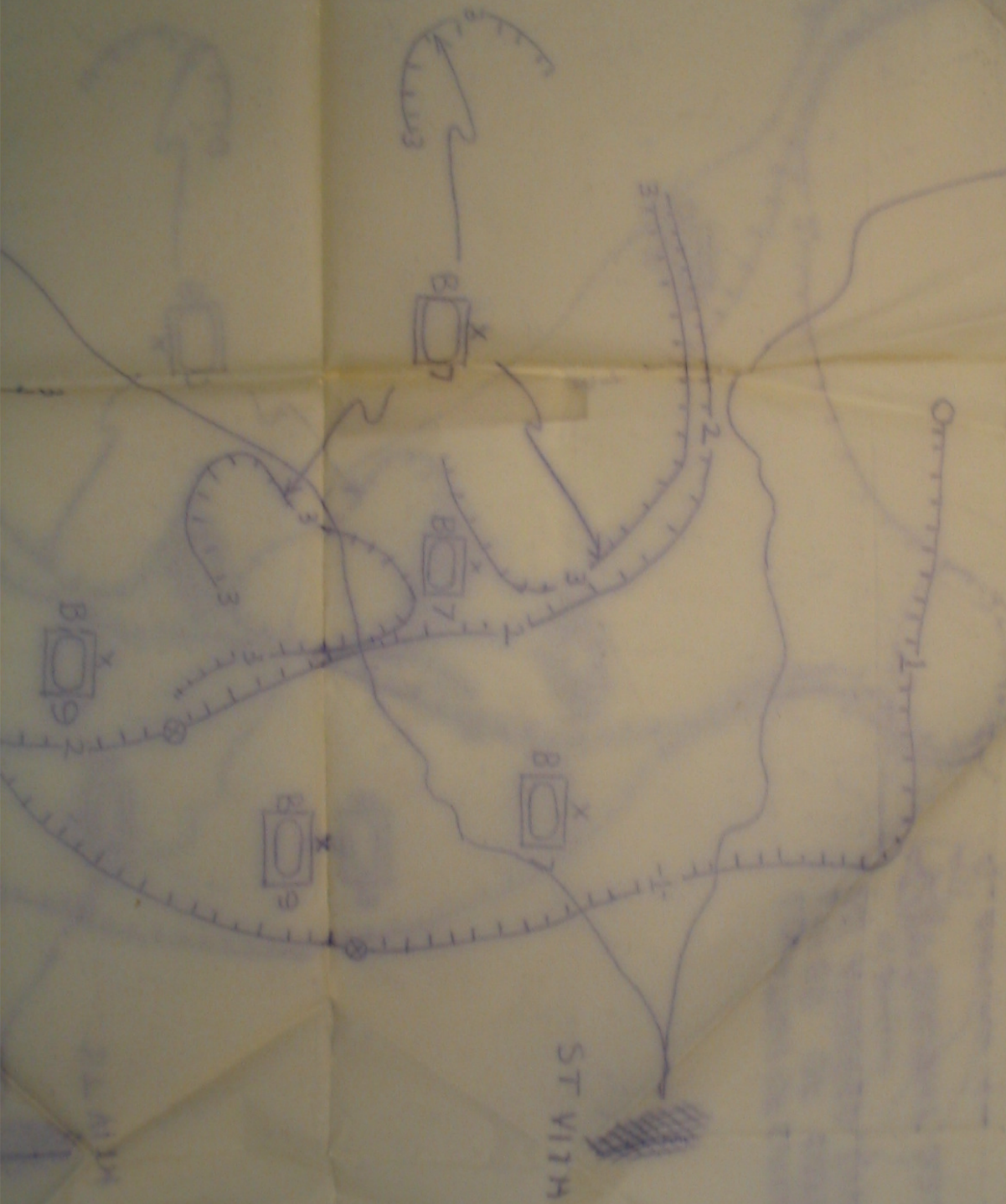
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LOCATION OF SUCCESSIVE
LINES OF DEFENSE
7th ARMORED DIVISION

- 1- AT DAYLIGHT 22 DEC.
- 2- EVENING OF 22 DEC.
- 3- AT 0700 23 DEC WHEN
WITHDRAWAL STARTED

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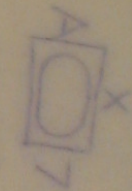
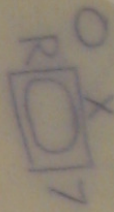
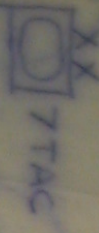


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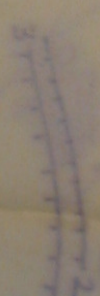
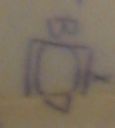
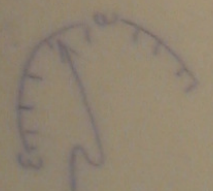
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R 7

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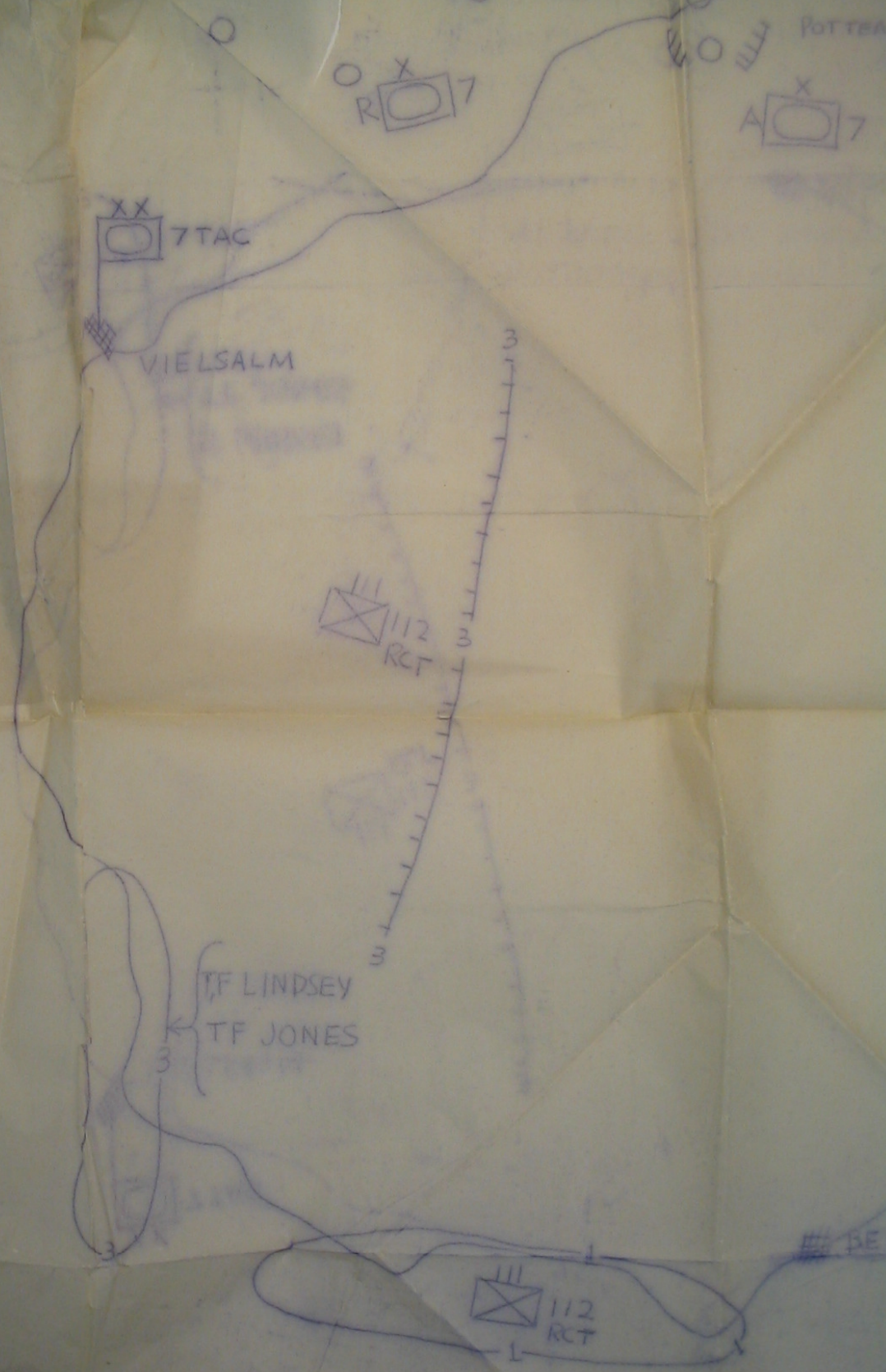
XX
7TAC

VIELSALM

III
112
RCT

TF LINDSEY
TF JONES

III
112
RCT

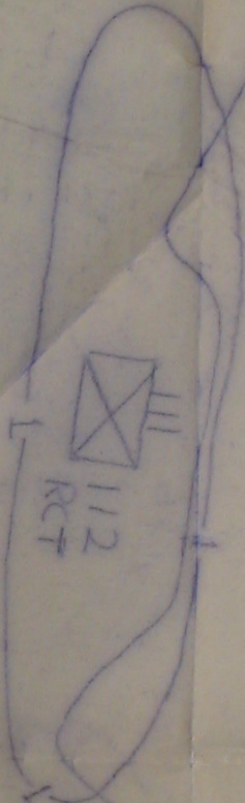
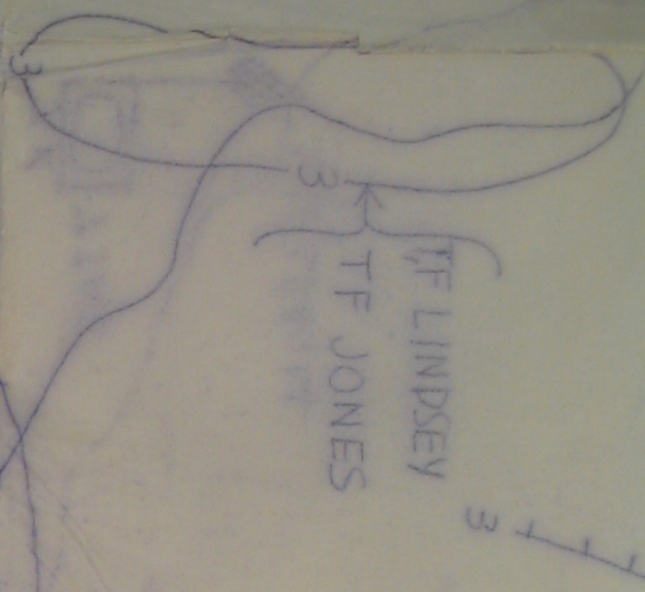
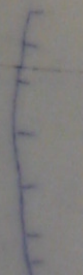


TF LINDSEY
TF JONES

112
RCT

BE HO

2



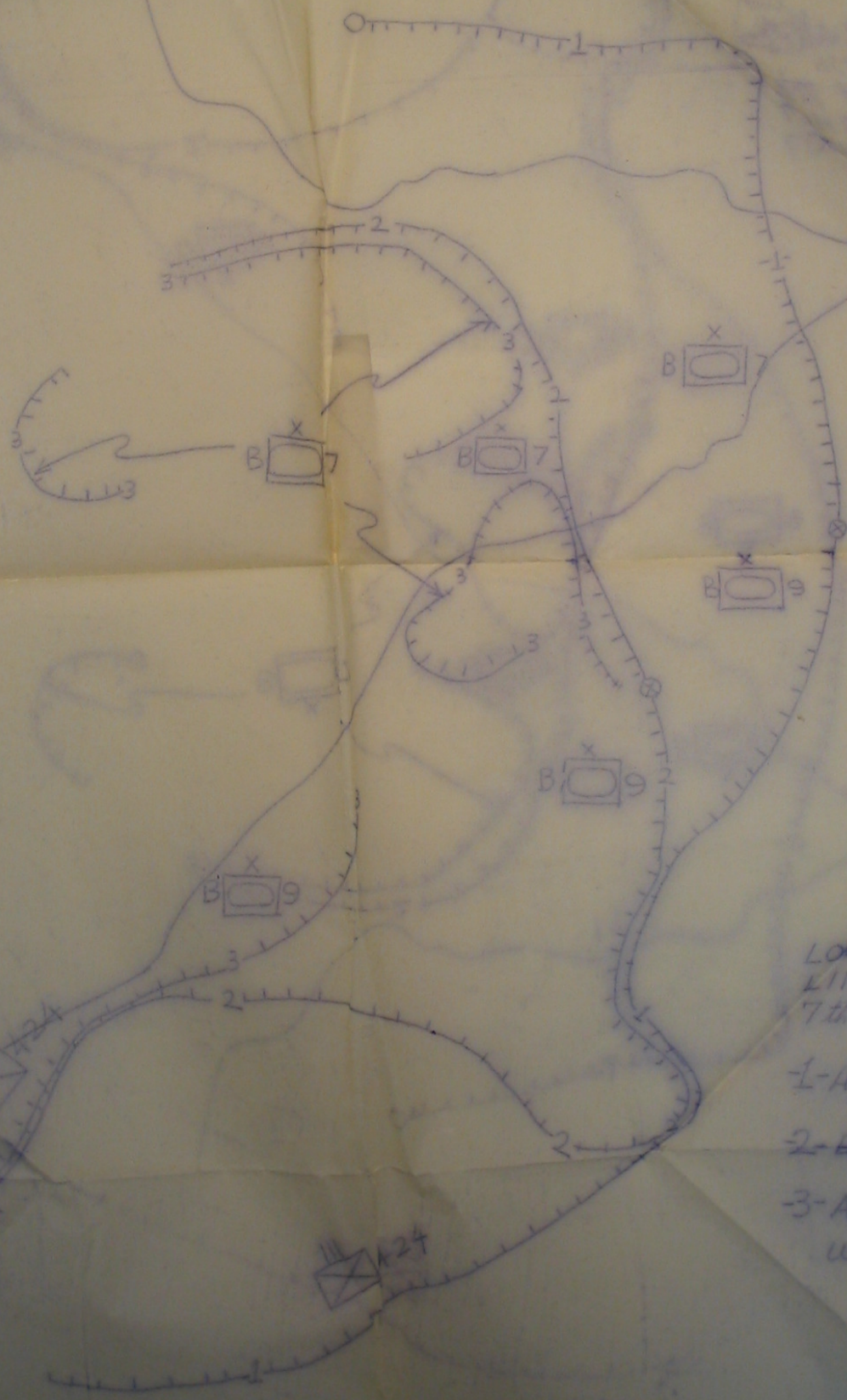


LOCATION OF SUCCESS
 LINES OF DEFENSE
 7th ARMORED DIVISION

1- AT DAYLIGHT
 2- EVENING OF
 3- AT 0700 23
 WITHDRAWAL

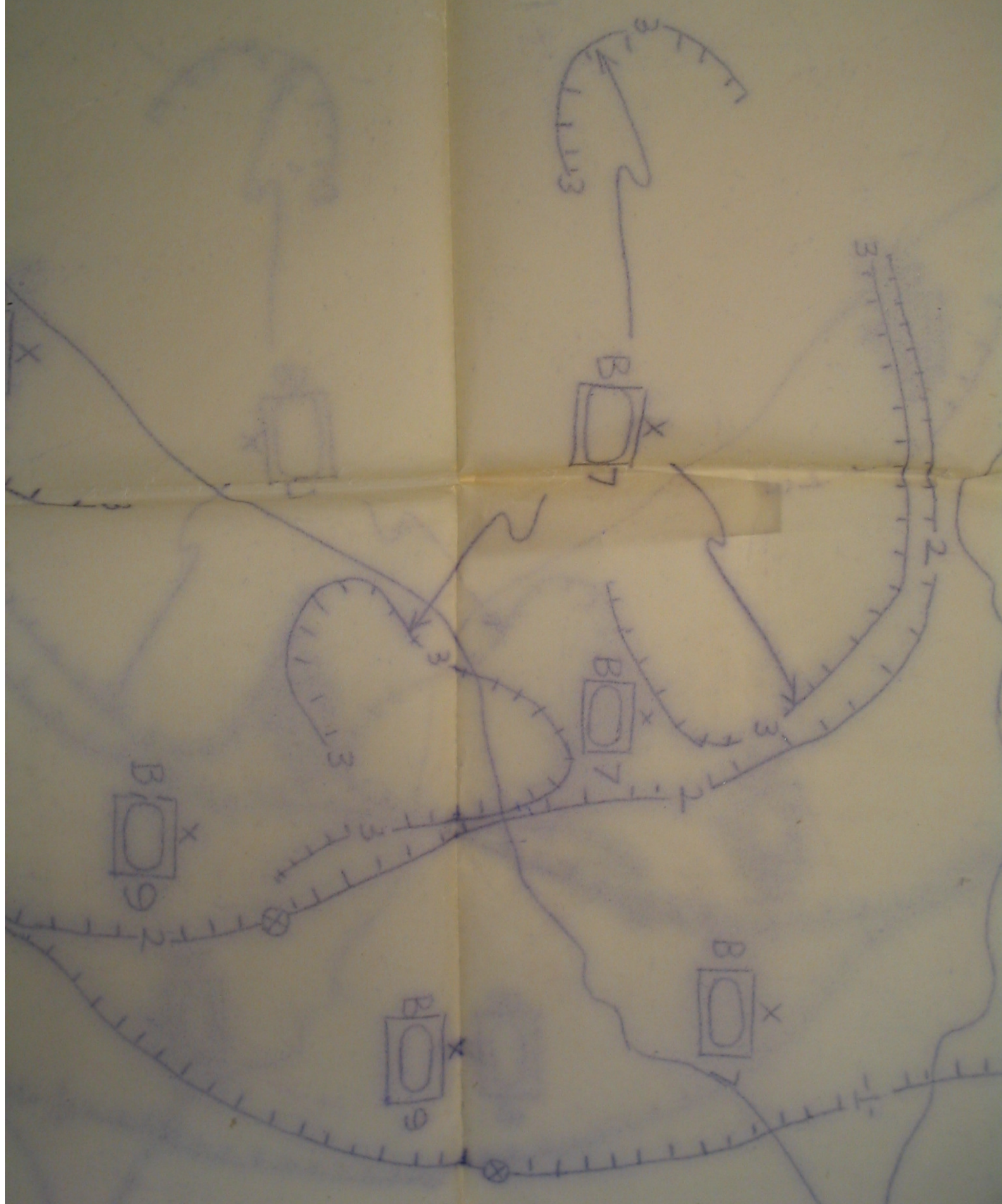
84
+ 91

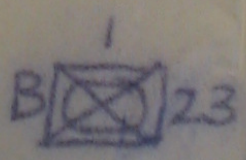
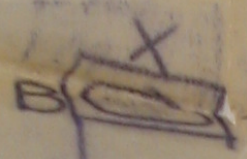
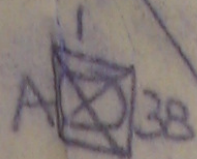
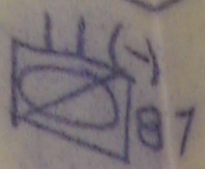
OVERLAY #6



LOCATION OF SUCCESSIVE
LINES OF DEFENSE
7th ARMORED DIVISION

- 1- AT DAYLIGHT 22 DEC.
- 2- EVENING OF 22 DEC.
- 3- AT 0700 23 DEC WHEN
WITHDRAWAL STARTED

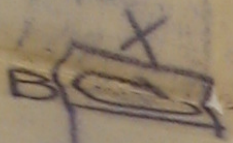
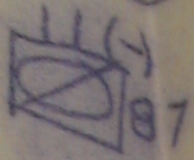




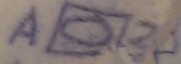
⊗ Contact Pt
CCB-9Δ

STYITH

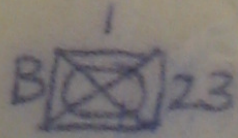




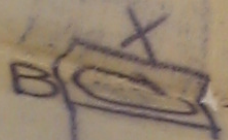
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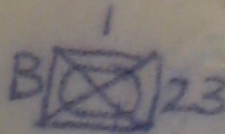
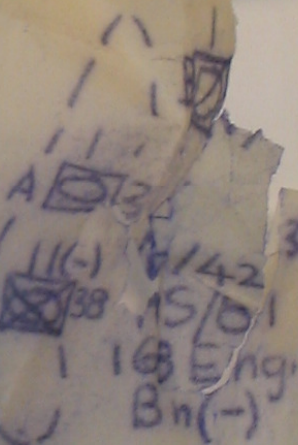
1/42 3
S/O 1
Eng
Bn(-)



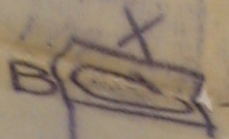
⊗ Contact Pt
CCB-9Δ



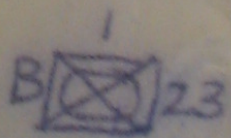
STYITH



⊗ Contact Pt
CCB-9A



STYITH



⊗ Contact Pt
CCB-9A

⊗ Contact Pl
CCB-9A

LOCATION OVERLAY

ADD 17200 DEPT

map key
Scale

1/2000

Sheets: 560, 561, 570, 703

G5644



LOCATION MERRY
 AD 17200 D04
 Scale 1:800
 Sheet: 509 50152 703
 031444

Camp A
 CCR 92

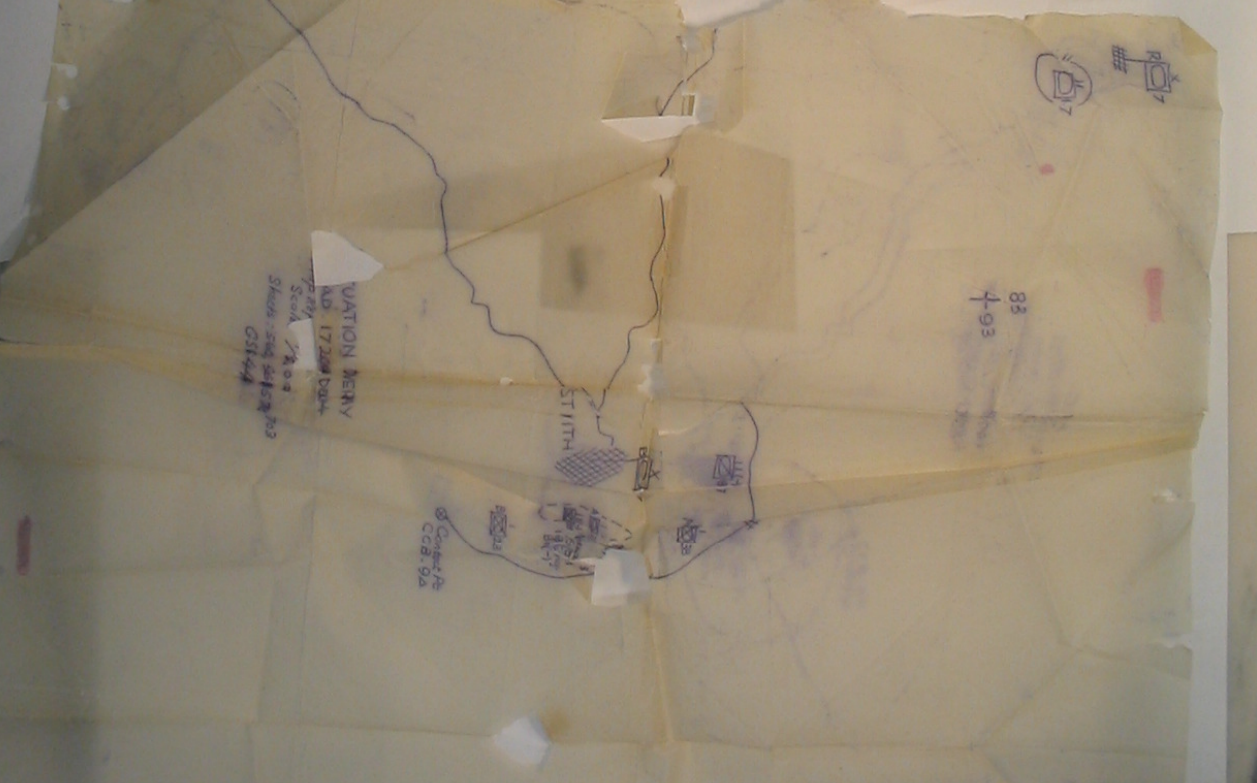


LOCATION MERRY
 AD. 17 200 D-4
 Sep 89
 Sec 4
 1/204
 Shows: 50g 50g 2003
 05144

① Contact
 CCB: 9A



WATSON BERRY
 NO. 17208
 Camp 19
 Sec. 7, 8, 9
 Shun. 200 (153) 00
 0344



VATION MERV
 AD 17200 D04
 Secd 7A04
 Slavs sig 5152703
 G3444

8
 C08.92



A 38

B 23

A 38

11(-) 38

168 Eng
Bn(-)

B 23

Contact Pt
CCB-9Δ

SITUATION OVERAY
172000 DEL 4

STILL



A 38

168
A 38
42 3
15/01
168 Eng
Bn(-)

B 23

Contact Pt
CCB-9Δ

STII

ATION OVERAY
7200 DEL-4



A [Symbol] 38

A [Symbol] 38
15/01
168 Eng
Bn(-)

B [Symbol] 23

Contact Pt
CCB-9A

STII

ION WERAY

A ⊗ 38

B ⊗ 7

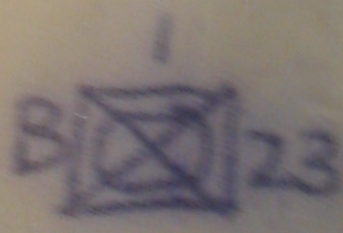
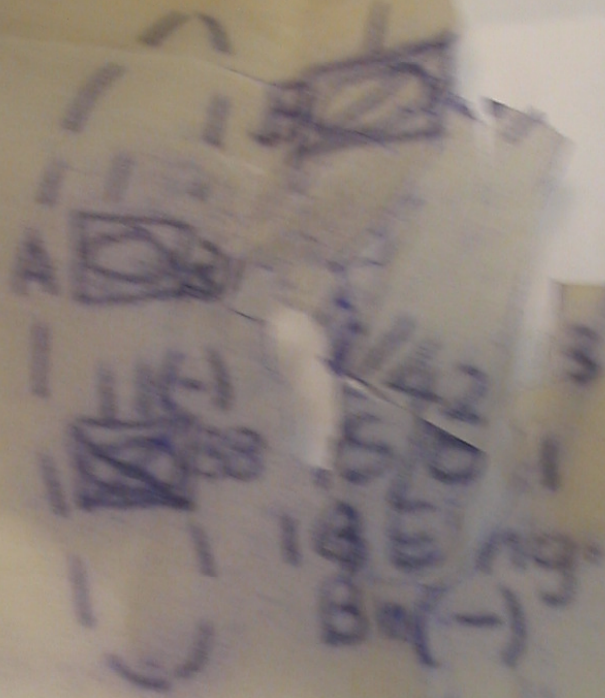
A ⊗ 38
11(-)
168 Eng.
Bn(-)

B ⊗ 23

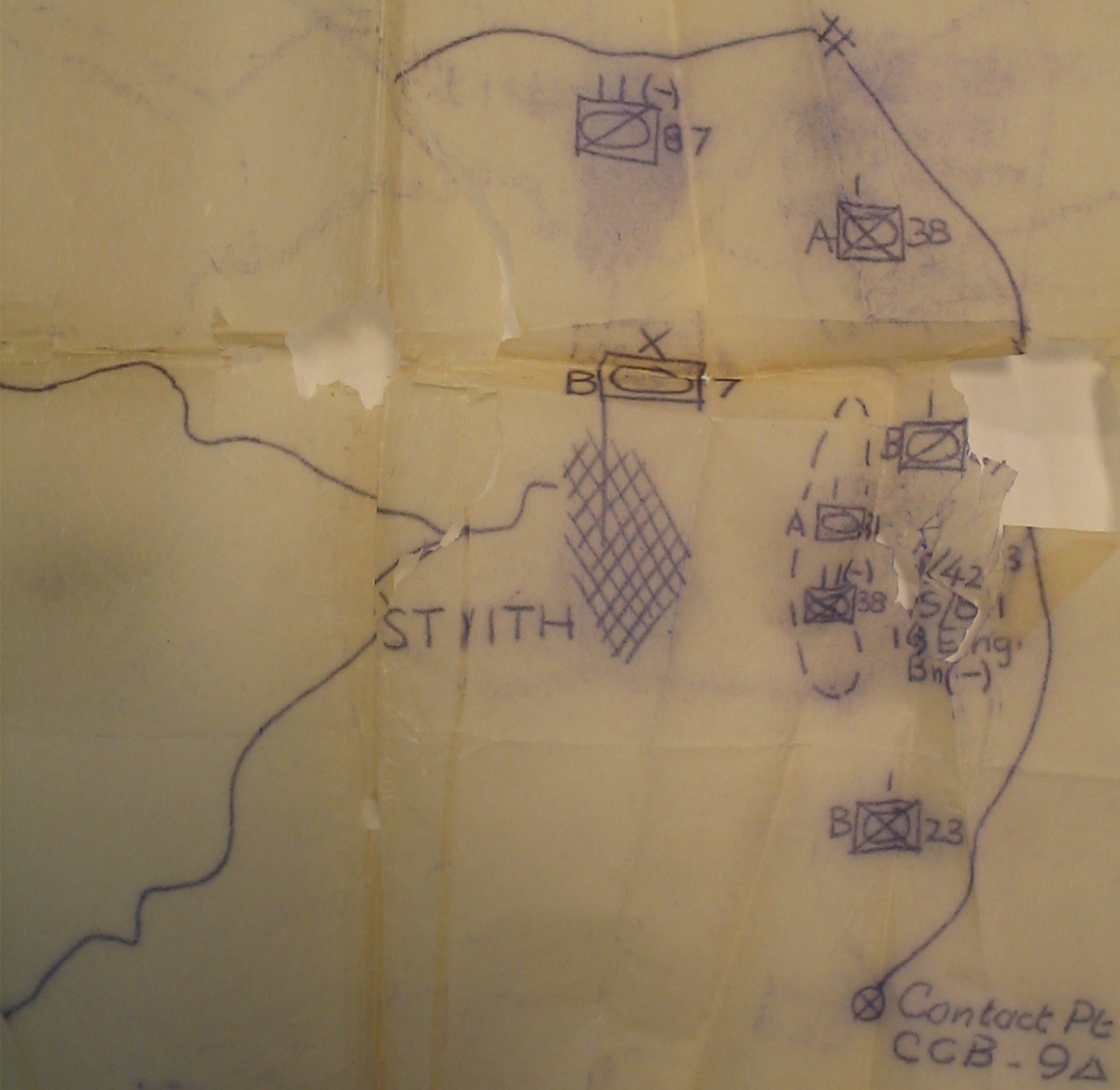
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CCB-9Δ

STII

ATION WERAY

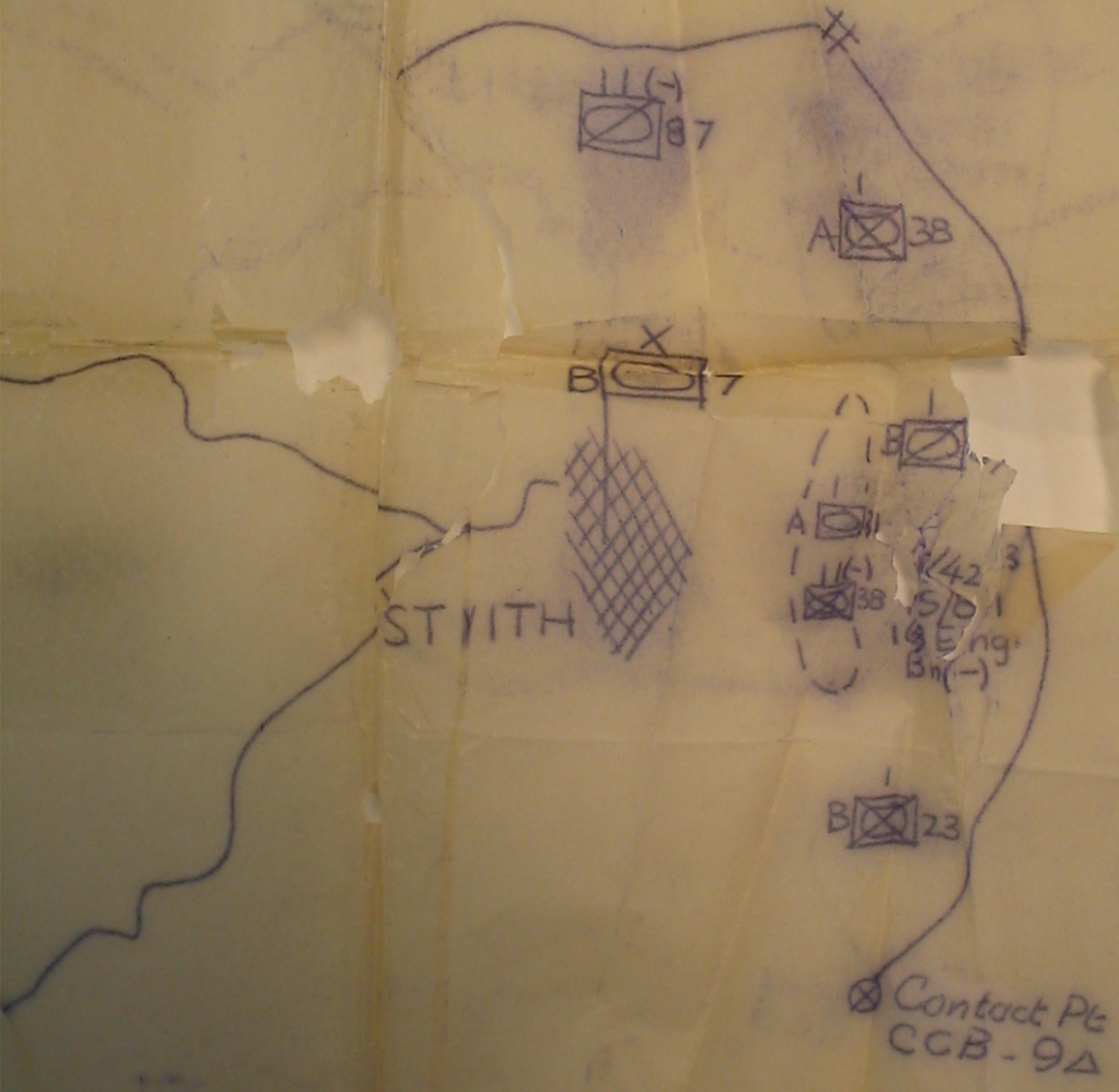


⊗ Contact Pt
CCB-9Δ



SITUATION PERAY
 AD 1720 DELTA

MAP KEY



SITUATION REPLY
 AD 17200 DEL 4

Map Key
 100

1-93
75

POTTEAU



83
4-93

75 - 93

POTTEAU



75
-93

POTTEAU

