

Why did 3 JD relocate from Deelen to Duisburg?

For those who are interested in these matters, it's a well known fact that 3 JD relocated as indicated above on 17 SEP 1944. The *GefStd* of 3 JD (DIOGENES) was located just south of the German airfield Deelen near Arnhem. This was just north of the major drop zones for the gliders and airborne landings of Operation MARKET GARDEN.

On 17 SEP after gliders and paratroopers had landed literally almost on the doorsteps of the bunker, it was evacuated and the staff moved to the prepared alternate command post (*Ausweichgefechtsstand*) in the *FLUKO* at Duisburg, where they were operational the very same evening.

Hitherto I've heard 2 explanations for the rationale behind the evacuation:

1. In his post-war recollections the division commander Maj Gen.. (MG) W. Grabmann has accounted that due to direct attacks, by heavy bombers and fighter-bombers, on the *GefStd*, the telephone lines were all cut, and it was impossible to perform either command or control of the subordinate forces, and it was impossible to compile an air picture. Consequently *I JK* gave the order to evacuation. Fact is that the *GefStd* was never directly attacked, as a matter of fact it was so close to the drop-zone that it was on the allied side of the bomblines – to-day Forward Line own Troops (FLOT). I'll explain a little later why Grabmann may have this recollection.
2. The telephone exchange incl. the *Luftwaffe LV* in downtown Arnhem was destroyed by a stray bomb, rendering all lines inoperative.

If you look at the list of documents available at BAMA you'll find RL 8/186 "3. Jagddivision. Anlage zum KTB band 2. Verlegung von Deelen nach Dortmund b.z.w. Duisburg, 17.09.44". It's the post re-location report drafted by the officer in charge the Operations Officer (*Ia*) of 3 JD a major whose signature I cannot read.

The report states that the re-location for the Battle Staff was PRE-PLANNED for the 17 SEP 1944 to the *FLUKO* in Duisburg, which was the pre-planned alternate command post, albeit it was established 9 SEP that it might not fulfil the minimum operational requirements for a *JD GefStd*.

On 10 SEP an advance party had been dispatched in order to find accommodation in the vicinity of the new *GefStd*. They had succeeded in finding suitable accommodation for the Battle Staff, but the administrative staff and the coms. support units had to be squeezed in at the *Flakkaserne* Dortmund under austere, but sufficient conditions.

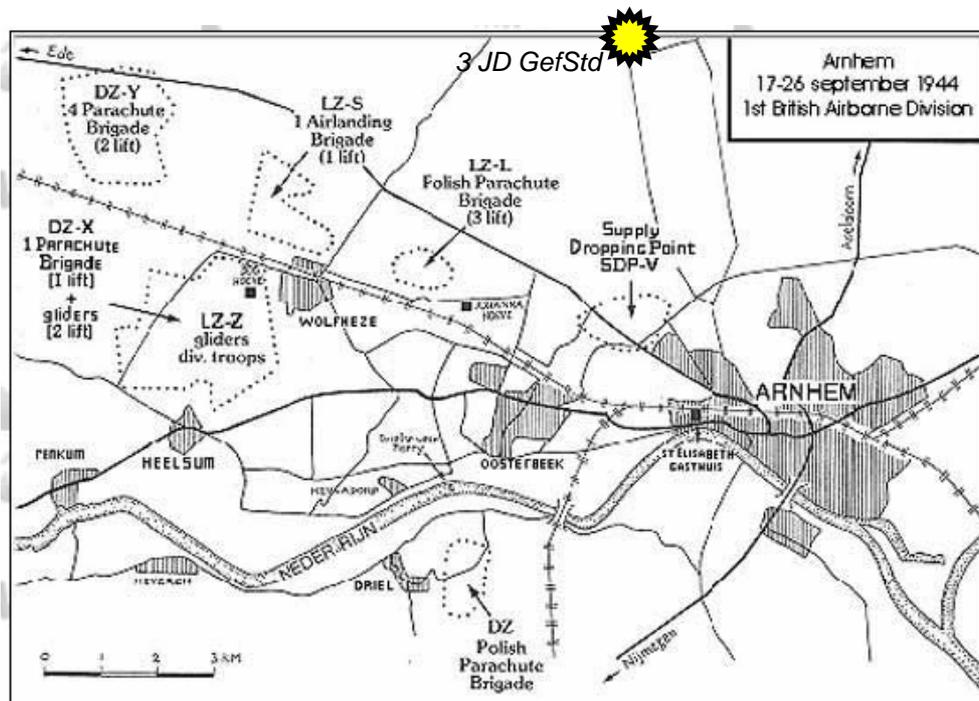
In the period 10 -14 SEP all materiel, documents and files, except those required for a minimum operational capability, was transferred by railroad. The remaining materiel and documents could be transported on one truck, which was on standby.

On 16 SEP 1944 vehicles for road transport of the ENTIRE staff was ready. And the move was ordered to start at 1000 on 17 SEP.

On the evening conference the same night / JK put the already issued movement order for 17 SEP on hold.

On 17 SEP DIOGENES was manned with the minimum Battle Shift. The rest of the personnel were on standby to move. Neither commander of 3 JD nor the *la* were present, but during the morning the *la* was called to the *GefStd*, when a large scale intrusion of aircraft from USAAF and Bomber Command was detected. At 1130 the first bombs hit Deelen airfield and the *Divisions- Dorf* (the housing/BOQ/messing area close to the bunker). These must be stray bombs, since this was on the allied side of the FLOT and it served no useful propose to bomb the *Offiziers Casino*, except maybe to lower the morale.

At 1342 reports filters in of the first glider landings, and subsequently also of para-drops.



The drop zones and 3 JD GefStd.

From this point our good major has his hands full:

- He orders the doctor and his team to report to the bunker.
- He orders the fires in the *Div.Dorf* extinguished.
- He declares a full alert.
- He observes with some alarm a glider land 1 km from his quarters.
- He order all classified (*Geheim and Geheim.Kdos Sachen*) destroyed.
- He orders 2 ground defence coys. to take up a blocking position south of the bunker and hold the position. If this is not possible, they are to fight a delaying action, re-treating in the direction of the bunker.



3 JD GefStd and Div.Dorf area on 19 SEP 1944, very little bombing is visible.

Meanwhile MG Grabmann had been unable to make it to the *GefStd*, since he had been unable to leave the *Div.Dorf* due to constant attacks by allied fighter-bombers. This could explain why Grabmann has a recollection of the bunker being under attack, which was not the case. And when you sit in an airraid shelter there is no way of telling if the bombs coming your way are dropped by a fighter-bomber or a heavy bomber. And frankly I think: You do not care. He finally makes it at 1530 and at 1600 he gives the order for personnel of the division less the minimum battle staff to start the pre-planned road march. At 1615 a total evacuation order is given.

Demolition had been prepared and the 2 1000 kg and 8 500 kg bombs, which had been obtained earlier for the very purpose were placed in the *Kampfraum*. Our *la Major* tells the officer in charge to initiate the demolition, when the first ret berets sticks their head over the nearest hill, whereupon he departs for Duisburg at 1815 hours. The *Kampfraum* was blown up at 1900.

Facts:

- The relocation from Deelen was not an emergency evacuation initiated due an unexpected event. It was a deliberate, planned process initiated a full week before the landings and to be completed by the evacuation of the last personnel on 17 SEP 1944 1000 hours.
- 3 JD moved to a location, which only had the bare necessities for operations and there was insufficient accommodation to be found in the area. The relocation was planned and ordered for some imperative reason.

- 3 *JD* sets the move in motion 10 SEP 1944; there must have been some staffing and deliberations before such a move is made. So the “imperative” must have been there on 8 or 9 SEP.

Now what was it the Germans knew on 8 or 9 SEP?