

## Royal Canadian Dragoons end of April 1944 from the Delfzijl Pocket to Bad Zwischenahn.

Quoting from the Project 44 site:

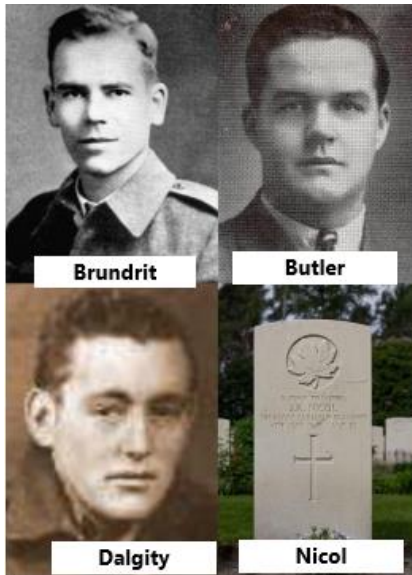
On the 21st of April, "A" Squadron carried out a reconnaissance northwest of Middlestum to interrupt enemy movement toward the evacuation port of Delfzijl. Spijk was reached but was under shell fire from coastal batteries forcing the squadron to return to Sauwerd. By the 22nd, "A" Squadron had completed its task in the northern Netherlands and spent the next three days on maintenance of vehicles in anticipation of a move to join the rest of the RCD in Germany, which they did on the 25th of April. "A" Squadron spent from the 26th to 29th resting and refitting like the rest of the RCD. On 30th of April, the squadron moved from harbour area near Friesoythe to Westerscheps. On the 1st of May the squadron remained at Westerscheps and sent out foot patrols to clear the area to the west and northwest. On the 2nd of May 1945, all squadrons of the RCD, except "A," prepared to return to combat the next day. In preparations for operations a crater in the road had to be repaired while under covering fire. Snipers were silenced by machine gun fire from Staghounds. "B" Squadron then shifted into position for the advance, while "A" Squadron continued patrols in the area, making no contact with the enemy. The war diary noted that "Morale good with a good deal of speculation on a German surrender."



Staghound after being hit by a mine

The 3rd of May saw the RCD commence operations. "B" Squadron moved toward Westerstede. Craters and blocks on the roads were overcome with the use of civilian labour. The squadron encountered elements of the Polish 1st Armoured Division at Westerstede. At a German hospital eleven Allied POWs, including three Canadians, were found. The Squadron harboured for the night at Westerstede. "D" Squadron moved toward Langerbrugge from the town of Altenoythe. The line of advance was heavily mined, which required probing actions on the flank to find a way through. During this movement to the west, enemy troops in well defended positions were encountered. A move further to the west revealed a route free of German troops and mines, allowing objective to be reached. It was at Langerbrugge where the squadron harboured for the night. "C" Squadron was

brought into the concentration area of Rostrup to harbour and saw no action that day. "A" Squadron conducted standing patrols in Godensholt. Eleven POWS were taken on this day without any show of fight. On the 4th of May "B" Squadron was ordered to advance towards the town of Zetel and moved at first light. The main road was found to be cratered, and the squadron switched to a side road advancing further north. Along the way several demolition charges were found, but the wires were cut and the squadron moved on.



Bypassing another crater, the squadron was bracketed by heavy shelling. Continuing the advance, Sgt Edward Brundrit, Trooper Frederick Dalgity, Trooper John Butler, and Trooper John Nicol, of "B" Squadron were all killed when their Staghound hit a sea mine buried in the road. They were the last casualties of the Second World War for the RCD. Following this loss, enemy infantry at a railroad crossing were attacked by the squadron. As the attack was increasing in intensity, word was received that the Polish 1st Armoured Division intended to heavily shell the area, and the attack was called off. The squadron withdrew and harboured for the night. "C" Squadron began the 4th with a push toward Spohle. A crater stalled forward moment and elements of the squadron were fired on by a German anti-tank gun. It caused no damage, and all cars returned the fire as they withdrew. Several other advances were stalled by cratered roads

or heavy German resistance. "C" Squadron ended the day at Linswege. "A" and "D" arrived at Westerstede and spent the day in reserve. During the evening of the 4th, it was announced that hostilities would cease for the RCD and all Canadian units fighting in the Netherlands and northwest Germany. On the 5th of May the war was over for the Dragoons. The 4 were temporarily buried next to where the incident took place and I understand moved to where they now rest in 1949.



Temporary Graves in Germany