SCENARIO: VILLERS-BOCAGE, 13 JUNE 1944

UMPIRES NOTES

Background for Umpires

This is a historical scenario based on the exploits of tank ace Michael Wittmann at the battle of Villers-Bocage on 13 June 1944.

After the D-Day landings the British and Canadians sought to expand their part of the beachhead by pushing inland and taking Caen, one of the original D-Day objectives. Having failed on the most direct approach, by 10 June focus shifted to XXX Corps front facing Panzer Lehr Division defending the Tilly-sur-Seulles area. Initial attacks here made some small gains, but progress was slow. Someone, possibly Erskine, CO of 7th Armoured Division, had the idea that the British could move 7th Armoured Division round the left flank of Panzer Lehr via Villers-Bocage, thereby taking it in the rear and exploiting to high ground that would threaten the road to Caen. There was a known gap beyond the left flank of Panzer Lehr that the Germans had not yet filled. This manoeuvre became known as the 'daring right hook'.

22nd Armoured Brigade led the way. Unfortunately, they were held up at Livry, north-east of Caumont, and Brigadier Hinde decided to leaguer for the night off the road. The advance on Villers-Bocage re-started at 05:30, the British approaching from the west. It was unoccupied by the Germans. In accordance with Hinde's orders, which were to advance as rapidly as possible to make up for lost time, the lead squadron (A Squadron, 4th County of London Yeomanry) sped on without reconnaissance to the high ground at Point 213 2.5km beyond the town. A Company, 1st Rifle Brigade, pushed through Villers-Bocage on the road towards Point 213, but had not reached more than a kilometre or so before they paused, because 4th CLY's commander had called an orders group for A/1RB and A/4CLY platoon and troop leaders at Point 213 to determine their next move.

Unfortunately for the British, their strung-out line of vehicles was adjacent to the assembly area of 2nd Company, 101st schwere SS Panzer Abteilung, led by Michael Wittmann, and only a few kilometres from 1st Company of the same outfit. In addition, Panzer Lehr was not unaware of their exposed left flank, which was due to be covered by 2nd Panzer Division.

This game can be run as an historical demonstration game, or as a competitive game for 2 teams. As the British were surprised, it's important to adhere strictly to communications delays for reports and orders. In addition, we reflect Michael Wittmann's exploits by providing some scenario-specific adjustments to the rules.

For Salute 2018, we are running the game as an historical demonstration game, so our purpose is to show off the Mission Command rules within the bounds of the historical events. We have scripted the first few turns in line with the historical events, using as our main sources George Forty's Battle Zone Normandy book 'Villers Bocage' and Wolfgang Schneider's 'Tigers in Normandy', supplemented by various online and offline resources. Future games can go 'off piste' as desired.

Materials required: General

- Mission Command Reference Manual
- Play aids
- Terrain
- D20s
- Artillery templates
- Chits and markers

Materials required: Germans

- German troops
- German command card
- German briefing sheets
- German Reference Cards for
  - » Tiger 1
  - » German infantry
  - » German infantry heavy weapons
  - » Panzer IVH
  - » Sdkfz 231 armoured car
  - » Hummel

Materials required: British

- British troops
- British command cards (2)
- British briefing sheets
- British Reference Cards for
  - » British infantry
  - » British infantry heavy support
  - » Humber scout car
  - » Cromwell
  - » Cromwell CS

- » Sherman Firefly
- » M3 Half-track
- » Sexton
- » Stuart M5
- » 6-pdr AT gun
- » Jeep
- » Carriers

Players' organisation

British

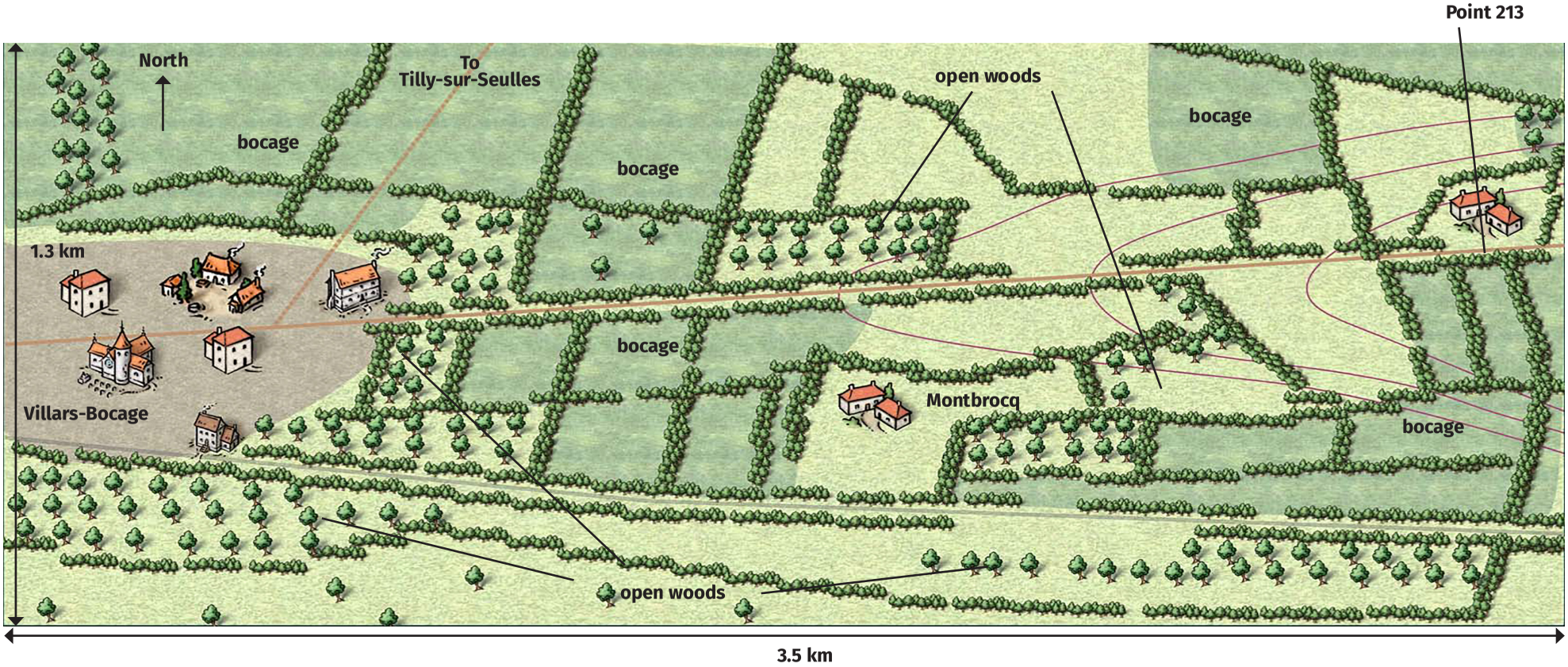
Ideally 2 players, 1 for forces at Point 213, 1 for forces at Villers-Bocage. An extra player can assist these by making sure that reporting and orders delays are kept, and then taking control of 1/7th Queen's Regiment. If playing with multiple players, 1 player can act as C-in-C only after Michael Wittmann's attack has finished and new Regimental Group HQ command has been set up.

Germans

One player can handle all German forces. If extra players are on hand, give 3 separate commands for the Tigers, the Panzer Lehr and 2nd Panzer forces. Do not permit the German players to communicate with one another unless they have elements within 5cm, as they have no radio links betwen the separate forces. If there is only 1 player, enforce this communication restriction by not permitting reactions to events unseen by different forces.

During the game

- Turn 4: 1/101 SS Tiger kompanie (except 1 Tiger) arrives at E end of table. If British are in range, the Tigers may shoot from off-table at <800m range then enter at any part of E edge outside 200m range from any British element.
- Turn 8: Remaining Tiger of 1/101 arrives as above. Both Panzer Lehr groups arrive anywhere along N or E edge of table.
- Turn 13: 2nd Panzer Division groups arrive anywhere along S edge of table.
- Any time from Turn 8 onwards: British can set up a new Regimental Group HQ command. To do this all British command elements except those at Point 213 must carry out an Attach Separated Elements action.
- New British Regimental Group HQ command can order 1/7th Queen's Regiment to enter as reinforcements from W edge of table.



Villers-Bocage scenario: terrain layout

Notes for umpires about Wittmann's attack

The Germans have 2x Tigers – 1 is Wittmann's, the other is the rest of 2nd company (up to 5 tanks, but 2 are damaged).

Specials for Wittmann:

- MW's Tiger is only 1 vehicle, but represented by 1 model, as it's a special circumstance.
- Can fire co-ax HMG and 88 in same shoot action
- Tiger can smash through stationary half-tracks and carriers (1 / turn)

See Command Cards for all the troops. British are all subject to surprise – they're not expecting any Germans at the start.

A/4CLY (County of London Yeomanry) and advance guard HQ group at Point 213. HQ group currently having an ops group, so 4CLY commander, A/4CLY command, and A/1RB command all present.

A/1RB (Rifle Brigade) – main part parked on the road to let other vehicles past. Currently mounted, but stationary (resting!). However, command element with White scout car is at Point 213, so rest of group is separated.

Regimental HQ group minus CO is in the eastern part of Villers-Bocage. But note there's no joint activation here, and CO is at Point 213! At this place are:

- 6-pdrs from support company
- 2x Stuarts
- HQ Cromwell
- Humber scout car
- Attached unarmed Cromwell OP tank for artillery.

All these are technically separated initially as CO is away. British will have to set up a new tactical HQ during the game.

B/4CLY as A. Coming into the western part of the town.

Script for attack by Michael Wittmann

Starts with MW's Tiger at edge of wood by road. 2nd Tiger model behind him.

Turn 1 - German

- MW shoot-then-move. Target: rear of Firefly. KO, then move 20cm down road towards Villers-Bocage.

- 2nd Tiger does 2 Move Once actions to hedge and hull-down position well within 15cm of enemy tanks.

Turn 1 – British

- A/4CLY takes reaction test (-2 element eliminated, -2 under fire from previously unlocated enemy, -2 from rear, -2 no friendly infantry, +2 veteran). Roll: 5 – 6 = -1. Cease fire and retire (cannot communicate) – retires minimum 5cm behind hedges and hull-down at Point 213. Note: Umpire rules that surprise requires only minimum movement, rather than giving option for full movement, especially as their orders require occupying Point 213.

- Other British groups no action (no knowledge of attack), as they're awaiting orders after ops group.

Turn 2 – German

- MW Move Once (only). Closes to < 300m. He cannot be seen by currently unaware A/1RB, but he can see them, as he's on higher part of road.

- 2nd Tiger just shoots. Range under 300m, only needs 4 normally, but -4 v hull-down. Hit and Cromwell with command gone, so A/4CLY now out of command.

Turn 2 - British

- A/1RB no action (still no knowledge of attack).

- A/4CLY reaction test (-4 elements eliminated, -4 out of command, -3 under fire AFV in 15cm, -2 from rear, -2 no friendly infantry, +2 veteran). Moderate roll, say 6-13 = -7 Retreat; almost off table, but reversing and going over obstacles means it's not too far, so still on table.

Turn 3 - German

- MW shoots. 88 AT at lead vehicle. 3 to hit (but MW intends to move so -2 = 5 to hit). Hit. Auto-destroy lead half-track. BR infantry must dismount into road (at least partly) and take suppression (auto) and possibly casualty (12 needed). Then MW 2nd action is to overrun the dismounted infantry and fire both MGs (note: effect of surprise is ruled as no close assault

defence, though even close assault requires 12 (-1 for suppression), then 16 for side armour of 5.

- 2nd Tiger: go into overwatch; situation at Point 213 is effectively stalemated, because both sides have orders to maintain positions and will not be easily visible to each other.

Turn 3 - British

- A/1RB reaction test modifiers: -4 separated, -3 under fire AFV in 15cm, -2 element eliminated, -2 previously unlocated element attacking, -2 in rear (from overrun), -1 suppression, +2 veteran; total -12. They roll high (say, 9) and only cease fire and retire. They move away into the bocage to the side, abandoning vehicles because they cannot turn or back up. Note: the modifiers can be worked out in various ways; some wouldn't call it on the soft vehicles for example. But a result of cease fire and retire or retreat is highly likely, and the former slightly more generous.

- A/4CLY must roll again for reaction test as on retreat status, but still on -4 for losses, -4 no command, -3 retreating, -2 no friendly infantry, -1 friends moving away, +2 veteran, so -12 in total. Roll of 7 – 12 = -5. Still retreat, but no located enemy in sight, so move not required. Still cannot communicate though, as no normal actions available.

Turn 4 - German

- MW: Shoot-then-move. Destroy more vehicles using co-ax MG and main gun, and also Move Once to smash stationary ones.

Turn 4 - British

- A/1RB takes reaction test with lots of minuses; -4 separated, -3 under fire AFV in 15cm, -3 retreating, -2 element eliminated, -2 in rear, -1 suppression, -1 friends moving away, +2 veteran; roll 2-14 = Rout. A/1RB disperses. Umpires note: after Wittmann's attack, historical accounts don't refer to A/1RB again (for example, they don't show up either at Point 213 or in the Villers-Bocage fighting). And 1RB took around 150 casualties during this battle, so it suggests many were scattered and rounded up by Germans in the afternoon.

- A/4CLY continues reaction tests as have retreat status – fortunately they cannot see anyone, so don't have to move. Basically, they keep out of the way. They are effectively out of it.

- Regt Group – do nothing, as not aware yet.

Turn 5 - German

- MW: Shoot-then-move. KO the Stuarts at Tilly road junction, then enter town (Move Once).

Turn 5 - British

- A/1RB gone, except remaining undamaged vehicles.

- Regt Group takes reaction test: passes, but all elements do self-preservation, except HQ, which communicates with B/4CLY (at far edge of town). HQ Cromwell backs off into side street. Note: 6-pounders could set up, but would prefer to get out of the way, as cannot shoot till next turn, and if unlimbered in sight, would be shot at! Note: in the account at least 1 6-pdr was destroyed, but 1 also survived and was used, so in our scale, this counts as not destroyed.

Turn 6 - German

- MW shoot-then-move again. Kills OP tank, as he cannot see HQ Cromwell. This is representative of attack on rear echelon, and they **were** KOed. Then moves further into town, about 10cm.

Turn 6 - British

- Regt Group re-groups. 1 Cromwell moves to get a bead on the Tiger's rear. 6-pdr sets up near Tilly road junction (hidden from MW).

- B/4CLY: Lead Firefly moves up to a hull-down position in the town but cannot see MW for effective fire as it's >5cm. Note: historically, there's some blazing away ineffectively, because no-one can see where the shots land - this represents no effective spotting.

Turn 7 - German

- MW: shoot-then-move again. Arc of fire is 360, so MW can shoot at the unlucky HQ Cromwell behind it – hit and destroyed (of course). Then MW motors back towards Tilly road junction. 6-pounder opportunity fires at it and either gets a lucky shot in the front (15+) or easy one in the side.

Later...

Regt Group HQ and B/4CLY regroup in the town and start to figure out how to try to rescue A/4CLY at Point 213. 1/101 and bits of Panzer Lehr start to arrive to attack Villers-Bocage and to seal off A/4CLY at Point 213.

The rest of the game is how this plays out, with both sides getting reinforcements during the rest of the day.

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BACKGROUND FOR BRITISH

This is a historical scenario based on the exploits of tank ace Michael Wittmann at the battle of Villers-Bocage on 13 June 1944 against 22nd Armoured Brigade. If following the outlines of Michael Wittmann's attack historically (recommended), the British have relatively few decisions early in the game, but their response after the attack provides opportunities for variation from what happened.

For **Salute 2018**, we are running the game as an historical demonstration game, so our purpose is to show off the Mission Command rules within the bounds of the historical events. We have scripted the first few turns in line with the historical events. Future games can go 'off piste' as desired, but for Salute it's a demo rather than a true competition. However, the details of what happened later are somewhat foggy, except that the British ended up withdrawing from Villers-Bocage in the face of strong German pressure.

After the D-Day landings we (the British and Canadians primarily) are seeking to expand our part of the beachhead by pushing inland and taking Caen, one of the original D-Day objectives. Having failed on the most direct approach, by 10 June focus has shifted to XXX Corps front facing Panzer Lehr Division defending the Tilly-sur-Seulles area. Initial attacks here have made some small gains, but progress has been slow. Someone, possibly Erskine, CO of 7th Armoured Division, has had the idea that we could move 7th Armoured Division round the left flank of Panzer Lehr via Villers-Bocage, thereby taking it in the rear and exploiting to high ground that would threaten the road to Caen. There is a known gap beyond the left flank of Panzer Lehr that the Germans have not yet filled.

Our forces, part of 22nd Armoured Brigade lead the way. Unfortunately, we were held up at Livry, north-east of Caumont late yesterday. Our Brigade CO, Brigadier Hinde, decided to leaguer for the night off the road. We re-started the advance on Villers-Bocage at 05:30 this morning, approaching from the west. As far as we can see so far, it's unoccupied by the Germans. Hinde's orders are for our advance guard to get going as rapidly as possible to make up for lost time.

Orders are:

- **4CLY Advance guard group** - occupy Point 213 NE of Villers-Bocage
- **4CLY main group** - occupy Villers-Bocage, then hand over to 1/7 Queen's and move on the Point 213
- **1/7 Queen's** - take over occupation of Villers-Bocage from 4CLY.
- Other units of brigade are securing W and SW of town.
- All artillery units secured to W and available for support.

See the British Command Card for forces, and the map for locations at start of the scenario.

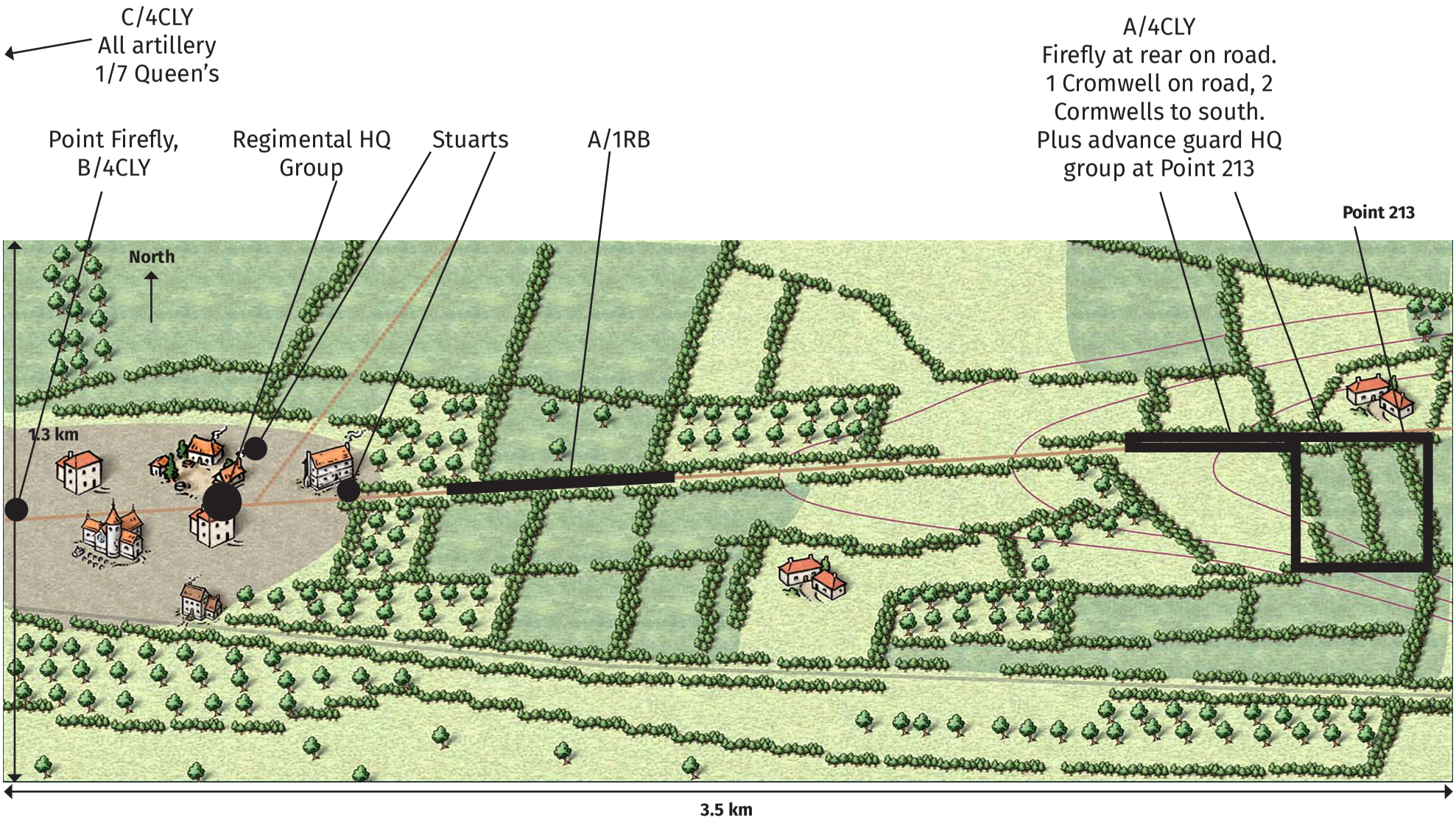
The lead squadron (A Squadron, 4th County of London Yeomanry) has sped on without reconnaissance to the high ground at Point 213 2.5km beyond the town. A Company, 1st Rifle Brigade, pushed through Villers-Bocage on the road towards Point 213, but hasn't reached more than a kilometre or so before they paused, because 4th CLY's commander has called an orders group for A/1RB and A/4CLY officers, including platoon and troop leaders at Point 213 to determine their next move.

British Player Organisation

Ideally 2 players, 1 for forces at Point 213, 1 for forces at Villers-Bocage. An extra player can assist these by making sure that reporting and orders delays are kept, and then taking control of 1/7th Queen's Regiment. If playing with multiple players, 1 player can act as C-in-C only after Michael Wittmann's attack has finished and new Regimental Group HQ command has been set up.

During the game

- Presuming that Wittmann's attack is successful, the British will have no effective Regimental Group command. So...
- ...Any time from Turn 8 onwards: British can set up a new Regimental Group HQ command. To do this all British command elements except those at Point 213 must carry out an Attach Separated Elements action.
- New British Regimental Group HQ command can order 1/7th Queen's Regiment to enter as reinforcements from W edge of table.



British troops start positions

SCENARIO: VILLERS-BOCAGE, 13 JUNE 1944

BACKGROUND FOR GERMANS

This is a historical scenario based on the exploits of tank ace Michael Wittmann at the battle of Villers-Bocage on 13 June 1944 against 22nd Armoured Brigade. If following the outlines of Michael Wittmann's attack historically (recommended), the German actions at the start are scripted, and we recommend they are followed to set the scene for the further actions later. While you can stick to the historical setting for the whole scenario, German actions after the attack provide opportunities for variation from what happened.

For **Salute 2018**, we are running the game as an historical demonstration game, so our purpose is to show off the Mission Command rules within the bounds of the historical events. We have scripted the first few turns in line with the historical events. Future games can go 'off piste' as desired, but for Salute it's a demo rather than a true competition. However, the details of what happened later are somewhat foggy, except that the British ended up withdrawing from Villers-Bocage in the face of strong German pressure.

After the invasion itself we (the Germans) are trying to firm up the front, so that the Allies cannot take Caen, the linch-pin of our position on the eastern side of the Normandy battlefield. We've successfully halted the British and Canadians north of Caen and Tilly-sur-Seulles, with Panzer Lehr Division on the left in front of Tilly-sur-Suelles. Unfortunately, though our right flank is more-or-less secure with at least tenuous contact with 12th SS Panzer Division, our left is in the air. 2nd Panzer Division is hurrying up to fill the gap, but won't be here in force for a couple of days. In the meantime, the Tigers of 101st schwere Panzer Abteilung have moved into the gap just NE of Villers-Bocage.

However, the Tigers have had to move up by too extensive rough road travel, and several vehicles have suffered mechanically as a result. The lead companies (1 and 2) are only at half strength at best; the rest are straggling up.

2/101 was well-camouflaged in a position near Montbroq just off the main road from Villers-Bocage to Caen. Visibility is excellent up on or about 213 down the road towards Villers-Bocage, and even across towards Caen. It's more difficult off the road into the bocage and wooded country.

Our crews had been carrying out maintenance, when soon after 08:00, they heard and then saw a column of British tanks come out of the town and pass them, halting at Point 213. A quick recce showed a further column on the road leaving Villers-Bocage. Michael Wittmann took immediate action, though some of our tanks were not serviceable.

Orders are:

- **Rest of 2/101** - engage the tanks at Point 213 and keep them from linking up with the enemy in Villers-Bocage.
- **1/101** - move as quickly as you can towards Villers-Bocage to support 2/101.
- **Elements of Panzer Lehr** - secure the area to protect the Division's rear; in particular, take Villers-Bocage.
- **2nd Panzer Division** - link up with Panzer Lehr Division in the Villers-Bocage area.

See the German Command Card for forces, and the map for locations at start of the scenario.

Lead tank in 2/101 is Michael Wittmann's tank. He will start by shooting at the rear of the tanks on the road this side of Point 213, then head down to Villers-Bocage, using shoot-and-move as he goes. The other tanks of 2/101 (1 model) will continue to engage the tanks at Point 213. If doing the historical version, see detailed script of the attack.

German Player Organisation

One player can handle all German forces. If extra players are on hand, give 3 separate commands for the Tigers, the Panzer Lehr and 2nd Panzer forces. The German players cannot communicate with one another unless we have elements within 5cm, as we have no radio links betwen the separate forces.

During the game

- Turn 4: 1/101 SS Tiger kompanie (except 1 Tiger) arrives at E end of table. If British are in range, the Tigers may shoot from off-table at <800m range then enter at any part of E edge outside 200m range from any British element.
- Turn 8: Remaining Tiger of 1/101 arrives as above. Both Panzer Lehr groups arrive anywhere along N or E edge of table.
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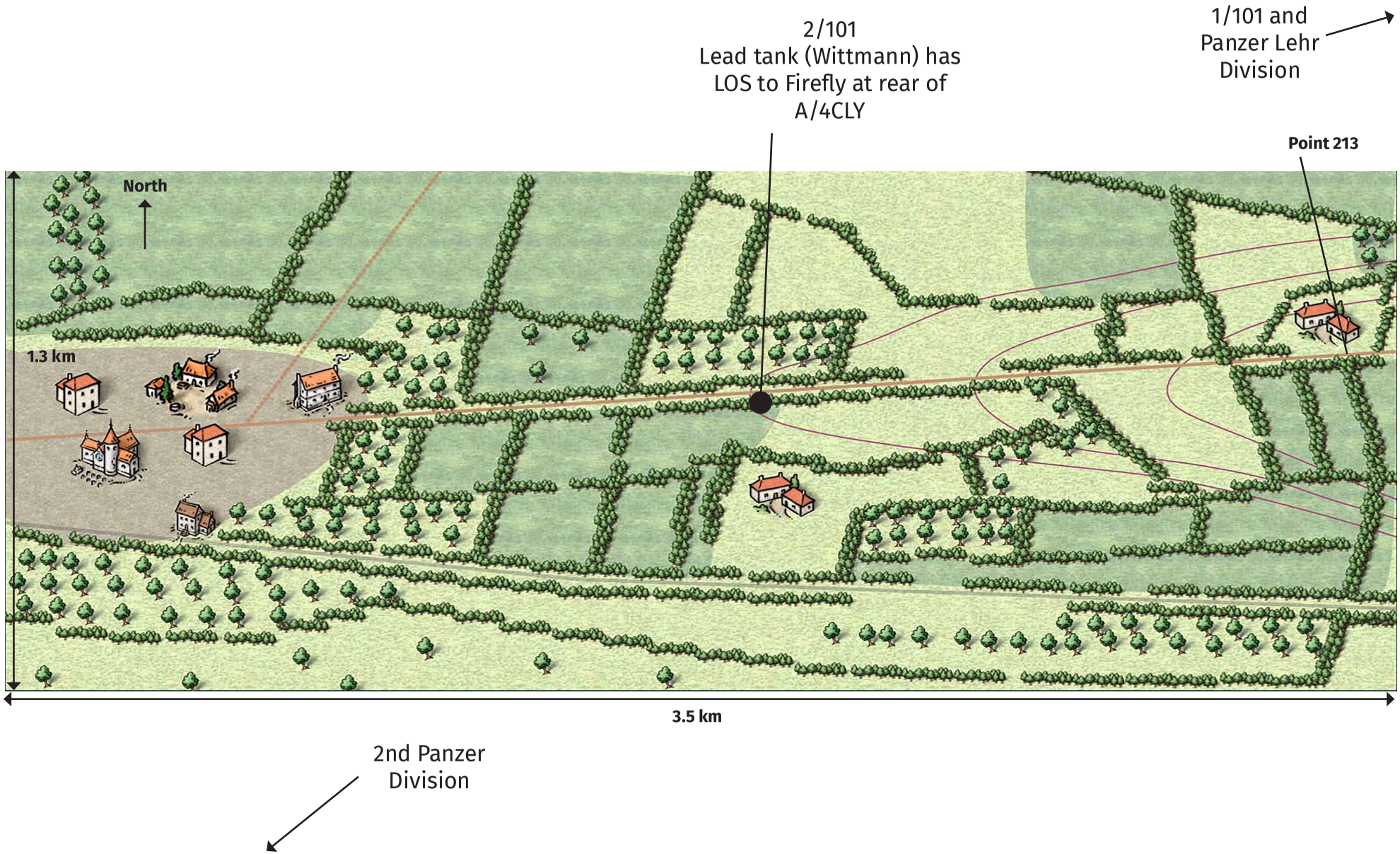

German troops start positions