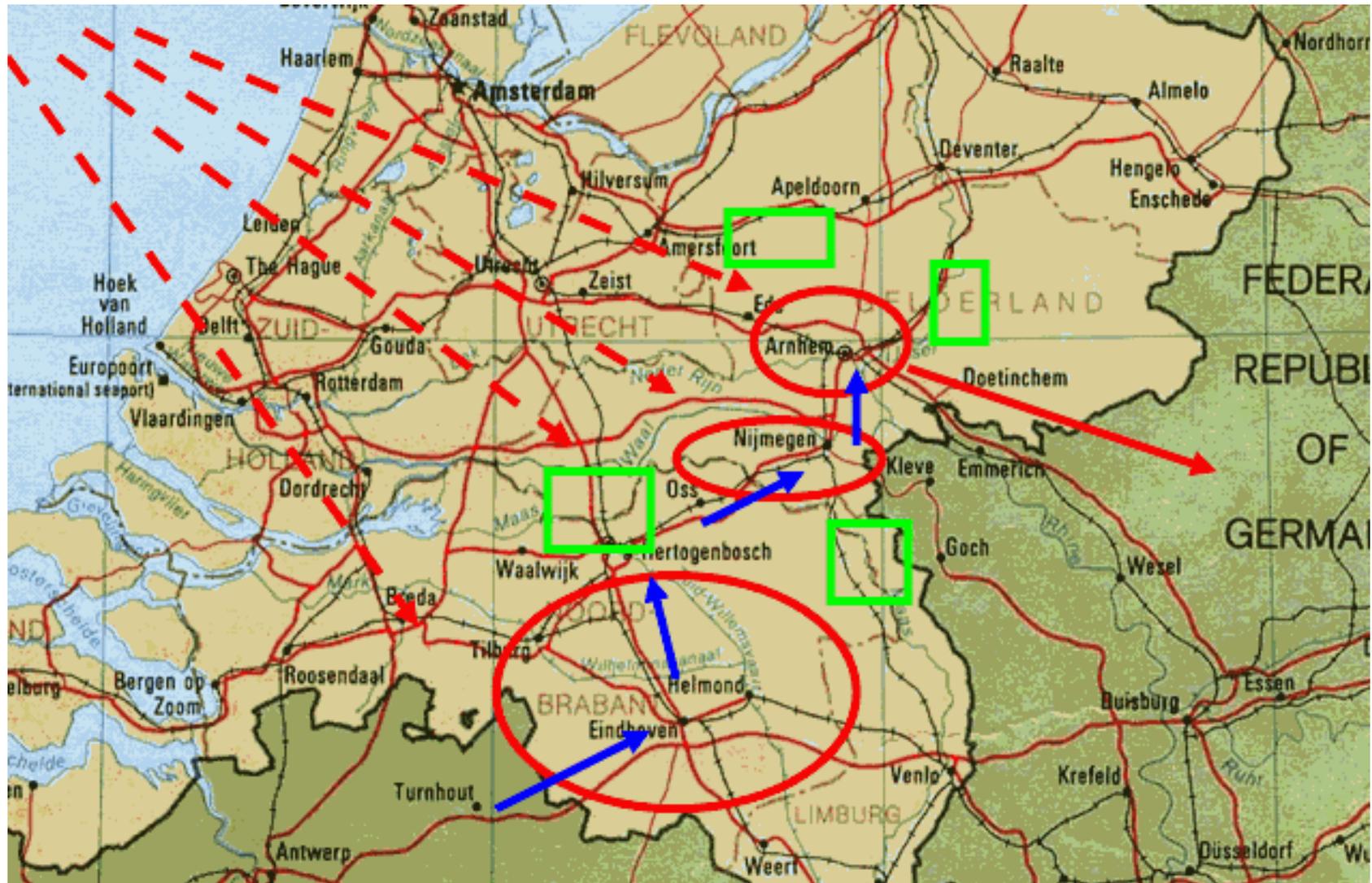


TIME-LINE for OPERATION 'MARKET-GARDEN' – THE BATTLE OF ARNHEM

17–25 SEPTEMBER 1944



Operation **MARKET**:

First Allied Airborne Army, under command of **Lt-Gen L Brereton**, included:

- US XVIII Airborne Corps, comprising: 82nd Airborne Division [Brig.Gen J Gavin]) under command of
 101st Airborne Division [Maj-Gen M Taylor]) Maj-Gen M B Ridgeway
- British 1st Airborne Corps, comprising: 1st, 6th Airborne Divisions [Maj-Gen R Urquhart]) under command of Lt Gen
1st Polish Independent Parachute Brigade) F 'Boy' Browning
 [Maj-Gen Sosabowski])

Operation **GARDEN**:

British XXX Corps, under command of **Lt Gen B Horrocks**

DATE	Details of Action
<p>Sunday 17.09.1944</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gen D Eisenhower, Supreme Commander of Allied Forces in Europe, approves Gen Montgomery's Operation 'Market-Garden'. • All three airborne divisions take off from Central and Eastern England for Holland; they land at Eindhoven, Veghel, Grave and Oosterbeek, as planned, and set about securing objectives. • 101st Airborne Division landing at Eindhoven and Veghel is successful in capturing of bridges. • 82nd Airborne Division landing at Grave is successful in capturing its target bridge. • 1st Airborne parachute and glider troops begin eight-mile advance towards Arnhem road and rail bridges, meeting stiff resistance from Germans who block the advance into Arnhem. • 2nd Battalion Parachute Regiment finds an undefended route into Arnhem, seizes northern end of road bridge spanning the Lower Rhine and, reinforced by other elements of 1st Airborne Division, beats off German attacks. • The Guards Armoured Division (XXX Corps) begins its advance towards Arnhem, along a narrow two-lane road, later to be renamed 'Hell's Highway' but advance is delayed by fierce fighting from German troops.
<p>Monday 18.09.1944</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further landings by 4th Parachute Brigade reinforce 1st Airborne troops. German defences prove too strong, preventing progress. • The Guards Armoured Division links up with 101st Airborne Division, but both are held up by a destroyed bridge at Son – more delays on advance.
<p>Tuesday 19.09.1944</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bad weather forces postponement on 1st Polish Independent Parachute Brigade being dropped to south of Arnhem Bridge. Gliders carrying Brigade's anti-tank guns do take off but, as they are about to land at Arnhem, a major German attack overruns their designated landing zone. Intense enemy fire erupts as gliders land in middle of confused battlefield with German, British and Poles firing at their opponents and each other, and only three anti-tank guns are saved. • Unable to break through, 1st Airborne Division abandons efforts to relieve paratroopers still holding out at the bridge and the survivors of the day's fighting fall back to the village of Oosterbeek. • To the south, XXX Corps, after delay at Son, makes good progress and leading tanks of the Guards Armoured Division arrive at outskirts of Nijmegen in early afternoon to discover that 82nd Airborne Division has not yet secured either the rail or road bridges, as planned. Joint attacks with US paratroopers, supported by British tanks, are launched later in the day, only to be met with continued strong resistance from Germans.

<p>Wednesday 20.09.1944</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan to drop General Sosabowski's brigade later in day at Driel to then cross the Rhine by ferry in order to reinforce 1st Airborne Division positioned at Oosterbeek is postponed for another day. At Arnhem Bridge, position of British defenders worsens as pressure from Germans reduces size of their defensive perimeter and as their casualties mount. At Nijmegen, British tanks and US paratroopers resume their combined attacks; approaches to the southern end of the road bridge are taken and, although under intense fire, US paratroopers link up with British tanks that race across the bridge from the south; German attempts to destroy the bridge fail.
<p>Thursday 21.09.1944</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At Arnhem Bridge, the surviving defenders, exhausted, out of ammunition and totally surrounded, with many dead and wounded, surrender. The 1st Airborne Division is now defending a position around Oosterbeek, but is still in control of part of the northern river bank. The 1st Polish Independent Parachute Brigade finally takes off for Driel in the afternoon, General Sosabowski having been reassured that the Heveadorp Ferry to be used to ferry his men across the Rhine to Oosterbeek is still in British hands. They come under intense anti-craft fire, resulting in the loss of five aircraft with 33 damaged. Casualties are relatively few (five killed and 36 wounded), but General Sosabowski learns that one of his three battalions has been dropped in error at Grave and will have to be transported to Driel by road, reducing his force to 750 men. From the Dutch resistance, General Sosabowski learns that the ferry is now in German hands, and not British hands, as he was led to believe. From General Urquhart's Polish liaison officer, Captain L Zwolanski, who has just swum across the Rhine, he learns that an attempt will be made to ferry the Poles across to Oosterbeek that night. The Poles take up position along the river bank, but efforts by the 1st Airborne Division's engineers to improvise rafts fails, so the Poles return to their original positions around Diel and dig in. The Germans divert troops and tanks from the Oosterbeek siege to move south across the river to attack the Poles, but the wet, ditch-bisected area which the Poles occupy is unsuitable for armour, and the planned attack fails. It does however relieve pressure for a time along the 1st Airborne defensive perimeter. A summary of the situation of the 1st Polish Independent Parachute Brigade: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The main body of the Brigade remains south of the river. The anti-tank battery with other units is already fighting alongside the 1st British Airborne Division on the northern bank. 1/3 of the Brigade is returned to England on the orders received. A group with ammunition and other vital equipment is still in Eindhoven. A further element including 75mm Light Battery is still in England awaiting orders.
<p>Friday 22.09.1944</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> British forces from the Guards Armoured and the 43rd Wessex Infantry divisions move out of the Nijmegen bridgehead to link up with the Poles at Driel with the intention of crossing some of the Polish paratroopers across the river, but a lack of suitable boats means that only 52 Poles from the 8th Company make it to the British positions around Oosterbeek.
<p>Saturday 23.09.1944</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Another attempt is made on night of 23 but is detected by the Germans. Although some 250 Poles, mainly from the 3rd Battalion cross the river, only 153 make it into the 1st Airborne's perimeter.
<p>Sunday 24.09.1944</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A further attempt to reinforce the Oosterbeek perimeter is planned for night of 24 by the 4th Battalion, the Dorsetshire Regiment and the 1st Polish Independent Parachute Brigade (which has been brought up by truck from Nijmegen) but, due to shortage of assault boats, the Polish crossing is cancelled. The attack by the Dorsets fails with very heavy casualties.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Following the failure to reinforce the Oosterbeek position, the decision is taken to withdraw the 1st Airborne Division back across the river the next night in Operation BERLIN.
<p>Monday 25.09.1944</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At Arnhem, some 6,000 Allied soldiers are taken prisoners by the Germans. A further 1,000 lay dead from the fighting. In Operation BERLIN, the Oosterbeek positions are silently evacuated; the surviving paratroopers are ferried back across the river. Operation MARKET-GARDEN is at an end. The survivors of the 1st Airborne Division are airlifted back to England. The Poles march back the 14 miles to Nijmegen where they spend the following ten days on guard and patrolling duties before also returning to England. 82nd and 101st Airborne Divisions remain in action in the front line in Holland, to be withdrawn in the second half of November.
	<p>As a result of being unfairly blamed for some of the failures of MARKET-GARDEN and, following allegations of insubordination, the Polish General Staff was forced to remove Sosabowski as the commanding officer of his brigade on 27 December 1944.</p> <p>Post war General Sosabowski, together with his wife and son settled in the United Kingdom where he worked at the CAV Electrics assembly plant in Acton. General Sosabowski passed away on 25 September 1967. In 1969, his remains were returned to Poland and re-interred in the Powazki Military Cemetery in Warsaw.</p> <p>On 23 June 1977, a film was released in the UK called "A Bridge Too Far" which told the story of Operation Market Garden. The actor, Gene Hackman, played the part of Major-General Stanisław Sosabowski.</p>

