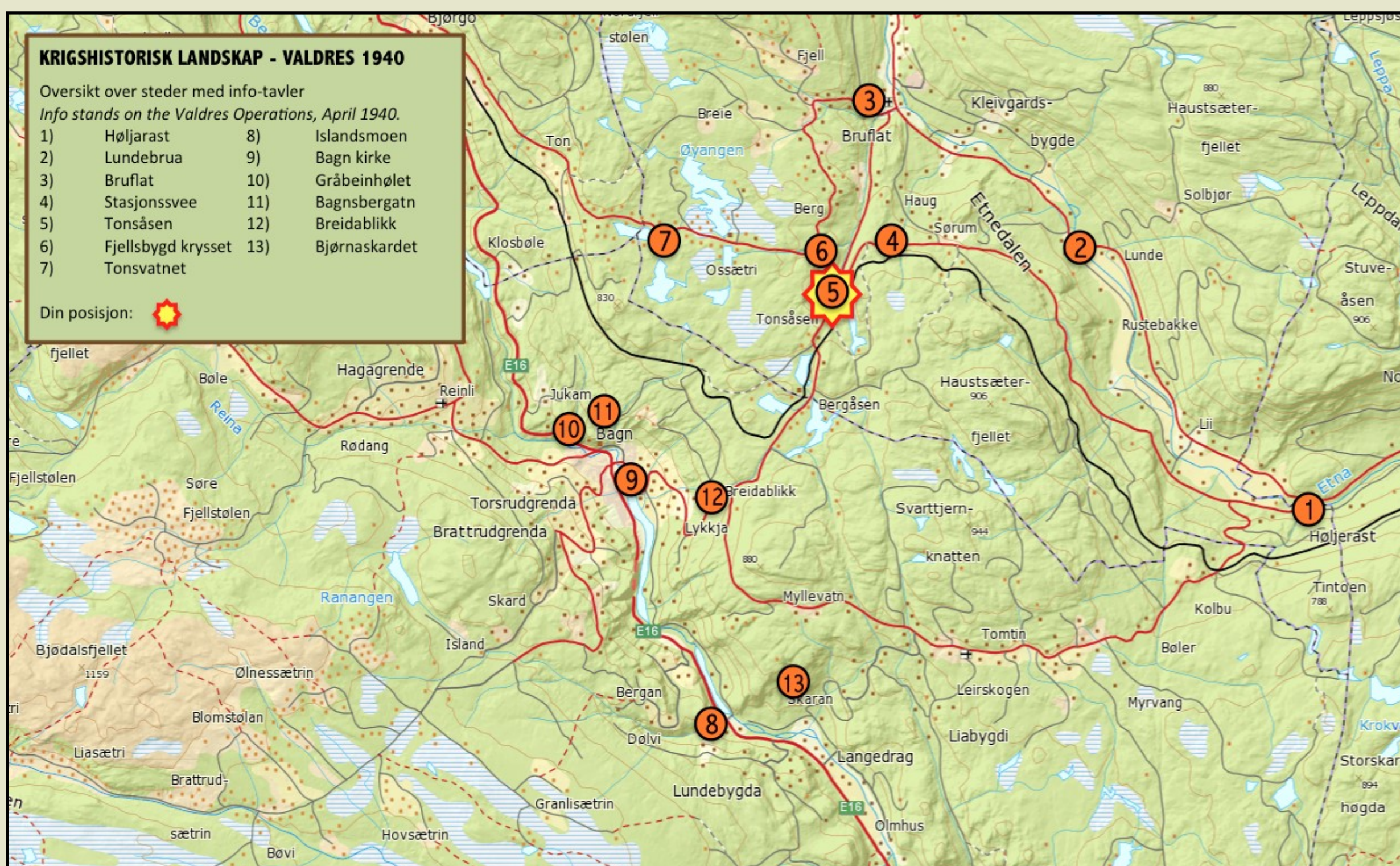


1. Korporal Magnus Haugom. Født 27. juli 1912 i Brandbu. Lagfører i tropp 2, Kp 3, Landvern bataljon nr.6. Falt i kamp under skipatrueljen Olstads angrep om morgenen, torsdag 25. april 1940.
2. Menig Harald Georg Halvorsen. Født 28. september 1912 i Oslo. Geværmann i tropp 2, Kompani 3, Landvern bataljon nr.6. Falt i kamp torsdag 25. april 1940, på formiddagen.
3. Menig Gunnar Hanssen. Født 15. desember 1905 i Nedre Eiker. Gift med Anna Marie Nedberg i 1937, ett barn. MG skytter i tropp 2, Kp. 2, Landvern bataljon nr.6. Falt i kamp 25. april, på ettermiddagen.
4. Menig Sverre Kristoffer Lauritzen. Født 11. mars 1907 i Nedre Eiker. Geværmann i Kp. 2 / Landvern bataljon nr.6. Falt i kamp ved Sanatoriet, sannsynligvis om morgenen fredag 26. april 1940.



Tyske soldater i vegkrysset ved Tonsåsen sanatorium den 26. april. 1940. På dette tidspunktet pågikk kampene noen kilometer lenger vest. Til venstre står en motorsykkel-ordonnans, i forgrunnen en offiser og en underoffiser. Underoffiseren har sporer på støvlene, og er tydeligvis oppsatt med hest.

German soldiers in the road junction by Tonsåsen sanatorium on April 26th 1940. When the photo was taken, fighting was going on a few km to the west. Foreground left an MC orderly. In the center an officer and an NCO (Non Commissioned Officer). The NCO wears spurs, and is possibly on horse.



Valdres, 1940

German units began their first advance towards Valdres from Hønefoss through Begnadalen on 14th April, 1940. Their intention was to push forward through Bagn and Dokka in order to outflank the Norwegian units deployed in the Brandbu—Jevnaker area. The attempt failed however, and on 20th April the Germans pulled back from Bagn, all the way to Hønefoss. The Norwegian 4th Brigade, having crossed over the mountains from Voss in the west, was now positioned in Valdres with 4,500 troops. On Monday, 22nd April, the German 163rd Division once again turned their attention to Valdres. This time the main force advanced through Dokka. On Wednesday, 24th April, heavy fighting broke out at Høljærast Bridge between Major Daubert's battalion (Gruppe III/IR 159) and Major Sæter's battalion (II/IR10). The day ended with the Norwegians pulling back. On the same evening, the German advance continued towards Tonsåsen, and farther up along the river Etna towards Bruflat.

Major Sæter's troops arrive from Høljærast

Later in the afternoon of Wednesday, 24th April, Major Sæter's battalion (2nd Bn/IR 10) arrived back from Høljærast Bridge. Their defeat at Høljærast had become a fact. At the Tonsås road turnoff they passed through the forward Norwegian line, held by 2nd Bn/IR 9, under the command of Major Haanes. It was 32 years since 54-year-old Karl Haanes had graduated from the Army Academy. Now, for the first time, he was to be put to the test. But his courage failed, and he ordered his men to prepare to pull back. When the commander of the brigade arrived shortly afterwards, however, he had Haanes removed. It was the machinegun company commander, Captain Skaathun, who was to replace him and take command of the battalion. Soon afterwards, Major Sæter turned up and was one of the last ones to arrive from Høljærast. He, too, was relieved of his command by an angry brigade commander. In less than one hour Colonel Østbye had dismissed two of his battalion commanders.

Norwegian Army Battalion launches offensive

During the evening of Wednesday, 24th April, Captain Skaathun deployed his two companies between the Tonsås turn-off and the Tonsås railway station. The Høljærast battalion was pulled out and sent to Aurdal to rest. At the same time Colonel Østbye sent Major Haneborg-Hansen's army battalion forward to Tonsåsen. Major Haneborg-Hansen said he was ready and willing to try and retake Høljærast Bridge. It was just past midnight that the advance to the east got underway. Captain Flood's 3rd Company advanced along the road while a platoon from Captain Knoff's 2nd Company followed the railway tracks up on higher ground. The remainder of 2nd Company followed behind. Captain Ula's 1st Company was detached to Major Laudal at Bruflat. Captain Flood's company came into contact with the enemy at Sørurn. There the advance came to a halt, and during the morning of Thursday, 25th April, heavy fighting broke out at Sørurn, and after some time it spread back towards Tonsåsen. The platoon making its way up along the railway tracks, however, met with no resistance and made it all the way to Høljærast. The platoon then became cut off however, and later deserted.

German tanks outflank Tonsås junction

During most of Thursday, 25th April, the Norwegian Army battalion was slowly pushed back to the Tonsås turnoff. During the course of the day Major Daubert's battalion was relieved by Major Krumbholz' 1st Battalion/IR 236. Krumbholz had already sent his 3rd Company from Høljærast, through Leirskogen, towards Bagn. But this company was stopped at Breidablikk. At the Tonsås road turnoff he had Captain Hasenkamp's 1st Company attempt a breach assault. The situation remained locked, however, so the German troops ended up having to spend a cold night in the snow before the Norwegian positions. By Friday morning the situation still remained unresolved. At 10 o'clock a German tank suddenly appeared on the road behind the Norwegian positions. A German company, supported by three tanks, had advanced to Bruflat on the 25th. After skirmishing with Major Laudal's ski battalion, they continued their advance on the next morning through Fjellsbygd towards Tonsåsen. This caused total chaos on the Norwegian side, and the Norwegian units eventually withdrew to the Tonsås plateau.

Retreat across Tonsås plateau

After a while, Captain Skaathun was able to regroup parts of his battalion into new positions at Ossætri. At 1200 hours the Germans pushed westwards along the road to Ossætri. The fighting was heavy. Attacking German planes and German artillery bombardment made the situation difficult. Nevertheless, Lieutenant Utkilen's medium machine guns and a field canon had a telling effect. At 1430 hours Captain Saathun's units pulled back to the eastern end of Tonsvatnet lake. Here too there was heavy fighting. From these positions the Norwegian field gun took out two German tanks. On the same evening Captain Skaathun's units pulled back, and Major Haneborg Hansen's army troops took over the battle from their higher positions on Tonsåstoppen.

Tonsåsen abandoned

Early on the morning of 27th April, the forward German battalion once again launched an attack. Initially the attack was halted before the Norwegian positions. But at 1000 hours Colonel Østbye ordered the army battalion to fall back. The battle for Tonsåsen was over. That same evening the Germans made contact with Major Seidel's battalion, which had advanced through the valley of Begnadalen.

