

Instructions regarding preparation of War Diaries (which will be kept from first day of mobilization, creation or embodiment), are contained in F.S. Regs. Vol. 1

WAR DIARY

OR

~~INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY~~

(Erase heading not required)

MARCH 1944

Original, duplicate and triplicate to be forwarded to O. i/c 2nd Echelon for disposal.

Title pages will be prepared.

WEST N S R

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks, references to Appendices and initials
S NICOLA	1		Weather fine and mild. Slight shelling fwd Coy posns during day. Maj F Hiltz has assumed comd the Bn during the period that Lt Col R S E Waterman is on leave.	
		1130	Recce party of the R22eR visited the Bn area in preparation for the relief to be carried out night 2/3.	
	2		Weather fine. Slight shelling fwd area, no cas. Lt Gen Sir Oliver Leese, KCB CBE DSO, presented medals to 77 all ranks of 1 Cdn Div and ancillary tps at S Vito. Members this unit receiving awards were, Capt J C MacNeil MC, Sjt D G Tait MM, Cpl J Amero MM, Cpl J A MacLeod MM, L/Cpl J W King MM, Pte H W Pelly MM, Pte R E Brown MM. Change over completed by 2200 hrs without incident, Bn now occupying res Bn posn at Villa Grande.	
	3		Weather fine. Slight shelling Bn area, no cas. EFI supplies issued today, this included Cdn beer. Ground gradually drying which helps to make the Italian smells more pronounced. Party of 75 to S Leonardo by tpt to see film, "You are always in my heart".	
	4	1100	Weather fine and warm. Emy very quiet today. Coy Comdrs discussion at Bn HQ.	
	5	0900	Voluntary church parade (C of E). Weather dull during with rain commencing in the evening.	
	6		Cold with snow and rain, ground very muddy. Normal res area trg carried on. Bn rest centre opened at S Leonardo known as the "Nova Scotian Hotel". This will be used to accommodate tps for 48 hr periods of rest and relaxation.	
	7	1030 1600	Still raining, a large number of dug-outs and slit-trenches are now flooded. Maj F Hiltz to Bn HQ where he received orders to relieve Carlit&York R night 8/9. Bn O gp re relief to be carried out tomorrow night,	

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ORTONA AREA.	8		Weather cloudy and mild. Extremely muddy condition of the ground makes life in the front area increasingly miserable. Take-over complete without incident by 2400 hrs. Bn now occupying general area 2814.	<i>AD</i>
	9		Rain very hard throughout the day. Very quiet this sector. Recce and contact patrols only carried out night 9/10.	<i>AD</i>
	10		Day cloudy with some rain. Party of 4 officers and 114 ORs reinforcements arrive at Rear Bn.	<i>AD</i>
	11		Weather fine and warm. Lt Col R S E Waterman returned from leave and Maj F Hiltz resumed his duties as 2 i c at Rear Bn. Slight shelling our FDLs, no cas. Contact and standing patrols only night 11/12.	<i>AD</i>
	12		High wind and heavy rain again. Enemy very quiet our sector. Contact and standing patrols as usual.	<i>AD</i>
	13	0800	Weather fine and warm. Coy comms meeting at Bn HQ to discuss the NCO situation within the unit. Brig Gibson visited the Bn during the morning. A fighting patrol of one officer (XXXXXXXXXX) and 10 ORs put in a raid on area XXXXXX . Got within 20 yds of their objective when they came under heavy MG, MP and grenade fire. Patrol was forced to withdraw with 2 ORs wounded and 1 OR missing presumed killed. Three enemy MG positions were pinpointed by this patrol.	<i>AD</i>
	14		Weather fine with high wind. DVs today included LtCol K S Bjorn of OCTU Selection Centre and Maj Morgan both of whom remained over night. Very shelling this sector was on an increased scale today causing 2 serious as well as several minor cas. Recce patrol to area 280143 located 5 enemy weapon pits that are being manned.	<i>AD</i> <i>RS</i>

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ORTONA AREA.	15	1400	Weather fine and warm. Lt Col R S E Waterman attended a discussion at the HQ. Fighting patrol of 1 officer (Capt E D Hersey) and 18 ORs went out at last light. Encountered enemy in strength area 281154. After sustaining 4 ORs cas and himself being wounded Capt Hersey withdrew his patrol.	AS
		2135	Enemy pulled some SP guns into the Rriella river valley and shelled the area of Villa Grande for approx twenty minutes. Very few of these fell in the Br area, no cas.	
	16		Weather fine and cool, ground now drying nicely. Enemy shelling and mortaring our area was on a reduced scale today, no cas sustained from this. At last light Lieut Moore took a fighting patrol of ten men to area 279194. Having approached to within 20 yds enemy positions that area came under heavy MG, MP and rifle grenade fire. Mr Moore and his senior NCO were seriously wounded and patrol were forced to withdraw bringing their wounded with them. It was learned with regret the next day, that Cpl Peach of the Par Pl, long a familiar figure within the Br, had died of wounds as a result of this action.	AS
		17	Weather fine. Very quiet day on our front. Contact patrols only carried out night 17/18.	
	18	1000	Weather fine and warm. Lt Col R S E Waterman attended an O gp at Base HQ. Orders received that this unit will be relieved by R22eR night 19/20.	AS
		1400	Recce party to area now occupied by R22eR.	
	19	1000	Clear fine day. Recce party of the R22eR arrived to liaise with their opposite numbers this unit. Enemy was very quiet this sector throughout the day and the take-over was completed without incident by 2230 hrs. Patrols for night 19/20 were supplied by this unit. These included one fighting patrol which however in without cas by 2230 hrs.	AS
			20	

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ORTONA AREA	21		Rain in the morning clearing at 1400 hrs. Day spent in resting and preparing for the march on the morrow.	AS
	22	0730	Rain which has been threatening all night came down in torrents accompanied by a wind which reached gale proportions. Tps move off at 0800 hrs as laid down but has not reached the SL when word was received that the march was postponed. Tps move back to coy areas where balance of the day was spent on trying where possible.	AS
	23		Day overcast with slight drizzling rain. EFI supplies were issued today, highlight of this being 2 bottles of C beer per man. Orders were received for this unit to relieve Carl & York R night 24/25, move to be completed by 2400 hrs.	AS
		1900	Officers discussion at B H. It is with regret that news was today received that our M O, Maj Woods is to be posted away from this unit.	AS
	24		Day fine but slightly cool. Maj H C Johnston, RCAMC arrived to be attached this B.	AS
		1915	B move off to relieve Carl & York R in the right fw B area of the B's front. Take over was completed without incident by 2230 hrs.	AS
25		<p>Fine but cool. Little or no enemy shelling or mortaring our sector today. At 1500 hrs our arty laid down a box smoke barrage around BOURLON in an effort to draw fire from that pos; but due perhaps to the fresh wind which quickly dissipated the smoke this ruse was not successful.</p> <p>Two officers of the Desert Air Force arrived to spend 48 hrs with the B. This is part of a system of exchange of airforce and Inf personnel to permit each to study the methods of the other.</p> <p>Besides the usual standing and contact patrols, 2 recon patrols were sent to the areas of GREBE and BOURLON respectively.</p>	AS	

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ORTONA AREA	26		Day fine but again cool with high wind. No any mortaring or shelling on our front during day. Recon patrols only tonight with a view to gathering information on which to base a fighting patrol tomorrow night.	AS
	27		<p>Fine but cool with high wind. No any shelling our sector today. " " " "</p> <p>It is believed that caves in the gully on the right flank of our Bn pos known as PLOVER are occupied by the enemy in the day time so a PIAT net was positioned approx 250 yds from the a/m caves and fired 18 bombs. Three were observed to be direct hits on the caves, no any movement was however observed during or after the shoot in that vicinity.</p> <p>Fighting patrol attempted to raid the caves in PLOVER at last light. Came under heavy fire before they reached the objective and forced to retire.</p>	AS
	28	0445	<p>Day fine but cool. " " " "</p> <p>2 officers and 14 ORs put in a raid on BOURLON under cover of supporting program of mors and arty, but found no any occupying that feature. 2 sappers took up a pos just right of that feature to remain during the day to observe and snipe.</p> <p>Acting on information brought back by the raiding party, an attempt was made at first light to secure the BOURLON feature. The leading sec was engaged by grenades and MG when about 30 yds into the ruins and rubble. Forced to withdraw and take up pos in gully 75 yds in front of BOURLON. From here a fire fight was carried on with the enemy throughout the day using all Pl weapons including the PIAT.</p>	AS
	1930		A Pl attack was put in on BOURLON which met very heavy opposition. Attacking party forced to withdraw suffering in cas, 3 ORs killed, 1 OR missing believed killed and 13 ORs wounded. Truly a place of many surprises.	
29		<p>Weather fine and warm. " " " "</p> <p>DVs (distinguished visitors) this morning included Maj-Gen Vokes, GOC 1 Cdn Div and Brig Gibson. Enemy shelling and mortaring of our pos was on an increased scale from 1700 hrs until midnight.</p> <p>Three recon patrols of 2 scouts each sent out this night to gather info on which to base fighting patrols following night.</p>	AS	

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ORTONA AREA	30		<p>Weather fine. Lt-Col of 2 Pol Corps visited and was wired and phoned at this HQ. He informed us with some disgust that he had under his command a Bn of Italian troops. During his visit to the fwd area he was most impressed with a shower bath at our 3rd mortar base plate position. This is within 500 yards of enemy positions. Increased enemy shelling and mortaring of our positions during day. Tonight the Coy's rotate clockwise which brings A Coy into the reserve Coy position. Two recon patrols each of two scouts to areas of BOURLON and FLOVER.</p>	<p>AS</p>
	31		<p>Weather fine today. Lt-Gen Allfrey, commander 5 Corps accompanied by Brig Gibson visited the area today. Shelling and mortaring of our area was on a reduced scale. "All villages and towns in this Bde area placed out of bounds. Capt C B Cochran recon a new area for Bn HQ." Patrols tonight consisted of two ambush patrols which however had no success.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Kesterman Lt Col</p>	<p>AS</p>