

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.

Title pages will be prepared.

WAR DIARY
OR
INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY
(Erase heading not required)

M.F.M 11
40/P & S/37

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

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks, references to Appendices and initials
			<u>1ST BATTALION THE BLACKWATCH (RHR) OF CANADA</u>	
			<u>FROM 1ST APRIL 1943</u>	
			<u>TO 30TH APRIL 1943</u>	
			<u>PLACE (EAST WITTERING) 229176 SHEET 133</u>	

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In the Field	1st Apr		<p>Overcast and cool. This morning the A/C.O. went up to make a recce at Kingley Vale complete with haversack lunch. This afternoon a new draft arrived from Aldershot incl. 2 Officers and 14 O.Rs. Another new establishment arrived this afternoon as well as the Secret Order on next weeks forthcoming Brigade Exercise on Minefield location and lifting. In the evening the officers listened to a lecture by an Offr. of the 2 A/Tk regt. whilst the men enjoyed a gala "Quiz Contest" sponsored by the Educ.NCO between the Wrens and a part of the sigs platoon. After much auditing the final score was 48-47 in favor of the girls. The sigs consolation came in the fact that there were prizes for the losing team too.</p>	G.S.B.
	2nd Apr		<p>Overcast and warmer. The A/C.O., Coy Comdrs. plus one or two other offr. attended a Div.Sigs demonstration at Bde. which lasted all day. The lectures were at one moment too highly technical and at the next too elementary but there is a good Canteen at Bde. The evening was noteworthy only in as much as there was no lectures.</p>	G.S.B.
	3rd Apr		<p>A beautiful midsummer day. Following Thursdays successful Quiz Contest the Educ. Staff with the cooperation of the Padre are going ahead with plans for a Bn reunion night at CHECHESTER, this is to take the form of a dance and if it comes off should be another educational extravaganza for the elite of East Wittering and environs. Tonight we advance our watches an hour to double summer time thereby losing an hour of sleep.</p>	G.S.B.
	4th Apr		<p>Clear and warm, another beautiful day. There were both Protestant and Catholic church parades in the morning, the Padre gave us another excellent sermon. In the afternoon the A/O.C., Adjt., and I.O. went up to N.E.T.D. to bid farewell to Col. Cantlie. In the afternoon an officer and 12 O.Rs of the 7th Fd.Coy arrived to be attached for exercise Submarine which starts tomorrow. They are to construct a type of raft and also take care of the craft we are to use. This exercise is to practise us in river crossings, apparently there's still one more river to cross! (shades of SPARTAN)</p>	G.S.B.

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In the Field	5th Apr		<p>Very heavy ground mist which the sun finally broke through resulting in another fine day. The A/O.C. and Adjt left early for theoretical river near BIRBHAM where A Coy were to cross over to destroy the German force. The Brigadier arrived in time to witness the assault which was well carried out under cover of smoke. Anti-tank guns were taken over in tarpaulins and the Engineers built their raft but owing to shortage of parts were never able to take a vehicle over on it. The paddlers returned in time for lunch and reported no drownings. In the evening an O Gp was held in preparation for Exercise Anonymous which starts Wednesday.</p>	GAB
	6th Apr		<p>Clear and cold with a brisk wind. This morning C Coy did the river crossing. The Brigadier appeared once again and again attack was carried out successfully. Support Coy laid down the supporting fire and showed that they still prefer hayricks and thatched roofs above all other mortar targets, it missed the roof but not by much! We learned today that our new Commanding officer is to be Major S.S.T.Cantlie and that he will be joining us in the very near future and so our biggest subject for conjecture - Who would it be? - now ceases to exist!</p>	GAB
	7th Apr		<p>The day was overcast, cold and windy. The Bn less rear party and the Mortar Pl., left on foot at 0915hrs Fanda echelon tpt followed us to Appledram which was the Bn R.V. & S.P. Thence we proceeded to vic. BOWHILL where our advance guard, B Coy, came in contact with the enemy at 1430hrs. The enemy's defensive posn was heavily wired and a minefield lay between us and the wire. The C.O. appreciated the situation and decided to sit tight till dark, then clear a gap in the minefield under cover of darkness and follow this with a dawn attack. In order to practice minelifting by day it was ruled that the enemy withdraw after a short fire fight and so we started to clear a gap and ended by using a bangalore on the wire. We were then ordered to withdraw to a bivouac area and no further movement was allowed until 0300hrs next morning. At 2000hrs the A/O.C. held his O Gp and divulged his plan after which we withdrew to our beds in favour of a nasty wind.</p>	GAB
	8th Apr		<p>Patrolling commenced at 0300hrs with the intention of capturing a P.W to garner</p>	GAB

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In the Field	8th Apr		<p>a little information. The prodders also got busy clearing 2 paths through the minefield. Both these jobs were to be over before first light and the attack was to take place at about 0630hrs. Good patrol work by B Coy resulted in the capture of the O.C. of the Defence Platoon complete with excellent map and diagrams showing dispositions of men, mines and munitions. Acting on this the C.O. changed his plan slightly and struck where they were weakest thus enabling us to capture our objective whilst suffering only minor casualties. After a short march we breakfasted and then had a 16 mile march home. We felt that Exercise Anonymous had gone quite satisfactorily. This evening Lt.Col.Cantlie arrived and now we are once again up to establishment and set to go.</p>	G.F.S.
In the Field	9th Apr		<p>Cloudy with a brisk wind. Capt.John Taylor returned from his attachment to the First Army in North Africa today. He was with the Argyll and Sutherlands and has seen a considerable amount of action some of it as a Coy Commander. Capt.D.Cowans is reported to have returned to this side of the water after spending some time with the 2nd Bn in Canada. Bumph on Exercise Parrot came in today. The C.O. began his inspection of the Bn area.</p>	G.F.S.
In the Field	10th Apr		<p>Clear and cold. The C.O. inspected A Coy this morning and seemed to be fairly satisfied with the appearance of personnel and equipment alike. He is to inspect all the other coys next week and concurrently coys are to be subjected to yet another check of G 1098.</p>	G.F.S.
In the Field	11th Apr		<p>A lovely summer day with church parades in the morning. The Bn having received a challenge from the RCAF stationed at Hayling Island to a baseball game went over to take up the challenge. We were able to defeat the junior service but were immediately challenged to make it home and home games-consequently next Sunday we shall have to teach them some manners on our home grounds.</p>	G.F.S.
In the Field	12th Apr		<p>Clear and cool. Capt.A.L.MacLaurin of Support Coy and Dieppe fame left us this morning for N.E.T.D. and a trip to Canada, lucky fellow we are sorry to see him</p>	G.F.S.

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In the Field	12th Apr		go. A Coy put on a demonstration this morning which the C.O. attended. Tactics used were derived from lessons learned at Dieppe but modified to suit the particular beach they were using. Considerable accuracy was achieved with both the 2" mortars and the grenade.	G.D.B.
	13th Apr		Foggy, then developing to a fine spring day. A skeleton Bn left at 0630hrs in the fog on the Exercise Parrot- a signal exercise. When the remainder of the Bn left for Goodwood to watch a demonstration of "German Tactics" by 1st Div it had cleared and the weather man did justice to the interested spectators. The demonstration was voted most interesting and instructional by all ranks and dealt with Pl.tactics, firepower, etc., of the enemy. The Bn bivouaced in our anti-invasion posn	G.D.B.

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In the field	14th		Overcast and cool. The large portion of the Bn. left at 0300hrs to return to their Billet areas, and landed in at 0700hrs. The A/C.O. having decided that it would be better to march back in the cool of the morning! The rest of the day was given to cleaning up and resting. The skeleton force of the Bn. H.Q. which was on Exercise "Parrot" returned early in the afternoon, and didn't seem too enthusiastic about their scheme.	G.S.B.
	15th		Clear and warmer. Pay parade throughout the Bn. which all ranks attended willingly. Training was resumed as the Bde Exercise laid down by the syllabus had been postponed. Word came through today of another I Course to be sponsored by Bde.	G.S.B.
	16th		Clear and warm. Three reinforcements joined us from 5 C.I.R.U. today, otherwise the only things of interest were the gardens which are now in full bloom, and the desire on the part of some men to take the seasons' first swim. Since the beach is out of bounds except when an officer is present we shall have to await warmer days.	G.S.B.
	17th		Clear and warm. Work was commenced on the various Bn gardens today, it took the better part of the afternoon to turn over the sod as most of the coys have large plots. All the officers, NCOs and men took part in the digging under the direction of Lieut. Smith, our Gardening officer. The soil is not very rich unfortunately and it is felt that this year's crop will be spuds only. Is this to be our only contribution to the war effort? The C.O.S. at BHQ has been issued with the red sash of a Color Sergeant, when we are centralized once again it will be worn by the B.O.S.	G.S.B.
	18th		Clear and warm, indeed a beautiful day. Compulsory Church parade for the R.Cs and a voluntary communion for Protestants. In the afternoon the baseball series with the RCAF was resumed and last weeks decision was reversed, we were beaten handsdown. Preparations were completed for the departure tomorrow of the Adjt., Sigs. O. and Coy Comdrs on Exercise WELSH.	G.S.B.

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In the Field	19th Apr		<p>Cloudy and cool with light showers in the evening. The Welsh group left today ; they are to be gone about 9 days, and as it is primarily an Arty Exercise they are looking forward to a pleasant time. At noon we had an air raid alert as 3 planes came in over PORTSMOUTH, there was a fairly heavy A.A. reception awaiting them and a large piece of flak crumped down on the Shore Club roof, H.Q.Coys cookhouse. The cook rushed out and found it had pierced through the roof and lodged in the ceiling above his head! There was some doubt as to whether it would ever have been noticed had it fallen into the stew he was making! A Coy left today on a field firing scheme in KINGLEY VALE.</p>	G.D.B.
	20th Apr		<p>Cloudless, sunfilled sky. The C.O. left before dawn to join C Coy at Selsey for their march to KINGLEY VALE. They are due to return about 0400hrs tomorrow morning. A dance was held at EAST WITTERING Parish hall this evening, the Bn's 4 piece orchestra was in attendance and much enjoyment was had by all. This evening 8 men from the R.A.F. moved into our area and pitched a tent beside the beach at the bottom of Shore Road. They are air spotters and by the use of wireless are actually a human R.D.F. team. We can expect such a team to be attached to forward units in battle. Their small party is apparently quite self sufficient though they have asked to be alloted a bath in our billets!</p>	G.D.B.
	21st Apr		<p>A dull rainy day. The C.O. inspected B Coy today and was well pleased with their condition. Training films were shown to all coys and a lecture was given by Capt. Lalkaka on his native land "India". The 2 i/c attended a demonstration of a new anti-personnel hand grenade this afternoon. He reported that it contained CAP and as demonstrated looked very effective. The C.O. left unexpectedly in the afternoon to RV with Brig.Lister of 1 Cdn Corps. This meeting has revived the hopes of an inspection by Her Majesty The Queen.</p>	G.D.B.
	22nd Apr		<p>Cold and showery. Today the C.O. inspected C Coy which is currently under the acting command of Major Hunt of the Vics. This afternoon a draft arrived from Farnborough on attachment</p>	G.D.B.

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In the Field	22nd Apr		for a period of 3 months. The draft consisted of Major M.G. Ibbotson, a former Black Watch officer and brother of our original 2 i/c, Capt.M.C.McGreevy and RSM Sawyers of the Royal Rifles of Canada, as well as 2 NCOs from the 2nd Bn R.H.C. They have just arrived from Canada within the past week.	
	23rd Apr		Rainy and cold and hardly a Good Friday! There were voluntary Church Parades and no regular parades though most people seemed to be working all day as due to the inclement weather, there was little else to do. There was considerable gun fire in the channel during the evening coupled with an air raid warning.	
	24th Apr		Cold and dull and more showers. Instructions were issued in connection with tomorrow's Drum Head Service which is to be a Bn parade. Lord Leconfield, the Lord Lieut. of Sussex, was to have taken the salute but owing to a cold he has been confined to his bed. Brig.Blackader has agreed to take the salute in his stead. Lt.Fraser one of our officers from the PRO section of MCHQ came down tonight to cover the service by camera, we live in hopes that by tomorrow the sky will be rained out!	
	25th Apr		The day dawned with more rain and a tremendous wind. It being Easter Sunday all ranks searched energetically for their Easter eggs but owing to rationing regulations they searched in vain. About 0930hrs the clouds broke and the sun shown forth upon our Drum Head service. The Padre preached another excellent sermon, we have come to expect them from him, and the service was enjoyed by a few local residents as much as by usall. The march past was a pleasing sight and all ranks enjoyed being reviewed by their former Commanding Officer. Parade was followed closely by a Coy Comdrs meeting at which tentative plans for Exercise DV were discussed as well as steps which are now necessary due to our recent Mobilization Order. We are to be fully mobilized by 1 May, oddly some of us had been under the misapprehansion that we were already mobilized. The A/Tk pl. left about noon for BIRLING GAP for a Bde competitive shoot.	
	26th Apr		Clear and cool but still a strong wind. The C.O. left for BIRLING GAP to witness the A/Tk shoot. It unfortunately had to be cancelled.	

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In the field	26th Apr		The wind was apparently so strong that the targets would not stand up to it and so in the afternoon they were forced to return without having fired a shot. The Bn is putting on a big drive in connection with the New Canadian Victory loan and it is hoped that the Cdn Army Overseas will do its share in putting the loan over the top. Sales commenced today but returns were a little slow.	G.S.
	27th Apr		Clear and cool. We learned that the Bn will change locations with the Queens Own Camerons of Winnipeg at the beginning of next week in order to be centralized and to give us a chance to polish up our drill and equipment for Exercise DV. The Camerons will take over our operational role for the 5 or 6 days we will be away. Exercise Welsh ended tonight and participants all seemed thankful it was over. Little sleep and much rain was the answer. They ended the exercise past Sunnybridge in WALES and had covered 646 miles in all. The shooting had apparently been very mediocre and the map reading on occasion definitely poor!	G.S.
	28th Apr		Clear and cool. Several officers from the Camerons incl. the C.O. arrived down this morning to look over our area. We are to leave a rear party of about 1 offr., and 6 O.Rs and leave has been cancelled for the next 10 days. In the afternoon most of the Bn took part in Exercise ABRAHAM which was a practice of our Anti-raid role. We were able to exterminate the raiders although we had to move fairly rapidly to handle their paratroops!	G.S.
	29th Apr		Clear and warm. The 2 i/c and a recce party left for PETWORTH to look over the camp into which we are to move and to decide on the route. They report that the camp should be most satisfactory and that we will be living in Nisson huts. Our Advance party will be leaving on Sunday to take over the camp. It is very definite that Exercise D.V. will take place on 7 May. The Bn, is of course, well pleased at the prospect.	G.S.
	30th Apr		Clear and cold. The CO left to make final arrangements for Exercise D.V. He visited the Irish Guards Depot near LINGFIELD where the actual inspection is to take place.	G.S.

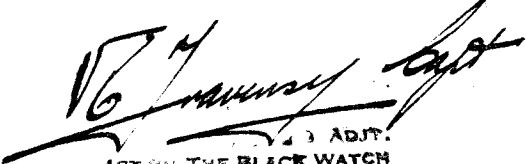
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