

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

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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
			<p>1st Bn Black Watch (RTR) of CANADA 1 Dec 42 - 31 Dec 42 EAST WITTERING SUSSEX 229 169 O.S. 132.</p>	

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W. Wittering	1st Dec.		<p>Clear day. Lt. Col. Cantlie went to training area five to watch the Calg. Highrs carry out Inf-cum-tank exercise. Lieut. Hull, the paymaster, left for London to make arrangements for his forthcoming marriage. In the morning the grapevine reported that the G.O.C. Major-General Roberts, DSO, MC was in the area paying surprise visits to units. This visit did not materialize although we waited all day. L.S.B. Shapiro, columnist of the Montreal Gazette and now a War correspondent, visited the unit to obtain material for a column on the Black Watch. In the evening a Coy Commander's meeting was held to discuss the inf-cum-tank exercise.</p>	M
	2nd Dec.		<p>Clear but cold; The Selsey Coys which through their geographical position seem to be left out of the picture of the Bn, but this is not so. They carry out their training the same as those in the WITTERING area, but they are however, self sufficient in SELSEY BILL as far as training areas go. They have their own Canteens and R.A.P, mortars and carriers, in fact they exist as a small independent force.</p>	M
	3rd Dec.		<p>Raining. The weather in this area is freakish, rain and dampness with sunshine and clear cold atmosphere intermingled several times a day. There was an air raid yesterday, a lone raider machine-gunned BOGNOR, this is not in our area, but we nevertheless get the alert. Lieuts. Law and MacAlpine and five ORs (including Ptes Bowman & McNeill of the Carrier Pl) arrived as reinforcements. Lieut. Carmicheal left for WITLEY on rotation with Lieut. Gault. Major Rawlings left to attend the Senior Officers School at OXFORD, he will be gone two months, Capt. Fraser, D Coy will take over 2 i/c temporarily. Coy Comds meeting for A&Q on tomorrow's move to S.LANCING.</p>	M
	4th Dec.		<p>Cloudy and warm. The Bn less A Wing and some of Support Coy left for S.LANCING, where they will billet while working with the tanks. The convoy of TCV's (!) left Bn S.P. at 0850hrs and arrived S.LANCING at 1020. All Comds down to Pls. preceded the Bn to attend a sand-table discussion and look over the ground of training area 5. The rest of the Bn were guided into billets by Capt. MacLaurin. Lieut. Gault arrived back, it was pleasant to see Randy again back in the fold. There was an I.Os conference for the Div IOs, this is an excellent idea as no courses are available for Bn IOs.</p>	M

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	5th Dec.		Stormy and very windy. Capt. Jean Duchastel de Montrouge and Lieut. D.A. Hull were married this morning, it is very regrettable that so few officers only were able to attend to convey to both couples the best wishes of the Regt. Platoons worked with troops of tanks throughout the day in Pl. cum tp exercises, while one pl. was doing this the others were digging slit trenches which the men were to get into to have the Churchills run over them.	W
	6th Dec.		Beautiful day, sunny and warm. Coys working with Squadrons did Coy cum Squadron exercises the tanks using their 2" smoke which was most effective. The A/Tk Pl. went into "action" for the first time with the Bn and obtained valuable tactical practice. It was the general view that the gun crews did well. After the Coy cum Squadron exercises were over the tanks demonstrated the fire power of a tank squadron which was most impressive. The Bde Comd Brig. G.V. Whitehead lived in the Officers Mess and attended most of the training giving his directions.	W
	7th Dec.		Cloudy and damp. The Bn returned during the day after handing over to the R de Mais. Col. Pawle, Chief Umpire 2nd Div lectured to the Officers and NCOs in the evening on Umpiring, it was an excellent lecture and something we should have had a long time ago. He explained the necessity of umpiring and also why umpires have to make decisions which sometimes appear to have no rhyme or reason to us.	W
	8th Dec.		Clear and mild almost like spring. The Regt's Sniper School started, it was decided to hold it for two weeks in the areas training eleven snipers per coy. The facilities for such a school are excellent and they are using a dummy airfield. Lt. Col. Cantlie is acting Bde. Comd in the absence of Brig. Whitehead. An opening for one officer and one NCO for attachment to the 1st Army in AFRICA was received, the lucky ones who get this!	W

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	9th Dec.		<p>Clear Day. Lt.Col Cantlie went to South Lancing to watch the R de Mais. go through their Inf-cum-Tank exercise. The Commander in Chief Home Forces, General Sir Bernard Paget watched this exercise, and as the Colonel was Acting Brig.Ccmd. went around with the GOC. C in C. Following this exercise there was a Bn Comd(s meeting with the GOC at 4th Bde H.Q.</p>	M
	10th Dec.		<p>Cloudy and windy, with showers. The Coys. did an all day cross-country route march of about 15 miles. This was very successful and the experience gained from cross-country marches was very beneficial. In the afternoon a promotion parade was held when some 20 NCOs were promoted to higher rank. A new naval establishment has been opened at Bracklesham Bay. This establishment is a rest camp for men in Combined Ops. We Liaised with them and offered any assistance we could.</p>	W
	11th Dec		<p>Raining and warm. An I.Os conference at which Lord Tweedsmuir the G1 I at Army H.Q. spoke. The 2 i/c Major Rawlings being away on a course the C.O. has been filling both jobs at once and appears to be very happy about it. The War Office courses continue and are very well received by the men taking the class.</p>	W
	12th Dec.		<p>Clear and warm. A lovely Spring day. Due to very rough seas a minefield in West Wittering was washed away during the night. This left that area dangerous and the R.Es were called in to fix it. The Bn drew from Ordnance stores some scrambling nets which every man would have to go over in full Battle order as soon as possible. We also received notification that the Bn Tpt. was to be brought up to date and new vehicles to replace the old ones would be forthcoming. A check on Bn G1098 was to be carried out immediately and all deficiencies filled. These messages had made a lot of people think that our day is getting very close.</p>	W
	13th Dec.		<p>Raining. Church parades of all denominations were held and attendance was good. The Ack Ack Platoon commanded by Lieut. Birks left for SEA ORD where they will attend a weeks' course. This Platoon is receiving a lot of training preparatory to getting their Hispano Suiza guns.</p>	W

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	14th Dec.		Clear and warm. A demonstration of the method for transporting Jeeps and anti-tank guns over water obstacles by the use of a 30cwt tarpaulin was attended by some of the Officers of the Bn. Due to the continuance of heavy seas mines have been washed ashore in Seisey Bill, these are sea mines having broke away from their moorings. We were asked to supply umpires for a Mobile Bath scheme. This demand was one of the most amazing ever received.	W
	15th Dec.		Cloudy and raining. The Bn started to go through their scrambling net today. For the first time in the history of the Bn Overseas, a man was charged for striking his superior. "C" Group meeting was held for the forthcoming exercise "MOOSE".	W
	16th Dec.		Raining and storming. Three lorries and a carrier went to Hayling Island to test the use of Chest Falings in disembarking vehicles from landing craft to shore. The tests were not very successful, as the carrier chewed the Chest palings up. We were asked to despatch a working party of one officer and fifty other ranks to the R.E. Dump in Horley. Although it is not our turn to do this duty, we did it. The Coys. are doing night training in the form of all night route marches. Flight Sgt Pat Packard, son of the famous author was attached to us for several weeks. He has had his quota of operational flights and rather than go home elected to be attached to an Army unit.	W
	17th Dec.		Fair and windy. Two more mines were washed ashore in the A Coy area. They were German X type. They were finally rendered safe by the Navy. These naval men who do this work are the height of courage, as they never know when a Booby trap has been set for them. Sgt. Major Murray of A Coy thought he belonged to this section and secured the mines with barbed wire. This deed was not appreciated by the Colonel. A boxing competition was held in Bognor Regis at night. We won four rounds and lost two.	W
	18th Dec.		Pouring rain. Bn H.Q. and Coy H.Q. participated in a signal exercise "MOOSE". The exercise was one of the better of this type we have ever had. More mines of all types mostly German were washed ashore during the day. The Sniper School finished their shooting practices with three men shooting a one inch group, which is very good for a Lee Enfield rifle.	W

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	19th Dec.		<p>Capt. J.P.Taylor was despatched to the N.E.T.D. to await transportation to North Africa, where he will be attached to the 1st Army. Everybody considers him most fortunate as he will probably be seeing action very soon. A Coy held a dance in West Wittering which was most successful.</p>	W
	20th Dec.		<p>Clear Day. No church parades. Excitement was caused by the detonation of some mines in West Wittering minefields as nobody knew whether it was one of our men that went up. A careful search revealed some parts of a dog and it is assumed that a dog was responsible for the detonation.</p>	W

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	Dec 21st		<p>Drizzling and overcast. The shortest day of the year and so it was very dark in the morning. The A/Tk Platoon went off to LYDD to shoot their 2 pdrs. Lt.Col.Cantlie also went along. D-82461 Cpl.Goodman, E.S. of A Coy organized men of his billets and others of the Coy. into working in their spare time making and repairing toys for Dr.Barnados Homes for orphans. These toys were sent to Dr.Barnados for distribution as Xmas presents. This fine work is to be published in Orders. Some men of the Signal Platoon went out at night singing Xmas carols, the money they received was turned over to the Red Cross. In the early evening a Xmas party was held for the children of the area, one of the men playing Santa Claus, a movie and some sweets were given to the children.</p>	
	Dec 22nd		<p>Raining and overcast. The food and beer for the Xmas dinner started to arrive. An aerial bomb was reported to have floated in on our front, on investigation it turned out to be a mooring bouy! ! The A/Tk pl came out tops in A/Tk shoot with 72%. Lt.Col.Cantlie shot the gun and made a better score than either of the other two C.Os. The A/Tk Pl. is commanded by Lieut.L.P.Candler.</p>	
	Dec 23rd		<p>Clear and sunny, one of the most beautiful days of the winter. Major Mitchell came back from Coy Comds school and is taking over 2 i/c of the Bn from Capt.Fraser who has been acting 2 i/c. The hardening training has been intensified again and the coys are back doing 10 miles in two hours. The transport was inspected by the Brigadier, G.V.Whitehead, for the Brigadier's shield for the best tpt in the Bde, a great deal of work was done by the tpt for this inspection and we hope to win. During the afternoon a frantic call was received from C Coy saying that kids were all over the place as someone had promised them a party. The Adjutant arranged for some chocolate bars from the K of C to be sent along and each kit had to be content with that. It sounds like a little fifth column work by the "neighborhook gang".</p>	
	Dec 24th		<p>Clear and sunny. An invitation from 43rd Div for a party of all ranks to spend Xmas with them was received. 2 Officers and 14 Other ranks volunteered to go, the volunteers actually oversubscribed the allotment. They were guests of the 7th Bn Hampshire Regt. A blanket pass till 0100hrs was issued for Xmas Eve and Xmas night as the pubs are remaining open till 2359hrs. A midnight carol and communion service was taken by the Padre</p>	

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	Dec 24th		and was very well attended. The men of Admin. Wing took up a collection for the two cooks D-81631 Pte.Spencer,W.B. and D-82022 Pte.Hammond,D.H. who have done such magnificent work in their cookhouse. Greetings were exchanged between 2067 Bleury Street and EAST WITTERING.	W
	Dec 25th		Warm but overcast. R.C. Church parade at 0800hrs well attended. The men's dinner was at 1300hrs and true to British Army traditions the Officers and Sgts waited on the tables. The dinner consisted of turkey, ham, stuffing and vegetables, pudding and ^{RS} sauce, with sufficient beer. The C.O., Adjt. and RSM were piped around all the Mess Halls. The C.O. made a few remarks the gist of which was; write home as they (the mothers, wives, etc) were really making ^W sacrifice. The Bde.Comd Brig.G.V.Whitehead visited the SELSEY coys and told the men to keep up the good work. The C.O. visited the Sgts Mess and thanked them for their co-operation in the past, the RSM replied. The RSM and the Regimental Police returned to the mess and listened to the King's speech. There was a mess dinner in the evening for the officers. The whole day went off very smoothly and it was in fact a Merry Xmas.	W
	Dec 26th		Cold and overcast. The Adjt coined a phrase which describes the scene of this day. "The Bn was having organized exhaustion". The festivities of Xmas night were well kept under control. A few fights in the WITTERING area but these ended by all contestants going home arm in arm. One wit in SELSEY said he didn't know what to do for if you took off your bonnet a Black Watch man hit you and when you put it on again a Gunner hit you.	W
	Dec 27th		Fair and mild. D & B Coys played softball against the WRNS at SELSEY the score being 17-17. The Bn won the Bde Hockey league and now go on to the Div finals. A church parade was held in both the WITTERINGS and SELSEY areas it was the best attendance for many months and the singing in SELSEY was especially noted.	W

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	28		<p>Overcast but mild. The Snipers School started up again in SHELSEY area. The results of the Bde. Tpt competition came in and unfortunately we were second, the Calg. Highrs beating us by 61 points, our score was 3017 which is really not too bad. "D" Coy. is experimenting with new methods of painting web equipment and the carrying of respirators, they have solved some new idea which will be submitted for approval.</p>	W
	29		<p>Clear and cold, and it actually snowed for about 30 seconds. A recommendation of man loads for a raid lasting more than 24 hrs was submitted to Div. for consideration. The Coys in their hardening training are accomplishing some amazing feats "A" Coy. covered 10 miles in 1 hrs 45 mins this included a ten minute halt.</p>	W
	30		<p>Clear and very cold. Ice on small ponds and puddles. Lt. Col. Cantlie and Lieut. Traversy, the Adj. paid a visit to 2 CDIRU to wish the BW Coy. their New Years Greetings, most of the Coy, however, are with Major Evans replacing some of the Essex Scottish who are away on special trg. Ever since moving into this area there has been trouble with the cesspools as there is only one truck to do all the emptying the pools have overflowed. Now that the cold weather is on us they are even worse and "C" Coy. are faced with moving out of their billets. The Carrier and Mortar Pls. are doing some specialized trg at the Kingley Vale ranges.</p>	W
	31		<p>Clear and cold, beautiful day. Capt. MacLauring & Lieut. Cassils have been away assisting the G.O.C. Major General Roberts D.S.O. M.C. inspect units of this Division, these inspections are very thorough and we shall probably get one ourselves soon. The hockey team went off to BRIGHTON to play in the beginning of the finals. The POTS officers in the Bn sent a telegram to Lt-Col. MacFarlane in reply to his Xmas greeting. The last day of 1942 finds the Bn in very good shape. All ranks are in excellent fighting condition and extremely keen that the fight begin soon. The reinforcements are good and in sufficient numbers. All in all the Bn is ready to do on as called and be an effective fighting team.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Submitted via for O.C. 1 RHC.</i></p>	W