

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.

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WAR DIARY OR INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

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M.F.M 11
& S/37

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| | | | <p>Month of Feb 1942.</p> <p><u>APPENDICES</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ I. Dress instructions. ✓ II. Report on Coy schemes 10-13 Feb ✓ III. Circular letter from T/Corps Comdr. ✓ IV. RHC Op. Instr. No.4. ✓ V. Report on coy schemes 16-17 Feb ✓ VI. RHC op Inst. No. 5. ✓ VII. Narrative and Inst. "C" Coy- H.G. Scheme 7 Feb. ✓ VIII. Inst. and report on coy schemes 23- 26 Feb. ✓ IX. Part 1 Orders No. 6-8 incl. ✓ X. Part 11 Orders No. 9-12 incl. ✓ XI. Weekly syllabi 2-28 incl. Feb ✓ XII. Weekly casualty returns 6-27 Feb incl. | |

S. J. Carter

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| EASTBOURNE | Feb 1 1942 | | <p>A heavy but transient fall of snow all morning. No church parade today. No. 3 Pl. spent the morning firing their 3" mortars out to sea, for want of a suitable range on which to use live ammunition. Most of the men were surprised that the sensitivity of the bombs was such that, with the exception of a very few blinds, all bombs exploded on impact with the water.</p> | JAG |
| | Feb 2 | | <p>Today's syllabus illustrates very well the extent to which the unit, in common with all the inf. bns of the Corps, have taken up battle drill as a standard form of training. Each of the rifle coys are doing several days of this drill each week, the object being to raise each junior NCO and each rifleman to a standard where he is able to put into effect the principles of minor tactics at a moment's notice when confronted with a sudden and unexpected situation and to carry out the deployment and attack rapidly without having to slacken the momentum to receive orders from his commander. The Cdn Corps has laid its stamp of approval on battle drill as a form of training, although one still hears often the criticism that, in trying to reduce all tactics to a standard drill, we are tending to destroy a soldier's natural sense of initiative; however, it is generally agreed that it is better to sacrifice some slight freedom of action in order to provide a junior leader with one or two simple, effective plans which are easily understood and memorized and on which he can fall back if he finds himself suddenly in a situation too critical to allow him to carry out any lengthy reconnaissances or to return to his commander for instructions. Besides these advantages, battle drill, being carried out at the double, helps greatly to bring the troops up to that essential yet unattainable state of "fighting fitness."</p> | JAG |
| | Feb 3 | | <p>The exercise Beaver 11 for HQs and signal personnel commenced in earnest today. The "STAND TO" was ordered yesterday but the volume of signal traffic did not become heavy until today. "ACTION STATIONS" was received at 1852 and from then on, the battle raged back and forth across the Downs and the flats. There were one or two times when the situation was confused owing mainly to the almost complete lack of information from Bde HQ; however, from the Bn point of view, the exercise was well carried out. This morning, in the first of the Div. playoffs in ice hockey our team went down to a</p> | JAG Cantby |

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| | Feb 3 | | decisive 4-0 defeat at the hands of the Camerons of Canada. The RHC team were definitely off their game but we have still hopes of retrieving the situation in the second game at the end of the week. | |
| | Feb 4 | | <p>Beaver ll continues. The imaginary enemy landing is well advanced and has reached the point where their tanks, landed from the sea, have already forced several sorties behind and around our positions. Casualties have been heavy with us and the R de Mais. have been virtually overrun.</p> <p>This evening, at 1955hrs, there took place the first real "AFLOAT". The real or suspected danger came from the direction of BRIGHTON; the only thing observed by troops in this area were flares from the west. "A" Coy, as duty coy. turned out and carried out their tasks without much confusion but it was apparent that certain other sub-units and civilian organizations either had not been properly informed of the plan of action or else had never given much thought to what part they should play. The excitement was short-lived: nothing happened and "STAND DOWN" was ordered at 2115hrs.</p> | ZPG. |
| | Feb 5 | | <p>Beaver ll finished with a "CEASE FIRE" at 1210hrs.</p> <p>The Bde.Comdr. today inspected the proposed new positions on the Downs, approved them and ordered that the digging should be commenced at once.</p> <p>In the evening at the BRIGHTON rink, our team lost the hockey series to the Camerons in a bitterly-contested game. The score 2-1 fairly well indicated the way the game went: the Camerons two goals were "flukes"(one goal was, on their own admission not valid) but, on the whole, their team was more polished and better trained than ours. One of the most painful features of this defeat was the loss of £27-0-0 worth of wagers which we had made with the officers of the Camerons and the 6 Bde.</p> <p>A change in dress for battle order came into effect officially today. The previous wearing of the respirator at the alert is replaced by the wearing of it slung over the web equipment. This comes as a result of the decision that the greater freedom of the chest and arms when the respirator is slung is sufficiently worthwhile to justify wearing it in a less accessible position. Certainly it is a welcome relief to be free of this bulky and uncomfortable piece of equipment under the chin.</p> | ZPG. Appx.1 |
| | Feb 6 | | Routine activity today with little of importance to note. | ZPG. |

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| | Feb 6 | | Coys busy with training in their areas. | JPG |
| | Feb 7 | | <p>Lieut.E.Motzfeldt left today for a 5 weeks advanced interrogation course at the Intelligence Centre, Cambridge.</p> <p>This evening, at LEWES, our boxing team lost a "sudden-death" Corps championship match against 48 Highlanders. It was a disappointing evening, our boys going down to a 14-4 score in bouts. Still, it was pleasing that we should at least have come out as Div.champions and great credit is due to Capt.J.G.Bourne and to L/Cpl.Willoughby for coaching their team to as many wins as they did.</p> | JPG |
| | Feb 8 | | <p>An R.C. church parade was held this morning but no Protestant service.</p> <p>Lieut Fred McKenzie, a B.W. officer recently arrived from Canada, visited the HQ Officers Mess today and gave a gloomy picture of the recruiting situation in Canada. He was speaking mainly of P.Q., although the general spirit of apathy seems to be in evidence in other provinces. According to his reports, all sorts of inducements and persuasive measures are resorted to in order to gain recruits for active service but still the flow of recruits is only a dribble. Certainly this is not a situation calculated to cheer the Canadians over here.</p> <p>The expected assault on Singapore Island commenced today. The troops are following events with great anxiety and, like every Britisher, are trying to convince themselves that, all reasoning to the contrary, this fortress can never fall.</p> | JPG |
| | Feb 9 | | <p>Today, half of the officers attended a lecture by Lt.Col Blatz, a noted psychiatrist now in the RCAMC, on the basis of morale in the army. All were much impressed by the clear, common-sense observations and proposals which the lecturer put forward.</p> <p>"D" Coy fired the first shot at an enemy plance when a lone monoplane swooped over Eastbourne Old Town during the afternoon. The guard at "D" Coy billets recognized the Nazi markings as the aircraft passed over him at only a few hundred feet and managed to loose off one mag. with his Bren; the plane flew on untouched, although the guard commander was convinced he saw some of his tracers enter the tail.</p> | JPG Caulty |

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| | Feb 10 | | <p>The first of a new series of "Coy in the attack" schemes took place with "A" Coy this morning. These schemes, which feature the co-operation of carriers with the rifle coy, are run under the supervision of Bde but actually directed by Capt.I.D. Beattie, the umpire attached to the unit.</p> <p>The Coys received a circular letter from Lieut.General H.D.G.Crerar, the A/Corps Comdr in which he urged unit comdrs to strive to maintain good discipline and morale within the Corps even under the trying conditions of unrelieved inaction. Certainly, these are hard times for the Canadians and it is little wonder that the pent-up energies of our men occassionally burst out in the form of military offences. Even then, the incidence of vicious or felonous crime is amazing low.</p> | <p>Appx.11 796 . Appx.111</p> |
| | Feb 11 | | <p>A RCOC inspection of all the unit's small arms started today with "A" Coy.</p> <p>Some appointments to special jobs within the Bn were notified in Part 1 Orders today: Lieut.V.E.Traversy to be W.T.O. , Lieut.J.R.Popham, Unit Legal Officer, Lieut R.Gault, Unit Education Officer and Lieut.J.Kemp, Military Assistance Officer for Eastbourne. All the appointments were formerly held by Lieut.G.M.G. Johnstne who, on his own request, relinquished them and went to "A" Coy as a Pl.Comdr; obviously, all these jobs were too heavy for one officer to carry.</p> | <p>796 .</p> |
| | Feb 13 | | <p>The C.O. and an officer from each coy attended a lecture at Brighton by Dr.Franz Burger, a legal man who came to this country recently after suffering at the hands of the Nazis. The general reaction, however, was that it was hardly worth the 23 mile drive to Brighton.</p> <p>Lieut.G.M.G.Johnstone was seconded today to act as a substitute for Capt.W.A.Wood as assistant to the S.C. at Bde.</p> <p>Some of the coys were shown a couple of German uniforms which were on loan to the Unit for a few days. Worn by one of the "I" Pl. men, these uniforms gave the troops a fairly accurate picture of what their opponents are going to look like when we do meet them in battle. This "German soldier" must have been pretty true to form for, when he was being taken up to "C" Coy in the "I" truck, a much-disturbed police</p> | <p>796 .</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Caution</i></p> |

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| | Feb 13 | | <p>constable phoned through to the I.O. with the report that he had seen a Nazi trooper in one of our trucks , and what should he do about it?</p> <p>The C.O., 2 i/c, Adjt and Sigs.O this evening attended a conference at Bde on the recent Beaver 11 exercise. The main conclusion from the signals point of view was that ^{the} verbosity and poor composition of our messages and improper regulation of signal traffic had jammed the lines. The most disturbing piece of information was supplied by the A.A.& QMG when, in answer to a series of complaints about billets, he referred to accomodation for us in this area "for the coming summer and the following winter", and so, were destroyed any hopes and illusions we still held of being moved off to something more exciting this spring.</p> | |
| | Feb 14 | | <p>The C.O. this morning attended a tank demonstration which included the showing of portable and truck-borne flame throwers and also a sort of travelling Bangalore torpedo, a 100 ft length of 3" pipe partly filled with explosive which is pushed ahead of a tank into a minefield and exploded by the crew to clear a path. Rather grotesque to see in operation but, according to the C.O. , a most effective outfit.</p> <p>Lieut.A.G.Stevenson with a work party of 9 today started on the installation of flames fougasses within the Bde area. This promises to be a job of some weeks duration.</p> <p>The CO, 2 i/c,I.O. and Coy Comdrs this evening attended a cloth model demonstration at Bde, directed by the R de Mais Officers. The exercise served to demonstrate the now accepted disposition of a Bn acting as advance guard in territory where anti-panzer action is considered to be the main problem.</p> | FPG |
| | Feb 15 | | <p>Capt.McKay being still away after his sojourn at hospital with suspected appendicitis, the Bn had no compulsory church parade.</p> <p>A feeling of gloom seemed to be general this week-end as a result of the announcement by the Prime Minister this evening that Singapore has had to surrender unconditionally. It is a queer, frustrated feeling for us to hear of this defeat due to inadequate defence when we are sitting in England long overdue for action and itching</p> | FPG |

W. Caulton

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| | Feb 15 | | for a scrap. | |
| | Feb 16 | | <p>The unit issued today an operation instruction embodying the same material as the one on "AFLOAT" but introducing a new codeword for the same action "BUGBEAR". The fact that this word was changed rather suggests that the previous one had become too well known as a result of bad security.</p> <p>All the officers attended a lecture at Bde H.Q. Mess in the evening on the characteristics and tactical handling of the 3" mortar given by a Lieut. Middleton from the Seaforths. We attended in a dull mood expecting a particularly dry lecture but it was generally agreed that the evening was most profitable. This weeks Coy tactical scheme is a village fighting exercise being held at FRISTON; the first to do it was "A" Coy who carried it out today.</p> | <p>JPG. Appx. IV</p> <p>Appx V</p> |
| | Feb 17 | | <p>The staff at Bde HQ and the Brig. himself have been busy the last few days on the current staff exercise Victor 11 which is taking place throughout England at all HQ from Bde up; today the Bde Comdr. became so involved in the exercise that he passed on the comd of the Bde to Lieut. Col. Cantlie until the termination of the scheme.</p> <p>Last week, the unit received a letter stating that the expansion of the army training program in Canada demanded that qualified officer and NCO instructors from the field units be sent back to Canada for a period of eight months to assist at the training centres. In accordance with instructions from Div., we submitted the names of four officers for consideration; in the meantime, these officers wait impatiently wondering whether they will be back in time to see the thaw on the St. Lawrence.</p> | <p>JPG.</p> |
| | Feb 18 | | <p>Routine activity today; "D" Coy on Crumbles range all day. A range day at Crumbles is a pretty cheerless ordeal in this weather: the butts are sited almost on the water's edge out at the end of LANGLEY POINT, where a bitterly cold, biting wind is forever sweeping in from the sea. Besides this, it is not uncommon to have a salty fog roll in across the firing points so thick as to almost obliterate the targets at over 200 yds. However, despite these trying conditions, the shooting during the last few practices has not been at all bad.</p> | <p>JPG</p> <p><i>Cantlie</i></p> |

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| | Feb 19 | | <p>"A" & "D" Coys move to their new billets in the WILLINGDON area this morning.</p> <p>This is the first of the moves designed to bring all the Bn billets into a concentrated area in proximity to the battle positions on the Downs above RATTON. The change back to our earlier positions is certainly a nuisance but, if our operational role is to exclude the defence of the foredown behind BEACHY HEAD, it is unwise to think of leaving any parts of the Bn down in EASTBOURNE old Town. These frequent moves are providing the wise-crackers in the unit with ample opportunity for comment on the Army's interpretation of a "mobile force".</p> <p>Brig. K.G.Blackader was a lunch-time guest at the Officer's mess today. He appears to be happy enough at his new job and certainly looks to be in good spirits. We saw him for the first time in ordinary uniform: to those who have ^{only} known him since the war ^{and} have never seen him in any uniform other than our own, the sight was rather strange.</p> | 7PG. |
| | Feb 20 | | <p>In B.O. No. 7 published today, instructions are issued for the laying up of 5 more vehicles in the Bn, so that 1/3 of our M.T. is off the road. If not a hardship, it is certainly a confounded nuisance, with 3 tpt. holidays in the week as well. However, it is undoubtedly a most necessary measure: our reverses in the Orient and the difficulty of keeping open the supply lines in the Mediterranean and the Near East have made the petrol and rubber precious commodities which everyone, including the army, must constantly strive to conserve against the day when we shall call our reserves into play for the long-delayed offensive.</p> <p>The Unit's Operation Instruction (No.5) covering our role in the present positions on the Downs was issued today.</p> | 7PG. |
| | Feb 21 | | <p>"B" Coy's move to new quarters in WILLINGDON this morning completed the change of billets of the rifle coys; "C" Coy and "B" Echelon personnel remain where they are and Bn HQ and HQ Coy are scheduled for their move about the middle of next month.</p> <p>In the first of the 2 out of 3 series with the Camerons in the Div soccer finals played at SEAFORD this afternoon, our team went down to a 1-0 defeat in a hard fought game.</p> | Appx.VI 7PG. <i>Scutt</i> |

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| | Feb 21 | | <p>"C" Coy staged a scheme with the H.G. at GARDNER STREET this evening; it was the type of thing which this coy has been doing through the winter,—night attacks against H.G. post by small teams of lightly clad men who attempt to pass through defences by stealth rather than to break them down by force, but tonight it was the biggest exercise yet. It included three pls of H.G., one with the attackers and two defending: it was what the English would describe as a "monster show". The attackers were conceded a win but had to admit heavy casualties; the H.G. type of defence (a network of one, two and three man posts around the village in concentric rings) is difficult to pierce with impunity: it may be broken through eventually but, in so doing, the attacking force becomes a pretty sorry-looking band by the time it reaches the village square.</p> | <p>796</p> <p>Appx VII</p> |
| | Feb 22 | | <p>The first church parade for several weeks was held this morning at St. Andrew's Church, Capt. McKay returned a couple of days ago after a tiresome week at the General Reinforcing Centre waiting for the sluggish machinery of 2nd Echelon to take some action on our demand made for him in the AFW 3008 of 6 Feb. He took the service this morning although Dr. Reid, the pastor of St. Andrew's delivered the sermon.</p> | <p>796</p> |
| | Feb 23 | | <p>In the absence of Maj. Weir on privileged leave, Maj. A.W. Wright is acting as 2 i/c</p> <p>a The G.O., representing the Bde Comdr, attended a discussion at Div H.Q. on the organization and disposition of a Bn acting as an adv. guard in territory where the presence of enemy AFV's is suspected; this is in preparation for the bn scheme to be held on 2 Mar.</p> <p>Lieut. MacLaurin commenced the first of a series of 5 day courses for rifle coys Officers on the use of the 3" mortar. Lieuts. Kemp, Gingues, and Fox are the officers attending this week.</p> <p>Capt. Beatty's scheme for the coys this week is "The coy in the defence and withdrawal". The comments appended indicate that, in this form of tactical move, we are not yet very smooth and that the offensive spirit which should accompany a withdrawal seems to be lacking.</p> | <p>796</p> <p>Appx. VIll</p> <p><i>W. Cantley</i></p> |

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| | Feb 24 | | <p>m We are notified today that, from the beginning of Mar, Officers and W.O.1's will be obliged to purchase clothing on ration coupons only, instead of being able to merely sign the bills, as has been the custom up to now. This regulation is put into effect, we understand, to do away with abuses of this privilege which lately have been becoming more frequent and serious.</p> | JPG |
| | Feb 25 | | <p>In the second of the Div final soccer matches against the Camerons of Canada, our team suffered another 1-0 defeat and so, once again, as in the case of the boxing and hockey, we got right through to the finals, only to lose out in our last match.</p> <p>Lieut.Col E.H.Small, of the Cape Breton Highlanders started a period of attachment to the Unit. His unit is one of the Inf. Bns in the 5 Arm Div which arrived a few months back. He is remembered by many of the subalterns from ALDERSHOT, N.S. where he was a Coy Commander.</p> | JPG |
| | Feb 26 | | <p>Lieuts J.E.Fox, C.H.E. Askwith and I.H.Louson today returned to the Reinforcing Unit on the expiration of their period of attachment.</p> <p>All officers attended a lecture this evening at Bde H.Q. on "The use of Arty" by Col. Roem, who has recently relinquished comd. of the 5 Cdn Fd. Regt to take over the Arty Group at C.B.U.</p> | JPG |
| | Feb 27 | | <p>Four officers arrived today from the Reinforcing Unit: Lieut J.A.Fraser, who goes to "B" Coy, is to be T.O.S., H.L. Carstairs and V.Wilson-Smith to "C" and H.G. MacKenzie to "B" on attachment.</p> <p>The C.O. attended a demonstration of combined arty, tank and inf. tactics.</p> | JPG |
| | Feb 28 | | <p>Lieut.MacLaurin staged a demonstration this morning of the 3" mortar firing live ammunition.</p> <p>The first issues were made today of the coupons which are now to govern the purchase of all type of soap for the tps. Gradually all necessities as well as luxuries are going on the rationing scheme.</p> | JPG Cantle |

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| | Feb 28 | | <p>And, so, ends another month with the prospect of fighting seeming as remote as ever. The month has been conspicuous as a period which was almost uneventful, for the absence of anything big or unusual.</p> <p>The weather was uniformly cold and bitter ^{bitter} with very little rain but almost every day, a piercing wind from the sea. Under these conditions, the work on field defences on the Downs is a pretty painful ordeal.</p> <p>The morale of the men remains high, although in some respects they appear a bit listless. Their health is amazing good and there are seldom any ailments more chronic than the mid-winter cold.</p> | TPG. C. S. [Signature] |