

WAR DIARY

48th Highlanders of Canada 10Jul43 to 28Jan45

10 JULY 1943

'H' hour 0245 hrs., R.C.R. and H. & P.E. landed on beaches unobserved and obtained initial success with few casualties and very little opposition. "A", "B" and Bn.H.Q. embarked L.C.I. at 0300 hrs. "C", "D" and duplicate Bn H.Q. loaded 0600 hrs. and proceeded to beaches. No firing or even a sign of enemy activity. Bn. landed in broad daylight and assembled off beaches and advanced in two columns to objectives one mile inland without encountering any opposition. Natives apparently very friendly, at least on the surface offering men fruit and continuously saying Amici. Bn. consolidated on three high points and sent out patrols. Slight enemy activity observed in distance but too far to engage. Men spent time collecting tomatoes and fruit of all types. Men found heat oppressive. This part of SICILY all vineyards, dry and flat. After dark enemy air raid on beaches. One bomb landing in "D" Coy. area but no casualties. Otherwise a quiet night. Weather - hot and dry.

11 JULY 1943

ROSOLINI SICILY

Bn. rested until 1100 hrs. then moved to BURGIO awaiting further orders. The Corps Commander, General Sir Oliver Leace, dropped in and chatted. Bn. ordered to move and take ROSOLINI. A forced march, men suffering intensely from the heat. No opposition encountered on route up, slight air activity causing some excitement but no casualties. Bn. attacked ROSOLINI from three sides, "A" Coy. centre, "B" Coy. left, and "C" Coy. right. No opposition encountered as elements of British tanks had already been through. "A" Coy. captured 30 Italians mostly Alpine Div. "C" Coy. taking 15 prisoners and seven light tanks. No casualties. Bn. consolidated and held on awaiting further orders. Weather - hot and dry.

12 JULY 1943

Bn. started to march at 0430 hrs. "A" Coy. leading Road lay through winding hill country towards MODICA. HEAT was very bad and dust proved to be final touch. Men suffered severely and several collapsed with sunstroke. Stopped for tea at 1400 hrs. then marched for two hrs. taking up rest position 2 1/2 miles NORTH EAST of MODICA. Lack of water is hardest thing to take. Bn. rested until 2130 hrs. having first meal in 48 hrs. Marched NORTH without any opposition. Men very tired. Some strafing by F.W.109 during day, no casualties. Weather - very hot

13 JULY 1943

GIARRATANA SICILY

Took up position 1 mile SOUTH of GIARRATANA, rested and cleaned up *during* the entire day. C.O. attended conference at Bde. H.Q. More vehicles arrived from Beach Dump at BURGIO and ROSOLINI. "C", "B" and "A" Coys. took up defensive positions on three high points with special Bn. H.Q. under Major Crawford-Brown, Rear Bn.H.Q and "D" Coy. remaining at present area. Padre very busy doing some mule collecting with the result of five mules to add to Bn, train, One D.R. involved in crash, not severely injured. Weather - very hot.

14 JULY 1943

Bn, drawn up in hollow square with R.C.R. for inspection by C. in C. Army, Gen. Montgomery, He arrived 1130 hrs. accompanied by Gen. Simonds and Brig. Graham. Troops called to attention, then Coy. Comds. introduced, then the General gave an informal talk to men, bidding the Div. Welcome to 8th Army and telling them what he expected. Sent off with three rousing cheers and a tiger. Bde. 'O' group at 1730 hrs. Bn. to move to VIZZINI at which point 51st Div. are fighting the Herman Georing Div. Bn. left on transport entirely, "D" Coy. leading, Bn, H.Q., "B", "C" and "A" Coys. A large rear party left behind. Bn, moved off at 2300 hrs. Q.M. was sniped at by enemy from ration point. Capt. macfarlane rejoined Bn, from 2nd flight. Rear party mounted strong guard around dump. Weather - very hot.

15 JULY 1943

VIZZINI, GRAMMICHELE CALTAGIRONE SICILY.

Morning found the Bn. bivouaced some 5 miles SOUTH of VIZZINI which was in the process of being cleaned by the 51st Div. After three hrs. sleep and a very hasty breakfast the column moved forward through VIZZINI and turned WEST. The Bde. now leading with H. & P.E.R. leading and 48th directly behind. The H. & P.E.R. ran into opposition 2 miles EAST of GRAMMICHELE and a tank battle ensued. By midday the Hastings had attacked and taken GRAMMICHELE and the 48 Highrs were put in to take CALTAGIRONE 10 miles further on, with a carrier section of S.L.I. in front and a squadron of the 12th Tank Regt. we moved forward in trucks. About a mile and a half this side of GRAMMICHELE the front carrier hit a mine and Lt E.M. MacLachlan, who was leading his section, was killed. The Engineers then started the laborious process of clearing the whole road to CALTAGIRONE of mines. The Bn. was deployed after considerable delay and started to march across country to CALTAGIRONE, which was held by a detachment of the Herman Georing Div. By 2300 hrs. Bn. was in an assembly area and was preparing to bed down as the attack had been called off till the morning, even though rumours of the Germans having left were prevalent. However, a new Order came though shortly after for the Bn, to take the town, and at 0200 hrs. with a squadron of tanks we marched into the town. There was no opposition, and the Germans had left about 6 hrs. previously, leaving parts of the town ablaze. Weather - very hot.

16 JULY 1943

CALTAGIRONE PIAZZA ARMERINA. ST. MICHELE SICILY

At 0600 hrs. 2 i/c, M.O. and I.O. made a tour of the town. It was a fair sized place - 40,000 inhabitants approx. - and was in a very bad mess having been heavily bombed by the Americans. The Carabinieri and fiscal police were then relieved of their arms and one car. The Unit meanwhile adopting a defensive position around the Town. During the morning 2 petrol dumps and large and ammunition dumps were found, whilst various parts of the Bn. authorized themselves with Italian vehicles. About 1100 hrs. the 2nd and 3rd Bdes. started to move NORTH to PIAZZA ARMERINA and by 2000 hrs. the Bn. leading Coy. ("D" Coy.) started in behind the 2nd Bde. The advance proceeded slowly NORTH, 3rd Bde. being held up by heavy mortar fire, and the Bn. reached Assembly Area a mile SOUTH of St. MICHELE by 2300 hrs. Weather - Very hot & dry.

17 JULY 1943

PIAZZA ARMERINA SICILY

C.O. joined Bde. 'O' group at 1000 hrs. and Bn. went on 45 minutes notice to move, warned to move at 1300 hrs. and finally moved off on transport in the following order "D", Bn. H.Q., "C", "B" and "A". Road crowded with 3rd Bde. transport and progress exceedingly slow. A long halt at 1930 hrs. to cook supper, then moved on to approximately 3 miles NORTH of

PIAZZA ARMERINA where Bn, became caught up in a traffic jam, drew to side of road and halted until dawn. Weather - very hot and dry.

18 JULY 1943

VALQUARNERA SICILY

At dawn Bn, drew into a transport area for breakfast. The German A.A. truck, captured by "B" Coy., centre of interest. Bn, suddenly ordered forward on foot to take up reserve position on ridge 2 miles SOUTH of VALQUARNERA. On way to position some enemy mortar fire. Arriving at position "D" Coy. to position on forward ridge and immediately snipers started from a ridge 800 yards away. C.O. laid on a barrage of 3 minutes and sniping momentarily halted but started immediately after barrage. "D" Coy. sent a Pl. plus 1 section under Lt. Handley to take position. Position taken killing 35 enemy and 20 wounded. Prisoners identified as 2nd Bn. 15 Panzer Div. Our losses 4 dead and six wounded including Lt. Handley *wounded* several other wounded of H. & P.E. & Carleton & York brought in. Lt. Milnes evacuated as result of m/c spill. Bn. moved at 2300 hrs. to take up an advance position one mile NORTH of VALQUARNERA. Due to bridge being blown up Bn. had absolutely no support. Passing through the Town which was absolutely deserted some shelling took place but no casualties. Weather - very hot and dry.

19 JULY 1943

Bn. took up position on road junction one mile north of VALQUARNERA and proceeded to dig in. Due to fact that the bridge SOUTH Of Town was blown up Bn. had no communication or support with anybody until 0700 hrs. when bridge was repaired and the 2nd Bde. passed through us. "A", "C" and Bn. H.Q. were in one position. "B" and "D" in a position one mile due EAST. The latter two Coys. spent a quiet day while the former were periodically shelled by a mortar which injured four men and Lt. Miller. Position eventually taken out by the P.P.C.L.I. Bn. rested the entire day and in the evening prepared to move. Weather - very hot and dry.

20 JULY 1943

Between VALQUARNERA ASSORO SICILY

The Bn. was advance guard for the Bde. on the route to ASSORO which was the first Brigade objective, while the 2nd Brigade took LEONFORTE. Bn. crossed the start line, which was at the road junction right beside the Bn. area, and proceeded up the road for two miles behind the 2nd Brigade then turned off taking the road to ASSORO. Route lay along a broad valley with high hills on both sides. Bn. spread out in extended line to thoroughly sweep valley and picquet the hills. Met with no opposition whatever for ten miles when the Bn. was put into reserve while the R.C.R. passed through us. During the recce of the Bn. area we were to occupy Bn. H.Q. took sixteen Italian prisoners. Bn. took up defensive position on a high ridge facing another ridge about 1000 yds away. R.C.R. passed through on the left flank and proceeded to attack this ridge and came under mortar fire. Tanks came up to support but some were knocked out by mines. Enemy battery then turned its attention on our area and proceeded to make life very unpleasant. Arty and M.M.G. took it on but the gun was not knocked out until late in the evening. The Bn. was subjected to periodic bombardments making life very unpleasant and killing two men wounding four, as well as some casualties of other units in the area. The Bn. suffered heavy loss when it was reported that Lt. Miller died as a result of his wounds. The Padre evacuated to hospital suffering from exhaustion. Weather - hot and dry.

21 JULY 1943

Spent the morning cleaning up and resting in preparation for a move. "O" group at 1400 hrs. The Bn. ordered to move forward and assist the H. & P.E., who were hard pressed at ASSORO. Bn. moved off at 1600 hrs, and were held up several times by mortar fire and M.G. fire. finally settled down in defensive position until dark. Weather - hot and dry.

22 JULY 1943

ASSORO SICILY

Shortly after midnight "B" and "D" Coys. launched their attacks on the heights at ASSORO to relieve the pressure on the Hastings and Prince Edward Regt. who had been holding the town itself for 24 hours and were in bad shape. "B" Coy. took up a position on a high ridge 1/2 mile SOUTH WEST of the Town. "C" Coy, occupied the Town. "D" Coy. SOUTH EAST of the Town, while "A" Coy. and Bn. H.Q. took up a position in the valley due WEST of the Town. "A" Coy, captured four trucks, one 88 mm gun and took 60 Italian prisoners who surrendered as soon as they knew we were there. During the whole of this operation the Bn. lost one man killed and seven wounded as the result of M.G. fire. Bn. dug in and waited. Light shelling continued throughout the day. In the evening the Bn. ordered to move forward and take the road junction N.W. of LEONFORTE. "B" and "D" Coys. were in the process of forming up in the Bn, H.Q. area when the Heavie of the Germans opened up on the position killing four and wounding ten. Advance elements moved forward at midnight. Weather - hot and dry

23 JULY 1943

NORTH WEST ASSORO

"D" and "B" Coys, started their advance from ASSORO to the road junction just EAST of LEONFORTE. En route "B" Coy. suffered two killed and four wounded from the heavy gun that had been strafing us before. The advance continued smoothly until "B" Coy. reached the road junction where they were met with heavy M.G. and mortar fire. After heavy fighting they were forced to withdraw and reorganize while "D" Coy. took up a defensive position. Lt. Moncur badly wounded in the leg and 10 O.Rs. injured. "A" and "C" Coys. brought up at first light and it was found that the enemy had withdrawn so the Bn. took up a defensive position just EAST of the junction, with "A" Coy. right, "C" Coy. left, "D" Coy. surrounding Bn. H.Q. and "B" Coy. in a series of caves in a rest area. Very few German prisoners taken. The Hun in this instance seemed to be mostly very young men including a number from the occupied countries who were forced in. Bn, maintained its defensive position throughout the day, Bn, H.Q. being subjected to 88 mm and mortar shellings. It is apparent that the guns D.F. on the radio sets. Weather - very hot and dry.

24 JULY 1943

LEONFORTE & NISSORIA SICILY

Bn. prepared to move in the morning. The Edmontons took over positions at noon when the Bn. withdrew to a forming up place preparatory to the advance. The start line was the road junction EAST of LEONFORTE. The R.C.R. were the advance Bn. with the objective of taking AGIRA with the 48th mopping up. The R.C.R. got as far as NISSORIA five miles from AGIRA when they met with heavy opposition and were halted. The 48th took up a strong defensive position on two high features, "C" Coy. on the left of the road and "A" Coy. on the right with "B" and "C" Coys. in reserve. This position was two miles west of NISSORIA. Bn. stood to all night in readiness for a counter attack, which never materialised. Weather - very hot.

25 JULY 1943

NISSORIA SICILY

Bn. maintained the same defensive position the whole day, while the other two Regiments, of the Brigade, who had been badly cut up withdrew behind the Bn. to reorganize. Bn. shelled all during the day but suffered very few casualties. Capt. Wallace took a patrol of ten men up to a high feature 1/2 mile to the NORTH of "C" Coy. area and surprised a German party, killing four and returning with valuable information. Bn. launched into the attack on the high feature due NORTH of NISSORIA. This feature was strongly held by the Germans, consisting of forward elements well behind entrenched M.G. and Mortar posts. Bn. advanced three Coys. forward. "D" Coy. left, "B" Coy. centre and "C" Coy. right, "A" Coy. reserve. Bn. advanced under Arty barrage. "D" and "B" Coys, nearly reached crest when "D" Coy. met heavy enfilade M.G. fire from the left. "B" Coy. attempted to swing round and take out post but also met heavy fire. The two Coys forced to withdraw. "C" Coy. attained ridge but also had to withdraw due to exposed flanks. Lt. R.F. Osler and 10 O.Rs. were killed, 2 missing and 38 wounded. Bn. withdrew to former positions to await daylight. Weather - hot and dry.

26 JULY 1943

Bn. remained in its F.D.L. and came under and Bae who passed through in the evening and took feature under a heavy barrage. Lt. S. Reburn, Lt. D. Cousins, Lt. J.G. Pickering, Lt. J.E. Chase and 52 O.Rs. joined the Bn. Lt.B.S. Eby evacuated with dysentery. Weather - still hot.

27 JULY 1943

Capt. Clarke took party out to search for the dead and managed to locate all but two, the graves of which were subsequently found. The Padre buried all Bn. dead in the afternoon. Rear Bn. H.Q. rejoined the Unit, men having their small packs for the first time in many days. Capt. Wright left with party in tpt to pick up Bn. kit bags. Weather - very hot.

28 JULY 1943

Bn. still resting and the entire day devoted to "make and mend". Major Warren dropped in to give the Bn. all the latest news. Weather - very hot.

29 JULY 1943

Bn. in rest area during the whole day, Coys. holding weapon and kit inspection and generally preparing for a move. Men in good spirits as a mail received. During the afternoon a heavy thunderstorm blew up. All Ranks incl. the C.O. took advantage of it and held impromptu shower baths out in the rain, at the same time attempting to keep their kits dry with complete lack of success. The rain which was torrential lasted for two hours resulting in a temporary quagmire which soon dried up. G.O.C. 1st Div. talked to Officers and W.Os. explaining progress of campaign and the probable future. Weather - Hot then thunderstorm followed by coolness.

30 JULY 1943

C.O. left early in the morning on a recce with the Brig. returning at 1000 hrs., the Bn. being put on an hours notice to move. Ordered to move at 1300 hrs. by transport to three miles EAST of AGIRA then to proceed by foot another two miles towards REGALBUTO. First part of move completed successfully, then "A" Coy. led off on foot followed by Bn. H.Q., "B" Coy., "C" Coy. and "D" Coy. Bn. moved off the road but almost immediately came under spasmodic shell fire which injured the three "A" Coy. men. Bn. reached D.P. without further trouble, "A" and "B" Coy.s. taking up positions right and left of the road respectively. "C" Coy. moving up a valley with Bn. H.Q. came under intense shell fire resulting in 2 killed and seven wounded. Bn. area approx. five mile from River straddling the EAST WEST Road.

Some spasmodic shelling during the night, but no casualties. "A" Coy. captured 5 Italians. Weather - very hot.

31 JULY 1943

REGALBUTO SICILY

Bn. moved off at noon to take over a position from the Devons. This position was on the high ground due NORTH of REGALBUTO which was still in the possession of four Coy. German Engineers of the Herman Goering Division. Take over completed around 1800 hrs, Weather - hot and dry.

For (I.S.JOHNSTON) Lt-col.,
Commanding Officer, 48th Highlanders of Canada.

1 AUGUST 1943

During the morning there was a great deal of activity on the part of enemy tanks who continually sniped and shelled our positions, killing one "A" Coy. man and wounding several others. Lt. Chase while endeavoring to find an O.P. to watch the tanks on "D" Coy. front was killed by a sniper. Around noon the Devons who had been attacking the town were forced to withdraw through our positions. During the afternoon No. 13 PL. commanded by Lt. Douglas was in forward position and Pl.. H.Q. were surprised by a German patrol. Lt. Douglas and one man were taken prisoner. The Bn. was in contact with the enemy all day but at sunset activity almost completely ceased. Rear Bn. H.Q. moved up to within two miles of town. Weather - hot.

2 AUGUST 1943

"C" Coy. sent a patrol into REGALBUTO in the morning to find that it was clear of the enemy, and the town badly damaged from bomb and shell fire. During the early hrs. of the morning the A/Tk. guns, rations and mortars joined the Bn. via a back road bulldozed by the Engineers. Two coys. of the Devons took over the town and the Bn. remained in its defensive positions for the remainder of the day. Weather - hot.

3 AUGUST 1943

Bn. moved from its defensive positions into a rest position in olive grove on the ridge occupied by "D" Coy. one mile NORTH OP REGALBUTO. Rear Bn. H.Q. caught up with the Bn, and in the afternoon "B" echelon and the dump moved up thereby causing some heavy shelling but without any casualties. The Bn. had a grand stand view of the bombing of REGALBUTO by some unidentified planes. Lt. Handley joined the Bn. from Hosp. and Capt. McLaren arrived from NORTH AFRICA where he had been since his ship was sunk. Also 34 reinf. arrived bringing the Bn. fairly well up to strength. Capt. Beatty evacuated to dump to recover from dysentery. Also Lt. Eby remained at dump to fully recover from dysentery. "A" Coy. sent out on a forward standing patrol to the high ground in the centre of the valley four miles due EAST of Town. Weather - very hot.

4 AUGUST 1943

During the early morning hours the Bn. was ordered to leave its present area and move through REGALBUTO to a position two miles EAST of the Town and on the high ground on the SOUTH of the valley. Bn. moved at 0545 hrs. and marched through Town, stopped for breakfast about one half mile short of objective, then took up position. "A" Coy. was still in its forward patrol area about four miles EAST of the Town on some high ground in the centre of the valley. "D" Coy. took up a position ½ mile behind that, with Bn H.Q., "C" and "B" Coys. on the high ground at the SOUTH of the valley. Bn, dug in and awaited events. Pioneer Pl. kept busy the entire day removing mines from the road. During the entire day the NORTHERN road was shelled by German long range mortars and guns. Also witnessed a successful attack put in by the Second Brigade. In the P.M. Canadian War Correspondents visited the Bn. for interviews and stories, and during their visit REGALBUTO was heavily bombed. According to an unconfirmed report by Americans. *Lt*

Cassels took a carrier patrol up the valley to the EAST and contacted the 78th Div. who crossed the road at the CENTURIFE-REGALBUTO road junction. The remainder of the night passed quietly. Weather - very hot.

5 AUGUST 1943

CARCACI SICILY

The Bn. remained in its defensive position the entire day resting and awaiting orders to move to form a bridgehead for the taking of ADRANO. The C.O. accompanied by the Coy. Comds, left on an all day recce which took them to the Second Bde area which lay NORTH EAST OP REGALBUTO. Returning from the recce the party took the wrong turning and headed towards TROINA. Realizing the mistake they turned around and immediately came under enemy M.M.G. fire. The jeep turned over in the ditch but fortunately nobody was injured although the I.O. received a machine gun bullet in the heel of his boot. The jeep was extricated by a carrier or the P.L.D.G. and the party returned safely. The 2 i/c attended an orders group in the absence of the C.O. The Bn. ordered to move forward and form a bridgehead over the river due EAST of CARCACI. Bn. moved at dusk and proceeded across country to a position one mile due WEST of this Town and took up an assembly position in an orange grove. The marching across country was extremely difficult and the Bn. did not reach the assembly area until 0300 hrs. Men immediately dug in and snatched what sleep they could. During the afternoon three Mustangs of the U.S. Forces once again unsuccessfully bombed the Bn. area, scoring a near miss on the transport lines. Lts. Ross Baillie, Buchanan, Murray, Milnes and Capt. Childs joined the Bn. Lt. Milnes returned from hospital where he had been for two weeks with a leg injury. Lt. Stearns arrived from NORTH AFRICA with three carriers. Weather - very hot. *Capt McLaren took a patrol forward to contact 78 div at CARCACI at 1900 hrs meeting Bn at R.V. at 0300 at 0300 Capt McLaren took another patrol to CARCACI where he found enemy had withdrawn from across river.*

6 AUGUST 1943

The Bn. left its rest area just WEST of CARCACI and proceeded to form a bridgehead over the river one mile EAST of the village. Quite heavy mortar and shell fire all day, one man being killed and four injured. "A" coy. took up a position on the left on a piece of high ground about three hundred yards from the river, with "B" Coy. slightly to the right, and "C" Coy. on the extreme right, "D" Coy. in the reserve just off the river bank. Advance Bn.H.Q. on the EAST side of the river bank, rear Bn.H.Q. just WEST of CARCACI. F and A echelons remaining where the Bn. spent the night. Very little enemy opposition except mortar fire. 78 Div. reported that their patrols had got to the edge of ADRANO without opposition. ADRANO officially fell during the evening, the enemy withdrawing to the NORTH. Weather - hot.

7 AUGUST 1943

Bn. still in position across the river forming the bridgehead one mile, EAST of CARCACI. The 78 Div. crossed the Bn. front going to the NORTH, so that the BN came into reserve. F, A and B echelons ordered up, the first coming in shortly after noon and B echelon arriving during the evening with the large packs and kit bags. Great use made of the river for bathing, as there were several swimming holes and the men had the first real wash since they came to the island. Weather - very hot.

8 AUGUST 1943

The day devoted to pay and muster parades and general cleaning up. The men having their kit bags for the first time. Also we received our first purchase from the Expeditionary Forces Institute, which is handled by Mr. Singleton the Y.M.C.A. Supervisor. There was a bottle of beer for every two men and a bottle of scotch for every two Officers, W.Os. and Sgts., also toothpaste, chocolate and cigarettes could be purchased. Pl. Sgts, collected the money and Pl, requirements and did all the purchasing. Church parade at 1900 hrs. and Bn. turned out

as a Bn. for the first time since the campaign began. Except for the variation in headgear due to kits being lost the Bn. presented a smart appearance and proved that it had not forgotten the fundamental drill. Weather - very hot.

9 AUGUST 1943

Major Crawford-Brown, Coy. 2 i/c's, R.Q.M.S., Sigs and Transport Sgts. left on a scat party to recce the rest area to which we are being sent. The Sicilian campaign as far as the Canadians are concerned is through as we are going back to rest and re-equip, to prepare for the next phase. The men rested all day and cleaned up. The Brigadier visited the Bn. The Q.M. and Adj. attended an A. & Q. conference at Bde. The Commanding officer addressed all ranks of the Bn. dealing with the campaign from the beginning up to the present time, the lessons that had been learnt, the faults he had to find, and of the pride he felt in the Regiment. It was an excellent address and one which the men appreciated. Major Warren visited the Bn. giving some news as to the progress of the campaign. Lt. Magee and 34 reinforcements arrived in the forenoon. The Pipe Band played retreat in the evening. Weather - very hot.

10 AUGUST 1943

Bn, rested in area the entire day, bathing, washing clothes and generally enjoying themselves. Weather - very hot.

11 AUGUST 1943

Bn. still in same area, preparing to move. "O" group 1400 hrs. and Bn. loaded vehicles as an early start to-morrow essential. All ranks enjoyed a last swim and are most reluctant to leave such a delightful area. Weather - very hot.

12 AUGUST 1943

MILITELLO SICILY

Reveille 0445 hrs., breakfast 0515 hrs., Bn. moved off at 0600 hrs. in transport to new area. An 83 mile trip over extremely bad roads, the heat and dust proving very oppressive. The new area (sheet 273, MR 740517) was reached at 1500 hrs. and proved to be most depressing. The Coys. very closely crowded in an olive grove on top of a high hill and very little shade available. Remainder of the day devoted to settling down. Weather - very hot.

13 AUGUST 1943

The entire day spent in settling into new camp, laying down of routine and organization of the camp. The daily routine is: Reveille 0545 hrs. , P.T. 0600 hrs., breakfast 0700 hrs., training parade 0800 - 1000 hrs., then no parades until 1600 hrs. and parades until 2000 hrs. The heat of the noonday sun is too great to work, so all ranks rest during the day. Many ingenious contrivances invented to add what comfort possible. Great use made of bullrushes for camouflage purposes. The C.O. ill all day with a touch of dysentery. In the afternoon Major Wemp of the Evening Telegram, Mr. Griffin of the Toronto Daily Star and Mr. Allen of the Globe and Mail interviewed officers of the Unit on the Sicilian campaign. Some mail received during the day. Weather - very hot.

14 AUGUST 1943

All Officers down to and incl Coy. Comds. attended a conference at Bde. which lasted the greater part of the morning. The official Historian for 1 Can. Div. visited the Unit obtaining a complete account of the campaign using the War Diary as a basis and supplemented by an account by the C.O. Coys. started on training syllabus and beginning of the baseball schedule. Weather - very hot.

15 AUGUST 1943

A Service of thanksgiving for Victory held at 0930 hrs. the Bde. Support Group (Sask, L.I.) participated. The Service was conducted by H/Capt. East, the lesson being read by Major Wemp. The Service was followed by a march past the C.O. Remainder of the day passed quietly. Coy. Comds. meeting to discuss various matters in afternoon. Summary of the week's news being given by the M.O., Capt. Skinner, a great many men attending. Lt. F.D. Handley appointed A/Capt. Weather - very hot.

16 AUGUST 1943

The G.O.C., Maj-Gen Simonds, visited the Bn. inspecting the camp and chatting with the Coy. Comds. Coys. carried out normal training. Major L.M. Crawford-Brown left the Bn. to return to England as an instructor. Major D.W. Banton appointed 2 i/c. Capt, J.C. Clarke taking command of "D" Coy., Capt. F.G. McLaren of H.Q. Coy. and Capt. F.D. Handley as 2 i/c "C" Coy. Weather - very hot.

17 AUGUST 1943

The Official Photographer of the Div. visited the Unit in the morning and went around the area taking various pictures of the Officers and men. Normal training carried out during the day. Coy. Comds. meeting in the P.M. to discuss promotions and decorations. The first game of the Bde. Softball League in the evening, the Bn. defeating the R.C.R. Lt. Clarkson inspected the swimming beaches and brought back a stirring account of them. Weather - very hot.

18 AUGUST 1943

C.O. inspected the camp during morning rounds and ordered *that* several badly needed improvements *be* made. The 13th Corps Commander, General Dempsey, visited the Unit meeting the Coy. Comds. and other officers. This is the first time he has visited the Bn. since it came under his Command. Lt. W. Woods joined the Unit as S.I. for training and was posted to "D" Coy. The Bn. defeated Bde. H.Q. in the second game of the Softball League. Weather - very hot.

19 AUGUST 1943

Bn. carried out normal training during the day and a further blitz made on the general condition and cleanliness of the camp area as a whole. Lt. Boughton joined the Bn, as S.I. for training and was posted to "D" Coy. Bn, defeated H. & P.E.R. in baseball. Weather - very hot.

20 AUGUST 1943

Normal training and clean up during the morning. In the afternoon a Bde. parade for General Montgomery. The parade held in Sask. L. I. grounds and the Bde. formed up in a hollow square, Bn. occupying the left flank. The parade was called for 1400 hrs. but was at the last moment moved forward one half hour, causing a great deal of confusion. The General arrived in his open car accompanied by General Simonds and Brig. Graham. Following the accepted custom, General Montgomery called them around his car, told them to sit down and smoke and then spoke to them informally. He congratulated the Bde. on their performance during the campaign and on the Canadians in general. He left after three rousing cheers were given and the Bde. was dismissed. Weather - very hot.

21 AUGUST 1943

Normal training in the morning and in the afternoon embussed at 1300 hrs, and proceeded to the beaches near CATANIA in order to swim. The trip down took about an hour and a half and then the Bn. had 2 hours in which to swim and lie around in the sun and all ranks seemed to enjoy the outing to the full. The sea was very warm. Returned in time for a late supper at 1930 hrs. Weather - very hot.

22 AUGUST 1943

Reveille at 0700 hrs., breakfast 0800 hrs. A voluntary Church parade at 0915 hrs. which was well attended. The Brig. called in during the morning. General McNaughton visited the Bn. during the afternoon, meeting many of the Officers and talking to several of the men. His visit was purely informal, the purpose being to commend the Bn. on its showing during the Sicilian campaign. Lt. MacLachlan, R.C.N.V.R., brother of the late Lt. E.M. MacLachlan, came to the Bn. to visit it for a few days. An informal Mess dinner held in the evening, so that many of the new Officers might come to know each other. A drink called McGullion was made, which consisted of anything that anybody happened to have. Weather - very hot.

23 AUGUST 1943

Bn. carried out normal training during the day. A great many men still being sent away with suspected malaria. Altogether some 50 odd have been sent away during the past four days. A large S.I. draft of 4 and 75 arrived. The officers are Capt. Smith, posted to "A" Coy., Lt. H. Grant to "B" Coy., Lt. Hudson to "C" Coy. and Capt. Palmer to "D" Coy. The 2 i/c left early in the morning on a recce and returned late in the evening. Weather - very hot.

24 AUGUST 1943

Bn. carried out normal training during the morning and afternoon. The C.O. attended a conference at Division in the morning. The Bn. baseball team severely trounced the Bde. Support Group team with a score of 19 to 3. Weather - very hot.

25 AUGUST 1943

Bn. carried out normal training during the morning. The C.O. attended a Divisional conference then with the Adjt. went to CATANIA to pay a visit to No. 4 Canadian Base Reinforcement Depot. This depot handles all the reinforcements for the Division. The Bde. Coy. is commanded by Capt. Meunier, ex 48 Highrs with Sgt-maj. Stevens also 48 Highrs as C.S.M. In the afternoon the Bn. embussed at 1300 hrs, and proceeded to the beaches to swim. The water was warm and everybody took full advantage of the holiday. Returned at 1800 hrs. The baseball team was defeated by the Bde. Support Group. Lts. Knight, Derry and Arrol with 20 O.R.S. joined the Bn. as S.I. Lt. Thompson evacuated to hospital. Weather - very hot.

26 AUGUST 1943

The C.O. briefed all Officers of the Bn. for the forthcoming operation which is to take place shortly. The C.O. began by giving us the general plan then went into the details and expressed great confidence in the outcome. The Bn. carried out normal training during the day, with special emphasis being placed on deficiencies of kit and equipment. C.Os, orders in the afternoon. Lt. Naylor left the Bn. for 4 C.B.R.D. to return to England as an instructor. An informal quizz programme and singsong, organized by the Y.M.C.A. , with Capt. Richardson as Master of Ceremonies, was held which was greatly enjoyed by everybody. Cpts, Cameron and Beatty and Lt. Milnes S.O.S. to hospital. Weather - very hot.

27 AUGUST 1943

The entire day devoted to Bde sports which started at 0700 hrs, with the preliminary heats for the sprints. It was evident from the start that the Bn. and the R.C.R. were going to fight it out for first place. The morning programme ended. at 0930 hrs. and then the meet was continued at 1700 hrs. The Bn. won the 100 yds. , 220, the mile relay and took second place in other events. The track team was composed of a dozen runners, Lts. Clarkson and Cassels, Cpl. Shaw and Pte. Mitchell taking a leading part. The first upset of the day was when the R.C.R. tug-of-war team defeated ours. At the conclusion of the meet the R.C.R. led by four points, with the result that whoever won the softball game would win the day. After a tightly fought game the R.C.Rs. won the match and became Unit Champions for 1943. Brig. Graham, D.S.O. presented the prizes then led off the Bde. singsong. The entire

day proved to be a great success and the keen competition throughout excited great rivalry between the Units competing. Lt. E.J. Pearson R.C.C.S. joined the Bn. as Signals Officer. Weather - very hot.

28 AUGUST 1943

The C.o. and Adjt. attended a Bde. Admin. conference in the morning. The Coys. spent the day doing field firing. Coy. Comas, meeting in the afternoon to discuss administrative details of the operation. Capt. Wilson, of the Medium Arty, joined the Bn. to act as F.O.O. A small parcel mail came in. Lt. McLurg S.O.S. to hospital with a high fever. Bn. mounted a guard of one Officer and thirty three O.Rs. in MILITELLO. Weather - very hot.

29 AUGUST 1943

The C.O. left early in the morning to make a recce with the Brig. of the new area. The Bn. left at 0800 hrs. and proceeded to the beaches to swim. Coy. Comds. left for Div. to study scale model for the forthcoming operation. Bn. returned in time for a late lunch. During the afternoon a severe rainstorm swept the area causing havoc and a great deal of abusive language. In the evening an Italian circus of 15 members visited the camp and gave an entertainment. The performance was extremely mediocre but gave the men a great deal of enjoyment. Weather - hot then a rainstorm followed by coolness.

30 AUGUST 1943

Normal training throughout the day. The Coys. carried out a practice pack of vehicles. 'O' Group in the afternoon followed by a Coy. Comds. meeting to discuss the appointment of a new R.S.M. C.S.M. Crossley appointed R.S.M. The Bde. S.O., Lt. MacDonald, lectured to all Officers on the new R/T procedure. Slight rain in the afternoon. In the evening the 8th Army Tank Corps Military Band played for the Bde. and gave a very enjoyable programme of military, jazz and novelty numbers. Major Darling, Capt. Locke and Campbell dropped in to visit the Unit. Capt. Beatty and Lt. Thompson returned from hospital. Weather - hot with light showers in afternoon.

31 AUGUST 1943

The Bn. busy packing for the move. Coy. Comds. meeting to discuss the move. The following promotions were made Sgt. Groves to A/C.Q.M.S. "C" Coy., Sgt. Gunn to A/C.S.M. H.Q. Coy. C.O's. orderly room in the P.M. Capt. Palmer, Lts. Knight, Erroll, Boughton with 45 S.I. returned to 4 C.B.R.D. Capt. Macfarlane s.o.s. to hospital. Lt. Fraser left on a scat party for the new area. Weather - hot.

I.S.JOHNSTON

(I.S.JOHNSTON) Lt-col.,

Commanding officer, 48th Highlanders of Canada.

1 SEPTEMBER 1943

Place: (near)

S. TERESA SICILY

Reveille 0400 hrs. Embussed in T.C.Vs. at 0500 hrs. Light scale only which consisted of 38 Officers and 704 O.Rs. and proceeded to the Assembly Area via CATANIA then the NORTH Coast Road towards MESSINA. The Assembly Area was in a lemon grove one mile SOUTH of S. TERESA. Bn. in Assembly Area 1330 hrs. The grove afforded excellent cover from air and ground with loading beaches 400 yds away at the mouth of a dried up Torrentia. C.O. and Coy. Comds. went NORTH up the coast to recce the landing beaches and objective through field glasses. No sign of enemy activity on Italian shoreline. 'O' group 1800 hrs. to further discuss the operation. The night passed quietly. Lt. Buchanan left in charge of 3rd flight and Unit baggage. The beginnings of a large mail came in. Weather - very hot.

2 SEPTEMBER 1943

Bn. remained in the Assembly Area the entire day. Serial guides recc'd the beaches. The C.O. attended Bde. conference and other ranks were briefed in the operation. 3rd Bde. Assault Bde. to land and take REGGIO and form a bridgehead.

1st Bde. mop-up Bde. and to extend the bridgehead. 48 Highrs. leading Bn. with its objective the village of GALLINA. In the P.M. serials formed up and the Brig. inspected them. Dress for landing: bushshirts, slacks, puttees, webbing, 48 hours ration rolled in gas capes. Large packs were put in assault transport, small packs being left behind. The Padre held Communion in the morning on a terrace overlooking the sea, and reported a large attendance. Capt. J.C. Clarke evacuated to hospital with a badly infected arm, Capt. J.R.O. Counsell assuming Command of "D" Coy.

Lt. J.P.S. Amore, British Intelligence Corps, attached to Unit as Interpreter. The Paymaster went to CATANIA to pick up water cans. 40 bags of mail came in. No sign of enemy activity during day. Weather - very hot.

3 SEPTEMBER 1943

Place: (near)
REGGIO
ITALY

Four years after the Declaration of War the United Nations landed in Europe. 'H' hour was 0400 hrs. 3rd Bde. landed and formed bridgehead without casualties and hardly any opposition. The Assault Group, 30 Officers and 661 O.Rs. of the Bn. marched to 'D' Beach to embark. "A" and "C" Coys. u/c Major Wallace embarked 1000 hrs "B" and "D" embarked u/c Capt. Lyon 1005 hrs. in L.C.I. and crossed the Straits of MESSINIA, no enemy at all. First troops landed 1155 hrs. on the beach at REGGIO with pipes playing and the Coys. marched to the Assembly Area in a grove just NORTH of REGGIO. The C.O. landed an hour later. The given objectives were cancelled as they had been already taken and the Bn. ordered to move through the bridgehead on the Div. axis of advance which was NORTH EAST via TERRELI - S. STEFANO in ASPRIMONTE, Mt. BASILIO - DELIANUOVA. While in the Assembly Area enemy planes raided REGGIO, one of several during the afternoon, but caused no damage. "A" Coy. led the advance followed by Bn.H.Q. "C", "B" and "D" Coys and marched steadily over very difficult hilly country. A great many men suffered from the heat and the strenuous climb. Stopped at TERRETI for supper then continued the advance. No sign of enemy resistance and inhabitants appeared very friendly. Proceeded to within one half mile of where a bridge had been blown. "A" Coy. sent ahead to recce and reported route clear. The C.O., therefore led the rest of the marching troops on leaving transport and rear Bn. H.Q. at the blown bridge. Proceeded as far as Pt. 755 in square 5251 at 0200 hrs. and took up defensive position in the area for the remainder of the night. Very hot.

4 SEPTEMBER 1943

Place: (near)
S. STEFANO
ITALY

The Brigadier had ordered two patrols, one via the road to S.STEFANO and GAMBARI and the other by track to Mt. BASILICO, and these were sent out at first light by "C" and "B" Coys, respectively. The Brig. himself then appeared on foot and ordered two Coys, forward to cut the road at Mt. BASILICO, the other two being held as a fire base. Thus at 0900 hrs. "A" and "B" Coys. went forward along the road across country, which was blown just beyond the cemetery at 537506. "C" Coy. was left to guard the main road around the cemetery and Battle Bn.H.Q. moved forward to a high point at 539506. At about 1000 hrs. "A" Coy. reported an enemy gun and mortar at 567540 and at 1030 hrs. gun and machine gun fire was heard coming from S.STEFANO aimed down the valley. This turned out to be

Sp. guns and M.Gs. opening up on "C" Coy. patrol which had reached S.STEFANO These guns could be seen by "D" Coy. and Bn.H.Q. but nothing could be done as the attached F.O.O. had been unable to pack his set forward of the blown bridge. "B" Coy. patrol reported a brush with the enemy at 609509 and the capture of 13 prisoners. Meanwhile some 25-pdrs from the rear dropped two or three short shells in our area and before they could be informed one man had been killed and one wounded in "C" Coy. They then shelled S.STEFANO at about 1300 hrs. and at 1400 hrs. the enemy pulled out and blew the road behind them at 594543. Meanwhile "A" Coy. attacked an M.G. and gun position held by 95 Blackshirt Legion at 608536. The position was taken without casualties and 9 Italians were killed and 38 taken prisoner. They then moved on to take up a defensive position around GAMBARI commanding the road junction. This turned out to be the H.Q. of the Blackshirt Legion and a large quantity of war material, including about 200 folding bicycles, was taken. The word then came through of two demolitions at 600510 and 610512.

During this time an English patrol had been sighted at 545540 moving toward S.STEFANO. At 1700 hrs. the blown bridge at 536497 was repaired and Bn.H.Q. moved forward to the cemetery with F echelon. The Engineers immediately set to work on the break above the cemetery which was repaired by 0100 hrs, Sunday. "C" Coy. was then moved forward to S.STEFANO to patrol the crater on the road to GAMBARI, whilst Advance Bn.H.Q. and "D" Coy. moved back to the cemetery. 40 prisoners were then brought in from ARASI, 523505, and 5 were brought in by the dawn patrol that had been held up at This patrol had had two casualties one wounded and one shell shocked. "C" Coy. reached S.STEFANO by 1830 hrs. and settled there for the night, taking up a defensive position with "A" Coy. of the Northamptonshire Regt. which had moved up from S. ALESSIO The C.O. and I.O. then went forward with an Engineer recce party to S.STEFANO and investigated the blowout at 594543. This was found to be about 20' wide and large enough to obstruct traffic. During the night 2nd Bde. was moved up to Mt. BASILICO, and in the early morning "B" Coy. was ordered forward on bicycles by the Brigadier to DELIANUOVA with the Seaforths moving up on foot behind. Weather - very hot.

5 SEPTEMBER 1943

Rations taken to "C" Coy, at S.STEFANO in the early morning. Capt. McLaren with two vehicles with rations, the M.O., A/Tk PI. and Mortar PI. moved as far as the blown bridge 610412 where the rations were manhandled across the gap and placed into an impressed horse and cart and brought forward to "A" Coy. "B" Coy. was ordered forward, as a mobile patrol mounted on captured Italian vehicles, to proceed as far as DELIANUOVA to try and contact the enemy and ascertain the state of the road. Entered DELIANUOVA around 1600 hrs. reporting it clear of enemy and were relieved shortly after by the P.P.C.L.I. Also reported road cratered at 618456 and 649596. Withdrew from DELIANUOVA spending the night just SOUTH of DELIANUOVA. "C" Coy. ordered to move forward to a new Bn. Assembly Area at GAMBARI where "A" Coy. already was situated. "D" Coy. moved from cemetery at 1400 hrs. to Assembly Area. Bn.H.Q. and transport were not able to move until 1600 hrs. due to the cratering of the road. The C.O. and I.O. went forward by jeep, Major Whyte bringing up transport. Arriving in the area Coys. moved into billets. The houses belonging to wealthy people in the district who only used them during the summer months. The area itself greatly resembles a Summer resort in the Laurentians. The temperature was considerably cooler and the men made full use of captured Italian clothing. During the late afternoon the I.O. proceeded on a ten mile recce by jeep up Mt. BASILICO to report on the roads. No way to the NORTH and no sign of enemy troops. A part of the 2nd flight u/c Major, Banton arrived late in the evening. Billets and greatly needed as it rained heavily during the night. Weather - cool and then rain.

6 SEPTEMBER 1943

Place: (near)
GAMBARI
ITALY

Rum ration issued at breakfast. "A", "C" and "D" Coys. and Bn.H.Q. and Sp. Coy. remained in the area the entire day. Enemy dumps were straightened up and sorted by Coy. fatigues and some captured Italian prisoners. In the early morning the C.O. proceeded by jeep as far as the second crater 649546 then by bicycle and horse cart to visit "B" Coy, returning around 1000 hrs. "B" Coy. moved back as far as the second crater during the afternoon to facilitate administration. Lt. Bell took up their rations and blankets in the evening. No traffic was allowed to move on the road SOUTH so reserve rations were utilised. The AMGOT Officials arrived in the afternoon and the Bn. turned over a captured Italian vehicle and biscuits to them as the local civilian population are badly in need of food. Capt. Mitchell arrived in the morning with the remainder of 2nd flight bringing the Bn, up to the Light Scale W.E. of 37 Officers and 704 O.Rs. C.O.'s. orderly room at 1400 hrs., eight cases being tried. The Bde. Sp. Group arrived during the afternoon and took over Bde. guard. Weather - sporadic rain throughout the day.

7 SEPTEMBER 1943

The Coys. remained in their areas throughout the day devoting the time to weapon and kit inspections. In the afternoon the C.O. spoke to all Coys. giving the men the general outline of the campaign and also spoke as to the relations between the troops and the civilian population. Weather - cool and rain.

8 SEPTEMBER 1943

The Bn. put on fifteen minutes notice to move at 0900 hrs. but this order was later cancelled and the Bn. ordered to remain in its area for another 24 hours. "B" Coy. moved into the Bn. area during the afternoon. At 1800 hrs, the news came through that the Italian Government had unconditionally surrendered to the United Nations. There was great rejoicing amongst the civilian populace. The C.O. spoke to all Coys., explaining what had happened and pointed out the fact that the Germans still had to be defeated in ITALY. Capt. Mitchell received a flesh wound in the leg due to the accidental discharge of a T.S.M.G. Weather - cool with rain.

9 SEPTEMBER 1943

Place: (near)
LOCRI
ITALY

Bn. embussed at 0845 hrs. in 14 T.C.Vs. and all Bn. transport to proceed to LOCRI on the EAST Coast. The route lay via REGGIO then around the coast road. The order of march within the Bde. was R.C.R., Bde.H.Q., 48 Highrs. Hastings & Prince Edward and Bde. Sp. Group, within the Bn. it was "A" Coy., Bn.H.Q., "C", "B", "D" Coys. and F, A and B echelons. 6 men of the Pioneer Pl. with detectors rode with the leading elements to sweep the road for mines. The entire journey proceeded without incident or enemy activity. Although the Jock column which had been operating on the EAST Coast reported that they had encountered some Italian opposition at SOVERATO which had ceased when they were informed of the armistice being signed. In several places the enemy had blown bridges but the Engineers had constructed diversions. Bn. arrived at its objective just NORTH of LOCRI at 989631 at 1800 hrs.. had supper and bedded down for the night. C.O. attended Bde. 'O' group at 1930 hrs.. The day's trip proved to be very pleasant through rather lovely country, the reception of the civilians being most cordial. Several flares reported in the evening but upon investigation turned out to be civilians celebrating the peace. Weather - very hot.

10 SEPTEMBER 1943

Place: (near)
CATANZARO MARINA
ITALY

Bn. embussed in T.C.Vs. at 0845 hrs. to carry on the advance. R.C.R. leading the Bde. followed by the Mortar Coy. Sask. L.I., the Bde. Command Group in which the C.O. and I.O. rode followed by 48 Highrs and Hastings & Prince Edward. Order of march within the Bn. 4 Pl., "A" Coy., Bn. 'O' group u/c Major Banton, "C", "B", "D" Coys. and F echelon. A and B echelons u/c Capt. Richardson remained in Bn. area and moved up under Bde. control. The advance continued without resistance except due to bridges being blown. The Bn. column held up for some time at BADALOTO Station, MR2300, due to a very difficult diversion. During this time Rear Div. H.Q. passed through splitting the column, "B" Coy. and F echelon being left behind. One mile SOUTH of SOVERATO MR2113 the Bn. went into an Assembly Area, the troops debussing and set out for CATANZARO MARINA having to cross a very bad landslide which prevented transport from going any further. The Engineers reced a long diversion which made it possible to take transport around. "B" Coy. was stopped in time to travel by T.C.V. the remainder of the Bn. being too far in advance. A tank broke down across the diversion so that all transport was held up for several hours. The Bn. area for the night was at MR265317. The marching troops arrived at 2300 hrs.. No enemy opposition of any kind encountered during the day, the Germans apparently having withdrawn well NORTH. Weather - very hot.

11 SEPTEMBER 1943

A and B echelon arrived at 0700 hrs. bringing the days rations. After breakfast the men cleaned up awaiting orders to move. C.O. attended Bde. 'O' group at 0900 hrs. and the Bn. ordered to move to the area of TIRIOLO, MR for a three day rest. C.O. accompanied by the Coy, Comds. went ahead by jeep to recce the area while the marching troops u/c Major Banton set out at 1045 hrs. stopping for lunch in CATANZARO at 1300 hrs. A long very hilly march but on good road and the Pipes helped considerably. The troops had marched about 12 miles when transport passed through and by loading everything to capacity the majority of the Bn. was lifted, the remainder of the way, transport being sent back to pick up the balance. Bn.H.Q. located at the road junction one mile SOUTH of TIRIOLO, the Coys. being dispersed around it. Lt. Stearns with a patrol from No. 4 Pl. made a recce fourteen miles NORTH WEST of TIRIOLO and came back with valuable information as to the state of the road and reported that they had contacted the Recce Regt. of 5 Div. Information duly relayed to Bde. Nothing to report during the night. Weather - very hot.

12 SEPTEMBER 1943

Place: (near)
TIRTOLO
ITALY

The G.O.C. 1 Cdn. Div. announced his intention to visit the unit and talk to the men and accordingly the unit paraded in the Support Coy. area, taking up position in a hollow square. The original time for the visit was 1030 hours, but it was postponed until 1130 hours. Accordingly the Padre spent the interval holding an undenominital church service. The G.O.C. Major General Simmons arrived at 1200 hours and spoke to the men. He began by congratulating the regiment on their spirit and smartness during the campaign, then he went on to describe the broad picture as it exists in Italy and concluded by giving advice as to the proper attitude the Canadian Forces should observe towards the Italian people. In the afternoon the Coys. went down to the river for a swim and wash parade. Lt-Col. Walsh, C.R.E. brought in an Italian Lieutenant who claimed that he had been robbed by two men of this unit, but upon all drivers being paraded this proved to be false. The Padre held a singsong and news summary in the evening.

13 SEPTEMBER 1943

The Coys. devoted the morning to kit inspection and a general check up on all equipment. Signals provided a one man listening watch on the telephone exchange at TIRIOLO, which is one of the main amplifying stations of the SOUTH. In the afternoon a half day was held for all officers of the Battalion. The Commanding Officer opened with a lecture on man management and stressed the importance as to the absolute adherence to all orders that were issued. Major Banton the 2 i/c gave a lecture on M.T. moves and the afternoon was concluded with a lecture given by Capt. Wright on elementary tactics on the approach march. It is the Commanding Officer's wish that whenever possible that these days be held so as to gain benefit out of the various experiences. Major Wallace D.A.G. 1 Cdn. Div. visited the unit re awards and to see if the unit had any suggestions. The Commanding Officer attended a meeting for all Commanding Officers at Division and brought back the news that there would be no move until the 16 Sep. Cpl. Burton of the "I" Section was sent out to recce the roads ahead.

14 SEPTEMBER 1943

The Coys. carried out normal training and the day was devoted to N.C.O's. In the morning the W.O's and Sjts. had the same lectures as the Officers and in the afternoon the Cpls. and L/Cpls. heard the lectures. Colonel Johnston attended a meeting at Brigade, bringing fuller details back of the forthcoming move. C.O.s orderly room in the afternoon, 11 cases being tried. "O" Gp. in the evening. The Div. is moving to the area of Spezzano, the First Bde. leading the advance up the coast with the Battalion leading the Bde.

15 SEPTEMBER 1943

A scat party consisting of 1 Officer per Coy, 6 Pioneers and 3 Signals under command of the 2 i/c Major Banton left at 0745 hours to recce the new area which the Battalion is to occupy and to sweep it for mines. Coys. carried out normal training. The Corps Commander, Lt. General Dempsey and the Div. Commander, Maj. General Simmons caused a flurry in the Battalion by holding a conference at the road junction beside B.H.Q. Coys. packed in the afternoon. 15 T.C.V's arrived. Capt. J.S. MacFarlane, Lieuts. Boughton and Knight joined the Battalion. Capt. MacFarlane resuming 2 i/c "B" Coy., Lt. Boughton as supernumary "D" Coy., and Lt. Knight as supernumary "C" Coy. Some mail in.

16 SEPTEMBER 1943

Reveille 0400 hours, breakfast 0430 hours, embussed 0615 hours and moved off 0630 hours. Order of march: 2 sections No. 4 Platoon, "A" Coy., Command Group, Mortar Platoon, "B", "C", and "D" Coy., "F" Echelon, "A" and "B" Echelon. Crossed the Bde. start point CATANZARO at 0730 hours and at MARINO di CATANZARO. One Battery of 2nd Fd. Regt. R.C.A. and one troop of the L.A.A. under command of the 48th Highlanders filed into the column after "F" Echelon and before "A" Echelon. Progress was extremely slow during the morning due to a convoy of the 13 Corps Heavy A.A. cutting into the Battalion convoy and vehicles proceeding south contrary to orders. This was later rectified. The Bde. route was CATANZARO, MARINO di CATANZARO thence up the coast road to CROTONE, Sheet 238, MR 7058. CROTONE is the new base of the R.A.F. and 1 Cdn. Div. and after this town was passed the traffic eased up considerably. From 1400 hours to 1500 hours a stop for lunch just SOUTH of CROTONE. "A" Echelon was 20 miles behind due to traffic jam but caught up NORTH OF CROTONE. Slow progress during the afternoon due to the condition of the road. The route continued up the Coast to CARIATI Sheet 230, MR. 5203, CORIGLIANO Sq. 1613, then west to TERRANOVA di SILARI Sheet 228 & 229 Sq. 0020 thence to Battalion area, which lay EAST and WEST of the road at 978205. First troops in area 0025 hours, the last at 0130 hours. During the day no sign of enemy aircraft or ground troops.

17 SEPTEMBER 1943

Place: SPEZZANO
ITALY

The Bn. remained the whole day in the area of SPEZZANO. Three vehicles had broken down during the previous day, so Sgt. Candy, the Provost Sgt., sent out to bring in vehicles. One only was able to make the bivouac area. The Carrier Pl. sent out to make contact with 5 Div. Recce, which they found about 5 miles WEST of SPEZZANO. "D" Coy. mounted a picquet in the Town. The Unit warned for an early move the following day. Bde. 'O' group 1900 hrs. The Div. to take up a position on the EAST Coast between ROTONDELLA and SCANZANO. 3rd Bde. left with a Bn. as far as ROTONDELLA. 2nd Bde. behind and 1st Bde. astride the crossroads at SCANZANO. 1st Bde. to form a firm base in any move made. Weather - very hot.

18 SEPTEMBER 1943

Place: SCANZANO
ITALY

Reveille 0530 hrs., breakfast 0600 hrs. and embussed 0720 hrs. Crossed Bde. start point at TERRANOVA 0800 hrs., arrived destination 1245 hrs. The usual scat party left 0500 hrs. to recce the new area. The Bde. order of march was R.C.R. with supporting arms, Bde. H.Q., H. & P.E.R., 48 Highrs and remainder of Bde. group. The move was excellent and without incident. Route SPEZZANO, TERRANOVA then up the Coast road the entire way. The Bn. area 1000 yds SOUTH of crossroads at SCANZANO in an Italian coastal defence camp. "A" Coy. sent out as a fighting patrol and came under command of the 4 P.L.D.G. (Recce) towards BERNALDA, N.W. of Bn. area, where a German patrol had been reported. "A" Coy. had 2 sections A/Tk Guns and 2 Det. Mortars under command. "B" Coy. defensive position astride the crossroads with 2 Dets. Mortars u/c. "C" and "D" Coys. just past the crossroads. Remainder of the day passed without incident. Weather - very hot.

19 SEPTEMBER 1943

Reveille 0700 hrs., breakfast 0800 hrs. The Padre held a voluntary service in "D" Coy. area at 0950 hrs. and one in Bn.H.Q. area 1030 hrs. The Brig. and C.O. 2nd Field Regt. visited the C.O. in the morning. Pioneer Pl. cleared a road to the beaches and the beaches themselves for swimming purposes. F.G.C.M. Major Whyte presiding held in the afternoon. Capt. Foster, and Field Regt. R.C.A., attached as F.O.O. "A" Coy. continued its advance with the Recce and took the Town of MONTE SCAGLIOSE. The 3" Mortar Pl. reported that with the new change, the mortars now have a range of 2500 yds. Padre's singsong and M.O's. news commentary held in the evening. Weather - hot.

20 SEPTEMBER 1943

17 Pl. "D" Coy. under command Lt. Wood took over the standing patrol which previously had been carried out by a Pl. of "A" Coy. "A" Coy. consolidated in MONTESCAGLISO. A school for Junior N.C.Os. was started and is being run by R.S.M. Crossley. The syllabus is for eight days and is so arranged that it can be run whenever the opportunity arises. Officers' half day in the morning. Lectures for Subs on the role of the 3" Mortar given by Lt. Baillie and one on the Anti-Tank Pl. by Lt. Milnes. A lecture for all Officers concluded the morning, being given by Lt. Pearson on Signal Procedure. A path down to the beach has been cleared of mines by the Pioneer Pl. The C.O. visited the "D" Coy. patrol then continued on to TARANTO bringing back glowing accounts of the Town. Lt-col. Yelden of the 3rd Bn. of the Airborne Div. dropped in to liaise with us re patrols. The I.O. visited the Tower nearby and reported that it is an Italian Merchant Coast Guard Station. Normal training during the day. Weather - very hot.

21 SEPTEMBER 1943

Normal training continued during the day. Lt. Buchanan, third flight, dropped in on his way to Div. Maintenance Area, bringing a truckload of mail and the report that three of the men of the Unit had been killed in a vehicle accident and several injured. Capt. McLaren and the Medical Officer, Capt. Skinner, visited TARANTO. The Coys. held swim parades in the afternoon. Weather - very hot.

22 SEPTEMBER 1943

The N.C.O. school continued. Coys. carried out normal training and swim parades. Half day for Officer held, lectures being given on the 4.2" Mortar and their role, the M.M.G: and their role and the Arty in their role. The first two lectures were given by Officers of the Sask. L.I. the last by Capt. Foster, 2nd Field Regt. R.C.A., who is attached to the Unit as F.O.O. A report came in that four German soldiers were making their way to the bridge just SOUTH of the Unit to attempt to demolish it. A patrol went out but the affair turned out to be a false alarm. A large mail came in during the afternoon. Weather - cloudy and warm.

23 SEPTEMBER 1943

N.C.O. School continued during the day. The C.O. attended a Bde. conference. Coys. carried out normal training. Further large shipment of mail arrived. Lt. Arrell and draft of 50 O.Rs. came in from 4 Bn. 1 C.B.R.D. Weather - hot.

24 SEPTEMBER 1943

Coys. carried out normal training. N.C.O. day cancelled to allow clean up due to prospective move which did not take place. Weather - hot.

25 SEPTEMBER 1943

N.C.O. School continued during the day and Coys. carried out normal training. "A" Coy. still under command 4th P.L.D.G. and their movements are uncertain. Two vehicles from 3rd flight reported in. Weather - hot.

26 SEPTEMBER 1943

Regimental Committee meeting in the morning when the C.O. explained the tactical situation and then went on to discuss O.C.T.U. candidates. The following were selected to appear before the Regimental Board. Sgts. Hewlett, Ralph, Thomas, Munroe, Braithwaite and Cpl. Calverley. Regimental Board met again in the afternoon to interview candidates. Message at 1900 hrs, from Bde. warning of a possible move the following day. Move confirmed at 2300 hrs. Bn. area to be the Bde. dump for baggage, the R.C.R, bringing in their baggage. At midnight Lt. Buchanan and 20 O.Rs. with baggage arrived. Lt. Buchanan selected as Bde *Baggage* Officer. One N.C.O. and 3 men being supplied by each Bn. Weather - cloudy.

27 SEPTEMBER 1943

Reveille 0500 hrs. C.O. attended Bde. 'O' group 0630 hrs. The Bn. with Bde. crossed the Bde. S.P. SCANZANO crossroads at 0800 hrs. in the following order - 4 Pl. "C" Coy., C.O., "B" Coy., "D" Coy., F, A and B echelons. Route was MASSAFRA, MOTTOLA, GIOIA del COLLE, ALTAMURA GRAVENA to Bn. concentration area one mile WEST of town. Bn. arriving 1300 hrs. having covered 90 miles. An excellent convoy move. One man being injured by a truck which sideswiped a carrier. Unconfirmed report that "A" Coy. entered FOGGIA. Brigadier visited the Bn. in the P.M. Pipe Band concentrated in preparation for the Div. sports meet to be held at POTENZA on 29th Sept. 43. Weather - windy and cloudy.

28 SEPTEMBER 1943

'O' group 0800 hrs. at Bde. in relation to Div. Sports to be held 29 Sept. 43. 15 men per Coy. as spectators plus the Band and competitors left 1100 hrs for POTENZA, Capt. Counsell i/c party. The C.O. and Brig. set out to visit "A" Coy. but the distance was too great

and they returned. A patrol under Lt. Stearns went out to try and contact a German patrol reported in the area but it turned out to be a false alarm. N.C.O. School continued. Snipers refresher commenced. Weather - hot.

29 SEPTEMBER 1943

C.O's. orderly room 0900 hrs. Coys. carried out normal training during the day. A purchasing party of Capts. Skinner and Lyon went to BARI. Bde. 'O' group 1500 hrs. Bn. 'O' group 1530 hrs. Draft of 18 O.Rs. arrived from 4 Bn. 1 C.B.R.D. Sports party returned 2300 hrs. The Bde. came third in the Sports. Lt. Clarkson, Sgts. Shaw and Jackson all placed in events. Weather - hot.

30 SEPTEMBER 1943

Place: (near)
MINERVINO
ITALY

Reveille 0400 hrs. breakfast 0430 hrs. vehicles loaded 0545 hrs. and moved off 0600 hrs. Usual scat party left before main column. Bn. at rear of Bde. Order of march within Bn. C.O., 4 Pl., "D" Coy., "B" Coy., "C" Coy., F, A and B echelons. Route GRAVINA, ALTRAMURO, MINERVINO to Bn. assembly area, Sheet 176 MR751363. Arrived 1000 hrs. Pay and Muster parade for whole Bn. in the P.M. "A" Coy. rejoined the Bn. C.O. attended 'O' group 1700 hrs. and Bn. 'O' group 1730 hrs. Bde. to follow up a jock column to LUCRIA the Bn. being the last Unit of the column. Capts. Lyons and Childs and Lt. Thompson evacuated. Capt. Macfarlane becoming O.C. "B" Coy. Lt. Knight moving from "C" Coy. to "D" Coy. and Lt. Arrell from "A" Coy. to Support Coy. as Pioneer Officer. Weather - cloudy and hot.

Signed

Ian S. Johnston

(I.S.JOHNSTON) Lt-col.,

Commanding Officer,

48th Highlanders of Canada.

1 OCTOBER 1943

Place: (near)
LUCERA,
ITALY

Reveille ordinary. Bn. embussed 0845 hrs. and crossed S.P. 0850 hrs. Order of march - D Coy., Bn. H.Q., 4 Pl., C., B., A Coys. F, A and B. Echelons. Route - CANOSA CERIGNOLA, FOGGIA, LUCERA, taking up an all round defensive position at M.R. Sheet 163 - 102222. A very slow move due to heavy traffic and slow progress of Jock column. Arrived in area at 1800 hrs. Bn. ordered to move at first light, message coming through at 2200 hrs. Weather - warm.

2 OCTOBER 1943

(near)
MOTTA,
ITALY.

Reveille 0400 hrs., breakfast 04:30 hrs. Bn. crossed S.P. 109321 at 0535 hrs. in the following order - 4 Pl., D, C, B, A Coys, F Echelon. A and B Echelon remained in their present location. Moved to area 0121 to await further orders. Shortly after arrival the road was strafed by three M.E. 109's causing one casualty in the Bn. "O" group 0930 hrs. Bn. ordered to move up and establish a firm base on the rd. junction 908230, F Echelon to move upon receiving orders. Order of march - C, D, A, B Coys. The village of MOTTA was being heavily mortared so Bn. debussed two miles East of town and proceeded to within one mile when they were held up due to activity ahead. Two men injured by shrapnel. The

Bde. put in an attack, R.C.R. right, H. & P. E.R. 1 ft at 1745 hrs. which was succesful and the 48th moved in and occupied the town for the night. F, A and B Echelons ordered to join Bn. at 1830 hrs. but were later turned back, one ration truck only going up. Weather - fair.

3 OCTOBER 1943

Place: (near)
VOLTURARA
ITALY

The Bn, moved out of MOTTA at 0730 hrs. with orders to pass through the H. and P.E. Regt. at the X Rds. 9024, then split, C Coy going East the remainder going west. B Coy remained in reserve the entire day. In the evening the R.A.P. and part of F Ech. moved into VOLTURARA. The detailed accounts of the days actions are given below in the reports submitted by Capt Wright A Coy, Capt Handley C Coy, and Capt Counsell D Coy. "A" Coy- Left MOTTA at 0715 hrs. and marched to X Rds. where C Coy went to the right and A Coy and D Coy went to the left. After moving about one mile down the road the Commanding Officer sent D Coy to cut the road South of VOLTURARA and A Coy to take the town. A Coy moved into the town unopposed. Then 8 pl. cleared the slopes on far side of town while 9 pl. chased a German Mortar of the road beyond. The Coy reassembled on the road and proceeded on behind D Coy. D Coy became pinned by heavy fire of all types and A Coy spent the rest of the day in the shelter of the river bank under very heavy Artillery fire. After dark the Coy moved to the high ground under very disagreeable conditions until the next day. "C" Coy- C Coy lead the Bn. out of MOTTA at about 0730 hrs. Orders were to pass through the H. and P.E.R. at the X Rds. 9024 and proceed East. Under command the company were a Tp.Recce, a Tp. Tanks, 2 Dets.A/T Guns, 2 Dets.3" Mortars. About 1030 hrs. fire was opened on the Recce about 883257, who returned to cover without loss. Two enemy guns were observed on the saddle connecting SAN MARCO and the X Rds. 8527, while it was thought others were in a sand pit forward of the road. The F.O.O., Capt Foster, established an O.P. well forward and opened troop fire. The enemy guns were forced out and an examination of the position afterwards revealed the enemy guns to have been 75 mm's. and also that a truck or trailer had been hit and some equipment destroyed. Meanwhile Maj.Wallace had sent 14 pl. under command of Lieut. Eby around to the right through the hills to try and occupy the high ground above the X Rds. The company was under continuous light shelling, probably 75mm., but no casualties were sustained. About 1200 hrs. enemy were observed on the ground above the X Rds. This was confirmed about 1230 hrs. by a message from Lieut. Eby to the effect that he had observed about 2 pls. of enemy on the forward slope of the MT. CAPELLO FEATURE and had 14 pl. take up a position overlooking them on MT. INGOTTA. Capt Foster had by this time registered the enemy position and fired his regiment on it using scale 3. Maj. Wallace had received fresh orders from the Brig. to capture and hold the X Rds. On receipt of the message from 14 pl. he moved the remainder of his coy to the INGOTTA feature and took up a defensive position. He then issued orders for a dawn attack. However the F.O.O. while manhandling his set up to the Coy position lost his way and Maj. Wallace not being sure of Arty. support postponed his attack. "D" Coy Moved from MOTTA by march route at 0715 hrs. after Commanding Officers "O" Group where orders and plan given for advance towards VOLTURARA. Passed through R.C.R. who had captured X Rds. West of MOTTA the previous day. Reached point on the road which came in full view of VOLTURARA, Commanding Officer not having any information as to whether enemy in town or not made a new plan which sent D Coy across country to the left of the road with the idea of cutting off road running out of town. The going was tough as I kept to all the dead ground available, but we reached a good location where we could cover the road completely. Soon after getting the Coy into position orders came over the wireless from Commanding Officer to move on West along the road to SAN MARCO. We started immediately with one pl. from A Coy tailing in behind us, joined later by the rest of A Coy.

Moving under cover of brush and river bed we reached a spot where road had been cratered. While Lieut. Wood and I were investigating crater an enemy mortar opened up. It seemed to be very close so I at once made a plan to capture it, sending 17 pl. out as a patrol to locate its position. When a runner came back from Lieut. Wood saying he had located Mortar and a M.G. post, I sent 16 pl. forward to help him. The ground was not favourable to us and both pls. got pinned down by Mortar and M.G. fire. By this time Gun and Mortar fire was being brought down along the whole river bed forcing the rest of the Coy along with A and B Coy, who had by this time joined us to keep under cover. After dark I withdrew 16 and 17 pl. Lieut. Boughton, Pte Quinn and Pte Courriere had been wounded by M.G. fire and it was a tough job carrying them out in the rain and darkness along the river bed. The three Coys., then took up a position in a draw on the right of the road on orders from Commanding Officer, where the rest of the night was spent in the rain. Unfortunately while Boughton, Quinn and Courriere were being taken back to the R.A.P. in a Jeep it struck a mine and they were all killed. Weather - Rainy.

4 OCTOBER 1943

Communications between Coys was extremely difficult during the day due to enemy activity. B Coy in reserve still the other three Coy Comas reports. "A" Coy- At 1330 hrs. the Coy again crossed the river to create a diversion for the R.C.R.'s. and proceeded to left flank the strong German position. At 1500 hrs. Lieut. Magee reported enemy on the slope in front of him and worked his way above the position and attacked. Clearing the enemy from the position. The pl. then came under very heavy Mortar and M.G. fire. Lieut Magee was wounded and Sjt Walsh took command and initiated an orderly withdrawal and Cpl Ellison and L/Cpl Biel very gallantly stayed and brought their Officer out. The Coy then consolidated and stayed there the night under spasmodic shelling. The Coy lost four men wounded and Lieut Magee. "C" Coy- Nothing to report until the afternoon. An attack was launched at 1500 hrs. by the troop of tanks and 2 sections of 14 pl. One tank was knocked out by mines on the approach. The attack was successful, the enemy either running from their positions or covering in the bottom of their weapon pits. About 60 casualties were inflicted on the enemy, while our casualties were, troop sjt of the tanks killed, six men of 14 pl. killed and two wounded. 13 pl., who were to be launched only if success was certain, came under fire of our own tanks and had one man wounded. Withdrawal was accomplished without trouble. "D" Coy- Commanding Officer gave me orders to advance along the road toward the enemy positions of yesterday, We had hopes they had pulled out during the night, but after proceeding about ½ a mile we were heavily mortared again but were able to get into cover of a draw before too much damage was done. Lieut. Wood was killed while getting his pl. back under cover. The same shell wounded three other men and myself. We remained in this draw until late in the afternoon when we moved up after an attack had been launched by the R.C.R. behind an Artillery barrage which was brought down on the SAN MARCO feature. The attack was successful as the enemy withdrew from the SAN MARCO feature during the night and we moved up and took over the position. Weather - Fair.

5 OCTOBER 1943

A, C and D Coys. remained in their existing areas. A patrol from B Coy. u/c Lt. Grant reced the road as far as 840228 and reported area clear of enemy. B.H.Q. and B Coy. moved to area 542231. Periodic shelling during the day but no casualties. Weather - warm.

6 OCTOBER 1943

C Coy. moved from its position to a defensive position beside Bn. H.Q. particularly the West flank. The remainder of the Coys. and Bn. H.O. remained in their positions throughout the day. At 1700 hrs. F, A and B Echelons ordered up, F and A Echelon moving into Bn. H.Q. area, B Echelon moving into rear Bde. H.Q. area about 1000 yds. behind. Periodic shelling by 105mm How, one shell landing beside Bn. H.Q. but caused no damage. The

remainder of the shells landed in rear causing damage to Arty. and Engineers. Major I.S. Wallace evacuated with jaundice. Capt. Palmer joined C Coy. and Lt. Arrell transferred from Support to D Coy. Coy. pack trucks brought up after dark. B Coy. sent out two sections at 2200 hrs. to act as covering patrol for an Engineer' working party. Capt. MacIntosh brought the latest Intelligence Summary. Weather - warm.

7 OCTOBER 1943

Heavy rain the whole day turning Bn. area into a sea of mud , making all movement extremely difficult. One M.M.G. Pl. of Bde. Support Group attached. Lt. George picked up a jeep from D.M.A. 3rd Bde. made steady progress across the river in spite of heavy opposition. Weather - rainy.

8 OCTOBER 1943

Bn. ordered to move forward in the morning to attack and consolidate on the feature Pt. 520 Sheet 162 M.R. 7527. "O" group moved off in jeeps at 1115 hrs., the Bn. on foot u/c Major Banton following up. Bn. forming up position 7925. Start point line of road 783265 - 787273. Zero hr. 1430 hrs. Order of attack was A Coy. on the left proceeding across the river then up a draw to a group of houses near of summit of Pt. 520. B Coy, on left crossing the river and up another draw to farm buildings and consolidated. D Coy. followed up B Coy. and advanced directly onto Pt. 520. C Coy. reserve, crossed the river later and took up a defensive position. Attack proceeded without incident, the enemy having withdrawn from feature. Coys. consolidated by 1700 hrs. Advance Bn. H.Q. established in draw at 789262. Night passed with out incident except for shelling across the valley. Lts. Clarkson, Reburn, Eby and Bell evacuated with jaundice A, B and majority of F Echelon remained in present location. Weather - fair.

9 OCTOBER 1943

Place: (near)
MACCHIA and
PIETRACATELLA
ITALY

The Bn. remained in its defensive positions the entire day. Periodic shelling on the valley but none in the Bn. area. 4 Pl. sent out two patrols at dawn u/c Lt. Murray. They patrolled to MACCHIA and PIETRACATELLA reporting the former clear of enemy. Upon entering PIETRACATELLA civilians reported the enemy in occupation of the town but on the way back the Germans blew up PIETRACATELLA and apparently withdrew. Capt. Handley evacuated, Capt. McLaren becoming A/O.C. C Coy. Rain during the day. F, A and B Echelons moved up just across the river. Weather - rainy.

10 OCTOBER 1943

Voluntary church services at Coys. D Coy. pulled *brought* down to location of Adv. Bn. H.Q. Bn. H.Q. moved back across the river. C.O. held orderly room at the Coy. areas. Two batteries of Mediums and 2 Fd. Regt., R.C.A. moved into area. Weather - rain and cool.

11 OCTOBER 1943

Place: (near)
CAMPOBASSO
ITALY

The Commanding Officer left with the Brig. to make a recce of an Assembly area for the Bn., before moving to the attack on CAMPOBASSO, which is to be the Bdes., next objective, returning shortly before lunch. The unit placed on two hours notice to move any time after 1700 hrs. The Coys were moved down from the hills and across the river to positions beside Bn.H.Q. Heavy rain during the later part of the afternoon and evening flooded the rivers and washed out the diversions making all movement impossible. Commanding Officer attended to "O" group at 1800 hrs., a Bn "O" group being held at 1915

hrs. The move cancelled until the following day and Coys bedded down as best they could in the rain. 16 carriers from third flight arrived, the Commanding Officer decided to keep nine carriers in the Bn and disposed of the rest through D.M.A. and Bde. Capt. Beatty evacuated with jaundice.

- Weather - Rainy.

12 OCTOBER 1943

The rain abated during the night but the diversions impossible until late morning. Bn moved off in T.C.V.s., in the following order - B, C, D, A, A/tk Guns, and one vehicle per Coy. Remainder of F, A and B Echelon concentrated in B Echelon area, u/c Major Whyte at 782263. Bn moved to concentration area in square 7024 and remained there until 2330 hrs when the approach march to CAMPOBASSO commenced. Major Whyte called up to the Bn as both the Commanding Officer and 2 i/c were not well. In the afternoon the Bn moved up from their position on hill 520, (area, 7526, 7626, 7525, 7825 on sheet 1/1,000, #162 ITALY) to area 7024. There the Brig. ordered the Bde to advance and capture CAMPOBASSO. The plan was for the 48th to lead to a line known as NAPANEE, extending right and left of the T road 582777. The R.C.R. were to then go through the 48th and take CAMPOBASSO. - Weather - Fair and Cloudy.

13 OCTOBER 1943

The Bn. crossed the start line, rd junction 6823 at 0002 hrs and proceeded to GILDONE 6123. From this point information regarding the enemy was nil. The Commanding Officer decided not to move forward until daylight and he could recce the ground from GILDONE to CAMPOBASSO. At 0630 hrs., the Bn., started forward again with "B" Coy, on the right of the road, "A" Coy, on the left of the road and "C" Coy, straddling the road. A section of R.C.E. accompanied us to sweep the roads, and F.O.'s., from the 2nd FIELD MEDIUMS and AIRBORNE 3.5's., accompanied the leading Coys. To line NAPANEE the advance was uneventful with no sign of the enemy. This line was established at 1100 hrs. F Echelon could not get forward due to a bad blow at 585256. Having established the line, the enemy began to Mortar and shell the advance Coys., and the blow at 585256. Casualties were light. "A" Coy were counter attacked by two ~~S.P. guns~~ Tanks and a German Platoon, but beat this attack off causing at least six German casualties and suffering one casualty. "D" Coy in the meantime, had occupied FERRATZANO suffering no casualties, but killing one enemy, capturing two and a staff car. The R.C.R.'s., having suffered casualties due to Mortaring decided not to attack CAMPOBASSO until the next morning. At 2300 hrs., a patrol of 3 men from "C" Coy., headed by Cpl Allen entered CAMPOBASSO - The first troops to enter the city. They were challenged and after a short exchange of shots withdrew. - Weather - Fair.

14 OCTOBER 1943

The R.C.R.'s. attacked at 0530 hrs., and by 0800 hrs., the city was declared clear. The 48th then moved to a defensive position in area 5728, 5729, 5828, 5829, 5928 and 5929. During the night, patrols from 4 pl. , patrolled to the towns of CAMPODIPIETRO 6228, TORO 6330, SAN GIOVANNI 6232 and MATRICE 5934, finding that the enemy had retired from these towns two nights previously. - Weather - Fair.

15 OCTOBER 1943

A and B Echelon moved up to the Bn., in the morning. Lt-col. Johnston still ill, Major Banton acting as Commanding Officer. The day spent in preparing of defensive positions and general clean up. "O" group at 1400 hrs., to discuss plans. The Bn., to remain in the area for a period of ten days for re-equipment and re-organization. Draft of 34 O/R's picked up at the D.M.A. - Weather - fair and cloudy.

16 OCTOBER 1943

Kit bags and bedrolls distributed in the morning. Major Banton and Major Whyte on a court martial all day. The Commanding Officer still indisposed. Coys., continued general clean up of areas and the preparation of all around defense positions. B Coy., sent patrols out to SAN GIOVANNI, TORO and CAMPODIPIETRA and reported all towns clear. CAMPOBASSO still being shelled. Capt. H.K. MacIntosh rejoined the Bn., being posted to 2 i/c A Coy. Two sections of pack mules consisting of 24 mules reported in to accompany D Coy on their patrol. The pipe band concentrated for the duration of the rest period. Lt. Buchanan who brought in the kit bags posted to C Coy. Lt. M. Stearns S.O.S. to 1Cdn Div as A.D.C. Major General Simonds. D.S.O. O.B.E. - Weather - Fair.

17 OCTOBER 1943

Church Parade for all R.C. personnel held at CAMPOBASSO CATHEDRAL, the Brig., taking the salute and the pipe band being in attendance. The march past broadcast by the B.B.C. with a background of shell fire. The N.C.O. school assembled consisting of 28 students. CAMPOBASSO placed in bounds to troops, 15% being allowed in at one time. Town proved to be very dull. The Brig., called in the morning and ordered that A Coy move to the high feature of FERRATZANO, the move being duly accomplished in the afternoon. D Coy patrol cancelled for 24 hrs. Lt. G.A. Fraser returned from hospital and rejoined C Coy. Major Warren visited the Bn. Pay and muster parade during the day, Capt. Mitchell coming down from Div to carry out pay. Weather - Fair and Warm.

18 OCTOBER 1943

Coys. remained in their present positions, "D" Coy. patrol postponed indefinitely. 15% of the men allowed into Campobasso. Some shelling during the day but none in the Bn. Area. N.C.O. School continued. Lt. G.A. Boyle reported as a reinforcement Officer and was posted to A company. C.S.M. Taylor left the Unit probably permanently. "C" Company carried out normal patrols and reported no sign of enemy. "A" Company reported tanks and patrols to the South West of them but upon investigation being made turned out to be part of the Second Bde. Bn. mounted the town guard on Campobasso, consisting of Lt. Hudson and 27 O.R.S. Ceremonial. Weather. - Fair and warm.

19 OCTOBER 1943

Major Banton as A/C.O held Orderly Room, 15 cases. Coys., devoted the day to clean up and to the issue of battle dress and the calling in of all K.D. kit. A possibility that the Bn. may move the following day to take over the R.C.R. position in CAMPOBASSO as that Battalion is pushing Northwards for about eight miles Captain MacDonald C.D.C. reported to the Bn. to do all necessary dental work. "B" Company sent out patrols during the evening and reported that everything was quiet. Guard mounting in Town square at 1700hrs, the Band being in attendance. An excellent guard. A large crowd turned out to watch it. Weather - Fair and warm.

20 OCTOBER 1943

The B.M. called in at B.H.Q. and reported that the Bn. was to move in the afternoon to CAMPOBASSO. O group at 1000 hrs to decide details of move and the Coy. Comds., and Major Banton went to CAMPOBASSO to liase with the R.C.R. as to the take-over. Coys marched independently to their new areas after lunch. A.B.& F Ech. moved in the late afternoon. Bn.H.Q., located in a very modern apartment house right in the town. This building was formerly the Office of the Minister of Agriculture and the Government Travel Agency and therefore excellent office space. "B" Coy., located at the castle M.R.546299 "C" Coy., just below them on the plain at M.R.531294 "A" & "D" Coys., being located at 539279 respectively. Support Coy., located in town, Q.M. stores being at the station. All companies very pleased with their billets. Handover completed by 1600 hrs. The band played retreat in

the square beside B.H.Q. at 1700hrs to the great interest of the local population. Nothing to report during the night. Weather Fair and warm.

21 OCTOBER 1943

The Brigadier arrived early in the morning to accompany Major Banton in an inspection of the Company positions. Upon the inspection being completed, he ordered that "B" Coy., move two platoons forward into the valley and that "C" Coy., move farther forward to a position in the valley. This move was completed by 1600 hrs without incident. The Brig. ordered that two, three men patrols be sent out. One to go out by "D" Coy. R.C.R. at ORATINO the other to go through "B" Coy. R.C.R. at BUSSO, to scout behind the enemy lines and collect as much information as possible. These patrols were drawn from 4 Platoon and left at 1800hrs. The Pipe band played Retreat in the town square attracting a large crowd. Major Banton with the Brig., made a recce from BUSSO of the ground beyond. Capt. J.C. Clarke and Capt. H.E. Cameron returned from the hospital, the former being posted as Coy. Comd., of H.Q. Coy. The latter resuming his appointment of O.C. 5 Pl. The Aux Services put on a special show "Cash and Carry" at the Capitol Theatre for the Bn. The treat was greatly enjoyed by all. Lt. Knight evacuated to the Hospital with Jaundice. Weather-Cool and Cloudy.

22 OCTOBER 1943

A Town guard u/c Lt. Cousins "D" Coy relieved the old guard at 0900 hrs in the Town square with full ceremonial, the pipe band being in attendance. Both the old and the new guard put on an excellent show which greatly impressed the spectators. The patrols from 4 Pl, returned and were interrogated by the Brigadier who came to B.H.Q. for that purpose. A Brig. O group called for 1500hrs and Maj. Banton sent a warning order for the Unit to prepare to move that night. O group at 1700 hrs. The Brigade to go into a concentration area preparatory to pushing forward. "A" Coy., ordered to relieve "B" Coy. R.C.R. at BUSSO. The Company pushed forward immediately the relief being completed by 2100 hrs. One Pl. in BUSSO the remainder of the Coy., in the area 484273, with under command, one section M.M.G., 2 dets Mortars and 2 sect A/T guns. "B" Coy. moved to area 483265 being in position by 2215hrs, with u/c 2 dets Mortars 2 sect A/T and M.M.Gs "C" Coy moved to area 498271 being in position by 2200 hrs, with u/c 2 dets Mortars, 2 sect A/T guns. "D" Coy in reserve in area 505271 being in position by 2200hrs. Advance B.H.Q. to be located in area 510271. Rear B.H.Q. The N.C.Os School Pipe Band, Transport and Q.M. to remain in present position, at least for awhile. The same two patrols from 4 Pl sent out with same objective. Maj. Wallace returned from Hosp. and posted to C Coy. Capt. Clarke to act as I.O. for the present. Capt. Patterson R.C.A.P.C. attached F.A.P. as unit Paymaster. Weather Cool and Cloudy

23 OCTOBER 1943

Place: (near)
BUSSO
ITALY

Coys. remained in their present positions entire day, all quiet except for A Coy. BUSSO was bombed and strafed by a squadron of Kittyhawks during the afternoon, but no casualties. An escaped British Officer (Major) came into B.H.Q. in the morning giving much valuable information. During the day several escaped prisoners and Italians came in all with some information of value. One man from Sjt. Majors patrol returned with the information that they had run into some "S" Mines and that the other four members of the patrol were wounded. A search party was immediately sent out but could not find the men. A further patrol went out in the evening to recce ground. Capt. F.D. Handley, Lts. J.M.E. Clarkson and B.S. Eby returned from hospital. Weather cool and Cloudy.

24 OCTOBER 1943

Place: (near)
CASTROPIGNANA
ITALY

The Colonel went up to advance B.H.Q. to meet the Brigadier re an attack the Bn. , was to put in. Major Banton still commanding the Bn. The battalion ordered to take CASTROPIGNANA by 2400hrs. Method., "C" Coy set out at 0730hrs to take up a position at 447308 . Upon this objective being taken "B" Coy. was to move through "C" to a position 462329. Upon this being taken "A" Coy to move through "B" and take pt 761 M.R. 456346. Finally "D" Coy to move through "A" and take pt. 661 M.R. 458361. A B & D Coys first concentrated in area 4729. "B" Coy moved off at 1430hrs, "A" Coy at 1730hrs "D" Coy 1930hrs. Advance Bn, H.Q. set up at pt. 730 M.R. 469292. Rear BHQ and report centre set up at 481269, with line to Command post and Bde. All of F Echelon and Coy A Echelon concentrated in this area. At 1800hrs the Brigadier gave new orders. The R.C.R. were to consolidate beyond CASTROPIGNANA and upon the word "GO" being given by the Brigadier the Bn. to concentrate in F.U.P. 462323 preparatory to attacking TORELLA the following morning. The word to move given at 2300hrs. Major Whyte and the R.A.P. moved by road via CAMPOBASSO to rd. junc 501308. Major Banton later went around by road to F.U.P. to set up an advance B.H.Q.. The Bn met with no opposition during the day except for sporadic shelling. 1 O.R. of "B" Coy killed four wounded. Sjt. Major badly wounded reported into D Coy R.C.R. at ORATINO and said that two of his patrol had died, one still alive. Upon a search party being sent out they found this to be the case, but the wounded man died on the way to the R.A.P. In the morning the pipe band played the Divisional R.C. parade to the Cathedral at CAMPOBASSO and then played during the march past. A voluntary Protestant parade was held at the Beaver Club, Major Jones Senior Protestant Padre of the div conducting the service, Capt East and Major Wilkes M.C. assisting. The N.C.O. school broken up and returned to Coys. Weather Cool & Clear.

25 OCTOBER 1943

Bn, arrived in F.U.P. around 0900hrs after a very trying cross-country march. Unit subjected to periodic shelling. Bn moved off at 1400hrs with objective of TORELLA "A" and "C" Coys passed through the R.C.R. line at CASTROPIGNANA. "A" Coy leading and took pt. 761 M.R. 442365 under Mortar and shell fire and remained there until the following day. "C" Coy in a position slightly behind. "D" & "B" Coys passed around NORTH of the R.C.R. position. "D" Coy taking pt. 661 M.R. 457361 "B" Coy remaining with advance B.H.Q. at M.R. 465357. Rear Bn.H.Q. established at the Town Hall ORATINO F Echelon remained in existing position. H.Q. in CAMPOBASSO moved to the old support Coy. H.Q. in CAMPOBASSO. One man killed by a mine on a ration carrying party. Weather Cool and Cloudy.

26 OCTOBER 1943

Place: (near)
TORELLA
ITALY

"D" Coy. moved forward to the next ridge about 2 miles out of town. This move was carried out at first light. At the same time "A" & "C" Coys supported by a squadron of tanks (Calgary Regt.) moved forward from 761 through pt.740 to position at pt. 781 M.R. 442359 "D" Coy on SOUTH of highway and A & C coy on NORTH and remained there during the day subjected to mortoring and shelling. A great deal of the fire directed at the tanks. At 1700hrs supported by tanks in hull down position A & C Coys moved to point 846 M.R. 433368 to take the feature with D coy on the right Starting their advance at 1770hrs towards two light features overlooking NORTH side of town at pt. 839 M.R.435377. Div Arty barrage was laid down from 1730 - 1800 hrs to cover their advance. D & C Coys reached their objectives

without any undue trouble but A Coy came under M.G. and Mortar fire and had to withdraw to S.P. After reorganizing A Coy moved to the right following C Coys line of advance at 1830hrs and achieved their objective. B Coy remaining in reserve with Bn. H.Q. Rear Bn.H.Q. remained in ORATINO. F Echelon moved up past CAMPOBASSO to M.R. 533304. Weather Cool & Cloudy.

27 OCTOBER 1943

At first light D Coy sent patrols into town and reported it clean of enemy. Whereupon D and C Coys moved in a line from N & S of town respectively with B Coy moving into D Coys position and protecting Bns right flank. Bn. H.Q. took up a position in town. Torella periodically shelled all day. Lt cousins wounded, 2 men killed. F Echelon and Rear Bn. H.Q. moved into Torella. Col Johnston came up to take command of the Bn. Various patrols sent out during the day one being encountered by a German patrol between the town and MELISSE which was taken by the H. & P.E. Regt., during the morning. Weather Cool and Cloudy.

28 OCTOBER 1943

The Bn remained in its existing positions at Torella the entire day. B.H.Q., C Coy and Support Coy subjected to heavy shelling the entire day from a 155 centimetre gun a shell penetrating B.H.Q. and the buildings of the other two companies. Fortunately only two men wounded during the entire day, though several people were badly shaken by concussion. It appeared that whenever anybody moved in the streets or a vehicle came into town, the Germans opened up. Two Support Coy 15cwts put out of action, during the day a third being hit. All unnecessary support Coy Vehicles evacuated from town. The Officers who had returned some days before from Hospital together with forty reinforcements came into town during the late afternoon thus attracting some shelling. Rations came in under cover of darkness without exciting any attention. Col. Johnston went to Bde. to see what information he could obtain re movements of other divs., and returned with a NIL report. Lt. Clarkson resumed his appointment of I.O. Capt. Clarke remaining attached to H.Q. Coy. pending an appointment. Major Wallace took over command of C Coy., with Capt. Handley as 2 i/c, Lt. Eby also rejoining the Coy. Capt. MacLaren resumed command of H.Q. Coy. Weather - Rainy & Cool.

29 OCTOBER 1943

Coys remained in positions the entire day and their local patrols during the night reported no enemy in the immediate vicinity of the town. The shelling of the town by the Germans continued the entire day. One shell landing in B.H.Q. area severely injured C.Q.M.S. McMonagle (who subsequently died) Sgt. Moore of the I section, Cpl. Nicolls of the I section and three other men. During the whole day 12 men wounded. The Commanding Officer decided to evacuate the entire surplus personnel of Support and Bn.H.Q. to form a B Echelon at ROCCASPOMONTE. Marching troops left at 1400 hrs., Rear Bn.H.Q. and vehicles at 1730 hrs., just at dusk, both parties being speeded on their way by shells. The Commanding Officer attended an "O" group at Bde. at 1500 hrs. Still very little information as to the enemy movements and our own. Weather - Occasional rain and cool.

30 OCTOBER 1943

Shelling by the heavy German guns started at 0400 hrs, and went on intermittently till 0700 hrs. "A" Coy reported that their night patrols encountered nothing, At 0915 hrs, "B" Coy reported having captured a German prisoner. Prisoner and escort arrived at B.H.Q. at 0930 hrs. He was a Cpl - 14th Regt., 29 Pz. Div. He had been leading a three man patrol from DURONIA 3839. One man had been wounded by our Arty., and the second had taken the wounded man back. The Cpl continued on and was sighted 200 yds in front of "B" Coys most forward position. On being questioned he said that DURONIA was occupied by 30 men and that it was protected by M.G.positions. He also stated that these positions were

changed every night to give the impression that a large force was defending the position. This information checked with that given by an Italian an hour earlier. He stated that 40 Germans, 5 or 6 Trucks and 2 tanks (or S.P.Guns) were in DURONIA, and that hill 728 - 396403 and CASALE - 396407, were heavily defended by M.G. positions. He also reported a gun position around COLLE ROSSA - 383431. The German N.C.O. was marched out to "A" Coy and sent back to Div.H.Q. Heavy shelling from 1030-110 hrs. No casualties. At midday an Italian came in with a letter for the town Marshal. We intercepted the letter which was ostensibly sent from FASSALTO to find if FROSINONE was safe for civilians. As the whole thing looked fishy the Italian was sent back under guard to rear B.H.Q. to be detained for 48 hrs. At 1600 hrs Div Arty., put on a show onto various enemy positions. This lasted until 1815 hrs. The enemy replied with his heavy guns and shelled the town for half an hour. Two casualties resulted. Late at night water and rations came in by vehicle. Heavy enemy shelling started at 2230 hrs., and kept up on and off until midnight. F Echelon, Rear B.H.Q. and Support Coy moved to CASALCIPRANO where there was more room for transport and billets for the troops. The Y.M.C.A. supervisor Mr. Singleton showed a film "Tall Dark and Handsome" to F Echelon in the local church. E.F.I.stores distributed to the Coys. Capt, Palmer and Lt Milnes evacuated sick. Two Officers per Bn. sent into CAMPOBASSO for 48 hrs leave. They will stay at the Royal York Hotel, the hotel taken over for the use of Canadian Officers. 15 man patrol from "A" Coy out all night between our positions and the H.& P.E.R. positions reported all clear. – Weather Cloudy and Cool.

31 OCTOBER 1943

Heavy shelling at 0400 hrs., and then for half an hour -0700 - 0730 hrs. At 0900 hrs., 3 man patrol left from "B" Coy to obtain information as to enemy in PIETRACUPA-4342. Two English speaking Italian men came into B.H.Q. with good information as to enemy positions at DURONIA - 3839. Also an Italian D.R. service has been established by "B" Coy., for obtaining information on enemy positions at PIETRACUPA. The regular 1030 hrsx. , shelling did not come over this morning. Visited by P.R.O. at 1300 hrs. Patrol from PIETRACUPA returned at 1600 hrs. No enemy in FASSALTO-4541 - or PIETRACUPA. Two PI, small enemy position outside PIETRACUPA - 428420. Civilians reported enemy on ridge behind the town and also up PIETRAVALDE valley - 4444. Civilians also report German heavy guns moved around considerably. Enemy shelled gun positions behind "A" Coy - 1600-1630 hrs. Quiet night otherwise. Rations and water in at 1900 hrs. Spasmodic shelling 2000 - 2015 hrs. News arrived of landing of 5th Cdn. Armd. Div. and Adv H.Q. 1st Cdn.Corps., at CATANIA. Also Maj. Gen. Simonds, CBE ,DSO. to take over 5th Cdn Div. and Brig. Vokes, DSO. new G.O.C. 1 Cdn Div. Vehicles evacuated from "A" Coy area due to shell fire. Lt R.W. Johnston, Seaforth Highlanders of Canada, Secured to the Bn. reported for duty. Weather- clear and cool.

Signed

Ian S. Johnston

(I.S.JOHNSTON) Lt-col.,

Commanding Officer,

48th Highlanders of Canada.

1 NOVEMBER 1943

Place: TORELLA ITALY

No shelling in the early morning. Report from "D" Coy about 1000 hrs that three Germans approached their forward positions but moved off into cover before their capture could be effected. At 1100 hrs a message arrived from Bde saying that our intercept on a German radio reported an enemy patrol moving to Pt.686 - 455401. Lt Fraser of "C" Coy was ordered to take his platoon to intercept this patrol. He returned at 1850 hrs and reported that he had gone to Pt.686 but had evidently missed the enemy patrol which had according to civilians visited the area some two hrs earlier. In the afternoon German guns opened up on 2nd Fd Regt R.C.A. and knocked out 10th Bty directly behind "A" Coys positions. At 1855

hrs "B" Coy reported Bren Gun fire from where the "D" Coy standing patrol was stationed at the road junc 443393. At 1940 hrs "D" Coy reported that their standing patrol on approaching the road junc had been fired on by an enemy section already there. Our men returned the fire, when a 2nd enemy section opened up on the left, whilst a third section was also identified. Outnumbered our patrol withdrew and reported that approximately 10 vehicles were halted on the road facing in the direction of PIETRACUPA. This was immediately reported to Bde and the Arty and D.F.10 was brought down by all three regts. The Bn stood to 100 % as a counter-attack was expected. The weather became foggy thus making observation difficult, but a harassing fire was maintained on the road by 2nd Fd Regt. - Weather - Foggy and Cool.

2 NOVEMBER 1943

"D" Coy sent a recce patrol to road junc - 4439 - to investigate results of last night's fracas and found two dead Germans, killed by TSMG, plus equipment and their steel helmets. Identification proved them to be of the 4th Pz Div. It had been reported that a knocked out vehicle was in the ditch beside the road but this report turned out to be unfounded. An intercepted message from an enemy radio ordering a patrol to Pt. 868 - 454401 - was acted upon. Lt Eby "C" Coy took his platoon to Pt.686, he returned at 1700 hrs reported that he had seen - heard no enemy. Heavy enemy shelling of town in mid-afternoon and sporadic till 1715 hrs. "D" Coy standing patrol went out to road junc as usual and laid two necklaces of Hawkins mines across the road. Heavy shelling of town from 2300 hrs until midnight. Col Johnston attended a conference at Div. H.Q. and dropped into Rear Bn H.Q. for lunch and to discuss various matters. Major Whyte left for CAMPOBASSO early in the morning to attend to some business with the Q.M. A draft of 17 arrived from D.M.A. and were attached to H.Q. Coy pending dispatch to the rifle Coys.

Forty men from the Bn spent the day in CAMPOBASSO under the new arrangements. It has also been arranged that seven men from the Bn spend 24 hrs at the Beaver Club for a rest and this system came into effect immediately. All vehicle movement to and from town stopped. Lt Pearson, R.C.C.S. reported for duty from hospital. Paymaster and Y.M.C.A. joined Rear Bn H.Q. - Weather - Cool and Cloudy.

3 NOVEMBER 1943

Short shelling 0400 - 0430 hrs. "B" Coy sent out a three man recce patrol to FASSALTO and PIETRACUPA at 0900 hrs. Usual morning heavy shelling 1010 - 1100 hrs. No casualties. Foo from 3.7-H.A.A. arrived and to shoot a tp. from our O.P. with their air burst shells and greatly lengthened range plus the co-operation of an air O.P. It is expected that the enemy gun positions will be more accurately and heavily engaged. Particularly vicious afternoon. Heavy shelling from 1350 - 1420 hrs, from 1440 - 1510 hrs and from 1645 - 1710 hrs stirred up by our Arty. 1730 hrs orders from G.O.C. to move one Coy during darkness to PIETRACUPA. 1915 hrs a red and white very light seen from direction of PIETRACUPA also enemy M.G. fire heard and movement of vehicles. At 2000 hrs information came from Bde that columns of enemy M.T. expected from TRIVENTO via SALCITO through BAGNOLI. Harassing Arty fire was to be laid down 60 rds per hr from 2245 hrs till 0245 hrs on road East of BAGNOLI. Harassing fire was also to be laid down 45 rds per hr from 2330 hrs till 0130 hrs on DURONIA. A further draft of seven reported in and attached to HQ Coy. "C" Coy ordered to move and to occupy PIETRACUPA, this being done under cover of darkness. The 5th Victory Loan Campaign got under way in the Bn. Capt McLaren returned from 48 hrs leave at CAMPOBASSO. Lt Boyle evacuated with jaundice. - Weather - Fair and Cool.

4 NOVEMBER 1943

At 0100 hrs "C" Coy started out for PIETRACUPA via FASSALTO. They reached FASSALTO by 0500 hrs and then sent one platoon forward to Pt.686 - 443412. After observing their objective and reporting it clear the Coy moved forward and occupied the town at 1100 hrs with one platoon on Pt.751 - 420420. At 0930 hrs our Italian D.R.L.S. service started to bring in information, and by 1030 hrs the following information had been gleaned.

TRIVENTO – 4654., SALCITO - 4249., and BAGNOLI - 3844, had been evacuated by the enemy the preceeding night. Bridges had been blown at 403447 and 377474 and that the enemy had withdrawn to AGNONE - 3057, and PIETRABBONDANTE - 3249. In the afternoon the R.C.R. moved its Bn.H.Q. and two Coys to DURONIA and the Engineers & Recce started to pile through to try the road to BAGNOLI. The enemy promptly shelled DURONIA and the 4 P.L.D.G's were forced to wait until night before reconnoitring the road. 1730 hrs., C.S.M. Keith left TORELLA with a pack train of 10 mules carrying food, 18 set and batteries, blankets and rum for "C" Coy. An Engineer Recce party then reported in that there was a fairly large blow in the road to PIETRACUPA at 420418. The demolition was surrounded by booby-traps which consisted of trip-wires attached to hand grenades strung up on trees. Booby-traps had also been reported at PIETRACUPA. The Engineers had swept as far as the blow, whilst our Pioneers swept up the road to FOSSALTO. No mines were encountered. At 1800 hrs picks and shovels arrived but it was too dark to attempt to fill in the demolition in front of the town and so the working party was laid on for the next morning. This was the first complete day that no enemy shells had been dropped into the town, although shelling was heard in the R.C.R. area. - Weather - Cool and Cloudy.

5 NOVEMBER 1943

"C" Coy acting on information given by a British escaped P.o.W.requested permission to send out a fighting patrol via SALCITO - 4249 - to take out a German gun position at approximately 3848. The patrol under command Capt. Handley consisted of 15 men and 2 mules including 48 hrs rations for the party, and set out at 1100 hrs with the intention of attempting to find either an enemy patrol or taking out an enemy gun position. In the afternoon the Commanding Officer and I.O. made a recce of FASSALTO and PIETRACUPA by jeep. A large blow at 423413 precludesthe movement of anything except a jeep, M/C, or mules to PIETRACUPA. On returning two British escaped POW's were brought back to Bn.H.Q. and produced some valuable information as to enemy positions. -- Weather - Fair and Cool.

6 NOVEMBER 1943

Coys remained in existing positions the entire day devoting their time to cleaning up and settling in, in Coy areas. Draft of 1 officer and 38 O/R's picked up at Div maintenance area by Adj. The officer Lt. D. Grant, Seaforth Highlanders of Canada, seconded to 48th Highrs., posted to "B" Coy. A large majority of the draft originally Seaforths. Major Banton and Major Whyte recce'd areas in which to move B Echelon and Support Coy. Brig Graham visited advance BHQ, and also Rear BHQ.

Announced his intention of moving Bde H.Q. to CASALCAPRANO.

- Weather - Cool and Cloudy.

7 NOVEMBER 1943

B Echelon, Rear BHQ., and balance of support Coy rejoined Bn. Support Coy occupied 17 pl area, the remainder being placed in various buildings throughout the town. The Padre held a voluntary church service in "D" Coy area. Paymaster spent day at "C" Coy selling Victory Bonds and collected \$1400.00. Padre held church service at "C" Coy in the evening. AMGOT and F.S.Police moved into town taking over civil administration. The Pipe Band played retreat in the square in front of Bn.H.Q. at 1630 hrs., including in the pipe march "Col

Johnston" which was composed by Pipe Major Anderson. Mr Singleton, Y.M.C.A. Supervisor showed the film "Wagons Roll At Night" to the Bn. The film was shown in the town square, the screen being placed in the back of a 3 ton truck. - Weather - Rainy.

8 NOVEMBER 1943

Coys remained in the rest area and prepared billets for a stay of two weeks or so. There is considerable lack of billets in the town, but by dint of squeezing the civilians into as small a space as possible room was found for the entire Bn less one Coy which is at PIETRACUPA. Coys devoted the day to cleaning up billets in preparation for the Brigadiers inspection the following day. Some escaped prisoners passed through the Bn lines during the day and were passed through to Bde for interrogation. Y.M.C.A gave a second showing of the film "Wagons Roll At Night" in the town square, a large crowd of civilians attending. - Weather - Cold with Rain.

9 NOVEMBER 1943

Brig. H.D. Graham, DSO. Comd 1st Cdn Inf Bde commenced his inspection of the Bn billets and administrative institutes at 0900 hrs in company with the B.M. Major Rennison and Lt-col. I.S. Johnston. He visited all kitchens, orderly rooms, Q.M. stores and billets and complimented the Bn on their cleanliness but commenting on the fact the billets were too crowded. Capt. Jackson, liaison officer for the muleteers attached F.A.P. to the unit. Capt. MacDonald, C.D.C. and his clinic attached while the unit is in rest area. Lt. M.E. George evacuated to hospital (jaundice). Bn pay and master parades during the day, Lt. R.W. Johnston carrying out the duties of mustering officer. Capt. Handley and the C.Q.M.S. "C" Coy arrived in town as advance party for "C" Coy. (Capt MacLaren received news that he had become a father on 2nd Nov. and the event was celebrated in the traditional style, Wed.). Col Johnston left in the afternoon to spend the evening in CAMPOBASSO with the Brigadier, Major Banton assuming command during his absence. - Weather - Cloudy and Cool.

10 NOVEMBER 1943

"A" Coy relieved "C" Coy at PIETRACUPA and the change over being completed by 1100 hrs and "C" Coy took over its billets in town by 1300 hrs. Coys carried out one hours smartening up drill in preparation for the Brigadiers inspection of personnel on Nov 12th. A/C.S.M. Langford evacuated to hospital and it is highly improbable that he will be back. Due to size of "HQ" Mess a "B" Mess was started for "HQ" Officers and attached officers. - Weather - Cloudy and Cool.

11 NOVEMBER 1943

Coy Comds meeting at 0900 hrs which continued until 1500 hrs. The Commanding Officer commenced it by reviewing the activities of the Bn and future movements. Policy re the band discussed but no concrete conclusion reached. A New Regimental Officers Mess Committee nominated as follows - Pres., Major D.W. Banton, - Secretary, Capt. J.R.O. Counsell, - and Treasurer Lt. J.M.E. Clarkson. It was hoped to have a Bn officers mess started in town, but upon investigation being made it was found that no accommodation was available. An N.C.O. School to commence immediately under the direction of the R.S.M. Appointments, Promotions and Reversions were then discussed and several promotions made. The meeting ended with nominations for Honours and Awards. At 1000 hrs information was received that Major-General C. Vokes, DSO., was on his way to visit the Bn and there was a great deal of confusion in preparation for the event. The General arrived at 1030 hrs accompanied by the Brig. and B.M. and after inspecting the guard spoke to the Coy Comds and then chatted with the Commanding Officer before leaving. Commanding Officers orderly room at 1600 hrs., eight cases being tried, as well as three interviews. The R.S.M. presented for the Commanding Officers approval a new regimental flag sewn by an

Italian lady in town and presented to the Bn as a gift. The flag to be flown for the first time at the Brigs inspection. - Weather - Cloudy and Cool.

12 NOVEMBER 1943

The Bn paraded at 0830 hrs at the road entering town for the Brigadiers inspection. The Bn drawn up in line all Coys being present except for "A" which was in the process of moving to the village of FOSSALTO. Brigadier H.D. Graham, DSO., arrived at 0900 hrs accompanied by the B.M. and proceeded to inspect the Bn to the accompaniment of the pipe band playing a series of ceremonial slow marches. After the inspection the Bn moved up into the square and formed into a hollow square while the Brigadier spoke to the men. He congratulated them on their past action then went on to speak of future movements, then urged them to take care of their health and to pay particular attention to personal cleanliness. The inspection ended with a march past in column of route to the regimental march past. Y.M.C.A. put on a film "Broadway Melodies of 1940" in the town square, a large crowd collecting for the show. - Weather - Cool and Cloudy.

13 NOVEMBER 1943

Coys carried out their own individual training syllabus during the day. Col Johnston occupied the entire day on a Court of Inquiry ordered by Bde. The Q.M., Adjt and I.O. spent the morning at Bde obtaining information. The Mule train returned to their own unit. In the evening word came through that Major Whyte, Capt Wright and Lt McLurg were to report to D.M.A. at noon the following day for return to England, three officers coming out to take their place. Second showing of "Broadway Melodies of 1940" in the town square, unfortunately stopped due to a breakdown in the machine. - Weather - Rainy and Cold.

14 NOVEMBER 1943

The Bn church parade that was scheduled to take place at 1030 hrs was cancelled due to rain and high wind. In its place the Padre held a voluntary church service in B.H.Q. for "C" Coy and "HQ" Coy, Major Wallace reading the lesson. Major Whyte, Capt Wright and Lt McLurg left at 1100 hrs for England. Officers get together held at 1100 hrs at A Mess, the Brigadier dropping in to pay the unit a visit. It was the first chance for many of the new officers to meet officers from other Coys. The B.M. Major Rennison and the A. & Q. learner, Capt Cassells stayed for lunch at A Mess. In the afternoon the Commanding Officer and 2 i/c visited "A" Coy at FOSSALTO. The Padre held a church service at "A" and "B" Coy. Major Rawlings Black Watch of Canada, replacing Major Whyte arrived and assigned to Support Coy as Coy Comd. Capt R.J. Harris Essex Scottish replacing Capt Wright assigned as 2 i/c "B" Coy. Lt I. MacDonald replacing Lt McLurg assigned to "A" Coy. During the evening a draft of 5 Officers and 17 O/R's arrived. The officers were those that we left behind in England as P.E. staff for the R.U. A/Capt Beal sent to Support Coy as 4 PI Comd, Lt Dickie took over command of the Pioneer PI, Lt G.O.G. Phibbs assigned to "A" Coy, Lt A.P. Perry became acting T.O. while Lt George is away, Lt C.F.S. Tidy assigned to "D" Coy. - Weather - Rainy and cold.

15 NOVEMBER 1943

Coys commenced on individual training syllabus, stress being placed on P.T., weapon training and gas training. N.C.O. School under R.S.M. Crossley commenced, 20 candidates attending. The diversion at M.R.478335 washed out in the morning and it is reported that it will take a week to repair. All down traffic to CAMPOBASSO stopped until further notice, but it is still possible to send vehicles to town by way of CASALCIPRANO, SPINETE and VINCHIATURO but the trip takes over three hours. Coy Comds meeting at 1400 hrs to decide upon a long term policy in regards to the appointment of NCO's. It was decided that a Pte upon being made a L/Cpl would of necessity be transferred to another Coy and would attend the NCO School. Senior ranks would not of necessity change to another Coy upon being promoted. The question of replacement of kit was also discussed and a definite policy

adapted. The Coys must keep a list of deficiencies of kit of a man at the time of a kit inspection and when that deficiency was made up. If at a later inspection other deficiencies are reported then the man must give a satisfactory account of how the article was lost or repay for replacement. Commanding Officers orderly room at 1530 hrs, eight cases being tried. Draft of two officers and ten other ranks arrived from Div Reception Camp. The officers were Capt Palmer who is to fill off the vacancy in 4 PI but be attached to "HQ" Coy to understudy the Q.M. and Lt Milnes who was reposted to the anti-tank PI. - Weather - Fair with Sun Showers.

16 NOVEMBER 1943

Coys carried out their own training syllabus and NCO school continued. The following changes in command were carried out. Capt F.G. McLaren to be O.C. "B" Coy, Capt G. Beal to be O.C. "HQ" Coy, Capt Harris to be 2i/c "D" Coy, Capt J.R.O. Counsell evacuated to hospital (Jaundice), Capt L.G. Smith becoming O.C. "D" Coy. Sjt. Calverley transferred to "HQ" Coy from "C" Coy to be Intelligence Sjt.
- Weather - Rainy and Cool.

17 NOVEMBER 1943

Col Johnston left for NAPLES with the B.M. Major Rennison for 48 hrs leave, Major Banton becoming A/C.O. during his absence. The M.O. commenced a course for training S.B's of which the Bn is short at the moment. Coys carried out their own syllabus, NCO School continued. The Adjt and Q.M. attended Bde A & Q conference. The Y.M.C.A. supervisor Mr. Singleton showed the film "Broadway Melody of 1940" to "A" Coy in the afternoon and to the remainder of the Bn in the town square in the evening. - Weather - Cool and Cloudy.

18 NOVEMBER 1943

Coys carried out normal training syllabus during the day. One Anti-tank gun evacuated as a result of the trail snapping during firing. Mobile Bath arrived, "B" Coy and "HQ" using it during the afternoon, also the M.O. started to give the first of a series of three inoculations for typhus. NCO School and S.B. School continued. R.S.M. Crossley spoke to all NCO's and WO's at 1600 hrs and followed it by putting on a model guard mount. The guard was from "D" Coy and it was acknowledged that it was one of the smartest guards ever mounted by a Coy. Lt Pickering and Lt A.W. Baillie on 48 Hrs Leave. - Weather - Fair and Cool.

19 NOVEMBER 1943

Coys carried out normal training, C, D and Support Coy using Mobile Bath and being inoculated. Word was received that Lt W.H. Magee had died of wounds on the 4th of Nov. Capt M Bruce Adjt 3rd Fd Regt R.C.A. lunched at "A" Mess. Lt Clarkson led a party of pioneers and two sections of 4 PI to TREVENTO to bring in some German prisoners who allegedly wanted to give themselves up but couldn't because they were trapped in a mine field. The story proved to be false and the party returned empty handed.
- Weather - Fair and Cool

20 NOVEMBER 1943

Coys carried out normal syllabus during the day. "B" Coy provided a fatigue of one officer and fourty other ranks in order to fix up the roads. Heavy rains during the day greatly curtailed all activity. Capt Jackson and his liason party returned to their unit. I.O. attended a Bde Intelligence meeting and returned with some very interesting information, in regards to air liason arty support. One mile of "A" Coys signal line was cut out during the night. A line party from "A" Coy and Support Coy laid on, with orders to shoot anybody found tampering with the line.
- Weather - Cool with Heavy Rains.

21 NOVEMBER 1943

Bn Church Parade 1000 hrs in the town square conducted by the Padre. The Coys marched onto parade u/c the C.S.M's. and were formed into a hollow square. The parade turned over to the A/Commanding Officer Major Banton at 0955 hrs who in turn handed it over to the Padre. At the conclusion of the service the Coys marched off in the following order HQ, D, Support, C and B while the pipe band played the regimental march past. This service was followed by a voluntary Communion service held in the Q.M. stores about 30 attending. A church service was held for "A" Coy in "A" Coy lines. at 1400 hrs. Col Johnston returned from leave in NAPLES at 2200 hrs. About 2300 hrs a petrol fire broke out in HQ Coy kitchen but after a great amount of excitement the fire was brought under control and subdued. One man was slightly burned.

- Weather - Fair and Cool.

22 NOVEMBER 1943

Coys carried out normal Coy training syllabus during the day. The Brigadier arrived at 1000 hrs and after inspecting the guard which had been turned out in his honour proceeded to "A" Coy with Col Johnston to inspect their billets at FOSSALTO. It was decided to move "B" Coy out to this area to relieve the congestion in TORELLA. Commanding Officers Orderly Room at 1400 hrs, eight cases being taken. The YMCA showed the film "Captain Courageous" to "A" Coy in the afternoon and to the remainder of the Bn in the town square at 1800 hrs, a rather old but definitely first class film. Bde fatigue of one officer and forty other ranks provided by "C" Coy. Capt Palmer left for TARANTO to get stationary supplies and kit of personnel.

- Weather - Fair and Sun Shining.

23 NOVEMBER 1943

Coys carried out training under the supervision of Coy NCO's as all Officers required for Officers Day. The Officers Day lectures held at "A" Mess and consisted of the following.- A lecture on Regimental History given by Major Banton. This was followed by the I.O. Lt Clarkson giving a lecture on the latest developments on this front. He dealt with the German troops now facing the division and a short description of the type of guns they are using, then finished off with by describing the New Method of obtaining Close Air Support and the limitations of same. The morning lectures concluded with a lecture by Maj Wallace on consolidation and defense. The afternoon session led off with a lecture by Lt-col I.S. Johnston on "Lessons learnt during the Sicilian Campaign" in which he covered the various lessons this unit had learnt during this campaign and pointed out that many of them were contrary to what we had been taught in England. The Medical Officer Capt F.L. Skinner then lectured on health of the troops during winter months and dealt with the various diseases most commonly encountered during this season of the year. The day ended with the Pioneer Officer Lt D.M. Dickie lecturing on Booby Traps and Mines. The Commanding Officer left directly after his lecture to go to CAMPOBASSO to attend a dinner given in honour of the Minister for National Defense, Hon Mr Ralston. Orders received late in the evening that there would be a parade on the morrow for the minister. "D" Coy provided the Bde fatigue of one officer and 40 other ranks. - Weather - Fair and Cool.

24 NOVEMBER 1943

Coys spent the morning cleaning up in preparation for the afternoons parade. AMGOT provided a working party of 10 civilians to clean up the town square and entrances to the square. The parade took place in HELLS KITCHEN at 1430 hrs, 35 officers and 434 O/R's being on parade. Also the Bde Support Group Sask.L.I. Major Irwin O.C. paraded with the Bn. The parade u/c Lt-col I.S. Johnston was formed into a hollow square the centre being occupied by the regimental standard and a "jeep" on which the Minister was to stand. The Minister Mr Ralston and his party which consisted of the Corps Commander Lt. General

Crerar, the Divisional Commander Maj. General C. Vokes, DSO., the Bde Commander Brig, H.D. Graham, DSO. and other staff officers arrived at 1530 hrs. The pipe band played the General Salute and the Commanding Officer greeted the party. Then the order was given to "Break Ranks" and gather around the "jeep". Mr Ralston commenced his address by thanking those on parade for the work they had been doing and brought them a message from Canada wishing them success in their work. He then touched upon the mail situation and promised that every effort was being made to improve the service. He also promised that newer films would be brought out instead of the antiquated ones which are currently being shown. A general laugh was caused when he mentioned that he had been with some Highland Regiment during the last war and added "I believe that the 48th were also there". He then thanked the parade for their effort in the Fifth Victory Loan and claimed that the example set by the fighting troops had materially aided the success of the campaign back home. He ended by wishing the Bn good luck and good hunting. Col Johnston called for three cheers which were heartily given, then Mr Ralston with a typical gesture called upon the parade to give "three cheers, a Tiger and a Tiger Pup" for Col Johnston followed by three cheers for Major Irwin. Ranks were then reformed and the officers were introduced. The Minister left followed by the strains of "Hielan Laddie" and the parade was dismissed. "B" Coy moved out to FOSSALTO in the late afternoon. Lt D.R. Baillie evacuated to hospital (Chronical Malaria). Word was received in the evening that the Corps Commander wished to have the pipe band fully equipped and a list of their requirements to be sent to him immediately. This was complied with to the great joy of the Pipe Major. - Weather - Rainy and Cold.

25 NOVEMBER 1943

Coys carried out normal training during the day the 2 i/c going around to visit them during training. Commanding Officers Orderly Room in the afternoon, five cases being tried. Guard Mount cancelled due to heavy rain. - Weather - Cool and Rainy.

26 NOVEMBER 1943

Pay, Muster and inoculation parade for all ranks during the day, HQ. C. D. and Support being taken during the morning at Bn.H.Q. A. and B. Coy at their own areas during the afternoon.* Subalterns half day in the afternoon, lectures being given by Lt Baillie on the 3" Mortar, by Lt Milnes on the Anti-tank gun and by the I.O. Lt Clarkson on enemy guns and weapons. Capt Murphy RCAMC arrived to relieve Capt Skinner. Coy Comds meeting at 1915 hrs to discuss the loading of transport and future vehicle requirements.

*Capt H.E. Cameron acted as Mustering Officer. - Weather - Fair and Cool.

27 NOVEMBER 1943

Commanding Officer attended meeting at Bde in the morning on the loading of transport. Coys carried out normal training. Capt Skinner the M.O. S.O.S. to 9th Field Ambulance and it was with great regret that the Bn saw him go. During his tour of duty with the unit Capt Skinner had become to be highly regarded by Officers and O/R's alike, both for his services as a medical officer and as a friend. A Sjts Mess meeting held at "A" Coy. The R.S.M. presiding. The pipe band played retreat at FOSSOLTA a large crowd of civilians turning out to watch the event. Word came through in the evening that the 2 i/c Major Banton was to leave the following day for England. Lt H.R. Grant evacuated to hospital with jaundice. - Weather - Fair and Cool.

28 NOVEMBER 1943

Major Banton left early in the morning for England followed by the good wishes of the Bn. Major I.S. Wallace became acting 2 i/c. Capt Handley taking command of "C" Coy. No training during the day Coys using the time as they saw fit. "O" group at Bde 1400 hrs for a pending move. Officers shop at Bde in the afternoon many officers availing themselves of the opportunity. Lt K.S. Arrell evacuated to hospital. - Weather - Cool and Cloudy.

29 NOVEMBER 1943

Coy Comds meeting at 0900 hrs. The Division is scheduled to relieve 78th Div on the SANGRO bridgehead and will come u/c 5 Corps, Lt-Gen Alfrey Commanding the Corps, composed of 2nd New Zealand Div., 8th Indian Div., and 1st Cdn Div. Coys carried out normal training during the day. Coy 2 i/c's., the Commanding Officer and I.O. left in the evening for new area to liase with 78th Div. Officers half day in the morning, lectures by Capt McEachren on Admin Questions, by Capt Richardson on Q. Matters, by Lt Clarkson on enemy tanks and by Lt Dickie on Booby traps. For this lecture a house had been deliberately booby trapped and the officers were conducted through it and came out booby trap conscious. Picture of all Bn Officers taken also the sjts picture. Lt George returned and resumed duties of T.O. Lt Perry going to "B" Coy. Also 49 reinforcements arrived, majority coming from the Carleton and York Regt.-Weather-Fair.

30 NOVEMBER 1943

Coys spent the day preparing for the move. Advance party from 78th Div came in to look over the Bn area, Major Wemp, Evening Telegram Reporter had lunch at "A" Mess. Later Gregory Clarke of the Star dropped in for an interview or story, none obtainable. 18 T.C.V's reported to Bn also A.A. Platoon of Bde Support Group. – Weather - Fair and Cool.

Signed

Ian S Wallace, Major Acting 2 i/c

For (I.S.JOHNSTON) Lt-col,

Commanding Officer, 48th Highlanders of Canada.

1 DECEMBER 1943

Place: TORELLA

ITALY

Bn move to Adriatic Coast. Scat party of six NCO's and R.Q.M.S. u/c Adjnt left TORELLA 0515 hrs to rendezvous with S.C. 1 C.I.B. at CASTROPIGNANO at 0600 hrs. Route to area CAMPOBASSO, CASACALENDA, LARINO, TERMOLI to Bde D.P. at Rd Junc 799788. (Italy, 1/100,000sheet 155) and then to Bn area 6578-6478 (sheet 148). Due to extremely heavy traffic congestion from TERMOLI forward this party did not reach Bn area until dusk. Area not favourable to taking transport off road. Bn crossed unit S.P. at 0915 hrs and across Bde S.P. at 1000 hrs. Bde order of march was H & P.E.Regt, Bde H.Q., 48th Highlanders, R.C.R., Bde Support Group, 9th Fd Ambulance and 2nd Fd Regt, R.C.A. Bn order of march A, B, D, C, Coy F, A and B echelon vehicles moving with them. Remainder of F Ech u/c Major Rawlings, A Ech u/c Capt Beal, B Ech u/c Capt Richardson. Major Wallace O.C. Convoy. Each rifle coy had 4 T.C.V's, Support and H.Q. Coy one a piece. Movement extremely slow the entire day due to bad roads and very poor traffic discipline especially in 5th Corps area. By midnight convoy had not reached Bn area - Weather - Cool and Rainy.

2 DECEMBER 1943

Place: (near)

SAN SALVO

ITALY

Leading elements of Bn arrived in area at 0300 hrs the last vehicle coming in at 0630 hrs. From TERMOLI forward the traffic was nose to tail, main delay was caused by vehicles sliding into ditches. One T.C.V. of C Coy was sideswiped and turned upside down, 8 men were evacuated to hospital suffering from broken limbs and other injuries. Bn H.Q. set up in house 649789. Rum issue authorized which was served at breakfast and troops bedded down for some rest. Col Johnston and the I.O. arrived at Bn.H.Q. 1030 hrs from forward area and an "O" group called for 1130 hrs and information given as follows- the enemy occupying ST.PIETRO 3610 and 305078. They are not 1st class troops, Tac R. reports an

armoured Div moving forward presumably to counter-attack. Our troops, 8th Indian Div on the left, N.Z.Div in reserve. The Bde to move forward and to take up a defensive position, area of responsibility FOSSACESIA 4004 to coast. Bn areas as follows- R.C.R. in reserve area 4204, H.& P.E.R. FOSSACESIA, 48th area of church SAN GIOVANNI in VENERE 4005. The Bn to move by T.C.V's leading vehicle to cross Bde S.P. line of Trigno river at 1400 hrs, order of march D, C, B, A, F Echelon, Coy A Ech vehicles, route, SAN SALVO, VASTO, CASALBORDINO, TORINO, FOSSACESIA. Remainder of A Ech u/c Capt Beal and B Ech u/c Capt Richardson to remain in present area. Marching troops to debus at Rd junc 433011, T.C.V's to return by coast road to unit. Major Wallace to bring up marching troops and will be met by Coy 2 i/c's at 401050. Bn moved off at scheduled time but due to very heavy traffic progress extremely slow. Imperial vehicles further slowed progress down by double banking causing very bad road congestion. As darkness came on all vehicles put on full headlights, a scene which reminded one of Sunnyside Beach especially when crossing the diversion at the SAGRO River. This diversion is a magnificent Engineers feat built under extreme difficulties. Weather - cloudy and cool.

3 DECEMBER 1943

(near)
FOSSACESIA
ITALY

Reveille 0700 hrs., breakfast 0730 hrs. Troops devoted the morning to cleaning up and resting. 'O' Op. at 0900 hrs. to co-ordinate the defense of the area. The Bn. situated on a tank proof plate about 250 yds long and Coys. detailed as follows: "C" Coy. to move SOUTH of the road and to be responsible for the SOUTH side flank and also slight EAST and WEST. "B" Coy. to cover the saddle which lies to the WEST of the plateau. "A" Coy. to remain in present position i.e. NORTH of the road on the EASTERN flank. "D" Coy. responsible for the sea and beach approach and to send one pl. to the promontory overlooked by the Monastery. 4 anti-tank guns to cover the saddle the remainder to be in reserve. 3" Mortars to go to "A", "B" and "C" Coys. and 4 Pl. to form Bn.H.Q. reserve. Line to be laid to all Coys. It was reported that one Pl. of "D" Coy. and one of "B" Coy. were missing from the move. "D" Coy. Pl. reported in at noon and "B" Coy. Pl. reported in just before supper. Failure to arrive at the area was due to breakdown of T.C.V's. Lt.Tidy. "D" Coy., reported that three soldiers had been blown up by mines on the beach. The Padre, Pnr Officer, and a party of S.B's. went down to the beach and, a path having been swept, the men were brought out. One Englishman was uninjured, one killed and one man from the R.C.A. was slightly wounded. Lt. D.R. Baillie reported back from hospital and rejoined "B" Coy. Cpts. Beal and Richardson brought up the rations in the evening. Bde. 'O' Gp. called at 1800 hrs. and Bn. 'O' Gp. 2000 hrs. The Unit is to move to-morrow, to an area just NORTH of ROCCA S.GIOVANNI, marching troops to move up under command the 2 i/c, and F, A and B Echelon to move up later in the day. Remainder of A and B echelon to move up from old area to present one. Intelligence report that the 96 Pz Grenadiers are now facing the Div. on the coast with the 26 Pz facing the New Zealanders. Weather - fair and cool.

4 DECEMBER 1943

Marching troops u/c Major Wallace crossed the Bde. S.P. at FOSSACESIA at 0930 hrs., marching in following order, "D", "A", "C" and "B" Coys. The C.O. and I.O. went forward with the Brig. to recon a new assembly area. Extreme congestion of the main road made any movement almost impossible and it was doubtful for sometime if any transport would be able to move up until sometime in the evening. However, it was found possible to move up single vehicles and this was started at 1300 hrs. All Ech's were in new area by 1630 hrs. The Bn. bivouaced in houses and olive groves on both sides of the road in area 3650460. Bn. took up an all-round defense position and settled down for the night. "A" Coy. situated in a Monastery just EAST of the road, "D" Coy. In a house on the bend of the road and Sp.

Coy. in another house in the same area. "C" Coy. situated 300 yds. SOUTH WEST of the road near Bn.H.Q. Transport and Q.M. situated on the road. "B" Coy. in other houses EAST of the road. This area was taken over from SEAFORTH OF CANADA. Weather - cool and cloudy.

5 DECEMBER 1943

Place: (near)
ROCCA S. GIOVANNI
ITALY

Coys. devoted the morning to cleaning up and improving camouflage. C.O. visited all Coys. during the morning. Around noon the area dive bombed by German planes probably H.E. 109's, five in number, and dropped six bombs. Three men were injured by shrapnel and evacuated to hospital, otherwise no damage done. Warning order at 1335 hrs. that the Bn. to move at 1430 hrs., C.O. leaving immediately for an 'O' Gp. Bn. 'O' Gp. at 1415 hrs. The Bn. to relieve the ROYAL INNISKILLING FUSILIERS in area 3511, the plan being that the H.& P.E.R. are to make a feint across the F.MORO on the right while the 2nd Bde. Put on a full scale attack on the left flank. Marching troops cleared Bn. Start Line at 1530 hrs. and F Ech u/c/ Major Rawlings left at 1640 hrs. A and B Ech to remain in present position. Order of marching troops as follows: "A", "D", "C" and "B" Coys., Bde. Wireless truck. One Tp. 51st Bty. A/Tk. came under Command at 1500 hrs. The Bde. is faced with the 36 Pz. group which consists of Infantry, Tanks and S.P. guns. The Commanding Officer and I.O. and Coy. 2 i/c's left by jeep to liase with the R.I.F. One Cpl. and twelve men from 4 Pl. detailed to the Bde. Muleteer Coy. At 1930 hrs. orders came through that A and B Ech to concentrate in the area of Q.M. Stores to leave billets free for the R.I.F. A Ech cooks u/c Capt. Beal went up at 2030 hrs. Weather - fair and cool.

6 DECEMBER 1943

Place: (near)
S.LEONARDO
ITALY

Unit co-ordinated in defensive position taken over from R.I.F. during morning. Some shelling of area during day. Mud has become a major difficulty and many vehicles have become a hindrance and parking places difficult to find. At 1700 hrs, received order to relieve EDMONTONS in area 345113 a defensive position overlooking R. MORO. 2nd Bde. crossing at V.ROATTI the same night. Bn. less vehicles moved up in darkness to complete relief by 2100 hrs. Vehicles to move up in daylight. Casualties - 3 Other Ranks wounded. Weather - cloudy and cool.

7 DECEMBER 1943

New area too muddy to take all vehicles so necessary vehicles only moved from old area. New area on crest of hill and forward positions under observation. Some heavy shelling during day and Lt. Grant and one O.R. killed and several wounded in "B" Coy. by one unlucky shell. Bde. Comds. 'O' Gp. at night as warning order for crossing of MORO. "A" Coy. only to feint in front of S.LEONARDO while R.C.R. attack S.W. from HAST. & P.E.R. bridgehead on coast. Casualties - Lt. D.C. Grant killed - one Other Rank killed - eight Other Ranks wounded. Weather - cloudy and cool.

8 DECEMBER 1943

Shelling in Bn. area early in the morning. Commanding Officer's 'O' Gp. was held at 1100 hrs. in "B" Coy. area -344115- for the attack across the River MORO that afternoon. The 'O' Gp. was harassed by enemy shelling as was the Commanding Officer's attempt to show Comds. the ground from the forward O.P. The Commanding Officer was called to Bde. at 1300 hrs. where a change in the plan was given him and a second 'O' Gp. was called at

1300 hrs. This plan finally resulted in "B" and "D" Coys. leading the Bn. attack on the high feature at 330115 with "C" and "A" and Comd. Post to follow on soon as the first Coys. were successful. To the right the R.C.R. moved across the River to 346137. at 1300 hrs. to be ready to attack S.LEONARDO - 335118. On their success the H. & P.E.R. was to consolidate the 1 Cdn. Inf. Bde. bridgehead by moving to 3312. The attack was to be supported by 4 Regts Fd. Arty., 2 Regts Med. Arty. 13 Squadrons of Kittybombers, 4.2 Mortars M.M.G's, and Bofors. Zero hour was 1630 hrs. Bn. Comd. Post moved forward to forward O.P. 343116 at 1545 hrs. and communications set up, all objectives covered by smoke and dust from heavy Arty concentrations and impossible to follow troops. "D" Coy. reached its objective with very little opposition. 1730 hrs. "B" Coy. H.Q. was heavily shelled whilst crossing the River and was out of touch with Bn. but patrol from "D" Coy. contacted it on objective 1800 hrs. "C" Coy. then moved forward up "D" Coy's. axis and at 1830 hrs, "A" Coy. and Bn. H.Q. moved forward. By 2000 hrs. Bn. fully on objective and dug in. "B" Coy. - 331116, Bn. H.Q. - 330116, "C" Coy. - 332113, "A" Coy. - 326115, "D" Coy. -326112. Bn. area was heavily shelled during the night and sniped at by M.G s. Meanwhile the R.C.R., according to radio intercept, seemed to be moving toward S.LEONARDO without too much opposition, and it was expected that they would reach the Town before midnight. However, heavy vehicles could be heard in the town during the night and it was clear that they had not fully occupied the Town. This attack was originally planned for the R.C.R. to break out of the HAST. & P.E.R. bridgehead and 48th to make a diversion only at S.LEONARDO crossing. Final orders had to be given without seeing the ground. The approaches to the river provided good cover and the attack went in at dusk enabling the unit to get on its objective with virtually no opposition. It was in fact thought that the R.C.R. had taken S.LEONARDO and a patrol was sent to contact them and was most incensed when fired on after challenging loudly several times. Casualties - eleven Other Ranks killed in action - thirteen Other Ranks wounded. Weather - cloudy and cool.

9 DECEMBER 1943

By first light Bn.H.Q., now underground in a large cave on the face of the hill side facing S.LEONARDO, found itself under observation and M.G. fire from the town. By 0800 hrs. I Troop of Shermans appeared on the forward slopes of the town with one Coy. SEAFORTHS and by 1000 hrs. a fierce battle was going on in the town between enemy M.G. posts and our tanks. Two men were sent to contact the tanks who were firing at our men and they returned with six Germans, the crews of the M.Gs. that had been sniping at Bn.H.Q. The prisoners were from 11th Coy., 3rd Bn. 361 Panzer Regt., 90 Panzer Div. Close watch was kept on this area all day and subsequently 3 more prisoners of the same unit were taken. The R.C.R. sent a patrol into the town 1000 hrs, but were split by a German counter attack at 1400 hrs. - 341331 - and it took a counter attack from the H. & P.E. Regt. to save a critical situation. However the Engineers had built a diversion at 337116 during the night 8/9 and tanks accompanied by Seathforths and Edmonton Regt. were helping establish the bridgehead. At 2000 hrs. Commanding Officer went back across the river to Bde. H.Q. - 353117 - at request of Bde. Comd. on his return he brought orders for "A" and "C" Coys. to move across to S. LEONARDO, to come u/c Edmonton Regt. and to protect right flank of bridgehead around S. LEONARDO. Coys moved across u/c Major Clarke 2330 hrs and took up positions 336126 and 339127. At 1900 hrs rations came forward by mule train but it was the shelled and it was not until 0200 hrs that all the rations finally arrived. Bn. area was heavily shelled throughout the day and was also engaged with NEBELWERFERS. Casualties - Lt. D.A. HARPER T.O.S. - Capt. F.G. McLAREN and Lt. C.F.S. TIDY wounded. - 2 Other Ranks killed and 5 Other Ranks wounded. - Weather - Fair and cool.

10 DECEMBER 1943

Bridgehead was further developed with 2 C.I.B pushing up ORTONA Rd. with tanks to 324136. The R.C.R. having reorganised, was acting as a firm base in old area – 350330. Road into S. LEONARDO, Diversion and Bn. area heavily shelled all day. In evening Bde. ordered one Coy. to go forward to take up position around LA TORRE - 322113 "D" Coy. set out 2300 hrs. and was in position by 0100 hrs. No opposition in LA TORRE. Bn. area shelled all day. Rations in by night. Casualties – A.P. & R's. - Capt. J.E.W. WRIGHT appointed A/Major, Capt. R.P. LYON appointed A/Major, Capt. F.G. McLAREN appointed A/Major, Capt. J.C. CLARKE appointed A/Major, A/Major J.E.W. WRIGHT confirmed in the rank of Major - Lt. T.M. BUCHANAN wounded - 3 Other Ranks wounded. Weather - Cool with rain.

11 DECEMBER 1943

Place: (near)
LA TORRE
ITALY

Shelled intermittently during the day. M.M.G's and A/Tk Guns moved up to protect "D" Coy. "A" and "C" Coys. brought back under comd. Bn. and moved to 328118 and 329121 whilst the R.C.R. moved in to protect S. LEONARDO at area 337130. Patrols ordered by Bde, one from LA TORRE to Main Road at 305123 and an Officer patrol to contact R.W.K. (Ind.Div.) at V. ROATTI - 320097. Patrol to main rd. ran into 2 enemy M.G's dug in – 313117. Lt. PERRY returned having contacted R.W.K. He walked through A/Tk minefield in valley 325105, contacted a Newfld Fd Regt and went to BHQ. R.W.K. - 311098. Their Bde planned to attack V.CALDARI - 302100 - next day. Casualties - Major R.P. LYON T.O.S., 1 Other Rank Killed in Action - Weather - Cool and cloudy.

12 DECEMBER 1943

Bn. area shelled intermittently. "C" Coy. ordered out to defence position 313117 to protect left flank: W.N.S.R. "C" Coy. moved out 1800 hrs. and in position by 2000 hrs. Sent patrol to contact W.N.S.R. at 309121. Pte. TOTH captured by enemy and taken to their positions in valley 307120. He managed to escape and returned to his Coy. with information that enemy in position, 1 - 2 Coys. in strength. A D.F. Stonk was brought down on this position. "C" Coy. requested permission to attack with some tanks that they had contacted but this refused as R. 22 R. to attack next morning 0700 hrs. Casualties - 2 Other Ranks wounded. Weather- cloudy.

13 DECEMBER 1943

"C" Coy. reported enemy counter attacked 0650 hrs. Coy. held its fire till end and drove off counter attack. 0730 hrs. R. 22 R. and tanks attacked. "C" Coy. killed nine enemy including one Capt. and one Lt. and took 31 prisoners including one Lt. Prisoners were from 190 Hy Recce Coy., 90th Panzer Div. "C" Coy. suffered no casualties. 'O' Gp. at Bde. 1400 hrs., Bde. to be concentrated to right of S.LEONARDO. I.O. sent as L.O. to Coys. to inform them of move. By 2000 hrs. Bn. in position - Bn.H.Q. - 342127, "A" Coy. - 337133, "B" Coy. - 339131, "C" Coy. 340127 - "D" Coy. 340128. Casualties - nil. Weather - cloudy and cold.

14 DECEMBER 1943

Place: (near)
S. LEONARDO
ITALY

'O' Gp. 0900 hrs. Bn. to move in around town as protective force whilst 1 Cdn. Div. reorganize. Bn. in position by 1300 hrs. Bn.H.Q. - 339123, "A" Coy. - 341123, "B" Coy. - 336122, "C" Coy. - 332124, "D" Coy. -339123. Quiet day little shelling and Bn. took advantage of rest. Patrols to R.C.R. at 337132. Casualties – Capt. I.S.WALLACE appointed A/Major and confirmed in the rank of Major, Lt. K,S, ARRELL t.o.s., three Other Ranks wounded. Weather - cloudy and cold.

15 DECEMBER 1943

'O' Gp. at Bde. 1400 hrs. Plan for attack in near future. 1st Bde to attack and take ground across main rd in 3013 as soon as Indian Div. gets across rd moving N.W. toward TOLLO – 2715. Bn. to rest and dig in defence position around S.LEONARDO. Casualties - four Other Ranks wounded. Weather - cloudy and cold.

16 DECEMBER 1943

No change in location, uneventful day. No contact with enemy. Shelling light. Coys. with F and A Ech vehicles spend day on organization. Casualties - Capt. W.L. BEATTY, Lt. N. BELL, & Lt. S.D. REBURN t.o.s. along with nine O.Rs. One Other Rank wounded. Weather - cloudy and cool.

17 DECEMBER 1943

Coys. went by vehicle every hour to S.VITO to mobile bath. 'O' Gp. Bde. 0900 hrs. Plan for Bde. attack next day, 48 Highrs to attack across rd behind Corps Arty barrage and take 307138. On success R.C.R. to attack behind barrage and take 320142. One Sqn. 12 C.T.R. with each Bn. G.O.C. came down 1100 hrs. to give talk to Offrs 48th and R.C.R. on tomorrow's attack. 1400 hrs. C.O. and I.O. went on Bde. Recce of F.U.P and ASSY area for attack 313117. Recce party heavily shelled in O.P. Joined by Br. Recce Party 1500 hrs. and Coy. Comds, married to Tp. Leaders "B" Sqn, 12 C.T.R. Bn, 'O' Gp. 2100 hrs. "D" and "A" Coys. to attack behind barrage with one Tp. following in reserve. 7 Arty Reps and F.O.Os. attended 'O' Gp. Night disturbed by wrong firing in MORO VALLEY, origin and reason both unexplained. Casualties - Lt. D.R.BAILLIE evac. - sick. Weather - rainy.

18 DECEMBER 1943

Place: (near)
LA TORRE
ITALY

Bn. moved to Assy are 320117, 0700 hrs. Barrage commenced 0800 hrs. "D" and "A" Coys. crossed Start Line 307120 at 0820 hrs. Fairly heavily shelled by enemy as Bn. moved up. "D" and "A" Coys. on objective by 1030 hrs. Bn. on objective by 1130 hrs. Dug in immediately with tanks in Bn. position. Coy. positions - "D" Coy. 306137, "A" Coy. 308138, "C" Coy. 307135, "B" Coy. 308136, Bn.H.Q. 308136. Harrassed by enemy snipers most of day and tanks managed to clear most of them up. R.C.R. attack failed so both flanks open. Original Arty plan was fixed by trace. Field Arty plan issued on paper at 1800 hrs. after dark. Showed several important changes which had not previously been notified. It was then too late to change the plan which rested with "A" Coy., ~~the Coy~~ going up to the right of the barrage. Leading Coys. would start 200 yds, short of *Start Line* but with rate 500 yds. in one min. it was felt this could be caught up. Owing to the inaccuracy of the maps the barrage started where originally planned and did give "A" Coy. cover, it stopped however just on the objective instead of going 700 yds. beyond it and was late in every position. The barrage for the R.C.R fell partially on our troope and had to be lifted. Contacted R. 22 R. who command rd 314134. Took 25 prisoners of I and III Para Regt. Casualties - Lts. N.B.BELL, A.P.PERRY, G.O.G. PHIBBS and S.D. REBURN wounded, 21 Other Ranks wounded and 8 Other Ranks killed. Weather - cool with rain.

19 DECEMBER 1943

Shelled, though mainly by own Arty as maps 1000 yds, out. ESSEX Regt. Indian Div. made contact 306135 with their right (W) Coy. R.C.R. moved two Coys. and Bn.H.Q. across rd to 314136. Enemy still sniping, situation easier. Intermittent enemy shelling. Rations, etc., coming up by mule train. Casualties – one Other Rank wounded. Weather cloudy and cool.

20 DECEMBER 1943

(near)

V.GRANDE
ITALY

R.C.R. attacked and took rd and rail junc. 320143. Patrols to 311150 contacted enemy in fair strength. Essex Regt. Consolidated around 305134. Attempted to take V.GRANDE 298140 with one Coy. and failed. Enemy counter attacked their left flank but thrown back. Our A/Tk guns plus 51st Bty and our 3" Mortars moved into position Ordered by Bde. To send one Coy. with one Tp. Tanks to take track junc. 311150. "B" Coy. attacked 1500 hrs, but tanks bogged down 310142 and Coy. pinned down 311147. Tanks encountered minefield 310139 and was mined 311147 to 311150. Under cover of dark "B" Coy. withdrew to position around tanks 310142. Patrols contacted R.C.R. at blown bridge 317142. Casualties – A/Major K.T.WHYTE confirmed in rank of Major, Capt. R.J.HARRIS evacuated sick, eight Other Ranks wounded. Weather - cloudy.

21 DECEMBER 1943

ESSEX Regt. attacked V.GRANDE 298140 behind barrage 0600 hrs. One Coy. succeeded in reaching outskirts 209138. Enemy still on rd 303137. ESSEX Regt. called for shoot by own 3" mortars; shoot carried out 1100 hrs. successfully. SEAFORTH Highrs of Can. relieved by H. & P.E.R. area 313117. R.C.R. consolidate around X rds. 313142. "B" Coy. in direct contact with enemy. Enemy shelling and mortaring intermittently. Patrols to ESSEX Regt. R.C.R. and enemy 311150. Lt-col. Spry (A/Brigadier), visited Bn. position. Bn. fighting strength - 15 Offrs, 377 O.Rs. "B" Coy. casualties in last two days 2 killed, 9 wounded. Casualties - Lt. D.H.MILNES wounded, 9 Other Ranks wounded, 3 Other Ranks killed. Weather - rainy.

22 DECEMBER 1943

ESSEX Regt. making tentative efforts to attack. V.GRANDE Bde. 'O' Gp. 1400 hrs. Bde. plan to swing left across country and then right to cut coast rd 384177 and relieve pressure on 2nd Cdn. Inf. Bde. In ORTONA 3316. HAST. & P.E.R. to attack track junc. 311150 and on success 48th Highlanders of Canada to go through and capture high ground 306154, R.C.R. then to swing right and out cut the coast road. Casualties – A/Major R.P. LYON confirmed in rank of Major. Weather - cloudy with rain.

23 DECEMBER 1943

HAST. & P.E. Regt. attacked behind barrage 0830 hrs. With tanks. ESSEX Regt. re-attacked V.GRANDE. Bn. 'O' Gp. Bn. to move Assy area 312151 on HAST & P.E. Regt. success. "A" Coy. then to lead Bn. via obscure path shown on aerial photographs to objective. Most of the HAST. & P.E. Regt. tanks bogged down and not on objective by 1300 hrs., though reported on. Bn. given release to attack. Moved forward to HAST. & P.E. Regt. area 313147 but only cross track 311150 taken and track not yet crossed at 313152. Tanks bogging down. HAST. & P.E. Regt. finally successful 1530 hrs. and Bde. Comd. ordered 48th Highlanders forward even though nearly dark and tanks unable to move. "A" Coy. moved off at 1600 hrs. followed by "C" Coy., Bn.H.Q., "D" and "B" Coys. Crossed track at 313152 and moved N.W. toward objective. Farm buildings searched enroute found to contain enemy and one killed, 2 wounded and nineteen taken prisoner, all Paratroops. Bn. suffered no casualties and arrived at gully 313164 in pouring rain 1900 hrs. Bn. immediately took up defensive position on high ground 315163. No organized opposition to occupation of ground. Casualties – nil. Weather – rainy.

24 DECEMBER 1943

"D" Coy ordered to send out strong party - 30 men - to move down main track to Rear Rn. H.Q. 315147, mopping up houses enroute, party then to bring up Mortars, A/Tk, M.M.G's and rations. Party started out 0300 hrs but returned 0430 hrs having encountered Inf. dug in around houses at 307158, 308157 and 308155. The track was heavily covered and could not be used. With arrival of dawn Bn took up defensive position on high ground. Bn. H.Q. in

a small house 306161, "C" Coy across track area 305162, "D" Coy around Bn. H.Q. and astride track 307163, "A" Coy around track junc in big house 308163, "B" Coy astride track 308161. Sniping and machine gunning from houses at 306157 and from post on track at 308158 all day. House registered as D. ROCK and D.P. task in valley WEST of Bn position registered also. D.P. task JANE in possible enemy F.U.P. 304167. Recce patrols to house ROCK returned having been unable to reach their objective. Fighting patrol sent out by "B" Coy at dusk thrown back with 2 casualties. "A" Coy sent out patrol at 1800 hrs to rd at 307176. No contact made with the enemy. A very active night. Enemy patrolling came very close and posts established in houses 309165 and 305165. Outposts pushed in within 75 yds of "D" Coy. Casualties - Capts. E.N. HEIGHINGTON, J.A. WILSON, Lts, W.C. BURKE-ROBERTSON, C.M. MIDDLETON and W.T. PENTLAND T.O.S. 143 Other Ranks T.O.S. 2 Other Ranks wounded. Weather - Fair.

25 DECEMBER 1943

Most unhappy Christmas. Practically unable to move in Bn area owing to enemy snipers and M.G's. Destructive shoot carried out on ROCK between enemy post during daylight. "A" Coy tried an attack on houses at 309165 but pl. opened up on by M.G's from right at 314169 and pl. had to withdraw with casualties. Enemy ranged "A" Coy houses and started to shell them heavily. Enemy Mortars started in Bn area and one detected in V. S. NICOLA at 299159. This was knocked out by F.O.O. Recce patrol sent out by "D" Coy to houses at 306165, pinned down and 2 men killed. By evening 8 M.G. positions pinpointed from 304164 to 313169 and Bn area decidedly uncomfortable. Patrol from R.C.R. contacted "A" Coy at 1600 hrs and brought first intimation of attempt to get ration train through, Bn having had no rations since 23 Dec. All attempts to impress Bde that tanks are essential to clean our area have failed so far. Ration train made up of S.L.I. carrying party appeared 2100 hrs at "A" Coy led by Capt. BEAL. Stretcher parties also brought for 6 casualties, including Capt. HANDLEY who was hit in evening by mortar shrapnel. "B" Coy sent out fighting patrol at 1800 hrs and took out post on track at 308158. "A" Coy, during the day, took 3 prisoners, one from I Paratroop Regt. and 2 from 20th Motorized Bty. Active contact all night with enemy who were clearly heard to be digging in close to "D" Coys position. Night attack tried but proved impossible owing to length time that it took to evacuate wounded from Bn. area. Casualties - Capt. F.D. HANDLEY, *wounded*, 7 Other Ranks killed, 11 Other Ranks wounded. Weather - Fair and cool.

26 DECEMBER 1943

Bn. area shelled in early morning. Call from Bde. to send guides for tanks who were now ready to come up. I.O. set out at 0930 hrs. to bring up tanks, visited R.C.R. enroute and tied up D.F. task and patrols. R.C.R. Command Post at 309158. R.C.R. having trouble on track from houses at 307155 and 307157. H.& P.E.R. also unable to move owing to M.G's. in house at 309152. 1000 hrs. Bn. area, "A" Coy. especially, heavily shelled and counter attack put in on "A" Coy. Coy. held its fire until the last moment and the counter attack beaten off at the Coy's. back door leaving 3 Germans killed around the house. Arty Rep. from 57 Army F.O. did magnificent work shooting enemy positions with one gun within 200 yds. of our own Bn. area. At 1300 hrs. the I.O. arrived with 3 tanks, a forth having bogged down. At 1330 hrs. tanks attacked houses at 309165 with Inf. support from "A" Coy. Enemy driven out across "B" and "C" Coys. front and a very heavy fight developed. D.F.JANE was brought down incessantly on the withdrawing enemy and quite a slaughter ensued. Enemy having been beaten off "A" Coy's. front tanks reported to "D" Coy. who attacked house at 305166 and drove enemy from there into gully. In both cases the tanks attacked first over a distance of about 100 yds. and did all the shooting they could, they then withdrew and ceased fire and the Inf. went up to mop up the area. This was the most effective use of tanks this Unit has made. Total at end of day was 40 enemy killed and 20 taken prisoner. Estimate of enemy casualties for the day in Bn. area 100 to 120. Major CLARKE badly shaken up in "A" Coy's house which received three direct hits during the day. Bn. area

heavily shelled at 1800 hrs. Quiet night. Ration party and 80 reinforcements and stretcher party arrived 2200 hrs. Casualties - Major J.C. CLARKE wounded but not evacuated, Lt. K.S. ARRELL, wounded, 2 O.R.'s. killed and 4 O.R.'s. wounded. Weather - fair and cool

27 DECEMBER 1943

Bn. remained in same position throughout day improving positions now made possible as most of sniping eliminated but "C" Coy. and slope toward S. NICOLA still under observation. Also contacts with R.C.R. and H. & P.E.R. improved and defences tied in. "B" Coy. teed up in morning for attack on ROCK with tanks but H. & P.E.R. got there first. Shelling and mortaring throughout day. Casualties - 1 O.R. killed and 4 O.R.'s. wounded. Lt. K.S. ARRELL died of wounds. Weather - cloudy and cool.

28 DECEMBER 1943

Shelling and mortaring throughout the day, otherwise uneventful. "D" Coy. ordered to go forward after dark and take up position covering ford at 301177. Arrived on objective O.K. and found abandoned German H.Q. with Christmas trees covered with Christmas messages in English. Casualties - Lt. J.C. CURRELLY, Lt. E.C. BENSON and Lt. N.H. McMURRICH t.o.s. - Major R.P. LYON wounded, 7 Other Ranks wounded. Weather - cloudy and cool.

29 DECEMBER 1943

Major Wallace came forward in the morning and took over Command from the C.O. who went back to B Echelon for two days. "D" Coy. relieved by R. 22 R. at 0900 hrs. and returned to old area. 3rd Bde. passed through Unit area brought down considerable shelling and several casualties particularly in "D" Coy. who were caught out of their trenches. Casualties - Lt. D.A. HARPER wounded, 3 Other Ranks killed, 23 Other Ranks wounded. Weather - cloudy and cool.

30 DECEMBER 1943

Same area. Heavy shelling. Major Wallace in Command while C.O. out for a two day rest. Sudden call from Bde. for Bn. to attack SAN TOMMASO MR298164 at any time they see fit, but must have it by first light on 31 Dec. This call arrived at 1600 hrs. Followed by I.O. and B.M. with further details. 'O' Gp. called for 1730 hrs. At Bn. H.Q. This coincided with supper and all were much put out when Jerry shelled Bn. H.Q. heavily and practically demolished the house. 'O' Group continued in slit trenches. Supper buried under ruins. Casualties - 2 Other Ranks killed, 5 Other Ranks wounded. Weather - cloudy and cool.

31 DECEMBER 1943

Place: SAN NICOLA &
SAN TOMMASO

C.O. absent for rest at B Ech. Attack launched against S. NICOLA and S. TOMMASO under direction of Major Wallace, 2i/c. "D" Coy. and H.Q. at former R.C.R. H.Q. "A", and "C" Coys. forward on ground looking WEST towards S. NICOLA and S. TOMMASO. "A" and "C" Coys. went into attack and suffered several casualties from Arty support. Re-organization and the attack was concluded. Both objectives were taken and approximately 30 casualties suffered. C.O. made recce of both Towns which were under fire and observation by enemy. He returned to Bn. H.Q. at 1330 hrs. and proceeded with I.O. to a Bde. 'O' Gp. Plans for the next month were outlined and the Bn. were ordered to stand fast in their positions at S. NICOLA and S. TOMMASO, keeping contact forward and to the flanks. Heavy rain and considerable wind bogged vehicles and generally impaired movement. Personnel in 'slits' spent a miserable night. Casualties - 13 Other ranks killed and 22 Other Ranks wounded. Weather - cold and windy with rain.

"Torrential" ISJ

signed

Ian S. Johnston

*(I.S. JOHNSTON) Lt-col.,
Comanding Officer,
48th Highlanders of Canada.*

1 JANUARY 1944

Place: S.NICOLA &
S. TOMMASO

During night 31/1 there was a very bad storm. All slit trenches filled to the lip and men had to evacuate them and move into the houses. Both sides were effected and there was practically no shelling during the day in either direction. There were several cases of exposure evacuated. Preparations were made to move remainder of bn forward to S.NICOLA and S. TOMMASO. There were only two possible routes to S.W., a road and footpath. The road was blown just outside S. NICOLA and under observation. Therefore vehicle movement was restricted to night time. By night bn hq, mortars and mg vehicles were moved forward. A rear clean up party was left in our former position. No patrols this night. Lateral contact was not made. Weather - sky overcast during day.

2 JANUARY 1944

Defensive positions were sighted and dug; as an added precaution defensive positions were dug to which to retire if shelling became too heavy. These slits were dug on the reverse slope. This day was spent for the most part in habilitation. In the evening Capt BEAL brought rations forward to blow. The question of retiring the coys for a bath and the receipt of personal comforts was considered. Shelling began this day but was not heavy and was mainly in the S.TOMMASO areas. Weather - clear and cool.

3 JANUARY 1944

Col PARTRIDGE of the Royal Fusiliers of the 8th Indian Div visited our command post. He asked permission to bring a coy forward to S.NICOLA the following day and successive coys when he had been able to effect forward moves through the 1/5th RGR who were on our left and to the front. This was concurred and the question of billets was investigated. The first of the Fusilier coys moved in during the night. A strong wind, very fortunately 'camouflaged' the vehicles movement. Shelling slackened considerably. Casualties - 6 other ranks wounded. Weather - clear & cool.

4 JANUARY 1944

No particular news of importance. There was some further discussion with the Fusiliers about more billets for them also about the question of repairing the blow to allow the forward movement of vehicles. Lt-col JOHNSTON was anxious to keep all movement by day or night to a minimum and felt that a/tk measures were not of immediate importance as the existing ground features provided a good natural obstacle. Shelling remained about the same and no severe casualties were suffered. Casualties 2 other ranks wounded. Weather - cloudy and cool, wind subsiding.

5 JANUARY 1944

Visited by Cdn Corps Comd, Gen CRERAR. Gen moved as far as former hq and met coy comds and Lt-col JOHNSTON there. Maj WALLACE and Capt MACFARLANE were absent. "A" and "B" coys. went for bath and returned safely. Shelling was light and intermittent with occasional but slight casualties. Lateral contacts were made with no particular news of hostile troops. Christmas comforts had been sent up with rations during the night and were enjoyed by the men during day. Capt D.W.JENKINS and A.MCNEIL and Lts J.G.MAYNE, E.G.D. WASHER and J.A. McNEIL tos as exchange offr. Casualties - 1 other rank wounded. Weather - cloudy and cool.

6 JANUARY 1944

Lt-col JOHNSTON made recce with Capt COUNSELL for new "D" coy area REF PHOTO 310160. Visit from Lt-gen ALFREY, 5th Corps Comd. "C" and "D" coys went back for bath and returned, "D" coy to new area. Parcels and comforts were brought back. Night patrols laterally to 1/5 RGR left and Vingt deux right. Nil reports. New arty rep, Capt ROLPH, arrived. Casualties - 4 other ranks wounded. Weather - cloudy and cold, some sleet.

7 JANUARY 1944

Lt-col JOHNSTON to bde to meet Lt-Gen Sir Oliver LEASE and Lt-gen ALFREY. Jerry started his usual intermittent shelling; he used the six barrel mortar at about nine in the morning for the first time on our new positions. Lt-col JOHNSTON returned at approximately 1800 hrs bringing back the news that the bn would move to the H & PER area on 9 jan 44. Some shelling on our "C" and "B" coy areas during the night. Mg (vickers) pl moved to slit trenches. Maj F.G.MCLAREN returned from hosp. Lts D.M.DUNCAN and W.A.HUNTER tos. Casualties - 7 other ranks wounded. Weather - cool and clear no wind.

8 JANUARY 1944

Lt-col JOHNSTON and Maj WALLACE away to recce move during morning. Lt-col JOHNSTON returned at 1330 hrs. Gen CRERAR dropped into bn hq and was shown our op, he was visiting the Royal Fusiliers Indian). Hastings acting c.o. came back here for lunch with Lt-col JOHNSTON and the defence of this locality was explained to the former. "B" coy lost a man from shelling in the morning. This shelling was hf which he has used on our positions since 2 jan 44. Lt G.A.FRASER appointed a/capt wef 26 dec 43. Casualties - 2 other ranks killed, 9 other ranks wounded and 3 other ranks missing. Weather - bright and warmer, frost during night.

9 JANUARY 1944

Place: 315147
ITALY 1/50,000
Sheet 141-11

H & PER relieve the bn at S.NICOLA and S. TOMMASO. "A", "B" and "C" coys moved between 0800 and 1100 hrs. Bn hq vehicles moved with Lt-col JOHNSTON's and Major WALLACE's articles and equipment before first light. Vehicle routes in the new areas were found to be very bad and several vehicles were mired down. B echelon were in positions at S. LEONARDO. Sp coy were about a mile from bn area. Position of coys were as follows - "A" coy 319147, "B" coy 313155, "C" coy 315152, "D" coy 307162, bn hq 315147. A and f ech were moved forward to bn area. Rest home opened at S.VITO MARINA, operated by Mr. SINGLETON. Rest home to accomodate 15 men for 2 days Lt I.MacDONALD and 4 nco's left as instructors for bde nco school. Bn ord rm and Capt. PATTERSON, Paymaster, rejoined main bn hq. Weather - bright and cool.

10 JANUARY 1944

The rest home finally got under way, the men living in tents with Italians to wait on them and generally do all fatigues. Lt-col JOHNSTON held coy comds meeting in the morning, the matter of honours and awards being discussed. Sjts Jonnassen, Walsh and McIntyre promoted to a/csm. Various other admn details discussed and the following changes made in officer personnel - Lt CURRELLY to be O.C. 3" mortars; Capt HEIGHINGTON and Lt DUNCAN to 4 pl; Lt WASHER to 5pl; Lt MURRAY to be T.O.; Lt GEORGE to "D" coy. Meeting followed by Commanding Officer's Orderly Room, three cases being tried. Afternoon passed quietly, coys carrying on with admn. "A" and hq coys small arms inspected by the armourer sjt. Transport and B ech heavily shelled during evening. Coy blankets disinfected at S. LEONARDO. Capts SMITH and MACFARLANE left on four days leave. Casualties - 2 other ranks wounded. Weather - clear and moderate.

11 JANUARY 1944

Lt-col JOHNSTON to conference at 0900 hrs at 1 Cdn Inf Bde. Morning quite quiet except for aircraft bombing a target about a mile away. 1 Cdn Inf Bde 'O' gp at 1300 hrs where orders were given re reliefs to be made by 1 Cdn Inf Bde. We are to relieve 1/5 Mahrattas over period 14-15 Jan 44 in area N and W of V.GRANDE.

Lt-col JOHNSTON to make recce on 12 Jan 44. "A" and "B" coys taken by transport to SAN APOLLONARA to see a film at 0900 hrs. After the show they were transported to the Mobile bath at S.LEONARDO where they had lunch followed by a bath then marched back to billets. "C" and "D" coy reversed the procedure having a bath in the morning and seeing the show in the pm. 30 nco's left for Bde NCO School at S.VITO. 21 other ranks arrived as reinforcements. "D" and sp coys small arms inspected by the Armourer sjt. B ech again shelled in the evening. Casualties - 1 other rank wounded. Weather - clear and moderate.

12 JANUARY 1944

Leave personnel changed over at rest camp. Capt CAMERON left on 48 hrs leave at the offrs club, S.VITO. "B" and "C" coy's arms inspected by the Armourer Sjt. Lt-col JOHNSTON went to Div at 0900 hrs to talk over a demonstration of infantry-tank co-operation. In the morning a memorandum was sent in from 1 Cdn Inf Bde re the relief of 1/5 Mahratta to take place from 13 Jan to 14 Jan 44. Lt-col JOHNSTON returned for lunch and left with Lt. McMURRICH, the I.O., at 1300 hrs to meet guides to 1/5 Mahratta bn hq. A recce was made of the new area which the 1/5 had occupied on a three coy basis. Lt-col JOHNSTON decided on his four coy positions and called an 'O' gp for 1700 hrs. All sub-unit Comds were present. Extracts from 1 Cdn Inf Bde memorandum were read to all present. Movement order was given in the clear form of ops orders - info re enemy; own tps; intention, etc. In method the following instructions were given - One offr per coy, one sjt. per pl, 3" mortar and sigs to make recce in a.m. 13 Jan 44. These to meet at 0930 hrs at 1/5 Mahratta bn hq. Guides for "A" and "B" coys to meet coys at 313140 at 1230 hrs move to areas via track. "C" Coy. no guides move forward at 1430 hrs to 295142. "D" coy (forward coy) to move to meet guides at FRASER track and main road at 303140. "A" coy position PHOTO (285139). "B" coy position and bn hq PHOTO 292145. "C" coy position 295142. "D" coy position PHOTO 285145. Questions were then answered by Lt-col JOHNSTON. 4 pl, 5 pl and 6 pl are to remain in old area for present. Four mortars are moving forward to take over 1/5 Mahratta positions. Casualties - 3 other ranks wounded. Weather - sunny and moderately warm.

13 JANUARY 1944

Lt-col JOHNSTON to 1 Cdn Inf Bde. Preparations for move; S.O., Lt PEARSON and M.O., Capt BYERS forward on recce in a.m. Major WALLACE and Lt McMURRICH move to new positions in 'quarry' area 292145. Slits for bn hq. Lt-col JOHNSTON forward by 1630 hrs. "A", "B" and "D" coys in pre-planned positions by night. Rations for these three coys were brought forward after last light at half hour intervals. Major D.A. MacKENZIE tos and assumes appointment of 2nd in command. Casualties - 4 other ranks wounded. Weather - sunny and moderate.

14 JANUARY 1944

Place: 292145
ITALY 1/50,000
Sheet 141-1

Considerable shelling during the night, maximum at 2300 hrs on "B" coy area, one casualty. H.S.R. sent to 1 Cdn Inf Bde by Arty Rep through our bn hq. Contact to our "A" coy by Essex, nil report. Capt BEAL phoned to have "A", "B" and "D" coys nominate men for change over at 'rest camp. Capt BEAL himself forward 1000 hrs. L.O. from Bde brings patrol tasks from 1 Cdn Inf Bde. Formation Arty Rep discusses d.f. tasks with Lt-col JOHNSTON and Capt HARRINGTON, our Arty Rep. Capt BEAL back to main hq at 1100 hrs. Shelling light during the day. Patrols from "A" coy to Essex on left at 2100, 2400 and

0300 hrs, nil report. Patrols from P.L.D.G. on right contacted "D" coy, nil report. Patrols forward to ASTOR (MR 293145 ITALY 1/50,000 Sheet 141-1) from 1800 to 2400 reported considerable enemy movement, withdrew at 2015 hrs; We mortared this area from 2045 to 2100 hrs. Four guns 1st Cdn A/Tk Regt relieved present guns at 2030 hrs. Two tps 4th Cdn Tank Regt 'reverted' at 0445 hrs 15 Jan 44, noise covered by Arty barrage. Negligible shelling during night.

Casualties - Major McLAREN evacuated with recurrence of blast injury. 4 other ranks wounded. Weather - clear and moderate.

15 JANUARY 1944

Occasional shells during morning with one casualty. Capt BEAL forward at noon advises of move of Main hq to M.R. 313135. Lt. DICKIE forward to see about booby trapping house in "A" Coy area with German equipment. Commanding Officer and I.O. to Bde for "O" Group at 1330 hrs. Information about the enemy on our front was in brief as follows, 90th Panzers withdrawn, Paratroops and 26th Panzers to our front. Across the River ARIELLI he was dug in, in deep caves and dugouts, from these he was doing considerable active patrolling across the river and supplying listening posts during the day which he occupied at night. On our immediate front he was supposed to have two Coys. After "O" Group the Commanding Officer went to new Main hq area and then back to Tac hq at "The Quarry". Coy Comds were warned for "O" Group at 0900 hrs 16 Jan 44. Patrols, to contact ESSEX on left by "A" Coy, patrol forward to "ASTER" by "D" Coy, nil reports. - Weather - Clear and Cool.

16 JANUARY 1944

Negligible shelling last night. 'O' group at 0900 hrs. In brief the information and intentions were as follows:-

1. Enemy - see 15 Jan 44.

2. Own Tps - Future ops - 11th bde making 2 bn attack towards ARIELLI River on 17 Jan 44 in three phases, zero hour 0400 hrs.

Phase 1 - PERTHS attack.

Phase 2 - CAPE BRETONS attack.

Phase 3 - Consolidation of these to ARIELLI River.

48 Highrs as part of 1 bde supplying diversion by military noises.

3. Method - Fighting patrols from "C" coy, 3" mortar firing from 0400 to 0500 hrs.

Tasks given to sp weapons. Lt-col I.S. Johnston also passed on additional information: The RAP to move forward as no evacuation of casualties until after noon 17 Jan 44.

No vehicle movement after 0230 hrs.

No personnel movement after 0400 hrs except where absolutely necessary.

The remainder of the day was uneventful with intermittent, but not heavy, shelling. Major J.C. CLARKE reported in at night. Casualties - 1 OR wounded. Weather - decidedly cool, overcast.

17 JANUARY 1944

Patrols from "C" Coy to ASTER found no enemy there and empty weapon slits, returned with this information at 0020 hrs. During the night "A" Coy were able to bag two Germans who were without weapons. They were shipped out immediately by jeep. The jeep did not return at night due to traffic restrictions. The Germans claimed to be HERMAN GOERINGS - we doubted this. Zero hr for 11 Bde attack was set for 0530 hrs at which time our diversion efforts went into action. We drew some shell fire but no great amount. The Brigadier called on the phone later in the morning when he informed us that generally the diversion was satisfactory and that Phase 1 was complete except for a couple of troublesome sp guns. Col ADAMS (PLDG's) called to liaise with us during the hour or so of military noises. Shell fire increased somewhat during morning but fell off again after lunch. Major J.C. CLARKE evacuated again after lunch. All was quiet until later at night when we received some shelling and mortaring. "C" Coy sent patrols forward without incident, contact was made to

left and right. During the night he lobbed some sort of smoke projectile at a house which he supposed to be one of our OP's. A fire was started by this in some straw where A/Tk amn had been dumped. It was not deemed safe to attempt to extinguish this as there were intermittent explosions from the fire. Capt J.R.O. COUNSELL appointed A/Major wef 10 Dec 43. Casualties - 1 OR wounded. Weather - Overcast and cool, some slight rain during the night.

18 JANUARY 1944

A quiet morning for shelling. "A" Coy reported noises of digging to their front; Arty was brought down in this area and was observed to be successful. Lt-col. I.S.JOHNSTON paid a visit to the PLDG Commanding Officer on our right. He returned at 1200 hrs at which time Capt HARRINGTON, the Arty rep, was relieved. After lunch Lt-col I.S.JOHNSTON left for a bn comds meeting at Bde. This morning twelve more left for 48 hrs rest. Sjt-maj Gunn was asked to investigate the Div rest camp to see whether our lads would gain by going there rather than to our own at S.VITO MARINA. There was mortar fire for almost an hour on our "A" Coy posn. "C" Coy reported in new position SOUTH and EAST of "A" Coy. 4th Recce moved a coy nearer to our "B" Coy position thus thickening our front considerably. There was considerable shelling during the night but no casualties. The only piece of info from patrols was the discovery of one dead German at ASTER, our farthest patrol limit. Casualties - 1 OR wounded. Weather - warmer with some sun, no wind.

19 JANUARY 1944

Quite heavy shelling on some of our positions after midnight and up until 0600 hrs Col JONES, 2nd RCA, visited Lt-col I.S.JOHNSTON and discussed the registering of targets. Lt-col I.S.JOHNSTON intended visiting "D" Coy but was advised against it due to enemy observation. Capts BEAL and McEACHREN were forward at 1400 hrs. 70 reinforcements forward at 1430 hrs. Capt F. F. McEACHREN reports strength 710 with 37 Officers. 4 PI moved forward to former "C" Coy area in order to patrol forward to-night. Two NCO's from "A" Coy brought in valuable info re enemy patrols and posts on their front. Standing patrol to ASTER, Capt E.N.HEIGHINGTON and nine men left for ASTER at 1800, were forced to withdraw at 2330, Capt HEIGHINGTON was killed by enemy fire. At 0200 hrs 20 Jan "A" Coy had a one hour small encounter with a strong enemy patrol, one German casualty, no casualties for us. A second arty F.O.O. arrived at 0530 hrs and was taken by guide to vantage point near "A" Coy posn. Casualties - 1 OR wounded. Weather - cold with frost on ground, clear during day.

20 JANUARY 1944

Considerable mortaring on "B" and "D" Coys from 2400 19 Jan until 0400 20 Jan, no casualties. Lt-col I.S.JOHNSTON left at 0900 hrs for a meeting at Div, he returned at 1530 hrs. Further information was given Lt. N.H.McMURRICH re activities at ASTER and the "A" Coy 'show'. The general contention was that the enemy had hoped to establish an OP in our "A" Coy posns. "D" Coy confirmed the report that the enemy (which attacked "A" Coy) had retired within 250 yds of their posns. Plans were made to repeat the standing patrol at ASTER. A carrying party left Bn HQ at 1730. They carried a stretcher hoping to bring Capt HEIGHINGTON's body back. They reached a point 50 yds from ASTER and one man, moving quite close to Capt HEIGHINGTON's body, was challenged, he fired, small arms fire was then opened by enemy on all sides leaving only a small gap through which the patrol could withdraw. Five men of a total force of seventeen were able to withdraw. Included among those presumed prisoner was Sjt Carle and Cpl Davis, the latter was allegedly wounded. Four hours later a party of two men was sent back to search the area for wounded but found none. Shelling during the night was intermittent and heaviest at 2300 hrs. Casualties - 1 OR wounded, 12 OR's missing presumed prisoners. Weather - clear and cool.

21 JANUARY 1944

"A" Coy sent a cpl to the OP where he and the Arty Rep were able to register a new R target. Yesterday P.M. the Cpl had seen movement from his "A" Coy posn and it was hoped to call down fire should the movement recur this p.m. Owing to the inexperience of 4 PI personnel (largely made up of 'zombies') it was decided to re-organize the establishment with volunteers recommended by the coys. This work of re-org was begun by Major I.S.WALLACE. A det of 4.2 arrived at 1400; Lt-col I.S. JOHNSTON discussed fire tasks with the Officer i/c and sent him to confer with Capt GODFREY the arty rep. This morning "B" Coy sent three men to investigate three alleged 48th bodies in the S. TOMMASO area, they were unsuccessful and brought news that a Senior C.C.S. Chaplain buried some men the other day. It was decided to await returns for confirmation of this. Rations arrived at 1500 hrs. 4th Recce patrol to us at 2400 and 0400 hrs. Our patrol to near ASTER, two man listening with red vevy for sos if movement seen. Enemy movement heard in the ASTER area and vevy was fired and arty was brought down. During the night HF was carried on between ASTER and APPLE BLOSSOM for a considerable time in the hope of 'catching' vehicles or personnel in this area. Shelling and mortaring was light during the night. Casualties - 3 OR'S wounded. Weather - fair.

22 JANUARY 1944

Major D.A. MACKENZIE and Major J.R.O. COUNSELL attended lecture at Div 1100 hrs. Trucks arrived for 48 hr leave men at 0900 hrs. Lt N.H. McMURRICH and 'I' Sjt to main HQ with this vehicle. Patrol activity at night was discussed by Lt-col I.S. JOHNSTON, Major D.A. MackENZIE and Lt D.M.DUNCAN and Sjt Caldwell of 4 pl. It was decided to send a 6 man patrol to shack on track from ASTER to APPLE BLOSSOM. Brief to patrol - (1) Enemy there? (2) disposition is so. (3) Mine track with Hawkins if conditions permit. Lt-col I.S.JOHNSTON to Bde and Div and spent night at Main HQ. Bde 'O' gp at 1400 hrs. News of 6 Corps landing. At night patrol met enemy in superior numbers and withdrew (1930 hrs). 18 PI attacked by 12 men (?) patrol, 2000 hrs and repulsed them. Casualties - own nil, enemy nil. 4 P.L.D.G. contact patrol to us at 2000 hrs (should have been 2300) was challenged twice and fired on (TSMG), Lt DUTTON seriously wounded, evac by 2130 hrs by us. Quiet night, shelling light. Casualties - wounded 2 OR's. Weather - fair.

23 JANUARY 1944

Lt-col I.S.JOHNSTON away at Div and Main HQ. News reached the Bn that Lt-col I.S.JOHNSTON had been awarded the DSO. During morning previous night's patrol discussed and tentative plans organized for this night's patrol, subject to Lt-col I.S.JOHNSTON'S approval. Otherwise a quiet morning. 3" mortar re-ranged some targets during afternoon. Lt-col I.S.JOHNSTON, DSO, returned about 1530 hrs. A col of the R.C.D. spent half an hour in discussion with Lt-col I.S.JOHNSTON, DSO, At 1600 hrs a new pl comd of MG PI reported at this HQ. By permission of the Brigadier contact from 4 Recce on our right was cancelled (see incident of night previous). Seven NCO's sent out from here at 1400 hrs, for exchange, to C.B.R.D. Capt BEAL and H/Capt EAST forward at 1430 hrs. Lt-col I.S.JOHNSTON, DSO, approved plans for 'ambush' standing patrol of 12 men near "D" Coy posn. This patrol out at 1800 hrs returned at 0230 hrs with nothing to report. Shelling around 2300 hrs quite heavy. One man killed while on sentry duty within 40 ft of Bn HQ. Weather - fair.

24 JANUARY 1944

Lt-col I.S.JOHNSTON, DSO, left at 0750 hrs to call in at Main HQ then on to Div for demonstration. Order came to this HQ for cancellation of the above. Lt-col I.S. JOHNSTON, DSO, returned before noon. We were warned 23 Jan of an arty harassing shoot starting at 0800 hrs 24 Jan and continuing intermittently until 1515 hrs in the afternoon. This was carried out with thickening fire by MMG and mortars of 1 Cdn Inf Bde. The reason was to

create the impression of preparation for an attack. There was considerable shelling close to Bn HQ at 1600 hrs for a half hour period, no casualties. Patrol activities for the night and then results were as follows:- (1) Two man listening post left "A" Coy 1730 hrs proceeded to area near "A" Coy - reported sounds of enemy digging around 2400 hrs. (2) Another two man listening post NORTH of main TOLLO rd - went out 1730 hrs through "D" Coy reported heard nothing. Some shelling in Coy areas but no casualties during night. Casualties - 1 OR wounded. Weather - fair.

25 JANUARY 1944

Lt-col I.S.JOHNSTON, DSO, and Lt N.H.McMURRICH to Bde at 0915 hrs. Arty harassing of 24th repeated this day. At 1000 hrs R.A.F. carried out bombing of TOLLO. An experimental attempt was made to burn out TOLLO by first dropping oil and then HE. Considerable smoke was observed but no idea of results from our forward units. Lt-col I.S.JOHNSTON, DSO, and Lt N.H.McMURRICH returned at 1200 hrs. There had been no heavy shelling during morning. At 1300 hrs quite a heavy concentration was put down in the Bn HQ area and the area of the bridge on the rd between Bn HQ and V.GRANDE. Lt-col I.S.JOHNSTON, DSO, called a coy comds meeting for 1330 hrs and discussed the following topics:- (1) Change in Offrs personnel - Major D.A. MacKENZIE commenced duties as 2nd in command as of 25 Jan 44; Major I.S.WALLACE to be O.C. Sp Coy upon Lt-col I.S.JOHNSTON's return from leave which he started at 1530 hrs 25 Jan 44; Capt J.A.WILSON O.C. "B" Coy wef 25 Jan 44, Capt J.S.MACFARLANE to remain for one week then to be O.C. HQ Coy; Capt G.W.BEAL at this time 2nd in command of "A" Coy. (2) Resume was given by Lt-col I.S.JOHNSTON of 5th Army situation. Points - 5th Corps relieved by 1 Cdn Corps consisting of 1 Cdn Inf Div, 5th Cdn Div and 8th Indian Div. - 1 Cdn Div axis main coast road to PESCARA. (2) Casualties - next of kin are not to be written any personal letters until at least two weeks after casualty occurs. C.O. on a few days leave at 1530 hrs. Casualties - 2 OR wounded. Weather - still clear and quite warm.

26 JANUARY 1944

Patrols during night N.T.R. Shelling during night comparatively light. At approx 0400 the MMG's changed their posns in order to gain a better field of fire on the high ground EAST of our "C" Coy area. In the morning the Brigadier phoned ordering us to put on a raid for a prisoner in the NORTH OF STOAT area. Plans were made as follows - raiding party 20 men from "C" Coy. Recce at 1700 hrs. Arty sp from 1710 to 1740 in the form of a conc and two stonk 4.2 M's also in sp to provide harassing for three quarters of an hour from 1700 hrs. Result of raid - one casualty, no prisoners. The ambush patrol in the area NORTH of ASTER was repeated, out 1800 hrs in 0100 N.T.R. Shelling during night was intermittent but light. More rain at night made considerable mud and added to the general discomfort of all. Casualties - 4 OR's wounded. Weather - Some rain, overcast, clear at noon.

27 JANUARY 1944

At 0930 hrs Major D.A. MacKENZIE to R.W.K. Regt on our left to discuss patrols, etc. Personnel waiting for transport to baths were to be recalled from RV in rear of V.GRANDE, mobile bath out of order, but runner from here unable to contact them, These men back to coys by last light, all ok. Not much shelling until noon when the OP, "B" coy and Bn HQ areas received considerable mortar, no casualties. Patrol activities were as follows:- (1) Standing patrol at STOAT area provided by "A" Coy. (2) 2 man recce to ASTER area for info re tank routes out last light back this HQ 0100 hrs - encountered no enemy but brought back certain info re tank routes. (3) 4 man patrol to APPLE BLOSSOM for info re enemy strength and disposition in that area - out last light, back 0100 - report hearing enemy movement, could not give strength. During night viz 0400 hrs patrol at STOAT, "A" Coy personnel, engaged by enemy force estimated at 15-20 men. Fire fight for 15 mins, enemy repelled, casualties - own 1 wounded, 1 missing, enemy casualties not known. Casualties - 4 OR'S wounded. Weather - clear and moderate temperature, no rain during day.

28 JANUARY 1944

Shelling negligible. Lt-col I.S.JOHNSTON, DSO, still on leave. Major D.A. MacKENZIE acting C.O. There was a discussion during the morning re patrols of previous night and of this night's intentions. There has been considerable difficulty in tying in information brought back by patrols with what can be seen on mosaic air photo. With respect to these and other problems of 'patrol personnel' it was decided to have Major I.S.WALLACE carry out brief training periods back at Main HQ with definite planned patrols for the ground to our immediate front. At 0900 hrs personnel for Dental Clinic and 48 hr leave were transported from this HQ. At 1000 personnel for baths Rv'd at rear of V.GRANDE. Major J.R.O.COUNSELL went back for bath, returned approx 1800 hrs. Major MacKENZIE to Bde at 1330 hrs to discuss future plans with Brigadier, back at 1600 hrs. Patrols near ASTER and STOAT observed considerable enemy activity to our front, due to the comparative strengths of our forces to his, Arty was called down on him rather than have a small arms exchange. No casualties were suffered. We had heavy mortar and shelling in the early hours of the morning with one casualty from "D" Coy. Capt F.F McEACHREN s.o.s. to 1 Cdn Inf Bde as A & Q learner. Lt Blair S. EBY,MC, to be Adjutant and Captain vice Capt F.F. McEACHREN. Casualties - 1 OR wounded and 1 OR missing presumed POW. Weather - clear and warm.

29 JANUARY 1944

Lt-Col I.S.JOHNSTON, DSO, still on leave. During last night there was considerable mortaring of our positions, concentrations were heaviest from 0400 to 0500 hrs. Bde called to warn us of 'O' gp at 1600 hrs, also to have our pioneers stand by for sweeping duties to-night. We were given notice that a propaganda broadcast over P.A. would be done in our area by Bde, this was later cancelled in view of pending ops. Major I.S. WALLACE back to Main HQ to take over duties of O.C. Sp Coy. No H.S. up till noon. After lunch at approx 1430 hrs several rounds of 'heavy arty' were brought down on the road to V.GRANDE and the V.GRANDE area itself. Major D.A. MacKENZIE and Lt N.H.McMURRICH to Bde at 1500. Before this at 1300 Col KENNEDY of the H & PER forward here for recce. Quite active patrol plans were made for to-night. They were in brief - three - 3 man listening 'patrols' and a 15 man raid with flash protection to try for a POW. No prisoners were obtained, some good information by the listening (patrols'. One casualty was suffered by the raiding patrol, listed as missing. The Pioneer pl under Lt D.M.DICKIE came forward and did an excellent sweeping job on the rd between this HQ and ASTER. One man was killed in "B" Coy he was acting as flank protection for sweepers and stumbled on a booby-trap. Casualties 2 OR's wounded, 1 OR killed. Weather - sunny and warm.

30 JANUARY 1944

Lt-col I.S.JOHNSTON, DSO, still on leave. After 'O' gp yesterday 'O' gp called here for 0900 hrs. O's. C. "A", "B", "C", "D", HQ and Sp coys, 3" mortar Officer, Signal Officer, Intelligence Officer and F.O.O, were present. Major D.A.MACKENZIE outlined the following - At 1600 (Z) H & PER to attack through us and occupy ridge feature known as APPLE BLOSSOM. This attack known as Phase I. Our role for Phase I to lend all possible co-op to H & PER and shift forward coys clear of arty barrages. Also we were to provide left flank reserve fire with our attached MMG. In sp of Phase I a squadron of tanks moved into this area at 2230 last night. Dependent on the success of Phase I and recce by the H & PER to the ASPIDISTRA area the 48th would perform Phase II, viz to occupy this latter area. Col JONES, RCA, and Col KENNEDY, H & PER forward to this HQ and thence to OP before move to co-ordinate arty. Several arty and a/tk forward in preparation. Attack starts as per plan but H & PER met stiff resistance from well sited MMG and mortar. Objectives were not gained and the H & PER suffered 60% casualties on the left flank. Shortly after zero our "D" Coy which had moved its position, to allow H & PER to occupy former right forward position, suffered 6 casualties from mortar. The other two coys also cahnged positions, viz "A" and

"C" but suffered no casualties. Brigadier phoned during night to ask Bn to take up defensive positions again, this meant the moving of "C" Coy to its former position by first light. During the action "B" Coy withstood very heavy mortar and sent out several cases of 'exhaustion'. News came in at 2200 that Lt-col JOHNSTON, DSO was back at Main HQ. Plans for Phase II temporarily halted and all here await arrival of Lt-col I.S.JOHNSTON, DSO, in the morning with news of our next step. H.S. during remainder of night negligible. As part of our co-operative work our RAP assisted in the evacuation of casualties which made considerable activity around this HQ until the early hours. Major I.S.WALLACE came forward at 1600 hrs to assist Major MacKENZIE. Casualties - 1 OR killed, 2 OR's wounded and 1 OR missing. Weather - clear and sunny.

31 JANUARY 1944

Very little activity here in morning. At 1430 hrs the H & PER attempted a second time to take the ground at 278145 and failed. They had good tank co-operation from 14 CAR but found that the positions were almost untenable owing to extremely heavy mortar fire. Major D.A.MacKENZIE listened in on the H & PER 18 set frequency and heard Col KENNEDY give orders to withdraw. Shortly after 1600 the Brigadier phoned Lt-col I.S.JOHNSTON, DSO, to inform him that the 48th would retire into the Bde reserve area to allow the H & PER to occupy our present positions. Lt-col JOHNSTON, DSO, gave warning of this and then proceeded to Bde to obtain details. All coys and Bn HQ and RAP were later ordered to be clear of the area by 2100 as tank recovery vehicles were to move forward at that time. 3 PI was left in sp of H & PER. Sask LI to move out at their convenience. By 2230 hrs coys were in positions as follows:- "A" Coy - 318147, "B" Coy - 309139, "C" Coy - 309152, "D" Coy 311163, Tac HQ – 313134. There was little else to record except that the move was executed with very little trouble and a good indication of our Bn organization was given. Casualties - 1 OR wounded. Weather - clear and sunny.

signed

Ian S. Johnston

*(I.S.JOHNSTON) Lt-col,
Commanding Officer,
48th Highlanders of Canada.*

1 FEBRUARY 1944

Place: 312147

Coys spent the day tidying their areas and preparing for Lt-col I.S.JOHNSTON, DSO inspection 2nd and 3rd of Feb 44. In the morning Lt-col I.S.JOHNSTON, DSO, went out with Capt J.S. MACFARLANE, O.C. HQ coy, Lt J.R. PEARSON, Signal Officer, CSM Gunn to recce a Bn HQ position within the Bde reserve area. Lt-col I.S.JOHNSTON, DSO, returned to Main HQ for lunch and after lunch visited the Brigadier. At 1530 hrs he brought news back that Main HQ would move from its present location to Bde reserve area. The H & PER to occupy our former position and thus make the change over complete. Major I.S.WALLACE, O.C. Sp coy, made plans to move his coy also. Arrangements were made for approx 15 of our personnel to attend a moving picture in ORTONA each day. Capt G.W.BEAL on leave. No shelling in Bn areas this night. Weather - clear and sunny.

2 FEBRUARY 1944

The Bn moved its Main HQ to new area and by noon all sub-units were in position. Bn HQ at 312147, Sp coy 320137. In the morning "B" coy was inspected and given a talk by Lt-col I.S.JOHNSTON, DSO, after which "C" coy given their inspection. The Adjutant, Capt Blair S. EBY, MC, and the Paymaster Capt L.A. PATTERSON, accompanied Lt-col I.S.JOHNSTON, DSO, so that each coy had its men paid, Commanding Officer's Orders and general inspection. During the morning and afternoon the I.O., Lt N.H.McMURRICH was active getting our areas clear of Italian civilians. 3-ton trucks were laid on by tpt to carry

civilians and the personal effects to AMOT at ORTONA. There was no H.S. in our areas this night. 17 OR reinforcements arrived to-day. Weather - clear and sunny.

3 FEBRUARY 1944

Last night still no H.S. in any of our areas. One contact patrol to H & PER 2300 hrs. During the morning "D" coy was inspected. Lt-col I.S.JOHNSTON, DSO, learned from Major J.R.O.COUNSELL that from certain positions in his area he was under direct observation. It was decided to make certain alterations for defence of the area to tie in with left flank of 2 Cdn Inf Bde. The Brigadier called in at A Mess and spent some time with Major D.A. MacKENZIE. In the afternoon "A" coy had their inspection, etc. "B" coy announced their intention to fire PIAT at a derelict tank in B coy area. Bde gave permission to carry out this firing. Capt G.W.BEAL reported back from 48 hrs leave and proceeded to "A" coy as 2nd in command. During the night at approx 0330 hrs the enemy put some 2 dozen shells quite close to our Bn HQ area, it sounded like an 88mm or some high velocity weapon. Some rounds also fell in the "A" coy positions. No casualties. Weather - still clear and warm.

4 FEBRUARY 1944

At 1000 hrs Sp coy were given their inspection. Major I.S.WALLACE supplied a piper for the occasion. During the morning the SASK LI Officer called in at A Mess to explain location of his Bn HQ. Also an L.O. from Bde gave warning of a move for us to positions in rear. A bn comds conference was called for 1400 hrs at Bde. We gained the following information: 3 Cdn Inf Bde to relieve 1 Cdn Inf Bde. 48th to be relieved by R 22 R on the 8 Feb 44. On or about 17 Feb 44 1 Cdn Inf Bde to relieve 2 Cdn Inf Bde. 2 Cdn Inf Bde may then relieve 1 Cdn Inf Bde or 3 Cdn Inf Bde as conditions decide. Lt-col I.S.JOHNSTON, DSO, back at Main HQ 1600 hrs called coy comds conference for 1000 hrs 5 Feb 44. Contact patrol from 4 pl to H & PER 2300 hrs, NTR. No H.S. during night in our areas, some rain fell. 18 OR reinforcements tos. Weather - cloudy and cool.

5 FEBRUARY 1944

Move to old H & PER area completed by first light. Mud very bad and many vehicles stuck. Main HQ moved up to Bn. Coy Comds meeting to discuss relief of 1st Bde by 3rd Bde. 48th by R22R who are in S.APPOLLINARA in reportedly good billets which cheered everyone up. C.O.'s orderly Room held. 29 OR reinforcements tos. Weather - fair and cool.

6 FEBRUARY 1944

Church Parades for "A" and "B" coys in the AM and "C" and "D" coys in the PM had to be cancelled on account of the rain. Bn still resting and men getting used to being out of slit trenches. Some excitement when proposed relief of 1st Bde was postponed indefinitely. Weather - rainy and cool.

7 FEBRUARY 1944

L.O. arrived from Bde to give details of delay in relief. It seems that an all-Canadian front is to be formed, so the 3rd Bde will hold the left flank relieving 8th Indians until the 11th Bde can take over from them, after which the 3rd Bde will relieve 1st Bde. Probably 3 or 4 days delay. GSO 1 at Div, Lt-col Malim HARDING paid us a visit to see positions. Quiet day with Bn HQ personnel off to see a movie in the PM. Weather - rainy and cool, some snow and sleet.

8 FEBRUARY 1944

Nothing happened all day. Troops doing best to keep dry and warm. Capt J.S. MACFARLANE sos to 1 Cdn Inf Bde. Weather - rainy and cold.

9 FEBRUARY 1944

Bad news - move to new area on foot. New area recce'd by Major D.A.MaCKENZIE who reported it was punk, hard to get at and full of Italian civilians, however, as it rained and

snowed all day he was probably prejudiced. Anything looks bad in this weather. Quite a few trucks stuck in the mud in the area, we will have to have a scammell up to haul them out for the move tomorrow. Everyone is feeling low on account of the weather. 3 OR reinforcements tos. Lt R.W.JOHNSTON returns from 1 Cdn Inf Bde. Weather - rainy and cold.

10 FEBRUARY 1944

Snowed during night and everything in sight is flooded, as the sun soon thawed the snow. Plans for move were as follows:- A, F and B echelons to move from DUNDEE crossroads at 1400 hrs. Marching troops to embus at same place at 1700 hrs. Original plan called for a stage overnight at FOSSACESIA but Lt-col I.S.JOHNSTON, DSO, decided it would be better to have troops march direct to new area from ROCCA and have everyone under cover the same night. This was undoubtedly a sound idea, the only flaw being that all the Bn HQ and HQ Coy vehicles were fast in the mud. With the combined aid of two scammells they were eventually pried loose by 1700 hrs too late for the 1400 hr convoy but in time to join the rifle coy convoy. When the troops debussed and marched to their area Capt Blair S.EBY, MC, was left in charge of Bn HQ and HQ coy vehicles and to bring them in, in the AM. This because the road from ROCCA was in too bad shape to try in the dark. A night in the open was quite a shock to Bn HQ personnel but they came through with flying colours. Lt D.M.DICKIE sos to 1 Cdn Div. Weather - bright and cool.

11 FEBRUARY 1944

First day in new area - a sea of mud - troops busy pushing and pulling vehicles and fixing roads. Capt H.K. MACINTOSH warned for Staff College, to leave 12 Feb and fly to UK. 8 OR reinforcements tos. Weather - rainy and cold.

12 FEBRUARY 1944

Working parties from all coys out on roads doing very necessary repairs. Roads so bad no vehicles can move without Bde authority. Bn getting acquainted with one another. A Mess had a house warming, guests to bring own vino, big success, many Officers had never met before and all were pleased to see their opposite numbers in other companies. Capt W.P.RICHARDSON sos to 5 Cdn Armoured Div. Weather - rainy and cold.

13 FEBRUARY 1944

Church Parade cancelled, H/Capt S.B.EAST, the Padre, visited coys instead and held voluntary Services. Lt-gen H.D.CRERAR visited Bn HQ in the AM and chatted with Lt-col I.S.JOHNSTON, DSO, re training, etc. Quiet day for all ranks. Roads drying up. Lt M.E.GEORGE appointed A/Capt wef to-day. 43 OR reinforcements tos. Weather - windy and cold.

14 FEBRUARY 1944

Road working parties as usual. Movies laid on in S.VITO for 180 OR's. Lt-col I.S.JOHNSTON, DSO, off to Corps Comds meeting at LANCIANO. Courts Martial held at Bn HQ all day. Coy Comds meeting and dinner with the following present:- Lt-col I.S.JOHNSTON, DSO; Major D.A. MacKENZIE; Major I.S.WALLACE; Major E.C.RAWLINGS; Capt J.A.WILSON; Capt G.W.BEAL; Capt L.G. SMITH; Capt Blair S.EBY, MC. Lt-col I.S.JOHNSTON, DSO, gave a description of the Corps Commander's conference, which he attended that morning. Weather - fair and cool.

15 FEBRUARY 1944

Bn doing a bit of training in a sea of mud. Some men away to shows at S. VITO. Courts Martial held here again to-day. 4 OR reinforcements tos. Weather - rainy and cold.

16 FEBRUARY 1944

A & Q conference at Bde attended by the 2 i/c, Major D.A. MACKENZIE, and the Adjt, Capt Blair S.EBY, MC, nothing new brought up. Lt-col I.S.JOHNSTON, DSO, to Bde as acting Brigadier while Brig SPRY away on seven days leave. Capt E.M.CHILDS, Lt T.R.D.DAILLEY and Lt H.M.COX tos to-day. Weather - rainy and cold. High winds have prevailed all week and the weather is really miserable.

17 FEBRUARY 1944

Nothing going on in Bn to write about. Weather - rainy and cold.

18 FEBRUARY 1944

Officers Day held, all officers attended. Lectures by Lt J.R. PEARSON the Signal Officer, Lt-col I.S. JOHNSTON, DSO, Arty F.O.O. Capt HARRINGTON, Major J.R.O.COUNSELL, Major E.C. RAWLINGS, and Capt J.A.WILSON, also I.O. from Div. See Appendix for schedule. 6 OR reinforcements tos. Weather - rainy and cold, windy.

19 FEBRUARY 1944

Preparations for Regimental Dinner going full blast, it should be a good party. Bn warned to move to area GUGLIONESI, near TERMOLI, for boat training, to move 21 Feb. S cat party composed of one officer from each coy to leave Sunday, 20 Feb. Regimental Dinner held at A Mess, among the guests were Brig E.W.HALDENBY, Lt-col BEVERLY MATTHEWS, Major N.L.C.MATHER the BM, Major L.A. RENNISON, Capts D.B. DEEKS, CAMPBELL, H.CASSELS, H.A. PROCTOR, W.J.LEADBEATER, W.P.RICHARDSON, Lt D.M.DICKIE and all Unit Officers. Capt Hector MITCHELL from Div Pay Office also turned up. A great time was had by all, due to some great staff work by the P.M.C. Maior D.A. MacKENZIE and some grand scrounging by the newly appointed Mess Corporal J.R.Garvie. There was plenty of whiskey and a lot of powerful cocktails. All concerned voted it the most successful dinner held by the Bn. It was a treat and a revelation to most of us to see Officers show up whom we had not seen for ages. Brig E.W.HALDENBY gave a most amusing speech and so did Lt-col I.S.JOHNSTON, DSO. The rest of the evening was given over to fighting old battles and planning new ones. 15 OR reinforcements tos. Weather - rainy and cold with snow in spots.

20 FEBRUARY 1944

Everyone considerably hung over. Scat party away to new area. Lt-col I.S.JOHNSTON, DSO, back to command from Bde. Weather - dull, cloudy rainy and cold.

21 FEBRUARY 1944

Bn moved off at 0745 hrs and crossed the Start Line at ROCCA right on the nose. Due to very good staff work and provost control, the convoy was excellent. The Bn arrived at GUGLIONESI at 1300 hrs, 2 hrs ahead of schedule. It is a nice little town away up on a hilltop. All ranks in good billets although a trifle cold. Weather - snowing and raining.

22 FEBRUARY 1944

All officers to lecture to discuss boat training for river crossing. We will practice on the BIFERNO in company with Engineers and A/Tk gunners. Weather - lovely day, first sunshine for weeks.

23 FEBRUARY 1944

Place: GUGLIONESI
ITALY

Training on river as usual. Brig McCARTER,BGS, and Brig CONNELLY, C.E. GONWAY, GRE, to call on Lt-col I.S.JOHNSTON, DSO, view training. Weather - sunny and cool.

24 FEBRUARY 1944

Training continues. River quite fast but men getting on to boat handling very well. Movies are shown 3 times daily and all ranks have a chance to see them. Platoon exercises at night for "A" and "B" coys. Weather - cool and damp.

25 FEBRUARY 1944

Training as usual. Corps Commander, Lt-gen CRERAR visits to see training, well pleased with it. Capt J.S. MACFARLANE arrives from Bde with movement orders for return trip, to ORTONA. He said the Brig had noticed our convoy on the move down and said that it was the best he had ever seen. Platoon exercises at night for "C" and "D" coys. Lt-col I.S. JOHNSTON, DSO, and Major D.A. MacKENZIE to dinner at Sp Coy which was a very festive affair. Weather - cool and damp.

26 FEBRUARY 1944

Lt-col I.S. JOHNSTON, DSO, and recce party off to new area. Coy exercises to close training here. Weather - clear and bright.

27 FEBRUARY 1944

Move at 0800 hrs to ORTONA to relieve PPCLI. Arrive ORTONA at 1430 hrs and settle in overnight. Coys to move out of town to relieve PPCLI in reserve Bn area at 0700 following morning. Weather - dull and cloudy, warmer.

28 FEBRUARY 1944

During the night 27th elements of Sp coy moved into forward positions N of ORTONA at MR321187, ITALY 1/50,000 Sheet 141-II. The rifle coys and Tac HQ moved forward this morning and completed relief of PPCLI. The references of our sub unit dispositions were as follows:- Tac HQ 319183; "A" coy 317176; "B" coy 321181; "C" coy 319184; "D" coy 318181; A/Tk and 3" mor 321187. Lt-col I.S. JOHNSTON, DSO, visited coy areas during the afternoon. At 1800 hrs Lt GILCHRIST the Arty F.O.O. arrived on attachment to Tac HQ with a party of four, incl himself. Weather - fair and moderate.

29 FEBRUARY 1944

The Brigadier and Bde. I.O. arrived at 1000 hrs at Tac H.Q. Lt-col. Johnston and the 2 i/c, Major Mackenzie, remained at H.Q. during the morning. Seven day leave personnel were sent out from "C" Coy at 1130 hrs. During the afternoon the Arty fired a deception shoot from 1600 hrs to 1630 hrs, no retaliation of any extent was made. Lt-col. Johnston visited the R.C.A. positions during the afternoon. At 1830 hrs a Coy Comdrs. conference was held at Tac H.Q. The following information was given: (1) Bns. of 1 C.I.B. to occupy positions for five day 'stands'. This Bn to relieve the R.C.R's the night of 4th and 5th Mar 44; to be relieved by H.P.E. the night of 14th and 15th Mar 44. (2) Training and general maintenance of the area to be carried out while in the reserve position. (3) Tactical role in reserve to amount to thickening of defenses and a counter attack defence role to be discussed later. (4) A new Counter Mortar plan was outlined and discussed. This to go into effect immediately. Equipment and arms were discussed and certain changes made in the amount of ammo. Amount, numbers and types of weapons to be carried by various elements of this Unit in battle. The Bn supplied two contact patrols to the two forward Bns. , these were carried out satisfactorily. We had a quiet night in our areas. Weather - Cloudy, some what cooler.

Signed

Ian S. Johnston

(I.S. JOHNSTON) Lt-col,

Commanding Officer,

48th Highlanders of Canada,

1 MARCH 1944

At 0930 hrs Lt-col I.S.JOHNSTON, DSO, ED, the Commanding Officer, set out with rifle coy Comds to view ground from RCR OP, he returned at 1200 hrs. Major D.A. MacKENZIE, the 2nd in Command, away during the day, he attended an A & Q conference at Rear Headquarters, 1 Cdn Inf Bde. "A" Coy attended a show in ORTONA. "D" Coy had a bath parade. During the afternoon the C.O. together with Capt L. SMITH recce'd the 'MORNING GLORY' ground with a view to an Officer's trg day to be held on 3 Mar 44 "B" Coy supplied the Bn HQ guard for 2 Mar 44. Patrol duties were two contacts, one to RCR and one to H & PER HQ. Both patrols successful and a quiet night. Casualties - 1 OR wounded. Weather - cool and overcast.

2 MARCH 1944

At 1000 hrs C.O. and Lt. N.H.McMURRICH, the I.O., attended a conference at 1 Cdn Inf Bde on counter attack schemes for the Bde area. Later in the morning the C.O. proceeded to Main HQ for an early lunch then attended a Decoration Parade. At 1400 hrs Major D.A.MacKENZIE visited the RCR where he had a look at enemy ground to our front from one of their OP's. There was some intermittent shelling of the fwd areas and a few rds to the immediate bn area between 1400 and 1600 hrs but nothing which did any damage. Patrols for the night were as usual, contacts to H & PER and RCR HQ's. Lt D.M.DUNCAN and 1 NCO from 4 pl proceeded to RCR to join patrols from there in order to gain familiarity with ground and general patrolling factors. A weapons inspection was carried out for "C" and "D" Coys by the Armourer Sjt, who found the general condition of weapons good. There was a quiet night with patrols making the usual contacts. At 1600 hrs a doz shells were dropped in ORTONA causing one casualty (not fatal) and some damage to two or three of our vehicles. Capt W.M. BYERS, the Medical Officer, returned to Bn from course at 1700 hrs.

3 MARCH 1944

All Officers of Bn, except I.O. at TAC HQ and Capt Blair S.EBY, MC, the Adjutant, at Main HQ, attended Officers' trg day. The C.O. conducted the trg programme which included a walk over the 'MORNING GLORY' route with an explanation and criticism of tactics used in the actual operation and a general discussion on inf and sp arms. During the afternoon Officers assembled for discussion. Weapons of "A" and "B" coys were inspected by the Armourer Sjt. Lt D.M.DUNCAN who was out on a standing patrol with RCR, reported that he was familiar with the route and general topography for future patrols. Major F.G.MCLAREN returned to Unit to-day. Weather - bright and warmer.

4 MARCH 1944

Last night an 'O' gp was held at TAC HQ, of two main topics discussed first was admn; Major D.A.MacKENZIE outlined and classified certain points which were settled at A & Q conference he attended the previous day. Second topic - the relief of the RCR by our Bn on the night of 4 Mar 44. The C.O. gave tentative plans and promised details later after liaison with C.O. of RCR. This morning C.O. issued instructions to all coys for reliefs. Sp Coy weapons and personnel were to change over during daylight with all rifle coys except "A" making the change after dark. Coys were to make their own recce and supply guides for the night move. Later in the morning, during C.O.'s, orders, Major-gen BURNS, Acting Corps Comd, and Major-gen VOKES, 1 Cdn Div Comd, walked from 1 Cdn Inf Bde TAC HQ and visited 48 Highrs TAC HQ. The Bn reported the relief complete at the following times - TAC HQ 1830 hrs; "A" Coy 1735 hrs; "B" Coy 2010 hrs; "D" Coy 2050 hrs; "C" Coy 2150 hrs. Patrol duties for this night were done by RCR with the exception of one contact to H & PER supplied by "A" Coy 48 Highrs. We are now rt fwd bn of the Bde. Our role tactically is to supply patrols and to man OP's and listening posts. Certain portions of our area are under direct observation by enemy and smoke and movement discipline are to be rigidly enforced.

MR of our positions are as follows Ref ARIELI 1/25,000 - TAC HQ 316185: "A" Coy 316188; "B" Coy 308183; "C" Coy 311192; "D" Coy 311186. A quiet night our areas. Lt E.C. BENSON sos sick. Weather - still fair and warm.

5 MARCH 1944

We had a quiet night in the Bn area. During the morning coys were busy cleaning up areas and 'settling in'. The C.O. made calls to the coys during the morning. Three standing patrols were laid on by the C.O. from which recce's were to be sent out to gain information for future patrol activities. The three patrols had the following dispositions - UNION 305195 supplied by "C" Coy; WASHINGTON 306175 supplied by "D" Coy; CHARLESTON 307183 supplied by "A" Coy. All patrols were carried out and good recce's were made. A patrol conference was held at 1330 hrs where typed sheets were given to coy reps; these outlined the above three patrols, giving indication that while in this area these would be carried out each night with modifications. During the day Comds of Sp Arms, viz, Sask LI, 2nd Fd Regt, Medium Arty and 4.2 mortars visited TAC HQ and tied in plans for targets and close support. Weather - cooler and overcast.

6 MARCH 1944

Again last night a quiet night in our Bn area. At 1030 L.O. arrived from Bde with patrol instructions for this night. During the morning the Fd Arty Rep, Major FULLERTON, reported in to this HQ also a rep from the Hy AA Bty. At 1330 hrs a aptrol conference was held with coy reps present. The patrol intentions were as follows:- UNION 3 man L.P. last light to first light; WASHINGTON fighting patrol one pl strong to obtain POW NORTH of 306175; CHARLESTON normal. The WASHINGTON patrol was given arty sp by 2nd Fd Regt but were unable to make use of it owing to necessary diversion in route. No POW was obtained but useful info was brought back by LT. 'Jock' MAYNE, i/c patrol, and casualties were nil. Personnel of Sp coy were brought forward during day to act as local protection for TAC HQ and to supply guard requirements. Reinforcements arrived for coys; it was necessary to hold them for "C" Coy until after last light as enemy observation denied approach to this area by day. Weather - cold and wet.

7 MARCH 1944

The C.O. visited "C" Coy during the morning. I.O. away to ORTONA during morning. Patrol instructions were received at 1 Cdn Inf Bde by I.O. and brought forward before noon. The afternoon was chiefly spent in plans for patrol activities this night. CHARLESTON, UNION and WASHINGTON were normal. Two other fighting patrols were sent out, one to ground forward of "D" Coy to houses near lateral rd to our front another NORTH up the extreme EAST coast going out through "C" Coy. Both of these were five man patrols, one led by Sjt Male of 4 pl the other by Lt 'Dave' DUNCAN. Neither patrol was able to obtain POW and no casualties were inflicted. A two man listening post, a mortar Sjt and an 'I' Sec Spl went out through "C" Coy to vantage point before first light. They took a 38 set and rations with the intention of staying till last light on 8 Mar 44. Major D.W.BANTON returned to Unit to-day from Staff Course. Weather - still cold and wet and very muddy under-foot.

8 MARCH 1944

Last night quiet, RSM Crossley forward this morning to organize guards, ration supply, maintenance of TAC HQ area and general disciplining of fwd HQ personnel. C.O. to RCR TAC HQ for conference with Brigadier. At 1145 hrs a Coy Comds meeting was held at this HQ. The following information was given:- As of 7 Mar 44 1 Cdn Corps and Corps HQ withdrew for training, 5th Corps took over. Eighth Army now has one Corps fwd. 14/15 Mar 44 2 Cdn Inf Bde relieve 11 Cdn Inf Bde. 5th Cdn Arm'd Div remains under comd. 1 Cdn Inf Bde front to be widened to include S. TOMASSO, the responsibility of left fwd bn. These changes necessitated a shift WEST for "D" Coy and "B" Coy. The latter occupied the former right coy posn of the H & PER. Coy Comds made recce's during the afternoon and were in

changed positions by 2400 hrs 8 Mar 44. Capt D.B.DEEKS forward with Major F.G.McLAREN during afternoon. The 2 man all day listening post returned from 'vantage point' on EAST coast NORTH of our left fwd coy. They spent an unpleasant day, observing no movement whatsoever and getting shelled during the late afternoon. Two patrols set out from here last night. The one a sweeping party which cleared a considerable portion of the rd to our front, it was made up of 4 pl, Pioneers, and "A" Coy covering party. The second patrol, a 3 man recce to the mouth of SAVANNA, the second gulley NORTH running across our front. Some misplaced Med Arty hampered success of this patrol but they returned at 0100 hrs intact with no enemy activity reported. Casualties - Lt C.M.MIDDLETON wounded. Weather - Overcast in am, sun in pm.

9 MARCH 1944

Another quiet night but some light mortaring in "C" Coy area early this morning. Major D.A.MackENZIE went back to Main HQ this morning. Before he left Brig D.C.SPRY called at our TAC HQ where he and the C.O. and Major MackENZIE had a chat. At 1030 hrs L.O. from Bde gave us patrol instructions which amounted to one fighting patrol over and above listening posts UNION and WASHINGTON, each of these latter strength 3 men, the former supplied by "C" Coy the latter by "D" Coy. The eight man fighting patrol was supplied by 4 pl. Men in detention were brought forward to supply fatigue party and under RSM Crossley given the job of tidying up the TAC HQ area. After lunch Lt D.M.DUNCAN went back to ORTONA where he briefed the fighting patrol. Major I.S.WALLACE came forward during the afternoon to take Major MackENZIE'S place. Results of the patrol were as follows:- they gained their objective and had two jerries walk in very close to them. The two took fright, went to ground, and Sjt Jackson the patrol leader made the decision to try a jump attack. This was not successful but good information was brought back and no casualties were suffered. Capt A.P. BATES tos. Weather - cloudy rain in the afternoon.

10 MARCH 1944

Quiet night. The C.O. left for Bde for C.O.'s conference at 0930 hrs. At 1000 hrs L.O. from Bde came forward and outlined the Brig's patrol policy. The Brig. wanted a screen of small fighting patrols across the Bde front. Our responsibility to be three patrols to be tied in with those of the RCR with respect to timing and support. At 1100 hrs the C.O. returned and final patrol intentions were settled. We were to send one five man fighting patrol up the EAST coast fwd of "C" Coy, a second up to the WASHINGTON area, and a third (a three man recce) to an area WEST and NORTH of our left fwd coy to investigate the occupation of houses and routes for future patrols. At 1330 hrs Major I.S.WALLACE and the I.O. went to "A" Coy HQ when the EAST coast patrol was briefed by I.O. Later in the afternoon Lt D.M.DUNCAN went to ORTONA to brief the other two patrols. The Padre, Capt S.B.EAST, and the M.O., Capt W.M.BYERS, and Major D.A.MackENZIE visited TAC HQ. Capt E.M.CHILDS relieved of his command of A/Tk PI to understudy Capt W.J.PALMER, the QM. The latter going to 1 Cdn Div very shortly as a Staff Learner. Lt E.G.D. WASHER assumed command of A/Tk PI. Major D.W.BANTON came to TAC HQ for the evening meal and brought interesting news of the senior Officer's School in ENGLAND. The Padre and a pioneer party came forward at 1930 hrs to carry out the removal of 11 Cdn Inf Bde dead from our areas. Weather - cloudy and drizzling rain until late afternoon.

11 MARCH 1944

There was another quiet night from shelling in our area. The patrol up the coast had nothing to report. Patrol to WASHINGTON area observed some movement at a distance but had no opportunity to obtain POW. The recce patrol brought back reports of hearing vehicle movement and activity in area BINGO I. Although we were still unable to obtain a POW we gained valuable information. Plans were laid for one patrol only other than normal listening posts supplied by "C" and "D" Coys. This patrol under command Lt R.W.JOHNSTON, "A" Coy, with a recce element from the 'Scout and Sniper Pl' (4 PI now being strictly a carrier pl)

This patrol saw only two enemy at a great distance and were greatly curtailed by a very bright moon. During the morning Major I.S.WALLACE went to ORTONA. After lunch Capt J.S.MACFARLANE Bde L.O. guided to "A" Coy OP by I.O. Major D.A.MacKENZIE forward at 1500 hrs to discuss admn problems with the C.O. At 1600 hrs one smoke and one HE fell quite close to TAC HQ area - no damage. Weather - clear and sunny.

12 MARCH 1944

At 0730 hrs for a period of half an hour rounds fell in the RCR area and quick shell reports were sent in from "A" Coy OP. Lt J.R. PEARSON, the Signal Officer, away during the day. The Bde L.O. brought patrol instructions forward. The Arty did a deception shoot forward of our F.D.L's during the afternoon laying down some smoke in the gully to our front. Patrols this night were not laid down specifically by Bde. It was decided in addition to normal listening posts WASHINGTON and UNION, to send out a recce group to form a base from which three two-man recces could search localities forward of our B Coy positions. Later in the evening a fighting patrol of Lt D.M.DUNCAN and ten men liaised with the recce at the base. The recce's were unable to contact Jerry. Lt D.M.DUNCAN made a further search of the ground but made no contact. A 'Sweep' party left this HQ at 2030 hrs to sweep track from rd MR315188 to 305188. They returned to TAC HQ at 0030 hrs reporting the job done and no evidence of mines. Capt W.J. PALMER sos to 1 Cdn Div. Weather - cloudy, continual rain after noon.

13 MARCH 1944

A quiet night from shelling. In the morning Lt D.M.DUNCAN left for seven days leave. At 1015 hrs L.O. from Bde came to TAC HQ. He gave us some general information but no patrols laid down. At 1130 hrs C.O. called a Coy Comds' conference to establish the timing and administrative programme for shange over with Hast & PER the following day. Exact details to be given at co-ordination conference the following morning to Coy reps. At. 1330 hrs the Hast & PER I.O. came forward to TAC HQ bringing with him two members of the DAF who were on exchange for purposes of instruction. This party was conducted to 48 Highrs OP at "A" Coy by I.O. At 1830 hrs a party was sent up the main rd to remove and identify Canadian dead who were found by party who swept rd previously. Certain of these were removed and taken to ORTONA for disposal. Last night's system of forming a base from which recces could operate was repeated; personnel were supplied by "A" Coy. They had nothing to report and the fighting patrol did not move forward of the base. Weather - bright and sunny.

14 MARCH 1944

Again no shelling in our areas. At 1150 hrs Coy reps assembled at TAC HQ for timings of relief to take place this night. Timings were as follows:- "A" Coy 1800-1900 hrs, "B" Coy 2130-2230 hrs, "C" Coy 2130-2230 hrs, "D" Coy 2230-2330 hrs. The Mortar pl to change at 1430 hrs and leave amn for incoming unit. A/Tk no change over. TAC HQ personnel at 1730 hrs. Sigs to change from 1330 hrs. Normal standing patrols to be provided by 48 Highrs and double manned from 2400 hrs. All moves went according to plan. "B" Coy had some rds fall in their area at 1730 hrs causing casualites to Sask LI but none to 48 Highrs. By 0100 hrs on 15 Mar 44 HQ and sub-units were in the following locations:- TAC HQ 322182, "A" Coy 317176, "B" Coy 323181, "C" Coy 319185, "D" Coy 319181. With the new Bde policy of moving the reserve bn further back Coys were warned that the above positions would only be occupied while new localities were recce'd. Weather - Overcast and moderate.

15 MARCH 1944

At 0900 hrs the C.O. went out with Major J.R.O.COUNSELL and recce'd new positions for "D" Coy. Major E.C.RAWLINGS made a recce for "C" Coy and the I.O. and RSM Crossley recce'd for TAC HQ. At 1230 hrs Lt-gen C.W.ALFREY and D.C.SPRY, the Brig. came to

TAC HQ. At 1330 hrs the C.O. visited TAC HQ 1 Cdn Inf Bde now in ORTONA to discuss tactical dispositions for the reserve bn. Major D.A.MackENZIE and Lt N.H.McMURRICH, the I.O. made plans to move TAC HQ to former Bde position at 326179. During the afternoon TAC HQ moved leaving the Sigs till further accommodation could be arranged. Contacts were made forward to Hast & PER and WEST to RCR at 2100 and 0100 and 0400 hrs. "B" Coy were ordered to supply the Hast & PER contacts while the Bn was in rest and "D" Coy those to RCR. The RAP changed over with Hast PER RAP during the day and took position at 322182 until decision was reached whether they should be kept forward or moved to ORTONA. Weather - bright and sunny.

16 MARCH 1944

This morning "C" Coy went to ORTONA for bath and show. "C" Coy Comd, Major E.C.RAWLINGS, recce'd billets in ORTONA. "D" Coy moved back to area 316175. Signal Officer moved back to area close to TAC HQ. During the morning C.O. held Orderly Room, the I.O. acted as Adjt in Captain Blair S. EBY's absence. At 1100 hrs the Bde Major, Major L. MATHERS, and Capt J.S.MACFARLANE came to TAC HQ where they had a discussion with the C.O. and Major D.A. MackENZIE. At 1400 hrs the C.O. again visited 1 Cdn Inf Bde TAC HQ to discuss the defensive layout for the reserve bn positions. At 1830 hrs a Coy Comds meeting was held at TAC HQ when the following were brought to the attention of those present:- (1) The general policy for our Bde front was to contain the enemy with the fwd bns holding a wide front and the reserve bn ready to man defensive localities in the event of a counter attack. (2) ORTONA was being prepared defensively to act as a stronghold against counter attack. Major D.W.BANTON is to be Garrison Comd in ORTONA and B ech personnel will man defensive positions in the town. (3) Coys to dig and prepare definite defensive positions which would be occupied by the reserve bn. (4) When fwd, bns to continue 'creeping' towards R.ARIELLI and NOT to become defensive minded. Normal contacts were made this night. Major I.S.WALLACE sos this date. Weather - bright and warm.

17 MARCH 1944

"C" Coy moved into billets in ORTONA during morning. Coy Comds spent the morning making recce of tactical positions. C.O. visited some of these positions and considered the siting of A/Tk guns. Major D.A.MackENZIE remained at TAC HQ to work out the agenda for a study period the following day. I.O. to ORTONA at 1330 hrs to prepare map enlargement of ORTONA and sketches for study period. Lt-col I.S.JOHNSTON, DSO, ED, Lt J.R.PEARSON, and Capt W.M.BYERS, the M.O., attended the first showing of the 'Forage Caps' at the Red Shield Theatre in ORTONA returning to TAC HQ at 2030 hrs. Contacts were made at night with RCR and Hast & PER TAC HQ's. Weather - bright and sunny.

18 MARCH 1944

Contacts were made at 2100, 0100 and 0400 hrs with Hast & PER and RCR TAC HQ. There was no shelling in our areas during the night. At 0845 hrs Major D.A. MackENZIE, Lt N.H.McMURRICH and Lt J.R. PEARSON went to ORTONA. At 0930 hrs Officers of the Regt met for Officers Study Group along with reps from supporting arms. During the morning the group was conducted over the battle course of ORTONA by Major STONE or the Loyal Edmonton Regt and Capt MackENZIE of the Seaforth Highlanders. Lunch was obtained at the MONASTERY INN after which a discussion was held at A Mess Main HQ, Major D.A. MackENZIE was Chairman and a very informative and useful discussion was held on 'street fighting' and the role of supporting arms. The C.O. went to 1 Cdn Inf Bde at 1700 hrs to take over duties as acting Bde Comd during the absence of Brig D.C.SPRY. Lt R.F.GIRDLESTONE and Lt N.A. BALLARD tos. Lt H.R.GRANT and Lt F.F.KNIGHT tos as Training Increment. Weather - bright and sunny.

19 MARCH 1944

Still no H.S. in any of our areas. Coys carried on with the digging and preparing of their positions. At 0845 hrs positions were sited for the protection of reserve bn TAC HQ by I.O. and 'I' Sjt. At 0930 hrs Major D.A. MacKENZIE and Lt N.H.McMURRICH forward to RCR TAC HQ. They visited two of the OP's and Major D.A. MacKENZIE drew up the programme for the relief, night 21/22 Mar 44, with Col RITCHIE, Acting C.O. of the RCR. Lt-col I.S.JOHNSTON, DSO, ED, called at TAC at 1100 hrs. During the afternoon timings and matters of admn were drawn up by Major D.A.MacKENZIE. An Officer and NCO of "B" Coy were sent out with RCR personnel at 1830 hrs to be shown a fwd outpost position which our "B" Coy was to occupy. Also two NCO's from 4 pl accompanied RCR standing patrols to become familiar with routes and dispositions. Major D.A. MACKENZIE, Lt J.R. PEARSON and Capt W.M. BYERS (now at TAC) went to ORTONA to see a show. Normal contacts were made at 2100, 0100 and 0400 hrs. Major J.R.O.COUNSELL confirmed in rank of Major wef 10 Mar 44. Weather - sunny and somewhat cooler.

20 MARCH 1944

At 0930 hrs an 'O' Gp was held at TAC HQ, "A", "B", "C", HQ and Sp Coys were present also S.O., I.O. and M.O. Timings for relief the following night were as follows:- TAC HQ 1900 hrs, "A" Coy 2200 hrs, "B" Coy 1800 hrs., "C" Coy 2030 hrs, "D" Coy, 2100 hrs, Sigs to change over switchboards during the day. The C.O. asked Coy Comds to attend a co-ordinating conference at 0900 hrs 21 Mar 44 at which time admn problems would be discussed. Following this 'O' Gp Major D.A. MacKENZIE and Coy Comds made a recce of ground from RCR OP. During the afternoon Major F.G.MCLAREN came to TAC to act as Battle Adj. In the afternoon Capt L.G. SMITH of HQ Coy made arrangements to supply "B" and "D" Coys by mules. Major G.E.B.RENNISON and Lt D.M.DICKIE came fwd to TAC during the evening. Contacts were made as usual to the Hast & PER and RCR at 2100, 0100 and 0400 hrs. There was a quiet night. Weather - bright and sunny.

21 MARCH 1944

At 0900 hrs a co-ordinating conference for Coy Comds was held at TAC HQ. Admn questions and details for relief this night were settled. At 0930 hrs I.O. and Sjt C.C.Male attended a conference at Bde to discuss plans for a Scout and Sniper school. At 1030 hrs Major D.A. MACKENZIE visited the "B" Coy area to investigate poor routes which presented a difficult supply problem. During the afternoon the Sigs changed over with the RCR. TAC changed over at 1900 hrs and Coy reliefs were reported complete as follows:- "A" Coy 2150 hrs, "B" Coy 1855 hrs, "C" Coy 2020 hrs, "D" Coy 2125 hrs. Patrols in the new area this night were supplied by the RCR and reported in at RCR TAC HQ. Eight men from 4 pl - 3 NCO's and 5 ptes were attached to RCR patrols to become familiar with patrol routes and dispositions of standing patrols and listening posts. There was no considerable shelling of any of our areas. Dispositions of Coys were as follows:- TAC HQ 311174, "A" Coy 300168, "B" Coy 310164, "C" Coy 307174, "D" Coy 299164. Weather - clear and cool.

22 MARCH 1944

At 0900 hrs, Maj. Mackenzie went to visit "D" and "A" Coys. While he was away the L.O. from Bde visited TAC. The Brigadier requested two recce patrols. During the afternoon the patrols were briefed. They rec'd ground on air photos and then visited "C" Coy O.P. to recce ground as much as observation permitted. One to DAISY area forward of our "C" Coy positions another to JOHNNIE north of our "D" and "A" Coy positions. DAISY patrol brought back information of light observed in houses and some coughing. Lieut. DUNCAN who took JOHNNIE did not encounter enemy but rec'd route for future patrol activity. The R.A.P. moved into forward position this morning with its own cookhouse where guards for barrier were to be fed. The Padre came forward to TAC during afternoon and had his evening meal with "C" Coy. NO H.S. our areas during day. Weather - Overcast, some light rain.

23 MARCH 1944

There was not great amount of shelling but some rounds fell in "D" and "A" Coy areas - no casualties or damage occurred. During morning at 1000 hrs L.O. forward. At 1015 hrs Lt. JOHNSTON of "A" Coy observed 4 Germans at REX (293175). By contact with Arty F.O.O. 'sniping' was carried out with 25 pdrs on this position but they were not scared away and appeared later in the day. This enemy position, probably a section post was about 1000 yards from the nearest "A" Coy position. Major MacKENZIE decided to move one of our mortars from reserve position to a site in rear of "A" Coy to fire on REX and other targets on "A" Coy front. This was done and mortar in position by last night. During the morning Maj. MacKENZIE visited "C" Coy and in the afternoon he and S.O. visited "B" Coy. Patrols for the night were as follows: (a) A standing patrol one pl in strength i/c ILt. PENTLAND to position astride TOLLO road at 301177 from first light to last light. (b) A three man recce patrol by "C" Coy to houses forward and right of our positions. (c) A three man recce by "A" Coy to CORNFLOWER (291175). Briefing was carried out during the afternoon and I.O. took "C" Coy patrol leader to O.P. to recce ground. Weather - Still cloudy, some rain in A.M.

24 MARCH 1944

Patrols made no personal contact with JERRY but "C" Coy patrol observed signs of enemy and brought back good information. During the morning L.O. came to TAC patrols were drawn up and Arty support tied in. At 1400 hrs patrols were briefed; I.O. went to "D" Coy in S. TOMASSO to recce ground from O.P. and brief patrol to be supplied by "D" Coy. Maj. MacKENZIE, Padre and Maj. RAWLINGS, visited "A" Coy during afternoon. The Padre remained for the evening meal. At 1830 hrs Lt. CURRELLY ranged on caves observed by both "D" and "A" Coys who confirmed a direct hit. An explosion was heard from the cave following mortar shell and personnel previously observed in cave were believed wounded or killed. Patrols for this night were as follows: (a) Normal standing patrol by "B" Coy. (b) Recce by "C" Coy to some houses to right forward positions. (c) Fighting and recce patrol led by Lt. SNIVELY to JOHNNIE area. Weather - Sunny and cool.

25 MARCH 1944

Shelling during the night still negligible. Our patrols carried out successful recces but made no personal contacts with the enemy. The patrol on the right sector did not reach its objective as it met with M.G. fire some 500 yards from it. Last night Maj. MOLAREN and Lt. J.C. CURRELLY left TAC H.Q. to go for four days on exchange to D.A.F. Officers from this latter to live with our Coys. Capt. Lightstone an L.O. from Div arrived this morning to spend a few days with "A" Coy. Capt. G.W. BEAL met him at TAC and guided him to the Coy; Capt. G.W. BEAL also received patrol instructions. S.O. away to ORTONA for day, returning at 1600 hrs. Bde L.O., Capt. J.M.E. CLARKSON, MC, came forward at 1030 hrs gave no particular patrol instructions from Brigadier. At 1330 hrs Capt. J.A. WILSON, "B" Coy and Capt. A. MACNEIL and Lt. W.M. COLLIER, "D" Coy, came to TAC for briefing for patrols tonight, Patrols were laid on as follows: (a) three man recce by "A" Coy to gully feature right of CORNFLOWER. (b) Standing patrol by "B" Coy to occupy houses on road NORTH of TAC H.Q. (c) Fighting patrol by "D" Coy with two man recce from it to cave on which hit was scored previous night. Vickers, M.M.G., Field Arty and 4.2 Mortars were firing in support from 1830 hrs to 2230 hrs. Our "D" Coy patrol and one by the W.N.S.Regt. both being close to the inter-Bn. boundary it was necessary for Lt. J.H. McMURRICH, the I.O. to visit W.N.S.Regt. TAC at 1830 hrs to discuss routes and covering tasks. Weather - Considerable wind, overcast.

26 MARCH 1944

There was no H.S. in our areas. Our "D" Coy fighting patrol led by Lt. W.M. Collier suffered one casualty, A/Cpl. SHYNKARCHUK, P., who is listed as missing. They ran into extremely heavy M.G. fire and after several very fine efforts were compelled to withdraw. "B" Coy

standing patrol had nothing to report. "A" Coy recce patrol brought back useful information. Arty reps, 4.2 mortar and Lt. J.M.E. CLARKSON, MC, Bde L.O. visited TAC H.Q. during morning. No extra patrols were laid on but standing patrol at 301177 put an ambush group forward of its main positions. At 1400 hrs, Capt. J.C. WILSON, "B" Coy and Maj. E.C. RAWLINGS, "C" Coy Comdrs at TAC H.Q. At 1500 hrs, Lt-col. I.S. JOHNSTON, DSO, ED, visited TAC to learn of our progress and activities. There has been considerable difficulty of late in the 'posting' of Officer personnel and this subject was discussed by Lt-col. JOHNSTON and Maj. D.A. MacKENZIE. An extensive harassing fire programme was laid on with the fd. Arty and the 4.2 mortars. This went according to plan. Lt. N.H. McMURRICH the I.O., and Capt. W.M. BYERS the M.O. left for a 'show' in ORTONA returning to TAC at 2030 hrs. Weather - Clear and cool, some wind during night.

27 MARCH 1944

Dispositions of the Coys are: TAC - 311174, "A" Coy - 300168, "B" Coy - 308165, "C" Coy - 307175, "D" Coy - 299164. There was some slight mortar harassing fire by JERRY in our F.O.L's. Our patrols had nothing of importance to report. At 1100 hrs conference with Col. Stewart JONES, R.C.A. and 4.2 mortar rep was held at TAC. The patrol plans in brief for this night were as follows: (a) An ambush patrol at 29876 to be deployed from "B" Coy normal standing patrol. (b) A fighting patrol to base at 301178 to recce houses forward of this point. At 1300 hrs Maj. E.C. RAWLINGS "C" Coy came in for briefing for patrol (b) above. At 1400 hrs Capt. J.A. WILSON and Lt. H.R. GRANT of "B" Coy came to TAC for briefing for patrol (a) above. Later in the afternoon Maj. D.A. MACKENZIE visited "A" & "D" Coys and contacted TAC H.Q. of W.N.S.Reg. He returned to TAC at 1730 hrs. During the morning, Lt. F.J.M. RIVE and Lt. N.S. HEWETT of the D.A.F. were sent to "D" and "A" Coys to spend the night and see what makes the Infantry tick. Nothing else of importance occurred. Weather - Sunny and cool.

28 MARCH 1944

Dispositions, no change. There was no H.S. during the night. Patrol results were negative. During the morning, Lt-Col. I.S. JOHNSTON, DSO, ED, (Acting Brigadier) visited TAC for more details of previous nights' patrol activity. Later in the morning at 1000 hrs, the L.O. from Bde came forward. At 1100 hrs supporting arms reps attended conference at TAC H.Q. At 1330 the D.A.F. visitors left "A" and "D" Coys, reported in at TAC and returned to Main H.Q. Capt. J.A. WILSON and Maj. E.C. RAWLINGS came in at 1400 hrs for briefing. "B" Coy to supply standing patrol with ambush out in front - last night's having been unsuccessful. "C" Coy to do a fighting patrol to area of houses to 299179 - last night's patrol to this area being unsuccessful. Capt. L.G. SMITH forward at 1500 hrs. At 1530 hrs Lt-col. JOHNSTON forward with proposed plans for raid on CORNFLOWER (292175). Capt. G.W. BEAL at TAC at 1800 hrs for preliminary briefing on CORNFLOWER raid. Lt. McMURRICH, I.O., out to "B" Coy at 1815 hrs and back at 2200 hrs. Weather - Fair and cool.

29 MARCH 1944

Dispositions, no change. No shelling during the night. "B" Coy carried out successful recce. in area 296175. CORNFLOWER raid was organized and drawn up with Arty, M.M.G. and 4.2 support. Raiding party got close to objective but lack of time inability to draw his fire and alleged ambush attempt by enemy necessitated withdrawal. Capt. G.W. BEAL and Lt. W.A. HUNTER of "A" Coy, thoroughly briefed. Lt-col. JOHNSTON forward in afternoon to TAC. I.O. from Div, Capt. T. BURR, came to spend a few days while Lt. McMurrich, I.O. of the 48th Highrs., visited Div. He was familiarized with the local picture and it was arranged for Lt. MCHURRICH to leave the following morning. Capt. BURR, Maj. MacKENZIE and Lt. McMURRICH went to Fd. Arty O.P. at 0230 hrs to watch attack go in. Weather - Fair and quite cool.

30 MARCH 1944

The acting I.O., Capt Burr, took over from Lt. McMURRICH for the day. There was desultory shelling of "D" Coys forward area in the morning, but the rest of the day was peaceful and uninterrupted. The following Officer arrived up as reinforcement: Capt. D.B. DEEKS. The usual standing patrols were laid on, and as well, fighting patrol of 1 and 2 to houses short of DAISY at 298178 leaving at 2400 hrs. This patrol did not make contact with the enemy and due to slowness of recce did not search all the houses. Dispositions, no change. Weather - Sunny and warm.

31 MARCH 1944

Maj-General C. VOKES, DSO, accompanied by Lt. D.M. DICKIE, A.D.C. and Lt-col. I.S. JOHNSTON, DSO, ED, visited H.Q. this morning and discussed the general situation with the T/Commanding Officer, Maj. D.A. MacKENZIE. Following this a conference of Arty and mortar reps including Lt-col. Stewart JONES, laid on D.F. and harassing fire for the night. Maj. MacKENZIE visited "A" and "D" Coys in the afternoon and the Padre, Capt. S.B. EAST, visited TAC H.Q. Dispositions, no change. Weather - Clear and sunny.

signed

DAMackenzie

(D.A.MacKENZIE) Major,

Officer Commanding,

48th Highlanders of Canada

1 APRIL 1944

No chANge in dispositions. Some slight, mortaring of "D" and "A" Coys' areas. The usual visits of Supporting Arm Reps. Only patrol other than normal standing patrol was an ambush patrol by "B" Coy to go out at 0230 hrs and return before first light, objective CANARY (298176), nothing to report. At 1400 hrs Lt-col I.S.JOHNSTON, DSO, ED, returned to Regiment, also the I.O., Lt. N.H.McMURRICH. Capt TUCKER-BURR, Div I.O., left at 1500 hrs to return to Div. Weather - Rain during morning, clear by noon.

2 APRIL 1944

No change in dispositions. Patrol did not gain objective owing to intense moonlight and returned at 0415. Night was reaspnably quiet with some light mortaring of gully in front of "A" and "D" Coys. Padre conducted Church Services in forward areas and had lunch at TAC HQ. ORTONA shelled during morning, Capt L.A.PATTERSON, the Paymaster, wounded, four OR'S wounded. Col STEWART-JONES, RCA with 4.2 and MMG Reps at TAC HQ at 1100 hrs for supporting fire tasks. One fighting patrol by "C" Coy of an Officer and 8 OR's to go to 299179 with 38 set intercomn, task to lie up during day 3 Apr 44 observe enemy and gain POW or identification, return after last light. C.O. visited "C" Coy during afternoon. Lts H.R. GRANT and F.F.KNIGHT sos to X.4 list on completion of tour on Trg Inc. Weather - Clear and cool.

3 APRIL 1944

No change in positions. Only shelling during night was mortar in valley in front of "D" and "A" Coy positions. This is one of his usual DF's and has not caused damage in this area. Patrol which was to have stayed out in no man's land and observe during the day came back at 0415 with good information. Capt BATES, who led the patrol, felt the positions too bare for hiding and unsuitable for observing during daylight. Col STEWART-JONES and 4.2 mortar Rep forward to TAC HQ during morning to tie up supporting and harassing fire tasks. Major D.A.MacKENZIE left TAC HQ at 1400 hrs to have a few days leave. Two ambush patrols were laid on in hopes that he might come to us this night. Lts C.J.SEAGRAM and G.D.HELLIKER arrive for a tour on Trg Inc. Weather - fair and warm.

4 APRIL 1944

No change in dispositions. There was a quiet night and patrols had nothing of importance to report. At 0800 hrs nine rds of his .105 Cm landed in the area of "C" Coy OP, but no damage was done or casualties suffered. During the morning the C.O. held a conference to tie up details of the relief to take place this night by Hast & PER. Some points regarding activity during the week in reserve were discussed. Coy Comds asked to submit sketches of wiring for FDL's. The Adjutant, Capt Blair S. EBY, MC, came forward in the afternoon and the signals exchange was relieved. The 48 Highrs carried out normal patrols only and men from Hast & PER supplied some percentage of these. The relief was completed by 2230 hrs without incident. Locations as follows:- TAC HQ 325179, "A" Coy 320179, "B" Coy 323180, "C" Coy 324172, "D" Coy 320170. Weather - fair and quite warm.

5 APRIL 1944

Place: 325179

C.O. held a Coy Comds meeting at 0930 hrs when the following matters were discussed:- (1) Training in reserve area, route marches to be carried out. (2) Dress steel helmets to be worn in forward areas. (3) Promotions. (4) Decorations and awards. (5) Kit inspection to be held. L.O. forward at 1030 hrs with details of deception scheme to be carried out to create impression of a change over with an English Unit. English operators on 22 set 2000-2400 hrs as part of deception plan. Major D.W. BANTON came to TAC HQ to remain as acting 2 i/c, he arrived at 1930 hrs. Lt R.F.GIRDLESTONE arrived at 1900 hrs to be Duty Officer night 5/6 Apr 14. At 0100 hrs deception scheme was repeated. Otherwise a quiet night. Weather - fair and warm.

6 APRIL 1944

At 0930 hrs Lt-col I.S.JOHNSTON, DSO, ED, held Orderly Room at TAC HQ when he dealt with four Coy cases. Lt N.H.McMURRICH, the I.O., acted as Adj. The I.O. left at 1130 hrs to have lunch at NCO School, S.VITO and at 1330 hrs gave a lecture to Scout and Snipers School on OP's and information. At 1400 hrs C.O. held further Orders at Main HQ. At 1600 hrs C.O. visited Bde HQ. Four shells were dropped in area of our Main HQ, causing six OR casualties, one fatal, at 1650 hrs. I.O. met C.O. at Main HQ at 1700 hrs and they returned to TAC HQ at 1715 hrs. Lt R.D.DAILLEY of "B" Coy came to TAC HQ at 1700 hrs to act as Duty Officer for night 6/7 Apr 44. Weather - sunny and warm.

7 APRIL 1944

There was a quiet night in our areas. At 0930 hrs Lt J.C.CURRELLY was given the task of liaison Officer with the 2/4 Gurkha Regiment detachment. At 1045 hrs six white Officers and four coloured Officers and fifty five OR's arrived at TacHQ and were conducted to "A" Coy area. At 1100 hrs Capt J.M.E. CLARKSON, the I.O. from Bde, came forward to Tac HQ. At 1145 hrs Lt-gen ALFREY, Comd 5 Corps, and Brigadier D.C. SPRY were conducted to "D" Coy area by Lt-col I.S.JOHNSTON, DSO, ED. At 1330 hrs Coy Comds came to Tac HQ for a meeting. OCTU candidates were interviewed. Matters for consideration brought by Major D.W.BANTON from A & Q conference were dealt with. During the evening Major D.A.MACKENZIE returned to Tac HQ to take over the duties of acting C.O. the following day. Lt N.A.BALLARD acted as Duty Officer for the night 7/8 Apr 44. Weather - sunny and warm.

8 APRIL 1944

At 0900 hrs Lt-col I.S.JOHNSTON, DSO, ED, left for a three weeks course at BENEVENTO. Major D.A.MackENZIE took over command. At 0930 hrs Officers of the Regt with the exception of Lt J.C.CURRELLY and Capt Blair S. EBY, MC, attended a lecture held at 1 Cdn Inf Bde HQ and given by Brig D.C.SPRY who spoke on his ten day tour to the ANZIO BEACHHEAD. This lecture which was both interesting and instructive lasted until 1200 hrs. Major D.W.BANTON remained in ORTONA for lunch and proceeded to Tac HQ at 1345 hrs. At 1530 hrs Officers of 2/4 Gurkha Regt came to Tac HQ for information re maps

and general topography of Bde area. Some of this information was supplied by Lt N.H.McMURRICH, the I.O. Major D.A.MacKENZIE and Major D.W.BANTON went to ORTONA returning at 1715 hrs. At 1745 hrs Major D.A.MacKENZIE and Lt J.C.CURRELLY attended movies in ORTONA, they returned at 2015 hrs. No Duty Officer was sent to Tac HQ this night. Weather - fair and warm.

9 APRIL 1944

There was a quiet night in our areas but a few rds were dropped in ORTONA; No casualties to our Bn. The Padre, Capt S.B.EAST, held Easter Services in the Coy areas during the morning at "A", "B" and "D" Coys. Tac HQ personnel joined in Service at "B" Coy. At 1100 hrs an L.O. from Bde came to Tac HQ. 'I' Section completed the locating of weapon slits in Coy localities. Major G.E.B. RENNISON, Acting G 1 at 1 Cdn Div visited Tac HQ at 1400 hrs. Nothing further of importance during day. Major J.C.CLARKE tos to-day. Weather - cloudy and mild, sun by noon.

10 APRIL 1944

Coy Comds were asked to submit wiring proposals during the morning for I.O. to set up master diagram of proposed wiring of Res Bn area. At 1000 hrs Lt-col J.W.RITCHIE of the RCRs came to discuss timings for relief by us the following night. Major D.A.MacKENZIE held Orderly Room at Tac HQ and later went to Bde for Brigadier's conference, he returned to Tac HQ at 1730 hrs. Capt L.G. SMITH paid a visit to Tac HQ during the evening. Nothing of importance occurred during the remainder of the day. Weather - sunny at first becoming unsettled, rain during the night.

11 APRIL 1944

Quiet night in our areas. At 0930 hrs an 'O' Group was held by Major D.A.MacKENZIE. The acting 2 i/c, Major D.W. BANTON, "A", "B", "C", "D", HQ and Sp Coy Comds, the Q.M.. Mortar Officer, Senior Signal Sjt and I.O. were present. Intention given to relieve RCR night 11/12 Apr 44 in right forward position. Timings, ops and Admn were outlined. Brig D.C.SPRY called at Tac HQ at 1030 hrs. During afternoon Sigs changed over. From 1500 to 1530 hrs there was considerable shelling in "D" Coy area and bend in rd at 324177. No casualties were suffered. At 1800 hrs Tac HQ changed over. Coys reported in new positions as follows:- "A" Coy 321183 at 1815 hrs, "B" Coy 308178 at 2100 hrs, "C" Coy 311191 at 2240 hrs, "D" Coy 312186 at 2130 hrs, Tac HQ 321184 at 1820 hrs. Command changed at 2245 hrs. RCR took over patrols for the night. Weather - sunny and warm, good visibility.

12 APRIL 1944

Night comparatively quiet. The first day in new area, Coys spent most of the day settling in, improving defensive positions, camouflaging, and becoming adapted to life under canvas again. There was some light mortaring of fwd areas but no damage or casualties suffered. During the morning L.O. from Bde came forward to Tac HQ and also the Arty Rep. Patrols were laid on for the night by Major D.A.MacKENZIE. Three standing patrols to be known as normal were as follows:- UNION 306194 NCO and 7 men standing patrol, last light to first light; WASHINGTON 305187 NCO and 7 men standing patrol, last light to first light; ALABAMA 306182 NCO and 7 men standing patrol, last light to first light. In addition a recce patrol was sent to 304188 and a 3 man recce to 304181 to lie up during day; This latter went out before first light on 13 Apr 44. Coys were briefed and nothing further of importance took place that day. Weather - bright and warm.

13 APRIL 1944

There was no extensive shelling of our areas but standing patrol at 309195 encountered some shelling during early hours. Fighting patrol did not make contact but did good work; Led by Lt R.F.GIRDLESTONE of "A" Coy. "D" Coy standing patrol at 307188 observed enemy mortar emplacement at 304188. Other patrols had nothing to report. During the

morning Brigadier D.C.SPRY, 1 Cdn Inf Bde and Maj-gen REID, 10th Br Div Comd, visited Bn areas. The Bde L.O. arrived at 1030 hrs, patrols were laid on. Fd Arty harrasing tasks laid on by I.O. At 1115 hrs the C.C.R.A. 5th Corps visi ted our areas and stayed at Tac HQ for lunch and was conducted by Major D.A.MackENZIE to OP. At 1300 hrs Major J.R.O. COUNSELL came to Tac HQ to take over 2 i/c duties for the afternoon and evening. Major D.A.MackENZIE went to ORTONA at 1500 hrs to hold Orderly Room, he returned at 1735 hrs. Patrols for to-night: Standing patrol at 309195 repeated, also standing patrol 305183. Three men who 'lay up' during day at 305182 reported in at 2115 hrs. Weather - sunny and warm.

14 APRIL 1944

Slight shelling approx 0800 hrs in left fwd areas but no casualties. Patrol by "D" Coy explored area of caves and house at 303188, heard enemy cough but could not pin point, patrol returned without further incidents. L.O. came fwd at 1000 hrs stating that all patrols must be back of main gully to our front by 2400 hrs in view of an Arty programme in the gully. Arty Rep at Tac HQ at 1100 hrs to explain programme. Patrols were briefed during the afternoon. The observations at CHICKEN (a lone house on "B" Coy front) proved very interesting and two men were laid on to go out before first light 15/16 Apr 44. At 1700 hrs Lt J.R.PEARSON the Signals Officer returned from leave. In his absence Lt D.V.ROLAND, RCCS, had come to Tac HQ as Signal Officer. There was a conference at Bde which Major D.A.MackENZIE attended during the afternoon. Weather - fair and warm.

15 APRIL 1944

Slight shelling of "C" Coy and "B" Coy areas during night. Patrols returned and reported some activity in gully fwd of our positions but no contacts made. L.O. fwd at 1000 hrs. Bde intends deception Arty programme to indicate assault landing. We are ordered to fire flares to sea. One ambush patrol was laid on. Arty Rep gave details of fire tasks at 1100 hrs. I.O. to "B" coy and OP at 1400 hrs. Major J.R.O.COUNSELL to ORTONA at 1530 hrs. Major D.A.MackENZIE spent most of day on trg programme for future trg period for Bn. OP's report considerable movement at mouth of ARIELLI and on coast rd sector. CASUALTIES - one OR wounded. Weather - sunny and quite warm.

16 APRIL 1944

Patrol previous night found caves at 304189 unsuitable for lying up and reported considerable enemy activity. They saw a seven man German patrol moving between themselves and our own FDL's. This was confirmed by normal standing patrols in their reports. There was light shelling of our fwd areas but no casualties. Major D.A.MackENZIE left for Bde at 0930 hrs leaving Major J.R.O.COUNSELL in charge. At 1000 hrs the Bde L.O. came to Tac HQ, also the Arty Rep Capt ROLPH. A patrol conference was called for 1330 hrs. Three ambush patrols were briefed to take up positions across our FDL's . They studied air photos with sterescope and discussed admn and intercom for these patrols. Major D.A.MackENZIE returned to Tac HQ at 1730 hrs. Excellent observation reports were sent in by 'I' Sec personnel indicating considerable movement on the Coast road. CASUALTIES - one OR wounded, died in hosp. Lt H.D.HELLIKER sos trg Inc. Lt H.W.D.KILGOUR and Lt C.J.L.KILLORAN tos Trg Inc. Lt C.J.SEAGRAM tos from Trg Inc. Weather - sunny and warm.

17 APRIL 1944

There was light shelling of "B" Coy positions at 0745 hrs this morning and some further at 1630 hrs. Two 'artillery' samples were obtained, a rocket 'propoganda leaflet' projectile from "B" Coy area and a 75mm Italian dud round which broke through the wall into "B" Coy Orderly Room. The three ambush patrols and normal standing patrols reported a very quiet night. At 0830 hrs Major D.A.MackENZIE and Coy Comds went to S.VITO for a lecture. During the morning the Bde L.O. and Arty Rep were at Tac HQ and tentative patrol plans

were laid on by the I.O. Major D.A.MacKENZIE and Major J.R.O. COUNSELL returned to Tac HQ at 1200 hrs. A patrol conference was held at 1330 hrs. One fighting patrol briefed to move up coast rd and a second to suspected enemy outpost forward of "C" Coy. As well as these two, normal standing patrols were maintained. OP at CASTLE manned by 'I' Sec noticed Jerry removing a casualty up coast rd and a 'red cross' appeal when some of our rounds fell near the scene. Capt A.P.BATES of "C" Coy i/c EAST coast patrol came to Tac HQ at 1800 hrs to peruse aerial photos. Two snipers from Scout and Sniper PI came fwd to "B" Coy at 1900 hrs to go out to fwd positions before first light 18 Apr 44. Weather - clear and warm at outset, clouded over remainder of day.

18 APRIL 1944

Patrol by "A" Coy up main NORTH SOUTH rd met three man enemy recce within 200 yds of our FDL's but after search were unable to locate them. Patrol up EAST coast ahead of "C" Coy found direction difficult due to intense darkness - heard movement close by but made no contacts. At 0900 hrs heard Arty support for R22R show on 3 Cdn Inf Bde front when the R22R attempted to take a feature to their front. At 0930 hrs Major J.R.O.COUNSELL went in to ORTONA to gain admn details for relief in near future. The Bde L.O. came to Tac HQ at 1000 hrs giving indication that RCR were to make Coy attack on BINGO II the following night and reces this night through our standing patrols. No further patrols were laid on for our Bn. Five man recce party was laid on to go to CHICKEN fwd of "B" Coy before first light and remain during the daylight 19 Apr 44. Capt COMFORT, Canadian War Artist, arrived at Tac HQ to do a sketch of our HQ, he remained for lunch and returned to Div for the evening. The Brigadier paid us a call at 1100 hrs. There was a patrol conference at 1330 hrs. Weather - fine with slight rain in the afternoon.

19 APRIL 1944

The "C" Coy patrol at UNION reported a bold recce on the enemy's part which they attempted to ambush but were not able to carry out with success. Otherwise there was quite a quiet night. Lt W.G.BURKE-ROBERTSON carried out a very successful direct shoot against an enemy occupied house to our front causing man near house to go to ground and gaining some direct hits on target. L.O. came fwd at 1000 hrs. Details re CARNIVAL (the RCR attack on BINGO II) were given and it was suggested the C.O. attend conference at RCR at 1500 hrs. During the morning the War Artist returned to finish his sketch of Tac HQ. At 1600 hrs C.O. held an 'O' Group when the following information was given:- (1) 48 Highrs to be relieved by 1/2 PUNJABS of 10 Indian Div night 20/21 Apr 44. (2) Move to be done in three phases by TCV. Phase I - Relief and move to Bde assembly area on S.VITO-LANCIANO rd, 343078 to 327033, 20/21 Apr 44. Phase II - Move to Bde staging area on TERMOLI-LARINO rd, 8065 to 7857, 22 Apr 44. Phase III - Move to trg area CAMPOBASSO 23 Apr 44. (3) Instructions for recce parties. (4) Timings for relief. Normal standing patrols were laid on for this night. Coys were specially warned to be alert in view of CARNIVAL. Occupation of CHICKEN (house fwd of "B" Coy positions used as OP during daylight hours). Major J.R.O.COUNSELL took Coy guides to ORTONA at 1745 hrs to indicate areas where Coy TCV's would assemble. Weather - warm and crystal clear.

20 APRIL 1944

Patrols had nothing to report. There was little HS in our areas. The RCR attack was NOT successful and considerable Officer and OR casualties were suffered. Coys spent the day preparing for relief. Lt W.G.BURKE-ROBERTSON took scat party to Bde Assembly area at 1430 hrs. A & B Ech vehicles moved to Bde assembly area during afternoon with the exception of "C" Coy. The remainder of the day was spent in tidying and general clean up. Tac HQ cookhouse closed down after the noon meal. Normal patrols were laid on and arrangements made to have personnel picked up by TCV when tour of duty completed. Some rain during night delayed the 1/2 Punjabs and former timings for relief were altered at the last minute. The relief, however, was completed under cover of darkness which was

necessary for the fwd Coys. Timings were as follows:- "A" Coy 0450, "B" Coy 0550 hrs, "C" Coy 0510 hrs, "D" Coy 0610 hrs, Tac HQ 0630 hrs and change of command, this was all on 21 Apr 44. Weather - sunny and warm.

21 APRIL 1944

Coys spent the day resting and sunning themselves. The C.O. called an 'O' Gp for 1600 hrs when the following information was passed:- (1) Enemy air activity had increased. LANCIANO was bombed the day before. All present warned to pay special attention to camouflege and to provide Bren gun protection for move to staging area. (2) The order of march to staging area. Bn to pass Bde SP at 1100 hrs. (3) Lt W.G.BURKE-ROBERTSON to take scat party to staging area. (4) Admn and dress for move. These orders were passed on and the remainder of the day was quiet. Weather - sunny and warm.

22 APRIL 1944

Place: VASTO, ITALY
1/250,000
8065

Bn spent a quiet and restful night. Early in the morning rain started which gave great discomfort to those without canvas. All vehicles were moved onto road in order to speed up convoy. Artillery Unit ahead of our Bn was one hour late in passing the Bde SP. In spite of rain which continued till noon our convoy ran very well and arrived at staging area (less a carrier, 2 m/c's and a jeep) at 1800 hrs. Coys bivouaced at road side in area 8065 (VASTO 1/250,000) and had a hot meal before turning in. Weather - warm but raining.

23 APRIL 1944

Place: 560308
Sheet 1/100,000
CAMPOBASSO
ITALY

An early start was laid on. Bn to move at 0830 hrs for trg area, CAMPOBASSO. Order was received to 'take down' Unit titles and to 'paint out' Maple Leaf insignia on vehicles. Convoy moved very slowly and arrived at new area by 1500 hrs. Bn disposition:- Bn HQ 560308, "A" Coy 559314, "B" Coy 562314, "C" Coy 557308, "D" Coy 561304, GM & Tpt 563302. All ref's CAMPOBASSO sheet 1/100,000. Weather - clear and warm.

24 APRIL 1944

Bn resting in new area. Issues of KD made to all ranks consisting of 1 pr long trousers, 2 bush shirts and two suits of light summer underwear. Beautiful sunny weather and everyone enjoying themselves in the sunshine. Trg conference attended by all Coy Comds at Bn HQ and programme laid down. Weather - sunny and warm.

25 APRIL 1944

Administration and weapon checking all day. Troops busy trying to keep out of the wind and rain. All Officers attended display of mountaineering by instructors from Snow Warfare School. Weather - rain and wind.

26 APRIL 1944

Trg started to-day, consisting of PT, Weapon trg, and hardening marches across rugged country. Lt N.H.McMURRICH, the I.O., left to-day for an Intelligence Course at FERRATZANO. Bde FGC'sM opened at Bn HQ with a docket of 12 cases, eight of them 48 Highrs. Rainy and cold all day.

27 APRIL 1944

Trg as previous day and FGC'sM still going on. Weather - rainy and cold, everyone uncomfortable.

28 APRIL 1944

The sun shone to-day for the first time and cheered everyone up considerably. Trg proceeding as laid down, hardening marches being the main feature. FGC'sM finally cleaned up to-day. In the evening an Officers' Smoker was held and attended by all the 48th Officers in the vicinity with the exception of Bde staff who were otherwise employed. A few of the guests included Major G.E.B.RENNISON and Capt W.J.PALMER from Division and thirteen Reinforcement Officers from AVELLINO, some of whom were 'oldtimers' Capt 'Bucky' HARRIS and Lts N.B.BELL, K.H.HUDSON and T.M.BUCHANAN. Lt-col I.S.JOHNSTON, DSO, ED, was unable to attend, being still away on course. Weather - sunny and warm.

29 APRIL 1944

'O' Gp at Bn HQ 1300 hrs to discuss move to new area SOUTH of LUCERA. Major D.A.MackENZIE still acting C.O. Scat party headed by Major D.W.BANTON left for new area. Afternoon spent making preparations to move. Eleven of the fourteen prisoners in Bn Guard Room disposed of to FP Camp at FERRATZANO, 'Thank God' said the Adjutant. Reinforcement Officers from AVELLINO returned there during the afternoon after having spent an enjoyable 24 hrs. No casualties among them but they all looked somewhat the worse for wear. Weather - cloudy but fairly good weather.

30 APRIL 1944

An early start was laid on by Major D.A. MackENZIE. Convoy passed SP at 0800 hrs. Route LARINO - SERRACAPRIOLA - S. SEVERO - LUCERA. Arrived in trg area at 1500 hrs. Weather - cloudy and windy.

Signed

DAMackenzie Maj

D.A. MACKENZIE) Major,

Officer Commanding,

48th Highlanders of Canada.

1 MAY 1944

Coys off at first light to do the first of a series/of tank and infantry co-op schemes. Lt-col I.S. Johnston arrived back from course in the morning and after reporting to Bde, left for the trg area. Coys had a hot lunch sent out and marched back to camp at about 1600 hrs. We are trg with the 25th Tank Bde, R.A.C. who have recently arrived from North Africa. They are a very keen lot and got along well with our men.

2 MAY 1944

Coys out to trg area early again today for more tank trg. I.O., Lt. McMurrich arrived back from course. In the evening several of the officers of the 142 Regt R.A.C. (The Suffolk Regt) of the 25th Tank Bde came to call at our Officers' Mess. This was an excellent idea for fraternizing between the infantry and the tank men in order to make for close co-operation in action. A good time was had by all.

3 MAY 1944

Place: Italy 1/100,000

Sheet 173

Bn. still at LUCERA area. Weather: Bright and warm. Scat party to staging area under Maj. BANTON. A and D coys. doing tank trg. C.O.'s O group 1600 - Timings and general method for move to area rd. 465707 to rd. 455707. All maps called in to bde. by 1800 hrs.

4 MAY 1944

Place: Italy 1/100,000
Sheets 172
173

Weather: Fair. Bn. led bde. group to staging area 465707 - 455704. Column crossed start line at 0530. The trip was made with all vehicles and personnel reported in by 1330 with the exception of one 15 cwt. gun-towing vehicle which was looked after by L.A.D. and reported in later. Lt-col I.S. Johnston, DSO. visited bde. to report personally to bde. comdr. At 1430, C.O. and coy. cmdrs. travelled by jeep to recce trg. area 3183 near CASERTA. This party returned at 1700. All retired early.

5 MAY 1944

Weather: Fair and warm. Bn. proceeded to trg. area 3183 at 0700. All arrived without incident. C.O. reported in to brigadier at 1030 hrs. Bn. spent the morning settling in. Coy. Cmdrs. meeting called for 1400. Adj. absent. Following matters dealt with:

- (1) Future ops: nil.
 - (2) Trg to concentrate on a) Physical fitness
b) Teamwork.
 - (3) Certain days to be coy. cmdrs. discretion for coy. trg. as above.
 - 4) Certain days for offrs, study periods.
 - 5) Malaria precautions and general sanitary precautions to be observed by all personnel.
- C.O. to bde. conference at 1700 where future policy for this area was outlined by brigadier.

6 MAY 1944

Weather: fair and quite warm. Dispositions: no change.

During the morning, further time was spent by coys. in make and mend and general organization. At 1400 hrs. C.O. called a conference for coy. cmdrs. When the following matters were discussed:

- (1) A bde river crossing ex. to take place 9/10 May.
- (2) A ceremonial Drumhead Service to be held at 1030 hrs. 7 May.
- (3) K.D. to be taken into wear for walking out and denim for duty wear.
- (4) Tentative trg. policy: Mon. 8th - Coy. Cmdrs, discussion.
Tues. 9th - Prep for bde. scheme and pay and muster.
Wed. 10th - Return from bde. scheme and make and mend.
Thur. 11th - Coy. Cmdrs. day.
Fri. 12th - Officers day.
I.O. to lecture coys. Thurs and Friday.
- (5) Regulations for walking out and restricted areas were given.
- (6) Leave to be granted on basis of 1/18 to NAPLES with passes. Towns: CASERTA and MADALONE declared out of bounds.

7 MAY 1944

Weather: sunny and warm. Dispositions: no change.

The Bn. turned out for Drumhead Service in Sup. Coy. area. Capt. EAST took over from C.O. Brig. attended and read lesson. Bn. marched past a saluting base and salute taken by Brig. Brig. commented favourably on turn-out and specially the pipe-band. Summer-drill taken into wear as of this date. The remainder of the afternoon was spent resting. In the evening a movie was provided by Mr. SINGLETON. This was held in "A" coy. area and preceded by a padre's talk. The Men enjoy these talks.

8 MAY 1944

Weather: fair and hot during day. Dispositions: no change.

(It is interesting to note that in this area a considerable interest was shown in recreational sports. Keen competition arose in inter-coy. baseball and volley ball. The campaign for

physical fitness included P.T. for all at 1000 hrs. each morning.) Coys. carried on with sec. trg. A Bn. route-march was laid on for all employed personnel to commence 1330. At 1800, C.O. and I.O. went to bde. for O group. Exercise "Squile Moses" was discussed. (C.O. has copy of programme obtained at bde.) At 2000 a company cmdrs conference held to briefly outline the exercise in order that personnel would be forewarned. An O group was called for 1000 hrs 9 May.

9 MAY 1944

Weather: fair and warm. No change in dispositions.

O group at 1000 hrs. I.O marked maps to indicate information on enemy for purposes of "Squile Moses". I.O. also read out most recent Intelligence report on enemy situation.

Details outlined in O group were as follows:

- (1) Purpose of ex. - A&Q and river crossing drill
- (2) Recce arrangements for coy. cmdrs.
- (3) Order of march a) troops
b) vehicles.
- (4) Assembly areas and F.U.P.'s.
- (5) Routes to ferry points.
- (6) Course of action up to objective
a) Ferry arrangements.
b) Exploitation of bridge-head made by other bns. of the bde.
- (7) Administration.

C.O. and I.O. made recce at 1300. Coy cmdrs taken to O.P. for recce at 1430. Move to assembly area 1800. Move to F.U.P. 2330. Crossing of river commences at 0130. Land ops. carried on till 100600.

10 MAY 1944

Weather: fair and quite warm. Dispositions: Bn., less rear party in camp, on exercise. At 0815 the cease-fire was given and bde. scheme was terminated. The Bn, marched to camp area across country and was back in area by 1330. The remainder of the day was spent resting. The C.O. attended a social function as guest of the H.P.E.R. A show was laid on at 2030 and enjoyed by all.

11 MAY 1944

Weather: fair. No change in dispositions.

This day was declared a day of rest and except for a pay parade for all ranks, was spent as a Sunday. Coy. cmdrs. meeting was held 1400 hrs. Troops were allowed to walk out after pay parade. Capt. "TONY" CASSELLS, now with Army H.Q., visited the Bn. At 2300 hrs, the 5th and 8th army offensive began with a barrage from 1100 guns on the 8th Army front alone.

12 MAY 1944

Weather: fair. No change in dispositions.

Coy. Cmdrs, gathered at A mess for a short talk by C.O. prior to bde study period which was to start at 0930, take time out for lunch, and continue till 1530 in the afternoon. The I.O. was given a few minutes during this preliminary talk to explain some new facts about air photos and their tactical use. The Study period at bde was in two parts: (1) Lessons learned from "SQUILE MOSES" and (2) A discussion of factors influencing a break through of a strongly fortified enemy position. At 1500 study period ended. C.O. addressed his bn. at 1530 putting them completely in the picture regarding the new offensive and told as much as he could of what the future held. The troops marched back for some tea and then at 1730 were paraded again for a visit by the G.O.C., Maj. Gen. C. VOKES, D.S.O. The General gave us a good pep talk and amused the assembled bn. saying that if we saw him or passed him on the road at any time

just to give him a wave. No further incidents of importance occurred after the dismissal of this parade.

13 MAY 1944

Weather: fair. No change in disposition.

During the day coys. carried out normal training. The I.O. visited B and D coys. where a talk was given to the men on "Intelligence". Some experiments were made with coloured smoke during the day.

14 MAY 1944

Dispositions: MADALONE area. Weather: Bright and warm.

At 0500 hrs. scat party moved to MIGNANO area under Maj. MACKENZIE. In the morning the bn, reloaded vehicles to meet the requirements of the light scale vehicle establishment. C.O.'s orders were held. During the afternoon, T.C.V.'s arrived. The bn. was put on one half hour's notice. The movement order came during the afternoon. The bn. to move to a concentration area at MIGNANO 9811, by T.C.V.'s. The head of our column to pass starting point at 0020 on the 15th.

15 MAY 1944

Weather: sunny and warm; a great deal of dust in the roads.

After a long and tiring drive, bn. arrived at O.P. 0801 at 0630 hrs. Maj. MACKENZIE gave us our areas and all personnel settled down for some sleep and then some food. The C.O. upon arrival, reported to bde. At 1030 the C.O. and I.O. visited bde. After this, Coy. Cmdrs. were taken on a recce. This was difficult because the valley was under a continual smoke screen necessitated by the enemy's O.P.'s on the high ground to the NORTH and EAST of the valley. At 1400 a bde. O. gp. was held and following this a bn. O. gp. We learned there that the bn. was to cross the GARI river that afternoon and move to a concentration area prior to attack. We would have only 1 bde. committed and therefore I Corps came under command 8 Indian Div. At 1600 the bn. moved to the new area 868128. The C.O.'s jeep, which preceded was held up for a time just this side of the GARI. A jeep in which Maj. RENNISON (48th) GII, 1 Can. Div. and Lieut. D. DICKIE (48th) A.D.C. to Gen. VOKES were riding, was blown in two by a box mine in the verges of the road. Lieut. DICKIE lost his life and Maj. RENNISON evacuated with serious wounds. The C.O. made an appreciation and decided to move ahead and cross the river as per plan. This was done and our own pioneers were kept well forward. The bn, in T.C.V.'s and the remaining essential vehicles were in the new area by last light without further incidents. We dug in and had a good night's rest, expecting to move in the morning.

16 MAY 1944

Weather: fair. Dispositions: as of previous night.

The bn. had a quiet night and were told by the C.O. in the morning that we would have half an hour's warning to move. During the morning tank and artillery reps. visited the TAC area and all were interested in the news. Gen. VOKES visited the bn. and spoke with Lieut. DICKIE'S brother in the "I" section. At 1300 we received orders to move. The order of march was D, B,H.Q., C, B, A, Sup., and the new area was just SOUTH of PIGNATARO at 830138. After considerable difficulty in routing our vehicles, we arrived about 1730 with our supporting squadron of tanks harboured close by. TAC took up a position in a sunken road with all coys. concentrated. B on the right, A on the left, and up ahead on the reverse slope of the next feature, D on the right and C on the left. The H.P.E.R. and R.C.R. had made contact forward of us. Our first prisoner was escorted to TAC at 1830 and held along with some "Jigaboos" in a cave. B coy. mounted a guard over these. They were later taken back in the ration vehicle. The order to move came; a hasty O gp. was held, coys. were told to feed and move as soon as possible. The C.O. went forward immediately on a recce. After his appreciation(the bn. then on the move), he passed back the order to halt and split

rations. B coy. was sent forward to fill a gap between the R.C.R. and H.P.E.R. and A was moved across the road to area 821141. While B coy. were moving up, Lieut. "JOCK" MAYNE was killed - this was our first officer casualty. The remainder of the night we awaited further confirmation to attack. A report-line trace arrived in the early hours and was handed over somewhat late to the C.O. by the i.O. News of this plus a request from the Brig. asking why we weren't moving was the final confirmation.

17 MAY 1944

Weather: fine.

At 0830 this morning we commenced the battle of the LIRI VALLEY. In close support C sqn, of 142 Tank Regt., Arty. and A/T reps. The bn advanced up the road 820144 to 810132, with its axis to the WEST in the order D, C, BHQ, A, B. D and C coys had with them a tp. of Churchills and the reserve tp. moved with A coy. Contact was first made at 800131 by D coy. who went to ground until C coy. were able to take up positions on the high ground to the right of the road. Tanks moved through the infantry and met still resistance from the German FAUSTRATRONE, a short range A.P. projector, which he fired from fox-holes in the tall grain which covered the tank approaches. By afternoon, with all but two tanks out of action and only a sketchy knowledge of the dispositions of the RCR (supposedly on our right), and the HPE to our left and rear, things were at a standstill. D coy. were almost on, and creeping towards, their objective area 783133, astride the road. A coy. were close to the river, area 790130. On the right, C and B were confronted with a pocket of resistance which gave the bn. two distinct tasks. The C.O., who had had a most strenuous day liaising with his widely deployed coys, brought Maj. MACKENZIE, the 2i/c, forward to fight A and D coys, while he tried bn. liaison with RCR and the sqn. of Sherman tanks in support, to clean up the C and B front. This attack was not successful due to heavy small arms fire and B coy. who had hoped to make the assault were compelled to consolidate. During the night, our remaining opposition pulled out and attempted to cover this withdrawal by a feint on the D coy front. Lieut. BURKE-ROBERTSON had moved up A/T six-pounders and was able to knock out 2 tanks and some infantry and with D coy's help completely foil the local counter or cover. D coy. sent out feelers before first light to next feature at 780138 but contact was lost. TAC and BHQ spent the night in the corner of a field, TAC having been brought forward by 0200 in the morning. The C.O., getting little sleep, liaised with the RCR and HPE and at first light visited TAC bde., where orders were given to push on and keep him rolling. 70 prisoners were taken during the day.

For a rather ??? Accurate report of this fighting see Unit History. "Battle of Liri Valley & Hitler Lines"

19 MAY 1944

Weather: still sunny but some light rain during night.

At 0800 the bn. was warned to move again. Just before setting out, the Brig. visited us to give us the latest news and to spur us on. The bn. moved off at 0830. There were a number of the PLDG vehicles on the road and progress was slow. In spite of this and some shelling&mortaring, the bn. was on to its objective shortly after noon; this was the high ground overlooking the famous ADOLPH HITLER line in the general area 741155. The disposition of our tps. at this time was: between the LIRI and ourselves, the PLDG who had fwd. elements right up to the FDL's of the HITLER LINE. On our right was the HPE and in rear, in reserve positions, the RCR. On a higher level, the situation was roughly as follows: The mountains on the left bank of the LIRI were in possession of the French forces who were well up to the 67 grid line at MONTE LEUCIO. On the right of our bde. were 78 Br. Div. who were fighting in the area of AQUINO. Soon after we had settled in to this area a recce patrol under Sgt. CALDWELL went fwd. during daylight and brought back a most excellent report on the make up of "the line". Higher formation spoke in praise of this patrol which gave us a knowledge of the wire, A/T ditch, prevalence of mines, gaps in wire,

condition of demolished houses and other vitally important facts. At 1800 a "flap" was experienced. A considerable amount of smoke and arty. appeared in the general area 7214 on the PLDG front. The PLDG's themselves saw boats crossing the river at 721162 and all events foretold counter-attack. Brigade warned us of this in good faith, hasty preparations were made locally and it was not till some hours later we learned that "the flap" was entirely the cause of misinformation. Tps. crossing the river were French and arty. fire did not precede any counter-attack. the remainder of the night was comparatively peaceful with normal contact patrols.

20 MAY 1944

Weather: still fair. Dispositions: no change.

This day was spent in make and mend. During the afternoon, there was a considerable amount of shell and mortar fire. Coys. forward sent in numerous shell reports and casualties were inflicted by him. The C.O. ordered coy. cmdrs. back to A Ech, for a rest and 2's i/c came forward to take over the coys. In the evening, Maj BANTON and the I.O. also returned to main H.Q. for 24 hours rest. The Adj. came forward to substitute for the I.O. and Capt. SMITH took Maj. BANTON'S place.

Casualties suffered in the course of this day were 1 killed and 5 wounded.

21 MAY 1944

Weather: fair and warm. Dispositions: no change.

Intermittent shelling continued during the night and in the morning an 88 mm. round gave TAC H.Q. a sprinkling. Coy.cmdrs, returned to their coys. at 1600. Maj. BANTON arrived back at TAC at 1930 hrs. An O gp. was called for 2230 hrs at bde. Here it was learned that higher formation had ordered our bde to breach the ADOLPH HITLER line in a four phase attack to be launched sometime after first light. 48th making initial break in. It was explained that this was going to be a hurried job with much too little recce but that in view of the broad picture and impending moves elsewhere on the Allied front, the risk was felt justifiable. The C.O. sent a phone message to the bn. to call an O. gp. for 2400 hrs. He returned with the I.O. to TAC at 0130 hrs. where the Orders gp. lay sleeping on the floor of the Italian farmhouse which had been our Tactical H.Q. for the past 36 hrs. In brief, the phases of the attack were intended as follows:

Phase I 48th Highrs to breach the ADOLPH HITLER line and form a bridgehead area 730160.

Phase II With one coy. 48th remaining in bridgehead, RCR would relieve this area while 48th moved to objective along ridge 735169 and to pt. 106.

Phase III HPE to move on axis to right of road and cross "line" in area 738166 and move across our front to area 731178 at the same time RCR moving through us to the right of HPE.

Phase IV 48th to re-organize and move through HPE and RCR to next feature forward.

The C.O. gave as much information as he was able at this time and laid on a Co-ordinative conference for 0600, at that time we had expected that the "show" would begin at or about 0800. An examination of map sheet ITALY 1/25,000, 160 III N.E. will give the reader a reasonable conception of the type and extent of the defences we had been ordered to breach: In actuality, we had only 8 hrs from the completion of the bn. O gp. till the attack went in. During this time sappers were to make a recce for mines and clear gaps for tanks to traverse. Marrying up with tank personnel and the netting of tank and infantry 18 sets had to be done; this latter through necessity was not as complete as we would have liked as the tp. cmdrs. were not the same as those who supported us in the LIRI VALLEY battle. At 0300 the trace of artillery support arrived and was duplicated for coy. cmdrs, and handed to them after the six o'clock conference.

22 MAY 1944

Weather: fair and warm.

Zero hour was advanced to 1030 hrs and at this time the battle for the break in on the ADOLPH HITLER line commenced. Start line, the line of the road 739150 to 743159. D and B coys moved fwd. first with B on left and D on right, each with their sup. tp. of tanks following closely. Several of the tanks were knocked out by mines in the initial stages. There were of the box type and were not found by engineers whose work the night before was hurried and by no means thorough. With this support partially lost and a considerable amount of small arms fire from the surrounding high ground, our two leading coys. had to go to ground. BHQ moved up to the left and crossed the HITLER line by the road at 730158. Soon after this he started with his mortars and NEBELWURFERS. BHQ retired to the area of a concrete pillbox (part of his defences). During the morning, coys made a slow advance suffering considerable casualties. By afternoon the disposition of coys was A - 731161, B - 729159, C - 730159, and D - 729162 with A and D moving forward slowly at last light. During the night slight advances were made but shelling and mortaring was considerably lighter. The RCR moved two coys into the bridgehead at last light, suffering some casualties from 88 mm. fire. On this day, Capt. H. MCCUTCHEON rejoined the battalion along with 31 other ranks as reinforcements. Casualties suffered were Lieut. J. A. MACNEIL, LIEUT H.M. Cox and 25 O.R.'s wounded, 9 O.R.'s being killed.

A more accurate report of this and the next days fighting will be found in history. ISJ

23 MAY 1944

Weather: fair and warm.

The C.O. made the decision during the early hours of this morning to move D and B coys forward in an attempt to take the ridge this side of pt. 106. It appears that the lines of advance followed by the coys crossed and by noon D coy was reorganizing near the house in area 732166 while B who had moved up on the right of D coy, found itself in houses area 73151665 with two pls. badly cut up. Capt. J. A. WILSON, O/C B Coy was killed at this position and Lt. D. S. SNIVELY was killed on the way up. A coy moved up a short time after this, less its

tanks and joined B coy, who in their depleted state came under command A coy. Maj. CLARKE, commanding A coy, did not feel it wise to try to take the objective at 733169 without tanks and especially as a good deal of trouble was being caused by an S.P. gun firing down the valley from the ground NORTH of 106. C coy. during this stayed back as reserve coy. When darkness came the C.O. decided to send our pioneers up under Sgt. RALPH to take out the S.P. and crew but this did not need to be done as HPE, moving across our front tidied up the trouble and sealed up the gap. And so by nightfall, the battle was virtually at a close. Comments on incidents during the battle, and lessons learned will be found in the diary for 27 May 44 which day a study period was held to discuss the battle and numerous details came to light. In addition to the officer casualties above, 13 O.R.'s also lost their lives. Lt. R. D. DAILLY and 38 O.R.'s were wounded. Bn was reinforced with the arrival of Lt. N. B. BELL, Lt. H. W. D. KILGOUR and 22 O. R.'s.

24 MAY 1944

Weather: sunny and warm.

With the battle over, this morning brought the not too pleasant task of burying our dead and establishing a small regtl. cemetery near the scene of the battle. With our padre, Capt. EAST, out of the line, this work was in charge of Capt. McCUTCHEON, a recent arrival to the bn. Rather than employ those who had fought the battle and were now having such deserved rest, men of the new draft and personnel who had been out of the line as "exhaustion cases" were used for the job. The pioneers started making the simple crosses which were to mark the graves of the 25 Highlanders who lost their lives, including Capt. J.T. WILSON and Lt. D.S. (Doug) SNIVELY who were buried here with their comrades. The

sacrifice these men made was our inspiration. The C.O. returned to Main H.Q. for a rest and refresher. He had been on the go for 9 days and nights with little or no sleep and his cheeriness and coolness had done much to making the successes of the regt. possible. He certainly deserved a rest. Maj. MacKENZIE and Maj. BANTON (O.C. Sup Coy) settled the bn in and moved the TAC H.Q. By noon that day the dispositions were as follows:

TAC - 738165 C - 732166

A - 733169 D - 735169

B-735168

The I.O. returned at 1500 to Main H.Q.

Casualties were 1 O.R. killed and two wounded. One O.R. taken on strength as reinforcement.

25 MAY 1944

Weather; sunny and clear. Dispositions: no change from yesterday.

Units of the Corps recce gp. and Div. artillery clogged the roads most of the day. The C.O., some hour and a half after an expected 15 minute drive, arrived at Tac at about 1130.

During our lunch, Gen VOKES paid a visit to us and again offered congratulations on the showing we made. At 1330, the I.O. visited coys in turn to give as much of the picture as possible. All troops were naturally most interested in the picture on the broad front and the progress of the battle. Just at this time, the news came from bde. that the Americans of the ANZIO BRIDGEHEAD had linked up with their fellow countrymen on our extreme left, thus establishing at long last, a continual line from ANZIO to ORTONA. The new padre Capt. McLEAN, spoke to the coys. after the I.O. and the C.O. spoke to officers of the regt. in advance of the I.O. Later in the afternoon, B Ech. and Main H.Q. moved forward to join the bn. At night the C.O. visited bde. and sent news of a move by phone to Maj. MACKENZIE.

The latter gave orders and laid on the accustomed scat party under Maj. BANTON, this party to leave at 0500 for a new concentration area at 686198. As well as this our sleep was somewhat disturbed by hostile aircraft which "dropped a few" on the other side of PONTECORVO. The only casualty of the day, Lt. N.A. BALLARD, was evacuated with a punctured ear-drum. Bn. was reinforced with the arrival of Capt. R.J. HARRIS, Lt. K.E. HUDSON, Lt. W.B. REID, Lt. D.G. WATSON, Lt. C.J.L. KILLORAN, and 57 O.R.'s.

26 MAY 1944

Weather: another bright and sunny day.

Bn. vehicles moved off after I CIB in the line of march at 0700 app. and marching tps. which were to follow the vehicles started off at 0830. Traffic congestion was considerable and marching tps. were at one time overtaking the vehicles. For most of us this was the first close up we had of PONTECORVO and quite will ingly the last. The Airforce and artillery had literally flattened this reputedly picturesque town on the banks of the LIRI. Nothing but rubble and rotten stench now remained. One or two bldgs, which were not completely battered were being used as dressing stations. We arrived in this new area and took up positions as follows:

TAC 686199

A 685200 C 687197

b 685199 D 688198

This appeared to be a concentration area in every sense of the word as when we first arrived, we found in our area elements of the PLDG, the 51st A/T Bty and 4 Fd. Amb. The PLDG however, moved out during the afternoon and we were able to find ample room. A small stream running through our area proved a godsend and men showed little modesty as they performed their ablutions right beside the local "Jigaboo" women who were washing clothes nearby. As a matter of fact, neither party seemed concerned.

News that afternoon of the continued advance of 5th Arm'd Div. and our own 3rd bde. was most encouraging and everyone hoped that their advance would not be stemmed before we could have time for a good rest. Actual news as to resistance was singularly vague but we

were quite happy to know that we still had him rolling. The casualty list was 2 O.R.'s wounded. 27 O.R.'s under Lt. J.F. WILLIAMS came up to reinforce the bn.

27 MAY 1944

Weather: fair. Dispositions: no change.

The first day in the rest area. The bn. spent the morning with make and mend. everyone was most thankful for a brief respite; a chance to wash soiled clothes and rest. After lunch at 1330, a study period was held to discuss the Battle of the LIRI VALLEY and the battle of the ADOLPH HITLER line. This period was attended by all officers of the regt. plus supporting arms reps, and conducted by the C.O. Both battles were discussed from the point of lessons learned. The effect and countering of enemy weapons was given some consideration with particular stress on his A/Tank weapons and the method of knocking out concrete fortifications. The old chestnut of inf. cum tank was knocked about again but some very concrete lessons were brought to light with respect to tactical deployment of tanks and liaison and intercommunication. Artillery support was discussed and certain modifications suggested. Intercom. and admin. difficulties were mentioned and certain adjustments were suggested in this regard. At 1700 the C.O. carried with him to a similar bde. study period the summation of ideas from the bn. Bde. Memo #45 gives notes on this Bn. Comdrs.

discussion. Particular points in these notes which originated from our experiences were:

- (a) Vulnerability of pillboxes from rear owing to limited traverse.
- (b) A telescopic sight for 6 pdr. would allow them to engage joint targets at longer range and with greater accuracy.
- (c) Morphine should be carried by officers and its use made clear to them.

28 MAY 1944

Weather: still fair and warm. Dispositions: no change.

With information on the general situation "up forward" somewhat vague, the bn. spent another restful day with no immediate move apparent. Padre MACLEAN held a voluntary church service at 0930. The C.O. and Coy. Cmdrs. were busy all day with the writing up of citations for honours and awards. In the evening the tps. were shown a movie by YMCA services and all troops in the area attended.

29 MAY 1944

Full day spent in "make and mend". 1st Cdn Army C.W.A.C's put on show for the troops. It was one of the most entertaining and amusing variety shows that this Bn has ever witnessed. Everyone enjoyed themselves immensely. Weather: Fair and Warm.

30 MAY 1944

Lt-col I.S. Johnston went to O Gp at Bde 0900 hrs. On arrival from Bde C.O. held O Gp at 1130 hrs: Scat party left Unit Lines at 0900 hrs to meet Staff Capt at Bde for the purpose of receiving new area. Bn moved at 1400 hrs in T.C.V's. Route - Sheet Rd Junc 632228 - ISOLETTA, Bridge 606235, Rd and Rly Junc 600245, Rd Junc 596268, D.P. Bridge 558257. Bn arrived new area at approximately 1630 hrs. Disposition of Coys was as follows: "A" Coy, 528269; "B" Coy, 528270; "C" Coy, 530269; "D" Coy, 529267; Tac HQ, 531267. Move by convoy was very good. One vehicle casualty - 15 cwt A/Tk pl. Bn spent a very quiet night.

Weather: Cloudy and Sticky.

31 MAY 1944

C.O. left for Bde to attend O Gp at 0400 hrs. The T.C.V's left the Unit at 0700 hrs. Major Mackenzie, 2 i/c, went forward in charge of scat party at 0530 hrs. They reced area 573295. Bn moved off by march route at 0630 hrs. "F" Ech moved brigaded; also "A" Ech. Roads were very crowded with 5th Div Vehs. We had great difficulty in getting the vehs in the new area. Bn had lunch and moved off again. C.O. took his R and O Gp forward. 2 i/c took marching troops by route Rd and Rly Junc 453294 around diversion 449298 to area

456308. There were a large number of Teller, Box and Shue Mines. We had no casualties in the area. Wheeled vehs were held at diversion 456308 for some time. Marching troops arrived at 1600 hrs in area 456308. Only remained there one hour and moved via route 309298 to Rd Junc 437317, Rd Junc 426328 to BOSCO FA/TO where we spent the night: The Coy's disposition was as follows: "A" Coy, 424338; "B" Coy, 425338; "C" Coy, 425337; "D" Coy, 426326; Tac HQ, 427337. Weather: Fair and Warm.

Signed

IanSJohnston

(I.S.JOHNSTON) Lt-col,

Commanding Officer;

48th Highlanders of Canada:

1 JUNE 1944

Weather: Fair and warm. Dispositions: No move during night.

The bn. spent an almost comfortable night in the former enemy ammo. park. Several recce and contact patrols were despatched and during the night he kept up harrassing shellfire on the cross-roads, some 600 yds. from our areas.

We waited, expecting news momentarily, when an order came to go to bde. The C.O., Lt.-Col. I.S. JOHNSTON and the I.O. Lt. N.H. McMURRICK, left for bde. We had been given an incorrect middle east reference for TAC 81 and were greatly surprized to find it just out at the main road. Here it was explained that when our Corps recce had sufficiently explored and exploited we would do several "bounds" to arrive at a final destination just SOUTH of FERENTINO. After lunch, the C.O. preceded the bn by jeep to SELVA DEI MULI, 413362, where a recce was made. The bn. then crossed the flat ground and moved in deployed formations, beyond the rly. track to the general area: "A" Coy. 398394, "B" Coy. 395389, "C" Coy. 402588, "D" Coy. 394399. After a pause of two hrs. here, the bn. moved again to the area of the cross-roads at 389409 where we spent most of the night. During the night contact patrols were sent to the H.P.E. and a 10 man patrol under Lt. "BILL" HUNTER, recced high ground 372455 overlooking Highway number 6. An F.U.P. was chosen and coys. were shuttled up one at a time. The bn. less TAC holding this ground by first light. No opposition was encountered.

2 JUNE 1944

Weather: still fine and quite warm.

Quite tired and ready for a rest, the bn. had hoped for a 48 hr. rest in this area. During the morning we found that we had to move to the high ground accross highway six in the general area 373445 and hold command of this ground. Orders were given by the C.O. at 1400 and after a recce of the ground, coys moved down the hill and wearily up the other side, here we were sure would be a resting place for a short time. Our pioneers swept highway six to 360440. R.C.R. were found to be on ground which was supposedly our objective. The H.P.E. had taken up positions to WEST of us at approximately 360448. Before we were settled in, a further order came through. Maj. BANTON came forward with details. We were to follow the R.C.R. up No. 6 to "Y" in rd. at 336463. The R.C.R. to move through our final objective at 316489 and on to ANAGNI. The H.P.E. preceded by the recce to move on a separate axis to area 265481. Our main difficulty was the routing of our "F" Echelon vehicles from crossroads at 382439 on to No.6 as a long series of demolitions occurred in the town at approximately 378432. This, however, was cleared in time to allow single lane use and later a double lane road was cleared.

Coys. moved on trucks from high ground down on to No. 6 and tailed the R.C.R. along it at 2130. A surprising number of vehicles were moved up by our friends in spite of opposition encountered by the R.C.R. at 335472. There was also a considerable amount of shelling just as we started, eighty per-cent of which were duds.

The R.C.R. eventually gained our objective and at first light, started to move coys. towards the town. We had been ordered to deploy and dig in at 0500 and it was not till some three

hours later that we followed our pioneers into the mine-ridden area on the high ground EAST of ANAGNI.

3 JUNE 1944

All ranks were particularly cautioned about booby-traps, A.P., Teller, Box and Schu-mines which the area was infested with. Most of the remainder of the day was spent sleeping. All during the day our pioneers were on call for a hundred and one jobs and truly performed a noble task. Towards nightfall two of our Scouts and Snipers ran afoul a boobied teller-mine. Both were evacuated wounded but with good chance for recovery. Once before midnight and twice after, contact patrols were sent to the SCOTS GUARDS out ahead of us and to the R.C.R. on our left. The C.O. spent the night at our main H.Q. which was by now in area 379439.

4 JUNE 1944

Weather: fair and very warm. Dispositions: no change.

After the first good night's sleep for a few days, the bn. rested awaiting further orders. News arrived at noon that elements of 88U.S. Div. recce had entered the outskirts of ROME. This was received with great eclat and Lt. BURKE-ROBERTSON removed the largest of 48th moustaches from his upper lip when it was officially announced that ROME had fallen. The roads through and around our areas were clogged with vehicles of 6th SOUTH AFRICAN Div. whose forward elements appeared to be held up NORTH of ANAGNI. We later learned that 6th Br. Armoured had crossed their front and taken their objectives and the Guards 6 S.A. were ordered to about turn - hence considerable traffic congestion.

The I.O. visited coys. giving what he could of the general situation. The eternal question asked was "What is the future of 1 Can. Div." which is never one which can be answered.

5 JUNE 1944

Weather: sunny and Warm; clouded at noon with very light rain.

At 0900 the bn. moved off its positions on the high ground into the "flats" of ANAGNI, general area 328478. By 1130 all coys. were in position. The C.O. walked to bde. where he reported to the Brigadier. The afternoon was spent in settling in. Maj. MacKENZIE and Capt. FRASER organized two baseball games which were played in the evening and followed by a show.

The 1 Can. Corps at this time in Army reserve.

6 JUNE 1944

The coys. rested after operations in pursuit of "Jerrie". The C.O. went to Div. at 1400 for a discussion by the G.O.C. as to plans for the coming training period and stayed at Div. for dinner. A movie in the evening was attended by nearly the whole bn - a very good show and enjoyed by all present. Major WALLACE appeared at the bn on 48 hrs leave from the reinforcement depot. Majors CLARKE, COUNSELL and RAWLINGS left on 4 days leave.

7 JUNE 1944

Coy. parades and lit inspections were held to day. The Adj. and R.S.M. inspected the lines and made several recommendations although the lines were in fairly good shape. A good stream was discovered nearby and all ranks had a good bath and clean up. Another movie tonight and another very good picture enjoyed by a large audience.

8 JUNE 1944

"O" group on forthcoming move at 1100 hrs at B. H.Q. Bn. to move at 1630 hrs 9 Jun to trng. area PIEDEMONTE. Major WALLACE was appointed A.L.O. at 1 Cdn. Corps and was very pleased. Major J.T. WILSON, who has been attached for field experience for two weeks left today to take an appointment as P.A. to the B.G.S at 13 Corps. A Bingo game was held in the evening. 3 men were sent to Field Punishment Camp at CEPRANO. The new "siesta routine" started today: Reveille - 0500 hrs, P.T. - 0515-0545 hrs, Breakfast -

0600 hrs, Parades - 0700-1100 hrs, Dinner -1200 hrs, Siesta - 1300-1600 hrs, Parades - 1600-1800 hrs, Supper 1830 hrs, Retreat - 1950 hrs, Lights-out - 2200 hrs.

9 JUNE 1944

Reveille was later today to enable men to rest up for the long trip to the new area by T.C.V.'s. Capt. BLAIR S. EBY, Adjt, and Pipe-Major went to ANAGNI in a vain attempt to salvage some band equipment left behind by the Germans. Unfortunately, the Hun in his usual vandalish manner had thoroughly slashed all the drums left behind. The bn. moved off at 1715 hrs in order as follows: "C", "B", "A", "D", HQ and Sp. Coys. Major MacKENZIE was in charge of the convoy as Lt.-Col. I.S. Johnston, DSO was A/Brig. in Brigadier SPRY'S absence. A very good move of 89 miles was made with all the bn. in at 0025 hrs, June 10th, with the exception of two T.C.V.'s. Our route lay through CASSINO and all ranks were amazed and open-mouthed at the absolute obliteration of a fair sized town. There is hardly a wall standing and certainly not a livable room in the place. No vehicle is allowed to halt in town and the road is wired off to prevent accidents from booby traps and mines.

10 JUNE 1944

The day was spent with the battalion settling in. Reveille at 0700, breakfast at 0800. All had a good night's sleep. The Bn. Officers' Mess started, the first since we left SCOTLAND almost exactly a year ago. All officers to live in Officers' lines and mess together. A very sound idea as a good many of the officers are not acquainted with one another. Majors CLARKE, RAWLINGS and COUNSELL returned from leave. Coy. locations are all within 300 yards of BHQ at 323043.

11 JUNE 1944

There was a voluntary Church parade today at 0800 hrs with a very good turn-out. The bn. resting and sun-bathing the rest of the day. Lt.-Col. BEVERLY MATHEWS and Major G.B. RENISON, who was just out of hospital after being blown up on a mine, called in the afternoon. The C.O., Lt.-Col. I.S. JOHNSTON DSO left for ten days in CAIRO, via the Army Commander's aeroplane.

12 JUNE 1944

The bn. Officers' Mess actually started today. The first time all officers have been together in a mess since leaving SCOTLAND exactly one year ago to day. Training parades started on new routine - no parades in the afternoon on account of the heat. The R.S.M. WM. CROSSLEY, took all the W.O.'s on a 48 hr leave to NAPLES.

13 JUNE 1944

Training as usual. Leaves and day passes conflicting somewhat. We send 25 men to NAPLES each day and also 25 to POMPEI. The Adjt. Capt. BLAIR S. EBY left for NAPLES for 24 hrs, ostensibly to pick up some stationery.

14 JUNE 1944

The RSM held a parade of all coys. and gave a stiff two hours parade-ground drill. The men were really extremely good, considering how long they have been away from the parade ground. Capt. A.P. BATES, Lt. W.G. BURKE-ROBERTSON and the Sigs. Officer, Lt. D.V. ROLLAND left for seven days leave to an hotel at SAN AGATA, near SORRENTO. Movies at night greatly enjoyed by a large crowd.

15 JUNE 1944

Bn. Sports Day. The events in the morning ran off well but the finals and main show in the afternoon had to be called because of a regular cloud-burst. Everyone was absolutely soaked to the skin and it was the start of a miserable week of rain.

16 JUNE 1944

Postponed sports were held this afternoon, between showers. A very successful meet won by "D" coy. and showing that we have several very good athletes in the bn. We are all looking forward to the Bde. Sports with anticipation. Brigadier E.W. HALDENBY, MC, VD, visited here but Maj. MacKENZIE, the acting C.O. was unavoidably absent at a meeting at 1 Cdn. Corps. Bde. dance was held tonight which was attended by Maj. MacKENZIE, Maj. CLARKE, Maj. COUNSELL and Maj. RAWLINGS.

17 JUNE 1944

A bn. parade under Maj. MacKENZIE was held today on the Sports Field. The bn. looked very smart and drilled very well indeed, thanks to the RSM's efforts the previous Wednesday. The 48th played the Hastings and Prince Edward Regt. at baseball and beat them very satisfactorily. It rained very hard in the afternoon and evening, flooding a great many of all ranks out of their tents.

18 JUNE 1944

Rained hard most of the day turning the area into a veritable quagmire. The Drumhead service planned for 0830 hrs had to be called off and we all spent a miserable day. In the evening, a coy. of reinforcements, 100 strong, arrived from AVELLINO for a two weeks trng. period with the bn. A great deal of trouble was incurred in trying to get them all under cover.

19 JUNE 1944

Great excitement today as we picked ten men to go back to CANADA on POW escort. Sgt. J.J. RANNEY, the untiring orderly room Sgt. was one of the most deserving cases, the others were also 1939'rs who for various good reasons needed a trip home. We were all sorry to see them go, but were glad for their sakes.

20 JUNE 1944

Lt. Col. JOHNSTON arrived back early from his leave with the very good news that he had been promoted to Brig. and appointed to command the 11th Bde. in the 5th Cdn. Armoured Div. thus confirming rumours which had been rampant for four or five days. We are all exceptionally pleased to see that his very good work and wonderful leadership have at long last been recognized but nevertheless, we feel rather lost after having had one C.O. for 18 months and finally losing him. It will be a tremendous loss to the Regiment.

At last we are able to send people to ROME. A party of 25 leaves every day for a 24 hour visit. All ranks are most enthusiastic and anxious to see the Holy city. It rained again today. C.O. held orderly-room and there were only 9 cases which is remarkably good for a bn. just out of action and after a week's rest.

21 JUNE 1944

Bde. sports meet today. The 48th won to the tune of 95 points against 75 for the H. & P.E. and 65 for the R.C.R. All were very pleased and determined now to make a clean sweep of the Div. sports and then on to Corps. The sun shone for brief intervals today and dried the camp up a little.

22 JUNE 1944

Sunshine today for the first time - at last we will all have a chance to dry out. Some excitement caused by a message from 1 Cdn Corps appointing Lt.-col IAN S. JOHNSTON DSO, ED, to command the 11th Bde and to be an A/Brig. This only confirmed a strong rumour that had been rampant for some days. We are all very sorry to lose Lt.-col JOHNSTON who had guided the Bn for over 18 months and through every bit of the fighting in SICILY and ITALY to date, however we are all also very glad to see him get a well deserved promotion.

23 JUNE 1944

Rain again today, causing the trg to be somewhat upset, as the mud makes it extremely difficult to get about. Big news of the day was the Regimental Mess Dinner in honour of Brig. JOHNSTON. This was held in the Ducal Palace at PIEDEMONTTE and attended by Brig E.W. HALDENBY (MC) (VD) "The father of the Regiment in ITALY" Brig. D.C. SPRY of 1 CIB, Lt.-Col J.W. RITCHIE Commanding the RCR, Lt.-col. D.C. CAMERON commanding the H&PE, Major N.L.C. MATHER, the Brigade Major and all available Regimental Officers, a total of about 70. The dinner was a huge success and indeed was voted by many as one of the best the Regt ever had. The highest tributes were paid to Brig. JOHNSTON by the speakers, Brig. HALDENBY and Brig. SPRY and everyone there thought them most deserved. The Regt was praised very highly for its splendid work in the recent show and every Regimental Officer present felt a real tingle of pride at being a member of the 48th Highlanders of Canada. All in all it was a most memorable occasion.

24 JUNE 1944

This was Divisional Sports day and the Bn was very optimistic about its chances in the field. However when the meet had drawn to a close, it was discovered that the Highlanders, while well able to cover themselves with glory in battle, had failed to achieve the same distinction in the field of sport. Three members of the Bn, feeling this disgrace rather keenly, enlivened the day by making off with the GOC's flag, which, while arousing the GOG'S ire, at least let the Division know that the 48th Highlanders were still a force to be reckoned with. P.S. The flag was recovered two days later and returned with suitable apologies.

25 JUNE 1944

Voluntary Church parade held by H/Capt. H. MacLEAN, and was very well attended. Rained again shortly after the service and continued off and on all day and into the night. Very little activity around the Bn area.

26 JUNE 1944

Parades during day. CO's discussion on coming exercise "DERBY". Movie at night well attended. First clear sunny day for nearly ten days.

27 JUNE 1944

Weather: sunny and warm. In the morning the C.O. Major D.A. MacKENZIE, held a conference with his coy comds on the final details of exercise "DERBY" In the afternoon the C.O. with the acting I.O. Lt. H.W.D. KILGOUR, and Capt. H. McCUTCHEON who was the infantry L/O for the exercise, and the S.O. Lt. ROLAND moved out to the area where the C.O. was to receive his orders at 1500 hrs. The Sp pl comds and the comds of B and D coys which were to do the exercise, accompanied by their pl comds, RV'd with the C.O. for his order group at 1545 hrs. Following the issue of the C.O.'s orders, the coy comds remained at the area with their pl comds, while the C.O returned to camp. At 2000 hrs the Bn was lifted by TCV supplied by the SLI to the training area M.R. 1207, sheet No. 161.3, arriving at about 2100 hrs under comd the 2i/c Maj. D.W. BANTON. That evening while the Bn got a fair night's rest, the scout pl under lieut. Wm. HUNTER, provided patrols to recce and tape crossing places over a wadi for our tanks on the morning exercise.

28 JUNE 1944

Reveille this morning was 0430 hrs with a hot breakfast at 0500 hrs. The coys then stowed their gear on their "F" Ech vehs and at 0700 hrs the troops being exercized moved to the FUP, while those who were playing a watching role, took up a position on a high knoll overlooking the area. For general outline of exercize "DERBY" see APPX "A" (attached). The plan of attack was 2 coys up, B coy rt fwd, D coy lft fwd. C Coy mopping-up (not rep) A coy reserve (not rep) Supporting our attack was "A" sqn 12 RTR comprising 2 tps Churchill tks one with each fwd coy and 2 tps Shermans, one supporting each Churchill tp. A and C coys were spectators during the exercize. Zero hour was 0830 hrs prior to which, 393 Bty of the 72 HAA Regt RA fired air burst over the fwd enemy posns. The attack progressed well,

open ground was crossed under cover of our mortar smoke laid by Lieut. A.E. RUTHVEN who was acting 3 pl comd. The Bn MMG's were also used for the first time since their organisation, under comd of Sgt. McKISSOCK. By 1000 hrs approx the fwd coys had reached the mine field some 400 yds from the objective where they halted. The CO moving behind them, then issued his orders for the taking of the objective and the final assault went in at 1030 hrs with success at 1105 hrs. Following the exercise, a conference of all officers participating was held, conducted by the Bdr Comd 21 Arm'd Bde and Lt.-col CAMERON HPE acting comd 1 CIB. The scheme was pronounced as highly successful and a fitting conclusion to the series. The CO was complimented for his sound planning, and it was reported that the Corps Comd. Lt.-Gen BURNS and the Div Comd Maj.-gen VOKS were pleased with the way in which it was conducted. They had been present during the exercise. Following the conference, the officers rejoined their coys, and after a haversack lunch were lifted back to camp in TCV's supplied by RCA at 1300 hrs. The afternoon was spent in cleaning up. In the evening, the officers of "A" sqn RTR were entertained in our mess. The day had been sunny and quite warm.

29 JUNE 1944

Weather: Sunny and very warm. Muster roll calls took up the morning, this time unaccompanied by the usual pay parade since practically all personnel had already drawn their quota of pay to proceed on any one of numerous leaves granted through the month. Training as per syllabus during the afternoon found "B" coy at the ranges and the rest of the coys engaged in routine parades.

30 JUNE 1944

The weather continued sunny and rather sultry. The Bn secured 1 CIB enemy weapons display, and all coys will be able to view German light calibre anti-tank weapons and small arms.

Signed

DAMackenie

(D.A. MacKENZIE), Lt.-Col.,

Officer commanding,

48th Highlanders of Canada.

1 JULY 1944

Weather: Fair and warm.

Recce party consisting of Capt. HARRIS and Lt. W.G. BURKE-ROBERTSON left for the Div Beach Camp on the TYRRHANEAN SEA - 50 miles from here. Preparatory Order received for Bde Efficiency Contest to be held on 6 Jul 44 (App 4). Lt-col. D.A. MacKENZIE took the first Bn parade since his appointment as Commanding Officer.

2 JULY 1944

Weather: Fair and warm.

There was a voluntary swimming parade this afternoon for the Bn to LAKE MATESE, a small lake high in the mountains above PIEDIMONTE and reputedly belonging to the Crown Prince. Bn Movement order to Beach Camp on the TYRRHENIAN SEA.

3 JULY 1944

Weather: Fair and warm.

Bn left 0830 hrs for the Div Beach Camp arriving in time for lunch. The camp is situated on the beach overlooking the TYRRHENIAN SEA, accomodating about 1200 all ranks, boasts a natural amphitheatre for moving pictures, a projector that works, a kitchen that feeds 250 men in 15 minutes. The water is delightfully warm.

4 JULY 1944

Weather: Cloudy and cool.

Reveille 0800, a decided improvement on our normal hour of 0500. Everyone is swimming, lying in the sun, reading, swimming again, playing ball; and to this general scene of happiness was added an E.F.I. issue. This evening about 15 nurses from 14th and 15th Cdn Gen Hosp accepted an invitation to a beach party given by the officers. Unfortunately it was too windy for night swimming and a corn roast as was planned, but the success of the evening was scarcely dimmed by that. Capt. CONNACHIE, the Div Catering Officer, supplied an excellent supper and thus food, drink and conversation flowed happily along.

5 JULY 1944

Weather: Fair and then very hot.

The Bn left 0930 hrs and arrived at our camp at PIEDIMONTE about 1230 hrs. After the cooling breezes of the ocean this heat is terrific.

6 JULY 1944

Weather: Fair and warm.

Normal routine today. Inter Coy contests were held in preparation for Bde efficiency Contest which has been postponed.

7 JULY 1944

Weather: Fair and warm.

Practice ceremonial parade this morning for the Bde Comds inspection tomorrow.

8 JULY 1944

Weather: Very hot.

This morning Brig. SPRY inspected the Bn and took the march past, after which he made a spot check of vehicles, equipment, weapons, ord. rooms etc. The Sgts Mess dinner this evening was attended by Lt-col. D.A. MacKENZIE, Major D.W. BANTON, Capt. BLAIR S. EBY, MC, R.S.M. DUFFY (RCR's).

9 JULY 1944

Weather: Rain most of the day.

Voluntary Protestant Church Service in "A Coy area. Everyone tried to keep cool. Lt-col. MacKENZIE proceeded to AMALFI on leave; Major D.W. BANTON A/C.O.

10 JULY 1944

Weather: Cool and cloudy.

The most exciting part of the day was a large Canadian Mail. RCASC Band is attached to the Bn for rations and are staying in this area for the entertainment of 1 Cdn Div. Moved out to trng area on the VOLTURNO; the A/C.O. held a preliminary meeting concerning the scheme to be held tomorrow.

11 JULY 1944

Weather: Fair and warm.

The Tank cum Infantry Scheme went off with that degree of smoothness that is customary when no real enemy are involved. Capt. BLAIR S. EBY, MC, received appt as S.C. 12 Cdn Inf Bde, the formation of which was announced today.

12 JULY 1944

Weather: Fair and warm - rained most of the night.

Moved back to PIEDIMONTE camp and spent the remainder of the day in make and mend.

13 JULY 1944

Weather: Fair and warm. Disposition: No change
Routine normal; R.S.M. CROSSLEY normal.

14 JULY 1944

Weather: Fair and warm. Disposition: No change.
The much postponed Bde Efficiency Contest is now announced for 17 Jul; this somehow seems definite, so everyone is training, cleaning, painting and generally preparing for the contest with the R.C.R and H.P.E. Regt.

15 JULY 1944

Weather: Sunny and very warm. Disposition: No change.
Capt. MURDOCK, Lts. FINDLAY, LeMESURIER, MILLING, RUTHVEN, who have been here with "E" Coy (reinforcement personnel sent to the Bn for trng a few weeks ago) returned today to 3 Bn, 1 CBRD at AVELLINO.

16 JULY 1944

Weather: Fair and very hot. Disposition: No change.
Voluntary Church Service in "SP" Coy area. H/Capt. H. MacLEAN, the unit padre officiated.

17 JULY 1944

Weather: Very hot. Disposition: No change.
1 Cdn Inf Bde Efficiency Contest commenced at 0800 hrs on the sports field at PIEDIMONTE. All the contesting teams thronged the field, both the pipe band and the R.C.R. brass band were in evidence, the announcer over the P.A. System was Lt. COURT BENSON. The events may be seen in App. 17. *THE BN WAS VICTORIOUS, SCORES IN APP 14*
Tewt today also on Tank cum Inf Intercom. This involved the acting I.O., Lt. H.W.D. KILGOUR, Major E.C. RAWLINGS, Major D.B. DEEKS. Lt. N.H. McMURRICH Bn I.O., arrived from ALGIERS after more than a month's absence on an "I" Crse.

18 JULY 1944

Weather: Fair and very warm. Disposition: No change.
The Bn and Bde I.O's drove NORTH to the HITLER LINE to find enemy weapons and equipment for use at the Bde N.C.O's School. Bn routine normal.

19 JULY 1944

Weather: Fair and warm. Disposition: No change.
This evening the Pipe Major. A. ANDERSON, and two pipers provided the necessary while the Officers practised the Schottische, Riel O'Tulloch, Rye Walse etc in preparation for the dance on Saturday evening.

20 JULY 1944

Weather: Fair and warm. Disposition: No change.
The "I" Sect are attending a Bde "I" School which commenced on the 18 Jul 44. Lt. R.F. GIRDLESTONE and 37 Highlanders proceeded to LAKE MATESE for confirmation ceremonies in several protestant denominations.

21 JULY 1944

Weather: Fair and warm. Disposition: No change.
A Bde mountain climbing *competition expedition* was held this morning. The entire Bn entered the contest and completed the course 16 minutes ahead of the H.P.E. and 85 minutes ahead of the R.C.R.

At another practice of Highland dancing this evening, Capt. G.W. BEAL complained that it was infinitely harder than the mountain climbing. Lt. W.G. BURKE-ROBERTSON was announced by the C.O. as the new Adjutant.

22 JULY 1944

Weather: Fair and warm. Disposition: No change.

A "cabinetto" was made from the Paymaster's tent for the use of the nurses this evening. Several tents were also erected to accomodate those nurses who were staying overnight. All the guests had gathered by 1730 hrs, ~~and commenced~~. At 1800 hrs the pipe band played 'Retreat' which as usual thrilled the officers even more than the guests. Supper was a success both as an appetizing meal and as a social amusement, the tables being laid beneath the olive and fig trees in the officers lines. About 2030 hrs everyone drove to the Duke of Piedimonte's palace where the Pipe Band, RCASC band and a specially imported American Negro Band, an exceedingly good punch mixed by Major D.W. BANTON and a plentiful supply of Canadian Nurses combined to make a very happy evening. Guests included Brig. HALDENBY and Brig. I.S. JOHNSTON, DSO, Ed.

23 JULY 1944

Weather: Fair and very warm. Disposition: No change.

Formal and compulsory church parade this morning conducted by H/Capt. MacLEAN. The Bn looked very well, all turned out in K.D. After the service Brig. HALDENBY took the march past.

24 JULY 1944

Weather: Fair and very warm. Disposition: No change.

Warning order to move! Apparently this quiet peaceful life is about to end. Lt. R.F. GIRDLESTONE and 17 Highlanders, all Church of England, went to ROME where they were confirmed by the Bishop of LICHFIELD.

25 JULY 1944

Weather: Fair and warm. Disposition: No change.

C.O. attended Bde Comds conference 1000 hrs. At 1130 hrs Bn O.Gp held and told that Bn would move to area FOLIGNO in two phases, first staging area to be 10 miles SOUTH of ROME on Highway 6; Bn to move at 0600 hrs 26 Jul 44. Scat party left, consisting of 2 i/c and Coy reps plus pioneers with detectors.

26 JULY 1944

Weather: Fair and cloudy. Disposition: 10 miles SOUTH of ROME.

After 47 days in PIEDIMONTE area the Bn made an adm move via Highway 6 and CASSINO to the staging area. Bde Comd authorized leave to ROME this evening for 1/5 of Bn strength. As a security measure on this move all marks of identification were removed incl maple leaves, medal ribbons, unit titles etc.

27 JULY 1944

Weather: Fair and warm. Disposition: 10 miles NORTH of SPOLETTO.

At 0500 hrs Bn commenced move that took it through ROME, NARNE, TERNI, SPOLETTO to Conc area MONTEFALCO 10 miles NORTH of SPOLETTO. Head of col arrived 1330 hrs. Remainder of day spent in settling down. Surveillance of civilians is very strict because of large number of German agents known to be in this vicinity.

28 JULY 1944

Weather: Fair and cloudy. Disposition: SPOLETTO AREA.

A day of make and mend. The I Sec established an infm board where maps of all European fronts were set up. The C.O. convened a selection Board of Senior Officers and considered 6 applications for OCTU. H.M. the King visited fwd posns on 8th Army Front.

29 JULY 1944

Weather: Fair and warm. Disposition: No change.

In all about 50 civilian residents in the Bn area have been issued with passes to remain here. Normal trng today.

30 JULY 1944

Weather: Fair and very warm. Disposition: No change.

Bn on 12 hrs notice to move. Voluntary church parade at which Major D.B. DEEKS read the lesson. Major D.W. BANTON and Capt. PROCTOR succeeded in finding some ice for the "Dileas Bar". There were organized swim parades all day to the FLUVA TORENTA 15 miles away.

31 JULY 1944

Weather: Fair and considerably cooler. Disposition: No change.

Bn was put on 24 hrs notice to move; later this was changed to 12 hrs. Pay and Muster parade during afternoon. Bde O.Gp this morning at 0930 hrs where it was learned that Bde Gp was to move to conc area CASTILLINA in two phases, staging en route nr CASTIOLIONE DEL LAGO on the WEST shore of LAGO TRASIMENE. Bn O.Gp held at 2130 hrs. Bn will move as above before first light tomorrow.

Signed

DAMackenzie

(D. A. MacKENZIE) Lt-col,

Commanding Officer,

48th Highlanders of Canada.

1 AUGUST 1944

Place: NORTH of
SPOLETTO, ITALY
MR W8871

Weather: Fair and warm.

At 0445 hrs Col. MacKENZIE moved off in his jeep at the head of the Bn coln. The route had not been furnished by Bde until 0330 hrs so that route cards were only completed by the B.O.R. Staff and I Sec after the Bn moved; the cards were distributed by D.R's. The Bn drove WEST then SOUTH to MASSA MARTINA thence WEST to TODI and so on to PERUGIA along a good road to TAVERNELLO, then N.W. to Highway 71 to CASTIGLIONE del LAGO, where the Bde Gp halted at noon. Thus far it was a very orderly move. During the afternoon there were swimming parades to LAKE TRASIMERE ½ a mile away under Coy arrangements. At 2300 hrs the Bn moved off again, having been preceded by Maj. D.W. BANTON and his Scat party consisting of Coy reps, batmen, pioneers with detectors.

2 AUGUST 1944

Place: CASTELLINA
ITALY
MR Q8135

Weather: Fair and warm.

It was rather dark last night and this factor combined with a complicated route, a map of scale 1/250,000, and inadequate traffic control arrangements, the Bn was soon embarked on a voyage of discovery which happily ended in its return to the proper route before too much time was lost. From the S.P. in yesterdays area the Bn moved WEST to Highway 71 and NORTH through SIENA at dawn to the conc area here. The Bn passes a large part of its time living in vineyards and olive groves. This is no exception: No contact is permitted with civilians these days because of the proven prevalence of what are described as short and long range enemy agents. We are now only 25 miles SOUTH of FLORENCE. The day

was spent in rest and reorganization. The Div Comd has ordered slits to be dug - as though we needed practice in that.

3 AUGUST 1944

Weather: Fair and warm. Disposition: Nr CASTELLINA - M.R. Q8135

Lt-col CALDER, the Bde Comd called on Lt-col MacKENZIE this morning. The rifle Coys are enjoying or rather experiencing a little hardening trng, P.T., bayonet fighting and revision of small arms. This area was well and truly sewn with mines not yet cleared, so that in itself has restricted tactical trng. In the afternoon Col. MacKENZIE discussed the subject of POW escorts to CANADA WITH senior NCO's at his computer. The siesta from 1200 hrs - 1600 hrs is being observed very religiously except by the B.O.R. Staff. Lt PEARSON who was the Bn Sigs Offr till April this year paid a visit. The film, "Bell Bottom George" with George Formby was shown tonight. Major BANTON, undeterred by strict blackout regs had the screen placed inside a large marquee especially erected for the purpose; in this way no light was visible, as the screen faced a steep slope on which the audience was seated.

App No 1

4 AUGUST 1944

Weather: Fair.

The pipers have just played Caber Feidh. Col. MacKENZIE, the Adj. and R.S.M. Crossley made an inspection of Bn lines this morning. The bn is marking time here doing only trng of a hardening nature in the mornings and having a prolonged siesta in the afternoons. There was another show this evening. Offrs are messing with their men; Cpl GARVIE, the Offrs Mess Orderly finally reached the Bn. He dropped out of the convoy on the way to this area together with the Offrs Mess Kitchen and mess eqpt and has not been heard of until his arrival today. As a result Offrs' in Tac HQ are now messing at a proper table set in the somewhat elusive shade of an olive grove.

5 AUGUST 1944

Weather: Fair and warm.

Col. MacKENZIE left with the I.O., Lt McMURRICH, for an O Gp at Bde at 0900 hrs where it was learned that 1 Cdn Inf Bde would relieve 6 South African Div on night of 6/7 Aug 44. The 6 S.A.Div is now holding that part of FLORENCE SOUTH of the ARNO RIVER and the area EAST and WEST of the city. The fact that a Bde is relieving a Div indicates a planned thinning out process in front of FLORENCE which in turn has given rise to much conjecture as to whether FLORENCE NORTH of the ARNO will be assaulted by our forces. A meeting of officers was held at the Bn 1145 hrs concerning the move and at 1415 hrs Col. MacKENZIE, Lt. McMURRICH, Maj J.C. CLARKE, DSO, (O.C. HQ Coy) and a party of pioneers left for the area SOUTH of FLORENCE to recce and plan the Bn disposition there. The Colonel met the Bde Comd at 1615 hrs at MR 764631 and the Bde positions were made known. 48th will be in Bde reserve.

6 AUGUST 1944

Weather: Fair and very warm.

The morning was spent in preparation for the Bn's move into the line SOUTH of FLORENCE which was achieved without incident by 1600 hrs. "X Area", comprising personnel and vehs not essential for the maintenance and adm of the Bn in action, was left at CASTELLINA under the command of Lt. H.D. HELLIKER, who has been for several weeks acting in the capacity of Asst. Adj. Gen.

The Bn is now in FLORENCE, in the outskirts of that portion of the town that lies on the SOUTH of the River ARNO. As indicated above we are in Bde reserve. Tac HQ is on the reverse side of a steep hill. Maj E.C. RAWLINGS ("C" Coy) has established his H.Q. in a villa of some consequence overlooking the ARNO and NORTH FLORENCE. An Italian butler forms part of his menage. Everyone dug in this afternoon.

7 AUGUST 1944

Place: FLORENCE
ITALY
MR 782657

Weather: Fair and warm

No shells have fallen in the Bn area since our arrival. Our own Arty make quite a lot of noise and one hears a certain amount of MG 42 fire across the ARNO. It is difficult to believe that the German 4 Para Div is only a few thousand yards away. This sense of unreality is increased by the almost normal civilian activities on the SOUTH side of FLORENCE - barber shops, bars and restaurants are open. No contact with Italians is permitted and any persons attempting to cross the river are to be SHOT.

Major J.R.O. COUNSELL, O.C. Sp Coy, suddenly disclosed today that he has relatives living in FLORENCE on the SOUTH side of the river. He and Lt. McMURRICH paid them a visit in the evening. For some reason Maj. COUNSELL does not stress his Italian connection.

This morning Lt. McMURRICH, the I.O., established an O.P. on the terrace of VILLA CORONA overlooking FLORENCE. Demolitions were heard in the direction of the PONTE VECCHIO and other warlike noises in the city itself. The R.C.R. suffered casualties from mortar fire in their area, but our bn was unmolested.

Unit titles, Div patches, and CVSM ribbons as well as other marks of identification are to be removed by midnight.

Ref App __ 13 __

8 AUGUST 1944

Weather: Cloudy and sultry.

Col. MacKENZIE attended O Gp at Bde HQ at 0830 hrs. FLORENCE NORTH of the ARNO is now known to be held by elements of the German 4 Para Div, incl 12 Para Regt at FIESOLE, and 400 German military police. The Hippodrome and the historic fortress are now among his strong points.

Tonight, the night of 8/9 Aug 1 Cdn Div will be relieved by elements of 17th Inf Bde, 8 Ind Div and will proceed to staging area N.W. of SIENA. Order of march will be 48 Highrs, RCR, HQ 1 Cdn Inf Bde, HPE R.

Ref App __ 13 __

9 AUGUST 1944

Place: FLORENCE, ITALY
MR 655786. and
N.W. of SIENA, ITALY
MR 783203

Weather: Still fair and warm.

This morning 1 Cdn Div was relieved by 17 Indian Bde, although in actual *fact part* the relief was not carried out in the normal way, because at no time was an Indian seen near the Bn. For the greater confusion of the enemy the Bn moved off in packets of 50 vehicles each, the first leaving at 0400 hrs under Maj COUNSELL comprising all marching tps in TCV's, "F" & "A1" Ech vehs from Rifle Coys, Tac HQ, and RAP in that order. The 2nd group left at 0500 hrs and was under command Maj CLARKE and consisted of remainder of "F", A1 & A11 Ech. Col. MacKENZIE, with Jeep and 1 D.R. waited until the whole Bn had cleared the area, then headed for the staging area by passing the coln in route.

The whole Bn was conc in this staging area by 0830 hrs and, as reveille this morning was at 0230, there has been a good deal of "blanket pressing" all day. This evening the Bn almost to a man attended a movie shown by a neighbouring English unit. Reveille will be 2400 hrs tonight. Ref App __ 5 __

10 AUGUST 1944

Place: N.W. of
SIENA, ITALY
MR 783203

Weather: Rain till 0800 hrs, then fair.

The Bn left staging area N.W. of SIENA at 0045 hrs. The moon had not yet risen, the stars were obscured, traffic control was almost non-existent and maps were scale 1/250,000, so it is not surprising that some difficulty was experienced in following the route laid down by Lt-col CALDER, the Bde Comd. Control of our coln was further hampered by a multitude of other vehicles from almost every allied formation in ITALY. However, most of the Bn in intermittent packets had reached the conc area SOUTH of PERUGIA by 1000 hrs, and by nightfall the Bn was complete but for 2 A/Tk vehicles, which these days are breaking down with alarming regularity. Capt. H. McCUTCHEON is now commanding the A/Tk PI with Lt. E.C.D. WASHER as his 2 i/c.

There is a look of tragedy in the eyes of all officers tonight and a feeling of gloom and despondency in their hearts caused by the total destruction of the EFI whiskey ration today when the 60 cwt carrying it struck a mine on the way to this area.

Ref App _____

11 AUGUST 1944

Place: SOUTH of
PERUGIA,
ITALY
MR 687815

Weather: Cloudy and sultry. Rain in afternoon.

The Coys carried on trng of a hardening nature this morning and enjoyed the normal siesta in the afternoon. After lunch Majors D.W. BANTON, J.C. CLARKE and D.B. DEEKS left on 48 hrs leave in ROME. Maj E.C. RAWLINGS will be acting 2 i/c vice Maj BANTON, and Maj F.G. McLAREN who is attached to the Bn at the moment took over HQ Coy vice Maj CLARKE. Lt. H.D. HELLIKER arrived this evening with as large a part of the unit X Area personnel and equipment that his limited number of vehicles would carry. He is returning tomorrow with the rifle Coy 60 cwt vehs to pick up the remainder. X Area until now has remained at the area N.W. of SIENA, Nr CASTELLINA where it was left when the Bn moved into the line at FLORENCE on 6 Aug 44

Ref App __7__

12 AUGUST 1944

Weather: Fair.

Each evening the Coys send to the Adjt their trng syllabus for the following day. Col MacKENZIE has directed that all trng syllabi will emphasize hardening and increased S.A. efficiency.

Mr. GEORGE SINGLETON made himself popular today by the issue of beer, chocolate bars and cigarettes.

Col MacKENZIE held Orders today at 1600 hrs, but crime is at a low ebb these days and to Mr. CROSSLEY'S disappointment only 3 cases were brought before the C.O.

Ref App _____

13 AUGUST 1944

Weather: Fair and warm.

At 0930 hrs Padre MacLEAN conducted a voluntary service at which the Colonel and most of the ofhrs were present. In the afternoon Maj I.S. WALLACE dropped in to see Col MacKENZIE and stayed for a helping of bully beef. Maj BANTON and Maj CLARKE returned from leave with another Major, who was finally recognized as Maj DEEKS without

his mustache. Apparently he was set upon by his two companions at the APOLLO CLUB in ROME with such dire results to his mustache that the remnants had to be removed. A Rft draft arrived this evening consisting of Capt R. MURDOCH and 48 O.R's, most of whom had been with the Bn before.

Ref App 10

14 AUGUST 1944

Weather: Fair and warm - very warm.

The Bn was paid today by the Bde Paymaster, Capt GRANT, who acted in conjunction with Capt L.W. STEVENSON our new paymaster who arrived last night and was introduced to the Colonel this morning by Capt HECTOR MITCHELL (former paymaster).

At 1000 hrs Brig CALDER arrived and was followed 15 minutes later by the Corps Comd Lt-Gen E.L.M. BURNS. Col MacKENZIE introduced Maj D.W. BANTON, Maj J.C. CLARKE, Capt E.M. CHILDS (Q.M.), Capt W.G. BURKE-ROBERTSON (Adjt) and R.S.M.

CROSSLEY and without further ado the General, the Brig, the Colonel and the R.S.M. proceeded on a tour of the Bn area inspecting Coy trng. He congratulated the det Comd of the A/Tk PI who was directly responsible for the destruction of 2 German S.P. guns in the LIRI VALLEY in May. The Gen was particularly impressed by the small arms circus displayed by "A" & "B" Coys. His comments on the Bn were entirely complimentary. In the midst of the inspection Maj-Gen VOKES, the G.O.C. 1 Cdn Div arrived with characteristic suddenness and joined the inspecting party.

Ref App

15 AUGUST 1944

Weather: Fair and warm.

The majority of the men in each rifle Coy left at 0730 hrs under command of Maj E.C. RAWLINGS to carry out a River Crossing Exercise.

Col MacKENZIE, Maj BANTON 2 i/c, the R.S.M., and 32 O.R's proceeded to an R.V. where other groups representative of each Bn in 1 Cdn Div also gathered to meet Lt-Gen Sir Oliver LEESE, the Army Comd. The general spoke briefly of the past exploits of the Div and of 1 Cdn Inf Bde and made particular and pointed reference to the 48th Highrs "magnificent achievement" in the LIRI VALLEY and at the HITLER LINE in May.

At 1400 hrs the C.O. left to conduct a Bde study group on River crossing, the preparation of which has been continually interrupted in the past 36 hrs by the arrival of high ranking officers. Early this evening came word that the scat party will move tomorrow morning.

Ref App

16 AUGUST 1944

Weather: Fair and very warm.

At 0730 hrs Maj BANTON left for parts unknown with his normal scat party. Coys carried out normal hardening trng and made preliminary preparations for moving.

Col MacKENZIE held Orderly Room this morning at 0900 hrs. Cases, and interviews requiring his attention took up two hours. The remainder of the day passed without incident.

Ref App 1

17 AUGUST 1944

Weather:- Fair and warm.

At 0930 hrs Col MacKENZIE held an O Gp at which he disclosed that the Bn will move tonight to a conc area nr JESI about 110 miles N.E. of here. The route will be X road 687817 to Route 75 to FOLIGNO to Route 3 to rd junc R 9913 to Route 76 to Dis P at S 381368 nr JESI. From FOLIGNO the route carries us through NOCERA, FOSSATO, FABRIANO, SERA, JESI. The remainder of the day was spent in preparation to move and at 2220 hrs the Colonel led the Bn across the S.P. at X-roads 687817. Very rigorous security measures are still in force. Divisional veh markings are still non-existent but for the sake of

convoy control all vehs are marked in chalk with the Serial No. C/32. Only side lights may be shown.

X Area comprising 86 personnel and vehicles remained behind under the command of Lt H.D. HELLIKER who for this purpose has been given the powers of a det comd. Maj F.G. McLAREN will command 1 Cdn Inf Bde X Area and at the same time direct and administer the Bde NCO School at which 10 candidates from each unit will attend. These candidates are chosen from those who were attending the School at PIEDIMONTE and who did not complete the course owing to the movement of the Div from that area in July.

Ref App _____

18 AUGUST 1944

Place: N.W. of JESI,
ITALY

MR 276472

Weather:- Rain and later fair.

The move last night was somewhat more prolonged than was expected. It took 14 hrs to bring the Bn to the present area, this entirely due to the congested state of the roads en route, which caused many halts. Convoy control was excellent and only 4 vehicles failed to arrive with the Bn - 2 A/Tk 15 cwts with guns, 1 HQ Coy 60 cwt and "B" Coy F Ech 15 cwt. The afternoon was consumed with digging, camouflaging, eating and sleeping. The gentlemen in grey are only 7 miles from here and we can hear the noise of their shells bursting some distance away. Our own guns are as noisy as ever. The I Sec commenced a systematic check of civilians living in the area and passes were issued to all over the age of five! They must seek permission of the I.O. in order to leave the area.

Ref App 9

19 AUGUST 1944

Weather:- Fair and warm,

The Bn is confined to Coy localities, no contact with civilians is allowed, except by one "purchasing" officer appointed to obtain fruit and vegetables from the district. NO vehs may be moved without specific permission from the Adj. Guards consist of 2 men per PI with one offr per coy available at all times. The Coys have spent the day on make and mend, checking battle kit deficiencies, and doing P.T. and bayonet fighting. Map Refs of Coy localities are as follows:- Tac HQ - 276472, "A" Coy - 272476, "B" Coy - 273475, "C" Coy - 275474, "D" Coy - 272472, Sp & HQ Coy - 278471.

Ref App _____

20 AUGUST 1944

Weather:- Fair and warm.

Voluntary church parades were held this morning for A, B & C Coys at 0830 hrs, Tac HQ and D Coy at 0930 hrs and Sp & HQ Coys 1030 hrs. An attempt was made to hold R.C. Mass for Italian civilians in the area but the local priest, being aged and infirm, was not able to conduct a second service on an empty stomach. At 1500 hrs all offrs attended a discussion at Tac HQ on the problems of a silent night attack to include the crossing of a water obstacle. Sup arms reps were there also, incl those from "C" Sqn 12 R.T.R. with whom the Bn trained at PIEDIMONTE and Maj RUTHERFORD 2nd Fd Regt R.C.A. The discussion took practical shape at 1830 hrs when the Coys rallied at an FUP and later carried out a silent attack working from high ground NORTH of the Bn area towards the camp. During the evening an extensive issue of maps was made to all sub units. What was thought to be a hostile wireless transmitter was heard by several of the Signallers but an investigation by the S.O., Lt ROLAND, revealed nothing. Lt H. HOFFMAN, O.C. 17 PI which has been gallantly defending VENAFRO AIRPORT since 23 Jul 44 arrived today to find out whether his men would be required again in this war in an operational role. Frequent attempts have been made to have this PI returned to the Bn until finally yesterday "higher

authority" confessed that it was all a mistake, that the PI had in fact only been required for a few days (they have now been there a month), and that it might now be relieved of its duties! Lt HOFFMAN'S report is attached.

Ref App _ 15, 6, 8, 11 _____

21 AUGUST 1944

Weather:- Fair and warm.

Oftrs this morning held discussions with their men of the points brought out in the night exercise held last evening. There was to have been a further discussion on that subject among the oftrs at 1600 hrs but as the Colonel was called to an O Gp at Bde HQ this was cancelled. In order to promote better understanding and mutual confidence between the Bn officers and the Tk oftrs who will be acting in support, it was arranged that the tp officers from "C" Sqn should come today on 24 hrs attachment to the Coys. The 2 i/c of the Sqn is spending today at Tac HQ. Lts MacKENZIE, FARLEY, TARBY and HILL went to A,B,C,D Coys respectively - the Coys with which they will work during the next action, it is presumed. Unit recce parties have been ordered to stand by ready to move. That famous FOO, Capt CON HARRINGTON 2nd Fd Regt, who has given the Bn such long and faithful arty sp since last January arrived together with the Arty Rep, Maj RUTHERFORD.

Ref App _____

22 AUGUST 1944

Weather:- Fair and warm.

At 0815 hrs the Colonel spoke to all Regtl officers and the reps from Sup arms and put them as completely into the picture as was possible so far as the Corps objective is concerned and outlined in some detail the immediate operational plan for the Bn. At 0940 hrs the Colonel left for Main Corps HQ, returned, had lunch, and went off again to Bde HQ to attend an O Gp. At 1430 hrs Capt JOHN CLARKSON dropped in and was followed shortly by Brig I.S. JOHNSTON, DSO, ED, who, is looking so refreshed and so fit that one would scarcely recognize in him the haggard man who brought our victorious Bn out of the line in June.

At 1715 hrs Col MacKENZIE held an O Gp concerning a tactical move fwd this evening to an assembly area SOUTH of the METAURO RIVER. The marching tps left under command of Maj E.C. RAWLINGS at 2100 hrs, the order of march being C, A, B, D, Tac HQ. The Dis P is rd junc 190535 for marching tps and rd junc 201535 for F Ech which does not leave till early tomorrow morning.

Ref App ___ 14 _____

23 AUGUST 1944

Place: S.E. of
ORCIANO,
ITALY
MR 182562

Weather: Very warm and fair.

Tps spent morning resting after march. C.O. went to Bde at 0900. Message was sent to Coys to keep movt down to a minimum. Later an order was sent that there would be no move from this position until after 2000 hrs. C.O. and I.O. left for O Gp at Bde at 1600 hrs. This O Gp was delayed and did not commence until 1700 hrs following which C.O. had to remain at Bde. I.O. returned to give O Gp to Bn. Patrols to recce routes and approaches to crossings over the METAURO RIVER were "Teed up". Lt. HUNTER, the Scout PI officer, liaised with the POLES giving our intentions; he was NOT able to contact the tps through whom our patrols would have to pass. C.O. returned at 1845 and answered Coy Comdrs queries. An R.C.E. oftr arrived to work with our patrols. At 2000 hrs C.O. and I.O. went ahead to new area S. of MONTEMAGGIORE. In spite of warning from higher fmn vehicles were moving too quickly over observed roads and the resultant dust provided the enemy with good targets and good indications of tp concentrations in this area. C.O. and I.O. went

into MONTEMAGGIORE and had a look at the ground before light failed. Col MacKENZIE was a little unhappy about liaison with Poles and sent I.O. to contact the Polish Infantry and clarify our intentions. This was accomplished.

F Ech moved off at 0200 hrs this morning without incident not reaching the marching tps till 1200 hrs due to congestion of roads. B Ech under the command of Major J.C. CLARKE and consisting of 121 all ranks and 19 vehs, was left N.W. JESI MR276472 the area vacated by the rest of the Bn yesterday. The B Ech of 1 Cdn Inf Bde, R.C.R. and H. & P.E.R. concentrated in the area occupied by our unit B Ech during the early part of the morning.

24 AUGUST 1944

Place: S. MONTEMAGGIORE,
ITALY

MR 153612

Weather: Fair and oppressively warm.

Patrol left at 0430 hrs and returned with good infm regarding routes and approaches. The marching tps arrived in the new area S. of MONTEMAGGIORE at 0130 hrs. There was some H.E. during the march in and the C.O. of the 17th Fd Regt RCA plus others of this unit were casualties, the former fatal. Tps dug in for the night. Our enemy sprinkled the reverse slope we were on and the approaches to it all day and some casualties were sustained. Eight men were evacuated incl 1 killed 6 wounded and Maj D.B. DEEKS who was sick. Capt Gordon PROCTOR took command of "B" Coy. At 0930 hrs an O.P. was manned in the town and observation was made of the river METAURO itself. Most of the movement observed was that of Italian civilians. "A" and "B" Coys put out patrols to watch crossing places; these were "laid on" to familiarize Coys with approach routes, FUP's, etc and to ensure that TADESCHI did not tamper with crossings. At 1530 hrs these patrols were relieved by "C" and "D" Coys respectively. Orders were sent that civilians were to be held in check. This necessitated considerable work for "I" and Prov Sec's and resulted in the detention of some fifty Italians including some who had left families on the NORTH side of the River. We were not of course allowed to give them any indication of when they would be released. All ranks were ordered to check their essential battle kit and to get as much rest as possible in view of the following night's operation. At 1600 hrs an O Gp was held at Bde. The C.O. & I.O. left Bn area at 1515 hrs. The drive to Bde was more than unpleasant as two thirds of the route was in plain sight of the enemy and he did considerable firing at certain points during the trip. The return journey was equally nasty. No great changes in general plans were given at this O Gp. H hour was given as 2235, 25 Aug 44. Details of change in H hour, Artillery programme, and Traffic control were to reach the Coys later.

Ref App _____

25 AUGUST 1944

Weather: Fair and warm.

The C.O. went forward to both the Bn and the Arty O.P's to become thoroughly familiar with the ground. The order arrived that units would put up all div and regti identification at the last minute prior to H hour. The C.O. held an O Gp at 1100 hrs. The following is a resume of infm given at this O Gp: Infm Enemy - Little known of definite enemy positions on the NORTH side of river. 71 Div still holding gd on our front, possible enemy MG forts on our immediate front and holding the line of the VIA FLAMINIA. Some signs of 1 Para Div on our (proposed) right flank. Infm Own Tps - An S.P. bty of 51st A/T, a sqn of 12 R.T.R., 1st & 2nd Arty (RCA) Regts, Cdn Agra. Object - 1st Bde to cross R. METAURO form br head break out from this br head and consolidate on high ground overlooking the R. FOGLIA. Crossing of river, 48 Highrs right, R.C.R. left, H.P.E. in reserve and to mop up. Breakout 48 Highrs. Intention The 48 Highrs will carry out a four phase operation as follows:- Phase I: Cross the river METAURO and gain line of VIA FLAMINIA. Phase II: Cross VIA FLAMINIA and penetrate to line of rd from x rds 128642 to rd junc 121636. Phase III: Cross previous line and consolidate. Phase IV: Breakout to high ground overlooking FOGLIA river and the

GOTHIC LINE. Method & Plan - (1) Bn to cross river at 2 pts crossing (2) Right - "B" & "D" Coys at 142634 crossing to be known as DOVE A. (3) Left - A & C Coys at 138628 crossing to be known as DOVE A-1. (4) Axis of advance for B & D Coys: rd junc 134639 to x rds 129642 to rd junc 114645. (5) Axis of advance for A & C Coys: House at pt 106 (125638) to track junc 117644 to track junc 114647. (6) Assembly areas - present areas. (7) FUP's - "A" Coy - 141621, "B" Coy - 144629, "C" Coy 144626, "D" Coy - 147627. (8) Route from assembly area to FUP: S.P. at rd junc 154614 to track junc 155617 to x rds 153622 to track junc 150626 to track junc 148625 to FUP's. (9) Order of march to FUP - A, B, Scouts, pioneers, Tac HQ, C, MMG, D Coy. (10) Timings: "A" Coy cross S.P. 2130 hrs, "B" and Tac follow. "C" Coy cross S.P. 2215 hrs, MMG and "D" Coy follow. (11) Phase I "On APPALACHIAN" to be given to signify assaulting Coys on objective. Fwd Coys cross river at 2310 hrs, rear coys cross river at 2345 hrs. Liaison with R.C.R. at 128629. Two dets of our pioneers to sweep rd for vehs from 141633 to 134638 all this to be done in silence. Phase II - (12) Cross VIA FLAMINIA at 2400 and secure line x rds 129643 to 121636. Success signal for this is "On QUEEN ST". Rate of advance to be 100x in 6 min, this latter ties in with Arty programe. Res Coys move to VIA FLAMINIA when assaulting Coys report themselves clear.

Liaison with R.C.R. was est at 121636. (13) Phase III: Object to secure br head psns Coy objectives: "B" - Pt 205 - 118648, "D" - 126644, "C" - 123641, "A" - Pt 264 - 114646, Tac - House pt 104 - 114646. Rate of advance 100x in 6 min "On DUNDAS ST" to be given when above objectives reached. Arty will support until 0300 hrs, repeats to be given if asked for. Liaison with R.C.R. est at 108646. (14) Phase IV: Break out by "C" Coy with in sp "A" Sqn 12 RTR; this to be carried out NOT before 0630 hrs and NOT later than 0730. C.O. to meet C & D Coy and A Sqn Comdrs in A Coy area and tanks to be vetted here. Tentative objectives - "C" Coy pt 218 - 109652, "D" Coy pt 171 - 114654, no firm plan till time for ground recce. (15) Admin: (a) 24 hrs rations to be carried (b) Boots to be muffled and faces blackened (c) R.A.P. to be est at 145629 to move to 134638 (a) Tac vehicles and F Ech to report to veh assembly area 136638 (e) MMG's to move up to "C" Coy to support Phase IV. (16) Inter Com: Slidex to be used. Verrey light as reserve signal for gaining objectives. The Brig visited the O.P. with C.O. at 1300 hrs. Casualties this day were only two evacuations, none wounded. Maj CLARKE came fwd at 1130 hrs and returned at 1330. Final operation order for 'OLIVE' arrived at 1700 hrs. The Bn prepared for move and moved according to plan.

Lt. W.T. PENTLAND returned from Coy Comds Course CMTCC, having had his kit pretty thoroughly rifled en route. He was immediately dispatched to HQ 1 Cdn Corps where he will be taken on strength. According to him his chief duty is to keep up to date the BGS's map. Ref App _____

26 AUGUST 1944

Place: ADVANCING NORTH
of METAURO
RIVER,
ITALY

Weather: Fair and warm.

The first three phases of the operation went according to plan. Not one shot was fired in anger except by the seven regiments of arty who carpeted our advance so effectively. By 0230 hrs 'coys were on objectives of phase III and Tac was at 127641. During the move fwd to these positions some of the "B" Coy tps lost direction but were restored to their Coy. One P.W. was sent back by "B" Coy, an officer of 71 Div; he was loath to give infm and was conducted back to Bde. Tanks were slow in coming up and it was not possible to "tee up" "C" Coys break out according to plan. Col D.A. MACKENZIE moved fwd to "A" Coy area sending "A" Coy to S. MICHELE at MR 108652 where he recc'd ground on which to base his next moves. Moving "D" Coy to 171 on right there was considerable difficulty in

recognizing ground features from the map. At 1130 hrs the C.O. moved fwd to area 105668 to liaise with the tanks. "C" Coy had moved into objective 093677 taking P.W. and then being subjected to heavy small arms fire. Other Coy dispositions were: "A" Coy - 185 - 097665, "B" Coy - 105668, "D" Coy - 159 - 109661. The I.O. was sent fwd at the C.O.'s order to find the tank sqn comd and to get him to the C.O. The C.O. made a recce with tanks and an attack was "teed up" for 1530 hrs. "C" Coy however needed assistance before this time and tanks and S.P's came to support them and smoke them out. At 1700 hrs the H.P.E. went through us followed by tanks.

Ref App _____

27 AUGUST 1944

Place: ITALY MR 099659

Weather: Fair and warm.

Col MacKENZIE spent the night with the Coys and there was reasonable quiet. At 0700 hrs he returned to Tac which was still in the SAN MICHELE area 105655. During the night some 14 P.W. of 71 Div had been rounded up by A, B and C Coys; they were briefly interrogated by the I.O. and sent on to Bde P.W. post. As Bde were mobile during the night they were held until morning. At 0845 hrs the C.O. moved fwd to Coy areas with essential elts of Tac the remainder to be brought up by Maj COUNSELL. These latter moved up at 1145 hrs. From this new Tac at 099659 new posns were pointed *out* to the Coy Comdrs on the ground and the C.O. then went fwd with his rover set in the jeep to see the new positions and recce a new Tac. At 1300 hrs two more P.W. of 71 Div were brought in by "C" Coy making the total to date - 29 P.W. Coys commenced the move fwd at 1400 hrs and Bn was in new posn area 093676 by 1500 hrs. The C.O. again went fwd to recce new positions and Bn again moved at 1630 hrs to area 087682. At this time H.P.E. were still reported advancing and we hoped to spend a night's rest here. At 1900 hrs orders received to move up as close as possible to the HPE this to be done if possible in daylight. The C.O. went fwd with the I.O. where he was able to see the ground on which the two fwd HPE Coys were fighting at this time. The C.O. sent I.O. to bring Coy Comdrs fwd to R.V. with him while he went off to R.V. further down the road with the Brig. The Brig could not get fwd till later than he had hoped and finally Coy Comdrs returned to Tac preparing their Coys for a night attack. Maj COUNSELL came fwd and listened in on the last of the Brig's O Gp, raced back to put Coy Comdrs briefly in the picture and to start the column fwd. This was accomplished and the C.O. met the coln on the road at 086689. The plan as laid down by the Brig at this time was to have our Bn occupy positions as follows: "A" Coy - pt 156 - 068745, "B" Coy - 080743, "C" Coy - 070730, "D" Coy - 072728. All Bn Comdrs R.V. with Brig at HPE fwd Tac MR 072708. The route to these posns was NORTH to track junc 077711 follow track left to crossing of river at 071719 turn right at rd junc 069720 follow rd to rd junc 072722 turn left follow to river 072724. After R.V. with Brig Bn set out for above positions; order of march B, Tac, A, D, C Coys.

Major D.B. DEEKS was evacuated to 1 Cdn Gen Hosp 24 Aug 44 with jaundice and was to have been further evac by air to CASERTA today, but succeeded in talking himself out of it at the last moment and came back to the Bn today. In the meantime Capt PROCTOR has taken over Maj DEEK'S Coy ("B" Coy) and will continue to command it at least until the completion of the present engagement. Maj DEEKS is staying at Tac HQ with Maj BANTON, the 2 i/c and the Coy 2 i/c's who are L.O.B. during the current action.

"B" Ech under command of Maj J.C. CLARKE moved 25 miles fwd in the record time of 6½ hrs to SALTARA about a mile NORTH of the METAURO river crossed by the Bn on the night of 25/26 Aug. B Ech is still some 7 miles behind the Bn but at least they have the thrill of hearing our own guns once again. En route to the SALTARA area tonight the Col was strated by enemy aircraft and 2 casualties were caused by A.P. bombs dropped on the road. The term "B" Ech Commando" is now one of the highest honour and respect.

Ref App _____

28 AUGUST 1944

Place: SOUTH of
RIVER FOGLIA,
ITALY
MR 069721

Weather: Fair and warm.

This day, in its entirety, will perhaps along with 25 Dec 43, go down as one of the most difficult and unpleasant that this Bn has had to experience. Leaving the H.P.E. Tac to occupy the positions mentioned in the previous day's diary at 0200 hrs of this day the head of our coln viz "B" Coy came under fire upon reaching pt 072722, shortly after this small arms fire came from several positions on the high ground around us. The Bn was taken by surprise and tactical deployment was difficult. Within an hour the Bn was disposed generally / with "B" Coy, less those who withdrew, pinned down in area 072722, "A" Coy and elements of Tac in area of village at 070720, "C" Coy withdrawn intact to 078714 with scouts, pioneers and remainder of Tac in same area, "D" Coy in area of house 075717. The C.O. spent some time in re-organizing and then went to "D" Coy posns, where he could observe and fight the Bn. When light came movement between the fwd Tac area of the village and the "D" Coy posn was impossible as was, in fact, all movt in the village area. During the day the C.O. made every effort to get tanks up to ease the situation.

Intercommunication and liaison with tanks was extremely difficult. During the day the Arty, under the direction of Capt HARRINGTON, observing from "D" Coy, scored some excellent hits on enemy in entrenched posns to the left and fwd of the village. Our own mortars engaged further similar targets to the N.E. of the village posns; in spite of this support it was necessary to muster all available personnel to prepare an all round defence of the village area. During the afternoon Lt. KILIORAN "B" Coy was hit and later evacuated with a serious eye wound. Sgt VAUGHAN, D.E., who was in the village area, assisted by willing sigs personnel, did a fine job of aiding the wounded. Some of "B" Coy casualties were evacuated during the afternoon and stretcher parties were fired on by the enemy. During the morning Capt BEAL, "A" Coy Comd, together with Capt LEADBETTER our tank liaison offr set out from the village area to join the C.O. and tie up a tank and infantry attack. It took them some time to traverse the 500x of ground and on a score of occasions they had to lie low or crawl to escape the sniping. Capt BEAL returned to the village later riding in a tank and here briefed his PI Comds. To clarify the picture as far as tank support was concerned: A composite sqn was mustered by the C.O. 12 R.T.R. comprising all the remaining fit tanks of the regt - these were Shermans and Churchill and numbered 11. These were to support "A" Coy in an attack to go in at 1830 hrs. Only two of these viz "A" Sqn had worked with the Bn before. Before reaching the village area where "A" Coy was, 1 Churchill was K.O'd by an enemy A/Tk gun and 1 Churchill and two Shermans were ditched in the small river SOUTH of the village. In the village itself a Churchill was hit by a 2" mortar or a rifle grenade which landed directly in the turret, another was knocked out by shellfire, this left five tanks one of which was the Sqn Comds which remained in the village area during the earlier stages and went fwd later and four Churchills which got up with "A" Coy and gave them excellent support. It was approx 1950 hrs when "A" Coy and tanks moved fwd the infantry following the Churchills. Lt KILGOUR was forward on the right with 9 PI, his first objective being pt 146 MR 067722 and his second objective pt 162 MR 065723. Lt GIRDLESTONE on the left with same objectives and Capt MURDOCH in reserve. Shortly after setting out Lt KILGOUR lost one complete sec from enemy shelling, following this one of the four tanks was knocked out. Both fwd PIs kept moving fwd till Lt KILGOUR found himself on the first objective alone, he then joined Lt GIRDLESTONE to whose posn Lt KILGOUR's Sgt brought up the remainder of his P1. In the Coy Comds absence these two offr "teed up" an attack on 162, they were almost on the objective when our own arty fire came down on it called for by Capt BEAL the Coy Comd. Lt KILGOUR eventually got this stopped. After this the enemy

infiltrated back again. Lt GIRDLESTONE then dug his PI in about 100x S. of pt 162 and Lt KILGOUR's withdrew to a posn near 146. Tanks tried to shoot up houses at pt 146 itself; Capt BEAL the Coy Comd came fwd, attempts were made for further attacks but not carried through as he did not have the strength in numbers to do the job. During the evening Capt PROCTOR came in to fwd Tac. He had been pinned down the entire day by snipers and had dug himself a 1 foot slit trench with a celluloid protractor.

Ref App _____

29 AUGUST 1944

Weather: Fair and warm.

The battle continued with "D" Coy moving up and consolidating 200x EAST of pt 156. A patrol was sent out at 0300 hrs to 156 and found no enemy. "A" Coy pulled back to the village area. In the early morning "C" Coy moved up to 162 and "D" Coy took up position on pt 156 at 0800 hrs. The C.O. planned to move the Coys to the original objectives but in view of a possible relief Coys stood pat. At 0830 hrs the remainder of Tac moved fwd to village area and a good breakfast was cooked for the hungry 'garrison'. F Ech came up to former "D" Coy area at 1330 hrs. Four P.W. were brought in this afternoon and 5 Italian partisans with stars and stripes draped over their shoulders carrying GERMAN 98 Gewehr rifles. All of these were treated as P.W. and shipped to Bde. "D" Coy was responsible for the four P.W. who were identified as 4 Para Regt 1st Para Div. It was decided, in view of the relief to be made before 2400 hrs by W.N.S.R., that a small command post of C.O., Battle Adj, I.O., and necessary sigs would be kept in village area. At 1730 hrs the I.O. was called away to Bde returning at 2030 hrs with patrol instructions. These were laid on and Lt HUNTER with 13 of the scouts and snipers left at 2330 hrs to recce the river FOGLIA and to search out the enemy on the far side.

Ref App __1_____

30 AUGUST 1944

Place: Nr VILLA GRANDE

ITALY

MR 092688

Weather: Very warm, roads clouded with dust.

At 0100 hrs our relief was completed by W.N.S.R., the Bn moved independently by Coys on a 1½ hours march to the rest area near V.GRANDE. Ech vehs arrived in this area at 0900 hrs. Traffic was being routed on one down and one up route both of these being very congested. The I.O. and I Cpl remained in area 070720 to get news from incoming patrol. By 0830 hrs there had been no word from them and I.O. attempted to get word back to the C.O. and to Bde. At 0900 hrs the I.O. started back; there had been no news from the patrol, no sure indication that the wireless message had reached the C.O., and a possible chance that the patrol had come in and headed for the new area. Upon return the C.O. ordered the I.O. to go back and make a search for the patrol. This was done but while one went up the up route, the other came down the down route. Upon investigation it was found that Lt HUNTER i/c patrol had given what infm he had to III Bde and, misunderstanding the arrangements had not come in to the I.O. but returned to the old "D" Coy - Tac area hoping to find instructions on route to, and whereabouts of, the new area. During the afternoon the EFI issue was given out. All ranks spent the remainder of the day 'at ease'. "B" Ech moved to join the Bn today, arriving about 0200 hrs this morning.

Ref App _____

31 AUGUST 1944

Weather: Decidedly hot and humid.

After a good nights rest, with the EFI issue in many cases supplying an unwarranted sedative, the Bn spent a day inspecting kits, making up shortages, and general reorganization. During the morning the C.O. went out with the Brig and walked the course of

the battle. The Brig returned to Tac HQ and had lunch with the C.O. A party consisting of Lt GIRDLESTONE and Sgt PIKE of "A" Coy with Pte O'BRIEN of the "I" Sec returned to 'the village' and pt 156 to obtain all available data on Jerry's weapon pits, siting etc, which infm was later passed to Bde. At 1500 hrs, 15 reinforcements and 2 Offrs reinfts arrived from AVELLINO. LT HELLIKER came up from X area. A meeting was called by the C.O. for 1900 hrs. At this meeting the C.O. mentioned several points for the Coy Comds consideration. He called a 'lessons learned' study period for all offrs of the Bn at 0900 hrs tomorrow. He asked Coy Comds to consider honours and awards and to have them prepared by the following evening. All present were told to consider themselves on 2 hrs notice to move, and F Ech to take down canvas, in case of a sudden move. The C.O. passed a message to all ranks from the Army Commander complimenting *us* on the fine show of the past few days.

Ref App _____

Signed

Damackenzie

(D.A.MACKENZIE) Lt-col,

Commanding Officer,

48th Highlanders of Canada.

1 SEPTEMBER 1944

Place: ITALY

MR 095695

1/100,000

sheet 109

Weather: Warm and sunny.

The present area has no water sup suitable for bathing - a common occurence at this time of year. However, the mobile bath was at the disposal of the bn all day and the coys after 48 hrs rest and a good bath are feeling full of beans, and ready for what may betide. The whiskey, replacing that which was blown up by a mine last month, was issued to the offrs and sgts today. The CO, Col. MacKENZIE made several changes today among the offrs. Lt. H.D.HELLIKER, who has been in charge of X Area since 18 Aug 44 is now T.O., Lt. R.W. JOHNSTON going to the Scout & Sniper pl. The former Scout ofrr, Lt. W.A.HUNTER is now commanding a pl in "A" Coy. X Area is now under *the* Aegis of Lt. N.H.McMURRICH who has been I.O. since those grim days on CEMETERY HILL late in December '43. He is responsible for the admn of X Area incl 64 ORs and 25 vehs and also for the proper disposal or personal effects of those who are killed in action or reported missing. Lt. H.W.D.KILGOUR is the new I.O. Orders have just arrived putting the bn on 2 hours notice to move.

Ref APP _____

2 SEPTEMBER 1944

Weather: Sunny and warm.

The CO was called to Bde at 0830 hrs. On his return the bn was ordered to move with the Bde Gp to a staging area 016782-012801. At 1130 hrs the bn moved in TCVS, order of march was TAC HQ, B,A,D,C Coys,RAP & F Ech. On arrival at the staging area the tps stood by the vehs awaiting further orders to move. In the afternoon the CO went to Bde for orders, and on his return the bn was ordered with the Bde Gp to seize a Br-hd over the RIVER CONCA. The move was done in TCVs as far as codename BOBSVILLE (007818) and from there by march route. The order of march in the bn, moving with the RCR as advanced gd, was C Coy with u/c 2 dets mortars (SLI) and 2 A/Tk guns, TAC HQ, Scouts & Snipers pl, pnrs, B,D,A Coys and F Ech: To facilitate liaison with the RCR. Capt. W.J. LEADBEATER was sent with an #18 set to move with the RCR TAC. The route was up "BOTTLE ROUTE" through BENDUFF (012801), BOBSVILLE(007818), BUNGLASS(001827) to MR 991841 where the bn debussed and took up def posns at 0030

hrs A Coy at track junc 993844, B Coy at 992844, D Coy at rd & track junc 994838 and C Coy at 990840.

[right margin: APPX "A" APPX "B"; (3008s & 3009s); PART II Orders.; No 6 9 d/1 Sep44; APPX "C"]

It was decided for the better admn liaison between Bde and the three bns to have the three Adjts and their staff's attached to main Bde HQ during the actual period when the Bde is in contact with the enemy. Accordingly today Capt. W.G. BURKE-ROBERTSON, the BOR HUP and 1 DR moved with Main Bde HQ. The various components parts of the bn during action now consist of TAC HQ (and on occasion rear TAC HQ as well), F Ech, BOR at Main Bde HQ, B Ech and X Area, which is likely to be 40-60 miles behind the fwd elements of the bn and is gpd with the other unit X Areas of the Bde under Comd of Major F.G. MacLAREN who is also i/c of the Bde NCO School.

Ref App _____

3 SEPTEMBER 1944

Place: ITALY MR 979850

957876

Weather: Cloudy in morning with rain, afterwards clear.

The bn halted in this area to permit the RCR to deploy as advanced gd, and then moved by march route to rd & track junc 987841. Thence NW along track to CASTLEBRIDGE 977854 where coys took up posns at 0145 hrs. A Coy at 981855, B Coy at 981861, C Coy at 976854, D Coy & TAC at 979850. On the RCR reporting no opposition the bn moved NORTH along the main rd to rd junc 983867 thence WEST to CROSS(969868) and SOUTH to CRAIG (967862) where it arrived at 0330 hrs. All vehs were routed SOUTH from CASTLEBRIDGE to avoid a blown br at 982867, rejoining the marching tps at CRAIG. Here the coys were deployed, A Coy to 965868, B Coy to 96 8869, C Coy to 967852, D Coy at 967859 and TAC taking up posn at 967852. From CRAIG the bn moved to its final obj the br-hd over the RIVER CONCA which it est at 0600 hrs. TAC HQ was located in a lge house at 954875 and D Coy at 953871. Here contact with the enemy was made by the RCR, stopping our advance and allowing rations to be brought up and the men some much needed sleep. At 1030 hrs Lt. BELL came down from Bde with orders that the H&PER would move through the RCR along the coast rd on the backs of tks and in Armd carriers followed by the 48ths on TCVS. Timings and details to follow later. As a result, our TCVs were brought fwd to each coy and the bn prepared for a dash through to RIMINI. By afternoon, it was evident that the RCR had met strong opposition and at appx 1400 hrs the CO was called to Bde. At 1550 hrs Lt. JOHNSTON was sent on patrol to recce the coast rd, returning at 1800 hrs to report the rd passable to vehs and enemy posns at 942898, with SP A/Tk guns and MMGs.

Ref App _____

4 SEPTEMBER 1944

Place: ITALY

1/100,000

MR 933878

sheet 109

Weather: Fair & warm.

Early in the morning the CO went to Bde, returning at 0915 hrs to hold his O Gp with his coy comds who had sent the night at TAC HQ in order to be on hand. The plan was to move up behind the H&PER who were to seize MARYLAND (SNUFF) a ridge at 921882, on the left of the RCR. The 48th were then to pass through them on an axis RELIANCE (SALWAY) 847898, ROC (SMOKIES) 893901, KITTYHAWK (JUTE) 875925. At 1010 hrs the bn moved off; D Coy leading to area 931879 where it married up with B Sqn 48 RTR cond by Major JOSS. B Coy moved to area 958877, C Coy to 936875, A Coy to 937878 with TAC HQ at 933878. On arrival here the CO together with Lt-col. CAMERON of the H&PER observed

the progress of the latter's bn, during the remainder of the morning. In the afternoon the bn area was subjected to considerable shell and mortar fire and at 1515 hrs Major E.C. RAWLINGS, C Coy comd, was fatally wounded as he left TAC HQ, dying shortly afterwards in the RAP. At 1600 hrs Capt.A.P.BATES came fwd to take comd of C Coy. At 1615 hrs and before the H&PER had taken MARYLAND, the bn attacked, swinging left of its original axis. D Coy leading sp by B Sqn 48 RTR swung SOUTH to a ridge at 918873 where it was stopped by MMG fire, and the tks by A/Tk fire from either SP guns or tks, at a range of 1200 yds. The M.10 tk destroyers in sp came fwd. and silenced the enemy guns. At 1800 hrs the CO came up to observe and with Capt. L.G. SMITH of D Coy and Major JOSS of the tks, it was planned that D Coy would push on after dark, and would send back guides to lead the tks to the coy area. D Coy then pushed on to 915878 where they met strong enemy small arms fire. The coy consolidated among the houses there and remained in posn till 0300 hrs when the enemy resistance seemed to stop. Meanwhile, C Coy comd by Capt. BATES contacted Major JOSS at 919869 and arranged to guide his tks to 918877 where C Coy took up a defensive posn behind D Coy. B Coy, which had been following D Coy with orders to by-pass it should it meet opposition, swung past D Coy on the left and proceeded to 912872 where the coy was stopped by enemy fire. Major D.B.DEEKS called down arty fire, overcoming the opposition and was able to move his coy fwd to track junc 911875. A Coy, as it moved fwd was attacked by enemy aircraft, which had been machine-gunning and bombing the brightly moonlit rds, and suffered several casualties from anti-personnel bombs dropped. CSM KEELER (MM) was seriously wounded, and the coy badly shaken up in general. In the late afternoon TAC HQ moved fwd to the ridge at 925874, leaving the vehs at 933877. Rations were brought fwd at 2100 hrs without difficulty.

[right margin: PART II ORDERS; No 70 d/4 Sep44; APPX "D"]

Ref App _____

5 SEPTEMBER 1944

Place: ITALY

1/100,000

MR 905882

Sheet 109

Weather: Fair and cool.

At first light, D Coy moved fwd to QUEEN 902885 and then pushed on to pt 207 at 894865 where Capt. L.G.SMITH waited for his tks to come up at 0900 hrs. Here contact was made with units of 5 Cdn Div. on assembly of the coy, the tks took up a hutdown posn and D Coy moved off pt 207 toward DUNDAS (rd at 8887). After moving about 1000 yds to 884895, the coy came under heavy MMG fire from all sides. Under cover of his own fire and that of his tks Capt. SMITH withdrew his coy into a gully at 886895. C Coy which had followed one bound behind D Coy had its leading elements over pt 207 when Capt.A.P.BATES. became aware of D Coy's predicament and ordered his coy to withdraw behind the reverse slope of pt 307, sending Lt.E.C.BENSON ahead to have the tks open fire in sp of D Coy. A and B Coys moved fwd at the same time from where they had halted that night B Coy taking up a posn at 894884 and A Coy moving to pt 905 at 904894. At 0400 hrs TAC HQ moved fwd to 905882. At appx 1030 hrs the CO came fwd and after laising with Lt-col CLARK of the IRISH Regt, ordered his coy comds to swing their coys back and to the right to attack SMOKIES(893901) and MISSOURI(904912). Capt. BATES was to move C Coy over to pt 201 at 907888. Major DEEKS was to withdraw B Coy to a house at 903885. C Coy sent a contact patrol to Capt. SMITH with orders from the CO to withdraw his coy to rear of pt 207 and from there to take up a reserve posn at 908888. With the aid of the FOO, Capt. HARPER, the enemy posns were silenced and D Coy withdrew. As ordered, C Coy moved to pt 201, arriving there at 1400 hrs where they were to marry up with tks and move to MISSOURI and recce a river crossing across the MARANO R. and occupy 886917. With the change in the axis of advance C Coy was halted at pt 201 till 2000 hrs, when it left to follow

A Coy's attack. When A Coy was stopped. C Coy dug in at 899900 for the night. The CO returned now to pt 56 a building at 905888, which became TAC HQ, the former HQ becoming rear TAC with Major COUNSELL (DSO) and F Ech vehs. On the CO's return to TAC HQ a new plan was formulated in which A&B Coys would attack on the rd at 899905 & 896904 respectively: each coy to have one tp sp tks. At approx 1630 hrs the attack went in. B Coy on the left got on to its obj through hy mortar and small arms fire, losing Lt.FINDLAY wounded and Sgt. McINTEE killed. A Coy moving on the right got 7 and 8 platoons on the obj, but due to the intense fire could not advance so they took up posns at 903905.

Ref App _____

6 SEPTEMBER 1944

Place: ITALY

1/100,000

MR 905888

sheet 109

Weather: Showers then fair.

During the night the enemy rushed Major DEEKS posn from the right and B Coy withdrew 350 yds SOUTH of the obj calling down arty fire on its former posn with the intention of attacking back on to it. However, due to the weakened condition of his coy Major DEEKS thought it inadvisable to move and remained where he was at 898901 for the day. A Coy was harassed all night by enemy fire and the house which its GIRDLESTONE and HUNTER were defending was heavily attacked by enemy BAZOOKAS and FAUSTPATRONENS. Toward morning all fire from the house ceased. Shortly after first light enemy tps could be seen moving about the house. Throughout the day all coys were subjected to intense shelling and cortar fire, causing few casualties, but maling the men keep cover. In the afternoon, the Brig came fwd to TAC HQ and an attack was planned for the 48 Highrs and the H&PER. At 1630 hrs, A and B Coys each with tks in sp attacked back on to their objs, while D Coy moved from 908888 to a defensive posn at 904903. At 1830 hrs a pl of enemy, apparently unaware of D Coy's presence walked in to the coy killing ground and got thoroughly shot up. B Coy again seized its obj, losing Lt. GRANT wounded in the foot, and the entire area was heavily mortared. Major DEEKS then asked that C Coy be moved fwd to assist him to hold his obj. As C Coy formed up to move, the coy came under intense fire and was pinned to its slit-trenches. On being informed, the CO then told B Coy that it might withdraw to its original posn. At this time, and just before the withdrawal, Major DEEKS was shot through the fingers of the right hand; however he led his cou out and later in the morning went out for medical attention, Capt. M.E.GEORGE coming up to take comd of B Coy. A Coy even with the aid of the tks was unable to push fwd, and the CO ordered them to fall back through D Coy, from which area they were ordered to cross over to bolster B Coy. As they came through C Coy they halted there at 2300 hrs and took up a posn in reserve. Meanwhile C Coy had managed to despatch one pl fwd to aid B Coy.

[right margin: PART II ORDERS; No 71 4/6 Sept 44; APPX "E"]

Ref App _____

7 SEPTEMBER 1944

Weather: Cloudy and cool.

Throughout the day the enemy was rather quiet - in the morning there was little activity, though in the afternoon shelling and mortaring re-commenced over all the br area. At 1500 hrs the C&Y Regt recce parties came fwd to the rifle coys and tonight we were relieved by them: A,B,C Coys moving to the RAP where guides picked them up and led them back to MARYLAND 921882. D Coy moved back to the right to their former posn behind TAC HQ where a guide led them to the check pt on MARYLAND. Late in the afternoon Major J.C.CLARKE (DSO) with coy reps met the Staff Capt about 2 miles SOUTH of CATTOLICA and made an inspection of the area to which the bn will go in reserve. The relief is intended to be complete by moon rise which will be about 2200 hrs. From the present location to the

bn reserve area is some 8 miles by march route which will seem a little trying in this weather after the stiff fighting of the past week. By 1900 hrs the Adjutant and part of B Ech had arrived in the new area which consists for the most part of broad open fields and orchards. Thanks largely to the enterprising spirit of Capt G.A. FRASER accommodation was found for the whole bn in bldgs which, unofficially, were immediately incorporated into the bn area. This is a godsend in such a night of howling wind and drenching rain.

Ref App _____

8 SEPTEMBER 1944

Place: ITALY

MR 028850

sheet 109

Weather: Cool and Sunny.

It was 0400 hrs before the bn was concentrated in the new area, having proceeded by march route to the coast rd and SOUTH to CATTOLICA. Three rifle coy 60-cwts ran a shuttle service for the remainder of the trip. Reveille this morning was at 0800 hrs followed by a leisurely breakfast. A hush of inactivity seemed to have settled over the bn because, no one stirred and nothing happened except for a movie put on by the Aux Ser officer, Mr. G.W. SINGLETON. During the course of today the rifle coys moved out from the shelter of their houses into pup tents.

Ref App _____

9 SEPTEMBER 1944

Weather: Fair and warm.

This has been a day of baths and movies for the whole bn. Those who were not able to avail themselves of the Mobile Bath, which is now doing business again, departed on an organized visit to the seaside about one mile away. Lt. J.E.C. MILLING arrived with a reinforcement draft of 53 men from the CORPS RECEPTION CAMP at PESARO about 12 miles SOUTH of here. Lt. MILLING was one of the ofrs with the bn on special increment at PIEDEMONTTE in JUNE and JULY. About one half of the draft are "old men", that is, men who had served with the bn before but had been evacuated through wounds or sickness. Our casualties in the last battle from 3 Sep - 17 Sep 44 incl were 19 Killed, 45 wounded, 35 Missing and 14 Sick (incl "exhaustion" cases) making a total of 92 All Ranks. This represents a number almost equal to our loss of 103 All Ranks from 25 Aug 44 - 1 Sep 44. [right margin: AFW 3008; Appx "F"; AFW 3009; Appx "G"]

Ref App _____

10 SEPTEMBER 1944

Weather: Rain later fair.

Brig J.A. CALDER strolled into our lines to have his hair cut by CQMS A. MARR of A Coy this afternoon. This is now a "drill" with him when ops permit. RSM W. CROSSLEY is making life supremely miserable for our newly arrived reinforcements but it is already evident, after only 24 hrs, that the RSM's vitriolic tongue has lost none of its effect. Already they show a smarter appearance and a better carriage. From morning to night under RSM CROSSLEY's critical eye they march, salute and do arms drill and tests of elementary training in small arms. Lt-col. MacKENZIE was at Bde all afternoon and when he returned found Padre S.B. EAST, who has come with some weird tale of being posted to some other unit. To the Padre's intense surprise and delight the colonel presented him with his MILITARY CROSS, of which he had not, until this evening, had the slightest inkling.

Ref App _____

11 SEPTEMBER 1944

Weather: Fair and cool.

Four more offr reinforcements arrived today together with 90 men from the Corps Reception Camp. The offrs are Capt. J.L.BROWN, who has not been with the bn since it left ENGLAND, Lt. D. MacDONALD, Lt. A.D. ATKINS and Lt. W.B. MOORE none of whom have seen action in this country. Lt. RUTHVEN now at 4 Bn, 1 CBRD is the only other 48 HIGHR officer available as a rft and the number of OR rfts is extremely limited indeed. Apart from men returning from hospital, the bn is now getting, to a very large extent, tradesmen to be remustered as rifle men and men who have beert holding semi-permanent jobs in base units. It is known that 3 Bn, 1 CBRD, the holding unit from which all our rits come has no more available. Nevertheless the bn is now almost up to strength again.

[right margin: *Part II Orders; No 72 d/11 Sep44; Appx "H"*]

Ref App _____

12 SEPTEMBER 1944

Weather: Cool and cloudy.

The rifle coys did route marches, PT and bayonet fighting this morning and devoted the remainder of the day to the problem of equipping themselves for battle. In the early afternoon arrangements were made to despatch 50 men to GRADARA CASTLE, perched high on a hill 2 miles from here. This medieval castle complete in every detail once housed LUCREZIA BORGIA. At 1720 hours the CO left for Bde HQ where the Div and Bde plans for the forthcoming operations were outlined. Once again "C" Sqn, 12 RTR, commanded by Major JOSS, are to be in support of the bn.

Ref App _____

13 SEPTEMBER 1944

Weather: Fair and warm.

At 1100 hrs the CO held a meeting of his coy comds and outlined to them in some detail the bn role in the next operation. At 1600 hrs Major JOSS and his tp comds arrived for a meeting: All bn officers were present. For three quaters of an hour the discussion was held on INFANTRY cum TANK cooperation in street fighting. At 1700 hrs the CO went to Bde to receive the final instrs on the next move which is due tonight. An "O" group was held at 2100 hrs. The marching tps move off at 0350 hrs and F Ech at 0410 hrs tomorrow morning to a conc area at MR 946885. The Adj, Capt. W.G. BURKE-ROBERTSON, reported to Bde Main HQ at 2200 hrs to remain, as before, for the duration of the forthcoming ops.

Ref App _____

14 SEPTEMBER 1944

Place: ITALY

Sheet 109

NW OF CATTOLICA

MR 946885

Weather: Cooler and cloudy.

By 0550 hrs the move was complete, with TAC HQ located at 946855 and the coys fwd along a WADI. Coy cookers were with their coys, and the men had a hot breakfast. At 0930 hrs the CO went to Bde, returning at 1030 hrs with the final plan. Our objective was to establish a base at area HOTSPUR 863945 about 2000 yds SOUTH of RIMINI. Third Cdn Inf Bde are to cross the R. MARANO and seize ground at 863934, 862917, 868920, following on their success, we are to move across the MARANO R. to GLENCOE 877920 to form a firm base. C and D coys then will move to 874920 and 878917 respectively, B Coy to follow in sp of C Coy to 874916. From these posns the bn will attack by leap frogging coys to their objs, A Coy to 857751, B Coy to 865940, C Coy to HOTSPUR and D Coy to 865948. At the conclusion of the hot group Lt. R.W.JOHNSTON was sent fwd with coy

representatives to select an area SOUTH of the R. MARANO to be used as fwd conc area for the bn. At 1630 hrs. Brig CALDER came down to TAC HQ to tie up the final plans, and induced the CO to go out for a 24 hrs rest, despite Col MacKENZIE'S protests. He is to remain at Main Bde HQ for 24 hrs, and Major BANTON will take comd of the bn. At 1700 hrs the CO called his coy comds together and explained the plan - the bn was to move to a fwd assembly area; TAC HQ to 904893, A Coy to 897896, B Coy to 907893, C Coy to 900893 and D Coy to 905896. As our movements depended on the success of 3 Cdn Inf Bde, no time for moves could be laid on and the bn was put on one hour notice from 0400 hrs 15 Sep 44.

[right margin: *Part II Orders; No 13 d/14 Sep44; Appx "I"*]

Ref App _____

15 SEPTEMBER 1944

Place: ITALY
Sheet 109/IV
MR 904893/NE

Weather: Light rain during night.

No further news came during the night and again the troops had a hot breakfast. At 0800 hrs an LO came from Bde with orders for the bn to move at 0930 hrs. The move was by march route along the road to SNUFF 921851 thence NW by track to the assembly area which lay a few yards from the scene of our last action only a week before. The country about here is a shambles, houses in ruins, with cattle dead in the stables, and haystacks smouldering in the yards. In the afternoon Lt. JOHNSTON took Padre S.B. EAST(MC) who has rejoined the bn in its former area at CATTOLICA to the scene of A Coy's last battle at 900906. On their return, he reported that the house there was thoroughly wrecked, there were NO graves or signs of bloodshed and that in all probability Lts HUNTER and GIRDLESTONE and the men of A Coy who are MISSING are prisoners of war. At 1545 hrs the Brig came fwd to TAC HQ with Major GALLOWAY of the RCR to xxx tie up the plan for the move to the F.U.P. across the MARANO R, A Coy is to move to 868918, B to 872916, C to 867916, D to 877917. Owing to the very fluid nature of the operation, an alternative plan was laid on to be put into effect should the R22R fail to take KESTRAL 862936 as scheduled. In this event, our obj would be a line from incl HENLEY 868933 to the CASA ROSSI at 873939. At 1730 hrs the coys moved fwd to the FUP by march route along the road, NW to 895894 thence to DORNIER 887898 to rd junc 880900 thence NORTH to ORGANDY 899906 and across country to the FUP. During the move there was heavy shelling by the enemy on the crossing of the MARANO R. and on the FUP and TAC HQ after several narrow escapes from 88mms directed at some nearby SHERMANS (tks) was forced to share a farmhouse with 2 VERY dead oxen at 875914. At 2200 hrs it was apparent that the R22R were not going to seize KESTRAL and plan B was put into effect. B Coy attacking towards HENLEY 868933 and D Coy to 872984. C Coy was then to pass through D Coy to 872939, and A Coy was to move to 874940.

Ref App _____

16 SEPTEMBER 1944

Place: ITALY
1/25000
Sheet 101
III-SE
MR 875914

Weather: Warm and sunny:

At 0300 hrs B Coy contacted the enemy, being fired on by 3 LMG posts which wounded Lt. W.B.MOORE who had just come to the bn. Capt PROCTOR, heavy tks moving about him, halted his coy at 870926 to await the arrival of two 6-pdr A/Tk guns. Shortly after the tank LO with TAC HQ advised Major BANTON that A Sqn 48 RTR was moving in B Coy area

following this information D Coy was moved fwd to pass through B Coy and to move on to the obj. At 0405 hrs Major JOSS contacted Major BANTON, and A Coy moved to GLENCOE to marry up with B Sqn and move up behind C Coy. By 0800 hrs the attack appeared to have stalemated, with C Coy pinned by heavy mortar and small arms fire at 873935 with A Coy waiting behind it. B Coy was pinned still at 870926 and D Coy was unable to get through. At 1100 hrs C Coy called for arty sp in order that it might take out the enemy MG posts at 875936, 876934, 878935. However, because the RCR were laying a similar plan ours was delayed. At 1300 hrs the CO returned from his enforced stay at Bde and took comd of the bn. By 1400 hrs with no news from Bde on help for the fwd coys, C Coy's position was becoming untenable and as it was not feasible to advance any further. A and C Coys were ordered to withdraw and "firm up" at rd and stream junc 874930. D Coy meanwhile had secured a posn overlooking the position at HENLEY and had lost 2 offrs - Lts HOFFMAN being injured in the head when his house was hit by shellfire and WATSON shot in the hand by a sniper. The CO then went fwd to liaise with Col RITCHIE of the RCR regarding their dispositions and intentions; also to contact Major JOSS at JUTE 875926. C and A Coys withdrew as ordered but found the RCR occupying the posns and were forced to come further SOUTH - A Coy to a wadi at 874925, C Coy to JUTE with B and D Coys still firm at 865933 and 868933 respectively. The CO now felt that further advance was impossible until the left flank was cleared up - KESTRAL 862936 in particular. At 2100 hrs the CO went to liaise with the SEAFORTHS and found that they were patrolling to and beyond KESTRAL and upon the COs return B Coy was ordered to patrol to HENLEY reporting on its return that HENLEY was clear, but that enemy infantry and tanks could be heard about the houses 200 yds further up the road.

[right margin: AFW 3008; Appx "K"; AFW 300k; Appx "L"]

Ref App _____

17 SEPTEMBER 1944

Place: ITALY

1/25000

Sheet 101

III SE

MR 866933

Weather: Warm and sunny.

At 0230 hrs Capt. G.W.BEAL came fwd to take comd of his coy and Capt FRASER went out. A Coy was ordered to move to a posn behind B Coy at 867931. While at 0445 hrs C Coy was to move into A Coys former posn. C Coy also sent patrols fwd to the coys former posn and after passing through the RCR, reported the enemys disposition unchanged. At 0800 hrs the CO had formulated his plan of attack. When KESTRAL is taken C Coy is to move back into its former position at 872938. A Coy is to move at the same time to 865937 sp by tks in B and D Coys areas also by fd and med arty concs and stonks. On the success B Coy is to move to 864940 and D Coy to HOTSPUR 86 3945. At 0830 hrs the CO went to Bde returning at 1200 hrs with the above plan laid on. Zero was 1350 hrs and the CO went fwd to an OP with Major JOSS to direct the action. At 1340 hrs the RAP was heavily shelled, killing 1 and wounding 2 of the sigs personnel there and slightly wounding Capt CURRELLY in the chest. At 1345 hrs C Coy was through the RCR lines on the right and meeting heavy mortaring. At 1420 hrs Capt. A.P.BATES was wounded and Lt WILLIAMS took comd of C Coy and by 1430 hrs C Coy was 300 yds from its obj. Capt. BEAL's coy on the left was making slow headway. The enemy had infiltrated between B Coy and the SEAFORTHS on our left and all of A Coys tks had been knocked out. At 1520 hrs both coys were ordered to withdraw under cover of smoke laid by Major HARRINGTON's bty and by 1810 hrs both fwd coys were in their old posns. When the RAP received the call for a stretcher party to get Capt BATES, it was found impossible to move in a jeep due to the heavy mortaring, but the Armd Regt had its scout car ambulance up and it was sent fwd. As

it approached the field where Capt. BATES lay it was stopped and searched by the enemy and allowed to pass on thus permitting Capt. BATES to be evacuated and receive medical attention within 2 hrs of his being wounded. At 1900 hrs the CO returned from the OP, from which he had been controlling the battle and went to Bde. On his return at 2400 hrs TAC HQ moved fwd to 866933 a farm house still held by a platoon of B Coy and badly shot up by the enemy. However, there was one room left which could be blacked out and into this TAC HQ moved. Capt M.E. GEORGE and Capt MURDOCH came fwd at night to the coys to relieve their respective comds - neither of whom would go out.

Ref App _____

18 SEPTEMBER 1944

Weather: Sunny and warm.

At 0200 hrs the scout offr Lt. R.W.JOHNSTON took a patrols into HENLEY reporting back at 0550 hrs, that the enemy was clear of the immediate area but that tps and tks could be heard 400 yds up the road. Shortly after first light the CO, who had been in the OP with Major HARRINGTON spotted a panther turret in a farm house about 300 yds from TAC HQ and firing up at KESTRAL. Capt. CURRELLY engaged the house at once with his mortars, using HE and smoke to neutralize it. However due to the location of the gun it was not possible to bring down medium arty in sp of us or to move tks fwd to deal with it. During the morning at about 0800 hrs 2 Cdn Inf Bde attacked on the left and the LER moved through our area, actually assaulted up the slope where TAC HQ was, thinking it was KESTRAL. By 1200 hrs the outcome of the action was very vague and Capt HARRIS was sent to FOXBOROUGH 863925 to contact the LER and get a report on their situation. In the evening it. H.D.HELLIKER brought up the rations. Major J.R.O.COUNSELL (DSO) also came fwd to TAC HQ, leaving Lt. ROLAND in charge of Rear TAC HQ.

[right margin: *Part II Orders; No 74 d/18 Sep44; Apx "M"*]

Ref App _____

19 SEPTEMBER 1944

At 0100 hrs a patrol from A Coy reported having reached KESTRAL and finding it clear of the enemy. A fighting patrol of 1 offr(Lt.WILLIAMS) and 10 ORs was despatched immediatly from C Coy to enter KESTRAL and on reporting no enemy on it D Coy was sent to take up posns there at 0515 hrs. At the same time B Coy was sent fwd to 864940 which they found clear and patrols were sent on to HOTSPUR 863945 and GRENFELL 859949. At 0550 hrs B Coy moved from 864910 to HOTSPUR sending strong fighting patrols to GRENFELL 859949 and GAUNTLET 862954. On completion of the move A and C Coys which had been placed under comd of Capt. BEAL, were to move to 864910. At 1040 hrs Capt. SMITH was ordered to move his coy to GRENFELL on his being relieved by the RCR on KESTRAL. At 1230 hrs a further message came from Bde directing that A Coy should move from 864910 to relieve and occupy a br-hd est by the PPCLI over the R. CURSA just NORTH of TARA 850937. Thus by late afternoon, the coys were located as follows; A and C Coys in the br-hd over the AUSA RIVER 849941, B Coy at HOTSPUR 863945 and D Coy at GRENFELL 859949.

Ref App _____

20 SEPTEMBER 1944

Place: ITALY

1/25000

Sheet 101

III SE

MR 865934

Weather: Cloudy and cooler.

- The night was quiet, with patrols from D Coy to RAYON 849951 where enemy were contacted and engaged. At 0900 hrs Major JOSS left us to go to the PPCLI. He had

secured more tks and was to sp them in their next push. It was apparent that there was to be a pause of 24 hrs in which rfts were to be brought up and the bn given time to organize again. Major BANTON, who had come fwd to TAC HQ the day before returned to F Ech to send up the new men, taking with him Capt. W.J. LEADBEATER who had been our tank LO and was now to comd C Coy. At 1130 hrs TAG HQ moved fwd into a large house formerly occupied by B Coy at MR865934 and Rear TAC HQ moved up there too. The CO the went fwd on foot to the rifle coys to confer with the coy comds, returning at 1400 hrs to meet the Brig at our TAC HQ. At 1330 hrs the rfts arrived -incl Lts. LEMESURIER and DAVIDSON and the remainder of the day was spent in reorganizing and regrouping of the coys, with patrols being sent to RAYON 849951 and EMBY 859956. A and C Coys areas were shelled sporadically throughout the day, although generally the bn area was quiet. In the evening it rained heavily for the first time since this action started, making the roads very greasy the next day.

[right margin: *Part II Orders; No 75 d/20 Sep44; Appx "N"*]

Ref App _____

21 SEPTEMBER 1944

Weather: Windy and wet.

The coy's reported their areas quiet during the night with no shelling, although explosions could be heard towards RIMINI - probably demolitions, as the enemy withdrew. At 0820 hrs the CO was called to Bde and the coys warned to be ready to move within a half hour. On his return the CO went fwd to B Coy and contacted Capt. PROCTOR and Capt SMITH of B and D Coys respectively and gave them their instructions - B Coy was to advance on an axis GAUNTLET 862955, EMBY 859956, DYSERT 859967, RYAN 850974 to SEDGEMOORE 843987. D Coy was to move on a parallel axis from GRENFELT along the RIVCR axis to RYAN 850974. By 1000 hrs the bn was on the move - the weather was wet and the rain blowing in gusts, making the work all the more uncomfortable for the men. Then followed a couple of hours of frantic wireless activity - the leading coys passing in reports on their routes, state of bridges, location of minefields which were in turn passed to the Bde. By 1100 hrs the situation had started to "gel" - the scouts who had acted as advanced guard, reported themselves on SEDGEMOORE 843987 and in contact with the enemy. By 1130 hrs D Coy was on RYAN 850974 with a platoon on FAIRCHILD 840974. Shortly after this, B Coy reported a pl on SEDGEMOORE and the remainder of the Coy 500 yds SE of it. C Coy was moving toward RIMINI and D Coy was firm on FAIRCHILD. The weather by now had cleared up and at 1715 hrs D Coy was ordered to move across the R. NARECCHIA to BRUE 835988 and C Coy was to move to FAIRCHILD to take up D Coys former posn. At 1800 hrs D Coy was across the river without a casualty and advanced with the aid of searchlights in sp of the 4 BR DIV on our left, to within 100 yds of their obj. Here they were fired on by enemy MMGs. By now Capt. L.G. SMITH was too close to the enemy to use his wireless and communications ceased at 0200 hrs.

Ref App _____

22 SEPTEMBER 1944

Place: ITALY

1/25000

Sheet 101

III SE

MR 893947

Weather: Rain and windy.

At 0530 hrs Major COUNSELL went fwd to contact B Coy and learned that early in the morning Capt. PROCTOR had sent a pl to D Coy to assist it and then to return to guide fwd tks. Meanwhile Capt SMITH had assaulted enemy posns himself and after 3 attacks, was firm on his obj with 2 pls, the third holding a posn to the SOUTH. Thus by first light the bn was firm in RIMINI with TAC HQ at 848974, A Coy at 849977, B Coy at SEDGEMOORE

and 500 yds SE C Coy at 844974 and D Coy at BRUE 835988 and F Ech under comd Major CLARKE (DSO) had moved fwd to DYSERT 859967. At 0900 hrs the Adj. came up to TAC HQ with a message that coy scat parties were to report to Bde at once, for at 0800 hrs the comd had passed to the 5 NEW ZEALAND battle group who were going through us. Throughout the day the coys held firm in their posns and at 1700 hrs the CO held an "O" Gp giving his orders for the withdrawal. Marching tps were to leave at once, D Coy leading, to a conc area at KOR 891949, the vehs leaving at 1830 hrs. By 1900 hrs all coys had reported clear of RIMINI and TAC HQ left following SUN ROUTE SOUTH to the airfield at 889940 then cutting to the coast to the concentration area. Here the unit was reported complete to Bde at 2000 hrs. Major D.W.BANTON the 2 i/c met the S/C, Capt T R WOOD at Main 81, together with the 2 i/c of each coy. By the grace of God and a little good management the 2 i/c succeeded in getting an area for the bn that leaves little to be desired. The most important aspect of the situation is that there are sufficient bldgs to get the whole bn under cover, a factor at these seasons of sudden rains and cold winds that cannot be ignored. The bn is on the COAST ROAD 150 yds from a beautiful beach on the ADRIATIC and just about half way between RIMINI and RICCIONE.

[right margin: *Part II Orders; No 76 d/22 Sep44; Appx "O"; Message of Congratulations; Appx "P"*]

Ref App _____

23 SEPTEMBER 1944

Weather: Fair and cool.

Today the approaches to the beach were swept by Lt.K.L.HUDSON, there were no mines but it was a necessary precaution because of the unreliable and indiscriminate way the whole shore has been mined. The bathing today is superb, but only Col.MacKENZIE of all the bn, had the intestinal fortitude to undertake a swim before breakfast. Major D.W.BANTON in his capacity as PMC has enthusiastically begun the furnishing of the mess. The bldg has some 40 rooms but was in such an indescribably filthy condition upon our arrival that the CO shut off all but the ground floor and one small wing on the second floor. The prevalence of human excreta on the floors, the window sills, on the shelves of cupboards, in short everywhere, was at once amazing and disgusting to behold. The mess itself has *the* distinction of a very posh bar and ante room is not without interest. The walls bear an abundance of German Eagles with mottoes and inscriptions beneath in German. One reads, with characteristic German arrogance, "Rather dead than Slav ". X Area arrived in charge of Lt N.H.McMURRICH and was completely in this area by 2300 hrs with the exception of 2 carriers. Here is the text of a message received by the CO from Lt-gen Sir OLIVER LEESE"to psec. Personal to Lt-col D.A. MacKENZIE, commanding, 48th Highlanders from LEESE. My congratulations to you and all ranks in your battalion in your hard fighting in the advance to the R. FOGLIA. The regiment may be proud of its part in a great and hard fought victory. With my thanks and best wishes to you all. Well done CANADA."

[right margin: *Part I Orders; D/23 Sep44; Appx "Q"; AFW 3008; AFW 3009; Appx QA; Appx QB*]

Ref App _____

24 SEPTEMBER 1944

Weather: Fair and cool.

A voluntary church parade this morning drew almost as large a congregation as a compulsory church parade. It was conducted by Padre S.B. EAST(MC) in an RC Chapel (the use of this bldg led to repercussions among certain pious anti-catholic gentlemen in higher fmn !) in A Coy's area. The lesson was read by Capt. G.W.BEAL. At 1500 hrs this afternoon found the bn, formed up in hollow square on the parade ground opposite A Mess, dressed in KD, balmorals, blue puttees and web belts to receive Maj-gen C. VOKES. The GOC, having been met by the Adj. Capt W.G. BURKE-ROBERTSON, inspected the Guard

of Honour by the main road then proceeded into the parade ground where he was met by Lt-col D.A. MacKENZIE. The GOC spoke briefly to the troops, while standing on the bonnet of his jeep. The most unique thing that he said was that all towns in the vicinity were IN BOUNDS to Canadian troops. After Col MacKENZIE had called for three cheers the General spoke to Pipe Major A. ANDERSON and had him play, "OVER THE SEAS TO SKYE".

[right margin: *LETTER ON ASSAULT BOATS; APPX "R"; LETTER ON BATH SCHEDULE; APPX "S"*]

Ref App _____

25 SEPTEMBER 1944

Weather: Rainy.

This morning a much needed institution went into operation, a regt Barber Shop, A and B Coys being shorn of their shaggy locks during the course of the day. Col. MacKENZIE today ordered that swimming, of which there is a good deal these sunny days would be permitted only under proper supervision. At noon today all ofrs began messing at A Mess, where sufficient furniture, chinaware and general interior decoration has been carried out by Major BANTON to make this procedure both possible and enjoyable. Immediately after lunch Col MacKENZIE gave permission to Cpts FRASER, GEORGE, LEADBEATER, MURDOCH and MacNEIL, Lts BALLARD, WILLIAMS and KILGOUR to spend 6 days in FLORENCE. Some indication of a lengthy period out of action came in the form of the appointment of the colonel as Chairman of 1 Cdn Inf Bde Sports Committee, whose first meeting was this afternoon.

[right margin: *Part II Orders' No 77 d/25 Sep44; Appx "T"*]

Ref App _____

26 SEPTEMBER 1944

Weather: Wet and cold.

A Regt Stretcher Bearers Course commenced today to replenish our dwindling reserve of trained men. Thirty-one reinforcements incl CSM D. MacARTHUR, formerly B Coy, made their appearance. The Mobile Bath, entertainment at Bde HQ, moving pictures in unit lines, visits to GRADARA CASTLE, tactical demonstrations have transformed BOR into a booking office and have prevented the introduction of any serious policy of training in this area. At any rate the men are rested and refreshed as a result. Daily routine is standardized as follows; Reveille 0600 hrs, Breakfast 0700 hrs, Parade 0800 hrs, Dinner 1200 hrs, Guard Mounting 1630 hrs, Retreat 1700 hrs, Supper 1700 hrs, First Post 2130 hrs, Last post 2200 hrs and Lights-out 2215 hrs.

Ref App _____

27 SEPTEMBER 1944

Weather: Rainy and cool.

Under the auspices of RSM W. CROSSLEY the Sgts Mess has come into being once more opposite C Coy's lines. The Canadian Concert Party have produced a show known as KIT BAGS, now being shown to the units of this Bde. Other entertainments arranged for the bn today was a Band Concert by the RCE Band, but this was ruled out by rain. The BOR has now compiled a list of men whose overseas service exceeds 4 years. There are still 156 men in the bn who come within that category who may be given a certain degree of preference should opportunities occur (eg, PW Escorts, etc) of getting back to CANADA.

Ref App _____

28 SEPTEMBER 1944

Place: ITALY
1/25000
Sheet 101
III SE
MR 893947
SOUTH OF
RIMINI

Weather: Cloudy later heavy rain.

Religious Services seldom leave as deep rooted an impression as did the Memorial Service held this morning to honour those HIGHLANDERS who were killed in a Action during the last battle from 15 Sep 44 to 22 Sep 44. At the Cemetery located SOUTH of the RIMINI AIRFIELD at MR 875920, are buried 28 NCOs and men; whose names are attached. There are 2 rows of white crosses, behind the graves was the DILEAS FLAG flanked on either side by the UNION JACK and the CANADIAN ENSIGN; and behind the flags was on the right the Pipe Band and on the left the Brass Band from the RCE, invited for the occasion. On the other side of the crosses stood the bn formed up in hollow square shoulder to shoulder, the Commanding Officer standing in the centre facing the graves. It was a solemn and unforgettable moment when after the last mournful whisper of FLOWERS OF THE FOREST had died away, Col MacKENZIE marched fwd 12 paces and saluted the graves of his fallen soldiers.

An embarrassing shortage of rfts within the Corps has made cross posting necessary. Today however 10 HIGHLANDERS who had been posted, after leaving hospital, to another unit were returned to the bn. The CO has given permission for 15 men to proceed by unit tpt to RICCIONE (3 miles SOUTH of here) each evening until 2200 hrs.

[right margin: *Part II Orders; No 78 d/28 Sep 44; Appx "U"; Order of Service; Appx "V"]
Ref App _____*

29 SEPTEMBER 1944

Weather: Rain all day.

With the introduction into wear of battle dress today the unpleasant thought has occurred that 1 Cdn Div may spend part of another winter in ITALY. The change from KD was well timed because it is quite as cold as MARCH. All coys concerned themselves with three main events during the day: a pay and muster parade with Capt.D.R.WHELDON paying and Capt. MacNEIL checking the muster rolls, a movie which gave continuous performances and the inevitable Mobile Bath where every other day for a week the men have been scrubbing themselves clean. This evening a Mess dinner was held at which Major JOSS, B Sqn, 48 RTR, who gave the bn such valuable and enthusiastic sp with his sqn and Capt. MILTON GREIG, RCR. There was enough potent wine in the bar to make it interesting and to put everyone in the party spirit. The Pipe Major and one other piper played throughout dinner in the candle-lit mess. Afterwards the 2 tk subalterns were dressed in the kilt, for the rest of the evening, much to their delight.

[right margin: *Part I Orders; d/29 Sep 44; Appx "W"]
Ref App _____*

30 SEPTEMBER 1944

Weather: Cloudy and cool.

This morning at the mouth of the notorious R. MARANO, A and Sp Coys commenced assault boat trg with 6 boats supplied by No.1 Fd Coy, RCE and in charge of Lt. BELANGER, RCE. Sp Coy was given the use of a class II raft, designed to ferry A/Tk guns or jeeps or their equivalents across rivers. A Coy confined themselves principally to watermanship this morning as they will have the use of the boats again next week for more advanced trg. B Coy went through the same trg this afternoon. The GSO II(Air) at 1 Cdn

Corps, in other words Major Ian WALLACE, gave a lecture for officers at HQ, 1 Cdn Inf Bde. Those who attended from the bn were Capt J.C.N. CURRELLY, Capt L.G. SMITH, Lt. D.B. DAVIDSON, Lt. D. MacDONALD, Lt. J. ANDERSON.

Ref App _____

[right margin: *Service chevrons; Appx X; Leave Appx; AFW 3008; AFW 3009; APPX Z; APPX ZA*]

signed

Damackenzie

(D.A. MacKENZIE) Lt-col,

Commanding Officer,

48 Highrs.

1 OCTOBER 1944

Place: Nr RIMINI

ITALY 1/25000

Sheet 101 111

S.E.

MR 893947

Weather - Cloudy and cool

Today there appeared on the right arm of nearly all personnel service chevrons varying from one lone red one to 4 red and one silver one. It was NOT feasible to wear them on KD or denim so their distribution was delayed until battle dress was brought into wear a few days ago. Lt; H.D. Helliker, the TO is spending a few days under the fatherly guidance of CREME, Lt-col de Maio, who is endeavouring to teach him a wealth of technical detail in connection with a Unit TO's job. Lt Helliker has been TO since 30 Aug 44.

Thirty other ranks proceeded on 48 hrs leave this afternoon to Riccione where a leave centre with the usual facilities is operating.

2 OCTOBER 1944

Weather - Cloudy with showers

The 7th Victory Loan Campaign has just been announced. Major Banton, the 2 i/c has been appointed the 1 Cdn Inf Bde representative and Capt McCutcheon, A/tk PI, is going to be the head Sales Manager for the Battalion.

The Battalion is on 24 hours notice to move. This word leaves us cold. Our thoughts for the past week have been almost exclusively occupied with plans and undertakings not in the least warlike. The weather has become decidedly unpleasant and very like what it was during those dreary months North of Ortona.

The Canadian Army Show entitled "Kit Bags" put on a performance this afternoon at the RCR Main HQ. It was an open air show and the Bn was able to send 400 men to attend:

3 OCTOBER 1944

Weather - Cloudy and cool

The Bn is still on 24 hrs notice to move and everyone feels a little like Damocles:

Pipe Major Anderson, much in demand these days, took the Pipe Band to 83 Br Gen Hospital to play the Matrons favorite Scottish airs.

Training is not too intensive but nevertheless is calculated to make the Bn "battle-worthy" once more. Because of our 24 hrs notice a planned syllabus is out of the question. Besides, a large part of each day is taken up with entertainment and incidental parades.

Demonstrations are much in vogue. Capt H.V. McCutcheon A/tk PI, took his Sect Comds SOUTH of RICCIONE to watch a new type of AP amn being fired at a TIGER.

4 OCTOBER 1944

Weather - Sunny and warmer

There was a bit of a flap this morning when the petrol line running along the beach was pierced by S.A. fire from a C Coy firing party. The pressure was too great to allow the Pioneer PI to plug the hole. Several gallons of seemingly precious liquid was escaping every minute. Excitement died down however when it was discovered by Lt. J.F. Williams that the pipeline was filled with salt water instead of petrol and was merely being tested. The Cdn Army Show "Kit Bags" was at Main HQ RCR this afternoon and all those in the Bn who had not seen it a few days ago were able to attend. Moving pictures are t still being shown here regularly, three times a week.

[right margin: see Appx 1 (bath schedule)]

5 OCTOBER 1944

Weather - Cloudy with showers.

This seems to have been Visitors Day. Col MacFarlane who was MO to the Bn in NPAM days called on Col Mackenzie. Cpts "Dickie" Palmer and Frank McEachern from 1 Cdn Corps HQ dropped in as did also Capt Hamish Macintosh who is now on the strength of 8th Army HQ. Capt Hector Mitchell, our former Paymaster, also called.

The Armourer, Sjt Bain, known best as "Sailor" Bain, has checked and repaired as required, all the small arms in the Bn since the Unit came out of action on 22 Sep 44. The QM, Capt E.M. Childs and the RQMS, D. Goodall, gave a tremendously successful party this evening to all the men who work in Bn Quarter Stores. An abundance of roast chicken and goose and the inevitable vino ensured its success.

Major D.B. Deeks, wounded in the hand a few weeks ago, arrived back tonight together with 24 rfts, all of them Highlanders of long standing.

[right margin: see appx 2 (trg instr No. 7)]

6 OCTOBER 1944

Weather - Rain, Rain, Rain.

The Corps Rehabilitation Officer spent 2 hrs this morning lecturing to 200 men composed of representatives from all parts of the Bn. This lecture combined with the fact that 11 men left as PW escort today has certainly fanned to flame everyones hopes of home. Major J.C. Clarke left for Canada today taking with him the trophy awarded by the then Brig D.C. Spry for our Victory at the Bde Efficiency Competition. Major Clarke is in charge of the Div Party of those proceeding home on PW Escort.

In the training instruction appended hereto are the details for Coy tactical exercises in the organization and deployment and assault in an opposed River Crossing with the use of Sp arms. HQ, Sp and A Coys spent the day on this exercise. No. 1 Fd Coy RCE has supplied the Bn with 6 Mk 3 Assault Boats and I Class 2 raft for this purpose. The scene of these exercises is near the mouth of the fateful Narano River.

[right margin: see Part I; Order Appx 3]

6 OCTOBER 1944

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[right margin: see Part I; Order Appx 3]

7 OCTOBER 1944

Weather - Rain followed by sun.

LT. D. Mas Donald set off at 0800 hrs with 20 men from each Coy to tour GradaRa Castle SOUTH of CATTOLICA and near the Bn conc area after the fighting between the METAURO and the FOGLIA last month. Lt. R.D. Dailley took a similar party an hour later. Two NCO's were despatched to Avellino to assist in the training of 500 personnel remustered to CIC from RCOC to ease the embarrassing rft situation.

All available officers and NCO's this afternoon listened to an address by Lt-Gen E.L.M. Burns at a public hall in RICCIONE. He discussed the activities of the Coys both past and future and also the way in which our fighting on this front dovetails with the higher strategy of *the war*. After the meeting the CO, Col. Mackenzie, went to Bde HQ to discuss with the Brig and the other two Commanding Officers the subject of operations with tanks in close flat country.

[right margin: see appx No. 4 (conducted tours to Gardara Castle); Appx 5 AFW 3008; Appx 6 AFW 3009]

8 OCTOBER 1944

Weather - Fair and cool

Two days ago Lt. J.T. Fraser was cross-posted back to HPER on demand by that Unit. Today. *LT*BAC Caldwell has returned to the HPER. Both officers were sent as rfts to this Unit during a temporary shortage of officers a few weeks ago.

Officers have been going to Riccione on 48 hrs leave but there is little competition for this because, being situated so close by, they can reap the joys and pleasures of RICCIONE without the trouble of staying there. FLORENCE is the xxxx closest centre of interest and that is a full days journey from here.

Auth to draw rum has just been received but it will be some time before it once more becomes a daily issue.

The Bn has been put on 12 hrs notice to move, recce parties to stand by to move at 1300 hrs tomorrow.

9 OCTOBER 1944

Weather - Cloudy with rain.

At 2000 hrs an O Gp was held at Bde and attended by the Co and the TO(Lt Kilgour had been evacuated with jaundice and Lt N McMurrich resumed his former post as IO). The CO Col Mackenzie, called an O Gp for 2300 hrs for the Bn and here the Bn was warned for a move, timed tentatively for 1630 hrs the following day. The move was to be by TCV to a concentration area just NORTH of SANTARCANGELO MR 753984.

At this O Gp a general, but still not detailed, outline was given regarding future operations. The Bde intention was to form a br head over the river FIUMICINO moving through 169 Br Div and thence up Highway No 9 and astride it towards CESENA with our axis the highway itself.

These intentions to be carried out in two phases -

Phase I - The establishment of the br head.

Phase II - The expansion of the br head.

Tentative dispositions for the operation were 48 Highrs lett and HPER right with the RCR in reserve.

10 OCTOBER 1944

Weather - Cloudy and heavy rain.

At 0830 hrs the CO went fwd in a drizzling rain to recce the ground over which his Bn was to fight; later in the morning the familiar scat party u/c the 2 i/c met the Bde Staff Captain in SANTARCANGELO. It had been decided, in view of the wet weather and the condition of the ground to billet for the night in the town itself. There was some difficulty in finding accommodation but by 2000 hrs all personnel had a roof above them and a good hot meal inside them.

At 2100 hrs, the CO and IO attended a B de O Gp. It was learned here that certain modifications to previous plans had been brought about by the suspected withdrawal of the enemy from the immediate area west of the FIUMICINO and the construction of a bridge at 717019 which was expected to be complete by 2400 hrs on 10 Oct 44. In composition, however, the two phases remained unchanged and methods of crossing were modified accordingly. Actual dispositions and timings were assumed with finality dependant on the results of 169 Bde's patrols during the night.

The CO returned at 2300 hrs to TAC HQ which was established in a house on the edge of town and passed on the information to Coy Comds; the arty rep, Major Harrington of 2 Fd Regt RCA also attended the Bde O Gp and disseminated the information to those of his command. Timings were laid on for Coys to be in assembly areas. These were as follows -

A Coy to move to area 723011 at 0725 hrs 11 Oct 44

B Coy to move to area 728008 at 0725 hrs 11 Oct 44

C Coy to move to area 718001 at 0715 hrs 11 Oct 44

D Coy to move to area 728008 at 0740 hrs 11 Oct 44

It was laid on that Coy Comds would assemble at TAC ready to leave at 0630 hrs for the 2/6 Queens TAC at 732997.

11 OCTOBER 1944

Place: SANTARCANGELO

MR 753984

Weather - Fair and cool.

The CO moved fwd with Coy Comds at 0645 hrs arriving at 2/6 Queen's TAC after a fifteen minute drive. Here a current picture was gained and here) TAC was moved at 0745 hrs.

The Coy Comds met their Coys on route and by 1200 hrs they had positioned themselves across the river; it had not been necessary to take up the original assembly area positions.

The CO visited Bde at 1130 hrs, which by this time had moved forward to the town of SAVIGNANO at MR 718016. Here latest enemy information was received and further clarity given to operational intentions.

By 1300 hrs the Bn was dispositioned as follows -

A Coy on the move to 695008

B Coy at area C TURCHI 706012

C Coy at area 700006 and 698012

D Coy at area 712014

TAC at 709011

C Coy was ordered by the CO to move to area S GIOVANNI, 696015 and when they were firm in their position B Coy were to be relieved by D Coy and the former move on to area 686013. This plan was made with a view to eventually moving D Coy through C Coy and straight up No 9 to establish a base at Xrds 678024.

At 1300 hrs F Echelon moved across the river and their arrival was heralded by a heavy arty concentration. It seemed apparent upon inspection of the ground later that the enemy had been able to observe us quite readily from the high ground in the area 67LO72. As a result of this we did suffer casualties - one killed and six wounded and unfortunately one a/tk gun. During the remainder of the day the CO edged the Coys forward aggressively, but with caution. They were exhorted to keep thin on the ground and well dispersed.

First contact was made by C Coy at 1200 hrs when they took 5 POW in the area 692017. Later in the day A Coy patrolled to 682015 and C Coy to 677023. D Coy moved to 677012 on the success of C Coy's patrol. B Coy were then able to move to area 687014 and A Coy through B to 677017.

There was intermittent harrassing fire by the enemy during this night but no casualties were inflicted.

12 OCTOBER 1944

Place: SAVIGNANO
ITALY
MR 709001

Weather - fair and cool

Expecting to move TAC during the night to a spot where communications could be improved, the CO had sent the Scouts at 2130 hrs the night before to recce a new location. This proved slow and at 2300 hrs the Pioneer Officer, Lt K.L.H. Hudson, was despatched with orders to recce a new TAC location. He returned to say that the only feasible spot was the VILLA GNALDO; although a sturdy building The paths and roads leading to it were blocked with felled trees and debris. After due consideration the CO decided not to move TAC until the early morning.

At 0830 hrs TAC moved to the VILLA GNALDO or CULLEN, as it was code-named (MR691021). Coy Comds were called in to this HQ which was reasonably central; here they were able to gain a broader picture of the progress of the battle and passed this information on to their sub-units. Coys were not moved as we were awaiting the results of an advance by the HPER across the SCOLO RIGOSSA. During the afternoon the RCR TAC moved into CULLEN, but there was ample room for all. Our own F Echelon moved to former D Coy area at 1630 hrs.

A message was received to move a Coy to 659021 as soon as possible after news was learned that the HPER were firm. The Bde LO arrived shortly after this with patrol intentions. The Scouts were given the task to recce 650021 and then move up the road towards 654036 not further that the 03 northing. The patrol set out commanded by Lt R.W. Johnston. They carried a 38 set and by 2340 hrs sent the message that they had reached 650021, made contact with a Br recce unit on our left and no sight of the enemy. In the meantime the CO and Major Deeks, the B Coy Comd had visited HPER TAC and returned. The HPER were given full information of our intentions. Shortly after midnight B Coy were ordered forward to 659021.

13 OCTOBER 1944

Place: WEST OF
SAVIGNANO
ITALY MR6500

Weather - Still cool but fair.

At 0200 hrs we learned that the bridge at 665032 had been blown out but was passable for jeeps. A message was sent on to the Scout Officer to move ahead up this road. At 0300 hrs B Coy were at 659021 and looking for improved positions. In the meantime C Coy had moved up and taken B Coy's former position.

B Coy reported an enemy mortar firing from 651031 and at that time were ordered to keep 'winkling' forward until contact was made. At 1130 hrs in the morning enemy were sighted at 649025 and fired upon. They fled but no known casualties were inflicted. At 1515 hrs enemy again sighted at houses 648025 and again fired in but without knowledge or effect. A very heavy concentration came down at 1545 hrs in the gun areas west south west of CULLEN causing considerable casualties to arty personnel. Later in the afternoon the CO and Arty rep went to an OP at BALIGNANO at MR 671012. Here supporting and harrassing fire tasks were laid on for the night. The CO proceeded to D Coy HQ at 1500 hrs. During the

afternoon a NEBELWERFER was pin pointed by B Coy at MR 62750425 and was engaged by arty at 1605 hrs.

At 1630 hrs the Bde Comd Brig J.A. Calder, sent orders to make a recce for track and wheel crossings at MR 653025. Before last light 3 Coy had established positions at 657027, 655026 and 652024 and had made contact at 652030 and 648024 while C Coy had again moved up to occupy B Coy's former area. Because the enemy were sited quite close to B Coy's FDL's the CO ordered that no fire be brought down until all patrols were accounted for and brought within safe limits. The CO himself moved fwd to B Coy to take the situation in hand. At 1700 hrs we learned of an attack to be put in on our left by 46 Br Div. Our arty had, as a part of the support, a deception shoot which we were ordered to thicken up with our 3" mortars. All this information was sent to the CO by DR. At 1730 hrs we received notification that the aforementioned attack had been cancelled, including the arty support. This would have left the CO free to carry out plans he had made and therefore he was notified immediately. Shortly after this notification had been despatched another communique informed us that the arty shoot was to be carried out as planned.

At 1745 hrs plans had been made for B Coy to clean up the houses at 649024, then attack known enemy positions at 640038. By 1800 hrs the Coy had tied up and at Z-5 the CO held things up until he could gain a satisfactory clarification of highers formations intentions. Zero was advanced to 1900 hrs. By 1830 hrs B Coy was formed up and ready to attack the enemy to the front and left; C Coy had sent one platoon forward to occupy B Coy's right forward pl position. When at approximately 1845 hrs the enemy put in a counter attack catching B Coy in their FUP and causing them to disperse. C Coy's pl came under heavy fire and pulled back to form a firm base. After a period of re-organization B Coy were able to counter the enemy who had occupied their right fwd position and to re-establish themselves firmly.

14 OCTOBER 1944

Place: ITALY

1/125000

SAVIGNANO

SHEET 100 111

NE MR 659022

Weather - Cloudy, cool but no rain.

At 0250 D Coy were ordered to move to general area 665027 - this move to be completed by first light. At 0300 hrs our dispositions were -

A Coy 677024 (692029)

B Coy in former positions viz (655026)

C Coy 659022 (656028)

D Coy 665026 with contact right to the HPER and left to C Coy.

At 0600 hrs there was a very heavy stonk around CULLEN which caused casualties to Sp Coy - 4 wounded and one who later died of wounds.

At 0630 hrs a TAC party moved to the high ground at 671012. From here at 0700 hrs an essential group including the battle adj, sigs and arty moved forward on foot, man packing 22 sets to the area 659022 where the CO had set up TAC HQ. A rear TAC was set up at 671012 and line was laid to here by noon.

[right margin: see appx No.7; APW3009 & appx No.8; APW3008; appx No.16; Part II Order; No. 81]

The scouts patrolled forward in the early morning to 642027 making no contact. By 0700 dispositions were -

A Coy moved to location 668022

B Coy in general area 654026 with all three pls across the stream.

C Coy at 659022

D Coy area 664027

TAC HQ at 659022

Tanks of the HPER became bogged down slowing their progress but our job was still to push forward till contact was made.

By direct liaison with the Durham Light Infantry at rear TAC we had some first hand information of the progress of the British tps on our left. A knowledge of the progress of the British was most important to us at this time as we were approaching ground where our left flank would be most insecure unless the flanking tps kept a leap ahead of us or at least abreast of us.

Our RAP set us a car post at 650018 during the morning.

At 1300 hrs B Coy was still making an effort to square up along the line of the road 650022 and 654037. Fire was reported at 1400 hrs coming from the area 650038 At 1430 A Coy were ordered to firm up with B Coy's left forward elements. At 1445 hrs B Coy was ordered to provide a standing patrol to relieve the scouts at 647025. The scouts when relieved patrolled to PRESTO MR 641028 where they found no enemy.

D Coy reported MG fire from 650038 at 1620 hrs. Later in the afternoon the Pioneer Platoon sent a detachment in order to sweep the approaches to a bridge at 641027. During the late afternoon A Coy moved forward to the area 649025 and relieved the B Coy patrols another detachment of pioneers were called upon at 1800 hrs to sweep in the area of a bridge still standing at 653023. It had not yet been possible to get A/tk guns to the forward Coys.

It is significant to relate at this juncture that our advance was being made normal to the grain of the land and instead of moving up or astride roads we were in many cases crossing them. At best, using a zig-zag route, our lines of communication would not have been first class but with lows from demolition and shelling and mines laid in considerable density; the supplies and evacuation of casualties were a constant problem.

At 2230 hrs line finally reached TAC HQ and the CO and Bde Comd were able to converse - the latter expressing pleasure at the progress which had been made.

The MMG Platoon had their first summons for support at 2315 hrs when they were ordered forward to the A Coy area.

15 OCTOBER 1944

Weather - Fair and cool.

During the previous night in an effort to get the A/tk guns forward, Sjt Adams and Sjt Shaw lost their lives on box mines. The Pioneer Officer returned to Rear TAC at 0200 hrs having removed 64 mines in one 200 yds stretch of road.

D Coy moved forward at 0615 hrs to 652032 and at 0645 hrs, A Coy were ordered to provide and maintain a standing patrol at PRESTO. Shortly after this C Coy again put a call in for pioneers to sweep the roads in the Coy area. Disposition at 0800 hrs were as listed previously.

In view of the amount of mine sweeping which was being found necessary the engineers were called for to offer assistance in sweeping from 650022 to 641028.

The Bde Comd sent orders at 0930 hrs to keep pushing ahead beyond 641028 and although he foresaw no imminent threat of tanks, advised moving our A/tk weapons forward as soon as a ROAD was clear. D Coy were ordered ahead to 647033 at 0930 hrs and enroute reported a peach orchard to be mined and booby-trapped in area 648035.

By 1300 hrs C Coy were at 642030 and by 1320 hrs had contacted the enemy. However, shortly after this, scouts moving in the area 639035 reported enemy seen at 639039. At 1345 hrs the scouts were ambushed and three of them were taken PW - later the body of Cpl Male was found.

A patrol from D Coy reached 646038 to which area the remainder of the Coy closed up. At 1610 hrs D Coy sighted enemy at 633032, 637038, 639026, 631028, and 621028.

Sometime later A Coy was moved up to 637033 and by 2045 hrs the dispositions were - A Coy at 647025 and moving to 636035

B Coy at 650003, C Coy at 643034

D Coy at 645035 and TAC 648025.
At 2330 hrs C Coy reports no enemy at 638038.

16 OCTOBER 1944

Place: ITALY
SHEET 1/25000
SAVIGNANO 100
11 NE MR
643034

Weather - Cloudy, some light rain.

At 0300 hrs one PI of A Coy occupied 638038 with the other two PIs still at 635033. A/Tk guns finally reached D Coy area at 0315 hrs and a patrol from D Coy back at 0350 hrs reported no enemy seen or heard in Area 640040, but the road heavily mined. At this time B Coy were ordered forward to 640039 to be in position before first light. At 0450 hrs the Engineer Officer reported the road 200X NORTH of 641028 clear of mines but further sweeping impossible owing to shell fire. At the same time B and D Coys were advancing with no small arms opposition. Most of B Coy were in their position at 641040 by 0625 hrs and A Coy had a PI at 638038. B Coy was given instructions to patrol to 630046 and to make contact and pass through A Coy. At 0845 hrs the C.O. went forward to C Coy and then ordered them to move to 629038 and patrol to LINEN. By 1055 hrs we were disposed as given at the outset.

Shortly after 1100 hrs the CO's driver and a signalier of the RCCS, who later died of wounds, ran over a mine in a jeep and both sustained serious injuries - the CP, Col MackENZIE, had traversed the same road only a few minutes before and it was believed to have been swept.

At this time B Coy made contact and took 9 P.W. at 1130 hrs from area 633046 and another three at 1215 hrs from houses in area 629045. By 1300 hrs they were firmly based at 630046. The disposition of the Bn at 1400 hrs was -

A Coy 636034

B Coy with PI localities at 629045, 630046, 633047

C Coy at 627038

D Coy with PIs at 638039, 640039 and 642041.

TAC arrived later in the former C Coy area at 643034 at 1800 hrs. At this time Bn forward elements on our left were reported at 623030, 625035 and intended patrols to 623038. A Coy was given as an objective for the night, the houses in the area 623046, and D Coy was ordered to move to 624052 to secure the line of the road and stream. At 1700 hrs a tp of Sherman tanks came under command and were ordered to move, under cover of darkness to 627037 in the C Coy locality.

17 OCTOBER 1944

Weather - Cloudy with rain after noon.

By first light D Coy had a pl at 628049 and another in contact with the enemy, who were occupying their objective, at 625052. A Coy were firm at 627043. Tanks supplied supporting fire for D Coy from the A Coy area and D Coy were firm on their final objective by 1000 hrs. An attack was teed up, supported by tanks, S.L.1. MMG's, 3" Mortars, and arty for A Coy to capture and hold the line of the road and river at 623047 (patrols from C Coy had already reported an estimated enemy platoon in this area). The sp fire lasted for 20 minutes after which A Coy assaulted from the SOUTH and were firm by 1230 hrs. At the same time C Coy sent a standing patrol to 622044.

The bridge at 623045 was found to be intact but prepared for demolition and the approaches to it mined. Enemy movement and probable OP's were engaged throughout the remainder of the day by tanks, MMG's and 3" mortars and arty registered and recorded probable enemy positions in the area.

Late in the afternoon Bde ordered an attack under cover of darkness to occupy 619053 this to take place simultaneously with an attack by the RCR on 625060.

At 1530 hrs prior to receipt of the above, a message was received at TAC regarding a suspected time bomb which reliable information indicated as likely to be in our B Coy area. A rather routine search was made by the Coy until some plastic H.E. was discovered in the basement of a house they had been using for the past day and one half. The house was then vacated and two volunteers, Sgt LEA and Cpl PAYTON, soon discovered some 100-150 lbs of HE in various forms placed in an inside well in a wine cellar. In among the explosions was a time clock which still had one day and 21 hrs left before detonation.

18 OCTOBER 1944

Weather - Intermittent rain.

B Coy moved forward under cover of darkness and by 0400 hrs had all three pls across the RIVER DONIGAGLIA with the fwd pls engaged in a small arms fight at close range in the area of the objective. The Coy consolidated and endeavoured to clear and occupy houses on a fwd slope at 617053. This they did killing some 20 Germans and capturing 6 POW. These positions were soon engaged by enemy SP guns and became untenable; an excellent artillery smoke screen was laid down enabling the Coy to fall back on the objective and consolidate - where they remained throughout the remainder of the day.

Late in the afternoon recce parties of the WNSR arrived at TAC to arrange for a subsequent relief. Guides were laid on to lead the WN Coys into positions and timings were as follows - C Coy - 1900 hrs, A Coy - 2030 hrs, D Coy 2200 hrs, B Coy fwd pls were relieved by a standing patrol of the WNSR, the remainder of the WNSR Coy occupying positions in the area 630045. Shortly after this was completed an enemy patrol infiltrated into A Coy area; they were engaged with grenades and small arms and driven off. After this the relief was carried out without incident and by 2300 hrs except for one officer and one NCO per pl, who remained with the WNSR till noon the next day (also the 3" mortars and MMG's). Coys moved by march route to an RV at PRESTO thence to CULLEN and by TCV to the rest area just SOUTH of SANTARCANGELO on highway No: 9. This rest area is nothing more than a large field of good greasy LOMBARDY mud.

[right margin: appx no. 17; Part II Order; no. 82]

19 OCTOBER 1944

Place: EAST OF ST.
ARCHANGELO
ITALY
SHEET RIMINI
1/50000 MR
774987

Weather - Cloudy & cool.

This area has to be seen to be believed. There is virtually no shelter from the elements. BHQ has one small partially shell shattered "casa" 2 rooms of which are taken up by the RAP and the other 2 by the BOR and the officers lounge. Sp Coy is camped in the midst of a muddy field, B Coy has one small semi demolished building and the other 3 rifle Coys are no better off. Still with the aid of pup tents supplemented by groundsheets and other makeshift devices everyone is under some semblance of cover. HQ Coy and other personnel that go to make up 3 Echelon have remained in their position on the outskirts of RIMINI on Highway No. 9.

20 OCTOBER 1944

Weather - Very cool and cloudy.

We have lost no time in despatching men on leave. A party of 25 left for FLORENCE this morning under the fatherly care of Capt. L.G. SMITH. A further 10 went for 48 hrs to the Rest Centre at RICCIONE. Capt. M.E. GEORGE left for the Sub Unit Comd's Course at

CMTC, BENEVENTO. Reinforcements numbering 67 who arrived in the midst of the last engagement and who have been held at B Echelon, came fwd today and joined their Coys. Among the reinforcements were Lts J.E. PICKERING and Ian MacDONALD who fought with the Bn last fall & returned to ENGLAND on exchange, and are now back in ITALY in time for the winter campaign; also Lt W/T/ PENTLAND returned from Hosp after a bout of jaundice. A new officer Capt W.G. ANGUS, formerly 30 Recce Regt, also joined the Bn today. Daily routine in this area is Reveille 0630 hrs, Breakfast 0730 hrs, Parade 0800 hrs, Dinner 1200 hrs, Supper 1700 hrs, Lights out 2215 hrs.
[right margin: appx No. 18 Part II Order; no. 83]

21 OCTOBER 1944

Weather - Rain all day.

Bde HQ today requested a return showing casualties during each day of the last engagement. Total casualties were 12 killed 41 wounded 3 missing 32 sick; the detailed return is attached as an appendix.

A very steady flow of leave vacancies ranging from 5 - 25 are arriving for 48 hr periods in RICCIONE and despite the scarcity of amusements in that town they are being filled very enthusiastically. Seven day leaves are not being given very generously but at any rate 25 men, mostly from the rifle Coys, are going to FLORENCE tomorrow.

Today the Officer's lounge, as it is rather grandiloquently described, opened for all officers in the Bn. It consists of one small room which the PMC, Maj BANTON, was able to furnish with chairs and 2 couches borrowed back from Brig JOHNSTON, whose Brigade has been in rest in our previous rest area between RIMINI and RICCIONE. The windows boast of no glass and our makeshift blockouts don't keep out all the wind by any means. Also the plaster from the ceiling falls at the slightest encouragement. But everyone is oblivious of these minor discomforts because in an even smaller room adjoining is the bar which produces a fairly steady flow of coffee cognac and a liqueur known as Kummel.

[right margin: see appx No. 9 (casualty chart); see appx No.10; AFW3008; see appx No.11; AFW3009]

22 OCTOBER 1944

Weather - Rain all day.

At 1400 hrs the C.O. held an adm conference at the Officer's lounge where all adm points arising from the last action were discussed and settled.

During the morning, it being Sunday, the Padre Major S.B. EAST, (MC), visited the Coys individually for short services at the conclusion of which he gave the men the latest news from all fronts.

During the course of the day the Armourer Sjt, Sjt BAIN, commenced an inspection of all automatic weapons. This is in line with instructions received from Bde that the Bn must be battle worthy by 24 Oct 44.

23 OCTOBER 1944

Weather - Windy and cloudy with occasional rain.

Capt D.R. WHELDON, the Paymaster, did business all day paying all personnel in this area. The only use for money in this rather cheerless spot is for the purchase of EFI. All the men were issued with a bottle of beer.

A large marquee normally used for the Sits Mess, has been erected in Sp Coy lines. It is used for a variety of things - CO's orders, movies and sleeping quarters for the guard, though not all at once.

Lt A.S. LeMESURIER, wounded badly in the back and chest on 18 Oct 44 has now been taken off the seriously ill list. Lts R.D.DAILLEY, J. ANDERSON and Maj D.B. DEEKS, the other officers wounded in the last engagement are getting on well.

Major Ian WALLACE, G2 at HQ 1 Cdn Corps, visited Col MacKENZIE this afternoon. He and Capt Hamish MacINTOSH have become frequent visitors and have been christened by the Col, "The Army Types" after two cartoon characters that appear in the 8th Army newspapers.

[right margin: see appx No.12; Part I Order; appx No.19; Part II Order; No. 84]

24 OCTOBER 1944

Weather - Rain, Rain, Rain.

If the rain continues this area will soon become a vast inland sea. Every known artifice and subterfuge is resorted to in order to keep dry.

That merciless martinet RSM CROSSLEY gave all NCO's a gruelling hour of bayonet fighting this morning. He was fortunate in finding a place for this purpose where the mud was only ankle deep.

During the past few days the weather has become very bad and that combined with the lack of facilities generally has confined training to route marches, bayonet fighting and other hardening forms.

25 OCTOBER 1944

Weather – Rain all day.

Major D.W. BANTON, the 2 i/c, warned an advance party to stand by to move by RIMINI MR

1330 hrs but nothing happened. It later transpired that 11 and 12 Cdn Inf Bde have not moved out of our former billets (between RIMINI - RICCIONE) to which the Bn is destined to return.

This evening Major F.G. McLAREN gave a party for the men of his Coy to which Col MacKENZIE, the 2 i/c, Adit and RSM CROSSLEY were invited. The party was completely organized by the men of the Coy and co-ordinated mainly by the efforts of Pte Rex WADDELL, one of the old stalwarts who has to his credit not only five years service in this war but 4 years in the last Great War. It was a very congenial and convivial sight that greeted the Colonel on his arrival. The whole Coy was seated at a long table made from boxes and crates covered with blankets. The whole scene was illumined by candle light - long rows of grinning faces, low rafted ceiling, corn bins at one side of the room, the farmers cattle on the other, curtained off with blankets. Pipers BOYLE and DONALDSON, a piano conjured up from some mysterious source and that rare thing a radio supplied the party with music of every kind. Each man also had his EFI issue of beer. At the end of the meal before the singing commenced Col MacKENZIE spoke briefly to the men of the Coy - his old Coy - thanking them for the excellent show they put up during the last action and giving them the welcome news that the Division was going into Army reserve for some weeks. The Colonel was followed by RSM CROSSLEY who delighted the men with a short but very amusing speech.

Around 1930 hrs Col MACKENZIE left C Coy for a movie at which all Bde Officers were invited to attend in the Bn area. Afterwards, despite the limitation of the officers lounge described above, a very successful smoker was held. The guests included Brig J.A. CALDER, Maj Ian MacDOUGAL, Lt-col RITCHIE, RCR, Maj A.S.A. GALLOWAY, who was in good form as usual.

26 OCTOBER 1944

Weather - Rain as usual.

Rum rations happily enough are increasingly common these days and on some days are by far the most cheering incident of all.

to the heavy rains of the past few days have wrought havoc with bridging and today a very bedraggled figure appeared to announce that Corps HQ was "cut off" by the flood! It was Maj Ian WALLACE.

Maj J.R.O. COUNSELL pulled up stakes (it didn't take much pulling in this mud) and removed his Coy to the village half a mile down the road towards RIMINI and is now occupying the buildings there jointly with the Italian owners. The marquee used for movies blew down for the fourth time.
[right margin: appx No. 20; Part II Order; No. 85]

27 OCTOBER 1944

Weather - Cloudy, cool, rain.

Twelve more men donned the kilt and departed for FLORENCE this morning. RSM CROSSLEY was flooded out and retired in good order to B Ech near RIMINI. Rifle Coys have dispersed over a wide area in order to gain the cover of buildings. Forty-three reinforcements, all but six of whom were previously with the Bn, arrived today, included were three new officers Lts D.B. SCOTT, A.E. BROCK and J.T. CHURCH. The last two were at one time NCO's in the Bn. Col MacKENZIE received word from Capt M.E. GEORGE, who left a week ago for BENEVENTO on course, to say that he was in 15 Cdn Gen Hosp as a result of a road accident.

28 OCTOBER 1944

Weather - Occasionally sunny.

This morning RSM CROSSLEY left in Col MacKENZIE'S Daimler Scout car on a few days leave to visit his brother serving NOT far SOUTH of here.

Lt E.C.D. WASHER brought 20 reinforcements to the Bn today and this leaves us only about 80 men under strength.

Much to their surprise and dismay all BHQ personnel found themselves taking P.T. at 1500 hrs under Lt D.V. ROLAND the Sigs Offr.

[right margin: see appx No.13; AWF3008; X appx No. 13A; AFW3009]

29 OCTOBER 1944

Weather - Rain - of course.

We are daily sinking deeper in the mud and water that surrounds us on all sides. Leave allotments for seven days to ROME & FLORENCE continue to be very low; at any rate a goodly number of men are getting away for 48 hrs to RICCIONE. Forty men were despatched today.

The Padre, Maj S.B. EAST, gave short informal services at the Coys, during the course of the day, visiting each in turn.

Nothing else happened.

30 OCTOBER 1944

Weather - Cool but sunny.

Several asortive attempts have been made to move to the billets assigned to us between RICCIONE and RIMINI. Each day we receive word that the following day the move will take place and during the course of each day our orders are alternately confirmed and cancelled, and when the following day arrives, as it always does, we do NOT move. On Bn level one is apt to draw obvious conclusions from such a preformance, but no doubt Higher Authority, in their greater wisdom, have sound reasons for maintaining the Bn in a state of uncertainty. Capt J.C.N. CURRELLY and Lt K.L.H. HUDSON returned from leave with glowing tales of the fleshpots of FLORENCE.

[right margin: appx No. 21; Part II Order; No. 86]

31 OCTOBER 1944

Weather - Wind and rain.

Major D.W. BANTON, the 2 i/c, spent most of the day, in endeavouring to find adequate quarters for the Bn in the new area SOUTH of RIMINI. The Coys have sent representatives

down to get the Coy billets clearly defined and some of these are staying overnight in the expectation that 11 and 12 Bde will move tomorrow.

Three more men left for CANADA under the Triwound Scheme. Rubber boots and leather jerkins are now being issued by Capt E.M. CHILDS, the Quartermaster.

[right margin: see appx No.14; Part I Orders]

signed

DAMackenzie

(D.A.MACKENZIE) Lt-col,

Commanding Officer,

48 Highrs

1 NOVEMBER 1944

Place: ITALY, SHEET

1/50,000

RIMINI MR

774987

Weather - Cold and cloudy.

Two days ago, the Sjt Cook, Sjt Wade, J.A. was fatally injured when the roof of the Sp Coy kitchen collapsed. Word has just been received of his death in hospital.

12th Cdn Inf Bde vacated our billets SOUTH of RIMINI - but only for a few hrs. while enroute to their new area they found that the only available bridges over a certain river had been washed away, so after an absence of only a few hours they were once more ensconced in our new area. However A Coy moved down today occupying parts of buildings not required by the units in possession.

[right margin: Appx 1 Part II; Order No.87/44.]

2 NOVEMBER 1944

Weather - Occasional rain.

Col MacKENZIE and RSM CROSSLEY lectured to all Cpls and L/Cpls this morning in Sp Coy billets and in the latter half of the morning to all WO's and Sjts.

Advance parties from the Coys and part of the Bn B Echelon have moved and like A Coy are occupying whatever space they can find in the new area.

[right margin: Appx 2-48 Highr trg instr No.8; Appx 3- Part I; Order No.25]

3 NOVEMBER 1944

Major F.G. McLAREN, OC C Coy, succeeded in moving his Coy to the new area and, like A Coy, they have become the guests of the units already there so far as housing is concerned. The "new area" comprises almost exactly the same buildings as were occupied by the Bn from 22 Sep to 9 Oct 44 immediately prior to the last engagement between SAVIGNANO and CESENA. HQ Coy also moved together with other elements comp rising our Bn B Echelon.

Another leave party of ten men left today for ROME and didn't appear very sorry to be leaving this sea of mud for a time.

A certain backlog of cases which it has not been possible for the C.O. to consider until now have resulted in 4 officers being engaged today taking Summaries of Evidence.

4 NOVEMBER 1944

Weather - Sunny and cool.

This morning at an early hour Col MacKENZIE and the Padre set off to visit the Div F.P. Camp at JESI, or rather allegedly at JESI, for after a rough 3 hr journey they arrived only to find that the F.P. Camp had moved the day before to a place within 15 mins of our own area.

Capt. L.G. SMITH took D Coy to the new area transported in TCV's that have been kept on hand for 6 days awaiting our move. At 1400 hrs B Coy followed by BHQ also moved down, thus leaving only Sp Coy in the SANTARCHANGELO area. Our new area is not yet completely ours as certain elements of 12 Cdn Inf Bde still remain but they have promised to leave soon.

[right margin: Appx 4- Field Return Offrs 3008; Appx 5 - Field Return ORs 3009; Appx 6 - Part II Order No.88]

5 NOVEMBER 1944

Place: ITALY, SHEET
RIMINI
1/50,000 MR
895945

Weather - Fair and cool.

This morning there was no general church service but the Padre did visit the Coys here and Sp Coy near St. ARCHANGELO in the afternoon. At 1000 hrs the RSM held a parade of all NCO's in the YMCA building for the purpose of instructing them in guard mounting. As elements of 12 Cdn Inf Bde are still in some of our billets it has not yet been possible to move Sp Coy to this area, nor has it been possible to establish our BOR in a suitable building. At the moment it is established in what was formerly the local barber shop. Capt. Dickie PALMER and Capt. Frank McEACHERN were visitors today from Corps HQ. Both have been nominated to attend the Intermediate War Staff Course at KINGSTON, ONTARIO.

6 NOVEMBER 1944

Weather - Sunny and cool.

The RSM this morning continued with his series of lectures to all the WO's and NCO's. In the afternoon Col MacKENZIE carried out a thorough inspection of personal and battle kit of B Coy at 1400 hrs. He was assisted in the inspection by Major BANTON (2 i/c), Capt E.M. CHILDS (QM), and Capt W.G. BURKE-ROBERTSON (Adjt). The inspection over, the Colonel spoke briefly and informally to the men and particularly asked for "beefs" and complaints of every kind. The officers in B Coy at the moment are Maj D.B. DEEKS, Capt J.L. BROWN, Lt D.B. DAVIDSON, Lt W.T. PENTLAND, Lt D.B. SCOTT. Col MacKENZIE then turned the parade over to the I.O. Lt N.H. McMURRICH who gave everyone a very comprehensive picture of what is going on on all fronts. A similar inspection of D Coy, commended by Capt L.G. SMITH, then followed on the sandy beach of the familiar ADRIATIC. The other officers in D Coy are Capt R.W. MURDOCH (2 i/c), Lt N.A. BALLARD (DSO), Lt I. MACDONALD, Lt C.J. SEAGRAM, and Lt R.O.B. WILLIAMSON here on training increment for two weeks.

[right margin: Appx 7 - Part I Order No.26; Appx 8 - Part II Order No.89/44]

7 NOVEMBER 1944

Weather - Light rain, mostly fair.

Col MacKENZIE carried out inspection of A Coy and HQ Coy today exactly similar to yesterdays inspections.

Capt A. MacNEIL, and Lts C.J. SEAGRAM, D. MacDONALD and W.T. PENTLAND left for ROME on leave today. Lt E.C. BENSON is now one of the officers responsible for radio broadcasts dealing with 1 Cdn Corps in this theatre and there duties, pleasant enough in themselves are made even more so by the fact that he is stationed in ROME. Lt N.H. McMURRICH today replaced Lt BENSON as LO 3 at HQ 1 Cdn Inf Bde.

At a special pay parade today the men were allowed to draw up to 1400 lire over and above their normal monthly payments for the purchase of Xmas presents.

8 NOVEMBER 1944

Weather - Fair and cool.

This morning the CO, Col MacKENZIE, inspected C Coy at 1000 hrs and held orderly room at 1130 hrs. Immediately afterwards the BOR was moved from its present location in the barber shop to a large building which is a sort of Regimental centre. The offices of the Paymaster, I.O., Adjt, Padre, Educational NCO, Signals Exchange and Dental Officer are all concentrated in this building.

The MO, Capt G.W. CANTELON, became a little more sadistic than usual and inoculated all personnel for typhus during the course of the day.

This evening Major BANTON (2 i/c) gave a lecture to all officers on Regimental History and customs. At dinner T M McCOY, the Aux Services Supervisor at Bde HQ was our guest. It was a sort of farewell dinner as he is leaving for CANADA within a day or two.

[right margin: Appx 9 – Part II Order No.90/44]

9 NOVEMBER 1944

Weather - Very wet.

Marching in States have always been associated in our minds with the Bn's battles in SUSSEX and SURREY so it was somewhat surprising to see Capt J.L. BROWN with an officer rep from each Coy preparing condition states of all the billets presently occupied by the Bn.

This morning in RICCIONE all Coy Comds attended a Corps Study Group which lasted all morning.

The Bde NCO School is about to start again in CATTOLICA with 10 candidates from each Bn for a course lasting four weeks. Lt R.W. JOHNSTON will be an instructor together with 2 Sjts and 1 Cpt.

10 NOVEMBER 1944

Weather - Cloudy and cool.

Guests of honour at our Mess Dinner this evening were Brig I.S.JOHNSTON and Lt-col W.W.DARLING, now commanding the P.L.D.G. Both gave very amusing, but of course short, speeches after many false starts because of everyone singing "See Him Smiling" and "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow" whenever they tried to make a beginning. Other 48th Highlanders there who are not now with the Bn were Major Ian WALLACE, Capt J.M.E. CLARKSON (both from Corps HQ), Capt H.K.MacINTOSH (8 ArmyHQ), Capt Frank McEACHERN (Corps HQ) and Capt D.M.JENKINS from Bde HQ

bou.

The day began for Col MacKENZIE, at any rate, in a more serious vein as he attended a Corps Study Group at the TEATRO DANTE at RICCIONE at 0900 hrs. The Study Group was conducted by the Corps Commander personally.

11 NOVEMBER 1944

Weather - Sunny but cold.

1000 hrs found the Bde drawn up in a hollow square on our parade ground for a Memorial Service for both those who have fallen in this war and in the first Great War. Major General VOKES, temporary Corps Comd attended with one or two of his Staff officers. It was the first time, in many months, as Brig J.A.CALDER pointed out that the 3 Bns have been on parade together.

In the afternoon "A" & "D" Coys carried out exercises with storm boats on the MARANO RIVER about 1 mile SOUTH. As these boats are provided with outboard motors the training was somewhat more interesting than the usual Assault Boat MK III.

[right margin: Appx 10- Fd Ret ofrs (3008); Appx 11- Fdd Ret ORs (3009).; Appx 12- Part II Order No.91/44; Appx 13- Part I Order No. 27/44]

12 NOVEMBER 1944

Weather - Fair and moderate with some rain.

All officers, Warrant officers and NCOs were on parade at 0930 hrs to see "The Enemy Listens" - a bit hard to take on a Sunday morning for some. It was followed by a Protestant Service at the YMCA building conducted by Padre EAST.

Capt L.G.SMITH put on a demonstration at 1400 hrs of a coy in defence and, while this is an old, old theme, it proved most interesting and won very favourable comments from Brig J.A.CALDER. The demonstration took place about 2 miles west of our present area near KESTRAL, where the battalion fought for many grim days in September.

Mr George SINGLETON, the Aux Supervisor, showed to-night a film entitled "The Song of Bernadette". Entertainment is plentiful. Besides our own 3 shows per week there is a new C.W.A.C. Show playing in RICCIONE and also a 56 Br Div Show.

BnDuty Officers are now having their meals at "A" Mess. As all officers are messing with their respective coys it is difficult otherwise for Col MacKENZIE and Major BANTON to get to know some of the very recent arrivals.

The 10 candidates from the battalion left for the Bde NCO School at CATTOLICA this afternoon.

The Regimental Barber Shop has reopened in competition with several Italian barbers who have set up business in windowless shops since our arrival.

13 NOVEMBER 1944

Weather - Windy with storms at night.

Training is continuing quite normally in accord with the Training Instruction issued by the C.O., Col D.A.MaCKENZIE, a few days after the Bn last came out of the line. A Copy is attached. Coy Comds are submitting syllabuses daily rather than weekly, because of the numerous unexpected developments such as visits by Formation Comds, baths, shows, inoculation parades, etc., which necessitate a very flexible programme of work. "B", "C" & "Sp" Coys in succession carried out Storm Boat Training during the day.

Make shift stoves of every conceivable design have made their appearance throughout the area. Oil drums and 2" Mortar boxes with drain pipes used as chimneys seem to be the favourites. The BOR is saved from being a general meeting place by the billowing clouds of suffocating smoke that seem to fill the room all day.

Col MacKENZIE disposed of 6 charges this morning, and 3 other men whom he had remanded previously were tried by Court Martial, Capt W.J.LEADBEATER sitting as a member of the Court.

[right margin: Appx 14- Part II Order No. 92/44]

14 NOVEMBER 1944

Weather - Rainy and cold,

Xmas airgraphs are in good supply and in great demand. The Officer's Mess have a card designed by Lt N.H.McMURRICH showing an outline map of ITALY with the Falcon Head superimposed and the name of the Bn at the bottom. There was an EFI issue of beer to-day for all ranks (but no whiskey). This combined with a large Canadian mail has pushed everyone's morale to a new peak.

"A" Coy held their coy dinner this evening and the C.O., 2i/c and Padre were guests. Col MacKENZIE has encouraged all coys to hold such dinners as a normal drill whenever the Bn, as now, is in reserve for a few weeks.

[right margin: Appx 15-Part II Order No. 93/44; Appx 16-Part I Order No.28/44]

15 NOVEMBER 1944

Weather - Rain with sun late in day.

To-day a visit by the T/Comd 1 Cdn Corps Major General VOKES was scheduled to take place but was cancelled at the last moment.

Major F.G.MCLAREN and Lt D.V.ROLAND left for FLORENCE for 7 days. Ten minutes after RQMS GOODALL returned from his leave to-day Capt E.M.CHILDS, the QM, departed for the Kit Disposal Unit near NAPLES, where he is going to get the kit of the wounded and sick who are now back with the Bn. Lt H.D. HELLIKER, the TO, also left for the SOUTH to pick up M.T. Stores from Ordnance Work shops near NAPLES. Capt G.W.BEAL returned from CMTC where he has been instructing for some weeks. The Pipe Band played this afternoon at 83 Br Gen Hosp near RICCIONE. The rifle coys all had baths at a 5 Cdn Div Mobile Bath Unit which, being located in our area, provides hot baths for the coys whenever needed.

16 NOVEMBER 1944

Weather - Sunny all day.

The paymaster Capt WHELDON held a normal mid-month pay parade to-day for all coys. "Sp" Coy fired 6 pdr and 3" mortar at floating targets out to sea. The 6 pdr targets were anchored 900 yards off shore.

Col GIBBON, Director of Military Training called with Lt J.NAYLOR (Bde LO) to discuss training with the Colonel and Major BANTON.

"Sp" Coy held their coy party to-night with Col MacKENZIE, Major BANTON, as guests. Capt Pat BATES arrived from Convalescent Camp to see the officers of the Bn and his coy before going to AVELLINO for re-allocation. The four bullets that found their way into his stomach in September have left him unfit for further combattant duties.

[right margin: Appx 17-Part II Order No.94/44]

17 NOVEMBER 1944

Weather - Fair and crisp.

The morning passed uneventfully, all coys still continuing with training as laid down by Col MacKENZIE in Trng Inst #8, here to attached. At 1330 hrs 54 officers and other ranks proceeded to a Symphony Concert at the IMPERO cinema at RIMINI where the for the first time in many months members of the Bn paid in cash for entertainment. The orchestra playing was the PESARO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA and it was interesting to note that the 48th Highrs bought more tickets than all the other units in 1 Cdn Div combined.

This evening all Coy Comds went to 442 Searchlight Bty, R.A., near SANTARCANGELO to witness a searchlight demonstration. It was only since the fight up the coastal corridor to RIMINI began that searchlights have been used, and with some effect to create artificial moonlight and so it is hoped to produce an adverse effect on the enemy's morale. These nocturnal activities made it necessary to cancel the Mess Dinner normally held on Friday evenings.

[right margin: Appx 18- Part II Order No. 95/44.]

18 NOVEMBER 1944

Weather - Light rain.

At the well-remembered place known by the code word SMOKIES "B" Coy commanded by Major D.B.DEEKS put on a demonstration of tank-hunting at which the Brigadier and all officers & NCOs of the Bn were present. The other officers at the present time and who took part in the demonstration are Capt J.L.BROWN, Lieut D.B.DAVIDSON, Lieut D.B. SCOTT and Lieut W.G.PENTLAND. The efficiency of P.I.A.T. teams was amply demonstrated and the use of smoke and 2" mortar flares was also shown to be indispensable to a successful attack on enemy tanks by night.

In this part of the world there are no lithographers, the inks available are red and black only and suitable paper is almost unobtainable, but nevertheless Lieut N.H. McMURRICH produced a very good effort showing the falcon in red superimposed on an outline map of ITALY in black. A copy is attached.

The c.O. held orders this afternoon at 1400 hrs. Crime is not at a premium these days, there being only two men in the Bn who are A.W.L. Both of these rejoice in the name of that of our former C.O. - JOHNSTON.

This evening "B" Coy held their coy party at which the C.O., 2i/c and the Padre attended. [right margin: Appx 19- Fd Ret Offrs(3008); Appx 20- Fd Ret ORs (3009)]

19 NOVEMBER 1944

Weather - Cloudy and cool.

This morning Col MacKENZIE and Major B.D. DEEKS left for 7 days leave in FLORENCE and ROME. Capt A.P.BATES, who has been here for the last few days arranged his return by air to the south of ITALY.

As Padre EAST is still away on leave, a voluntary service at the Hastings & Prince Edward Regiment was made available to us. The usual R.C. parade was conducted of course by Padre KELLY of Bde HQ. The Weapon Training Officer, Capt R.W.MURDOCK, has completed a first class 100 yd rifle range which will be used during the next week by all coys.

This being Sunday nothing happened, most of the Bn sleeping soundly during the afternoon and a little mild carousing filling in the evening hours.

20 NOVEMBER 1944

Weather - A beautiful day.

Capt A.P.BATES left at 0800 hrs this morning by air on the first lap of his trip to AVELLINO. Major D.W.BANTON commanding the Bn in the absence of Col MacKENZIE attended a "Weasel" demonstration (these vehicles are similar to carriers and are to be used to bring up supplies in action). After this Major BANTON attended a conference held by the DivComd in RICCIONE.

Capt R.A.MacINTOSH has arrived to replace our M.O. Capt G.W.CANTELON who has now been with the Bn since early June.

During the afternoon two other officers also arrived - Lieuts H.W.D.KILGOUR and M.HOFFMAN both sent forward on Trng Increment by 2nd Ech.

At 1400 hrs "A" Coy commanded by Capt G.W.BEAL put on a demonstration of a coy attack which was attended by all officers, W.O.'s and N.C.O.'s. The difficulties that infantry will experience advancing over such absolutely flat ground as the Bn will encounter in the LOMBARDY PLAINS was evident during the demonstration. A full use of supporting arms will be necessary and this "A" Coy incorporated in it's demonstration.

An inter-company guard-mounting competition started to-day. Each coy during it's tour of duty will be marked on precision of drill in mounting the guard, appearance and turn-out, conduct and relief of sentries, guard reports, etc.

Six MK III assault boats plus a large number of Mae Wests are once again available for the Bn so that coys are spending all available trng time to-day and to-morrow seeing the mouth of the MARENO RIVER, training consisting of watermanship and platoon and coy exercises.

HQ Coy held a coy party this evening. Major D.W.BANTON and all officers of BHQ and HQ Coy were present. The orchestra that had been arranged failed to arrive, but PICO, the Italian helper played his mandolin during dinner and Sjt VAUGHAN of the RAP intermitently sang songs and Quarters MARRS squeezed his box. The men were waited upon by the sergeants of the coy, SM GUNN acting as a sort of head-waiter and maitre d'hotel combined. Pipe music was also in evidence, of course, and speeches were kept to a minimum, the principal ones being given by Major D.W.BANTON and RSM CROSSLEY.

[right margin: Appx 21- Part I Order No.29; Appx 22- Part II Order No.196/44]

21 NOVEMBER 1944

Weather - Rainy and cold.

Major D.W.BANTON held and dispensed with all Orderly Room cases this morning in the record time of 9 minutes. Capt S.G. STRATHY called this morning in connection with his intended transfer to the Bn from the Lorne Scots. Capt A.M.McNEIL was evacuated with jaundice and Major F.G.McLAREN being on leave, Capt W.J.LEADBEATER was sent pro tem to command the coy.

"A" and "D" Coys trained with MK III assault boats during the day, the remaining coys followed their own syllabus.

22 NOVEMBER 1944

Weather - Fair and cool.

3 C.I.B. put on a Light Bridging Equipment demonstration near CATTOLICA for all available officers in the Bn. Major BANTON lead the procession.

The Pipe Band spent the morning at #5 Med Regt, RCA, playing during an inspection, returning here in the early afternoon, obviously having been wined and dined in considerable style.

During the evening orders were received that 3 men whom we are allowed to send on the 1st 30 day leave to Canada were to be warned to stand by to move. These men are RQMS D GOODALL, Sjt-Major J GUNN of HQ Coy and L/Sjt J.A.GAUTHIER of "C" Coy. These three have been continuously with the Bn since the landing in SICILY. Sjt GAUTHIER is the only NCO left at the presenttime who has been in every action in a rifle company during the past year and a half.

At 1000 hrs the A.D.J.A. spoke for an hour to all officers in "A" Mess, dealing principally with the preparation of summaries of evidence. He was then followed by Capt "Squib" MOWAT, Bde I.O., who spoke for half an hour on the handling of P.O.W. in forward areas with a view to making information obtained from them immediately available to the units in contact with the enemy.

[right margin: Appx 23- Part II No. 97/44]

23 NOVEMBER 1944

Weather - Sunny all day.

Major F.G.McLAREN returned from FLORENCE without his Jeep. Since these machines are well-nigh unprocurable, this represents a minor catastrophe to the Bn. Jeep= stealing has become in 1 Cdn Corps almost as fashionable as sheep-stealing two hundred years ago in the Highlands. The Signal officer Lieut D.V.ROLAND also arrived back from leave. John Collingwood REID the well known columnist and radio commentator had dinner in "A" Mess and spent the evening, and with all the officers attended a flare-demonstration put on by Capt R.W.MURDOCK, A/OC of "D" Coy. The demonstration was designed to show primarily the value of 2" mortar flares as an aid to directed fire at night.

Major G.J.W.PROCTOR made himself popular by arriving at the Mess at 2100 hrs with 3 Nursing Sisters and very shortly a party developed in the Mess, and just when things began to calm down around midnight Capt G.W.BEAL and all "Sp" Coy officers arrived en masse to liven things up again.

[right margin: XXX Appx 24 Part I Order No.30/44.]

24 NOVEMBER 1944

Weather - Uncertain with rain.

A first class exhibition of V.D. control with instructive and revealing microscopic slides was shown at RICCIONE to-day and a large proportion of the Bn were able to attend. It is indicative of something or other that this Bn during the months of July to November had the lowest V.D. rate in 1 Cdn Div.

We are now reduced to 9 motorcycles which is well under half the number permitted by W.E. No more will be issued to us for some months, so to-day all motorcycles were grounded with the exception of those required for the carrying of despatches. During the next operation all infantry bns in 1 Cdn Div will hold their 6 pdr A/Tk guns in "X" area. Our A/Tk platoon will retain its identity as such, but will be used possibly in a variety of roles, including the reinforcement of rifle companies by P.I.A.T. teams, scouts and snipers work and as carrying parties should circumstances and country make it advisable. We received to-day instructions that all leave personnel will be back with the Bn by 1200 hrs 28 Nov 44.

25 NOVEMBER 1944

Weather - Fair and cool.

"C" Coy won the guard-mounting competition which has been in progress this week and their prize-winning guard is being granted 48 hrs leave in RICCIONE as a result. Major D.W.BANTON attended an "O" Group at Bde HQ at 1400 hrs. It was really more in the nature of a conference when information on our forthcoming operation was given to Bn To-day Capt J.C.N.CURRELLY took his mortar platoon to a 3" mortar range near 3 Bde HQ at CATTOLICA and then spent the day practicing the material uses of smoke.

Capt E.M.CHILDS, the QM, returned from No 2 Kit Storage and Disposal Unit at ATRIPELDA where he has been sorting out and obtaining kit belonging to personnel at present with the unit.

Col MCKENZIE returned from leave in FLORENCE together with Major D.B.DEEKS who suffering from another attack of jaundice and is being evacuated in the morning.

Unfortunately both the Colonel and Major DEEKS spent a very large part of their leave in their FLORENCE hotel in bed (sick). The Colonel did however manage to lay claim to and establish ownership of his families FLORENTINE VILLA.

[right margin: Appx 25- Fd Ret Offrs (3008); Appx 26 -Fd Ret ORS (3009).; Appx 27- Part II Order No.98/44.]

26 NOVEMBER 1944

Weather - Very sunny, very cool.

At 0630 hrs three very happy NCOs left for Canada for 30 days leave excluding travelling time. These are the three who were warned several days ago - Sjt-Maj GUNN, RQMS GOODALL and Sjt GAUTHIER whose jobs and appointments in the Bn will be heldmopen pending their return.

The Padre who returned from leave yesterday held a voluntary service jointly with the H&PER Padre near the YMCA building this morning. The Padre (Hon Major S.B. EAST MC) spent a few days of his leave in ROME AND the remainder visiting the battlefield around ORTONA including ORTONA itself and the large Canadian Cemetery where our fallen Highlanders of last winter's campaign now rest.

Capt NYE from the Div Photographic Unit lunched at "A" Mess and afterwards took group pictures of the officers and of the sergeants.

During the later part of the morning Col MacKENZIE, Major BANTON, Major PROCTOR, Capt BEAL, Capt J.L. BROWN, Major McLAREN and Capt MURDOCK attended a conference held by the G.O.C. at RICCIONE.

Following the picture in the afternoon three officers from every company attended an R.C.E. lecture and demonstration on road maintenance.

27 NOVEMBER 1944

Weather - Rain all day.

A Light A.A. ground-shoot demonstration was held to-day, also a "crocodile" flame-throwing demonstration. At each of these a large portion of officers and NCOs attended, but the demonstrations were not a complete success due to torrential rains which lasted all day and which caused the tanks bearing the flame-throwers to bog down.

A Coy Comdrs meeting was held at "A" Mess at 1000 hrs to-day to re-arrange the loading of vehicles particularly coy "F" Echelon vehicles. It was also decided by the C.O. that "B" Echelon will be commanded by the Q.M. The Paymaster who will work in conjunction with the Adjut in making proper disposal of the personal effects of casualties will also remain in "B" Echelon rather than in "X" Area which will be in charge of Lieut R.W.JOHNSTON. Col MacKENZIE also advised Coy Comdrs to be prepared to move night 28-29 Nov 44 to an assembly area.

[right margin: Appx 28 – Part I Order No.31]

28 NOVEMBER 1944

Weather - Raining.

At 1200 hrs to-day the Bn was placed on 24 hours notice to move. In the morning the Regt Institutes Committee and Sub-Committee composed of personnel noted in Part I Orders #23 dated 23 Nov 44 was presided over by Major D.W.BANTON. During the course of proceedings Lt-col STILLMAN former C.o. of the L.E.R. and now President of the Regt Funds Board arrived to add his blessing to the work in hand.

A representation of officers and NCOs witnessed a portable flame-throwing demonstration at Main HQ of the R.C.R. at 1430 hrs.

From 1000 hrs to 1030 hrs those who listened to the radio heard a recorded broadcast of pipe music arranged and played by our pipe band a few days ago in preparation for a Christmas Day broadcast from ITALY.

The "Scat Party" is standing by to move and is comprised of only the 2i/c's of each coy as well as Major D.W.BANTON.

"X" Area will be located in CATTOLICA in billets vacated to-day by a unit of the 3rd Bde which necessitated our despatching a holding party to avoid re-occupation by the Italians and/or other units.

[right margin: Appx 29-Part II Order No. 99/44.; Appx 30- Part I Order No.32.]

29 NOVEMBER 1944

Weather - Raining.

The Scat Party" R. Ved 2200 hrs at "A" Mess and proceeded to a R.V. a few miles N.E. of FORLI.

Col MacKENZIE at 1900 hrs at a meeting at "A" Mess attended by all officers disclosed the general plan for 5th and 8th Armies and dealt in some detail with the plan for 1 Cdn Div and 1 C.I.B. in the operation about to commence.

"B" Echelon will move to the area of CESANITICO but neither "B" Ech nor "X" Area will move till the remainder of the Bn has cleared this area.

At 1845 hrs the Bn moved off in the following order: Tac HQ, A, B, C, D, F Echelon north along the coast road to and beyond CERVIA and thence to square 4623 where the Bn was complete at 2340 hrs and all personnel provided with shelter.

The plan for our Bde will not involve the committal of this Bn for several days to come.

30 NOVEMBER 1944

Place: ITALY, RIMINI

1/100,000 MR

4623

Weather - Rainy.

No changes in the disposition of the Bn took place to-day. The scarcity of houses as billets has caused a very wide dispersal of the Bn.

Arrangements have been made to supply the Bn with 2 Weasel carriers also OLAFSON bridging Jeeps and Jeep trailers for supplies and approximately 20 Italian Partisans whose role in the Bn is not yet known. This is the 1st time that the Bn has had any direct contact official or otherwise with the Partisans.

Col MacKENZIE, the C.O., is thought to have jaundice and it appears that it may not be possible to lead the Bn during the coming action.

[right margin: Appx 31-Part II Order No. 100/44.]

Signed

Damackenzie

(D.A.MacKENZIE) Lt-col,

Commanding Officer,

48 Highrs

1 DECEMBER 1944

Place: ITALY, SHEET

1/50,000 100 IV MR

534215

Weather - Sunny and warm.

The Commanding Officer with jaundice and the R.S.M. with a damaged leg left early in the morning for "B" Ech. At 1245 hrs Major PROCTOR and his scat party left for the new area at 465236. In the afternoon the O.C. issued a warning order for the move, marching troops to leave at 1730 hrs, the vehicles at 1700 hrs.

The move went off without incident and was completed by 2000 hrs, the Coy cooks providing an evening meal on arrival at about 2130 hrs.

The Battle-Adjt Capt W.G.BURKE-ROBERTSON made quite a hit with the local inhabitants and TAC had something of a carnival spirit; the officers attempting to settle details of the move and forthcoming events whilst the Italian signoras laughed among themselves and pointed to our Battle-Adjt's moustache with cries of "buffoone"! A clowns make-up-is a free translation.

[right margin: Appx-1-Part II Order No 101/44; Appx-2-Notes on Exercise "CHUCKLE"; Appx-3-Air plan for operation "CHUCKLE"]

2 DECEMBER 1944

Place: ITALY, SHEET

1/50,000 100 IV MR

465236

Weather - Sunny and warm.

At 0900 hrs 3 CIB attacked, but we had not yet received news of their progress. However, we were to move to give left flank protection to them and at 1300 hrs the scat party assembled to move to a new area at 4225. This move was cancelled due to lack of billets.

At 1700 hrs the move was ordered again - the bn to take over from the CYR when they vacated and at 1800 hrs the scat party left with the Scout PI who were to act as a holding party. The area was across the R. MONTONE at 422288 and there was to be no more before 2200 hrs. Major PROCTOR was to go ahead and report on the advisability of bringing the soft vehicles right into the bn area.

At 2200 hrs Major PROCTOR returned and reported that jeeps only were suitable in the area, and Major BANTON, A/Commanding Officer then established "F" Ech on the right bank of the MONTONE at 430265. At 2215 hrs the bn was ordered to "Stand Down" until 0600 hrs and to be on ½ hrs notice to move, there after, thus permitting the men another night's rest.

[right margin: Appx 4- Field Return Officers 3008; Appx 5- Field Return ORs 3009]

3 DECEMBER 1944

Place: ITALY, SHEET

1/50,000

100 IV MR

422288

Weather - Cool and grey with heavy mist during night.

Coys had hot breakfast and at 0730 hrs they were ordered to move at 0900 hrs.

By 1100 hrs the move was completed without incident, with TAC at 422288, "SP" "A", "B", "C" Coys along road in area 418289 and "D" Coy in houses at 424290. The Coy cooks were ordered up from "F" Ech to cook the noon meal.

At 1530 hrs Major BANTON went to a Bde conference, but the Bde Comd was away at 3 CIB HQ, for apparently the R 22eR were meeting with considerable opposition and it looked as though 3 Bde would not try to make the bridgehead as planned. We were told that there was to be no move before noon 4 Dec and the men were again reasonably comfortable that night.

4 DECEMBER 1944

Weather - Sunny.

At 0130 hrs bn was ordered to go on air and the R.C.R. and H. & P.E.R. were placed on 1 hrs notice to move.

"F" Ech was moved up to area "B" Coy 417295 and at 1000 hrs Hastings took over from W.N.S.R. and the R.C.R. moved to area 432334.

The bn was ordered to move at 1500 hrs to BATON (442328) as the Hastings were to form a bridgehead at that time. At 1200 hrs the Coy cooks provided a hot meal and at 1300 hrs the troops marched off. The bn consolidated in its new area at 1600 hrs with TAC at 443322, "A" Coy at 442324, "B" Coy at 439329, "C" Coy at 449344, "D" Coy at 440326 and "Sp" Coy at 446336. At 1800 hrs the Brigadier told Major BANTON, A/Commanding Officer that there would be no further move before 0700 hrs and that we would be on immediate notice to move thereafter.

The enemy had only recently left this area and the natives were in some fear of us, for they had been told that we would hang their children and burn down their buildings.

Nevertheless, their friendliness on finding that we were not as depicted by Jerry proved to be a nuisance insofar as it concerned maintaining a quiet TAC HQ.

[right margin: Appx 6- Notes for Fire Plan "SPARK"]

5 DECEMBER 1944

Place: ITALY, SHEET

1/50,000

100 III MR

443322

Weather - Cloudy.

At 0600 hrs the bn was ordered to move; TAC to 432346, "A" Coy to 424350, "B" to 439352, "C" to 429348, "D" to 435350 and "Sp" to 435343. After a hot breakfast the troops marched off at 0715, arriving in the new site at 0900 hrs. The area was under shell fire and Major MCLAREN "C" Coy Comd, at 0915 hrs was seriously wounded as he stood by his Coy HQ.

During the late morning word was received that the Hastings and RCR were being counter attacked by infantry and assault guns and had withdrawn across the LAMONE leaving behind considerable equipment and their wounded.

At 1900 hrs the Officer Commanding was called to Bde where he was informed that the bn was to be u/c 3 CIB and that the RCR and Hastings who were now firm on this side of the LAMONE were to relieve the R 22e R and the C&YR who were to come back for a brief rest preparatory to making the bridgehead. At 2130 hrs Major BANTON went to 3 CIB where Brigadier BERNATCHEZ outlined the probable crossing points and the patrols that would be required to recce these points that night. On his return to TAC "A" & "B" Coys provided patrols to recce the crossing points in the bn sectors.

[right margin: Appx 7- Part II; Order No 102/44]

6 DECEMBER 1944

Place: ITALY, SHEET

1/50,000

100 III MR

432346

Weather - Cloudy and cool.

Word was received in the morning that Major McLAREN had died of wounds in hospital. Since his evacuation Capt McCUTCHE ON has been commanding "C" Coy.

At 1130 hrs Major BANTON went to Bde conference and the exercise was outlined. The operation was to be done in three phases. First, the making of the bridgehead with C&YR on right, WNSR centre, and 48th left. Phase 2 was the passing through of the R 22e R to seize the FOSSA VECCHIO at area 399370 and the third phase was the making of a bridgehead over the FOSSA VECCHIO by the WNSR.

At 1400 hrs Major BANTON held his "O" Gp - zero for the operation was 2100 hrs that night. The plan was to cross on a 2 coy front, "A" on the left at 411347 and "B" on the right at 415352. Both coys were to form a tight bridgehead and then move outwards about 200 yds while "C" Coy crossed and formed up between them. When the bridgehead was again firm, "D" Coy was to cross and take up a position covering the crossing point, and from which it could operate as a counter attack force to aid the 3 forward coys. To this end 16 pl of "D" Coy was attached to "A" Coy for the crossing, and the Scouts & Snipers pl placed u/c "D" Coy. The entire operation was to be supported by a very heavy Arty fire plan - fd and medium guns being used, and starting at H-65.

At 1700 hrs Major BANTON, A/Commanding Officer went again to Bde for a coordinating conference. Our "H" hour was advanced to 2200 hrs and that of 5 Div who were doing a similar op on our right to 2030 hrs. Similarly 56 Div who were pushing on our left, were to go in at 2130. Just as the O's.c. left the conference word came from Corps that the show was off for 24 hours due to the rain. A D.R. was sent around to the coys who received the news with mixed feelings of relief and impatience to get the job done.

7 DECEMBER 1944

Weather - Sunny and cool.

The morning was spent in tying in details of the operation and arranging for ropes and equipment with which we were going to have to do without had the scheme gone off as scheduled. During the morning Capt HARRIS who had been forward at an O.P. spotted an enemy SP gun just across the river and Brig BERNATCHEZ who was present at TAC at the time went forward himself to see it and on his return arranged with the Brigade Major to have the Air Force take it on.

At 1500 hrs Lt-col MACKENZIE came up to TAC to see Major BANTON. He was feeling much better and stayed a few hours before returning to "B" Ech.

At 1915 hrs a phone message came cancelling the show for another 24 hrs, and "A" & "B" Coys who were already on the move were stopped by wireless from moving into their FUP. The "F" Ech vehicles were then brought up in order that the men might get blankets and greatcoats for the night.

[right margin: Appx 8- Part 11 Order No 103/44]

8 DECEMBER 1944

Weather - Cloudy.

During the day the troops rested and there was little activity. At 2000 hrs "A" & "B" Coys again sent recce patrols to the crossing sites which reported that due to the rain which had been falling all afternoon and evening, the LAMONE had risen and was flowing faster, thus jeopardizing the use of boats and the OLAFSON bridging.

9 DECEMBER 1944

Weather - Cloudy.

At 1130 hrs Major BANTON was informed by telephone that there would be nothing on that night again. The SP gun was reported still active on our front despite our efforts to get guns and air to take it on. However, the cabrank was flying that morning and it was hoped that they would get it.

At 1430 hrs there was another conference at 3 CIB to tie up the final details of the crossing which was to come off the following night. On the way home Major BANTON called in at 1 CIB HQ to meet our new Commander Brig SMITH who was formerly BGS at Corps and more latterly Acting Div Comd. Lt-col MACKENZIE was also at Bde and as he felt quite fit from his jaundice he expected to be up with the bn very soon.

At 2000 hrs the Commanding Officer returned to the bn and went over the plan with Major BANTON. The chief problem was getting carrying and launching parties for the boats and bridges. The original plan was that "D" Coy would supply these men, but with the change in plan it became necessary to find them elsewhere, and Lt D.G.WATSON was sent post haste to "B" Ech and "X" Area to round up 50 or 60 men who would be put u/c the Pnr Offr Lt HUDSON and Lt WASHER to carry the boats and OLAFSON bridges to the water. Further patrols that night by "A" & "B" Coys reported that "A" Coy crossing site suitable, but "B" Coy reported that the water had risen to such a width that the OLAFSON bridge would be short a span.

[right margin: Appx 9- Part II Order No 104/44; Appx 10 3 CIB Operation Order No 1; Appx 11- Field of Return Officers 3008; Appx 12- Field Return ORs 3009]

10 DECEMBER 1944

Weather - Sunny but cool.

At 1000 hrs a final co-ordinating conference was held with the Coy Comds and a slight change of plans was made whereby "A" & "B" Coys were to cross both at "A" Coy's crossing - boats and bridges were both to be used.

During the afternoon TAC was shelled again, killing Capt CURRELLY's driver as he waited in his bren carrier and wounding 4 gunners of the Arty rep's party. Major PROCTOR who moved to a window to look at the crater made by one of the rounds was cut in the forehead by a piece of flying glass when another shell lit just in the courtyard. Fortunately the wound was not serious and the R.A.P. fixed him up.

At 1900 hrs the leading coys moved off to the FUP followed by TAC at 2000 hrs, which moved into a large house at 416346.

At 2025 - 65 minutes before zero, the Arty started their barrage - the medium and field guns shelling the dyke across the river, then stopping and recommencing and lifting to the back areas and again dropping down on the dykes.

Zero was at 2130 hrs. At 2145 hrs "A" Coy reported 2 platoons across on the left; shortly after it was reported that the bridge was too short a span and "B" Coy was ordered to cross in "A" Coy's boats.

By 2215 "A" Coy was wholly across and reported little opposition and many prisoners - in fact the boats bringing over the troops were carrying back Ps;W.

At 2230 hrs "B" Coy reported itself across with 3 pls. Meanwhile on our right the WNSR had been having rather bad luck, neither of their bridges had held and they were ordered to avail themselves of ours and the C&YRs crossing points, for the C&YR like ourselves, were over the river and progressing well.

11 DECEMBER 1944

Place: ITALY, SHEET

1/50,000

100 III MR

416346

Weather - Cloudy with a slight frost.

Shortly after midnight "C" Coy was reported across the LAMONE and "A" Coy had reached LIPITS(411350), "B" Coy was on GORODETS (414352) and reported hearing an SP gun

moving toward them from the north. The gun ran down the road right through the coy position and apparently turned around and came back up. By this time Capt LEADBEATER's men were ready for it and it was fired on and hit by a PIAT bomb which failed to stop it immediately and the gun disappeared up the road.

At 0200 hrs Brig BERNATCHEZ came up to TAC. He seemed pleased with the progress of the brigade and arranged then to pass one coy of the WNSR through our bn, followed later by 2 coys of the R 22é R. On it being reported to him that the P.W. Interrogation had revealed the location of a Bn HQ and 3 SP guns at 403356, the Brigadier himself arranged to have medium guns shell the area, following which a red flame was seen which was believed to have been one of the guns burning. At 0300 hrs 2 of our Mk III boats were sunk by shell fire, but despite this loss, the one coy of the WNSR was clear of our crossing site, and "D" Coy was ordered to prepare to cross and move to 409357 -- at the time "B" Coy had reached SECTION (412355) and sent it's extra pl to "A" Coy at LIPITS (411350).

By, 0500 hrs the confusion of the initial crossing had died down and the coys having farmed up in the bridgehead, sent guides to 415352 to bring up the 2 pdr anti-tank guns, or Little Johns as they were known, which had crossed on a Mk 5 FBE bridge built by the R.C.E.

At 0600 hrs "C" Coy having taken up firm positions at 414353 and 414351 was ordered to move forward to the left of "B" Coy to area 406360. At the same time, The original plan of the coys was altered and Capt MURDOCH was ordered to move his men into the position vacated by Capt MCCUTCHEON. By 0730 hrs move was well under way with "D" Coy in position and "C" Coy at SECTION (411355) and moving towards it's final objective.

At 0830 hrs a Class II Raft was functioning and the Little Johns were carried across. "C" Coy had reached 40953580 and "B" Coy was ordered to move to 405355 - "A" Coy and "D" Coy were remaining firm at 411350 and 414351 respectively. Some difficulty was experienced in getting the 2 pdrs over the river, and although one was ditched, by 2000 hrs "C" Coy had 2 of the Little Johns in the Coy area. The raft sight was under constant shell and mortar fire making the operation so difficult that eventually it ceased.

During the remainder of the morning there was little change in the bn area. By 1400 hrs "A" Coy was advancing cautiously beyond LIPITS (411350), "B" Coy was in area SECTION (412355) and moving toward 406355. "C" Coy was also on the move to a point beyond SECTION at 407358. "D" Coy was still firm at the rd jc 414353.

At 1440 hrs Brigade ordered that the bn clear up the line of the railway to the power line at 408363. The WNSR were to cross in part of "C" Coy and clear along the road to SINGLE (403362) while the R 22é R went to DUKORA (404375).

However, before the plan could be put into effect it was changed; and instead, "A" Coy was ordered to push on to BONCELLINO 401343, and "B" Coy was ordered to take CASA LUGATTI 399349, leaving "C" Coy standing fast at 407356. The WNSR were at the same time to pass one coy through "C" Coy to SINGLE (403362) where it would consolidate, and a second coy was to go to the rd jc OCTAGON(399356) and firm there. "D" Coy would then move to area LIPITS (411350).

At 2100 hrs Lt-col MACKENZIE moved TAC across the LAMONE to 411350 with Major PROCTOR as Battle Adj. At this time Major BANTON remained behind and later returned to "X" Area. The area was very quiet with sporadic fire to the south and heavy Arty barrages on the 5th Corps front. Capt W.G.BURKE-ROBERTSON and the Signal Officer remained behind to maintain the Rear TAC HQ.

As a result of working under comd 3 CIB great stress was laid on line comm. It was decided that wherever possible not only would TAC be on line to Bde, but the Rifle Coys would be in telephone communication with TAC. This somewhat radical change in policy meant considerable work for the Sigs pl who were kept continually busy maintaining lines across the river to TAC and beyond to "A" Coy which was the only coy at that time that had line.

Another casualty due to sickness in this operation was the Medical Officer Capt MacINTOSH who had only recently succeeded Capt CANTELON. He had held off an attack

of jaundice to the last possible moment, but was forced to go out eventually and Capt POLLAK took over as RMO in the midst of the crossing of the LAMONE.

12 DECEMBER 1944

Place: ITALY, SHEET

1/50,000

100 III MR

415350

Weather - Cloudy and cool.

Shortly after midnight Capt BEAL, who had come into TAC to get instructions regarding the move of "A" Coy to BONCELLINO (401344), left to get a patrol forward to recce the area there, preparatory to the move. During the early morning "B" Coy had moved toward CASA LUGATTI (399352) and had heard small arms fire and track movement in the general area and had swung south to SURD (406346) firming there at 0600 hrs. At 0700 hrs "A" Coy reported itself firm at BONCELLINO, with a standing patrol forward at DOVSK (396344) and meeting light resistance. With the opening of the pontoon bridge over the LAMONE at 415352 the RAP crossed over to LIPITS (411350). Prior to this move, it had been necessary to evacuate casualties by assault boat - sending carrying parties to the off-loading point to bring the stretchers back through the former TAC position at 416346 and thence by jeep ambulance to the RAP at 417340. At 1000 hrs the bn locations were "A" Coy at BONCELLINO (401344) "B" Coy at SURD (406346) "C" Coy at Section (411355) and moving toward SINGLE (403362), OCTAGON (398355), and then to their objective C. LUGATTI (399352) "D" Coy was still firm about TAC HQ.

By 1430 hrs "C" Coy was firm on it's objective and had contacted "A" Coy on it's left. During the remainder of the afternoon the area was quiet until 1800 hrs when "D" Coy was ordered forward to relieve the WNSR on OCTAGON (399356). The relief was completed by 2000 hrs and Capt MURDOCH was sending recce patrols forward toward ELIPSE (386359) at midnight and 0415 hrs. Further patrolling that night was done by "B" Coy who sent 2 recce patrols through DOVSK (397344) towards a rd jc at 394341 and towards STEINBECK (388347).

[right margin: Appx 13 - Part 11 Order No 105/44]

13 DECEMBER 1944

Weather - Sunny and cool.

At 0630 hrs the patrols reported contact with the enemy - "D" Coy at 384358, "B" Coy at CASA BASCHI (394345) and at the dyke at R LAMONE at 395341.

The area was harassed by Arty, 4.2 and 3" mortar and MMG fire; also Capt xxx HARRIS moved 2 of his Vickers forward to assist "A" Coy in mopping up this area which resulted in them taking 2 more Ps W. Also a minefield was reported about the rd jc at 396343 and the pioneers on their recce reported the road prepared for demolition with serial bombs.

The night's patrolling revealed that the enemy's FDLs extended on a line parallel with the rd from "A" to "D" Coys and approximately 400 yards west of it. At 1600 hrs "D" Coy reported a patrol had infiltrated into their position and after a brief fire fight were seen to withdraw taking one wounded member with them. "C" Coy was moved down the road to 398346 in order to tie in with "A" and "D" Coys localities. At 1700 hrs Brig BERNATCHEZ arrived to lay on a patrol to BROD (397362). This area had been approached by the WNSR in their approach to the FOSSA VECCHIO and they had been fired on from here.

Capt LEADBEATER was to send Lt SCOTT's pl to BROD. This pl was to be placed u/c "D" Coy and be equipped with an 18 set which would give it's communication to TAC HQ via "D" Coy. A bty of 25 pdrs was placed on call should Lt SCOTT need their support to gain his objective.

"A", "C" and "D" Coys also patrolled along the same routes as of the night before.

14 DECEMBER 1944

Weather - Cool and cloudy.

At 0500 hrs "D" Coy reported that Lt SCOTT had been unable to reach his objective due to heavy enemy resistance, and had withdrawn to "D" Coy for an additional section and then returned to CASA BALDINI (398358) where they remained in position.

At 0930 hrs the Commanding Officer went to Bde where he was ordered to have the bn take over from the WNSR in their area. This was cancelled at 1015 hrs and the following few hours were quiet.

At 1700 hrs Bde phoned to say that the R 22é R had got into POKAT, a brickyard at 399378 which had been a strong point, and it looked to them as though the enemy had withdrawn. As a result "A" Coy sent a patrol to the cemetery at 395372 - "C" Coy later reported small arms fire in their area and "A" Coy's patrol returned having contacted the enemy at the cemetery, thus negating this theory.

At 2000 hrs "A", "C" and "D" Coys patrolled along the same routes and at 2200 hrs we again came under comd 1 CIB.

[right margin: Appx 14- Part 11 Order No 106/44]

15 DECEMBER 1944

Weather - Sunny.

At 1000 hrs Brig SMITH came to TAC HQ to confer with the Commanding Officer regarding forthcoming moves. Shortly after his arrival his B.M. telephoned to say that that operation had been cancelled and that the GOC was coming up to see him. Following the departure of Major-General FOSTER, the Brig outlined his plan to the Commanding officer and to Lt-col REED of the RCR, the Commanding Officer of the RCD and to Lt-col STRABENZE of 12 RTR who were also present. We were to extend our bridgehead towards the FOSSA VECCHIO in a South Westerly direction - first feeling out the enemy's dispositions with strong fighting patrols who were to seize if possible the points of resistance encountered on our nightly patrols. Should these prove too strong to occupy easily, the coys were then to withdraw and at 0700 hrs the next day attack with Arty and tank support.

At 1500 hrs the Commanding Officer called in his coy comds and issued his orders. "D" Coy was to patrol to 397357 at 2000 hrs, make contact and then withdraw and call down their supporting fire - Arty, 4.2 and 3" mortars and MMG.

Following the crump they were then to advance again and try to occupy the position. Should however the resistance still prove too strong, the patrol was to return to the coy area. "C" Coy was to patrol to 394345 at 2100 hrs and "B" Coy to 393340 at 2200 hrs - both latter patrols were to act similarly with "D" Coys.

[right margin: Appx 15- Part II Order No 107/44]

16 DECEMBER 1944

Weather - Sunny and cool.

Shortly after midnight the coys began to report their patrols results. "D" Coy's pl had been successful and it was firm on it's objective with the remainder of the coy moving to it at 0040 hrs. At 0230 hrs "B" Coy's patrol returned. They had contacted the enemy in strength suffering one fatal casualty and were to attack again as planned at 0700 hrs. At 0515 hrs the tanks moved forward, one unfortunate ran into the ditch and was not pulled out until 0800 hrs. Prior to the movement by the tanks, "A" Coy had reported a large blow in the rd at 396343 - presumably caused by the detonation of one of the bombs by shellfire. Recce by Lt HUDSON showed a diversion possible for tanks, although it was doubtful whether or not wheeled vehs could pass.

Meanwhile C coy was advancing and meeting heavy small arms fire, while "D" Coy was moving on the right and had taken over 12 Ps W since the previous evening.

By 0900 hrs, despite the support of 1 tank which had got forward over the rd jc at 397343 and was shooting up CASA BASCHI (394345) "C" Coy was forced to withdraw to reorganize and plan another thrust. Again on the right, "D" Coy was counter attacked by infantry, supported by 2 tanks, these latter were driven off on the appearance of our

Churchill - one of which took cover behind a haystack. Eventually the haystack caught fire and the tank at the same time commenced to sink in the mud. The situation was made more awkward by the presence of an enemy tank some 200 yards away which was hiding behind a building. Both fired at one another through the building with no apparent effect.

"D" Coy area was during this time under intense shell and mortar fire making movement almost impossible. Capt MURDOCH was shot through the foot and evacuated and Lt BALLARD (DSO) took over comd. TAC moved that afternoon down the rd toward "A" Coy to 402344 in order to maintain wireless communication with "D" Coy which was moving rather out of range.

At 1300 hrs 1 pl of "B" Coy was sent forward to 398349 to cover area between "A" and "D" Coys and Capt McCUTCHEON came into TAC to get orders for another attack at C. BOSCHI (394344).

Shortly after taking comd, Lt BALLARD (DSO) was wounded when the house he was occupying was struck by a shell from an SP gun, and Capt SMITH who had just come off course was called forward to "F" Ech preparatory to his taking over "D" Coy.

At 1600 hrs "C" Coy attacked with 2 tanks in support - the CROCODILE (flame thrower) was not working and had to be left behind -- also under comd "C" Coy was a pl from "B" Coy leaving Capt LEADBEATER with 1 pl at CASA RICCI (398349) and one at SURD (406346).

At 1640 hrs it was reported that both tanks and infantry were on their objective and mopping up, but from then on the situation became increasingly confused; for at 1800 hrs the tanks reported themselves and only 6 infantry on the objective. We had momentarily lost contact with Capt McCUTCHEON who had left his 18 set and in order to clarify the situation which was becoming almost disastrous, the Commanding Officer went forward with his runner to get information and locate "C" Coy.

At 1910 hrs the Commanding Officer returned and ordered an additional pl from "B" Coy be sent to "C" Coy who were by now consolidating on their objective with the tanks, and the situation appeared to be in hand.

At 2030 hrs the bn was ordered to continue its advance to the VECCHIO. "D" Coy was to move cautiously along the rd to GREY (386358) while "C" Coy from its base at C. BOSCHI (394345) would move to 383347. To this end "C" and "D" Coys sent patrols forward to feel out the enemy.

[right margin: Appx 16- Field Return Officers 3008; Appx 17- Field Return ORs 3009]

17 DECEMBER 1944

Place: ITALY, SHEET

1/50,000

100 III MR

402344

Weather - Cloudy.

At 0300 hrs "D" Coys patrol returned and the coy moved to 390357 where it contacted the enemy. "C" Coy was to move in the next hour to 392346 and firm there. Following this "B" Coy with 2 pls would pass through "C" Coy at first light to the VECCHIO.

At 0800 hrs Capt SMITH reported "D" Coy in position in area 388357 and "C" Coy was firm at 392346 and patrolling forward - both coys had tank support in their areas.

At 1000 hrs, OC "D" Coy was ordered to seize a bridgehead over the VECCHIO at GREY (386358) in order that the Hastings might pass through the bn. He was promised the Brigadiers, the Commanding Officer's and Major PROCTOR'S EFI issue if he were successful, and at 1100 hrs the Commanding Officer went forward to tie up the attack with Capt SMITH.

At 1400 hrs "C" Coy was counter attacked from 388348 and 388346 by 30 to 40 enemy who were beaten off by our Arty and MMG fire.

At 1430 hrs the Commanding Officer returned from "D" Coy having laid on their attack for 1600 hrs. The area there was particularly hot, being under almost continual shell and mortar

fire and the tank tp comd was wounded as he left Capt SMITH'S "O" Gp. At 1600 hrs the Scouts and Snipers pl which were attached to "D" Coy moved forward to cross the river, supported by 2 tanks and 2 M 10's, but at 1630 hrs the platoon was forced to withdraw and Lt MILLING was slightly wounded when fired on by an enemy SP gun in the house directly across the Canal at 386359. The remainder of "D" Coy had remained firm with platoons at 387358, 386357, 387356, and the MIO's moved forward to shoot up the house. Just before "D" Coys attack had started there was some consternation caused by the discovery that the rd leading to the bridge was mined, making it impossible for the Hastings to move over with tanks. Lt HUDSON was sent forward to clear the road and was seriously wounded by a Schu mine as he was organizing his pioneer party.

"C" Coy was counter attacked again at 1730 hrs and the enemy driven off by our D.F. At 1800 hrs Capt TUCKER-BURR the Corps Interrogator came up to TAC HQ to question the 6 Ps W taken by "D" Coy that afternoon and got some valuable information regarding their strengths and dispositions.

At 2100 hrs "C" Coy was again attacked, but by 2130 things were quiet. The blow in the road at 397343 was causing some trouble, for our vehicles could not get past it, which meant that casualties had to be carried out and rations in. Regarding the latter the tank comd Major MELVAIN assisted us greatly by the loan of a "Honey-tank" which carried the rations and 2 of Capt HARRIS's MMGs to "C" Coy.

At 2200 hrs the Commanding Officer was informed that the RCR and Hastings were attacking over the FOSSO VECCHIO late that night, on our right, and that "D" Coy will have to pull back to 392354 in order to clear the Arty barrage - they were to be back by 0330 hrs and to return by 0445 hrs.

18 DECEMBER 1944

Weather - Cloudy and cool.

At 0500 hrs the RCR were reported to have 2 coys over the VECCHIO, and the Hastings were reported also as having their leading coys facing on the Canal. Following this information a \$ pl from "D" Coy was again moved over the bridge to secure it.

At 0630 hrs TAC had been out of communication with Capt SMITH for some time, when Bde informed us that that sector was being counter attacked. By 0700 hrs we were again in contact with "D" Coy and learned that their pl was again on this side of the river, and that Lt WILLIAMSON had been killed while leading it - Lt HOFFMAN was also killed by mortar fire, leaving "D" Coy with only 2 subalterns for 4 platoons. "A" Coy of Hastings was also firmed up in their area, and by 1000 hrs the situation there was firm.

At 1300 hrs "D" Coy was ordered to withdraw from area GREY (386358) to 399348 - however, they found the Hastings occupying the buildings there and "D" Coy moved down to "A" Coys area at 400344.

The remainder of the afternoon was quiet with occasional mortaring in the coy areas. The area of the church at 402344 came under continual shell and mortar fire throughout the day - fortunately there were few casualties, but "A" and later "D" Coy had some very uncomfortable moments at BONCELLINO.

At 2000 hrs Major COUNSELL (DSO) came forward to TAC to see the Commanding Officer, bringing with him Lt GRAY who was going to "D" Coy.

[right margin: Appx 18- Part II Order No 108/44; Appx 19- Att of Officers Gruppo CREMONA]

19 DECEMBER 1944

Weather - Cloudy and cool.

The morning was relatively quiet, and the Commanding Officer with the Arty rep laid on fire plans to cover enemy positions we had located. That our fire was effective was shown by the greatly diminished mortar and small arms fire in our area after our shoots.

At 1000 hrs the tanks with us from "C" Sqn 12 RTR left to go in support of 3 CIB's attack on BAGNACAVALLO and in turn we got tanks from "B" Sqn of the same regiment.

At 1800 hrs an American officer from PWB at Army came to TAC to make arrangements to install an amplifier in the bn area in order that he could broadcast tank noises from our sector to draw the enemies attention from 2 and 11 Bde's attack that evening at 2000 hrs. At 1900 hrs "D" Coy moved from area "A" Coy to CASA RICCI at 398346 - also Lt PICKERING was wounded by shell fire as he stood by a house in "A" Coy's area. At 2000 hrs the American returned to work his "INFERNAL" machine which sounded very realistic indeed, and drew considerable mortar and heavy shell fire. Fortunately no casualties were caused in "D" Coys area where the amplifier had been placed, but the Hastings TAC which was located further up the road at 389356 came in for a very hot hour or two. By 2200 hrs the officer was still with us - apparently the real war noises were something new to him, but eventually he left, though without his amplifier - in fact, as Major PROCTOR remarked, had someone fired a burst of tommy gun outside the door he would probably have left without his jeep.

20 DECEMBER 1944

Weather - Cloudy.

There was no change in the coy positions during the day. The bn area was heavily shelled and mortared all night, although no casualties were suffered. At 1400 hrs Major PROCTOR went out for 48 hrs rest and Major COUNSELL took over as Battle-Adj. In the early evening some slight consternation was felt at TAC when a bullet chipped the door frame only a few inches from the sentries face, however it was probably only a stray shot, for there was considerable activity with an exchange of small arms fire in "A" and "C" Coys area.

21 DECEMBER 1944

Weather - Mild and cloudy.

At 0400 hrs word came from B de that the enemy had withdrawn and that we had lost contact on the entire Corps front. 5 Div were up to the SENIO, and 2 CIB which had had considerable opposition in it's initial attack had already completed the 2nd phase of their operation. Consequently "A" and "C" Coys were ordered to patrol immediately towards the FOSSA VECCHIO.

At 0930 hrs Capt McCUTCHEON reported that "C" Coy's patrol had reached area KNIFE (383347) and that the bridge was still intact, although the enemy were occupying a house on this side of the VECCHIO.

At 1100 hrs "A" Coy had patrolled to CARNEGIE (389333), and had moved a pl to the cemetery at 395342, a pl to CASA BELOSI (393347). Meanwhile "D" Coy was moving forward to "C" Coy's area at 390346 and from here it was to pass through over the VECCHIO to 381348 which had been reported clear by the Hastings.

At 1400 hrs "B" Coy was in position -- 1 pl and Coy HQ at CASA BOSCHI (394346), with the remaining 2 pls still u/c "C" Coy. "A" Coy was still firm at BONCELLINO (401343) with a pl at CASA BELOSI (393341), a pl at the cemetery (395342) and a pl at Coy HQ at the church itself (401343). "C" Coy was in area 390346 with one pl forward covering the crossing at KNIFE at 384347 which was engaged in a fire fight supported by one of the Churchills.

In the afternoon it commenced to rain lightly and "D" Coy moved forward from 388347 through "C" Coys pl there to it's objective.

At 1530 hrs TAC moved to 390346, and found the area very quiet - very few buildings were intact, and the area formerly "C" Coy's, was reminiscent of ORTONA - pocked with shell craters and generally scarred by days of heavy arty fire. Later in the afternoon "C" Coy sent another pl forward to LINT (388347) and at 1600 hrs "D" Coy reported itself firm on it's objective at 378349. The remainder of the day was quiet in all coy areas.

22 DECEMBER 1944

Place: ITALY, SHEET
1/50,000

100 III MR
390347

Weather - Sunny.

The coys reported a quiet night with no shelling in their areas. At 1130 hrs the Brigadier came to TAC HQ to confer with the Commanding Officer. The RCD had been moving on our left flank along the next road toward 378340, but now they were to pull back to the area 389333 and we were to move south west-to effect this "D" Coy sent a pl to clear the houses at 376343, 373344 and 378341.

By 1700 hrs "D" Coy's pl had cleared the house at 376343 and had taken 2 Ps W and driven about 12 enemy into the houses at 378341. "A" Coy during this action had moved from the church at 401344 to rd and track jc at 387347 - passing 2 pls through "D" Coy which were to seize the houses and relieve "D" Coy's platoon at 376343.

Following this, "B" Coy moved through "A" Coy and occupied the houses at 376341 and from there patrolled that night to WALNUT (367342) and POISON (363334).

[right margin: Appx 20- Part II Order No 109/44]

23 DECEMBER 1944

Weather - Colder with snow flurries.

Early in the morning "B" Coy's patrol returned having been fired on by MGs at WALNUT (367342). There was no word, however from the second patrol to POISON (362333) until 1130 hrs when Capt LEADBEATER reported that the patrol had noted 3 enemy positions at 371337, 371334 and 372333. Following this information "B" Coy was ordered to send out standing patrols to maintain contact and observation on these positions for it was felt that they formed part of the enemy's ~~secreh~~ *switch* line between his defense of the R. SENIO and the Canale NAVIGLIO.

The remainder of the day was quiet with occasional mortaring and small arms fire in the forward coy areas.

At 1600 hrs the Commanding Officer went to Bde returning at 1730 hrs with the welcome news the "B", "C" and "D" Coys were to come back that night to CENSOR (396343) for a 48 hrs respite. Unfortunately, "A" Coy had to remain in it's position and Capt FRASER was to relieve Capt BEAL. Also Capt GEORGE was to take over from Capt LEADBEATER who was to go on a hospital tour.

[right margin: Appx 21- Field Return Officers 3008; Appx 22- Field Return ORs 3009]

24 DECEMBER 1944

Weather - Cold and grey.

At 0200 hrs "B" and "D" Coys reported themselves firm in their new areas. They had been met on the route out by the Coy 2i/c who had previously recce'd the coy areas - there had been some trouble in finding unoccupied houses which were not too badly battered. However, it was felt that any buildings at all were better than the ones the coys had just vacated.

At 0830 hrs "C" Coy was able to move back having found suitable billets at 398346.

During the day the troops who were out of the line rested and a mobile bath was laid on allowing the troops a much needed shower and change of clothes, also Mr TEAGER the Auxiliary Services Officer arranged for a show to run almost contin uously in a large room in Coy's area.

At 1000 hrs the Commanding Officer called a conference of the Coy 2i/c s to make arrangements for Christmas.

Apart from bringing up our "F" Ech vehicles, through the courtesy of 2 Fd Regt RCA who lent us some 60cwt vehicles, it was possible to send to "X" Area for the Christmas mail which had been collected there while the bn was in action. The Christmas menu was to include 2 bottles of beer, pork and fowl, and great quantities of pastries and plum pudding.

The only blot on an otherwise happy Christmas day was the warning from Bde that we were to be on 1 hrs notice to move from 1600 hrs 25 Dec, thus making it necessary to have the Christmas dinner at 1300 hrs.

"A" Coy was to have it's Christmas dinner cooked in the "F" Ech area and brought forward the night of the 24th in hay-boxes as late as possible, but before first light.

These arrangements having been made, the bn rested and cleaned up.

25 DECEMBER 1944

Weather - Sunny and cold.

At 0300 "A" Coy's Christmas dinner was carried in to it by a carrying party made up of "X" Area personnel.

The area was quiet during the day and the coy was able to have it's dinner in relative peace.

In the morning the Commanding Officer was at home to his officers who dropped into TAC from 1000 hrs onwards. The Brigadier, Major MacINTOSH the Bde Major and Lt WATSON the LO3 at Bde also called and later Major WALLACE and Capt CLARKSON (MC) dropped in.

At 1800 hrs "A" Coy went u/c the RCR who were to patrol to the NAVIGLIO that night preparatory to the bn attacking to face up on the Canal. "A" Coy was placed under command to act as rt flank protection and following the success of the RCR the bn was to move out on their left flank to give protection there. Following this the higher intention was to have 3 CIB pass through the RCR and form a bridgehead over the SENIO, out of which 2 CIB was to break and move toward LUGO (3338) followed by 1 CIB who were to move northwards between LUGO and COTINGOLA (3534).

[right margin: Appx 23- Personal Message from Army Comd; Appx 24- Personal Message from Corps Comd]

26 DECEMBER 1944

Place: ITALY, SHEET

1/50,000

100 III MR

378320

Weather - Sunny and cold.

At 0800 hrs the bn was ordered to move to area 378320 - "B" Coy moving at 0945 hrs to PORTER (371320) "C" Coy moving at 1045 hrs to 382327, and "D" Coy at 1030 hrs to 380324.

By 1130 hrs the move had been completed and TAC was established at 378320.

At 1500 hrs "B" Coy, commanded by Capt GEORGE, moved forward from it's area at PORTER (371320) with 1 pl leading. However, heavy small arms fire was met from houses at 367323 and the pl withdrew.

At 1600 hrs "B" Coy again attacked, this time with 2 pls and supported by a crump of arty and mortar fire - however, the coy again was forced to withdraw due to the heavy MG fire and Lt DAVIDSON was wounded.

The Commanding Officer then laid on another fire plan to support a 3rd attempt by "B" Coy. The arty, mortars and MMGs were to fire from Zero for 2 minutes, then all fire was to stop for 5 minutes, and then another 2 minute crump was to come down followed by the infantry assault.

While these preparations were being made, the 7th Fd A/Tk rep moved one of his guns forward to "B" Coy, and when driving out in his jeep ran over a Teller mine in the road and was wounded.

Zero hour for "B" Coy's attack was set at 2300 hrs - a half hour after that of the RCR who were moving forward to the NAVIGLIO.

At midnight there was no word from the pls of "B" Coy regarding their progress and Capt GEORGE sent forward recce patrols to get information.

[right margin: Appx 25- Part II Order No 110/44]

27 DECEMBER 1944

Weather - Sunny.

At 0030 hrs one of the pls returned to "B" Coy and reported that the enemy were still occupying the house at 367323 and that a wire fence surrounding the house prevented their advance. The enemy were being contained however by the other pl, but only for a short while, for they were unable to get sufficient cover and were forced to withdraw due to the intense fire.

The Commanding Officer then arranged to have the tanks supporting us come forward to "B" Coy area and shoot up the houses which had been "B" Coys objective. The difficulties here were that the bridge at PORTER (371320) had been blown and even if an ARC bridging equipment was used, the road beyond the blow would probably be mined as it was on this side. As an alternative plan, it was suggested that the tanks cross some 400 yds to the right of the blow moving cross-country. Whether the ground had frozen sufficiently to permit tanks to move without sinking was not certain and this made the prospect a risky one.

However, by 0130 hrs the RCR attack had proved unsuccessful and it was not "ON" for "B" Coy to advance and form a rather dangerous salient, so the entire undertaking was dropped. The remainder of the night was quiet.

At 1130 hrs the Bde Major telephoned the Commanding Officer to advise him that the WNSR were to relieve us some time that day and that we were to go out for a short rest. "A" Coy, however, would not be relieved and would remain u/c RCR until the following night. At 1400 hrs the WNSR advance party arrived at TAC HQ to arrange the hand over and it was planned that "D" Coy would move out at 1730 hrs, "C" Coy at 1800 hrs, and "B" Coy at 1900 hrs - TAC moving when the bn was clear of the area.

The coys marched out by road over the bailey bridge across the LAMONE to 409318 where they embussed in TCVs and were taken to the rest area at 4936 and by 2030 hrs the relief was complete and the troops had embussed and were on the move.

The rest area, which had just been vacated by the WNSR, was recce'd by the Coy 2i/c s who met their troops as they embussed and led the coys right to their respective areas - "B" Coy at 500372, "C" Coy at 495367, "D" Coy at 488377 and TAC HQ at 493367.

28 DECEMBER 1944

Place: ITALY, SHEET

1/50,000

100 III MR

493367

Weather - Cold and cloudy.

Appx 26- Part 11 Reveille was at 0700 hrs, with breakfast at 0730 hrs. Then during the day the coys paraded to a mobile bath which had moved into the bn area. The Auxiliary Services Officer, Mr TEAGER, also arranged a cinema in "C" Coy area and shows were shown there all day.

In the evening, "A" Coy was relieved when the C&YR who had taken over from the RCR, were able to move a coy into "A" Coys position and the coy marched out to the TCVs and were driven into their area at 490375 at 2100 hrs.

That afternoon and evening the 6 Cdn Army Show played in a hall at GODO (4635) and the majority of the men were able to see it.

[right margin: Appx 26- Part II Order No 111/44; Appx 27- Part I Order No 33/44; Appx 28- Honours and Awards]

29 DECEMBER 1944

Weather - Cold and cloudy.

During the morning the kit bags came up from "X" Area and the men were able to get out fresh kit. Also the duty officer was despatched to RAVENNA to bring back 6 barbers in order that the men might get badly needed hair-cuts.

The Brigade paymaster visited the coys who were paid that day - Capt WHELDON was not available as he was still away on an advance party.

At 1600 hrs Support Coy provided the HQ guard which was mounted by the Bn Orderly Officer. The pipe band was also on hand to play "RETREAT" having come forward from "B" Ech to be with the bn while it was out.

The Brigade commander, Brig D. SMITH (DSO, MBE) was present with his staff officers to witness the ceremony and to meet the Coy Comds.

In the evening 2 shows were given the troops in the cinema at "C" Coy's area by Mr TEAGER, the Auxiliary Services Officer.

[right margin: Appx 29- Part II Order No 112/44]

30 DECEMBER 1944

Weather - Cold and sunny.

Permission came through in the morning to send a few men on leave to RICCIONE, and "B", "C", "D" & "SP" Coys and "Signals" sent two men each for 48 hrs.

A bath parade was laid on for "Sp" Coy at the mobile baths at the RCR area at 461324.

Then during the afternoon and evening shows were again given the men in the bn cinema.

At 1600 hrs each rifle coy sent a PIAT team to a Bde competition - also a new type incendiary PIAT bomb was demonstrated. It apparently lacked to some degree the penetrating power of the ordinary projectile, but was very effective in it's incendiary role.

[right margin: Appx 30- Part 1 Order No 34/44; Appx 31- Field Return Officers 2008; Appx 32- Field Return ORs 3009]

31 DECEMBER 1944

Weather - Cold and bright.

At 0900 hrs the bn marched independently by coys - the pipe band with BHQ - to Church at GODO, where in the absence of Padre EAST (MC, MBE) the Senior Chaplain of the Div, assisted by the Chaplain of the Div Engineers, and the Principal Chaplain Overseas H/Col FLEMINGTON conducted the service.

Following the service, the bn fell in on the road beside the Church and marched past in review order, the Brigade Comd, Brig D. SMITH (DSO, MBE) taking the salute.

In the evening, at 1830 hrs "A" Coy had a company dinner in the hall in "C" Coy's area. It was attended by the Commanding Officer, his 2i/c and staff officers, and was very successful. After the meal, the male members of the 6th Cdn Army show entertained the coy. It was unfortunate that the C.W.A.C. girls of the show were unable to attend, but rumour had it that following a party they had attended the previous night at "D" Coy, they had run afoul of the military law and were C.B.

New Year's Eve was relatively quiet in the bn area, although 2 pipers with a show of good Scottish spirit, piped in the New Year throughout the bn area.

signed

Damackenzie

(D.A.MACKENZIE) Lt-col,

Officer Commanding,

48 Highrs

1 JANUARY 1945

Place: ITALY, SHEET

1/50,000

100 III MR

493367

Weather - Cold and clear.

The poultry farm that has been steadily accumulating on the bn "ranch" at CATTOLICA since 30 NOV 44 has ceased to exist. All chickens, ducks and turkeys were killed, plucked and cleaned and sent forward to the coys to add to their already generous supply of baby beef brought from the same source for New Year's Day dinner. This and EFI beer constituted the main dish. Each man also was given an individually wrapped gift from the 48th Chapter IODE consisting of toilet articles and a book.

In accordance with the custom of the bn, abandoned since last year because of operations near ORTONA (at SANTOMMASO and SAN NICOLA to be exact), the officers entertained the Warrant Officers and NCO's to toast the New Year in Gin and Sherry. All officers gathered in a large hall in "C" Coy area at 1400 hours and there received their guests who, led by that now famous RSM CROSSLEY, were piped into the hall by Pipe Major A. ANDERSON.

It was on this occasion that Lt-col MACKENZIE congratulated Capt L.G.SMITH on his promotion to A/Major and also spoke a few brief words of greeting to the NCO's. While this was going on most of the other ranks were enjoying a moving picture at GODO or attending the CWAC Show.

2 JANUARY 1945

Weather - Cold and clear.

To-day 5 Italian barbers descended upon us from RAVENNA and will come daily until every man's hair is cut or until we move whichever event happens first. Haircuts, baths, movies, the CWAC show, and tactical demonstrations take up all time not devoted to training. To-day the Bde Comd, Brig J.D.B.SMITH was invited to attend a series of tactical demonstrations put on by the rifle coys and dealing with attack on a group of buildings, consolidation, and defense of buildings. In the morning the Adjt, Capt W.G.BURKE-ROBERTSON went to a meeting at Bde HQ where he was told that the bn would move tomorrow to relieve the PPCLI whose TAC is

located at 413370. Accordingly a Scat Party headed by Major J.R.O.COUNSELL, A/2i/c left at 1430 hours taking with it a holding party who are to guard the coy billets from occupation by hopeful "Jigaboos" and encroachment by other bns.

3 JANUARY 1945

Place: ITALY, SHEET

1/50,000

100 III MR

414369

Weather - Cloudy and cool.

TCV's were made available for the move to-day, the bn being moved on a shuttle basis 2 coys at one time commencing with "A" and "B" Coys at 0900 hours and "C" Coy and "D" Coy at 1000 hours; Thus the move was completed in time for coys to have a hot lunch in their new locations. Coy locations are as follows:+ "A" Coy at MR 411370, "B" Coy at 405375, "C" at 398378, "D" Coy at 409373, "Sp" at 414369 and TAC also at MR 414369. The coys spent the afternoon digging defensive positions around their billets, in line with the bn's counter attack rôle. At the moment the HPER are in a state of readiness at all times to move to repulse an enemy breakthrough, while we are on 2 hours notice to move with the same object.

4 JANUARY 1945

Weather - Sunny and cold.

In this relaxed state of readiness it has been both possible and practical to carry out training, so coys are submitting daily syllabuses. At 1600 hours the Commanding Officer, Lt-col MACKENZIE, held a coy comds' conference to explain more fully the bn's job in the event of an enemy counter attack.

We are mainly concerned with the possibility of an enemy counter attack across the SENIO RIVER in any one (or all) of three likely areas - S.POLITO MR 3540, PTE della CHIUSO MR 3638, and at MR 363374. To be better prepared for this threat the HPER who are now in rear of the 48th, will move forward at once to take up a position N.W. of BAGNACAVALLLO. This bn will stay in it's present area. Routes forward to the bns in contact are to be reced by coy comds and to-morrow coy comds will liaise closely with the officers of the 12 RTR Squadron supporting us.

5 JANUARY 1945

Weather - Cloudy and cool.

Thus far there has been no shelling in the battalion area and, in fact; no enemy activity of any description. One's thoughts, as a result, have turned chiefly towards the elemental problem of keeping warm and dry - no mean feat in itself these days. The state of alert here is 1 officer per coy and 2 men per platoon; the duty coy for the day supplies the TAC HQ guard. Training has resumed again with coys submitting a daily syllabus as in the previous area. Attached herewith as an appendix is the instruction concerning a PIAT contest held to-day N.W. of BAGNACAVALLLO won by "A" Coy, the prize being a dozen bottles of beer for the winning coy. Each coy supplied 2 PIAT teams for the contest.

[right margin: Appx 2 - Part 11 Order No 2/45; Appx 6 - PIAT Firing Competition]

6 JANUARY 1945

Weather - Cloudy and cool.

All coys proceeded to BAGNACAVALLLO to-day for bath parade. In the afternoon a 2" mortar contest was held each coy supplying 2 teams. This time "D" Coy won the contest and the prize of a bottle of beer.

In the past few months the bn has been continually under strength, and latterly as many as 160 men less than the War Establishment. Such reinforcements as did arrive from time to time were nearly all sick or wounded returning from hospital and reached the battalion only in twos and threes. As a result not little interest and excitement was caused to-day when 142 reinforcements arrived. These were from all parts of CANADA and included many remustered personnel.

[right margin: Appx 7 – 2" Mortar Firing Competition; Appx 2 – Part 11 Order No 3/45; Appx 3 – Field Return Officers 3008; Appx 4 – Field Return ORs 3009]

7 JANUARY 1945

Weather - Sunny and warmer.

H/Major S.B.EAST was to-day informed by Lt-col MACKENZIE that he had been awarded the MBE. This combined with the MC won by the Padre in the HITLER LINE battle has made him the most decorated padre in the Canadian Army. To-day after over 2 years with the bn he conducted his last services visiting the coys in turn during the morning and ending up with a short farewell service at TAC HQ. Tomorrow he leaves for ENGLAND.

The remainder of the day passed without incident, the training continuing as usual.

8 JANUARY 1945

Weather - Snow.

Shows were arranged for 200 men to-day in RUSSI. Among those who didn't attend were 8 men who were paraded to the Commanding Officer on charge at "orders" held at 1600 hours. The show in the afternoon and baths during the morning at BAGNACAVALLO resulted in very little training to-day.

Lt E.C.D.WASHER, 2i/c A/Tk PI since last February, has been selected to operate a Wasp flame thrower school under the auspices of 1 Cdn Inf Bde. Each bn will supply for this purpose 4 carriers, Complete with drivers and candidates who will be taught to operate the weapon.

Normal leave to ROME and FLORENCE resumed late last month, is going to continue indefinitely. This will absorb LOB personnel and enable the bn to have approximately forty men on leave at all times.

9 JANUARY 1945

Weather - Cloudy and cold.

This morning we received word that "X" Area (separated from the bn since 28 Nov 44) commanded by Lt R.W.J OHNSTON was moving NORTH to join "B" Echelon.

The armourer sgt has commenced another check of all small arms starting this morning with "A" Coy.

Lt W.T.PENTLAND who recently was appointed Pioneer Officer left to-day for the Nine Warfare Course CMTC at CAPUA.

The most significant occurrence of the day was the recce by Major PROCTOR and all coy comds of the WNSR positions which we are destined to occupy very shortly. They are in the same general area as this bn was before being relieved on the night of 26/27 Dec 45.

10 JANUARY 1945

Place: ITALY, SHEET

1/50,000

89 III MR

413369

Weather - Cold.

In the morning word was received from Bde that the bn was to move to relieve the W.N.S.R. in front of COTIGNOLA; and at 1000 hours the Coy Comds together with Major PROCTOR, the I.O. and the S.O. left to recce this new area.

[right margin: Appx 2 – Part 11 Order No 4/45; Appx 8 – Nom Roll & Appts of Officers]

11 JANUARY 1945

Weather - Cold.

At 1000 hours Major COUNSELL(DSO) who was acting BnComd while the Commanding Officer was indisposed with flu, went forward to see Lt-col HILTZ of the W.N.S.R. to arrange the final details of the take-over and returning shortly after lunch to hold his "O" Gp at 1330 hours.

Five TCVs were to report to each company. "C" & "D" Coys were to embuss at 1730 hours and move to 378316 and 391333 respectively where the coys would debuss and march to their areas.

At 1800 hours approx the TCVs were to have returned for "A" & "B" Coys and take them to their debussing point at 378316 from which they would move on foot.

Support Coy was to move to 378320 at 1730 hours and TAC HQ was to move at 1800 hours in order to be in position as the take-over took place.

At 1730 hours the move commenced as ordered, and proceeded without incident. However, the change-over took some time, for each of the 3 forward coys had an outpost position

whose relief required some caution, and it was not until 2300 hours that the take-over was complete.

[right margin: Appx 2 – Part 11 Order No 5/45; Appx 9 – Trng Syllabus]

12 JANUARY 1945

Place: ITALY, SHEET

1/50,000

89 III MR

372323

Weather - Cold and cloudy.

The coy locations were as follows:- "A" Coy at 361334 with an outpost at 358336, "B" Coy at 365337 with an outpost at 359342, "C" Coy in reserve at 365333 and "D" Coy on the right at 365344 with an outpost at 361344.

The night following the relief had been very quiet with only occasional mortaring and spandau fire in the bn area, and following the completion of the relief the coys were able to stand down from 100 percent to the normal two thirds stand to.

During the day the area was rather quiet although it was harassed sporadically by mortar and spandau fire.

In the evening "C" Coy sent 2 contact patrols to the 2/6 QUEENS on our left, one at 2000 hours, and the second at 0400. At 2300 hours "A" Coy sent a fighting patrol forward along the line of the railway to investigate a house at 358339 and to engage enemy there in a fire fight in order to locate their positions.

At 0200 hours the patrol returned, and Lieut NUTTALL reported having been fired on from the left of the house. His patrol returned the fire and then withdrew and called down arty fire.

13 JANUARY 1945

Weather - Raining lightly and milder.

During the day the coy areas were shelled more heavily than usual and some 15cm shells fell in "A" Coy's area.

At 0830 hours Major J.R.O.COUNSELL (DSO) went to a conference at Bde on harassing methods - it was the Bde Comd's intention that each night some means would be used to harass the enemy on the entire Bde front. Further to this effort, the Scout PI had deployed 2 sniping teams, and 2 outposts on the bn front, one each with "A" & "D" Coys.

In the afternoon the Commanding Officer came up to TAC HQ fully recovered from his touch of the flu.

Apart from the usual contact patrols to the 2/6 QUEENS, "B" Coy was recce fwd to a house by the dyke at 360343 with a view to manning it with snipers. By 2300 hours this patrol had returned and reported that they had found sign of the enemy; and as a result, Lt SEAGRAM was ordered to man it the following day with 3 snipers.

[right margin: Appx 2 – Part 11 Order No 6/45; Appx 3 – Field Return Officers 3008; Appx 4 – Field Return ORs 3009]

14 JANUARY 1945

Place: ITALY, SHEET

1/50,000

89 III & 88 II

372323 MR

Weather - Raining and milder.

Bde had ordered that all the civilians be evacuated from the area between the SENIO & LAMONE rivers, and on the previous day Capt LEADBEATER with 2 Carabinieri and 2 partisans had warned many of the households in the bn area to leave, and throughout the day there was a continuous stream of people, carts and oxen to be seen moving past TAC HQ on it's way to RUSSI, where AMG was to take over.

In the afternoon "A" Coy's outpost at 358336 reported 2 enemy digging in on the railway embankment about 250 yards from them.

Our MMG's engaged them and they ran off. However, in the meantime, the outpost had sent 2 men out to the left to shoot at these enemy, and they in turn were sniped at from the dyke at 35553390, and this area was harassed by arty fire.

The harassing scheme for the night was to shine lights from the house in "B" Coy's area at 360343 while an ambush patrol lay about it to catch any Hun who should investigate.

At 0100 hours when the lights were shone, the enemy fired one flare and a few mortar bombs, but beyond this, he showed no curiosity.

15 JANUARY 1945

Weather - Cloudy and cool.

The early morning was rather quiet in the bn area. At 0645 hours "A" Coy called down a prearranged fire task on the SOUTH side of COTIGNOLA where there had been considerable vehicle movement heard.

We were still having trouble with civilians, for 56 Div on our left had not yet started to clear their areas, and as our civilians left to pass through GRANAROLA (3532) they were promptly returned. This matter was easily overcome by re-routing them out through "C" Coy, and the stream continued almost endlessly.

In the afternoon the coy areas were under fire by an SP gun, though no casualties were suffered, and jerry also harassed with rockets which fell well on our left behind the QUEENS.

At 2040 hours "B" Coy reported than an enemy patrol had come in on their outpost and had taken 2 prisoners - one of the lads was able to escape when the enemy took shelter in a slit trench from the section's fire by kicking and pushing his escort, he jumped out of the trench and rolled down the dyke wall - the enemy fired on him as he did so, wounding him superficially in the neck.

16 JANUARY 1945

Weather - Cold and icy.

At 0100 hours "D" Coy reported that at least 4 enemy had attacked them from the left and had been engaged in a fire fight and although no bodies were found, the outpost thought that at least 2 had been killed or wounded judging from the yells and groans heard.

At 0600 hours the night's harassing scheme was carried off. The bn EY rifles were fired at known enemy positions over the SENIO, but once again, the enemy showed no curiosity.

At 1015 hours the Bde Comd came to TAC HQ to see the commanding Officer and shortly after his arrival they went out to "C", "B" and "A" Coys, returning at 1230 hours.

During the afternoon the forward coy areas were harassed by quite heavy arty and mortar fire.

In the evening at 2045 hours, following a heavy concentration of mortar and shell fire, "B" Coy's outpost was attacked on both flanks by a strong patrol which crawled over the top of the dyke onto their positions. The outpost opened fire at once, killing 4 of the enemy and perhaps wounding more. The Cpl i/c the post said that they would be lucky if one of the patrol got away with a whole skin.

At 2100 hours "D" Coy also had a patrol come in on their outpost, which was repulsed by fire, perhaps killing 2 of the enemy.

For the remainder of the night, the enemy contented himself with harassing fire from mortars and arty.

[right margin: Appx 2 – Part 11 Order No 7/45]

17 JANUARY 1945

Weather - Cold and clear.

At 0800 hours the Cpl i/c "B" Coy's outpost reported in to TAC HQ with the documents taken from the enemy bodies. Subsequent identification showed them to be from 1 Bn 1060 GR 362 Div which had been on the BOLOGNA sector.

The morning was relatively quiet, with the usual spandau and mortar fire in the forward coy areas, and continued so throughout the day.

At 1030 hours 3 Field Officers and an RSM from the Jewish Bde arrived at TAC HQ on 7 days attachment. The officers were sent to "A", "B" and "D" Coys and the RSM was kept at Main HQ.

In the evening the usual contact patrols to the QUEENS were sent out and "C" Coy established a standing patrol at 363336 between "A" & "B" Coys, on the CANALE NAVIGLIO. Also "B" Coy sent an ambush patrol to the house at 360343 where it was thought that the enemy were crossing the SENIO. Although this patrol remained out until midnight, no sign of the enemy was seen.

At about 2230 hours the bn was heavily shelled by 15cm arty fire concentrated chiefly in "B" and "C" Coy areas, and 2 casualties were suffered. The shelling, with additional mortar fire, fell sporadically all night.

18 JANUARY 1945

Weather - Sunny and cold.

At 0830 hours "D" Coy's outpost on the dyke reported seeing 3, and perhaps 4 enemy leave the buildings at 360343 and proceed toward "B" Coy - no further reports on this were received.

At 1000 hours the Bde Comd, Brig J.D.B.SMITH (DSO, OBE) came to TAC HQ to congratulate the Commanding Officer on the excellent job that "B" and "D" Coy's outposts had done in repulsing and killing the enemy who had patrolled in on their outposts. Also a fighting patrol was planned for that night. "D" Coy was to patrol to the house at 360343, clear it if necessary, and occupy it until 0400 hours when it would be relieved by an ambush patrol, which would remain all day.

"A" Coy was also to send a recce patrol again to the house at 358339 to pinpoint enemy locations and weapon positions preparatory to our sending a fighting patrol the next night to get a prisoner.

"D" Coy's patrol to the house at 360343 apparently met no opposition and was able to firm itself about the buildings.

The harassing scheme for the night was 2" mortar paraflares fired on the Bde front at 2200 hours. "B" and "D" Coys varied this slightly by the addition of 72 bombs HE each, on the road running along the SENIO where considerable movement had been heard.

At 1830 hours "D" Coy shot at one of the houses on this road with 9 PIAT bombs, drawing MG fire from the right 150 yards downstream. Shortly after the shoot a vehicle was heard to drive up to the house and 3 more bombs were fired, hitting the house again.

The mortar flares drew MG fire on our front and quite heavy mortar and arty concentrations on the QUEENS on our left; and during the remainder of the night the harassing fire was fairly heavy with occasional MG fire in the coy localities.

19 JANUARY 1945

Weather - Cold and cloudy.

Late last night Major G.RENISON arrived at the bn having just come recently from England where he was C.I., Staff College, CAMBERLY, to be 2i/c of the bn. With him also came Major DEEKS who had been away for the last month or so with jaundice.

At 0645 hours "D" Coy's recce patrol reported reaching it's objective - the house at 358339 and finding the area quiet, with no movement heard in the house not on the dyke behind it. Voices were heard from over the dyke, but no enemy positions were pinpointed.

At 1300 hours the Commanding Officer attended a conference at TAC HQ 9th ROYAL FUSILIERS at which defensive measures against a possible enemy attack were discussed. Throughout the day the bn area was subjected to the normal harassing fire.

Just after last light "D" Coy reported that it's patrol which had been standing at the house at 360343 had, during the day, observed a dark patch on the dyke-wall, and on investigation had found 2 enemy in a tunnel running through the dyke. One was killed by a No 36 grenade thrown by the patrol, while another of the patrol, running to the top of the dyke, shot the second Jerry as he scuttled out of the tunnel.

At 1915 hours "C" Coy's standing patrol at 363336 reported to "B" Coy that an enemy patrol had penetrated our outpost positions. After a brief alarm, it was decided that the patrol had seen spandau fire coming from the railway bridge and had thought that the enemy had got into our positions and "B" Coy stood down.

"D" Coy, however, was ordered to send it's patrol which was scheduled to go to the bridge at 367347 to ambush the tunnel at 360343 until relieved by "B" Coy at 0200 hours. In the meantime, the tunnel was to be prepared for demolition, but not blown, for we hoped to catch more enemy as he came through.

20 JANUARY 1945

Weather - Cloudy and cool.

At 0100 hours "A" Coy sent a recce patrol forward to the house at 358339 to determine again if possible the enemy situation there, and at 0440 hours this patrol returned and it was reported that the area about the house was booby trapped, for trip wires were found. The patrol, however, fired a burst of TMG and threw 2 grenades, but received no answering fire and were again unable to locate the enemy. Although, they did report that on their way towards the house, an MG position which had been harassing all the roads in "A", "B" and "C" Coy areas seemed to receive a direct hit from a 2" mortar bomb fired by CSM JACKSON (MM) of "A" Coy which silenced it for the remainder of the night.

As the weather cleared, the airforce bombed and strafed the enemy, silencing his guns, and the bn area was fairly quiet during the day.

In the afternoon Capt GEORGE reported that his outpost shot, and hit an enemy soldier standing in a slit trench on top of the dyke to the rear of their house at 360343. This was further confirmed by the appearance of another enemy at last light who was seen to drag an object (body?) out of the slit trench over the dyke.

Later in the evening Lt WASHER went forward to the outpost with 2 Lifebuoy flamethrowers with which he hoped to harass this dyke position of the enemy.

Our coy areas were still fairly quiet although considerable shell and nebelwerfer fire fell on the QUEENS on our left.

There were no harassing schemes that night and the silence was interrupted only by the spandau by the railway bridge which was soon silenced by "A" Coy's MMGs.

[right margin: Appx 3 – Field Return Officers 3008; Appx 4 – Field Return ORs 3009]

21 JANUARY 1945

Weather - Clear and cool.

At 0400 hours the bn area was heavily shelled and mortared, knocking out 2 of the Arty A/Tk vehicles with "A" Coy and Major BEAL'S HQ was hit 3 times by arty fire. Half an hour later, "D" Coy's ambush patrol at 360343 which had only just relieved "B" Coy, was attacked by an enemy patrol who came over the dyke, yelling that they were surrounded, to put their hands up and surrender - the house was hit 3 times by faustpatronens. "D" Coy's men, however, were having none of this and after a brisk fire fight the enemy withdrew, apparently without casualties and by 0730 hours the situation was again normal.

The day was again rather quiet, the silence being broken now and then by rockets falling in the QUEENS area and the occasional burst of spandau at us.

Patrolling for that night was limited to the usual contacts with the QUEENS, and "B" Coys relief of "D" Coy's ambush at 360343 in the early morning, and "C" Coy's standing patrol at 363336.

There were no harassing efforts laid on by Bde, but all coys fired their 2" mortars on known enemy positions across the SENIO.

22 JANUARY 1945

Weather - Clear and cool.

The night was quite uneventful, with scarcely a round falling, and this state of quietness persisted throughout the day, interrupted by only the occasional round of mortar fire. After last night the enemy again harassed the coy areas with spandau fire - one MG in particular was located at C. PEZZI (354338) and could not be silenced by our MMG. At 2000 hours "B" Coy's outpost reported hearing enemy movement in the area of the railway bridge, and this was silenced by the MMG. Shortly after, "D" Coy outpost reported that a 4 man enemy patrol had approached their position from the left moving in the river bed. They were driven off by 36 grenades, following which neither outpost had anything to report. The remainder of the night was again quiet with only light shelling and mortar fire on the battalion front. A recce patrol from the scout platoon reported that there was no footbridge, and apparently never had been one at MR 362347.

23 JANUARY 1945

Weather - Sunny and cool.

At 0400 hours the 2/7 QUEENS who had relieved the 2/6 QUEENS on our left, attacked with 4 WASPS to clear the area of the SENIO at 333336 and to support them "A" Coy fired Vickers and 2 mortars at area bridge and house at 358339 from 0440 hours to 0540 hours. Unfortunately, the 2/7 QUEENS had bad luck with their WASPS - 2 only reached the dyke - the others either threw tracks or bogged in the soft ground.

However they did get good information regarding the enemy's positions.

At 1000 hours Capt BRUCE of 48 ROYAL TANK REGT whose squadron was supporting us, went forward to "A" Coy to see if he could shoot C.PEZZI at 354338. However, there was insufficient crest-clearance over the dykes of the SENIO and the target was not registered.

The afternoon was again fairly quiet with only the occasional shell falling.

In the evening the enemy commenced their MG harassing fire on "A" and "B" Coy areas, firing chiefly from the railway bridge at 357339.

Patrols were limited to "C" Coy's standing patrol at 363336, "D" Coy's patrol which was to relieve "B" Coy at the house at 360343, and "A" Coys contact patrols to the QUEENS.

At 2230 hours "D" Coy's outpost reported that an enemy patrol had come in on them and had fired 3 bazookas at their position, but they were driven off after a sharp fire fight. In further retaliation "D" Coy fired 6 PIAT bombs at the house across the SENIO from their outpost which they believed to be a PI HQ.

[right margin: Appx 2 – Part 11 Order No 8/45]

24 JANUARY 1945

Weather - Cloudy and cool.

At 0320 hours "A" Coy called down a mortar concentration on the area WHITE HOUSE 358339 which put an end to the spandau fire for the night and from then on until daylight the forward coy areas were fairly quiet.

In the morning the coy 2i/c's left with Major RENISON to recce billets in RUSSI (4333) to which we were to move when we were relieved.

Apart from the usual patrols, "A" Coy sent a recce patrol to the house at 358339 which on it's return reported that there was no sign of the enemy there, or at the dyke, or from across the SENIO.

25 JANUARY 1945

Weather - Cloudy and cool.

At 0125 hours "C" Coy's standing patrol which manned a defence position below "A" and "B" Coys, fired on 2 men of an enemy patrol, following which "B" Coy sent out a section to investigate and they captured one enemy who led them to the second who had been

wounded. At the same time, "B" Coy's ambush patrol at the house at 360343 reported that an enemy patrol had come in on them, but had withdrawn after a brief fire fight in which a faustpatronen was fired at the house.

At 0330 hours spandau fire came again from the dyke behind the house at 358339 and from in front of "B" Coy at 358343. These were engaged by the 4.2 mortars and our Vickers and silenced. Also "D" Coy fired their PIATs into a slit trench on the far side of the SENIO, getting direct hits and silencing the spandau which had been firing from there.

Further activity on the part of the enemy was reported by the HASTINGS who said that they believed that an enemy patrol had passed between their "B" Coy and out "D" Coy.

However, no further word was received of this and "D" Coy was able to stand down.

The day was again fairly quiet with only the usual shelling and spandau fire and this situation continued in the bn area for the remainder of the day. Patrolling that night was normal, no special tasks being done.

26 JANUARY 1945

Weather - Light rain, cold.

At 0500 hours "D" Coy's outpost was fired on by rifle grenades from the opposite side of the SENIO, following which 4 shots were fired from a flame thrower from the river bed. One of the outposts was temporarily knocked out by the blast effects, but the men retaliated with 4 boxes of 36 grenades and some 77 grenades, causing the enemy to withdraw. Shortly after this, "D" Coy's area, as well as that of "B" Coy and that of the HASTINGS was heavily mortared for 15 mins, after which the area was quiet. No casualties were suffered by us during the entire action which lasted some 30 minutes.

At 0930 hours the Commanding Officer and the Coy Comds of the 2/6 QUEENS arrived at TAC HQ to make arrangements for the relief of our bn, and the left forward coy of the HASTINGS.

The plan was that on the night 27/28 Jan "C" Coy 2/6 QUEENS would relieve "A" Coy 48 HIGHRS, "D" Coy 2/6 QUEENS would relieve our "D" Coy and "B" Coy CHESHIREs (u/c 2/6 QUEENS) would relieve our "B" Coy, while "A" Coy 2/6 QUEENS was to relieve "B" Coy of the HASTINGS.

No special patrols were done that night and the bn area was under the usual harassing fire.

At 2300 hours "D" Coy reported that a patrol had come in on their outpost, but after an exchange of grenades it was forced to withdraw and there were no further incidents that evening.

27 JANUARY 1945

Weather - Clear and cool.

The day was without incident. During the morning, the Coy Comds of the QUEENS were making last minute recces of the routes into the coy areas, and at 1530 hours the relief commenced, continuing smoothly and without incident to it's completion at 2300 hours, by which time TAC HQ was able to move to it's new location in RUSSI.

[right margin: Appx 1 – Part 1 Order No 1/45; Appx 3 – Field Return Officers 3008; Appx 4 – Field Return ORs 3009]

28 JANUARY 1945

Place: ITALY, SHEET

1/50,000

89 III MR

433333

Weather - Sunny and cool.

The battalion woke and shook itself after a good sleep in the new billets, and started the process of cleaning up, reorganization and recreation. Baths and a clean change of clothing were arranged for the rifle coys, and everyone felt much improved for it.

Innoculations parades commenced in the afternoon, to be completed in the next few days. Priority was given to inoculations in the program for the week, owing to a rather high rate of diphtheria in the Army.

Ceremonial guard mounting was held in the main square RUSSI at 1630 hours, followed by "RETREAT" and music by the pipe band. This caused great interest among the local inhabitants who thronged to watch.

It was not possible to have a movie to-day, but our YMCA was in full swing, and the tps enjoyed the benefits of the canteen.

29 JANUARY 1945

Weather - Cold.

Training commenced to-day, special emphasis being placed on kit and stores inspections, with a view to getting shortages made up. Innoculations continued, and moving picture schedule commenced at the YMCA theatre in RUSSI. This schedule gave an allotment of 200 at each of 3 showing - enough to serve practically all men who were available and wished to go.

The highlight of the day was an EFI issue of 3 quarts of beer to all ranks, and whiskey for the officers, WOs and Sgts.

[right margin: Appx 9 – Trng Syllabus]

30 JANUARY 1945

Weather - Cold.

Capt McCUTCHEON, Lts KILGOUR and NUTTALL left for 7 days leave to FLORENCE. In the morning Brig SMITH visited the bn and toured the coys with the Commanding Officer. In the afternoon Lts ROLAND and GREEN left for a skiing course at SAN MARINO.

Trg went on, and movies were available. In the evening 100 men from the bn went to each of two shows by a CWAC Concert Party at GODO. This was the first of three nights that seats for this concert party were available to us. The Commanding Officer, 2i/c and several other officers attended as well, and all agreed that it was a good show.

[right margin: Appx 2 – Part 11 Order No 10/45]

31 JANUARY 1945

Weather - Fair and cool.

This was the fourth day in rest. Each company spent the morning with routine activity – inspection, foot-drill, billet inspection, and P.T. The afternoon was taken up with bath parades and shows. The latter held in the YMCA theatre in the town.

A memorial service was held at 1030 hours at the LAMONE RIVER 48 HIGHLANDERS CEMETERY - 22 officers and 150 men attended. The service was conducted by Hon; Capt A.RAPSON.

The Brigade Commander, Brig J.D.B.SMITH, visited the battalion and was conducted on an informal inspection by the 2i/c Major G.E.B.RENISON. There was the customary signs of efficient activity and the Brigadier left well satisfied.

At night a very snappy Army Show was held in GODO, only ten minutes ride from RUSSI. Some of the bn attended this and enjoyed it very much.

signed

Damackenzie

(D.A.MACKENZIE) Lt-col,

Commanding Officer,

48 Highrs

1 FEBRUARY 1945

Place: ITALY, SHEET

1/50,000

89 III MR

433333

Weather - Cloudy and quite cool.

Subalterns of the bn were given an address by Major FLAHIFF, a M.O. from HQ 1 Cdn Div, on V.D. control followed by a chalk talk by the Adj, Capt W.G.BURKE-ROBERTSON. This talk was designed to point out to the unenlightened; and remind the 'au fait' of the particular highland mess etiquette which would be expected at the mess dinner to take place that evening.

During the morning the Commanding Officer, I.O., Coy Comds, and a Sigs rep, went forward to the Loyal Edmonton Regt TAC HQ. Details of timings and system of relief were tied up and the parties returned to RUSSI for lunch.

Before return to RUSSI the Commanding Officer visited Bde to discuss a change in dispositions in the new area. It was decided to make the changeover on a coy for coy basis and modify later.

The afternoon was spent in preparing for the mess dinner. The PMC, Major RENISON, and his staff made a concerted and evidently successful effort to convert a rather war scarred Fascist building into a true Gaelic banquet-hall - alcohol and the cooking staff supplied the rest.

An excellent dinner was held. All officers wore kilt - or at least arrived in them. Among those piped into the dining hall from the crowded bars, of which there were two, were col D.C.CAMERON of the HPER and Major S.GALLOWAY, 2 i/c of the R.C.R. The tables, supplied (or requisitioned) by RUSSIANS or RUSSITES, were overflowing with all manner of pleasant fare and it was unanimously agreed a miracle to have such excellent food only four miles from the front line. The piano, which was B.L.R'd the following day, was the only serious casualty.

[right margin: Appx 2, Part 11 Order No 11/45]

2 FEBRUARY 1945

Weather - Cloudy and cool.

The morning was spent in loading and packing for the move forward to relieve the LER during the afternoon. Advance parties from the LER arrived at TAC during the morning and officers stayed for lunch at "A" mess.

The I.O. with a sigs party, went forward at 1330 hours to prepare TAC which was in complete by 1730 hours. Other coy reliefs were as follows: "A" Coy at 1600 hours, "B" Coy at 1745 hours, "C" Coy at 1540 hours, "D" Coy at 1625 hours and "Sp" Coy at 1650 hours. At 1800 hours an L.O. from 2 CIB brought forward traces giving details of supporting arms fire tasks and locations of flanking units. Our bn was to remain under command 2 CIB until the other two bns of our Bde made reliefs the following night.

The Commanding Officer visited 2 CIB HQ returning to TAC by 1900 hours for dinner.

The PPCLI, patrolling from the right forward position at 0200 hours, suffered heavy casualties when a house was demolished by the enemy and heavy mortar fire was brought to bear in the area (488498). A quiet night was spent by the bn.

[right margin: Appx 5, Admin Instr No 1]

3 FEBRUARY 1945

Place: ITALY, SHEET

1/50,000

89 III MR

494477

Weather - Cloudy and milder.

The "spread" of the bn area is apparent from the map references. For this reason the Commanding Officer, as soon as our reserve rôle was clarified, made plans to draw in his far flung sub units and to re-dispose TAC and MAIN HQ, consisting of the *QM, TPI & B.O.R.* The latter was another hundred yards nearer the enemy than TAC and the forward elements. Apparently earlier reliefs of Italian tps by 2 CIB had necessitated this peculiar disposition. Coys supplied guards of section strength for the timorous B.O.R. who were reported to be typing with charged tommy guns across their laps. Later the B.O.R. was relieved from the forward position by "D" Coy.

Our chief reserve role consisted of manning a switch line position as shown on trace Appx "11". This was recc'd during the day by the Commanding Officer and Coy Comds, who effected certain modifications. This switch line was to be occupied in the event of a break through Italian-held positions on the right flank. Other positions were also recc'd in area of dyke at MR 492488. These positions to be occupied by "A" Coy in the event of a penetration from here between the two forward bns.

At 1200 hours recce parties of the Irish Regt came forward to TAC and to Coy HQ.

During the afternoon the 2 i/c recc'd new TAC and MAIN HQ positions to be occupied the following day. Amgot offered to remove Italian civilians from any houses we desired.

A meeting was held at 1900 hours at TAC HQ. The 2 i/c outlined the dispositions and establishments of the various Service and HQ units of the bn and a discussion was held and useful conclusions reached on a more efficient administration.

The remainder of the night was quiet.

[right margin: Appx 3 – Field Return Officer 3008; Appx 4 – Field Return ORs 3009; Appx 11, Chart of Switch Line "PURPLE"]

4 FEBRUARY 1945

Place: ITALY, SHEET

1/50,000

89 III MR

494487

Weather - Cloudy and warmer.

The bn is still in the long 'strung out' positions taken over from the LER with the B.O.R. as it's leading sub-unit. The night was quiet. Dispositions of the bn are as follows: TAC 494487, "A" 498486, "B" 499475, "C" 487437 (Sugar factory), "D" 499477.

Arrangements were concurred in by the Bde Comd for a shuffling of locations and TAC, Sp Coy, D Coy and Rear Echelon spent the entire day re-locating according to the plans made at the 2 i/c's conference the night previous.

At 0930 hours the 2 i/c left TAC to recce a new one at MR 499476 and to see that the Italian civilians were evacuated from the houses in area GRATTACOPPA MR 498476.

The Commanding Officer, Col MACKENZIE, was out during the morning and returned to TAC for an early lunch, also the 2 i/c. By 1430 hours TAC had moved to new location and "D" Coy had occupied former TAC area; support Coy in turn moving into remainder of "D" Coy area and area of GRATTACOPPA by this time very efficiently cleared of 'wops' by an Amgot Sgt.

During the day arrangements were made with the YMCA Supervisor to show moving pictures at the Sugar Factory ("C" Coy area) and allotments were drawn up by the B.O.R. Routine training was carried on by Coys not busy with the moving. The padre held services at "A", "B" and "C" Coys during the morning.

5 FEBRUARY 1945

Place: ITALY, SHEET

1/25,000

89 IV SE

499476 MR

Weather - Fair and mild with the frost coming out of the ground and roads turning to quagmire.

During the morning the Commanding Officer was out visiting coys and in the afternoon paid a call on the Hasting's and P.E.Reg't. Dispositions of the bn areas follows: TAC at 499476, "A" Coy at 498486, "B" Coy at 499475, "C" Coy at 487437, "D" Coy at 494487 and "Sp" Coy at 499476.

At 1330 hours a coy comd and "I" Sgt of the Irish Regt (5th Cdn Div) came for TAC for details of local activity, Bde dispositions and sup arms D.F. tasks were given to them and a general picture of the reserve bn counterattack role.

6 FEBRUARY 1945

Weather - Fair and mild.

The enemy jabbed at the Italian troops on our right flank in the early hours of the morning but were repulsed. Elsewhere things were quiet.

Our role while in the reserve position has been clarified and is as follows. In the event of a thrust by the enemy between the two forward bns "D" Coy will occupy positions (which have been dug), in pl areas at 493487, 493489 and present area 494486. If he attacks through the Italians on our right and threatens to enfilade us from the NE we will occupy positions (which are almost complete) of switch line PURPLE (see trace with January War Diary).

In view of this, the operational work has consisted of a tie-up of supporting arms for the aforementioned 'potentials' in addition to the normal preparations and siting of defenses.

This morning "A" tp comd of the N.I.H. (North Irish Horse) was at TAC to clarify tank support for PURPLE. The Commanding Officer and 2 i/c were both out most of the day. The Commanding Officer visited coys and the 2 i/c attended to administrative work in the bn. Lt H.W.D.KIIGOUR former I.O. went to 1 CIB as Bde L.O. Lt N.H.McMURRICH carried on the bn int duties with Lt J.E.PICKERING as understudy.

[right margin: Appx 2 – Part 12 Order No 12/45]

7 FEBRUARY 1945

Weather - Fair and warmer.

There was a quiet night on the Bde sector. During the morning coys carried on with syllabus of trg as submitted and the Commanding Officer visited informally during trg hours. The 2 i/c spent the morning at TAC and went out after lunch to visit MAIN HQ. An auction of deceased officers' kit was held at MAIN HQ at 1430; this was conducted by the 2 i/c in accordance with instructions by Higher Formation.

The Intelligence Officer lectured to "D" Coy in the morning and to "C" Coy in the afternoon; points stressed were (1) the current local picture (2) possibility of use of 'V' weapons in ITALY (3) economic warfare.

Lt SEAGRAM took over duties as T.O. reporting to HQ Coy Comd during the afternoon. Lt PICKERING came to TAC HQ to understudy the I.O.

A message was received in the evening that the road from 493488 to the Sugar Factory would be closed to traffic for maintenance work from 1200 hours the following day for a period of 18 hours. This necessitated an adjustment in supply and administration.

The Commanding Officer visited the R.C.R. late in the afternoon and returned at 1800 hours.

8 FEBRUARY 1945

Weather - Clear and moderate temperature.

There was a particularly quiet night in the forward bn areas. With the closing of roads from 1200 hours on, all admin was carried out before this time. The QM called TAC asking for ration 15cwt by 1030 hours.

At 1015 hours the Bde L.O. arrived at TAC HQ and had little information to give.

The Commanding Officer went out at 1030 hours after which the Bde Comd and aide arrived at TAC. In the Commanding Officer's absence the 2 i/c acted as escort and the party returned for lunch at the TAC Mess.

Bde phoned to say that the bn has a road maintenance task, viz. to keep ditches clear for water drainage from "D" Coy at MR 493488 to bridge over the LAMONE at 497468. The pioneer officer Lt PENTLAND was put in charge of this work, to commence on morning of 9th.

The Commanding Officer spent the afternoon in his caravan, an extremely noisy afternoon, as a tank from the NIH (North Irish Horse) fired it's A/Tk guns very close by, close enough to give the impression that a slight change in aim would place the caravan in the path of the shells at about 100 yard range. A complaint was launched.

The 2 i/c spent a busy day oiling the admin machinery of the bn and returned slightly late for the evening meal - roast chicken, very well cooked, and the mess only between 2000 and 3000 yards from "No Mans' Mand".

At 2200 hours the Commanding Officer received a message to attend the Corps Commanders conference in RAVENNA during the afternoon of the 9th.

[right margin: Appx 2 – Part 11 Order No 13/45]

9 FEBRUARY 1945

Weather - Dull with drizzling rain at noon.

The 'ditch clearers' started work first thing this morning and carried on in the rain after noon.

The Commanding Officer went out at 0900 hours and returned in the evening.

Lt PICKERING went up to R.C.R. TAC (the RCR held the right forward position) and pinpointed all sub-unit positions on an Air photo posaic. Mosaics of scale 4" equal to 1 mile were prepared for all four rifle coy comds.

10 FEBRUARY 1945

Weather - Moderate.

The chief problem of the bn continues to be the state of the road. To-day it was closed to all traffic including jeeps between "D" Coy at 493488 and 1 CIB HQ at 565465 whilst undergoing repairs. The battalion contributed a working party of 30 men for this purpose. In the morning the Commanding Officer, Lt-col D.A. MACKENZIE attended a Bn Comdr's conference at Bde HQ.

[right margin: Appx 3 - Field Return Officer 3008; Appx 4 - Field Return ORs 3009; Appx 1 - Part 1 Order No 2/45]

11 FEBRUARY 1945

Weather - Moderate.

The Commanding Officer, Lt-col MACKENZIE, called a meeting this morning of all Coy Comds, Support Coy Officers, the Adjutant, T.O., Q.M., S.O., M.O, I.O., and R.S.M. Several administrative matters were discussed including the checking of anti-malarial and winter equipment. Several names were also brought up as possible CQMS's. Coys have now completed the digging in of positions on the PURPLE Switch line. "A" Coy is at 508493, "D" Coy at 506485 and "B" Coy at 509479. This line is insurance against a possible Jerry breakthrough against CREMONA Group (Italian forces) on our Bde right flank.

12 FEBRUARY 1945

Weather - Moderately fair.

Intelligence Officers and "I" Sgt received to-day instructions at Bde HQ in Linex Cypher which is to replace Double Transposition Cypher. The mortar platoon to-day, under command of Capt J.C.N.CURRELLY, moved to 492485, registered enemy targets and did a shoot at night firing in all 100 rounds. The mortar platoon are thus the only 'fighting soldiers' so far during this tour in the line.

[right margin: Appx 2 - Part 11 Order No 14/45]

13 FEBRUARY 1945

Weather – Moderately fair.

Normal training continues, the only touches of actual war being the mortar platoon firing their 100 rounds a day and a brief stonk by Jerry SP's or field guns in "D" Coy area at 1825 hours.

14 FEBRUARY 1945

Weather - Overcast, moderate.

During the past few days coys have been able to send men to a mobile bath at MEZZANO and the M.O. has started diptheria inoculations of coys in turn.

[right margin: Appx 5 - Admin Instr No 2]

15 FEBRUARY 1945

Weather - Morning chilly and foggy - fair in the afternoon.

Our road running from MR. 493488 to 485439, though still very bad, is improving as a result of no rain and continued repair work by "Eyetic" road gangs. The bn area remains quiet and free of shelling and mortaring.

[right margin: Appx 2 – Part 11 Order No 15/45]

16 FEBRUARY 1945

Weather - Overcast and misty; moderate.

Our mortar platoon in support of the R.C.R. at 0315 hours this morning fired a DF task when a Jerry lighting patrol made a prisoner snatching raid on "B" Coy R.C.R. This afternoon the Commanding Officer, Lt-col MACKENZIE, after witnessing "A" Coy's patrol demonstration arranged for it to be repeated for the benefit of the officers of the battalion.

17 FEBRUARY 1945

Weather - Sunny.

The I.O. this morning re-checked positions of Switch Line PURPLE and handed in trace to Bde HQ upon request of Major BRADY, Senior L.O. The Commanding Officer, Lt-col MACKENZIE, visited "A" and "D" Coys this morning. The Commanding Officer, also ordered that "A", "B" and "D" Coys should maintain 25% alert at nights in addition to normal sentries for reserve position. Training the past week has emphasized range work and field firing as the coy trg syllabi show attached as appx).

[right margin: Appx 3 - Field Return Officers 3008; Appx 4 - Field Return ORs 3009]

18 FEBRUARY 1945

Weather - Low clouds and moderate.

Much heavier shelling than usual both by Jerry and ourselves could be heard along our Bde Front from midnight till approx 0330 hours. However, no shells landed in the bn area. "D" Coy reported a Jerry propaganda machine from 0500 to 0530 hours and estimated location in the area of 492518. The broadcast was in Italian and of course was meant for the CREMONA Bde Group (Italian) on our right. The Bde Comd, Brig SMITH O.B.E., D.S.O., this morning called on the Commanding Officer, Lt-col MACKENZIE, re the approaching move. At 1430 hours to-day the officers of the bn witnessed a fighting patrol demonstration put on by "A" Coy. Lt R.NUTTALL was in charge of the patrol.

19 FEBRUARY 1945

Weather - Mostly fair and cold.

The Bde Comd this morning inspected "D" Coy and lunched there. After lunch he inspected "A" Coy and then dropped in on the Commanding Officer, Lt-col MACKENZIE, to discuss several matters concerning the forthcoming relief and move. This morning the Pioneer Platoon carried out several experiments with flares and trip-wires devising "automatic sentries"? In the afternoon the I.O. gave a lecture on security to "A" Coy.

20 FEBRUARY 1945

Weather - Clear and cold in morning; fair and warmer in the afternoon.

Major G.J.W.PROCTOR and Capt R.W.MURDOCH to-day left for MONTALTO to look over billets for the bn after we move. At present the first 5th Royal Gurkha Rifles who are to relieve us in these billets. The bn continues to carry on a daily trg program. Each coy has put a good deal of stress on field firing and range practice. All bn vehicles are grounded to-day except those drawing rations.

[right margin: Appx 2 - Part 11 Order No 16/45]

21 FEBRUARY 1945

Weather - Fair and moderate.

The Commanding Officer, Lt-col MACKENZIE, this morning held a preliminary "O" Group for the approaching bn move. He revealed that the bn will move on 23 Feb 45 to CESENATICA and on the 25th to MONTALTO. All carriers are to be brigaded and travel separately from the bns. At 1400 hours to-day an inspection of all bn vehs was made by the Commanding Officer, Lt-col MACKENZIE, who remarked upon their excellent condition. The Bde Comd, Brig SMITH, was present having been invited by the Commanding Officer to witness the inspection.

22 FEBRUARY 1945

Weather - Moderate - mostly fair.

The 2 i/c, Major RENISON, this morning left for CESENATICA with a recce party consisting of 1 officers and 1 O.R. per coy. The party returned in the afternoon. This morning Capt Alex CHESTERTON R.A. arrived at TAC thus anticipating by a day the arrival of the Fifth Gurkha's for whom he is to be Arty Rep. The Commanding Officer of the first bn of the 5th R.G.Rs. called on our Commanding Officer, Lt-col MACKENZIE, to gather information as to the bn's location, rôle, etc.

[right margin: Appx 6 - Standing Op Instr No 5; Appx 2 – Part 11 Order No 17/45; Appx 10 – List "D"]

23 FEBRUARY 1945

Weather - Fair and cool.

To-day the bn was relieved by the 1/5 Royal Gurkha Regt and moved by packets of 10 to 12 vehicles each (See Standing Op Instr No 1, attached as appendix). The move was accomplished without incident and by 1300 hours the bn was complete in the new area in CESENATICO on the ADRIATIC coast. This area has been devastated by war and what was once a fairly attractive residential area is now a collection of houses that are mere shells without windows and without doors.

Lt-col MACKENZIE held an "O" Gp this afternoon at 1645 hours and gave out the details of the next move. Recce parties will leave at 0800 hours to-morrow headed as usual by the 2 i/c Major G.E.B.RENISON.

24 FEBRUARY 1945

Place: ITALY, SHEET
40 No 100
1/100,000
720135 MR
Weather - Cool.

A 'Scat party' led by Major G.E.B.RENISON left at 0800 hours to recce the next area south of ANCONA. Before arrival, here in CESENATICA, the coys threw away or sent to salvage a great mass of eqpt that has accumulated during the past 6 months and which has always been regarded as essential, such things as chairs, bed springs etc.

Pipe Major ANDERSON and the band played 'RETREAT' at 1600 hours. As usual the skirl of pipes, the swing of the kilt, the shining brass and leather made a very brave show and it was difficult to say who was the more awe inspired - the local Italians or the most recently joined officers and men.

"A" Mess is functioning complete with the 'Dileas' Bar, which provided inspiration for song after song to-night.

[right margin: Appx 3 – Field Return Officer 3008; Appx 4 – Field Return ORs 3009]

25 FEBRUARY 1945

Place: ITALY, SHEET
Road Map 14
1/200, 000
Area "B"
6878 MR
Weather - Snowing.

The bn moved off this morning at 0530 hours in packets each comprising 10 to 12 vehicles in accordance with Standing Ops Instr No 1 attached herewith as an appendix. The route took the column SOUTH through RIMINI, past the RIMINI airfield, KESTREL, HENLY - names not to be lightly forgotten by those who fought with the bn in September 44 - and on further to CATTOLICA, FANO, ANCONA, PEDASO, then WEST mile after mile to the foothills of the snow-capped mountains in the distance. The bn wound up and up for over an hour finally reaching the remote medieval village of MONTALTO where it was met by the 2 i/c, Major RENISON, and the rest of the 'Scat party'.

The people here seem to speak nothing but Italian but an interpreter has appeared in the form of a monk, a German by birth, who promises to be very helpful by way of communicating our needs and desires to the aged Mayor and the grubby Sergeant of the Carabinieri who is the chief constable and very conscious of his position.

26 FEBRUARY 1945

Weather – cool and sunny.

This is a strange town. In size it is quite capable of housing two thousand souls but the population has diminished of recent years until a scant 600 remain. By far the strongest influence is wielded by the Monastery of the Holy Order of St. Salvador situated in the highest part of the town and commanding a view on every side. As many as 72 separate towns and villages may be seen from this point. The town dwellers, regardless of how poor they may appear to be, all own plots of land on the surrounding hillside - worked by the less fortunate who live on it and deliver to the owner in the town the larger proportion of the profits and produce.

"In a small public square just below the monastery is our MAIN HQ. The bn flag waves proudly in the small public square just below the monastery where the MAIN HQ is situated. In the same square is the bn Guard Room, in reality a civilian jail, a building with small barred windows and clanging doors and rats by the score. The rats are of a particularly

large and muscular variety and show every sign of making field punishment less attractive than ever.

From the above square a narrow, cobbled incredibly steep roadway leads down to a lower square and it is here that bn guard of 18 men is mounted each day at 1600 hours by the duty officer followed by the playing of 'retreat' by the pipe band, a spectacle watched by the entire population of the town as well as by large numbers of Highlanders.

[right margin: Appx 1 – Part 1 Order No 3/45]

27 FEBRUARY 1945

Weather - Sunny and warm.

The bn since arrival has been carrying out a syllabus of training that deals very largely with P.T. and hardening exercises and drill, the latter in preparation for a drill competition on 2 Mar 45.

In the morning the Commanding Officer, Lt-col MACKENZIE, held a conference at which he disclosed to those present 2 i/c, Major G.E.B.RENISON, O.C. HQ Coy, Major G.J.W.PROCTOR, Adjt, Capt W.G.BURKE-ROBERTSON, I.O., Lt J.E.PICKERING, T.O., Lt C.J.SEAGRAM, S.O., Lt D.V.ROLAND - that the bn was about to move in three short stages to a concentration area a few miles from LEGHORN, the move to commence on 3 Mar 45.

In the evening Major SMITH "D" Coy Comd gave a dinner party for his coy and as is customary the Commanding Officer was the guest of honour. It was during the course of these proceedings that Major RENISON received a telephone call from the Bde Comd who announced that Col MACKENZIE had been awarded the D.S.O. The instantaneous result of this was an "A" Mess party that didn't come to an end until the duty bugler marched onto the square to sound reveille.

[right margin: Appx 7 – Drill Competition; Appx 8 - Report on Hygiene & Sanitary Insp.]

28 FEBRUARY 1945

Weather - Sunny and warm.

For the first time since those far off days in ENGLAND the bn guard (furnished by "C" Coy now commanded by Major D.B.DEEKS) was mounted in the kilt. Together with the pipe band it made an inspiring sight. Also for the first time in this theatre the B.O.R. is now lighted with electricity supplied by the local power plant.

It was a strange and amusing sight to-day to see a team from the rough and rugged Scouts and Snipers PI playing volleyball with a number of mild-looking monks in their flowing black robes. The monks won!

Eggs are plentiful in MONTALTO and coys are all able to have eggs for breakfast every day.

Further awards for gallantry were announced to-day, Capt W.G. ANGUS, and Lt J.E.PICKERING each received the M.C., C52868 Pte BRAY J.A.(Died of Wounds 31 Dec 44) the D.C.M. and B108561 Sgt CHURCH J.R. the M.M.

[right margin: Appx 9 - Move Forward from FERMO Area Inst]

signed

Damackenzie

(D.A.MACKENZIE) Lt-col,

Commanding Officer,

48 Highrs