

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

32-N-2

Dec 43

49TH HIGHLANDERS OF CANADA

WAR DIARY

OR

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

(Erase heading not required)

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

Title pages will be prepared.

| Place | Date | Hour | Summary of Events and Information | Remarks, references to Appendices and initials |
|-------------------------------|----------------|------|---|--|
| TORRELLA ITALY | 1 Dec 43 | | <p>Bn move to Adriatic Coast. Seat party of six NCO's and R.Q.M.S. u/c Adjt left TORRELLA 0515 hrs to rendezvous with S.C. 1 C.I.B. at CASTROPIGNANO at 0600 hrs. Route to area CAMPOBASSO, CASACALENDA, LARINO, TERNOLI to Bde D.P. at Rd Junc 799788. (Italy, 1/100,000 sheet 155) and then to Bn area 6578-6478 (sheet 148). Due to extremely heavy traffic congestion from TERNOLI 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., 49th Highlanders, R.C.R., Bde Support Group, 9th Pd Ambulance and 2nd Pd 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.</p> | |
| (near) SAN SALVO ITALY. | 2 Dec 43 | | <p>Leading elements of Bn arrived in area at 0300 hrs the last vehicle coming in at 0630 hrs. From TERNOLI 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.C. 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 306078. 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 FOSSACERSIA 4004 to coast. Bn areas as follows- R.C.R. in reserve area 4204, H & P.E.R. FOSSACERSIA, 49th 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, FOSSACERSIA. 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</p> | |

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32-N-3.

DEC 43.

WAR DIARY

OR

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

(Erase heading not required)

M.
40/P

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| | | | (cont) | |
| (near) SAN SALVO ITALY | 2 Dec | 43 | 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 SANGRO River. This diversion is a magnificent Engineers feat built under extreme difficulties. Weather - cloudy and cool. | |
| (near) POSSAGESIA ITALY | 3 Dec | 43 | Reveille 0700 hrs., breakfast 0730 hrs. Troops devoted the morning to cleaning up and resting. 'O' Gp. at 0900 hrs. to co-ordinate the defense of the area. The Bn. situated on a tank proof plateau about 280 yds long and Coys. detailed as follows: "G" 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.R.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. Capts. Beal and Richardson brought up the rations in the evening. 3de. 'O' Gp. called at 1800 hrs. and Bn. 'O' Gp. 2000 hrs. The Unit is to move tomorrow, to an area just NORTH of BOCCA 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. | |

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DEC 43.

WAR DIARY

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

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| (near) FOSSACESIA ITALY | 4 Dec | 43 | <p>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 1800 hrs. All Ech were in new area by 1630 hrs. The Bn. bivouaced in houses and olive groves on both sides of the road in area 365045. 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 WEST of the road. This area was taken over from SEAFORTH OF CANADA. Weather - cool and cloudy.</p> | |
| (near) ROCCA S. GIOVANNI ITALY | 5 Dec | 43 | <p>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 M.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 1355 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 IRISH RIFLES in area 3511, the plan being that the R.A.F.S.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 P 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 "E" Coys., Bde. Wireless truck. One Tp. 51st Bty. A/Tk. came under Command at 1600 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 liaise 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.</p> | |

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WAR DIARY

| Place | Date | Hour | Summary of Events and Information |
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| (near) S. LEONARDO ITALY | 6 Dec 43 | | 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 orders to relieve EDMONTONS in area 345115 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. |
| (near) S. LEONARDO ITALY | 7 Dec 43 | | 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 faint 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. |
| (near) S. LEONARDO ITALY | 8 Dec 43 | | 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 1200 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 as soon as the first Coys. were successful. [To the right the R.C.R. moved across the River to 346137. at 1500 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 Pd. Arty., 2 Regts Med. Arty, 15 Squadrons of Kittybombers, 4.2 Mortars H.M.C's. and Bofors. Zero hour was 1630 hrs. Bn. Comd. Post moved forward to Forward O.P. 343116 at 1645 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. - |

Sly

Sly

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Penthouse

Dec 43.

WAR DIARY

| Place | Date | Hour | Summary of Events and Information (cont.) |
|--------------------------------|----------------|------|--|
| (near) S. LEONARDO ITALY | 8 Dec 43 | | <p>53116, Bn. H.Q. - 330116, "C" Coy. - 332115, "A" Coy. - 326115, "B" Coy. - 328112. 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.</p> |
| (near) S. LEONARDO ITALY | 9 Dec 43 | | <p>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. GRAFORTH'S 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.G.s. 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</p> |

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32-N-7

Dec 43

48th Highlanders of Canada

WAR DIARY

OR

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

(Erase heading not required)

M.F.M. 11
40/P & S/37 (9/42)

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| (near) S. LEONARDO ITALY | 9 Dec. 43 | | 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 Southforths 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 w/c Edmonton Regt. and to protect right flank of bridgehead around S. LEONARDO. Coys moved across w/c Major Clarke 2330 hrs and took up positions 336126 and 339127. At 1900 hrs rations came forward by mule train but it was 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 NEBELWERFER. - Casualties - Lt. D.A. HARPER T.O.S. - Capt. F.G. McLAREN and Lt. C.F.S. TIDD wounded. - 2 Other Ranks killed and 5 Other Ranks wounded. - Weather - Fair and cool. | |
| (near) S. LEONARDO ITALY | 10 Dec. 43 | | 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 - 329115 "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. | |
| (near) LA TORRE ITALY | 11 Dec. 43 | | 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 326118 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 Pd 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. | |

Dec 43.

WAR DIARY

| Place | Date | Hour | Summary of Events and Information | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|------|--|-----|
| (near) LA TORRE ITALY | 12 Dec 43 | | En. area shelled intermittently. "C" Coy. ordered out to defence position 513117 to protect left flank W.N.S.R. "C" Coy. moved out 1900 hrs. and in position by 2000 hrs. Sent patrol to contact W.N.S.R. at 309121. Pte. TOM 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.P. Stenk 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. | Shy |
| (near) LA TORRE ITALY | 13 Dec 43 | | "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.C. sent as L.O. to Coys. to inform them of move. By 2000 hrs. Bn. in position - Bn.H.Q. - 342127, "A" Coy. - 337125, "B" Coy. - 339121, "C" Coy. 340127 - "D" Coy. 340125. Casualties - nil. Weather - cloudy and cold. | Shy |
| (near) S.LEONARDO ITALY | 14 Dec 43 | X | '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. - 338124, "D" Coy. - 329119. Quiet day little shelling and Bn. took advantage of rest. Patrols to R.O.R. at 337122. Casualties - Capt. I.S.WALLACE appointed R/Major and confirmed in the rank of Major, Lt. K.S. ARRELL t.o.s., three Other Ranks wounded. Weather - cloudy and cold. | Shy |
| (near) S.LEONARDO ITALY | 15 Dec 43 | | 'O' Gp. at Bde. 1400 hrs. Plan for attack in near future. 1st Bde to attack and take ground across main rd in 3015 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. | Shy |
| (near) S.LEONARDO | 16 Dec | | 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. H. BELL, & Lt. S.D. REBURN t.o.s. along with nine O.Rs. One Other Rank wounded. Weather - cloudy and cool. | Shy |

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32-N-9
Dec 43.

WAR DIARY
OR
INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

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40/P & S/37 (19/42)

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| (near) S. LEONARDO ITALY | 17 Dec 43 | | <p>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 307136. On success R.C.R. to attack behind barrage and take 320142. One Sqn. 12 C.T.R. with each Bn. G.O.G. came down 1100 hrs. to give talk to Offra 48th and R.C.R. on to-morrow's attack. 1400 hrs. C.O. and I.C. 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 Reqs and F.O.Gs. 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.</p> | Shy |
| (near) LA TORRE ITALY | 18 Dec 43 | | <p>Bn. moved to Assy area 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. 306187, "A" Coy. 308136, "C" Coy. 307135, "B" Coy. 308136, En.R.Q. 308136. Harassed 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. Fixed 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 320142 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 on every position. The barrage for the R.C.R. fell partially on our troops 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. HEBURN wounded, 21 Other Ranks wounded and 8 Other Ranks killed. Weather - cool with rain.</p> | Shy |

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32-N-10

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| (near) LA TORRE ITALY | 19 Dec 43 | | 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 Am.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. | Shy |
| (near) V.GRADE ITALY | 20 Dec 43 | | R.C.R. attacked and took rd and rail junc. 320143. Patrols to 311150 contacted enemy in fair strength. Essex Regt. consolidated around 303134. Attempted to take V.GRADE 298140 with one Coy. and failed. Enemy counter attacked their left flank but thrown back. Our A/Tk guns plus 31st 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.WHITE confined in rank of Major, Capt. R.J.MARRIS evacuated sick, eight Other Ranks wounded. Weather - cloudy. | Shy |
| (near) V.GRADE ITALY | 21 Dec. 43 | | ESSEX Regt. attacked V.GRADE 298140 behind barrage 0600 hrs. One Coy. succeeded in reaching outskirts 299138. Enemy still on rd 203137. ESSEX Regt. called for shoot by own 3" mortars; shoot carried out 1100 hrs. successfully. GRAPFORTH Highrs of Can. relieved by H. & P.R.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 En. position. <u>En. fighting strength - 15 Offrs, 377 O.Rs.</u> "B" Coy. casualties in last two days 2 Killed, 9 wounded. Casualties - Lt. D.H.HILMES wounded, 9 Other Ranks wounded, 3 Other Ranks killed. Weather - rainy. | Shy |

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| | | | 32-N-11 DEC-43 | |
| (near) V. GRABBE ITALY | 22 Dec 43 | | <p>MOSEK Regt. making tentative efforts to attack V. GRABBE Bde. 'C' Coy. 1400 hrs. Bde. plan to swing left across country and then right to cut coast rd SS4177 and relieve pressure on 2nd Cdn. Inf. Bde. in ORTORA SS16. HAST. & P.E.R. to attack track junc. SS1150 and on success 48th Highlanders of Canada to go through and capture high ground SS6164, R.C.R. then to swing right and cut the coast road. Casualties - A/Major R.P. LYON confirmed in rank of Major. Weather - cloudy with rain.</p> | Shy |
| (near) V. GRABBE ITALY | 23 Dec 43 | | <p>HAST. & P.E. Regt. attacked behind barrage 0830 hrs. with tanks. MOSEK Regt. re-attacked V. GRABBE. Bn. 'C' Coy. Bn. to move away area SS1261 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 SS1247 but only once track SS1150 taken and track not yet crossed at SS1262. Tanks bogging down. HAST. & P.E. Regt. finally successful 1630 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 "E" Coys. Crossed track at SS1262 and moved N.W. toward objective. Para 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 SS1264 in pouring rain 1800 hrs. Bn. immediately took up defensive position on high ground SS1263. No organised opposition to occupation of ground. Casualties - nil. Weather - rain.</p> | Shy |

Dec 43.

WAR DIARY

| Place | Date | Hour | Summary of Events and Information |
|------------------------------|-----------------|------|---|
| (near) V. GRANDE ITALY | 24 Dec 43 | | <p>"D" Coy ordered to send out strong party - 30 men - to move down main track to Rear Bn. 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 307168, 308167 and 308165. 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 305168, "D" Coy around Bn. H.Q. and astride track 307163, "A" Coy around track junction in big house 308163, "B" Coy astride track 308161. Sniping and machine gunning from houses at 306167 and from post on track at 309168 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 P.U.F. 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 307170. 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 - Capt. E.N. HENNINGTON, J.A. WILSON, Lts. W.C. BURKE-ROBERTSON, C.M. MIDDLETON and W.T. FETTLAND T.O.S. 143 Other Ranks T.O.S. 2 Other Ranks wounded. Weather - Fair.</p> |
| (near) V. GRANDE ITALY | 25 Dec 43 | | <p>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 299169. This was knocked out by P.O.C. Recce patrol sent out by "D" Coy to houses at 306165, pinned down and 2 men killed. By evening S.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 308168. "A" Coy, during the day, took 3 prisoners, one from 1 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" Coy's position. Night attack tried but proved impossible owing to length time that it took to evacuate wounded from Bn. area. Casualties - Capt. P.D. HANDLEY, 7 Other Ranks killed, 11 Other Ranks wounded. Weather - Fair and cool.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Wounded.</i></p> |

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32-N-13

DEC 43.

WAR DIARY

OR

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

(Erase heading not required)

M.F.M. 11
40/P & S/37 (9/42)

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

Title pages will be prepared.

| Place | Date | Hour | Summary of Events and Information | Remarks, references to Appendices and initials |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|------|---|--|
| (near) V. GRABE ITALY | 26 Dec 43 | | <p>En. area shelled in early morning. [Call from Bde. to send guides for tanks who were now ready to come up. I.C. set out at 0850 hrs. to bring up tanks, visited R.C.R. enroute and tied up D.F. task and patrols. R.C.R. Command Post at 309166. R.C.R. having trouble on track from houses at 307156 and 307157. H.& P.E.R. also unable to move owing to H.C.'s. in house at 309162. 1000 hrs. En. 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 P.O. did magnificent work shooting enemy positions with one gun within 200 yds. of our own En. area. At 1200 hrs. the I.C. arrived with 3 tanks, a fourth having bombed down. At 1230 hrs. tanks attacked houses at 309166 with Inf. support from "A" Coy. Enemy driven out across "B" and "C" Coys. front and a very heavy fight developed. D.P.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 308166 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 80 taken prisoner. Estimate of enemy casualties for the day in En. area 100 to 120. Major CLARKE badly shaken up in "A" Coy's house which received three direct hits during the day. En. 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. R.R. ARRELL, wounded, 2 O.R.'s. killed and 4 O.R.'s. wounded. Weather - fair and cool</p> | SLY |
| | 27 Dec 43 | | <p>En. 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. tied 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. R.S. ARRELL died of wounds. Weather - cloudy and cool.</p> | SLY |

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Title pages will be prepared.

32-N-14
Dec 43.

WAR DIARY
OR
INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

(Erase heading not required)

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40/P & B/37 (9/42)

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| (near) V. GRANDE ITALY | 28 Dec 43 | | Shelling and mortaring throughout the day, otherwise uneventful. "D" Coy. ordered to go forward after dark and take up position covering ford at 801177. Arrived on objective O.R. and found abandoned German H.Q. with Christmas trees covered with Christmas messages in English. Casualties - Lt. J.G. CURRALL, Lt. H.C. BENSON and Lt. H.R. McMURRICH t.o.s. - Major R.P. LYON wounded, 7 Other Ranks wounded. Weather - cloudy and cool. | SLY |
| | 29 Dec 43 | | 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. passing 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. | SLY |
| | 30 Dec 43 | | 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 S.M. TORRANO MESPLOE 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.C. and B.M. with further details. "D" 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. "D" Group continued in slit trenches. Supper buried under ruins. Casualties - 2 Other Ranks killed, 5 Other Ranks wounded. Weather - cloudy and cool. | SLY |

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Title pages will be prepared.

32-N-~~15~~ 15

WAR DIARY

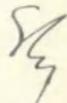
OR

DEC 43. INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

(Erase heading not required)

M.P.M. 11
40/P & S/37 (9/42)

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|--------------------------|-----------|------|---|---|
| SAN NICOLA & SAN TOMMASO | 31 Dec 43 | | <p>C.O. absent for rest at B Sch. Attack launched against S.NICOLA and S.TOMMASO under direction of Major Wallace, 2 i/c. "D" Coy. and H.Q. at former S.C.R. H.Q. "A", "B" 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 recon of both Towns which were under fire and observation by enemy. He returned to En.H.Q. at 1330 hrs. and proceeded with I.G. to a Sde. 10' Sp. Plans for the next month were outlined and the En. 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 'units' spent a miserable night. Casualties - 13 Other Ranks killed and 28 Other Ranks wounded. Weather - cold and windy with rain.</p> <p><i>Intentional</i></p> <p><i>San S. Johnston</i> (S. JOHNSTON) Lt-col., Commanding Officer, 48th Highlanders of Canada.</p> |  |