

WAR DIARY

~~TOP SECRET~~

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

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Title pages will be prepared.

West N S R

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December 1944

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks, references to Appendices and initials
RUSSI area	3	2215	"B" Coy now moving forward.	
			<p>2330 "A" Coy is still making progress having found area 442344 clear of enemy. "C" Coy now on objective 434344 after having met slight opposition from small arms fire. CO orders "D" Coy to move to 439359.</p> <p>Weather this date fine and warm, but night was very foggy - visibility nil.</p>	
4	0005		"B" Coy now at 442344 and "A" Coy still pushing on meeting no opposition.	
		0130	"A" Coy now at 439346 reporting this area clear of enemy. CO orders fighting patrol from "C" Coy to go to two large buildings at 434341 and 432342. It is now intended that when "A" Coy is firm at 438352 they will push on to 439359. "D" Coy will move to 448353 and "B" Coy will stand down temporarily at 442344.	
		0250	"D" Coy moving forward now.	
		0300	An enemy tank at this time was creating a disturbance in "A" Coy area. A Patrol from "C" Coy returned and reported buildings 434341 and 432342 clear of enemy.	
		0545	Elements of CYR are now passing through "A" Coy's posns.	
		0643	"D" Coy are now on their objective and have sent four PWs to HQ. Two-PWs have arrived from "A" Coy and one from "C" Coy. All coys involved in the night's action have made good progress with little opposition. They will now move to 448353 and "B" Coy will stand down temporarily at 442344.	
			"D" Coy will now move to 448353.	
		1045	"D" Coy have now reached 435359 and find it clear of enemy.	
		1115	"D" Coy passing 446352, have taken two PWs on the way.	
		1210	A strong patrol from "D" Coy supported by tanks have now reached 437367 and find that area clear of enemy. Three PWs arrive at TacHQ from "A" Coy.	
		1255	TacHQ moved forward and established at 442344.	
		1430	Word has just been received that Major J H Jones MC has been killed. Major Jones came to SICILY with the Unit as Signal Officer, later taking command of a platoon and while serving in this capacity won the MC.	
		2000	A total of 35 PW have been taken by this Bn to date.	
			Weather today fine and warm, night foggy with poor visibility.	<p><i>Full</i></p>

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OF

~~INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY~~

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RUSSI	15	0055	R 22e R and two coys with the RCR. Weather today foggy with light rain.	
		0620	TacHQ now moved to new location, former HQ RCR, 409389. Change-over now complete with coys in posns as follows: "A" Coy 406381, "B" Coy 402378, "C" Coy 404387, "D" Coy 404398 398388.	
		0915	This Unit has now, to within the hour, been in contact with the enemy for two weeks.	
		1150	Brig Bernatchez paid a visit to this HQ.	
		1245	A report from 5th Div states that the enemy has withdrawn to a line behind the Senio River in the ir area. Due to this report it is expected that he will withdraw from this area very shortly. It is impressed on all coy comds that they must not lose contact with the enemy. It is intended that "B" Coy will do a small attack this afternoon, H hour being 1430 hrs. Objective is houses-396383.	<i>Lab</i>
		1430	Attack opened up according to plan but met heavy opposition and had little success. No change in coy posn.	
		1900	It is now whispered that we may changeover with 2nd Bde tomorrow night. Activities at the time are limited to very active patrols both fighting and recon. Weather today clear and cold.	
BAGNACAVALLO	16	0105	Strong fighting patrols were out from "B" & "D" coys but had no success. Enemy is still thick on the ground and very alert.	
		1230	It is now quite definite that we are to relieve the Saaforth Highrs of Canada tonight. Recon parties and guides have been arranged.	
		1510	CO held an "O" Gp at which he discussed details of change-over. Until change-over is complete, elements of this Regt in 2 CIB area will be under comd 2 CIB.	
		2350	TacHQ situated new posn at 400400. Change-Over not yet complete. Weather today fair and warm.	<i>Lab</i>
	17	0320	Change-over now complete with coys in posn at: "A" Coy 394399, "B" Coy 401401, "C" Coy 394403, "D" Coy 398401.	

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

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BAGNAVAVALLO	19	0930	Patrol intentions: Two recon patrols from "C" Coy one this morning and one this afternoon. First one to recon area 390406 and the second one cross rds 394406. "A" Coy to send two recon patrols, one to area 390400 and the other to 392402. All patrols on their return confirm that enemy still occupying area to our immediate front. Weather today cloudy and cool, poor visibility.	JAB
		20	To date in the present operation this Unit has taken 70 PW.	
	1110	It is intended that "D" Coy will establish one pl in houses at 389400. H hour is set for 1215 hrs.		
	1300	"D" Coy patrol, strength one pl, was forced to withdraw from their attack on houses 389400. As they were right in on this posn one Mark VI Tiger emerged from a haystack and fired on them with MG and 88 mm. It was only due to the prompt action of tanks working with "A" Coy who laid down a very effective smoke screen the patrol was able to withdraw without suffering severe casualties. Casualties suffered were - one killed and two wounded. On the strength of this information 7.2 arty fire was brought down in area of houses. Shortly after this tanks were heard to move off. Patrol comd estimated enemy killed was four to five.	JAB	
	1700	The entire Bn has area has been under mortar and shell fire since early morning. Weather this date fine and reasonably warm.		
	21	0200	Two PW were brought in to this HQ from "C" Coy.	
		0400	"C" Coy sent out a fighting patrol to 384401. They did not contact the enemy. Remainder of coy was then moved to this area and were consolidated by 0535 hrs. "C" Coy sent a recon patrol to 378404 and reported no enemy at this point. "C" Coy posns at this time: Pls at - 38484011, 38494020 & 38584015.	
		0835	One PW sent to this HQ from "C" Coy, who came into their posns and gave himself up.	
		1110	Bde Comd informed this HQ that our rear coys can now stand down and take things a little easier. Rear Coys are "B" & "D". Own mortars are now set up at 394403, MMGs in the same area.	
	1750	Twenty rfts arrived at this HQ and were allotted to coys. Weather today overcast but no rain. Situation very quiet. It now appears that enemy has withdrawn to far side of Senio river. Total PWs taken to date - 73.	JAB	

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BAGNACAVALLO	22	0745	Bde informed this HQ that it is expected enemy may attempt a sea-borne landing in the area RIMINI - PESARO.	<i>FAB</i>	
		0750	Paymaster arrived at TacHQ and began to pay coys at 0830 hrs. He was closely followed by Auxiliary Services with EFI supplies.		
		1200	Mail has just arrived at this HQ that has been held since the Unit was committed to action.		
		1300	Reece party proceeded to 4334 to reece billets.		
		1330	Two officers and thirteen other ranks proceeded to ROME on leave. One Officer and seven other ranks proceeded to FLORENCE on leave.		
		1945	It was necessary to send another reece party to an area laid on by Bde HQ as former 4334 was not suitable. This HQ was informed that as from 0800 hrs 23 Dec 44 Bn would be on one hours notice to move. Weather today fine and warm, poor visibility towards night. All in all it was a big day for the troops. All coys were paid, there was a rum and EFI issue and all Christmas parcels were delivered.		
	23	0930	Bn moved to new area by TCVs, movement complete by 1100 hrs. Bn HQ established at 492366 with coys at - "A" Coy 494372, "B" Coy 499371, "C" Coy 494368 and "D" Coy at 484378. Weather cool and cloudy with snow flurries.		<i>FAB</i>
	24	0900	Lt col A L Saunders proceeded to ROME on leave. Major F E Hiltz assumed command of the Unit.		<i>FAB</i>
		1800	Four other ranks arrived as rfts and were allotted to coys. Weather fine and warm.		
	25	0830	A very generous EFI issue was distributed to the troops. C of E church services were held at 0900, 1000 and 1100 hrs.		<i>FAB</i>
		1230	A very fine Christmas dinner was enjoyed by all ranks of the unit.		
		1300	Nineteen other ranks arrived as rfts and were allotted to coys.		
		1600	All Coy comds are on one hours notice as from first light to proceed on tactical reece party. Remainder of Bn on three hours notice to move as from 0900 hrs 26 Dec 44. Weather this date fine and cool.		

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GRANAROLA	30	0320	"B" Coy contacted 6 Cheshires - nothing to report.	
		1050	A reconce patrol from "A" Coy proceed to area 369323 where they came under fire from rifle grenades and were forced to return. "D" Coy reconce patrol went to a point 372330 from where they observed five or six enemy in area 369330. They also observed several slit trenches that were unoccupied.	
		1215	One of the Churchill tanks under Comd of this Bn engaged the church at 354320 and the factory at 357322. The shoot was not very successful due to some in-accuracy in the gun.	
		1220	Our own 3" mortar engaged area occupied by enemy reported by "D" Coy reconce patrol. This fire was observed to fall in the exact area and should have been quite effective	
		1430	Reconce patrol from "B" Coy went out through the 6th Cheshire Regt to a point 357313. Here they came under heavy MG fire and had to return. Also at 1430 hrs a reconce patrol from "B" Coy proceeded to 361218 but could observe no enemy movement.	
		1515	"A" Coy has been under continuous shell fire all afternoon. Several direct hits being made on the houses they occupy. Artillery engaged suspected enemy mortar and gun posns, how effectively is uncertain because the fall of shot could not be observed.	
		1725	Nine rfts arrived at this HQ and were allotted to coys.	
		1800	A reconce patrol from "D" Coy proceed out through their left forward post to a point 371329, at this point they were engaged by rifle fire but could not pinpoint any posns. They did not return the fire and suffered no casualties.	<i>File</i>
		1945	"B" & "D" Coys have now changed over.	
		2040	"C" & "A" Coys have now changed over. This change-over is to give "A" & "D" Coys a much needed rest.	
		2100	A reconce patrol from "D" Coy went out through through left pl posn to a point 37243300 from here they could distinguish enemy voices to their front. Patrol remained in this area for twenty minutes and was not fired on. They returned by same route.	
		2200	"A" Coy reconce patrol went out through right pl posn across country to a point 36853250 Here they had two hand grenades thrown at them from an unknown posn. Except for this incident no movement was seen or heard and the patrol returned by same route.	
		2215	Another reconce patrol from "D" Coy went out through their left forward pl posn to a point 372433. It was definitely ^{determined} that enemy was still occupying the area 3733. They came back by the same route and were not fired on.	
		2320	A reconce patrol went out from "A" Coy through their right pl posn 372323 and reached a point 36853251. They were engaged with hand grenades but could see no movement.	

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GRANAROLA	30		They returned by the same route. Today Major F E Hiltz was officially appointed to Command the West NSR with the rank of Lt col, Lt col A L Saunders having ceased to Command with effect 29 Dec 44. Weather today clear and cold.	
	31	0130	A recone patrol from "B" Coy went out through the left forward pl of 6 Cheshires to a point 362314 where they were engaged by enemy MG fire. They ascertained that the enemy was still holding 362318. They also found that the enemy were harassing area from 364315 to bridge 362318 by MG fire.	
		0405	At this time this morning "C" Coy missed a golden opportunity of procuring prisoners without going after them. An enemy patrol, four men strong, came to within 20 yards of their sentries posn. The sentry pressed the trigger of his Bren and nothing happened - the Gun had jammed! The enemy patrol fired on the posn and beat a hasty retreat, making a clean getaway.	
		1430	Lt J O Jordan and Lt A O MacKenzie are attending a short course on counter battery work at Bde.	
			Lt col F E Hiltz left this afternoon for RAVENNA to attend a Corps Comds meeting.	
		1700	All together today there were six recone patrols sallied forth into no mans land to check on the enemy. It was determined that the enemy was still very much on the belligerent side and most reluctant to give up his positions. There were no casualties suffered on these patrols.	fab
		1815	"D" Coy are now in a new position, locations as follows : Coy HQ 38153253, Pls at - 38153253, 38003242 and 38203275.	
		2120	A recone patrol from "B" Coy went out through pl posn 37703313 to a point on the canal at 37153320. They could hear a great deal of activity across the canal at 37103331 music, singing, vehicular movement, etc.. It sounded as though New Year's celebrations were in full swing. Patrol returned by the same route. Due to this report the area 371333 was engaged by arty, 4.2 & 3" Mortars and MMG.	
		2230	A recone patrol from "D" Coy proceeded out through forward pl of 6 Cheshires 365315 to a point 364318. They could hear enemy activity at houses 362318 also from across canal from a point 367325. It was a bright moonlight night and they observed a strong enemy patrol 15 to 20 in strength coming in their direction. Our patrol withdrew back to the 6 Cheshire posn and notified the Pl Comd of that Bn which directed mortar and arty on the enemy patrol and dispersed it. Our own patrol then returned.	

