

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.

Title pages will be prepared.

WAR DIARY

OR

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

(Erase heading not required)
1st Bn The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada

M.F.M.-11
40/P & S/37 (3072)

Original, duplicate and triplicate forwarded to O. i/o 2nd Echelon for

| Place | Date | Hour | Summary of Events and Information | Remarks, references to Appendices and initials |
|-------|-------|------|--|--|
| | 1 Oct | | Reveille - Cloudy and cool. Rear BHQ moved up to forward BHQ at chateau at 916765 le Beau-Marais. 0930 "A" Coy moved forward from Fort Vert to the town of COURGAIN, meeting no enemy opposition. 1110 "A" Coy moved forward again into the centre of Calais where they contacted patrol of R.W.R's who informed them that the city had fallen at 0900 hrs. | 786 |
| | 2 Oct | | Reveille - Wet and cool 0950 Bn left present area around le Beau Marais in square 9176 and proceeded from there along the main road to GRAVELINES. From GRAVELINES turned south and proceeded along secondary road running along the MARAICK CANAL and the MEUTSTROOM RIVER to la RECOUSSES, where we picked up "A" ECH. Turned south east and travelled along main road ST. OMER Road for about 2 miles and then turned East and proceeded to WATTEN. From Watten took secondary road running N.E. along the COLME CANAL to LOOBERGHE. Turned S.E. and proceeded to L'ERKELSBRUGGE, took the main highway running N.E. TO ZEGERS-CAPPEL, turned east and travelled to WORMHOUT, turned south and travelled along the main highway to CASSEL, turned east and proceeded to TERDEGHEM where we arrived at 1600 hrs. BnHQ set up in Chateau at 331572. Coys proceeded to allotted areas around TERDEGHEM. "A" Coy at 339569, "B" Coy at 341567, "C" Coy at 345565, "D" Coy at 342572 and "Sp" Coy at 353568. The people in this area don't seem any too friendly, and were reluctant to let the men use their buildings to sleep in. At our present location we are a little over four miles from the Belgian border. We lost two men at le Beau-Marais before we left there. The first one was Rfn Beaver who was killed when the carrier he was driving hit one of the posts on the corner of a road block turning it over. The second man was Rfn Bennett of the Pioneers. They had uncovered two Jerry improvised mines made of Arty shells. An English officer came up and started fooling around with the mines, after being told to leave them alone, setting them off and killing both himself and Rfn Bennett. | <div> <div>Maps</div> <div> <div>ARDRES 1</div> <div>POPERINGHE 2</div> <div>HAZEBROUCK 3</div> </div> </div> <div> <div>Int Summary -</div> <div>#45 - Appx 4</div> </div> <div>786</div> |



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Reference number/no de référence: R G 24 V.15169

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| | 3 Oct | | Reveille - Wet and cool | |
| | | 0900 | Call from Brigade to pick up air photos and new maps of Belgium and Holland. | 786 |
| | | 0915 | Maps arrived from Bde and were sorted out for distribution to the Coys. | 786 |
| | | 1300 | Intelligence Summary No 44 arrived from Bde | 786 |
| | | 1900 | Coy Commanders meeting to discuss new operations and the general situation. The men have enjoyed the little rest we are getting here even though the weather has been pretty miserable. Mr Monahan of the K of C War Services put on three shows daily in a Cafe, beside the church in the village, the picture was "Andy Hardy's Blonde Trouble". | 786 |
| | 4 Oct | | Reveille - Wet and cool. | |
| | | 0930 | Air-photos received from Bde concerning new area of operations. | |
| | | 1100 | Route trace and movement order received. | |
| | | 1200 | "O" Group | |
| | | 1330 | Bn vehicles ready to move off to new Bde area between URSEL and OOSTWINKEL. | 786 |
| | | 1350 | Bn started to move from present area at TERDEGHEM by TCVs for the long haul to KRUIPUIT, the new Bn area. Passed through STEENVOORDE on our way to the Belgian border, which we crossed at 1515 hrs. | |
| | | 1530 | Passed through POPERINGHE which is a fair sized city and got our first real look at the architecture in Belgium. Things seem fairly prosperous here as the stores seemed to be well stocked. There was plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables and the heavy Dutch brown bread. We also saw electric irons, stoves, bicycles and plenty of furniture, although we heard that most of this stuff was pretty high in price and had to be obtained on the black market. There was little evidence of any war damage and everything seemed fairly normal. There is quite a difference here to what we saw in France. The country is much cleaner and the buildings are quite modern, in fact the whole thing reminds one of Ontario more than anything we've seen so far. There was both electric and steam railways operating between here and YPRES, where we arrived at 1550 hrs. We proceeded N.E. from here passing through the city of ROULERS and from there to PITTHEM and THIELT. Still travelling N.E. we crossed the GHENT CANAL at 1800 hrs and proceeded from there through URSEL to KRUIPUIT, our destination, where we arrived at 1850 hrs. | 786 |
| | | 1930 | BnHQ set up in house at 050925. The Coys took up positions at "Sp" Coy 037923, "A" Coy 060935, "B" Coy 060934, "C" Coy 057932, "D" Coy 047924 | 786 |



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| Place | Date | Hour | Summary of Events and Information | Remarks, references to Appendices and initials |
|----------|-------|------|---|--|
| ERUIPUIT | 5 Oct | | Trace Conc Area Op SWITCHBACK | Appx 5 |
| | | | Code words for Op SWITCHBACK | " 6 |
| | | | Op and Maintenance Routes | " 7 |
| | | | Map ZEEBRUGGE - BRUGES | " 8 |
| | | | Trace "P" SWITCHBACK | " 9 |
| | | | Int Summary 4 Oct 44 | " 10 |
| | | | Map - GHENT 1/100,000 | " 11 |
| | | | Map - ZEEBRUGGE - BRUGES | " 12 |
| | | | Reveille - Clear and cool. | |
| | | 0930 | Maps and aerial photos for new operations issued to Coys | |
| | | 1120 | New defence overprints and aerial photos received from Brigade. | |
| | | 1130 | We have six new vehicles in the battalion to-day, which we have never seen or heard of before. These new vehicles are called "WEASELS" and at first appearance look like a small carrier. Actually they are an amphibious CARRIER. They are equipped normally with a No 19 wireless set and a signal spot light, and will carry 4 men and their equipment. "A" Coy Commander Major Medland on receiving his was just like a boy with a new toy and wanted to try it out, and was last seen heading down the road a mile a minute. | |
| | 6 Oct | 1900 | "O" Group | |
| | | 1930 | Coy Commanders meeting. | |
| | | | Plans were laid at this meeting for our part in the operation "SWITCHBACK", but had to be cancelled as the bridgehead across the LEOPOLD CANAL hadn't been enlarged enough. | |
| | | | Reveille - clear and bright. | |
| | | 0800 | Projected move has been cancelled so we expect to stay in our present area for a couple more days. Coys are spending time cleaning and repairing equipment. The people here seem quite friendly and although we have heard rumours that about 60% of them are pro Nazi we have seen no evidence of this. | |
| | | 1700 | We had a very good meal to-night with plenty of fresh vegetables. We actually had corn on the cob and along with this fresh tomatoes and some of the finest grapes we have ever seen. The men in the Bn are being allowed the freedom of the town to-night and seeing as there are three pubs in the place which have a good supply of Belgian beer, which is the nearest thing to Canadian beer that we have seen yet, the boys - | |
| | | 1900 | Coy Commander's meeting. | |
| | | | should have a good time. | |



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| | | | O.O. #21 Op "SWITCHBACK" Arty task Table Op "SWITCHBACK" | Appx 13 " 14 |
| | 7 Oct | | Reveille - Clear and bright. | |
| | | 0800 | The situation on our front along the LEOPOLD CANAL is practically unchanged. The enemy has been sending out patrols in some force and has infiltrated through the lines on several occasions. Our C.O., Lt-col S.M. Lett gave some of our new reinforcements a pep talk and told them how proud they should be to be in Canada's finest fighting Regiment. "A" Coy are still looking for their Coy Commander, Major Medland. When last seen he was sitting in his new Weasel looking at the boys through the hedgerows. | JSG |
| | | 1900 | Coy Commander's meeting. Typhoon Targets - Op "SWITCHBACK" | JSG Appx 15 |
| | 8 Oct | | Reveille - Cloudy and cool. | |
| | | 0800 | The situation up front hasn't improved in any way so we are still sitting in the area around KROIPUIT waiting for things to break. The men are a little disappointed that they can no longer spend their French money in Belgium. Some of the boys have accumulated quite a bit, and unless they can dispose of it soon, they can take it home with them to paper their bedrooms. The paymaster put in a rare visit and changed the French notes (up to a limited amount) into the local currency. | JSG |
| | | 1645 | Additional air-photos received from Bde, covering the area between the LEOPOLD CANAL and the SCHELDT ESTUARY. Intelligence Summary | JSG Appx 16 |
| | 9 Oct | | Reveille - Cloudy and cool. | |
| | | 0800 | Situation along the LEOPOLD CANAL is still unchanged. Coys carrying out normal routine. The men are in very good spirits and are enjoying their rest in this area. | JSG |
| | | 1600 | Company commander's meeting. | JSG |
| | | 2000 | "A" Coy were fortunate as they were able to get to the mobile showers and get a good hot bath. Coy Commander's meeting to discuss new plans for projected move to-morrow. The men are still being allowed the freedom of the town and are enjoying the local brew very much | JSG |



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3/19A MPM 11
40/P&S/37 (5028)

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|-------|--------|------|--|--|
| | | 1715 | Arrived at areas allotted and Jerry immediately started to lay down a mortar barrage, making things pretty hot in the bridgehead area. BnHQ set up at 178152 and Coys at, "A" 175150, "B" 184149, "C" 176153, and "D" 183154. Major Cottrill wounded and one jeep damaged by mortar fire was all our casualties. | JLB |
| | 13 Oct | | Reveille - Bright and clear. Considerable action going on all night. | |
| | | 0845 | Jerry started mortaring. | JLB |
| | | 0900 | Adv BHQ was set up in BIERVLIET 18051108 | JLB |
| | | 1200 | A Spitfire chased a Focke-Wulfe right over town and while firing at him managed to strafe the main street. However there was no casualties. Present locations of Coys, "A" 177107, "B" 181111, "C" 181112, "D" 178110. Typhoons were in action and did plenty of damage, including two houses, which by the explosions, we figured were ammunition dumps. Some prisoners taken. Arty Task table and trace Erase for Arty task table 11 Oct. Adm Order Op "SWITCHBACK" Int Summary (13 Oct) Arty task table and trace | JLB Appx 22 " 24 " 25 " 26 ✓ |
| | 14 Oct | | Reveille - Bright and clear. | |
| | | 0900 | A few more prisoners brought in. | JLB |
| | | 1030 | German Arty, landed a few heavy ones in town. Casualties was confined to the Sigs jeep, damaged. "Tiffy's" were active all day and there were some medium bombers. At one time the "Tiffy's" got a little off the beam and we had to get under cover. | JLB |
| | | 1930 | Left our present posn. | |
| | | 2030 | Set up BHQ at farm 17950710. | |
| | | 2100 | C.O. and I.O. went to "O" Gp at Bde. Intelligence Summary Intelligence Summary (#48) | " 27 " 28 |
| | 15 Oct | | Reveille - Bright and clear. | |
| | | 0900 | C.O., I.O., Scout Officer and Sigs Officer went on Recce. Several chickens were liberated this morning, they tasted pretty good. | JLB |
| | | 1600 | The remainder of "F" Ech came back from "A" Ech. They managed to get a shower while there. Also were inspected by two girls to find out who had robbed them. Needless to say BHQ were not picked out as culprits. | JLB |



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|-------|--------|------|---|--|
| | | 1600 | Lots of vehicles and M 10's are rolling in now that the roads are cleared. | |
| | 16 Oct | | Reveille - Cloudy and wet. Quite a few prisoners, all types, sizes and ages. A few of our casualties have been brought in for treatment. | |
| | | 1200 | The coys had reached their objectives by this time with "A" Coy at 144106, "B" 141088, "C" 147093 "D" 147107 and Advance BHQ at 158087. IJZENDIJE was well defended but "A" & "B" Coys still kept on with their advance. | |
| | | 1900 | "A" & "B" consolidated on either side of the town. Many prisoners and we had some casualties. "A" Coy were fired on by M 10's until they were informed that they were firing on their friends. Lt King of "A" Coy got some Jerry shrapnel in the back and Rfn Sawka also of "A" had his leg blown off by what was probably a 105. | |
| | | | Intelligence Summary | Appx 29 |
| | 17 Oct | | Reveille - Cloudy and wet. | |
| | | 0900 | The attack on IJZENDIJE was resumed. "D" was the first into town and Jerry had moved on. | |
| | | 1500 | Rest of Bn went in. We were greeted by civilians fresh from their cellars who all wanted to shake our hands, feed us and to see the "Kanadeesh" or some such name. However Jerry whistled a few shells in and we had a magical disappearing act. The shelling started large fires in town. 15 pl attempted to go through town but were stopped on the outskirts by heavy mortar fire. | |
| | | | Intelligence Summary | Appx 30 |
| | 18 Oct | | Reveille - Cloudy and cool. | |
| | | 0830 | "C" Coy went out towards the position from which they had been mortared the previous night. On arriving, all they found was six very forlorn Germans who were only too willing to surrender. We used them to peel potatoes back at rear BHQ. The Jerry's are very good at that job. They peel very fine, not like our boys, who just cut the peel off. | |
| | | 1530 | "A" & "C" Coy moved on toward TURKEIJE and took up positions between the two towns. Plenty of mortar and other stuff sent over by Jerry. | |
| | | | Intelligence Summary #49 | Appx 31 |
| | 19 Oct | | Reveille - rain with high winds. | |
| | | 0800 | Coy Commanders meeting at BHQ. Good news for the boys. 48 hr leaves to Brussels are starting. It will be nice to have a couple of nights between sheets again. Its been a long time without a leave. | |

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|-------|--------|------|--|--|
| | 20 Oct | | Reveille rain with high wind. During the night a German army cook walked into a house occupied by D Coy. Quite a lot of excitement trying to figure out how he got in. | |
| | | 0930 | First batch of men for 48 hr leaves left for "A" Ech, 2 officers and 18 OR's. We all hope they enjoy themselves. | 786 |
| | | 1000 | Adv BHQ set up in STEENHOVEN 076113. The coys are set up in front on the road to OOSTBURG which is one of the Jerry's main points of resistance in this pocket. | 786 |
| | 21 Oct | | Reveille - Misty and cool. There was occasional shellfire during the night. | |
| | | 1545 | We had a grandstand view of Typhoons giving SCHOONDIJKE a going over. This is one of the places that gives us plenty of trouble. | 786 |
| | | 1630 | "B" Coy went back as they were stopped by mines. After these had been looked after they went forward but had to consolidate 500 yds short of their objective. | 786 |
| | 22 Oct | | Reveille - Misty and cool. | |
| | | 0815 | Bn O Gp at 0815. During the morning some of our 5.5's dropped a few hots, this made us realize as never before that this is a war of movement. He who moves the fastest, lives the longest. | 786 |
| | | 1730 | "C" Coy moved up in support of "B" Coy who were being considerably annoyed by Jerry. During the move, "C" Coy jeep hit a mine. The jeep was a total wreck but the driver, Rfn Hayes, fortunately was not wounded badly. During the night a patrol of Jerry's got around "A" Coy's positions but were shot up by 13 pl. | 786 |
| | | | Intelligence Summary | Appx 32 |
| | | | Intelligence Summary | " 33 |
| | | | Trace for OO #23 | " 34 |
| | | | Intelligence Summary (Oct 22) | " 35 |
| | | | Intelligence Summary | " 36 |
| | | | Intelligence Summary | " 37 |

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| | 23 Oct | | <p>Reveille - Cloudy and cool.</p> <p>0930 RAP moved from IJZENDIJKE to WATERLANDKERKSIE.</p> <p>0300 Another quota left for "A" Ech to go on 48 hr leave. Officers can go either to ANTWERP or BRUSSELS. The I.O. decided to go to the former.</p> <p>1600 A fighting patrol from "C" Coy attempted to go along road to OOSTBURG. They met with a hot reception and had to retire. No casualties but they did manage to bring back one P.W.</p> <p>1900 Bn C Gp. "C" Coy won draw to go to Canadian Army show in EKKLOO next day. 23 men to go. Op "SWITCHBACK"</p> | <p>Appx 38</p> |
| | 24 Oct | | <p>Reveille - Cloudy and cool.</p> <p>1030 Fighting patrol from "C" Coy went out again toward OOSTBURG but met with another hot reception. Had six casualties, none very bad. The first men returned from 48 hr leaves in BRUSSELS. Everybody had a great time. All day in IJZENDIJKE, the civilians were repairing damage done. Its going to be some job.</p> <p>1300 Some of the Queen's Own went to IIKLOO to see the Canadian Army Show.</p> | <p>Appx 39</p> |
| | 25 Oct | | <p>Reveille - Cloudy and cool</p> <p>0600 "C" Coy moved forward and relieved one coy of R de Chaud.</p> <p>1315 "A" Coy started forward with "D" to attack OOSTBURG. One of the Flame throwers with "A" Coy struck a mine and the two men in it were killed. A heavy smoke screen was put down to assist the attack on the open road into the town. The houses on the outskirts were soon taken. No 8 platoon made a wild bayonet charge to gain as their objective the first crossroads in town.</p> <p>1900 Tactical BHQ set up in dugout at 04151070. With relatively slight opposition the rest of the coys all got on their objectives in town. There was some heavy mortaring and few shells came from FLUSHING. Our casualties were fairly heavy. R.A.P. moved from IJZENDIJKE to WATERLANDKERKJE.</p> <p>Intelligence Summary</p> | <p>Appx 39</p> |
| | 26 Oct | | <p>Reveille - misty and cool.</p> <p>0615 "O" Gp. Plans were laid for the continuation of operations in the OOSTBURG area.</p> <p>0745 Recce car from 7 Recce ran over two mines about 20 yds from BHQ. Killed the commander.</p> <p>0820 M 10's started lacing buildings NORTH of our present positions, at point blank range to clear out any enemy prior to "B" and "C" Coys advance to clean out other end of town.</p> <p>1000 BnHQ set up at 04021125, "A" Coy 040111, "B" 040113, "C" 045117, "D" 039117, Mortars and Carriers 063112.</p> <p>2000 "O" Gp. The day's work satisfactory.</p> | |



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|-------|--------|------|--|--|
| | | | Op Instr #25 Trace 00 #25 | Appx 40 Appx 41 |
| | 27 Oct | | Reveille - Cloudy and cool with fair wind. | |
| | | 1515 | One P.O.W. from 301 FLAK bn. brought in by "D" Coy. He had been left behind to listen for "Panzer-wagens" and had been cut off. He produced a mouth organ and gave us an organ recital which was quite good but fate in the shape of Bde PW Cage at last took him from us. | 786 |
| | | 1600 | "A" Coy moved ahead | 786 |
| | | 1800 | 24 PW's brought in by "A" Coy and 29 by "B" | 786 |
| | | 2000 | 0 Gp at Bde. | |
| | | 2330 | 0 Gp at BnHQ. Our arty and mortars were busy all night. | |
| | | | Intelligence Summary | Appx 42 |
| | 28 Oct | | Reveille - Clear and cool. | |
| | | | With the first clear day for a while we got lots of air support. Typhoons started out early and made things pretty hot for Jerry. According to PW's they are a great morale breaker as well as doing a lot of damage. | 786 |
| | | 0900 | Coys started bringing in PW's and by noon we had 46 including 1 officer. | 786 |
| | | 1300 | Some Jerry Arty shells landed in town. Some damage but no casualties. | 786 |
| | | 1800 | Total bag of PW's to-day is 129 including 2 officers. | 786 |
| | | | Intelligence Summary | Appx 43 |
| | 29 Oct | | Reveille - Cloudy and cool | |
| | | | BnHQ at 016133 in town of ZUIDZANDE. A Coy 010140, "B" 003137 "C" 994131, "D" 00601315. It was a day spent moving into these positions with very slight opposition. The bn moved on to RETRANCHMENT overlooking the VITWATERINGS canal. A number of Jerrys surrendered and we rounded up some more in the cellars of the town. | |
| | | 1900 | "B" Coy moved to 002137. | 786 |
| | | | Information from civilians was that the enemy had withdrawn the previous day in the direction of TERHOFSTEDT, due WEST of us. | |
| | | | Intelligence Summary | |
| | | | Op SLUIS | |
| | | | Intelligence Summary | Appx 44 |
| | | | Complete set 1/25,000 maps for Op "SWITCHBACK" | " 45 " 46 " 47 |



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|-------|--------|------|---|--|
| | 30 Oct | | Reveille - Cloudy and cold A day starting with early morning moves. 0130 Tac BnHQ went to 994131. 0200 "C" Coy at 97401383 and "D" 97501385 0300 "A" Coy at 994144, "B" 985144 and "G" 97151430 1400 Royal Winnipeg Rifles passed through our positions. We had some shelling during the day, but no casualties. Though we lost Major Medland of "A" Coy through sickness. Lt Pond 2 i/c of the coy took over. 1630 "B" Coy took up position at 971343. Coming under very heavy mortar fire. Out six pdrs returned fire and knocked out a haystack which was actually a camouflaged blockhouse. | 786 786 786 786 |
| | 31 Oct | 0200 | Reveille - Cloudy and cool. Forward formations of the 9th Bde started to move through us in the first phase of crossing the canal. For us it was a day spent in preparation for what we all hope will be the end of the SCHELDE pocket. From information received, and our own observations, we feel sure that the enemy here have just about had enough. The PW's that have come in lately have not been of the same calibre as before. Even the Paratroops we have taken seem to have lost their old arrogance. | 786 |

(S M LEFT)

Lt-col

Comd 1st Bn The Q O R of G



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