

WAR DIARIES

When Kept

A war diary is kept by every unit (e.g. an infantry regiment) or formation headquarters (e.g. a Divisional HQ) from the time it is mobilized for war until it is demobilized, reduced to nil strength or for some other reason such as amalgamation, ceases to exist.

What It Is

The war diary is a record of what is happening within the unit. It reflects occurrences of major consequence--unit roles, moves, strength, training syllabus, recreational activities, special events, inspections, casualties, after action reports--as will provide a later factual account of what the unit was doing at any given time.

How Kept

The adjutant or the intelligence officer, within an infantry battalion, is the individual usually responsible for keeping the war diary.

Contents

The contents of any war diary are probably a combined reflection of the interest, initiative and time available to the officer keeping it, and the interest taken in the diary by the Commanding Officer who reviewed it and signed it before sending it back to superior headquarters. Contents of the diary, beyond the daily descriptive entries, could be anything from copies of unit and company training syllabi, copies of written operation, movement orders, marked maps, patrol reports, intelligence reports coming to the unit or originating within it and so on. The occasional copy of unit Part I orders will be included as well.

Present Location

War diaries for all units and formations are in the Public Archives, Ottawa.

Contents of This Extract

This volume contains photostatic reproductions only of the daily entry sheets. Copies were not made of any reports, maps or appendices filed with the diary.


J. F. Doig
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