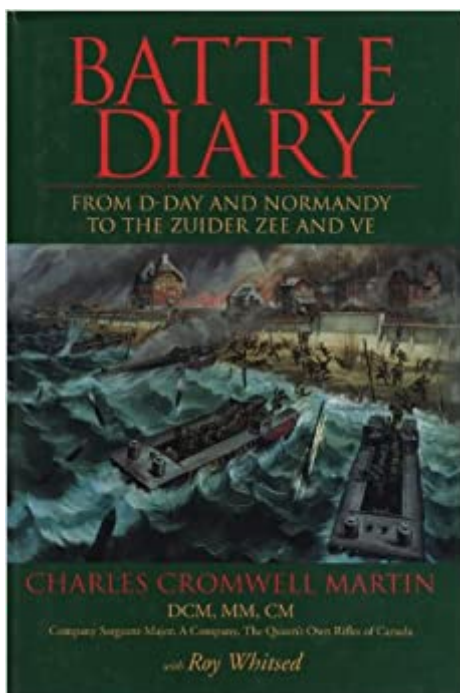


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# Battle Diary: From D-Day And Normandy To The Zuider Zee And VE



## Synopsis

A fast-paced account by a soldier who was twice decorated. Charlie Martin, company sergeant-major in the Queen's Own, was with his beloved A Company in all of the significant Normandy actions.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

As well as being an absorbing read, *Battle Diary* is an important book • important because it concerns a critical period in our country's history. (Barnett J. Danson Minister of National Defence)

Charles Cromwell Martin became at twenty-four one of the youngest company sergeant-majors in the history of the Queen's Own, Canada's historic rifle regiment. In the D-Day invasion, his landing craft was among the first of 4,123 to hit the beaches of Normandy. Charlie has lived, very happily, with his war bride Vi, working for the Department of Agriculture, raising a family.

The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada originally formed up on April 26, 1860 as the 2nd Battalion, Volunteer Militia Rifles of Canada, some seven years before Confederation, thereby making the Toronto-based unit the longest serving infantry regiment in the nation. Their first combat on foreign soil came during the Boer conflict in South Africa, and while no militia infantry regiments were mobilized and brought into action in World War I, a fair number of volunteers from the regiment did transfer to the 3rd Canadian Battalion (Toronto Regiment) of the 1st Canadian Division. In WW II they were shipped to England in 1941 but their first taste of action (other than a sprinkling serving in

the Pacific theatre) did not come until D-Day on June 6, 1944 when they came ashore at NAN sector of the Canadian target of Juno Beach, where they were instrumental in the taking of the strategic seaside town of BerniÃres-sur-Mer. On that day the regiment suffered the highest casualties of the Canadian regiments participating: 143 killed, wounded or captured (total Canadian casualties that day were 340 dead, 574 wounded, and another 47 taken prisoner. Throughout the rest of the war, as they fought into Northern France, then the Low Countries (Belgium and Holland), freeing up desperately-needed channel ports along the way, including Antwerp, they lost 463 killed in action and close to 900 wounded. Meanwhile, some 60 more of their brethren were killed as parts of other Canadian formations fighting in Hong Kong and Italy. Here, A Company Sergeant-Major Charles Cromwell Martin provides a vivid account of their various confrontations with the enemy, complete with many often graphic photos along with action maps and illustrations, personal letter reproductions, and lists of names of the regiment's rank and file, including those awarded various honours. Highly recommended.

In this book, Sergeant-Major Charles Cromwell recounts his own first-hand experiences of the Canadian arms of the D-Day landings. Like the hit movie "Saving Private Ryan", this book is told in vivid, easy to understand - "readable" english. Here he vividly recreates the horrors of the landings, and how these (like the American landing at Ohmaha), went wrong. He then takes us past the landings and on a journey through the next few months. He takes us through the sweep into France and through the push into Germany. It's a true story of "how men became veterans who had to learn fast at the 'point' or they were gone." Because these horrors happened - that alone is reason enough that books like these must be read so that we may be even more thankful for the freedoms we share today.

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