

APPENDIX "A"

SPECIAL NOTICE

Message of Congratulation from  
Comd Eighth Army

1. The following message has been received from Lt-Gen Sir Oliver Leese, Bt KCB CBE DCO, Comd Eighth Army, and is passed for the info of all tps under comd:

"GOC 5 Cdn Armcd Div

I feel I would like to write you this short letter, conveying my thanks and congratulations to you and your Division on the successful outcome of your first fight as a Division.

To you was given the arduous task to exploit the break of the 1st Canadian Division through the ADCLE HITLER LINE and continue toe pursuit. Owing to physical difficulties, it was particularly difficult for you to pass your Division quickly through the bottle-neck of the breach in the HITLER LINE. That you accomplished this task is to the credit of you all.

You then advanced with great dash to the MELFA LINE, where brilliant actions were fought; in particular by the Governor General's Horse Guards, Strathcona's Horse, and the Westminister Regt. After that you had considerable fighting with your infantry brigade, culminating in the passage by swimming and boating, under fire, by the Irish Regiment of Canada and the Perth Regiment, at Ceprano.

I congratulate you particularly on the work of your infantry, tanks, and sappers. I am very proud to have the 5th Canadian Armoured Division in the Eighth Army; and I have learned in this battle how greatly I can rely on you in the future.

I would be glad if you would convey my grateful thanks and best wishes for the future to all ranks in your division.

(sgd) (Oliver Leese) Lt-Gen  
Comd Eighth Army"

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## Soldiers of the Allied Armies in Italy

Throughout the past winter you have fought hard and valiantly and killed many Germans. Perhaps you are disappointed that we have not been able to advance faster and farther, but I and those who know, realize full well how magnificently you have fought amongst these almost insurmountable obstacles of rocky, trackless mountains, deep in snow, and in valleys blocked by rivers and mud, against a stubborn foe.

The results of these past months may not appear spectacular, but you have drawn into Italy and mauled many of the enemy's best divisions which he badly needed to stem the advance of the Russian Armies in the East. Hitler has admitted that his defeats in the East were largely due to the bitterness of the fighting and his losses in Italy. This, in itself, is a great achievement and you may well be as proud of yourselves as I am of you. You have gained the admiration of the world and the gratitude of our Russian Allies.

Today the bad times are behind us and tomorrow we can see victory ahead. Under the ever increasing blows of the air forces of the United Nations, which are mounting every day in intensity, the German war machine is beginning to crumble. The Allied armed forces are now assembling for the final battles on sea, on land, and in the air to crush the enemy once and for all. From the East and the West, from the North and the South, blows are about to fall which will result in the final destruction of the Nazis and bring freedom once again to Europe, and hasten peace for us all. To us in Italy, has been given the honour to strike the first blow.

We are going to destroy the German Armies in Italy. The fighting will be hard, bitter, and perhaps long, but you are warriors and soldiers of the highest order, who for more than a year have known only victory. You have courage, determination and skill. You will be supported by overwhelming air forces, and in guns and tanks we far outnumber the Germans. No Armies have ever entered battle before with a more just and righteous cause.

So with God's help and blessing, we take the field—confident of victory.

War Diaries  
Ser 107  
Appx 2  
MAY 1944

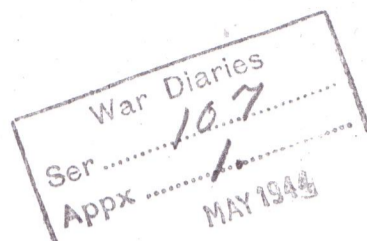
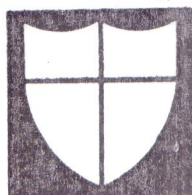
*H.R. Alexander*

General,  
Commander-in-Chief,  
Allied Armies in Italy

May, 1944

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# Personal Message from the Army Commander

Great events lie ahead of us. All round Hitler's Germany, the Allies are closing in: on the East, the victorious Russians drive on — in the West, the British and American Armies are massed to invade.

— Now in the South, the Eighth and Fifth Armies are about to strike.

Side by side with our French and American Allies, we will break through the enemy's winter line and start our great advance Northwards. Our plan is worked out in every detail — we attack in great strength, with large numbers of tanks and guns, supported by a powerful American Air Force and our own Desert Air Force.

The peoples of the United Nations will be watching the Eighth Army. Let us live up to our great traditions and give them news of fresh achievements — great news such as they expect from this Army.

We welcome gladly to our ranks those Divisions whose first fight this is with the Eighth Army. We send a special message to our Polish Corps, now battling beside us to regain its beloved country.

I say to you all — Into action, with the light of battle in your eyes. Let every man do his duty throughout the fight and the Day is ours!

Good Luck and God Speed to each one of you!

*Oliver Keese*

—  
Lieut.-General. 

ITALY,  
MAY, 1944.