WEST NOVA SCOTIA REGIMENT

WWII WAR DIARY

Place

Date

Time

Entry

WOLDINGHAM, SURREY

1 Jul 41

1030

The CO and Adj visited the Guards Depot when the King presented colours to the Carleton & York and Edmonton Regts.

1100

About 500 of the personnel of the Regt crossed SP for Redhill to attend 1 Cdn Div Track and Field Championships. When the final heat was run, 3 CIB finished in second place. CSM Shaffner took 2nd place in the 100X dash. L/Cpl Falls won 3rd place in the Shot-Put. Pte Hutchins was 2nd in the 3 mile run. Pte Letourneau was 3rd in the 440X while our Tug-of-War team got 3rd place. The 440 relay was won by West NSR and was composed of the following: Lieut Day, CSM Shaffner, Pte Campbell, and L/Cpl Butler. His Majesty, the King, was present, together with Lt-Gen McNaughton, Maj-Gen Pearkes and several Brigadiers and Lt-Cols.

2000

Brig and Officers of 3 CIB held a dance at TINNEVELLY. Lieut Millard represented this Regiment.

WOLDINGHAM, SURREY

2 Jul 41

0800

Coys carry on according to syllabus.

1000

CO visited Biggin Hill where work is being done in preparation for our impending move to that area.

2000

Moving pictures at Warlingham Hospital tonight. The usual number from various Coys attending.

WOLDINGHAM, SURREY

3 Jul 41

0800

Coys carry on according to syllabus.

1600

CO and all Officers attended a lecture on Crete in the Market Hall at Redhill. This was by an Officer from the Armoured Bde who had been in Libya.

WOLDINGHAM, SURREY

4 Jul 41

0800

Coys carry on re syllabus. Later in the morning a work party proceeded to Biggin Hill.

1000

CO visited Biggin Hill.

2000

The usual weekly dance was held at the YMCA. West NSR dance band was in attendance. Officers 34 - Other Ranks 740.

WOLDINGHAM, SURREY

5 Jul 41

0800

Work party to Biggin Hill.

1000

CO and IO visited Biggin Hill area. After a thorough inspection of the work being done, the CO voiced his approval.

2030

A dance was held at “Broadlands,” WARLINGHAM, for the Officers of the Unit. A most enjoyable time was had by all who attended. The proceeds from this dance were handed to the Lord Lieutenants Fund.

WOLDINGHAM, SURREY

6 Jul 41

0900

Lt-Col Ernst proceeded to the Polytechnic School in Croydon and inspected the various classes being held there.

1000

Usual Church Parades.

WOLDINGHAM, SURREY

7 Jul 41

0800

Work parties to Biggin Hill.

1000

CO proceeded to Biggin Hill to inspect operations with re to impending move of Regt to that area.

1500

Bn HQ moved off to Xrd EAST of “C” Coy area to witness a paratroop demonstration which was supposed to be held in vicinity of Oxted. After waiting at Xrds for a considerable time, Bn HQ moved off with HQ “Coy”. No person seemed to know just where the demonstration was supposed to be put on, so the “Coys” marched down lime works hill in jackets plus skeleton equipment. When the “Coys” arrived at the bottom, there were no guides so proceed further. In the meantime the show was put on about two miles away, and the “Coys” had a tough eight mile march in the broiling sun for what?

BIGGIN HILL[, KENT]

0800

Regiment preparing to move to Biggin Hill.

1600

Bn HQ moved off for Biggin Hill and were fairly well settled by 2000 hrs under canvas. There is splendid cover in this area for all “Coys” and the CO seemed quite pleased with the whole picture.

2000

Coy orderly rooms have eventually been set up in marquees.

BIGGIN HILL

9 Jul 41

0800

Coys are working hard getting settled.

1400

Order came through to the effect that the Regt will be CB as from 1800 hrs.

1400

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1800

Paratroop exercise commenced. OP established at WINDMILL on main rd and one on the roof of the “palace” and referred to as OP No’s I and II.

2200

Two “enemy” tp carriers passed over Bn area travelling in a WESTERLY direction.

2205

Report from 3 Fd RCA papa tps dropping at 84658285, at the same time a report from OP No II to the effect that 17 paratps were dropped in the above area.

2216

Airport reports that 16 more paratps were dropped in the above mentioned area and “C” Coy was ordered to deal with the situation.

2348

“C” Coy are on the main rd and preparing to attack HIGH HOUSE where paratps are supposed to be hidden.

0100

There seems to have been some difficulty in contacting “A” and “D” Coys.

0105

OC leaves in carrier in an endeavour to locate the missing Coys.

BIGGIN HILL

10 Jul 41

0250

All Coys returning to jumping off psn after having swept the area.

0330

No. 18 pl ran into 40 SAS at HIGH HOUSE and were wiped out with the exception of one man, it is further reported that 16 pl has gp surrounded and pretty well cleaned up.

0410

7 paratp prisoners brought in to Bn HQ for questioning.

0600

Paratroop exercise successfully concluded. Personnel turned in and slept till noon.

BIGGIN HILL

11 Jul 41

0800

Various Coys quite busy settling down in new quarters etc.

1600

Conf at Div re paratp exercise held in this area on the nights 10-11. STRENGTH RETURN Officers - 34 - Other Ranks - 745.

BIGGIN HILL

12 Jul 41

0800

Usual routine throughout Coys. It will take a few days before Coys will really get down to business.

1000

Maj Mitchell, North Nova Scotia Highlanders arrived with the advance party of the 3 Cdn Div and was a visitor at this HQ.

1100

Work parties busy in all Coys.

BIGGIN HILL

13 Jul 41

1000

Church Service on the Cricket Pitch. Through a misunderstanding of daily orders, Bn HQ and “C” Coy failed to appear on Church parade.

1300

A meeting was held in the mens Mess tent by Mr Higgins who informed Bn HQ that they were to be penalized for not attending Church this morning, the penalty to be a 4 mile route march.

1400

Bn HQ moved off on “penal” march returning to HQ at 1530 hrs. “C” Coy also did this march.

BIGGIN HILL

14 Jul 41

0800

Usual camp routine by various Coys.

1000

A lecture on Crete was held in WESTERHAM. Officers attending were Lt-Col Ernst, Maj Harris and Lieut Archibald. Nothing of import occurred during the balance of the day.

BIGGIN HILL

15 Jul 41

0830

Pay Parade starts with Bn HQ.

1030

Brigadier Ganong visited Bn HQ and conferred with CO.

BIGGIN HILL

16 Jul 41

0930

CO held a conference with all Coy cmdrs re Corps cmdrs inspection to be held tomorrow.

BIGGIN HILL

17 Jul 41

0930

Corps cmdr and GOC arrived to carry out an inspection of the Unit.

1330

Corps cmdr, GOC, Brig and others lunched with Lady Stanley.

1400

CO held conf with Coy cmdrs re exercise to be carried out this afternoon.

1630

CO issues orders and Bn moved off and proceeded to LEAVES GREEN where they will engage “enemy” paratroops.

1700

Exercise in full swing, our troops putting on a splendid show and the GOC seems quite pleased.

1730

Exercise concluded.

BIGGIN HILL

18 Jul 41

0800

Work parties and Engineers busy laying in water throughout the Coys.

1000

Bath parade for all Coys to the mobile bath at CATERHAM. All Coys managed to get baths in CATERHAM with the exception of Bn HQ. Arrangements have been made with the airport at BIGGIN HILL to allow BN HQ to use their baths tomorrow.

2000

A guard is to be posted at the lower gate. In this connection the I section has been selected. STRENGTH RETURN - Officers - 34 - Other Ranks - 746.

BIGGIN HILL

19 Jul 41

0800

Work parties still busy throughout Holwood Park area.

1300

Bn HQ proceeded to BIGGIN HILL airport for bath parade.

1500

Lieut Higgins, together with the Scouts section proceeded to SHEER to participate in a scouting exercise in conjunction with the Home Guard. The party will return Sunday.

2000

A dance was held in Keston Hall for a limited number of the personnel of this regt. This dance was a decided success.

BIGGIN HILL

20 Jul 41

1000

Usual Church parade on the Cricket Pitch. Pte Gehue and Pte Gibson proceeded to BORDEN to attend a Snipers course.

1500

Lieut Higgins returned from SHEER with Scouts and Snipers. The scheme in which the above participated in was quite successful.

1600

Lieut Higgins left for Dorking to attend a three day camouflage course. L/Cpl Walters, “A” Coy L/Cpl Perry and Cpl Irving of “B” Coy proceeded to BORDEN on instruction course.

BIGGIN HILL

21 Jul 41

0800

Usual work parties busy on weapon pits etc.

1000

Lt-Col Ernst proceeded to Aldershot to attend lecture held in Prince Consort library. Nothing of unusual note happened during the balance of the day.

BIGGIN HILL

22 Jul 41

0400

Personnel from A B C D Bn HQ and HQ Coys proceeded to ASH RANGE for rifle practice. Maj Courtney was i/c of party. Personnel passed the main gate in the above order.

1000

Lt-Col Ernst left for the SOUTH COAST to attend a tank demonstration.

BIGGIN HILL

23 Jul 41

0830

Coy cmdrs attend a demonstration of attack put on by the R22eR at REIGATE.

1300

“C” Coy put on a demonstration of Coy in defence on our Coy area.

1400

Lieut Higgins returned from camouflage course.

BIGGIN HILL

24 Jul 41

0900

Bn formed up on Cricket Pitch where Lt-Col Ernst presented trophy for efficiency for the month of June. The cup was presented to “B” Coy.

1000

CO held a conference re duties etc. Nothing further to report today.

BIGGIN HILL

25 Jul 41

0830

Bn route march 15 miles. Lieuts Hiltz, McCarthy, and Isnor came up to Unit from the Holding Unit and were taken on strength.

1000

The Brig paid a visit to the Unit, discussing matters with the CO.

1700

Officers of this Bn attended a lecture at the Drill Hall, Caterham re COURTS MARTIAL.

2000

A meeting was held for Coy cmdrs and Pl cmdrs of “A” and “C” Coys with reference to field practice to be held tomorrow. A dance was held at WARLINGHAM hospital for the officers of this Unit. STRENGTH RETURN - Officer 34 - Other Ranks 742.

BIGGIN HILL

26 Jul 41

0900

“A” and “C” Coys proceeded to HANGMORE range to take part in field firing exercises.

1330

The CO, 2 i/c and Lieut Reardon left for HANGMORE range to witness field firing exercise this afternoon.

1700

Lieut Hiltz left for Bde to take over LO work for Lieut Fraser who is going on a six weeks course at Div.

BIGGIN HILL

27 Jul 41

0800

COs conference for Coy cmdrs re FANNY ADAMS exercise.

0855

LO reported 300 paratroops landed at airdrome and that Home Guard needed assistance. The CO immediately dispatched “A” Coy.

0907

“A” Coy move off to render assistance to Home Guard in the vicinity of airdrome [sic. aerodrome].

1330

“C” and “D” Coys have been enlisted to act as “enemy” and are making plan of attack.

1400

Attack well under way

1425

“C” and “D” Coy advance according to plan.

1443

“B” Coy have reached objective with 30% casualties in one pl.

1530

After gaining various objectives and threatening main line defence, scheme called off.

1620

Fanny Adams exercise concluded.

BIGGIN HILL

28 Jul 41

0245

The first air raid in weeks took place this morning and lasted for more than an hour. One fire was observed from OP on roof and was in the general direction of the London docks.

0400

All clear sounded. During the raid AA shells landed and explored in our area without damage.

0900

The CO granted permission to 3 RCA to use part of our area for an inspection by Corps cmdr.

1700

COs conference re training, vehicles and conservation of petrol.

2000

Coy cmdrs conference re Home Guard exercise held yesterday.

BIGGIN HILL

29 Jul 41

0800

Usual routine by various Coys.

1000

Brig and Bde IO visited Bn HQ, later accompanying Lieut HIggins to rifle range at Woldinghamm.

BIGGIN HILL

30 Jul 41

0800

Usual routine by various Coys.

1400

Sports at the Cricket Pitch.

1530

HQ Coy and Bn HQ pay parade.

1930

The band concert which was to be held at the Fish Pond was called off on account of rain.

BIGGIN HILL

31 Jul 41

0800

Training as per syllabus.

0830

“A” “D” “B” and “C” Coy pay parade.

1000

CO and Maj Hebb proceeded to London on regimental business.

1400

Various messes and canteens checking up on monthly statements.