WEST NOVA SCOTIA REGIMENT

WWII WAR DIARY

Place

Date

Time

Entry

September

Biggin Hill

1

0800

Sniper section together with Lieut. Higgins, proceeded to rifle range at WESTERHAM where rifles will be zeroed.

1000

Snipers return to Unit owing to the fact that the RAF have use of range for today.

2000

CO’s conference with Coy cmndrs regarding “exercise” to be held tomorrow. This “exercise” for the purpose of manning action stations and slit trenches in the event of coming under fire.

1930

Movies at YMCA

2

0930

Personnel of Regiment in battle order, manned weapon pits and gun posns while personnel of Bn HQ orderly room took refuge in battle HQ, remainder of personnel were divided in groups and occupied slit trenches.

0945

Maj.-Gen. Pearkes together with Brig. Ganong visited and inspected Battle HQ, proceeding from there to individual Coy’s on inspection.

1200

“Exercise” concluded.

Maj. Bryson, 2 i/c, returned from ODIHAM airport where he has been attached to 400 sqdn undergoing a course in A I L O work.

1700

Lt.-col. Ernst was a guest at the Overseas League in London where, among others, he met General Jean Knox, Commanding the ATS.

3

0830

Coy’s carry out general routine duties.

1330

Sports were held on the Cricket Pitch this afternoon. A game of soft ball between Bn HQ and C Coy was played and the score was 13 - 2 for Bn HQ.

1930

Movies at the YMCA

4

0830

Training – Fieldcraft Nothing of import for the balance of the day.

2000

Concert party at the YMCA

5

1000

A party of 15 officers arrived from Coy cmndrs School, Borden, who were shown over our area (defences etc.) by Lt.-col. Ernst who thoroughly explained the set up.

Major Bryson, Lieut. Higgins and Lieut. Archibald proceeded to WOLDINGHAM and checked up on billets which had been used by this Unit.

1330

A Coy demonstration was put on by C Coy, manning weapon pits etc. This was for the benefit of officers from Cdn Training School. Coys in attack and defence.

1930

Dance at Keston Hall. Unit band in attendance.

STRENGTH RETURN: Officers 36 Other Ranks 743

6

0800

Collecting Barrack room stores in preparation to move to ASH RANGES.

1000

Major Bryson, Lieut. Higgins and Lieut. Archibald again went to WOLDINGHAM to finish check-up on billets which had been used by this Unit

1515

Coy’s crossed S P for ASH RANGES in the following order B A C D Coy’s Bn HQ and HQ Coy.

1830

Bn arrived at ASH No. 4, pitched tents and prepared for tomorrows [sic.] shoot

Ash Ranges

7

0800

Shoot commences. Detail formed etc.

0930

First detail “go to bat” at 100 yard range. All details followed through shooting for groups and practice.

1100

Church parade on range.

1330

Details continue firing.

1730

Shoot finishes for the day.

8

0800

Details commence shooting for the day.

1100

Brig. Ganong arrives at RANGES and confers with CO.

1800

Rifle shoot completed for the day. Tomorrow will be devoted to LMG.

Biggin Hill

9

0800

Details continue practice with LMG.

1800

LMG practice concluded and Bn prepare to move back to BIGGIN HILL.

1925

Bn crossed the SP for return trip to BIGGIN HILL area in the following order: B D C A Coy’s Bn HQ and HQ Coy.

2230

Bn arrived back in camp.

10

0800

Training as per syllabus

1300

Sports at the Cricket Pitch

1930

Movies at the YMCA

11

0800

Training as per syllabus. Nothing further of import for today.

1930

Concert party at the YMCA

12

0800

Training as per syllabus. Coy’s busy completing wiring and weapon pits.

1345

Bath parades, all Coy’s

1500

Major Harris returns from Inf Coy cmndrs School, S E Command.

1545

C O held conference with all officers of the Unit. Brig. Ganong was also present

1930

Bingo at the YMCA

STRENGTH RETURN: Officers 35 Other Ranks 747

13

0830

Training as per syllabus

1330

Pls from A B D Coy accompanied by the West N S R band, proceeded to BROMLEY where they paraded for “Salvage Week”. The party was in charge of Major Courtney who was assisted by Capt. Jenkins, Lieut Curphy, Lieut. Isnor, Lieut Cameron and CSM Nauss. This parade started at 1500 hrs and our boys did their part in a splendid manner and received a good hand along the route of march.

14

0815

Coy’s fall in for Church parades.

15

0730

CO and IO proceeded on recce in the vicinity of WORTHING on the south coast.

0830

Coy’s carry on according to syllabus. Snipers go to range to try out new rifles P14’s

1800

Exercise T and Ball. This was in conjunction with aircraft and Signals and was carried out on lawn in front of “Holwood”

1930

Movies at the YMCA

16

0800

Route march under Coy arrangement.

0830

Coy’s carry on according to syllabus

1400

Lieut. Higgins proceeded to YALDING and interviewed the Secretary of the Kent Territorial Army, Capt. Stobford, re securing WESTERHAM range for practice for Div shoot.

17

0830

Coy’s working as per syllabus. A/Tk personnel proceeded to ranges under Lieut. Bent.

2100

Officers of Bn HQ entertained the ladies with a sing-song and dance at “Nightens”.

1900

Movies at the YMCA

18

0800

Bn went on route march this morning 14 miles

1930

Concert party at the YMCA

19

0800

Lieut. Higgins proceeded to WOLDINGHAM range for rifle practice to prepare for Div shoot.

0830

Coy’s carry on according to syllabus

1330

Brig. Ganong and Lt.-col. Ernst were guests of Lady Stanley at lunch today at “Holwood”

2100

A dance was held at HQ 3 Cdn Inf Bde by Brig. Ganong and Bde Officers. Lt.-col. Ernst represented the Unit at this dance.

STRENGTH RETURN: Officers 36 Other Ranks 745

20

0645

Lt.-col. Ernst and Major Bryson together with the IO and Coy cmdrs made a recce of the WORTHING area with regards to billets etc.

0830

Coy’s carry on according to syllabus

1630

West NSR band proceeded to ORPINGTON to play for the Womens [sic.] Aux Service “Salvage Day”

1930

Dance was held at Kesto Hall for the personnel of this Unit

21

0815

RC Church parade at the YMCA hut

1000

C of E paraded to the Cricket Pitch where Church service was held.

Lt.-col. Ernst attended a conference at Bde thence to WITHYHAM for demonstration of Tank Torpedoes.

53 of the personnel of this regiment composing a rifle team proceeded to ASH RANGE for 3 day practice. Capt Jenkins was OC party assisted by Lieuts Putman and Curphy.

1900

Sing song at the YMCA

22

0800

Route march under Coy arrangement. Funeral of Pte McIntyre of B Coy at Brookwood Cemetery.

1000

Major Bryson proceeded to ALDERSHOT where he attended or will attend a class in messing.

Major Burgess and Lieut Webster of the 7 Bn Manchester Regt have spent day checking over buildings etc in preparation to moving in after this Unit leaves for the Coast.

1930

Movies at the YMCA

23

0800

Route march for Coy’s

1600

Rifle team returned from ASH RANGE where they have been undergoing practice since Monday

1930

Movies at the YMCA

24

0800

Route march under Coy arrangement

1000

Major Bryson returned from ALDERSHOT where he has been attending a messing course

2000

A select Military dance was held in the Bell Hotel, Bromeley [sic. Bromley]. Personnel from this Unit attended including Lt.-col. Ernst and several officers

25

0600

Stand to for exercise “BUMPER” No passes tonight. Bn “CB”

1500

Order comes from Bde “Action Stations”

1600

Umpires for “BUMPER” exercise arrive and are detailed to the respective Companies.

Coy’s busy turning in Barrack Stores and preparing to move

2100

CO’s conference for Coy Cmndrs re exercise “BUMPER”

2130

Lieut Higgins holds conference for NCO’s

26

0813

A Coy pass Unit SP followed by Bn HQ A/Tk D C B and HQ Coy

1005

Unit cross Bde SP half hr late. This was due to Arty not being clear

1215

Unit arrive at concentration area COMBHILL [sic. COMB HILL] 818555

1235

Location report sent to Bde Coy’s all in respective areas. The balance of the afternoon was spent digging slit trenches against air attack and various games of sport were indulged in.

1800

All sentries were warned to be on the alert during the night owing to 5 column activity which was apparently rampant

STRENGTH RETURN: Officers 36 Other Ranks 743

27

0630

Breakfast Quiet morning spent with games and sport

1100

Brig BM and IO visited this area when a trace of Unit area disposition showing slit trenches was handed to the Bde IO. Report from Transport Sgt that Bde petrol Pt was in the hands of the enemy. This was forwarded to Bde. Later this report proved to be false

1200

Code list changed.

1430

Div L O reported 5 column activity in Bde area, all Coy’s notified.

1445

Officers played a game of soft ball with OR’s, result OR’s 22 Offrs 17 Our CO played on the officers team.

28

0930

Entire Bn attended Church parade. A splendid sermon was preached by Capt Addie

1130

Bde L O advises there may be a move to the NORTH between midnight and noon tomorrow, if so we will use the route via GUILDFORD

1430

Game of soft ball between Officers and OR’s Score 25 - 10 for the OR’s

1844

We have just received a SITREP from Bde as at 2200 hrs 27 Sep: “Enemy”: 17 corps reached line MURROW, WESTFEN, DODDINGTON, EARITH. 9 corps reached line SWAFFHAM PRIOR, BARNARDISTON, OVINGTON. Armed tps HAVERHILL at 1600 hrs but were repulsed. German 6 corps little progress NORWICH FELL 2100 hrs. Street fighting BURY ST. EDMONDS. Sabotage: Telephone lines and Post Office and attempts to pass false orders. Traffic direction signs also tampered with “OWN TROOPS”: Counter attack by 11 armed 18 Inf Div. Postponed until 28 Sep Bombing: Area impassible to traffic around LONDON, EAST of lines excl STAINES, incl UXBRIDGE, PINNER,

28

1844

SITREP continued: HARROW excl ELSTREET, BARNET, ENFIELD, end sitrep

29

0545

Stand to for one hr Recce party to report to Bde at 0630 hrs.

0615

Word received from Bde that there will be no move before noon today

0740

CO and Adjt leave for conference at Bde.

0845

CO calls conference for Coy cmndrs for 1000 hrs

1000

CO’s conference: Move NORTH to area in vicinity of MARLOW, pass Bn SP at 1440 hrs, Bde SP SP [sic.] at 1520 hrs

1130

All times shifted ahead 50 mins and convoy to travel in “packets” and only “housing lights” to be used

1710

Head of Unit coln passed Bde SP 55 mins late

1935

Head of Unit coln passed Div SP

30

0155

Bn arrived DP MARLOW. Tps snatched a few minutes rest.

0500

OC calls conference Coy cmndrs re move NORTH to TRING

0755

Bn passed Bde SP

0900

SITREP as at 0845 hrs: At 0800 hrs situation TRING was obscure with elements of “enemy” forces engaging one Bty 2 Fd Regt. and A/Tk Bty from 2 Bde. Umpires refused to make decision. Head of 3 Bde Gp then near HALTON 3229 enroute to TRING. Carlt & York R were ordered to clear TRING of enemy 0830 hrs B & D Coy’s Carlt & York R pushing through TRING reaching Xrds 373370 A Coy occupied bridgehead 380332 C Coy moving via TRING wharf NEWMILL 381314 to cut off enemy and occupy bridgehead 391315 0840 hrs R22eR moved forward to assist in mopping up. Remainder of Bde Gp in coln with head near HALDON. end sitrep.

1030

SITREP: TRING situation cleared up and Units of Bde Gp moved into assembly area Carlt & York R established bridgehead along GRAND JUNC CANAL at 385335 R22eR at the moment is SOUTH of TRING ALDBURY with bridgeheads established along CANAL West N S R forming perimeter around TRING and TRING PARK. end sitrep.

1130

Bde reports location

1315

Bn arrive at TRING Tps snatch few hrs rest

1610

Word comes through from Bde to be prepared to move any time after 1700 hrs

1745

L O from Bde brings word that we shall move to new area at 2400 hrs with a possible night or dawn attack

1840

1830

CO’s conference with Coy Cmndrs when route was laid down for move tonight which will be NORTH EAST through LUTON to GREAT OFFLEY where in all probability we will go into attack.

2359

Bn crosses Bde SP for new area at GREAT OFFLEY (second and final chapter of exercise “BUMPER” will be continued in the October issue of WAR DIARY)