WEST NOVA SCOTIA REGIMENT

WWII WAR DIARY

Place

Date

Time

Entry

1 Sep 42

NEWHAVEN

0800

Maj J.A. Hebb attended a TEWT at HQ 3rd Cdn Inf Bde. This was for the purpose of exercising 2 i/cs in command of Bn gps.

West NSR provided 12 officers, 18 Sjt and a number of Cpls to act on the control staff of exercise “Breaststroke” while 1 Cdn Inf Bde carried out this exercise. Maj F.B. Courtney of this unit was chief control officer

2000

Lecture at 3 Bde HQ on combined operations training given by Lt-Col A.H. Fraser, formerly Bde-Maj of 6 Cdn Ind Bde. A farewell letter was received from Maj-Gen G.R. Pearkes in which he expressed his disappointment at being unable to say farewell to the tps in person.

NEWHAVEN

2 Sep 42

0800

Training as per syllabus. A German pilot that had been shot down and rescued from the channel was given in custody of this unit for delivery to London or thereabouts. Tps entertained this evening by show, “Rookies” provided by Auxiliary Services

NEWHAVEN

3 Aug 42

1100

From this time until 1130 hrs all work that was not of vital importance ceased. Tps attended special Church services. This was set aside as a day of prayer by HM King George VI. 30 all ranks of this unit proceeded as spectators to the scene of exercise “Breaststroke”. Lieut J.R. Cameron, Adjt, visited the local HG detachment for liaison purposes.

NEWHAVEN

4 Aug 42

1200

Lt-Col M.P. Bogert returned from Bernards Castle, Co. Durham where he had been on a course.

1400

Bn parade on Recreation Ground at which a certificate on vellum given by the Royal Humane Society, was presented to Pte (Gunboat) F. Smith of B Coy in recognition of courageous work performed by him during the drownings in Adur River 6 Jan 42. After the presentation Bn drill was carried out. Field Return.

NEWHAVEN

5 Aug 42

0800

Training as per syllabus.

1600

The CO held his weekly conference re training for the coming week. The weekly dance sponsored by the Aux Services at Drove Hall was well attended.

NEWHAVEN

6 Sep 42

An exceptionally quiet Sabbath. No Protestant church parades. Entertainment as per.

NEWHAVEN

7 Sep 42

1000

Lt-Col M.P. Bogert attended a discussion at Bde HQ re exercise “Viking”. This exercise is in the nature of combined operations. Information was received today to the effect that Maj J.A. Hebb is to attend a Senior Officers school beginning 10 Sep 42. This is a bit embarrassing due to the fact that Maj Hebb proceeded on seven days leave on 7 Sep 42.

NEWHAVEN

8 Sep 42

0800

Training as per syllabus.

1600

Lt-Col M.P. Bogert attended a conference at Bde HQ re exercise “Viking”. Following hte discussion he had dinner there.

2000

Lt-Col M.P. Bogert, Maj P.H. Stehelin, Maj F.B. Courtney, Capt W.R. Moore, Capt G.F. Johnston and Lieut J.R. Cameron attended a lecture given at Bde HQ by Lt-Col Horton of the Royal Marines. This lecture was on combined operations.

NEWHAVEN

9 Sep 42

This morning Lt-Col M.P. Bogert and Lieut J.R. Cameron attended a briefing re exercise “Viking”. This was held at 1 Bde HQ where they have an excellent large scale model of the area where the exercise is to be carried out. In the afternoon Lieut J.R. Cameron attended a conference Div HQ re administrative matters, chiefly on the wastage of paper. Maj J.A. Hebb has finally been apprehended by the police at Inverness, Scotland. Maj Hebb proceeded on seven day leave on 7 Sep 42 but is “wanted” to attend a senior officers course commencing 10 Sep 42.

NEWHAVEN

10 Sep 42

0800

Training as per syllabus.

1830

Lt-Col M.P. Bogert gave a lecture at 5 Cdn Inf Bde HQ. This lecture was based on Lt-Col M.P. Bogerts’ personal experience in the Libyan Campaign. This afternoon officers of this unit attended a lecture given at HQ 3 Bde by Lord Lovat (Col) 4 Commandos. In the recent raid on Dieppe Lord Lovat led a party which attacked the German guns on the right flank. Following Lord Lovat’s speech another was given by Maj Young of 3 Commandos who raided the guns on the left flank.

NEWHAVEN

11 Sep 42

Maj J.A. Hebb proceeded on senior officers course.

1815

Lt-Col M.P. Bogert, Lieut J.R. Cameron, Adjt. Lieut H.M. Eisenhauer, IO, Lieut J.H. Jones, SO, Coy commanders and all available plat commanders proceeded to 2 Bde HQ to attend a briefing of plans for “Viking”.

1930

A lecture, giving a picture of the Dieppe raid, was given at 3 Bde HQ by Brigadier Mann. Officers of this unit who attended were, Lt-Col M.P. Bogert, Maj P.H. Stehelin, Maj F.B. Courtney, Capt W.R. Moore, Capt G.F. Johnston, Lieut J.R. Cameron, Adjt, and Lieut H.M. Eisenhauer, IO. Field Return.

NEWHAVEN

12 Sep 42

0815

Five officers of this unit attended an arty shoot for the purpose of practicing [sic.] the indication of targets to the arty.

1000

Lt-Col M.P. Bogert attended a conference at Bde at which the final orders for “Viking” were given out.

1500

Bn O Gp re “Vikings”.

1900

The movement order for the forthcoming exercise was received from Bde. A, B, C, and D Coys were paid today.

NEWHAVEN

13 Sep 42

0930

Church parades as per. Following church parade, Bn HQ and HQ Coy were paid.

1230

Movement order for exercise “Viking” was issued to the Coys.

NEWHAVEN

14 Sep 42

Morning spent in preparation for exercise “Viking”.

1200

Tps push off on move to the concentration area which is just SW of Hailsham. The intense heat made the march of fifteen miles extremely uncomfortable.

1700

Arrived at concentration area. After a hot meal the tps were assigned to their various boatloads. (The “boats” were, of course, purely imaginary, and the general opinion of the rank and file was that boating trips of this nature were hard on the feet.) Except for the imaginary boats everything possible is being done to make the exercise as realistic as can be under the circumstances.

NEWHAVEN

15 Sep 42

0200

Reveille and light meal. At 0300 hrs the tps push off for the “anchorage”.

0430

A, B and C Coys on the “beach”. D Coy was supposed to be held in reserve, but due to an error by the “naval commander”, was prematurely landed at this time.

0600

All Coys on their first objective. Remainder of the exercise proceeded according to plan and “Cease Fire” sounded at 0900 hrs. Tps retired to concentration area where they had breakfast and commenced the return march at 1120 hrs. Lunch was served En route and tps arrived at the billets at 1700 hrs.

NEWHAVEN

16 Sep 42

Eight LCP (L) have been made available to this unit for a short period for training purposes. One hundred and sixty personnel taken from A, B and C Coys and under the direction of Maj F.B. Courtney commenced training with these boats.

1600

Conference at Bn HQ re training for the following week.

2000

Lt-Col M.P. Bogert attended a conference at Bde HQ.

NEWHAVEN

17 Sep 42

0900

Lt-Col M.P. Bogert and Lieut J.R. Cameron viewed the training being carried out by the Coys in conjunction with the assault craft.

1430

A conference for IOs of the Bde gp was held at Bde HQ for the purpose of discussing arrangements for an intensive two day period of training for I personnel in their duties. The conference was attended by Lieut H.M. Eisenhauer of this unit.

1830

Lt-Col M.P. Bogert gave a lecture to officers of the Bn in A Coy mess.

2000

A practise night landing was carried out by Bn personnel in the assault craft. This was declared by naval officers in charge of the LCPs to be one of the most successful practices they had yet been on.

NEWHAVEN

18 Sep 42

1000

Lt-Col M.P. Bogert and Lieut J.H. Jones contacted the local AA authorities to discuss and recce their posns for a special system of A defence in which we are to participate.

1400

In the weekly Bn parade this afternoon special emphasis was placed on the rehearsal for the GOCs inspection to be held on the morrow. Field Return.

NEWHAVEN

19 Sep 42

Reveille was at 4 A.M. and at 0600 hrs the tps crossed SL on march to Firle P where the GOC will inspect the Bde. Arrived at Firle Pk at 0830 hrs and after a short break, carried out a practice of the ceremony. Maj-Gen H.L.N. Salmon, MC, arrived at 1100 hrs and after inspecting the tps gave a short talk in which he expressed his pleasure at being given command of the 1st Cdn Div. Following this the tps had lunch and marched back to Newhaven arriving at 1630 hrs.

In the evening Lt-Col M.P. Bogert and Lieut J.R. Cameron attend an informal party at the fort, given by officers of the 521st Arty unit.

NEWHAVEN

20 Sep 42

1000

Church parades at the usual times. Maj Jones, senior Protestant Chaplain 1st Cdn Div, gave the sermon at the Protestant service. Six ORs this unit proceeded to Eastbourne on Map-reading course.

NEWHAVEN

21 Sep 42

0800

An NCO class started this morning scheduled to run for four weeks.

1200

Lt-Col M.P. Bogert contacted the clerk of the town council to arrange for a discussion on the mutual defence of Newhaven.

2000

Lt-Col M.P. Bogert attended a sigs exercise for Bn commanders at Bde HQ.

NEWHAVEN

22 Sep 42

1100

Lt-Col M.P. Bogert attended a lecture given by Gen Skaines in the Capitol Theatre, Tunbridge Wells. The General stressed the point that this war must be regarded as a crusade in which the individual must be subordinated to the cause.

1600

Weekly training conference held at Bn HQ at which the information received from the Bde commander the previous evening was passed on to all concerned.

1900

Lt-Col M.P. Bogert again attended the W/T procedure exercise at Bde HQ in company of the other Bn commanders of the Bde gp. Lt-Col Tweedie of the C & Y R mentioned that in conversation with Maj Carson of the C & Y R, one of the naval officers at Newhaven remarked on the high standard of performance reached by West NSR personnel while using the LCP craft. This officer declared that they were better than the tps trained to go to Dieppe.

NEWHAVEN

23 Sep 42

0800

Training as per syllabus.

1930

Lt-Col M.P. Bogert attended the W/T procedure exercise at Bde HQ. Arrangements have been made for those interested in boxing to train three nights each week at the RA gym in the fort. This with a view to forming a unit team.

NEWHAVEN

24 Sep 42

Applications as required of three officers, three sjts and 10? Cpls for return to Canada on the instructional staff were submitted to Bde HQ. Arrangements were made with the C & Y R and R22eR for taking over the duties in this area during our absence on exercise “Invader”. In the afternoon a preliminary discussion of the exercise was held. Exercise is scheduled to take place on 28, 29 and 30 Sep 42.

1800

Lt-Col M.P. Bogert gave a lecture on the encounter battle and the set or planned type of attack. Following this he outlined the duties of the officers holding the various appointments in the unit.

NEWHAVEN

25 Sep 42

0800

Training as per syllabus.

1200

Lt-Col M.P. Bogert lunched at Bde HQ.

1400

Weekly Bn parade taken by Maj W.C. Gemmel, OC HQ Coy but dismissed by Lt-Col Bogert on his return from Be.

NEWHAVEN

26 Sep 42

0800

Training as per syllabus. Nothing unusual occurred today.

NEWHAVEN

27 Sep 42

0930

Church parades as per. The Protestant service was taken by C & Y R chaplain.

NEWHAVEN

28 Sep 42

1030

Bn O gp conference on exercise “Invader”. In the first phase of this exercise, West NSR takes the part of a Bn in the attack as from an established bridgehead.

1730

Bn in concentration area at a point just East of Saltdean. Bde O gp conference at 1800 hrs. The Bn put in the attack during the night according to plan. The weather was abominable being cold and windy night 28/29 with heavy rain from early 29 onwards.

NEWHAVEN

29 Sep 42

Operations were suspended at approximately 0900/29 after West NSR had successfully attacked the more important posns. The tps have a hot meal and endeavour to get a bit of rest despite the driving rain. Night 29/30 this unit will play the part of SS Regiment der Fuehrer and endeavour to defend the same posns against the R22eR. The exercise went according to plan this night except that the R22eR made a valiant charge up the wrong hill on one occasion. Still raining very hard all night.

NEWHAVEN

30 Sep 42

0900

“Cease Fire”. The tps had breakfast in the pouring rain, following which they filled in all slit trenches etc. and marched back to billets. The balance of the day was spent in cleaning and resting up.