WEST NOVA SCOTIA REGIMENT

WWII WAR DIARY

Place

Date

Time

Entry

WEST N C R

JULY 1944

GRECI

1

Another hot day dawned bright and clear.

0830

The Bn proceeded on tanks to a nearby range where they were permitted to fire the 6 Pounders and M.G’s. The mid-day meal was taken along and eaten on the banks of the nearby river, after which the men enjoyed a dip in the cool water.

1430

Bn. moved by transport to camp area GIOIA arriving at 1900 hrs. A small party of Signal reinforcements arrived and several old friends were welcomed back.

2

Weather fine and warm. Trg as per syllabus. Capt C.E. Bent former Bde T O arrived to take over command of Hq Coy, replacing Capt Bruce Cochrane who was posted to Div HQ. Capt D.I. Rice, I O took over temporary command of “A” Coy Voluntary church parades were held in HQ Coy area and a considerable number attended. The service was conducted by a visiting Padre from 9th Fd Amb.

3

0630

BN Parade was held in the cool of the morning. Major F.E. Hiltz proceeded on several days leave, in his absence Major McMillan acting 2 IC. In the evening a film “TORNADO” was shown.

1700

A party left on seven days leave to 8th Army Rest Camp at SALERNO. Capt S. Miller 9th Fd Amb arrived to replace Capt: H.I. Mendelson, Unit M O, who has proceeded on leave. Weather fine and warm.

4

0630

Weather fine and warm. BN Parade in full Battle Order.

1000

Lt Gen E L M Burns visited the Bn and in company with Lt Col R S E Waterman, C O, spent a short time with each sub unit.

5

0630

Weather fine and warm. Bn parade.

1400

Muster parade. “E” Coy proceeded to Lake MATESE MR 3311 for two days trg.

1930

Lt Col R S E Waterman, Capt A Dyer, and Capt Miller, M O attended a dinner at RCHA Hq. In the evening a film “Background For Danger” was shown.

6

0830

Capt Hersey proceeded on a recce in preparation for an exercise to be carried out in the near future.

1000

Lt Col M P Bogert, DSO paid a casual visit to this Hq.

1500

65 OR Reinforcements arrived and were duly allotted to Coy’s. Weather warm but cool in the evening and a film “Princess O’Rouke” was shown.

7

0800

Weather fine and warm. Lt Col R S E Waterman and Coy Comdr’s proceeded to Hq 2 CIB to attend a discussion on points brought up by exercise “VULCAN” 1 now being carried out. They will be spectators of these manouvers [sic.].

8

0800

Weather fine and warm. Lt Col R S E Waterman in addresses concerning future operations. Trg to be carried out in conjunction with tanks in preparation for our next action. Remainder of day trg as per syllabus. All Bn parades now held at 0630 hrs have been postponed until further notice.

0830

Capt D I Rice and one N C O from each Coy proceeded on a recce to an area which will be occupied by this unit during coming exercise.

1000

From 1000 to 2000 hrs an exhibition of War Paintings is taking place at PIEDEMONTE D’ALIFE. All Coys are making arrangements for as many men as possible to see this. Unit T O will provide transport.

9

0500

After an early breakfast Bn moved by Tpt at 0830 hrs as per Movement Order.

1100

Arrived at Bn Area.

1845

Bn “O” Group. Light showers during the day.

10

0900

Weather fine and warm. Offrs and NCOs proceeded to area in which exercise is to take place, for the purpose of studying the ground and acquainting themselves with the plan, i.e. Starting Line, Axis of advance and objective etc.

1300

Bn “O” Group.

1900

Brig J P E Bernatches, DSO, OBE, visited this Hq. The 1939-43 [illegible] to-day awarded to qualifying personnel.

11

Weather fine and warm.

1000

Bn “O” Group.

1200

Exercise “VULCAN 11” commenced.

1700

Bde “O” Group was held in R22eR area.

1900

Exercise completed. Brig J P E Bernatches, DSO, OBE, was guest this evening at the Offrs mess.

12

1300

Bn returned to former area as per movement order. A heavy downpour made this trip very unpleasant and turned the ground into a morass of mud.

13

Weather fine and warm. Trg as per syllabus.

1700

Grig J P E Bernatches, DSO, OBE visited this Hq. In the evening a film “The Road to Zanzibar” was shown starring Dorothy Lamour, Bing Crosby and Bob Hope. A small party of reinforcements arrived and were duly allotted to coys.

14

0900

Trg as per syllabus. “E” Coy S O S this Bn and returned to Unit.

1400

Brig J P E Bernatches, DSO, OBE visited this Hq.

1800

Hon Capt L Wilmot, Unit Padre, gave a very interesting and profitable talk to Bn Hq and Hq Coy, in which sincere interest was shown. Weather fine and warm.

15

Weather fine and warm. Trg as per syllabus. Capt “D” Coy Comdr, promoted to the acting rank of Major.

1400

Brig J P E Bernatches, DSO, OBE visited this Unit. To-day a leave party left for a three day visit to [illegible].

16

A warm and sunny Sabbath morning.

0900

RC and C of E Church parades were held in the Bn Area, after which the C of E observed Holy Communion which was well attended.

17

0500

Breakfast. Bn moved by TPT as per movement order, arriving at 1 Cdn Div Rest Camp at 1530 hrs. Beautiful weather and the water was delightful. An excellent brand of plums and watermelons could be easily procured and were greatly appreciated. In the evening tea and dough-nut were served by the [illegible] Army Canteen and a film “Johnny Come Lately” was shown. The camp was nicely situated and the [illegible] air outstanding.

18

Weather hot and calm. A [illegible] proves very inviting and most of the boys had a refreshing swim before breakfast. In the evening a very good film “Theodora Goes Wild” was shown. Major A.W. Rogers was injured in a jeep accident, and his departure from the Regt is greatly regretted. A/Maj Rhodes proceeded to 1 CBRD to take temporary command of the West N S R Coy.

19

0800

The Bn moved by Tpt to the former camp area. The past two days have provided a real break and the holiday greatly enjoyed.

[Illegible.]

Lt Col R S E Waterman attended a conference at Bde.

1700

Lt Col R S E Waterman addressed all Offrs and discussed the possibility of going into action in the near future; and give them some idea of what to expect.

20

Weather fine and warm. Lt Col R S E Waterman commenced to crack the whip in approved fashion and really strenuous trg has begun.

21

Weather fine and warm.

0845

Lieut R E Campbell and other officers attended a short vehicle maintenance course at 3 Cdn Inf Bde work shop. Trg as per syllabus.

22

Trg as per syllabus.

0830

The Bn formed up complete on the Bn Parade square, their smart turnout testifying to the effecient [sic] manner in which the COs wishes were carried out.

0900

Brig J P E Bernatches, OBE, DSO arrived and to the strain of the 48th High’rs pipe band inspected the Bn. He was visibily [sic] impressed and in his short talk expressed great satisfaction as to the very evident high standard maintained by the Regiment. Remainder of the day Support and “B” Coys took part in exercise “CARAVEN” as per trg syllabus. In the evening a film, “Gentleman Jim” was shown.

23

Weather fine and warm.

0900

A party proceeded to a stage show sponsored by the Carlt York Regt and held at the Theatre in PIEDMONTE [sic. PIEMONTE]. It was a huge success and several good numbers were provided by local talent.

1200

The C O attended Bde Conference; upon his return at 1400 hrs he addressed all officers of the Bn. There was no Church Parade held to-day. In the morning a party proceeded to ROME to attend a Confirmation Service.

24

Weather fine and warm and showers in the evening. Trg as per syllabus. “A” Coy carried out exercise “CARAVAN” while “C” Coy spectators.

1530

Confirmation of C of E personnel took place at All Saints Church in ROME when 25 men from our Regt were confirmed by the Bishop of Lichfield. Confirmation was followed by holy Communion conducted by Major J I McKinney when all newly confirmed members made their first Communion.

In the evening a film “Tarzan Triumphs” was shown.

25

Weather very warm but a light breeze in the late evening made the day more pleasant. Trg as per syllabus. The C O addressed all officers and senior N C Os of the Bn on points that arose from exercise “CARAVAN”. In the evening a film “Uninvited Guest” was shown

26

Weather fine and hot. Trg as per syllabus. Movement Order for Move from present area to SPOETO A9759 29 / 30 July 44, was issued to-day. Bn busily preparing in accordance with order.

1850

In a fast game this evening the West N S R Soft Ball Team soundly whipped visiting team from the 9th Fd Amb. Score 16 to 7.

27

WEather fine and warm. Trg as per syllabus

0830

“A” and “D” Coys took part in exercise “Redeamer” [sic]. In the evening a film “Reveille With Beverley” was shown.

28

Weather fine and warm. In the morning Trg as per syllabus. The afternoon was spent by all ranks checking equipment and packing for to-morrows move to the new area.

1830

Soft Ball and boxing bouts were held this evening.

29

0420

Bn moved as per Movement Order to Staging area 99597 (sheet 150 ROME) Arriving at 1200 hrs it remained for the night. In the evening a film “Gentleman Jim” starring, Errol Flynn, was shown. Weather fine and warm.

30

Weather continues to be fine and warm.

0500

Bn arrived at starting point and continue through ROME to assembly area 9181, near FOLIGNO (sheet 131-iv, 1:50000)

1545

Bn “O” Group held. Bn on 24 hours notice as of 1200 hrs to-day. Bn in position by 11300 hrs. Bn on 12 hour notice as from 1200 hrs to-day. Weather fine and warm but a shower in evening soon made the ground very muddy and unpleasant and almost cancelled the showing of a film “Life Boat”.

2015

Bn “O” Group held.