WEST NOVA SCOTIA REGIMENT

WWII WAR DIARY

Place

Date

Time

Entry

GUILLECOURT BARRACKS

1/3/40

0800

Training as per schedule.

2000

The Army Physical Training Staff from School of Physical Training, Queens Ave, Aldershott, rendered an exhibition of training and gymnastics, which included boxing, floor work and horse work. This was conducted by Capt.Smith, G.O. for P.T About 500 troops were present, also Brig. Price, Lt. Col Gregg and Col. Hinston, G.S.O., for P.T.

1200

Brig. Grawford, Commandant of A.G.S., gave lecture to 3 Bde Officers & P.S.M’s on gas at the Officers Mess.

On Parade 21 Os 702 ORs

Sick 48

Total Strength 798

GUILLECOURT BARRACKS

2/3/40

0800

Training as per schedule.

Lt. R.H. Beck proceeded on Command to Inf. Transport Officers Course, London and Chatwell.

On Parade 22 Os 703 OR.

Sick 46

Total 798

GUILLECOURT BARRACKS

3/3/40

0945

R.C. Church Parade. N?afi Hut.

1045

C of E Church Parade.

Lt. G.F. Johnston returned off Command from Winterhbourne [Gas?] School.

On Parade 22 Os 680 OPs.

Sick 46

Total 798

GUILLECOURT BARRACKS

4/3/40

0800

Training as per schedule.

Lt. E.M. [illegible. Crown?] proceedes to P.T. Course at Command Gymnasium, Aldershot.

Mjr. W.H. Worth went on seven days sick leave after being discharged from Cambridge Hospital.

Capt. P.H. Stehelin began to carry on the work of Adjutant.

On Parade 20 Os 683 ORs.

Sick 53

Total 798

GUILLECOURT BARRACKS

5/3/40

0800

Training as per schedule.

On Parade 20 Os. 677 ORs.

Sick 46

Total 798

GUILLECOURT BARRACKS

6/3/40

0800

Training as per schedule.

0745

Lt. H.F. Parker proceeded to Snipers Course at Hythe.

On Parade 20 Os. 675 ORs.

Sick 50

Total 798

GUILLECOURT BARRACKS

6/3/40

0800

Training as per schedule.

On Parade 20 Os. 677 ORs.

Sick 46

Total 798

GUILLECOURT BARRACKS

7/3/40

0800

Training as per schedule.

1800

Lt. R.T. Armaud returned from Hythe School of Musketing.

Capt. P.H. Stehelin took over duties of Adjutant.

Letter from Mgr. Faulker ordering the W.N.S. Regt to select a team of A.A. Lewis gunmen to be used for the protection of shipping. This team will embark on a small ship based on the port of London.

Major A.W. MacKenzie was discharged from Cambridge hospital where he had been since 28-2-40 & has been granted 10 day sick leave.

On Parade 21 Os. 663 ORs.

Sick 58

Total 798

GUILLECOURT BARRACKS

8/3/40

0800

Training as per schedule.

Maj. O.B. Berringer is appointed to supervise the voting by soldier in this Bn. in the forthcoming election.

2000

The combined Sgts. Men(Mess?) held their bi-monthly danse in Mess rooms.

On Parade 20 Os. 664 ORs.

Sick 58

Total 798

GUILLECOURT BARRACKS

9/3/40

0800

Training as per schedule.

As an [illegible]oration in this Bn. W.Os. are henceforth to act as Orderly Officers.

C.S.M. Garber, W.E. is the first W.O. named for this duty. The use of W.Os. as Orderly Officers will ease the pressure of duties on the few Officers now with the Bn.

On Parade 20 Os. 669 ORs.

Sick 51

Total 798

GUILLECOURT BARRACKS

10/3/40

0845

R.C. Church Parade to NAAFE Hut.

1045

C of E Parade to NAAFE Hut.

1300

Capt. W.C. Germ?mell proceeded on Command to Inf. Coy. Comdr’s Course at [illegible. Chichester?]. The first team of “A.A.” gunmen for the protection of shipping proceeded to Aldershot enroute to their duties on ships sailing out of London. The personnel of this team was A/ept. F.J. Stephenson & Pte. O.H. Sullivan.

On Parade 20 Os. 670 ORs.

Sick 50

Total 798

GUILLECOURT BARRACKS

11/3/40

0800

Training as per schedule.

This morning the parade ground took on an unusually war-like appearance. The little field [illegible] cps, which had for so long adorned the right cars of the troop, have given way to steel hats. The martial appearance of the ranks of soldiers was, however, somewhat tinged with the ludicrous, owing to the fact that all “tin hats” issued by Q.M. were of the same size–(7).

On Parade 20 Os. 680 ORs.

Sick 50

Total 798

GUILLECOURT BARRACKS

12/3/40

0800

Training as per schedule.

On Parade 20 Os. 670 ORs.

Sick 61

Total 798

GUILLECOURT BARRACKS

13/3/40

0800

Training as per schedule.

1100

Today Mgr. Berringer opened a polling booth in the Instructional hut next door to the Intelligence Office. Voting was not very brisk. The troops do not seem to be taking much interest in this election.

On Parade 17 Os. 666 ORs.

Sick 62

Total 798

GUILLECOURT BARRACKS

14/3/40

0800

Training as per schedule.

On Parade 17 Os. 666 ORs.

Sick 63

Total 798

GUILLECOURT BARRACKS

15/3/40

0800

Training as per schedule.

On Parade 17 Os. 665 ORs.

Sick 63

Total 798

GUILLECOURT BARRACKS

16/3/40

0800

Training as per schedule.

1200

Lt. H.P. Jenkins, Bn. I.O., returned to duty from Int. Course at Mintey [sic. Minley] Manor.

On Parade 20 Os. 671 ORs.

Sick 57

Total 798

GUILLECOURT BARRACKS

17/3/40

0845

R.C. parade (Church) to NAAFE Hut.

1045

Prot. parade (Church) to NAAFE Hut.

Mjr. K.P. Harris & Capt. J.A. Hebb proceeded to Hythe to attend Senior Officers’ Course, small arm school.

On Parade 20 Os. 654 ORs.

Sick 56

Total 798

GUILLECOURT BARRACKS

5/3/40

0800

Training as per schedule.

Lt. E.M. Crouse returned from P.T. course, Comd’ Central Gym.

On Parade 20 Os. 675 ORs.

Sick 59

Total 798

GUILLECOURT BARRACKS

19/3/40

0800

Training as per schedule.

The following Officers were transferred to 1st Inf. Base Depot:

Mjr. D.J.F. Burgoyn.

Capt. J.H. [illegible. Mason?]

Capt. R.C. Elliott.

On Parade 17 Os. 677 ORs.

Sick 59

Total 791

GUILLECOURT BARRACKS

20/3/40

0800

Training as per schedule.

As a further measure of relief for the over-worked Officers on duty with the Bn., our P.S.Ms. are to perform Orderly Officer duties. P.S.M. appointed for this duty.

On Parade 20 Os. 678 ORs.

Sick 55

Total 791

GUILLECOURT BARRACKS

21/3/40

0800

Training as per schedule.

0900

Rehearsed for the coming inspection of the Bn. by the G.O.C. 1 Cdn. Div. For many of us this was the first Bn. parade for two months. Bn. H Q paraded with one officer & three O.Rs. on foot–The rest on bicycles & M.Cs.

1200

Lecture on co-operation with the Air Force. This lecture was given by an R.A.F. Officer in our Officers’ Mess.

2100

This Berringer’s polling booth closed down and the voting by overseas troops in our first khaki election in the war, is finished.

On Parade 20 Os. 682 ORs.

Sick 54

Total 791

GUILLECOURT BARRACKS

22/3/40

0800

Since this is Good Friday the troops are having a holiday.

0830

Lt. Col. Gregg took the Officers, C.S. Ms. & P.S. Ms. out on a T.E.W.T. We “defended” a section of the BASINGSTOKE CANAL near ODIHAM. Chief points of interest arrising out of this T.E.W.T. were 1st the question of whether the first consideration in locating the PCs. of a Coy. is to locate them so that all three PCs. can cover the tank obstacles with fire, or whether the primary consideration is to [illegible] the Coy in depth; 2nd, the question of the size, tasks and armament of outposts ahead of the tank obstacle. These problems were not settled.

Capt. J. Tedford is attached to us as our M.O. in place of Major G.H. Ryan. Capt. Tedfour belongs to No. 5. Gen. Hosp. R.C.A.M.C.

1700

Mjr. K.P. Harris and Capt. J.A. Hobb returned from Coy. Cmdr’s Course.

On Parade 20 Os 695 ORs

Sick 57

Total 798

GUILLECOURT BARRACKS

23/3/40

0800

Training as per schedule.

1100

Another rehearsal for the Generals inspection.

Lt. H.F. Parker returned from Sniper Course at Hythe.

1300

A fever of cleanliness has struck the Barracks. Cleaning of grounds, room and equipment is taking the place of the usual Saturday half holiday.

On Parade 18 Os. 627 ORs

Sick 53

Total 786

GUILLECOURT BARRACKS

24/3/40

Easter Sunday. Church parades.

On Parade 17 Os. 636 OR.

Sick 50

Total 786

GUILLECOURT BARRACKS

25/3/40

0800

Training as per schedule.

1100

As soon as the “Van Doos” cleared the parade ground, we held our final rehearsal for tomorrow’s inspection. During the rest of the day, the swish of mops and broom, the scrape of brushes applying blanco to equipment and the click of barbers clippers was heard all over the Barrack area. The Bn. cap badge and a Maple Leaf were laid out in white washed stones in front of Bn. HQ hut. By nightfall the W.N.S.R. lines and personnel showed no trace of dust, rubbish or surplus hair.

1205

Lecture by Mjr. Faulkes to the Bde Officers on the attack.

On Parade 19 O’s 697 ORs

Sick 46

Total 789

GUILLEMONT BARRACKS

26/3/40

0600

Rain

0700

Rain

0800

More rain, very cold rain.

0815

The Whitewash has been worked off the stones in front of the Bn. Orderly rooms?, leaving only a few rows of stones sunk in the sand, as a pathetic remnant of the gay decorations of yesterday.

0900

The C.O. held the final conference of Officers & P.S.Ms. He warned us to have our mess pile on all possible cloches under the battle dress since kindly authority has forbidden the wearing of Greatcoats on the Great Day. One wonders what great coats were issued for.

0950

Hurrah! Orders have come for us to wear great coats. The rain is still falling heavily.

1100

Coy’s begin to march on parade grounds for inspection, still raining.

1130

In spite of the rain and the fact that the G.O.C. did not stand in place we had picked out for him, the Inspection went off without untoward incident. The rain was very cold and the mens hands were cold & stiff by the time we got off the parade ground. After the march past, details were selected to go to the range to fire rifle & Bren and the re??sh returned to their spiders? To carry on training by Pls.

1300

Dinner. Remainder of day was holiday for the troops. Capt. C.K. Blecks from No. 5 Gen. Hosp. R.C.A.M.C. has been attached to the Regt. as our N.O. in place of Capt. J. Zedfort

Who entered Cambridge Hosp. as a patient.

On Parade 20 Os 704 O.R.

Sick 46

Total 789

GUILLEMONT BARRACKS

27/3/40

0800

The troops had a morning’s rest.

1300

Ports were in order this afternoon and a three mile cross country run and about 50 men participated. C. Coy won over B. Coy at soccer football, Final score 1-0. Many other Coy’s indulged in an hours practice. Ech Coy had a soft ball game during the afternoon. The inter-Coy games will start on Thursday April 4th, as will also Soccer competition. Many volley ball games were played during the week. Only one court is now available, a second will be ready shortly. A lack of sports equipment is the main draw back at present.

On Parade 21 Os 705 ORs

Sick 47

Total 789

GUILLEMONT BARRACKS

28/3/40

0800

Training as per schedule.

1900

The W.N.S.R. boxing contest (elimination) was held tonight in the Gym. The winners were: LeBlanc, J.M. (126 lbs), Steele, R. (135 pounds), Olmstead, C. (147 lbs), Embree (160 lbs), O’Handley, S.B. (175 lbs), Falls, J. (Heavyweight).

1930

Bde dinner in the Officers Mess. Principal guests were the Rt. Hon. R.B. Bennett and Sir Henry Page-Croft. Other guests were the G.O.C. & Brigs, and other officers from 1 Div. HQ and other units & formation in 1 C.I. Div. A number of English Officers were also guests. The W.N.S.R. band provided the music.

2135

Brig. Price proposed the Toast to the guests. He remarked that from the battle of the Plains of Abraham to Confederation, a total of 105 units of the British Army had served in Canada.

2140

Sir Henry, in his speech, praised “the greatness of spirit” of the Canaidans who had come 3000 to 7000 miles to fight “so early in the day.”

2220

Lt. Smeltzer W.N.S.R., sang “On the road to Mandalay.” Hearty applause.

2227

The Rt. Hon. R.B. Bennett stressed the idea that 1 Cdn. Div. is “Canada on Parade.” He declared that Canada’s purpose in this was is “freedom & self-Government.”

2245

Mr. Ford of the Y.M.C.A. told two funny stories.

On Parade 21 Os 706 ORs

Sick 43

Total 789

GUILLEMONT BARRACKS

29/3/40

0800

Training as per schedule.

The second team of A.A. Lewis gunmen for A.A. protection of shipping left the Bn. today. This team consisted of Ct. J.M. Byrne and Pte. J.T. Roy. It is interesting to reflect that while the “Van Doss” are parading for visiting notables and “changing guard at “Buckingham Palace,” the W.N.S.R. is helping to guard British ships in the channel and North Sea.

1630

At an “official meeting” of the W.N.S.R. Officers, Lt. Col. Gregg informed us that a Regimental Fund in the name of W.N.S.R. had been located in the tank in Bridgewater, N.S. This fund has been transferred to London Branch of the Bank of Montreal and is available for the use of the Bn. Amount transferred is £190 or $851.49. Another account has been opened in Lloyds Bank, Fleet, for use in paying small bills.

1900

Bde. boxing finals in the Gym.

On Parade 20 Os 106 ORs

Sick 44

Total 789

GUILLEMONT BARRACKS

30/3/40

0800

Training as per schedule.

1900

The Bde. boxing finals held in the W.N.S.R. Gym, finished tonight. The results were as follows:

118 lbs. Lt. Cpt. Seguin, R.22R.

126 “ LeBlanc, J.N., W.N.S.R.

135 “ Steele, R. W.N.S.R.

147 “ Miller, R.22R.

160 “ Trudeau, R.22R.

175 “ Brison, Carl & Yorks

Heavy Falls, T., W.N.S.R.

On Parade 21 O’s 612

Sick 39

Total 789

GUILLEMONT BARRACKS

31/3/40

0845

R.C. Church parade. Naafi Hut.

1045

Prot. Church parade. Naafi Hut.

Kit and clothes inspection of the Unit to check shortages and to find missing pieces of kit.

On Parade 21 O’s 706 ORs

Sick 43

Total 789