

WAR DIARY

Page 1.

3/19A MFM 11
40/P&S/37 (5028)

Instructions regarding preparation of War Diaries (which will be kept from first day of mobilization, creation or embodiment) are contained in FS Regs Vol 1.






Nov. 45 - Jan. 46

~~INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY~~

Original, duplicate and triplicate to be forwarded to OIC 2nd Echelon for disposal.

Title pages will be prepared.

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks, references to Appendices and initials
Petworth, England	19 45 1 Nov.	Thu.	Weather:- clear, bright sunshine. The Bn. fell in at 1000 hrs this morning for inspection by Brig. K.G. Blackader, who commanded the 1st Bn. on mobilization and brought it overseas. Brig. Blackader chatted with some of the men who had been in the Unit at that time. After the inspection Brig. Blackader, and the C.O., Lt-Colonel V.E. Traversy addressed the men. In the afternoon the kits were turned in to the kit stores, and this was followed by a Pay parade. In the evening an ENSA show gave a performance in the camp.	
Petworth, England	2 Nov.	Fri.	Weather - clear. At 1000 hrs. this morning the men paraded to pick up their passes prior to proceeding on leave. Trucks conveyed us to Haslemere where a special train for London was awaiting.	
	3 Nov.	Sat.	Bn. on leave.	
	T O 8 Nov.	Thu.		
Petworth, England	9 Nov.	Fri.	Weather - clear and cold with slight wind. The customary clearance after leave took place this morning. On Coy. parade the men were advised that a movement order has been received designating this draft as a part of the contingent going on the next sailing of the "Queen Elizabeth". Kits were drawn from kit stores and re-packed in readiness to be picked up tomorrow morning. We shall probably be leaving here in the early hours of next Wednesday morning. A mail parade was held in the afternoon.	
Petworth, England	10 Nov.	Sat.	Weather - clear and cool. On Bn. Parade this morning the C.O., Lt-Colonel V.E. Traversy, addressed the men, advising them that we shall be sailing next Thursday, and should be in Montreal around the 21st of this month. A muster parade was then held, following which all kit bags were turned in, not to be seen again till Montreal is reached. Customary recreational transport was available to take the men to the nearby towns.	

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WAR DIARY

Page 2.

3/19A MFM 11
40/P&S/37 (5028)





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Petworth, England	19 45 11 Nov. Sun.		Weather - bright, clear and warm. At 1000 hrs. this morning a Remembrance Day Service was held. This was a voluntary service, largely attended. As we shall soon be wearing our greatcoats many of the men spent the afternoon in pressing out the innumerable creases accumulated through the long incarceration of the coats in kitbags.	
Petworth, England	12 Nov. Mon.		Weather - overcast and cool. On the Bn. Parade this morning the function and ties of the Black Watch Association, in Montreal, was explained to the men, and all were given the opportunity of becoming members, most of the men doing so. All ranks were C.B. as from 0001 hrs. this morning. In the evening an ENSA show played in camp.	
Petworth, England	13 Nov. Tue.		Weather - bright and clear. At 0800 hrs. all ranks fell in for Muster Parade, on which parade all the men received three packs of Canadian cigarettes. At 1400 hrs. a parade was called when Lt-Colonel V.E. Traversy, the C.O., spoke to the men, telling them of the arrangements which had been made for the reception in Montreal. As this was the last time we would all be together on parade, until the final parade in Montreal, he expressed to the men his appreciation of their service in the Black Watch, and more particularly while under his command. As the movement from this camp will be in two "lifts" the men were then divided into two groups. Just before midnight the men of the first lift had a snack in the kitchens. This is one night move about which there have been no grouses; morale is at an all-time high.	
Southampton, England	14 Nov. Wed.		At 0050 hrs. the second lift paraded to the kitchen for a snack, and at 0100 hrs. the first lift moved off, followed one hour later by the men on the second lift. Two trains had been laid on to pick up the men when they arrived at Haslemere station, and as each man boarded he was given a Cdn. Army Mess Tin ration. Few of the men used this en route, spending the journey in sleeping. Immediately upon arrival at Southampton we boarded the "Queen Elizabeth", where we were conducted	

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WAR DIARY

Page 3.

3/19A MPM 11
40/P&S/37 (8028)

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Southampton, England	14 Nov. Wed.	19 45	(Cont.) to our quarters on "D" Deck. As no breakfast was forthcoming the rations issued on the train were consumed at least in part. During the remainder of the day the men walked around the ship and watched troop train after troop train disgorge their loads on the quay alongside. Two meals daily are served while on board, these being at 0800 hrs. and 1700 hrs.	
On Board "Queen Elizabeth"	15 Nov. Thu.		Weather - clear and cool. At 0700 hrs. this morning the moorings were cast off and six tugs slowly edged the giant liner out of her berth. We steamed down Southampton water until 0930 hrs., when we were lying off the Isle of Wight. From 0930 hrs until 1510 hrs. the ship slowly circled thrice while the process of "swinging the compass", known only to the marine hierarchy, was pursued. During the afternoon the canteens were opened for the sale of cigarettes, candy, and coca-cola. The massed pipe band of the Black Watch, Essex Scottish, Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders and Calgary Highlanders, played on the Sports Deck in the afternoon, a dress rehearsal for a future date when they will play for the Earl and Countess of Athlone, passengers with us on this voyage. In the evening a light rain fell and the wind rose somewhat.	
On Board "Queen Elizabeth"	16 Nov. Fri.		Weather - raining. Sea - moderate. Though the sea running was moderate some few of the men had moments of uncertainty. Boat drill enlivened the morning from 1100 hrs. until around noon. Movies are being shown on both the port and starboard sides of the promenade deck, four times daily. It was announced over the Public Address System that we had covered 601 nautical miles in the 24 hours since noon yesterday. In the evening a strong wind arose, causing a greater roll to the ship, but chasing away the rain.	

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Page 4.

3/19A MFM 11
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On Board "Queen Elizabeth"	17 Nov. Sat.	19 45	Weather - cloudy with rain. Sea - moderate. This morning we ran through a belt of fog and the ship's horn was brought into frequent use. A very heavy rain squall was encountered shortly after 1000 hrs., continuing for upwards of half an hour. Our run for the day was announced as 692 nautical miles. In the evening the wind rose attaining almost gale velocity, causing the ship, large though she may be, to buck more than a little.	
On Board "Queen Elizabeth"	18 Nov. Sun.		Weather - variable. Wind - very high. Sea - rough. This morning there were two Protestant and three Catholic church services conducted on board. The roughness of the sea with its effect upon the feeling of the men cut down the attendance considerably. The adverse weather conditions caused a drastic reduction in the ship's mileage for the day only 557 nautical miles being logged. At 1400 hrs. a medical inspection of all ranks aboard was conducted. In the afternoon the massed pipe band played for the Earl and Countess of Athlone, who, due to some error in staff work, failed to put in an appearance. Later in the afternoon all C.Os. of Infantry Units aboard were invited to meet the Governor-General. In the evening we passed a ship, only the lights of which could be seen, the first vessel we have encountered since leaving British waters.	
Halifax, N.S.	19 Nov. Mon.		Weather - bright sunshine, with cold wind. Sea - moderate. Though reveille was as usual at 0600 hrs. most of the men were up and about before that hour, looking for their first sight of land. It had been estimated that we would dock at 0800 hrs. but the inclement weather encountered yesterday set this back almost six hours. The mistiness prevailing at dawn was soon dispersed and the sun came out bright and clear. As neared Chebucto Point we received the escort of H.M.C.S. MICMAC, Canada's newest destroyer, and a flight of R.C.A.F. planes flying low overhead. As we neared the port of Halifax the massed pipe band, and the brass band of the South Saskatchewan Regiment appeared on deck to play us into the harbour. Many small boats loaded with civilians and service personnel came out to greet us.	

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Page 5.

3/19A MFM 11
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Halifax, N.S.	19 45 19 Nov. Mon.		(Cont.) Coming into the harbour itself the boats in the basin and at the wharves, greeted us with their horns, with dock, factory and train whistles adding to the cacophony. As tugs edged our vessel closer to its pier the R.C.A.F. band standing there played the National Anthem and followed it up with many popular selections, and as we tied up, the Mayor of Halifax, Allan M. Butler gave us official welcome, - his speech being punctuated by the cheers of the men on the ship. The men hung over the rails and clung to the most precarious of perches in an endeavour to see all that was transpiring on the quay. Major I.H. Louson and RQMS U.R.L. Emo, from Montreal, were on hand to assist with the arrangements for getting us home in good order. The business of disembarking was soon commenced and continued steadily for the remainder of the day. In the evening a full moon shone on the quiet waters of the harbour. We were back in Canada!	
En Route to Montreal, Que.	20 Nov. Tue.		Weather - overcast and cool. We had been originally scheduled to disembark at 0500 hrs. but it was not until 0915 hrs. that we mustered on the Promenade Deck. On the quay we were mustered in alphabetical order and allotted our berths on the train, then filed aboard. In the station the Canadian Red Cross served coffee and doughnuts, and distributed magazines, cigarettes, gum, and apples. At 1100 hrs. the train pulled out. At many of the stations en route we were met by the Red Cross representatives with hot drinks and a bite to eat. In the evening snow fell heavily and the countryside through which we were passing was soon blanketed. Baggage tickets and the programme of events laid on for our arrival in Montreal were distributed to all the men. The accomodation on the train was excellent, three men to a section, sleeping one up, and two down, with clean sheets and pillow-slips, and spring mattress provided. During the evening each man was given a leave pass, good until the 7th of January, ration coupons, and a priority slip for the purchase of a suit of clothes.	

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Page 6.


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Montreal, Que.	21 Nov.	Wed. 19 45	<p>Weather - bright sunshine, becoming overcast, cold. The train was scheduled to reach Montreal around 1500 hrs. but the heavy snow during the night resulted in some delay, which, however, had been almost made up by the time we reached Levis. As the train approached Montreal, cleaning rags appeared and the men gave their brass and boots a final rub up. Shortly after 1400 hrs. we reached Point St. Charles station, where the packs were collected on trucks to be transported to Craig St. Drill Hall, and at 1500 hrs. the train pulled in to the Bonaventure terminal. The public and military reception committee at the station included Colonel P.P. Hutchison, Regimental Commandant, Maj-Gen. E.J. Renaud, C.B., C.B.E., D.O.C., M.D. 4, The Minister of National Defense, Hon. D.C. Abbott, Minister of National Health and Welfare, Hon. Brooks Claxton, Maj-Gen. A.E. Walford, C.B.E., M.M., E.D., Adjutant-General, and, representing the City of Montreal, Councillor W.R. Bulloch. In the station paymasters were on hand to change sterling into collars, and while the men were waiting in line for this, coffee, doughnuts and cigarettes were distributed. The Bn. then formed up and marched off. The route followed was Chaboillez Square, where we were joined by those men of the 1st Bn. who were already home, under the command of Lt-Colonel E. Motzfeldt, thence East on St. James St., to Victoria Square, where Gen. Renaud received the "Eyes Right". Continuing along St. James St. to St. Gabriel, North to Craig St. and East to the Drill Hall. As we marched along this route, deeply lined with spectators, the reception was tumultuous, and the roar sent up by the assembled friends and relatives in the drill hall as we entered, breath-taking. When the parade had formed up three very brief addresses of welcome were made by Councillor Bulloch, Maj.-Gen. Renaud, and Colonel P.P. Hutchison, and replied to, with even greater brevity by Lt-Colonel Traversy. Permission having been received from Maj.-Gen. Renaud, our C.O., Lt-Colonel V.E. Traversy, gave the final Command - "Dismiss". We were home!!</p>	

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Montreal, Que.	19 45 22 Nov. Thu.		Bn. on Disembarkation Leave.	
Montreal, Que.	19 46 5 Jan. Sat.		Since the returning men of the 1st Bn. had been granted an extension of the normal disembarkation leave to include the Xmas and New Year's holiday, they were due to report for official discharge from the Army on 7 Jan. 46.	
Montreal, Que.	6 Jan. Sun.		<p>Therefor, a final Church Parade was held today at the Church of St. Andrew & St. Paul to return the Colours of the Bn., which had been deposited in the church by Lt-Colonel K.G. Blackader in 1939, to their place in the Armoury. An invitation was issued to all ranks who had served with the Bn. to take part in this final parade and a good number turned out, as well as many senior officers and friends of the Regt. The service was conducted by the Rev. G.H. Donald, assisted by H/Capt. R.J. Berlis, who had been the Bn's. Padre when it landed in Normandy. At the conclusion of the service, the Colours were returned by Dr. Donald & Capt. Berlis to Lt-Colonel V.E. Traversy who in turn gave them to the Colour Officers, Lt. H.H. MacKay & Lt. S.L. Martin.</p> <p>The Bn. paraded back to the Armoury, Lt-Colonel G.S. Cantlie, Hon. Colonel of the 1st Bn., taking the salute outside his home on Sherbrooke Street, and the Colours were marched off Parade to be deposited in the Colour Case in the Officers Mess. Prior to dismissing the Bn., Lt-Colonel V.E. Traversy thanked the men on behalf of all the officers who had served in the Bn., for their excellent service, and reminded them that in peace time they could find the same comradeship within the ranks of the Reserve Regt. and the Black Watch Association.</p> <p>The 1st Bn. was then dismissed from its last parade as an Active Service Unit to report the following day to No. 4 D.D. for discharge from the Army.</p>	

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Page 8.

3/19A MFM 11
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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks, references to Appendices and initials
Montreal, Que.	7 Jan.	19 46 Mon.	<p>The majority of the Bn. reported to their respective District Depots for demobilization and return to civilian life once more after an absence of many years in most cases.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">----- o -----</p> <p>N.B. 1st Bn. The Black Watch (RHR) of Canada was officially disbanded as an Active Unit of the Canadian Army on 30 Nov. 45 under authority of GO 85 of 1946.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">  Lt-Colonel V. E. Traversy Commanding Officer 1st Bn. The Black Watch (RHR) of Canada </p>	