

AWM52
2nd Australian Imperial Force and
Commonwealth Military Forces unit war
diaries, 1939-45 War

Item number: 8/3/3

2/3 Infantry Battalion
December 1941 - August 1942,
Report

578

Friday 26 Dec 41. — BOURKOCH.

Coy moved from old lines in Tents to new lines in HUTS in new Bn area.

Capt Lysaght taken on Coy strength to Comd Coy.

Sat. 27 Dec 41.

Eliminating heats for Bde Sports — BN finals.

B Coy won — (i) Sec alarm race — Cpl Lever and Sec.

" " " (ii) 880^x — Pte Chester

" " 2nd in ~~the~~ (i) Wire crushing Comp — Lieut Terry + 10 PL.

" " " " (ii) 100^x — Ptes Chester and Donohue — Dead heat

Sunday 28 Dec 41.

NIL to report.

Monday 29 Dec 41

Recce of BOURKOCH by Comds — Coy

on Routine Camp duties, less 11 PL, under comd of Lieut Strong, who mounted duties on the POK dump on the Damascus — Beirut Road.

Tuesday 30 Dec 41

Recce of BOURKOCH by Comds —

Coy, less 11 PL, on Camp duties.

Wednesday 31 Dec 41.

NIL to report.

Thursday 1 Jan 42.

Bde Sports at QATANA — foul

day — cold wind and rain from HERMON.

Sports, nevertheless, carried on — spectators lost interest.

B Coy won the Bn "Coy-cooking" competition with a very good meal consisting of hot vegetable soup, roast beef, roast potatoes, cabbage, battered onions, apricots and cream.

Coy failed to win an event for the BN in the sports.

Friday. 2 Jan 42.

Heavy rain and wind of yesterday turned to snow and a raging blizzard during the night. Coy awoke to find everywhere covered in snow, which had also found its way into most of the Huts. Spent days drying clothes and attempting to make huts waterproof.
Still snowing.

Sat. 3 Jan 42

Blizzard still raging. Huts in a bad state. Held P.T. in huts to keep men warm. Unable to do much, but made small fires in huts to dry clothes etc.

Sun. 4 Jan 42.

Blizzard raged all night, but dropped this morning - drifts of snow 6' to 8' deep. Impossible to do any training etc. Men employed on clearing the snow. Made large fire in N:3 Hut, using camel-thorn, to dry out clothes blankets etc - quite successful - everyone had some dry clothes by the evening.

No rations have been able to get through to the BN from Bde - using dry rations etc - nevertheless Coy Cook, Pte Fothergill, managed to have a good hot meal available on all occasions.

Mon. 5 Jan 42. Coy employed on clearing camp of snow etc - also clearing road to Bde.
No rations through yet.

Tues. 6 Jan 42. Coy clearing roads etc of snow -
Unable to get through to POL guard, 11 PL - snowed in. Rations came through on mule train.

Wed. 7 Jan 42. NX 5059 SMITH. WM. awarded the "Military Medal"
for gallant action in the Greece Campaign, in the New
Year's Awards List. SMITH, at present, acting as
batman to Capt Lysapour.

Coy still employed on digging out the BN-
Bde road - which was opened up and transport
able to get through with tanks.

Thursday. 8 Jan 42. NIL to report - message came
through that, although still snowed in, 11 PL
on the P.O.L. Dump was in good fettle apart
from a couple of cases of frost bitten feet of a
mild nature.

Frid. 9 Jan 42. NIL to report - Coy on Camp
duties.

Sat. 10 Jan 42. NIL to report.

Sund. 11 Jan 42. NIL to report.

Mon. 12 Jan 42. Lieut Terry and 44 O.R.s, attached
to C. Coy, marched out as part of the Damascus
Guard - a good opportunity for all these to get
cleaned up etc - baths and good billets for 14 days.
Marched in - 11 PL, under Comd Lieut Strong,
from P.O.L. Dump guard.

Tues. 13 Jan 42. Coy on BN duties - making
roads etc.

Noticed - great improvement in Coy lines, but still
room for more.

Wed. 14 Jan 42. NIL to report, beyond remainder of Coy employed on Camp Duties and BN Guard.

Thurs. 15 Jan 42. 35 ORs marched out from Coy, to relieve HQ Coy personnel on Damascus Guards, leaving approx 10 O.R.S and 2 offrs in Camp

Friday. 16 Jan 42. NIL to report - 90% of Coy on Damascus Guard under Comd. Capt Macdonald.

Sat. 17 Jan 42. NIL to report - ditto to 16 Jan 42.

Sun. 18 Jan 42. NIL to report. ditto to 16 Jan 42

Mon 19 Jan 42. NIL to report - ditto to 16 Jan 42.

Tues. 20 Jan 42. Capt Lysser took over comd of Damascus Guard from Capt Macdonald. - remainder of Coy ditto 16 Jan 42

Wed. 21 Jan 42. NIL to report - ditto to 16 Jan 42

Thursday 22 Jan 42. NIL to report - ditto to 16 Jan 42

Friday 23 Jan 42. Capt Brown to Palestine (7 days duty-cum leave)
NIL to report - ditto 16 Jan 42

Sat. 24 Jan 42. Lieut Grover and 12 ORs posted to the Coy from Rempts.

Sunday 25 Jan 42. Capt Lysser returned to Coy from Damascus Guard. Otherwisi NIL to report.

Mon. 26 Jan 42. Lieut Toney and 70 ORs returned from the Damascus Guard. Remainder of Coy. in camp, spent the day on weapon training. SGT Simpson (ex D Coy) joined B Coy as Pl Sgt 12 Pl. - at present A/CSM of Coy in place of Woff Smith.

Tues. 27 Jan 42. Light morning rain - Coy parade for the first time in 1942 - 5 Offrs and 90 ORs. Wet weather training programme in morning (Bren etc TOETS)
Bn muster parade at 1330 hrs. Weather cleared, and Coy went into the field and carried out "Drill for Night Attack" by day - well done.
Patrol Competition from 1830 - 2200 hrs - quite enthusiastically carried out, but much improvement needed (Lamp game).

Wed. 28 Jan 42. Fine day - weapon training in Camp area during the morning - later Pl Route March Competition in the afternoon (7 miles) - 10 Pl won (2 hrs 5 mins), 11 Pl 2nd, 12 Pl 3rd.

Thurs. 29 Jan 42. Very wet morning - wet weather training syllabus TOETS etc. Afternoon cleared up - Coy on wiring + digging HQ Coy area. Advance party K.O.R.R. arrived - Coy Comds.

Fri 30 Jan 42. Fine day but cold - Coy on digging and wiring HQ Coy area. Concert party in evening - food show, in recreation hut. Co. K.O.R.R. arrived

Sat. 31 Jan 42. Fine warm day - Coy digging + wiring HQ Coy Area during the morning. Afternoon spent in throwing S.T. + 73 Grenades, and firing 68 Grenades - very successful. Coy Comd receiv of BOURKOCK with Capt Minill, 6 Coy K.O.R.R.

Sun. 1 Feb 42. MIA to report, beyond Coy packing up. Kit bags packed to go on advance party of BN move.

Mon. 2 Feb 42. Lieut Strong + 3 ORs left, as representatives of the Coy, in the BN advance party for the BN move from Syria to Palestine.

Remainder of Coy under Lieut Lamb and Groves on the range - reveille 0500 hrs, breakfast 0600 hrs, marched to the range 0650 hrs. Very good weather for shooting, but standard very poor.

Tues 3 Feb 42. Bde Assault Course. Pts, individually, went over the Bde Assault Course, using live ammo - 31 Grenades, 68, 73, S.T. Grenades. Quite well done by all - interest was kept high. Particularly good piece of work was 11 PL's effort in getting 2" Mortar into action, without sights, in 45 seconds - the first round landing 5' from Target - range 400' (Ptes Plum and Feggans were 2" mortar men).

Wed. 4 Feb 42. Packing up day in preparation for BN move to Palestine. Was fine and warm - men took things easy - no fuss, no bother.

Thurs 5 Feb 42. Coy took part in BN move to Palestine - were not sorry to leave the cold weather of Mt Hermon. Reveille 0445 - breakfast - 0530 - Road party left 0630 hrs. Majority of Coy left 0800 hrs to proceed by rail. Everything went without a hitch throughout the move. Very slow journey to Haifa in cattle trucks - left Damascus 1130 hrs arrived HAIFA 0430 hrs 6 Feb 42. Men had a hot meal at HAIFA and entrained in a corridor

train, which was more comfortable. Left HAIFA
0545 hrs, arrived MADDAH 1030 hrs 6 Feb 42 - from
then by Tpt. to Beit Sirja Camp. been very
pleased to have showers and running water, at
last, after the rigours of M^s Hermon.

Friday 6 Feb 42. Troops settling in into new lines - No
training.

Sat. 7 Feb 42. Weapon Training during morning - PI
cross country run to Tskelon in the afternoon

Sunday. 8 Feb 42. Bde Church parade in Caesaria -
Coy, at full strength, attended. Aden day.

Monday 9 Feb 42. Coy route march - Dimria - Hus -
Burein - about 15 miles. Rather warm
for time of year + men in S.D. Some
sore feet.

Tues. 10 Feb 42. Training on weapons during
morning - aft. march to Dimria + Najd
to practice by day a Bvt in Night attack.
Quite successful - approx 9 mile march
Some sore feet + blisters.

Wednesday 11 Feb 42. Weapon training during morning
after ceremonial inspection of Bvt by the Brig.
Afternoon - Coy marched out on
20 hr exercise of Bvt in night attack. Very
successful, returning at approx 1100 hrs 12 Feb.

Thurs 12 Feb 42. Men tired after all night exercise -
new the tent carried out to E.T. in aft: also
a demo of 3" mortar by Lewis Stone.
21 Rempts and 5 x list with Sgt Macdonald
marched in to the Coy during afternoon.

Friday 13 Feb 42. M/Gas & weapon training all day
together with thorough kit inspection.

Sat. 14 Feb 42. Weapon training during morning
followed by TAB inoculation before lunch.
Picnic afternoon - 32 of the Coy on
the Jaffa Range under Lewis Tenney.

Sun. 15 Feb 42. Pack up practice - full kit inspection
Rece by Offrs for next weeks exercise.

Monday 16 Feb 42. Route march to BET-TIMA. Advance
Guard Exercise coming home - fls attacking
in turn. Quite well done. All NCO acted
as umpires and enemy - Ptes took count of
the Secs. Fire control orders on a landscape target
to PI Comd - PI Sigs & Sec Comd 2000 - 2045 hr.

Tues. 17 Feb 42. Miniature range practice - mostly
consisting of fire orders by Sec Comd to a sec
of four men. Harmonisation of sights with a
landscape target. Fire orders were bad - firing,
also, was of a low standard.

Wed 18 Feb 42. Morning - Competition on 2" Mortar with
live amm. Ptes Shipley, Lawson J.C. won £1 prize
for getting first bomb away in 50 secs landing
5' from target (310' x) - 2nd Kentwell + (10⁵-)
(10 PI) 6' x.

21 - 1st prize in grouping of three, after one lighter, Ptes Macdonald + England (12 PI). Shooting not of the best but winners + runners-up very good.

Off. - demo of incendiary bombs on BN parade ground following after with close order drill and preparing weapons for Saffa Range.

Thurs. 19 Feb 42. Coy at Saffa Range all day. Reveille 0500 hrs - started to shoot 0915 hrs. Weather conditions bad - heavy rain at midday. 5 rds repetition and 10 rds (two bursts) automatic at the 200^x and 300^x ranges.

Fri 20 Feb 42. Duty Coy. Remainder of Coy on Patrols to HOLEIQAT. Lunched at HOLEIQAT and marched back to camp practicing movement of Coy in open formation as an advanced guard in open country.

Sat. 21 Feb 42. Coy gave a demonstration using live 2" + 3" mortar ammo, to some twenty or thirty Arty Offrs - demo was an adv'd Coy to a BN. Terrible weather early in the morning - troops were soaked to the skin before they started out by torrential rain. The rain eased off giving place to a high wind, which made use of smoke impossible. Nevertheless all ranks did an excellent job and the demo was a great success. One 3" M bomb fell amongst 10 PI as they advanced to the final objective - luckily it was a 'smoke' bomb!

Sund. 22 Feb 42. Kit inspection in morning. Otherwise a rest day. Coy was duty Coy again.

Mon. 23 Feb 42. Reception training etc in the lines during the morning - afternoon, practice daylight-patrols East of Beit Sirja village.

Tues 24 Feb 42. 20 mile Route march under Command Capt Brown Route. Barbara Camp. At Jaluya Rd. - Kawkaba - HULEIFAT - BEIT SIRJA. Coy Comd and Pl Comds TESTS for two Coy attacks with special ref to battle procedure. The one from BEIT SIRJA towards HULEIFAT, the other through SUMSUM towards high ground behind NAJD.

Wed 25 Feb 42. Carried out as a Coy Exercise the first Tues TEST - selected some five Cpls and eighteen Ptes as spectators. Coy Comd acted as BN Comd, rifle commanded the Coy. Exercise proved very satisfactory in bringing out the necessary points of battle procedure in the attack.

Thurs. 26 Feb 42. Morning spent in practice in use of Recce Boats on small pond in Barbara Village - much amusement and interest. Afternoon - Offrs made recce of makeshift range at the mouth of WADI HESI - troops had smartening drill, I.D. and fire control orders. First Khamsin of the year made work very tedious.

Fri. 27 Feb 42. Pls in rotation marched to WADI HESI Range and had two hours range practice - not a very satisfactory show.

Sat. 28 Feb 42. Kit inspections during morning - Pl cross country run in afternoon.

Sun. 1 Mar 42. Quiet day - Kit inspection in morning
after Church parade.

Mon. 2 Mar 42. Patrols - Close country around HIRBYA

Tues 3 Mar 42. Coy marched out some three miles
to area between HIRBYA and BARBARA, where
a Coy attack was carried out over the Sand
Dunes - concentrated mostly on Battle
procedure. Late lunch in field, then
marched home to camp.

Wed 4 Mar 42 Pls in succession on the 30^x range
- training in camp on Rifle Exercises and
Smartening Drill while not at range.

Thurs. 5 Mar 42. Coy adv. Gd. exercise South of HIRBYA
with live enemy using blanks - quite
successful - lunched in field.
At last, information received of a definite move
of BN over the week-end. Much speculation
as to whether Bde returning to Australia.

Fri 6 Mar 42. Final packing up for BN move -
"NIL personnel on sick parade".

Sat 7 Mar 42. Getting Kit together all morning and
afternoon. 2200 hrs Coy embarked in the
offrs lines. 2330 hrs entrained at AL MAJDAL
Station. Everything went according to plan
11 P1 + 12 P2s rather slow at entraining.

Sun 8 Mar 42. Left AL MASJAL 0030 hrs. Fairly cold during the night journey to KANTARA - many halts on the way. Arrived KANTARA approx 1000 hrs - had a good breakfast waiting, under arrangements by Goodwin, - little time lost, and troops moved across the CANAL in very good order, immediately entraining at KANTARA WEST. Left KANTARA WEST at approx midday and arrived KIBRIT, 20 miles from SUEZ, at 1600 hrs. Troops low very tired and a march of 3 miles to the camp from detraining point in S.D. and full eqpt incl pack was very tiring. Had to erect some tents on arrival. A rotten camp, but a cinema was in operation that night which relieved things somewhat. This ended the first step of a very quiet and orderly move. Nothing was lost by Coy during transit.

Mon 9 Mar 42. Again, much speculation as to how long we remain here and whether we are going to Australia - the odds against Australia have considerably shortened during last 24 hrs. However, training was the order of the day, and the Coy had some Coy drill and smartening exercises during the morning. Coy ^{showed} some marked improvement. Coy swam in lower "Bitter" lake during afternoon - only about six inches of water on top of six inches of mud!! Still, men enjoyed it. In evening, orders for further move and embarkation at SUEZ on following day.

Tues. 10 Mar 42. BN moved out on 1700 - 3 10 Tonners
and 2 Trailers per Coy - for SUEZ.
Had to pack 45 men + kitbags in a
10 Tonne. Arrived on Wharf at SUEZ
approx 1100 hrs - where there was an
hour's wait in hot sun - men wearing
S.D. + full eqpt + packs. At 1200 hrs Coy
embarked on lighter and moved out with
Bay and embarked on HMT ORONTES.
2/3 BN were last unit to embark on
the ship. Ship very crowded - the
entire 16 Bds. Coy rather split up
in various corners of the ship, Coy HQ
and about 13 of 10 Pl in cabins on
E Deck, Remainder 10 Pl 11 Pl and some
14 of 12 Pl sleeping in hammocks on
G 7 Deck, remainder 12 Pl and Rem of
Pl down on H 1 Deck.

Men had a good meal and seemed
very cheerful. Rather a mix up at
the moment. Ship sailed at 1730 hrs
in a great hurry - a quantity of the
BN's stores were unable to be loaded.

Cpl Parker + Pte Edwards. V., 10 Pl,
had to stay on stores lighter at last moment,
to come on in the M.T. ship.

Anxiety over Coy weapons + Ordn. Room
stores, which may have been left behind

Wed 11 Mar 42. In RED SEA. Sorting out
of Coy - men finding way about the
ship. Still rather a muddle.
Great relief, as all Coy weapons came

aboard, also the Coy Qd Room Gear
and training manuals. Men very
contented, but odds against returning
to Australia lengthened considerably owing
to some rumours. Managed some training
on C. Deck. Coy was duty Coy to BN.

Thurs. 12 Mar 42. Things settling down now. Training
in weapons + sweetening drills on B Deck.
Very cramped for room, unlike the trip
from Australia in 1940 on the ORCADES.
Weather getting much warmer - hot
on the lower decks.

Friday 13 Mar 42. Regular routine now. Start morning
training at 0900 hrs till 1145 hrs. Aft from
1330 - 1600 hrs Sport + P.T.
Passed PERIM late in evening.

Sat 14 Mar 42. Much excitement, as ship turned
round during the night, and now heading
due WEST on our tracks - turned NW
and reached ADEN at approx 1100 hrs.

Fair amount of speculation now owing
to this rapid change of course. Rumours
of Enemy Raiders etc in Indian Ocean very
prevalent. Odds against returning to
Australia shortening.

Usual routine training. Ship
remained at anchor outside ADEN harbour.
Pretty warm here - lower decks very trying
after "blackout". Men in lower decks allowed
to sleep out on open decks at night.

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Sun 15 Mar 42. Still at anchor off ADEN. Easy day - Church service in morning and some training.

Mon 16 Mar 42. Still off ADEN. Routine training. Aircraft carrier and three destroyers came into port during morning. During sport in aft. B Coy beat A Coy at a TUG of WAR.

Tues 17 Mar 42. Still off ADEN, but moved into inner harbour at 1400 hrs. Routine training. During aft a great TUG of WAR Challenge B vs C, C having previously represented the BN in SYRIA. Much money on the event. B won the toss and had advantage of the deck. B won - two pulls to one. Also beat A Coy in three legged race and relay race in the forenoon for Ships Sports.

Wed. 18 Mar 42. Left ADEN 0730 hrs in convoy. Usual training. Final of BN TUG of WAR in aft. B vs D. D Coy won, two pulls to one, a better & heavier team than B Coy.

Thurs. 19 Mar 42. Cool breeze after damp heat of ADEN. Training on deck during morning - sport in aft. Ples Chesher & Macpherson beat D Coy pair in final for BN three legged race - to represent BN in Bde Sports. Boat drill in afternoon.

Fri 20 Mar 42. Ship now in danger area of Indian Ocean - all personnel wearing life jackets at all times. Aft. Bde sports. Ptes Chesher + MacPherson won the Bde threelegged race for the BN easily. Ptes Sliger + Burke in BN TUG of War Team which beat 2/2 BN in the final.

Sat. 21 Mar 42. Coy was duty Coy of duty BN - consequently little or no training done - all men on various duties. Boat still at 1130 hrs - surprise one

Sun 22 Mar 42. Church parade in morning - otherwise an easy day. Coy now mounting five F.A.L.M.G. on the poop deck. Attack by enemy aircraft now considered quite possible.

Mon. 23 Mar 42. Usual training - ship now in the 8th danger zone. "A" deck cleared for action. Concert held on "B" deck aft during afternoon.

Tues. 24 Mar 42. Nothing unusual to report. Coy packing up gear, ready to disembark tomorrow morning at Colombo.

Wed 25 Mar 42. Arrived at Colombo approx midday without incident. After standing by, informed that troops not disembarking till Friday. However, kitbags and offrs gear went ashore - 12 PL providing an unloading party till midnight.

Thurs 26 Mar 42. A little training - Reinft Pl. under Comd Lieut Groen, went ashore at 0600 hrs

on a shore loading party, returning at midday. COLOMBO very full of ships.

Fri 27 Mar 42. Describarkatini started at 0600 hrs by 4/1 BN followed by 2/2 BN. Everything went to plan on board. B Coy started down the gangway at 1315 hrs, carrying all Coy weapons. Short wait some 200' from the wharf, while BN assembled - then a march of about one mile to the Ry Station - very hot! Troop train was on time and the entrainment easy carried out quietly and efficiently. Train departed at approx 1430 hrs; about 3/4 hr run South along the Coast to PANADURA - troops pleased to see much greenery at last. B Coy had a long wait on the station from 1600 - 2000 hrs - not sufficient tft for BN. At 2000 hrs the Coy moved off in 7 motor buses for HORANA. Arrived HORANA Camp at approx 2145 hrs. A cup of tea and hard rations. Men bedded down immediately in native huts.

Sat 28 Mar 42. B Coy duty Coy - all men on various fatigues - erected many lean-tos for men to sleep in - only two natives huts made of coconut palms - rather crude conditions but men taking it all in good spirit.

Sun 29 Mar 42. Coy still put Camp and buses in order. Some weapon training done.

Mon 30 Mar 42. Coy digging PI locality defenses
to form part of BN Camp protection.

Tues. 31 Mar 42. Finished off digging def posns.
Manured posns at night, and carried
out exercise from 1830 - 2200 on infiltration
and counter-infiltration. Some good points
raised.

Wed. 1 Apr 42. 20 mile route march - a try out
of light eqpt, which did not prove very
satisfactory. Very hot and men very
tired at the end. Only took water-bottles
and small pieces of bread, for rations, in
order to test for endurance. 23 men
failed to complete the march.

Thurs. 2 Apr 42. Suby Coy. No men on training.
Lieut Tenney took 10 PI on a road recon on
trucks to GALLE on the South Coast.

Adminstration after Church service
Fri. 3 Apr. 42. ~~before training in morning~~. Heavy
rain during aft. curtailed a short march
to ELLAKANDE HILL. Good Friday

Sat. 4 Apr 42. before training during morning. marched
to ELLAKANDE (approx 3 miles) in afternoon.
At approx 1900 hrs, BN stand to, owing to information
received that JAP invasion fleet approaching CEYLON.
Men keyed up, weapons set and bayonets
sharpened!

Sund. 5 Apr 42. Easter day. BN standing on
1/2 hour notice. Stand-ti in def posts from
0530 - 0615 hrs.

At 0745 hrs heavy attack on COLOMBO
by approx 70 to 80 enemy aircraft.
Coy could not see much, but heard all,
men saw one enemy bomber shot down
in flame by our hurricane.

Later the great news came through
that 27 enemy planes had been brought
down! and another ten probables. Great
show by RAF and RAAF.

Invasion fleet reported only 100 miles
off SONDRA - the southern tip of the island.
Stand-ti at dusk.

Mon. 6 Apr 42. Still standing 1/2 hour notice.
No further news of invasion fleet.
Coy duty Coy.

Tues. 7 Apr 42. Training within Coy area - weapon training
and tree sniping. Stand-ti night & morning.

Wed. 8 Apr. 42. Position easier - enemy fleet reported moving
away. Coy moved further out for training -
patrols all the morning - mostly making men
accustomed to the country. Stand-ti at daybreak
cancelled - very popular order!

Thurs 9 Apr 42. 17 mile Route march to the KALU GANGA -
A good march - hot, but most of men enjoyed
it. Had lunch under the trees by the river.
Returned to camp by 1530 hrs - mounted duties

the same evening. Several members of Coy away
at Colombo doing ~~set~~ Stevedore jobs unloading
ships.

Fri 10 Apr 42. Duty Coy. Nil to report. o.c. away
making trace of PT areas inland in the
mountains.

Sat. 11 Apr 42. A day. Thirteen (4 each Pl + 1 Coy HQ)
went by Truck to PANADURA on the coast, for
a swim - very much enjoyed.

Sun. 12 Apr 42. Coy attended Church parade under rubber trees -
Brig attended also. Easy day.

Mon 13 Apr 42. Duty Coy. Nil to report.

Tues 14 Apr 42. Patrol demo in morning by Sgt Simpson + one
Pte from each Pl. Well done, and many useful
points brought out. Afternoon - Pls in turn
practised riding bicycles and ambushing bicycle
patrols in turn - much amusement at some
efforts of riding!

Wed. 15 Apr 42. Duty Coy - Nil to report.

Thurs 16 Apr 42. Marched to "PERTH" property on RD HORANA-INGIRIYA
and had lunch under rubber trees. Pls in turn
did a 5 mile bicycle patrol along road, finally
being ambushed by another Pl.

Fri 17 Apr 42. Duty Coy - Nil to report. Nightly Standing
patrol, which had been in operation for the past ten
days, suspended till further notice - very popular
decision!

Sat. 18 Apr 42. Admin day. Reserve Pl under command
Lieut Strang went to PANADURA for a swim in
afternoon.

Sun 19 Apr 42. NIL to report. 17 Pl made Road recce
to GALLE - much enjoyed by the men, who
were able to get a good meal, and a charge
from the Camp.

Mon. 20 Apr 42. Coy out training all day - moving
through thick scrub & jungle in two's and
threes. Good training and preparation
for heavier jungle.

Tues. 21 Apr 42. Duty Coy. NIL to report.

Wed 22 Apr 42. Offs away on recce in hill
country. Coy under command Lieut Randall
moved out five miles along Rd HORANA -
INGIRIYA, practising circular flank & patrols.
Quite strenuous going.

Thurs 23 Apr 42. Duty Coy. Offs still away on
recce. Night patrols cancelled owing to very
heavy rain.

Fri 24 Apr 42. Heavy rain all night and still
raining - 8.5 inches in 24 hours!
Training in jungle movement cancelled.

Sat. 25 Apr 42. Duty Coy. Preparation for coy
move up into hill country.

Sun 26 Apr 42. Reveille 0530 hrs. Heavy rain early. Coy set off at 0800 hrs for hill stations. Rd HORANA - INGIRIYA flooded, necessitating going round via AVISAWELLA to get to RATNAPURA. Arrived PELMADULLA 1200 hrs. PIs had moved in to locations by 1500 hrs. Men very pleased at change, cool air and dry billets.

Mon 27 Apr 42. PIs digging PI localities and Rd Blocks. Everything running smoothly and men seem well contented with new locations. Local planters giving much assistance, especially Mr. Brown at Coy Hdq at PELMADULLA, and Mr & Mrs Rumbelow at 10 PI RAKWANA.

10 PI	at RAKWANA	- 1500' above sea
11 PI	" LANARK	- 500' " "
12 PI	" BALANGODA	- 1600' " "

Tues. 28 Apr 42. Visit of C.O. + Adjt to Coy area + PI localities. Routine same as Monday.

Wed. 29 Apr 42. Visit of Bn 2 1/2 Coy H.Q. + 12 PI. Bt sig visited Nos 10 + 11 PI areas. All PIs engaged on digging PI localities + making Rd Blocks.

Thurs 30 Apr 42. Men well settled down in new quarters - and seem well contented and glad of the change.

Fri 1 May 42. PI spent day in making recce
of areas around their localities. 10 PI
had a mishap - Cpl Searle and Pte
Seward falling down a waterfall for some
90 feet. Cpl Searle hurt his back and
Pte Seward dislocated his shoulder - both
taken away by ambulance.

Night Patrols from 2300 - 0300

Sat 2 May 42. 10 PI made recce of BULUTOTA pass
- HAYES-LAUDERDALE + MATARA. 11 + 12
PIs on Road Blocks

Sun 3 May 42. 12 PI made recce of Rd BALANGAJA-
WELLAWAYA - HAMBANTOT. Unable
to reach the sea in time allowed.

Ptes Hyland and Potts, 10 PI, played
for the BN at a sportscast, RATNAPURA
Club. Some of 10 PI under Lieut Grover
felling timber for Rd Blocks.

Mon 4 May 42. Still considerable amount of
work to be done to complete posns.

All pls engaged on finishing up their
particular tasks. Weather, so far, has
been excellent for past eight days - little
rain. 11 PI Recce to HAMBANTOT.

Tues. 5 May 42. Finishing areas + road blocks and
packing up. Weather still excellent -
men very fit after change of air.

Wed. 6 May 42. Coy moved back to camp and
mounted duties same evening.
One and two day leave has now started
of Colombo, at last.

Thurs 7 May 42. Duty Coy - nil to report.

Fri 8 May 42. Exercise through jungle country
south of INGIRIYA. fairly tough job,
but men managed it quite well - using
group formation of twos & threes.

Sat. 9 May 42. Duty Coy. Night Exercise
just south of camp area - practice in
protection at night at a bivouac area.
Good lessons learnt - challenging + passwords.

Sun. 10 May 42. Interior Economy. Sports meeting
at Ratnapura - some members of Coy
took part and others went as spectators
- very much enjoyed.

Mon 11th May 42. Duty Coy + preparation for
3 day exercise.

Tues 12th May } 3 day exercise - advanced guard
Wed 13th " } for first two days. Coy did not
Thurs 14 " } come up to scratch - put over a
disappointing show. Third day's work
improved considerably, when Coy acting
as rear guard.
Much improvement required in "guts"
and discipline.

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Fri ¹⁵ 19 May 42. Men very tired after 3 day Exercise -
but carried out 14 mile Route march, and
Six hour call out in M.T. at night.

¹⁶
Sat ¹⁶ 19 May 42. Miniature range - rifle and LMG
Shooting results still very poor - perhaps due
to the fact that not enough time is
allowed for coaching. Men in rather
tired condition after very strenuous week.

¹⁷
Sun ¹⁷ 19 May 42. Rest day - much appreciated
by men. Nevertheless preparation made
for next 3 day Exercise acting as enemy
to D Coy.

¹⁸
Mon 20 May 42 } 3 day Exercise - enemy to D
Tues 21 " } Coy. An entirely different
Wed 22 " } Shows to last time. Coy were
well on top all the time and put
over an excellent exercise. Quick
to take advantage when withdrawing on
Mon & Tues and speedy in the
Adv Gd on Wed. A great improvement

Thurs 23 May 42. Camp training. At Gas
and weapons. Discussion in the
aft. on the last ten days' exercises.

Fri 24 May 42. Duty Coy. Nil to report.

Sat 25 May 42. Adm.

Sunday 26 May 42. Nil to report. Mouson broke
but not very severe - everyone

expected to be washed out, but weather
no more severe than some previous
storms.

Remnant PI has now dwindled to only
9 men.

Some new cpls have been created
during fast week.

Pte Armstrong becoming A/cpl

4/cpl Richards " A/cpl

" " Boyd " A/cpl

" " Matthews A.c. " A/cpl.

A/cpl Hoare, reverting to Pte

4/cpl Hamington " " Pte.

Mon. 25. Coy practice of HVC crossing of
KALU GANGA under command CSM - not
very successful, owing to a very swollen
stream. CSM and one other managed
to gain a crossing in a catamaran
much to the amusement of the rest
of Coy. Civilian ferries not allowed to
be used. Coy Offs. made recon
of BENTOTA area in preparation for Bde
Exercise.

Tues. 26 May 42. Coy left Camp 1500 hrs, with
1 det M3, 1 sec carriers porter for Bde
Exercise. Successful move to BENTOTA
where a bivouac was made. Coy HQ
being the BENTOTA Rest House!!

Wed. 27 May 42. Bde Exercise. Coy did very
well considering that the scheme was

allowing enemy, 2/2 Bn + 2 Coy 2/3, to be made casualties.

2 secs of 10 Pl, under Comd Lieut Tenney, were cut off at BENTOTA bridge but continued to fight very well behind the enemy's lines.

11 Pl, also, were all made casualties after a good show in ambushing the enemy's flank.

12 Pl got away to the 30 mile post to fight again at a later stage of the exercise and to hold the enemy and inflict heavy casualties on them.

Canon Sec under comd Sgt MacLennan did a good job, as also did the M3 Det.

Not a good exercise from the men's point of view, though some lessons were learnt. Reached Camp 2100 hrs.

Thurs 28 May 42. Duty Coy. Very heavy rain all day, lasting all night.

Fri 29 May 42. Rain ceased, and Coy spent day erecting new huts out in the Camp Def area. It seems at last that there will be some reasonable accommodation for the men who have been living in very poor conditions so far.

Sat. 30 May 42. A dm day - but some members of Coy working on new huts.

Sunday 31 May 42. Quiet day - men resting
Some work done on New Hubs - very
anxious to get same finished as present
hubs are v. bad.

Mon 1 Jun 42. Duties Coy. In the evening
Coy played Rugby Union against D Coy
on the PERTH Estate. B Coy won easily
27-3 - Lieut Strong leading B Coy Team

Tues. 2 Jun 42. All day spent on building huts
- good job done by the men, but
natives very slow on the thatching

Wed 3 Jun 42. Compass march by secs - not
very well done, but difficult country
and heavy rain all day - a good test
of training in reading maps of country.

Thurs 4 Jun 42. Heavy rain and then bright
patches - managed to do some framing
in Camp area, T.O.E.T. mostly.

General Knowledge questions by PIs
in the evening under rather difficult
conditions owing to hut shortage and little
available space. Questions rather hard
but some well answered.

Fri 5 Jun 42 River crossing by individuals. Men
got soaking wet and exercise rather
unpopular at first. However there was
more practice and the men quite
enjoyed the day once they got thoroughly
wet.

C.S.M. lost his rifle and spent on the bottom of a river, but a native managed to find the rifle and brought it up.

Sat 6 Jun 42. Adm nil of interest to report

Sun 7 Jun 42. Quiet day but preparations made for BN 3 or 4 day Exercise.

Mon 8 Jun 42 } BN Exercise. 2/1 + 2/2 Bns + Arty
Tues 9 " " } attacked 2/3 BN in its RATNAPURA
Wed 10 " " } defence posts. Resulted in an
easy win for 2/3.

B Coy did exceptionally well in the Exercise and was well commended, all three PIs doing a wonderful job. The passing of information back was a great improvement and probably led to the success of the BN.

Thurs 11 Jun 42. Evacuated night 10-11 Jun 42 in RATNAPURA, near PALM GARDEN Estate - had early hot breakfast 0500 and left for camp 0600 reaching our lines 0845 hrs. - men fairly tired and spent remainder of day resting - also mounted duties.

Fri 12 Jun 42. T.O.E.T.s and Map Reading. Weather very fine, for a change. Nil of interest to note.

Sat 13 Jun 42. Adm day - PIs finishing off their new huts in readiness to move in next week.

The Coy played N.1 Bty Arty in the evening at Rugby Union. B Coy won 21-6. Our back play was far superior and pretty to watch. Lieut Stray, Ptes Burke, Manzies, Longobardi, Jack, Englist, Mr. Pherson, Duncan, Kentwell, Sgt Burke & Matthew B.S., Wilson, Atkinson, Adler, Macdonald. I. composed B Coys Team - All played a good game.

B Coy now have to play C Coy in the BN Competition and the bets are running very high - B Coy being favourites at the moment.

Sun 14 Jun 42. Duty Coy & Camp all day. Some Coy "Scouts" went to Perth Estate to see C Coy play an intra Coy rugby tryout.

Mon 15 Jun 42. Coy took part in BN practice move - packed all gear and marched some 6 miles up HORANA - PADUKKA Road and back. On return to camp, Coy moved to its new lines, which, though much better than the old lines, are not yet completed. Sgt Macdonald returned to the Coy, temporarily, in place Sgt Baxter, ill.

Tues 16 Jun 42. Compass march by secs, and lunch in the field. Great disappointment today, as training programme, which gave the Coy Camp training, altered at last minute, by BN, to compass march - meaning that rugby team, which is to play C Coy in key match tonight,

will be fixed when going on to play -
B Coy beat C Coy in first class game 11-6.
B Coy were better and deserved the win
the score being 11-3 shortly after half-
time. Both sides played very hard.

Wed. 17 Jun 42. Camp training - map Reading
and weapon training. Preparations for
2 day BN Exercise.

Thurs 18 Jun 42 } 2 day BN Exercise - PADUKKA Road.
Fri 19 " " } Not a good exercise - though the part
played by the Coy was quite well
done

Sat 20 Jun 42. Adm - Final of BN Rugby
Competition B Coy v. HQ Coy. -
B Coy short of Lieut Strong but still
have a good side. HQ Coy beat B Coy
16-8. Good game - best side won

Sun 21 Jun 42.

First official news of impending move - great
speculation now about returning to Australia.
Quiet day. Eqpt being scrubbed
for next Tuesday's inspection.

Mon 22 Jun 42. Weapon training in Coy area
Final cleaning and inspections for
tomorrow's inspection of the BN by
the Brig. Coy mounted duties
in evening.

Tues 23 JUN 42. Brig inspection of BN on PERTH
Estate. BN looked the best ever and
B Coy, depleted owing to being duty Coy
4 off + 57 ORS, turned out really well,
and all ranks put their very best
into it. Arrived back in camp approx
1130 hr.

Wed 24 JUN 42 Weapon training etc in Coy Area.
There are now daily leave parties to
Colombo from 0800 - 1600 for shopping
A good idea - 2 men each day.
Much tea and souvenirs
being bought.

Thurs 25 JUN 42. Training in Coy Area - mostly
T.P.E.T. Rather a reaction setting
in now after the hard training - only
to be expected.

Fri 26 JUN 42 Nil of interest to report. I.T.B. personnel
and all hospital cases returned to the
Coy. necessitating the reforming of
the Reserve Pl. mounted duties
in the evening.

Stand-t. was badly done - a black
mark against Coy!! However, men
not really to blame, as Coy Comd
himself forgot about it!! There
has been no Stand-t. for some time.

Sat. 27 Jun. 42. Duty Coy. Erected Tents
again in preparation for incoming unit.

Sun 28 Jun 42. Easy day. Coy Soccer Team
played a return match against D Coy
which ended in a draw 1-1 for the
second time - this was played in the
morning at the PERTH Estate.

In the evening B Coy played
A Coy at Rugby Union, and B Coy
won 14-3 - the score flattered B Coy
who were not playing to their usual
standard. A Coy never crossed B Coy's
line - the 3 points being a penalty.

Mon 29 Jun 42. Camp training - one hour
smartening drill on Camp Road.
Coy smartening up well now, and
arms drill showing a great
improvement.

H.Q. Coy gave demos to B Coy
of Sigs, 3" Mortar & Cannon during
afternoon - interesting change for men.

Tues 30 Jun 42. Camp training - bit of interest to report

Wed 1 Jul 42. Duty Coy - Played return match
against C Coy in the evening - Rugby
Union. Not such a good game as
last time but B Coy won 6-3
much celebration in the lines that
night !!

Thurs 2 Jul 42. Marched to PERTH Estate and had some ceremonial drill - final Coy drill for many months. Results were good

Fri 3 Jul 42. Compass march all day - not very popular! Men now getting all clothes cleaned up ready for move.

Sat. 4 Jul 42. Adm. Practice pack by BN.

Sun 5 Jul 42. Duty Coy. 48 BN Northamptonshire Regt arrived 0500 hrs to relieve the 2/3 BN in Ceylon. Most of day spent in setting B Coy 48 BN into their huts. This camp a great shock to these "Tommys" who have not been out of barracks since war began

Mon 6 Jul 42. Short route march to keep men occupied and out of camp

Tues 7 Jul 42. Another short route march to PERTH Estate where men had a swim in river. Final packing up for early move tomorrow morning - embarkation day. Where to? The BODS seem to be on Australia this time. Concert in the evening which was attended by both units.

Wed 5 Jul 42. BN move to embarkation at Colombo. Very good and quick move - after arriving near wharf troops immediately boarded lighters which took us out to "Westerland" - a horrid "tub". Usual difficulties of first few hours in board, but taking all in all things went pretty well.

Thurs 9 Jul 42. Settling down gradually. Still in port but went for short trip out of harbour in afternoon. Very hot all night both on mess decks and in cabins. Food not bad for the troops but rather "light on". Boat drill in afternoon which went well. Money was changed today and the odds on return to Australia rose pretty high, as money was changed to Australian.

Fri 10 Jul 42. Still in harbour - very hot + sticky, especially at night during blackout. Everyone "fed up" with waiting around and want to get going for home.

Sat 11 Jul 42. Training on deck under difficulties - very little room to do any rifle drill. Still in port.

Sun 12 Jul 42. Not of interest to report - still in port.

Mon. 13 Jul 42. At last! After lunch the convoy sailed. Great relief - much cooler at sea.

Tues. 14 Jul 42. At sea - apparently heading South.
Many colds among the men owing to cool
change in temperature out on deck.
Food on board not too good - but there
is little grumbling.

Wed 15 Jul 42. Usual attempts at training, which fall
rather flat. B Coy have a fair training
area today on the promenade deck but
on alternate days have to go to A Deck
aft where very little can be done.

Thurs 16 Jul 42. Rained most of the day, allowing no
training in the morning. Difficult to keep
men occupied.

Fri 17 Jul 42. Nil of interest to report. Coy all on duties being
duties Coy of ships duties unit. Weather a little
cooler but still very close between decks at
night time.

Sat 18 Jul 42. Wretched morning - training area A Deck aft,
rained most of time. Aft men went on to the
promenade deck to listen to concert over the radio.

Sun. 19 Jul 42. Quiet day - nil to report.

Mon. 20 Jul 42. Improvement in weather - but colder. Attempted
training on A Deck aft. Aft B Coy pulled
C Coy in heat for Top of beam. B Coy was
fairly comfortably.

Tues 21 Jul 42. Nil to report. B Sports cancelled owing

heavy seas. Air Alarm and Boat Station
drill in aft.

Wed. 22 Jul 42. Nil of interest to report. Conditions on
mess decks are now quite pleasant for the
men owing to colder weather.

Thurs 23 Jul 42. Training on Prom Deck - men still
in Summer dress + pullovers and feeling
the cold. Coy bridge tournament on
the mess deck in the evening. Capt
Brown!! won - but prize £1 went
to Pte Menezies 10 Pl.

Fri. 24 Jul 42. Winter dress for all. BN sports in
afternoon on Boat Deck. B Coy won
biggest share of events. Pte Sliger & Burke
the wheelbarrow race - Sgt Burke the apple
race. 2 sec, 10 Pl, won the sea alarm
race under Cpl Seate.

Sat 25 Jul 42. Training on prom deck - nil of interest
to report. Radio concert in afternoon.

Sun 26 Jul 42. Adm - not to report.

Mon 27 Jul 42. Nil to report - men looking fwd to first
glimpse of Australia in morning.

Tues. 28 Jul 42. Sighted Australia at approx 0715 am
Anchored off Fremantle at 1100 hrs -
news came through that leave was
going to be on. 60% of Coy went on

leave to Perth & Fremantle when ship
pulled in to South Quay at 1400 hrs.

Things were well organised. Trains etc
to Perth, each man having to pay for
only which entitled him to travel on all
trains and trams. Leave up till 2400 hrs.

Wed 29 Jun 42 } leave each day for 60% of pay from 1100-2400
Thurs 30 Jun 42 } hrs. Some AWLS late back to ship.
Unfortunate to lose any of these AWLS, as
most made good effort to return, having
consumed first beer for many weeks.

Fri 31 Jun 42. Ship's duty Coy - nil of interest.
Left Fremantle at 1500 hrs.

Sat 1 Aug 42. Running South and getting much colder.
Nil of interest. Concert in afternoon.
Men are able to buy one bottle of beer
per day now which helps to pass the
time on a rather uninteresting trip.

Sun 2 Aug 42. Adm - Concert in afternoon.
Cold on deck during training hours.
Convoy heading East now - must be
well into the "Bright" by now.

Mon 10 Aug. Packing up ready for leave
General issue of new clothes - men
looking much tidier.

Sun 9 Aug. Settling in camp - Church service in
morning at American Recreation Tent
Pay for leave - tea + clothing coupons
issued. Spirits generally very high
with prospect of leave during next
fortnight.

Sat. 8 Aug. Disembarked at 0830 hr + entrained
on the wharf. Left Melbourne 0930
and reached Sydney 1300 hr.
Went to camp and had excellent hot
meal ready.

BN lines next to some
Americans.

V. cold here. men issued with
four blankets.

Fri 7 Aug. Reached Melbourne quay at approx
0900. Frantic rush at last
moment to disembark - having got
everything packed up + men ready
decks swept + clean, were informed
that our unit were not disembarking
till next day.

Thurs 6 Aug.

Tues. 1 Sep. Approx 15 men bus of Coy returned midday
Rather a shock to find themselves put
on a route march in the aft. Went
back took Coy for 2 hour march.
Leave 1700 - 0100 for 55% of Coy.
Mon 31 Aug. Some half dozen members returned
from leave. Camp training in
morning + short route march in the
aft. under Coy command.
Leave for 10% of Coy 1700 - 0200 tonight

Sun 30 Aug. General leave for all
today

Sat 29 Aug. Adm. lit to report

Fri 28 Aug. More members returned from leave
Short route march in aft.

Thurs 27 Aug. Camp adm. Short route march
in aft. Very much post leave
feeling.

Wed 26 Aug. Sydney metropolitan members returned
from leave.

Thurs 13 Aug. Last parties to leave - North Coast
North Western + South Coast parties. Good
trains thro to Sydney - tea at Wangaratta
+ Bf at Moss Vale very well organised

Wed 12 Aug. SA Queensland parties went on leave

Tues 11 Aug. Sydney metro leave party left.