

Second World War Unit War Diary - Arthur Huyshe Yeatman-Biggs

The following is from the National Archives WO 172/4900

WAR DIARY			Army Form C-2118.
<small>Instructions regarding War Diaries and Intelligence Summaries are Contained in F. S. Regs., Vol. I. Title pages will be prepared in manuscript.</small>			7TH BN THE LEICESTERSHIRE REGT.
(Erase heading not required.)			Sheet 2.
Hour, Date, Place.	Summary of Events and Information.	Remarks and references to appendices.	
12 MAY 44. BURMA.	P.M. 47 Coln - Contacted Recce Pl at Pt 1408, and went into bivouac. Intended S.D. and rest following day. Weather extremely hot.	Ref Maps BURMA 83 P/NE, 83 P/SE, 92 D/SW, 92 D/NW, 92 C/SW, 92 C/SE. 1" to 2 miles.	
13 MAY.	At 0430 hrs Coln attacked in bivouac by Jap patrol with ponies estimated 30 strong. Original intention to stay until first light, and then clean up. Japs, however, made excellent use of cover, and as they were inflicting casualties on men and mules, and it was not known whether they were an advance party of a bigger force moving up behind, it was decided to pull out. Main portion of Coln moved down boulder strewn chaung with precipitous sides. It eventually became necessary to leave the chaung. This necessitated off-loading the mules, and man-handling loads up the side for some 200 ft. Japs failed to follow up, probably due to fact that their offr was killed. Arrived bivouac chaung 775770. Own casualties:- <u>Killed</u> : Offrs - two. (Major YEATMAN-BIGGS and Lieut SUTTON) W.Os - one. (CSM Holmes) Rank and file - six. <u>Missing</u> : Rank & file - five. <u>Wounded</u> : Rank & file - thirteen. <u>Animals killed</u> : one pony; two bullocks; thirteen mules.		
14 MAY.	47 Coln - Walking wounded despatched under Capt. DACOSTA for flying out by light plane from NAMAKYAING SG74. Coln ordered to move to MAINGTHEINGYI SGOSS, and proceeded via MALIN SG7962 - NATMANK SO5675 - Ft 3390 SGB52730 - NAMSANG chaung - MAINGTHEINGYI.	JL	

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1 - 10 MAY 44. BURMA.	Garrisoned WHITE CITY. Enemy restricted their activities to spasmodic and ineffectual shelling and mortaring, and one air attack by approx 17 planes. During this time remainder 14 Bde concentrated in area of block to act as "floaters" to cover evacuation. BLACK WATCH fought heavy engagement EAST of block against approx one Jap Regt, which was thought to be that which had been contacted by the Bn in the TATLWIN area. Force placed under command General J. STILWELL, Comd U.S. - Chinese forces. On 6 May orders received that on evacuation of WHITE CITY 14 Bde were to operate as "floaters" for block established at "BLACKPOOL" SC2304 by 111 Bde. 47 Coln were ordered en route to operate against railway area KADU SG9465. Recce pl despatched to area Pt 1408 SG882552 to recce safe bivouac for Coln, and suitable lines of approach to railway. WHITE CITY evacuated during night of 9/10th May without interference in spite of fact that Japs had ranged landing strip during previous afternoon. DAKOTAS flew in at dusk with limited reinforcements, and took out fortress stores and guns, and sick and wounded. 49 sorties flown.	Ref Maps BURMA 83 P/NE, 83 P/SE, 92 D/SW, 92 D/NW, 92 C/SW, 92 C/SE. 1" to 2 miles.	
10 MAY.	Bn moved out at 0300 hrs leaving Commando pls to booby-trap and destroy non-essential stores. Subsequently, on return to Coln, Commandos reported Jap reinforcements with tanks were moving up from SOUTH. <u>Note</u> . Just prior to leaving, plan again changed, and complete Bn ordered to proceed with all speed to KYUSANLAI PASS SH0495, with intention of securing and holding it until arrival of remainder of Bde.	JL	
10 - 16 MAY.	74 Coln - March to MAINTHEINGYI 799875. Very steep and difficult going. Monsoon started punctually on 15th May. Light plane strip constructed.		

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7 Leicesters,
11 A.B.P.O.

17 December 1944.

Dear Sir Claude,

Thank you very much indeed for your kind letter of the 8th December.

I will not pretend that the disbandment of our battalion has not been a very sad blow to us all. Many of my officers and men had served together since the formation of the battalion, and had a most wonderful pride in the unit. As a comparative newcomer, I am extremely proud to have commanded them, as, in my small experience, I have yet to see a keener, more intelligent, and a better disciplined body of men, than they were when I took over command.

There are two things by which we console ourselves. Firstly, that we have been lucky enough to go into action as a unit before disbandment, and secondly, that the majority of the battalion are still remaining within the Regiment.

Again thank you very much for writing. We do so appreciate it.

Yours sincerely,

F.R. WILFORD.

His Excellency General Sir Claude J.E. Auchinleck,
G.C.I.E., G.B., C.S.I., D.S.O., C.B.E., A.D.C.

COPY.

No. 39457/Ord. 4(b)

NEW DELHI.
December, 1944.

8th

My dear Wilford,

During the past few months it has become increasingly difficult to keep our British Infantry Battalions out here up to strength. It is now unfortunately necessary to reduce temporarily the number of active battalions.

The excellent work done by the battalion when fighting in Burma recently with the Special Force is well known and fully recognised but, after very careful consideration of all the many factors involved, and after a reference had been made to the War Office, I decided most reluctantly that the battalion under your command would have to be one of those to be disbanded.

It is, however, a consolation to me, and I hope it will be to you also, that the fine and well trained fighting material in the battalion will be available for the 2nd Battalion of the Regiment, which has been chosen to serve with the re-organised Special Force.

I wish you and all ranks the very best of luck and every success in the future.

Yours sincerely,

C.J.E. AUCHINLECK.

Lt. Col. F.R. WILFORD,
Commanding, Leicestershire Regiment,
C/o No. 29 Adv Base P.O.

240401	/Lieut. GRACH	Order W-34
PART C-DESCRIPTION OF UNIT IS PA		
Rank	Name and Initials	
166100	/Lieut. SAUHL	
C.F.B.A. ON		

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