

Original War Diary of 606 Coy (Palestine), Pioneer Corps (Transcription)

22 November 1940 – 31 August 1942

Transcript by:

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Acknowledgements

Dalia Rubinstein, a friend and a good manuscript reader.
Yehuda Scheffer, Colonel (ret.), for the copies of authentic military documents that were invaluable for the interpretation of this diary. His assistance was particularly helpful in understanding the military background of the events in Greece and Crete included in the manuscript.

Forward

1. The company was formed in 22 November 1940 at Sarafand camp in Palestine (Eretz-Israel). All of the ordinary soldiers and most of the Non-Commissioned Officers were Jewish, the commander and most of the officers were British.
2. The name of the company was changed on the 1st of January 1941 from "6 Company, Pioneer Corps" to "606 Company, Pioneer Corps".
3. During the period 1940 – 1942, the company served at these locations in the following chronological order: Palestine, Egypt, Greece, Milos Island, Crete, Egypt, Cyprus, Egypt.
4. The manuscript of the original War Diary is in the holding of "The British National Archives" Files: WO 169/581, WO 169/2423 and WO 169/6400, years: 1940, 1941 and 1942 accordingly.
5. The following War Diary pages of 606 Coy have not been found in the The British National Archives: pages recording events in Egypt from February 1941 – 8 March 1941, in Greece from 9 March –14 April 1941 and in Egypt during June 1941. Some of the events that took place during the above mentioned periods have been added as notes in chronologically relevant places based on information that was collected from other sources. Regarding the missing War Diary pages for June 1941, a possible

explanation could be that at that time the company was in the process of reorganizing.

6. On 15 April 1941, 90 soldiers and one officer of the 603 Coy Pioneer Corps were attached to the 606 Coy. As of that date, in most cases, the War Diary for Greece and Crete refers to both sections as 606 Coy. However, in the Heading of the War Diary there is a clear reference that the content of the diary refers to 606 Coy + a detachment of 603 Coy Pioneer Corps.
7. This War Diary describes events that took place in Milos from 23 April 1941 until 1 May 1941, although recorded very briefly (three lines). On the morning of 23 April 1941, 606 Coy Deputy Commander Captain Ernest Wallace Christie, MC. (Military Cross) was killed in enemy action - during the attack and bombing of the “PANCRATION” on its way to Milos Bay – by Italian airplanes. During the battle, the company shot down two enemy planes. The company arrived to shore in the early afternoon of that day. On 24 April 1941, the ship sunk. While staying in Milos Island, the company endured several air raids daily, shot down two enemy planes and overcame a heavy attack by 15 hydroplanes.
8. The events on the island of Crete – in which 606 company actions took place in the course of May 1941 - were written by an unknown soldier and signed by 2/Lt. Mordechai Shyfman. The person who recorded the events did not use fluent English, and therefore the records contain numerous spelling and grammatical mistakes. Some of the spelling mistakes were corrected and some grammatical mistakes were left in order to maintain the authenticity of the War Diary.
9. Notes and corrections would be greatly appreciated. Please contact: Shaked60@gmail.com .
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Notes

1. Additions and clarifications carried out in the process of writing the manuscript appear between square brackets [].
2. Deciphered acronyms also appear between square brackets [].
3. Names, interpretations and location names appear in *italics* and between square brackets, as well [].
4. Spelling errors appear between square brackets with equal marks [=].
5. Necessary grammatical corrections appear between square brackets and appear in *Italics* [*Italics*].

Original War Diary of 606 Coy, Pioneer Corps (Transcription)**22 November 1940 – 31 August 1942**

| Instructions regarding War Diaries and Intelligence Summaries are contained in F. S. Regs., Part II. [Field Service Regulations, Part II]. and the Staff Manual respectively. Title pages will be prepared in manuscript. <i>Month and Year</i> <u>November 1940 – January 1941</u> | | | WAR DIARY <i>Or</i> INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY. (Erase heading not required). | Army Form C. 2118. Unit: 606 Coy A. M. P. C. (Palestinian) [Auxiliary Military Pioneer Corps] Commanding Officer: R. L. T. Murray Major [Rupert Luxmoore Tanner Murray Major] |
|--|-------------------------|-------|--|---|
| Place. | Date. | Hour. | Summary of Events and Information. | Reference to Appendices. |
| Sarafand | 22 th Nov 40 | N R | Coy was formed and proceeded to Mena Camp near Cairo in three parties the last party arriving at Mena on 25 th Nov. | |
| Mena Camp | 22 th Nov 40 | " | Coy was employed daily on tent pitching. | |
| " | to | | | |
| " | 30 Nov 40 | " | | |
| " | | | | |
| Mena Camp | 1 st Dec 40 | | Coy was employed daily on tent pitching. | |
| | to | | " " | |
| | 16 th Dec 40 | | " " | |
| Mena Camp | 17 th Dec 40 | | Coy proceeded to the Western Desert [<i>to Sidi-Hanish</i>], arriving on the | |
| | " | | morning of the 18 th Dec. | |
| Western Desert | 18 th Dec 40 | | Coy was employed in digging in and making dugouts [<i>in Sidi-Hanish</i>]. | |
| | to | | | |
| " | 26 th Dec 40 | | 100 men were employed daily clearing the railway | |
| " | 27 th Dec 40 | | at Sidi-Hanish Station. | |
| | to | | 25 Men were employed road making at Kilo [Kilometer] 61 on | |

| | | | | |
|--------------|------------------------------|--|---|--|
| | 31 th Dec 40 | | rd [road] Marsa Matuch – Alexandria. daily | |
| | | | 8 Men were employed daily as instructed for | |
| | | | austra New Zealand Pioneers at kilo [Kilometer] 11 on | |
| | | | rd Marsa Matuch – Alexandria. | |
| | | | 20 employed daily constructing a dugout at Bagunh | |
| | | | Camp. Remainder of Coy on fatigues and construction | |
| | | | wall in camp. | |
| Sidi-Hanish | 1 st Jan 41 to | | 150 men worked daily at Sidi-Hanish station on clearance of track and on light railway construction. | |
| | 25 Jan 41 | | 8 men employed daily at Kilo [Kilometer] 11 as instructed for New Zealand Pioneer Coy. 25 man employed daily in road construction at Kilo [Kilometer] 61 road Mersa Matruh - Alexandria. Remainder of coy in fatigues daily in camp. | |
| | 26 Jan 41 | | Coy moved by train from Sidi-Hanish station to Mersa Matruh. | |
| Mersa Matruh | 27 Jan 41 to 29 Jan 41 | | Coy engaged in getting into Billets and etc. | |
| | 30 Jan 41 to 31 Jan 41 | | Coy did one hour drill followed by one hour English lesson. | |

Notes:

As mentioned above, the War Diary pages recording events: in Egypt during February - March 1941, and in Greece up to 14 April 1941, have not been found. However, information from other sources reveals:

- a. On 10 February 1941 the Company left Mersa Matruh (Lybia-Egypt border) and arrived by transportation to El-Amiriya Camp. On 7 March 1941, the Company left El-Amiriya Camp by train for Alexandria.
- b. The next day, the Company embarked in Alexandria Port on the light cruiser HMAS “PERTH”. On 9 March 1941, the Company disembarked in Piraeus, Greece and moved to Kokinia Camp near Athens.
- c. The Coy worked on the docks of Pireus Harbor unloading ammunition and equipment from ships and placing the cargo on trains leaving for the front.

| Instructions regarding War Diaries and Intelligence Summaries are contained in F. S. Regs., Vol. I. [Field Service Regulations, Vol. I]. and the Staff Manual respectively. Title pages will be prepared in manuscript. <i>Month and Year</i> <u>March 1941 – May 1941</u> | | | WAR DIARY <i>Or</i> INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY. (Erase heading not required). | Army Form C. 2118. Unit: <u>606 + Detachment of 603 Coy P. C.</u> [Pioneer Corps] Commanding Officer: <u>Major R. L. T. Murray</u> |
|---|-----------|-------|---|--|
| Place. | Date. | Hour. | Summary of Events and Information. | Reference to Appendices. |
| Kokinia Pireus | 15 Apr 41 | 1900 | 2/Lt. Shifman [= Shyfman] and 90 men attached to 606 Coy. | |
| | 16 Apr 41 | | 2 partys [= parties] consisting 210 men worked in Pireus and Eleusis. | |
| | 17 Apr 41 | | 215 men working party to Pireus and Scaramaga [= <i>Skaramaga</i>]. | |
| | 18 Apr 41 | | 100 men worked under 2/Lt. Zhon in Eleusis. | |
| | | 0930 | Heavy air attack on the harbour. 2 men wounded. | |
| | 19 Apr 41 | | 120 men under 2/Lt. Shifman worked in Scaramaga [<i>Skaramaga</i>]. | |
| | 20 Apr 41 | | 120 " " [men under 2/Lt.] Ben Aharon " " [worked in] Eleusis. | |
| | 21 Apr 41 | 1000 | An order arrived from Force H.Q. [Headquarters] issued by Major Cotton stated all ranks are confined to camp and had to be ready to move within 2 hours. | |
| | | 1600 | Another order issued by a/m [above mentioned] stated, Be ready to move within one hour notice. No transport. Carry only equipment and 2 days haversack rations. | |
| | | 2100 | Order received from a/m. 2 Pal. Officers and 60 OR. [Other Ranks] full armed to be ready to move forthwith. Officer will report to H.Q. at 2200 Hrs. | |
| | | 2130 | 2/Lt. B. Zohn and 2/Lt. Ben Ahron detailed by Major Murray, went off. | |
| Kokinia Pireus | 21 Apr 41 | 2200 | 60 Men of 606 + 603 detailed by Major Murray parade. | |
| | 22 Apr 41 | 0030 | 2/Lt. Zohn left camp with his party for some unknown destination. | |
| | | 0200 | 2/Lt. Ben Ahron dito. | |
| | | 1000 | Cpt. [= Capt.] McCulloch and 100 OR. equipped with rifles, 6 Lewis guns and 10,000 rounds amm. [ammunition] arrived to camp. According Major Cotton's orders detached himself [<u>from 603 Coy</u>] to 606 Coy. | |

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| | | 1430 | A message signed by Major Cotton arrived stated, All the troops stationed in Kokinia will leave the camp at 1515 Hrs. Proceeding to Pireus harbour to the Coal Quay to embark. No transport. Carry equipment and 2 days rations. | |
| | | 1515 | 1008 Cyprus Coy, 606 and detachment [of 603 Coy] marched off. | |
| Pireus | | 1710 | Stopped the march in town. Heavy air attack on harbour. | |
| | | 1930 | The 'PANKRATION' [= 'PANCRATION'] 600 tones, 5 ½ knots [= knots] speed, no life belts two leaking boats was occupied by Major Murray, Cpt. Christi [Christie], Cpt. McCulloch, 2/Lt. Shifman and 392 OR. of 606 and 603 Coy P. C. | |
| Pireus | 22 Apr 41 | 1930 | Also Cpt. Reed, Dr. Cpt. Makalidis, 2/Lt. Chikali and 200 men of 1008 Coy, also the Roman Catholic Padre Cpt. Grice. | |
| Pireus | 23 Apr 41 | 0030 | The 'PANKRATION' [= 'PANCRATION'] left harbour. | |
| Milos | 23 Apr 41 to 1 May 41 | | Refer to the Diary kept by Cpt. Reed who was under the same command and under the same conditions. Sent to H.Q. M.E. [Headquarters Middle East] in the beginning of month May 41 from Crete. | <i>M. Szyfman 2/Lt. 603 Coy P. C.</i> |
| Crete | 1 May 41 | 0730 | 273 OR. and Major Murray of 606 Coy P.C., 118 OR. Cpt. McCulloch and 2/Lt. Shifman of 603 Coy P.C. disembarked from the destroyer 'Havock' at Suda. Marched off from Suda according to the order given by Movement Control Officer to proceeding to Camp "D". | |
| | | 1100 | Arrived at Camp "D". | |
| | 2 May 41 | 1900 | 45 PAL. OR. who have arrived in small sailing boats from Greece joined this Company. | |
| | 5 May 41 | 0900 | Arrived at Suda Bay and made the Camp under olive trees as instructed by A.D.P.& L. [Assistant-Director of Pioneer and Labour]. | |
| | | 1000 | A report signed by Major Murray indicating deliveries of blankets, cooking, essentials and clothing has been submitted to A.D.P.& L. in Canea. | |
| | 6 May 41 | | 2 shifts of 150 men each under the supervision of Cpt. McCulloch & 2/Lt. Shifman worked in Suda docks. | |

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| Suda Bay / Crete | 7 May 41 | | 2 shifts of 150 <i>[men]</i> each worked in the docks. | |
| | | 1700 | Air raid warning. Few bombs have been dropped. No damage. | |
| | 8 May 41 | | 300 men in two shifts unloaded A.A. [Anti Aircraft] guns and ammunition. | |
| | 9 May 41 | | 285 men on work. Sick comprised 65 men. | |
| | 10 May 41 | | 34 men went to hospital. 225 men on work. | |
| | | 0915 | Air raid in harbour. No damage. 1 Plane brought down by A.A. [Anti Aircraft]. | |
| | 11 May 41 | | 225 men on work in the harbour in two shifts. | |
| | 12 May 41 | | Dito. Air raid alarm in the afternoon. | |
| | 13 May 41 | 0100 / 0430 | Heavy bombing on the Suda Harbour. One small boat damaged. | |
| | | 0430 | 3 bombs exploded in the camp area. No casualties. 220 <i>[men]</i> worked as usual. 3 times interrupted by enemy planes. | |
| | 14 May 41 | | 220 men in Suda. 20 men on special job in Canea. | |
| | 15 May 41 | | Same number [= numbers] in docks. Work slightly seased [= ceased], because of 7 air raids on which about 50 enemy planes took part. No damage. One wounded slightly. | |
| Suda Bay | 16 May 41 | | 200 men required for the dock. 100 each shift. | |
| | | 1715 | 35 enemy planes attacked in the harbour. One liner damaged. 2 smaller sunk. 4 killed, 35 wounded. Including 4 men of 606 Coy wounded. | |
| | 17 May 41 | | 150 men required for the docks. | |
| | | 1600 | 40 enemy planes attacked the dock. 1 direct hit on jetty. 1 direct hit on amm. [ammunition] ship which exploded. 20 killed on the ship. 1 on the jetty. 4 men of 606 + 603 Coy wounded and sent to hospital. 2 planes brought down by A.A. [Anti Aircraft]. | |
| | 18 May 41 | | 100 men on work, which seased remarkable [= ceased remarkably]. 14 raids during the day. Slight damage on small barges. Few wounded. 3 planes brought down by A.A. 5 bombs exploded in area of 606 coy. No damage. | |
| | 19 May 41 | 0630 | The first air raid whilst men were on way to docks. The work in harbour very limit [= limited]. Continually raid. | |

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| Suda Bay | 20 May 41 | | The work in the harbour stopped. | |
| | | 0630 | The first enemy reconnaissance planes came over. | |
| | | 0715 | Like a cloud of mosquitoes appeared bombers and fighters from all directions. Bombing and gunning started all over the valley, in between Suda, Canea and the aerodrome. | |
| | | 1000 | A rumor reported that parachutists [= parachutists] have been dropped near the aerodrome and the wireless station. | |
| | | 1015 | According Major Murray's order 2/Lt. Shifman with 50 men guarded the Suda Canea road. Cpt. McCulloch and 50 men guarded the 42nd Street. All equipt [= equipped] with rifles and amm. [<i>ammunition</i>]. | |
| | | 1200 | Cypriot troops evacuating their camps past [= passed] through 606 Coy camp area. | |
| | | 1400 | Appeared Lt. Col. Ride and the officers of 1005, 1006 & 1008 Coys. Lt. Col Ride ordered to establish one headquarter for the pioneers with Major Murray as D.C. [Direct Commander]. Air attack continues until dark. | |
| Suda Bay | 21 May 41 | 0545 | Many hundreds [<i>of</i>] enemy planes appeared. Heavy attack on petrol dump which was some 200 yards from camp. Big number of bombs fell in the camp area. All men in slit trenches except guards posted as yesterday. | |
| | | 1400 | A.A. fire seased [= ceased]. The planes came to 50 feet above head. Heavy machine gunning all over the area. L/Cpl. Wagner deadly wounded. | |
| | | 1500 | Col. Mc Knoll O.C. [Officer Commanding] Suda Sub-Area ordered to evacuate the camp proceeding to the hillside on the South. | |
| | | 1900 | 2/Lt. Shifman and 35 men went to the amm. [Ammunition] Dump at Tobruk Avenue for night work. | |
| | 22 May 41 | | The Connection with D.A.D. [Divisional Ammunition Dump] had been cut off. Rations portion dropped down. 5 wounded during one day. Cpt. Dr. Stefanidis [Stephanides] with assistant of L/Cpl. Torbin runned [= running] an own hospital in a Hous [= house] air raid shelter. | |
| | | 1300 | Report has been given to Major Murray that parachutists have been dropped on gliders in Wavel Street. They destroyed A.A. battery. | |
| Suda Bay | 23 May 41 | 1030 | Major Fanington cold [= called] in and informed that parachutists have occupied the Malma aerodrome and gliders with parachutists landed in Canea, but the wireless line is still held on. | |

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| | | 1400 | Greek policeman reported that parachutists have been dropped on the other side hill [= hill side] near the camp area of 606 Coy. | |
| | | 1410 | 2/Lt. Shifman went with 20 men to patrol the area. | |
| | | 1545 | 2/Lt. Shifman stated that report was false. It seemed to be 5 th columnist's work in mean to bring panic in the lines. | |
| | | 2130 | Ordered by A.D.M.S. [Advanced Depot Medical Stores] through Major Murray. 2/Lt. Shifman and 40 men marched off proceeding to the wireless station to pitch tents for a hospital. | |
| | 24 May 41 | 0545 | 2/Lt. Shifman reported that half of the tents were pitched during the night, also that at 2 am enemy planes dropped cases in the wireless area, by light of many lights shown [= shone] from the ground. | |
| Suda Bay | 24 May 41 | 0605 | Very high concentrated gun fire by low flying planes on the camps of the Royal Marines, Australians and Pioneers. | |
| | | 0720 | Sgt. Loeb of 606 Coy reported. Whilst being in 7th G. [7th General] Hospital he had been captured by parachutists 4 days ago. He escaped in the same night. Capt. Stefanidis accommodated the Sgt. in his M.S. [Medical Service] room. | |
| | | 1945 | Capt. McCulloch went with 40 men to finish pitching hospital tents. | |
| | | 2400 | Capt. McCulloch reported that he found some of the tents burned, some riddled with bullets and he decided not to carry on. | |
| | 25 May 41 | 0600 | 2/Lt. Shifman and 20 men proceeded to ammunition dump at Tobruk Avenue. | |
| | | 2000 | 2/Lt. Shifman reported back with the men. The gunning and bombing was going on from dusk to dusk. Force H.Q. [Headquarters] moved in 606 Coy's area. | |
| | 26 May 41 | 0600 | Capt. McCulloch and 20 men went to the amm. [ammunition] dump at Tobruk Avenue. | |
| | | 1500 | Order from F.H.Q. [Force Headquarters] arrived. The camp has to be removed. | |
| Suda Bay | 26 May 41 | 1500 | Proceeding to the South, because the advanced [of] 3 miles. | |
| | | 2000 | Capt. McCulloch reported that one man of his working party had been light wounded. | |
| | | 2100 | The Coy left camp by sections. | |
| | | 2220 | The Coy lingered south of Suda town under trees. | |

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| | | 2230 | Capt. Stefanidis went with his patients in two vehicles to embark. | |
| | 27 May 41 | 0455 | Capt. James reported to Major Murray that it had been a general break through and the H.Q. ordered to evacuate to the south coast for possible embarkation. | |
| | | 0505 | Major Murray called officers and section commanders and ordered, that everyone shall find his own way south coast, he thanked for work done and God help you. | |
| | | 0515 | The Coy dispersed into the hills. | |
| | 31 May 41 | | Disembarked from "Glengyle" had only 280 OR. and 2/Lt. M. Shifman. Major Murray, Capt. McCulloch believed prisoners of war. | <i>Szyfman 2/Lt. 603 Coy P. C.</i> |

Notes:

As mentioned above, the War Diary pages recording events in Egypt during June 1941, have not been found. However, information from other sources reveals:

- a. The Coy's soldiers were taken from Alexandria Port by transportation to El-Bisher Camp, and left for Palestine for a one week leave.
- b. During June 1941 the coy was in the process of reorganizing in El-Qassasin Camp. The missing commanding strength of the Company was replaced by British officers and Jewish officers. The strength of the Company was completed by ordinary soldiers from the Jewish Pioneer Corps (601, 609) that have not been sent to Greece, and a small number of British soldiers.

| Instructions regarding War Diaries and Intelligence Summaries are contained in F. S. Regs., Vol. I. [Field Service Regulations, Vol. I]. and the Staff Manual respectively. Title pages will be prepared in manuscript. Month and Year <u>July 1941 – August 1941</u> | | | WAR DIARY <i>Or</i> INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY. <i>(Erase heading not required).</i> | Army Form C. 2118. Unit: <u>606 Coy P. C. [Pioneer Corps]</u> ... Commanding Officer: <u>Major I. W. Brooks</u> ... |
|--|-----------|-------|---|--|
| Place. | Date. | Hour. | Summary of Events and Information. | Reference to Appendices. |
| Base. <i>[El-Qassasin]</i> | 5 July 41 | | Capt. J. A. Stretch Pooled 2 nd in command, and in command pending affirmation of O.C. Also pooled 2 nd Lt. M. J. Sinto 2 nd Lt. M. Shyfman. Also British OR.s complement. | |
| | 9 July 41 | | Musketing training commanded. | |

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| | 12 July 41 | | C.Q.M.S. [Company Quarter Master Sergeant] Britton returned to Base details. C.Q.M.S. Conn Pooled. | |
| | 13 July 41 | | Verbal movement orders received. 1098 [= 1008 Cypriot Pioneer Coy] lodged. Use of range requested. | |
| | 12 July 41 | | Major I. W. Brooks pooled in command. | |
| | 13 July 41 | | Became fully armed. 2 machine guns Rifle ammunition etc. (Italia) | |
| Base. | 17 July 41 | | Entrained. | |
| Port Said. | 17 July 41 | | Detrained. | |
| | 18 July 41 | | Embarked HMT [His Majesty Troopship] 'WARZAWA' [= 'WARSZAWA']. | |
| Famagusta | 20 July 41 | | Disembarked. | |
| | 20 July 41 | | Established Camp Stavros. | |
| | 21 July 41 | | Company engaged in general Dock Work. The Company continued in this line of work to end of month. Serving. | |
| | 31 July 41 | | General satisfaction. Major Brooks indisposed for past few days. | <i>J. A. Stretch Capt. for O.C. 606 P. C. 1/8/41</i> |
| Field. | 1 Aug 41 | | Major I. W. Brooks admitted to hospital. Captain J. A. Stretch assumed command. | |
| | 2 Aug 41 | 1600 | | |
| | 5 Aug 41 | | Nothing of interest. | |
| | 6 Aug 41 | | Major I. W. Brooks discharged from hospital and resumed command. | |
| | 7 Aug 41 | | Air raid on harbour. 7 men wounded. | |
| | 8 Aug 41 | 1500 | | |
| | 20 Aug 41 | | Nothing of interest. | |
| | 21 Aug 41 | | Air raid on harbor, we escaped casualties. | |
| | 22 Aug 41 | 1500 | | |
| | 31 Aug 41 | | Nothing of interest. | |

| Instructions regarding War Diaries and Intelligence Summaries are contained in F. S. Regs., Vol. I [Field Service Regulations, Vol. I]. and the Staff Manual respectively. Title pages will be prepared in manuscript. <i>Month and Year</i> <u>Septmber 1941 – October 1941</u> | | | WAR DIARY <i>Or</i> INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY. (Erase heading not required). | Army Form C. 2118. Unit: <u>606 Coy Pioneer Corps</u> Commanding Officer: <u>Major J. A. Stretch</u> |
|---|-----------|-------|--|---|
| Place. | Date. | Hour. | Summary of Events and Information. | Reference to Appendices. |
| | 6 Sep 41 | | Maj. [= Major] I. W. Brooks was drunk or dummy and behaved very badly. | |
| | 7 Sep 41 | | Consulted staff Capt., re above Maj. Brooks admitted to hospital. Capt. J. A. Stretch assumed command. I submit report on Maj. Brooks conduct to higher authority. | |
| | 10 Sep 41 | | Accused Maj. Brooks suspended and under arrest. | |
| | 11 Sep 41 | | Capt. J. A. Stretch recommended by O.C. sub area to be Local - Temp (unpaid) Major. | |
| | 12 Sep 41 | | Summary of evidence in the case of Major Brooks, commenced. | |
| | 14 Sep 41 | | Capt. J. A. Stretch interviewed by S.O.C. [Senior Operations Commander] Area regarding appointment to Local rank of Major. | |
| | 14 Sep 41 | | The Brigadier accorded. | |
| | 21 Sep 41 | | Jewish New Year Eve 1 ¹ / ₂ days holiday granted by higher authority A Rabbi attended and full religious exercise was available. The break was much appreciated by all ranks. | |
| | 22 Sep 41 | | Jewish New Year Day the holiday continued. | |
| | 1 Oct 41 | | Jewish Day of Atonement 1 ¹ / ₂ days released from duties. Senior Jewish Chaplain to Forces attached + spend 3 days in camp full appportunity for Relgious Experience, was given. The Chaplain expressed his complete satisfaction and congratulated the CO [Commanding Officer] + officers on their mens [men's] comfort + happiness. | |
| | 22 Oct 41 | | Court Martial of Major I W Brooks advised that Major G. Pape, at present at P.C.B.D. [Pioneer Corps Base Depot] is appointed to command of unit, VICE Maj. Brooks CRME/P/21743/Ag3. (D) dated Oct. 13 th 1941. | |

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|--|-----------|-------|---|---|
| Place. | Date. | Hour. | Summary of Events and Information. | Reference to Appendices. |
| Field | 1 Nov 41 | | Refresher Musketing course commenced. | |
| | 3 Nov 41 | | Range exercise commenced (Range exercise accommodation is very limited only 4 joining at a time). | |
| | 4 Nov 41 | | Major A G Pape – RE. [Royal Engineers] attached Pioneer Corps. reported for duty and assumed command. Captain J. A. STRETCH resumed 2 nd in command. | |
| | 10 Nov 41 | | Shipping requirements having eased, a full training programme is resumed. Training continued to the end of the month almost without interruptions. There was nothing of further interest. | |
| Field | 1 Dec 41 | | Company commenced intensive infantry training programme. | |
| | 1 Dec 41 | | Company took over defensive position in Famagusta. | |
| | 4 Dec 41 | | Company removed temporarily from under canvas into billets, pending completion of winter hut quarters. | |
| | 14 Dec 41 | | Company celebrated Feast of Tabernacles [= Hannukka]. | |
| | 22 Dec 41 | | Four sections of the Company took up Battle positions in readiness to defend the docks & Harbour at Famagusta. | |
| Field | 24 Dec 41 | | Capt. J. A. Stretch. 2nd in Command returned to P.C.B.D. [Pioneer Corps Base Depot] for re-posting. 2/Lt. R. A. Beavan appointed Captain & 2 nd in command of Company. | |
| | 28 Dec 41 | | One Company of 2 H.L.I. [2nd Highland Light Infantry] relieved our Company of Battle positions. 606 Company P. C. detailed as reinforcements to Company of 2 H.L.I. | |
| Field | 6 Jan 42 | | 19 reinforcements arrived from P.C.B.D. [Pioneer Corps Base Depot], + were taken on the strength of the Company. | |
| | 8 Jan 42 | | 4 sections of the Company under 2/Lt. M. J. Sinto took up battle positions from the H.L.I. [2nd Highland Light Infantry] for 24 hours on the Docks + Harbour at Famagusta. Three gun | |

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| | | | sections also took up positions. | |
| | 13 Jan 42 | | 4 sections + 3 Gun sections of the Company under 2/Lt. Sinto took up Battle Postions from the H.L.I. for 24 Hours on the Docks + Harbour at Famagusta. | |
| Field | 16 Jan 42 | | 4 sections + 3 gun sections of the Company held a successful field day. | |
| | 22 Jan 42 | | 4 sections + 3 of the Company under 2/Lt. Sinto took up Ballte Poistions from H.L.I. for 24 hours on the docks + Harbour at Famagusta. | |
| | 29 Jan 42 | | 39 ORs embarked for Sarafand to be trained as N.C.Os [Non-Commissioned Officers] at the Palestine Recruiting Training Depot. | |
| Field | 4 Feb 42 | | Company held a field day in its Battle Positions. | |
| | 5 Feb 42 to 27 Feb | | Company employed in strengthening Battle Positions. | |
| | 12 Feb 42 to 28 Feb 42 | | 200 Civilian laborers employed in assisting company to strengthen Battle Positions. | |
| | 18 Feb 42 | | 30 reinforcements arrived from P.C.B.D. [Pioneer Corps Base Depot] were taken on the strength of the Company. | |
| | 28 Feb 42 | | Company proceeded to Battle Positions to take part in 25 Corps [25 Corps - Cyprus Volunteer Force] field exercises which continued until March 1 st 1942. | |
| Field | 12 Mar 42 | | Gun sections took over Battle Positions from 2nd H.L.I. for 12 hours. Remainder of Company employed at Famagusta Docks to assist movement of 10 Ind. Inf. Bte. [10th Indian Infantry Battalion] which left the island. | |
| | 17 Mar 42 | | Company held a field day. | |
| | 1 Mar 42 to 31 Mar 42 | | Company continued its training program. | |
| Field | 3 Apr 42 | | Lt. Col. Murray, Famagusta Brigade commander, + Staff Captain, Famagusta Brigade, visited the unit's Camp, + made a tour of inspection. | |

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| | 7 Apr 42 | | Capt. Beavan + 2/Lt. Sinto cpmpany toured Company's defence positions in Famagusta Old Town in Company with Major Shaw 2ed o/c of 74 th (C of G) Heavy A.A. Regt. R. A. [74 th (City of Glasgow) Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regiment, Royal Artillery]. | |
| | 9 Apr 42 to 15 Apr 42 | | Sergt [Sergeant] Dumay Company Chief Machine-gun unit master, taught Det [Detachment] Mewar infantry [= Mewar Bhupal Infantry, Indian State Force] how to manipulate Schwarzlose maching-guns. Letter of appreciation was recieved from O.C. [Officer Commanding] Det: | |
| Field | 5 th May 42 | | The Company received instructions from Famagusta Brigade to organise sections to defend a part of the beach near the Company's camp in the event of sporadic landing raids at night. The Company took steps to hold practically one mile of sea front in the event of such emergency. Personell held in readiness to meet the possibility of these raids consists of two rifle and Tommy Gun Sections, and one complete gun section with 4 Schwarzlose M.Gs, 4 Hotchkiss M. guns and 2 Breda M.gs. [Machine-guns]. | |

| Instructions regarding War Diaries and Intelligence Summaries are contained in F. S. Regs., Vol. I. [Field Service Regulations, Vol. I]. and the Staff Manual respectively. Title pages will be prepared in manuscript. <i>Month and a Year</i> <u>May 1942 – August 1942</u> | | | WAR DIARY <i>Or</i> INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY. <i>(Erase heading not required).</i> | Army Form C. 2118. Unit: <u>606 Company, Pioneer Corps</u> Commanding Officer: <u>Capt. R. A. Beavan</u> |
|---|-----------|-------|---|---|
| Place. | Date. | Hour. | Summary of Events and Information. | Reference to Appendices. |
| Field | 14 May 42 | | Company received instructions from Famagusta Brigde to provide a meal for 840 Greek military refugees. | |
| " | 15 May 42 | | O.C. Company recieved letter of appreciation from staff Captain, Famagusta Brigade for "able & cheerful way in which the feeding of the Greek military regufgees was carried out" | |
| " | 13 May 42 | X | Capt. R. A. Beavan, Second in Command, took over temporary command of Company. C [Cyprus] authority: PL/96130, 9.5.42, D.A.D.P.L. [Deputy Assistant-Director of Pioneer and Labour] Troops, Cyprus. X | |
| Field | 15 May 42 | | Major A. G. Pape, R.E. [Major Alick George Pape, Royal Engineers], embarked Famagusta in order to report to P.C.B.D. [Pioneer Corps Base Depot]. C authry [Cyprus authority]: | |

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| | | | PL/96130, 9.5.42 D.A.D.P.L. Troops, Cyprus). | |
| " | 16 May 42 | 0100 | O.C. arranged rehearsal for sections detailed to deal with sporadic Raids. | |
| " | 18 May 42 | | Report on above was submitted to Famagusta Brigade. Staff Captain replied that rehearsal was "highly satisfactory". | |
| " | 29 May 42 | | Lt. A. S. Nahamias admitted to hospital. | |
| Field | 29 May 42 | | No 1 section trained in night operations. | |
| " | 30 May 42 | | " " " | |
| " | 31 May 42 | | " " " | |
| " | 1st May 42 to 2nd May 42 | | Company employed on unloading ships at Famagusta Docks. Numbers employed varied from 10 to 160 daily Frequently during these periods. Company provided night guards for the Docks during the greater part of the periods mentioned. | |
| | 3rd May 42 to 18 May 42 | | | |
| | 21 May 42 | | | |
| " | 25 May 42 to 31 May 42 | | | |
| Field | 18 June 42 | | Report on above was submitted to Famagusta Brigade. Staff Captain replied that rehearsal was "highly satisfactory". | |
| " | 10 June 42 | | Lt. Nahamias discharged hospital. Re-joined unit same day. | |
| " | 21 June 42 | | Strength of Company: 3 officers and 259 ORs. Establishment: 4 officers + 342 O.R.s. Docks reinforcements arriving daily 166. Ammunition guards etc required occasionally in addition. 16 "crocks" [=disabled] on Company's strength. | |
| Field | 25 June 42 | | G.O.C. [General Officer Commanding] visited docks some men of the Company have been employed for 11 months + five days except for brief intervals. | |
| " | Practically daily during month | | 40 to 166 Ors employed on Docks. | |
| " | 30 June 42 | | Strength of Company: 3 officers + 242 other ranks. | |

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| Field | 4 July 42 | 1600 | Self [<i>Capt. R. A. Beavan</i>] + Lt. M. J. Sinto attended G.O.C's [General Officer Commanding] conference of officers in the island. | |
| " | 5 July 42 | 0730 | Lt. Sinto Proceeded by air to Palestine for indefinite compassionate leave. | |
| " | 8 July 42 | | Strength of Company: 2 officers and 234 ORs. | |
| " | 9 July 42 | | no 11838 Pte. Singer P. [R. not P.] killed in accident on Famagusta Docks. | |
| " | 10 July 42 | | Pte Singer buried in Military Cemetery, Famagusta. | |
| Field | 12 July 42 | 1100 | 1 N.C.O. [Non-Commissioned Officer] + 6 ORs (as a Guard) at harbor proceeded from Famagusta Docks on minesweeper for an unknown destination. Duties: To guard Italian submarine crew prisoners aboard the minesweeper. | |
| " | 13 July 42 | | 2/Lt. Svarcmans A. [2/Lt. Svarcmans Abrams] taken on strength of unit W.E.F. [With Effect From] 13.7.42. | |
| " | 16 July 42 | | Unit fostered incoming unit - 1205 I. A. P. C. [1205 Indian Auxiliary Pioneer Corps]. | |
| Field | 16 July 42 | 1000 | Cont [continuation] of inquiry on Pte Singer. | |
| " | 18 July 42 | | Unit handed over all stores to 1205 I. A. P. C. | |
| " | 18 July 42 | | Unit handed over all weapons except 2 Bredas [Machine-guns] + 2,000 rounds for same to D.A.D.O.S. [Deputy Assistant-Director Ordnance Service] 25 Corps [25 Corps - Cyprus Volunteer Force]. | |
| " | 18 July 42 | | 1205 I. A. P. C. took over dock duties from this unit. | |
| " | 19 July 42 | | Unit handed over transport to 1205 I.A.P.C. [1205 Indian Army Pioneer Corps]. | |
| " | 20 July 42 | | Anniversary of unit being stationed in Cyprus. | |
| " | 1 to 17 July 42 | | 150 – 160 ORs employed daily on Famagusta Docks. | |
| Field | 21 July 42 | | Unit received final instructions to move from Cyprus. | |
| " | 22 July 42 | 0930 | Company embarked Famagusta Docks with 3 officers + 245 ORs. | |
| " | 23 July 42 | 1200 | Company disembarked Egypt. | |
| " | 23 July 42 | 2100 | Company arrived P.C.B.D. [Pioneer Corps Base Depot, <i>in El-Qassasin Camp</i>]. | |
| " | 24 – 26 July 42 | | Capt. Wellington O/C 1039 Port Operating Coy, R.E. interviewed all ORs of unit + selected personnel for 1039 Port Operating Coy, R.E. | |
| " | 28 – 29 July 42 | | 200 ORs pitched tents in camps at Tahag. | |
| " | 30 July 42 | | Jewish chaplain visited Company, + addressed same. | |
| Field | 2 Aug. 42 | | 140 ORs proceeded to Haifa on being posted to 1039, Port Operating Coy, R.E. [Royal Engineers]. | |
| " | 3 Aug 42 | | Remainder of Company awaiting instructions for disposal. | |
| " | 9 Aug. 42 | | 2/Lt. a. [A.] Svarcmans attached temporarily to 609 Coy, P. C. | |

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| " | 10 Aug 42 | | 35 Or's proceeded to Palestine on 14 days leave. | |
| " | 12 Aug 42 | | Letter received from Lt. M. J. Sinto stating that at expiration of leave he was attached to P.C.D. [Pioneer Corps Depot] Sarafand. | |
| Field | 16 Aug 42 | | Lt. Sinto rejoined Unit. | |
| " | 19 Aug 42 | | All remaining Palestine ORs posted to H.Q. Palestine Wing, P.C.B.D. [Pioneer Corps Base Depot, in El-Qassasin Camp]. | |
| " | 20 Aug 42 | | United Kingdom Staff (ORs) posted to H.Q. Wing, P.C.B.D. | |
| " | 23 Aug 42 | | Lt. A.S. Nahmias, Lt. M. J. Sinto + 2/Lt. A. Svarcmans posted to P.C.B.D. | |
| " | 31 Aug 42 | | Company Headquarters awaiting final instructions for winding up. | |