

1st BATTALION



THE GUARD OF HONOUR OF 1st BATTALION MARCHING PAST THE KING OF SIAM  
AND ADMIRAL LORD LOUIS MOUNTBATTEN AT BANGKOK.  
Remainder of Battalion following. January, 1946.



1st BATTALION MEMORIAL IN GROUNDS OF RANGOON CATHEDRAL.  
Erected by the Battalion Pioneers and designed and supervised by an Officer of the Battalion.



GENERAL SIR GEORGE GIFFARD, G.C.B., D.S.O.  
Colonel of the Regiment, 1945.



# The Journal of The Queen's Royal Regiment

VOL. VIII

MAY, 1946

No. 1

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## EDITORIAL

WE feel that we owe our readers an apology for ceasing publication on the outbreak of war, but it was considered impracticable to continue when, for security reasons, it was not possible to give news of the doings of battalions of the Regiment. On two occasions during the war, attempts were made to produce a form of news-letter but the Censorship was so strict as to preclude the circulation of a useful or interesting letter.

In this number we publish a summary of the war services of the eight battalions who were on active service. The Regiment has been represented in every sphere of operations and might almost claim to share the gunner motto "Ubique." We hope that these summaries may be useful when the history of the war comes to be written. In this connection, it is hoped that anyone having eye-witness accounts, or able to write descriptions from personal knowledge, of incidents which occurred during the innumerable actions in which battalions have taken part will send them in now to the Colonel of the Regiment at Stoughton Barracks, Guildford, marking the envelope "Regimental History." It is of the greatest importance that such accounts should be written while fresh in the memory so that relevant details are not overlooked. Any such account sent in will be copied and returned to the sender if desired.

We have received some suggestions as to the form that the Journal should take in the future. One such suggestion is that the present make-up should be done away with and that, instead, a Regimental News-Letter should be published at frequent intervals such as every two months or every quarter. Another is that a smaller Journal shall be published every six months as at present and that two news-letters a year shall be circulated, one between each issue of the Journal. A third is that quarterly news-letters shall take the place of the Journal and that once a year a magazine shall be published, perhaps in the form of a Christmas number. It will be of great assistance to the Regimental Committee if readers will send in their views on this question. It is possible that restrictions on paper may, for the time being, prevent a final decision being taken. Readers' comments should be addressed to the Editor, at Stoughton Barracks, Guildford.

So far, no news is available as to the future of the Regiment, and some time will probably elapse before final decisions as to the future organization of the Army can be arrived at. It is hoped that the Regimental Depot will continue to exist in some form or other so that the Regiment can have a home.

The Rules of the newly formed Regimental Officers' Club will be found on another page. At a recent meeting of the Committee the Hon. Secretary reported a large membership with many replies to his circular letter still to come in. The Committee decided to try and hold a Club Dinner this year, either at the end of September or early in October, but felt that it would not be possible to hold a Reunion in the summer months. Members will receive notice of club activities in due course.

With this number we take leave of our readers and hand over the duties of Editor. We wish to thank the numerous contributors and also Battalion Assistant-Editors who, up to the war, gave us invaluable assistance in producing the Journal. Their ready co-operation made our task a pleasant one. For our many errors of omission and commission we ask forgiveness. We feel sure that our successors will receive all the help they require from past and present members of the Regiment, and that the useful record of the doings of all battalions will be maintained in the future. It is just over twenty years since the Journal first made its appearance and it is to be regretted that the continuity of publication was interrupted by the war.

If the Journal is to be retained in its present form, it will be published in November this year. Contributors and Assistant-Editors are requested to send all news, articles and illustrations to the Editor not later than 1st October.

## 1ST BATTALION

### SUMMARY OF WAR SERVICE

Station, 3rd September, 1939 : Allahabad.

To North-West Frontier, October, 1940 :

1st Column	...	...	Razcol, 7th December, 1940, to 11th January, 1941.
2nd Column	...	...	Tocol, 16th June, 1941, to 31st August, 1941.

Returned to India, November, 1941.

To Burma, 23rd August, 1943.

#### Actions.

29th November, 1943	Point 206	} Arakan.
18th/19th December, 1943	Point 182	
4th/28th February, 1944	Encirclement of 7th Indian Division	
12th/25th March, 1944	Point 162	
7th May, 1944	1st Battle Jail Hill, Kohima.	
11th/14th May, 1944	2nd Battle Jail Hill, Kohima.	
22nd/31st May, 1944	Naga Village and Church Knoll, Kohima.	
25th July/1st August, 1944	Kohima—Ukhrul Column.	

Returned to India, 10th September, 1944. Station : Shilong, Assam.

To Burma, 15th March, 1945.

#### Actions.

13th April, 1945	Kyaukpadaung.
17th/22nd April	Chauk and Yenangyaung (Central Burma Oilfields area).
16th May/17th June	Zalon Bridgehead, Irrawaddy (Break through of Jap 54th Division from Arakan.)
5th/13th June	Poywa Village.
1st July /9th August	Sittang Bend.
27th July	Letpanthonbin Village.

Situation on 15th August, 1945 : Battalion resting at Pegu.

Bangkok, Siam, 4th October, 1945 to date.

19th January, 1946

Provided Guard of Honour of 3 Officers and 102 O.Rs. in honour of Lord Louis Mountbatten's visit to the King of Siam.

### COMMANDING OFFICERS.

Lt.-Colonel J. B. Coates, M.C.	...	...	from 3rd September 1939 to September, 1940.
Lt.-Colonel H. G. M. Evans	...	...	from September, 1940 to 23rd September, 1943.
Major J. F. Metcalf	...	...	23rd September, 1943 to 1st October, 1943.
Lt.-Colonel G. S. Grimston	...	...	from 1st October, 1943 to 2nd December, 1943.
Lt.-Colonel H. G. Duncombe, D.S.O.	...	...	from 2nd December, 1943 to 20th September, 1944.
Lt.-Colonel G. S. Grimston	...	...	from 20th September, 1944 to 10th June, 1945.
Lt.-Colonel J. R. Terry	...	...	from 10th June, 1945 to date.

## BATTALION NEWS

THE Battalion is at present stationed in Bangkok where it arrived on 4th October, 1945. It would be hard to imagine a better station outside England at the present time. The main part of us are living in good quarters, buildings of the main university. There are usually about two companies away on detachment guarding the docks or other military property.

The Thais have impressed us all by their friendliness and hospitality. Many of the better class Thais have been educated in England and seem anxious that we should enjoy ourselves as much as they enjoyed being in England, which must have been a lot.

The main task of the Battalion is finding guards, protecting stores, buildings and messes. Little continuous training is possible. As a change from the "fleshpots" of Bangkok most of the Battalion has been spending ten days at a seaside camp, which is very popular.

The majority of 7th Indian Division has left Siam, including our own 33rd Brigade. We are at present attached to another Brigade, but hope to meet the Battalions who fought beside us throughout the Burma campaign, when we leave Bangkok. There is no definite news of when this will be, but it will probably be in April or May.

The Battalion is fairly well up to strength, but it is a struggle to find replacements for the steady stream of key officers and other ranks who disappear with each age group. The new reinforcements usually come from all over the country and there is only a very small sprinkling of men from West Surrey and London among us.

\* \* \* \* \*

Extracts from a letter dated 24th January, 1946, from Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten, Commander-in-Chief, South-East Asia Command, to the Colonel of the Regiment :—

"I was recently invited by the King of Siam to pay an official visit to Bangkok. I decided to have a big Inter-Service Parade in order to put up British prestige within Siam. The King of Siam inspected the parade and took the march past. In the march past, there were units of the Royal Navy, 1st Battalion The Queen's Royal Regiment, 4th/14th Punjab Regiment, 4th/5th Royal Gurkha Rifles and the Royal Air Force. A special Guard of Honour was also found by the Queen's, and the Royal Marine Far Eastern Band headed the march past.

"I enclose a photograph showing the march past of the Queen's Guard of Honour in column of sixes, followed by the Queen's Detachment in column of threes. The photograph gives little idea of the tremendous impression which the bearing, turn-out, drill and marching of the Queen's Guard of Honour made on all spectators. They received a special ovation from the crowd, and everyone commented on them. Their marching was head and shoulders above the rest of the parade.

"I therefore sent the enclosed message to Evans, who commands 7th Indian Division in Siam, from which you will see that I promised to report to you how splendidly your Regiment kept up the traditions of the Queen's.

"Evans further informs me that the behaviour of your men on leave in the town has been exemplary, and has greatly raised the prestige of the British Army in Siam.

"I hope you, as their Colonel, will accept this small but sincere tribute from me."

Message from Lord Louis Mountbatten to General Evans :—

"Where all were so good at the Inter-Service Parade, it would be invidious to make distinctions, but the march past of the Guard of Honour found by The Queen's Royal Regiment was so exceptionally smart that I would like you to tell them that I will inform their Colonel and my late colleague, General Sir George Giffard, what a magnificent show his regiment has put up."

## DEDICATION OF H.M.S. "HOWE"

THURSDAY, 20TH AUGUST, 1942

A LETTER dated 11th August was sent to the Under Secretary of State for War and read as follows :

"I am commanded by My Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to acquaint you, for the information of the Army Council, that the Commanding Officer of H.M.S. *Howe*, at present nearing completion at Rosyth, has reminded them of the traditional friendship between the Queen's Royal Regiment and His Majesty's ships bearing that name, and expressed a desire for its continuation.

"As a beginning, we suggest that an early visit should be paid to the Ship by a few Officers and N.C.Os. of the Regiment. I am, therefore, to request that the Army Council will grant facilities for this visit, and make arrangements, if Service conditions permit, for about six Officers and twelve N.C.Os. to go on board at Rosyth on the 19th August, and stay until p.m. 20th August."

A.G. (2), the War Office, sent a copy of this letter to O.C., 13th I.T.C., and asked him to arrange, in conjunction with the Officers Commanding 13th and 15th Battalions, Queen's Royal Regiment, for a party to visit H.M.S. *Howe* as suggested.

A party was finally made up and consisted of the following :—

Colonel G. V. Palmer.

Lieut.-Colonel D. C. G. Dickinson, O.C., 13th I.T.C.

Major Grimston, 15th Battalion Queen's Royal Regiment.

Major Kingsley, 15th Battalion Queen's Royal Regiment.

Major Fowler, 13th Battalion Queen's Royal Regiment.

Mr. Bailey, 13th Battalion Queen's Royal Regiment.

R.S.M. Tasker, 13th I.T.C., with one Warrant Officer and two Sergeants and four Warrant Officers or Sergeants from 13th and 15th Battalions, Queen's Royal Regiment.

This party arrived aboard H.M.S. *Howe* on Wednesday, 19th August, at about 2000 hrs. and were received by Captain C. H. L. Woodhouse, C.B. They were duly entertained and put up on board by the Ship's Company.

On Thursday, 20th August, the following ceremonies took place.

At 0745 hrs., the Chapel in H.M.S. *Howe* was dedicated by the Chaplain of the Fleet (the Rev. Crick). This ceremony Colonel Palmer attended with Captain Woodhouse.

Later on in the morning, the Ceremony of the Blessing of the Ship and its dedication was carried out, again by the Chaplain of the Fleet, assisted by the Rev. Ellison (Chaplain of H.M.S. *Howe*, and Captain Woodhouse.

The whole Ship's Company attended; many of the workmen actively interested in the building of the ship also attended and the party from the Queen's Royal Regiment.

The form of ceremony was an ancient one, of probably some 500 years' standing, and was extraordinarily impressive.

The responses and adjurations of the Captain and the Ship's Company were as follows :

*The Captain* : "Bless our Ship."

*The Ship's Company* : "May God the Father bless her."

*The Captain* : "Bless our Ship."

*The Ship's Company* : "May Jesus Christ bless her."

*The Captain* : "Bless our Ship."

*The Ship's Company* : "May the Holy Spirit bless her."

*The Captain* : "What do ye fear, seeing that God the Father is with you?"

*The Ship's Company* : "We fear nothing."

*The Captain* : "What do ye fear, seeing that God the Son is with you?"

*The Ship's Company* : "We fear nothing."

*The Captain* : "What do ye fear, seeing that God the Holy Spirit is with you?"

*The Ship's Company* : "We fear nothing."

This was followed by the Blessing by the Chaplain of the Fleet.

The service ended with the singing of the sailors' hymn, "Eternal Father, Strong to Save," followed by "God Save the King."

The whole was accompanied by the band of the Royal Marines aboard.

After a short space of a quarter of an hour "Stand Easy," everybody aboard re-assembled on the Quarterdeck to receive the Lord Provost of Edinburgh and the whole of that City's Council.

This, in turn, was a striking piece of picturesque ceremony in that he was led aboard by two halberdiers and his Mace-bearer, and both he and his Bailees were robed in scarlet and ermine. The Lord Provost himself was wearing the uniform of the Lord Lieutenant of the City of Edinburgh. They came bearing the gift of a shield of the arms of the City, which they gave to the Ship to bear. In return, Captain Woodhouse gave the Lord Provost a shield with the arms of H.M.S. *Howe* to place in the City Council Chamber as a token of thanks to the citizens of that City for their contribution in War Weapons Week, of the money for the building of H.M.S. *Howe*.

After the speeches were over, the parade was dismissed, the civic party adjourned to be shown the ship before being entertained to lunch.

At lunch in the Ward-room, there sat down the Ward-room Officers of the ship, Lord Howe, the Lord and Lady Provost of Edinburgh and their civic party and the Officers of the Queen's Royal Regiment.

At the end of the meal, after the toasts to the King had been drunk, Lord Howe rose to wish good luck to the ship that bore the name of his house and proposed the health of the Ship's Company. This toast was seconded by Colonel Palmer, who recalled the association between the Regiment and the Royal Navy as intimately bound with the name of Howe. The toast was put forward in the third degree by the Lord Provost of Edinburgh, who added the good wishes, especially of the citizens of that City, and he called upon the company to rise. Captain Woodhouse replied to the toast by recalling the glories of the Admiral after whom they were named, the traditions of the First of June, 1794, and he expressed his gratitude to the citizens of Edinburgh for their generosity.

After this the civic party went ashore and the detachment of the Queen's was taken in hand, severally and collectively, by the various Officers and Warrant Officers of the Ship's Company to be shown the mysteries and intricacies of this great man-of-war.

That evening the party split up for home, but the representatives of 15th Queen's remained aboard so that they might actually sail once again with the Royal Navy in war.

The Officers of the 13th Queen's returned by sea to their station at Sheerness on the following morning, Friday, 21st August, by invitation of Lieut.-Commander Morrison, Commander of H.M.S. *Vanity*.

As a token of the good wishes of the Queen's Royal Regiment to the Royal Navy in general and H.M.S. *Howe* in particular, the party took with them a coloured print of the Battle of the Glorious First of June, 1794, which depicts on the one hand, Earl Howe on the Flagship *Queen Charlotte* during the battle; while, on the other hand, Lieut. Neville of the Queen's Royal Regiment is seen dying, mortally wounded, being cared for by two of his soldiery.

This picture had been set in a frame with a plaque inscribed "To H.M.S. *Howe* from The Queen's, August, 1942." This was handed over to Captain Woodhouse, who warmly expressed his thanks to the Regiment for such an appropriate reminder of good relations.

*Extracts from a letter from the Officer Commanding H.M.S. "Howe" to the Colonel of the Regiment, dated 5th June, 1942.*

"I have the honour to be the Captain of H.M.S. *Howe* and write to tell you that the ship commissioned on 1st June.

"It was fortunate that it was possible to arrange for the Commissioning Day to be on the anniversary of the 'Glorious First.' I have, myself, served in H.M.S. *Excellent* for several years and so has my Second-in-Command so we are well acquainted with the links between The Queen's Royal Regiment and that ship. I hope it may be possible for us also to share in some degree in this happy state of affairs.

\* \* \* \* \*

"I find that the Mess property of this ship includes a large silver bowl inscribed 'From 1st Queen's to H.M.S. *Howe*, 1794-1894.' It is at present in a safe place with certain other items which belonged to the last ship bearing the name 'Howe' and I look forward to the day when we may have it on board."

*Note.*—H.M.S. *Howe* returned home recently from service in the Pacific and the Colonel of the Regiment sent a telegram of welcome to the Captain and Ship's Company.

## 2ND BATTALION

### SUMMARY OF WAR SERVICE

- 3/9/39 Palestine. In 16th Infantry Brigade, consisting of 2nd Queen's, 2nd Leicesters and 1st Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders.
- Sept, 1940 16th Brigade move to Western Desert. Dig positions in Bergush Box. Attached 4th Indian Division.
- 10/12/40 Capture Sidi Barrani. Push on as far as Bardia. Withdrawn to El Tahag in Nile Delta. Leave in Cairo.
- April, 1940 Combined Operations training at Kabrit on Bitter Lakes.
- May, 1941 El Daaba. Amriya. 16th Brigade to Crete. 2nd Queen's and Brigade Headquarters last to sail. Sailed from Alexandria on s.s. *Glenroy*. Badly dive-bombed. Several landing craft damaged. Turn round when within sixty miles of Crete and return to Alexandria. Sail for Crete a second time; again return when within about sixty miles. Evacuation already started.
- June, 1941 Syria. 2nd Queen's capture Quneitra, which the Royal Fusiliers were forced to surrender three days previously. Capture Qatana unopposed. Held up in foothills of Jebbel Mazar range, south-west of Damascus. Large scale attack planned. 2nd Queen's objective, 1634. Information received—believed lightly held. Night attack goes in on a two-company front. Proves to be very strongly held. (400 on one-company objective.) After fairly heavy fighting both companies forced to surrender. Armistice declared. All prisoners returned. Short spell in barracks of Ecole Militaire, Homs. 16th Brigade now form part of 70th Division.
- Sept., 1941 70th Division sail in destroyers for Tobruk. Take over garrison from the Australians.
- Nov., 1941 2nd Queen's take part in successful break-out of perimeter and hold open corridor to enable 8th Army to get through.
- End Dec., 1941 70th Division withdrawn to Delta area to refit. 2nd Queen's arrive in camp, El Quassasin, on Christmas Day. Whole Battalion sent on leave.
- Feb., 1942 Leave for Syria, 5th February. In camp near Qatana. Dig Defences. Return to Delta, El Quassasin, 26th February. Draw tropical kit.
- 6/3/42 16th Brigade group sail from Suez on *New Amsterdam*. Objective believed to be Rangoon, which falls to Japs during voyage.

- 14/3/42 Arrive Colombo, Ceylon. Remainder of 70th Division to India. Intensive Jungle Training.
- Feb., 1943 Rejoin 70th Division at Ranchi, India. Training with Valentine tanks.
- 5/5/43 2nd Queen's do demonstration exercise with tanks. Ex-"Timothy," watched by senior officers from all over India and some from Middle East.
- 13/5/43 Move to Jhingagacha (60 miles north-east of Calcutta). Prepare Brigade Perimeter Defence. No. 1 Company stationed at Khulna.
- 28/6/43 Leave for Bangalore.
- 4/7/43 Arrive Bangalore. 16th Brigade Camp at Y Tank, eleven miles from Bangalore. One week's Jungle Training sixty miles south of Bangalore. Take part in 33rd Corps Exercise "Trump 2" (Infantry in co-operation with Tanks).
- Sept., 1943 70th Division join special force, General Wingate's Long Range Penetration Group. Battalion organized into two columns.
- 8/10/43 Leave Bangalore.
- 13/10/43 Arrive Bijawar near Jhansi. Intensive training and drawing up of special equipment and mules.
- Feb., 1944 16th Brigade, with 2nd Queen's in the lead, march into Burma from Ledo Road.
- Mar., 1944 Cross River Chindwin. 22 Column (2nd Queen's) successful ambush on M.S.20 Banmauk road.
- 27/3/44 Battle of Indaw commences. Severe damage inflicted on enemy, but eventually withdraw without capturing town.
- April, 1944 Indaw West Airfield captured. All Columns 16th Brigade flown out by May 6th.
- 21/5/44 In camp at Bidau (twenty-three miles south of Bangalore). Whole Battalion on leave.
- Sept., 1944 2nd Queen's join 23rd Infantry Brigade.
- Oct., 1944 Move to Orcha near Jhansi. Intensive training for further campaign in Burma in January, which eventually does not materialize.
- May, 1945 Special Force disbanded. Move to Ranchi area.
- June, 1945 2nd Queen's join 29th Brigade, 36th Division, at Uruli seventeen miles from Poona. Further campaign impracticable owing to repatriation situation. Still at Uruli when Jap war finishes.

## CASUALTIES

Casualties during the whole war were light. 5 Officers only were killed.

## LIST OF COMMANDING OFFICERS

Lt.-Col. Ross	...	...	From 3 September, 1939 to February, 1940.
Lt.-Col. Haggard	...	...	From February, 1940 to June, 1940.
Lt.-Col. Oxley-Boyle, D.S.O.	...	...	From June, 1940 to February, 1942.
Lt.-Col. Barrow (acting)	...	...	From February, 1942 to April, 1942.
Lt.-Col. Phillips	...	...	From April, 1942 to October, 1943.
Lt.-Col. Duncomb, D.S.O.	...	...	From October, 1943 to December, 1943.
Lt.-Col. Metcalf	...	...	From December, 1943 to April, 1944.
Lt.-Col. Close, D.S.O.	...	...	From April, 1944 to November, 1944.
Lt.-Col. Du Vallon, D.S.O., M.C.	...	...	From November, 1944 to date.

## AWARDS FOR GALLANTRY

D.S.O., 2 (one with bar); M.C., 1; D.C.M., 1; M.M., 1.

[Reprinted from "The Surrey Times and Express" by kind permission of the Editor.]

## GUILDFORD HONOURS "THE QUEEN'S"

A MEMORABLE CEREMONY—29TH SEPTEMBER, 1945

NEVER before has Guildford witnessed a military spectacle of such dignity as that which was enacted on the Sports Ground amid glorious weather on Saturday, when the borough conferred its highest honour on the Queen's Royal Regiment, the senior English regiment of the Line.

A Scroll of Rights, granting to the regiment the privilege of marching through the town with bayonets fixed, Colours flying and bands playing, was presented by the Mayor (Alderman Wykeham Price) to General Sir George Giffard, the Colonel of the Regiment. Men from Burma, Berlin and Trieste were among the veterans on parade. Each battalion of the Regiment was represented. There were men of H.M.S. *Excellent* standing on the right of the parade recalling the traditional association with the Royal Navy since June 1st, 1794, and men of the Home Guard and large contingents of cadets associated with the Regiment were present.

First event on the programme was the inspection of the parade under the command of Lieut.-Colonel A. C. W. Upton by General Sir George Giffard, which was preceded by the General Salute. Promptly at 11 a.m. the Lord Lieutenant of Surrey (Sir Malcolm Fraser) arrived accompanied by General Sir Walter Kirke. As he faced the parade the Royal Salute was given and the band of the 1st Battalion played the National Anthem.

The Mayor's Chaplain (Canon E. G. Southam) conducted the short service, and the lesson was read by the Rev. E. W. Gedge, a liberated prisoner of war. Included in the service was the special prayer of the Queen's Royal Regiment, an act of remembrance for fallen comrades, during which the band of H.M.S. *Excellent* played Walford Davies' "Solemn Melody," and Kipling's "Recessional" was sung, the Queen's band accompanying, and a choir of teachers, conducted by Mr. Crossley Clitheroe, leading the singing.

Before handing over the scroll, the Mayor addressed the parade. He said it was one of the greatest days Guildford had ever known, and the presentation of the Scroll of Rights to the Regiment was the carrying out of a long-cherished wish. There was no doubt that Guildford had been conscious of its pride and affection for the Queen's for very many years. For generations they had had here a depot of the Regiment, and the many thousands who had visited the Cathedral Church of the Holy Trinity had seen there the magnificent regimental memorial with its over 30 battle honours.

## NATION IS THE ARMY

The Mayor called to mind the raising of the Regiment in the middle of the seventeenth century for duty at Tangier, apparently then a troublesome place as it is to-day, and also an event 150 years later on the Glorious First of June, when the Queen's acted as marines. Because of that occasion he was glad to see a detachment of H.M.S. *Excellent* with them. "That is history," commented the Mayor, "and things were different then. The Army was the Army and the nation was the nation. But to-day the Army is the nation and the nation is the Army. I think there can be no shadow of doubt that many hundreds of hearts in Guildford in the last five or six years have missed a beat when news of some kind leaked through of what the Queen's were doing."

"An amazing record," was how the Mayor described the achievements of the regiment in the war just concluded. His Worship enumerated the Regiment's record, which started in France and Belgium with the miracle of Dunkirk. After a period of preparation came Alamein, which history would regard as the turning point of the war. Then followed the march across Africa when the Queen's became part of the Desert Rats and the actions at Medenine and the Mareth Line. Alderman Price also recalled the Burma campaign, the Queen's fighting in the swamps of Arakan, their being flown to Kohima, and the action at Jail Hill, which might be regarded as a turning point of the war in Burma.

Lastly, the Mayor mentioned the Normandy landing, the fight for Caen and the final event, which took place three weeks ago—the triumphant victory march through Berlin headed by the Desert Rats, and at the head of the Desert Rats were the Colours of the Queen's Royal Regiment.

The Scroll, which was read by the Town Clerk, took the form of the resolution passed by the Council on September 26th, 1944. In handing the Scroll to General Sir George Giffard, the Mayor said: "In conferring an honour upon you we are very sensitive that we are conferring a very great honour upon ourselves."

#### QUEEN MARY'S REGRET

General Sir George Giffard expressed the regret of Queen Mary, the Colonel-in-Chief of the Regiment, that she could not be present. The previous Tuesday he was summoned to Marlborough House for Queen Mary to hear the final arrangements and she gave him a message to the Regiment. "She told me to say to the Regiment that she sends greetings to all ranks on parade, and to all those who from force of circumstances could not be here, and to express her admiration for the courage, endurance and the skill of all battalions in the past six years of war. She further sends her best wishes to all ranks for the future wherever they may serve. She was careful to point out to me that she was wearing on that day the badge of the Regiment, which was presented to her as a brooch some two or three years ago."

Since 1881, when the Regiment was first associated with the county of Surrey and the words "West Surrey" incorporated in the title of the Regiment, the ties which had bound the Regiment with the Borough of Guildford had grown closer and closer and culminated that day in that great ceremony. It was indeed a great honour to the Regiment coming from a borough which could trace its line of Mayors back to 1412.

General Giffard, in a résumé of the war history of the Regiment, said the 1st Battalion had been in India on the Frontier and subsequently at Arakan. The 2nd Battalion were in the Western Desert, the Siege of Tobruk, India and finally into Central Burma with Wingate's Chindits. The 131st Brigade—the 1st/5th, 1st/6th and 1st/7th Battalions—were in France and Belgium, Alamein, Sicily, Italy, Normandy and finally Berlin.

The 169th Brigade of the 56th Division, composed of the 2nd/5th, 2nd/6th and 2nd/7th Queen's, started in Persia on what must have been one of the longest marches into battle, for they motored 3,500 miles, arriving one evening and going into battle the next day at 9 a.m. They went to Sicily, Italy and were now in Trieste.

After a welcome to H.M.S. *Excellent*, General Giffard said it was a great pleasure and honour to have the Home Guard with them, many of whom in their younger days served in the Regiment. They had also the cadets, the rising generation to whom they passed the tradition and with whom was the future. He thanked the Mayor and Guildford for their most cherished gift and called for three cheers for the Mayor, Corporation and Borough of Guildford.

#### SCENES IN HIGH STREET

Long before noon the pavements on either side of High Street were packed as far as the eye could see from the focal point of the Guildhall. Gay strings of bunting and flags splashed the route with joyous colour, while, below, little children clutched Union Jacks.

One saw the badge of the Regiment worn proudly on many a breast, with here and there a sad-eyed yet rightfully proud woman with the ribbons of an absent warrior. A limping French soldier passed, two nasal-tongued Americans sought vantage points for the snapshots that would thrill the folk way back home, a group of Canadians, a bush-hatted 14th Army man and a fresh-faced English nursing sister discussed the occasion together.

On the Guildhall balcony laurels and flowers set off the inscribed tribute, "Thank you, Queen's." The first real touch of pageantry came when the Mayor, scarlet-robed, set off in his car for the Sports Ground ceremony.

Faintly came the notes of the band of the 1st Battalion. Then, headed by two stalwart military policemen, round the bend they marched and along the sanded stone sets of the hill. To a rush of clapping, the band, led by Bandmaster C. H. Brooks, and stirring the pulses with the Queen's own quick-step march, "Braganza," turned in under Tuns Gate and counter-marched to face the Guildhall before halting to play the procession through.

Blue uniforms and a gleam of bayonets heralded the H.M.S. *Excellent* detachment, and as the officer in charge gave the "Eyes right" and dropped his sword to the salute, the Mayor lifted his black peaked hat with white-gloved hand. The sailors' welcome was warm, but what enthusiasm stung the hands as the colours of the 2nd Battalion of the Queen's, those honourably dulled glories of gold and red and blue, were borne past!

Then, with a soldierly dignity that had consciousness of victorious achievement, came the men of the 1st Battalion. Here were no show-soldiers, but seasoned fighters, as more than their medal ribbons betokened. The deadly utility of the shortened bayonets on their rifles was in itself a chastening reminder of the grim fields in which these veterans had earned the honour, and infinitely more than that honour, which the town was according them.

These passed in their ceremonial array of double sections of threes, to be succeeded by detachment after detachment, the colours of the 1st/6th and 1st/7th Battalions, blue-uniformed Sea Cadets, the band of H.M.S. *Excellent* and two cadet bands dividing the progress of martial khaki.

#### THE LUNCHEON

Nearly two hundred guests under the chairmanship of the Mayor attended a luncheon in the Borough Hall, where tasteful floral decorations included laurels picked out in coloured lights on the panelled walls and an inscription, "Guildford is proud of the Queen's," hung above the stage, upon which the band of the 1st Battalion played.

The following telegram from H.M. Queen Mary was read by the Mayor: "As Colonel-in-Chief of the Queen's Royal Regiment, I wish to express my grateful appreciation of the honour which your borough is doing to my regiment to-day. I rejoice at this further proof of the affection and esteem which have always existed between the people of Guildford and the men of the Queen's.—Mary R."

To this message the Mayor had drafted the following reply:—

"To H.M. Queen Mary,—In humbly expressing our thanks to your Majesty's gracious message I would beg to be allowed to say that your Majesty's words will serve to increase our admiration for the Regiment, which has been so much enhanced by its glorious service in the war now mercifully ended.—Wykeham Price, Mayor."

His Worship said it was a happy chance that that was the first gathering in that hall since a similar gathering just eighteen months ago, when they had the great pleasure and honour of entertaining a representative contingent of the 1st/5th Queen's. About a hundred of all ranks came to Guildford to receive such expressions of gratitude and honour as it was then possible to confer upon them.

As he took the salute on that occasion he had two predominant thoughts. One was that never in his life had he seen a body of men more on top of the world. In vulgar parlance, they had "bought the High Street." Had they only known, it was given to them. The second thought was that it was known pretty conclusively that D-Day was near. He regretted to say that not many of that contingent at Guildford that day ever came back.

He hoped that that day's celebrations would not be a merely passing affair, but the cementing of infinitely closer relations than ever before existed between borough and regiment. He mentioned that, as an example of those relations, the Mayor and Corporation now had the great pleasure that, when proceeding in state to church and on other great civic occasions, theirs was the honour of being preceded by officers of the Queen's from the Depot.

He wanted that occasion to go down in history as the moment when the Regiment and the borough really got together, because the obvious result was that in the future the young men of Guildford would have additional reason to regard as the proudest thing they could possibly do the taking of service in one form or another with the Queen's. On behalf of the Borough Council and civilian guests, he proposed the toast of the health of the Queen's Royal Regiment.

#### GENERAL'S TRIBUTE TO TERRIERS

Responding, General Sir George Giffard said the bulk of the work done in the war was done by the Territorial Army—those who in peace time had spent many hours and days in training themselves for the defence of this country. As the war went on, and with the coming of conscription,

the regular officers, W.Os., N.C.Os. and men gradually disappeared from the units, partly to the staff and partly to instruction. It was true that the traditions of discipline and duty passed on by the regulars had made possible all the things that had been done, but they could not get away from the fact that a great part of the fighting had been done by the young soldier and young officer who had come in during the past six years. The Regiment owed a great debt for all that those men had done.

They would hold together in the future as a body, not only within the Regiment, but between the Regiment and Guildford. The ties would be maintained and kept even closer. They had a great job in this country to settle down now that the war was over, and it was for the Army and the civilian population to pull together in order that they could make the country the place they all hoped it would be. That day should be a landmark in their progress towards cementing the Regiment's ties with the city of Guildford.

At his call, the toast of "The Mayor and Corporation and people of Guildford" was drunk. Sir George then read a telegram "from an old school-fellow of mine," which read: "Regret exceedingly cannot attend historical occasion 29th. Congratulations all members Royal Regiment, especially as regards 5th Battalion.—Spens, Chief Justice of India" (who, said Sir George, was once captain and adjutant of the 1st/5th Battalion).

The Mayor kicked off at a football match between the Regiment and H.M.S. *Excellent* on the Sports Ground. A large crowd saw the Queen's victorious by six goals to two in an excellent game.

Forty members of 2nd/4th Queen's Old Comrades Association attended the ceremony and had an excellent view of the procession from near the Guildhall.

## 1ST/5TH BATTALION

### SUMMARY OF WAR SERVICES

Station, 3rd September, 1939, Guildford. To France, 31st March, 1940.

#### Battles and Actions.

Escaut Canal 16th/21st May, 1940 Strazeele ... 27th/28th May, 1940

Withdrawal from Dunkirk, 30th/31st May, 1940. Re-formed at Port Meadow Camp, Oxford, on 6th June, 1940.

To Middle East. Embarked at Clydeside, 24th May, 1942; disembarked Suez, 21st July, 1942.

#### Actions.

Munassib ... 30th September, 1942 Alamein ... 23rd October, 1942

Joined 7th Armoured Division (The Desert Rats) on 30th October, 1942, followed the chase with minor skirmishes at Tobruk, Benghazi, El Agheila, Wadi Zem Zem, Tripoli, Zuara.

#### Actions.

Medenine ... 6th March, 1943 Tunis ... 6th May, 1943  
Mareth ... 21st/27th March, 1943

Followed Wadi Akarit, Sfax, Enfidaville. Back to Homs for rest and refit.

To Italy. Landed at Salerno, "D" Day plus 1, 16th September, 1943.

#### Battles and Actions.

Battipaglia ... 18th September, 1943

Relieved our sister Battalion, the 2nd/5th Queen's, 19th September, 1943.

Aversa ... October, 1943 Crossed the Volturno  
Saint Maria La River 16th October, 1943  
Fossa ... 6th October, 1943 Mondragone 31st October, 1943

Withdrawn to Imperial Strategical Reserve. Rest on the Sorrento Peninsula and await ship for England.

To England for re-grouping. Landed Greenock, 5th January, 1944. Proceeded to Hunstanton (Norfolk).

Landed in Normany, "D" Day plus 2 (8th June, 1944).

#### Actions and Battles with B.L.A.

Villers Bocage	13th June,	1944	Crossed River		
Livry ...	...		Seine	31st August,	1944
Beauvoire Farm			Crossed River		
Ecovigny ...	1st August,	1944	Somme	2nd September,	1944
Hamars ...	7th August,	1944	Crossed La Bassée		
Livarot ...	20th August,	1944	Canal ...	4th September,	1944
Lisieux ...	22nd August,	1944	Ghent ...	6th September,	1944
			Dornhock ...	22nd October,	1944

Followed by battle for Tilburg and the south bank of the Maas Wehr, Germany, 7th December, 1944.

Battle of Roer			Ahaus ...	31st March,	1945
"Triangle"	13th/29th January,	1945	Ibbenburen	4th April,	1945
Crossed R. Rhine					
at Xanten	27th March,	1945			

Crossed Dortmund—Ems Canal two miles south of Bremen, 9th April, 1945.

Fallingbostal 16th April, 1945

Stalag 11B liberated by the Battalion, 19th April, 1945.

Closed upon Hamburg, River Elbe.

Situation when Armistice with Germany signed: Haslohn. Surrender delegation for city of Hamburg came through our lines, 29th April, 1945. We occupied Hamburg unopposed on 3rd May, and pressed on toward Denmark until 6th May, 1945.

Leading British Infantry unit in march through Berlin on Allied Victory Parade, 7th September, 1945.

#### LIST OF COMMANDING OFFICERS.

Lt.-Colonel G. V. Palmer (Queen's)	...	...	3rd October, 1939—3rd August, 1941
Lt.-Colonel L. C. East. D.S.O. (Queen's)	...	...	4th August, 1941—11th March, 1943
Lt.-Colonel M. D. Leslie	...	...	12th March, 1943—6th August, 1943
Lt.-Colonel M. Elrington, D.S.O., O.B.E.	...	...	7th August, 1943—27th January, 1944
Lt.-Colonel C. G. Luce	...	...	1st February, 1944—10th March, 1944
Lt.-Colonel H. Wood (Queen's)	...	...	11th March, 1944—4th July, 1944
Lt.-Colonel G. B. Ashworth, D.S.O.	...	...	5th July, 1944—8th August, 1944
Lt.-Colonel I. H. Freeland, D.S.O.	...	...	26th August, 1944—11th June, 1945
Major W. L. Johnson, M.C. (Queen's)	...	...	12th June, 1945—2nd August, 1945
Lt.-Colonel H. G. Duncombe, D.S.O. (Queen's)	...	...	3rd August, 1945—to date.

#### AWARDS FOR GALLANTRY.

D.S.O., 5; M.C., 14; D.C.M., 3; M.M., 15; B.E.M., 1; Croix de Guerre, 2; American Silver Star, 1.

#### BERLIN, 1945.

JUNE, 1945, found the Battalion quartered in a tiny town called Bad Segeberg, on the North German plain, some thirty miles from Lubeck. We had been there perhaps a week, settling down for a long period of occupation duties, when the news came through that the Division had been selected to provide the occupying troops for the British sector of Berlin.

It seemed fitting enough that the "Desert Rats" should be chosen for the job, for they had been born fighting—back in the dark days of 1939—and had been fighting ever since. It seemed

fitting, too, that the 1st/5th Queen's should be with them in this crowning glory, for we had, after all, logged with the "Rats" from the bloody sands of El Alamein through Tunisia, Italy, France, Belgium, Holland, and across Western Germany to the Danish frontier. Nevertheless, the news was a surprise received with as much excitement as pride.

We had two days to prepare for the move. Never in the history of the Regiment has there been such a frantic and enthusiastic wielding of paint-brushes and scrubbing of equipment. Even the Quartermaster was infected with the general spirit, and issued new suits of battledress with such careless abandon that we began to doubt his sanity.

On the appointed day, at the appointed time (incredible though that may seem to those acquainted with the vagaries of military movement), we started on the three-hundred-mile road journey. We paused a few days in Brunswick—impatient days those—while the last administrative arrangements were being made, and finally found ourselves at the gates of the great capital. We drove into the city on the afternoon of the 4th July, prepared for almost anything. What we in fact found was a goggling civilian population lining the devastated streets, not hostile, inclined even to be openly friendly; and mingling among them many Russian soldiers, saluting, waving, and evidently more well disposed toward us than we had supposed they would be.

The Gross Halle barracks, Spandau, were destined to be our quarters for the next four months. We grumbled a little at first, for previously we had been living in houses requisitioned from the Germans, complete with furniture. But we soon learnt better, for these were very nearly the only large group of intact buildings in the whole of the British sector, and probably in the whole of Berlin.

The devastation of the city was very considerable. There was scarcely a building with its roof intact. Rubble still lay in the side streets, and in the early summer sun the sweet stench of decaying human flesh rose from the gaunt skeletons of the houses. The trees in the Tiergarten had been bared of all green by the shells the Russians had poured on to it. The Reichstag stood grey and forbidding, a red flag flying from the torn roof; while in the shadow of its scarred walls the infamous black market flourished.

The people of Berlin seemed dazed. They had two aims in their lives—to get enough food to keep themselves alive, and to get in enough fuel to keep them alive during the winter.

The housing problem was desperate. Overcrowding was so serious that vast epidemics were feared. The water was polluted with waste from the smashed sewers, and all troops were forbidden to drink it. Gas was on for a few hours on Sunday only. Electricity was rationed to 500 watts per house per day. There was no postal system in operation. There were queues for everything. People brought their own stools, and appeared to wait from early morning to late at night outside the same shop, for the shops only opened when there was food to sell. We even watched a large queue wait for two hours to buy a newspaper!

We would sometimes try to get the people's views on the war and the general situation, with little result. No one would admit to any connection with the Nazi party, nor admit that they had wished for, or participated in, the war. Nor would anyone make any comment on their defeat. "Germany is 'kaputt'" (finished) was all one could get out of them. Well, certainly Berlin seemed to be "kaputt." How we wished we could show some of the women at home this city of the dead and despairing! Those who cried "Revenge" should find revenge enough in the spectacle of well-dressed, apparently respectable people hovering round a group of soldiers in order to pick up the cigarette ends as they were thrown away into the gutter.

We had hoped to learn something of the Red Army and the Russian people while in Berlin, but were to a large extent disappointed in this. Of course, one saw Russians walking about. The hospitality of our N.A.A.F.I. clubs was extended to them, and at the "Winston" it was not unusual to see them sitting at a table, eating and drinking with our own troops. But the language difficulty was tremendous. Some of them were able to speak a little German, but up to then we had found neither the time nor the inclination to learn the language. The Tommy, as most of us know, can usually converse with a foreigner without knowing a word of the other's language, but the language of signs does not take one very far into the deep character of the Russian. Russia and the Russians remain a closed book to us unless we care to base opinion on pure surmise.

Once settled down to life in Berlin, it was not unpleasant. We set to work on our barracks, and in time reduced the sandy waste of the immediate surround to the careful order of gardens.

The central heating system, suffering some damage and general neglect, was repaired in readiness for the harsh winter. The place began to take on an almost homely atmosphere.

One must allow the Germans credit for being able to build fine barracks. The materials and workmanship may not always have been of the finest quality, but in general conception and design they were well advanced. Grosse Halle was actually designed as a rest or nursing home for workers of the Todt organization, and was therefore even better than the standard barracks which are evident everywhere in Germany. In each group of three large two-storeyed buildings (such a group housed some hundred and fifty men comfortably) there was a well-equipped and spacious cookhouse with steam and electric cooking appliances of the latest type, a large dining-hall, and a room evidently designed as a cinema. Each individual building had in the basement its own toilet accommodation, a room for washing clothes, a drying room, and a shower bath large enough to accommodate twenty men at a time. The barrack rooms were large, but partitioned off to allow the maximum amount of privacy. Such conditions could hardly be described as "rough."

Quite a large proportion of our time was spent on the concrete Drill Square, getting the "Edges knocked off" again, and in keeping our eyes in on the improvised rifle range. The afternoons were devoted almost exclusively to sport—cricket, football, hockey, basketball, athletics, swimming, tennis—everyone played something.

In Berlin there was no problem of evening entertainment. A three-tonner bus service was run to the city centre, some twenty minutes' drive, and on most evenings there was a mass exodus from the camp. The Welfare Services had set up no less than eight other ranks' clubs, and two officers' clubs. There were three E.N.S.A. cinemas, and an E.N.S.A. theatre. In addition, we were permitted to attend the civilian shows, although these were few since there were not many suitable buildings left standing.

But perhaps the greatest feature of the entertainment programme was the series of Sunday afternoon concerts given by the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra and the German State Opera and Ballet. One wondered how Leo Borchard could conduct so vigorously, how Liselotte Koster and Jockel Stahl could dance with such precision and verve, on their 1,500 calories per day. But the fact remains that their performances would have drawn generous applause from the most critical of London audiences.

To supplement the entertainment diet it was possible to spend an evening in a German beer cellar—selected cafés had been placed in bounds since fraternization had become legalized by Army order. However, the beer was poor stuff, and any other form of refreshment a prohibitive price in spite of our favourable rate of exchange (40 marks to the pound sterling). And so, save for the sake of curiosity, few ventured forth to such places.

Generally speaking, our attitude in dealing with the civilian population was one of firm tolerance. After our interest in the Berliner's outlook on life had been satisfied by the discovery that he was too dazed to have much opinion on any subject, fraternization became a sport for the unscrupulous and we had little to do with the people.

However, the Germans, although they traditionally feared the strong arm of any uniformed authority, were willing to try anything once. The Intelligence Office, where the greying I.O. reigned as "Commandant" for the purpose of civilian enquiries, was besieged night and day by Huns requesting travel permits, petrol, motor tyres, jobs in the camp, food, and even drink. We were not slow in pointing out to them that the British Army was not a benevolent institution run for their exclusive benefit!

It is curious that such incidents, although commonplace, did not arise from any desire to annoy or to interfere with the British administration. Rather were they evidence of that dazed condition which is the first sign of starvation, and of the degradation of a once proud people who were prepared to stoop so low as to beg from their conquerors.

As time went by the condition of the Berliners gradually improved. It became possible to issue them with just enough rations to sustain life—a little over half the standard British civilian ration—but it will be a long, long time before Berlin again rises to be a proud city.

The climax of our stay was the Victory Parade before Mr. Churchill. For us it was, in fact, the climax of the whole war. That short march past up the Charlottenburger Chaussee before the man who had led the whole nation to victory epitomized within us the memories of that long

and bitter struggle. It represented the moment of the miracle accomplished. Here was the fruition of the sweat, blood, toil and tears of the incomparable faith of a united nation.

The Tiergarten reverberated to the rousing strains of "Braganza." On the crowded, flag-bedecked saluting base stood the Prime Minister, Field-Marshal Montgomery at his right hand, saluting as each company passed by in their deep, steady ranks and in perfect unison, their bayonets glinting and the colours proudly flying in the morning's summer sun.

When the last infantry unit had passed, and the tanks and guns had rumbled serenely by in their mass formation, Churchill is stated to have said: "This is the day of which I have dreamed these last six years. Now I can die a happy man."

And so we felt that our task, too, was done. We could leave Berlin without regret for the quiet retirement of winter occupation duties in the Ruhr, but with the knowledge that we had written the last line of yet another page of that history always called to mind in "Pristinæ virtutis memor."

\* \* \* \* \*

*Extract from a Letter from the Brigadier Commanding 138th (Queen's) Infantry Brigade addressed to Lieut.-General Ivor Hughes. Written in Italy and dated November, 1943.*

"As you probably know, we are now in Italy. We are having a much easier time as the troops and their officers are now very well experienced and do quite fantastic jobs with extraordinarily few casualties. The three Battalion Commanders are remarkably good. Of course, the Brigade looks upon itself as the élite infantry of the Army. Their morale is amazing and their saluting in the middle of battle, a sight to be seen—not, of course, calling parties to attention, but individuals salute from pride and with beaming smiles on their faces. Their tasks have been by no means easy and we have had two days off in thirty . . . You have no idea what marvellous material it is . . . There have been moments when sister battalions\* have made physical contact covering the whole battle front—a good thought and one which should be recorded in the Regimental History in due course."

*Note—The 138th Infantry Brigade is composed of:*

1st/5th Battalion Queen's—C.O. (July, 1943).	Lt.-Colonel Leslie, Cameron Highlanders.
1st/6th Battalion Queen's—C.O. (July, 1943).	Lt.-Colonel Thickness, R. Ulster Rifles.
1st/7th Battalion Queen's—C.O. (July, 1943).	Lt.-Colonel Gordon, Green Howards.

*Extract from a letter from a Corps Commander, 8th Army, Tunisia, addressed to Lieut.-General I. T. P. Hughes, Commanding — Corps, 8th Army, March, 1943.*

"You will be delighted to hear that your old Queen's Brigade† has done magnificently.

The Brigade led the whole advance from Tripoli up to the Mareth Line and had many encounters with German rear-guards.

A few days ago Rommel lashed out at the 8th Army and the brunt of his attack fell upon the Queen's Brigade.

The three Queen's Battalions, particularly the 7th, without any wire or mines, 'saw off' the attack of two Panzer Divisions. On the front of the 7th Queen's there were 27 'dead' German tanks . . . Everybody agrees that it was a most magnificent performance."

\* Presumably refers to 2nd/5th, 2nd/6th, and 2nd/7th Battalions.

† *Note—The Queen's Brigade referred to consists of the 1st/5th, 1st/6th and 1st/7th Battalions of The Queen's Royal Regiment. Up till and including the Battle of Alamein (October, 1942), the Brigade formed part of the Division under the command of General Hughes. It was subsequently converted to a motorized brigade and transferred to another Corps.*

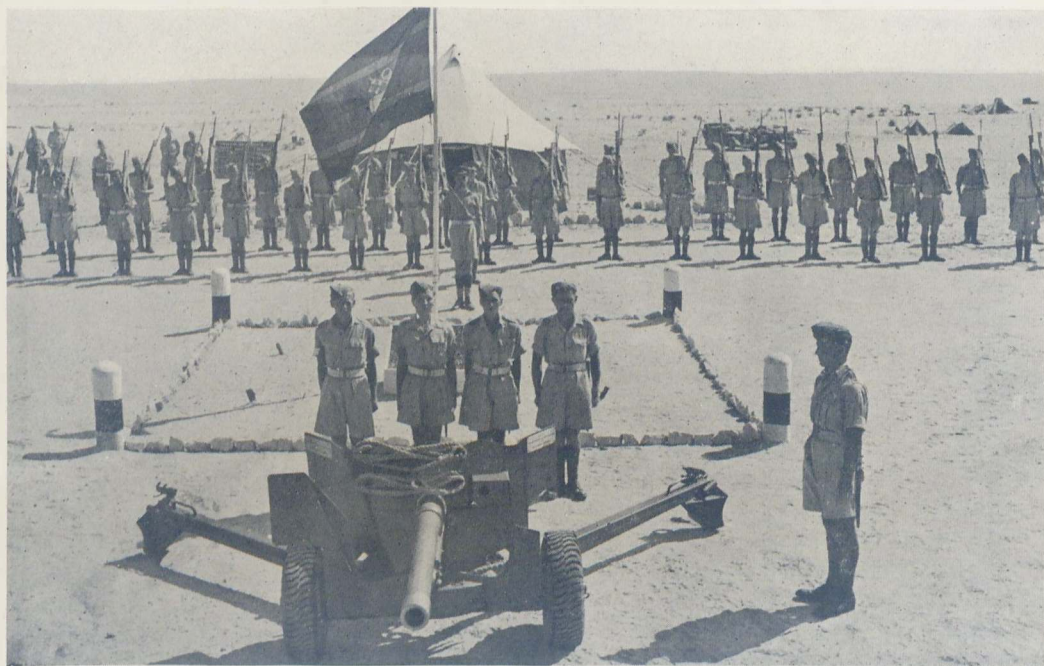


THE "SCROLL OF RIGHTS" PRESENTED TO THE REGIMENT BY THE MAYOR AND CORPORATION OF GUILDFORD.

## 1st/7th BATTALION



GENERAL MONTGOMERY, C-in-C. BRITISH WESTERN EXPEDITIONARY FORCE, INSPECTING 1st/7th BATTALION ON 17th FEBRUARY, 1944.



SERGT. ANDREWS, D.C.M., AND HIS ANTI-TANK GUN TEAM, 1st/7th BATTALION. Employees of U.K. Inspection Board of Canada presented a brass plate to this gun in commemoration of the fact that it was the gun which had destroyed most enemy tanks in the North African Campaign.

## RULES OF THE OFFICERS' CLUB

### THE QUEEN'S ROYAL REGIMENT

(Adopted at a meeting of the Officers' Regimental Dinner Club, held on 22nd October, 1945.)

1. The Club shall be called the "Officers' Club, The Queen's Royal Regiment."
2. The objects of the Club are :—
  - (a) To provide opportunities of meeting for serving and retired officers and their wives.
  - (b) To maintain and circulate a record of the doings of Battalions of the Regiment by the publication of a Regimental Journal.
  - (c) To stimulate interest in the history of the Regiment by maintaining a Regimental Museum, adding to it as opportunity offers.
  - (d) To maintain a small fund from which the Colonel of the Regiment can meet charges which should be borne by the Regiment as a whole and which cannot be met from any other source.
3. Membership of the Club shall be open, without election, to all officers holding, or who have held, Regular, Reserve, Territorial Service Commissions, 1914-1918 War or War Emergency Commissions in the Regiment. Officers of other Corps or Regiments who have served with Battalions of the Regiment on service may be offered membership by resolution of the Committee. Officers who are not qualified for full membership under the above conditions may be elected Honorary Members by the Committee provided that they are proposed and seconded by full members.
4. The affairs of the Club shall be managed by a Committee composed of the Colonel of the Regiment as Chairman, a Deputy Chairman and Honorary Secretary, both to be nominated by the Colonel of the Regiment, one member nominated by each Regular, Territorial and War Service Battalion and the Depot, two Regular retired Officers and one retired Territorial Officer to be nominated by the Colonel of the Regiment.
5. The Annual General Meeting of the Club shall be held on the same day as the Annual Dinner. At this meeting the accounts of the Club, duly audited, shall be presented, the programme of the Club activities for the ensuing twelve months shall be drawn up and the Committee shall be nominated.
6. The Committee shall meet twice annually and at such other times as the Chairman shall direct. Five shall form a quorum. Any two members of the Committee may request the Chairman to convene a meeting to consider any particular matter which has arisen. The Committee may at any time appoint Sub-Committees for the management of the Club activities or for any other purpose.
7. The Annual Subscription to the Club shall be one pound (£1) payable (preferably by Banker's Order) on 1st January each year. The following amounts will be allocated from each member's subscription to the various funds :—
 

Annual Dinner, 5/- ; Annual Reunion, 2/6 ; Journal, 5/- ; Museum, 5/- ; G.P. Fund, 2/6.
8. Members of the Club shall be entitled to the following privileges :—
  - (a) To attend the Annual Club Dinner.
  - (b) To attend, and bring guests to, the Annual Afternoon Reunion at the Depot.
  - (c) To be supplied with a copy of each number of the Regimental Journal.
  - (d) To see the Regimental Museum at any time.

Note.—Members attending (a) and (b) will be required to pay the cost of tickets as fixed by the Committee.
9. Any member whose subscription is six months in arrear may be debarred from exercising his privileges as a member until such time as the arrears are paid off.
10. The Hon. Secretary shall be responsible for maintaining a register of members and their addresses, for the collection of subscriptions, for making all payments in connection with the Club's activities, for keeping the accounts and presenting them, duly audited, at the Annual General Meeting.

11. No alteration shall be made to these rules except at the Annual General Meeting or at a General Meeting specially convened for the purpose. Notices of such alterations, duly proposed and seconded, shall be circulated to all members at least seven days before the date of such meeting.

## 1ST/6TH BATTALION

### SUMMARY OF WAR SERVICE

Station, 3rd September, 1939—Bermondsey. To France, April, 1940.

#### Battles and Actions.

Escaut Canal, May, 1940. Dunkirk, May, 1940.

Re-formed at Oxford, June, 1940. To Middle East, 25th May, 1942.

#### Battles and Actions.

Munassib Depression	September, 1942	Tripoli	January, 1943
Alamein	October, 1942	Zuara	February, 1943
El Ageila	December, 1942	Medenine	March, 1943
Tarhuna and Castel		Mareth	March, 1943
Benito	January, 1943	Djebibina	April, 1943
		Tunis	May, 1943

To Italy, September, 1943.

Salerno	September, 1943	San Andrea	October, 1943
Scafati		Mondragone	November, 1943

To England for Training, January, 1944.

Landed in Normandy "D" Day plus 2 (8th June, 1944).

Briquessard	June, 1944	Ghent	September, 1944
Caen Sector	July, 1944	Albert Canal	September, 1944
Aunay Sur Odon	August, 1944	Dinther	October, 1944
Le Plessis Grimault	August, 1944	S. Hertogenbosch	October, 1944
Livarot	August, 1944	Thorne	November, 1944
Lisieux	August, 1944	Wessem	November, 1944
River Seine and Somme	August, 1944		

Returned to England 16th December, 1944.

#### LIST OF COMMANDING OFFICERS.

W. R. Darnell, T.D.	... ..	September, 1939 to November, 1939.
I. T. P. Hughes, C.B., D.S.O., M.C.	... ..	November, 1939 to October, 1940.
R. E. Pickering	... ..	October, 1940 to January, 1942.
N. A. Willis	... ..	January, 1942 to February, 1942.
D. L. A. Gibbs, D.S.O.	... ..	February, 1942 to October, 1942.
E. P. Sewell, M.B.E.	... ..	October, 1942 to December, 1942.
R. J. A. Kaulbach	... ..	December, 1942 to February, 1943.
R. N. Thicknesse	... ..	February, 1943 to July, 1943.
M. Forrester, D.S.O., M.C.	... ..	July, 1943 to June, 1944.
J. H. Mason, D.S.O.	... ..	June, 1944 to December, 1945.
T. V. Close, D.S.O.	... ..	December, 1945.

#### AWARDS FOR GALLANTRY.

D.S.O., 5; Bar, 1; M.C., 11; D.C.M., 1; M.M., 11; B.E.M., 1.

### SHORT HISTORY OF THE BATTALION DURING WORLD WAR, 1939-1945

WHEN war broke out, the Battalion mobilized at its Headquarters in Jamaica Road, Bermondsey, and very shortly moved down to Yeovil, Somerset, for training and preparation for going overseas to France.

On 2nd April, 1940, the Battalion landed in France and moved to a concentration area at Mazieres near Le Mans. It then moved forward to Oissy and from there made a 75-mile march in three days to Steenwerck. When the invasion of the Low Countries took place in May, 1940, the Battalion took up defensive positions on the Escaut Canal, holding part of the front of the 44th Division. They held off the German attack for about two days, although suffering heavy casualties, until ordered to withdraw to Strazeele, where they again took up defensive positions. They stayed here for about two days until ordered to withdraw again to Dunkirk and re-embark, which they did on 30th May, 1940, a large proportion of them being taken aboard H.M. Destroyer *Malcolm*.

The Commanding Officer, Lieut.-Colonel (now Lieut.-General) I. T. P. Hughes was awarded the D.S.O.; 2/Lieut. J. Cox (Carrier Officer), Capt. A. R. Trench ("B" Company) and 2/Lieut. Worke were awarded the M.C.; and Sergt. Horwood of "B" Company was awarded the D.C.M. for escaping with Capt. A. R. Trench after having been taken prisoner. Sergt. Horwood later was commissioned and it was announced in 1944 that he had won the V.C. in Burma, but had been killed in so doing.

After re-forming at Oxford in June, 1940, the Battalion moved to Boston, Lincs, defending the coast of England, and after a short stay at Pontefract, was moved to South Eastern Command, where it was alternatively on coastal defence and mobile reserve to counteract any possible German invasion. It was in turn stationed at Wadhurst, Romney Marshes, Faversham, Ramsgate, Dover, Faversham again, and then Woldingham, where it mobilized again for service overseas.

In May, 1942, the Battalion, under Command of Lieut.-Colonel D. L. A. Gibbs, embarked at Glasgow on H.M.T. *Strathallan* (sunk later in the year off the north coast of Africa) and sailed for an unknown destination. The convoy called in at Freetown and Cape Town; at that time news had been received of the fall of Tobruk and it was not surprising that our final destination was the Western Desert. The Battalion landed at Port Tewfik in July, 1942, and went to a camp at Khatatba for acclimatization. After a few weeks' stay there, the Battalion moved to a defensive position in a minefield "box" at Alam Barrani, from which they were able to get a fine grandstand view of the repulse of Rommel's attack at the end of August, 1942, without actually being called into action.

In September, 1942, the Battalion had its first taste of what positional warfare in the desert was like. Together with the 1st/7th Queen's, an attack was made to capture the high ground overlooking the Munassib Depression, which was considered an important tactical feature. The attack was put in before first light and was preceded by a heavy artillery concentration and a barrage behind which the Battalion advanced. The objective was reached and the ground was held for three days, in spite of very heavy shelling and mortaring which caused considerable casualties. C.S.M. Stratford of "B" Company (who died of wounds) and L./Cpl. R. Cole, stretcher-bearer attached to "B" Company, were both awarded the M.M. for their gallantry there. The Battalion was then relieved and, after one further spell in the line, prepared itself for the Battle of Alamein.

The 131st Infantry Brigade's task was to help to gap two enemy minefields on the southern extremity of the line, just north of the prominent Himeimat feature, and thus allow our tanks to break through. During the night of 23rd October, and the day of the 24th, the Battalion was formed up ready to go into action, but was not called upon. In the meantime the 1st/7th Queen's with the 1st Battalion the Rifle Brigade and armour of the 7th Armoured Division, had passed through the first minefield and were established in between the two minefields.

In the afternoon of 24th October, the Battalion received orders to make a night attack with 1st/5th Queen's to reach the far side of the second minefield and allow the R.E. to gap the minefield and pass our tanks through.

The attack went in before midnight behind a very heavy barrage and the Battalion reached their objective, driving out elements of the Italian Iolgor Division from their positions and taking

prisoners, not without having suffered themselves from casualties caused not only by enemy shelling and small arms fire, but also by anti-personnel mines strewn liberally in the minefield through which they passed.

The Sappers successfully gapped the minefield, but so heavy was the anti-tank fire brought to bear on these gaps, in spite of the darkness, that the tanks were unable to get through. When dawn came, the Battalion was out in the "blue" with no supporting weapons at all and little or no cover, so rocky and bare was the ground. All through that day the enemy shelling and mortaring was intense, and had their armour attacked, they could not have failed to annihilate the Battalion. As it was, very heavy casualties were incurred, and the C.O. and Adjutant, together with their Battalion Headquarters and "D" Company were taken prisoner. At last light the remains of the Battalion withdrew just in time to avoid complete destruction by a large enemy counter-attacking force which was even then advancing. Of the four Rifle Companies and Battalion Headquarters that went in to the attack, only four Officers and eighty other ranks came out. Major Wilson, "A" Company, was awarded the D.S.O., the I.O., 2/Lieut. R. G. Pearce, the M.C., and M.M.s were won by Cpl. Hewson, "B" Company, and Pte. Cook, stretcher bearer attached "D" Company.

Reinforcements were quickly received, but a few days later, it was heard that the 44th Division had been broken up and the 131st Brigade had been attached to the 7th Armoured Division as a Lorried Infantry Brigade. In early November, the necessary transport was received, and that evening, the Battalion moved up along congested tracks towards the front. The break-through occurred a day or two after this and the 22nd Armoured Brigade was in the van of the chase, nobly and often vainly pursued by 131st Brigade, in their new role, as happened particularly in the early days when they were very inexperienced in desert navigation.

The Brigade was not called upon to deploy fully until it reached Tobruk, which it entered on 14th November, the enemy having left the previous night. The Battalion stayed there for some days, partly to assist in getting the port working by unloading ships, but mainly through administrative reasons.

In early December, the Battalion moved forward to Benghazi and continued their temporary task of stevedores there until they were needed for other purposes.

On 12th December, the advance restarted and the 131st Infantry Brigade was once again with the 7th Armoured Division. On 15th December, the Battalion attacked by night positions which the enemy held west of El Agheila and from which they had held up the Armoured Brigade. The attack went well, but the enemy were heard withdrawing and they just got clear before the objective was reached.

The Battalion spent Christmas in a position just west of Marble Arch, and in spite of the shortness of supplies, a good effort was made to provide a good dinner for all ranks. The following day a move was made to Wadi Tamet facing a defensive line which the enemy held from Buerat to the south covering Tripoli. There the Battalion stayed until the necessary supplies had been brought forward to make the attack to capture Tripoli feasible.

On 14th January, 1943, the attack began against the enemy positions covering the Wadi Zem Zern, the Battalion having the task of covering the northern flank of the Armoured Brigade as they thrust through the enemy positions. After a battle lasting all day, the enemy withdrew during the night and was pursued through Beni Ulid to Tarhuna, where he made a stand at the end of Tarhuna Pass covering the entrance into the Tripoli plain. As the Armoured Brigade could not get forward, the Battalion put in a night attack involving an approach march over mountainous country of some ten miles, only to find that the enemy withdrew once again just as the Battalion reached their objective. By first light, the Armoured Brigade had passed through, only to be held up by an anti-tank ditch and enclosed country at Castel Benito; once again the Battalion was sent for and, arriving at their concentration area at last light, immediately put in another night attack, this time with their objective five miles away. Once again the enemy were heard withdrawing just as the Battalion reached the village, but this time a small skirmish took place between the enemy rear party and the battle patrol which was leading the Battalion. As soon as the town was reported clear, the 11th Hussars went through the Battalion and on into Tripoli, which they entered just before first light.

Owing to administrative difficulties, the Queen's Brigade alone was sent forward to push the enemy back to the borders of Tunisia, and this they did almost entirely on foot, fighting their way forward and capturing in turn Zavia, Sabraiha, Zuara, and Pisida, where they were held up by the salt marshes there. After a short delay to enable the armour to rejoin the infantry, the salt marshes were crossed near El Assa and the enemy strongpoints at Ben Gardane, Metameur and Medenine were quickly captured.

By this time the 8th Army was up against the outskirts of the Mareth Line, so no further attempts were made to do anything except consolidate the positions won and await reinforcements.

The high ground overlooking Medenine, known as the 'Tadjeras, was a great tactical gain, which the enemy had been surprised into losing, and it was essential for us to hold before any attack on the Mareth Line could take place. It was no surprise that the enemy put in a determined attack on 6th March with no less than three Panzer Divisions, the 10th, 15th and 21st.

The first attack came in just after first light and was mainly concentrated against the 201st Guards Brigade to the south, who knocked out twelve tanks. This diverted the attack on to the Battalion front, and in spite of heavy defensive artillery fire he pressed home his attack and managed to get a few tanks in between the Battalion and 2nd Scots Guards on their left, but these were halted and made to withdraw.

Later in the morning at least one hundred enemy tanks attacked the Queen's front, held by 1st/6th and 1st/7th Queen's but they were held and driven off by heavy artillery fire and accurate anti-tank gunnery and only succeeded in over-running one platoon position on the Battalion front. They tried once again in the afternoon with tanks and infantry but this was again broken up by artillery fire. When nightfall came, the line was unbroken; during the night further heavy concentrations of artillery were brought down in front of our positions and when morning came it was found that the enemy had called it off and had withdrawn into the hills to his previous positions. He left forty-five knocked-out tanks on the Brigade front, of which the majority were in front of the 1st/6th Queen's. The Battle of Medenine only lasted twenty-four hours, but it cost the enemy dear and made the Battle of Mareth possible.

Before the Battle of Mareth started, the Battalion moved continuously from position to position facing the enemy line and had a very unpleasant and exhausting time, being shelled most of the day and moving most nights to fresh positions.

After the Mareth Line had been breached, the Battalion advanced through the Wadi Akarit, past Gabes, Sfax and Sousse, and finally took up positions at Djebibina. Here the Battalion put in a night attack to cover the flank of the 4th Indian Division, who were in their turn attacking a high feature known as Djebel Garci. The attack was only partially successful and, as it was found impossible to bring up supporting weapons, the Battalion profited by its previous experience at Alamein and withdrew to a more favourable position.

After moving to the Enfidaville front, as a great surprise, the whole of the 7th Armoured Division and 4th Indian Division were suddenly switched to the 1st Army front on the night of 30th April, 1943. A few days were spent at Le Krib, and on 5th May the Divisions moved forward to Medjez el Bab. That night the attack began and after the 4th Indian Division had taken their objectives, the 22nd Armoured Brigade poured through followed by 131st Brigade. By the night of the 6th the armour had reached St. Cyprien and the 1st/6th Queen's were at Djebel Achon, a mile or two behind. The following day the Battalion took over positions on the high ground north of St. Cyprien, whilst the armour pushed on down into Tunis, which they finally entered that evening.

Although there were a few more days before it could be said that the war in Africa was over, the 1st/6th Queen's had no further task to perform, and after a short stay near Tunis moved by their transport, over a period of four days, to an area on the coast of the Mediterranean near Homs, where they stayed for many months.

The next few months were spent refitting and training for the invasion of Italy, in which special attention was paid to perfecting battle drills and co-operation with tanks.

## ITALY

The Battalion took no part in the Sicily campaign, but at the end of August moved to an area just outside Tripoli preparatory to the invasion of Italy. Whereas the Rifle Companies were not scheduled to arrive until ten to twelve days after the first invasion troops at Salerno, the administrative part of the Battalion were landed some days before, and so critical was the general situation at that time that they were mobilized as fighting troops and given positions to defend. Then the Rifle Companies landed about 18th September, just when the worst of the crisis was over, and were called upon to do very little except hold positions on the perimeter.

After the 46th and 56th Infantry Divisions had fully cleared Salerno and the high ground to the north as far as the pass overlooking the Naples plain, which took several days, the Queen's Brigade were passed through to exploit. After passing through Nocera and experiencing for the first time the enthusiasm of the local population, the leading company came to the town of Scafati, where they were held up by an anti-tank gun and infantry covering the bridge over the river, which it was vitally important to capture intact. The leading company quickly discovered a small wooden bridge a little farther upstream, crossed the river and came upon the German rear party from behind, killing or capturing the lot. The charges were removed from the bridge and two further companies and a troop of tanks moved across and took up positions to cover it. Further progress was impossible owing to a German counter-attack both with infantry and tanks from the north and the west, which was beaten off by nightfall. A very anxious night was spent, not made any more pleasant by continuous thunder and lightning. When morning came an early recce. revealed that the Germans had abandoned hope of recapturing the bridge and had withdrawn. Major W. L. Johnson, "A" Company, was awarded the M.C. and Sergt. Coles, "B" Company the M.M. for this action. Early that morning, armour passed through to the west to capture Naples whilst 131st Brigade was directed north to the east of Vesuvius. By that evening the Battalion had reached Passanti, by the next day they had advanced to Tzecijno in the face of heavy shelling and mortaring from the enemy rear party, and by the following evening had captured Somma Vesuviana, where they formed a base whilst the armour passed through into the more open country beyond.

The remainder of the advance up to the River Volturno was achieved mainly by the Armoured Brigade, with the Infantry Brigade lending them support when necessary.

Then came a lull whilst preparations were made for the crossing of the river, which was a very considerable obstacle. The crossing on the Divisional Front, which was considered a subsidiary one, was carried out by 1st/5th Queen's and 1st/7th Queen's, and after they had gained a very limited bridgehead around Brezza, 1st/6th Queen's were passed through them north-west towards San Andrea. Progress was very difficult owing to the open nature of the ground, but the enemy was slowly pushed back by the aggressive patrols sent out by the Battalion. Capt. P. Kime was awarded an M.C. for his leading of the Battle Patrol in these patrols. Finally entry was made into San Andrea and the Battalion took up positions there in a completely isolated salient. In spite of heavy shelling and one raid by a large German patrol, the Battalion held on to the positions until relieved.

This time they were drawn right out of the line for a rest. This was rudely shaken two days later when the Battalion was again ordered to move up to the line, this time on the coastal sector. After an all-night drive, they were in position just after first light and the advance started soon after. The enemy were driven out of Mondragone, and the foot of the hills to the north of it was reached by nightfall. The following day the Battalion scaled the heights of Mt. Massico and Mt. Cicola and pushed the enemy back into the Garigliano plain. The Battalion was relieved and withdrew to a concentration area at Mondragone. It was here on 5th November, 1943, that the Battalion was given two items of good news; first, that the Commanding Officer Lieut.-Colonel M. Forrester, had been awarded the D.S.O.; and, secondly, that the Division was returning to England.

The Battalion in due course withdrew to a rest area at Vico Equense on the Sorrento Peninsula until they embarked at Naples on the Dutch boat *Boissevain* just before Christmas. The journey was uneventful, and the Battalion landed at Glasgow just after New Year, 1944.

Thus ended a short but completely successful campaign in Italy.

## ENGLAND

The Battalion's new station was to be King's Lynn, in Norfolk, and after disembarkation leave it settled down to refit and train for the coming invasion of Europe, which was, of course, the reason for it being brought back to England.

Early in May, 1944, the Battalion moved to a concentration area in Brentwood, Essex, where they stayed in a Staging Camp and vehicles were waterproofed. There they stayed until 4th June, when they embarked at Tilbury and after a short wait off Southend, sailed through the Straits of Dover and then over to Normandy, where the Battalion disembarked on 8th and 9th June and concentrated north of Bayeux.

## FRANCE

A couple of days were given for getting fully prepared, and on 12th June the Battalion first went into action north of Tilly Sur Seuilles.

Before nightfall word came that 11th Hussars had found a soft spot in the enemy defences farther to the west, and 131st Brigade was therefore relieved that night to support the armour through that gap.

One regiment of 22nd Armoured Brigade (4th C.L.V.) reached Villers Bocage, with 1st/5th and 1st/7th Queen's close behind, when they came upon a complete Panzer Division moving up to the line and the Armoured Regiment suffered severe losses, making it necessary to withdraw from this salient. On the night of 14th June they withdrew through 1st/6th Queen's, who were then established at a village called Briquessard, an important road junction. The Battalion was in a very exposed salient, being exposed on the east, south and west, and having only a very tenuous line of communication back to the north. In addition, this was the junction between the British and American armies. An attack was therefore expected.

There was only patrol activity by the enemy on the 15th, but the first attack, supported by tanks, came in at first light on 16th. Each company front was tested in turn, but held firm, and the attack petered out by early afternoon. The rest of the day was quiet except for mortaring and shelling, but several enemy patrols tried to infiltrate during the night without success.

An even more determined attack was put in by the enemy on the afternoon of the 17th and they succeeded in penetrating the Battalion lines, but any further progress was held up by M.M.G. and tank fire, and finally by last light, all positions had been retaken and the enemy beaten back. It was estimated that two Battalions of enemy attacked and their casualties were very heavy. During the night the Battalion withdrew according to plan to a less exposed position in Briquessard Wood to the north, having achieved what they were ordered to do. For this action the Commanding Officer, Lieut.-Colonel M. Forrester, was awarded a bar to his D.S.O.

From then until 1st July, 1944, the Battalion held the forward edge of Briquessard Wood, being subjected to constant shelling and mortaring, which caused many casualties, carrying out constant patrolling and having frequent small skirmishes with the enemy. The Commanding Officer was severely wounded by a shell landing on his Battalion Headquarters, and the command of the Battalion was taken over by his Second-in-Command, Lieut.-Colonel J. H. Mason.

The Battalion then moved back into reserve, for the first time since landing three weeks previously. On 18th July the Battalion moved into the Caen area and was in action at Giberville, Soliers.

The Battalion was then switched back to the Caumont area, where it was hoped to achieve a break-through. After certain progress had been made, the Battalion was ordered to make a night attack on 2nd/3rd August in order to gain Point 188 and permit the armour to pass through towards Aunay Sur Odon. The attack was successful, the enemy being driven off and an enemy tank destroyed. During the remainder of the night, several enemy trucks trying to pass through the cross-roads now held by the Battalion were intercepted and their occupants killed or captured.

When morning came it was seen that the forward companies were overlooked on both flanks from high ground held by the enemy. There was very heavy shelling and mortaring all day, and in the early afternoon two attacks were put in by the enemy. The first was repulsed, but the second was partially successful, the whole of one company and part of another being overrun by enemy tanks and infantry, the anti-tank guns supporting the Battalion having been put out of action.

The leading companies withdrew to more favourable positions and, with the help of artillery and a squadron of tanks, the enemy attack was halted. That night the Battalion withdrew.

After receiving reinforcements to cover the losses suffered on 3rd August, the Battalion moved to Mount Pincon on 8th August and occupied the village of Le Plessis Grimault, which had just been captured from the enemy, and helped to clear up pockets of them left behind. The following day the Battalion was switched to a new axis, and after reaching its objective at La Fresnée, in spite of heavy shelling, it was relieved that night and sent back for a rest; the first non-operational position since the Battalion landed.

On the 16th August, the Battalion was off again in support of the Armoured Brigade, having been given the task of capturing Lisieux. In succession the Battalion captured Boissy, St. Marguerite des Loges and, after a hold-up for a day or two here, occupied Liverot on the 20th. Here the Battalion was counter-attacked by enemy infantry, supported by tanks, but after losing a little ground, the attack was beaten off. On 24th August, Lisieux was captured and it became obvious that the enemy were retreating fast to the River Seine, leaving behind substantial rear-guards. A steady advance continued clearing all pockets of resistance on the way, and on the 31st, the Battalion crossed the Seine.

The Somme was crossed the following day and the speed of the advance was increased. On 4th September each Rifle Company was put under command of an Armoured Regiment, with the objective as Ghent in Belgium. Very swift progress was made, and after a short parley with the Germans on the night of 5th/6th September, demanding their surrender, the city was entered on the following morning, the Germans having withdrawn. By this time lines of communication were very stretched and even cut by wandering parties of enemy, some of whom were still very much on the offensive but the majority were looking for someone to whom to surrender.

On 9th September, an attack was made to cross the canal north of Ghent and clear the factory area there. A small bridgehead was made over the canal, using a small railway bridge and in spite of very heavy shelling by the enemy the whole area was cleared by midday the following day, a large number of prisoners being taken.

After a short rest the Battalion then took part in the operation to try and link up with the airborne troops dropped at Arnhem. The road between St. Oedemede and Veghel was cut by the enemy and had to be reopened to allow supplies to get through. This was done. Thereafter came a long and tedious spell of defensive warfare around Heeswijk and Dinther, involving constant patrolling and offensive prodding of the enemy positions, lasting until 22nd October, when an attack was made to drive the enemy from S. Hertogenbosch.

The Battalion advanced steadily, and by the 24th the objective had been achieved with very little loss and a considerable number of prisoners taken.

The Commanding Officer was awarded the D.S.O. at this time.

This task finished, the Battalion was switched to join the Armoured Brigade in the clearing of the remainder of the ground south of the Maas farther to the west, which task was slow but thorough, and was completed as far as the Battalion was concerned by 8th November, when the Battalion moved to new positions near Roermond. The Battalion took up positions near Thorn and cleared the village of Wessem, which had been occupied by the enemy. The Battalion held these positions and carried out constant patrolling until relieved on 29th November.

It was then that the Battalion was informed that it would be leaving the 7th Armoured Division and that a nucleus of about a hundred Officers and N.C.Os. would return to England with 50th (N) Division as a training cadre.

After moving to Ypres to join the new Division and posting away the majority of the Battalion to other units, the remainder embarked in early December, and were stationed at Helmsley, Yorkshire.

Here for three months, till March, the Battalion carried out the conversion of former R.A. and R.A.S.C. personnel to infantry in a ten weeks' course. After the European war was over, the conversion courses ceased and the Battalion acted as a training Battalion, finding drafts for overseas, until November, 1945, when orders were received for the Battalion to mobilize again for service in the Middle East. Owing to the steady demobilization, the Battalion was almost completely re-formed. Lieut.-Colonel T. V. Close, D.S.O., was appointed to command.

The Battalion embarked again on 23rd December, at Liverpool on H.M.T. *Orion*.

## "COMRADES IN WAR—AND PEACE?"

Reprinted from *The Army Quarterly*, April, 1944.

BY MAJOR R. A. C. RADCLIFFE.

I WAS serving in the Middle East—Mesopotamia as it was then called—when the last war ended. The Battalion in which I was serving had been overseas for several years, and as the casualties for the last two years had been comparatively slight, we were very much of a family party. Although of course, we—both officers and men—had discussed the end of the war, and our return to Blighty and civvy street many thousands of times, most of us had, I am sure, failed to appreciate in its full significance one of the inevitable factors of demobilization.

We, the officers, had not realized that when we said good-bye to one of our men, far more likely than not it would be the last time that we should ever see him, and the men in their turn had I am sure failed to grasp the finality of the farewell salute and handshake, and mutual good wishes. Sometimes not even those. One would be away for the day on some duty, and on return be told that Private X had been wired for suddenly and had gone. And it was Private X who had saved one's life one day perhaps, or shared with one some particularly unpleasant adventure. It seemed impossible that it could happen just like that. That these men with whom one had shared so much, and whom one loved so much, could suddenly vanish completely out of one's life. And yet so it was—and so it is likely to be again unless anything written in this article can be of any help to make it different.

Of course, at the time, we did not realize that we were not going to meet again. I remember that I took down a number of my men's addresses, and promised faithfully that I would come and look them up in their home towns. But I only kept my promise in the one instance of my faithful batman, and then it took me a day's travelling to achieve a not very satisfactory to either side meeting of two hours. The trouble in my case was that I lived in the south of England, and the men, for the most part, in the industrial towns of Lancashire, and the East and West of Kipling are scarcely farther apart from one another. I just never had the time—and possibly after my experience with my batman I had not the inclination either—to keep those other promises. I expect things happened much the same way with the other officers in the Battalion.

Of course, I did meet a few of the men again at occasional battalion reunions or Old Comrades' dinners, but only a very few, and more often than not the ones who came were not those whom one particularly wanted to see.

In any case, those reunions, particularly after the industrial slump, gave one far more pain than pleasure. I always felt. Fewer men came each year to them, of course the absentees were presumably unable to afford the expenses of the journey and the dinner, or had pawned their good suit, while the pinched faces of those who did come too often told their own tale. Was it friendship or a mockery of the word, one wondered, to stand these men drinks, and talk of the good old times when we had really shared difficulties and dangers together—and at the end of the evening to wish them good luck, and leave them to the hard anxieties and poverties of their lives, when one knew how worthy they were of better things. One wanted desperately to give them some real help, to show that one really did care and had not forgotten and only very rarely was one able to find any practical means of putting one's wishes into practice.

Well! that was after the last war, and we are all determined that the mistakes of those post-war years with regard to employment shall not be repeated again after this war. We all hope, too, that this time our determinations will be realized, but whether they are or not, or whether they are only partially, the comradeship in this war between officers and men and the unit *esprit de corps* must be made full use of in the post-war years and not just thrown away and wasted like last time. They are too valuable for that.

Let no one imagine that the Government or industry or the authorities of the charitable associations can do everything that requires to be done, because with the best will in the world, they cannot.

If the Government and industry between them find every returning soldier a job, and if the various authorities and charitable associations do all they can to set him up with a house and home again, the returning soldier may still lack one most important thing which, if provided, may make just the difference between the success or failure of all the other official and non-official efforts on his behalf—I mean a friend who knows him and understands his point of view. The readjustment to civil life, both to the conditions of industry, and to home life will be for very many men a difficult and disturbing process.

In their work there will be for the majority the change from open air to indoor life, the absence of Army comradeship and team spirit and the feeling of working together for an all-important cause, and, finally, once again there will be the Friday pay packet and the haunting feeling of insecurity.

In their home life, the problem of settling down happily will probably be no less acute. A man cannot live a soldier's life for a number of years, and then return and pick up the threads of domestic life just as if nothing had happened to him or to his family in his absence. While he has been inevitably changing under the influence of new ties and new surroundings, it is more than probable that his wife or his family have also been altering in many ways too, and the business of mutual readjustment will not be very easily accomplished, even where the separation of war has caused no actual estrangement. In many families, father and children will be strangers to one another, and in the case of a large number of war marriages, the same will almost be true of husband and wife. One cannot help wondering too, how the returning soldier will ever get used to home life in the slum areas of our big industrial towns.

Of course, it is quite possible for an officer to take the view that economic necessity will compel the men to accept and make the best of the jobs they are given, and that the force of circumstances will in the same way compel them into happy family union again, and that, therefore, there is nothing that need be done; but such a view is neither imaginative nor sympathetic, and will, I know, be repugnant to the many thousands of officers in the Army who, having shared the comradeship of war with their men, will be anxious to make that comradeship a real thing in peace time, and not just the artificial sham of annual reunions and Old Comrades' dinners.

It is for those thousands of officers, and for the many thousands of their men who will need as never before their officers' help, encouragement and counsel that I am writing this article, as I believe that something really worth while can be organized, if steps are taken now to make the necessary plans. This is what I suggest should be done.

A scheme should be organized on a regimental basis in every unit with the following two objects in view:—

- (1) To keep as many officers and men of the unit as possible in regular touch with one another on their return to civil life.
- (2) To ensure that as many men as possible shall have an "officer friend" within reach of their home, to whom they can turn for advice and help in case of need.

The officers will, therefore, form the framework of the scheme, as it will be their job to be both the officer friend to the men in their region and to arrange for periodical reunions of the men for whom they are responsible.

The success or failure of the scheme will clearly depend to a very large extent on the distribution of the officers and men throughout the country with regard to their home towns. Clearly if all the officers live in the south, and all the men in the north, the scheme will be quite impossible to work, but I think that there is not much likelihood of that contingency occurring in many units to-day.

Conversely, the scheme is, of course, very simple to work if all the officers and men are drawn from the same part of the country, but I think that situation is also exceptional to-day.

In most units, one finds officers and men from all parts of the country, and it seems reasonable to suppose that a regional framework is a possibility, more especially if, as seems advisable for many reasons, Warrant Officers and some of the senior N.C.Os. are reckoned as officers for the purpose of the scheme. How large a region any officer should be responsible for would, of course, depend on factors such as:—

- (a) The type of region. For example, an officer living in a large industrial town like Leeds or Nottingham, or a provincial centre like Durham, which are easily accessible from all the neighbouring areas, could be responsible for a bigger region than, say, an officer living in Barrow-in-Furness, Cromer or Sherborne.
- (b) The location of the men to be included in the region.
- (c) The capability of the officer concerned.

but it seems reasonable to suggest that a model region might cover anything within a circumference of twenty to thirty miles, or within one to two hours' journey by train or bus to put it differently. A journey of that length should be quite within the means both in time and money of a man occasionally when in need of funds or friendship.

Where necessary other men, farther away from the centre, would have to be included in the region, but it is unlikely that they would benefit from the scheme to the same extent.

Of course, it is probably not going to be possible to cover anything like all the men in the unit in the regional scheme, even when extended beyond the desirable limit, and other methods will then have to be used. Suppose, for instance, a soldier comes from Hereford or its vicinity and there is no officer—I use the term "officer" to include all those warrant officers and sergeants acting in that capacity for the purpose of the scheme—in the battalion living within fifty or one hundred miles of the place, my suggestion is that the organizer of the scheme should then try and find out if some officer knows of someone in that region who will act as the soldier's friend. For instance, the battalion may well have been stationed near Hereford at one time, and someone will remember the name of the Army Welfare Officer there, or some kind donor of local hospitality, who, if written to, will gladly take on the job. Or perhaps some officer will have a personal friend of whom good use could be made. It is difficult to imagine anyone not willing to do this small service for a discharged soldier if they were asked. Such outlying cases will not, of course, have the opportunity of any local reunions, but they will at any rate have a friend in case of need.

That briefly explains the regional scheme which, in my opinion founded on some experience of my own Regimental Old Comrades Association, is the only really practical and useful basis on which any Old Comrades Association can be founded.

I am, of course, aware that some of the best regimental associations of regular regiments work somewhat on the lines which I have indicated, decentralizing from a head office, and I feel fairly certain that they would agree with my contention. But they need no advice from me, and it is not for them that I am writing. I am thinking of the countless units in this war which have not already formed regimental associations at home to help them. Such units may be able to form their own central association, either now or after the war, if they wish to do so and can find a suitable person to run it, or may be able to link up with some larger association when they return to England—those plans can be left to a later date, but the regional organization scheme must be prepared now, all ready for the day when demobilization starts.

If that is not done, the unit will be caught unawares, as my own unit was after the last war, and men will have disappeared for ever before anything has been done about them. The defeat of Germany when it comes, will very probably come suddenly as in 1918. It will be followed, as we know, by some degree of demobilization, and by an inevitable shifting about of personnel in units, and for these eventualities units should be fully prepared in advance.

The question of money for the scheme is, of course, of great importance, as, however modest the scheme, some money will be required for it. If it is decided to have no central association, at any rate to start with, and to make no attempt to give financial help to hardship cases, it will only be necessary to give each regional organizer a comparatively small sum to pay the administrative expenses of postage, etc., to get the thing started, and after that each region should be self-supporting with regard to its activities. If, on the other hand, regional organizers are to be empowered to relieve hardship cases, then, clearly, they must be given the money to do so, and again, if a central association is to be formed to link the regions together, further funds for administrative expenses will be required.

To decide this point, the whole idea of the scheme will obviously have to be explained to all the officers and men in order to see if they want it. The officers, and with them the selected warrant officers and sergeants, should be consulted first, as without their willing co-operation

the scheme could not function. If the idea proves acceptable to both officers and men then the question of raising the necessary money, whatever type of scheme is decided on, should present no insuperable difficulty. Those desiring to participate should be asked to start subscribing at once, and, at the final settlement of P.R.I. Funds, a proportion of money could be fairly allocated to the funds of the Association.

Two further practical steps could be taken now:—

- (1) The appointment of an officer to organize the scheme in the unit.
- (2) The allocation by this organizer of officers and men to their regions.

Each officer should be given a list with addresses of the men in his region for whom he is responsible—each man should be given on a stiff card the name and address of the officer responsible for his region.

I can myself see a hundred and one difficulties about my suggestions. Nevertheless, I believe them to be worth attempting, and I hope some units will make the attempt, remembering that difficulties are but opportunities to those who have courage, vision and determination.

## 1ST/7TH BATTALION

### SUMMARY OF WAR SERVICES

Station, 3rd September, 1939: Greenwich (Area). To France, 1st April, 1940.

#### Battles and Actions.

La Bassée Canal (Area). Withdrawal to Dunkirk.

Withdrawal from Dunkirk.

Re-formed at Doncaster on approx. August, 1940. Thence Coastal Defence, Kent.

To Middle East, 21st May, 1942.

#### Actions and Battles.

Munassib	September, 1942	Castel Benito	January, 1943
El Alamein	October, 1942	Zuara	January, 1943
Tobruk	November, 1942	El Assa	February, 1943
Barce	November, 1942	Ben Gardane	February, 1943
Benghazi	November, 1942	Medenine	March, 1943
El'Agheila	December, 1942	Gabes	March, 1943
Nofilia	December, 1942	Djebel Fadeloun	April, 1943
Sirte	December, 1942	Medjez-El-Bab	May, 1943
Tarhuna	January, 1943	Tunis	May, 1943

To Italy, September, 1943.

#### Battles and Actions.

Salerno	September, 1943	River Volturno	November, 1943
Vesuvius (Area)	October, 1943	Mondragone	November, 1943

To England for training, January, 1944.

Hunstanton, Norfolk. Transferred to Concentration Area, Brentwood, Essex, awaiting "D" Day.

Landed in Normandy, "D" Day plus two (June, 1944). Landed at Le Hamel.

#### Battles and Actions.

Villers Bocage	June, 1944	La Vallee	August, 1944
Bourguebus	July, 1944	Lisieux	August, 1944

Advance into Belgium, September.

Oudenarde.

Garvere.

St. Nicholas.

Subsequent advance:

Beveran Waes (small village near Antwerp)	10th September	Osterhout	October, 1944
Eindhoven (Holland)	23rd September	Waalwyjk	October, 1944
St. Oedenrode	29th September	Huesden	November, 1944
Middlerode	October, 1944	Kessenich	November, 1944
Loon-Op-Zand	October, 1944	Thorn	November, 1944
Panheel Lock	November, 1944		

Returned to England, December, 1944.

#### LIST OF COMMANDING OFFICERS.

Lt.-Col. P. Adams, T.D.	... ..	from September, 1939 to February, 1940.
Lt.-Col. G. A. Pilleau, M.C.	... ..	from February, 1940 to June, 1941.
Lt.-Col. R. M. Burton	... ..	from June, 1941 to October, 1942.
Lt.-Col. R. H. Senior, D.S.O., T.D.	... ..	from October, 1942 to March, 1943.
Lt.-Col. D. S. Gordon, D.S.O.	... ..	from March, 1943 to June, 1944.
Lt.-Col. W. D. Griffiths, D.S.O., M.C.	... ..	from June, 1944 to December, 1944.
Lt.-Col. H. G. Veasey, D.S.O.	... ..	from December, 1944 up to present date.

#### AWARDS FOR GALLANTRY.

D.S.O., 4; Bars, 2; M.C., 15; D.C.M., 3; M.M., 24.

DECEMBER, 1944—NOVEMBER, 1945.

THE Battalion fought its last action at Beegden (Holland). It was then brought out of the active zone and reorganized with a view to taking up its new task—training reinforcements in the United Kingdom. Only a limited number of Officers, W.Os. and O.Rs. returned to form the nucleus of a new Battalion. In all, 12 Officers, 7 W.Os. and 101 O.Rs. came back. The Battalion arrived at Yeadon Camp, Yorkshire, on 16th December, 1944, under the command of Lieut.-Colonel W. D. Griffiths, D.S.O., M.C.

Yeadon Camp itself could only accommodate Headquarters and three companies. It was, therefore necessary to take over another hutted camp, this being situated near Calverley, about six miles from Battalion Headquarters.

On 24th December, Lieut.-Colonel Griffiths proceeded on leave prior to attending a Staff Course. The Battalion was then taken over by Lieut.-Colonel H. G. Veasey, D.S.O., who had recently returned from an E.A. Command.

Training had now started in earnest with a new intake of 720 trainees. By this time a number of new Officers and N.C.Os. had increased the original numbers of the old 1st/7th Battalion. Major J. A. R. Freeland had been posted as second-in-command but left the Battalion in May to take up an appointment as Instructor at the R.M.C., Kingston, Ontario, his place being taken by Major S. W. Peet, M.C.

The inclement and very cold weather on the Yorkshire moors was indeed a test in hardening, but all ranks bore it cheerfully and, with the generous allotment of ammunition, much useful training was carried out.

Although "Queen's" by name, the Battalion has been made up of a variety of regiments, and recently, owing to numerous drafts, a new influx of Python and Prisoners of War have joined our ranks. In one way and another, it might be said that representatives from most of the regiments of the British Army have passed through our hands.

Regimental Sports took place on 1st June with "F" Company winning the Athletic Shield. The Battalion has done well in athletics, having won the Brigade Athletic Shield twice out of three meetings. Further, individually it had the greatest number of prize winners at the 50th (N.) Divisional Sports Meeting, Capt. Poole and Sergt. Penny being selected for the Inter-Command Athletic Meeting at Aldershot. We have played a certain amount of cricket, football, both Rugby and Soccer, and with regard to the latter, we have quite a useful side.

On 15th September, we were very pleased to welcome our Colonel, General Sir George Giffard, G.C.B., D.S.O., A.D.C., who paid us a visit.

A detachment of 15 Officers and 100 O.Rs. proceeded to Guildford on 28th September to take part in the Ceremony of the Presentation of the Scroll by the Borough of Guildford. This was indeed a most welcome break and was much appreciated by all ranks, for in addition to attending the Parade and partaking of the lavish hospitality of the Depot, it gave many an opportunity of visiting their homes during the week-end.

Recently the Battalion has been called upon to carry out agricultural work, and about two hundred men proceeded to Scunthorpe, Lincs, under command of Major E. G. Sandys, for potato picking. This was quite a popular pastime despite the bad weather. However, great assistance was given to the farmers.

We have just concluded our Thanksgiving Week with very good results. The target for saving was £500, but the Battalion saved £1,640 15s. 6d. During the week, four dances, a midnight matinee, a concert, shooting match and a military exhibition were all staged with a view to stepping up the savings. Great credit is due to Capt. P. N. P. Plunkett and his Committee, with the willing assistance of the A.T.S. and civilian helpers, in achieving such good results.

During the period under review the following Certificates for Mention in Despatches have been presented:—

Major E. G. Sandys.  
6082824 R.S.M. J. Groves (M.M.)  
5504854 C./Sergt. N. Smith.  
6093238 Cpl. E. Bussey (1st and 2nd).  
6089725 Cpl. A. McDougall (M.M.), (3rd and 4th).  
5951678 L./Cpl. L. Drury.  
6096879 Pte. S. Hiscock.

We are now starting to lose many of our old members on release from the service and our loss is indeed great, but we must face the inevitable and wish them the best of luck on their return to civil life.

#### SERGEANTS' MESS NOTES

The main Mess is situated at Yeadon, with a detachment Mess at Ferncliffe Camp, Calverley, both of which are very comfortable.

We are lucky in having C.Q.M.S. V. Rachel and Sergt. D. Borman, whose artistic talents have been put to good use in beautifying the Mess with cartoons and drawings.

The life in the Mess has been greatly brightened by holding a series of social evenings at which Officers have attended.

Three dances have been organized since our arrival, and all were well attended, in particular our "VE" Ball, which was a crowning success.

We were very sorry to lose some of our oldest members on release from the Service, in particular Q.M.S. "Froggy" French, who has served so long in the Regiment. A special farewell party was organized to bid him good-bye, the Commanding Officer attending.

It has been the custom in the Mess to present shields, suitably inscribed, to departing members.

Another old member we were so very sorry to lose was C.Q.M.S. "Sully" J. Sullivan. He had served for twenty years with the Battalion, and had been with it throughout the whole of the war.

We still have with us, however, the oldest existing member of the Battalion, C.Q.M.S. "Ernie" Shears, who already holds three bars to his T.A. decoration, and it is a matter of conjecture what happens when he qualifies for his fourth!

We are very pleased to welcome other serving members of the Regiment who are quartered in the area, such as C.S.M. V. Edwards, who has been such a useful asset on our social evenings.

Among recent arrivals, that "old soldier" C.S.M. C. Huskinson, and R.Q.M.S. H. Bowman, have joined our ranks.

Although "Queen's" by name, several of our members come from various regiments and the A.A. Command, and with this combination we produced a football team on "VE" Day against the Officers. The Officers were leading 1—0 until a smoke barrage placed by some irresponsible persons descended upon us. We now know that this can be applicable to international games, as experienced recently in the match Moscow Dynamos v. Arsenal, but we thought of it first!

All members were delighted to welcome our Colonel, General Sir G. Giffard, G.C.B., D.S.O., A.D.C., who visited both Messes during his tour of the Battalion.

It gave the Mess great pleasure in entertaining some of our old members who left us previous to our return to the United Kingdom. They visited us during a week-end in September. They were: R.Q.M.S. G. New, C.S.M. J. Bromige, C.S.M. R. A. Bremer, C.Q.M.S. H. E. Flood, C.Q.M.S. H. Fluke and Sergt. Lancaster, M.M. The week-end was certainly a tonic for both the old members and ourselves, as we held a grand dance in the Yeadon Drill Hall, which proved a great success.

The following members attended an Investiture at Buckingham Palace, held in July: R.S.M. J. Groves, M.M.; C.S.M. J. Thomas, M.M.; Sergt. R. Andrew, D.C.M.; Sergt. J. Allen, M.M.; Sergt. P. Ring, M.M., and Sergt. H. Puncher, M.M. A suitable party was held after the Investiture in close proximity to the Palace to celebrate the occasion.

We are indeed a happy Mess, but realize that gradually the inevitable departure of so many members must take place.

We wish them all the very best of luck.

## THE ANTI-TANK ACTION AT THE BATTLE OF MEDENINE

THE Battle of Medenine will doubtless be considered as the most successful defensive action fought by the 1st/7th Queen's during the 1939-45 war, especially for the Anti-Tank Platoon of the Battalion, who were put to a severe test on the 6th March, 1943.

7th Armoured Division (Desert Rats) was allotted the task of securing point 214 feature (Tadjeras-Medenine) and protecting the left flank of 30 Corps.

22nd Armoured Brigade was in readiness to occupy battle positions at fifteen minutes' notice and armoured cars were patrolling as far west as possible, especially on the road Metamuer—Toujane, with 131st (Queen's) Lorried Infantry Brigade holding the Zemlet El Lebene feature and the approaches between it and Tadjera Khir—1st/5th Queen's right, 1st/7th Queen's centre, 1st/6th Queen's left.

Facing our forces were known to be the formidable German troops of 15th Panzer Division (including part of 21st Panzer Division and other Battle Groups), 90th Light Division and 164th Light Division, who had fought at Alamein, and the 20th and 21st Italian Corps consisting of the Pistoia, Trieste, Spezia and Young Fascists Divisions.

The following positions were allotted by the Battalion Commander 1st/7th Queen's:—

"B" Company right of Battalion area linking with 1st/5th Queen's, with the special task to deny the enemy entrance through the pass in the centre of their area.

"C" Company centre on ridge in centre of Battalion front.

"A" Company left, with the special task to deny the enemy entrance through the wadi linking with 1st/6th Queen's on left.

It was considered the most likely tank "run ins" to the Battalion's positions were "B" Company's pass and "A" Company's wadi, and anti-tank guns were disposed accordingly. In addition to the Battalion Anti-tank Platoon, one troop each of 216th and 260th Anti-tank Batteries, R.A., were in support.

One troop (1st/7th Queen's No. 2 Troop) 6-pdrs., were sited to cover "A" Company's wadi (approximately two hundred yards wide) and one troop (1st/7th Queen's No. 1 Troop) 2-pdrs., in depth in a similar role. The two troops of 216th and 260th Anti-tank Batteries were positioned in "B" Company's area and in depth on the right and centre of the Battalion position.

On the night 5th/6th March, 1943, our patrols had heard much movement, and at 0600hrs. 6th March enemy shelling commenced. This appeared to be directed at gun areas, but many shells fell in the Battalion area. The first report of any enemy movement was of 15th Infantry at 0645 hrs., and this was quickly followed by a strong force of German tanks (Marks III, III Special, IV, and IV Special) advancing up the track towards "A" Company's positions.

The tanks came in the sights of No. 5 gun (commanded by Sergt. Andrews), who, knowing the anti-tank layout to be mutually supporting, allowed the first four tanks to proceed along the track. The fifth and sixth tanks were engaged and direct hits stopped them and the crews "baled out." Fire was then directed on the leading tanks with successful results and other tanks—about twelve in number—swung east and south and some went into hull-down positions in a wadi on the immediate flank of "A" Company and were able to bring both anti-tank and machine-gun fire across the Battalion area, whilst they themselves were partly defiladed from our anti-tank guns.

Sergt. Andrews took up the challenge, but the targets presented were small, and during this encounter the parapet of Sergt. Andrews' gun was smashed and he ordered the crew to take cover whilst he continued to load and fire the gun himself. He disabled two tanks which at the time caused a grave threat to "A" Company's positions and prevented the enemy from entering the wadi.

The remaining tanks, having been driven east and south by the effective anti-tank fire, later entered the smaller wadi on the left of the main wadi and were immediately engaged by No. 7 gun (Sergt. Crangles) and No. 8 gun (Sergt. Vincent). The first tank was disabled at a range of 500 yds., and shortly afterwards No. 8 gun was put out of action. Both anti-tank armour-piercing shot and small arms anti-personnel fire were directed on No. 7 gun, but Sergt. Crangles continued to engage the tanks, and the Bren gunner kept up a high rate of fire which prevented the tank commanders from obtaining full observation from their targets, until the gun shield was riddled in over twenty places and a direct hit on the recuperator put the gun out of action.

It was around 1430 hrs., that both the 69th Medium and 146th Field Regiments were brought down on one of the D.F. tasks (M.90), and this concentration, together with our own anti-tank fire, was so effective that after seeing the fate of the leading tanks the remainder of the force withdrew and made no further advance.

After No. 7 gun had been put out of action, Sergt. Crangles and his crew fixed bayonets, and three tanks approached the protecting infantry (a platoon of 1st/6th Queen's) and took them prisoners and shortly afterwards "winkled out" Sergt. Crangles and his crew and took them prisoners of war. In all fourteen tanks were knocked out in the wadi cover by No. 7 gun.

On the morning of 7th March, 1943, twenty-seven German tanks were found on the Battalion front which later in the day were destroyed by the R.E. The tanks were 12 Mark IV Special, 12 Mark III Special, 3 Mark III.

It is not possible to say how all these tanks were put out of action, but a considerable number were accounted for by the anti-tank guns of 1st/7th Queen's and the remainder by artillery fire, which was instituted by the battery in direct support.

From this action the lesson that resolute infantry, well dug in, with well-sited positions and supported only by their own anti-tank guns well sited, can repel a tank attack, was confirmed.

The Anti-tank Platoon was formed in August, 1942, shortly after the Battalion landed in Egypt with two troops, each four 2-pdr. guns. In January, 1943, a troop of four 6-pdrs. was substituted for a troop of four 2-pdrs., and in April, 1943, the Platoon was completely equipped with 6-pdr. guns—the change-over and subsequent re-training having almost literally taken place while the Battalion was on the move. Capt. E. G. Sandys commanded the Platoon during the African and Italian campaigns, and Lieut. L. H. Cockroft—killed in action with his troop in Italy in September, 1943—commanded No. 2 Troop during the successful action at Medenine.

Sergt. Andrews and Sergt. Crangles were both awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal for their courageous actions in this battle.

## REPORT OF THE REGIMENTAL WAR WELFARE COMMITTEE, 1939–1945

THE Committee was formed in September, 1939, by the Colonel of the Regiment, General Sir Ivo Vesey, K.C.B., K.B.E., C.M.G., D.S.O., for the purpose of providing, collecting and distributing knitted garments, books, games, etc., for all battalions of the Regiment and of being responsible for all matters connected with the welfare of units of the Regiment on service. The Committee consisted of representatives of all battalions under the Presidency of the Colonel of the Regiment and with Colonel G. N. Dyer as Chairman. When General Vesey relinquished the Colonelcy of the Regiment in 1945, his successor in that appointment, General Sir George Giffard, G.C.B., D.S.O., assumed the Presidency. When Colonel Dyer was recalled to Army Service, Mrs. R. E. Pickering took over the duties of Chairman, and on leaving the Depot in November, 1940, she was succeeded by the Rev. J. E. Wynne Roche, C.F., until October, 1941, when Colonel Dyer took over again.

The Committee of the Regimental Old Comrades Association was kind enough to place the services of the Association Secretary, Major C. J. M. Elliott, D.C.M., and clerical staff at the disposal of the War Welfare Committee, and Major Elliott acted as secretary until ill-health necessitated his retirement in 1944; he was succeeded by Mr. R. J. Clark, Assistant Secretary of the O.C.A., and later by Major F. Waspe, on his appointment as Secretary of the O.C.A. Mr. P. Rowley, Clerk to the O.C.A., served the Committee throughout. The Committee desires to place on record its appreciation of the services of all these mentioned.

In addition to clerical assistance, the War Welfare Committee is indebted to the O.C.A. for a loan of £400, and although it was never necessary to use this money, the fact that it was available was of the greatest assistance in formulating plans for the development of Welfare activities.

**Funds.**—In conformity with the agreement reached between the Lord-Lieutenant of the County and the Colonel of the Regiment, for the purpose of preventing any overlapping, no public appeal for funds was ever made. Retired officers and friends of the Regiment were, however, circularized privately and their generous response enabled the Committee to begin its activities.

Her Majesty Queen Mary, Colonel-in-Chief, graciously gave an initial donation of £50, to be followed later by two further donations of £25 each.

As the work of the Committee became known and appreciated, donations were forthcoming from many sources, and in addition to numerous individual gifts, Messes and Units of the Regiment, Committees of Dances, Bridge Parties, Whist Drives, Savings Weeks, Amusements, etc., all helped to provide funds for welfare.

The principal amounts received were as follows:—

Her Majesty Queen Mary	£100
Messes, Battalions and other Units	£1,500
Officers, Retired Officers and families	£1,620
Other individual donations	£526
Proceeds of Dances, Whist Drives, etc.	£1,628

The chief items of expenditure were:—

Purchase of knitting wool	£2,235
Purchase of flannel (Prisoner of War shirts)	£180
Donations to Red Cross and other organizations	£220
Cigarette consignments to Battalions	£470
Cigarette parcels to Prisoners of War	£819
Books and stationery to Battalions	£189
Newspapers to Battalions	£46
Grants to next of kin for Prisoner of War Parcels	£156
Grants in aid to relatives of Prisoners of War	£47

*Knitted Comforts.*—As a demand for warm garments was anticipated, an early start was made in obtaining wool, organizing knitting parties and asking individuals to knit various types of woollen things such as scarves, pullovers, balaclava helmets, socks, mittens, gloves, gum-boot stockings, etc. An initial issue was kindly made by the Lord-Lieutenant's Fund and as money became available regular supplies were purchased through the good offices of the Personal Service League. During the war years, twenty-six knitting parties and 313 individuals worked for and gave gifts to the Regiment.

Her Majesty Queen Mary personally knitted 106 scarves as gifts for the officers of her regiment and also kindly provided 432 articles from her working party at Badminton.

Up to 31st December, 1945, the Committee had received 93,102 articles and had issued 91,679. The details of the issues are as follows:—

1st Battalion	...	...	973	13th Battalion	...	...	2,321
2nd "	...	...	2,973	14th "	...	...	2,832
4th "	(S.L. & A.A.)	...	1,989	15th "	...	...	4,221
1st/5th "	...	...	9,258	70th "	...	...	20
1st/6th "	...	...	12,333	H.Q. 169th Brigade	...	...	254
1st/7th "	...	...	4,987	Army Comforts Depot	...	...	11,820
2nd/5th "	...	...	8,382	County Comforts Depot	...	...	3,789
2nd/6th "	...	...	5,643	Royal Navy (H.M.S. <i>Howe</i> ) and			
2nd/7th "	...	...	8,291	Merchant Navy	...	...	537
11th "	...	...	1,035	Prisoners of War	...	...	9,127
12th "	...	...	112	Lost in Transit (enemy action)	...	...	800

*Books, Papers, Cigarettes, Games, etc.*—In the early days of the war, residents in the Regimental area kindly sent in large numbers of books, papers, games, gramophones, records, playing cards, etc., and these were distributed to battalions in training or on guard duties.

Later on, the Committee sent several consignments of books to Battalions on service and twenty-seven lots of 140 books each were despatched.

Unfortunately, the restrictions on purchase precluded the Committee from complying with requests for sports equipment and kit. A limited quantity was, however, made available by the courtesy of the Officer Commanding Depot Party; the *Daily Sketch* War Relief Fund also very kindly made an issue of jerseys, shorts and stockings. All that were obtained were issued to Battalions.

Since operations ceased a regular supply of daily and weekly papers has been sent to all Battalions overseas and will be continued until they return to England.

Parcels of cigarettes were sent to Battalions on service and a total of forty-seven consignments of 10,000 cigarettes each has been forwarded to date.

*Prisoners of War.*—It was not possible to send food and uniform to prisoners of war, the former being sent by the Red Cross and St. John and the latter for other ranks being issued by the War Office to the Red Cross in bulk for despatch to the different camps. Two donations of £100 each were sent to the Red Cross towards the cost of food parcels.

Gifts of cigarettes (200 per man) were sent by the Committee at regular intervals to every known prisoner of war, and the total number of parcels sent was 4,820. It is satisfactory to record that the majority appear to have received the cigarettes safely.

In order to assist relatives in making up the quarterly next of kin parcels for prisoners of war, the Committee made 251 grants, totalling £256.

When cases began to occur in which relatives of prisoners were unable or unwilling to send the quarterly next of kin parcels a scheme of adoption was organized by Mrs. George Dyer and was successful in ensuring that such parcels were sent. When hostilities ceased, one hundred prisoners of war had been adopted by seventy-one adopters, the majority of whom generously bore the expense of the parcels. 525 parcels were sent off under this scheme, though it is regretted that in some cases those for whom they were intended never received them. The Committee thanks these ladies and gentlemen "adopters" for the help they gave in making the scheme a success and for the time and trouble they expended in preparing and sending the parcels. In order to provide shirts for these parcels, flannel was bought in bulk and cut out and made up by several

ladies and by a working party organized by Mrs. E. A. Rose, wife of Colonel E. A. Rose, Honorary Colonel of 2nd/7th Battalion. The total of garments of all types issued to prisoners of war was 9,127.

In a few special cases, grants to alleviate hardship were made to the relatives of prisoners of war.

The total number of prisoners of war reported to the Committee was 2,118; of these, eighteen were reported as having died or being missing as prisoners, 1,941 are known to have been repatriated leaving 159 still to be accounted for. Enquiries in regard to the latter are still being made and it is hoped that eventually it may be possible to ascertain what has happened to them.

A letter of welcome and offer of help in difficulties was sent by the Committee, on behalf of the Regiment, to every known repatriated prisoner, and as a result, 1,450 requests for advice were dealt with.

*Conclusion.*—Without the help of numerous individuals and by a large number of organizations, the Committee would not have been able to carry on. The Committee expresses its sincere thanks to all the ladies and gentlemen who helped individually and to the following organizations and units:—

The Director of Voluntary Organizations.  
The Lord-Lieutenant's Fund, County of Surrey.  
The Mayor of Guildford's Fund for the Forces.  
The Personal Service League.  
The British Red Cross and St. John Organization.  
The Ypres League.  
The Soldiers', Sailors' and Airmen's Families Association.  
The "Daily Sketch" War Relief Fund.  
The British Legion.  
Albury "Salute the Soldier" Week Committee.  
Dennis Bros., Welfare Committee.  
Frimley and Camberley Urban District Council and "Salute the Soldier" Week Committee.  
Farnham "Salute the Soldier Week" Committee.  
Farnham Working Men's Conservative Club.  
Frimley Dance Club.  
Guildford Co-operative Tontine Club.  
Marshalswick Lane Circle.

Old Contemptibles Association.  
Pirbright Brotherhood.  
Guildford Rotary Club.  
Messrs. Smalpiece and Merriman.  
Taylor Woodrow Comforts Fund.  
1st, 2nd, 4th, 7th, 58th Surrey Battalions, Home Guard.  
6th Battalion War Welfare Committee.  
7th Battalion War Welfare Committee.  
Witley Motor-Cycle Club.  
Woking War Hospital Staff.  
Haslemere Entertainment and Dramatic Society.  
Baptist Women's League.  
Women's Voluntary Services at Guildford, Woking, Frimley, and Camberley, Worplesdon, Westborough, Witley, Thursley, Cove, Woodham, and Stoke Newington.  
Women's Institutes at Witley, Worplesdon, Pirbright, Rydes Hill, Coldharbour, Horsell and Stoughton.  
Holmbury St. Mary Group.  
Redhill and Reigate Depot.  
and a number of privately organized working parties.

A Regimental Welfare Workers Badge was designed, and as long as they were obtainable the Badges were issued to all those working for the Regiment. Many workers refused to accept the Badge as a gift and generously paid for them.

The Committee's activities will shortly come to an end and it is proposed to hand over the funds remaining to the Regimental Comrades Association with a suggestion that the money is used primarily for the benefit of ex-prisoners of war.

A summary of the Accounts, which have been audited regularly every quarter, and a Balance Sheet are attached.

5th January, 1946.

F. WASPE, MAJOR, *Secretary*.

G. N. DYER, COLONEL, *Chairman*.

The close of the war has brought to an end the need for the work of the Regimental War Welfare Committee, and it is my pleasant task to thank all those who during the six long years of war devoted their time, energy and skill so unselfishly to working for the welfare of our battalions and prisoners of war and have given so generously to the funds.

The report gives the details of what has been done and the record is a very fine one. I know how greatly the gifts have been appreciated by the recipients of the many parcels of clothing, books, cigarettes, etc., and I am sure they will wish me to express their grateful thanks to all the workers and subscribers.

When all have done so much it is invidious to select individuals for special mention, but I cannot let this occasion pass without expressing on behalf of all ranks of the Regiment their deep gratitude to Colonel Dyer for all that he has done. He was Chairman of the Committee when the fund was started in 1939 and, except for a brief period when he was recalled to the Army, he has been Chairman throughout the war. To his wisdom and untiring energy the success of the War Welfare work for the Regiment is due.

GEORGE J. GIFFARD, GENERAL,

*Colonel, The Queen's Royal Regiment.*

7th January, 1946.

### THE QUEEN'S ROYAL REGIMENT WAR WELFARE COMMITTEE.

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FROM INCEPTION IN 1939 TO 31ST DECEMBER, 1945.

RECEIPTS.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	EXPENDITURE.	£	s.	d.
By Donations, H.M.							To Wool Purchases	2,324	13	10
Queen Mary	100	0	0				" Shirting Material	180	6	0
" Officers, Retired							" Cigarettes for Battalions overseas	470	0	0
Officers and Families	1,619	0	1				" Cigarettes for P.O.W.	819	3	0
" Battalions and Units	1,449	13	5				" Books for Battalions overseas	47	5	0
" Loan from Old Comrades Association	400	0	0				" Stationery Wallets, etc., Battalions overseas	141	19	0
" Other Independent Organizations	526	15	9				" Welfare Workers' Badges	64	4	0
" Other Organizations	1,628	18	2				" Grants for P.O.W. N/K Parcels	255	19	0
				5,724	7	5	" Compassionate Grants to P.O.W. Dependants	47	7	5
" Sale of Writing Wallets				109	7	6	" Donations to other Organizations	220	10	0
" Welfare Workers' Badges				39	19	9	" Cost of Cupboards	14	4	6
" Prisoner of War Shirts				2	2	6	" Carriage of Comforts Goods, etc.	31	5	6
" Refunds, N/K Parcels				6	8	10	" Printing and Office Stationery	21	11	5
" Dividends, 3 per cent. Defence Bonds				56	12	7	" Telephone Charges	5	0	5
" Interest, P.O.S. Bank					16	3	" Laundry Charges	2	9	4
							" Cheque Books	2	15	0
							" Postage	111	12	5
							" Packing Material	6	18	11
							" Cap Badges for P.O.W.	1	6	0
							" Newspapers for Battalions overseas	46	14	0
							" 3 per cent. Defence Bonds	400	0	0
							" Deposits in P.O.S. Bank	24	6	3
							TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£5,239	11	6
							" Balances at 31st December, 1945:—			
							Lloyds Bank	£696	14	5
							Cash	3	8	11
								700	3	4
							TOTAL	£5,939	14	10

GUILDFORD, 30th SEPTEMBER, 1945



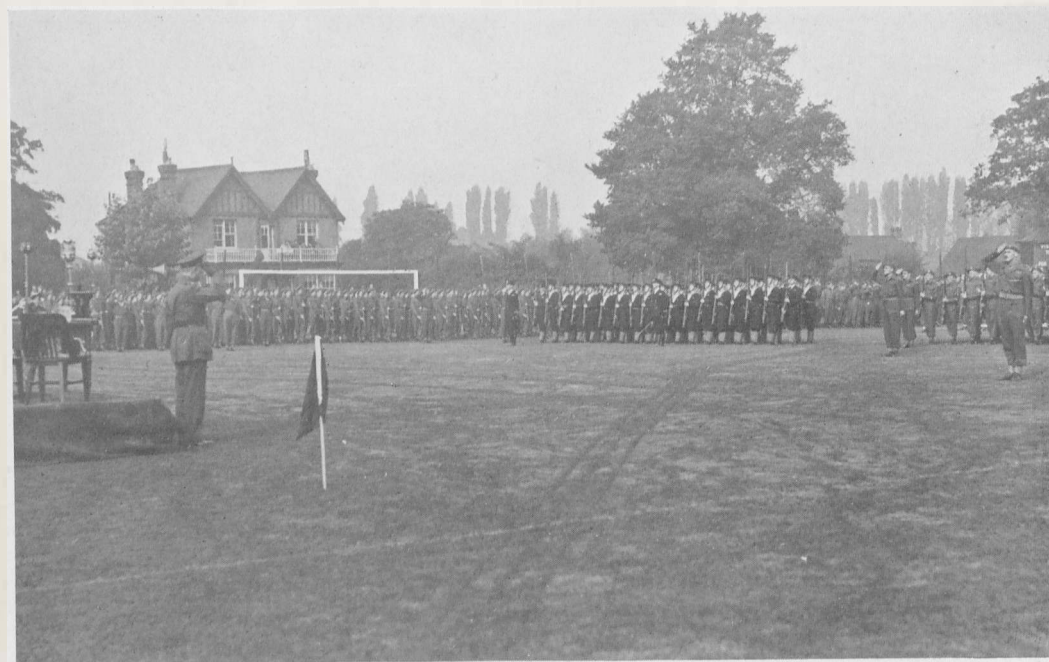
THE MAYOR OF GUILDFORD (ALDERMAN WYKEHAM PRICE) AT THE SALUTING BASE IN HIGH STREET ON 30th SEPTEMBER, 1945, ACCOMPANIED BY GENERAL SIR WALTER KIRKE, SIR MALCOLM FRASER (LORD LIEUTENANT) AND GENERAL GIFFARD.



THE DETACHMENT FROM H.M.S. "EXCELLENT" MARCHING PAST DOWN GUILDFORD HIGH STREET, 30th SEPTEMBER, 1945.



THE MAYOR OF GUILDFORD PRESENTING THE "SCROLL OF RIGHTS" TO THE COLONEL OF THE REGIMENT, 30th SEPTEMBER, 1945.



THE COLONEL OF THE REGIMENT, GENERAL SIR GEORGE GIFFARD, BEING RECEIVED WITH THE GENERAL SALUTE ON ARRIVING ON PARADE on 30th SEPTEMBER, 1945.

## 2ND/5TH BATTALION

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### BALANCE SHEET AT 31st DECEMBER, 1945

ASSETS.			LIABILITIES.		
	£	s. d.		£	s. d.
By Cash at Bank and in hand ...	700	3 4	To O.C.A. Loan ...	400	0 0
„ 3 per cent. Defence Bonds ...	400	0 0	„ Balance due to Fund ...	724	9 7
„ Deposits in P.O.S. Bank ...	24	6 3			
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£1,124</b>	<b>9 7</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£1,124</b>	<b>9 7</b>

Guildford,  
7th January, 1946.

F. WASPE, MAJOR,  
Secretary.

G. N. DYER, COLONEL,  
Chairman.

## 2ND/5TH BATTALION

APRIL, 1939—8TH MAY, 1945

THE Battalion was formed out of the 5th Battalion in April, 1939, in accordance with the policy of doubling the Territorial Army. It landed in France with its sister battalions—2nd/6th and 2nd/7th—on 24th April, 1940, as part of the 12th Division. After the German break-through at Sedan, the Battalion fought an action north of the Somme near Abbeville. The 209 survivors embarked at Cherbourg on 7th June and the Battalion was re-formed in Cumberland. At the end of the month it moved to South-Eastern Command, when the Brigade was designated 169th Brigade in 56th (London) Division. 2nd/5th, 2nd/6th and 2nd/7th Battalions have served together in this Brigade and Division up to the present time.

The Division landed in Iraq in November, 1942, and stayed until the following March. It then completed the 3,000-mile journey to Enfidaville in under five weeks. Enfidaville was reached on 22nd April, 1943, and the next day the Battalion was in the line. After the North African surrender it trained for the invasion of Italy and landed in the initial wave at Salerno on the morning of 9th September. The actual landing was almost unopposed, but the enemy put in repeated counter-attacks with armour and the Battalion had 173 casualties in the first thirty hours. By 18th September the situation had eased; next day it was relieved by 1st/5th Queen's of 131st Brigade.

With a company of 2nd/6th Queen's, the Battalion then captured the 3,000 ft. Mount Stella and had its first experience of mountain warfare. The Naples Plain was now open and each battalion in the Brigade in turn led the pursuit to Capua on the right of 10th Corps. After the crossing of the Volturno, contact was made with 131st Brigade and for a short time the six Queen's Battalions were advancing together. The next major battle was the assault on Mount Camino. The climb up the mountain side was arduous, the weather conditions severe and the fighting bitter. 2nd/5th Queen's captured the famous features Pip, Squeak and Wilfred, on 3rd December; three days later the enemy finally put up the white flag on the monastery.

On the night of 17th January, 1944, the Battalion took part in the assault crossing of the Gárigliano and captured its objectives in the hills beyond. A month later it moved to Anzio beach-head, where it remained until 13th March. The whole Division had had severe casualties and was withdrawn to Egypt to rest. After receiving many reinforcements, mostly from the Royal Artillery, the Battalion returned to Italy at the beginning of July.

After the outside crust of the Gothic Line had been broken, 56th Division was passed through. The enemy had retired to hill positions in depth which dominated the coast road, and the Battalion fought in the severe battles for Capello, Gemmano, Croce, the Ceriano Ridge and Savignano. During this period—1st September to 10th October, 1944—7 officers and 84 other ranks were killed and 18 officers and 262 other ranks were wounded.

Six weeks' rest followed. The Battalion spent the winter fighting on the Lamone and Senio river banks. Both had high bunds, and on occasions on the Senio the British were dug in on one side of a bund, the Germans on the other. A prodigious total of grenades was expended.

At the beginning of March, the Brigade was withdrawn to train on Lake Trasimino for an amphibious operation at the start of the final advance across the Lombardy Plains. Using Buffaloes, known in this theatre as Fantails, the Queen's Brigade landed on the edge of Lake Commachio

behind the enemy's main positions on the 11th April, 1945. It then drove west and took part in the battles for the Argenta Gap. The Po was crossed without opposition on the morning of 26th April, the Adige forty-eight hours later. By this time the enemy was disorganized and only small pockets of resistance were met. 2nd/5th Queen's, in mortar carriers and captured vehicles driven by partisans, raced the New Zealanders to Venice, reaching it on 29th April. Next day, the Battalion marched through the narrow paved streets and over the many bridges to establish itself in a barracks in the centre of the city. Rations and baggage were ferried up the Grand Canal, later assigned as the Brigade axis. It was a pleasant place in which to hear of the capitulation of Italy. In all the Battalion had received 1,189 casualties in the Italian campaign.

#### 9TH MAY—30TH NOVEMBER, 1945

On the day on which the war in Europe ended, the Battalion moved from Venice to the small village of Ruda near Udine, and that night the cheering of the crowds outside Buckingham Palace could be heard over a loud-speaker in the courtyard of Battalion Headquarters. From this time the Battalion has been occupied with the political troubles in Venezia Giulia.

The brigade celebrated the 1st June with a cricket match against the Navy on the Battalion ground, and with a fête in the surrounding fields which were gay with bunting lent by shipping companies in Trieste. In June, we moved farther east, and in the late summer the Battalion was billeted in small villages on the Morgan Line, ten miles east of Trieste. We moved into a barracks in the city itself on 4th December.

Welfare facilities are now good. There are two cinemas, an opera house, a music-hall, a N.A.A.F.I. restaurant, and officers' and sergeants' clubs. Unit dances are held frequently and the Battalion has its own dance band. A generous supply of English newspapers, sent out by the Regimental War Welfare Committee, was much appreciated. Sport has played a large part since the war ended. The Battalion gained only third place in the Brigade Athletic Meeting in the summer, but led in the track events. Sergeant D. Brabben went on to win the 800 metres in the Corps meeting in 2 mins. 6.8 secs. A great deal of cricket was played in the summer, and the Battalion reached the final of the divisional knock-out competition, where it was defeated by 44th Recce. Regiment. They also beat us in the semi-final of the divisional football competition. Soccer leagues at battalion and company levels have been running throughout the winter. In the divisional cross-country run the Battalion was second to 2nd/6th Queen's, Sergt. Brabben being the first man home. Owing to release and Python the personnel in the Battalion are still changing almost as rapidly as in the war. The following original Territorial members were still serving in the unit in the autumn: Major H. F. Bott, M.C.; R.S.M. J. W. Dunkley, M.M.; C.S.M. A. Steadman; C.S.M. R. E. Mears; C.Q.M.S. J. A. Dallen; Sergt. E. Bryder; Sergt. J. A. Neal; Sergt. F. Osman; Sergt. F. Straughan; Cpl. E. Strudwick; Cpl. L. Watson; Pte. S. Bevan; Pte. W. Castleton; Pte. F. Creeper; Pte. R. Philps; and Pte. H. Preston.

#### COMMANDING OFFICERS

Lt.-Col. A. F. F. Young, O.B.E.	...	...	August, 1939—4th May, 1942
Lt.-Col. J. Y. Whitfield, D.S.O., O.B.E.	...	...	*5th May, 1942—22nd Jan., 1944
Lt.-Col. F. A. H. Ling, D.S.O.	...	...	23rd Jan., 1944—24th Nov., 1944
Lt.-Col. P. C. Hinde, D.S.O.	...	...	25th Nov., 1944—14th June, 1945
Lt.-Col. B. C. Pincombe, M.C.	...	...	15th June, 1945—18th Aug. 1945
Lt.-Col. L. S. Sheldon	...	...	19th Aug., 1945—

The following decorations were won by officers and other ranks whilst serving with the battalion:

D.S.Os.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
M.Cs.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	15
D.C.Ms.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	5
M.Ms.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	23
American Bronze Star	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Russian Order of the Red Star	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1

\* Lt.-Colonel Whitfield was away commanding the Brigade prior to this date; Lt.-Colonel Ling commanded the Battalion during the crossing of the Garigliano on 17th January, 1944.

## 2ND/6TH BATTALION

### SUMMARY OF WAR SERVICES.

Station, 3rd September, 1939: Caterham. To France, 23rd April, 1940.

#### Battles and Actions.

Abbeville (Withdrawal from the Somme).

Withdrawal from Cherbourg, 8th June, 1940.

To Persia and Iraq, October, 1942 (Kirkuk).

Moved by road to Enfidaville. Distance: 3321 miles.

Campaign in North Africa.

#### Battles and Actions.

Enfidaville.

To Italy, 9th September, 1943.

#### Battles and Actions.

Salerno landing (Montecorvino Airfield, Point 210, Mount Stella)	September, 1943
River Volturno (Pt. 180, Calvi Vecchia)	October, 1943
Mount Camino	Nov./Dec., 1943
River Garigliano crossing (S. jo, Damiano)	January, 1944
Anzio	Feb./Mar., 1944
Vis (Dalmatian Islands)	April/May, 1944
Gothic Line (Mt. Cappella, Gemmano, Croce, Ceriano, Savignano)	September, 1944
River Lamone	December, 1944
River Senio	December, 1944
Comacchio, Adige, Argenta, River Po, Venice	April, 1945

Situation when Armistice with Germany signed: Venice—occupation.

### LIST OF COMMANDING OFFICERS.

Lt.-Colonel E. F. Bolton, D.S.O.	September, 1939—July, 1942
Lt.-Colonel H. E. Wilson, O.B.E.	July, 1942—April, 1943
Lt.-Colonel J. B. H. Kealy, D.S.O.	April, 1943—November, 1943
Lt.-Colonel A. J. Renshaw, D.S.O., M.C.	November, 1943—January, 1945
Lt.-Colonel P. M. A. Taylor, M.C. and Bar	January, 1945—April, 1945
*Lt.-Colonel P. H. Richardson, D.S.O., O.B.E. (now Brigadier).	April, 1945—May, 1945

Lt.-Colonel St. Maur Sheil, D.S.O., took over Battalion after the Garigliano crossing for a short time.

Killed in action: Lt.-Colonel H. E. Wilson, O.B.E. (Enfidaville); Lt.-Colonel St. Maur Sheil (with D. of Ws.)

### AWARDS FOR GALLANTRY.

D.S.O., 5; M.C., 14; D.C.M., 5; M.M., 27; U.S. Star (Silver), 1.

\* Lt.-Colonel Richardson, D.S.O., O.B.E., is now Brigadier Richardson (169th Brigade.)

THE Battalion landed on the Salerno beach-head two years ago. This was the beginning of our part in the Italian Campaign. To-day the Battalion is in Trieste and for the first time since the Adolf Hitler Barracks, Forli, it is concentrated in one building.

With the other two Queen's Battalions in 169th Brigade we are called upon to man check posts on the Morgan Line. This is the military boundary laid down until the future of Trieste and the province of Venezia Giulia is settled at the Peace Conference, and divides Allied occupied territory from Yugoslav.

Within the Battalion the switch over from war to peace has been accomplished and previously untapped talent is coming to light. A Battalion School is running well with courses on Plumbing, Carpentry, Art, Italian, Shorthand, Bookkeeping and Commercial English. All this for the benefit, chiefly of those shortly to be released.

Our own printing press, "The Dog Press," is much in demand throughout the Division and is kept going at top pressure with orders. In between it manages to produce a Battalion newspaper.

There is a big variety of sport now running. Soccer, Rugby, Boxing, Rowing and Cross Country Running teams are going well. We have a training house at Plezzo (near the Austrian border). Sending teams to train there has already shown good dividends. At the moment of writing, the Battalion Soccer team is top of the league.

Despite summer weather sufficiently warm to warrant K.D., we are told that we may expect a fierce gale here in the winter, which goes under the name of the "Bora." When the gale is known to be approaching, sirens send out a warning. Certain streets in Trieste have hand rails on the side for the benefit of those who are caught out. So far we have not experienced this wind, but the weather has put on some imposing dress rehearsals of late.

The Italians are also full of stories of terrific snowfalls and bitter weather generally. But we can take a winter in Trieste. We think it may not be as trying as wintering on the summit of Monte Camino, or quite as uncomfortable and slushy as December on the Senio river.

## 2ND/7TH BATTALION

### SUMMARY OF WAR SERVICE.

Stationed on 3rd September, 1939, at Woolwich and subsequently at East Grinstead and Hastings. Moved to France on 20th April, 1940. Rearguard actions fought at Saleux and Abbeville followed by withdrawal from Blain, on 6th June, 1940, via Cherbourg.

Re-formed at Newcastle on 8th June, 1940.

June, 1940—August, 1942: Stationed at Faversham, Hythe, Lyminge, Ipswich, Southend and Sudbury.

Sailed from Liverpool on 24th August, 1942, on *Johan Van Olden Bahnevelt*.

October, 1942: Short stay at Malabar Camp, Bombay.

November, 1942: Up the Persian Gulf to Shaiba Camp and under canvas at Kirkuk for five months.

25th March—24th April, 1943: 3,000 miles in thirty days to Enfidaville via Baghdad, Palestine, Cairo, Western Desert, Benghazi and Tripoli.

25th April—13th May, 1943: Took over from the Guards at Enfidaville.

May—September, 1943: The Capitulation, P.O.W. Guards and assault landing training.

9th September, 1943: Salerno, Faiano, Ogliar, Monte Stella, Caserta.

5th October—15th October, 1943: Rest and reorganize at Caserta Palace.

October, 1943: Volturmo, Sparanise, Montanaro, San Clemente, Monte Camino, Garigliano, Suje, Damiano, Anzio.

March—July, 1944: Re-formed in Egypt to train large drafts from the Royal Artillery.

August, 1944: Gothic Line, Mondaino, Gemmano, San Sevino, Coriano, Savignano, Lamone River, Faenza, Senio River, Lake Commachio, Longastrina, Filo, Argenta, Porto Maggiore, River Po, River Adige, Occupation of Venice.

Soon after signing of Armistice, we moved to Venezia Giulia and subsequently to Trieste and the Morgan Line.

### LIST OF COMMANDING OFFICERS.

Lt.-Col. C. J. Falk, M.C., T.D.	...	from March, 1939, to 1940.
Lt.-Col. P. B. Girling, O.B.E., M.C.	...	from March, 1940, to May, 1942.
Lt.-Col. A. P. Block, C.B.E., D.S.O.	...	from May, 1942, to September, 1943.
Lt.-Col. D. C. Baynes, D.S.O., M.C.	...	from September, 1943, to December, 1944.
Lt.-Col. M. E. M. MacWilliam, D.S.O., M.C.	...	from December, 1944 to February, 1946.

### AWARDS.

D.S.O., 6; M.C., 15; D.C.M., 6; M.M., 15; M.B.E., 1; Mentioned in Despatches, 20. Records of awards in France incomplete and some awards still outstanding for Italy.

### DESCRIPTION OF PRESENT SITUATION.

THE Headquarters of the Battalion at the moment are in Sesana, a large village in the hills, ten miles behind Trieste, and near the provisional demarcation line (the "Morgan" Line), between Yugoslavia and Italy. Three companies are detached in other villages, sited, tactically to watch the "line" which involves a considerable number of guards, which, however, are easier to man now that most of the "old hands" have had L.I.A.P. and a considerable number of "new hands" (with incredibly high release groups and very pale knees) have arrived.

Incidents with the Yugoslavs are very few and have been settled by tact and firmness without use of force. In fact, the soldier's life might well be boring through lack of activity and therefore great care is taken to promote activities in welfare and sport; a proportion of the Battalion can also be allowed into Trieste, which is well supplied with amusements for the benefit of the only British Corps now left in Italy. In sport there are frequent inter-battalion and inter-company games of soccer; there is also battalion rugger, hockey and boxing. The Battalion has some horses, and riding, sailing (in Italian boats) and rowing (in the summer) can be added to the sporting activities. In welfare, company dances take first place, and there it is perhaps interesting to note that Slav partners are (contrary to what is generally reported in British papers) difficult to find, as they are obviously under instructions not to be too friendly with British troops!

There is one other activity—the Battalion Retreat—which should be mentioned. This is in the mountains near Tarvisio, not far from the Austrian border; in the summer small parties were sent for a few days and could swim, walk, or rest as they wished, and now there is some fair "beginners' " ski-ing.

It will be seen that, apart from the serious operational guards and training of new arrivals from U.K. which goes on, ample thought is taken to keep active and happy those who have served nearly three or four years with the Battalion and are expecting release soon. The Education Scheme provides courses in technical subjects for those who will return to that sphere in civil life; lectures and discussions on subjects of importance to the soldier returning to civil life have an important place in the programme.

In accordance with the War Office policy to disband Second Line T.A. units, on 5th January, 1946, the Battalion was warned of its coming break-up. This is now in progress and should be completed by 31st January. Consequently everyone is very busy in preparation and only a select few who are winding up the Battalion still remain to be posted away. It is a sad time for all those who have been in the Battalion a long time, and especially so for the few that still remain who joined at the forming of the Battalion early in 1939.

# REGIMENTAL OLD COMRADES ASSOCIATION

TWENTY-FIFTH ANNUAL REPORT, 1945

THE Committee presents herewith the Annual Report and audited Abstract of Accounts for the year ended 31st December, 1945:—

**Membership.**—The Committee record with much pleasure the amalgamation with this Association of the 22nd London Regiment (The Queen's) now 6th Battalion The Queen's Royal Regiment, O.C.A., and offer a hearty welcome to all its members.

As a result of the help given by the Officers Commanding Battalions and the War Office, membership of both the Association and the All Ranks Dinner Club has substantially increased. Annual Subscribers are now 287 Officers and Honorary Subscribers and 534 Other Ranks to the Association. Annual Subscribers to the Dinner Club are 295 Officers and 534 Other Ranks.

**Life Members.**—Life Membership has also increased, the numbers of Life Members of the Association now being 16 Officers and 1,323 Other Ranks, and Life Members of Dinner Club, 8 Officers and 151 Other Ranks.

**Home Guard.**—Home Guard Members of the Association now amount to 37 Annual Subscribers and 26 Life Members.

**Employment and Resettlement.**—The Committee has been working in close collaboration with the Ministry of Labour and the Regular Forces Employment Association and placings amounted to 34.

A very large number of N.C.Os. and men who have been released have resumed their pre-war employment and many have sought their own situations with success.

Fifty-four Employers have kindly offered to give preference to ex-soldiers of the Regiment, but the lack of skilled tradesmen has prevented the acceptance of all offers made.

Many excellent situations in private service are offered, but applicants for these have been few.

The Committee has agreed to collaborate with the British Legion in that Organization's Small Business Loans Scheme.

**Loans.**—Eight Advances have been made in 1945, some for resettlement and some in special circumstances.

**Charitable Fund.**—Calls upon the Fund again showed an increase, 229 applications having been dealt with and 191 grants authorized.

In view of this increase and further calls during the Resettlement period, the Committee applied to the Army Benevolent Fund, and a donation of £400 in two instalments has been received.

General Sir G. J. Giffard, G.C.B., D.S.O., Colonel of the Regiment, also made a personal appeal and the Committee record with much pleasure and gratitude, that the response to this has been most generous. The 1st, 1st/5th, 1st/6th, 1st/7th, 2nd/5th, 2nd/6th, 2nd/7th, 30th Battalions, 13th Holding Battalion and the 6th Battalion War Welfare Committee all gave substantial donations. Among the private donors were Mrs. Wilson, £200 in memory of Lieut.-Colonel H. E. Wilson (2nd/6th Battalion) and Miss Smith, £100 in memory of Lieut.-Colonel H. W. Smith, D.S.O. (retired).

The North Africa Fund mentioned in the Annual Report for 1944 has now been disbursed. Certain changes occurred in investments owing to the exchange of some of the stocks held by the United Services Trustee on behalf of the Association.

**Dinner Club.**—In view of the expected closing down of the War Welfare Committee, subscriptions ceased to be diverted to that Committee.

The Committees are meeting with great difficulty in arranging a Dinner for 1946, owing to restrictions on accommodation and rationing. An announcement will be made as early as possible.

**Disabled Personnel and Local Representatives.**—It is very desirable that all men who have left the Regiment and are scattered throughout the country should feel that they have a close personal touch with the Regiment. It is intended, therefore, to start a scheme under which repre-

sentatives should be established in centres throughout the country. These representatives would, it is hoped, be Officers or Other Ranks who would volunteer to undertake such duties as:—

(a) Contact all disabled men of the Regiment in their area and keep the Secretary of the Association informed of their addresses and any difficulties which they might have encountered.

(b) Contact ex-members of the Regiment in their area and if any man wants help, inform the Secretary of the Association.

A list of Officers and Other Ranks who would be willing to undertake this work would be kept by the Secretary.

**Secretary.**—Major F. Waspe assumed the duties of Secretary from 13th June, 1945.

**Conclusion.**—In conclusion, the Committee desires on behalf of all Ranks, past and present, to express its gratitude to all those who have shown a kindly interest in the Regiment by their generous donations and subscriptions as Honorary Members.

The help given by the S.S.&A.H.S., the S.S.&A.F.A., the British Legion, the C.O.S., and other Regimental Associations in investigating, reporting on and collaborating in cases referred to them, has again proved valuable and their co-operation is greatly appreciated.

The services of the Association are at the disposal of all serving members and ex-service personnel of the Regiment, wherever they may be, and all are earnestly requested to "Keep in touch."

Subscriptions for 1946 should be sent to The Secretary, The Queen's Royal Regiment, Old Comrades Association, Stoughton Barracks, Guildford, Surrey.

The Committee appeals to all members to keep their subscriptions up to date.

R. H. PHILPOT, MAJOR, *Hon. Treasurer.*

F. WASPE, MAJOR, *Secretary.*

G. J. GIFFARD, GENERAL, *Chairman.*

## INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER, 1945 ASSOCIATION ACCOUNT

EXPENDITURE.			INCOME.		
	£	s. d.		£	s. d.
To Salaries, Wages and Insurance	617	2 11	By Subscriptions	430	10 8
„ Printing, Stationery, Postage	47	7 0	„ Life Members (Proportion)	46	17 10
„ Miscellaneous, Audit Fees, Wreaths, etc.	10	10 2	„ Bank Interest	2	17 10
„ Balance, being surplus of Income over Expenditure	1	9 5	„ Donations	195	10 8
			„ Badges	0	12 6
Total	£676	9 6	Total	£676	9 6

## CHARITABLE FUND

EXPENDITURE.			INCOME.		
	£	s. d.		£	s. d.
To Grants in Aid	726	13 3	By Dividends	492	1 4
„ Donations and Subscriptions to Other Organizations	146	8 0	„ Donations	2280	12 0
„ Cheque Books	1	10 0	„ Bank Interest	3	1 3
„ Balance being surplus of Income over Expenditure	1993	4 2	„ Income Tax Recovered	92	0 10
Total	£2,867	15 5	Total	£2,867	15 5

## DINNER CLUB ACCOUNT

EXPENDITURE.			INCOME.		
	£	s. d.		£	s. d.
To Salaries	20	0 0	By Subscriptions	78	9 6
„ Balance being surplus of Income over Expenditure	91	1 5	„ Life Members (Proportion)	13	11 11
			„ Dividends and Interest	19	0 0
Total	£111	1 5	Total	£111	1 5

## OLD COMRADES ASSOCIATION

## BALANCE SHEET AT 31st DECEMBER, 1945

LIABILITIES.		ASSETS.	
£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
<b>LIFE MEMBERS ASSOCIATION</b>		<b>By Lloyds Bank, Ltd.—</b>	
To Balance at 31st December, 1944 ...	141 0 0	Association Accounts	605 18 6
Add subscriptions received during 1945	326 17 10	Charitable Fund Accounts	2675 3 6
	467 17 10	„ All Ranks Dinner Club Account	265 17 11
Less Proportion to 1945 I. & E. Account	46 17 10	„ Cash in hands of Secretary	1 8 0
	421 0 0	„ Investments at cost as at 31st December, 1944	14338 2 6
<b>LIFE MEMBERS ALL RANKS DINNER CLUB</b>		Less cost of Stocks exchanged*	5277 17 3
„ Balance at 31st December, 1944 ...	41 0 0		9060 5 3
Add subscriptions received during 1945	98 11 11	Add cost of Stocks received in Exchange:	
	139 11 11	Australian 3½ per cent. 1956/69	2281 19 10
Less proportion to 1945 L. & E. Account	13 11 11	L.C.C. 3 per cent. 1962/67	2658 0 10
	126 0 0	N. Ireland 3 per cent. 1956/61	505 0 3
<b>ASSOCIATION GENERAL ACCOUNT</b>		Add cost Savings Bonds purchased 1965/75	751 17 6
To Balance at 31st December, 1944 ...	257 17 1	(Held by United Services Trustee. Market value at 31st December, 1945, £16,881 17s. 2d.).	15257 3 8
Add surplus of Income over Expenditure, 1945	1 9 5	„ All Ranks Dinner Club:—£600 3 per cent. Defence Bonds cost at 31st December, 1944 ...	600 0 0
	259 6 6	(Held by Association).	
<b>CHARITABLE FUND</b>		„ Advances:—	
To Balance at 31st December, 1944 ...	15620 18 0	Balance at 31st December, 1944	5 0 0
Add gain on exchange of Stocks	167 3 8	Add advances during 1945	98 10 0
Add surplus of Income over Expenditure, 1945	1993 4 2		103 10 0
	17781 5 10	Less repaid during 1945	30 10 0
<b>ALL RANKS DINNER CLUB GENERAL ACCOUNT</b>			73 0 0
To Balance at 31st December, 1944 ...	648 16 6		
Add surplus of Income over Expenditure, 1945	91 1 5		
	739 17 11		
<b>INVESTMENT RESERVE, CHARITABLE FUND</b>			
	151 1 4		
Total	£19,478 11 7	Total	£19,478 11 7

\*Australia 5 per cent. 1945/75 ... £2259 4 11  
 L.C.C. 4½ per cent. 1945/85 ... £2518 12 4  
 Ulster Loans 4½ per cent. 1945/75 ... £500 0 0

## AUDITORS' CERTIFICATE

We have examined the above Balance Sheet. We have obtained all the information and explanations we have required. In our opinion such Balance Sheet is properly drawn up so as to exhibit a true and correct view of the state of the affairs of the Association and is in accordance with the Books and Vouchers of the Association and the information and explanations given to us.

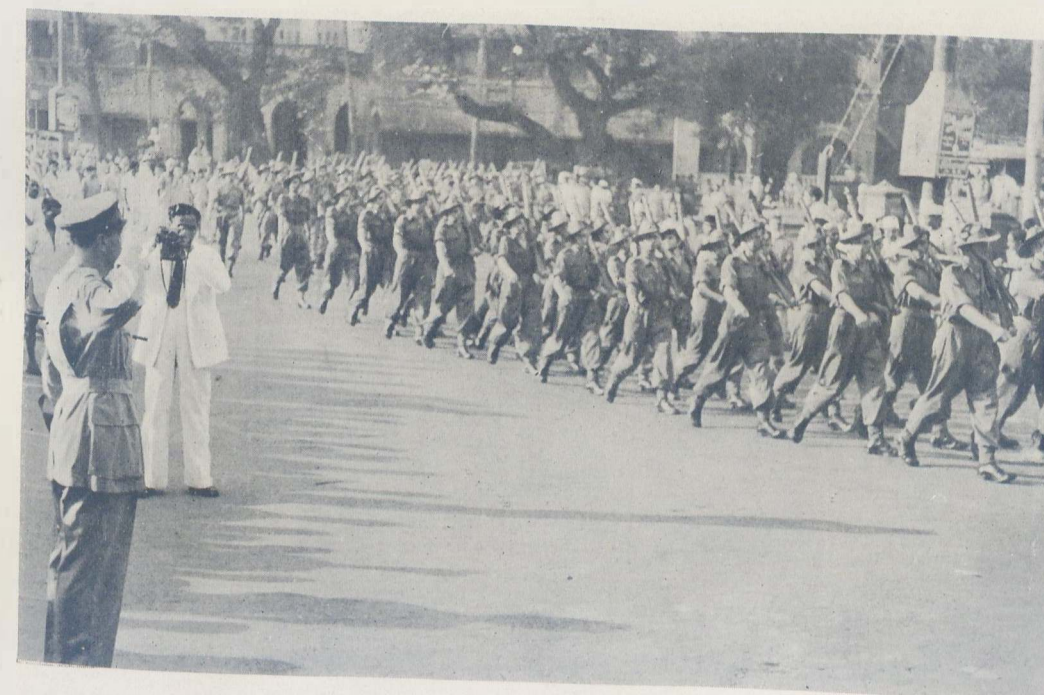
(Signed) KELLER SNOW & CO., Auditors.  
 Incorporated Accountants.

Dated this 8th Day of February, 1946.  
 GUILDFORD.

## 2nd BATTALION



BATTALION BAND PLAYING THE BATTALION THROUGH BOMBAY.



A PLATOON OF 2nd BATTALION MARCHING PAST AT BOMBAY.



A BATTALION OF THE REGIMENT MARCHING INTO TOBRUK, NOVEMBER, 1942.  
(Presumably a Battalion of 131 Brigade.)



2nd BATTALION COLOUR PARTY MARCHING DOWN GUILDFORD HIGH STREET  
30th September, 1945.

## COLONELS OF THE QUEEN'S ROYAL REGIMENT

The Earl of Peterborough	...	...	1661-1663	Resigned.
The Earl of Teviot	...	...	1663-1664	Killed at Tangier.
Colonel H. Norwood	...	...	1664-1668	Resigned.
The Earl of Middleton	...	...	1668-1675	Died at Tangier.
The Earl of Inchiquin	...	...	1675-1680	Resigned.
Sir Palmes-Fairborne	...	...	1680-1680	Died of wounds, Tangier.
Colonel Percy Kirke	...	...	1682-1691	Died at Brussels.
Colonel W. Selwyn	...	...	1691-1701	Exchanged to 22nd Foot.
Lieut.-General Sir H. Bellasis, K.T.	...	...	1701-1702	Dismissed by C.M.
Lieut.-General The Earl of Portmore	...	...	1703-1710	Retired by sale.
Colonel Percy Kirke	...	...	1710-1741	Died in Command.
Colonel T. Fowke	...	...	1741-1755	Transferred to 14th Foot.
Colonel Hon. J. Fitz-William	...	...	1755-1760	Transferred to Irish Horse.
Major-General Sir C. Montague, K.B.	...	...	1760-1777	Died in Command.
Colonel D. Jones	...	...	1777-1793	Died in Command.
Major-General A. Stewart	...	...	1793-1794	Died in Command.
Major-General J. Coates	...	...	1794-1822	Died in Command.
Major-General Sir H. Torrens, K.C.B.	...	...	1822-1828	Died in Command.
General Rt. Hon. Sir W. Keppel, G.C.B.	...	...	1828-1834	Died in Command.
Lieut.-General Rt. Hon. Sir J. Kempt, G.C.B., G.C.H.	...	...	1834-1846	Transferred to 1st Foot.
Major-General Lord Saltoun, K.C.B., G.C.H.	...	...	1846-1853	Died in Command.
Major-General Sir J. Rolt, K.C.B.	...	...	1853-1856	Died in Command.
Major-General Sir J. H. Schoedde, K.C.B.	...	...	1856-1857	Transferred to 35th Foot.
Major-General Sir J. Spink, K.H.	...	...	1857-1877	Died in Command.
Lieut.-General C. A. Edwards, C.B.	...	...	1877-1877	Transferred to 18th Foot.
Lieut.-General Sir H. Smythe, K.C.B.	...	...	1877-1891	Died in Command.
Hon. Lieut.-General F. G. Wilkinson	...	...	1891-1893	Transferred to Oxford L.I.
General Sir G. Selby-Smyth, K.C.M.G.	...	...	1893-1896	Died in Command.
Hon. Lieut.-General G. G. C. Stapylton	...	...	1896-1902	Transferred to D.C.L.I.
General Sir T. Kelly-Kenny, G.C.B., G.C.V.O.	...	...	1902-1914	Died in Command.
Lieut.-General Sir E. O. F. Hamilton, K.C.B.	...	...	1914-1920	Resigned.
General Sir C. C. Monro, Bt., G.C.B., G.C.S.I., G.C.M.G., A.D.C.	...	...	1920-1929	Died in Command.
Major-General Sir W. D. Bird, K.B.E., C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O.	...	...	1929-1939	Completed tenure of command.
Her Majesty Queen Mary was appointed Colonel-in-Chief of the Regiment on 11th May, 1937.				
General Sir Ivo L. B. Vesey, K.C.B., K.B.E., C.M.G., D.S.O.	...	...	1939-1945	Resigned.
General Sir George J. Giffard, G.C.B., D.S.O.	...	...	1945-	

### ARMY, NAVY, MARINES AND AIR FORCE PROVIDENT SOCIETY.

Established in 1889 to provide Annuities for the widows (or Orphan Children) of its Members. Officers holding permanent Commissions in the Royal Navy, Army, Royal Marines, Royal Air Force and Royal Indian Navy are eligible for membership provided they are under 50 years of age; also Officers of the Royal Air Force must not be under 30 years.

Under the present Rules an Officer may take up either one, two, three or four Memberships and an annuity of £2 10s. for each Membership (£10 for four Memberships) is payable when the Membership has been held for six years. The annuity increases after each subsequent year up to a maximum of £13 for each Membership (£52 for four Memberships). If death takes place before the Membership has been held for six years the contributions are refunded to the widow or orphan children. The annual contribution for each Membership is £2 plus a disparity fee of 2s. 6d. for each year the wife is younger than the Member.

Full particulars and form of application can be obtained from the Secretary, "Burnside," Yateley, Camberley, Surrey.

## THE HELEN PEIRCE MEMORIAL FUND.

To the Editor.

21st February, 1946.

DEAR SIR,

We shall be grateful if you can find space to publish, in your next issue, this letter, and also the enclosed tribute to the late Miss Helen Peirce, O.B.E., which appeared recently in the *Aldershot News* following the announcement of her death, which took place on 23rd August in a nursing home in Surrey.

We are well aware that there can be few still serving who remember the life-long work of this remarkable woman amongst soldiers, irrespective of rank, in Ireland, at Tidworth, and in Aldershot, yet we feel sure that there are many past members of your Regiment who will recall with gratitude her devoted services to them and their comrades, and who might like to show their appreciation of the many acts of kindness they received at her hands during their soldiering days by making a small contribution to the Fund we are raising to perpetuate her memory.

As to the form the Memorial will take, no decision can be come to until the result of the appeal, which will remain open until 1st July, is known, but everything will be done to make it of practical value to the men of to-day and of the future. The Committee, which has been formed to deal with the matter, will then meet and the result of its decisions, together with a complete list of subscribers to the Fund, will be made known to you.

All donations, however small, should be sent direct to the Hon. Treasurer, "Helen Peirce Fund," c/o Messrs. Glyn Mills, Kirkland House, Whitehall, S.W.1, who have kindly consented to act as Bankers to the appeal.

We are, Sir,  
Your obedient servants,

Harry W. Blackburne (*Dean of Bristol*).\*Neville G. Cameron (*Maj.-Gen. and Vice-Chairman*).\*William G. S. Dobbie (*Lieut.-General and Chairman*).Gerald F. Ellison (*Lieut.-General*).

Lilian A. Ellison.

A. E. Wentworth-Harman (*Lieut.-General*).James A. Hartigan (*Lieut.-General*).\*R. J. Kentish (*Brig.-Gen. and Hon. Sec.*).Eva Maguire (*Miss Sandes's Homes*).John McNee (*Corporal*).\*J. Gordon Ramsay (*Lieut.-Colonel*).\*G. J. Scovell (*Lieut.-Colonel and Hon. Treasurer*).Arthur Smith (*Lieut.-General*).Monica Smith (*O.C.U.*).

\*Members of the Committee.

Reprinted from "*Aldershot News*," 21st September, 1945.

## A FRIEND OF SOLDIERS.

## A TRIBUTE

We have just received from Brig.-General Reginald J. Kentish the following tribute to the memory of Helen Peirce, O.B.E.:—

"On the 23rd of August, after a long illness, bravely and patiently borne, there passed peacefully away in a nursing home not far from her beloved Aldershot, a woman who, for over fifty years, had devoted herself to the welfare and well-being of the soldier, and whose good deeds and countless acts of kindness to all ranks, irrespective of creed, colour or class, will be remembered for many years to come.

"The woman of whom I write was Helen Peirce, O.B.E., whose remains were cremated in the Crematorium at Woking on the 27th ult., in the presence of a few of her most intimate friends, amongst whom were the Hon. Lady Arthur Smith, wife of Lieut.-General Sir Arthur Smith, G.O.C. in Persia and Iraq, Lieut.-Colonel A. Victor Olphert and Mrs. Olphert, Captain Knox-Patterson, Mrs. Arthur Crook and a few others.

"Born of Irish parents just over seventy-six years ago, Helen Peirce first came in contact with the Army through Miss Sandes, of Miss Sandes's Soldiers' Home fame, to whose great work I have made reference below, and coming into close touch with the men as she did, and feeling that they had need of the help and advice of women like herself, led to her decision to devote her life entirely to their welfare, and no words of mine can tell how fully she attained her object.

"My first meeting with Helen Peirce dates back to 1905, just on fifty years ago, when serving in Dublin with my regiment, the 1st Bn. Royal Irish Fusiliers (the old 87th, or 'The Faugh-a-Ballagh Boys,' as it was—and still is—known through the Army). I was Adjutant at the time and my battalion had just moved out to Kilbride, a very wild and bleak spot in the Wicklow Mountains, some twenty-odd miles from Dublin, to which each battalion of the Dublin Brigade went in turn to fire its annual course and do its company training. It was, as I have said, a very wild, bleak spot, tucked right away in the mountains without a house, shop, or sign of civilization within miles; consequently the men just hated the place, and there wasn't a man who, having fired his course and done his training, wasn't heartily glad when he found himself on his way back to Dublin again.

"But grim and cheerless as the life of the men was in that wild spot, it would have been a hundred times more so if it hadn't been for Helen Peirce, who, somehow or other, had managed to get the powers that be to allow her the use of one of the Army huts, and it was in this hut that we found her, on our arrival, firmly ensconced, having turned it into a kind of 'welcome to all' hut, to which the men, when off duty, could go and be sure of a real welcome and the best of tea and cakes, etc., which she dispensed all day and every day, until her supplies were exhausted as, indeed, I'm afraid they often were, such was the demand of the men for a hot drink and something to eat up in that cold, bleak camp.

"But there was something of even greater value that 'Peirce' (as the men used to call her) dispensed—something which, I remember her telling me one day, cost her nothing! And that was that wonderful smile of hers, which, once seen, was never forgotten, for it was the most wonderful smile ever!

"Such, then, were the circumstances of our first meeting with her, and I can say, without the slightest fear of contradiction, that although the men just hated Kilbride, and were always glad when they were on their way back to Dublin, there was just one thing they didn't like and that was leaving behind them their beloved 'Peirce,' and what I am saying of the men of my regiment I know can be said of the men of every other regiment with whom she came in contact, for she was a very wonderful woman.

"But it wasn't for long that our men found themselves parted from her, for feeling, I think, that she wanted to be more in the 'centre of things' she moved to Aldershot a year or two later, and took up her abode in the grounds of the Cambridge Hospital, where again, with her persuasive ways, she managed somehow to get the 'powers that be'—in this case, Major-General (and now Lieut.-General) Sir G. Ellison, then M.G.A., the Aldershot Command who, with his wife, now Lady Ellison, became two of 'Peirce's' closest friends—to give her a hut, a fine, big and much more spacious one than the one she had in Kilbride—and here we found her again when, in 1908, we moved from Dublin to Aldershot, and, needless to say, our men were delighted.

"Here in Aldershot, and subsequently in the Queen's Hotel, to which she moved after leaving the Cambridge Hospital, Helen Peirce had full scope for her great gifts, and for some years she remained, carrying on her splendid work amongst the patients, and being a friend to every soldier, soldier's wife, nurse or member of the R.A.M.C. staff who came to her for her help and advice, and no one, after telling this great-hearted woman what his (or her) troubles were, and asking her advice, ever left her presence without a feeling of comfort, cheerfulness and hope for the future.

"Helen Peirce was a really remarkable woman, and, in the writer's opinion, in every way qualified to rank with those other two great friends of the sailor and soldier, viz., Miss Agnes Weston and Miss Sandes, both now long since passed away, but still remembered by some of us for their great work.

"This tribute, I fear, falls far short of what a tribute to a woman of Helen Peirce's outstanding qualities should be, but I trust that what I have written about her and her life amongst 'her' soldiers—and particularly do I refer to the soldiers of the old Regular Army, those 'Old

Contemptibles' who withstood the German Army in front of Ypres in 1914 without flinching or yielding ground—has made it clear that with the passing of Helen Peirce the Army has lost a very dear friend.

"There are others, who knew and saw more of her in her later days than I did, and they, I trust, will send you further tributes to her memory.

"But whether they do or not, I feel that I shall be voicing the wishes of many officers and men, who knew her in the days of which I write, when I express the hope that some permanent memorial of her life-long work for and on behalf of the British soldier may be dedicated to her, perhaps in the main Garrison Church in the Aldershot Command, or elsewhere.

"Thus will the name of Helen Peirce be kept green—and for all time."

R. J. K.

## EDITORIAL NOTES

*Editor and Hon. Treasurer:* MAJOR R. C. G. FOSTER

*Offices:* STOUGHTON BARRACKS, GUILDFORD

The following are suggestions which may be of help to Battalion Assistant Editors and contributors in sending in material:—

1. Assistant Editors should frame their material on the following lines:—

- (a) A general survey of things in which the whole Battalion has taken part, *i.e.*, Battalion General News.
- (b) Training, Musketry, etc., of the Battalion.
- (c) Battalion Games and Sports. In this connection it is suggested that short reports of important Battalion matches should be given, mentioning names of goal-scorers, good scores or good bowling performances at cricket, together with the names of teams in each match. Concerts, dances, etc., should be included under this sub-head.
- (d) Sergeants' Mess News.
- (e) Corporals' Mess News.
- (f) Company and Platoon Games and Sports.

2. Contributions should be written on one side of the paper only, and should, if possible, be typewritten, but this is not essential.

3. Photographs should be marked on the back with the title, and, in the case of groups, names should invariably be given. In this connection, readers are invited to send all photographs likely to be of interest.

Subscribers are requested to notify at once any change of address. Unless this is done the safe delivery of the JOURNAL cannot be guaranteed.

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