



THE QUEEN'S ROYAL SURREY REGIMENTAL ASSOCIATION OF THE QUEEN'S REGIMENT

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Regimental Association
Newsletter

Editorial

As mentioned in the President's Notes last time the title of the Association has changed but nothing else seems to have altered. Reading my correspondence and contributions for the Newsletter I have the impression that the rate of activity is increasing. Long may it remain so.

Copy for the November issue should be sent to me at 50 Ashdene Road, Ashurst, Hants SO4 2DN by 30th September 1981.

Stop Press

It is with regret that the illness of the Colonel of the Regiment – Major General RSN Mans CBE is reported. He is making satisfactory progress but it is anticipated that he will be out of action for some weeks. I am sure that all members unite in wishing him a speedy recovery and safe return to duty.

Regimental Museum Requirements

We are grateful to those who responded to our list of requirements published in the November 1980 Newsletter. Our particular requirements this time are a pair of Home Service long puttees and a photograph of L/Cpl G Henshaw GC, 1st Queen's to accompany the photograph we have of Pte A Brook GC.

We are also especially interested in the connections of Her Majesty Queen Mary with The Queen's Royal Regiment after her appointment as Colonel in Chief in 1937. It is known that Queen Mary made with her own hands over 100 scarves for the troops, and we have one in the Regimental Museum. It is described as 'knitted' by Her Majesty. Almost every lady visitor to the Museum draws our attention to the fact that the scarf is crocheted, not knitted. If any of our readers has got one of these scarves, we should like to know if it is knitted or crocheted.

Queen Mary also presented windcheater type pull-overs to the Regiment for Christmas 1939, and one is on display in the Museum. It is believed they were given to the 2nd Queen's only. We should be interested to hear of any other recipients.

Correspondence, please, to Mrs D Hill, The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Museum, Clandon Park, West Clandon, Guildford, Surrey GU4 7RQ.

Army Benevolent Fund Band Concert

Bands of The Queen's Regiment will perform at the Civic Hall, GUILDFORD, Surrey, during the evening of Wednesday 1 July 1981. Timings and ticket details can be obtained from the Civic Hall, Guildford, and from posters in the town, after Monday 18 May 1981. No details available at time of going to press.

Regimental Museum Appeal

The Trustees of The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Museum thank the under-mentioned gentlemen for their generous donations which have been made since September 1980:

| | |
|--------------------------|------------------------|
| Major General R S N Mans | Colonel J G W Davidson |
| Mr H Drayton | Mr H J Ford |
| Brigadier F E Stafford | Mr H C Russell |

A donation was also made by the late Lieut Colonel A J Sullivan.

The total received up to 10 March 1981 is £871.25.

Regimental Association Benevolent Work of the Association – 1980

The number of cases in which a grant was made was 137 and the total amount disbursed in grants was £8,441.

In addition the Association administered Army Benevolent Supplementary Allowances for 21 former members and their widows totalling £2,207.

Laying-up of the Colours of 3rd and 4th Battalions The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment (TA) 16th November 1980.

From a study of correspondence and operation orders I conclude that although one intention was defined – several were inferred. They may be summarised as follows:–

1. The colours will be laid up in Southwark Cathedral.
2. The operation will be conducted in such a manner that full justice and honour will be shown to the colours of a first class regiment by its successors.
3. All participants, guests, visitors, past and present members of the Regiment and onlookers will enjoy themselves as a necessary contribution to the overall success of the operation.

It would take a very jaundiced eye to deny that any of these intentions were met. The only variable factor was – as usual – the weather, but even this supported the event pretty well. A strong cold wind kept the clouds moving along, and one short shower fell to settle the dust while the regimental association contingent was being marshalled ready to join the marching column. Was it really coincidence that the sun shone when the Colonel of the Regiment came to address us? Or did he wait for the rain to pass? Good planning somewhere for someone!

THE QUEEN'S ROYAL SURREY REGIMENT

FORECAST OF EVENTS 1981 – REGIMENTAL ASSOCIATION AND OFFICERS' CLUB

| Date | Place | Event | Detail |
|------------------|----------------------|--|---|
| 9, 10, & 11 June | Horse Guards London | Beating Retreat by The Massed Bands & Corps of Drums of The Queen's Division | Queen's Regiment – 9 June See detail in Newsletter |
| 14 June | Guildford | Regimental Association Annual Church Service | Guildford Cathedral 11.15 a.m. |
| 7 July | Richmond | Queen's Surreys' Golf Society | Match v R Marines |
| 8 July | City of London | The Queen's Regiment Exercise The Privilege of Entry to City of London | 1245-1315. Detail in Newsletter |
| 16 July | Ardingly Show Ground | Presentation of New Colours to 6/7 Queen's (V) by The Duchess of Norfolk | HQ 6/7 Queen's Denne Road Horsham Sussex |
| 2 August | Canterbury | Queen's Regimental Association Grand Re-union | Howe Barracks. Details separately |
| 9 October | London | Officers' Club Ladies Luncheon | Victory Club – Details separately |
| 15/16 October | Richmond | Queen's Surreys' Golf Society | Two Day Autumn Meeting |
| 6 November | London | Regimental Association Annual Re-union | Union Jack Club. Details separately. |
| 8 November | Guildford & Kingston | Remembrance Day Parade | |

Regular readers of the Newsletter will understand why the bulk of the effort fell upon 6/7 Queen's (V), but if in doubt refer to Col. A R Martin's article in No. 28 and to Major Peter Hill's article in the current issue. Two colour parties and four guards, the latter each of 3 officers and 66 R and F., formed the uniformed contingent. No. 3 Guard was formed mostly from 5 Queen's (V) personnel, but the rest were all from 6/7 Queen's (V). The estimates of members of the regimental associations who marched range from 100 to 200, while many more attended the ceremony itself in the Cathedral.

The march was led by the band and drums of 1 Queen's – who else plays "Braganza" quite like that? I hope the bearing and behaviour of the marching column satisfied the Colonel of the Regiment as he took the salute. It sounded reasonable to me, but I was hidden in the middle.

The musical contribution of the band inside the Cathedral was really excellent. I should like all the regimental musicians to know how much their efforts are appreciated, and just how much they add to the beauty and atmosphere of the occasions when they are present. My personal, subjective and biased view was endorsed in the Cathedral by a German visitor who came to sit by me and with whom I had a conversation. He was the organist from a German cathedral – I forget which – and he was in London for a conference. He came along to the ceremony as a result of seeing an advertisement about it. He was quite emphatic and very sincere about his enjoyment of the music, the level of its performance and the attendant ceremonial.

The service was much to the point and very effective. The colours were handed over for laying-up by the former Commanding Officers of 3rd and 4th Queen's Surreys – Col. D B Pullen, OBE, TD, DL and Col. W E McConnell, TD, respectively. The sermon preached by Peter Mallett (Ven. Archdeacon CB, QHC, AKC – former Chaplain to 1 Queen's and recently retired as Chaplain General to the Forces) was apposite and delivered in his usual inimitable style. It was very fitting that a former chaplain to 4th Queen's Surreys – now Chaplain to H M The Queen – Rev. Canon Derek Landreth TD MA could assist the Provost of Southwark at the ceremony. One can only hope that the Provost appreciated and was not too over-awed by the calibre of the support available to him from the Regiment. His efforts were sincerely appreciated by all.

The guest-list as a whole is far too lengthy to spell out here – but selected items give a good indication of the standing of the Regiment and its Territorial components in London and Surrey. The Lords Lieutenant of Greater London and Surrey, the Mayors of Guildford, Kingston-on-Thames, Reigate and Southwark – together with their Mayoresses – paid us the honour of attending. Major-General Fergus Ling CB, CBE, DSO attended in his dual capacity as Vice Lieutenant of Surrey and a former Colonel of The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment. Major-General F J C Piggott CB, CBE, DSO, headed a large contingent of other senior and distinguished officers of the Regiment. The former Commanding Officers of Regular and Territorial battalions of the Queen's Surreys were there, together with officers, warrant officers and sergeants who had been on their staffs. A touch of colour was provided by Yeoman Warders of H M Tower of London who had served with the TA battalions. The present Territorial Army and Cadet Force were well represented. Last but not least – our own stalwart Majors F J Reed and P G Hill welcomed us in the Cathedral.

The reunion in the River Room of Glaziers Hall which followed the service was very well attended and provided a fitting end to a really enjoyable occasion. The surroundings were truly delightful and contributed significantly to the warm, friendly atmosphere, for which the quality and quantity of available refreshments were not wholly responsible.

In conclusion may I say that I have tried to express the feelings of a memorable occasion in which I am delighted to have shared. If I have overlooked any point of major interest or omitted to express thanks for or appreciation of anybody's efforts then please do not hesitate to complain to the Editor – who declares such correspondence on the subject to be already closed.

K.W.B.

News of the Associations

5th Queen's Old Members Association

The annual Reunion dinner will be held on Saturday 9th May at Guildford, and an enjoyable and well-attended evening is anticipated. Members of other battalions would be warmly welcomed. For further details contact Doug. Mitchell, 3 Little Field Way, Fairlands, Guildford, Surrey.

Thirty members attended the Armistice service at Holy Trinity Church, and the wreath-laying ceremony in the Castle grounds. The Mayor took the salute at the marchpast. Wreaths were laid by Brigadier G Curtis and Lt. Col. H M W Harris for the Queen's Royal Surrey Regimental Association and this association respectively. Refreshments were taken afterwards in the local inn.

In January 16 members and wives attended a service at Milstead Church, Sittingbourne to dedicate a plaque in remembrance of Major H R Watson TD. The plaque also referred to the battalion's stay in the area in 1941 and to a chest presented by the officers of the battalion. The chest was unfortunately stolen at a later date. After the service the OMA members were invited to the Rectory for drinks and then repaired to a local hotel for a meal. Col. Healy, Lt. Col. Harris, Major Neale and Captain Clark attended – the last named travelling from Cornwall for the event.

45 members of the Cranleigh 1939 contingent held their annual Dinner at the Cricket Pavilion, Cranleigh in October 1980 under the chairmanship of Les May. The Guest of Honour was Lady Mullens. The Hon. Sec., Reg Hubbard, said the attendance was pleasing and he hoped it would continue for many more years.

1/6th Queen's OCA

A very active programme is still being kept up. The Annual Dinner for 1981 will be held on Saturday 30th May 1981 at the Union Jack Club. Good support is expected for an enjoyable evening.

The AGM was held on 3rd June 1980.

June 1980 saw a party visiting Steenwerck for a long week-end. Ypres was visited. Some old French friends were met again. The trip was very exacting but liquid reserves stimulated flagging efforts.

During May 1980 a party from "La Sarcelle" visited London and were "looked after" by the members of the association. Both sides enjoyed the weekend.

Support was given to the Annual Regimental Service at Guildford and will be repeated this year.

A strong party visited Ghent for a long week-end in September, being looked after by "La Sarcelle" members. Stamina was displayed by all participants, and the week-end was voted a success.

A new venture, a Ladies' Night, held in October proved to be very popular. Hopes are that it will be repeated this year.

Remembrance Day was celebrated in Bermondsey, at the Memorial outside the Drill Hall and the Parish Church. Refreshments and buffet luncheon completed the occasion.

The laying-up of the old 3rd and 4th Queen's Surrey's colours was well attended. The event was sincerely appreciated and enjoyed.

A pilgrimage was made to Poland again – but all responsibility for subsequent industrial unrest is specifically disclaimed. Snow in May did not lessen the pleasure of the trip – although this was leavened by tributes paid to the POWs who did not return.

From Here and There

Brigadier F E Stafford writes that he vaguely remembers the Brodrick cap referred to in the last Newsletter. He has more vivid memories of an officer who was the brother of the Secretary of State for War whose name was given to the cap. The excellent word portrait is shown separately in this issue.

Mr. W Matthews – Hon. Sec. 6th Queen's OCA – told me about a concert on 25th September 1981 at the Fairfield Halls, Croydon by a band of The Queen's Regiment and the band of the Metropolitan Police. The organiser is Major (Retd) J Howe MBE, late of the Guards Division, so it should be good.

Major A F S Ling MBE of the Queen's Regiment is presently working in the Military Assistance Office of the M O D. Recently he was in Swaziland and saw the name "Queen's" painted on a rock high on a hill-side above Mbabane. He wonders whether any of our readers can offer any information as to when it could have been done, and by whom. The regimental history does not offer any ready solution. He was accompanied by the commander of the British training team in Swaziland who is also a Queen's officer – Major Clive St. John Perry.

Mr. C S A Avis asks for his regimental number to be shown correctly. It should have been 9661 NOT repeat NOT 9961. He was appointed Orderly Room Sergeant at the Depot, Guildford on 7th June 1918, vice CSM Fletcher.

Captain J Riley of 1 Queen's has asked whether anybody could confirm the truth of the story that the FA Cup was once won by the 1st Surrey Rifles, mounted section, playing as the Clapham Rovers. Apparently the first ever England football team practise was held at Flodden Road Drill Hall, Camberwell, which was the HQ of the 1st Surrey Rifles.

Mr. H E Hannan has sent me photo-copies of the menus for the 10th to 13th Annual Dinners of the 9th Bn East Surrey Regiment, held in 1936 through 1939. The dinner planned for 1940 was cancelled. The fourth toast of the evening was "The Gallants" which followed the toast to the East Surrey Regiment. The wording used was "When we drink to the "Gallants", let us remember with gratitude those very many, very gallant gentlemen of our old Battalion, both the dead and the living, who cannot be with us tonight". The menus have been signed by many people, some of whom may be known to some of our members. Mr. Hannan has also written some interesting anecdotes which will be used in the next issue.

Mr. G W Hinde writes from New Zealand of his trip back to England and Europe last year which he enjoyed – apart from suffering two strokes. We all wish him a full recovery. He was able to attend the Reunion at Canterbury in August. Elsewhere in this issue is a small piece of interesting information supplied by him.

The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Golf Society Autumn Meeting at Richmond Golf Club, Sudbrook Park on 17 October 1980.

Unfortunately we were rained off on Thursday 16 October and all competitions were played on Friday 17th.

Results:

| | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Autumn Bowl | Lt M J Power |
| Glasgow Greys Cup | Lt Col J F Sherrard |
| Veterans Halo | Lt Col J F Sherrard |
| Petri Plate | Lt Col J F Sherrard |
| Heales Memorial Trophy | Brig M J A Clarke |
| Harry Adcock Memorial Trophy | Lt Col J G W Davidson |

Dates for 1981

| | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Spring Meeting | Friday 1st May |
| Match v Royal Marines | Tuesday 7th July |
| Autumn Meeting | Thursday 15th October |
| | Friday 16th October |

Lieut-Colonel The Hon. Arthur Grenville Brodrick, TD., DL.

He commanded the 5th Battalion The Queen's (Royal West Surrey) Regiment, (Territorial) from 1912, at the outbreak of the 1914/18 War in England, in India and Mesopotamia until some time in 1917.

He was a carry-over from the Volunteer Force, the 2nd Volunteer Battalion. In appearance he was portly and rubicund, in manner pompous and truth to tell was not an ideal commanding officer of a full time infantry battalion, particularly on active service. When benign he could have been the host at a garden party of the Primrose League; when angry he resembled a character in one of H M Bateman's drawings.

He refused to make any concessions to climatic conditions, and invariably appeared dressed in a serge or gabardine tunic, riding breeches and boots, surmounted, not by a Brodrick cap but, by a shapeless pith helmet usually with the chinstrap down. Even on active service in the hot and arid deserts of Mesopotamia, not for him the khaki drill uniform and shorts worn by everybody else on the long, long training and fighting marches which formed the bulk of the active service in that theatre of war. Nor was his charger very far away. This peculiarity of dress was high-lighted by his obedience to the call for economy in war-time and he continued to wear his heavy-duty uniform long after it developed tatters and patches, giving him a faintly scarecrow appearance.

He was a staunch Churchman and on Sundays, whatever the place or the conditions, there was a formal Church parade. Then he was really in command, or possibly second-in-command.

On active service in a temperature sometimes 120° in the shade, and there was no shade, when all ranks sought what little shelter and rest could be found in the tented or bivouac camp, the Colonel in full, ragged, fig would stalk to the Orderly Room tent, sit in his old wooden rocking-chair, which was always carried in the first-line baggage, and methodically read in order the "Times", usually months in arrears. He would then dictate letters, in a loud voice, for home consumption, to the unfortunate Orderly Room staff, while all else was in fitful slumber.

Looking back more than sixty years to my close association with him I see him as one who presided, or perhaps brooded, over the dynamic machine of a fighting unit rather as a figurehead, like Queen Victoria whom, in some respects, he resembled. One of his more memorable remarks, I recall, was made when he was seated on a packing-case in a small hastily-erected mess tent. He had pushed back his empty enamelled plate after consuming his ration of tinned meat and said "I do hope that was mutton because I do like mutton so much".

Yet, however ill-fitted he was to command a fighting unit, Arthur Brodrick was an intensely patriotic Christian gentleman who offered, and would have given, his all for his King and Country.

F.E.S.

7th Armoured Division, Dinner 1980

Officers who served with 1/5th, 1/6th or 1/7th Queen's in the 131 Infantry Brigade during the North African, Italian and North West Europe campaigns of 1942-45, will be interested to know that the Divisional Officers' Dining Club held its annual dinner on December 3rd at the Naval and Military Club, Piccadilly.

Seventy Desert Rats, including no less than three Field Marshals, were there and an excellent dinner was had—with the Ante Room and tables decorated with battle relics, mementoes and silver kindly loaned by Divisional Headquarters and private individuals. The Guest of

Honour was Lieut. Colonel George Forty the author of the two volumes of "Desert Rats at War".

Next year's dinner is again to be held at the Naval and Military Club, but this time on Wednesday December 2nd. The new President is General "Pip" Roberts; our Hon. Treasurer is the late Paymaster-in-Chief, Maj. Gen. John Cowley CB; and our Hon. Secretary, Christopher Milner Esq. MC of Mill Lane, Radford, Inkberrow, Worcester (Tel: 0386 - 79.22.62).

Any officers who served in the Division who have not yet joined the Dining Club and would like to do so, should write to Christopher Milner and will be more than welcome at the next reunion.

The Citizen Soldiers of The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment

This article is intended to provide a brief outline of the various non-Regular units which formed part of the corps of The Queen's Royal Regiment, The East Surrey Regiment and The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment. Further information may be found in the Regimental Histories, Colonel A R Martin's 'Historical Record of The London Regiment', Major J M A Tamplin's 'Catalogue of the Surrey Rifle Volunteers, 1859-1959' and in the Regimental Journals.

Militia

The tradition of the citizens of this country to bear arms in the defence of the realm has its origins in the compulsory levies of Saxon times. The Assize of Arms in 1181 authorised a force of freemen which became the forerunner of the Militia. However, it was not until after 1660 that the trained bands of the Tudors were organised under Act of Parliament as the Militia. Recruits were raised by ballot or parish quota for the Militia, which formed not only a valuable reserve for the Regular Army but a force for home defence and internal security. Militia units were embodied in times of national emergency, and ordered to stand down when no longer required.

In 1759 the Surrey Militia was divided into 1st and 2nd Battalions, which in 1804 were granted the title of 'Royal'. A 3rd Battalion was raised in 1853. Under the Cardwell Reforms of 1873 the Militia was incorporated in the Regimental Districts, and eight years later became the 3rd (or 4th) Battalion of their parent Line Regiment. The 3rd Bn The Queen's, formerly the 2nd Royal Surrey Militia and the 3rd and 4th Bns The East Surrey Regiment, formerly the 1st and 3rd Royal Surrey Militia respectively, served in the South African War. They assumed the additional title of 'Special Reserve' in 1908, and during the 1914-18 War were responsible for the provision of reinforcements for the battalions overseas. The Special Reserve battalions were disbanded in 1919.

Volunteers

Recruited by voluntary service, the Volunteers were exempted from liability to serve in the Militia or other forces. Many small Volunteer units were raised during the Napoleonic Wars, but all were disbanded by 1815. However, in view of our uneasy relations with France and the threat of invasion, the Volunteer Force, consisting of entirely new units, was established in 1859. They were joined by members of rifle clubs and other unofficial organisations. By the summer of 1860, 180,000 Volunteers had been enrolled.

In Surrey there were 26 corps of rifle volunteers, which as the result of amalgamations were reduced to eight corps by 1880. Two years later four were allocated to The Queen's and four to The East Surrey Regiment.

From these eight corps of Surrey Rifle Volunteers stem all the Volunteer and Territorial battalions of the Regiment. With the exception of the 1st Corps, all became Volunteer battalions of their parent Regiments. The 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th Volunteer Battalions of The Queen's were formed in 1883, and the 2nd, 3rd and 4th Volunteer Battalions of The East Surrey Regiment four years later.

Territorials

On the formation of the Territorial Force in 1908, these seven Volunteer Battalions assumed Territorial titles as under:

The Queen's

- 1st Volunteer Battalion became 4th Bn The Queen's
- 2nd Volunteer Battalion became 5th Bn The Queen's
- 3rd Volunteer Battalion became 22nd (County of London) Bn The London Regiment (The Queen's)
- 4th Volunteer Battalion became 24th (County of London) Bn The London Regiment (The Queen's)

The East Surrey Regiment

- 2nd Volunteer Battalion became 5th Bn The East Surrey Regiment
- 3rd Volunteer Battalion became 6th Bn The East Surrey Regiment
- 4th Volunteer Battalion became 23rd (County of London) Bn The London Regiment

The only Volunteer Corps which had not become a Volunteer Battalion, that is the 1st (South London) Corps East Surrey Regiment, now assumed the title of the 21st (County of London) Bn The London Regiment First Surrey Rifles.

So, in 1908 the original eight corps of Surrey Rifle Volunteers had become two Queen's Territorial battalions, two East Surrey Territorial battalions and four County of London Regiments. During the 1914-18 War these battalions served in India, Mesopotamia, Gallipoli, Palestine and on the Western Front. The first of the eight original Volunteer corps to leave the Regimental family was the 21st London Regiment First Surrey Rifles, which in 1935 became an Anti-Aircraft Battalion. Three years later the 4th Bn The Queen's became a Searchlight Regiment and the 5th Bn The East Surrey Regiment became an Anti-Tank Regiment. The Territorial units then consisted of the 5th, 6th (formerly 22nd London Regiment) and 7th Queen's (formerly 24th London Regiment) and the 6th Surreys.

In 1939 each Territorial battalion formed a second battalion for the duration of the War, all of whom were to see active service. The six Territorial battalions of the Queen's were formed into two complete Queen's brigades. In 1947 the 7th Queen's left the Regiment to become a Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regiment. The Territorial element of the Regiment was thus reduced to the 5th and 6th Queen's and on the East Surrey side the 6th Surreys and the 23rd London Regiment. The last named unit had become a battalion of the Royal Tank Corps in 1937, but had reverted to infantry in 1956.

The amalgamation of The Queen's Royal Regiment and The East Surrey Regiment in 1959 rendered the titles of the Territorial battalions obsolete. So, in 1961 the 5th and 6th Bns The Queen's Royal Regiment, together with Q (4th Queen's) Bty 565 LAA Regiment RA amalgamated to form the 3rd Bn The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment. Similarly, the 6th Bn The East Surrey Regiment came together with the 23rd London to become the 4th Bn The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment.

A similar reorganisation took place in 1967 after the formation of The Queen's Regiment. The 3rd and 4th Bns

The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment amalgamated to become the 6th Territorial Bn The Queen's Regiment. Four years later this unit became the 6th Volunteer Battalion; and today, as the result of amalgamation with the 7th Volunteer Battalion, is the 6/7th Volunteer Bn The Queen's Regiment.

P.G.E.H.

A West Country Cockney Town Crier

In a recent BBC "Down Your Way" programme Mr Brian Johnston interviewed the Town Crier of DORCHESTER. He is former Private R A (Bob) WALKER (6091558) who joined the 2/7th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment (TA) in May 1939. After serving at the ITC and in 13 Queen's he was posted to 1 Queen's and served with that battalion in BURMA from 1942 to 1945, and later with HQ 45 Army Group. An LCC Ambulance Driver prior to the War, on release from the Service in 1946 he became a long distance lorry driver, until he retired in 1974, and took up his present occupation. In this capacity he has made official visits to Canada, Bavaria, and several other places. A former native of Paddington, he reckons he is the only Cockney Town Crier in the West – and he is doubtless right! He now lives at 13 Coles Lane, Yetminster, Dorset.

Regimental Wives

Continuing the series of Regimental wives' experiences in war time, Mrs Betty Orme has contributed a long and interesting account of what befell the families of the 2nd Bn The East Surrey Regiment in the Far East in 1940. Major Dennis Orme, popularly known as 'Babe', was then a company commander in the Battalion which two years later were to become prisoners of war of the Japanese.

When the 2nd Surreys were posted from Shanghai to Singapore in August 1940, their families were shipped off to Australia. Mrs Orme had the unenviable task of accommodating the families in the ship and looking after their finances. She writes,

'It had many phases, this trip of ours to Australia. Everyone was in shock – many had never been parted from their spouse before. Few had joint banking accounts and were worried about what was going to happen. I had to get as much Australian pounds as possible to try and give everyone enough spending money for the trip. Many women did not understand why the purser of the ship and I should take control of their money and dole it out as we saw fit. This had to be done so that everyone had Australian pounds in their possession. There were many upsets over who should share cabins with whom and many problems of this nature had to be solved. When we reached Australia we were greeted by officials of the Australian Government so that trauma ended.

On arrival in Australia we were welcomed with open arms. I went to Melbourne and lost touch with others who settled in Sydney and Brisbane. However, I did keep in touch with many of the wives, as I was still the spokeswoman for them with the authorities in Melbourne. When we arrived in Brisbane we had a few pregnant wives with us and the people of Queensland were fantastically kind. They took an interest in these lonely women, provided them with layettes for the babes and generally showed a lot of T L C. They were really great.

After 14 months in Australia, I took off for Singapore where I worked at GHQ. Eventually Singapore fell and Dennis became a prisoner of war. I went off to Java to work on Wavell's staff. Things were pretty hair-raising in Java. I worked in Bandoeng and got out on the last ship that got through the Sumatra Straits en route for India. I eventually got to Delhi where I worked as P A for the Deputy Chief of Staff in India, General Kirby, for 14

months. When the General left India, I joined my mother in South Africa to wait for V J Day. I eventually got home well ahead of Dennis, and was there to greet him on his return.'

Personal Experiences on the Opening Day (31st July 1917) of the Third Battle of Ypres

At the time of which I write, I was a Lewis gunner in No 11 Platoon C. Coy, 11th Battalion, Queen's Royal West Surrey Regiment. We were in the 123rd Brigade, 41st Division. I was Number 2 on the gun, so that my job was to carry the spare parts bag and assist the No 1 (a young chap named Collar who was about the same age as myself). In addition I had to carry the Number One's rifle as well as my own, as up to this period of the War, Numbers 1 and 2 on Lewis guns had not been issued with revolvers. Later on in the War they were.

We had been encamped in bivouacs near the village of Westoutre. Soon after sunset on the 30th July we marched up to the line, a distance of about 8 or 9 miles and arrived at Imperial trench, near Battle Wood, where we remained until about 9.30 p.m. We then moved to our assembly positions, arriving there at about 1.30 a.m. (31st July). We took what shelter and cover we could, mainly in shell holes. The enemy did a certain amount of desultory shelling, and we received a number of casualties. During the period of waiting I talked to Private Collar and suggested that, as he had carried the Lewis gun all the way up, I would carry it when we commenced going forward into the attack, and so give him some relief from the burden. He agreed and we exchanged, he taking the two rifles and spare parts bag, and I the Lewis gun. A Lewis gun with loaded magazine is quite heavy, especially when carried in addition to all the impedimenta which a soldier on active service has to carry with him. In the meantime I had removed my puttees and replaced them with an empty sandbag tied round each of my legs below the knee. This was done to prevent my puttees from being covered in mud, and was a common practice among infantry men, but was strictly against rules and regulations.

Zero hour (3.50 a.m.) arrived and our artillery and machine gun barrages commenced and we started to advance. I had gone only a few yards, when I was brought to a halt by the empty sandbags bound round my legs, becoming entangled in the barbed wire. After placing the Lewis gun on the ground, I used my jack knife to cut the strings of the sandbags, and so freeing myself, picked up the gun and continued advancing towards our objective. By this time the other members of my gun team were out of sight, apparently not having noticed my absence. I hurried to overtake and rejoin them, but before I could do so I saw a German soldier walking in a slow and halting manner and travelling in the same direction as myself, namely towards the German lines. He was wearing his long grey greatcoat and coal-scuttle helmet, but was not wearing any equipment and was not carrying a rifle. As far as I could see, even from a back view of him, he appeared to be dazed and bewildered. I hurried and overtook him, still carrying the Lewis gun on my right shoulder with the muzzle pointing rearwards, this being the easiest way to carry it until one needed to use it. When I reached him I clapped my left hand on his shoulder. He turned round and I said to him "do you surrender?". He looked at me as though he did not understand, but did not offer any resistance. I myself was rather nonplussed, as I realised that I could not be spared from my job to escort one solitary prisoner to the rear. I then looked about to see if there was an officer of N.C.O., to whom to hand him over. There was no officer in sight, but a short distance away on my right flank, I saw a sergeant of "B" Coy with two riflemen. I called him over and handed the prisoner over to

him. One of the men with him immediately brought his rifle into a firing position, and was going to shoot the poor devil, but fortunately the other rifleman knocked up the muzzle with his own rifle, and prevented him from doing so. At the same time I remonstrated, saying that the prisoner was mine and not his. The sergeant also ordered the first man not to shoot the German. Then the sergeant, like myself, deciding that he could not spare an escort for one solitary prisoner, tried to make the German understand that he must go unescorted towards our rear. Sign language was used by the sergeant, who pointed to the rear, then extended his arms upwards and, pointing to the prisoner, said the word "Kamerad". The German then appeared to understand, and with his hands and arms extended upwards, shuffled off towards the next wave of our supporting infantry, who were then coming into view. I do not know how he fared, as I had to hurry off to catch up with my own platoon and gun team.

I caught up with some of my own Company, but not my own platoon. We were advancing close up to our barrage, when Lieutenant Ryan of No 9 Platoon came running up from behind. He called out "Halt! you men! You are getting too close to the barrage! You will be hit by our own shells if you are not careful! The barrage is going to play on that line of enemy dugouts for another two minutes". He then looked at his wristwatch, timing the barrage. After the two minutes had expired he said "Now you can go forward". At the same time the barrage lifted from the line of dugouts, which were the famous (or notorious) German concrete "Pillboxes". A group of us, including myself advanced to within about 40 yards of one of these "pillboxes" without being fired on by the occupants who, up to then had, no doubt, kept their heads down in safety whilst our shells were falling and exploding on their domain. If the terrain had been more favourable (and not churned up by our own barrage several times worse than a ploughed field), we could no doubt have rushed them and captured the "pillbox". As it was they looked through their spyholes and saw us. One of them opened fire with a machine gun, killing and wounding several of our number. Another German seeing me with the Lewis gun, threw a stick bomb at me. I saw it sailing through the air towards me, flattened myself in the mud and it fell about 4 feet in front of me, exploding and throwing its contents over my head, fortunately without any of it striking me. I then rose to my feet, picked up the gun and ran off with it about fifty yards away to the right flank where I took cover in the remains of an old wooden shed which had been smashed up by our shellfire. I then aligned the gun on the aperture of the "pillbox", pulled back the cocking handle and pressed the trigger. The bolt and striking mechanism went part of the way forward and then jammed. I removed the magazine, examined the gun and discovered that it was plastered up with mud and would need a good cleaning before it could be fired. As I then had no spare parts bag (which contained the tools and cleaning rags) and only one magazine, I decided that the best thing I could do would be to try to rejoin some of the other men, who were in the shell holes over on my left flank. They were of course nearer to the enemy "pillbox" than I was, and more directly in front of it, but I could not do any good on my own, with a temporarily useless Lewis gun.

As the enemy machine gunner now appeared to be busy, firing at some of our men further away on the extreme left of our battalion front, I picked up the gun, and started walking towards a large shellhole about fifty yards away, in which I could see several of our men, including a corporal. He shouted at me several times "get down or you'll be killed". I (perhaps somewhat foolishly) ignored the warnings, not because I am brave (on the contrary I'm rather a coward) but because I just did not think that the

enemy machine gunner would bother about me, one single man, when he had targets of numbers of other people to fire at. True enough he did not, until I reached the edge of the shellhole, and was on the point of jumping in. Then he switched his gun round on to me, at the same time firing it. I was carrying the Lewis gun waist high at the right side of my body and it was that fact that probably saved me from being killed. The next thing I knew was that a burst of machine gun bullets hit the Lewis gun and me. I felt a stinging pain in both hands, as though my knuckles had been violently rapped by a cane or stick, and a pain in the right side of my abdomen as though I had been punched or kicked there. I half jumped and half fell into the shellhole with blood streaming fairly copiously from both hands. Fortunately for me there was a stretcher bearer there with a bag full of dressings. He inspected my injuries, and discovered that on my right hand the index finger had a ragged wound about one and a half inches long on the inside and at the base of the finger. The ring finger had a wound about half an inch long on the inside of the top joint, and the little finger was split at the top with a half-inch slit. On my left hand there was a small wound on the middle knuckle of the third finger. The stretcher bearer poured iodine on the wounds and bandaged them. He then asked me if I had been hit elsewhere and I told him "Yes in the stomach I think". He undid my clothing, and we saw a small wound on the right side of my stomach with blood running down, but fortunately the stomach wall had not been penetrated. He put a dressing on it and tied a bandage round my waist. He then asked me how I felt and I replied that I felt a bit faint but did not think I would "pass out" as up to now I had never done so in my life, but that I would like a drink of water. He removed my water bottle from my equipment and gave me a drink. With that, and not now being able to see any of my own blood because of the dressings, I felt better. I then took stock of my position and surroundings.

I looked at the Lewis gun first and saw that the casing and radiator had been riddled with bullets like a colander, the wooden part of the pistol grip had been shot out with bullets, so that only the steel framework remained. In fact the gun was now useless and was so much scrap metal. In the shellhole were the corporal, two riflemen, the stretcherbearer, myself and a dead man. He was on his knees, still clutching his rifle, with his head down on the ground which was stained red and brown with his blood. The poor fellow had evidently been trying to snipe the enemy machine gunner who had got him instead. I remained where I was for about 20 minutes with the sounds of battle going on around me. Then the corporal said to me "I would try to make my way back if I were you, chum. It is not going to be very healthy here when the enemy starts to counter-attack". I agreed, but could not see how that was to be done as, whenever anyone so much as poked the top of one's head above the rim of the shellhole, it was greeted with a burst of machine gun fire. But I realised that it would be better for me to try, than to stop there. During a lull in the firing I cautiously poked my head over the top of the shellhole and took a quick glance to the rear. In that momentary glimpse I saw another shellhole a few yards away, and beyond that another, and yet a third and fourth, which formed a rough chain leading towards a shrubbery. I mentally evolved a plan and proceeded to carry it out as follows.

I waited until the enemy machine gunner was busily engaged elsewhere, then, as rapidly as possible, I scrambled up the side of the shellhole and half jumped and half fell into the next one, the enemy missing me with his burst of fire. I waited another five minutes and was successful in reaching the next shellhole in similar fashion. I waited again and repeated the process and yet again for the fourth time, being fortunate each time that I

was not hit by a burst of machine gun fire from the "pillbox". (My guardian angel must have been watching over me or else the enemy gunner was an inferior marksman.) There was a gap of about a dozen or so yards between the last shellhole and the shrubbery, so I waited a longer period before making my next dash to safety. After waiting about a quarter of an hour or perhaps twenty minutes, and when the machine gun in the "pillbox" was again firing elsewhere, I got up and ran literally for dear life with bullets sometimes splashing into the mud between my feet. With only a few yards to go I dived into the bushes, flattened myself full length on the ground, and hugged Mother Earth closely, with bullets spattering through the foliage. When the gunner could no longer see me he ceased firing. After resting there for a time, I crept slowly and cautiously down through the shrubbery towards the rear.

Being a countryman I always had a fairly good sense of direction which was fortunate, as most landmarks had been obliterated by shellfire. When I reached the end of the shrubbery I saw, a short distance away, another "pillbox" which we had earlier in our advance overrun. As the enemy were now beginning to shell the area I was in with "whiz-bang" shells, I decided to seek shelter in this "pillbox". But first I thought it would be advisable to ascertain if it was occupied or not. The door, which was facing me, was closed but there was an oblong aperture in the top half. I cautiously looked through this and saw a number of German soldiers sitting on bed bunks and swinging their legs. They were not holding any rifles and the impression I received was that they were probably waiting to surrender themselves. But I had been warned by older soldiers and men with more experience of warfare than myself not to be too trustful of Germans so, being totally unarmed and with both hands useless, I ducked down below the bottom of the aperture hoping that I had not been observed. But I was too late, one of them had seen me and I heard an excited exclamation. The door was thrown open and about half a dozen German soldiers came running out. They were not carrying rifles and I could see no other weapons so I presumed that my original impression was correct and that they had been waiting to surrender to the first British soldier that they saw and I happened to be that one. I told them to follow me (although whether any of them could understand English I never knew) and I ran back towards an old German trench which we had previously overrun earlier in our advance, and they followed me, and as by now the enemy artillery was shelling strongly, we all took shelter in the trench. So I now found myself in the position of being wounded and weaponless, and in charge of about half a dozen prisoners whom I did not particularly want. My chief desire (having got a "Blighty one") was to get back to safety and receive medical attention to my wounds. For the second time that day I had to look around to see if there was anyone to whom I could hand over my prisoners, only this time they were plural instead of singular. Then over to the right of our position I saw two riflemen of the 10th Battalion Royal West Kent Regiment who were in our Brigade. I called them over and handed my Germans over to them. I did not think of asking them for a receipt (which is what older soldiers later told me I should have done). That was the last I ever saw or heard of those two riflemen or the prisoners.

As the enemy shellfire was now increasing I decided that it would be advisable to seek shelter again. I espied another concrete "pillbox" on the route towards the rear and made a beeline for it. When I reached it, I discovered that a number of stragglers of my own Regiment had taken shelter in there from enemy shellfire. They found room for me and I made myself as comfortable as I could, squatting on the floor in a corner. Some more stragglers arrived and

the place became rather overcrowded. Then a Lieutenant of the Royal West Kent Regiment arrived with some signallers and field telephones, and told everyone to get out and rejoin their units. One man pointed out that I was wounded and I was allowed to remain. A few hours later (about noon) the Lieutenant told me that I was then rather in their way and that he thought that it would be best for all parties concerned, if I were to find somewhere else to shelter. I went out, looked towards the rear, and saw another concrete pillbox on the tortuous road to safety. As the enemy shellfire was in no degree abating, I ran as fast as I could to this new shelter. When I arrived at the doorway I saw that it had no human occupants, but there was a hole in the roof which had been made by one of our own 12 inch armour-piercing shells, which had failed to explode and was lying on the floor. Anyway to me at that time the "pillbox" was a haven of refuge, in spite of the inanimate steel monster on the floor, as I knew that, being a percussion and not a time-fuse shell, it would not explode so long as it was undisturbed. I made myself as comfortable as I could in there on a wooden rack, and feeling rather hungry proceeded to eat some German biscuits which had been left behind by the previous inhabitants. The only thing which I lacked was some water to drink. All my equipment, including my water bottle, had been left behind in the shellhole, when my wounds had been dressed by the stretcher bearer. I remained in the "pillbox" all the afternoon, as there were plenty of enemy shells exploding round about, and it seemed to me foolish, to risk being blown to pieces, by venturing any further for the time being. During the evening some more men of my battalion came to the "pillbox" and sheltered from the rain which was now falling. When it became dark someone produced a groundsheet, and tied it up to cover the doorway and lighted a piece of candle so that we could see each other and talk. Of course the doorways of these "pillboxes", although being at the back when used by the enemy, were on the wrong side of the building for us, as the back for them became the front for us. All through the night there was a continuous stream of people coming to the "pillbox" for shelter and it was necessary for us inside to shout out "mind the dud shell on the floor! don't kick it for Christ's sake!" Fortunately no one did kick it or we would probably all have "kicked the bucket" by being blown sky-high.

When daylight came it was still raining and as the enemy shellfire had somewhat abated, although not entirely ceased, I decided to try and make my way to the Divisional Rest Station, somewhere in rear. I arrived there without further incident, and when it became my turn to be seen by the Medical Officer, he removed my dressings, washed the wounds with iodine, applied fresh dressings, and placed my right hand in a sling. Then he said to me "You are not too badly wounded! Do you think that you could help this poor fellow back to the Field Ambulance?" and he indicated a sergeant of the Royal West Kent Regiment, who had his left arm in a sling, and had had the bones in his forearm rather badly shattered. He was moaning with pain and should really have been carried on a stretcher. But there were so many wounded and so few stretchers available, that only those who were very badly wounded were able to have them. I assisted the sergeant as well as I could and piloted him along until we reached the Ypres-Comines canal, where we were picked up by a G.S. horse wagon and taken to the 139th Field Ambulance at Locre. There I received an anti-tetanus injection in the chest and a cup of cocoa from a mobile Y.M.C.A. van. It was the first drink that I had had since when I was wounded about thirty hours previously. To me it was nectar.

I was then taken by Red Cross motor ambulance to the 11th Casualty Clearing Station at Godewaersvelde

near Mont Des Cats in France. That night (1st August) I slept on a stretcher in the open outside a large Red Cross marquee. The Clearing Station was alongside the railway and in the morning a Red Cross train arrived and a large number of wounded including myself were taken down to Calais. I was admitted to the 35th General Hospital there and on the 5th August I was evacuated to England on the hospital ship "Ville de Liege", a Belgian vessel. On landing at Dover I was taken by train to Birmingham and admitted to a military hospital. So ended the most exciting episode in my wartime career.

The casualties of the 11th Battalion the Queen's on this day numbered over 200. Exact figures of killed, wounded, and missing are not known.

V.E.F.

The Queen's Regiment

By the time this is in print, the 1st Bn will have returned to Canterbury after six months in Belize.

On 8 July, The 2nd (Lt Col Peter Packham took over Command from Lt Col Peter Barrow in March) will be exercising the Regiment's 'Privilege' to march through the City of London with Colours flying, drums beating and bayonets fixed; detachments of Old Comrades will also be taking part and all will be given lunch in the Guildhall afterwards. In October the 2nd will be off to Cyprus for six months with the United Nations Force.

In February the 3rd Bn moved from Dover to Fallingbowl in Germany for a normal BAOR tour. Lt Col Richard Graham takes over Command in August from Lt Col Gavin Bulloch.

The 5th (V) (Lt Col Richard Dixon) is exercising in Denmark during Annual Camp in September when it is hoped that HM Queen Margrethe will be paying them a visit.

On 16 July, the 6th/7th (V) Bn (Lt Col Mike Dudding) will receive New Colours from Lavinia, Duchess of Norfolk at Ardingly Show Ground; and, two days later, the last of the Old Colours – those originally presented to 4/5 RWK (TA) – will be laid up in All Saints, Maidstone.

The Regiment was again 'on the map' at Wembley during this year's Football League Cup Final (14 March) when the Band and Drums of the 2nd Bn provided the music.

Veterans Company

1. It has been decided to revive the Veterans Company with the object of holding an occasional Reunion.
2. The first (Cassino Day) Reunion will be held on Saturday, 9th May, 1981 at 8.00 p.m. at the WOs and Sergeants Mess, 6/7th Bn. The Queen's Regiment (V), Farringdon House, TA Centre, Stonecot Hill, Sutton, Surrey. (Bus Route 80 from Sutton S.R. Station: Bus Routes 80, 93 and 293 from Morden Tube Station).
3. On this occasion there will be no buffet, but it is hoped this will not prevent a good turn out. All who served in 6th East Surreys (TA), 23rd London (TA), 4th Queen's Surreys (TA), 6th (T) Queens and all former or serving members of 6/7th Queens (V) qualify for membership and will be welcome.
4. Any who cannot attend the Cassino Day Reunion, but who wish to be notified of future reunions, should please send a Stamped Self Addressed Envelope to the Company Commander, Lt. Col. J F Sherrard TD, 61 Woodlands Ave., New Malden, Surrey.
5. Forthcoming Events for 1981 are:-

Thursday, 16th July, 1981 – ARDINGLY SHOW GROUND, Sussex – Presentation of New Colours to 6/7th Queens, our successor Battalion.

Friday, 6th November, 1981 – UNION JACK CLUB, Waterloo SE1 – Queen's Surreys Reunion.

Sunday, 8th November, 1981 – 10.30 a.m. outside BENTALLS, Kingston-on-Thames – Remembrance Sunday Parade.

Queen's Division Massed Bands – Beating Retreat

1. The Massed Bands and Corps of Drums of The Queen's Division, (The Queen's Regiment, The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers, The Royal Anglian Regiment and The Pipes of the Division UDR Battalions), will Beat Retreat on Horse Guards Parade (HGP) on Tuesday 9, Wednesday 10 and Thursday 11 June. The Performances will begin each evening at 6.30 p.m. but the actual "March-On" begins at 6.15 p.m.

It is essential that those attending are seated by 6.15 p.m. as the Whitehall Gates will be closed at 6.20.

2. "The Queen's Regiment Night"

The first night Tuesday 9 June will be termed "The Queen's Regiment Night" when the salute will be taken by The Right Honourable The Lord Mayor of London, Colonel Sir Ronald Gardner-Thorpe GBE TD DCL, who is an ex-Commanding Officer of a TA Battalion of The Buffs. Salute Takers on Wednesday 10 and Thursday 11 June will be HRH The Duke of Kent and HRH Princess Margaret respectively.

3. Tickets.

These are priced at £3.00, £2.50 and 50p. Proceeds from this event will be going to both the Army Benevolent Fund and the Benevolent Funds of the Regiments in The Queen's Division. Tickets are obtainable as under:

a. Normal Bookings – Available now from:-

The Ticket Centre,
1b Bridge Street (opposite Big Ben)
Westminster, London SW 1
Tel: 01.839.6815/6732.

Note: (1) Cheques should be made payable to "The Ticket Centre"

(2) If you are applying for £3.00 tickets it is suggested that you mark your application "QUEEN'S REGIMENT – STAND 'E'"; this will ensure that those with a Regimental connection will be sitting together (Stand "E" is for £3.00 ticket holders only).

b. *Bulk Bookings* – If Bns or OCAs wish to make a bulk booking, (20 or more tickets), for any price of seat please send your requirements ASP but certainly not later than 1 MAY to:

The Queen's Division Project Office
Room 7B CLRD
5 Great Scotland Yard
Whitehall, London SW1.
(Tel: 01.930.4466 Ext 2309)

Note: Cheque should be made payable to "Queen's Division Massed Bands A/c".

4. Dress Rehearsal

This will take place on Monday 8th June at 3 p.m. Admission will be free (in all stands): for reasons of security those attending may be asked to identify themselves. Programmes will be on sale. Spectators to be seated by 2.45 p.m.

Regimental Dinner – Warrant Officers & Sergeants (Past and Present) – The Queen's Regiment

A Regimental Dinner will be held for all past and present Warrant Officers and Sergeants who have been badged to The Queen's Regiment since 31st December 1966, and includes those who have subsequently been commissioned. It will take place on Saturday 12th September 1981, and will be hosted by the RSM and WO's and SGT's of the 2nd Bn The Queen's Regiment. Further details can be obtained from and application to attend sent to:

The Regimental Sergeant Major
2nd Battalion The Queen's Regiment
Hyderabad Barracks
Colchester, Essex, CO2 7NZ

Note: This does not include members of the former Queen's Royal Regiment, East Surrey Regiment or Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment who retired prior to 31st December 1966.

The Queen's Regiment – Exercising "The Privilege of Entry" to the City of London

Date: Wednesday 8 July 1981.

Timings: Troops form up at Tower Wharf at
The Tower of London – 1200 hrs
Column leaves Tower of
London – 1245 hrs
Column arrives Guildhall,
London – 1315 hrs

Troops taking part: Band and Drums of the 2nd Bn. The Queen's Regiment, Marching Contingent with Colours from 2nd Bn. The Queen's Regiment.

Salute: The Right Honourable The Lord Mayor of London, Colonel Sir Ronald Gardner-Thorpe GBE, TD, DCL, will take the salute at The Mansion House.

Historical significance: A Charter of 1327 gave the City of London special protection against intrusion by the Military, forbidding the removal of any Citizen against his will; it followed that a Royal Warrant was required for entry to raise recruits by beat of drum and the display of Colours.

The Holland Regiment, later The Buffs, received such a Warrant in 1666. In 1672 it was made permanent and The Buffs have exercised the 'Privilege' to march through the City with Colours flying, drums beating and fixed bayonets regularly since 1821. From 1915 this distinction was extended to five other Regiments connected with the City.

The 'Privilege' was inherited by The Queen's Own Buffs, The Royal Kent Regiment on formation in 1961, and by The Queen's Regiment on 1 July 1968.

Canterbury Bells

The bells of Canterbury Cathedral have to be renewed at a total cost of £85,000, and the new bells should last for two or three hundred years. As a result of an Appeal launched by the Cathedral Appeal Trust Fund, The Queen's Regiment has contracted to provide a Sharp Treble Bell engraved with the name of the Regiment. The cost of this bell will be £1,543.

Those readers who may wish to be associated with this gift to the Cathedral should send donations, however small, to:-

Major E A McCarthy
RHQ The Queen's Regiment
Howe Barracks
CANTERBURY, Kent

Cheques/Postal Orders should be made payable to: "The Queen's Regiment".

Deaths

We regret to announce the passing of the following former members of our Regiments:-

Anscombe-On 12 February 1981, R Anscombe. Served with 1/5th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment MT Platoon 1939-45.

Carew-Hunt-On 1 December 1980, Major Basil Gifford Carew-Hunt MBE TD MA aged 68. Served in the 5th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment (TA) from 1934 to 1947. He was Staff Captain of the Queen's Brigade 1941-1942, and GSO2 of 5 Corps and 8th Army in Italy 1944-45. From 1945-1947 he was a Civil Affairs Officer in Austria, returning to his profession of schoolmaster on release from the Army.

Caulfeild-On 2 November 1980, Lt Col Wilmot Smyth Caulfeild MC aged 93. Commissioned in The Leinster Regiment in 1908, he came to The East Surrey Regiment in 1922 on the disbandment of the Irish Regiments. He retired in 1935, but was recalled for service in the Royal Artillery in the 1939-45 War. 'Dizzy', as he was affectionately known, was a genial man with an engaging sense of humour. A keen sportsman, he was popular with all ranks.

Coleby-On 22 December 1980, Robert Coleby (69) aged 90. Served in The Queen's Royal Regiment from 1914 to 1921.

Dell-On 31 December 1980, Captain M R Dell MC aged 88. Served in The East Surrey Regiment 1914-1919. From May 1915 to September 1918 he was with the 2nd Bn The East Surrey Regiment, becoming Adjutant of that battalion in August 1918. Later he was appointed Staff Captain HQ 85 Brigade, until his discharge in 1919. He was also awarded the Order of the White Eagle with Swords (Serbian) (See obituary).

Duncombe-On 29 November 1980, Colonel Harry Graham Duncombe DSO aged 78. Served in The Queen's Royal Regiment and The East Surrey Regiment 1926-1952. Was Regimental Secretary of RHQ The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment 1959-1965 and a Military Knight of Windsor 1965-1980. (See obituary).

Elliott-In January 1981, R. Elliott. Served with 1/6th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment - reaching the rank of sergeant.

Harnett-In March 1980, A. Harnett aged 89, died in New Zealand. Ex-Sgt with 22nd Bn The London Regiment. Served 1914-18, held Mons Star. Emigrated and settled in New Zealand.

Huggett-On 14 December 1980, CSM Alfred Benjamin Huggett DCM aged 86. Served in the 24th London Regiment 1914-1919. Was awarded the DCM for distinguished conduct on 2 September 1918 when he assumed command of his company when his Company Commander was killed.

Kendall-Carpenter-On 1 November 1980, Commander Claud Eric (Sinbad) Kendall-Carpenter, 'a few fathoms off his 90th birthday.' He joined the 1st Volunteer Bn The Queen's (Royal West Surrey Regiment) in 1904, and was one of the oldest members of the Regimental Association. On the formation of the Territorial Army, he joined the Trinity House Service and served for 56 years before finally 'swallowing the anchor'. An account of the Commander's long and eventful career appeared in Newsletter No 7 in May 1970.

Loveland-On 25 January 1981, Sgt William A Loveland (6138907) aged 66. Served in the 1st Bn The East Surrey Regiment 1932-1945 and then 6th Bn The East Surrey Regiment 1947-1966.

Mason-On 7 September 1980, Edward (Ted) Mason (680511 (T)) aged 83. Served in the 1/22nd Bn The London Regiment (Queens) 1914-1917. A staunch supporter of the 6th (Bermondsey) Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment OCA for many years. (See obituary).

Newman-In September 1980, R. Newman MT Sgt in 1/5th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment 1939-40. Transferred to REME - final rank Major.

Piper-On 10 October 1980, CSM George Edward Thomas Piper (6139099) aged 69. Served in the 1st and 2nd Bns The East Surrey Regiment 1929-1945, and was at the Depot of that Regiment 1936-1939.

Rich-On 3 March 1981, Lt.Col. Guy Rich died in Portugal as a result of a car accident. Cremated at Guildford 17th March. He served with 1/7th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment 1939-45 - wounded in Italy. After the war became military attache in Berne and Stockholm.

Russell-In 1980 in New Zealand A E Russell. Joined 22nd Bn The London Regiment, served with 1/6th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment in France, Middle East, North Africa and Italy. Emigrated and settled in New Zealand.

Sullivan-On 7 February 1981, Lt Col Arthur Joseph Sullivan OBE aged 80. Served in the 1st and 7th Bns The Queen's Royal Regiment from 1918 to 1935. On recall in 1939 he held several Staff appointments, the last being that of GSO1 HQ Northumberland District. In 1945 he returned to his civil occupation with the British Council which he had joined in 1935 and from which he retired in 1962. He was awarded the OBE in 1960 for his services with that body.

Wells-On 23 June 1980, Edward Arthur Wells (6143170) aged 60. Served in the 2nd Bn The East Surrey Regiment from 1935 to 1946. He was a Far East Prisoner of War from 1941 to 1945.

Regimental Families

Duncombe-On 22 February 1981 after a long illness, Mrs Gladys Iva Beaumont Duncombe (Billie), widow of Colonel Harry Graham Duncombe DSO.

Whitfield-On 21 November 1980 at the Phyllis Tuckwell Memorial Hospice, Farnham, Sheelagh Nora Dundas Whitfield, widow of Major-General J. Y. Whitfield CB DSO OBE, last Colonel of The Queen's Royal Regiment. During the last ten years of General Whitfield's life, when he was completely blind, she nursed him with loving devotion and kept him informed of all regimental news, accompanying him to all regimental occasions. A staunch supporter of the Regiment right up to the time of her death she kept in close touch with its affairs. She attended the Grand Reunion at Canterbury in August 1980, although she had then recently undergone a serious operation.

Obituaries

Capt R M Dell MC

Roger Dell enlisted in the 1st Battalion London RNVF Division in September 1914 as a writer. He at once volunteered to go to France. He served with the battalion in N. France and Belgium until April 1915.

After attending a Cadet School he was gazetted 2/Lt and posted to 2nd Battalion The East Surrey Regt, who were then at POPERINGHE where he joined on 30 May 1915.

He remained with the battalion till the end of the war, serving in France and Macedonia in a Rifle Coy. He also acted as Battalion Bombing Officer, Asst Adjutant and Acting Staff Capt. He was awarded the MC in June 1917.

In July 1916 along with the rest of us he went sick with malaria and was evacuated to hospital in Salonika. The battalion through this disease was reduced to about 250 all ranks. When the battalion went to Turkey in November 1918 he went on leave to UK and was then demobilised.

In later years he ran an Annual Officers Dinner in London for the many non-Regular Officers who had served with the 2nd Battalion. More recently he suffered years of incapacity which he bore with great courage and cheerfulness.

I joined the battalion just after Roger and served with him throughout the war, so naturally I knew him very well. He was a very keen and able officer, one of the best. He had a very dry sense of humour as the following shows. At the Battle of Loos after the battalion had suffered heavy casualties in the HOHENZOLLERN REDOUBT'S "LITTLE WILLIE", it was then ordered to attack after the previous 11 battalions of the Division had failed. As we sat in the jumping-off trenches Roger strolled up to our Coy and said with a smile "Say your prayers chaps we go over the top in 10 mins". He then strolled away. Fortunately the attack was cancelled.

R.A.B.

Colonel Harry Graham Duncombe DSO

Graham Duncombe, who died on 28th November 1980, was one of a number of outstanding fighting commanders of The Second World War.

He enlisted in the ranks of the Scots Guards during the First World War and was commissioned into the Queen's Royal Regiment in 1926.

His service took him to China, Malta, India and Palestine. This tall impressive soldier, a man of the highest principles and personal integrity, became Adjutant of the 1st Battalion and in 1940 was Adjutant of the 2nd Battalion in the Western Desert.

In 1943 he was transferred to command the 1st Battalion in Burma. It was an honour and privilege to serve under Graham Duncombe during the operations in Arakan and at the battle of Kohima.

With his very likeable straight-forward character, went the ability to reduce seemingly complicated problems to basic essentials and produce simple, correct solutions.

It was natural that when Battalion HQ was partly over run by the Japanese in a counter-attack on 20th December 1943, that he should be the rallying point and that the attack foundered ten yards in front of him. This battle was the first in Arakan in 1943 to produce Japanese prisoners. With the Battalion's earlier victories, this one set the Battalion firmly on its majestic progress to Jail Hill, Kohima (May 1944), the capture of which is regarded by many as the turning point of the war in Burma.

In ten months of almost continuous fighting – including some three weeks of being encircled by the enemy – we were witness to Colonel Duncombe's unflappability, sense of humour, his equable temperament and with so often a glint in his eye; all this was such a tonic. Who could ever forget his anecdotes, his leg pulling, his sense of the ridiculous when discussing a particular ambush or even a cup of tea and those enjoyable moments of cabaret when we indulged in a hilarious game of ludo.

Then there was the other side of him: if he thought his beloved Battalion was not being used correctly, his approaches to higher command were immediate and tenacious.

The testimony to his courage is born out by his being awarded a Viceroy's Certificate of Commendation after the Quetta earthquake (1935), a mention in despatches in Palestine (1940) and a D.S.O. in 1945.

Those of us who had the good fortune to serve under him took comfort and courage from his inspiring

leadership. He did so much to sustain the Battalion's very high morale in trying conditions.

M.A.L.

The Colonel of The Regiment continues:–

Soon after the war ended Graham commanded the 1/5th Queens in Germany. In 1946 he took command of the 1/6th Queens shortly before it left the Lebanon for operations in Palestine. He transformed this Battalion, which was beset by all the immediate post war problems of rapid demobilisation and a constant change round of officers and men, into one of the best units in the Command.

I had the great good fortune to be one of his company commanders at this time. Graham inspired us all. He had that rare gift of knowing exactly when to slacken or tighten the reins over us. Every officer and man in the Battalion would have followed him anywhere.

His humour was both infectious and unique. I well recall being christened "Bwana" immediately he discovered that I had served with KAR. 'Plumsters' were those unfortunates who try as they might could never keep uniform tidy and in his office was the famous stamp PTYBFO which was marked on any unclear letter from higher authority.

A great sportsman himself he encouraged us to take part in all competitions and insisted on the proper award of colours to those who performed well. It was a rare moment when he won the plunge in the Command swimming championships and that wonderful moustache surfaced at the very end of the pool, to the tumultuous cheers of the whole Battalion.

After the disbandment of the 1/6th Graham stayed in the Middle East to command the 2nd East Surreys. He was therefore a natural choice to be the first Regimental Secretary upon amalgamation in 1959. Upon retirement from that appointment he became a Military Knight of Windsor where he and Billie derived great pleasure from entertaining their friends on great State occasions.

I shall never forget a superb infantry leader, a great mentor and a devoted friend to my family.

R.S.N.M.

Edward Mason

Ted Mason enlisted in the 1/22 Bn The London Regiment (The Queen's) in 1914 at Jamaica Road Drill Hall, Bermondsey, and saw active service in France.

When war was declared the battalion was mobilised and Ted was posted to 'D' Coy. When the unit was sent to St Albans for field training, Ted, who was then in the Drums, was seconded to 'A' Coy; my company. He quickly made himself at home and was a most likeable fellow. He was dapper but not a big fellow. Cheerfulness was the chief ingredient of his nature. At the Front Line, Ted was always one to make the most of the situation. "Grin and bear it" was his motto. That is not to say that he was never put out. When things went wrong or an injustice done, he could be very vehement. I was invalided home and on recovery sent to join the 2/22 Bn; thus I did not see Ted again until after the war ended.

But once again we were to meet. Ted was keen to attend Remembrance Day and the Annual Regimental Dinner. He was always welcome amongst his old pals of the war, and as ever, he brought his cheerfulness with him. Get him to reminisce and we were sure of a good yarn.

Alas, as Anno Domini caught up with so many of us, it was left to only Ted and I of the 1914 veterans to keep alive our memories. It is sad his going; he will be missed – but remembered. Cheerfulness was his motto; cheerfulness he gave.

Goodbye Ted, I will remember.

E.B.

Somme – 1916

Lyn MacDonald – author of “They Called it Passchendaele” and “The Roses of No Mans Land” – is now working on a book covering the Somme campaign of 1916. She would be very glad to hear from anyone who took part in the campaign. Contact should be made direct with her at: 4 Wingate Road, Hammersmith, London W.6.

New Year's Honours

Congratulations are in order for Major A F S Ling and Major L M Wilson who each received the MBE in the New Year's Honours List. Our best wishes are extended to them both.

The Royal New Zealand Fencible Regiment 1847

Mr G W Hinde has sent an interesting piece of history from New Zealand. From an Army list of 1847 he has extracted some details of old soldiers of The Queen's and East Surreys who enlisted in the Fencible regiment which was formed to settle and garrison New Zealand. Many of the men settled near where he lives at Otahuhu. The men landed from the good ship “Ann” in 1847. They include among many from other regiments:–

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|------------------------------|--------------------|
| Richard Kyle – Queen's Royal | |
| Regiment | – Afghanistan 1839 |
| Pte. Frederick Hughes | – 31st Foot |
| Pte. Jasper Boggs | – 31st Foot |
| Pte. James Pullen | – 31st Foot |
| Cpl. William Patterson | – 70th Foot |

The regiment included men who had served previously with the Buffs, West Kents, Middlesex and Sussex regiments. A grant of land would have been given presumably to each old soldier, and in return he would agree to serve as militia in case of any enemy attack. They initially built forts, redoubts and roads near Auckland.

I should be glad to know if any reader has any further information on this subject.

Mr. Hinde was able to speak to the daughter of Richard Kyle, who was herself 89 in 1980. She told him about a family reunion held in recent years at which 200 descendants of Richard Kyle were present.

Sir Alexander Sim

The sudden death of Sandy Sim on the 28th of December 1980 reminded me of the debt of gratitude owed to him by many members of the 1st Bn of The Queens who were in the Arakan & Shillong in 1944.

Sandy Sim was at school with me from 1920 to 1923 and was a Director of Andrew Yule & Co Calcutta from 1939 and Chairman from 1956 to 1976.

While in Shillong we were told to deal with some 500 kitbags brought into the Arakan by the 1st Bn in August 1943 as no one wished to be responsible for them.

This subject cropped up while I was staying with the Sims in Calcutta and Sandy immediately offered to help by storing the personal effects of the Bn, provided they were reduced to a suitable size and clearly labelled with the owner's name.

The Bn was also to tell him when any one was coming to Calcutta so that he could have the parcel ready for collection at his office in Clive Street.

This operation was very successful except for the writer whose personal effects were inadvertently left in a taxi by a brother-officer in charge of the operation.

G.S.G.

Museum Notes

After considerable work and reorganisation the Museum reopened for its second season at Clandon Park on 1st April. Amongst particular changes and additions pride of place goes to the mounting and encasing of the Colours of 2nd Battalion, The East Surreys. These Colours were presented after the War by General Foster to replace the old 70th ones brought back from Singapore, but were retired only three years later, when the first reductions in the Regular Infantry were imposed. The Colours are thus in especially fine condition: they have been mounted most beautifully by Mrs Roupell who has done nearly all the stitching required and by Lt Col H R D Hill who designed the case. They are very well worth seeing.

Mrs P G E Hill amongst many other things has completed the re-display of the photographs of the Regimental VCs – these have all been re-photographed to a smaller size. She has also organised displays of photographs illustrating some of the Regiment's actions during the 1939-45 War and since.

Amongst acquisitions, just before she died, Mrs Whitfield gave the Museum General Whitfield's decorations and medals, which include his badges of the C.B., Commander of the Legion of Merit USA, and his Red Star – these are now shown on one of his uniforms. We have also received from Captain C M Estall MC, who lives near Colchester, his extremely distinguished and unique collection of medals.

There is therefore quite a lot of change and more interest, and the Museum will hope for more than the 17,000 visitors who came in last year.

Lloyds Presentation Swords

In the early years of the nineteenth century the Patriotic Fund of Lloyds presented swords to officers who had distinguished themselves in battle. Out of 176 swords so awarded only six went to Army officers, the others being officers of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines. Officers of both our former Regiments were honoured with this unique distinction.

Lieutenant Mathias Everard, a young Irish officer of the Queen's, displayed exceptional gallantry and leadership during the assault on Monte Video in February, 1807. After heavy fighting, in which 22 of his specially selected force of 30 had been killed or wounded, Lieutenant Everard was the first to enter the town.

The Regimental History records, ‘For his gallant conduct on this memorable occasion, Lieutenant Everard was presented with a sword by the Patriotic Fund at Lloyds and honoured with a Presentation of the Freedom of the City of Dublin.’

The other officer was Captain Edward Carey Fleming of the 2nd 31st Regiment at the Battle of Albuhera in May, 1811, in which he was badly wounded in the head. Fleming, an officer with nine years service, had obtained his Company in the 1st 31st Regiment after the action at Rosetta in 1807. He retired as a major general and died in 1860.

We are indebted to Mr Herbert Heather of Leicester for his information on these Lloyds Presentation Swords.

P.G.E.H.