

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

Regimental Association  
Newsletter

President  
Colonel J.W. Sewell  
Chairman  
Lieutenant Colonel H.R.D. Hill, MBE  
Secretary & Editor  
Lieutenant Colonel L.M. Wilson, MBE



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Regimental Headquarters  
The Queen's Regiment  
Howe Barracks  
Canterbury  
Kent  
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Editorial

This year as you will all be aware, marks the 325th Anniversary of the raising of The Tangier Regiment, later to become The Queen's Royal Regiment.

It is to be hoped that as many of our old comrades and their wives will make the journey to mark this very special occasion on Putney Heath on the 14th October when the Chief of the Defence Staff, Admiral of the Fleet, Sir John Fieldhouse, GCB, GBE, will unveil the additional inscriptions on the monument which was placed there in 1961. I know that the President would wish as many of us to attend and to parade as an Association, so dust off the cobwebs and polish the medals!

This year too, The Glorious First of June falls on a Sunday and it is hoped that our attendance at Guildford Cathedral will increase yet again. Tea and coffee are available in the Refectory from 1030 a.m. and of course the usual bar facilities will operate following the service.

Letters from you continue to roll in - I hope you will forgive me if at times you have to wait some time for an answer, I do try to answer your letters but the days of a large clerical staff at Regimental Headquarters have gone! Contrary to popular belief amongst my contemporaries we do NOT start at 11 a.m. - open the mail - retire for a pint and leave at 2 p.m. to sleep it off!

As you know, I publish letters which are of interest to others and where possible, a photo so do please keep the letters and 'snippets' of interest rolling in. I have received during this period several long articles which I am not able to publish in this Newsletter but will hold them over for future editions. It goes without saying that I always welcome more articles and photos.

Finally, I should like to thank all members who wrote to me, telephoned, or were present at my wife's funeral for their kind messages and support which I do assure you was very much appreciated by my family and myself.

Les Wilson

President's Notes

It seems a long time since I was writing for our last Newsletter in September. Since then a highlight for me has been a visit to Gibraltar where I was privileged to see something of our 1st Battalion. I have written about that elsewhere giving some impressions but, in addition to what is said in the article, I brought back a strong feeling of how much the present Regiment has an interest in the history and activities of its forbears. There is too among a number serving now, I believe, a genuine wish to be linked with us, the past members, and this being the case it may be time for our Association and its subsidiary branches to take further steps to offer opportunities for, and a welcome to, any who wish to be linked with or join us.

The encouragement of this will be to our advantage, as inevitably all those who so dedicatedly devote themselves to keeping our various Association affairs going, get older, and soon must be looking for younger people to take on responsibilities. We have indeed the choice for the future, either to fade away or to so involve ourselves into The Queen's Regiment that our Association(s) can go smoothly forward continuing to provide for our members what is now done so well. The overall Association Committee has discussed these matters, and at my request subsidiary Associations and groups will be considering this, including possibly some further retitling of individual Associations, which I believe is desirable. After this

consideration, if favourable, we will be able to publicise ourselves more widely within the present Regiment, and confirm our wish and willingness to offer association and companionship to all ex-soldiers of the Regiment who live in the areas we cover, and who have come to the age when this will be welcome and useful to them too. In thinking about any advance in this way I hope everyone will look forward - I emphasise however that it is for each subsidiary Branch to make up its own mind - no Association can be effective if coercion is involved - but personally I am sure most members will welcome the presence of younger members, and their wives, at our gatherings and events, where this is suitable and acceptable on both sides, so I hope we will be able to move forward.

These past months have besides their pleasures also produced their sadnesss, and these have included the loss of Brigadier C.D. ('Nipper') Armstrong CBE, DSO, MC, a very distinguished and highly respected East Surrey. There has also been the very sad death of our Secretary's wife Ella. She was a very gallant lady, who during her more than 30 years "membership" of the Regiment gave so many people, including latterly the children, a very great deal. Because she was such a very special person within the Regiment I asked Colonel John Davidson to write something about her, and this is included in the Newsletter at my request.

We have now the usual busy summer before us - all details of events are included elsewhere, and I hope they will be well attended and, even more, will be enjoyed by everyone as they should be.

Toby Sewell

THE QUEEN'S REGIMENT CHRISTMAS CARD 1986

This year's card will feature, in full colour, a reproduction of a water colour in possession of the Regiment, painted in 1881 by two brothers, Arthur and Harry Payne. The scene depicts the 77th Regiment approaching Dover Castle with a Militia unit in the background.

The cost which includes matching envelopes is £ 2.00 per dozen, available from R.H.Q. The Queen's Regiment, Howe Barracks, Canterbury, Kent. CT1 1JU.





## FORECAST OF REGIMENTAL AND QUEEN'S SURREY ASSOCIATION EVENTS

1986



Date	Details of Event
1 June	THE GLORIOUS FIRST OF JUNE Regimental Association Annual Church Service, Guildford Cathedral, 11.00 hours.
12 June	2/6th East Surreys Reunion St Valery en Caux.
2 July	Memorial Service for the late Brigadier C.A. Armstrong, CBE, DSO, MC. All Saints Parish Church, Kingston-upon-Thames. 1100 hours. Details from the Secretary.
9 July	Queen's Royal Surrey Golf Society v. Royal Marines.
13 July	The Queen's Regiment Grand Reunion, Basingbourn. Details enclosed.
6 September	Salerno Reunion - Union Jack Club 1900 hours. Details from S.B. Pratton, MM.
9 September	SALERNO DAY
9 September	6th (Bermondsey) Queen's OCA visit to Ghent.
16 September	Queen's Royal Surrey Golf Society Autumn golf meeting - Details to members.
19 September	Queen's Royal Surrey Officer's Club Ladies Luncheon. Clandon Park. Details to members.
27 September	Museum 'Open Day' Clandon.
10 October	The Queen's Regiment, Officers Club Cocktail Party, London.
11 October	WOs and Sgts Past and Present Dinner Basingbourn.
14 October	325th ANNIVERSARY of the raising of The Tangier Regiment, later The Queen's Royal Regiment.
14 October	6th (Bermondsey) Ladies Night.
24 October	The East Surrey Regiment Old Comrades reunion, The Grand Hall, Battersea Town Hall.
7 November	Annual All Ranks Reunion, Union Jack Club. Details enclosed.
9 November	Remembrance Sunday, Parades at Kingston - Guildford - Bermondsey.
20 December	BRITISH BATTALION DAY.

1987

10 February	SOBRAON DAY
21 March	Queen's Surreys Regimental Trustees and Association Committee meeting. Clandon Park. Details to members from Hon. Sec.
23 April	YPRES DAY.
24 April	East Surrey Officers Dinner, Details from Colonel G.G. Strong.
16 May	ALBUHERA DAY
7 June	Regimental Association Annual Church Service, Guildford Cathedral, 1100 hours.
12 June	Freedom of Kingston March. Details in November Newsletter.
23 October	Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Officers Club Dinner.

### The Monument, Putney Heath

On the 14th October 1986 to mark three and a quarter centuries of service to Sovereign and State, the Colonel of The Regiment has asked the Chief of the Defence Staff (C.D.S.) Admiral of the Fleet Sir John Fieldhouse, GCB, GBE, to unveil the additional inscriptions on our Monument on Putney Heath. With our links with the Royal Navy and the Royal Marines this is most appropriate. The plan is that the C.D.S., accompanied by the Colonel of The Regiment, will arrive at the Monument at 11.30 a.m. and we, the Association, will welcome him with a suitable salute before he is asked to carry out the unveiling. The C.D.S. will also be invited to inspect the Association detachments. Hopefully, therefore, a large turn-out of all ranks will parade at the Monument.

So that our parade may be properly organised, the President asks those who can come to be at the Monument by 11.00 a.m. which will mean arriving at the Windmill Carpark on Wimbledon Common by 10.45 a.m. - signs will be put out from the main Putney to Wimbledon and Merton road.

The Quebec Band of the Queen's Regiment will be in attendance for the parade. Dress for those parading with the Association should be lounge suits, or Regimental blazers, with hats (where possible) and certainly medals.

Since the site is now surrounded by a natural amphitheatre, wives and friends and any not parading can have a good view of proceedings, and we hope they will come too - for ladies, however, sensible shoes may be required for the 600 yard walk/stroll from the carpark.

Unfortunately, due to very heavy commitments, the regular Battalions are unable to assist with the organisation of such an event, and the financial cost would have been prohibitive to erect marquees and run bars, such as we all remember from the past. It is to be hoped that individuals and Branches, will make up parties, and either arrange picnic lunches, or retire to a local pub.

### Donations

The Trustees wish to record their thanks to the following ladies and gentlemen:-

The Executors of the will of Mrs. A. Whittaker; Mrs. M. Gill in memory of her husband, Major Reg Gill; Mrs. F. Campbell; Mrs. W.V. Glover; Mr. W. Geeves; and Mr. J. Slater in memory of his father Private C.E. Slater.

### Congratulations

We offer our heartiest congratulations to:-

**Colonel R.W. Acworth** on his award of the CBE.

**Colonel & Mrs. H.B.L. Smith** who celebrated their Golden Wedding anniversary on March 14th 1986, and **Mr. & Mrs. A. Stanikowski** who also celebrated their Golden Wedding on April 11th 1986. **Mr. & Mrs. W.F. Perchard** celebrated their Diamond Wedding on April 5th 1986.

**Bill Warren and Shirley Crowther** (widow of CSM Derek Crowther, The East Surrey Regiment) who were married on 6th December 1985, and **Bill Steeles and Claudia Mossotti** who were married on 29th November 1985.

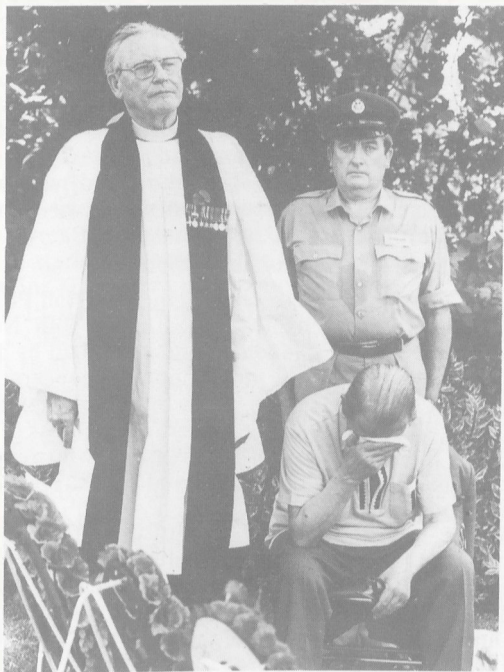
## PILGRIMAGE TO THAILAND

In November 1985, 230 former Far East Prisoners of War and war widows took part in a unique pilgrimage to the graves of their comrades and husbands who died in Singapore, Thailand and Malaysia in the 1939-45 War. Among them was the Reverend Henry Babb MBE who had been padre to the 2nd Bn The East Surrey Regiment in Malaya in 1940 and early 1941. At the fall of Singapore in February 1942 he became a prisoner of war of the Japanese, and during the dark days of captivity Padre Babb ministered to our men under conditions of great hardship, danger and difficulty. Mr Babb, who conducted Services of Remembrance during the Pilgrimage, writes,

'I have settled down after the Pilgrimage to Bangkok, Kanchanaburi and Chungkai. The journey was well worthwhile and I am glad to have seen the wonderful job the War Graves Commission have done with the War Cemeteries. I always look on Chungkai as being of special interest to me as I started and closed the cemetery there. Many prisoners of war made it a beautiful place, and it is now a very peaceful, hallowed area.

I must say the media did us proud, for the television companies, BBC radio and the better newspapers followed us throughout. I would find it difficult to record my feelings during the Services of Remembrance at Chungkai and Kanchanaburi (the large War Cemetery in Thailand). We were well looked after by the RAF, the British business people in Bangkok and the Thai representatives wherever we went. Everybody was most kind to us.'

Padre Babb hopes to be present at the Drumhead Service at Basingbourn on 13th July this year.



*Padre Babb, MBE*

## REMEMBRANCE 1985

### The Field of Remembrance, Westminster Abbey

The President attended the Dedication of the Field on Thursday 7th November 1985. He planted Crosses on behalf of the Association in the plots of The Queen's Regiment, The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment, The Queen's Royal Regiment, The East Surrey Regiment, and those of the 22nd, 23rd, 24th London Regiments, later 6th and 7th Queen's and 6th East Surreys, also in that of the 21st London Regiment (The Surrey Rifles).

### Remembrance Day

At Kingston-Upon-Thames the Association was represented by the President who laid a wreath after the Mayor at the War Memorial. After the Service in All Saints Parish Church the President was invited by the Mayor, Councillor Stepto, to join him and the Parade Commander, Mr. David Jacobs DL, who served in the Royal Navy, on the Saluting dais. The Association Contingent under the command of Mr. David Boorer marched past at the head of the parade, after the Regular Services detachment, with great style and élan.

At Guildford Lieutenant-Colonel Foster Herd TD DL represented the Association and laid wreaths on the Queen's Royal Regiment Memorial in Holy Trinity Church and at the War Memorial in the Castle grounds. 5th Queen's Old Members Association marched past the Mayor's Saluting Stand in the High Street.

Our Secretary, Lieutenant-Colonel L.M. Wilson MBE attended the Service at Hinton Parish Church, Near Maidstone, Kent, where the refurbished grave of Lieutenant-Colonel A.D. Borton VC was rededicated, and laid wreaths on behalf of The Association and The Queen's Regiment.

### A 23rd London Regiment Cap Badge

Mr Chye of Kampar, Malaya, who has written the story of the British Battalion in the Malayan campaign, recalls that he was given a cap badge by a soldier of the 2nd Bn The East Surrey Regiment in 1941. The photograph sent by Mr Chye shows quite clearly that the badge is that of the 23rd London Regiment, and the inference is that the donor served at some time in the 23rd London Regiment.

The only member of the 2nd Bn The East Surrey Regiment known to have served in the 23rd London was Major R.A. Chidson, who was Adjutant before the War, but, of course, there were PSIs. Can any reader suggest who might have given Mr Chye his 23rd London cap badge?

### Reception

The President of The Association held a Reception at the Regimental Museum at Clondont Park on Friday 18th April for the Mayors and Mayoresses of the Regiment's Freedom Boroughs in Surrey to enable them to meet the Colonel of The Regiment and have a private viewing of the Museum.

The Mayors of the Royal Borough of Kingston-upon-Thames, Councillor Frank Stepto, of Guildford, Councillor Jack Patrick JP, and of Reigate and Banstead, Councillor Mrs. Kathleen Waters, together with their Mayoresses, their Deputies and their Chief Executives attended. On arrival the guests were received by the President and Mrs Sewell and were introduced to the Colonel of The Regiment. Amongst other guests were Colonel J.C. Holman, Colonel and Mrs. R.W. Acworth, Colonel and Mrs. J.W. Francis, Lieutenant-Colonel C.M. Joint, and Mrs. Rachel Roupell. The Chairman of the Museum Trustees, Lieutenant-Colonel H.R.D. Hill and members of the Museum Committee and staff were also present acting as hosts and showed the chief guests round the Museum.



*The Colonel of the Regiment, President of the Association with the Mayors of Kingston upon Thames, Guildford and Reigate and Banstead.*

*(Continued from Page 11)*

All is quiet again and we are pulling out. the pack feels light and that heavy PIAT fits well in the groove on the shoulder. No problems, am feeling great. I look at my mate in front. He has a spring in his step - I guess it's the thought of a brew-up. Seven Jap trucks had entered our ambush. From one of these we were given a tin of meat and some rupees. To this day I would not hazard a guess as to what that meat was. All I know is that if the Japs could eat that, they were capable of anything. Compared to that, Soya Links were a delicacy, and I do believe they were made of sawdust. Incidentally, the rupees were worthless as well!

Stan ('Buster') Brown, 6103161

## 5 Queen's Royal Regiment OMA

As I write these notes preparations are in full swing for our Annual Dinner to be held this year on Saturday 17 May at the Drill Hall, Sandfield Terrace. Each year our numbers seem to increase, and more old friends appear to support the event. However, I should like to see a few more of our officers attending, and also some of the younger serving T.A. and ex-regular soldiers – for without the support of the latter our Association will eventually die, which would be unthinkable for a Regiment with such an unrivalled tradition as ours in the past.

The Regimental Church Service at Guildford Cathedral coincides with the Glorious First (1 June), and I am sure will, as usual, be well supported by the members of our association and their families. The service starts at 11.00 a.m. and all members past and present are welcome. After the service the usual arrangements have been made for an informal meeting in the Refectory where old acquaintances can be renewed over an informal drink.

If you want any further information about either of the above events please don't hesitate to contact Doug Mitchell, our Hon. Sec.

Now to events that have happened since the last newsletter:

In October 40 members and guests attended the Cranleigh Reunion Dinner; this was the 1939 Cranleigh Coy later to become C Coy. Lady William Mullens presided and Mr. Pat Jobson, the Bn MO in 1939 also attended. Reg Hubbard made all the arrangements for a most enjoyable evening.

There was a good turn out of Association members at the Remembrance Day Service at Holy Trinity Church, Guildford. Lt Col Foster Herd laid wreaths at the Church and War Memorial on behalf of the Queens Royal Surrey Regimental Association. Major Richard Saunders laid the wreath on behalf of 5 Queens OMA, and led the contingent in the march past. The salute was taken by the Mayor of Guildford, Councillor Jack Patrick.

Since the last newsletter we sadly have to report the deaths of the following members:

Cecil Turner (Ginger), 5th Bn Queens Royal Reg. 1939/45, MT Section. Cecil died on 16 October and his cremation took place at Woking on the 23rd October. He was a regular attender at our OMA functions, and had been the Chairman of the Woking Branch of the Dunkirk Veterans Association for the past fifteen years.

Perry Philip, 5th Bn Queens Royal Regt. Perry died at his home near Woking in January this year. He was a regular attender at OMA functions.

Finally if you are an ex-member of any of our former, or a serving member of any of the present Bns. of our Regiment, who would like to attend an OMA function please contact:

Doug Mitchell, 3 Littlefields Way, Fairlands, Guildford, GU3 3JE. Tel. Guildford 232043. 5 Queens OMA will welcome your support.

## 6th (Bermondsey) Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment.

Since the last issue we have kept on the go, a good Christmas Social with the aid of the Deptford Branch of The Royal British Legion. After Christmas, in spite of the weather, there was a successful Reunion Dinner/Dance in February. Here we were breaking new ground by going to Dulwich. Time passes quickly when making arrangements for the visit of our Belgian friends in May. A full programme has been drawn up with a Dinner/Dance at the Union Jack Club on the 9th May and on the Saturday we are taking them to see The Cutty Sark, The Greenwich Naval Museum, The Wolfe Memorial and finally The Thames Barrier, finishing the day at the 300 Club of the Royal Marines Reserve (City of London) at the Drill Hall, Old Jamaica Road. To help finance these activities we organise two Draws based on the Grand National and The November Handicap but we could do with selling a lot more tickets.

Already plans are being discussed for our visit to The Queen's Regiment Reunion at Bassingbourn and for our reciprocal visit in September to Ghent, we will be represented at the Church Service at Guildford.

One of our members will be taking part in the London Marathon, having run in all the previous races, we usually sponsor him for further funds.

Fred Walker made a video of The Queen's Division Massed Bands on Horse Guards parade which is at present with a

firm considering making copies. We are looking forward to seeing it.

"Membership has stabilised, some 1939/40 era people have come to light and eagerly joined us. Finally, amongst our members is a survivor of the 24th County of London Regiment (The Queen's) who will be 96 in June, having served in the Regiment 1909-13. Is he by chance the oldest member alive today? The writer is very interested as the gentleman in question happens to be his Father who also celebrates his 71st Wedding Anniversary on the 4th April 1986."

WCM

## The Queen's (Southwark) Association

The Annual Re-Union Dinner was held on Saturday 1st March 1986 in the Gascoigne Room, Union Jack Club and unfortunately, due to the atrocious wintry weather, sickness and age, only 55 members could attend. However, intrepid long distance travellers included a Vice President of the Association, Frank Wilkins and Horace Lott came from Northampton, Larry Uren from Cornwall, Sgts Vic Rachel and Jack Burton from Leeds, CSM Frank Bohm from Skegness and Major General D.S. Gordon, CB, CBE, DSO, from Oldham, Major Ken Jessup from Seaford, Major Jack Sheehan, MC, RAMC, from Leicester, Major E.G. Sandys from Boxted, with the President, Lt. Col W.D. Griffiths, DSO, MC, from Hove, who was in the Chair.

It was a most convivial evening with an excellent meal and some very good speeches, notably from Sgt Paddy McCourt who proposed the Toast of Absent Comrades, and Major Stuart Playfoot, MC, the Guest of Honour; he served with 1/7th Bn The Queens as a Company Commander every mile of the way from Alamein to Tunis and with the 2/6th Queens in Northern Italy where he was awarded a well deserved MC.

Amongst the guests was CSM Viv Edwards from the Royal Hospital Chelsea, very mobile on two sticks and a credit to the Queens, who entertained with the aid of a blackboard and chalk and as usual, had us laughing our heads off.

Major John Tamplin, TD, our hard working Hon. Secretary, made all the arrangements and we were greatly indebted to him.

## Warrant Officers & Sergeants Association

The Christmas Draw was held at the Drill Hall, Portsmouth Road, Kingston-upon-Thames on Saturday 30th November 1985, and once again a splendid evening was had by all. There were 140 festive prizes and most members appeared to have been lucky. A Christmas Cake, made by Pat Warner, especially for the draw, was won by Jack Chaffer. The success of the draw was due to the hard work of Bill Warren, who receives our sincere thanks. Our congratulations and thanks are also due to the ladies for the excellent buffet.

At the end of the draw, a Christmas Cake made and presented by 'Dusty' Miller and his wife, was auctioned, and the proceeds combined with a whip round realised £ 150 which has been donated to Research into Leukaemia in Children.

Our appreciation was expressed to 'Dusty' and Mrs Miller and all who contributed towards this magnificent gesture. The lucky recipient of the cake was Ted Boddy.

The A.G.M. will be held at the Drill Hall, Portsmouth Road, Kingston-upon-Thames on Saturday 31st May 1986 commencing at 6.30 p.m. Ladies and guests are cordially invited to the Buffet, followed by a social evening.

During the A.G.M., normally of about one hours duration, your ladies and guests will be entertained in the Club Room. There will be no charge made for this event, but it would be appreciated if you can let the Secretary know (a) if you are attending and (b) how many guests. This is to make sure that we get enough food in.

Good news of our Vice-Chairman Bill Warren. Wedding bells in fact. The marriage took place at Hounslow Registry Office on Friday 6th December 1985 between Bill and Shirley Crowther. Shirley was so well known to us as the wife of the late C.S.M. Derek Crowther and we were delighted to receive this news. We heartily congratulate Bill and Shirley as this couldn't have happened to two nicer people, and we hope that all good fortune attends them.

News has been received from member Alec Bromige who is now living in Milton Keynes. Ill health dogged Alec for quite a long time, but now that is behind him we hope that he will surface occasionally at regimental dq's.

## 78 DIVISION BATTLEAXE CLUB RETURNS TO TUNISIA



In 1985 some members of the 78 Division Battleaxe Club returned to visit their old haunts in Tunisia. All those going, excepting, of course, the wives, were the originals who landed in Algeria in 1942. Of those from the Home Counties there was Bill Baynes and myself from the Surreys, two from the Buffs and one from the Royal West Kents.

Although assured by the travel agency that all our trips were feasible, our coach driver just shook his head when he saw the extent of the first drive. We quickly recast our route, and soon we were heading for Tunis and once in the suburbs, turned left on to the road to Medjezel Bab. As soon as that sign was seen, one could detect a distinct awakening of interest; soon more familiar names appeared and suddenly we stopped outside Massicault Cemetery. Moving among the headstones, I found the names of Lt Cecil, Capt R. Lindsay, and the name of a fellow signaller, Bill Baacke. Most of the Surrey casualties were dated 26th February 1943, which was the date when 'D' Coy was overwhelmed at Fort McGregor in the Goubellat Plain. We moved on and soon on our right, we could see the long whaleback of Longstop Hill, and behind that, the higher hills with Djebel Ang coming to mind. We crossed the famous bridge at Medjez – possibly the first Bailey bridge of the campaign to be built was built here.

We moved on through the wide plain and started to climb the hills towards Beja. Signposts to Ksar Mezouar appeared – all familiar names to 1 Surreys – and then suddenly there was 'Mortar Hill' well remembered by Bill Baynes, and then the green signpost pointing to Oued Zarga Cemetery. This was a 1½ mile track to the cemetery, for since our days there, a huge reservoir has been built, hence the road diversion.

Two days later we were on the Medjez road once more, this time to hold our Remembrance Service at the huge Cemetery there, in the shadow of Longstop. The War Graves Commission had made the Register available for us, and so, after laying the wreath on behalf of the Club at the foot of the Cross of Sacrifice, I started to look for the headstone of my 'best man', Ron Wilkins. There are many Surreys here and I spotted the names of Lt Col Wilberforce DSO (the Surreys CO) and the MTO, Lt Crampton, killed at Tebourba, on 27th November 1942, less than three weeks after landing.

We moved on to Beja for lunch before leaving for Sidi Nsir. The cemetery at Beja is right in the town, with buildings on either side. We noticed a headstone to a member of the RAF who had been awarded the VC. This was surprising to us, because I think most of the 1st Army thought for most of the campaign, that the RAF was non-existent; but seeing all those RAF graves made us think differently. We were soon on the road to Sidi Nsir and the wide valley of 'Hunt's Gap' soon opened up; in fact it was a far better road than the one passing Green Hill. Memories of 'Gert and Daisy' were recalled of the two Messerschmidts regularly patrolling each day along the valley. I suppose the rusty railway could have been a guide. We passed the 'Binnacles' and gradually the road fell down a slight slope, with Sidi Nsir station before us. On the right a gravelly road climbs over the hills to Tebourba, and (if my memory does not play me false,) I think a track led off there, to 'B' Company's positions, and the OP on Hill 609, which commanded a magnificent view towards Mateur and Tunis. I remembered that the American 'Long Toms' lay up in a farm behind us but they were unpredictable, although the Yankees were very friendly, individually. I think, we, brought up in the traditions of the British Army discipline, found their familiarity a little unusual. But one day, they were gone . . . .

The coach pulled up on the road above the station, although memory seemed to say that a road, or at least a track, came to the front of the station. Forty years ago, the railway had been in use, but now it has not seen an engine for many a year. The place is now a granary with storks nesting in the roof. The name sign has disappeared. Forty years ago, every night we used to lay a ring of '75' mines around Battalion Headquarters, but there weren't many smiles when carrying a stock of mines one night, one slid out of my hands on to the railway track.

With photographs taken, we move on and descending through the narrow pass, we appreciated that the Germans could not have had too pleasant a time keeping their troops supplied.

On the far left, up in the hills, we could see the Arab village which we had searched under the leadership of Sgt Ted Cunningham but it had been an exhausting climb to it.

I think when we were in Sidi Nsir in 1943, we felt very isolated, and with such a valley widening out towards Beja, we sensed it would be difficult to defend. Soon after we left, this proved to be true, but that is not our story.

We made our way through Mateur, a not particularly entrancing town, and then home to Hammamet.

Our last trip started out in a fine drizzle, taking the road to El Aroussa and Bou Arada. We then struck north for the Goubellat Plain. The drizzle had now turned into heavy rain and the hills were covered in cloud. We tried to make out Stuka Ridge and Grandstand, before running close to Djebel Djaffa, well known to the 1st as well as the 1/6th Battalions of the Surreys. Torrential rain, not unknown to 1st Army campaigners, made it impossible to sight Fort McGregor where 'D' Coy suffered so much. An hour later we were passing Medjez station (the scene of many hard fought battles) and saw the sign to Toutkabeur. On a fine day it would have been possible to get there, but we were experiencing the Tunisian mud we knew so well, those years ago. The road on to Tebourba was absolutely flooded now, and on our left, Longstop and the foothills were visible very occasionally through the clouds. Our road was almost impassable, but we pushed through and amazingly we stopped on the same level crossing where the Surreys had made the acquaintance of Tiger tanks in 1942. The wooded spare ground where BHQ had been was there just the same, as was the old barn where we set up the Signal Exchange. Ahead lay the hill, Pt 186, which 'A' Coy had occupied and which I would have liked to have climbed, if conditions had been more favourable.

We moved on, and Bill Baynes, fellow Surrey, pointed out the cavalry barracks in El Bathan, and the various places 'B' Coy, to which he was attached, had manned. 'Chips' Carpenter, who was a sick man and he, both Regulars, were taken prisoner of war here. (On the capitulation of the Italians, Bill escaped from his POW camp, and eventually made his way into Switzerland. His is an enthralling story and he should put it into writing for the archives).

We moved on to Carthage, visiting the American Cemetery where all the American dead are buried. By the entrance, the memorial of the North African campaign is set out in tablet form, and the British are given every credit when they were fighting side by side with the Americans. Unlike the British cemeteries, there is a small Chapel where one can worship and pray. This finished our official visits, but we saw something of the territory of the 1/6th Battalion when we toured Cape Bon.

All together a good trip, but I think we all secretly wish we could have had adequate transport to take us up into the hills from Medjez to see Longstop, or Toukabeur, or Djebel Ang, and all those Arab villages, the names of which were on everyone's lips, forty years ago.

HER

*'The writer of this article is Mr. H.E. Rolph who served in the Signal Platoon of the 1st Bn The East Surrey Regiment until wounded at Cassino in 1944. Eddie Rolph, who is now the Treasurer of 78 Division Battleaxe Club, would be pleased to hear from any old Surreys who would like to renew friendships. His address is 55 Brighton Road, Coulsdon, Surrey. CR3 2BE.'*



Signal Platoon, Tunis 1943



# THE QUEEN'S REGIMENT

## The Colonel of the Regiment

We are pleased to report that Brigadier Charles Millman, the Colonel of the Regiment, returned to his duties for the Regiment and the Army Benevolent Fund in early March. He received many messages of best wishes after he was taken ill at Christmas, and following a period of convalescence, his first official Regimental function was to preside at the Officers' Club Dinner in the Duke of York's HQ, Chelsea, on 21 March.

## The Regular Battalions

The 1st Battalion is now well into the second year of its tour in Gibraltar and returns to Tidworth in January 1987. The 2nd Battalion returned in early March to Oakington after an interesting tour in the Falkland Islands and moves to Minden in August. The 3rd Battalion which returned from BAOR to Howe Barracks, Canterbury, in January, left in April for an unaccompanied posting in Belize until October.

## New TA Battalion

Our third TA Battalion was formally established on 1 April. It is titled the 8th (Volunteer) Battalion The Queen's Fusiliers (City of London) and is composed of both QUEENS and RRF companies. Battalion HQ is at St John's Hill and company locations are to be at Edware, Balham and Camberwell. The CO has not yet been nominated but the Training Major is Major Pat Gwilliam.

## Illustrated History of The Regiment

The new illustrated history of The Queen's Regiment which tells the story of all our forbear regiments and is generously illustrated with pictures in full colour has now been published and is available for sale at Regimental Headquarters, price £ 1.25 which includes postage. The history is also available at the Museum price £ 1. The text was written by Major Jock Haswell and the booklet was 'masterminded' by Lt Col Les Wilson who has received many congratulations on its production. It is now regarded as the best of its kind and it will doubtless soon be copied by other regiments.

## Dover Castle Museum Appeal

An appeal for £ 75,000 was launched on 26 April to pay for the move of the Regimental Museum from Howe Barracks, Canterbury, and its setting up in Dover Castle. It is hoped that the museum will be officially opened in its new location on 16 May 1987 (Albuhera Day).

## 'The Flying Dragons'

The Regimental Free Fall Team now has a sponsor which will support it financially for the next three years. Parachutes, jump suits and other equipment have been purchased in regimental colours and the Team started giving displays in April, following a one month training period in Germany.

## Benevolence 1985

During 1985 a total of 212 cases were investigated, 164 grants in aid were given, and 11 cases were carried forward into 1986 for various reasons.

The Association now administers 20 cases of Supplementary Benefit on behalf of The Army Benevolent Fund, an increase of 4 with a further 3 cases under consideration by the ABF.

A total sum of £ 24,758 was paid out in grants-in-aid. The Army Benevolent Fund made grants to our Charitable Funds of £ 7,375. With the aid of SSAFA, The Royal British Legion and The Forces Help Society we have been able to assist those of our comrades who needed assistance including three members who have been purchased new electric wheelchairs.

## Museum Notes

In January Sotheby's mounted a 'Loan Exhibition of Paintings and Works of Art' in aid of the Royal National Lifeboat Institute at their galleries in Bond Street. We loaned the travelling desk used by Admiral Earl Howe in HMS Queen Charlotte at the Battle of the Glorious 1st of June 1794. The desk was well displayed in sight of an oil painting of the death of Captain Neville, The Queen's Royal Regiment, on the main deck of the Queen Charlotte during the battle, and the gorget which he wore was in a nearby display case.

The catalogue produced by Sotheby's was well illustrated, much in colour and full of historic interest on the exhibits. A copy is held in the Museum.

Recently, thanks to the help of the Army Museums Ogilby Trust, we purchased at Christies, a water colour map depicting the movement of 131 Queens Brigade in their advance into the Low Countries in 1940 and their ultimate withdrawal to Dunkirk. The map covers from south of Amiens to Courtrai north of Lille. It is of historic interest and it will hang in Room 3.

Because of the work involved in assembling all the material for our Far East display, this special feature will continue into 1986. For those who have not seen it, it chronicles the history of the 1st and 2nd Battalions The Queen's Royal Regiment and The 2nd Bn The East Surrey Regiment in the Far East during World War Two.

For 1987 and 1988 the subject for the special display will be the Territorial Army. In this we wish to illustrate and record the peacetime service of the TA and to bring out what it was that brought men together for voluntary military training after their day's work was done and in some cases, to forego their annual holiday from their civilian firms.

Mrs Daphne Hill is already collecting photographs, documents, items of uniform, pictures etc which will illustrate aspects of peacetime service and a booklet will be produced which will describe what it was like to be a soldier in the TA. If you can give or loan anything or write an account of particular happenings, would you please send it to Mrs Daphne Hill, c/o The Museum, Clandon Park, Guildford, Surrey GU4 7RQ. Whatever you send will be well cared for and returned later to you if you wish it back. We particularly want TA brass shoulder titles both Queen's Royal Regiment and East Surrey Regiment.

Quite apart from the excellent work being carried out in the Museum by a conservation group of ladies of NADFAS restoring our large collection of photograph albums and books, we have just received a generous cheque from the Shalford Decorative and Fine Arts Society (a branch of NADFAS) to enable us to complete our restoration work. This generous gift will be used for the restoration of our four Ackerman prints and the large oil painting of Sergeant Lynch in the Volunteer case in Room 1.

The Museum Open Day for 1986 will be on Saturday 27th September. The Museum and Clandon Park open at 2pm and close at 6pm. Those wishing to have lunch at the restaurant are advised to reserve a table in good time (telephone Guildford 222502); alternatively the Black Bull, about 150 yards south of the entrance gate to the park provides a very good 'pub lunch'. Tea is available in the restaurant from 3.30pm.

Lastly, we suffered a great loss through the death of Lieut Colonel P.C. Kimmerling TD in September 1985. Although there was an excellent obituary in the November 1985 Newsletter, on behalf of the Trustees of the Museum, I would like to add how much we will miss his wise guidance. Peter was a Trustee from the beginning and has contributed enormously in many ways to the development of the Museum over the past seven years. Lieut Colonel B.A. Hannaford has been elected a Trustee in his place.

HRDH

## Can you help?

The Secretary has received several letters concerning Spaniards who served in the Queen's Royal Regiment during the second world war. A book is being written and any reader who remembers these men, or perhaps still has contact is asked to contact the Secretary. One Spaniard who served with the 1/5th swam the River Volturno on the night of the 8th October 1943 and brought back vital information concerning the enemy positions.

"... My next posting was to a parachute battalion, the 60th Queen's, once more commanded by Colonel Coats and officered by the nucleus of the ski battalion. But this, again, was soon disbanded because, we were told, there were no parachutes. The RAF - not unreasonably - needed all there were ..."

F. Spencer Chapman  
"The Jungle is Neutral"

This passage from Chapman had puzzled me for some time since I knew that apart from the Young Soldiers' battalions, the highest numbered Queen's battalion during the Second World War was the 15th. There is no trace of anything higher in the Archives.

As background, Chapman had joined the 5th Scots Guards in early 1940. This was a specialist ski battalion which was being trained to fight in Finland against the Russians. He was joined by volunteers from all branches of the Army and Navy, including several friends with whom he had been involved in Polar Exploration during the 1930s: J.M. Scott, Quintin Riley and Martin Lindsay.

The ski battalion (commanded by Lieutenant Colonel J.S. Coats MC Coldstream Guards) was disbanded in May 1940 when the Finns sued for peace. Most of the skiers were posted to a new battalion, again under Coats, who incidentally is the Officer who led the Coats Mission, whose role was the protection of the Royal family in the event of a German Invasion. Chapman was among those posted into the battalion, along with Martin Lindsay who will appear again in this story.

This new battalion was entitled "20th Queen's". There is no clear reason why it was allotted to The Queen's, any more than why its predecessor should have been 5th Scots Guards. Chapman is certainly wrong over the numbering of the battalion, but his account may have been written solely from memory without the benefit of documents to refresh it, so there would appear never to have been a "60th Queen's". This is odd as Chapman was always a most accurate recorder of events.

As to the Parachute role, the generally accepted starting date for the history of Parachute forces in the British Army is Churchill's memo of 22nd June 1940, in which he directed that at least 5000 of such forces should be trained. There was already in existence a Central Landing School at Ringway, which had opened on 21st June 1940 - however the 20th Queen's would pre-date this.

It is known that the first unit to be involved in parachuting was No 2 Commando which made its first descents on 21st July 1940. Chapman did not belong to this unit, but Martin Lindsay was a member of the Staff at Ringway.

There is no evidence that there was any withdrawal of parachutes for use by the RAF, since all training-type parachutes had been replaced early in the War by American "Statichutes" better suited to parachute operations.

It is known also that 20th Queen's, containing as it did a number of ski-trained personnel, was kept on standby to go to Norway but once the decision to withdraw had been made, the battalion was disbanded on 3 June 1940. No War Diary of any kind survives.

There is, however, a further appearance of the 20th Queen's later in the War, this time definitely connected with the Parachute role. In the Autumn of 1941 it was decided to raise a Parachute brigade from troops in India. The first battalion - 151 (P) Bn - was raised from volunteers from some 23 British Infantry Battalions in that theatre and its Commanding Officer was Lieutenant Colonel Martin Lindsay, who had been in the 20th Queen's in 1940. In October 1942 it was decided to send the battalion to the Middle East and in order to disguise its movement it was given the title 20th Queen's. The unit War Diary of 30th October 1942 records that:

"... Battalion Special Instructions issued. The name of the Battalion was changed from 151 (P) Bn to 20th Queen's Regt for the period of the move, for security reasons."

Possibly Lindsay chose this title to connect with the earlier incarnation of the 20th Queen's and to give credence to the title. This circumstantial evidence does point to the earlier 20th Queen's having been earmarked for the Parachute role.

All obvious signs of 151 Bn's Parachute status were removed and on its arrival in the Middle East, the battalion was again redesignated 156 Parachute Battalion. The title 20th

Queen's then disappeared and was not used again. As a matter of interest I reproduce the Battalion Special Instructions mentioned earlier, which did not, it appears, fool anyone.

## Special Orders

This Bn is no longer the 151 Parachute Bn, and will not be so, until told otherwise. The name of this Bn from the time of leaving Delhi Cantt Station, is the 20th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment (West Surrey) (2nd of Foot).

Colonel-in-Chief

Queen Mary

Colonel

General Veasey.

## FORMATION

The Bn has just been formed in India July 1st 1942, in Delhi, from Offrs and ORs from all other Infantry Bns in India. They have not volunteered, but have been posted to this Bn.

The Bn is organised as an Infantry Bn and its special role is an A/Tk Bn.

(2 pdr A/Tk guns are now operated by Special Inf Bns).

## TRAINING

No training in A/Tk gunnery has been done due chiefly to lack of eqpt in India, (about which we are all rather browned off).

The training up to date has been purely Infantry training i.e. forming the Bn and getting it to work together, and training it into a first class infantry unit so it can fight in an alternative role. The training in A/Tk gunnery will be done at our destination where we will also get the eqpt.

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Coy Commanders will lecture at once to all men of their Coys on this narrative and will ensure by constant practice and questioning that all ranks are fully conversant with their new name and history. If Coys possess men from The Queen's Regt they will be very useful in lecturing the men on Regimental Customs or habits such as Regimental March or popular songs etc.

2. The following points will be drilled into all ranks; so that nothing comes to notice showing we are really a Parachute Bn.

a) There will be NO Parachute talk at all, whether about pay, jumping, refusals or aeroplanes.

b) Knives fighting will be put into universal kit bags which are in the hold.

c) No parachute exercises on PT parade.

d) No one will shout parachute slogans such as "Action Stations" or 1-2-3-4 Arms.

e) Men tattooed with parachute wings will always wear shirts, or trousers if the tattoo is on the leg, on PT parades, games or sunbathing.

f) A.Bs 64 Pt 1 & 11 will be kept safe and will only be shown to Officers and NCOs of this Bn. A.B 64s contain information ref A.L.S. training and Parachute pay. Remember A.B 64s are SECURITY DOCUMENTS.

g) In the event of any man meeting someone from his old unit, who knows he joined a Parachute Bn, he will have to swallow his pride and say he got R.T.U. and sent to the Reinforcement Camp, Doolali, from where he was posted to the 20th Queen's.

h) Owing to the date of joining men must not show a knowledge of Delhi before July 1942 unless they happened to have been in the Dukes or some other Regt which has been stationed there in the past.

i) It must be impressed on all ranks that no mention of the changing name must be made in Delhi or elsewhere before the train leaves Delhi Cantt Station.

## FINALLY

All ranks must swallow their pride and not admit that they are in such an elite corps as a Parachute Bn or the 151 at all. And in order to finish the War sooner they must tell all those who question them that they are only in an A/Tk Bn.

It is not known if any Officers or Soldiers of The Queen's actually served in the "20th Battalion" in either 1940 or 1942, or were connected with it in any way. If anyone reading this article can throw any more light on the matter, the author would be glad to hear from them.

Although this unit is not strictly a part of our Regimental History, it is offered as an interesting sidelight on the Second World War.

J.P.R.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am most grateful to the following gentlemen for their help.  
Mr. J. Harding, Army Historical Branch, Ministry of Defence.  
Mr. T.H. Fitch, Airborne Forces Museum, Aldershot.  
Mr. D.B. Nash, Imperial War Museum, London.

#### The Somaliland Camel Corps

In the gardens between the Embankment and Temple underground stations is one of the most attractive monuments in the whole of London.

It is an oblong block of stone surmounted by the figure of a soldier mounted on a camel. This is the monument to The Camel Corps. On the sides of the stone are engraved the names of British soldiers who lost their lives while serving with the Corps.

The Queen's Regiment has an association with this small but elite force.

On 11 August 1940 Captain E.C.T. Wilson of The East Surrey Regiment won the Victoria Cross during a battle against Italian forces while serving in the Somaliland Camel Corps. The Corps were holding a position at Tug Argan in Somaliland and the Somali machine guns were causing so much havoc that the Italians brought a pack battery into action against them scoring two direct hits and severely wounding Captain Wilson. He kept his post in action until it was over-run four days later and he was taken prisoner. It was thought that he had been killed and he was awarded a posthumous V.C. However, he was later released and subsequently served with the Kings African Rifles in Burma.

Who were The Camel Corps, this force of Somali troops commanded by British Officers?

The Corps had been raised in June 1912 to protect British Somaliland and many British officers applied to serve with the corps and so get the chance of some action against Mohammed bin Abdulla Hassan who was known for cruelty and aspirations to become the Mahdi of Somaliland and was called by the British the Mad Mullah. Between 1900 and 1904 the British mounted four expeditions against the Mullah. Many of the troops in these campaigns were from The King's African Rifles, Sikhs, Punjabi's and British regiments.

In June 1912 after pressure from the British Commissioner the Government authorised the formation of a Camel Constabulary to protect the coastal settlements of Somaliland and the caravan routes up to a 50 mile radius from the coast. The force was to be civilian and not military and it was limited to the number of weapons it had. Most of the Somali recruits had served previously in the King's African Rifles. Three British officers were in charge of the unit.

The Mullah was steadily gaining control of the interior of the country and had constructed a series of P.C. Wren 'Beau Geste' type forts.

On 9 August 1913 a Camel Constabulary force of 75 men became engaged with 2,000 Dervishes. In a five hour battle the British leader and 35 men were killed and 395 Dervishes were left for dead when they withdrew.

After further Dervish attacks the British Government decided to organise the Camel force on military lines and it became known as the Somaliland Camel Corps. Among their first British officers were two who later distinguished themselves in other fields of action. Captain H.L. Ismay of the 21 Cavalry Indian Army later to become General Lord Ismay and Captain A. Carton de Wiart to become Lieutenant General Sir Adrian Carton de Wiart V.C. It was in an action in November 1914 against the Mad Mullah's forces that de Wiart was wounded in the face which resulted in the loss of one eye. He was evacuated back to Britain and subsequently won a VC in France in 1916.

In 1915 The Camel Corps consisted of 3 Camel Companies (one Indian and two Somali), one Pony company and 400-strong volunteers from the Indian Army.

The last campaign against the Mad Mullah was led by Ismay in January 1920 and in this instance the RAF were involved. Bombs were dropped on the Mullah's forces from an RAF aircraft. His forces were harried for weeks after and in November 1920 the Mad Mullah died. For over 21 years Somaliland had been in turmoil and it has been estimated that 2,000,000 lives had been lost.

In 1920 the Inspector General for the King's African Rifles was made responsible for the Camel Corps. During the following year short battles were fought against tribes that raided the caravan route to Ethiopia.

In 1927 it was proposed that the Camel Corps should be mechanised. This was opposed by many of the officers of the corps. However in 1929 the mechanisation plans were put into operation to replace some of the faithful camels.

When war broke out in 1939 the strength of The Camel Corps was 14 British Officers, 400 askaris, and 150 reservists. It consisted of 2 Camel companies which included 2 pony troops and one mechanised rifle company mounted in trucks. The strength of the Corps was increased in January 1940 and the enemy became the Italians. It was in the campaign of August 1940 that Captain Wilson won his VC.

Many fierce battles were fought in the Somaliland campaign and the allied forces were evacuated from the country by the Royal and Australian Navies, having been subjected to an overwhelming opposition. Within 8 months the British were back in Somaliland and a main line of communication was established for the British forces in Abyssinia.

The Camel Corps was reformed and it was intended to convert them to an armoured car regiment for service overseas and two battalions were formed into the King's African Rifles.

The conversion to a mechanised armoured unit was an unfortunate move. The Somalis who are Moslems are a very proud people and very aware of their status and position. They considered their status to be that of Indian troops and not African.

The result was that on the night of 5/6 June 1944 when the regiment was due to move to Southern Rhodesia for training the Camel Corps mutinied. The reason for this according to the area District Commissioner was that the askaris felt that when they reached Southern Rhodesia they would not be accorded their proper status and rights as Moslems and they would be degraded.

After a court of Inquiry a recommendation was made for the disbandment of the Somaliland Camel Corps and this was done on 30 September 1944, and the name removed from The Army List after 30 years of honourable service.

So ended one of the most colourful Army units ever raised. Most of their service was spent in fighting and the courage of the men was shown in the battles against the Mad Mullah and later against the Italians in World War II.

The British Officers who served with The Camel Corps can be proud of their excellent record.

RR

#### The Royal Hospital, Chelsea.



Christmas 1985, seen with the Secretary are:-  
S. Bulley, J.W. Dodd, V.J. Brown, J.A. Kershaw, L.F. Law and V.G. Edwards

## Fever, 1804

Shortly after arriving in Gibraltar, I started looking for any signs or landmarks of our forbear regiments. My biggest surprise was to find the graves of four officers of the Queen's Royal Regiment alongside the headstones of Naval officers who had died of wounds at the Battle of Trafalgar buried within the Trafalgar Cemetery. The names of Ensign Henry Colestean, Patrick Fallen, Charles Culloden and Lt Hugh Clough could be clearly seen along with their dates of death all in the month of October 1804. The cause of death was also marked - 'Malignant Fever'. My curiosity was aroused, especially when I later discovered that 7 officers and 91 other ranks from the Queen's Royal Regiment had died in the four months between September and December 1804.

The Queen's Royal Regiment arrived in Gibraltar, after the Egyptian Campaign, in March 1802 and were reported to be in 'Good Order' by His Royal Highness The Duke of Kent (Queen Victoria's father) when he inspected the unit in February 1803. The Battalion was enjoying a quiet successful tour when the malignant fever struck in the Spring of 1804.

In August the fever (which is now believed to have been Yellow Fever) broke out in Malaga and it was reported in Gibraltar that hundreds of people were dying each day. Consequently, the Commander-in-Chief, General Sir Thomas Trigge cut all communication with Spain by land and sea. The land order read, "No person, therefore, is to pass the Barriers, excepting King's workmen, or people with carts, mules or borricos, loaded or going for stores, sand or water; nor are these to go to the northward of the road leading to the Devils Tower, except to unload rubbish." A few weeks later all vessels between Oran and Alicante were refused access to Gibraltar. Unfortunately, these measures made no difference to the spread of the fever, which no one really understood.

The Commander-in-Chief himself wrote on 19th September that according to his medical officers "The sickness is neither contagious or malignant". By that stage seven soldiers, three soldiers' wives and thirty-nine inhabitants had died. A writer in the Gibraltar Chronicle stated a few days later "We have every reason to hope that the first favourable change in the weather will put an end to the sickness". Meanwhile, the doctors were afraid that the burning of the victims' bedding might spread the disease and failed to appreciate that the washing-down of premises left puddles suitable for the infected mosquitos to breed. At the same time, the health committee was recommending to the Commander-in-Chief that "A party of Military" be employed to kill stray dogs and were complaining that the Jewish community were not dealing with their dead quickly enough. Hundreds of soldiers and civilians continued to die and the local newspaper, the "Gibraltar Chronicle", ceased publication for six months.

The fever ended in December 1804 when the cold weather destroyed the mosquitos. Total dead were recorded as:-

54 Officers  
864 Soldiers  
164 Soldiers' wives and children  
4864 Local inhabitants  
5946 TOTAL

On the 1st January 1805 the Garrison Chaplain of the Kings' Chapel made a list of all the military and principal inhabitants carried off by the epidemic fever. Included in the list are our forbear Queensmen one of whom is Ensign John Wynne Griffiths who was commissioned on February 14th 1804 and died of the fever on October 22nd 1804.

The Padre finishes his list by saying "The reader will see what dreadful havoc has been made in this small place, but of the misery that accompanied this scene of desolation, no one without being an actual witness can form an idea".

PTC

Editor's note: In 1974 Mr P.C. Reynolds sent photographs of Regimental headstones to the Newsletter. A short article appeared in Newsletter No. 16, Nov. 1974.

## Visit, 1986

Colonel Mike Ball, the present Commanding Officer of the 1st Battalion, suggested very kindly that while the Battalion was there Gibraltar would be a nice place to visit. Having only looked at 'The Rock' a number of times from passing troopships this was an attractive proposition, and so in early February my wife and I escaped the snow and flew off from Gatwick to spend a wonderfully interesting and enjoyable 7 days.

The main highlight of course, was to be welcomed by and see something of our 1st Battalion, almost 18 years on since I had last served with them. I was privileged to be a guest at the Sobraon Dinner in the Sergeant's Mess, we lunched in the Officer's Mess, had a private tour of the Barracks - the two of them, as the Battalion is divided between South Barracks, reputedly now containing the oldest barrack blocks in the British Army and Lathbury Barracks, one of the newest - and watched the Guard Changing outside the Convent (The Governor and C-in-C's Residence). We also saw quite a lot of the Battalion going about its affairs in the town, and soldiers out on various activities both on and off duty. The impressions I received from all these occasions and sights were quite excellent, and confirmed in every way how proud we can be of our Regiment as it lives on. Clearly standards are high - the drill and bearing for the Guard Changing, involving C (Sobraon) Company was faultless and was backed by The Drums on their own, as the Band had gone on leave, most smartly and with some very tuneful and effective fife music. Besides the smartness and efficiency I also sensed the special pride, combined with good humour and friendliness, and a will to get things done in the best possible manner, which I believe were much the hallmarks of our Regiments.

Attending the Sobraon Dinner was a special pleasure, and the traditions of the Day have been even more underlined so that the memory of Sergeant Bernard McCabe and the 31st Regiment in the Sutlej Campaign continue to provide a very real inspiration to the 1st Battalion today. It was splendid to hear "A Southerly Wind and a Cloudy Sky", together with the Earl of Huntingdon's Slow March played again as a preliminary to the Sobraon Sergeant, selected to carry the Regimental Colour from the Officer's Mess - for 1986 Sergeant A.R. Scully - proposing the Toast of Sergeant McCabe.

All in all it was great for me to visit our 1st Battalion in this way, and I pay tribute to the Battalion, and in particular to the Commanding Officer and to the Regimental Sergeant Major, Mr Boden, who between them and with all other officers and men of the Battalion are ensuring that the best of the traditions of the past continue, and that we can all be extremely proud of them.

While seeing the 1st Battalion was the highlight of my visit, Gibraltar is full of interest to anyone with an old Queen's or Surrey's background - as our Secretary has totted up our Regiments, besides being involved in capturing the place in the first instance, have served for no less than a total of 57 years on 'The Rock'. There are no remaining artifacts to show the part played by Villier's Marines in the original assault in 1704, and neither of our Regiments took part in the Great Siege of 1779 - 1783, but Sergeant Major Ince, then of the Military Artificers, who was mainly responsible for the construction of the great Galleries, was initially a soldier in the Queen's Royal Regiment. Then in what is known as the Trafalgar Cemetery, just outside the South Gate, are a number of graves of Queen's officers who died in the great Yellow Fever epidemic of 1804 - the Regiment had been transferred to Gibraltar after winning the Battle Honour of The Sphinx for its part in the Battle of Aboukir in 1801.

Across 35 miles of water from Gibraltar lies Tangier, and here the Old Citadel defended by The Tangier Regiment from 1662 - 1684 seems fully intact and is entirely identifiable, overlooking the harbour. The Old Citadel is now called the Kasbah, but many of the buildings as well as the Walls must have been there when our ancestors fought, and in many cases died, to hold Tangier for King Charles II and began to establish the honours and traditions of our Regiment. Tangier also contains a fascinating Military museum put together by the Forbes Magazine of America - it contains a quite outstanding display of model soldiers and dioramas.

JWS

*A recent addition to the archives in the Regimental Museum has been the notebook of Colour Sergeant Roberts, 31st Regiment, between 1856 and 1867. He recorded meticulously issues of arms and clothing to his Company, details of issue and forfeiture of pay and the movements of the Regiment. These records throw an interesting light on life in an Infantry regiment in the last century. Although conditions were hard and discipline severe, many soldiers extended their service with the Colours.*

*The following are extracts from Colour Sergeant Roberts' notebook.*

#### **MALTA, SPRING 1856 to FEB 1857**

**1856**

8 Nov Drew from Quartermaster's Stores 100 peaks of forage caps. Served them out to men same date.

13 Nov Mrs Sergt Smith joined from England.

26 Dec Gave Capt Travers Pat Eagan's Medal and Clasp and Star.

*Note: Eagan had died on 14 Dec.*

**1857**

7 Mar Mr Jeffcock found dead in his tent at St George's Bay.  
*Note: Lt Jeffcock's shell jacket is in the Regimental Museum.*

24 Apr Left Wing with Headquarters, embarked for Gibraltar.

#### **GIBRALTAR, MAY 1857 TO MAY 1858**

3 May Disembarked at Gibraltar.

20 Aug Received from Orderly Room 11 Protestant Bibles of superior quality.

8 Sep Regiment changed quarters – Right Wing to Windmill Hill and Left Wing to Buena Vista.

14 Sep Horse Guards memo published showing the Establishment of each Regiment: 8 Service Companies and 4 Depot Companies.

**1858**

20 Jan Regiment changed quarters from Windmill Hill and Buena Vista to Grand Casemates.

28 May Embarked, on board the Steam Ship 'City of Manchester' and sailed from Gibraltar.

#### **SOUTH AFRICA, JUL 1858 TO OCT 1858**

**1858**

1 Jul Anchored in Table Bay this morning.

5 Jul The Regiment arrived at Algoa Bay.

13 Jul Headquarters of the Regiment consisting of Nos 6,7,8 and 10 Companies marched from Port Elizabeth.

27 Jul Headquarters marched into King Williams Town this day.

17 Sep Nos 4,5,8,9 and 10 Companies arrived at East London.

12 Oct 31st Regiment embarked at East London on board the Steam Troop Ship 'Simoon'.

#### **INDIA, DEC 1858 TO FEB 1860**

2 Dec Regiment disembarked at Bombay.

7 Dec Nos 8,9 and 10 Companies took train for Poona.

17 Dec Regiment inspected by the Commander in Chief, Sir H. Somerset.

**1859**

7 Oct Women of 31st Regiment joined from the Cape of Good Hope.

**1860**

15 Feb Nos 9 and 10 Companies embarked for China in the Steam Ship 'Assaye'.

22 Feb Pte Massey: 5 days grog stopped.

9 Mar Left Wing dropped anchor in Singapore Harbour.

#### **CHINA, MAR 1860 TO JUN 1863**

25 Mar Dropped anchor in Hong Kong Harbour.

27 Mar Nos 9 and 10 Companies disembarked and went into camp.

14 Apr Took over the duties of Sergeant Major to the Provisional Battalion at Hong Kong.

26 Nov Provisional Battalion removed from Murray Barracks, Hong Kong to Kowloon Camp.

6 Dec The Provisional Battalion ceases.

7 Dec Joined the Police Force at Canton.

**1861**

15 Sep Became a total abstainer again.(!)

21 Oct The City of Canton finally handed over to the Chinese. The Police Force and the last of the troops embarked for Hong Kong in the Steam Ship 'Cooper'.

1 Nov Put in my claim for discharge from the Army.

9 Nov Joined the Police Force at Kowloon.

11 Nov Withdrew my claim for discharge from the Service. Received from HM late Commissioners at Canton 100 dollars gratuity.

14 Nov Quitted the Hong Kong Police, the situation not being as good as expected.

**1862**

30 Jan Chinese New Year's Day. This commences the 4,599 years of Chinese history.

15 Mar A Garrison Total Abstinence Society established at Hong Kong.

27 Jul Hong Kong visited by a severe typhoon. Many lives lost and much damage done.

16 Sep Landed in Shanghai.

18 Sep Proceeded on detachment to Fa Wha.

21 Oct Marched from Fa Wha to commence operations against the Taipings.

24 Oct Siege of Kanding opened. Stormed the city at 8 a.m. Met with no resistance.



- 26 Oct Rejoined the Detachment at Fa Wha. Three privates drunk on the line of march from Shanghai to Fa Wha. Tried by Detachment Court Martial on 30 Oct. Convicted and sentenced to 42 days imprisonment and loss of 1d per day for 30 days.
- 8 Nov Embarked for Hong Kong.
- 14 Nov Drummer Mallet deprived of GC badge. Drunk when Orderly Bugler.
- 21 Nov Number of men in Company who can read and write:
- |                            |    |
|----------------------------|----|
| Read and write             | 56 |
| Read but cannot write      | 20 |
| Can neither read nor write | 11 |
- 8 Dec Privates Cleworth and Cook tried by Garrison Court Martial for striking corporal of Corps of Police. 50 lashes each. Former 56 days imprisonment, latter 84 days imprisonment.
- 1863
- 1 Jan Private Nelson's Court Martial. 50 lashes, 28 days imprisonment. Deprived of 1d per day for 672 days for being drunk in Barracks on 25 Dec.
- (Notes: This sentence seems exceptionally severe for an offence which took place in Barracks and on Christmas Day.  
Flogging was abolished in the Army in peace time in 1867.)
- 27 Jun Nos 2,5,7,9 and 10 Companies 31st Regiment embarked on board the 'West Derby' for England.
- 25 Sep Rounded the Cape of Good Hope.
- 15 Oct Crossed the Line this day.

#### ENGLAND, NOV 1863 TO JUN 1867

- 20 Nov Disembarked at Plymouth.
- 24 Nov Mrs Roberts (wife) rejoined this evening.
- 1864
- 14 Jul Private Spears brought before a Board for loss of China Medal. Decision: To be supplied with a new one at his own expense, after an absence of two years from Regimental Defaulters Book.
- 1 Oct Proceeded by rail to Aldershot.
- 1865
- 15 Mar Handed over to No 10 Company one stand of arms, one set of accoutrements.
- Note: A stand of arms is a complete set of arms for one soldier.
- 29 Apr Extract from Regimental Orders of this date.  
'On all occasions of firing in Line, the front rank will invariably drop on the knee previous to delivering fire. In File firing, the front rank will remain on the knee to load until the order to cease fire is given. In Volley firing, the front rank will rise to reload, kneeling again when the word "Ready" is given.

- 1866
- 8 May Mrs Cpl Wyatt taken on the strength of the Regiment.
- 25 Oct Sent to Orderly Room for 13 Protestant Bibles, 16 Prayer Books and 1 Catholic Prayer Book.

#### 1867

Strength of companies on embarkation for Malta.			
Service companies		Depot companies	
Field officers	3		
Captains	10	Captains	2
Lieuts	11	Lieuts	3
Ensigns	9	Ensigns	1
Staff Sergeants	5		
Sergeants	49	Sergeants	11
Drummers	21	Drummers	4
Rank and file	680	Rank and file	120
Total	788	Total	141

Note: The 31st Regiment sailed for Malta on 1 Jun, but Colour Sergeant Roberts did not go with them, his Colour service being nearly complete. He was posted to 3rd Depot Battalion at Chatham two weeks later.

- 18 Jun Left 3rd Depot Battalion, Chatham and proceeded to Shrewsbury to join the Salop Militia.

#### 1868

- 29 Jul Received Good Conduct Medal from 3rd Depot Battalion, Chatham.

PGEH

#### 22 Column, March 1944. Memories of Milestone 20

'22 Column will set an ambush on the Banmauk - Indaw road at Milestone 20'. This news is given to us whilst in bivouac having a well-earned rest after that incessant marching to all points of the compass, with no apparent destination. Now we had one - a figure 20 on the road. The news made the neck hairs prick as usual, only for a second, but it was there. At least my beard would hide any facial feelings. I wondered did the others have hairs that prickled, did their stomachs turn over - those lads I had joined up with, shared confidences and family news with? They certainly did not show it. They were great lads. Some were married - how they must miss their wives and children!

A whispered command 'Load up' stops any further pondering. Silently we help each other put the heavy packs on. Why does it get heavier every time? The chink of the mules' harness buckles sounds so loud. One tries to protest, raising his head to do so, but the poor beast has had his voice box removed, so all we hear is a rush of air from his throat, but no noise.

Off we go in single file to the ambush site. How heavy the PIAT feels. Thank goodness we pass it around. I feel sure it will be of no use on this operation. I wonder, will we go near Auktaw. How I hate that place. It has an air of foreboding about it. We ourselves were caught there - lost my friend Billy Gittings, also an officer and two men were missing. I look at the man in front of me, as I had for many weeks. He looks the same, from his bush hat to his boots, except perhaps a little dirtier. Could do with a bath myself.

It is now getting dark and the Column is stopping and starting. Messages are passed back, man to man. 'We are crossing a road.' Our turn comes and we cross a metalled road. I am behind a huge mule, and just as we begin to enter the jungle on the far side, he decides to stop. How dark it is now. But, what's this? It is getting lighter with moving shadows as well. God, it's lorries! Can't be Japs - not with headlamps on. The brain seems unwilling to accept that we have come face to face with the enemy, but isn't that why we are here - to ambush them? How shiny the mule's hindquarters look in the headlamps. Then realization that we must be seen, and up go the neck hairs. 'Move, you stubborn animal!' Push, push, I'm sure I lifted that mule bodily into the safety of the dark jungle.

The convoy starts to pass, seventeen trucks, the occupants clearly visible in the headlamps of the following truck. When they have passed, an uneasy calm returns. We move forward and I see the Meza River which runs parallel to the road. The ambush is set on the north side of the road. The night is uneventful, thank goodness, after our one near miss. At dawn we withdraw up to the high ground, from which we can see down on to the road and catch glimpses of the river through the trees. The ground between the road and the river has now been booby-trapped. What an ideal place for an ambush! A cuppa would go down a treat now. During daylight two Burmese pass through and are detained for security. They are terrified, and I feel for them.

Dusk returns, and we re-set the ambush. We lie there so quiet with only the gechos breaking the silence. Do they object to our occupation of their territory? I had dozed off, when suddenly the jungle quiet is shattered by a crescendo of fire at the end of the ambush and speeds down the length of the line. Now wide awake, I see a lorry stop in front of our section, the driver clearly visible in the glow of the lights. He calmly leans forward, applies the brakes and extinguishes the lights. Then total darkness. I raise my rifle and fire several rounds at that cab. This action releases all tension and I feel good. Bert Broadlis, next to me, throws some grenades.

Daylight, and we return to the high ground. The man next to me does not move. He has been killed. Not a sound, no blood, I remember he had a small wound on his left breast. He had died instantly. Later a shot rings out, and we hear that Lieut Sparrow is dead, shot by a sniper. Our platoon digs a grave behind a large tree. The two Burmese watch all this with horror, crying and shaking. I think how calm and correct we are. Is it discipline, or are we afraid to show our feelings? I remember looking down into the grave, not knowing anything except sadness. We have a short service, and a made-up cross is inserted into the ground.

As we prepare to march off, we are attacked. The Nips have set light to the jungle, trying to smoke us out. You have to hand it to them, they don't miss a trick. Our section is ordered to do a sweep at the rear, and another section does the same in a pincer movement. A burst of machine gun fire rips through the trees above our heads. I think it came from our side. Such is jungle warfare.

(Continued on Page 3)

**W. WEATHERBY** writes from Newquay:- I remember the East Surreys Badge in Lucknow in 1924 which was shown in the last (November) copy of the Newsletter. I helped to make this badge and it was my dearest wish to see it again.

**M.J. ORCHARD** writes from Waltham Cross:- I noted in your Newsletter an article about Mr H. Mellows. We were in Sgt E (Arty) Wards Squad, another member of our squad was Corporal James Barrett, who, the last time I heard of him, lived in Streatham S.W. 16. I would also be interested in contacting Sgt Ward again, who I have not seen since 1983. I have recently retired from the Post Office after 37 years, and although I still see some of the chaps its not the same as the comradeship of the Regiment, that will never die.

**C. TAYLOR** from Weybridge writes:- I have just received my copy of the Regimental Newsletter and have read it all. There are two pieces of news which are of great interest to me. It is with regret that I read of the death of Lt Col Kimmerling as I was with him in 1938-39 and was at St Valery-en-Caux but I was sent into St Valery to assemble the members of the Regiment as they were sent in.

He was able to get away from Veules-les-Roses but we were taken prisoner on the 12th, I took a roll call at the time and there were 108 of us.

I have been back to St Valery twice since with my pal J. Mandeville. The first time we were almost floating in drink from the welcome we received. We then had to drive to Dunkirk.

**W.A. WILLIAMS** writes from Winchcombe, Glos:- The Newsletter was more than usually a delight because of the photographs and I am venturing to send you these taken in 1934 and 1935 because we were all wearing the Paschal Lamb in our collars and, of course, the tunic buttons of the Queen's Royal Regiment (I still have mine in use on a blazer).

Whitgift Middle School Cadet Corps, to which I belonged was B Company, 1st Cadet Battalion of the Queen's Royal Regiment. We had many fine parades but undoubtedly the high spot came in 1935 when we were invited to mass with the band of

Whitgift School OTC and march in the Lord Mayor's Show. Sergeant Instructor Etches trained the bands of both schools - a smart and soldierly figure if ever I saw one - and a man to be reckoned with! I think you can see the 'bearing' he managed to impart to his schoolboys. - Bags of Swank' was his motto. Imagine my luck when in 1944 in Italy I was posted to 2/6 Bn The Queen's and found myself wearing the Paschal Lamb again. Incidentally I was greeted at Brigade HQ by the Intelligence Officer - Capt H.B. Oswald with whom I had been contemporary at Whitgift Middle School, also of The Queen's.

Three officers have recently retired and come to live in the Cotswold region, they are Captain John Lea-Wilson MC, Major Derek Edwards and Captain Reg White. The real coincidence is that we all served in 2/6 Queen's in the North Italy campaign and, although we have kept in touch, these moves happened - no appreciation of the situation, no recces, no 'O' Group. Nothing. Just Happy change.

**H. HYLANDS** writes from Newport, Gwent:- May I take this opportunity to say how very pleased I was with the Far East display shown at the museum in Clandon Park, and having met up with some of my comrades whom I had not seen for many years really made my day. Many thanks to all concerned.

**J.H. AUSTIN** writes from Hastings, Sussex:- Thank you for sending me the November Newsletter. I would like any back dated Newsletters on the Salerno landings. I was there myself and had not gone many paces up the beach when I was hit by a S mine fragment. It was some time before I rejoined my Battalion, they were in the Rocco Monfina area, and on arriving I was sad to see so many of the lads missing.

We were lucky to get Christmas dinner out of the line but soon after found ourselves in what was called a quiet area on the south bank of the Garigliano River. My mate LCpl Bert Maynard was killed on a recce patrol and I was asked if I would like to bury him, so we went in a jeep to just outside a place called Sessa where the Padre gave a service for him and a few other lads.

As time passed I was driving up through Sessa and to my surprise the graves were empty, so I asked a couple of local Italians what had happened, they said they had been taken to a larger cemetery at Minturno. Needless to say on my way back from Rome I made a detour off highway 6 through Minturno and to my surprise I found that he had been brought back to almost the same spot where he died, and stranger still, lying alongside was an old mate, Sgt Eddie Pratt from way back and our old Platoon Sgt. Even now I could never explain how I felt leaving that cemetery.

So you see I would appreciate any Newsletters on the Italian campaign.

**M. WILKES** from Lindsey, Suffolk writes:- In March 1942 I was a 21 year old Lieutenant in The East Surreys who had volunteered for transfer to the Gurkhas.

In those days it was the practice for British Army Officers going to the Indian Army to spend some time with a British Battalion in India before joining their Indian Regiment.

As there was no East Surrey Battalion in India I was sent to The Queen's in Peshawar, this was a regular battalion which, I think, had been in the country for a number of years, certainly in today's jargon "there was a lot of malaria about" in it.

As this was the time of Gandhi's "Quit India" campaign we did a considerable amount of training in aid of the Civil Power and reconnoitred Peshawar City with the Indian Police in case there was rioting.

Later went up through the Kyber Pass to Landi K hotel to prepare defences in the mountains against a German break through in the Caucasus where it was alleged, libellously I am sure, that we had used a years supply of explosives in a month blasting trenches with rock.

In June my posting to the 6th Gurkha Rifles came through and I went off to their Depot at Abbottabad.

As I was very much a 'bird of passage' I cannot recall names apart from Major Parkinson who may have been 2 I/C but I shall be interested to learn which Battalion it was, what was its subsequent history and whether the memories of anyone in Peshawar 44 years ago is jogged by these notes.



**A.G. BRIDGEMAN, DCM**, writes from Berkhamsted:- I have been disabled with Multiple Sclerosis for the past 5 years, which unfortunately is worsening rather than improving and I am now very housebound.

The Newsletter gave me much pleasure and interesting reading, as I had no idea such an Association existed and am now contacting Sid Pratton re the Salerno Reunion in September. He and I were great pals, and I have often thought about him and many others during the last 40 years.

I have been a member of the D.C.M. League - London Branch since 1948. In September 1985 there was a Muster at Windsor Castle when 180 were on parade and they came from all over the world including 5 serving soldiers from the Falklands. I was one of the six in wheelchairs, but it was a great event, the Duke of Kent as our Patron took the Inspection and March Past and afterwards attended a reception.

**S. MOUNTAIN**, a newly joined member writes, I very much enjoyed the Newsletter. My time with 1/6th Queen's was very short. I was called up in Dec. 42 and spent almost a year with the Royal Artillery. I did basic training at Maidstone with The Queen's and more at Lancaster. After about a week in Normandy I was posted to 1/6th Bn in the line between I think Lilly and Caumont on the 19th June, they had just had a bashing at Villers Bocage a few days before. A Company were in front of us in B Company. Early in the morning of 22nd June I got hit by shrapnel in the right foot which brought me back to England for three months.

I met up with the 1/6th again in the front line on October 7th a few miles from Nijmegen. On October 8th at dinner time I was on a stretcher on my way home again!

I was with A Company and was on a standing patrol a few hundred yards ahead of the company on a bombed out canal bridge. I was on the wrong end of a "potato masher" which broke my right elbow and I still have pieces of German shrapnel in my legs, hips and groin. I was invalided out in February 1945 with a small pension.

I hope one day to find someone who knows the spots in Normandy and Holland where I copped it, so that if ever I could afford it, I could visit these sites.

**L C A Moxon** writes, Has the Drill of "falling in" by the Drum survived, or is it a thing of the past?

In 1928 I did a TA Course at the Buffs Depot, and we really were put through it - two Sergeants to eleven of us. At the time the Guards Depot at Caterham was closed and the Depot was temporarily at the Old Cavalry Barracks. Whether or not it was to vie with them I do not know, but all Other Ranks "fell in by the drum." The Drummer took his place behind the RSM who signalled to him to "tap" or "roll" by opening and closing his right hand. I imagine it is a very old drill, can you tell me whether it is still practiced and if so just what the sequence is?

As far as I remember it went something as follows:

All ranks walked smartly to and fro on the edge of the parade ground, the RSM took his place in the centre of the edge of the ground, the drummer marched to a pace or two behind him.

On tap of drum all stopped marching up and down and turned to their right or left as the case required, markers were already in position, on the second tap all marched onto the parade ground and "fell-in" on the appropriate marker, on another tap "eyes right" then a roll during which all dressed by the right, a tap and "eyes front".

I know that for the first day or two I was quite bewildered but when I got the hang of it I thoroughly enjoyed it. My belief is that though "square bashing" is a term of contempt or derision most men thoroughly enjoy it, take a secret pride in their own smartness and that of their comrades. I certainly did but as I soon after became Orderly Room Sergeant I rarely went on parade and my drill went to pot, and I know and regret that.

**L. KING** now living at Esher writes:- I served with the 2/6th and 1st Surreys. I lost touch with all my old comrades and after 41 years the only contact with my old Regiment has been your letter and the Newsletter, and I have now been contacted by "Pinky" Williams with details of the Reunion at St Valery.

Reading the Newsletter I was very sad to read of the death of Lt. Col. Kimmerling and to read about the steps and the cliffs at Veules-Les-Roses. I was there and made it to the beach with the help of a cow.

I was interested also to see a photo of case No. 12 in the museum which contains one of the footballs kicked over 'the top' in 1916. My old Dad was one of the 'team' so it brought back memories of the stories he used to tell me. When I returned to UK from Italy and awaiting demob, I was at Canterbury and played for the 12th I.T.C. There were quite a few famous names in the team at that time, so you see Dad and I both played for the East Surreys.

**R.T. HANNINGTON** writes:- I was interested in the article in the Harrow Observer, February 27th, about the reunion of members of the East Surrey Regiment in France later this year.

My uncle, Sgt. James Hannington, my father's brother, was serving with the East Surrey Regiment when he was killed in May 1940, he was buried in Belgium.

Last August my wife, my mother and myself set off for a weekend in Belgium to find his grave.

We found the church and small graveyard in a remote setting in the village of Kaster, near Anzegem, between Oudenaarde and Kortrijk in Belgium. There are only sixteen servicemen buried there. The graves, in two rows of eight, are neatly kept and looked after by local people. About half the men buried there are from the East Surrey Regiment. I enclose a photograph.

It was an emotional moment and I wondered why the men had been buried there and not in one of the large war cemeteries in the area.

I hope this letter might be of some interest to you and your comrades.



Kaster.

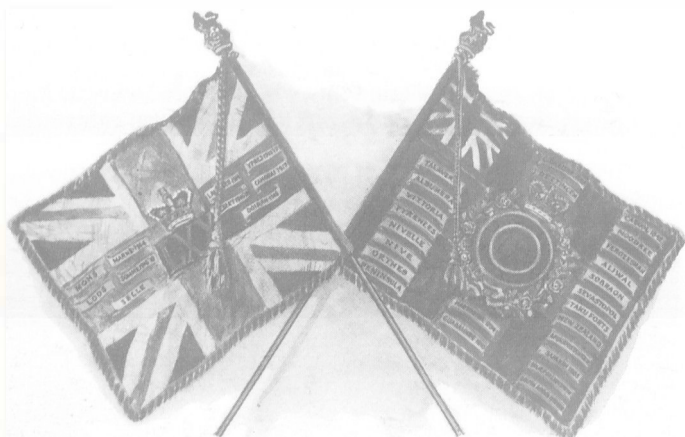
**A.H.F. WILLIAMS** from Northwood writes:- I enclose a photo of The Colours and Silver of The 6th Bn The East Surrey Regiment (TA) displayed in the Drill Hall, Park Lane, Richmond during Recruiting Week 1938. For the camera buffs this was taken with a box brownie placed on the edge of a table with the shutter open, I then went into the mess for a pint, then returned and closed the shutter.

The article on the regimental silver has put my mind at rest, as I have often wondered what happened to all the old silver.



## FORTY YEARS ON

On 17th November 1945 the Colours of the original Second Battalion The East Surrey Regiment were brought home from Singapore in HMS Nelson. On 30th November 1945 the Trooping and Laying-Up of these Old Colours and presentation of New colours were held at West Chiltington, Sussex. The new Colours were presented by the Colonel of the Regiment, General Sir Richard Foster, on behalf of HM King George VI. This was the first colours ceremony post war. Forty years later, on 30th November 1985 a small but very successful commemoration reunion was held at Clandon Park. Fifteen ex-officers of the Second Battalion The East Surrey Regiment 1945/46 and their ladies were present. also present were Major and Mrs Peter Hill; they had very kindly opened up the Museum and displayed photographs of forty years ago. Capt Derek Gee, Adjutant of the 2nd Bn and Mrs Gee were also present.

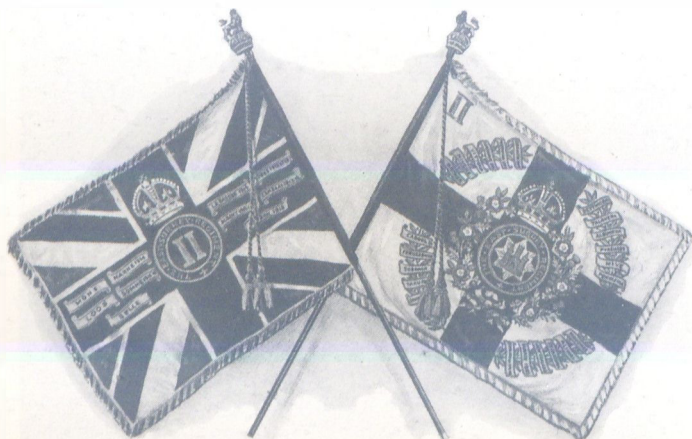


The Colours of the former 70th Regiment were presented at Aldershot in 1867 by Lady Scarlett, wife of the General Officer Commanding.

The last time that the Colours were taken overseas by the 2nd Battalion was in August 1938. After service in China and Malaya, they were eventually placed in the vaults of the Hong Kong - Shanghai Bank in Singapore.

These Colours never fell into enemy hands. After the Japanese surrender in 1945, the Colours were recovered intact by Major F A H Magee, who arranged for their despatch to England in HMS Nelson. Major (now Colonel) Magee served with the Second Battalion in Malaya and was taken prisoner by the Japanese. He was on parade on 30 November 1945 being with Tony Hannaford one of the escorts to the Old Colours on their return to the Battalion. Unfortunately he could not be on parade on 30th November 1985; he was in America.

Both stands of Colours are Laid-Up in the Regimental Museum at Clandon Park.



## On Parade 30 Nov. 1945 and 30 Nov. 1985

OC Parade	Col Buck Buchanan
Adjutant	Capt Lyndsay King
Escort to the Old Colours on	
their return to the Battalion	Lt Col Tony Hannaford
Colour Party of the Old	
Colours	Maj John Clark
Colour Party of the New	
Colours	Maj Dick Gray
No. 1 Guard The Escort	Maj Arthur Newton &
for the Colours	Maj Frank Oram
No. 2 Guard	Maj Jack Griffen &
	Maj Derek Poulsen
No. 3 Guard	Maj Logan Brown &
	Capt Bill Large
Holding the Ground	Maj Bill Madigan &
	Capt Ned Sparks
Transport Officer	Capt Ken Batterson
Spectators & Camp Followers	Mrs Jo Newton &
	Miss Thelma Ratcliff

## Reflections

Research for the forthcoming TA Display now being arranged by the Regimental Museum for next year brings to light many interesting facts and figures.

Present-day serving officers might sigh for the so-called "good old days" as brought to light in the pages of the Minute Book of the Officers' Mess, 22nd Bn. The London Regiment (The Queen's) of 1922.

At a Mess Meeting held on the 14th June, 1922, it was decided that there should be an entrance fee of Two Guineas for active Members and an annual subscription of Two Guineas. For Honorary Members, the annual subscription would be One Guinea which would include the use of the Mess and copies every two months of Bn. Orders and other notices. For both Active and Honorary Members, the annual subscription would include the cost of the Annual Dinner, although Members would be debited with their share of expenses for drinks, etc.

Following this Meeting, the next Annual Dinner was held at Oddenino's Imperial Restaurant, Regent Street, on the 25th January, 1923, and Officers who wished to invite guests would be charged 25/- per guest. Evening dress with miniatures was worn and among the many decorations of those attending could be seen VC's, CMG's, DSO's and MC's.

The Menu for that evening was:-

*Huitres Natives*

*Tortue Claire*

*Saumon See. Mousseline*

*Agneau de Pauillac Boulangère*

*Petit Pois à la Française*

*Bécasses Rotie au Fume (Woodcock)*

*Salade d'Orange*

*Jambon de York*

*Pêches Nouvelles du Cap Glacées Trianon*

*Paillettes Diable*

washed down with

*Moet et Chandon (22/6 bot)*

*Dry Imperial 1911 (7/6 bot)*

*Graham's Port (10/- bot)*

*Vieux Cognac (30/- bot)*

The total bill for drinks for 46 diners (including cocktails amounted to £ 26.16.2.!!

(PS to those now serving. Don't attack the Mess Committee too soon; remember that £ 200 a year in those days was a good salary.)



### The Western Desert

Early September 1940 saw the battalion transport formed up in convoy loaded with the battalion stores and equipment and start on the long journey from Palestine to The Western Desert via The Sinai Desert, Ismalia, Moasca, Cairo, Meena, the Cairo to Alexandria Desert Road and then due west via El-Daba-Fuka to Sidi Hinaish to our final destination The Buqqush Box, which was a defensive position astride the coastal road and the only road leading on through Mersa-Matrah-Sidi-Barrani, Sollum, Bardia, Tobruk, the last named place being about as far west as The 2nd Battalion reached in its Western Desert campaigns.

As the convoy began its first leg across the Sinai Desert, we had gone about a quarter of the way when I noticed a 15 cwt. truck with its rear tyres on fire. This was caused by the extreme heat of the road surface. As the truck was carrying mortar bombs I deemed it prudent to remove the burning tyres without delay.

I was at this time a Corporal in charge of 'A' Company transport which consisted of 1 x 30 cwt lorry for heavy equipment, 3 x 15 cwt trucks, one each for the three platoons, and 1 x 8 cwt pick up for the Company Commander who at this time was Captain D.L. Lloyd-Owen, his 2nd in command was 2/Lt T.V. Close.

When Lt. Cecil Ottaway and the fitters lorry arrived they decided that new tyres were required. A very simple remedy, only the tyres were at the other end of the Sinai Desert in a store in Ismalia, some hours road journey ahead. The MTO ordered me to remain with the offending vehicle and he would send a vehicle back with new tyres.

By this time all the remainder of the convoy had gone on, taking with them our haversack rations. There was I, the Company Commander's batman who I think was named Pittock, and the driver of the 15 cwt truck alone in the wastes of the Sinai Desert. Shades of Beau Guests passed in front of our eyes and what an inhospitable place to be left in.

In the 8 cwt P.U. was the personal baggage of the officers of 'A' company including a tuck box containing supplies of non perishable items of food to supplement their meals in the desert.

The Company Commander's batman knew what was in the tuck box, what is more he had the key to the box. He also decided that he wasn't going to die of starvation in the desert, an attitude of mind that I and the other truck driver heartily agreed with.

I cannot remember now, these forty four years on what it was that we took from the tuck box, but I seem to remember packets of soup and oxos were among the items that we enjoyed for three meals. This made a large dent in the stock.

To complete this part of the story out of sequence. Some time after our arrival at the Baqqush Box Defensive Positions, 2/Lieut. T.V. Close came to me and remarked that he and the officers of 'A' company were DELIGHTED that they were able to help us in our hour of need and hoped that we had enjoyed the

contents of their tuck box. I got the distinct impression that there was a note of insincerety, but I don't think they ever bore us any malice.

The replacement tyres arrived in the early hours of the following day. Having carried out the necessary tyre changing, we set off to complete the long journey across the Sinai Desert. We finally met up with the main convoy as it was leaving Moasca.

The driving was very monotonous. For those who have never seen these desert roads, they were nothing more than a single, black tarmacadam surface of inferior quality, stretching away in the distance as far as the eye could see with nothing on either side of the road but desert of one kind or another.

To keep station and the correct distance between vehicles when in convoy required considerable concentration. I think the whole journey took about three or four days to complete. When we arrived at our final destination, The Buqqush Box, the Battalion had already arrived. They had travelled by train and de-trained at a station called Sidi-Hinaish near our positions.



Tobruk:

The group includes Capt. M.T.N. Jennings, Major E.S. Bingham and Lieut. J.A. Robertson-Walker.

The Battalion were immediately involved in large scale digging of defensive positions in the Buqqush Box area and in exercises deep into the desert. We were not in immediate contact with the enemy, they were many miles away to the west at a place called Sidi-Barrani, where they had halted after their first big advance. Their Air Force however was active particularly at night. There was very little if any opposition from the Royal Air Force for one very good reason, they had only a few old fashioned Gloster Gladiators and some Lysander Spotter places.

We were lucky that it was the Italian Air Force we had to contend with in those early days. Their nightly raids were more of a nuisance than anything, nevertheless there were casualties.

I will always remember CSM Len Wells in one of those early raids. As usual it was a night raid on our positions with the moon well up. Len Wells didn't take cover himself, he stood up in the open making sure all of us young ones had taken cover in the slit trenches, while he with his eyes lifted heavenwards was uttering profanities to the SPAGHETTI EATING B..... Well that was about all we could fire at them at that time. There were no heavy anti aircraft guns, at least not where we were, and if there were any, they were precious few in number.

The Italians dropped a number of anti personnel bombs in the disguise of things like flasks. One had to be most careful not to pick up suspicious looking objects or even kick them out of the way. There were some casualties from these devices.

One worthwhile incident of interest ... There had ben a night raid on our Company position, and the O.C's dug-out had a very near miss, and in daylight we noticed several small unexploded bombs laying around. The Company was



14 Platoon 'C' Company Tobruk.

proceeding out on one of the many Battalion exercises and a few chaps were left behind to look after our positions. When we returned we found that one of the chaps had collected in one of these unexploded bombs, and stripped it down. When he was asked why he had done such a foolish thing, his reply was to the effect that he wanted to see how the thing worked. I think he got a deserved wiggling from the Company Commander, but I often thought he missed his true vocation, for chaps like him were sorely needed back home to diffuse the many unexploded bombs there.

From the drivers point of view we had a lot to learn on how to cope with the different types of desert surfaces we had to traverse.

Sometimes the going would be soft and one had to take the vehicle at a fairly fast pace to get through. Not always with success I am afraid. On many occasions the vehicle would be bogged down in soft sand well over the axles. There was nothing for it but for everyone to lend a hand and dig out, get behind the vehicle and push while the driver sat at the controls and revved up the engine to get the vehicle on the move again.

Other difficulties such as negotiating into and out of wadis, and navigation all had to be learned and overcome. Most of our drivers were still the hard core from Isle of Wight and Palestine days, so they were experienced and a good set of drivers, and on the whole, throughout the Western Desert they acquitted themselves pretty well.

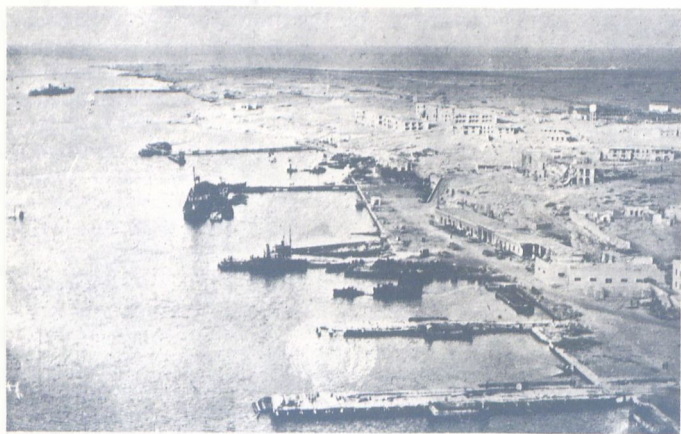
The vehicles we had brought to the desert were not really designed for desert purposes. They were pre-war designed and I think with Europe in mind. They were certainly very sturdily built, had they not been so, I am sure they would have landed up on the scrap heap well before they did. Remember also that The Royal Scots before us, and then ourselves, had used this motor transport extensively in Palestine for nearly three years, and if anything is going to wear out mechanical transport, it will be desert conditions with sand being the bogey, for it got into every nook and cranny of all working parts. It speaks well for the makers at the time, Morris Motors, that these vehicles served us until the conclusion of our part in the first Western Desert Battles up to and as far as Bardia and finally back to the Nile Delta.

We had been in the Buqquish positions for a few weeks when reinforcements arrived from home. I think I am right in saying they were men from the first call up groups, also some young officer reinforcements.

Shortly after their arrival I was detailed to take one of these young officers on a three day reconnaissance to a forward area between Mersa-Matruh and Sidi-Barrani. His name was 2/Lt R.M. Merrett, and from that day and for the next four years our fortunes were to be connected from time to time.

I had by the time of this detail become reasonably competent in driving any vehicle in desert conditions. In the case of this detail I took a 8 cwt PU, and with 2/Lieut. R.M. Merrett and a batman on board off we went.

Some 44 years later, I had the privilege of sitting in his lovely cottage garden (July/August 1984) where he and Mrs Merrett were most kind to me and my wife. We sat in the garden reminiscing over those days.



*Tobruk Harbour*

Flies and sanitation, two aspects of desert life are worth mentioning. I don't think it is possible to describe the flies pestilence as it occurred to us in the desert. For anyone who has not been there I think it would be beyond their imagination. As soon as one produced food or drink the flies would zoom in and literally cover it, and no amount of swatting would remove them. By day when one was perspiring from the heat they would settle on one for the moisture.

The latrines. I never ever came to terms with the system. For the other ranks a latrine was a long deep trench, ten to twelve feet in depth and about three feet wide. There might, if one was available, be a long pole to be used as a seat, either end of the pole resting in a sort of trestle. If not, one would just have to squat over the trench, quite a risky business when one comes to think of it now. There was not even a screen to give some degree of privacy. With the heat of the day and the flies it was awful. I personally used to try and wait until darkness and the cool of the desert night to obtain some comfort and a degree of privacy.

The one memory that escapes me is the food of those days. I know when we had bread we used to inspect it for weavels, and by the time they were ousted there wasn't much left. If there was no bread, then it was 'hard tack' i.e. hard biscuits. I seem to remember tinned bacon being on the menu for breakfast, or a thing called soya links, they were supposed to be sausages, (they looked the most repulsive item one would wish to see on their breakfast plate). The tinned bacon, when and how it was served depended on the imagination and the mood of the regimental cook. If he had any imagination, care would be taken as he opened the tin and carefully unfolded the contents, and he would try and cook and serve something that looked like a rasher of bacon. But, on most occasions, one would present their mess tin and a spoon full of very small broken pieces covered in fat was slapped into it.

The main meat course for most days was corned beef (bully beef): that was the one commodity that there was no shortage of. Again it depended on the imagination of the cook, but I think in general it was served up in a menu called bully stew. Of course all the meals had that gritty content mingled in, the sand!

Water of course was always scarce, one had to use it with great care. I think a mess tin of water for ones ablutions in the morning was the ration. There was a system, teeth cleaning first, then shave and wash, any water left was kept to wash the utensils.

I am not too sure about the laundry arrangements, but I seem to remember a clean change of shorts and shirts coming up once a week. The items were never one's own, so it was pot luck as to how the items were going to fit.

Whilst we were in the buqquish box positions, we were able to go down to the sea to bathe. I remember taking the officers. 2/Lt. Close used to rib me quite a lot on these trips. I would be moaning about the desert and saying what most of us were thinking, anyone who wants this place can have it. He used to pull my leg, he would say "Cpl Atkins, millionaires would spend thousands of pounds to come and bathe in the blue seas of the Mediterranean, and here you are getting it for nothing." We all used to go into the sea in the nude, there were no maidens to worry about. The one useless thing about it all was that having got one's self clean and refreshed, by the time we had got back to the company positions we would be covered from head to foot in sand again.

Despite all these petty restrictions and discomforts, we learned to live with them and they became a way of life. Again, despite the flies and the danger of jippy tummies, except for the desert sores, or burnt and split lips, we were all fairly fit and our morale was good.

In the last week of November 1940, the CSM, Len Wells, sent me on 7 days leave to Cairo and a Cpl Lane took over my vehicle and the responsibility of looking after 'A' Company transport.

I went off to Cairo, found myself a billet in some down town hotel and set about seeing the sights of Cairo. I can't say that I was impressed with this city. I was on my own, so I spent most days either eating egg omelette and chips in some cafe, going to the pictures, or just resting in the hotel. I did not have a lot of money anyway.

My hotel was situated very near that very well known street of ill repute, it was called the Burka Street, where the ladies of easy virtue sold themselves. Being human I was sorely

tempted, but with my hand on my heart, I can truthfully say I resisted the temptation, for I was too frightened of what the results might be. We had had it drummed into us so often that to render one's self unfit for active service through contracting venereal disease was a punishable offence, probably trial by Courts Martial. It always meant loss of pay whilst one was receiving hospital treatment, but worst of all was the stigma that came with it, for one could not keep it a secret under those conditions. When I returned to the Battalion positions seven days later, there were only a very small number of people present and I learned that the Battalion had taken part in the first Western Desert battles, and captured Sidi-Barrani.

I also learned that Captain Sammy Lynwood had been killed in the attack on Sidi-Barrani. He had been commissioned in Palestine just before we left for the Western Desert. He had been at the Regimental Depot back in 1937 when I enlisted. Sammy Lynwood was a very popular and much liked officer. He was a very sad loss.

I eventually caught up with 'A' Company in the area of Buqbuq, between Sidi-Barrani and Sollum. I located Cpl Lane, who promptly handed over to me my 8 cwt. PU, said cheerio and was gone. A quick inspection of the PU showed a very flat rear wheel tyre, perhaps that was the reason for his hasty retreat. I never saw him again in the Battalion.

The Battalion was at this time engaged in rounding up thousands of Italian prisoners of war and collecting in salvage from the battle field. Around the 19/20 December we moved up to the top of Helfaya Pass (we called it Hell-Fire Pass). From the top of this pass was a wonderful view of the Bay of Sollum and the desert stretching back towards Buqbuq.

A guide was sent to meet me and to tell me to take the company transport down into a wadi. I remember distinctly asking the guide if the bottom of the wadi was firm going, to which he gave an affirmative reply. Well his idea of firm was different from mine, for in less than no time all five company vehicles were bogged down in soft sand to above the axles. Did I curse that guide, I would like to put into print here what I called him, but rest assured the air was blue. I tried for several hours that night to free the vehicles, but with no success. Things were not made any easier, for besides being dark, the Italian Air Force was around dropping bombs – not directly on us – but in the dark these situations always seemed to be worse than they actually were.

After several hours of unsuccessful endeavours, I went along to Captain Lloyd-Owen and asked if I could wait until daylight when I would be able to see where I was going, but he said no, the vehicles had to be ready to move at first light. All my further efforts were to no avail, and in the end I was so dog tired I gave up. I knew there were some Bren carriers close by, so I contacted them and arranged for a towing operation with the carriers towing out the bogged down vehicles at first light. I then went back, crept into a sanger and snatched forty winks. At first light the carriers had the vehicles towed out in very short time and we were ready to move when the Company Commander gave the word. I don't know if now Major General Lloyd Owen will read this, if he does, he might remember the incident. He might also want to give Tommy Atkins a wiggling for disobeying an order but, on reflection I think I obeyed in the spirit of the order in that the vehicles were ready to move at first light as he had instructed.

We spent Xmas Day 1940 in a wadi somewhere outside Bardia. Xmas Dinner was hard biscuits, a tin of bully beef and for sweet, hard tack biscuits and marmalade.

The Australians took over from us and the responsibilities for capturing Bardia and then Tobruk, and we once again went back to the Buqbuq area in reserve and to rest. But not for long, the Australians having successfully captured Bardia, 2/Queen's were again on the move back to Bardia where they again were given the task of gathering in the Italian prisoners of war, and salvage from the battle field.

Before moving from Buqbuq, I remember most of us in the Battalion being in a rather sombre and anxious mood. We were receiving news from home about the very severe air raids that the people at home were being subjected to, particularly in London and the Home Counties. There was nothing we could do to help and it was best not to dwell on the subject too long. There were however a lot of men in the Battalion who had mothers, fathers, wives and children at risk – it was particularly hard for them to bear.

When the Australians went on to invest Tobruk, some of our carriers and their crews were lent to assist them and in one of the reconnaissances carried out by our carriers, I lost a very close friend. His name was Ted Burgess, he had been killed when his carrier was blown up by a mine.

Just before the Battalion was to move to Bardia for the second time, I was told to report to the MTO, Lieut. Ottaway. He told me I was to be promoted to M.T. Sgt., and take over the duties immediately, and so it was as such that I travelled to Bardia, in 'B' Echelon as the M.T. Sgt.

It wasn't until I had got to Bardia and assumed the task of M.T. Sgt that I began to realise the very run down state our own transport was in. To put it bluntly it was almost clapped out. Small wonder, The Royal Scots before us, and then ourselves had used it extensively in Palestine over a period of three years, we had then used it extensively in our wanderings of the Western Desert. As I said earlier, if anything is going to put paid to mechanical transport, it is desert conditions.

A little story that showed our touchiness. I had detailed a driver, I think his name was Pte. Skilton, to take a 15 cwt truck on a detail across the desert. He returned a little later on foot and reported that his truck had broken down, he thought it was a broken stub axle. I had the vehicle brought in and as the driver had said, it was a broken stub axle. The MTO on hearing this wanted the driver put on a charge for negligent driving. I examined the stub axle and it was plain for all to see that there was a very prominent flaw in the metal, and the fracture was obviously hastened by the rough terrain, no matter how careful the driver would have been. I explained this to the MTO and said I thought it extremely unfair to charge the driver. The MTO agreed. This was not a good start for me as the MT Sgt for I should have been seen to be supporting my MTO. Lt. Cecil Ottaway was an extremely efficient MTO and a very fair minded man. We in the M.T. Section had known him since he was the M.T. Sgt from the Isle of Wight days and everyone without exception thought very highly of him. He went on to be Company Commander of H.Q. Company at a later stage and was also one of the trio of officers who, when we went into Burma looked after us so magnificently from our supply base at Comilla in India.

It was unfortunate that my term of office as MT Sgt began with our transport as it was. We sent out salvaging parties and brought in some of the Italian Diesel Lorries, but we knew so little about them, that after a few days they would break down irretrievably.

So it was that I had a number of drivers at 'B' Echelon without vehicles, sitting around doing nothing, getting slovenly and bored. This wouldn't do. I must also admit at that stage, I had very little experience as a Sgt to go by and I hadn't the slightest idea of what to do about it.

It is here that Major 'Buzz' Waspe came to my aid. He took me aside, and pointed out that as the MT Sgt I really should do something about the situation. He suggested that I make work for the drivers who were idle. If there aren't any vehicles for them to work on, well there are plenty of picks and shovels, and after all, we are not to know that the enemy will not counter attack, why not set the drivers digging defensive positions in case they are needed... Have a morning muster parade so that they men are properly dressed, washed and shaved, keep the men occupied all the time. Very sound advice indeed. I began to act upon it.

The drivers without vehicles moaned of course about the digging, and the bull at muster parades, but there was an improvement both in dress and morale. There is a saying, if you hear the British Soldier moaning, all is well, it is when you don't hear him that you want to be on your toes.

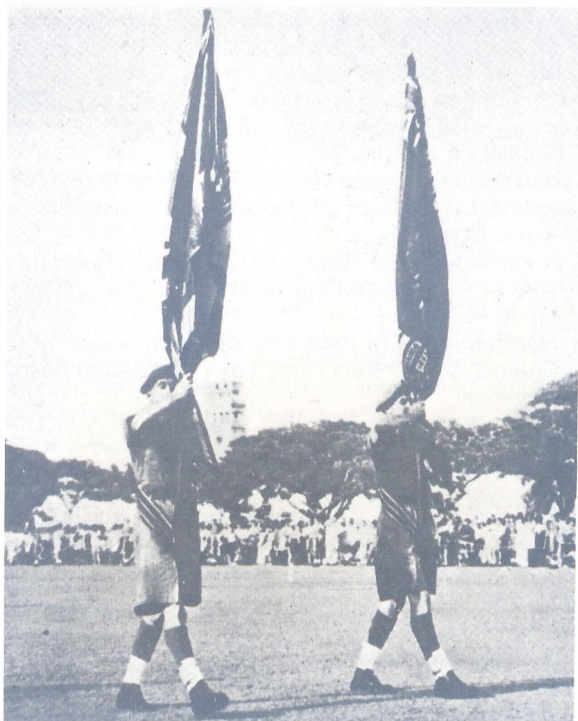
During the second week in February 1941 the Battalion moved back to the Nile Delta, to re-equip and re-train for future operations. The Battalion had returned by train and went to a camp called El-Tahag, near Tel-el-Kabir near the Suez Canal Zone. The Battalion's transport returned by road, along the same single desert road towards Alexandria and Cairo and El-Tahag.

The whole of 16 Infantry Brigade was stationed at El-Tahag. It was a most unpopular camp. Accommodation was in tents. There were precious few amenities – what there was of a very low standard. For instance, there was an open air cinema. We called it Bobby Shafto's. There was an outside screen of old army blankets etc., to form an auditorium. I think

As a result of the First South African War, the Battle Honour "SOUTH AFRICA 1851.2.3" appeared below the Sphinx. Later, after the China campaign of 1860 the Battle honours "PEKIN" and "TAKU FORTS" were added to left and right of the Sphinx.

A major alteration in the Colour's appearance came about as a result of Honours awarded between 1902 and 1912. These included not only Honours for the campaigns in India and South Africa at the turn of the century, but also distinctions awarded in retrospect: "TANGIER 1662-1680", the oldest Battle Honour of the Army awarded only to The Queen's and The Royals; "NAMUR 1695" and the Naval Crown superscribed "1 JUNE 1794". The final addition came after the Great War - the distinction "AFGHANISTAN 1919".

What is surprising about the retrospective Honours (and this is not confined to The Queen's) is the many omissions. No awards, for example, for the War of the Spanish Succession despite the fact that the Regiment fought with great distinction. Also no awards for service under Marlborough in what was one of the Army's greatest periods.



*The old Colours of the 1st Battalion The Queen's Royal Regiment.*

By 1920, then, the Sphinx had been moved to below right of the Garter, balanced by the Naval Crown (shown as Figure 1) below left of the Garter. The Battle Honour scrolls were aligned in two columns down the left and right sides of the Colour, thus:

TANGIER 1662-1680	NAMUR 1695
VIMIERA	CORUNNA
SALAMANCA	VITTORIA
PYRENEES	NIVELLE
TOULOUSE	PENINSULA
GHUZNEE 1839	KHELAT
AFGHANISTAN 1839	SOUTH AFRICA 1851.2.3
TAKU FORTS	PEKIN 1860
BURMA 1885-87	TIRAH
RELIEF OF LADYSMITH	SOUTH AFRICA
AFGHANISTAN 1919	1899-1902

In this form, the Colours remained in service until they were laid up in 1947. No doubt many former members of 1st Queen's will remember them, most of all the luckless Ensigns who had to struggle through parades carrying them - a feat which in windy weather required the use of both hands and a great deal of physical effort.

The writer understands that it became the custom to place a silver tally on the Colour pikes recording the name and occasion of each Ensign's carrying the Colours, and that these tallies became a considerable hazard to the hands! It is further

believed that the pikes were of some antiquity at the time of the Presentation of these Colours and may have been nearly 200 years old by the time the Colours were removed from service.

### The 2nd Battalion 1857-1948

In 1857, The Queen's raised a Second Battalion in common with the 24 Regiments next in seniority below them. This was the third time that this had occurred in the history of the Regiment, but the first two occasions had been short-lived, whereas this battalion was to last for 91 years. It was the 2nd Battalion which gained the Battle Honours "BURMA 1885-87" and "SOUTH AFRICA 1899-1902".

The Battalion received its Colours, the only stand it would hold during its life, from Lady Buller on 1st June 1859 at Corfu. Originally, it is believed, these Colours were full size, but in the course of time repairs were necessary in order to preserve the fabric. By the time of the Second World War the Colours had shrunk to the size of those which are now generally in service with Infantry Battalions. These Colours can be seen in the Regimental Museum at Guildford.

In general the Colours were of the same design as those of the 1st Battalion, and the same Battle Honours and Distinctions were borne. However there were certain differences between the two Regimental Colours.

On the Regimental Colour of the 2nd Battalion, the Roman numeral II appears below the Lamb at the centre of the Union, instead of above it. Also, with the restoration of Queen Catherine's Cypher in 1902, a Roman II appeared below the Cypher inside the Garter. Below the Garter there was no title scroll, but the Naval Crown was placed there in 1909. Below this was the motto "Vel Exuviae Triumphant" and directly below this, in line with the Naval Crown, the Sphinx.



*Figure 1: The Naval Crown.*

The Battle Honour scrolls were arranged in the same way as the 1st Battalion except that the Distinctions "TANGIER 1662-80" and "NAMUR 1695" appeared at the top of the Colour, left and right of the Royal Crown and much smaller than the other Battle Honours.

These Colours remained in service until the 2nd Battalion was disbanded in Berlin in 1948.

(To be continued)  
OVID

Major 'JOCK' HASWELL is asking for readers help, he writes: "While serving in the 1st Battalion, The Queen's Royal Regiment, in Allahabad in 1939 I came across a document headed 'The Soldier's Ten Commandments'. It was unsigned and I was unable to trace its origin, despite a careful search through the Old Testament Books of Leviticus and Deuteronomy.

I copied it, of course, but at some time during the past 47 years it has been mislaid and I can recall only three of the Commandments:

Honour thy Colour-Sergeant all the days of thy service that thy credits may be numbered even as the sands of Egypt.

Thou shalt not fritter away thy worldly goods on Nap, Pontoon or Games of Chance lest the avenging voice of the Provost Sergeant be heard: "Render unto me thy names and let the money remain where it lieth".

Six days shalt thou labour and do all that thou hast to do, and on the seventh thou shalt do twice as much.

I would be most grateful to any of your readers who can supply the missing seven Commandments.

*All letters will be forwarded to Major Haswell by the Editor.*

## Regimental Deaths

**Aldridge** - On 17th March 1986, Lieutenant Colonel John Derek Aldridge, MBE, The Royal Tank Regiment. Commanded 42nd Royal Tank Regiment from 1954-1956 when it became 23rd (London Regiment) part of The East Surrey Regiment.

**Allin** - On 21st June 1985, Lieutenant Frederick Ian Russel Allin, The Queen's Royal Regiment, in South Africa.

**Armstrong** - On 11th December 1985, Brigadier Charles Armstrong, CBE, DSO, MC, aged 88, The East Surrey Regiment.

**Barsotti** - On 1st January 1986, WOI (Bandmaster) Roger Barsotti, aged 84 years, The Queen's Royal Regiment.

**Bennett** - On 27th December 1985, Captain P.O. Bennett, The Queen's Royal Regiment. Captain Bennett served with the 1/6th Battalion as Intelligence Officer.

**Brooker** - On 1st August 1985, Major Norman Nelson Ronald Brooker, aged 74, The Queen's Royal Regiment. Major Brooker served in France, Belgium, Holland, Germany and Korea.

**Brown** - On 27th February 1986, R.S.M. Vivian George Alfred Brown, aged 77 years, The Queen's Royal Regiment. RSM Brown served with The Regiment in Malta, China, India, Palestine and in the Middle East during the Second World War. He was mentioned in despatches in 1941.

**Butcher** - On 21st November 1986, Ernest Stanley Butcher, aged 62 years, The East Surrey Regiment.

**Creasey** - On 25th February 1986, Major James William Creasey, TD, The East Surrey Regiment. Served with the 6th and 1/6th Bn The East Surrey Regiment.

**Donlea** - On 11th January 1986, Lieutenant Colonel Basil James Fitzgerald Donlea, MC, Royal Ulster Rifles. He served with 2 Surreys as Second in Command in 1942.

**Fairhead** - On April 14th 1986, Leonard Fairhead, The Queen's Royal Regiment. He was a standard bearer for The Burma Star Association and served with 2 Queen's in Burma.

**Fisher** - On 15th March 1984, aged 87 years.

**George** - On 8th February 1986, Private Reginald Armistice George, aged 61 years, the Queen's Royal Regiment. Private George served with the 2nd Battalion in India and Burma.

**Gill** - On 16th February 1986, Major (QM) Herbert Reginald Gill, aged 71 years, the Queen's Royal Regiment.

**Hearden** - In January 1986, C.S.M. C.H. (Togo) Hearden, The Queen's Royal Regiment, after a long illness.

**Hibberd** - On 24th December 1985, Captain George Sidney Richard Hibberd, The Queen's Royal Regiment. Captain Hibberd served with the 15th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment.

**Hill** - On 18th May 1985, Charles Ernest Hill, The East Surrey Regiment. Served throughout the Second World War and was a P.O.W.

**Larcombe** - On 5th December 1985, Louis Norman Larcombe, aged 95 years, The Queen's Royal Regiment.

**Marson** - On April 15th 1986, Michael James Marson. Served in Europe with The Queen's Royal Regiment and was a civilian lecturer at RMA Sandhurst 1956-1973.

**Marriott** - On 22nd October 1985, Captain Charles Marriott, aged 94, 2/4th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment.

**Mathews** - William Cubit Mathews aged 95, The Queen's Royal Regiment and R.F.C.

**Micklewright** - On 5th December 1985, Lieutenant Colonel C.L.W. Micklewright, TD.

**Nebel** - On 23rd February 1986, Major Roger Owen Nebel, The Queen's Royal Regiment.

**Oliver** - Private J. Oliver, The East Surrey Regiment. Private Oliver was for many years batman to Brigadier Armstrong.

**Pickering** - On 29th January 1986, Sergeant Norman Noel (Sandy) Pickering, aged 64, The Queen's Royal Regiment. Sgt. Pickering served with the 2/7th Queens in the Mortar Platoon.

**Radford** - On March 31st 1986, Rev. Arthur John Radford, aged 74 years, following a coronary.

**Russell** - On 19th December 1985, Private William Russell, The East Surrey Regiment.

**Seymour** - On 19th April 1986, Jack Seymour, The East Surrey Regiment. Served in the 2nd Battalion in Shanghai.

**Simmonds** - On 19th November 1985, Corporal Albert Simmons, aged 56 years, The Queen's Royal Regiment.

**Simon** - On 20th February 1986, Major A.P.W. (Tim) Simon, TD, The Queen's Royal Regiment.

**Slater** - On 12th November 1985, Private Charles Ernest Slater, aged 84, The East Surrey Regiment. Private Slater joined The East Surreys in June 1919 and served with the 1st Battalion in Turkey, Egypt and Hong Kong as a signaller. Later in his life he became blind, but always spoke with much affection of his old Regiment.

**Turner** - On 28th October 1985, Corporal Bert Turner, 2/4th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment.

**Vyvan** - On 6th April 1985 Lieutenant Phillip Vyvan aged 92 years, The Queen's Royal Regiment. Served in Khartoum, Cairo and Palestine.

**Whichelo** - On 20th September 1984, Tedwyn Stanley Whichelo, aged 80 years, The East Surrey Regiment. Served for many years with the 1st Battalion and was a regular attendee at Old Comrades reunions.

**Willans** - On 25th November 1985, Captain (QM) William Charles Willans, aged 73 years, The Queen's Royal Regiment.

**Willmore** - In October 1984, Cpl R.J. Willmore, The Queen's Royal Regiment.

## Regimental Families

**Barnes** - On 23rd January 1986, Phyllis Louise Barnes aged 88, wife of Lieutenant F.H. Barnes, H.A.C. and The Queen's Royal Regiment.

**Mann** - On 29th January 1986, Mrs. Katherine Charlotte Mann, wife of Sgt Harry Mann, MBE, Secretary 2/4th Queen's OCA.

**Petri** - On January 25th 1986, Mrs. Mo Petri, widow of the late Colonel A.V. (Peter) Petri, The Leinstar and East Surrey Regiment.

**Tannock** - On January 28th 1986, Mrs. Eileen Ada Tannock, wife of Major Noel Tannock, The East Surrey Regiment.

**Whittaker** - On 4th January 1986, Mrs. Audrey Whittaker, aged 82 years. She was the widow of Captain John Whittaker RNR and daughter of Colonel R. Dawson who commanded The Depot at Stoughton in 1908. She often told the story of how the 2nd Battalion The Queen's Royal Regiment marched into the Depot, with the Band and Drums leading the parade and how the Drum Major threw the mace over the archway, catching it inside the entrance. She also had a brother who served in The Regiment who was a very fine shot. He was killed in a motor accident in the thirties. The Trustees of her estate have forwarded a donation of £2000.00 to The Queen's Royal Regiment Charitable Fund.

**Wilson** - On February 13th 1986, Mrs. Ella Wilson, wife of Lieutenant Colonel L.M. Wilson, MBE.

### Revd. A.J. Radford

We are sad to report the death at his home in Plymouth, of Arthur John Radford, the well loved Padre of 2/7th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment, and Chaplain to the Forces 1941/46.

Joining the Queen's in 1942 for the Battalion's departure overseas, his natural cheerfulness and steadfast support was an encouragement to all Ranks. through two years of very active service with the Queen's at Enfidaville, Salerno and Anzio, his quiet personal strength and guidance was an inspiration that will be remembered with great affection.

AGS

### Personalities - News

6079695 CSM Harry White (sometime 'Moke' or 'Chalky') lives now at Brownscombe House, Haslemere. He joined the Regiment in 1922 and as a recruit to the 2nd Battalion in India remembers clearly being received by RSM 'Chokey' Sullivan. He first served in 16 Platoon of Captain J.B. Coates' D Company. His Life Membership card of The Queen's Royal Regiment is signed by Major Buzz Waspe - he is now a member of our present Association.

## ELLA WILSON

### A Tribute by John Davidson

Sergeant Ella Adams joined the Regiment on 12th December 1953 when she married the Battalion Signal Sergeant, Les Wilson. I first met her in Iserlohn in early 1957, just after we had returned from Malaya. I was invited by Les to their quarter for a drink; baby Jane was in her high chair being fed (or as it seemed to this bachelor subaltern, having porridge poured over her head!) So began a close and treasured friendship that was to last for 29 years until her tragic and untimely death on 13th February 1986, after an illness stoically and uncomplainingly borne.

Les was RSM of 1 Queen's when I was Adjutant and a Company Commander, and Quartermaster when I commanded. I saw at first hand the magnificent backing he received from Ella in these appointments. She was a great supporter of the Sergeants' Mess, and there are many serving and retired members of the Regiment and their wives who will always remain grateful for the help and guidance they received from her when they first joined the Mess. She was the perfect foil to the RSM who terrified them! When Les was commissioned, she supported the Officers' Mess with equal enthusiasm.

But Ella's contribution to Regimental life was far from confined to the Sergeants' Mess. She was a hardworking champion of the Wives' Club, and on a personal note I can say that Jennifer, my wife, will for ever remain grateful for the loyal and energetic support she received from Ella, particularly over some two years when the men were away on unaccompanied tours. A further contribution was her stewardship of the Regimental Kindergarten in many different barracks at home and overseas. Both our boys were in her care and I know that she loved, and was loved by, the children; nothing deterred her - not even a badly broken leg in Münster. She continued with this good work in the Kindergarten in Howe Barracks until late 1985 and was looking forward to doing so for 3 Queens.

Finally, we remember Ella as a wife and mother. Les usually referred to her with affection as "Adams" or "The Colour Sergeant". She supported him in everything he did in his exceptionally successful career as a soldier. She was a member of a happy and devoted family. She went down fighting, and it was typical of her that her response right to the end to Les and her friends who expressed concern at her evident illness was to "stop fussing".

I know that all members of the Regiment and all Ella's friends will wish to express their deepest sympathy to Les, to their children Jane, Anne and Mark, to Laura and Hannah, and to Ella's mother.

JGWD

### LT.(Q.M.) W.C. (Bill) WILLANS

Bill Willans was appointed to QM of the 1st Bn The Queen's during the final campaign in Burma which took the Bn from Shillong to the Sittang Bend, and is well recorded in the Regimental History.

As RSM at Shillong he maintained the high standard of drill and discipline for which the Regiment had always been renowned, and when the QM, Lieut Avery, left, he was well prepared to take on his duties.

His outstanding characteristics of firmness and determination mingled with cheerfulness and a wonderful sense of humour, made him an excellent QM in action, and faced with the many difficult Q situations, he always managed to overcome them.

The problem of moving air drop stores over swollen chaungs with one small rubber dinghy, and then along almost impassable muddy tracks with bullock carts which he hired on his own initiative, was amongst his typical achievements.

After the airlift to Bangkok at the end of the war, he set about supplementing the Bn rations to great effect with local products, and the dining hall meals soon reached a handsome standard, which duly contributed to the well being of all.

Those of us who served with him and knew him well, would like to extend our sympathy to his family.

JRT

## Bandmaster R. Barsotti

Roger Barsotti was a very distinguished performer, composer and arranger of military music. He was Bandmaster to the 2nd Battalion The Queen's Royal Regiment from 1932 to 1945 before leaving the Army to continue his career as Director of Music of The Metropolitan Police. Colonel L.C. East writes:-

'I pay tribute to the memory of Mr. Barsotti who was Band Master of 2 Queen's at Aldershot in the early thirties. He died at Bournemouth on 1st January 1986 aged 84. He was a first class musician and an excellent Band Master. However he disliked soldiering as such and particularly he had little use for DRILL! As Adjutant I had great difficulty in persuading him of the necessity of the Band going on to the parade ground even if accompanied by the Drums. The reputation of the Band gives him the utmost credit.'

LCE

### Major Reg Gill

6083887 Boy H.R. Gill joined the 1st Battalion, The Queens Royal Regiment in Malta, when the Band rejoined the Battalion after its return from Hong Kong. He played the trumpet and tenor saxophone. He remained with the Band until he returned to duty when the Battalion arrived in India. During the war he was posted home and later served in North Africa with the 2/5th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment. When the Battalion disbanded he was for a time, Quartering Commandant with the Venezia Pola Police Force, his duties being very similar to those of Quartermaster.

After leaving this post he applied for a regular Q.M.'s commission and this was granted. He was at the Battle School in Japan during the Korean War and later served as Camp Commandant at Kuala Lumpur, Malaya. He was Quartermaster of 1st Bn The Queens Royal Regiment in Iserlohn from 1957 to 1959, he then served with the Ghurka's in Singapore until his retirement in 1967.

Major Gill was secretary at Ashford Branch of the Kent Bee Keepers Association for many years. He was instrumental in the international exchange of bee-keepers between Munstereifel W. Germany and Ashford.

WKR

### Sgt. 'Lou' Larcombe

'Lou' Larcombe as he was known throughout the Queen's Royal Regiment enlisted at Stoughton in 1908. He went to France with the 1st Battalion in the BEF in August 1914 and was taken prisoner in the retreat from Mons. In captivity he was made a Corporal, it was said that this was the only way the Germans could stop him insulting them!

He joined the 2nd Battalion in late 1918. He went on to serve in India. It was there that he became very seriously ill after which he joined the Officers' Mess staff; beginning his long association with the Regiment's officers.

On leaving the Army in 1931 'Lou' spent many years as Steward of the prestigious Junior United Services Club in London. In 1944 he returned to Stoughton as Steward of the Depot Officers Mess. It was there that he became known to hundreds of young officers passing through in the halcyon days of National Service. Meticulous in his turn out he would cast a jaundiced eye on any young officer falling below his own high regard for standards of dress and conduct. In this dedication to the Regiment he and his lifelong friend Major (QM) Buzz Waspe were trusted advisers to a succession of Depot commanding officers. 'Lou' was awarded the Meritorious Service Medal in 1959 for 50 years service to the Regiment. In that year he retired when much to his sorrow the Depot closed.

My own vivid memory of Lou was at Officers Garden parties when clad in tail coat he would announce the names of visitors to the Colonel of the Regiment. Senior officers would pause before him and although always maintaining the aura of courtly civility a very faint twinkle in the eye would indicate that he had known them in their more youthful and wilder days.

Lou was of that very rare breed of men only found in the Regimental families of the British Army. Fiercely loyal to the Regiment and insistent that everyone maintains its high standards. We mourn the passing of a great Regimental character and our sympathy goes out to his widow and his family.

RSNM

## **Brigadier C.D. Armstrong, CBE, DSO, MC.**

Brigadier Charles Douglas Armstrong CBE, DSO, MC, who died on 11 December 1985 aged 88, was educated at Cheltenham and the Royal Military College, Sandhurst. He was commissioned into the East Surrey Regiment on 17 April 1915, which marked the beginning of a most distinguished and dedicated career.

During World War I he was seconded to the Machine Gun Corps and served in France from 1916 to 1918 and was twice wounded. In 1919 in North Russia, still with the Machine Gun Corps, he was awarded the Military Cross for gallantry and devotion to duty. Always keen to be in action, he fought in Mesopotamia in 1920-21 and on the North West Frontier in 1930-31 and in other skirmishes.

Between the World Wars he will be especially remembered for the very high standards he set as Adjutant of the 1st Battalion, and in lighter vein for his able contribution to the making of the film "Four Feathers" in Sudan.

The outbreak of the 1939-45 war saw him commanding B Coy, 1st Battalion in France. In April 1940 he took command of the 1/6th Battalion, also in France, shortly before it went into action. For his brilliant leadership and gallant command of 1/6 Surreys during its subsequent distinguished action in the withdrawal to Dunkirk, he was awarded the DSO.

In April 1942 he commanded the 70th Battalion of the Regiment for a brief, but none the less impressive, spell.

In January 1943 he was commanding 1st Battalion The Duke of Wellington's Regiment and led it into action in March 1943 in the North African campaign, where he quickly established a reputation for enthusiastic and fearless patrolling. He was badly wounded in a successful action, in which he had shown a complete disregard for his own safety and as recorded by the French Divisional Commander, displayed the highest qualities of a leader in battle.

Soon after, he was appointed Brigadier to command the British Military Mission to General Mihailovic in Yugoslavia, and dropped into the Balkans in September 1943. His subsequent adventures and exploits whilst often cut off from the outside world, and some of which at the time were wrongly attributed to Tito, became famous. He was, however, always disappointed that he had not been able to achieve more because of lack of support from the Allies. Strong friendships made with the Chetniks lasted up to the time of his death.

Next he was actively engaged in command of the British Airborne Liaison Unit to the Polish Parachute Brigade. In September 1945 he was back with the Surreys in command of the 1st Battalion in Austria and then in Greece. He was appointed CBE in 1946, and retired in 1948 after almost thirty four years of truly outstanding service.

Retirement brought no relaxation, however. He farmed for many years in Norfolk and in Kent with his usual superhuman energy. Yet he was never too busy to find time to campaign actively for deserving causes.

Known affectionately throughout the Regiment as Wix, Babe or Nipper, he devoted himself completely, without stint, to the Regiment and the Army. His small, slight, dapper and boyish figure belied a modest and courteous, yet most determined and forceful character, tough, resilient and unboundedly energetic, who revelled in overcoming difficulties. He would not take "No" for an answer. Highly professional, he was always concerned to serve the soldiers he commanded.

Field Marshal Lord Montgomery is said to have described him as one of the finest commanding officers in the Army, although he might not have been everyone's cup of tea. He often told his troops that "Nothing but the best is good enough for me!" and meant it. There were no half measures, no excuses, war was total and had to be won. But he never asked anyone to do anything he was not prepared to do himself. He was a very strict but scrupulously fair disciplinarian.

In all matters he paid meticulous attention to detail, could not tolerate idleness or inactivity and deplored waste. He gained a legendary reputation as a severe, somewhat obstinate, sometimes fiery, hard taskmaster. Yet he enjoyed fun, had a fine sense of humour and could be a puckish practical joker. A no mean performer, he was an extremely keen and knowledgeable sportsman and games player, as well as being a first class shot.

Soldiering and serving under the "Nipper" was an unforgettable, awe inspiring and incredible experience. Life was

admittedly hard and the standards he demanded were exacting, but all ranks trusted and respected him, had the utmost confidence in him and were ready to follow him anywhere. He instilled in them a great sense of loyalty, of pride and esprit de corps and comradeship, from which many lasting friendships grew. It can be truly said that they loved him, as he loved them.

He has been aptly called a "soldier's soldier", but he taught many of us not only to be efficient soldiers but also to be "men", for which we shall be ever grateful.

His name and fame will stand out supreme in the annals of The East Surrey Regiment.

In 1935 he married Sylvia Bailey, a leading lady golfer, who survives him with a son and three daughters. His eldest daughter is the well known journalist and broadcaster, who, following in her father's footsteps, campaigns tirelessly for improvements to the welfare of Army families, under her pen name of Ann Armstrong.

RCG

## **Major R.O. Nebel, TD**

The news of Roger Nebel's sudden death on 23rd February 1986 will be received with sadness by a wide circle of friends who knew him as a dedicated Territorial officer.

Originally enlisting as a sapper in 313 Coy, 29th S/L Bn RE in March 1938, Roger was commissioned into the same Bn in August 1939. He served throughout the war in AA Command in the UK, becoming a chief instructor at various AA Comd OCTU and Div Schools.

In 1945/6 he saw service in Norway in a converted (S/L) Inf Bn of the RNF where he was 2IC prior to demobilization.

On the re-formation of the TA in 1947, Roger - then on the teaching staff of Selhurst Grammar School - joined 598 LAA Regt (4th Queen's) in Croydon, where he served until its amalgamation in 1955. He spent 2 years in Mobile Defence Corps AER and then joined 6th Bn Queen's TA as O/C 'C' Coy in Croydon. He assisted in the amalgamation of 4th, 5th and 6th Queen's TA in to 3rd Bn The Queen's Royal Surrey Regt TA. On reaching the age limit in 1962 he resigned and was recommissioned into 1st Cadet Bn, The Queen's ACF which he subsequently commanded.

He was a staunch supporter of the 4th Bn Queen's OCA having served it since 1962 in various capacities as Secretary, Treasurer and finally Chairman until its dissolution in 1983.

Despite numerous interests and activities which included much voluntary and welfare work, Roger will be remembered for his great devotion to the affairs of 'The Queen's' and all it stood for.

To his wife Bobbie and to his daughters and their families, we extend our deepest sympathy.

PDC

## **2/7th Bn. The Queen's Royal Regiment OCA.**

The highly-successful 40th Annual Reunion Dinner of the Association was held at 'The Barley Mow', Horseferry Road, London S.W.1 on Saturday, 22nd March 1986 under the Presidency, as usual, of Brig. M.E.M. ('Mac') MacWilliam C.B.E., D.S.O., M.C.

59 ex-members of the Battalion were present and it was particularly rewarding to the persistence and efforts of our Secretary, Harry Neale, that these included several 'first-timers' and the re-emergence of others after many years absence. It was unfortunate that a change of date from the norm, enforced by the early Easter, resulted in a number of our 'regulars' being unable to attend but it augers well for the future that we are still able, so many years on, to find new blood - however thinly it may now be running!

A notable absentee this year, due to hospitalisation, was our much-respected R.S.M., Gary Lockwood, D.C.M., and no-one present needed any persuasion to sign a 'get-well' card to be sent on to him. Not that anyone was forgotten for 'Greetings' slips, prepared by the Committee, were circulated during the course of the evening to be signed for the benefit of all those members unable to attend.

The customary raffle was enthusiastically and generously supported with only a minimal application of thumbscrews by the Committee's hit-men, Bob Cardy and Roy Bullen, to the appreciable benefit of the association's funds from which we are able to offer help to any ex-member of the Battalion in need.

The toast 'Absent Comrades' was proposed by Maj. A.G. Sanders, D.S.O., Chairman of the Reunion Committee, who then presented his annual report. He was followed by Col. Toby Sewell who detailed the activities of the present Queen's Battalions and listed the Regimental functions to be held during the course of the year. Of particular interest to members were the Annual Church Parade and Service at Guildford Cathedral on the Glorious 1st June and the Bassingbourn get-together on the 13th July and it is certain that the Battalion will be well-represented on both occasions.



Brigadier Mac Macwilliam, Colonel Brian Owen, Major Peter Hughes-D'aeth, Major Dennis Humm, Colonel Toby Sewell and Lt. Colonel John Wyke.

This year members were asked to comment on a suggestion that the Annual Dinner should be superseded by a Luncheon and it may well be, as decrepitude takes its inevitable toll, that this will become, eventually, the accepted order of things. The general consensus was, however, that while we remain, for the most part, reasonably – and even hearty after a few bevies – we should 'soldier on' with the Dinner on the last Saturday in March of every year (Easter permitting). We look forward, therefore, to many more evenings as enjoyable as on this most recent occasion and former members of the Unit wishing to know more should contact Harry Neale at 63 St. Aidan's Road, London S.E.22 (Tel 01-693-5074). They and, indeed, any former Queen's man can be assured, always, of a warm welcome.

AGS



Tony Stockwell, 'Nobby' Bedzleigh, Bert Todd and John Mills with other members of the 217th Queen's at their Dinner.



Bill and Claudia Steeles on their wedding day.

**BILL ROADNIGHT** is trying to find out the names to complete the team. *Left to right back row:*– Sgt. Caldicott. Pte. Cantor. Bill Barclay. Pte. Herridge. Charlie Underdown. Pte. Warner. *Not known.* Sam Sharpe (team captain). *Second row:*– Sgt. Ashby (coach). Lt.Col. Ponsonby. Trophies won in Malta. Lieut. E.J. Foord (officer i/c football). *Trainer not known.* *Front row:*– Cpl. True. Darkie Hill. George Hooper. *Not known.* The Battalion football team won every competition they entered whilst in Malta. The Spurs league team visited Malta whilst we were there, they played the 1st. Battalion team and we drew two all with them. Also for interest the following members of the football team also represented the Battalion hockey team in numerous competitions:– Sgt. Caldicott (left wing). Sgt. Sam Sharp (C. H. he also was a member of the cricket team). Sgt. George Hooper (right back). At the time this photograph was taken Lieut. E.J. Foord was the signals officer.



Football team, Malta 1929/30

#### Past and Present Dinner, 1985



A group of Queen's Surrey's at the WO's and Sgt's Dinner, Bassingbourn.



Bill and Shirley Warren on their wedding day.

## Pictorial History of The Queen's Regiment

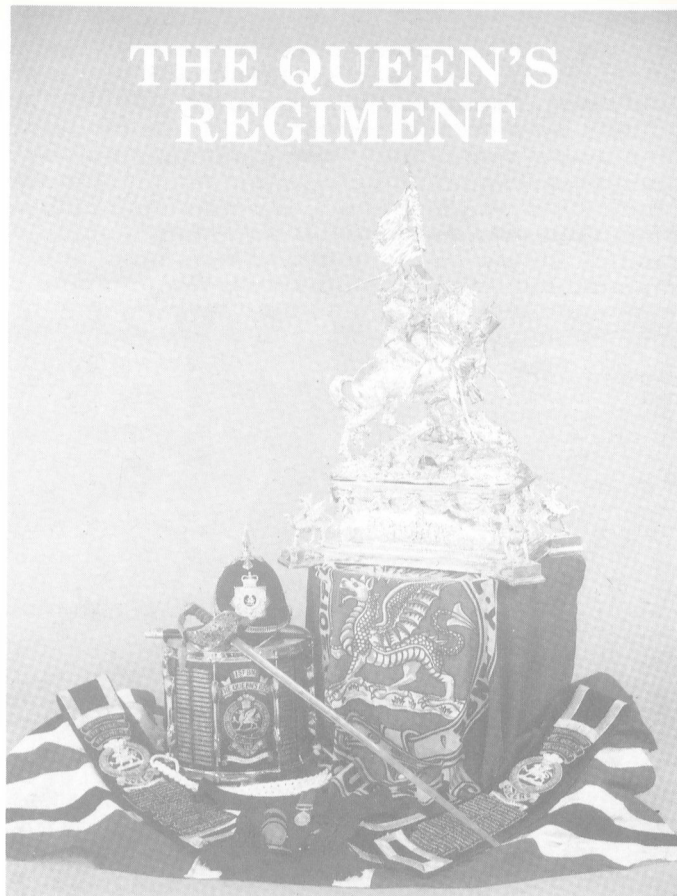
This colourful booklet traces the history of the Infantry regiments of Surrey, Kent, Sussex and Middlesex from their original formation to the amalgamation which brought them together as The Queen's Regiment on the last day of 1966. The Colonel of one of our former regiments has written, 'There is nothing new in amalgamation. The Army has been reorganised and regiments have been amalgamated before this. Change does not mean the abandoning of tradition. Tradition is the whole sum of service, gallantry and self-sacrifice set for us by our forbears in the Regiment over the past three hundred years of British military history.'

Major Jock Haswell, with considerable skill, has woven together the strands of regimental history of the six former regiments which constitute The Queen's Regiment of today. Though young in years, the Regiment has a proud record of service to the Crown extending over three centuries. An interesting collection of Regimental paintings illustrates the booklet, and mention must be made of the lively historical scenes by Charles Stadden, the well-known military artist.

There is an excellent picture of the Colours bearing the battle honours of the former regiments; and the history of the badges, customs and Regimental marches is explained. There is so much of interest, and so much to be proud of, that every member of the Regiment, past and present, should have a copy of this finely produced booklet.

PGEH

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:** The Editor wishes to thank Mr C.C. Stadden for his line drawings, Major C.F. Cole, MBE and Major A. Martin, MBE for their photographs, and The Surrey Advertiser for theirs.



## ANNUAL REUNION - UNION JACK CLUB November 1985



Viv Edwards, John Kershaw and Vic Auket



Maj. Gen. Mike Reynolds, Sid Waldron, Maj. Gen. David Lloyd-Owen, Fred Winter, Joe Becket, George Deacon, Major Jim Kemp, Col. Nick Nice and Lt. Col. Les Wilson.



Col. Nick Nice, Joe Becket, Brig. Charles Millman, Maj. Gen. Rowley Mans and Tommy Atkins.



E. Diplock, Maj. Gen. Mans, "Drummy" Wilson and Bill Roadnight. This was the first time that Bill Roadnight and Fred Wilson had met in 45 years.