

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

Regimental Association Newsletter

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Regimental Headquarters
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Editorial

The period since our last Newsletter has been a particularly busy one for me. It has however had the bonus of me meeting so many of our members and their families at various functions.

A large number supported The Queen's Regiment at the opening of the new Museum at Dover Castle and the Grand Reunion at Bassingbourn brought an even higher turnout than ever before. The Freedom March through Kingston-upon-Thames and our Clandon Open Day at the Museum were all mini-reunions which gave much pleasure to our members.

The march through Kingston-upon-Thames was, I know, marred for some because it had not been possible to arrange any central meeting place where members and their families could get together for a drink. Sadly, apart from our museum, there is now no permanent Association location in Surrey. Efforts were made to enable members to use The Field Ambulance Mess at the Drill Hall in Portsmouth Road, but, on this occasion, they were involved in an exercise and could not assist us. I mention this, as I know from talking to members how disappointed they were in not being able to have a proper 'get together'.

During this period the 3rd Battalion The Queen's Regiment, commanded by Lt Col R.M. McGhie, has been awarded the Wilkinson Sword of Peace for their outstanding work in assisting the civilian population of Belize during their recent unaccompanied tour. This achievement brings great credit to the battalion and the Regiment.

The 1st Battalion, commanded by Lt Col M.J. Ball, has now returned to Tidworth from yet another tour in Ulster, this time in South Armagh. It was a particularly testing and hard time for them and great credit is due to all ranks for their very successful tour. It remains a sobering thought that the 1st Battalion were first deployed in Londonderry in 1969 and, like their regular sister battalions of the Regiment and many other units of the British Army, they have carried out emergency tours of four months and resident tours of two years since then, over a period of eighteen years.

Benevolence is still on the increase but, if you know of a comrade or a dependant who needs help, do let us know and we will do our best to help.

All the best to you for Christmas 1987 and a prosperous 1988.

Les Wilson

Annual Church Service





FORECAST OF REGIMENTAL AND QUEEN'S SURREY ASSOCIATION EVENTS



| | 1987 | 1988 |
|-------------|---|---------|
| 20 December | THE BRITISH BATTALION DAY | Details |
| 10 February | SOBRAON DAY | |
| 13 February | 6th Bn Queen's OCA - Dinner Dance | |
| 4 March | Queen's Regiment Officers' Club Dinner - Duke of York's HQ | |
| 19 March | Queen's Surreys Regimental Trustees & Association Meeting - Clandon Park. Details to Members from Hon Sec. | |
| 26 March | Annual Reunion Dinner, 2/7th Queen's. Details from Harry Neal - (01-693-5074) | |
| 23 April | YPRES DAY | |
| 5 May | Golf Society Spring Meeting at Richmond. Details from Maj F.V. Sheppard MC | |
| 14 May | 5 Queen's OMA Annual Dinner. Details from D. Mitchell (0483-232043) | |
| 16 May | ALBUHERA DAY | |
| 28/29 May | 'Glorious First' Cricket Match v HMS Nelson, Portsmouth | |
| 1 June | THE GLORIOUS FIRST OF JUNE | |
| 5 June | Annual Church Service, Guildford Cathedral. 1100 for 1115 Service | |
| 15 June | Freedom March - Guildford - further details in May NL | |
| 16 June | Freedom March - Reigate & Banstead - further details in May NL | |
| 6 July | Golf Society v Royal Marines GS at Northants Golf Club. Details from Maj F.V. Sheppard MC | |
| 10 July | The Queen's Regiment Annual Reunion - Bassingbourn | |
| 9 September | SALERNO DAY - Officers' Club Ladies Luncheon, Clandon Park | |
| 6 October | Golf Society Autumn Meeting at Richmond Golf Club. Details from Maj F.V. Sheppard MC | |
| 15 October | WOs' and Sgts' Past & Present Dinner - Bassingbourn | |
| 28 October | The East Surrey Regiment All Ranks Reunion | |
| 4 November | The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment All Ranks Reunion at Union Jack Club | |
| November | Remembrance Day Parade | |

CONGRATULATIONS

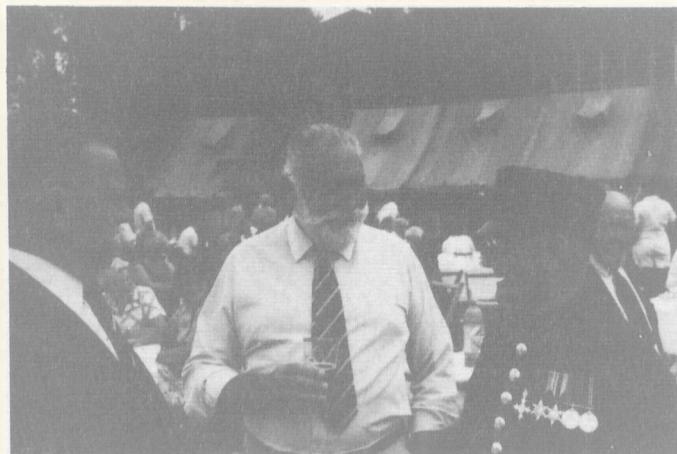
To Colonel and Mrs. John Kealy on their Golden Wedding.
To Captain and Mrs. Charles Wilder on their Golden Wedding.
To Brigadier R.W. Acworth, CBE, on his promotion to Brigadier.
To Lt Col A.F.S. Ling, MBE, on his forthcoming promotion to Colonel.

progress. As we might have been party to its destruction I decided not to pursue the matter. At this stage in the proceedings we were formed up and marched into the church, subsequent attempts to prise information were lost in a haze of Wine, Gateaux and Achutzels.

There is obviously a thread somewhere, perhaps some reader can throw some light on an intriguing sighting.

RAJ

Annual Reunion - Bassingbourn



European Sighting - The Lamb and Flag

Having read the detailed article on the Regimental Colours in your May issue of the Newsletter I thought that readers might be interested in the following story:-

My wife Kay and I were invited to a wedding in Friburg in Southern Germany in early June of this year. It was, need I add, an exhausting but very enjoyable weekend.

On the day of the ceremony which took place in the comparatively new (1952 pattern) church which was of Martin Luther faith, I was standing on the steps attempting to recover from the previous night's activities at a "Wein Fest". I looked upwards for help and inspiration and saw to my delight a circular stained glass window which depicted a Lamb and Flag exactly in the format and colour we all know so well.

Trying to confirm the origins of the window was difficult. My previous fluent command of the german language honed over years of service in Iserlohn, Lemgo and Werl had been clouded by UK life and exposure over four years to Gulf Arabic.

Questions relating to origins and indeed significance were met by blank looks. As to the original Church and the reason for a new build or why a rebuild had been acquired, I made no

Bill Warren, Jack Chaffer & I/P Sam Dickason



THE QUEEN'S REGIMENT

1661

Regular Battalions

The 1st Battalion have recently completed a 4 month tour in Northern Ireland and, on their return to Tidworth, Lt Col Mike Ball handed over command to Lt Col Chris Charter. The 2nd Battalion, based in Minden, West Germany, under Lt Col Peter Cook, trained in Canada in August. The 3rd Battalion, commanded by Lt Col Bob McGhie, completed their 4 month operational tour in Northern Ireland in June and returned to Canterbury, but move back to Ireland as a 'resident battalion' in January 1988.

TA Battalions

The 5th (Volunteer) Battalion, under Lt Col Charles Joint, have taken part in exercises in Germany and Scotland, won the South East District Catering Competition and provided the guards for the Grand Reunion at Bassingbourn in July. The 6th/7th (Volunteer) Battalion, commanded by a TA officer, Lt Col R E Lowman TD, provided a Guard of Honour for HRH Princess Margaret when she opened the Tynwald Parliament on the Isle of Man in July. The new 8th (Volunteer) Battalion, The Queen's Fusiliers, which is under Maj P A Gwilliam, had their TA Centre at St John's Hill, Clapham, opened by HRH The Duke of Kent in July and is now recruiting hard.

Museum in Dover Castle

One of the highlights of the year was the opening of the new Regimental Museum in Dover Castle by the Lord Lieutenant of Kent on 16 May 1987 (Albuhera Day). HM Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother subsequently visited the museum, in her capacity of Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, on 19th July and was received by the Colonel of the Regiment and Lt Col Les Wilson. All members of our Regimental Association may obtain free entry to the castle to visit the museum on showing their Association Membership Card.



Eric Stenning, who many Queens Surreys will remember, talking to H.M. The Queen Mother on her visit to the museum. Mr Stenning is the museum attendant.

Wilkinson Sword of Peace

The 3rd Battalion had the great honour of being awarded the Wilkinson Sword of Peace this year for their work for the civilian community of Belize during their tour there in 1986. The Sword was presented by the Lord Lieutenant of Kent at a ceremony in Canterbury in September. This is the first time a battalion of the Regiment has received this distinction.

Freedom Parades

In June a contingent from the 3rd Battalion exercised the Regiment's Freedom of the London Borough of Barnet and the City of Chichester and received, on behalf of the Regiment, the new Freedom of Ashford, Kent. In September they exercised our Freedom of the Royal Borough of Kingston-upon-Thames. During this ceremony the silver bugles, originally presented to the East Surrey Regiment, were represented to The Queen's Regiment by Colonel W E McConnell TD. The same month, a

contingent from the 6th/7th (Volunteer) Battalion paraded through Brighton, another of our 'Freedom Boroughs'. In 1988, a contingent from the 1st Battalion will exercise our Freedoms of Guildford (15 June), Reigate and Banstead (16 June), Ramsgate (17 June) and Maidstone (18 June), while the 6th/7th (Volunteer) Battalion will parade through Worthing on 1 October.

ASSOCIATION EVENTS

Visit to 1st Battalion, The Queen's Regiment

Lieutenant Colonel Mike Ball, commanding the Battalion, asked the President, Trustees and Members of the Main Committee to visit the 1st Battalion at Mooltan Barracks prior to their Northern Ireland tour. The visit took place on 30th April. Eight of us were able to go on a fascinating and most interesting visit, during which we were made very welcome, and were assured of the present Regiment's concern for us and pride in the traditions and history they have inherited and now represent.

The visit started with a briefing of the Commanding officer on the organisation of the Battalion, their pre-Northern Ireland training and their role and activities once in Ireland, some requiring very high levels of expertise. We then visited some training, which included an introduction to, and firing of, the new SA 80 rifle. The WOs and Sgts welcomed us to their Mess, and we had a delightful buffet lunch in the Officers' Mess. It was a very stimulating visit and we were most grateful to everyone concerned in the Battalion for making time for us in an extremely busy period.

Opening of the Queen's Regiment's Museum

A good representation was present for the official opening by the Lord Lieutenant of Kent of the new Museum at Dover Castle on 16th May - Albuhera Day. Everyone involved is to be congratulated on a wonderful addition to the portrayal of the Regiment's history and tradition. In particular, our Secretary, who amongst his many other tasks is Curator of the Museum and therefore responsible for just about everything. Major Jock Haswell has provided and written most of the historical detail. We are proud that the Museum contains a number of our important artifacts, including some of the most distinguished sets of medals, including those of Lieutenant Colonel A.D. Borton VC, DSO and Lieutenant A.J. Fleming-Sandes VC.

Annual Service, Guildford Cathedral

The annual service took place on Sunday 31st May. A very large turnout of members and their wives were again present and included the Colonel of the Regiment, Mayor, Generals M. Forrester, D.L. Lloyd Owen, R.S.N. Mans and M.F. Reynolds. The service was conducted, due to the interregnum of Deans, by the Precentor, Canon Adrian Leak. The Reverend Douglas Walker, CF, TA, Chaplain to 5th Battalion The Queen's Regiment, gave the Address and the President, as usual, read the Lesson.

The Queen's Regiment Reunion - Bassingbourn

The largest turnout of the Association so far attended the Reunion at Bassingbourn. The Association contingent on parade for the Drumhead Service was commanded by the President and marched past after the Queen's Regiment Association detachment, in which a number of our members marched. It was very good to have Sergeant Ernest Turner, MM (DOB 6 November 1898) with us from Huntingdon, where he lives. It was a very nice, friendly day, blessed with sunshine and warmth in a not so good summer.

Opening of Headquarters,

8th Battalion The Queen's Fusiliers TA

The President and Chairman and a number of others were invited to be present at the official reopening of the TA Centre at St John's Hill, Clapham, by Major General H.R.H. The Duke of Kent. This ceremony took place with style in the forecourt of the Drill Hall on 15th July 1987. The Battalion has its Headquarters and Headquarter Company at St John's Hill and a Company at Flodden Road, Camberwell. It very much re-establishes our presence in the old Queens and East Surrey areas in South London and we wish the Battalion all possible success.

Freedom March, Kingston Upon Thames

The 3rd Battalion, The Queen's Regiment, exercised the Freedom of the Regiment in Kingston-upon-Thames on Wednesday 23rd September. The Colour of the Battalion was escorted by two Guards under the command of Major R.M. Pratten and five Support Weapons vehicles were on parade and were inspected by the Mayor, Councillor Mrs Jenny Philpott in front of the Guildhall. The Quebec Band of the Regiment and the Corps of Drums of the 3rd Battalion and the 5th (Volunteer) Battalion lead the parade. Members of the Regimental Association were assembled to the right of the Saluting Base. Subsequent to the inspection of the troops on parade and before they marched off, Colonel W.E. McConnell, TD presented the Silver Bugles originally presented to, and belonging to the 6th Battalion The East Surrey Regiment TA, to Major and Drummers of the present 5th (V) Battalion, The Queen's Regiment.

After the parade the Mayor held a Reception in the Guildhall for the troops on parade and the special guests. Extracts from her address, to which Brigadier M.R.I. Constantine, OBE, representing the Colonel of the Regiment, replied are as follows:

"It is a great honour for me as Mayor of The Royal Borough to welcome you to Kingston upon Thames.

May I say how delighted and impressed I was to see you on parade this morning, and what a splendid sight you made with the Regimental Colour Party and the Quebec Band here in the centre of Kingston.

By exercising your right today, to march through the Borough with bayonets fixed, colours flying and drums beating, you have confirmed the strong ties which have existed between Borough and Regiment for so many years through so many changes. In 1966 the Queen's Regiment was created as one of the newly formed 'Large Regiments' and only one year earlier this Royal Borough was created in much the same way by amalgamation of the three former Boroughs of Surbiton, Malden and Coombe, and the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames. All these former boroughs had close ties going back through centuries with units of your Regiment as they then existed. We in Kingston have ancient colours of your Regiment hanging in our parish church where Holy Trinity Chapel is part of our hallowed heritage. The Memorial Gateway facing onto the busy market place and the Keep in Kings Road are reminders too of old East Surrey Days.

Therefore it is right on such an occasion as this to look back over the history of the Regiment and remind ourselves of the many honours won by your predecessors. However, I would like to mention a much more recent honour which has been bestowed upon the 3rd Battalion. I refer, of course, to the Wilkinson Sword of Peace which you received last week for your work in Belize.

I have read, with pride, the Defence Council Instruction which sets out the reasons for the award and makes mention of the excellent work for peace carried out by the Battalion in that distant land. Such work as this must enhance the reputation not only of the Regiment, but also the British Army and indeed the whole country. I feel that congratulations are in order and I would like to extend them on behalf of the Council and the Royal Borough."



Some of our members who watched the Freedom March.

The Silver Bugles of the 6th Bn The East Surrey Regiment (TA)

On 23rd September, 1987, The Queen's Regiment exercised its privilege of the Honorary Freedom of the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames by marching through the Borough with Colours flying, drums beating and bayonets fixed. The contingent, under the command of Major John Pratten, consisted of a Colour party, two Guards each of 50 officers and men, The Regiment's Quebec Band, the Drums of the 3rd Battalion augmented by the Drum Major and four drummers of the 5th Volunteer Battalion and a vehicle party of five land rovers.

Following the march, the contingent formed up in front of Guildhall where the salute was taken by the Mayor accompanied by the Colonel of the Regiment's representative. The Mayor was then invited to inspect the parade. On this occasion a majority of the Members of the Borough Council attended and over 100 Old Comrades of the Regiment and their wives and families were present.

After the inspection, Colonel W.E. McConnell, TD., Chairman of The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Territorial Trustees handed over, on loan, to the 5th Volunteer Bn The Queen's Regiment the silver bugles which had belonged to the 6th Bn The East Surrey Regiment (TA). In handing over the bugles Colonel McConnell in the course of his address said that the silver bugles were presented at different times between 1860 and 1928 to the 6th Battalion. Until the Infantry reorganisations of 1959 Kingston was the headquarters town of The East Surrey Regiment and of the 6th Battalion. The Royal Borough had conferred upon that Regiment the privileges of the Honorary Freedom which are today exercised by its successors, The Queen's Regiment. The Colonel continued "The Queen's Regiment is represented on parade today by the 3rd Battalion, one of its Regular Army Battalions, and it is fitting that among them are some of the Territorial soldiers of the 5th Battalion. These bugles are therefore symbolic of the historic links between the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames and the Regular and Territorial soldiers of The Queen's Regiment. Therefore on behalf of the Queen's Surreys Territorial Trustees I now hand over, on loan, the eighteen silver bugles to the 5th Volunteer Bn The Queen's Regiment and I express the hope that it will not be long before they are all seen and heard again in this Royal Borough."



The Mayor talks to some of our Association who were present.

The bugles commemorate various episodes in the history of the 6th Battalion between 1859 and 1920. Each bugle is inscribed with either the badge of the appropriate Rifle Corps or that of The East Surrey Regiment and details of its presentation. The following is a brief description of the bugles.

1. **6th Surrey Rifle Volunteer Corps Bugle.** Presented by the Ladies of Esher and district.
2. **12 Surrey Rifle Volunteer Corps Bugle.** Presented by the Ladies of Kingston and neighbourhood.
3. **9th Surrey Rifle Volunteer Corps Bugle.** Presented by the Corporation of the Borough of Richmond.
4. **15th Surrey Rifle Volunteer Corps Bugle.** Presented by Chertsey Urban District Council.
5. **3rd Vol Bn The East Surrey Regiment Bugle.** Presented by members of the 3rd volunteer Battalion in commemoration of the change of title to 6th Bn The East Surrey Regiment, Territorial Force.
6. **The Imperial Service Bugle.** This bugle commemorates the granting of the distinction 'Imperial Service' to the 6th Battalion in 1914.
7. **The Officers' Memorial Bugle.** Presented by wives of past and present officers in memory of the officers killed in the 1914-1918 War.
8. **The Colours Bugle.** This bugle commemorates the presentation of Colours in 1928.
9. **The 1/6th Battalion Bugle.** Presented in commemoration of the service of the 1/6th Battalion in India and Aden in the 1914-1918 War.
10. **The NCOs and Men Memorial Bugle.** Presented by the NCOs and Men of the 1/6th Battalion in memory of the NCOs and Men of the 1/6th, 2/6th and 3/6th Battalions who lost their lives in the 1914-1918 War.
11. **The 2/6th Battalion Bugle.** Presented by all ranks of the 2/6th Battalion to perpetuate the memory of that unit (1914-1918).
12. **The 3/6th Battalion Bugle.** Presented by all ranks of the 3/6th Battalion to perpetuate the memory of that unit (1915-1918).
13. **The Post War Bugle.** Presented in commemoration of the reformation of the 6th Battalion in 1920.
14. **The 31st Foot Bugle.** Presented by the 1st Bn The East Surrey Regiment in commemoration of the 31st Regiment of Foot.
15. **The 70th Foot Bugle.** Presented by the 2nd Bn The East Surrey Regiment in commemoration of the 70th Regiment of Foot and in commemoration of the authority granted to the 6th Battalion to accept the rights and traditions of The East Surrey Regiment.
16. **The North Staffordshire Bugle.** Presented by all ranks of the 2nd Bn The North Staffordshire Regiment.
17. **The Drayson Memorial Bugle.** Presented by Colonel A.P. Drayson, OBE, TD., DL., in memory of Lieutenant A.D. Drayson who died in September 1925.
18. **The 'Line' Bugle.** Presented by all ranks of the 1/6th Battalion in commemoration of the 6th Battalion relinquishing the rights and uniform of a Rifle Battalion and adopting the rights and uniform of The East Surrey Regiment.

GLAS



Colonel W E McConnell T.D. presenting one of the silver bugles to a Drummer from 5 Queens.

The Queen's (Southwark) Regimental Association

A delegation from the 1/7th Queens attended the Peace Festivities that took place in St Niklaas, Belgium on 4th, 5th & 6th September 1987 and received a very warm welcome and hospitality from the Burgomaster Paul De Vidts, the Aldermen, the Patriotic Committee and a cheering population at the various events including 3 Bands and hot air balloons. The depth of feeling and gratitude shown towards Lt Col W.D. Griffiths, D.S.O., M.C. and the delegation, "their liberators", was a moving experience, demonstrating that our friendships are as strong as they have been since the liberation on 6 September 1944.

A wreath of poppies was provided by Mr Joe Rowe, M.M. and laid by him at the "Queens" War Memorial, in addition to other wreaths laid by the President and members of the delegation at 3 War Memorials. Altogether the programme proved to be a most memorable, worthwhile, happy, colourful and exhausting experience.



The Queens War Memorial St. Niklaas, Belgium, Foto Delro.



Wreath laying at the War Memorial September 1987.
L. to R. Burgomaster Paul de Vidts, Lt Col W.D. Griffiths, Mrs. Freda Griffiths, The Army District Commander and one of the town Aldermen.

Donations

The Trustees wish to thank the undermentioned gentlemen for their donations: W. Geeves, E.K. (Yorky) Atkins and A S A Avis (deceased).

5th OMA The Queen's Royal Regiment

Once again there was a good turn out for our annual Reunion Dinner on the 16th May, held at the Drill Hall, Sandfield Terrace, Guildford. 160 members attended and, since they had travelled from a wide area of the country to be together again, the prize for the furthest travelled must go to member Arthur Hill who, for the second year running, had come over from Canada, making his holiday coincide with the reunion. Another long distance member was Busty Humphries who had come over from Germany where he now lives.

The Chairman, Lt Col Foster Herd gave a warm welcome to everyone in attendance and to our guest of honour, the Mayor of Guildford, Councillor Andrew Hodges. There was also special mention of our most senior member in attendance, Brigadier F.E. Stafford who is now in his mid nineties. Also with us was Colonel Toby Sewell, President of The Queen's Royal Surrey Association. The Chairman's after dinner speech was brief. He commenced by proposing a toast to absent friends. He went on to say a few words on the Museum, our Territorials and The Queen's Regiment. He also mentioned the unfortunate circumstances of one of our members Bert Lemon who, due to illness, had both legs amputated at the knees and was also losing his sight. He hoped that as many people as possible would sign a card to be sent to him. The Chairman thanked OCA Company 5 Queen's and all who worked so hard to make this popular function such a success and, in particular, Doug Mitchell and his committee.

A small contingent of the OMA attended the Regimental Service at Guildford Cathedral and joined the congregation of some 450. After the service most people went into the Refectory for refreshments and the normal gathering of members from all our old battalions of our Regiment.

For particulars of the Old Member Association please contact Doug Mitchell, Hon Sec, 3 Little Field Way, Fairlands, Guildford, Surrey GU3 3JE - phone 0483 232043.

6th (Bermondsey) Bn. The Queen's Royal Regiment O.C.A.

The visit of our friends from Belgium in May was very successful. Starting off on the Friday with a well attended Dinner and Dance at the Union Jack Club on the Friday night. On Saturday a party went to Bisley for a days shooting, and in the evening the Belgians were entertained at the Hackney Social Club.

By the time these notes appear we will have held our Ladies night Dinner and Dance. This year our Christmas Social will again be held on board H.M.S. Belfast on December 5th 1987.

The writer of these notes was pleased to meet at Bassingbourn in July 'Drummie Bennett' on a visit to this country from New Zealand. It is just over thirty years since we last met. So it does pay to go to this reunion. You never know who you are going to bump into.

J.T.B.

2/4th Queen's 62nd Reunion

Croydon's 2nd/4th Queen's (West Surrey's) celebrated the 62nd anniversary of the association last May. Among their guests were younger colleagues of the 4th Queen's and members of other Croydon Territorial Army regiments, some who had seen service in the second world war.

Many of the old soldiers were over 92 years old and as they chatted with their guests, wartime memories were exchanged, from the landing on Gallipoli, the capture of Jerusalem and the battles in France and Flanders in the first world war to the victories of El Alamein, Normandy, and Burma in the last war.

Guest of honour Col D.J. McLelland, Deputy Lieut for Croydon replied to the toast "the 2nd/4th Queen's".

He said that although he wore the blue tie of the Royal West Kents he did not feel out of place among those who wore the blue, red and sea green tie of the Queens. "The Queen's Royal Regiment have now been merged with other home county battalions and the West Kents are one of those units. But you can be sure that the traditions of the Queen's, which span over 300 years, will not die. They will live on in the new Queen's Regiment."

Col McLelland regretted that we did not have a Queen's Regiment in Croydon.

The lunch was arranged by Sgt Harry Mann, MBE, who is the longest serving Old Comrades' Association secretary in the

country. Sgt Mann said: "It was in 1925 that I was asked to form a Queen's Old Comrades' Association. It started with 20 former Queensmen but it soon grew to more than 120 members. Every May we meet for lunch and hold a shrine service in November to remember those who did not return from the battlefields."

Now just a handful of the old soldiers are left, but when none remain, the legends and battle honours of Croydon's proud Queen's battalion will live on in the history books and on the Regimental Colours which hang in Croydon Parish Church.

TM

6th (Bermondsey) Old Comrades Association London Marathon

For the past three years John Roll of our association has completed the full course of the London Marathon. Enclosed photo of him receiving trophy presented by clients of the Lilliput Arms, opposite the Marine Centre where we hold our meetings.

When they heard John was running on our behalf they sponsored him to the sum of £ 33.50. The total collected was £ 161.98 which was divided between our social fund and general fund.

John through his efforts has given strength to both the above mentioned funds. He has now taken on the job as our sick visitor for the London Area, in which we wish him well.

Chick



An Old Soldier's Prayer

Lord, Thou knowest better than I know myself that I am growing older, and some day will be old.... Keep me from getting talkative, and particularly from the fatal habit of thinking I must say something on every subject and on every occasion.... Release me from the craving to try to straighten out everybody's affairs.... Make me thoughtful but not moody, helpful but not bossy, understanding and appreciative of my wife and children, and thankful for my grandchildren. With my vast store of wisdom it seems a pity not to use it all.... but Thou knowest, Lord, that I want a few friends at the end.... Keep my mind free from the recital of endless details.... Give me wings to get to the point. Seal my lips on my many aches and pains - they are increasing - and my love of rehearsing them is becoming sweeter as the years go by. I ask grace enough to listen to the tales of others' problems; help me to endure them with patience.... Teach me the glorious lesson that occasionally it is possible that I may be wrong. Keep me reasonably sweet as I do not want to be a saint - some of them are so hard to live with - but a sour old soldier is one of the crowning works of the devil. Help me to extract all possible delight out of life.... there are so many funny things around me and I don't want to miss any of them. Amen.

This 'prayer' was forwarded to the Editor by a VERY senior and distinguished officer of the Regiment who, the Editor recalls, as a very young subaltern made a hobby of collecting extra orderly officers and, on one memorable occasion, twenty eight days, which were completed without a break.

Museum Notes

The current special theme is the Territorial Army. Despite the limitations of space a fascinating display of photographs has attracted much interest and thanks are due to Mrs Daphne Hill for her tremendously hard work and ingenuity in assembling it. The TA booklet - all 140 pages of it - is now with the printers and will be available by the end of the year. Entitled The Territorial Battalions of Surrey, it brings together under one cover much of historical interest from the origins of the TA to the present day, and a number of spicy anecdotes. It is a product of much hard work by contributors, researchers, typists and checkers of drafts, too many to mention by name but all deserving many thanks. It will, we hope, give much pleasure to those who buy it for it epitomises the enduring spirit of the TA and adds to the recorded history of our Regimental family.

Coincidentally a number of recent donations of silver have been connected with the TA. These have included the 1920 East Surrey Challenge Cup presented by Colonel Drayson and now donated by Major Peter Spearing, and a cup presented to the Esher Detachment 5th Surrey Rifle Volunteers by Lady Brett, later Viscountess Esher, on the occasion of Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee in 1887. A Challenge Cup presented to the 1st Surrey Rifles for the best drilled Company by Capt. W.H. Frensham, Adjutant, in 1891 is also on display.

Our next major display will be in 1989 when we plan to have as the main theme regimental life in India in the 1920's and 30's. Research is already in hand and we hope to unearth original material for the accompanying booklet. There are superficial similarities between then and today, for example internal security commitments, family separation and Arms Plot problems - or perhaps there wasn't an Arms Plot in those days? So we might even identify some lessons for the future. We look forward to seeing what our senior citizens produce.

John Woodroff, our curator for the last four years, has decided to retire this autumn and we are seeking his replacement. His historical awareness and links with the museum world have been invaluable, and we are glad that he will continue to keep in touch and help research the time consuming inquiries about relations and friends who served, possibly, regimentally a long time ago. The post is part-time, administrative and attracts a useful honorarium. Regimental connections would be an asset but are not essential, but there will be some involvement in regimental benevolence and other matters locally. Anyone interested should contact the Regimental Association Secretary as soon as possible.

Located as it is in the National Trust house at Clandon Park near Guildford, the museum has to conform with the National Trust opening timings from early April to the end of October. We re-open again on 1st April 1988 but a dedicated working party meets regularly during the winter to help re-organise and clean the displays, and Association members are welcome to visit but only by appointment or they may find the place closed.

MJAC

Recent Additions to the Medals in the Museum

Sgt C.S.A. Avis, Queen's

Alex Avis, who died this year at the age of 93, was probably our oldest regular soldier, having joined The Queen's Royal Regiment in 1910. One of his earlier recollections was the dedication of the window in Holy Trinity Church, Guildford to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the formation of the Regiment.

In September 1914 he was severely wounded while serving with 1st Queen's and down graded as unfit for further active service. In 1921 he joined the South Africa Police in Cape Town. He took an active part in the St. John Ambulance Brigade and maintained a great interest in the Regiment. He has left his medals to the Museum. They are The Order of St. John of Jerusalem, 1914 Star, British War Medal, Allied Victory Medal, Africa Service Medal (South African), South Africa Police Good Service Medal, Medal of The Order of St. John.

CSM F.H. Barber, Queen's

In June 1987 Squadron Leader F. Barber RAF, visited the Museum and presented the medals of his father the late CSM F.H. Barber, Queen's. They are the MM (awarded while serving with the Machine gun Corps), 1914 Star, British War Medal, Allied Victory Medal.

Pte J. Begg, Queen's

Mr. D.E. Begg has presented the British War Medal and Allied Victory Medal awarded to his father, the late Pte. John Begg, Queen's.

Capt. F.G. Coles, Queen's

Mr. A.F. Coles has presented the MC awarded to his brother Capt. F.G. Coles, Queen's, but at the time (Feb. 1943) serving with The Lancashire Fusiliers in North Africa. He was killed in action a few weeks later. His other medals are the 1939-45 Star, Africa Star, Defence Medal, War Medal.

Pte. P. Hanlan, Queen's

The National Army Museum showed their happy co-operation by giving us the Indian General Service Medal 1854-95, with clasps Burma 1885-7 and Burma 1887-9, awarded to Pte. P. Hanlan, Queen's.

Col. M.J.A. Jourdier, Surreys

It has been previously recorded that Maj. J.M. Jourdier, Surreys, presented the medals of his late father. Those medals are DSO, 1914-15 Star, British War Medal, Allied Victory Medal with Mention in Despatches, King George V Silver Jubilee Medal.

Pte. G.L. Langdown, Queen's

Pte. Langdown served in 7th (S) Bn. Queen's. He was awarded the MM for Conspicuous Gallantry at Lempire on 18th September, 1918 but died from wounds on 27th October that year. His medals were presented by Mr. D. Fillery, the godson of Pte. Langdown's sister. The medals are MM, British War Medal, Allied Victory Medal.

Pte. E.C. Redley, Queen's

Mr. J. Redley, son of the late Pte. E.C. Redley, Queen's, has presented his father's medals. They are 1939-45 Star, France and Germany Star, Defence Medal, War Medal 1939-45.

Cpl. K.V. Sutton, Surreys

Mrs. Sutton, widow of Cpl. K.V. Sutton, Surreys, has presented his Korea Medal and United Nations Service Medal.

Col. E. Tebay, Surreys

The late Mrs. A.A. Tebay, widow of Col. E. Tebay, Surreys, has presented his medals. They are 1939-45 Star, France and Germany Star, Defence Medal, War Medal 1939-45, Queen Elizabeth II Coronation Medal, T.D. and Bar, and the Royal Order of St. Olaf (Norway).

Officers' Club Dinner, 1987

Despite the near hurricane storms which our county had suffered only a week before, it was pleasing that some fifty members of the Officers' Club met together to dine at Simpson-in-the-Strand on 23rd October.

Colonel 'Toby' Sewell presided at this convivial occasion, which was attended by Generals Fergus Ling, Rowley Mans and Michael Reynolds.

After the Loyal Toast and the toast to The Queen's Regiment, Colonel Sewell thanked Lieutenant-Colonel Desmond Wilson for his years as Chairman of the Club's committee and welcomed Brigadier Michael Doyle, who had agreed to accept this appointment.

Colonel Sewell reminded members of the significance of the date of this year's dinner, which was that of the Battle of El Alamein, and of our former Regiments and Battalions outstanding contribution in that Battle.

Finally our President welcomed Lieutenant Colonel Michael Ball, Commanding Officer, 1 Queen's, and Lieutenant Colonel Charles Joint, Commanding Officer, 5 Queen's. It is unusual to invite guests to our Club dinners, however, on this occasion, Colonel Sewell said that it was significant to remember, with renewed interest, our connections with the Regiment which had evolved from the old County Regiments.

The dinner and wines were much enjoyed but, of course, the pleasure of meeting again so many former brother officers made the evening a memorable and happy event. Our thanks are due once again to Lieutenant Colonel Les Wilson, our Association Secretary, who made all the necessary arrangements with his usual quiet efficiency.

Museum Open Day

The open day at Clandon on 26th September 1987 was a great success. Some two hundred old comrades, friends and relations turned up and spent a happy few hours exploring the displays and exchanging reminiscences. Among them we noted Colonels John Kealy and Philip Connery, RSM Garry Lockwood, former Chindits John Cotton and Jimmy Dill, and old Surreys Bill Barrow and Fred Jenkins to name but a few. We were also delighted to see the Commanding Officer designate of 1 Queen's, Lieutenant Colonel Chris Charter.

The photograph albums in the archives room were a particular attraction but alas they extend only up to 1945. So if you have any photographs of regimental interest which you no longer need, we would like to enlarge our collection especially covering the post-war years. So please let us have them.



Lt Col Chris Charter now commanding 1 Queen's, Maj Peter Hill and Brig Michael Clarke.



Col Nick Nice, Jock Patterson, Jack Homersham, George Beadle and Ron May.

A Visit to the Ypres Salient Museum at the Cloth Hall, Ypres

During the summer it was arranged that the banner of the Guildford Branch of the Old Contemptibles, whose President had been the late Brigadier G.R.P. Roupell, VC, CB, DL, should be handed over to the Ypres Salient, 1914-18 Museum in the Cloth Hall at Ypres. As we were going to France on holiday, we undertook to deliver it.

On entering the Cloth Hall, we found ourselves face to face with a full length dummy of an officer in blue patrols wearing the badges of The Queen's Royal Regiment. The uniform was that of Lieut Colonel Ian McKay who had served in the Ypres Sector with The Cheshire Regiment in the 1914-18 War, and who subsequently commanded the 2/5th Cadet Battalion The Queen's Royal Regiment. The Colonel died in 1986 at the age of 90.

Also in the Museum was the figure of a sergeant of The Queen's in battle order beside a GS wagon. He is wearing the blue rectangular flash of the 7th Service Battalion. Among souvenirs taken by soldiers from the town is a statuette of the Madonna and Child. The notice reads, 'This statue was taken from the ruins of the Cloth Hall by Pte Walter Gillespie of The East Surrey Regiment. At his request his family returned it to Ypres.'

The Museum had a number of most interesting exhibits of the 1914-18 War and is well worth a visit. The Curator, Tony De Bruyne, is a most friendly person and would welcome anyone from the Regiment who paid a visit.

DGM

Golf Society

The Spring Meeting of the Golf Society was held at the Richmond Golf Club, Sudbrook Park, on 7th May 1987. 18 members attended.

| | |
|-----------------|----------------------------------|
| Challenge Cup: | Col J.G.W. Davidson (82) |
| Dodgson Trophy: | Maj T.J. Medcalf (71 net) |
| Heales Trophy: | Maj B.A. Crutchfield (35 points) |
| Veterans Halo: | Maj B.A. Crutchfield (35 points) |

The Sweep was won by Maj R.A. Green

The Annual General Meeting of the Society was held on the same day. Major-General G.A. White, having completed his three year term of office as President retired and received a vote of thanks for his work on behalf of the Society. By popular acclaim Colonel Toby Sewell was elected for the next three years.

Annual Match v. Royal Marines G.S.

This fixture was held on 8th July 1987 at the North Hants Golf Club Fleet. The Society held a 2 point advantage after the morning foursomes but could manage only 3 wins in the afternoon singles, the match being halved at 6 points each.

| A.M. | | |
|---------------------------|---------------|--------------------------|
| QUEEN'S SURREYS | ROYAL MARINES | |
| Colonel J.G.W. Davidson | 1 | Colonel H.S. Harris |
| Major J. Sutton (2/1) | | Colonel S.D. Smith |
| Colonel J.W. Sewell | 1/2 | Lt Col D.G. Tweed |
| M. Power | | M.A. Trotman |
| Maj-Gen G.A. White | 1 | Maj-Gen P.R. Kay |
| Captain J.A. Clark (2/1) | | Captain D.G.R. Hunt |
| Major T.J. Medcalf | 1/2 | Sgt J.D. Francis |
| Major F.V. Sheppard | | Cpl P.R. Doe |
| | 3 | 1 |
| P.M. | SINGLES | |
| Col. J.G.W. Davidson(4/3) | 1 | M.A. Trotman |
| M. Power (6/4) | 1 | Colonel H.S. Harris |
| Major J. Sutton | 0 | Maj-Gen P.R. Kay (2/1) |
| Major T.J. Medcalf | 0 | Capt D.G.R. Hunt (4/2) |
| Major F.V. Sheppard | 0 | Colonel S.D. Smith (2/1) |
| Captain J.A. Clark (2 up) | 1 | Sgt J.D. Francis |
| Maj-Gen G.A. White | 0 | Lt Col D.G. Tweed (1 up) |
| Colonel J.W. Sewell | 0 | Cpl P.R. Doe (2/1) |
| | 3 | 5 |
| Result | 6 | 6 |

It was agreed that the format for the 1988 fixture would be foursomes both morning and afternoon.

Golf Society

The Autumn meeting was held at Richmond Golf Club, Sudbrook Park, on Thursday 8th October 1987, 19 members attended.

| | |
|--|-----------------------------|
| The winners of the competitions were:- | |
| Autumn Bowl | M.J. Power Esq. net 66 |
| Glasgow Greys Cup | Lt Col F.B. Herd net 68 |
| Heales Memorial Trophy | Maj F.V. Sheppard 40 points |
| Veterans Halo | Maj F.V. Sheppard 41 points |
| Petri Plate | Maj F.V. Sheppard net 141 |
| Harry Adcock Memorial Trophy | Col J.W. Sewell 29 putts |

SWEEP WINNERS

| | |
|--------|----------------------|
| First | Capt P.K. Bruckmann |
| Second | Maj B.A. Crutchfield |
| Third | Maj P.A. Gray |

The 1988 fixtures will be at Richmond Golf Club on 5th May and 6th October.

Bassingbourn 1987

After three years of trying to attend a Bassingbourn Regimental Reunion I finally made it this year.

Following directions I parked my car at the end of a line of others. Would cars I wondered be inspected by a military gentleman and notes left on the windscreen. "Headlamps dirty", "Wash rear window", "Tyres under inflated".

I arrived after the Drumhead Service and the sale and collection of lunch boxes, so I wandered to the snack bar and beer tent. There was a small queue at the former and a large one at the latter.

Meeting acquaintances was a delight. People wearing the same regimental tie looked hard at each other to see a sign of recognition. Surely Bill doesn't look that old, I'm sure I don't. But all too often we do. When recognition was achieved a handshake, a visit to the beer tent, chairs and a talk about old times followed.

I thought on my way home, how fortunate that the affiliation to regimental associations continues and yet a reunion of all association members immediately effects a band of comradeship.

Surrounding the reunion area was a tent in which regimental ties, records, and tapes were sold. The Queen's Regiment Display Team were on duty attracting potential young soldiers who were there with their Fathers.

One of the best food buys were hot dogs and hamburgers that were cooked on the spot. The cooks (or is it chefs these days) who operated this food outlet are to be congratulated.

The first display was a thrilling one, a parachute drop by The Flying Dragons - The Queen's Regiment Display Team. Freefalling and spinning from 4000 feet they landed on a cross marked in the area.



Association march past, Bassingbourn.

Some of the Fire Support Company of the 3rd Bn The Queen's Regiment gave a demonstration of the fire power of mortars and the MILAN launcher.

An event, which I assumed always gets support, was the Air Gun Clay Shoot competition. Each regimental association entered a team and they were cheered by their supporters and friendly heckled by their opponents.

Tea, more time for snacks and other liquid refreshment, then a walk to claim a seat to see Beating Retreat.

Sitting on the grandstand awaiting the arrival of the Quebec Band of The Queen's Regiment and the Band of The Queen's Regiment (TA) and Corps of Drums 5th (Volunteer) Battalion The Queen's Regiment. I looked round the area. The large airfield with the hills of Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire in the background, hangers adjacent to the parade area all covered by an almost cloudless sky was a suitable setting for such an event. The music and marching precision was first class and as the various regimental marches were played enthusiastic spectators clapped or sung. "Sussex by the Sea" was a favourite. I wondered what would be sung when the line "you can tell them all that they know . . . all at Sussex by the Sea" was reached. All was well no one was offended. Sunset was played, regimental flags were lowered, the salute was taken by the Colonel of the Regiment and the bands marched off to the appreciation of all spectators.

Bassingbourn was over for another year. Friendships had been revived and new ones made, but most of all the spirit of comradeship of the Regiment had been renewed. Truly an interesting day in pleasant surroundings and a well organised event.

RR

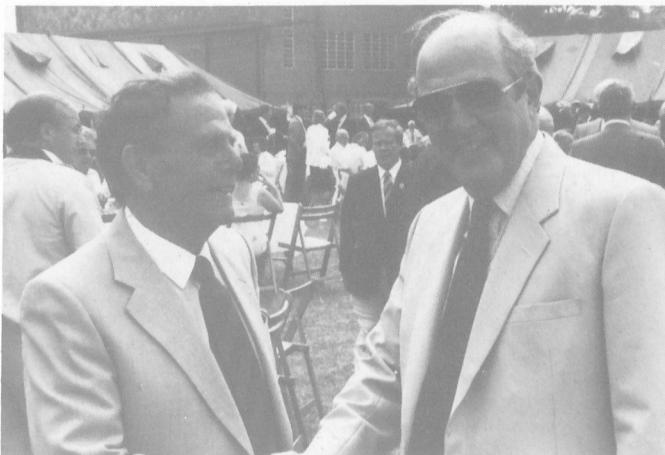
J W SKILTON writes:- I had great pleasure in visiting Bassingbourn Barracks, for the Queen's Regiment Reunion. It was for me a great day, as I met about eight colleagues who were in the 2nd Batt, in 1938/39, it was a marvellous feeling to meet up again with people who were together as young men, and then meet again over forty years later. I was a little disappointed that more old 2nd Bn members did not parade, may I say to my pals "Come on lads" lets get together in 1988.

During our conversations at Bassingbourn, I was told that it is possible that Stoughton Barracks may be sold for building development, hoping to retain the keep, with the "Queen's Badge" intact. If this rumour comes to pass, may I kindly suggest to the O C A, that pressure be put to the Town and Country Planners, that the roads be named after the victories of "The Queen's Royal Regiment" such as:- Namur, Peninsular, Egypt etc.

This is all for now, once again I say thank you to all the lads for making an old comrade happy. My very best wishes to you all.



John Kershaw with 'Friends'



Frank Bohm & Maj Gen Mike Reynolds

Can You Help?

Captain R de Horman of The Royal Hussars is researching the history of Stalags XI D and 357 at Fallingbostel, Germany. They were liberated by the Recce Troop of the 8th Hussars with an 8th Hussars Squadron in support.

1/5 Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment had captured the village. The period was 12th to 17th April 1945.

Any information however small is valuable. Write to: Captain R de Horman, HQ Berlin Infantry Brigade, British Forces Post Office 45.

20th Queen's - The Answer

The author of the article asks for more light to be thrown on the matter of 20th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment and The Parachute Regiment.

Anyone who was in 151 (British) Parachute Battalion in the late Summer of 1942 should be able to provide more information, but perhaps, as one who was closely involved at the time, I am able to give almost the full picture.

In any war it is vital that a nation hides its intentions from the enemy, as well as doing its best to confuse him. Thus an important role is played by a department of the operations and intelligence staff which deals with cover plans.

151 British Parachute Bn, which with 152 (Indian) and 153 (Gurkha) Bns, formed part of the 50th Indian Parachute Brigade, was formed in October, 1941. In 1942 it was decided to move the British battalion to the Middle East for operations and to act as a basis on which to form another Parachute Brigade. Naturally, the Germans and the Japanese must be led to believe that the battalion is still in India, and that a new battalion has been formed in Egypt, therefore the real identity of the unit must be kept secret during the move.

It was an accepted fact that one of the main areas of leaks in security was in the General HQs of both India and the Middle East, for it is difficult to conceal mailing lists, strength and ration returns, the issue of re-inforcements and especially movement orders, but it is this loophole which the Cover Plans branch use to turn the tables on the enemy. So, it was decided that 151 Parachute Bn should to all appearances be moved to Egypt as if it were an infantry battalion.

I was the Intelligence Officer of the battalion and was involved in the planning of this cover with the appropriate departments of the GHQ, Delhi; indeed I drafted the special orders to the battalion instructing members on their temporary name, status and history. I cannot remember why the Queen's Royal Regiment was chosen; maybe because there were already three battalions of that Regiment in the Middle East. I cannot remember why 20th Bn was chosen. Lt Col Martin Lindsay, the original CO of 151, had nothing to do with the plan for he had returned to the UK several months before. The anti-tank role was chosen in order to make it appear reasonable why we had so many Sergeants - Section/Stick Commanders were, in those days, Sergeants.

The simple subterfuge was taken seriously by all ranks; the Queen's history in outline was learned; all signs of what might be called 'para - fanalia' were hidden. For instance, those who had parachute wings tattooed just below the right knee ie above the hosetop, had to wear slacks; new K.D. uniforms were worn without parachute wings or signs; no regimental badges were worn, except by a few and they were Queen's. This may have confused the enemy but it did not fool many friendly observers; it was obvious that the general 'look' of the battalion was something more than a wartime infantry battalion, and even a Green admiral observed this as the battalion embarked at Bombay on the small troopship *Varela*, a one time pilgrim ship from the Persian Gulf. Security was not helped by the Indian Ordnance organisation, unbeknown to us, delivering 1000 Cawnpore-made parachutes and weapons containers to the docks.

The cover had some awkward consequences for a few members who were evacuated sick on arrival at Port Tewfik with Malaria (before the days of mepacrine and paludrine): for after they were discharged from hospital they had difficulty in persuading the authorities that they were, in fact, parachutists and not of the Queen's and thus liable to be posted with all speed as reinforcements to the Western Desert - it was just after the Battle of Alamein.

The general cover plan at that time was to make the Germans and Italians think that the next British offensive would be into Greece and her islands including Crete, rather than in the western Mediterranean, and the formation of a parachute brigade was part of this plan. Soon after, 4 Parachute Brigade started with a small HQ, 151 (now 156, a new battalion), 2nd Royal Sussex to be 10th Bn The Parachute Regt, an engineer squadron and a field ambulance all from 8th Army, and was located next to 1 SAS at Kabrit. This small nucleus was officially in The Middle East order of battle known as 4th Airborne Division complete with vehicle signs, letter headings etc; and it was hoped that German Intelligence would soon hear of it and be suitably interested. For similar reasons in 1941 David Stirling's

first small SAS detachment - 70 strong, was called 'L' Det, SAS Brigade.

One of the more cynical Company Commanders remarked at the time that he preferred the role of a potential threat rather than anything more dangerous! By the twist of fate this officer was, unfortunately, killed at Arnhem.

So, the 20th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment was just a temporary cloak used to disguise the transfer of a parachute battalion from one theatre of war to another, but in its short 2-3 weeks it had played its part in the general conduct of the war.

My Experiences in the Great War by Clarrie Jarman

I joined Kitchener's Army at the age of 18 years in August 1914. After taking the King's Shilling in the Drill Hall at Woking, along with many other local lads, we were taken to Stoughton Barracks at Guildford, which was the Depot for The Queen's (Royal West Surrey Regiment). After spending the night there the 7th (Service) Battalion, The Queen's was formed and then transported to Purfleet, Essex.

There were no barracks or huts for us to go to, so from then until the end of December 1914 we were under canvas. The weather turned bad and the camp being near the River Thames was soon flooded. We were then taken to Belus Park, Averley, Essex, four miles from Purfleet, but still under canvas. The battalion stayed there until January 1915 when we returned to Purfleet where huts had been built for us.

In April 1915 we were moved to barracks in Colchester for brigade manoeuvres, marching the 18 miles from Colchester to Ipswich where we stayed for one night in billets. The manoeuvres then took us across to Hollesley Bay. We covered 150 miles on foot before returning to Ipswich after a week living rough: all part of our training. We arrived at our billets in Ipswich at 10pm and then at 11pm the fall in was sounded and we had to march back to Colchester through the night and were placed in huts at Reedhall Camp, taking them over from the 10/Royal Fusiliers. Towards the end of April 1915 we moved to Codford St. Mary on Salisbury Plain for divisional manoeuvres and rifle firing on the ranges. This ended our training in England which had taken eleven months.

About the end of June 1915 the 18th Division, which included my battalion, was ordered to France. We belonged to the 55th Brigade and embarked at Folkestone and landed at Boulogne. We marched through the Town to St. Martin's Camp where we stayed for the night. The next day we travelled to a place just outside Amiens by train. From there we marched to a village called Dernancourt just behind the British front line. We then went into the front line for our first experience under fire, marching up through the village of Meaulte at night.

We took over a section of the line from the 1/Norfolks, with Albert behind us and Fricourt held by the Germans in front of us. At first to hear the bullets whizzing by and shells whining over made us duck, but we soon got used to it and treated this with contempt. With experience we learned when to take cover and when not to. For instance, we knew when shells were being fired at us in the front line or at the artillery in our rear.

During the rest of 1915 and all through the Winter of 1915/16 we remained on this front between La Boisselle and Suzanne at the right of the British line, linking up with the French. The conditions during the Winter months were pretty grim, snow at Christmas with rain and freezing cold. The trenches became thick with mud and we were often up to our knees in water which made life miserable, to say the least.

During these months we spent two weeks in the trenches and two weeks out. Any action was out of the question due to mud and water, except for patrols and wiring parties which went out at night into no-man's-land. Casualties were few, some lads were unlucky and got shot while out wiring and shells at times landed in our trenches; also trench mortars and dirty coalboxes, killing or wounding anyone near.

Our main food when in the line was bully beef stew and we had to share one loaf a day between four men. Other than this we had a ration of cheese each day and some butter in tins. At night a dixie of tea and rum was sent up. For warmth we had charcoal braziers in dugouts: charcoal was burned as it gave off no smoke. Tins of hard biscuits were placed in the front line for us to eat as we liked: they were like dog biscuits.

When out of the line our time was fully occupied. First we had to clean the mud off uniforms and boots and clean buttons, rifles and equipment. We had to parade for a bath and change of underwear. The bath house was usually in some old barn and we had to bathe in tubs. Our clothing after being in the line was pretty lousy. In fact we were hardly ever free from lice. Rats not only invaded the trenches, they came in droves to the villages. In old barns where we had to sleep on lice-infested straw, the rats just ran over us.

Up on the firestep in the front line we had fun by putting a piece of cheese on the end of our bayonet: the rats came sniffing up and the one to get the cheese, got the bullet. If a lad was killed while out with a wiring party a guard had to stand over his body with a cudgel to keep the rats off until burial the next morning.

Other duties when out of the line consisted of parades, route marches, physical jerks and often we worked with the REs making up roads, laying railway tracks and water mains, hence the saying: the bees do the work and the bees make the honey, but the Queens do the work and the REs draw the money.

Sports and football were among our activities. I played in inter-platoon tournaments and in the Brigade Sports held at Picquigny in May 1916. I managed to get 2nd in the mile race and 2nd in the high jump, winning 20 francs in each event. As these sports took place on the day before we were returning to the front line to prepare for the Battle of the Somme I treated some of my pals to Porto Blanc with the money I had won. This was the last occasion I was able to compete in sports.

Picquigny, where we had about two weeks rest after being at the front for eight months, was quite a nice place to us, not far from Amiens. To see English nurses in Picquigny and in Corbie was a sight for sore eyes, not having seen an English girl for eight months. However, all good things come to an end and we boarded a train at Picquigny for Mericourt, from there we marched to Suzanne, a deserted derelict village just behind our front line. The weather at this time was good but the sandbags along our parapet in the front line were green and slimy as a result of mustard gas used by the Germans sometime before we arrived there – at least that is what we were told.

For the next few weeks things remained fairly quiet but all the time preparations for the Somme battles were going on. The last ten days in June our artillery continually shelled the German lines day and night but we heard hardly a sound from the Germans. They knew quite well that the attack was coming and were fully prepared for it, a fact not known to us ordinary soldiers or, one would assume, to the top brass either, for we were led to believe that the German wire and defences had been destroyed.

On Thursday 29th we took up our position in what was called the assembly trenches. We were ready to go but at the last moment orders came through that the attack had been put off for 48 hours. We never knew the reason why. The weather turned bad and we had to stick in the trenches in the pouring rain with no cover at all.

However, on Saturday 1st July at 7.30 a.m. zero hour arrived. The weather had turned fine and warm, the trench ladders were in place and, on the blast of whistles and after wishing our chums the best of luck, over the top we went expecting, as we had been told, just a walkover. We had been drilled to go over in Star Formation, the four sections of each platoon forming a star and then on approaching the German line to spread out in extended order. As a bomber, I was carrying 250 rounds of rifle ammunition, seven Mills bombs on my chest and seven on my back in bomb carrying jackets, a rifle with bayonet fixed, and a pick and shovel. The idea of these was to square up the German trenches after we had taken them.

We actually went over the top at Carnoy and our objective was Montauban, though very few, if any, of the battalion reached this. The Germans had been sheltering in concrete dugouts 60 feet down and as soon as our attack started they came at us with what must have been hundreds of machine guns coupled with artillery fire and just mowed us down. On top of this our own field guns were for the first time using what was called a creeping barrage firing over the top of us and a great many of our lads must have been killed or wounded by our own shells. Instead of being a walkover it was complete slaughter: something like 60,000 British soldiers in the main Kitchener's Army were killed or wounded on that day. I had a bad gunshot wound in my right leg and was lucky to crawl in a deep shell hole.

In the few minutes in which I remained conscious I had a look round and the ground was just covered with lads in khaki,

dead, wounded and dying. The ground was being spattered with shrapnel, high explosives and machine gun bullets: it was almost impossible not to get hit and the noise of it all was deafening. I was soon unconscious from the loss of blood as an artery was severed. I managed to throw off my equipment, including the Mills bombs, etc.

I lay out where I had fallen all day: about fourteen hours. Again I was lucky for just as it was getting dusk a lad from the RAMC happened to come my way looking for wounded and just at that time I regained consciousness and in a very faint voice I called to him and he heard my call. Then, with the aid of one of his comrades, he carried me back to our front line. I was one of hundreds lying about waiting to be removed to a casualty clearing station. A great many died before getting there and many were killed by shell fire or stray bullets.

Eventually, after several hours, I was placed on a stretcher and carried into a field dressing station. There my leg was dressed and I was then put in an ambulance to hospital in Amiens. There were no beds for us so we were just lined up on stretchers.

We were given a wash and our wounds were freshly dressed. Still wearing our dirty khaki uniforms we spent five days on stretchers, cared for by nuns who were very kind, they fed us and did all they could to ease our pain. Many of the lads were in great pain and many died. I survived this and after a few days was put on a hospital barge and towed down the River Somme to hospital in Abbeville. This was the first time I lay down in a bed for over a year and it felt like heaven after all those months of active service living under pretty rough and squalid conditions.

From Abbeville where we were given fresh underwear and new uniforms we were taken to No. 3 Canadian Hospital in Boulogne by train. The train actually took us to the docks to board a hospital ship but when we got there the ship was full so we were taken back to the hospital where we stayed for three days. By then it was eight days from the time we left the battlefield. Personally, I was not feeling too bad, my leg was a bit painful and I could not put my foot to the floor and had to stay in bed.

I think it was the evening of Sunday 9th July when we were again taken to the docks at Boulogne and put on the hospital ship, Western Australia. We sailed later in the evening and after 17 hours docked at Southampton. It was said that we took so long on account of the German submarines lurking around. On the boat I was labelled up to go to London but the hospital train waiting at Southampton was bound for Aberdeen. I did not know at the time, however, as some not so badly wounded were wanted to fill the top bunks on the train. I was picked out for this.

The train left Southampton about 12 p.m. and the first stop was at Basingstoke. I thought "This looks like going to London", but the next stop was at Snow Hill station at Birmingham. I did not know then where we were going. We moved off again at about 3 a.m. and eventually arrived at Aberdeen. This was Tuesday 11th July, eleven days after leaving the front. I was further away from home in Scotland than I was in France. We were taken to Old Mill Military Hospital, where I remained in bed for six months.

During all the travelling the wound in my leg became infected with gangrene and after suffering great pain and many operations my right leg had to be amputated high above the knee. By this time I was almost a skeleton and when I was taken to the Operating Theatre for the umpteenth time I told the surgeon (Captain Mitchell) that if he was going to take my leg off he could take it off at the neck as I had had enough. This happened on 20th September 1916 and my war service was over.

After the leg had been amputated and most of the pain had gone I was able to move in bed. For almost three months I had been unable to move as my leg was put in plaster from top to bottom and afterwards in a Thomas splint with a weight on the end which meant I just had to lay on my back with bed sores as big as saucers. With this gone I gradually gained strength and after a few more weeks I was able to get out of bed. The first time I got out I thought I would not stop going up! When I reached my full height, six feet, on my one leg, I just collapsed onto the floor and that was my lot for the day. Each day, however, I made progress and was soon able to ride around in a wheel chair. I, like most amputees, sometimes tried to put the foot which was not there to the ground as I could still feel my toes tingling and I still do to this day.

Towards the end of 1916 I was sent to Dr. Gray's Hospital in Elgin for convalescence. To start with some of the lads took

me out in an old fashioned bath chair and they pushed the bath chair with me in it into an ornamental pond in Coopers Park. The water was not very deep, but I could not get out of the chair. I was rescued in due course and then, on the way back to the hospital they pushed me into a pub. I was well received by the patrons who had a whip round for my benefit. After this experience I asked the matron for crutches and was given a pair of the old broomhandle type and with practice I soon got used to them and got around very well, although the first time I tried to go down the hospital front steps I fell down most of them, but came to no harm.

The treatment given to me in both hospitals, Aberdeen and Elgin, was great. All the war casualties were well looked after and wanted for nothing. Apart from the first three months when I suffered acutely I enjoyed these hospital days and the Scottish people were very kind and generous. Most places of entertainment outside the hospital were free to us and the golf course in Elgin was available to us. We had no trouble to get a round of golf with the local girls. I had to balance on one leg when hitting the ball, but with my crutches I got round and could play a fair game. However, all good things come to an end, and just before my 21st birthday it was decided to send me to a hospital near my home in Woking. I was sad to go as I had made many friends in Elgin.

I returned to Old Mill Hospital in Aberdeen for a few days and then with an escort I was sent to Inkerman Barracks at Woking. After all this time my stump had still not healed. I had an open wound which would not heal over the bone and it was thought that I would have to undergo another operation. Fortunately I was transferred from Inkerman Barracks Hospital to a VAD Hospital called Beechcroft and the Matron there found an ointment which healed the wound and a further operation was avoided.

It was in April 1917 when I arrived in Woking, my home town, the treatment at Beechcroft was excellent and people in the town, especially local traders, were very good to us. I stayed in this hospital for many months.

After a few weeks leave which I spent with my parents in Woking and friends at Salisbury I was admitted to Roehampton Hospital to be fitted with an artificial leg, but the surgeon there considered my stump was not ready for fitting and sent me to the Pavilion at Brighton for further treatment. The Pavilion was a wonderful place: there were about 1000 chaps with either arms or legs missing. I was supposed to have a further operation but the surgeon at Brighton decided against this and put me on a course of massage and stretching to pull my stump straight down. This did the trick and in January 1918 I was sent back to Roehampton where I was fitted with my first artificial leg. In

I got on well with my artificial leg and in February 1918 was discharged from the army. I had been in hospital for nearly two years. I found civilian life very difficult after being waited on in hospital all that time. The army life was so different and I missed the comradeship and spirit of the lads. In civilian life it was a case of fending for yourself. I applied for a course in engineering at the Regent Street Polytechnic and after being accepted I went there for six months.

Many of us who attended this course which was for disabled ex-servicemen, lived in a hostel in Hanover Square. We were all war disabled chaps and Vesta Tilley took a great interest in our welfare. I have often remarked that I slept in Vesta Tilley's bed since she had donated one to the hostel.

After some years in engineering I was fortunate enough to obtain a position in Local Government. I retired from this after 36 years at the age of 65. I am now 85 and so have enjoyed 20 years in retirement.



Picquigny, near Amiens, June 1916.
Pte. F. Talbot (k.i.a.) L/Cpl. Gunner (k.i.a.), Pte. C. Jarman (wounded)



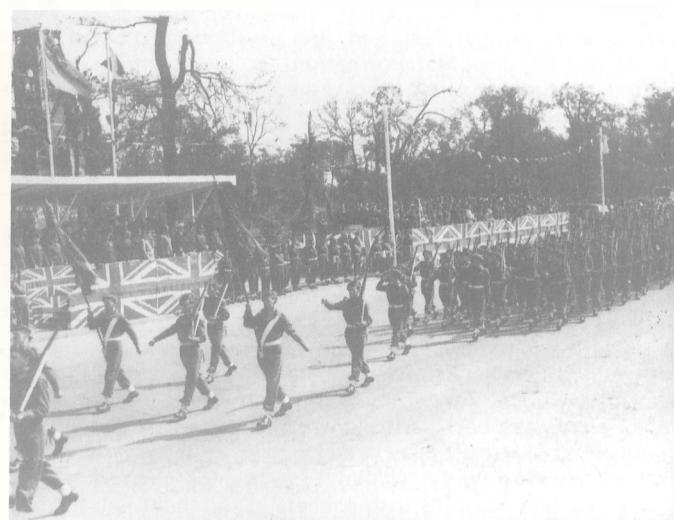
Bellus Park, 1915

Back row:- Pte. James, Unknown, Pte. Wilson, Pte. Gale, L/Cpl. Dean, Pte. Gunner. Front row:- Pte. Jarman, Pte. Townsend, Pte. Haddow. Of this group only Ptes. Jarman and Gale survived the war.

those days the limbs were made of willow and my leg weighed nine pounds, a fair weight to carry about.

While at Roehampton I began to train for a career when discharged from the army. I did not want to go back to my old trade in ironmongery in which I had served a four year apprenticeship from 1910 to 1914 when I joined up. I spent 100 hours in the workshops at Roehampton fitting and turning. While there I was introduced to Admiral Jellicoe who took an interest in our work.

BERLIN July 23rd 1945



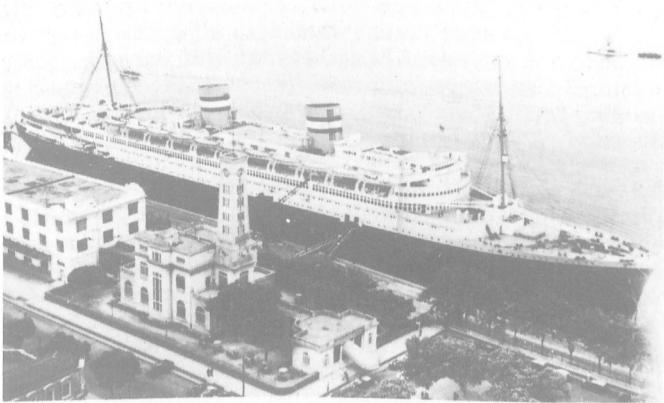
The photo, which was sent in by C. Sumner, shows C Company 1/5th Queens and their Regimental Colours marching past a very distinguished gathering of V.I.P's.



THE FAR EAST

Ceylon - February 1942 - February 1943

The activities of the 2nd Battalion in the Middle East ended early in 1942. The Battalion embarked at Suez on the Dutch Liner Nieuw Amsterdam and sailed for the Far East. I was then a Platoon Sergeant. Our destination was unknown but there were rumours that it was either Rangoon or Singapore. Both had, however, already been captured by the Japanese whose navy was very active in the Bay of Bengal and the Indian Ocean threatening India and Ceylon. Thus it was that we were directed to Ceylon and disembarked at Colombo on the 14th March 1942. For the next few days we were billeted on the Colombo Golf Course. It was at about this time that a rather amusing incident took place. I am not exactly sure of the exact location, except that it was in a built up area near the sea, and I think there was a hotel nearby called The Gaulle Face. Now in the Western Desert, we had been used to going into the sea for our weekly bathe in the 'Altogether' so to speak, there were no lovely maidens blushes to worry about. Here in Ceylon it was different, but of course we hadn't given it the slightest thought when we were invited to take a dip in the sea. A goodly number of us hadn't any swimming trunks anyway or anything else suitable for that matter and so into the sea in the 'Altogether' we went. If variety is the spice of life, then it wasn't appreciated by the fair maidens of Ceylon for howls of protest were received and we were hastily withdrawn from the sea. Needless to say we changed our habits a bit quick. During our short stay at the Golf Course, the Japanese Air Force paid its first visit to Ceylon, dropping bombs in the harbour and surrounding area so there were a few more holes around other than those at which one aims golf balls.



The Nieuw Amsterdam arriving in Colombo - Ceylon
14th March 1942.

A short while after this we were moved by rail to the centre of the Island to a place called Habarane. This was our first shock, for when we de-trained, there was nothing around us but jungle. The village of Habarane some distance away was a small Singhalese native village of a few Rattan type buildings. However, in good 2nd Battalion Queen's spirit, areas were cleared, Battalion Headquarters and Company Lines established, tents erected, and in no time we were ready to start training or whatever. Due to battle casualties in the Middle East and losses through postings of key personnel back to the United Kingdom the Battalion was a little under strength and so whilst at Habarane we received a draft of reinforcements of men from other Regiments; there was however, still a strong contingent of the original 2nd Queen's. It is interesting to try and recall some of the key figures. The RSM was Sam Sharpe, Bob Cuthbert was the RQMS, Len Wells DCM MM of the First World War vintage; Fred Harcup, Fred Jode, Cush Field were CSM's and Spike Gage and Chirby Watson were two of the C/Sgts. George Deacon was the MT Sgt and one other that I must not forget is Sgt Jack Homersham. He came to us from the 5th Battalion The Queen's Royal Regiment (TA). These are some of the original

2nd Bn members that come to mind as I write this; I hope if any other 2nd Bn members read this they will forgive me if I have not mentioned them, but it is more than forty years on, and one's memory is not what it was. Jack Homersham was great fun, and many a ditty did he render in The Sgt's Mess at night. His only rival was Fred Harcup, after a couple of pints, he was quite good. I will try and recall one of his favourites, it went something like this:-

"The snow was falling on it, and the 'arth and all was cold
To save 'is starving family, the stick 'e 'ad all sold,
Don't shed a tear of pity, nor quell that angry voice,
'e never knew no better, nor no voice of conscience 'eard.
The Judge looked down in anger, and the prisoner 'ung his
'ead,

When up stood 'is poor old muvver, w'at was wiv 'im and said
Don't send my boy to prison, it's the fust crime w'at 'es done,
'e never knew no better, nor no voice of conscience 'eard
Six month replied 'is Lordship, and gawd 'elp your erring son."

What one has to remember, is that we had to make our own entertainment, there were no ENSA or concert parties out there at that time. The ditty of course, was sung in a rather boozy tone to a rather boozy audience in the Sgt's Mess. Entertainment for the men was just as basic. Their only source of relaxation was an evening spent in the Beer Canteen on Friday and Saturday evenings, this was a Provost Sergeants nightmare, but more of this later.

So it was that we began to train for the defence of the Island against Jap invasion. It would be wrong to gather from the previous paragraph, that life was one long booze up and a regular occurrence. On the contrary, we were almost continually out on exercises jungle training etc, for we had a lot to learn before we would be capable of stopping the Japs. The area around the centre of the Island was notorious for malaria, and it wasn't long before I was laid low with it and found myself in a hospital in Trincomalee, the British Naval Base in Ceylon. The hospital was staffed mostly by Singhalese doctors and nurses. Quinine was still available and I had within a few days been liberally injected with it, when the Japs paid their second visit to the Island and heavily bombed Trincomalee Naval Base and the surrounding area including the hospital. I suddenly felt very much better, told the doctor so, and high tailed it back to the Battalion. Some time after my return, the RSM, Sam Sharpe sent for me and said "Sgt Atkins, I want a volunteer for the duties of a Regimental Provost Sergeant, report to me at 0800 hours tomorrow morning as such". Now my Company Commander, Captain R M Merrett had been away from the Battalion for a few days, when this appointment was made. When he returned to see me strutting around the Battalion Area looking like a Provost Marshall, he stopped me and asked what the hell did I think I was doing. I could only answer that I was now the Provost Sergeant, "Not for long, just wait until I've seen the Commanding Officer" he said. I thought he would have been glad to see the back of me, for we never seemed to see eye to eye on anything. However, he lost the battle with the Commanding Officer as was to be expected and I remained as Provost Sergeant for the stay in Ceylon and on into India.

The threat to Ceylon from a Japanese invasion seemed to recede as the Japs fleet withdrew from the area. It was about this time that the Battalion moved from Habarane to a place called Peradinya which was to the north of the centre of the Island, and a short distance away from the Singhalese capital, Kandy. Also, not too far away was the Botanical Gardens, where later Lord Louis Mountbatten established South East Asia Command Headquarters. This was a better station, much healthier, but soon I was once again laid low with malaria. This time sent to an Australian Military Hospital somewhere outside Colombo and Oh Boy, was I well treated. I was the only 'Pommie' in that Australian Hospital for the best part of four weeks.

My Company Sergeant Major, Fred Jode, had been laid low with malaria at the same time, and he had been dispatched to a British Military Hospital. He came round to see me in my lush surroundings and was filled with envy; he told me all they thought of in the British Military Hospital was laying to 'Attention' when the visiting Matron or Medical Officer was

doing their rounds. It didn't seem to matter how the poor patients felt. In stark contrast, I remember well the Duty Sister in the Australian Hospital saying one day, "Now listen boys, the Matron and the Colonel are visiting this morning, see you lay to attention when they come into the ward". The Australian soldiers reply was hilarious and also unprintable; even the Duty Sister laughed. When the Matron and Colonel arrived, they didn't expect to see that sort of thing either. I did however take good care to see that I kept to the standards of my own Regiment. The Doctors and nurses were absolutely marvellous towards me, and I'm sure I was kept in that hospital longer than as necessary; all because I was the only 'Pommie' in there.

The training continued almost non-stop, with short breaks in between. It was when these breaks were in progress that for entertainment or should I say for lack of entertainment, the men used to spend their Friday and Saturday nights in the Beer Canteen letting their hair down so to speak. As I have already mentioned, this was a Provost Sergeants nightmare, trying to clear the canteen at closing time, and getting the men away to their beds without causing too much disturbance. It required patience and tact, and I must admit to learning a great deal as did my Regimental Provost Staff on how to handle chaps when they had a couple of drinks and were feeling a bit bolshie. All things considered, we didn't have too much bother at all. During exercises as the Provost Sergeant I travelled a great deal on a motor cycle especially doing MT Control, Sign posting routes, and traffic control. During these exercises, the troops travelling in the lorries became expert in brewing up when ever the convoy stopped, even for the shortest of periods. The popularity of the Provost Sergeant could be judged by the invitations he got, or rather didn't get to share a cuppa. I didn't do too badly. Normally I would be well ahead of a convoy, so would stop at one of the many tea boutiques on the road side, fill up a couple of water bottles with tea, and as the RSM passed by, would hand one to him. (Well I had to look after the RSM didn't I?) All things considered, our stay in Ceylon was a welcome break; we had trained and worked hard, and when we got the buzz that we were to move to India it didn't seem that a year had gone by. I think it would be fitting to end this period of the 2nd Battalion's stay in Ceylon by recalling a visit we had from that very popular Army Commander, General Slim. He hadn't at that stage made his mark, but he was on his way; he gathered us around as the custom became, and he said something like this:

"I have gathered you here so that you can get a good look at me, not because I am any oil painting, that doesn't bother me. But because I want you to know who I am and what I look like, so that the next time you see me you will know who I am".

And so the Battalion went on to India and greater things.

THE FAR EAST

India, February 1943 – December 1943

Still in the appointment of Regimental Provost Sergeant I accompanied the MT Section from Ceylon, across to the southern most tip of India, and thence by road up the western side towards Bombay, then due east across the Central Provinces and on up to Ranchi, our final destination. This was probably the longest motor cycle journey I had done. One look at the map of India will enlighten the reader of the distance involved. Take into consideration that the roads were not of the best surfaces, that the motor cycles were Army issue Nortons 350cc, not very well sprung, and it will be appreciated that it was no joy ride, but nevertheless, a good way to see the country, and a good experience. The Battalion having assembled at Ranchi, had once again become part of 70 Division and a new type of training began. We were to be trained to work with tanks and artillery support.

My term as Provost Sergeant came to an end, and I was posted back to a Company to learn the job of Platoon Sergeant all over again; this time with B Company. I cannot say that I enjoyed my time with the platoon I had been posted to. In fact, I cannot even remember the number of the platoon, the name of the platoon commander, (there probably wasn't one, for our young officers were always in demand somewhere else), or even the name of the company commander. What I do remember is that this platoon was not a patch on my previous platoon in C Company. I couldn't get them to work well. They seemed

insolent, un-cooperative. There can be no doubt about it, however, it was my fault. I had failed somewhere along the line with this group of chaps. When that happens to a platoon sergeant one is on the way to failure. The sequel to this will be seen shortly. My Company Sergeant Major in B Company knowing who the CSM was, but I need not have worried on this score, for Harry Rolfe, like Fred Jode from C Company turned out trumps, and indeed saved me from a disastrous course that I had decided to take, but this was a little later on. It was my experience that in the 2nd Battalion, we always seemed to produce a good CSM; they are invaluable in a Company, get a bad one and life could be hell. Not long after we began our new training schedule in the Ranchi Area, a scare developed that there was a possibility of a Japanese Invasion in the Water Ways of Jhingergaon approximately 70-100 miles north east of Calcutta. The Battalion was uprooted and dispersed to this area as a precaution. It wasn't a very exciting time; there were restrictions on what could be done because of the nature of the terrain; but I do remember that it was at this time that I decided that I had had enough of this platoon. I went along to the CSM and asked for an interview with the Company Commander. Of course the CSM wanted to know the nature of the interview. I told him that I was so bloody fed up with this platoon that I wanted to revert to the rank of private. Harry Rolfe stood silent and thoughtful for a few moments, then looked at me and said "Sgt Atkins, turn around", and as I did so, he gave me a friendly boot up the backside, told me not to be such a bloody fool, and to go away and get on with the job I had been given to do, and so I was saved from what could have been a disastrous move career wise. Within about a week of this period of weakness on my part, I was warned to attend Commanding Officers Orders, Lt-Col H G Duncombe was the Commanding Officer. It was with some surprise when he told me I was to be promoted to C/Sgt and posted to C Company, Lt-Col Duncombe gave me some fatherly advice on how I should carry out my new job; wished me well, and as happy as a sand-boy off I went.

I must at this stage say a word about Lt-Col Duncombe. I had, of course, known him from the time I joined as a recruit back in 1937, and he was a subaltern at the Regimental Depot, and later as Adjutant during the latter part of our stay in the Isle of Wight and on into Palestine where for a while, he was with the MT Section. I don't think I knew anyone from the rank and file ever to utter an unkind word about him; he was deeply respected by us all. To many of the rank and file he was known as "Daddy Duncombe". Whether he or any of the Officers knew this I cannot say, but let me hasten to say that name amongst us was the expression of our very deep respect for this very humane Commanding Officer. All in the 2nd Battalion felt a very sad loss when he left us to take command of the 1st Battalion The Queen's Royal Regiment during the battles in and around the Kohima Area. Lt-Col J F Metcalfe succeeded Lt-Col Duncombe in command of the 2nd Battalion The Queen's. It was while we were at Ranchi and just before the move that Sam Sharpe was promoted to Lieutenant Quartermaster, and Fred Harcup was promoted to Regimental Sergeant Major.

Once again, the flap of a Jap invasion died down, and the Battalion found itself on the move again, this time down to Bangalore in Southern India, known to most pre-war Indian soldiers as, I believe, The Garden of India. Bangalore was a delightful place. I had, of course, by this time been welcomed back into the fold of C Company. My Company Commander, Captain R M Merrett, in welcoming me back, told me the bigger rogue I was in the interest of the Company the better he would like me, but not of course, if I got caught. I didn't get caught, and I could not have asked for a better or more understanding Company Commander. He was a hard task master; but since my previous experience with him in C Company, young as I was, I had begun to learn a little about man-management, and I expect he had as well. It was whilst at Bangalore that he sent me on five days leave to a place called Wellington, which was up in the hills a few hours journey by road from Bangalore. It was to be my last of three one week periods of leave taken from 1939 until I returned to the United Kingdom in July 1944. Anyway, it was a welcome break, a very healthy spot, and I returned to the Company much refreshed, but I found the Battalion alive with rumours again of an impending move.

There had appeared on the scene in India a person who had captured the imagination of the press and more important certain high ranking politicians on a campaign he had just

completed in Burma. I am referring to Major General Orde Wingate, who had led a number of 'Columns' of British, Indian and Gurkha troops deep into enemy held territory in Burma. He had apparently proved that such an expedition could be mounted and carried out successfully behind enemy lines in jungle; albeit, the casualties and wear and tear on the forces employed was heavy. He had convinced the powers that be that a second expedition with a larger force and better equipped and better trained could do the same again, but this time with greater success. This force, as was the first, was to become well known, it was the Chindits. So the 2nd Battalion The Queen's Royal Regiment once again found itself on the move. This time to an area in the Central Provinces around Jhansi and near a river called the Ken River. We had been informed that we were to be formed into 'Columns' and form part of General Wingate's 2nd expedition into Burma, and operate deep behind the enemy lines; the correct name was, I believe, Long Range Penetration Group. The conventional Battalion organisation was abandoned and each Battalion was divided into two independent columns, and so each brigade consisted of eight such columns and a headquarters. It was under command of Brigadier Bernard Ferguson who as a Major had commanded one of the columns in General Wingate's first expedition.

The Brigade was:-

| | |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| 2 Queens | - Columns 21 and 22 |
| 2 Leicesters | - Columns 17 and 71 |
| 45 Recce Regt | - Columns 45 and 54 |
| 51/69 Field Regt RA | - Columns 51 and 69 |

45 Recce Regt and 51/69 Field Regt RA had been converted into Infantry.

We were warned that the training would be hard and prolonged; we would carry everything we owned on our backs or on mules; we would move over very long distances, only on our own two feet; have to cross wide and fast flowing rivers, climb some of the steepest jungle clad hills in the world, and be prepared to fight at any time of the day or night, tired or not. The only luxury that we could expect was that every five days or so we would be re-supplied by the air. This depended on the Japs, the weather and the ability of the Royal Air Force or the American Air Force to find us at the right time or the right place, or for that matter for us to be in the right place at the right time. There was to be no other way for us to receive supplies. Now it is not known generally in Regimental Circles that at about this time, a Company of Infantry from our Battalion was sent to one of the C Columns of the Royal Artillery who had been converted into infantry to help them learn the trade of an Infantry soldier. So it came about that Captain R M Merrett as Company Commander and myself as his CSM were sent to the Gunner Column to help and advise them on infantry procedure. They coped very well, but I think deep down in their hearts they would much sooner have their guns. They were excellent gunners as we in 2/Queen's had very good reason to know from experience.

There had apparently been a re-think on the composition and numbers of Columns, and so due to some reorganising, a week or so later, I became surplus as CSM, with the Infantry Company attached to the Gunner Column and was returned to 21 Column, where I reverted to my substantive rank of C/Sgt. Captain Merrett and the Infantry Company remained with the Gunner Column for almost the whole of the expedition into Burma, I believe his CSM was then Spike Gage, who, of course, was very much senior to me even as a C/Sgt. Very soon after this, for some reason not known to me, there appeared to be a need for a disciplinarian to go to the muleteer platoon, at least that was what I was told, so off I go to help keep good order and to learn all about mules, and to help train them in swimming rivers, particularly to go in the direction that one wants them to go. Well we all know the old saying 'Stubborn as a Mule', and anyone who has had dealings with them, particularly at the early stages of their training will know what was in store for me. Lt-Col Metcalfe had recently assumed command, and having taken stock of the Column he decided on a few changes. One of these was that I was recalled from the training of mules, and appointed Column CQMS in place of C/Sgt Pound who it was deemed was too old for this type of warfare, and the task ahead. Indeed, it should be mentioned here, that this was to be a young man's job; and except probably for those in command or with specialist training such as our Medical Officer, Captain Harrison RAMC, the bulk of the chaps age group would be between, I suppose 20-25 years of age. I mentioned earlier that we were told that the

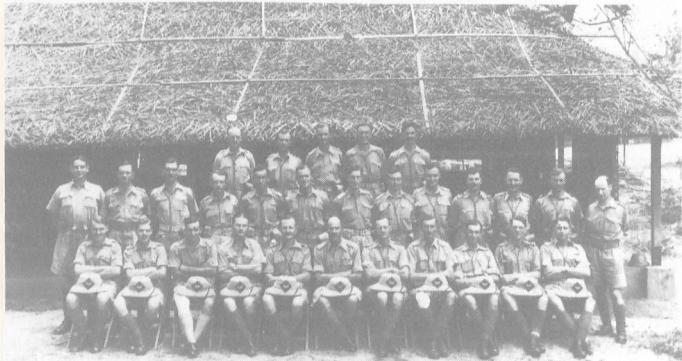
training would be hard and prolonged and so it proved to be. Everyone had to learn to swim, or get across rivers under their own efforts. Non-swimmers could put all their belongings into a ground sheet, roll and tie it, and use it as a float to get across. Others, particularly those who had been training and were muleteers could take their mules across, laying along side the mule, with ones arms across the mules withers, and holding the bridle. By the Grace of God and with a co-operative mule, one might reach the far bank of the river. On the other hand, the mule might get half way across, have a change of heart, rear up, dump the muleteer in the middle of the river, and return from whence it came. To carry the extra kit, the smaller haversack was sewn onto the front of the pack, and two webbing pouches sewn one on each side. This, of course, meant that the load carried was much heavier than normal. There was no hard and fast position in which to carry the pack, each individual carried it to his own liking, so long as it was comfortable. Most of us found some sort of padding and had this sewn on the shoulder straps; this helped to stop the straps cutting into the shoulders. Of course individual weapons and ammunition had to be carried. Support weapons such as 3in. mortars, Vickers Machine Guns, PIATs, and relating ammunition, medical supplies, a spare blanket per man tied and specially rolled into bundles of ten, heavy RAF wireless sets for long distance communication back to base, and operated by Ground Personnel from the RAF, charging motors for the batteries of the wireless sets, flame throwers and the fuel for them, bullion, all were carried either in cradles or panniers specially designed for mules, or like blankets, specially rolled and tied to be hung on either side of the mule. There were approximately 70 mules per column; this will give an idea of the extent of the equipment we carried. Finally, there were a dozen ponies which were kept specially for carrying the exceptionally sick and wounded who couldn't walk, but as was often the case, by the time we required the ponies they were too exhausted themselves to be of much use. A very rigid rule never to be broken, no-one was allowed to put their packs onto a mule; anyone trying it on was severely dealt with.

As we were going to move on our own two feet for many weeks and cover very long distances, it was imperative that our boots were well fitting. Up to this time and indeed almost up to the time of the actual departure into Burma, we had been issued with and were wearing what were called Boots Ankle Indian pattern. These were not really suitable for the British soldiers dainty feet, so special efforts were made to obtain boots from South Africa, and when we got them I must say, I thought they were a distinct improvement. A team of RAOC experts came with them and having ensured that we were fitted out correctly with the right size, the team then set about teaching us how to lace the boots correctly. Well we had been doing this quite successfully over many years, and had achieved a remarkable standard of efficiency. At the conclusion of the demonstration however, we were left utterly confused. With due respect to the RAOC Team and their desire to help us, when they left, we promptly forgot what they had taught us and resumed our own bad habits of how to lace a pair of boots so that they stayed 'Done Up'. At the start of this training rations were the difficulty. We were of course, on British type rations, mostly carried in bulk, ie 7lb tins of bully, (corned-beef for the uninformed), sugar, tea, issued in bulk, tinned milk, 2lb tins of jam or marmalade; this was the very devil to break down for convenient load carrying, and so "share out systems" had to be adopted to meet the situation. It wasn't until after about the first two weeks of actual entry into Burma that we came onto the more practicable American 'K' ration system. Water was also a problem. Every man carried his water bottle filled at all times, and in addition, we carried a canvas bag called a chargol, also filled with water, I say filled but they had a habit of leaking, and one often had a wet side. It was useful reserve in times of emergency of which there were to be a few. And so the training continued over many weeks and months, humping everything we owned on our backs or mules, covering many hundreds of miles. At the end of the day always bedding down on the ground in the open utterly exhausted. We would fall asleep anywhere, if we were on a slope, we just hacked out a flat and got down to kip.

Our final exercise lasted about ten days, at the end of which we were ready and fit to go. The finish of this exercise found us in the area of Sauger, and it was here that we were addressed by Lord Louis Mountbatten and General Wingate. There were the usual morale boosting speeches that are given in war time, but I

must say Lord Mountbatten's speech was certainly down to earth and he gave us confidence in what we were about to do, and confidence in the people in the rear who were going to look after us. The Battalion, ie 21 Column and 22 Column, then entrained for Ledo. We were then treated to a luxury; we were transported by lorry driven by Chinese drivers along the Ledo Road for approximately 70 miles to our assembly area, which if I remember correctly, was called Tagap-ga. If anyone wants a hair raising experience, I fully recommend a trip in lorries driven by Chinese soldiers along this so called road. It had been hacked out of the jungle by American Engineers with thousands of coolies and, of course, machinery. It rose thousands of feet, sometimes above the cloud base, and dropped just as suddenly. There were sheer drops on one or both sides, and if you went over, you would

The Officers 2nd Bn The Queens Royal Regiment (Ceylon) July 1942



Top standing L-R:- Lts. Fenton, J.W. Dell, J.C.L. Murdoch, G.A. Hicks, G. Maltasse. 2nd Row standing:- Lt. M. Wilson, Capt. D.G. Harrison, RAMC, Lts. J.E. Williams, S.R. Newman, A.S. Blackman, H.O. Jones, R.R. Acheson T.D. Cotton, J.F.R. Fox, J.E. Flint, J. Anderson, K.H.A. Biddle, Capt. Ware, CF. Sitting:- Capt. R.M. Merrett, A.G. Cheston, T. Simon, A. Munro, Major B. Owen, Lt. Col. J.B.P. Phillips, Capt. D. Clarke (Adj't), N. Marsden, T.V. Close, H.M.W. Harris, Lt. R. Hawkins (Q.M.)
Not on photo:- Majs. D. de S. Barrow, C.F. Ottaway, Capt. E.B.G. Clowes, Lt. D. Riddle.

never been seen again. It went across bridges, hand made by the coolies; I wouldn't have trusted my best Dinky car on them. This was a trip not to be recommended if you were of a nervous disposition; but of course we were lucky, we had a ride; the muleteers didn't, they brought their mules the whole distance along the Ledo Road on their own feet. However, the distance was nothing to what we had done or were about to do.

Whilst in the assembly area, the Commanding Officer came back from one of his recesses, and this is what he told us, or words to this effect:-

"Your route for the first few weeks will be like climbing up the walls of a tall house, walking along the ridge of a very long roof, and then descending the opposite wall; wrap this all up in jungle, add a few unforeseen circumstances not of a kind nature, and you might have some idea of what's in store for you".

One Man's War

Old members of the 4th and 5th Queen's may remember William Molyneux of Dorking, but how many know the full story of his remarkable war service? This short article cannot do justice to his experiences, but it may evoke some memories.

William Edward Molyneux was born on the 21st September 1896. In 1913 he joined the Dorking Company of the 5th Queen's, adding a year to his age: luckily his father William was already a member of the company and was party to the deception!

On the outbreak of war in August 1914, the Territorial Force was embodied, and the 5th Queen's marched off to training camp near Stonehenge. Shortly afterwards, the 1/5th battalion was formed out of the 5th and sent to India but William was still too young for overseas service and so he remained with the 2/5th battalion. It was not long, however, before the 2/5th was amalgamated with the 2/4th battalion from Croydon in order to produce a composite battalion for overseas service. This battalion was soon after redesignated as the 2/4th Queen's, and the famous Colonel F D Watney TD was given command of the battalion. The young William showed great aptitude with the Lewis, Vickers-Maxim and Hotchkiss machine guns then in service and was soon promoted to Corporal in the MG platoon.

With battalion training completed, the 2/4th was ordered first to Egypt for continuation training and then to Gallipoli. As part of the 53rd Division, the battalion landed at Suvla Bay on the night of 8/9 August 1915. Heavy fighting was to continue around Suvla until the end of the year, and during this fighting, William was blown up by a Turkish shell, which caused severe bruising to his back but luckily, no wounds. As a result of this, and of frostbite, William was evacuated to Egypt, followed by the battalion and the rest of the division after the evacuation from Gallipoli in December 1915.

After being declared fit once more in early 1916, William did not rejoin the 2/4th Queen's. Instead he found his machine gunner's skills in demand by the newly formed Imperial Camel Corps. This Corps had 4 battalions, of which the 1st, 3rd and 4th were derived from Australian and New Zealand mounted regiments. The 2nd battalion was derived from British Yeomanry regiments, except for No 5 Company, which was a special purpose company made up of infantry, with a high proportion of machine gunners, and it was to this company that William was sent.

Each company of the corps was commanded by a major or captain, and organised as a cavalry squadron into four sections of 35 men, each commanded by a subaltern. It was usual for companies to act as independent bodies, supported as necessary by the Sikh mounted artillery battery of the corps. Being infantry, it was noted that No 5 Company had more trouble than most in learning to ride camels!

Early in 1916, the Imperial Camel Corps was deployed in operations against the Sultanate of Darfur, which lay to the west of the Sudan. This Sultanate had at one time been annexed to the Sudan, but had been freed during the revolt of the Mahdi, and was now under Turkish and German influence. In February 1916, its forces began to concentrate against the Sudan. In reply, the British amassed a force of Camel Corps, mounted infantry strongly armed with Maxim MGs, Indian infantry and Egyptian engineers. Later, aeroplanes, 15-pounder guns, armed river steamers, motor transport and a wireless detachment were added.

At the end of January, this force began to advance into Darfur, and after a number of successful skirmishes, brought the main enemy force to battle at their capital of El Fasher on 22nd May. The enemy was completely routed, losing over 1/3rd of their force, the remainder dispersing, for the loss of only 26 British soldiers. Although this action removed any threat from Darfur, the Sultan himself escaped, and it was not until October that he was killed. Thus William missed the first battle of Gaza, in which the 2/4th Queen's fought, and after which his old battalion was shipped off to France. With all the other members of the Darfur expedition he was awarded the Khedive's 1910 Sudan Medal.

After the close of the Darfur expedition, William's company was deployed in operations against the Senussi in a little-known campaign which had been going on since 1915. The Senussi were a powerful sect of muslim fanatics who occupied the western borders of Egypt. Their sultan, Sayed Ahmed, had visions of a Libyan state under Senussi rule, and saw the presence

The Queen's Regiment Journal

The Queen's Regiment Journal is published in June and December each year, price £ 2 a copy. It is packed with news and photographs of all sections of the Regiment including the Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Association and contains several articles of general interest. There are always colour pictures on the front and back covers and sometimes also within the 88 pages in each edition. All members of the Regimental family should try to read the Journal, or even better, purchase their own copy. Subscription forms are included in the Journal and are also available from The Editor, Regimental Headquarters, Howe Barracks, Canterbury, Kent, CT1 1JU.



W. Molyneux with camel

of the British in Egypt and the Italians in Tripoli as an obstacle to his ambitions. It was thus that Ahmed fell under Turkish influence.

The Senussi were at this time a powerful tribe with a large regular army capable of using artillery and machine guns. In October 1915, they attacked the Italians and in November they began a campaign against the British. Operations against the Senussi were prosecuted throughout 1915 and 1916 but it was not until the deployment of the ICC and the Light Armoured Motor Batteries (LAMBS)* that the western desert was brought under control: by January 1917, the Sanussi held control of only two oases, at Girba and Siwa city.

In late January 1917, a mixed force of ICC and LAMBS was despatched to deal with this last Senussi stronghold. By 2nd February the force had reached a rendezvous point 185 miles south of Matruh ready to attack the Senussi. From the RV two LAMBS were sent to screen Girba, where 850 Senussi troops were believed to be quartered, while the main force prepared to attack Siwa where Sayed Ahmed himself was resting with a further 450 troops. Under threat of this attack, the Senussi fled into the desert. After this fiasco, Ahmed's power collapsed and the Senussi broken as a nation.

Soon after the raid on Siwa the ICC was moved up to Gaza where the 2nd battle of Gaza was being planned. This battle was to be a deliberate attack on the strongly defended Turkish position at Gaza which dominated the Beersheba road. The British plan called for a frontal attack by three infantry divisions with tanks, supported by naval gunfire. The open right flank of the attack was to be protected by mounted troops, the Australian and NZ Mounted Division; the Imperial Mounted Division; and the Camel Brigade.

The battle opened on 17th April 1917 and the initial objectives were carried on the first day with only light casualties, despite open ground and temperatures around 90°F at midday. The Camel Brigade remained at Abasan el Kebir, but on the 19th it moved up towards Khan Sihan in support of the second phase of the battle.

This phase had opened at 5.30 a.m. with two divisions attacking to the east of Gaza. Despite a heavy bombardment including gas, Turkish resistance was strong and British casualties heavy. One brigade, the 163rd, lost 1,500 men including all its company commanders. With the attack bogging down, the Camel Brigade, reinforced by an infantry battalion, attacked towards Khan Sihan.

The Camel Brigade attack, like all the others, ground to a halt under heavy Turkish fire. The Brigade sustained many casualties, including William who was wounded, and at 7.45 p.m. it withdrew back to Abasan el Kebir. Total British casualties in this ill-conceived battle were 6,444 men and 2,129 animals including camels.

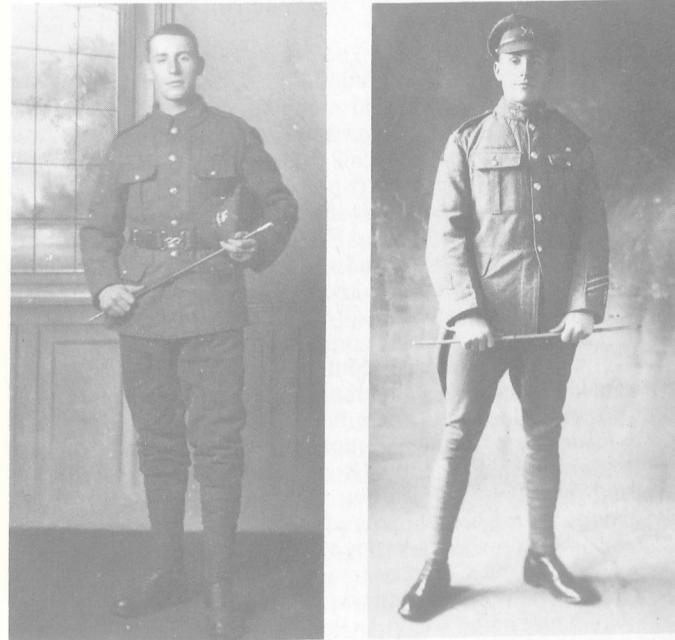
By October 1917, General Allenby had taken command of the Gaza area, William, now recovered from his wound, was back with No 5 Company in time to take part in the Beersheba battles. Allenby decided to remove the Turks from Gaza by turning their eastern flank at Beersheba: the attack was completely successful.

On the night preceding the main attack, 30th October 1917, No 5 Company, reinforced by a platoon of the 21st London Regiment and 10 heavy MGs, moved behind the Turkish lines. On 31st October they cut the telegraph line to Jerusalem, and caused such confusion that the Turks despatched their two

general reserve divisions and a cavalry brigade to counter what they thought was the main British attack. Thus these troops were not available against Allenby's main force.

No 5 Company had succeeded brilliantly, but paid a heavy price. The company was completely surrounded and on 1st November surrendered having taken 50% casualties. By a stroke of luck, William's MG team had been dropped off just before the encirclement and so avoided capture. They returned to the Corps as the only survivors of the action.

The company was, however, reformed, and spent most of 1918 with No 7 Company as part of TE Lawrence's Hejaz Assault Column. The reputation of the ICC was by this time high: Lawrence himself wrote that "... from that 300 (of the ICC) I would pick 40 fellows who would out ride, out fight and out suffer any 40 men in Feisal's army."



W. Molyneux in the uniforms of The Queen's & The Camel Corps.

At the end of the war, the ICC was disbanded, and William returned to civil life. He found a job as a motor mechanic/welder with the Dorking Motor Company; he also joined the St John's Ambulance Brigade and was the driver of Dorking's first ambulance, a model-T Ford. During the 1926 General Strike, William joined the Surrey Special Constabulary. He served 30 years as a Special, rising to the rank of County Commandant.

William's medals are probably unique to a Queen's man: 1914-15 Star, 1914-18 War Medal, 1918 Victory Medal, Defence Medal, 1953 Coronation Medal, Special Constabulary LS and GC with three bars (1941, 44, 53), Khedive's 1910 Sudan Medal. His son Ted still lives in Dorking and is a keen student and collector of Queen's regimental history.

William Molyneux died on 29th October 1982 following a sudden decline which doctors attributed directly to the effects of his having been blown up at Gallipoli 67 years before.

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* The author believes that the LAMBS wore a badge similar to that of The Queen's, but with the title LAMBS on the scroll. If any reader knows more of this, the author would be interested to hear of it.

Ex-Service Fellowship Centres

The Ex-Service Fellowship Centres own two residential care homes for ex-servicemen (or women), ex-merchant seamen and their widows. New Belvedere House in Stepney, East London, can take 29 residents, Hollenden House in Bexhill-on-Sea in East Sussex can take 50. Residents, who must normally be of pensionable age, have their own rooms in comfortable buildings and may bring some of their own furniture if they wish. They are not nursing homes and residents on admission must be capable of looking after themselves though help (for example with bathing) can be given. Those interested should apply for details from the Secretary at RHQ Canterbury.

COLOURS OF THE QUEEN'S (Contd.)

Colours of the Militia.

It will be remembered that the 3rd Battalion of the Regiment was the 2nd Royal Surrey Militia, which had its own Colours distinct from those of any other Battalion of The Queen's.

The 2nd Surrey was raised in 1758 as a consequence of the Militia Act of 1756. Its first Colours were granted in response to a request by Lord Onslow, Colonel of the Regiment and Lord Lieutenant of the County, on 25th June 1759. The First Colour was the Great Union, while the Second Colour was white, bearing in the centre Lord Onslow's Arms, which are described in Burke's *General Armoury* as:

"Argent, a fess gules between six Cornish Choughs proper. Crest - an Eagle sable preying on a partridge or, motto over 'Semper Fidelis'.

Motto - "Festina Lente".

In November 1759 the 2nd Surrey was divided into two Battalions each of five Companies and on 1st January 1760 Lord Onslow applied for a second stand of Colours for his 2nd Battalion. These were not granted, and the Regiment was reduced to one battalion in 1762.

The old white Colours continued in use until 1798 when new Colours were presented while the Regiment was forming part of the coastal guard against French invasion. The ceremony took place at Eling Barracks, West Cowes, IOW, with Lieutenants A.G. Onslow and R. Frederick being the Ensigns. The event was reported satirically in a *Punch Magazine* article of the day.

This stand of Colours conformed more to the pattern of those held by Regular Regiments. Their size was 6 feet long and 5 feet 9 inches deep with pikes bearing a spear point. The first Colour was again the Great Union, still without the red saltire of St. Patrick, and in the centre a Royal Crown with below it a scroll bearing the title "11 Royal Surrey Militia" (see figure 1), the Regiment having been honoured by being given the distinction "Royal" and allowed to display the Garter Star as its badge.

The Second Colour was now the blue sheet of a Royal Regiment. In the first canton was the Union with a Roman figure II in the centre of the Union. In the centre of the Colour was a red roundel bearing in the centre His Majesty's Royal cypher surrounded by the Regimental title and surmounted by a Royal Crown. Around this was a wreath of roses, and thistles.

These Colours were destroyed by a fire at the Tower of London on 30th December 1841, where they were being stored while the Militia was in temporary abeyance.

Correspondence exists between Lancaster Herald (the Inspector of Colours) and the Regiment as a result of which new Colours were presented to the Regiment by Viscountess Cranley on 19th May 1854 at the training ground, Woodbridge Road, Guildford. These Colours followed the same scheme as those of 1798, although the size was now reduced to 4 feet long and 3 feet 9 inches deep. the Union was now in its modern form, including the red saltire of St Patrick, and shamrocks were added to the wreath of roses and thistles. Lastly, the cypher of Queen Victoria replaced that of King George III on the Second Colour, now called 'Regimental'. (See figure 2).

Two modifications took place in these Colours. First, in 1858, the spear points on the pikes were replaced by Royal crests. Secondly, as a result of the part played by the Militia during the Boer War, the Battle Honour "SOUTH AFRICA 1900 - 1902" was emblazoned on the Regimental Colour below the wreath. This was the first and only Battle Honour won by the Regiment.

As a result of Cardwell's Reforms, the 2nd Surrey became the 3rd Battalion of The Queen's. During the Great War it was a holding and training battalion but thereafter, although appearing on the Regimental Establishment, it ceased to have any real function. On the amalgamation of The Queen's and the Surreys in 1959, the Colours of the Militia were presented to the Borough of Guildford.

The Service Battalions 1915 - 1920

In order to give some signal recognition of the gallantry of those war-raised units which served overseas during the Great War, King George V instigated the award of a King's Colour to every Service, Young Soldiers', Graduated and Garrison Battalion of the Regular Army. Also to 2nd and 3rd Line TF Battalions, TF Units serving as infantry and battalions of overseas troops who had so served.

For The Queen's, this affected five of its Service Battalions: the 6th, 7th, 8th, 10th (Battersea), and 11th Service Battalions.

Each Colour was to be a silk Union with in the centre a red roundel surmounted by a King's Crown. On the roundel appeared the Regimental title - here "The Queen's (Royal West Surrey Regiment)". In the centre of the roundel appeared the Battalion numeral, a gold Roman figure. This was the first time that battalion numerals had appeared in this position. The Colour was emblazoned with ten Battle Honours selected by the Regiment to be borne on the Colours: these were the same as those carried by the 1st and 2nd Battalions of The Queen's.

The Colour of the 6th (Service) Battalion was presented at Douai, Flanders, by HRH The Prince of Wales on 4th February 1919 and was laid up at Holy Trinity Church Guildford after the Battalion was disbanded in 1920.

The Colour of the 7th (Service) Battalion was presented at Villers Outreux, France, by Lieutenant General Sir A. Holland KCB, DSO, MVO on January 16th 1919 and was laid up at Holy Trinity.

The Colour of the 8th (Service) Battalion was also presented by General Holland at Baisieux, France, on 12th February 1919. On disbandment it was taken first to the Regimental Depot and later to Holy Trinity.

The Colour of the 10th (Battersea) Battalion was presented at Ehreshoven, Germany, on 19th February 1919 by General Plumer. On disbandment in 1920 the Colour was sent to the Depot until 1933 when it was laid up in St Mary's Church, Battersea.

The Colour of the 11th (Service) Battalion was presented at the Exerzierplatz, Berlin, on 11th February 1919 also by General Plumer. On disbandment in 1920 the Colour was handed over to the Mayor of Lambeth.

(to be continued)
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Fig 1.



Fig 2.



London to Siberia by Train

Travelling across Siberia on the Trans Siberian Railway conjures up ideas of espionage, intrigue and the old story Omsk, Tomsk and Vladivostok, so I decided to make a package tour of such a journey.

Our party of 25 assembled on 7th September at the Great Eastern Hotel in London, where we met Sally our tour escort, and we were briefed on the do's and don'ts of our journey, the strongest point was not to laugh at the frontier guards!!!

Monday morning after a huge buffet breakfast with champagne, we set off on this great adventure. We boarded the ferry at Harwich and were due to sail at 1115, but we stayed there - the reason - there were football supporters going to Sweden and the crew refused to sail. Sealink spent 3½ hours 'negotiating with the crew', but at last the football crowd left the boat and we sailed.

On arrival at the Hook of Holland the train had left, but they had left one Moscow coach for us with its two Russian conductors, who were not pleased! However we loaded the luggage and settled in the sleepers, a bit cramped, but all in fair spirits. A few packets of cigarettes put things right with the Russians and in a short time they appeared with 'Tea' - black Russian tea in glasses in 'silver' holders, the samovar was going full blast. We settled down to the 'duty free' aided by the Russians, and had a party. The toilets were locked, but the washrooms etc., were 20 yards down the platform. Gunfire at 0630 and after a sandwich snack we were taken to Amsterdam and the Hague for the day.

When we arrived back the train was assembled, and what a train - carriages for Berlin, Bonn, Stockholm, Oslo, Warsaw and right at the back, Moscow.

Well, we got away that night and settled down to sleep, or so we thought. Crossing Communist frontiers can be very trying, taking all of two hours. Passports, visas, declarations of money, even gold necklaces, all must be declared, compartments searched, and one is told to 'sit down please', 'stand in the corridor please'. One of our party was German and joined us at Hanover, and he was very scared.

We all got up at 0500 and stood in the corridor to see the Berlin Wall as we crossed over. The Polish Frontier Guards were quite pleasant. We travelled through Poland that day and during the night we crossed into the Soviet Union. Again a long delay. Actually it is difficult not to laugh. A thin faced Russian official stood in the door of the compartment, visa in one hand, passport in the other, and his gaze went from you to passport and then to visa, and this went on. Again you have to make out the forms for currency etc., and they count the money. I had 97 US\$ in singles. The young lady started to count these, got to about 15 three times and then gave up, so Jack beat the system. At the Russian frontier the bogies must be changed as the gauge is different in USSR. This is done quite simply by jacking up the train and changing the wheels!!! At Warsaw the dining car is coupled. Warsaw station is so clean it looks as though they are waiting for a COs inspection, - they probably are.

We travelled on through the night through Minsk to Moscow where we arrived the following afternoon. Here we were met by our guide Marina, a lovely young lady and very clever. She went all the way to Siberia with us. Her English was very very good and on the bus to the hotel she gave a quick briefing. As we got off the bus (1620 hrs) she told us that supper would be at 1730 hrs and we would leave for the ballet at 1815. At the hotel you hand in your passport and visa - 'you will not need them here'.

A quick bath, change and down for supper. The ballet was also good. In the Belgrade Hotel there is a late bar, so we were introduced to vodka and some of the ladies of Moscow, - no hangovers from vodka. In Russia there are no banks and you change your money at the hotel 'bank'.

Next day the Kremlin, the Armoury where all the Imperialist relics are kept. At least I caught up with Boris Godunov, Ivan the Terrible, Peter the Great and Catherine the Great, and all the 'Onion' Cathedrals.

Quick lunch and off to Red Square. Here we saw the changing of the Guard at the Lenin Mausoleum and what precision. The Guard of one corporal and two sentries leave the barracks at 2 mins 45 secs before the hour and slowly goose step to the Mausoleum. When the sentries actually take post if you blink you miss it. A tour of other spots in Moscow, pass the lines of people queueing for food, and back to the hotel. Again one hour



Sentries at Lenin's Mausoleum, Red Square, Moscow.

for change etc., supper and off to the Bolshoi opera to see the Barber of Seville in Russian. This is just my thing and it was superb, but not everyone went. Some people went out on their own. The Hotel gives you a card which you show to the taxi driver and all is well. We came back on the Metro, that in itself is an experience if you cannot read Russian. You ring the station on the map you are given and look for the name on the station platform. . . . we made it....

Every visitor to a Russian city must visit the Berioska shop. You can only spend hard currency in these shops but they have some very nice goods (Russians are not allowed in). Here one comes across the Russian system. You select what you want, the assistant makes out a chit in duplicate, you take it to the cashier (another queue) pay for it, take the chits back to the assistant, she takes one, gives you the other and your goods. You are supposed to keep these chits for when you leave the country to account for the difference in your foreign money. We visited the GUM, but they had very little to sell.

Quick lunch, and we all fell in for Siberia. Marina appeared in slacks, long leather coat, felt boots and a lovely red and white woolly cap. We stared and thought she knows a thing or two about the weather.

The Lake Baikal Express leaves the Yaroslavl station every day at 1430 and there were 23 coaches on the train and hundreds of people. We had reserved sleepers, soft class which is another name for 1st class. Although there is a dining car, very few Russians actually use it, so they were loaded with 4 days rations, all types of things and the apples did not look too good.

In order to stop drunkenness on Russian trains they are dry, so everyone takes his own, so we stocked ourselves up with vodka from the Berioska shop.

The dining car runs a sort of meals on wheels system, and the youngest waiter comes up the train with his trolley. Also at stations there are kiosks on the platforms which sell bread, cheese, jam, apples, postcards and stamps. Well the journeys are long. No smoking in carriages or compartments on Russian trains. If you want to smoke you go to the space outside the doors between the coaches.

We left on time, slowly, well it was a big load even with two engines. The Trans Siberian is electrified. As soon as we set off 'Tea'. On a Russian long distance train there are two conductors, one male and one female, and one is always on duty, so at any time you can walk along and get tea. Good strong stuff with plenty of sugar (Cuban), and as regards the silver holders - no souvenirs - they are probably signed for.

The food on the trains and hotels is very good, but that does not mean to say that all Russians eat like that. Marina had a lot of authority, and we sampled all the Russian dishes. The cooks on this train were female and came to watch us. We crossed the mighty rivers Volga, Kama, Tobol, Irtysh at Omsk!, the Ob and many others, and they are mighty rivers.

On the train you see what I would say is the real Russia, this is the part the Trade Union delegations and Twin Town delegations do not see. Settlements of wooden houses, about ½ acre of garden, no running water, a village well, unmade roads in the village and no visible signs of electric power.

All Russian railways run on Moscow time, and the station clock may show 1800 hrs when the local time is midnight, and we had

to keep to Moscow time.... breakfast at 0300 when it is really 0730

The scene varies enormously and one never gets bored with looking out of the carriage windows. We passed the famous white obelisk in the Urals marking the boundary between Europe and Asia. The train goes very slowly so that there is no excuse for not seeing it.

There is a lack of main roads in the Soviet Union and most freight goes by rail. We saw Red Army Tanks, whole Regiments along with transport, tankers, command vehicles, even field kitchens all loaded on flat beds. All going west, no doubt from exercises in Siberia or as we saw in Outer Mongolia.

If any of you make this journey, the best things to take for 'tips' are cigarettes, tights and frilly knickers, and then you get wonderful service. Tip before you start!!

So we arrive at Irkutsk, near Lake Baikal. It is a frosty morning, but Autumn comes early in Siberia as the beautiful colouring on the leaves show. On the station we meet our local guide, a lovely woman named Ludmilla, and we got on very well together. After 4 days on the train we get 1 hour to bathe etc., and then on parade. I even managed to get my dhobi done.

We are taken on a tour of the city and as always to the Eternal flame. If I remember correctly we are told that 80,000 Siberians fought in the Great Patriotic War (Second World War to you) and 18,000 plus died. Ludmilla forgot to tell us that some of them fought on the German side and took part in the attack on the French Maquis at Vassieux en Vecors on 21st July 1944. I did not think it tactful to remind her, and our friendship was beginning to blossom. Some Pre-Revolution houses have been preserved, a quick visit to the only working church in Irkutsk and off to Lake Baikal. We sat in the warm sunshine overlooking the Lake. I had a lovely chat with Ludmilla and was invited back to Irkutsk.

Magnificent lunch, enough to make one ask for a party card.

Back to the hotel for a quick bath and change, and off to a choir concert. This was real singing, mainly folk songs, and then we found out that they were students and teachers from the local music conservatoire. We ate late that night as Marina had laid on a party. We had a double birthday. One lady was 78 on that day, and another would be 87 in Hong Kong, so we had Siberian dishes, with one bottle of champagne between two and a bottle of vodka also between two, - some party....

Up early next morning, breakfast was to be on the train.... fond farewells to Marina and from my point of view to Ludmilla.... and off we go to Mongolia....

The impression one gets of the Soviet is the cleanliness - no litter, not even dead leaves. There are very severe penalties for dropping litter. There is no unemployment, but there is much evidence of gross overmanning. One sees a gang of 4 women and 8 men working on the railway, the 4 women doing the work and the 8 men watching.

Russia is a beautiful country and the people in the countryside seem to work hard, I don't suppose they have much option. However, I liked the country, enough to go back on another visit.

JS

Flashback - Reunion 1959



Ron Estar, Harry Boseley, Les Wilson, Bill Roadnight, Bruce Dunkeld, Tommy (The Bandit) Atkins, Fred Stevens, Jim Griffin, Joe Simmonds, Fred Isaacs, Charlie Davis.

80 Years Ago



Field Marshall Earl Roberts & Staff Presenting Colours to 164th Battalion Queen's Royal Regiment

Field Marshall Earl Roberts of Kandahar presented Colours to the 4th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment The Colours now hang in Croydon Parish Church

The Long Arm of Coincidence

On the outbreak of war I was ordered to the Depot of The Queen's Royal Regiment (Q.R.R.) at Stoughton Barracks near Guildford. There I remained for a short period of training, when I was posted to the 1/6th Queen's and went out to France with the B.E.F. as part of the 44th Division, 131 Brigade which was composed of the 1/5th, 1/6th and 1/7th Battalions The Queen's Royal Regiment. We had, I think, the almost unique distinction of going into battle as a complete Territorial Brigade.

When the German Blitzkrieg burst upon us in early May 1940 on the invasion of Belgium and Holland, the Brigade force marched into Belgium and took up defensive positions on the line of the river Escout SW of Audenarde. I was No. 7 platoon commander in 'A' company, and on the 21st of May 1940 in the confusion of the Battalion's withdrawal in the face of the German onslaught, I was captured with a number of wounded and one of my section commanders, Corporal Thomas. Soon after we were segregated, and each of us went our separate ways, Cpl Thomas to a Stalag and myself to an Oflag for the next five years. During all that time I kept a log starting from what I could remember of the battle.

After the war I was commissioned into the Royal Scots and to cut a long story short, served out my time in the service of the Queen, followed by nearly a decade as an R.O., finally in 1984 retiring for the second time. During all these years I had carried around my old wartime log, never really bothering to reread the cramped writing of a 20 year old young subaltern. Now out of curiosity I decided to laboriously type out the whole log, and found that the embers of the past were surprisingly still warm, which led me to wonder how accurate my memory had been. So on the 18th September 1986 I wrote to the Secretary of the Queen's Royal Surrey Regimental Association together with a copy of my MS, requesting a comment on the accuracy of my dates with those of the official history.

Not long after the arrival of my letter, the secretary received a letter from a Miss Thomas who was trying to locate a Lieutenant Wagstaff who had been captured in Belgium with her father. This was without her father's knowledge, but that any trace gleaned was to be a surprise for him. And so it was nearly half a century later (47 years) on the 8th April 1987 I met (Cpl.) Ted Thomas again, whom I had last seen in the confusion of the Escout battle on the 21st May 1940.

It was pure curiosity that prompted me to check the accuracy of my jottings in 1940 by writing to the Regimental Association 47 years later. That my letter should coincide after all this time with Miss Thomas' inquiry trying to locate me for her father, is against all the odds!

DAN JAMES writes from Purley:- I was recently in Southwark Cathedral, and remembering the "passage of arms" I had with the former Provost over the 'defacing' of the East Surrey South African War Memorial some years ago, I went to see how the memorial was faring nowadays. Members will be glad to know that the Memorial is now uncluttered with the unsightly hessian sacking of some years ago. The bad news is that standing right in front of it is now a gigantic font, and refurbished font cover placed there in 1986! However if one stands to the side one can obtain a clear view of the fine work honouring our dead of the South African War.

For those members who are unable to visit Southwark this memorial is a particularly fine one, all black and gold and with a superb silver representation of the famous badge of the East Surrey Regiment.

The memorial is about 11 foot in length in the centre arcade of the seven arcades at the rear of the Cathedral near the main entrance.

Below the Regimental Badge the inscription is as follows:- "3rd Battalion ESR - Formerly 1st Royal Surrey Militia. To the Glory of God & to the memory of our comrades who gave their lives for King and Country in the SA War 1897-1902. Killed in Action: Major H W G Crofton

2/Lt H F Lyon

(Then follows the names of 11 privates who died of either wounds or disease)

"Be thou faithful unto death & I will give thee a crown of Life". "This tablet erected by their comrades past and present whose names are inscribed on a scroll enclosed in this casket".

J. MAYES writes:- I should like to hear from the following Barrack Room Squaddies Stoughton Barracks, Guildford from April 1938, then to Parkhurst I.O.W. and Palestine:- Lamb, Batchelor, Bury, Turvey, 'Bros' Lymbury, Easeman, Smith, Horton, Read, Hatch, Davies, and many more, names forgotten. Please write to 6088055 J. Mayes, 17 Pound Lane, Fishponds, Bristol, BS16 2EF. Tel. 656789. All letters will be answered.



A.H.F. WILLIAMS writes:- Thank you for Newsletter No 41 and its very interesting contents. I found the article by RCT "Birth of a Battalion" very nostalgic as I was one of those that rejoined the 6th Battalion on its formation. I re-joined at Richmond where I first enlisted in 1932.

On demob from the 1st Bn I was a CQMS but I took on the position of mortar platoon sergeant, which I was in 1939. As mentioned in the article a lot of travelling was involved. I worked in the city, lived in Shepherds Bush and had to travel to Richmond, so I spent more time on the train than on parade.

Yes, we had plenty of Generals but very few troops at first. My company was about the strength of a platoon, if that. My time at Richmond was short as I was promoted to CSM and posted to D Coy at Kingston, an even longer journey. My service came to an end when the LCC re-housed me in Hertfordshire. I was asked if I would be attached to the Beds & Herts, and attend camp with the Surreys. This did not appeal to me, once a Surrey always a Surrey, thus my service ended. Thank goodness for the OCA which keeps you in touch.

My memory boggled at all those names mentioned, both officers and other ranks. Thank goodness we can remember both the good and the bad times which I had with the 6th Bn, 2/6th Bn and the 1st Bn.

As an old Saturday Night Soldier I have no regrets.

A.H.F. WILLIAMS writes:- I refer to Newsletter No. 41 May 1987, and to the article "Don't Join the Infantry, Son" by HC, in which he mentions his involvement with an "AP" mine.

In Sicily I was Platoon Sgt of the 6 Pounder of the 1st Bn The East Surreys. Some little time before the fall of Centuripe I was very much aware that I had a high temperature, but soldiered on, and it was whilst the transport column was waiting for a crater to be filled in that my Platoon commander took me up to an MO that he knew, he took my temperature which was 102 and gave me two M & B tablets. The crater was filled, my platoon were sent through the town to take up anti-tank defence, only to be stopped again by a crater. To the left of this crater were a pair of iron gates leading to a small villa. Myself and a Corporal were checking a gun when the Platoon commander called the lads over to him by the gates which they did. There was a very loud bang and a cloud of black smoke. We two ducked behind the gun shield on which a large dent appeared. There were cries of pain and one of the drivers ran back over the road and collapsed. We ran to him. He had been badly wounded in the groin. We bandaged him as best as we could, but sadly he died. I assume that it was he who stepped on the mine and took the main force of the bomb.

We then went over to the lads, all of whom had received their share of metal and were in a state of shock. We went back to BHQ where the MO took over. Company HQ was in a small park and I stretched out on a park bench, but I realized I was not in a condition to carry on, and made my way to the R.A.P. I found the MO and his Sgt enjoying a well earned sleep, so I just slumped down on the floor. The next thing I remember is being shaken awake, having a thermometer stuck in my mouth and then being put in the next ambulance out. I finished up in Algiers looking like a Chinaman.

"S" mines were not a rarity but I would like to know if this is the episode that 'HC' refers to.

F.A. STAPLES writes:- I wish to thank and congratulate you on an excellent Newsletter, and I refer in particular to No. 41 May 1987 which I recently received. In the article entitled "Birth of a Battalion" the author "RCT" mentions RSM "Pinky" Williams.

I served in 10th E. Surreys during 1942-1944 in N. Ireland and the BN staffed a Transit Camp in Hambleden Hants before being disbanded. I personally was drafted to Normandy where I was transferred to 1st Royal Norfolks and saw action there.

I well remember RSM Williams as an old fashioned very correct RSM and the last words I heard from him were "good luck you lads" as we all piled into a 3 tonner to go to our new units in June 1944. I think they were the only words I heard that were not shouted from him. Nevertheless he was a true example of an old British RSM, and he did his job well.

I would be most interested to see if he is the same "Pinky" Williams mentioned in the said article.

Many thanks and keep up the good work.

FRED SUTCLIFFE (6093959) writes from Malawi:- I have just received the May 1987 issue of the News Letter which I found of great interest.

I was with the 2nd Battalion in the Middle East and Ceylon and Burma and Russell Acheson was one of my officers. I was thrilled to see a photograph of H.M.S. Hobart. But I had always understood that she was part of the Australian navy and therefore should it be H.M.A.S.?

I remember the night we landed at Tobruk very well. As we were given to understand that the Germans were just over the hill, complete silence was imperative. So we had our boots draped around our neck and wore our issue plimsols (known as 'tackies' in this part of the world).

We crept off the ship to be greeted by a noisy convoy of Aussie trucks and drivers with appropriate rude remarks like 'get a move on you Pommie bastards'. That would be one of the more mild instructions.

We were driven to some cave-like structures which I suppose were really ammo dumps. I had arrived in Tobruk nursing some bad desert ulcers and had to get them dressed daily. I hadn't been in Tobruk many days when the M.O. said he was sending me out otherwise I would be losing my thumb. We boarded a destroyer for the trip back to Alexandria and I felt a bit 'spare' with my lightly bandaged hand amongst all the other wounded and sick.

A high level (very high level) Italian bomber took a pot-shot at us but fortunately missed. The plane was so high that it could only just be seen with the naked eye. While in hospital I came down with some form of scarlet fever and was in quarantine with a New Zealand officer.

Our trip back to Tobruk was in a small cargo vessel. Approaching Tobruk harbour we were told to stay put below. Our ship had some rear-mounted gun as its defence and this opened up and what sounded like every other gun in the harbour. The reverberation around the lower deck was very hard on the ear drums - and the nerves.

I then reported back to the battalion transport lines and was given a pick-up without glass (naturally) and all springs broken and the cab in a wobbly condition due to repeated passing over land mines.

We took part in the operation mentioned by Russell Acheson of finding and disinterring the dead and bringing them into a new cemetery that was being made. Our last 'patient' was a German Army doctor and two orderlies. The particular smell associated with dead bodies remained with that vehicle until I parted with it on leaving Tobruk. It was as Russell Acheson says, a most unpleasant job.

On our sojourn in Ceylon there is one thing that is not mentioned. The visit by General Wavell - or has the distance of time made my memory suspect? But if I am remembering correctly, General (or was he then already a Field Marshall) Wavell inspecting the parade on Habbarane airstrip. I recall a rather short stocky man with a very lined face. And having read something of the problems that he had to face I am not now surprised.

Another high level visit that is not mentioned by Russell Acheson is the visit by a very ebullient character. The current word would be 'charismatic'. The Earl Mountbatten of Burma. He got an immediate score of fifty points by telling us to stand at ease, break ranks, and 'gather round'. He then proceeded to give us a pep talk and interspersed his remarks with plenty of royal 'bloody's'. He had us on his side right from the first 'bloody'.

Russell Acheson also mentions swimming across the Chindwin, towing, or pushing our 'sausage' of two rifles and equipment suitably wrapped in two groundsheets. Very effective. The non-swimmers had to hand-over-hand themselves across by a rope. But does anybody remember the arrival of the 'Life Magazine' photographer? We were on the other side relaxing and had been told we could have a quick swim or wash in the river if we wanted. Then the 'Life Magazine' photographer decided the scene needed to be jazzed up a bit and a group of us were required to 'frolic' in the water. Maybe that picture got lost on the cutting room floor.

Russell Acheson also mentions that last march in Broadway to await the plane to Comilla. That was the hardest stretch for me. I learnt what it was to be beyond the end of your tether and still keep one foot in front of the other.

We collapsed under the shade of some trees. I was close to mutiny when I was detailed to help dig the latrine. And the

crowning moment was the following morning when we found we had been sharing ground with some long dead Gurkhas who were on 'their long sleep' beneath us.

One of my mates at that stage was a Londoner of Russian descent named Danishevsky. I think his brother is the well known figure in the theatrical and film world. As I was repatriated a little before Danishevsky he gave me a small gift to deliver to his wife. We met briefly in the foyer of the Dorchester Hotel. Such opulence, even in wartime London, was a bit overpowering after being a ranker in Tobruk, Habbarane and Broadway.

Well, they were great days to look back on.

My subs are enclosed as I am not sure if they are up to date. If they are, I will be one year ahead. A good Queens motto - always be one year ahead! One last thing. I shall be laying the wreath this year on behalf of our Ex-Services Association at the Remembrance Service. I believe I am correct in saying that Malawi is the only country in black Africa to hold a Remembrance Service. We still have quite a contingent of old soldiers of the Kings African Rifles who served in Burma (and Malaya).

BILL ROADNIGHT writes:- Whilst on holiday in North Yorkshire I had a couple of visits which may interest members of the Regiment. My nephew with whom I was staying, knows of all my connections with the Army and always tries to take me to places of military interest. He took me to see "The Bunker" situated in Clifford Street, York., also to "Eden Camp" Molton. This was the site of an Italian Prisoner of War camp during the second World War. I arrived at York with my party, and we proceeded to "The Bunker" in Clifford Street. Outside there was a mass of barbed wire, rather putting one off I thought, but we went inside. It was rather dark but we booked in to the resident Corporal of the RAF - there were also two WRACS acting as waitresses. The interior had white walls and I saw many names of military personnel inscribed. I could not find any of our Regiment, so straightway borrowed a pen and put my name, Regiment, etc. Whilst doing this the waitress came up for the order and she commented to my nephew "A Captain". She asked my name but I did not know about this. It was nice to see "The Queens Royal Regiment Second of Foot" on the wall.

After a little time a hooter sounded and over the air came the order "Will Captain Roadnight and his party proceed to the bunker". I thought my nephew had organised this. We all went down stone steps into the bunker where I reported to the waitress. She saluted me and naturally I saluted back. She did salute smartly, on a par with that in the Regiment. We had a first class meal of what one had whilst in the service. Before we left we were given a mug which I am arranging to have given to the Regimental Museum.

I suggest that any members of the Regiment who happen to be in the York area on holiday, pay it a visit, as it is more than interesting, and it would be nice to have a few more names of members from the Regiment.

After leaving we proceeded to Malton to Eden Camp. This is another very interesting encampment, full of events during the war appertaining to "The Peoples War". All the hutments, as they were when the POWs were there, were very well maintained. The hutments were numbered from one to twenty and you proceeded to the end and to the entrance of the next, and so on. It was all very interesting and made one remember what hazards, etc., the civilian populace had to put up with. If any member of the Regiment is in the Malton area, this is another place he might like to take his family to.

Whilst in Helmsley, I found out more information about Lord Feversham who led the Royalist troops at the Battle of Sedgemoor. His family have been Lords of the Manor at Rievaulx and were descended from Sir Charles Duncombe who died in 1711. I wonder whether Col. Duncombe of the Regiment was a descendant of the last named. It would be interesting if this was so.

Doctor ALFIE ROY (MBE) writes from Glasgow, "Please pass on my best wishes to any of the E. Surreys whom I knew and respected so much. there must still be a good few around despite the dwindling numbers and advancing years. I am adjusting to it at present by putting my house on the market and looking for a flat with no garden to look after."

Doctor 'Alfie' Roy was Medical Officer to The British Battalion during the years of captivity. Any old Surrey who wishes to drop a line to him can do so C/O the Editor.

P. MABBETT writes from Suffolk:- May I first apologise for being in arrears with my subs.

I must mention that on The Glorious 1st of June this year, we, at Bury St Edmunds, had our own annual 'get together' and it was discovered that several of us were all in the same position with our payments. This caused several humorous comments to be made, including a reference to the good fortune of the distance between us and yourself.

I hope now you have received all your overdue payments, and I, and my local comrades look forward to the Annual Reunion at Bassingbourn again this year.

D.J. BENNETT writes from Bury St Edmunds:- Being a wartime Corporal in the 2/5th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment and seeing a request for news of old comrades in one of our local papers just before last Christmas, I replied, and have since been in touch with quite a few of the lads round the area. One of them has passed on a May 1987 Newsletter. Most of us have no transport now, so we mainly keep in touch by letter or phone.

I would like to have the News Letter. I am 72 now with time on my hands, and would like to hear a little of the 'Queens' from time to time.

I was in the Salerno landing, and after taking my section some 4½ miles inland to try to hold a road 'T' junction, we were taken prisoner by a number of Tiger tanks that surrounded us. From then on I was 1 year and 8 months as a POW. After being flown home to England, I was attached to the R Es postal depot at Nottingham, that made up my 6 years in the Army.

I lost my wife 25 years ago, and with bringing up two daughters I lost touch with all old comrades. I joined the OCA in 1946 as a Life Member, but changes in address, etc., cut me off.

CLIVE HARRISON writes from Western Australia:- Regarding the interest in the May 87 Newsletter from Major Michael Hare, and his visit to the War Cemetery in Madras, India, would it be possible to do some research into the death of L/Cpl A E Hardy, who died 30 June 1946. The 2nd Battalion The Queen's at that time was in Poona.

I note from my medical records that I was taken to B M H Poona on 24.4.46 and after a series of very serious illnesses which included a period of time on the dangerously ill list with typhoid, I was eventually discharged from hospital on 11.10.46.

What interests me is this:-

On the 5th May I was completely recovered but still not fit. I know for a fact that at least one other B O R sharing a tent with me at the time was taken ill, but being away from the Battalion so long, I never found out what happened to him. I was informed by the medics that I was extremely lucky to be alive. I now wonder if L/Cpl Hardy was sharing the same tent, and if so why was he buried in Madras. There surely would have been a War Cemetery in a town - an army town the size of Poona. Perhaps someone who was there at the time can throw some light on the mystery.

Incidentally there is no mention of any death in the 2nd Bn at that time in The Journal of The Queen's as both of which I have with me now.

TED JOSLING - Australia

6087294 Ted Josling very kindly sent the following telegram:-
BEST WISHES TO ALL RANKS ON THIS GLORIOUS FIRST OF JUNE.

2/6th Bn The East Surrey Regiment return to Normandy 1987

This years return to France by the St Valery Association of the Battalion left the Royal British Legion Richmond promptly at 06.30 hrs in high spirits, as all members had succeeded in arriving there in good time, despite typical English weather. Many had already travelled long distances; while others joined us on route or at Folkestone for the ferry. After an uneventful crossing to Boulogne, our coach was first off the ferry and drove through a Bank Holiday France to St Valery-en-Caux. Drinks were available on the coach and one of the party detailed to dispense them may make a good QM; given time!

Our first days outing took us to Fecamp and Les Ifs where "D Coy" in the early days had been guarding naval mines, gas, ammunition and stores of all types, prior to loading the gas for return to England. We then proceeded to Le Havre via Fontaine-la-Mallet and the Chateau d'Epremesnil area which was our first billet on arrival in France in 1940. After lunch and a

walk around the town, we travelled via Bolbec to Beaunay where we had had our last battle as Support Group to the 51st Highland Division, and were received by the Mayor and his Wife with overwhelming hospitality at the Chateau, where battle scars are still visible both inside and out from aerial action. A wreath was presented on behalf of the Association to be placed on the local War Memorial. We were also introduced to the Mayor of the neighbouring village with which Beaunay is now linked, whose home was in Veules-les-Roses which we intended to visit the next day, and were given names of contacts there. On our departure, the Mayor, who had been in both British and French forces, gave us a cordial invitation to return.

After our return to the Hotel that evening, one of our number talking to another he thought was in our party but in fact was with another, discovered he was talking to Arthur Hanes, late of the Royal Corps of Signals, who in 1940 had been caught at St Valery and had been one of the Radio Operators of the Radio Truck delivered to us at the Foret d'Ewey.

The following day on our visit to Veules-les-Roses, we found the house where Charlie Bobart was hidden by the owner for several months before being caught by the Germans, and also the Mairie where at very short notice after being collected from various parts of the town, we were entertained by the Mayor and asked to return on our next visit, we for our part promised to give due notice of our visit. After a break for lunch at Dieppe we passed the Chateau of Bois Robert which at one time had been Bn H.Q. while the Companies were sited on the River Bethune, we returned along the river valley from St-Aubin-le-Cauf to Arques-la-Bataille but were unable to pinpoint any of the 1940 positions.



Members of 2/6 Bn The East Surrey Regiment, Normandy 1987.

The next day we set out to try and find the positions taken up by the Companies when guarding the anti-tank guns; B Coy headquarters was found and on the third attempt one of the positions covering a road bridge over a railway identified. The villages where the headquarters of C and D Companies were situated, were visited and one position at the cross road in Campdos found. The next stop was on the A bancourt-Aumale road where we were fortunate in pinpointing some of the A Coy positions in the adjoining woods.

Our last day before returning home was spent in a morning visit to the Hypermarket at Dieppe, and then the afternoon sight seeing at Rouen, prior to an evening reception at the Hotel de Ville, where the Mayor of St Valery entertained us; once again a wreath was presented in memory of our fallen comrades; also a framed poem by S. Rayner was given to the Mayor who in return gave him a special medallion as a memento.

On our journey home a short stop was made in Veules-les-Roses to photograph the house where Charlie Bobart was hidden, followed by lunch at Le Treport, but there was insufficient time to visit the cliff tops where we had taken up positions forty seven years earlier. Thence to Boulogne for the ferry back to England, and the final drive along the motorway in the worst weather we had experienced, to arrive well before closing time at the Royal British Legion Club, before dispersal to our homes.

Comment must be made on the warmth of welcome and hospitality accorded us either individually or as a group, by the French people and their Civic Authorities, where ever we went.

NT

South Armagh 1987

Ask any modern soldier about South Armagh and he will immediately mention such names as Crossmaglen, Forkhill and Bessbrook. These are all names of company locations that countless soldiers have lived in, patrolled around and sadly died whilst carrying out their duties of trying to defeat terrorism. Over the years the media have fuelled the reputation of these small towns by constant references to 'Bandit Country' and the 'bad-lands' of South Armagh. All too frequently we read of such other names like Warren Point - a delightful spot near Carlingford Lough - but also remembered for the tragic murders of eighteen members of the Parachute Regiment and the Commanding Officer of the Queen's Own Highlanders in 1979. Similarly we hear of the main Belfast Dublin highway and railway so often in the news and recently the scene of the assassination of the Northern Ireland Chief Justice, Sir Maurice Gibson and his wife Lady Gibson.

To put it into perspective, South Armagh is an area of some 400 square miles of the most beautiful farming countryside in the shadow of the Mourne Mountains. The 50,000 inhabitants are almost exclusively involved in farming and much of their prosperity is based on evading the Customs and Excise officials as live-stock is moved across the border into the Republic. The fields are small; on average some one hundred in a square acre and all surrounded by dry stone walls and blackthorn hedges - a patrolling soldier's nightmare. Since 1974 an infantry battalion has always been based in South Armagh and in June the 1st Battalion arrived to carry out a roulement tour.

In January of this year the Battalion moved to Tidworth after two years as the Resident Battalion in Gibraltar. The first task was for everyone to convert to the new rifle - SA80. 1 QUEENS were to be the first battalion to carry the new weapon in Ulster. Having spent some time training each man, the Battalion embarked on a concentrated and very specialised training programme. Each soldier had to become familiar with a variety of skills and techniques - first aid, signals procedure, helicopter drills and the like had to be practised and tested. No-one was exempt, soldiers from the QM's department and rifle company soldiers were treated alike. Suddenly officers' mess staff and MT drivers found themselves as important members of intelligence teams. This training period culminated in a three week package on the Lydd and Hythe ranges, followed by a period of rural exercises in Norfolk. The Battalion was then declared fit to carry out its role in Ulster.

On deployment the Battalion split up to cover the three market towns of Crossmaglen, Forkhill and Newtowhamilton whilst the fourth company carried out specialised surveillance duties. The border with the Republic of Ireland is covered by a series of observation points of various types. Some are on hills and are like piquets found anywhere that the British Army serves, while others are on low ground with fifty foot towers and underground accommodation for protection against the mortar threat. All are designed to monitor movement on road and on the border and, in particular, are designed to report any suspicious activity or movement of known 'players'. Two additional companies from the Duke of Wellington's Regiment and the Royal Green Jackets came under command to assist the Battalion during the tour. In all a battalion group of some 1200 officers and men.

Over the years the Security forces have been denied the use of all the roads in South Armagh due to the constant threat of land mines. Thus the Battalion has to resort to foot patrols supported by a mass of helicopters. All movement of men and stores is done by the old Royal Air Force workhorse - the Wessex, backed up by the faster and more modern Army Air Corps' Lynx and Gazelles. Tac HQ at Bessbrook Mill is rightly known as the busiest heliport in Europe and certainly the locals would readily testify to this.

The essence of operations in South Armagh is getting as many men as possible on the ground to allow the Royal Ulster Constabulary to carry out their normal business. Each man would expect to carry out a 24 hour patrol with some 60 pounds on his back. His aim would be to monitor road movement by carrying out vehicle check points while indulging in 'chat-ups' with the locals. If he was in a sensitive area he would expect to have top cover from one of the helicopters and, having finished his patrol he would be transported back to base or on to his next task. Having completed this glamorous task the soldier then returns to the reality of soldiering - sanger duties, fatigues and

base plate patrols which check for mortars around the bases. Having finished this cycle he would then return to his patrolling, welcoming the freedom of movement and escape from the company sergeant major.



With acknowledgement to BRAGANZA - SOUTH ARMAGH

Perhaps soldiering in South Armagh can best be summed up by describing an incident during the tour. At 1312 hours on a Saturday afternoon 4 months into the tour a young Lance Corporal had just relieved his commander in an observation tower. The commander disappeared into the underground accommodation for his lunch. Four minutes later a sentry and the Lance Corporal noticed a tractor and hay trailer moving into a local post office car park. They were immediately suspicious and warned the off-duty soldiers who took cover. The Lance Corporal saw two men move the hay bales and this was then followed by a salvo of 5 mortars being fired from the trailer. While the rounds were in the air he pressed the mortar alarm, sent a contact report and a description of the getaway car before taking cover himself. Four of the rounds exploded on the position with the fifth one landing on the accommodation as a blind. A further five rounds exploded on the base plate shortly afterwards causing considerable damage to the Post Office and some injuries to civilians. All the off-duty soldiers, including the commander, were trapped underground because of the blind and for the next hour the young Lance Corporal directed operations until the company commander assumed command on the ground and the clearance was completed.

When 1 QUEENS arrived in Tidworth 60% of the soldiers were under 24 years of age. The Battalion was untried, untested and distinctly lacking many of the skills that are so necessary for a demanding tour in Ulster. Within a few months the soldiers at all levels had reached a superb level of training that allowed them to cope with the various trials and tribulations of a busy four and a half months in South Armagh. Too often one hears criticism of modern youth, however, having watched some of today's young men perform in a dangerous and hostile area over a protracted period, I would say that there is much hope for the future.

Regimental Deaths

Abbott - on 3rd September 1987, Stephen Sharrah Abbott, OBE, aged 67 years, The East Surrey Regiment.

Babb - on 8th October 1987, Rev. Henry Cecil Babb, MA, MBE, aged 81 years, Chaplain to the Forces.

Blundell - on 2nd September 1987, WOII George James Blundell aged 69 years, The Queen's Royal Regiment and REME.

Brown - in June 1987, Sergeant Aubrey Brown, East Surrey Regiment. Served with 1st Battalion in the Drums and later in the intelligence section.

Brooks - on 3rd March 1986, Pte Maurice Frank Brooks, aged 69 years, The Queen's Royal Regiment.

Castle - on 16th September, Private R Castle, 1/6th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment.

Charlton - on 11th May 1987, Col Henry William Vaughan Charlton, TD, MRCS, LRCP, aged 64 years, The Queen's Royal Regiment and RAMC. He served as a carrier driver with The Queen's. Later he qualified as a doctor and commanded 222 Field Ambulance RAMC from 1976-79. He was Honorary Colonel of 222 (East Midlands) Field Ambulance, RAMC.

Clark - in July 1987, 1/5th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment.

Fagence - on 1st June 1987, Private V E Fagence, The Queen's Royal Regiment. Fagence was wounded serving with the 11th Queen's in 1917. He wrote many articles for this Newsletter. A very loyal Queensman and member of the Association.

Jennings - on 4th September 1987, Lieutenant Reginald Angus Unwin Jennings, the Queen's Royal Regiment.

Lavey - on 16th September 1987, Private P.L. Lavey, The East Surrey Regiment.

Moon - on 1st October 1987, L/Cpl W. Moon, The East Surrey Regiment. L/Cpl Moon served with the 1st Battalion and was captured at Fort MacGregor (North Africa) in February 1944.

Paisley - on 18th July 1987, George L. Paisley, The Queen's Royal Regiment. He served with the 1/7th Bn from the outbreak of war until taken prisoner in 1944 in Holland. After the war he served with 622 (Queen's) HAA Regiment R.A. (TA) until 1961. He was an active committee member of the Queen's (Southwark) O.C.A.

Peasley - on 22nd June 1987, Maj John T. Peasley, MC, The Queen's Royal Regiment.

Phelps - in April 1987, R.E. Phelps, 1/5th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment.

Rolph - on 10th July 1987, Corporal Harry Edward (Eddie) Rolph, The East Surrey Regiment.

Solomon - on 6th July 1987, Sgt John Solomon, The East Surrey Regiment. Popularly known as Gus, he served in the Carrier Platoon of the 1st Battalion in North Africa and Italy. After being wounded in action, he was transferred to the "Devons". John was a founder member of The East Surrey Regiment Re-Union Association, and its success is in no small measure due to his dedicated work and organising ability.

Stiby - on 25th September 1987, Major Arthur Robert Charles Stiby, TD, MA, JP, aged 78 years, The Queen's Royal Regiment. He was commissioned into The Queen's Royal Regiment in 1928 while still at Wrekin College. The Masters presented him with his sword. He was the youngest commissioned officer in the TA. Served 4th Battalion TA. Brevet Major New Year Honours 1938. Commanded C Company at Caterham.

He transferred to Royal Artillery 1938/9, 315 Battery. He was captured at Singapore in 1942, POW Saigon/Thailand, and worked on the railway to Burma.

After the war Arthur Stiby became Chairman and Managing Director of the Croydon Advertiser Group of Newspapers until 1974. He was Chairman of the Croydon Bench from 1968 until 1970.

Tasker - on 3rd June 1987, RSM Philip Tasker, MBE, aged 85 years, The Queen's Royal Regiment. He served from 1919 to 1948 with the 1st Battalion and at Maidstone and Shorncliffe.

Tilly - on 6th September 1987, Lieut Colonel Gerald Tilly, DSO, TD. He was commissioned in the 6th Bn The East Surrey Regiment in July 1939. In 1944 he was appointed to command the 4th Bn The Dorset Regiment in 43 (Wessex) Division and was captured in the advance to Arnhem in September 1944. For his gallantry and leadership in this operation, Colonel Tilly was awarded the DSO.

Wakeman - on 9th June 1987, Drummer Joseph Wakeman, aged 85 years, The Queen's Royal Regiment. Served with the 2nd Battalion in India and the Sudan.

Regimental Families

James - on 9th August 1987, Joan, wife of Dan James.

Philpot - on 30th May 1987, Joan, widow of Reg Philpot.

Obituaries

S.S. Abbott, OBE

Stephen Abbott, who has died at the age of 67, served in the 2nd Bn The East Surrey Regiment in the disastrous campaign in Malaya in 1941/42. He contributed a vivid description of the Battle of Gurun to the booklet 'Malaya 1941-42'. At that time he was second in command of a rifle company and held a similar appointment on the formation of the British Battalion. On the surrender of Singapore, Lieutenant Abbott was held with the remnants of the British Battalion at Changhi.

It was a considerable surprise to him, still a subaltern, to be sent to Japan in April 1943 in charge of a draft of British prisoners of war. On arrival he was appointed Senior Allied Officer of Aomi Prisoner of War camp. He was then only 23.

Conditions in Japan were severe, but a great improvement on those in Malaya. Within a few months fifty three of the original three hundred men died. There was no doctor nor padre to care for the suffering and dying prisoners of war. The men were required to work twelve hours daily on starvation rations. In winter they lived in unheated rooms with twelve feet of snow outside, and not even a change of clothing to sleep in.

Throughout the years of captivity Stephen Abbott cared for the several hundred British and American prisoners of war under his charge to the best of his ability that the harsh conditions allowed.

After the war, Abbott joined the Conservative party's research department. He was employed by the party, both in and out of office, as an industrial relations adviser. He was awarded the OBE in 1973.

P G E H

Brigadier D.M. Cornah, CBE, DSO, Officer of the USA Legion of Merit

Donald Cornah died at his home at Seaford, East Sussex, on 21st October 1987 aged 80. Although only serving briefly with the Regiment he took great pride in being a member of it. Donald joined 2 Surreys at El Ballah in the Canal Zone in June 1947 on transfer from the Indian Army and became Lieutenant Colonel Graham Duncombe's second-in-command. It was a splendid combination guaranteed to maintain morale at the highest level at a time when the battalion was running down in strength prior to amalgamation with 1 Surreys in Greece, which was due to take place in June the following year. Donald had served with great distinction with his former regiment, the 36th Sikhs, and on the staff in North Africa and Italy during World War 2, and had commanded a brigade during the concluding months of the war. He was a highly able instructor and staff officer and a brilliant all-round games player. Old Surreys may remember the club on the Suez Canal at El Ballah, and the Commanding Officer floating benignly and motionless in the swimming pool while his energetic second-in-command exercised his perspiring officers in the adjoining squash court. Small wonder that 2 Surreys were the outstanding games playing battalion in the Canal Zone that year.

In 1948 on the amalgamation Donald returned to Pakistan to help in setting up the Pakistan Staff College in the local rank of colonel. He did so at the invitation of the British Commander-in-Chief and not knowing where his future lay if he remained with the Regiment. It was an understandable decision with the Commanding Officer of the amalgamated battalion only half way through his tour and a number of World War 2 stars of the sister Regiment waiting on the side-lines as potential candidates to succeed him. In the event Lieutenant Colonel John Metcalfe arrived in August 1949 to command 1 Surreys and later became the first Colonel of the Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment. On his return from Pakistan in 1950 Donald became Colonel GS Ops/Plans in the War Office before being promoted to command a brigade in Kenya at the height of the Mau-Mau rebellion. He returned to the War Office in 1954 to become Deputy Director Staff Duties followed by DQMG BAOR, and took early retirement in 1957 when the Army was contracting at the end of conscription to become Chief Constable of the Army Department Constabulary, a post which held for thirteen years. During that time he renewed direct contact with the Regiment as Chairman of the Officers Club.

It was typical that when he eventually retired from being Chief constable he was dined out by the Army Board. For us lesser mortals who served with him regimentally he evoked similar appreciation. It was a great disappointment when he went off to Pakistan and there was inevitable conjecture as to his destiny had he not done so. But we shall always remember his warmth and readiness to help, and that whimsical smile as he patiently pointed us in the right direction. Many years have passed but those who served with him have an abiding memory of an officer of very high calibre and a greatly valued friend.

Lieutenant R.A.U. Jennings

Reginald Jennings who has died aged 88 served for barely 4 weeks with 2/4th Battalion, The Queen's Royal Regiment in the spring of 1918 before being severely wounded. In that short time he gained a great affinity and pride in the Regiment which he sustained all through his life as a schoolmaster at Marlborough College. He was a long term member of the 2nd/4th Queen's Association, and was for many years their President. He wore The Queen's royal Regiment tie on all possible occasions, and asserted that he had never in fact left the Regiment, since while still recovering from his wounds, because he received no contrary order, he posted himself to Oxford University in October 1918, and no one ever queried where he was or what had happened to him. He was a very nice man, a very inspiring schoolmaster, and a great christian gentleman. JWS

Cpl. H.E. Rolph

Harry Edward Rolph, popularly known as Eddie, has died at the age of 69. He served in the Signal Platoon of the 1st Bn The East Surrey Regiment during the 1939-45 War, and was badly wounded in the face in the Bowl outside Cassino.

After the War he became a keen member of 78 Division Battleaxe Club, and organised pilgrimages to Tunisia, Italy and Austria. Latterly, Eddie took on the onerous task of Treasurer of the Club on the death of Captain Harold Payne. A great deal of his time was taken up with the affairs of the Club, and he will be remembered, not only as an efficient organiser, but also as a cheerful, friendly and energetic comrade for whom nothing was too much trouble.

PGEH

The Reverend Henry Babb MBE MA

It was with a sense of sadness that I read of the death on 8th October of Padre Babb at the age of 81 years. I met the Padre in January 1985 while I was researching for the Far East display in the Regimental Museum.

He was a large man in every sense with a friendly warm approach towards people. He was ordained in 1936 and went out to India where he served on the North West Frontier.

In 1937 he was appointed a Chaplain to the Forces in Woolwich. Postings to the Military College of Science at Lydd and then the Middle East followed. In September 1940 he joined the 2nd Bn The East Surrey Regiment in Singapore as their chaplain; and travelled north to Jitra where the Battalion took up defensive positions. Just before the fighting started he moved on promotion to the Divisional Headquarters. He wrote in a letter to me, 'My period with the Surreys was an exceptionally happy one and I have nothing but praise for the officers, NCOs and men of the 2nd Battalion, they were all so very kind to me'.

Of his POW days, Padre Babb wrote, 'I was able to take at least one or two services during the week, and on Sundays Holy Communion to any prisoners when they returned from work on the Railway Line. Also services in the hospital hut in either a camp on the line or at base'. In 1944 the Japs took a photo of him in Chungkai cemetery to use for propaganda purposes to show how considerate they were to permit a chaplain to minister to the prisoners of war. He buried the first casualty there in 1941 and the last one four years later. The cemetery has been preserved by the War Graves Commission.

After VJ Day, Padre Babb volunteered to stay behind and accompany a party, mainly Australians, who were going up the Railway to look for graves of those buried near the track as well as finding the cemeteries overgrown by the jungle. He travelled the length of the Railway, and tells of his harrowing and sometimes funny experiences in his diary which he gave to the Imperial War Museum.

After his eventual return to the UK in 1946, he took a post at Culham College, Oxford, until he retired in 1964. He continued to lecture until 1975. Recently he moved to live near Bassingbourn, so he was able to officiate at the Queen's Regiment Grand Reunion Drum-head Service in 1986. It gave him immense pleasure to be with soldiers again.

The Regimental History of The East Surrey Regiment records, 'The Padre, the Reverend Henry Babb MBE, was outstanding in his devotion to the British Battalion, and was a great source of comfort and inspiration in the dark days of captivity.' The Medical Officer, Doctor Alfie Roy MBE, writes of those now far-off days, 'It was as a POW that I knew him best and appreciated the work he did for the community, particularly the many sick and wounded. His cheerful and encouraging manner did much for morale, and his willingness to help in the most menial of tasks were a shining example to us all.'

Padre Babb presented his Royal Army Chaplains Department embroidered scarf to the Regimental Museum, together with the pewter cross for services in the Field, supplied by the Surreys PRI some 44 years previously. He said he felt a certain amount of guilt in keeping it so long!

A thoroughly nice person to have known.

D G H

Can You Help?

W.H. Hill of 30 Charter Road, Cippenham, Slough, SL1 5JE, Tel. Burnham 3577, is asking for news from an old army pal.

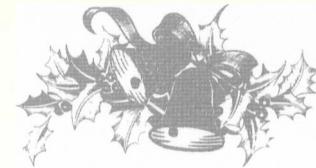
I am writing to you, hoping you may be able to give me some information relating to an army colleague of mine. The name of the person is:- Lance-Corporal J. Johnson of the 2/6th Battalion Queen's Royal Regiment. I believe his army number was Queens starting 609. . . .

Jack Johnson was wounded at Enfidaville in Tunisia in 1943, and I last saw him in No. 1 General Hospital at El Ballah in the Canal Zone. Apparently on his release from the Convalescence Depot at El Ballah he was pushed or fell under a train, with the result he lost his right arm. I was in the Con Depot myself when I learned that Jack was in No. 1.

When I saw him he was very despondent and morose, and after saying we would meet after the war, that was the last time I ever saw him or heard anything about him. He lived in Haywards Heath, Sussex, but his parents could not tell me anything.

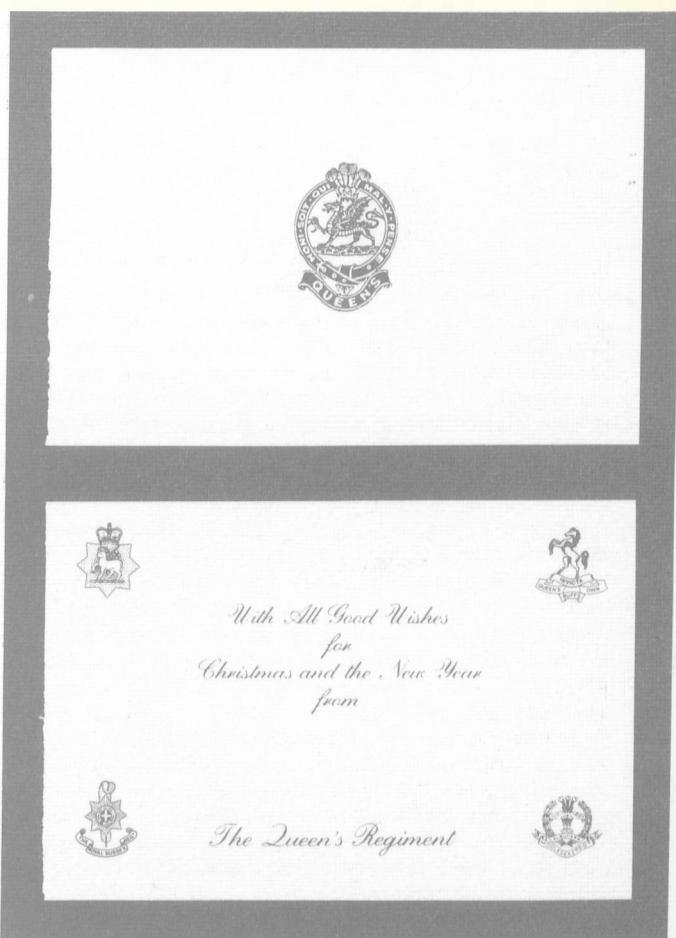
Whilst in England we were mates, and the third member of our party was Private E. Rundle, who came to us from the Devon Regiment and whose number began 562 . . . He was transferred to the 2nd Battalion, and I have never been able to trace him either. He lived in Torpoint, Plymouth.

If you or your readers can supply any information on either of these two "veterans" especially L/Cpl Johnson, I should be most grateful. I look forward to hearing from you soon.



THE QUEEN'S REGIMENT CHRISTMAS CARD 1987

The Regimental Christmas Card this year will be a traditional white card with the Regimental Badge embossed in colour on the front and the usual greetings inside. The price will be 10 for £ 2, including envelopes post and packing. The cards may be obtained from Regimental Headquarters, Howe Barracks, Canterbury, Kent CT1 1JU. Cheques should be made payable to 'The Queen's Regimental Benevolent Fund'.



Regular Forces Employment Association

The Association, together with the Ministry of Defence and the Manpower Services Commission, is part of the Forces Resettlement Service. Our task is to assist all non-commissioned men and women who served with good character for a minimum of three years, or less if discharged on medical grounds, to find civil employment at the end of their engagements.

Our services are free, and we take a long term interest in ex-Regulars so they are available to them throughout their working lives.

Our Employment Officers are situated in Branches throughout the United Kingdom and they maintain close contact with local employers and Job centres. Their addresses and telephone numbers can be obtained from the Regimental Associations; Post Offices; Job centres and local telephone directories.

During the period 1st April 1986 - 31st March 1987 the Association assisted 11,499 men and women with their resettlement and placed 4,970 in employment. Of those placed 2,314 were men and women from the Army and 40 were from The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment.



ASSOCIATION CHRISTMAS CARD 1987

This year's card features in full colour, a reproduction of a water colour by Mr. C.C. Stadden. The card features a Sutlers tent c1752 and shows uniforms of our former Regiments.

The cost, which includes matching envelopes, is £ 2.00 for ten, available from R.H.Q. The Queen's Regiment, Howe Barracks, Canterbury, Kent. CT1 1JU. Cheques payable to "Queens Surreys Association".

The History of the Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment

As some may have seen in the papers, again there is discussion and speculation as to the right organisation of the Army and in particular the Infantry. Partly arising from this, our Regiment has received commendation in the British Army Review with mention in a recent Editorial, together with a review of Captain (now Major) Jonathon Riley's History. The Editorial says: "One does not have to be a senescent dreamer to have learned the need for institutions, organisations, deployments, operational and tactical methods and administrative and logistical systems to be ready, willing and able to adapt to new circumstances and changed conditions. Less easy to remember sometimes in the excitement and heat of debate is the need to trust the system and cheerfully accept the decision of authority. Captain Riley's "History of the Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment" reviewed in this issue gives a picture of one of the Regiments which did exactly that in the "swinging sixties".

The review of our History is as follows:
The History of the Queen's Royal Surrey

Regiment 1959-1970

by Captain J.P. Riley (*Published by the Regiment £24.50 hardback, £12.50 softback*)

This book of some 150 pages covers the brief life of the Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment, formed in April 1959 as a result of the reorganisation laid out in the Defence White Paper of 1957, and the first few years of its continued existence as the First Battalion The Queen's Regiment, after the formation of the large Regiment on 31 December 1966. Interest in it will not be confined solely to those who served in the regiments concerned. Any Infantryman in the 1950s and 1960s had his own experience of amalgamations, disbandment or reorganisations and there is a sometimes masochistic interest to be found in Captain Riley's detailed and objective account of how his Regiment approached the problems which it shared with so many others. The result of his careful research is a meticulous record of the events and personalities of his Regiment during the 11 years in which it, in common with much of the rest of the British Infantry, underwent metamorphosis from two Regiments of the sort which had been familiar at least since 1881, and which had been manned in considerable parts by conscripts since before the Second World War, to a single battalion of a large Regiment in the all-regular Army of the last twenty-odd years, with corresponding and equally traumatic changes in the Territorial Army. He provides a detailed account of the effects on the officers and men concerned of implementing the two sweeping and dramatic reorganisations of the Army which were carried through during these difficult years. The book serves as a salutary reminder that the best thought-out schemes of reorganisation to meet changing circumstances and policies are, and always have been, completely dependent upon the discipline, morale and strong sense of service of

the volunteers whose lives and well-being are centred upon their Regiments. Whilst adjusting to the changes the regular battalion of *Captain Riley's* Regiment continued to pull its weight during the period, not only at home and in BAOR, but also in Aden, Bahrain, Hong Kong and in the opening moves in August 1969 of the continuing campaign in Northern Ireland.

The Queen's Regiment and *Captain Riley* are to be congratulated upon the production of a detailed and copiously illustrated record which is obtainable from Regimental Headquarters, The Queen's Regiment, Howe Barracks, Canterbury.

Reunion after 43 years

In August 1944 14645285 L/Cpl Wingfield R.M. and 14677321 L/Cpl Puddephatt J.R. parted company for the last time. Both were at that time serving in the 13th Queens which was then stationed at Southwold/Walberswick. L/Cpl. Wingfield went on a draft to North West Europe and joined the 1/6 Queens.

About a month later L/Cpl Puddephatt went on a draft to India, subsequently joining 1 Queens.

Their paths had only crossed briefly when they were in the same Company in the 13th Queens at Bowerham Barracks in Lancaster. Their acquaintance was but brief as they had never been on the same draft but being Northerners (in fact their homes were only 12 miles apart) and being in a Southern regiment drew them together. In addition they were both University students holding Certificate 'B' and were somewhat euphemistically termed 'potential officers'.

Though separated by many thousands of miles they briefly remained in communication until the early part of 1945 but this broke down. Subsequently Puddephatt received a newspaper cutting from this Aunt showing that Wingfield had been seriously wounded, in fact the incident occurred within three weeks of his last letter. By that time he had been transferred from 1/6 Queens to 1 Herefords.

There the matter rested until the early part of 1948 when Puddephatt, having only just returned from the Far East, visited Wingfield's parents in Wakefield to ascertain how their son was faring. He was in fact back at University in Oxford. Correspondence was then renewed briefly but eventually appears to have petered out later that year and there was no meeting.

In 1955 whilst Puddephatt was living in Worcester, and quite out of the blue, he discovered that Wingfield had written a book called "The Only Way Out" based on his experiences in North West Europe prior to being wounded. Puddephatt immediately bought a copy in the local Smiths. As far as he was concerned that was the end of the matter until this year he received a very long letter from Wingfield seeking to re-establish contact after a period of over 40 years. Wingfield had actually traced Puddephatt from knowing he was a Solicitor and traced his name in the Law list in his local public library. Wingfield then wrote to the firm. Their reunion took place when Wingfield and his wife visited Puddephatt's home a fortnight ago.

It had taken them over 43 years to get together again.

