

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

Regimental Association
Newsletter

President

Colonel J.W. Sewell

Chairman

Colonel W.E. McConnell, T.D.

Secretary & Editor

Lieutenant Colonel L.M. Wilson, MBE



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Regimental Headquarters

The Queen's Regiment

Howe Barracks

Canterbury

Kent

CT1 1JU

Tel. Canterbury (0227) 763434

Editorial

I must begin this editorial with an apology to you all for the late publication of this edition. The fault is mine and I only hope that you will still enjoy reading it. To those of you who have sent articles, photos or small items of interest for publication and find that these have still not been published, again my apologies, but I do like to have a small store of items in hand ready for the next Newsletter/s. So do keep the articles coming in.

In June the 1st Battalion exercises the Freedom of Guildford and Reigate and Banstead. Details are enclosed with this edition. In Guildford, thanks to the efforts of 5 OMA and in particular Doug Mitchell, arrangements are in hand for a bar with light refreshments to be available at Sandfield Terrace – subject to you, the members, completing the proforma and returning it to Doug Mitchell. At Reigate the position is more difficult and, despite the efforts of Jimmie Patterson on our behalf, at the time of writing no firm venue has been found. If, on the day of the Parade, we have managed to arrange for a pub to supply drinks and light refreshments on repayment, we will make an announcement before the march commences.

We as an Association, regret this but I can assure you that strenuous efforts were made for the marches last year and also for those taking place in June. We do not have the administrative 'back up' to arrange for our members to enjoy a 'mini reunion', despite what some members may think. There is no question of the towns providing venues or refreshments as their facilities are, quite rightly, being used for the members of the 1st Battalion who are taking part in the marches.

Having got this off my chest, I do hope that you will come along on June 15 or 16th to support The Regiment and meet a few old mates.

Finally, may I remind you all of our Annual Church Service on June 5th at Guildford Cathedral. Our numbers have been steadily increasing but we have still not reached the Cathedral's capacity, so do come along and say a prayer for Quartermasters everywhere!

Les Wilson

President's Notes

There is little to say this time, and I just comment on two things. Firstly our Title – the observant may notice that we have dropped an "of". This is a small thing, but it has been agreed so that the title even more unequivocally shows that we are part of The Queen's Regiment. This reflects too revised rules for our funds which now allow The Queen's Regiment to be a beneficiary once all the primary objects of the funds have been satisfied.

My other point follows on, and it is to confirm once more that our benevolent funds are there to be used, and one hopes again that all cases of need are reported through to our Secretary – for any fairly quick response it is most helpful to him, and often essential, for SSAFA to have been alerted.

I send my best wishes to all members, and hope that many of you will enjoy the various events involving the Regiment and the Association during the Summer.

Toby Sewell

DONATIONS

The Trustees wish to thank the undermentioned gentlemen for their very generous donations to our funds:- Mr 'Jock' Alcock, Mr Lewis Wheatley and Mr G A Hardie.

Freedom Parades

The 1st Bn The Queen's Regiment will exercise the Freedom of Guildford and Reigate and Banstead on behalf of The Queen's Regiment.

The details are:

GUILDFORD: Wednesday 15th June 1988. The salute will be taken by the Mayor (Councillor Mrs Elizabeth Cobbett), accompanied by The Colonel of the Regiment outside the Guildhall.

The 1st Battalion will form up in the Millmead Car Park at 1145 hours and the march commences at 1200 hours. The route will be: MILLMEAD, TOWN BRIDGE, HIGH STREET, LONDON ROAD and CIVIC HALL. The march concludes at approximately 1245 hours.

The Borough of Guildford will entertain The Regiment to a buffet lunch in the Civic Hall.

The Association will have a reserved space near the saluting dais. A bar with some refreshments has been organised at A Company, 5 (Volunteer) Bn's Drill Hall in Sandfield Terrace immediately following the march past, for association members only. To assist the arrangements you are requested to complete the proforma enclosed with this Newsletter and return them to Mr D Mitchell.

REIGATE and BANSTEAD: Thursday 16th June 1988. The salute will be taken by the Mayor (Councillor Mrs Angela Frazer), accompanied by Brigadier H N Tarver CBE, representing The Colonel of the Regiment, in Church Street, East of the old Town Hall. The 1st Bn forms up in tunnel Road at 1145 hours and the march commences at 1200 hours. The route will be: CASTLEFIELD ROAD, CHURCH STREET, HIGH STREET and LONDON ROAD.

The Borough of Reigate and Banstead will entertain The Regiment to a buffet lunch in the Town Hall.

No arrangements have been able to be made for our Association to gather for drinks at the time of writing. Any further details will be publicised at 5 QUEENSOMA Dinner and the area near the saluting dais, which has been reserved for members of the Association to stand and watch the parade.

CONGRATULATIONS TO:-

Major and Mrs R.E. Taylor who celebrated their Golden Wedding on the 16th April 1988.

Colonel A.F.S. Ling on the award of the OBE for services in Northern Ireland.

Brigadier H.C. Millman OBE on the award by H.M. Queen Margrèthe II of Denmark of the Royal Order of Dannebrog (Commander 1st Class).

WOII I.G. Hounslow RAPC on the award of the MBE in the New Years Honours. WOII Hounslow served for many years in 5 Queen's and 3 Queen's Surreys before transferring to the RAPC. His wife (ex Sgt Betty Best WRAC) also served at the old Reigate drill hall.

Major General D.H.V. Buckle, CB, CBE and Mrs Buckle on their Diamond Wedding on 25th January 1988. Denys Buckle was commissioned in The East Surrey Regiment in 1923, and served in the 1st Battalion in Hong Kong. In 1925 he transferred to the Royal Army Service Corps in which he had a distinguished career.



FORECAST OF REGIMENTAL AND QUEEN'S SURREY ASSOCIATION EVENTS

1988



| Date | Details of Event |
|--------------|--|
| 1 June | THE GLORIOUS FIRST OF JUNE |
| 5 June | Annual Church Service, Guildford Cathedral. 1100 for 1115 Service. |
| 15 June | Freedom March - Guildford. |
| 16 June | Freedom March - Reigate and Banstead. |
| 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 - Basingbourn. |
| 9 September | SALERNO DAY - Officers' Club Ladies Luncheon, Clandon Park - Details enclosed. |
| 24 September | Museum At Home Clandon, 1400 - 1800 hrs. |
| 6 October | Golf Society Autumn Meeting at Richmond Golf Club. Details from Maj F.V. Sheppard MC. |
| 15 October | WO's and Sgts' Past & Present Dinner - Basingbourn. |
| 28 October | The East Surrey Regiment All Ranks Reunion. |
| 4 November | The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment All Ranks Reunion at Union Jack Club. Details enclosed. |
| 11 November | Field of Remembrance Westminster Abbey. |
| 13 November | Remembrance Day Parades. |
| 25 November | The Queen's Regiment Officers Club Cocktail Party - Whitehall. |
| 20 December | BRITISH BATTALION DAY. |

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| 10 February | SOBRAON DAY. |
| 18 March | Queen's Surrey's Regimental Trustees & Association meeting - Clandon Park. Details to members from Hon. Secretary. |
| 1 April | Annual Reunion Dinner 2/7th Queen's (Details from H. Neale 01-693 5074). |
| 16 May | ALBUHERA DAY. |
| 1 June | THE GLORIOUS FIRST OF JUNE. |
| 4 June | Annual Church Service, Guildford Cathedral. |
| 9 September | SALERNO DAY. |
| September | Officers Club Luncheon, venue and date to be announced later. |
| 30 September | Museum 'At Home' Clandon, 1400 - 1800 hrs. |
| 10 November | Annual All Ranks Reunion - Union Jack Club. |

Ex-Prisoner-of-War Association

The national Ex-Prisoner-of-War Association first annual reunion will be held at the Ladbroke's Holiday Centre, Middelton on Sea (nr. Bognor Regis). This holiday complex has been booked from Friday 21st October to Monday 24th October 1988.

A Church Parade will be organised for Sunday 23rd October 1988 and interested organisations are cordially invited to honour the Parade by the presence of their Standards. For further details of this first Ex-Prisoner-of-War Association weekend reunion, send a stamped addressed envelope to: National Ex-Prisoner-of-War Association Reunion Secretary, Mr. C. Jago, 72 Norfolk Road, West Harnham, Salisbury, SP2 8HE, Telephone (0722) 333599.

Burma Star Association

West Somerset Branch, Burma Star Association are putting on a Burma Campaign Exhibition (the property of Major Allan, of Truro, Cornwall) in the Market House, Minehead, Somerset from 25th to 29th July. All ex-Burma veterans particularly welcome, and to meetings of the Branch, 7.30 p.m. second Tuesday of every month in the Royal British Legion Club, Minehead.

Further details from Dr Glyn Court, Sunbeam House, Roadwater, Watchet (TA23 0QY).

East Surrey Regimental title

In the display of badges and flashes in the Regimental Museum is a black cloth shoulder title with the words 'East Surrey Regt' in yellow.

Can any reader say when and by which unit it was worn?

'Nothing Changes'.

2nd Bn The East Surrey Regiment - August 1921

Soon after the last issue of the Regimental News, attacks on Military Lorries and Armoured Cars in the streets of Dublin became more frequent, and, in consequence, a system of continuous patrols, in addition to Curfew and Raids, was brought into existence. This innovation added immensely to our duties, and both Officers and men were kept fully employed to the exclusion of the ordinary Military training. Life was a succession of Patrols, Guards, Curfews, Raids and Picquets, with occasional intervals for meals.

Some relief was brought by the arrival of "B" and "D" Companies on 24th June from Drogheda, where they were relieved by two Companies of the K.O.Y.L.I.

Bandmaster E. Manley

Mr Manley was taken Prisoner of War in the Far East and died 15th January 1945. His wife Dorothy was tragically killed at her home at Shalford in 1977. A fund was set up in the Village for The Far East Prisoners of War Association, the monies from this fund have now been used to purchase a Garden Seat which has been placed in LIGHT HOUSE COURT, in The Pensioners private garden of The Royal Hospital, Chelsea. The inscription reads "In Grateful Remembrance of Ernest Manley Bandmaster 2nd Battalion East Surrey Regiment, and his wife Dorothy Manley".

The Loss of the KENT, 1825

We are indebted to Mr Michael Pitfield, MA, BSc, FIPM, FBIM, of Stoke Poges for permission to publish the following letter. It was written to Mr Bryan, one of his ancestors, by Captain E W Bray of the 31st Regiment, immediately after the shipwreck.

Letter from Captain E W Bray, 31st Regiment, to Mr L A Bryan,
10 Bride Street, Dublin

Falmouth
10th March 1825

My dear Bryan,

By this time the newspapers will have informed you of the awful visitation of Providence in the total destruction of the Honourable East India Company ship KENT by fire in the Bay of Biscay. It is a melancholy tale to record. The KENT, having on board the Right Wing of the 31st Regiment, to which I belong, sailed from the Downs about 20th February. We had 20 officers with their families, besides private passengers, 334 men, 48 women and 67 children. Including the ship's officers and sailors there were 636 souls on board.

Everything went on very well until the fatal morn of the 1st March. At 4 a.m. it blew a heavy gale of wind. The ship was under a close reefed topsail and storm staysail, the sea running very high, the ship pitching, rolling and labouring very much. All this we thought nothing of. About half past 12 at noon the dreadful cry 'The ship's on fire' struck every ear. Imagine to yourself the horror of our situation – a single ship at sea, 200 miles from shore and no vessel in sight. Death appeared inevitable.

Everyone now used their utmost efforts to preserve the ship. Some drew up buckets of water, others cut holes in the decks to let it run down. (The fire had broken out in the hold where the spirits were stowed). The ports were then raised which let in the sea in such torrents that the ship must have sunk in a very short time. The spirits having caught fire nothing could avert the progress of the flames. All our exertions were unavailing. The gun deck began now to be filled with smoke. We now lost every hope of saving the ship or our lives.

A man was sent to the masthead to see if there was any chance of succour. At this awful moment when we expected the ship every instant to blow up (the fire being very close to the magazine), it pleased Divine Providence to send us relief. The man aloft called out, 'A sail in sight'. A faint ray of hope began now to animate every bosom. It was a faint one – the ship was barely in sight, and it would take a long time to come to us – if she could come at all. We hoisted a signal of distress and fired minute guns. The stranger approached, saw our signal and bore up for us. The boats were now hoisted out and rafts were made. We put the ladies into the first boat, then the women and children. The sea ran very high and the boats were nearly stove to pieces. All the women and children being sent off, the men next got into the boats. During this operation some were drowned and others killed. The boats were going and returning until nine at night. All removed except a few who were so stupified with terror that they would not lower themselves down to be saved.

The ship was now enveloped in flames and it was attended with greater danger to go near her. She was now abandoned, and at two o'clock in the morning she blew up and went down, and this terminated the fate of the KENT. By this melancholy catastrophe I am reduced to absolute beggary. Every shilling I possessed on earth was expended in the purchase of everything requisite for a long residence in India. Nothing is saved – all buried in the waves – nay, more than all, for my exchange to the 31st caused me to contract a heavy debt which, had I gone to India, I could soon have repaid. Unfortunately for me nothing was saved. Amidst my own total ruin by loss of property and my prospects in life blighted for ever.

The loss of human life was severe – 68 men, one woman and 20 children of the 31st Regiment. The ship which saved us was the CAMBRIA of 200 tons, bound to Vera Cruz, commanded by Captain Cook, a brave generous seaman. After three days voyage we reached Falmouth. I landed in a sailor's jacket with a woollen night cap on my head which some kind sailor of the CAMBRIA lent me. Mrs Bray had on a man's shirt and a night wrapper. Everybody lost alike all their property, and a more deplorable sight could not have been witnessed than to see us landing, cold, wet and half naked. Thank God, though we are entirely ruined, our lives are saved.



Charles Stadden's artist's impression of the fire on board the KENT

On our landing here the misery of our situation excited universal sympathy. The inhabitants of the town had a meeting, a Ladies Association was formed and a subscription entered into. By the evening £ 300 was collected. Clothes were distributed to cover our nakedness, and all classes seemed to vie with each other in acts of benevolence. Amongst the foremost in acts of charity and humanity were the virtuous and worthy Quakers. The neighbouring towns of Truro, Flushing and Penryn are all coming forward with clothes and money for the poor sufferers. The humanity of the people of Cornwall will never be obliterated from our heads.

We were taken to the house of Mr Broad, the agent for Lloyds here, where we received every mark of the kindest hospitality. They received us, not as strangers, but as if we had been old friends. What our future plans are, God knows. My loss has been severe: I cannot estimate at much less than between £ 800 or £ 1,000. It was my all. Kindest regards to your brother and all friends.

Yours very sincerely,

Edward Wm. Bray

Notes:

1. On the return of the 31st Regiment to England, claims for compensation were submitted. Captain Bray put in for £ 1,200. He received £ 99.13.0 from the Government and £ 71.15.0 from the East India Company.
2. The Headquarters and Right Wing of the 31st Regiment were re-equipped with admirable speed and sailed again for India in April 1825. This time Mrs Bray did not accompany her husband.
3. Edward Bray was appointed Brevet Major in 1837. He served throughout the First Afghan War and was present at the occupation of Kabul in September 1842. He retired after 36 years service.

Still Travelling

Tom Connolly, who served in the 1st Bn The East Surrey Regiment in the Twenties and Thirties, is still getting around at the age of 85. He now lives in Canada and has visited Australia, Israel and Egypt.

Of a recent visit to Hong Kong he writes, 'I went back to Hong Kong, the 1st Battalion's home from 1923 to 1926. All has changed. Murray Barracks is now a parking lot and Mount Austin Barracks are gone. The Peak Tramway was the only place I recognised. I stayed on the Kowloon side and the Hong Kong Police showed me around. I recognised the mountain near Bridge 47 where the camp used to be, but our Cap Badge is no more.'

Tom sends his good wishes to old comrades who remember him. His address is Broughton Court, III/241 Scott Avenue, Penticton, B.C. V2A 2J6, Canada.

The cap badge to which Major Connolly refers was on the hill behind Lo Wu camp. It was made of stone by the Battalion Pioneers. The badge, which measured 40 feet from the top of the crown to the bottom of the scroll, served literally as a guiding star to the Battalion when miles away from camp. It was erected as a memento of the Regiment's membership of the Hong Kong garrison.

THE COLOURS OF THE QUEEN'S (Contd.)

Colours of the Territorial Battalions.

Until the formation of The Queen's Regiment, Territorial Battalions carried Colours which differed in detail from those of Regular Battalions. This article traces the development of the Colours of the four TA Battalions of The Queen's and subsequently the two TA Battalions of the Queen's Surreys.

The 4th Queen's.

On the formation of the Territorial Force in 1909, the 1st Volunteer Battalion of The Queen's became the 4th Battalion (TF) and as such became eligible to display Colours. In fact this battalion was the very first TF unit to be granted permission to carry Colours. Because of this there was a good deal of discussion over design and it is from these Colours that one can trace the direct descent of those Colours afterwards carried by the Regular and Territorial Battalions of the Regiment.

The King's Colour was identical to that of the 1st Battalion later presented in 1947 which has already been described in this series, except that it bore a Roman numeral IV in the first canton.

The Regimental Colour was a blue sheet with four Pascal Lamb corner badges and again a Roman IV in the first canton. The centre roundel was originally to bear the cypher of HM Queen Alexandra but King Edward VII then decided that it should bear his own Royal cypher. The then Commanding Officer of the Battalion, Colonel F. Watney, pointed out to His Majesty that the Regiment had never borne a King's cypher and His Majesty therefore agreed that the interwoven Cs of Queen Catherine might be borne in the centre of the Colour. The usual wreath of roses, thistles and shamrocks surrounded the centre but only bore one Battle Honour: "SOUTH AFRICA 1900-1902"

The original drawings of these Colours are preserved by D Company 6th/7th QUEEN'S (V) at Sutton. The Colours themselves were presented by Field Marshall Earl Roberts at Duppas Hill Croydon on 10th July 1910.

After the Great War, TF Battalions were granted the privilege of bearing the same Battle Honours as Regular Battalions. The King's Colour was therefore emblazoned with the same ten Battle Honours as the 1st and 2nd Battalions; a golden laurel wreath was added to the Regimental Colour bearing the Battle Honours won outside the Great War.

These Colours remained in service until 1938 when they were laid up in Croydon Parish Church on 8th October. New Colours were presented to the Battalion by HM Queen Mary, Colonel in Chief of the Regiment, at Whitgift School, Croydon, on 7th May 1938. These Colours followed the same design as the old.

Shortly after this the Battalion was converted into an Artillery Regiment, so that those Honours awarded to the Regiment during the Second World War were not added to the King's Colour although the Colours were retained by the unit until it was amalgamated with the 5th and 6th Queen's in 1961. After this event the Colours were laid up at Croydon on 5th April 1964.

Before leaving the 4th Battalion it should be noted the Croydon ACF unit has carried a pair of Banners similar to Colours for many years. The old Banners have been laid up alongside the 4th Queen's Colours.

The 5th Queen's.

The 5th Queen's had originally been a Rifle Volunteer Battalion and had clung to the black badges and accoutrements of a Rifle Regiment long after the formation of the Territorial Force. It was not, therefore, until 1926 that the Battalion finally took on a stand of Colours. These, the only Colours the Battalion was to hold, were presented on 28th April at Guildford by HM Queen Mary. The Colours had been subscribed for and worked by the Ladies of Surrey and followed the same design as those of the 4th Battalion except for the distinguishing numeral V. Unlike the 4th Battalion, the King's Colour was emblazoned with the Second World War Battle Honours.

These Colours remained in service until the Battalion was amalgamated with the 4th and 6th Queen's, after which they were laid up in Holy Trinity Church Guildford on 25th October 1964.

The 22nd London Regiment (The Queen's); 6th (Bermondsey) Battalion.

The 22nd London Regiment, formerly 3rd Volunteer Battalion The Queen's, received its Colours on 19th June 1909 at Windsor Castle from HM King Edward VII. These were the only Colours which the Battalion held, and were quite distinct from those of the two 'County' Battalions of the Regiment.

The King's Colour was the Great Union, with a gold Roman XXII in the first canton. In the centre was a red roundel bearing the Regimental title surmounted by a King's Crown. After the Great War, this Colour was emblazoned with ten Battle Honours and it should be noted that these were Honours specifically awarded to the 22nd London by Army Order 49 of 1924:

| | |
|--------------------|--------------|
| YPRES 1915 '17 '18 | GAZA |
| LOOS | CAMBRAI 1917 |
| FESTUBERT 1915 | ARRAS 1917 |
| SOMME 1916 | JERUSALEM |
| MESSINES 1917 | JORDAN |

The Regimental Colour was a blue sheet, with the Roman numeral XXII in the first canton, but no other corner badges. In the centre was a red roundel bearing the title and within this, in place of Queen Catherine's cypher, the Pascal Lamb. This was surrounded by a wreath of roses, thistles and shamrocks with a scroll at its base bearing the title "THE QUEEN'S". Above was a King's Crown and below the title scroll the Battle Honour "SOUTH AFRICA 1900 - 02" awarded by Special Army Order of 21st December 1904.

In 1938, the 22nd London became the 6th Queen's and at the same time the 24th London became the 7th Queen's. By Army Order 150 of 1939, their Battle Honours were amalgamated with those of the rest of the Regiment, allowing them to emblazon their Colours with all the Battle Honours borne by the other Battalions. This, in fact, was not done, neither were the second World War Battle Honours, awarded by Army Order 47 of 1957, added in their turn.

After the 6th Battalion amalgamated with the 4th and 5th Battalions, these Colours were laid up in Bermondsey Parish Church on 12th April 1964.

The 24th London Regiment (The Queen's); 7th (Southwark) Battalion.

The 24th London Regiment, formerly 4th Volunteer Battalion The Queen's, received its Colours on the same occasion as the 22nd London and like them owned only one stand of Colours. The design of the 24th London Colours was identical to that of the 22nd except for the numerals, and the Great War Battle Honours:

| | |
|----------------|-------------------|
| AUBERS | FLERS-COURCELETTE |
| FESTUBERT 1915 | MESSINES 1917 |
| CAMBRAI 1917 | EPEHY |
| BAPAUME 1918 | GAZA |
| JERUSALEM | JORDAN |

Like the 22nd, the 24th did not add any of The Queen's Battle Honours.

The 7th Battalion became an Artillery Regiment after the Second World War, but kept the Colours until they were laid up on 12th November 1961 at St Mary's Newington.

3rd and 4th Battalions The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment (TA)

In 1961, the 4th, 5th and 6th Battalions of The Queen's were amalgamated to form 3 Queen's Surreys while the 6th East Surreys and the 23rd London became 4 Queen's Surreys. New Colours were presented to both Battalions at Woking on 12th July 1963 by the Rt. Hon. the Earl of Munster PC, KBE. Both sets of Colours followed the design of those of the 1st Battalion with certain differences. First, there were distinguishing Battalion numerals on both Colours; secondly the TA Queen's Colours bore the Battle Honours "FESTUBERT 1915" and "GAZA" in addition to those borne by the 1st Battalion. Thirdly, in commemoration of its service as 42nd RTR, the 4th Battalion inherited from the 23rd London the Honorary Distinction of a Badge of the Royal Tank Regiment borne on the Regimental Colour at bottom centre. The badge, shown overleaf, carried four scrolls: "1941 - 45", "NORTH WEST EUROPE", "NORTH AFRICA" and "ITALY".

After the TA reorganisation of 1965-67, these Colours passed to the 6th (Territorial) Battalion The Queen's Regiment

(Queen's Surreys) and later to the 6th/7th (Volunteer) Battalion. They were laid up in Southwark Cathedral on 16th November 1980.
(to be continued) OVID



Notes.

As a footnote to the series I attach some notes which should have been included in earlier articles. I also include a summary of the locations of the various stands of Colours described in the series and lastly a summary of the major Clothing Regulations and Royal Warrants which have been concerned with the evolution of Colours.

NOTE 1. The white or gold blaze borne on Majors' Colours until 1707 was known as the "pile wavy".

NOTE 2. There is in existence in the State Archives in Windsor Castle a set of paintings of the 1686 Colours of The Queen's. These show the distinguishing numerals denoting the Company placed on the upper vertical arm of St George's cross and not, as described in other sources, in the first canton. Bearing in mind the amount of inconsistency rife at that time, which I have highlighted, it remains a matter of conjecture as to where the numerals were actually placed.

| Locations of Colours. | Date Presented: | Where Placed |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|--|
| 1. Regular Battalions: | | |
| Tangier Regiment 1661-1686 | Unknown | Not preserved. |
| Queen Dowager's Regiment | 1686 | Not preserved, except Colonels Colour at Kilmainham, now decayed |
| 2nd Queen's (Green facings) | 1751 | Not preserved. |
| 2nd Queen's (Blue facings) | 1768 | Not preserved. |
| 2nd Queen's | 1772 | Regimental Museum. |
| 2nd Queen's | 1806 | Reduced to rags in Peninsular War. |
| 2nd Queen's | 1820 | Reduced to rags in Afghanistan. |
| 1st Battalion The Queen's | 1847 | Depot The Queen's Div. |
| 2nd Battalion The Queen's | 1859 | Regimental Museum. |
| 1st Battalion The Queen's | 1947 | Guildford Cathedral. |
| 1st Battalion Queen's Surreys | 1960 | Guildford Cathedral. |
| 1st QUEEN'S | 1974 | In service. |
| 2. Third Colour: | | |
| Donkin Colour | 1686 | Royal Hospital Kilmainham, now decayed |
| Torrens Colour | 1825 | Centre portion used in Burns Colour, remnant not preserved. |
| Burns Colour | 1853 | 1st QUEEN'S, other remnants in Regimental Museum. |
| 1st Malta Colour | 1894 | Regimental Museum. |
| 2nd Malta Colour | 1930 | WOs and SGTs Mess 1st QUEEN'S. |
| Davidson Colour | 1977 | In service. |

3. Militia.

| | | |
|------------------|------|------------------------|
| 2nd Surrey | 1759 | Not preserved. |
| 2nd Royal Surrey | 1798 | Destroyed by fire 1841 |
| 2nd Royal Surrey | 1854 | Regimental Museum. |

4. Service Battalions.

| | | |
|----------------------------|------|-------------------------|
| 6th (S) Battalion | 1919 | Holy Trinity Guildford. |
| 7th (S) Battalion | 1919 | Holy Trinity Guildford. |
| 8th (S) Battalion | 1919 | Holy Trinity Guildford. |
| 10th (Battersea) Battalion | 1919 | St. Mary's Battersea. |
| 11th (S) Battalion | 1919 | Borough of Lambeth. |

5. Territorial Battalions.

| | | |
|------------------------------|------------|---------------------------|
| 4th Battalion (TF) | 1909 | Croydon Parish Church. |
| 4th Battalion (TA) | 1938 | Croydon Parish Church. |
| 5th Battalion (TA) | 1926 | Holy Trinity Guildford. |
| 22nd London Regiment | 1909 | Bermondsey Parish Church. |
| 24th London Regiment | 1909 | St. Mary's Newington. |
| 3 and 4 Queen's Surreys (TA) | 1963 | Southwark Cathedral. |
| 5 and 6/7 QUEEN'S (V) | 1974 & '81 | In service. |

Clothing Regulations and Royal Warrants.

- 1686: Ten Colours authorised for The Queen's.
- 1707:
 - Colours reduced to three.
 - St. Andrew's saltire added to the Union.
- 1747:
 - Colours reduced to two, a First or King's Colour to be The Union and a Second Colour to be the facing colour of the Regiment with the Union in the first canton.
 - Colonels forbidden to display Arms on Colours.
 - Details of numerals and distinguishing badges of Regiments laid down.
 - Size of Colours to be 6 feet x 5 feet 9 inches.
 - Pikes to carry a spear point.
- 1751 and 1768: Further promulgations of numerals and distinguishing badges.
- 1801: St Patricks saltire added to the Great Union; shamrocks added to wreaths.
- 1844:
 - First Colour to be called "Royal".
 - Second Colour to be called "Regimental".
 - Colours to bear a central roundel with Regimental title and number.
 - Distinctions and Battle Honours to be placed on the Regimental Colour only.
- 1855: Size of Colours to be 6 feet x 5 feet 6 inches.
- 1858:
 - Size of Colours to be 4 feet x 3 feet 6 inches.
 - Spear point replaced by Royal Crest.
- 1881: County titles replace numbers.
- 1892: Royal Colour to be called "Queen's" or "King's".
- 1909:
 - TF Battalions allowed Colours.
 - Great Union disappears from Regimental Colour.
- 1919: Service Battalions allowed a King's Colour.
- 1924:
 - Great War Battle Honours to be placed on King's Colour.
 - TA Battalions allowed to display all Regimental Honours.
- 1957: Second World War Battle Honours placed on Queen's Colour, followed more recently by Korean War on Regimental Colour.

This concludes the series.
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Annual Reunion





THE QUEEN'S REGIMENT

1661

Danish Award

Her Majesty Queen Margrethe II of Denmark, one of our two Allied Colonels-in-Chief, has awarded the Colonel of the Regiment, Brigadier Charles Millman OBE, the Royal Order of Dannebrog (Commander 1st Class). The decoration was presented to Brigadier Millman by the Danish Ambassador in London on 18 February.

The Battalions

The 1st Battalion, under command of Lt Col Chris Charter is now firmly established in Tidworth and have had some notable boxing successes. Command of the 2nd Battalion in Minden has passed from Lt Col Peter Cook to Lt Col Merrick Willis. The 3rd Battalion, commanded by Lt Col Bob McGhie, moved from Canterbury to Aldergrove in late January. As for our Territorial Battalions, the 5th is now commanded by Lt Col Philip Pearce who took over from Lt Col Charles Joint in March, the 6th/7th is still commanded by Lt Col Roger Lowans TD, and Lt Col Nick Brunt RRF has taken over as the first Commanding Officer of the new 8th (Volunteer) Battalion The Queen's Fusiliers (City of London).

Freedom Parades

On 7th January, before they left Canterbury, the 3rd Battalion exercised the Regiment's Freedom of the City. The salute was taken by the Mayor, accompanied by the Colonel of the Regiment. The splendid parade was followed by a magnificent Service in the Cathedral attended by the battalion and its families at which the Dean preached, followed by a sit-down civic reception for all the Queensmen who had been involved.

Later this year the 1st Battalion will exercise the Regiment's Freedom of Guildford (15 June), Reigate and Banstead (16 June), Ramsgate (17 June) and Maidstone (18 June). All these ceremonies start at midday and it is hoped that as many members as possible of the local branch of the Queen's Royal Surrey Regimental Association will be able to attend the parades in Guildford and Reigate. On 1 October, the 6th/7th (Volunteer) Battalion will exercise our Freedom of Worthing and next year Crowborough is to honour the Regiment with its Freedom.

Three On One Cycle Across America

Maj John Gamlin of the Regiment currently serving at the Junior Infantry Battalion Shorncliffe, is at present cycling with two Junior soldiers across the United States on a single machine. They are using a specially constructed 'Triplet' made by 'Swallow Cycles' for the trip. They set out from New York on 9 April and hope to complete the 5,500 mile crossing in San Francisco on 1 July. They are totally self-contained, taking their sleeping bags, tent and spares etc on the 3 man cycle.

Everest Expedition

Capt Duncan Strutt of our 2nd Battalion is one of 36 climbers who have been selected for the British Services Everest Expedition 1988. The party left England on 19 February, will attempt to climb Everest from the North (Tibet) side in May and will return on 6 June. Capt Strutt's interest in outdoor pursuits started with him becoming a Queen's Scout with his home based Ashford Common (Middlesex) Scout Troop. This blossomed into mountaineering following his award of both Silver and Gold under the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme. Whilst at RMA Sandhurst he began mountain climbing in earnest with a trip to the icefields of the Rocky Mountains in Canada. This was followed by frequent climbing trips in the UK and the Alps. In 1986 he went to Peru and made many successful ascents of 5900-6100 metre peaks which in many ways led to him being selected in September 1987 for the present Everest Expedition.

1st Battalion The Queen's Regiment

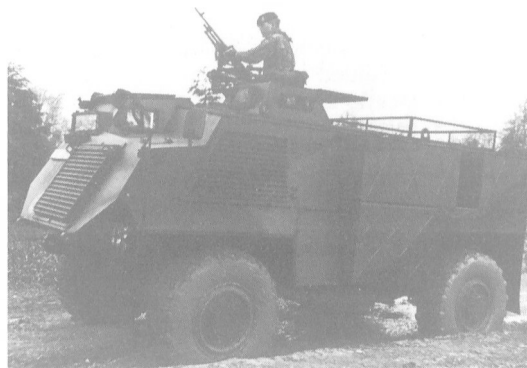
Since the last News Letter the battalion has gone through a period of re-education and retraining for its role as a motorised battalion in 1st Infantry Brigade. Our home, Mooltan Barracks,

Tidworth, will certainly be familiar to many readers, and they may be sure that it has hardly changed in the last 50 years!

Since leaving Germany nine years ago, Internal Security operations and ceremonial have been the dominant features of battalion life. In Tidworth, training for European war has come to the fore once again. The training year began with a lengthy cadre period aimed in particular at the 50 strong mortar Platoon and the 80 strong anti-tank platoon, the latter equipped with the medium range wire-guided missile MILAN. Considerable effort also went into driver training, since the battalion is equipped with the new SAXON wheeled APC.

Readers who soldiered in Munster will have memories of the Humber 1-ton Pig; certainly some of the tactical techniques involved with SAXON are similar to those used in BAOR in the early 1960s. There, however, the comparison ends. SAXON is a well designed, modern vehicle which is admirably suited to its role, which is to move infantry rapidly along roads and tracks out of contact with the enemy. It gives protection from artillery fire, and once the full radio harness is issued, will allow all-informed radio communications throughout a company or battalion group.

The vehicle is not meant for rapid cross-country movement. Attempts in this direction usually end in fairly dramatic bogging down. Nor is it able to move in the face of the enemy, since its armour is relatively thin and its armament, a 7.62mm DISA mounted GPMG, is only for air defence against helicopters.



Each section vehicle carries nine men including the driver, with full equipment and combat supplies for up to four days. The stowage is well thought out, and so there is rather more room inside than was the case with either the Pig or the AFV 432. The APC is technically simple with little maintenance required. As well as section vehicles each company has command and recovery variants, and there is an additional command vehicle for the Commanding Officer. The battalion's support weapons and administrative elements are still, however, carried in Land Rovers and Bedfords.

Once individual training had been completed in late February, the battalion was able to embark on company and battalion training. One aspect of minor tactics which has been stressed in training is the fire team in attack and defence. This will be a new idea to some and so will require a little explanation. Readers will recall the Bren LMG; its modern equivalent, the 5.56mm Light Support Weapon (LSW), is issued on a scale of two per section. Thus each section breaks down into two four-man fire teams (a technique which has to some extent evolved out of our Northern Ireland experience) commanded by the section Corporal and Lance-Corporal. In the attack, the teams can support each other by fire and movement. In defence, a complete team occupies a four man battle trench. The advantages of control, firepower, and morale will be obvious.

As well as training for its war role, the battalion has been tested by the GOC South-West District, Major General Jeapes, who set a demanding 24-hour exercise on Dartmoor. The battalion came through the test with flying colours. With high morale, therefore, we look forward to the attractions of the year which include major field training exercises in England and Denmark, and the prospect of a trip to the USA after Christmas.

Readers can see another aspect of life for themselves later in the year when BBC Television starts a series of programmes about Regimental customs. So far the cameras have recorded the Sobraon ceremony; they return in May to cover the Colonel's Colour, the Silent Toast, the Loyal Toast and the 31st (Huntingdonshire) Salt.

OVID

The Sobraon Ceremony 1988

The celebration of Sobraon Day by the 1st Battalion The Queen's Regiment, officially 10th February, was marked by the Battalion two days later, on Friday 12th February. The Regimental Sergeant Major had kindly invited Lieutenant Colonel Les Wilson and myself to be present. The day was bright and reasonably temperate for early February and the drive from Canterbury to Tidworth was pleasant; we were both anticipating the day and evening ahead with much pleasure. We were not to be disappointed.

Having reported ourselves SPD to Captain Vic Ebbens the Quartermaster, we made our way to the Warrant Officers and Sergeants Mess to watch the arrival of the Regimental Colour. The Sergeant appointed to the honour of carrying the Colour was Sergeant (now Colour Sergeant) D.L. Fisher. His responsibilities were made more difficult by the presence of TV cameramen and other technicians who were filming the ceremony for screening later in the year. TV productions being what they are, retakes were necessary but despite the entry and disappearance of the Colour Party to and from the Sergeants Mess at least four times, Sgt Fisher carried the Colour and himself with great dignity. Captain Vic Ebbens meanwhile, responsible as senior Quartermaster for receiving the Regimental Colour into the Mess, was using the intervals when the Colour Party were out of the Mess to ensure not a hair was out of place. Cries of 'Oscar' and 'Vic the Slick' from brother Officers commissioned from The Ranks assembled in the Mess, would not deter him. Eventually the TV crew were satisfied and the Regimental Colour was received with due dignity and placed in company with The Queen's and Colonel's Colours, both pre-positioned in the Mess for the day's ceremonial.

In accordance with tradition, the arrival of the Regimental Colour was witnessed by all Officers of the Battalion commissioned from The Ranks. Once the ceremonial was completed they joined members of the Warrant Officers and Sergeants Mess in drinking a Sobraon Toast to the memory of Sergeant McCabe of the XXXIst whose brave and gallant action at the Battle of Sobraon was honoured for all time in today's moving ceremony.

Despite being extremely well hosted with copious drinks and lunch, we knew that the day's action would enter its second phase at the evening's Guest Night. The interval called for rest and recuperation so whilst I went through the motions of being interested, Les Wilson went off to count some socks and Tables GS to keep his hand in.

Happily, we were able to retire to Vic and Moira Ebbens house for some rest prior to the evening's engagement.

This took the shape of a Warrant Officers and Sergeants Dinner Night with the Commanding Officer, all Officers who had come via the Warrant Officers and Sergeants Mess to their commissions, Les Wilson and myself all as honoured guests. It was good to hear the Quebec Band playing for the first time at a formal Mess Function of the 1st Battalion.

Because of the volume of wine accompanying the meal, I cannot repeat word for word the splendid speech delivered by the Sobraon Sergeant of the day, Sgt Fisher. I do recall that his speech was pertinent, witty and only as long as was necessary to get his point across. Would that other after-dinner speakers could follow his shining example. I also recall his commanding stance and coherence, recalling a previous Sobraon Dinner some dozen years back when the then Sobraon Sergeant would have fallen whilst delivering a jumbled speech were it not for the support of two comrades.

The remainder of the evening following dinner becomes something of a hazy memory. One recalls the kind hospitality, the renewal of old friendships and an upsurge of great emotion, thanks to the consideration of the RSM, at being part of a very moving ceremony carried out with a devotion to detail and dignity which would have been the pride of the Forbear Regiment from which the tradition was inherited.

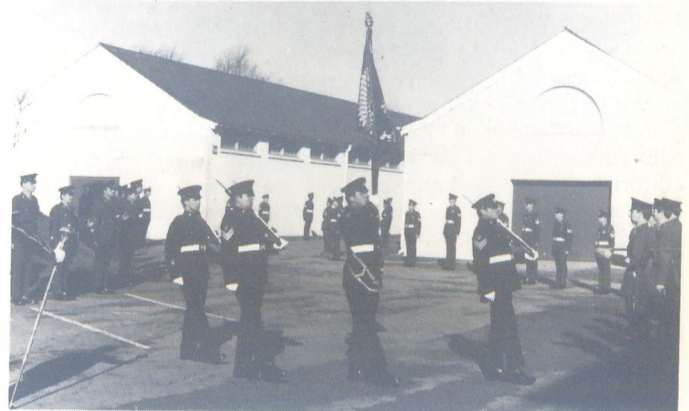
And the final recollection of the 1988 Sobraon Ceremony? Most certainly of the young Officer immaculate in his Blue Patrols, glowing with youth and innocence, despatched no doubt with great glee by the young hoods of the Officers Mess, to recover the Colours, drink thrust into his mit by welcoming Committee, glow of youth and innocence heightened as drink descends epiglottis, all changed in one frightful instant as well rehearsed team of Warrant Officer and Sergeant Snatch Squad

seize aforesaid innocent, remove jacket and with well-rehearsed dexterity attach him to door handle with plastic handcuffs. Having been present at other Sobraon nights when young Officer does not accept his fate readily, we note with relief that this one has bowed to the inevitable and has a drink in his free hand It is at this point that we decide to leave, full of good cheer and some wonderful memories of another Sobraon Day.

A.M.



The Colour Party leaving the Officers Mess



Arriving at the Sergeants Mess



The Colour Party Sobraon Day 1988

C/Sgt G S Perkins, RSM J Brown, Sgt (now C/Sgt) D L Fisher, Captain (QM) V D Ebbens, CSM P K Tidy, C/Sgt A R Hayes

Museum Notes

The winter closed season has seen much hard work by our volunteers meeting every Wednesday to help refurbish the displays, work on forthcoming projects and prepare in other ways for the opening of the museum again at the Easter weekend. The Museum has to conform with National Trust opening hours which in 1988 are 1.30 to 5.30 daily except on Thursday and Fridays until mid-October, unless special arrangements are made with the Curator. It attracts a considerable number of visitors, many of whom have regimental connections and often have much pleasure in tracking them down in the records and photograph albums held in the Archives Room. But attending to them, keeping an eye on display cabinets, and managing the Museum shop create a formidable load for our two permanent staff. Anyone prepared to come in at a weekend to help, especially on Sundays and Bank Holiday afternoons, will be most welcome and should make themselves known to the Curator in advance. No special expertise is required, and they will find that the opportunity to welcome friends of the Regiment is a rewarding one.

There were a number of applications for the post of curator during the winter, none of them regimental. Our new Curator is Mr Richard Ford who has recently retired from a local government post at Woking. He has been a frequent visitor to the museum and as a historian and member of the Orders and Medals Society is well equipped for the job. He retired from the Home Office Police Training Centre at Nutfield, where he was a chief instructor, in 1971, following service in various County forces and abroad in Nyasaland, now Malawi, and served in destroyers in the Royal Navy during World War II. We are very glad to have him.

Other recent Museum appointments have been Lt Col Anson Squire and Major Ronnie Fairburn as Trustees, and Captain Grahame Wenn, formerly 5th Queen's, as Treasurer. His business expertise is proving both helpful and salutary!

The book 'Territorial Battalions of the Regiments of Surrey and their Successors' is now on sale for £2.00 plus 40p postage. This extremely modest price for 134 pages of history and entertaining anecdotes is due to generous grants by the Queen's Surreys Association and Territorial Trustees which paid for the printing and production, and has been pitched low enough to be within reach of everyone's pocket. It is well worth buying by anyone interested in our TA battalions. First reactions have been extremely favourable with one exception which needs an answer. The battalion chapters were subjected to editorial adaptation in greater or lesser degree to ensure consistency, completeness, avoidance of unnecessary repetition and in some instances greater concentration on historical fact in place of eulogy. At an early stage in the process, now some two years ago, all reference to the 5th Queen's outstanding World War II record was relegated to the chapter about the operations of the Queen's Brigades. This was overdoing avoidance of repetition and was unfortunately not picked up later. A two page addendum to Chapter 2 is therefore being issued with the book and is available on request to the Curator for those who have been sent the first courtesy copies without it. Needless to say all those of us at the Museum who have worked so hard on this project are exceedingly cross with ourselves that this should have happened and hope that, albeit belatedly, credit is now being given where it so rightly belongs.

As previously reported, our special theme for 1989-90 to replace the Territorial Army is to be Regimental Life in India. Preparations are well in hand, the response to Mrs Daphne Hill's appeal for personal reminiscences has been most encouraging, and Mr Michael Langley has undertaken to write the supporting booklet. Brigadier Geoffrey Curtis has also reported that progress is well advanced on his eagerly awaited book about Salerno.

The write-up of various facets of regimental history has originated with the Museum and has been a most enjoyable extension of its main function. Our thanks are due not only to the authors but to Lt Col Les Wilson for organising the printing at cut rates and Major John Fowler, formerly 5 Queen's, for providing the paper. Between them they have ensured that we have been able to sell the product at a very reasonable price which is important both in principle and for the Museum which depends a lot on the income for its upkeep. To encourage those sales a mail order form is enclosed with this Newsletter, and it is very much hoped that readers will use it.

M.J.A.C.

Reception

A reception was held at the Regimental Museum at Clandon Park on Friday 15th April to give the Mayors of the Regimental Freedom Boroughs the opportunity of a private viewing of the Museum. The Mayor of the Royal Borough of Kingston-upon-Thames, Mrs. Jennie Philpott and her consort; the Mayor of Guildford, Councillor Andrew Hodges and the Deputy Mayoress, Mrs. Mary Lloyd-Jones; and the Mayor and Mayoress of Reigate and Banstead, Councillor and Mrs. J. McFarlane attended. Other guests included Colonel N.R. Robertson WRAC, Commandant the WRAC Centre; Colonel G.O. Mullins, Secretary the South East Territorial Association; Colonel W. Scott-Moncrieff, Secretary Surrey SSAFA; and Lieutenant Colonel and Mrs. John White representing RHQ. We were also very pleased to see Lieutenant Colonel and Mrs C.G.F. Charter and a small delegation from the 1st Battalion who found time to come up from Tidworth.

The President and Mrs. Sewell with Brigadier Michael Clarke, Chairman of the Museum, received the guests. Major Peter Hill, Mr Richard Ford, the Museum Secretary and Curator and other members of the Museum Committee acted as hosts and guides.



An Ill-fated Family

Britain became involved in the French Revolutionary War in 1793, and in the eleven years that followed, the Yorkshire family of Neville had lost their seven sons.

In the summer of 1793, The Queen's were split up into detachments and embarked in ships of Admiral Howe's Battle Fleet. In the great naval battle of the 1st June 1794, Lieutenant Neville of The Queen's was killed in action in the Flagship, QUEEN CHARLOTTE.

The Neville family was to suffer other sad losses, mostly in the service of their country. Captains John and Brownlow Neville were killed in action serving with the Guards in Holland. Captain Cavendish Neville, also of the Guards was taken ill at Malta while en route to join his Regiment in Egypt. He was sent back to England but died soon after in the family home at Badsworth Hall, near Doncaster.

A fifth son, Joseph Neville, died aged twenty, at the Prince William Henry Hotel in Plymouth. His brother, Captain Martin Neville, a distinguished naval officer, received three severe wounds in a hand to hand fight with the captain of a French man of war. For his gallantry he was promoted to Commander. He sailed to the West Indies in the PORT MAHON of 18 guns, but sadly died of yellow fever which was prevalent in the theatre of war.

The last of the seven sons, Lieutenant S Neville, of His Majesty's Ship CENTAUR, was killed in action at Martinique on 7th February 1804. The unfortunate parents suffered yet another loss when their daughter died of food poisoning at Badsworth Hall.

Found in the archives at Clandon.



THE FAR EAST

Burma - January 1944 - May 1944

Many readers will have read The Official History of the 2nd Chindit Expedition into Burma and may wrongly conclude that they were all flown into Burma and onto their objectives by aeroplane and glider. This was so in the case of 77 Brigade (Brigadier Mike Calvert), 111 Brigade (Brigadier Lentaing) and 14 Brigade (Brigadier Brodie), but not so with 16 Infantry Brigade (Brigadier Bernard Fergusson) of whom The 2nd Battalion The Queen's Royal Regiment was part - Number 21 Column commanded by Lieut-Col J.F. Metcalfe and 22 Column commanded by Major T.V. Close.

16 Infantry Brigade walked the whole way into their area of operations which was to be centred around the area of Indaw (Rail) Northern Burma. To keep a true picture of this part of the story, one must keep in mind what a Column of approximately 400 men, 70 odd mules, 12 ponies, all strung out in single file looks like. The men very heavily laden and bent under the weight, the mules equally heavily laden and bearing in mind the general gist of the description of the terrain given to us by the Commanding Officer, then one might just have a slight idea of the sheer physical exhaustion that men and animals were under for almost the whole of the trip through Burma until its conclusion some 90 odd days later and about 550 miles further on. The first four to five weeks were sheer hell. The start was commenced in rain and looming in front of us were some very steep jungle covered hills rising to sometimes over 5000 feet. Almost before we had started there were holdups. The "going" was atrocious. A working party of Sappers were sent ahead to cut steps into the hills so that the mules could get a footing on the climb ahead. These steps were smashed in less than no time and had to be rebuilt again and again. Cutting parties working with the Sappers would be widening the path so that as the mules passed along their loads would not be ripped off by the protruding undergrowth, but of course, this did happen time and time again; and when it did happen it was a safe bet that the mule would panic and the next thing the mule would be tumbling down the side of the hill. There was nothing for it then but for a party of men to 'off packs and equipment', descend the hill, release the load and the harness, cart it all back up, get the mule back, which was easier said than done, re-harness, reload and set off again, only for it to be repeated some hundred or so yards further on. Descending could be equally frustrating and very hard on the knee joints; one example will suffice. One descent was so steep, the mules were 'off loaded', given a smack on the rump and they almost literally slid down the hill for the next hundred yards or so on their haunches until they reached the bottom. In the meantime a bamboo slide had been made, and the mule loads, and their harnesses were passed down this chute by the men lining either side of the chute. Of course, at the bottom the mules had to be rounded up, re-harnessed, re-loaded, and the climb up the next hill started. At the end of a day, as darkness fell, we would just stay on the spot we had actually reached and try to find a flat spot to lie down and get some sleep. Only there weren't

any flat areas. The ground was very wet, and it was still raining, it was almost impossible to light a fire and get a warm brew up even. Was it any wonder we were behind schedule almost before we had started?

Up to the time of reaching the River Chindwin, there wasn't too much of a threat from the Japs. Their offensive started after we ourselves had crossed the river into their territory some four to five weeks from our start. Their offensive was then directed on to Imphal and Kohima where the 1st Battalion became involved. The crossing of the Chindwin didn't pose too much of a problem to either of our Columns. A number of boats with outboard motors had been flown in. There were also some boats without outboard motors; which could be paddled across. With these and the mules free swimming across, we were across in a remarkably quick time, 22 Column being extremely fast, it was just as well as the Japs were close by. One incident of light relief I remember well. We were resting on the far bank of the river after the crossing, waiting to disperse once again into the jungle. There were two men walking along the river bank, one was attired only with a towel wrapped around his middle, wearing a battered bush hat, a fearsome looking beard, and a monocle in his eye; this was, of course, our Brigadier. The other man was dressed in a crumpled old suit of khaki drill, an old topee worn well down on his head, that was General Wingate. I couldn't help thinking, Blimey, that is our top brass responsible for all our doings; I wonder what the more conventional dressed brass hats of the European Theatre of War would say if they could have seen them.



L - R: Lt. C.S. Phillips, Intelligence Officer 21 Column; Maj. F.B.G. Clowes, Commanding 21 Column; Maj. T.V. Close, Commanding 22 Column; Capt. A.S. Blackman, Rifle Coy Comd, 22 Column; Capt. J.E. Flint, Adj. 22 Column; Maj. R.R. Acheson, Adj. 21 Column.

I think a word or two on the composition of a Column and the supply by air would not come amiss, each Column consisted of an advance and rear headquarters, a rifle company, reconnaissance platoon, a support platoon, and a commando platoon. The rifle company was larger than normal having four platoons each of four sections and a flame thrower platoon. The support platoon had two three inch mortars and two medium machine guns. The commando platoon, all sappers carried explosives as well as engineering tools. The reconnaissance platoon was three sections, one of which was from the Burmese Rifles. In Advance Column Headquarters, were the Commanding Officer, the Adjutant, the RSM, the 2nd-in-Command, the Intelligence Officer. In the Rear Column Headquarters were the administrative officer, the medical officer and his medics team of a sergeant and one private. A RAF ground team with heavy long distance wireless for communicating back to base; an armourer Sgt, REME and a Column CQMS to assist the administrative officer. In 21 Column the RSM was Fred Harcup, the admin officer Capt. Jimmy Dell, the MO Captain Harrison, RAMC, the armourer sergeant Tiffy Harris REME and I was the Column CQMS. The



Mules were the only transport on the line of march

Administrative Officer's job, assisted by the Column CQMS was to collect from all sections their expected requirements for the next supply drop, scheduled for approximately five days hence. All these items except the standard ration demand were given code numbers. The admin officer had to collate these demands into a coded message and together with the standard code for the rations have it ready in time for transmission by the RAF team back to base. This was usually done during the long midday halt from around noon to 1500 hours.

The reconnaissance platoon always well ahead of the main Column would be responsible for selecting an area suitable for a supply drop. The area selected had to be reasonably free from any high hills close around, fairly open to allow the aircraft some degree of safety during its mission of supply dropping. Ideal dropping zones were alas, few and far between. Except for the early days, the supply drop always took place at night. The demands were passed back to base where Major John Stobbs, Major Cecil Ottaway, Lt (QM) Sam Sharpe did absolute marvels. They were given some five days notice where we would be, or hope to be to receive the airdrop. On reaching the selected rendezvous the Column would go into bivouac set up defensive positions; a working party would then set about gathering large amounts of dried foliage etc, and establish a line of bonfires in the shape of a capital 'L'; the long arm of the 'L' being about a hundred yards long. Recovery parties would be detailed off, a central collecting area established, then nothing more could be done until contact with the aircraft was made. The RAF ground wireless crew would home in the aircraft, bonfires would be lit, and then we were in the hands of The Royal Air Force or The American Air Force as to how much of the drop we would get. Their accuracy of the drop was essential and good as they were, indeed very good, we could never be sure that we would receive a hundred per cent. Recovery parties would go and retrieve the chutes and containers, bring them in to where Captain Jimmy Dell would sort, check on the quantities finally brought in, and distribute to all sub-units. All this had to be done with great haste and caution. It was obvious that the Japs would be alerted. There was no time for dilly dallying; it was up and away as far as we could and as quickly as possible.

It was on occasions like this that I am eternally grateful to my friend of those days, Tiffy Harris. We had teamed up together in Rear Column HQ. Many a time after a supply drop I would return to where I had left my kit and maybe had a quick brew of tea ready. Then off we would go to catch up with the rest of the Column. The care of the sick and wounded was in the capable hands of Captain Harrison RAMC, whom I think was the oldest man in the Column; he travelled with Rear Column HQ, so I had the opportunity of seeing him at work. As far as the sick were concerned, he was as always kind and considerate. There were, however, times when a very strong attitude had to be taken with those who had through sheer exhaustion given up and had sat down. At times like this he did not hesitate to adopt a very positive attitude, always with the result that the exhausted chap would get on his feet, and eventually make it to the end of the day, when again Captain Harrison would treat him with all the sympathy required. If he had not shown this strong will, there may well have been one or two chaps who would have given up and stayed where they were until either they died or the Japs got

them; the former would have been preferable. The wounded, if they could not walk, would be carried on a pony, if we could find one which wasn't exhausted. One lad was carried on a pony for about a week. He had accidentally shot himself through the thigh bone with a sten gun. (Sten guns at that time did not have safety catches). The Medical Officer put his whole leg in splints and thus he was carried on a pony. Many times during the following days was this lad lifted off the pony, sometimes in great haste because of the presence of Japs. He never complained, I cannot remember now, but I think we were able to construct an airstrip for a light plane to land and evacuate him. I hope he recovered for he deserved to do so. One other case is worth mentioning. During a supply drop, a bale of mule fodder which was always free dropped from the plane, hit a lad in the back, and he suffered severe spinal injuries. We tried hard to find a place open enough to hack out a light plane strip. When eventually we did and the strip was ready, the plane arrived. The pilot did his very best to land, but on this occasion the strip was just that bit too short even for pilots with the greatest of skills. The injured lad saw this, and I think through utter disappointment on seeing the plane unable to land, he died.

Both the Royal Air Force and the American Air Force supply and light plane pilots were magnificent, without them we would not have survived; we owe them a great debt of gratitude. Having crossed the river Chindwin without much trouble, our next objective was to reach the stronghold codename, 'Aberdeen'. We started the actual journey early in February 1944 and some five or six weeks and about 300 miles later we reached the stronghold. It was situated near a place called Manhton and near a river called Meza. It was a very pleasant area, plenty of water, and our own area was situated in a valley surrounded by hills. We had a very pleasant interlude of a few days rest and recuperation before we began the task proper which was to interfere with the supply lines of the Japanese in and around Indaw. The gunner and recce columns were delayed and so plans were changed. 21 Column was ordered to attack Indaw from the south and 17 and 71 Columns (2 Leicesters) would attack from the north. Meanwhile, 22 Column had the task of ambushing the Banmauk - Indaw Road. The Reconnaissance platoon, as always operating well ahead of the Column in and around Indaw, discovered a Japanese supply dump. With the recce platoon on this occasion was Flight Lt Gillies RAF (21 Column's RAF Liaison Officer). He eventually got a lift back to India on an aeroplane from the stronghold at Aberdeen and led a bombing mission in which these dumps were destroyed; we in the Column witnessed this from some very high ground some distance away. It was a very satisfying spectacle to see these dumps exploding; Flight Lt Gillies was eventually lost in a Hurricane fighter plane he was operating from Aberdeen airstrip. He had been a very valuable and much respected member of our Column.

Some four or five days after we had started the march, we had stopped and taken a supply drop. The march had been a hard one and is one of the few times that I can remember when we suffered a shortage of water. I think we had been without for about two days, the thirst was made worse because it was unbearably hot. With the supplies that we had dropped that day, were two one gallon jars of Jamaican Rum, (classified as a luxury). I remember well giving one of the jars to the RSM and asking him to look after it until we reached bivouac that night, and I would look after the second jar. Little did I realise we were in for a rude awakening just prior to going into bivouac later that night. It was towards the latter part of the day and the muleteer in front of me was having a difficult time with his mule; I gave him the jar of rum to carry, with the express instructions not to drop it and more important not to wander out of my sight, and I would lead his mule. It was in this situation that the head of the Column had begun going into bivouac with half the Column still spread out behind in single file. I was very near the rear, darkness fell very quickly, when suddenly the noise of motor engines could be heard close by. Then all hell was let loose, shooting and shouting all around. We had somehow bivouaced near a wide track and I don't think we knew it was there. A number of Jap lorries with troops aboard drove straight into the centre of our bivouac. This involvement with the Japs could not have come at a more critical time, for a Column in single file going into bivouac as darkness is falling is most vulnerable. It would have been alright if we had all been able to have got into bivouac before the attack. One of the advantages that Rear Column Headquarters had on this



*The last march before reaching Broadway April 1944
Maj Clowes, Ptes Brooks and Parrish*

occasion, if it can be called an advantage, was that as we had not yet got into the bivouac area, we still had our equipment and heavy packs on our backs. Those already in, had discarded theirs, mules had been off loaded, and preparations for lighting fires and making an evening meal, and then getting down for a nights rest were in progress when the shooting began. During this action in a close encounter with a Jap, Lt Col J.F. Metcalfe was badly wounded in the hand. To make matters worse, the flame throwing liquid on one of the mules was hit. It caught fire and several mules panicked. Many of them up and scarpered, never to be seen again.

As the Commanding Officer had been badly wounded, Major E.B.G. Clowes assumed command, and he organised a withdrawal across a rather steep banked deep watered chaung. This would have been difficult enough under quieter conditions and in daylight; however the withdrawal was accomplished amid a lot of confusion and firing, and we finally withdrew about a mile from the scene and waited for daylight to assess the situation. It was then discovered that we had lost most of our mules and their heavy loads and about seventy men were missing. Many of those who had reached the bivouac early had lost their heavy packs and equipment. (Hence my remark earlier about the advantage of Rear Column HQ still having their equipment and heavy packs still on when the shooting started). And now back to the two bottles of rum which it will be recalled were given into custody for safe keeping. Among the seventy odd men missing was the RSM and the muleteer, (Pte Walker). I never ever saw Pte Walker again or the bottle of rum I had given into his safe keeping. Whether he was drowned in the night crossing of the chaung, or killed or captured in the melee, I don't know. The RSM with quite a number of the missing men had gone on to an advance rendezvous. When I asked the RSM about his bottle of rum he had nothing but bad news, for it too had become a battle casualty, (well that is what he told me). I've often wondered if the Japs got hold of this rum and decided to have a party instead of following us up in the withdrawal. If this is so, then the rum did a wonderful job, judging by the noise that went on in the distance during the night after our withdrawal, I'm rather inclined to think that is what happened. More serious of course, was the loss of so many heavy packs and mule loads. We were suddenly very short of rations, and what was more serious, we had lost our heavy RAF wireless sets and charging motors. We were thus left with just a short range army set, (I think it was called a 22 set) to communicate to other Columns and Brigade HQ. The batteries for this set were getting low, and there was no means of recharging them. Because of the loss of rations, everyone had to hand in individual rations that were in their possession to the Admin. Officer, Captain Dell. He established a central dump, and after taking stock, re-issued to everyone a much reduced ration, and we didn't know when the next drop would be.

I remember also very well Lt Col J.F. Metcalfe sending for me and asking if I could produce him another pistol. His had been shattered in his hand; this I was able to do. A number of the chaps who had lost their weapons in the confusion at the bivouac were less fortunate, and finished up with just a matchet as their personal weapon. The co-ordinated attack on Indaw did not materialise for reasons unknown to me. I do know that the Leicesters had a battle north of Indaw, the gunner and recon columns didn't fair too well around the Indaw Lake. 22 Column had a successful battle but they had casualties. I think it became obvious to higher command, that after the very long period of training, and then the long and very trying time the columns had in reaching Indaw, that we were getting very near the end of our tether. We were all very tired, and physically nearly worn out. Even the mules were very docile, and that is saying something. The K rations, although suitable for carrying, were after a while terribly boring, and despite the nutrition experts, most of us were getting near the malnutrition state. Orders were eventually received for us to make our way back to Aberdeen, the stronghold. We were really not in a fit state to get embroiled with any Japs on this return journey, but we certainly had one or two exciting escapes. On one occasion, when we were crossing the Railway Line south of Indaw, half the column was across, a Jap troop train came chugging up from Katha towards Indaw. It was dark fortunately, but I've never seen chaps go to ground so quickly. This was one of the occasions when the lad with the fractured thigh bone from the sten gun incident was unceremoniously unseated from his pony into the undergrowth of the jungle. He never uttered a sound, nor did he complain, and



*American Light Plane Force at Seiktha (base for Indaw)
R - L: Capt Finlay, Maj Clowes, Lt Dell, Capt Johnston, Lt Phillips.*

yet he must have suffered great pain even in this incident. On arrival at the stronghold we were given a few days complete rest, re-equipped, and given extra rations. We were then told that one more effort was required to inflict as much damage as possible on the two airstrips near Indaw; this time 21 and 22 Columns worked in close support, and some successful actions took place under the command of Major T.V. Close with Major E.B.G. Clowes as 2nd-in-Command.

At the conclusion of this latest operation it had become obvious to the higher command that the Columns of the 16th Infantry Brigade were all in and instructions were issued for 21 Column to make its way north to a stronghold called Broadway where we would eventually be flown out to India. Broadway was where 77 Brigade under command of Brigadier Mike Calvert had flown to from India. The journey north was over some pretty steep hills, and one or two delicate stages where the railway had to be crossed as well. 77 Brigade were having a full blooded fight with the Japs and we could hear this as we proceeded north. The journey was about 50 to 60 miles, and also very steep, I remember when at the top of these hills we could see the town of Katha, and that other great river in Burma, the Irrawaddy. Thank goodness we didn't have to cross that one! Arriving at Broadway some five days later, we were allocated a rest area, Captain Dell went away to see the stronghold quartermaster to see what he could scrounge in the way of food. He returned and asked if I could drive, which of course I could. He pointed out a jeep to me, told me to go and get it. Then he and I went to the central ration dump where we were told to help ourselves to anything we wanted and no restrictions. We didn't want a second invitation, we helped ourselves and then back to the columns. Amongst the rations were fresh vegetables, tinned fruit, and other luxuries I can't recall these 40 years on, but my goodness, did we tuck in. As I looked around, there were little groups of men, fires going, and all shapes and sizes of tins on the fires with all sorts of concoctions. But would you believe it, what the favourite menu was, I'll tell you, 'All in stew'. What went into those 'All ins' is anyone's guess, but by gum, they beat anything one could get in a top hotel in London, at least we thought so.

My last impression of Broadway, was sitting on the airstrip waiting for a Dakota aeroplane to pick us up. I had a large tin of apples opened and was tucking into them when an American Dakota landed. The pilot was told he was taking a bunch of Chindits out. His reply was not reassuring; words to the effect: "I've only just got the . . . crate in, it will want tying together with string to stand any chance of getting out". I made certain I wasn't going to leave any of those apples. As for the state of the aircraft, I did wonder if it wasn't safer to walk, but very quickly revised that idea on thinking over what we had walked. We had covered somewhere in the region of 550 miles over some of the worst territory in the world with climbs taking us sometimes above 5000 feet. We moved through at times almost impenetrable jungle, crossed a river 300 yards wide. At times we crossed many minor rivers, for on the maps the sign would say 'Path follows river bed'. Add with all this there were many minor irritants such as leeches, shortage of water, monotonous diet of K rations for over three months. I had walked and looked at the stern end of a mule hour after hour. Periodically the mule would lift his tail and I shared with the poor chap following, a rather obnoxious odour, and all the time I was carrying a very heavy load. These were some of the thoughts as I considered the pilots remarks, and

decided that a third class ride was better than dare I say it, 'A first class walk'. We took off in the dark, and some time later landed at an airstrip, where we de-planed and were met by a guide who took us to where a hot drink and sandwiches were waiting for us. We were told to go and find a place to lie down and get some sleep until daylight. Most of us were in a state of great delight and relief thinking we were out of Burma and danger. And as we had been doing for many months, found a piece of ground, and got down to an undisturbed sleep. On waking we asked a chap where we were. The answer was 'Oh didn't they tell you, this is Imphal'. That certainly pricked our bubble of euphoria, for make no mistake, Imphal was not at that time a nice place to be.

Everyone was kind to us, and during the day another Dakota took us on to Comilla, our base in India. Here at last, safe and sound, we began to get civilised again; shaving gear was re-introduced, but the Indian barbers did the first shave and haircut. It was amazing how different a chap looked after he had lost his beard, indeed we had difficulty in recognising some of our comrades. Quite a number of the men went down with malaria and other ailments and were taken to hospital. Whilst at Comilla, we were treated to a great rarity; a concert party, and there present in front of us was that very lovely lady, Vera Lynn. We thoroughly enjoyed that concert, and Vera Lynn was the first white lady that we had seen for a very long time which, of course, made the occasion more sentimental.

Let me add a postscript, when we started the Burma trip, everyone was issued with, I think, 50 rupees which was intended to be used to buy food from the Burmese villagers should we get lost and have to make our own way. A number of us were also issued with G1098 watches, compasses and binoculars. On return to Comilla, the administrative officer asked for all this bullion money, watches, compasses and binoculars to be returned. I believe every rupee was handed in or otherwise accounted for, as were the items of G1098 equipment. I think this speaks very highly for the morale of the Battalion, for it would have been the easiest of things to say something or other of the items mentioned as being lost. We then had a long train ride to Bangalore, about ten days, I think it was. On arrival members of the Sgts' Mess were delighted to be met by CSM Len Wells DCM, MM, a First World War veteran. A Sergeants Mess had been prepared for us, unlimited beer, plenty of food and rest. We could go where we liked, when we liked; we went mostly into Bangalore. Those of us who had been with the Battalion since Palestine 1939 were destined to leave shortly for the United Kingdom. When that happened, there would be no-one of the original 1939 2nd Battalion The Queen's Royal Regiment left except I think, Company Sergeant Major Len Wells DCM MM. He stayed because the Battalion was his home.

TA

A Married Family in India, 1927 to 1936

My father Harry Chaffer joined The East Surrey Regiment as a Regular soldier in 1913. In those days the Regiment had two Regular battalions, and in general one was in England and the other abroad. When abroad the Battalion was normally accompanied by its married families.

In 1927 the 1st Bn The East Surrey Regiment moved from Hong Kong to India, and it was then our family arrived in Rawalpindi. There were almost a thousand men in the Battalion and about thirty married families. In the hot season we moved to Barian in the Murree Hills, part of the journey being by bullock cart. The married quarters were primitive, being built of wood with a red tin roof. Very little equipment was issued so my mother hired furniture and some household goods from the Sudda Bazaar. Cooking was done on a range heated by wood as there was no coal, and lighting was by hurricane lamp. You can imagine the problems for a newly-joined soldier's wife. The nearest shops were in the bazaar about three miles away; there was no transport so we walked.

We spend about six months a year in the hill station. My father would come on leave once during that period, and this was the pattern for the next nine years. Not much of a life for a soldier's wife, but for a boy, of course, it was great fun with plenty of adventure and I enjoyed it. When living in Barian there was an outbreak of diphtheria and everyone had to have a swab taken. After about three weeks it was discovered that I was a carrier; although I had not got the disease myself, I gave it to others. So I was sent to a remote isolation hospital about ten miles away. There were only six of us in the hospital, one doctor, two nurses,

two cooks and me. My mother visited me once a week. She had to be carried in a sedan chair along mountain paths and it took more than five hours each way. The hospital was primitive and often I was left alone in the ward for as long as eight hours without food. The bed was bug ridden, and of course I was covered with bites. They used to breed in the slats of the wooden bed. My mother used to kill them with a lighted candle.

In 1930 we moved to Lahore, a much better station. We had a decent bungalow type quarter, brick built, but the kitchen was in an outhouse with a range and wood fuel. Water was delivered daily; it was well water, highly chlorinated, and it tasted awful!

The hill station was in the Simla hills, at a place called Dagshai. Dagshai was a nice hill station although the quarters were simple. It was nothing to see a snake slither across your front room. Rats were half the size of cats, and my mother used to kill them with a flat iron. I still have that iron 55 years later!

I recall that Dagshai was notorious for forest fires that burnt for days. Many times we sat up all night with a suitcase packed ready to be evacuated. The soldiers used to fight these fires with picks, shovels and branches. When the monsoon arrived it would rain so hard you couldn't see ten yards. It came straight down like stair rods, and it would stop as quickly as it started. What had been a small stream became a raging torrent in minutes.



The Chaffer family, Napier Barracks, Lahore 1932.

In 1934 we moved from Lahore to Fyzabad, near Lucknow. This was an unpopular posting with little in the way of amenities. Again the quarters were primitive, but we did have electric light – when it worked! The kitchen was still in an outhouse, with a range and wood for fuel. There was no tap water – it had to come from a well. In all these stations the toilet arrangements were basic. Buckets were emptied once a day by the sweeper. Mail and papers from home took about three weeks.

For the nine years we were in India we never had a wireless set. Our only entertainment was a gramophone wound up by hand, and a dozen well-worn His Master's Voice records. Rather different from today, but we were happy with our lot. Sometimes we would borrow the dhobis' donkeys and play Cowboys and Indians – happy days!

The time came to go back to England. The train journey from Fyzabad to Bombay took three days and three nights. In January 1936 we left India and came home in the troopship Somersetshire. I was considered too old to share a cabin with my mother, so had to have a hammock on the mess deck with the soldiers. I also ate with them, and, as you can imagine, they looked after me very well.

The voyage from Bombay to Southampton took three weeks. On the day we left Gibraltar King George V died, and the day we landed we heard his funeral service on the wireless – the first time I had heard one in my life. I thought it was wonderful.

FROM THE EDITOR'S POSTBAG

PADDY BERMINGHAM writes:- It was a very pleasant surprise to see George Deacon's photograph in the Newsletter, as I had heard a rumour some years ago that the "Black Abbott" had departed to that celestial Monastery in the Milkyway. No doubt Infantry records have him earmarked for a posting in the opposite direction when he ceases supporting Messrs. Watneys, or his right arm becomes non-operational. Please give him my very best regards if you see him before I do.

N.J. DYER writes:- I am writing to thank you very much for your letter enclosing the Association's Newsletter, which I was very interested to read. I was also very interested to hear that a Branch of the Association still exists in Bermondsey, and I am wondering if you could give me an address to write to.

So much has changed since my day, even the Regimental Flag! I was called up in April, 1940, to the Royal Fusiliers at Hounslow Barracks, London, which was very convenient for me as I lived at Ealing, about four miles away! I did three months training there and we were then moved on to Hounslow Heath for another three months training. However, Dunkirk occurred and we were summarily transferred to Oxford, where we joined the 1/6th Queen's Royal Regiment. We were then moved up to Boston, Lincs, where we stayed from August to November 1940. We were the first troops in Boston and, whilst there, the Regiment was presented with two side drums by the Town, in Boston "Stump". I have very nostalgic memories of Boston, as it was whilst stationed there that I met my future wife! (We didn't get married until 1950, as she was only thirteen years of age at the time!) However, the point of this story is that since that time a plaque together with the Regimental flag have been placed in Boston "Stump" Church and are there to this day. My wife and I often return to Boston to visit her relatives, and I went into the Church last August to have a look at the Flag and Plaque. You are probably aware of this story from other members of the Regiment, especially the "Bermondsey Boys" as we were known at that time.

I was with the Regiment until May 1941, when I volunteered to join the Palestine Police and remained with the Police until the end of 1947. Strangely enough the Regiment followed me out there and one of the people I met in Jerusalem was our old Platoon Commander, Lt. Smith, of whom I heard no more. I apologise for the 40 year delay in joining!

6087855 Cpl HENRY SCOTT writes with news from America. Many thanks for the Newsletters which I thoroughly enjoy reading. Here in the U.S.A. news about the Regiment is very scarce to say the least, so the Newsletter is a big letter from home.

November the 10th was the highlight of the year, at 7.30 p.m. Harry Drayton arrived from England for 3 weeks visit; this was the first time we had seen one another in 41 years. We have not stopped reminiscing since he arrived, stories about Allahabad, Nani Tall, Chaubatti, Razmak, Ambula, Landikotol were common; yarns about Gus Hartridge and the band and drums brought back many memories.

I am enclosing a photo of Harry and myself taken on my patio in 80° temperature reading a copy of S.E.A.C. This also brought back many memories.

I am planning a trip to England and hope to be in Guildford for the Church Service at Guildford Cathedral in June 1988. I am looking forward to meeting with many old comrades from the 1st Battalion.

I was reading an article about a mini reunion between Godfrey Shaw and some other officers - was that the Major G. Barnsley Shaw I knew in Burma?

I cannot think of any more news at this time, except my address is 2715 Tanager Lane, Englewood, Florida, 34224, U.S.A. and I would love to hear from anyone who remembers me.

Hope to see you in Guildford in 1988.



Lt. Col. HUGH HARRIS writes:- In answer to Bill Roadnight's query in the November Newsletter; Yes, I believe that Colonel Graham Duncombe was related to Lord Feversham, and I understand he had a claim to the Title, but it was not upheld.

I am not sure which of the Feversham titles. The Barony was created in 1826. The third Baron was created Earl of Feversham in 1868. The third Earl, Charles William Slingsby Duncombe, had connections with both the Regular and the Territorial Armies. He served with the 13th/18th Hussars and was a Lieutenant Colonel, D.S.O. In 1962 he became Honorary Colonel of the Queen's Own Yorkshire Yeomanry, but sadly he died in 1963, and the Earldom became extinct.

However, the earlier title of Baron Feversham passed to the present holder, who is the son of the late Lieutenant Colonel Anthony John Duncombe-Anderson T.D. I am told the latter served in the East Surrey Regiment.

But was there a connection between Sir Charles Duncombe, who died in 1711, and the Lord Feversham who commanded the Royalist troops at the Battle of Sedgemoor? There is no mention of the title being older than 1826 in Burke's Peerage. Perhaps the Lord Feversham of 1684 went into exile with his Royal Master, James II, in 1688 and the title lapsed. Does anyone know?

S. MOUNTAIN, who served with 1/6 Queen's writes:- Best wishes to all my old comrades and friends.

Bassingbourn is getting better every year. I at last bought myself a record and tape of the Queen's bands and Corps of Drums. I think they are magic.

The Flying Dragons crown it, a glorious day. Thank you.



Colonel TONY LING writes from Brunei:- On Armistice Day a group of Loan Service British personnel took a boat from Brunei to the war time cemetery in Labhan where we held a short remembrance service.

As with all War Grave Commission cemeteries it was beautifully and lovingly maintained by a dedicated local staff.

The majority of the dead were Australians killed liberating the North Coast of Borneo in the very last days of the war. However, wandering among the graves I found one solitary member of our Regiment. He was recorded in the memorial book as:

TREASURE Pte Peter Crawford 6142250

2nd Bn The East Surrey Regiment

24 June 1945 age 25

I hope these photos will be of interest to somebody. Perhaps, Editor, you would like to publish them in your rapidly expanding magazine along with this letter.

For my part I would be most interested to know how an East Surrey came to be fighting alongside the Australians out here.

TOMMY ATKINS writes:- It probably might appear a bit vain on my part being a subscriber of some articles to the newsletter, for me to write to say how much I enjoyed the November issue.

Leaving aside my own article, it was two other stories which I think has highlighted the virtues of the British Soldier, that of "Clarrie Jarman" World War I, and the "South Armagh" Story 1987.

Only those who have experienced World War I and the terrible slaughter and horror that they lived through, can know what it was like. To sit in a trench or shell hole under long and sustained artillery fire, not for a few hours, but for days and weeks on end must have tested these old soldiers to the limits of their endurance.

What else can one say except it makes one feel very humble in their presence.

A note of interest here, I see he mentioned Stoughton Barracks and a place called "Belhus Park" Averley, in Essex. Clarrie might be interested to know that I too did a stint at Belhus Park 1944, but I bet it was a damn sight better equipped than in his days.

It was a transit Camp, known as S4 Marshalling and Transit Camp. The tents were E.D.I.P. pattern, with iron two tier beds and mattresses, and electric light in all the tents.

I feel even more humble to know that I have trodden some of the ground of these illustrious old Gentlemen.

The South Armagh story is of modern day soldiering dealing with a completely different situation, but none the less calling for cool, level headed action, under most difficult circumstances. You Sir, will know only too well what these young men can do when put to the test. Malaya was another example as you well know, where very junior NCO's, (and many of them National Service) performed magnificently.

What a pity, such stories as this young L/Cpl in the South Armagh story doesn't find its way into the media; instead of some of the recent incidents which gives the media such joy in demolishing the credibility of "Tommy Atkins". But of course, that wouldn't sell their papers would it, so much for present day standards of our newspapers.

Watching the annual Remembrance ceremony at The Albert Hall on television also proved very moving; to see Viv Edwards being wheeled down the aisle in a wheelchair, does this suggest that his legs are giving him more trouble? When I last saw him he seemed to be doing well on his sticks.

I enjoyed the Reunion at the UJ club, got to bed about 0100 hrs, up again 0430, caught a train 0540 and was setting up my paper stall in St Omer Bks at 0800 hrs.

HENRY LEWIS writes from Ontario, Canada:- I was very interested to read in the newsletter of November 1986 the account of "Operation Blackcock". I joined the 1/5th Queen's in January was an infantry signaller and part time interpreter (as I was fluent in the German language). We were in the mud at St. Odilienberg, Holland, near Maastricht, and then were pulled back to Weert for rest and re-supply. We then crossed the river Rhine at Xanten, Germany, three days after the Airborne troops had landed on the far side. We could still see some of the boys who had not made it, hang suspended from the trees by their

parachutes. After crossing into West Germany, the battalion was amongst the first to enter Hamburg after the German surrender early in May 1945, and then helped to disarm the large number of enemy troops in the Jutland peninsula. During the early summer of 1945 we were with the first British troops to take over the British Sector of Berlin and witnessed the Allied Victory Parade.

Incidentally at the bottom of page 19 of the article, mention is made of 2nd Lt. R. Maxwell receiving the M.C. I knew him very well, as we had both originally come from Czechoslovakia. You may be interested to learn that he is now a newspaper tycoon who owns, amongst other companies, several London newspapers and whose business interests are worth many billions of pounds.

H.W. SMYTH writes: In reply to the letter submitted by A H F Williams (Newsletter No. 42) regarding the Sicilian campaign, the episode mentioned by me in the May 1987 issue occurred on the outskirts of Randazzo. The mine in question caused three deaths - Pte Williams (B Coy runner), Pte Cayze (D Coy runner) and Pte Rustici (Pioneers), and about six men including myself were wounded.

The date of this incident was 13 August 1943 - and yes, it was a Friday.

Brigadier MICHAEL CLARKE writes: I did my recruit training with the Surreys at Kingston Barracks from August to December 1940, and spent many a night during the blitz in trenches dug around the football pitch. I recall one night in particular walking back from some pub in Kingston when a stick of bombs was dropped across the town which ended with one outside the Sergeant's Mess. It was the only one which did not go off and people drew their own conclusions. In January 1941 I went off to OCTU and then to the Indian Army for which I was destined had I been old enough to attend RMA before it closed after the outbreak of World War 2, and had I made the very demanding grade. I returned to the Surreys in Egypt in April 1947 to serve under Graham Duncombe who was then commanding the 2nd Battalion, and subsequently I was Adjutant of the 1st Battalion in Greece when John Metcalfe was commanding. I was therefore very much aware of the Queen's connection, but recent correspondence in your splendid Newsletter has reminded me how often my service coincided when I was with the Indian Army.

Tommy Atkins and Russell Acheson have both recalled their days with 2 Queen's in Ceylon. Tommy mentions the Battalion being billeted on the Colombo golf course during the Japanese air raids in May 1942, and bathing in the never-never in the sea off the Gaulle Face Green. At that time I was with the 6/15th Punjab Regiment which was billeted on Colombo race course. I was commanding the Pathan company (D Company) which (for reasons only known to Higher Authority since a land invasion was not a possibility) manned the coastal pill boxes during the raids. I visited them during the first raid to find a Hurricane crash landed on the green behind them and the pilot having breakfast in the Gaulle Face Hotel.

My Battalion moved to the north of the Island later that year where 2 Queen's also did much jungle training. It is the area of the main Tamil insurrection and many of the place names reported in the Press nowadays conjure up memories of the past. Early in 1943 I attended a course at the Tactical School at Poona and I was recalled there that May to teach jungle warfare at the School, which had recently been ordered to convert to that form of warfare from training for the North African Desert that had been its primary function. There was, however, one major problem, the almost complete absence of trees. We solved it up to a point by dint of diagrammatic exercises and taking students to a patch of jungle a few miles square and a hundred miles south in the hills at Mahableshwar. However, by the end of that year we had established a proper Jungle Training Centre in the Siwalek hills near Dehra Dun in North East India. It was proper jungle, renowned for its tiger population which we occasionally encountered on exercises. The interim period at Poona was notable only for the anacronym JEWTs - Jungle Exercises without Trees.

I remember Poona with much pleasure. The Tactical School occupied the Deccan College and it was a time of relative relaxation in pleasant surroundings. I learnt to sail on the river there at the Royal Connaught Boat Club, and my first sailing trophy is a silver spoon engraved R.C.B.C. 2 Queen's came there after the war and were stationed the other side of Poona, one of their camps being at Lake KHARAKAVASLA, which when I was there was being developed as a Combined Operations Training Centre. I believe it is now the site of the Indian Army Military Academy.

The Ceylon training, albeit in flat jungle, was doubtless of use to 2 Queen's before their return to India and subsequent operations in North Burma in 1944 as part of the Chindit Long Range Penetration Group. However by the time I was able to get back to my Battalion it was part of the air-portable 99 Infantry Brigade of 17 Indian Division which occupied the Japanese airfields at Meiktila well behind the main front at Mandalay in February 1945 and there took part in armoured operations on the plains of central Burma and in the final advance on Rangoon. 1 Queen's were in 33 Brigade of 7 Indian Division which advanced in parallel down the Irawaddy Valley and subsequently finished up in the Sittang Bend north of Rangoon. 99 Brigade took over there in early July and after hostilities finally ceased on 23 August 1945 I took the remnants of the Sikh company I had been commanding across to join the Sikhs of the 4/15 Punjab Regiment, which was brigaded with 1 Queen's, to command the composite company. John Terry was commanding 1 Queen's then and the battalion had a very fine reputation not only for its former exploits but for withstanding with conspicuous success the strain imposed on all British units by the end of the war in Europe and the opening up of repatriation leave. However my personal recollection is of a Brigade Point-to-Point Race Meeting organised by the 1st Battalion with its usual efficiency in September at which it was reliably reported that the Sergeant's Mess made a packet.

We followed 1 Queen's to Bangkok having remained in Burma for several weeks to collect in Japanese remnants from the Pegu Yomas. I left Bangkok just before Christmas 1945 to make my way back to England by air for a month's leave, the first other than the occasional long weekend for nearly five years. I therefore had little opportunity to explore the alleged delights of that city, so perhaps some of your Queen's correspondents will enlighten me. My battalion moved to North Malaya while I was away. On my return I spent a year at Taiping and Kuala Kangsar from where we mounted anti-piracy patrols on the coast south of Penang and north up the Grik road to the Thai border against the Communist partisan, where my Ceylon jungle training at last became of some use. Eight years later 1 Queen's were there during the Emergency.

Colonel H.L.W. Stevens writes from Woodbridge, Suffolk; I am now 93 years of age and served in both World Wars. I first wore the Paschal Lamb badge before 1910 when I was in the OTC of King Edward VI School, at the Royal Grammar School, Guildford. I was commissioned into The Queens during the First World War.

I was posted to a Battalion of The Queens in 18 Division and I later left The Regiment to become a RFC and RAF fighter pilot. I later served in The Indian Army after leaving the RAF in 1925. I went back to the RAF in 1939 to 31 Squadron which took part in the Burma Campaign. After the war at the Indian Army's request, I went back to India and later became Colonel Commandant of two Battalions. In 1947 after Partition I left the Indian Army and was in Baghdad for ten years followed by seven years in Ghana. I thought you might be interested to know what became of a very junior Queen's subaltern of the First War.

I shall always have a very soft spot for The Queen's and of course their regimental cap badge.

Fred Daunt writes from 6 Isola Street, Whanyarei, New Zealand; I write to say thank you for the two newsletters received since joining The Regimental Association last year. I found them most interesting and informative but I was quite shaken to learn of the demise of those fine and proud Regiments, especially The East Surrey Regiment. However I realise that changes must be made to suit conditions.

I would like to hear from anyone who served in 'A' Coy, 1st East Surreys in North Africa and Sicily and 'D' Coy in Italy and Australia. A few names I remember are CSM Jim Ellens, Sgt Des Sewell, Dan Donovan, Bob Oug, Bill Bennett.

Best wishes to all.

BENEVOLENCE

As will be seen from figures published at the end of this article, the work of administering benevolence funds for those in need goes on. The channels of communication are threefold; firstly via the service welfare organisations like SSAFA, Royal British Legion, Forces Help Society, where the case workers are contacted direct by an Old Comrade or dependant; secondly via the great brotherhood of former Officers, Warrant Officers, NCOs and soldiers who bring a case of distress to the attention of the Committee; and finally where someone in distress writes direct to the Association Secretary here at Canterbury.

It would be absolutely marvellous if, via this threefold network, we could be one hundred per cent certain of looking after and doing right by every last member of our three Former Regiments who are facing distress or hardship. Sadly and despite our best endeavours, this can never be. All we can do is our level best by keeping on the look out at reunions, regimental functions and gatherings and by using the intelligence network of our Association membership to see that our benevolence funds are disbursed fairly and promptly for the benefit of those who need them.

One of the greatest barriers to the alleviation of hardship is pride. There are some to whom semi-starvation or hypothermia are better alternatives to seeking help from their former Regiment. One cannot but respect such sentiment whilst wanting to get the message across that there can be no sacrifice of spirit by accepting comfort and assistance in times of hardship, and that these funds are for the very purpose of alleviating the distress of Old Comrades and their loved ones.

This is not the place for a political discussion of the merits of the Government's restructuring of social services. As a result, however, most non service Charities are steeling themselves for greater calls on their resources. We have the reserves and capabilities to deal with any upsurge; what concerns us more is that no former member or dependant will suffer unalleviated distress because of a lack of communication.

What should an Association Member do if a case comes to his attention? The natural reaction would be to tell the Association Secretary at Canterbury. In fact, a great deal of time would be saved by referring the Old Comrade concerned to the local SSAFA, Forces Help Society or British Legion caseworker. They will send to Canterbury a detailed report which will assist the benevolence committee greatly in assessing the needs of the case. Furthermore, the expert local knowledge of the service welfare agency may prove invaluable in sorting out problems. Much as the committee would like to be able to visit personally distance, time and sheer numbers make this impossible.

We at Canterbury are ready and able to help. But it is those of you out there with regimental connections and interests who can be of equal help in searching out those Old Comrades who, through pride or ignorance of the system, are depriving themselves of their right as members of our Regiments to help in times of need.

During 1987, a total of two hundred and thirty six cases were investigated, one hundred and ninety four grants were approved with fourteen cases being carried forward into 1988 for various reasons. A total of £ 31,128.00 was paid in grants during 1987.

The Association now administer thirty two cases of the Army Benevolent Fund Supplementary Allowance scheme and at the time of writing we have a further five cases pending.

The Army Benevolent Fund continue to give very generous donations in cases where it is decided to ask them for assistance, and in a number of cases, the Association is alerted to an old Comrade's or dependants need for assistance by the ABF.

Last year the ABF gave grants of £ 7245 in assistance.

We are all very grateful to the Trustees of the Army Benevolent Fund for their generosity and in all cases their very prompt action.

The Queen's (Southwark) Regimental Association

The Annual Reunion Dinner was held on Saturday, 5th March, 1988, in the Gascoigne Room, Union Jack club, under the Presidency of Lieutenant Colonel W.D. Griffiths, D.S.O., M.C. Despite the passing years there was a very good turn-out, and many voted it one of the best of our reunion dinners since the war. We were delighted to have the company of Major General Desmond Gordon, C.B., C.B.E., D.S.O., who, once again, honoured us with his presence.

The guests this year were:- Mr. José Huybrecht, President of the Patriotic Committee of St. Niklaas, Belgium; Mr. Frans Bruwiere, Treasurer; Commandant René Van Den Bergh, Secretary; Mr. Jean Trommelmans, Committee Member; Mr. Jozef De Cock, Committee Member; Mr. P. Shew & Mr. G. Bates of the Royal British Legion (Southwark Branch); Sergeant Major V.G. Edwards, Royal Hospital, Chelsea.

There were some excellent speeches, notably from Larry Uren, who, in the most fluent and moving manner proposed the toast of 'Absent Comrades'. Captain Roy Lugg covered a great deal of history, finishing with a touch of humour in proposing the toast of 'The Regiment'.

Col. Griffiths proposed the toast of 'The Guests' in his usual breezy manner. He made special reference to Major Ken Jessup who was elected the Guest of Honour this year. In describing various aspects of Ken's meritorious service with 1/7th Queen's, he recalled the situation in which he was appointed Adjutant in the middle of the Alamein battle, and how he continued with these responsible duties throughout the desert campaign. Major Jessup responded to this toast on behalf of the guests and in turn proposed a toast to 'The Association'. In what was the main speech, he named several of those present including Sgt Ivor Andrews D.C.M. who had travelled from Cornwall.

Following these speeches, and unexpectedly, René Van Den Bergh rose to say how delighted the Belgium party were to be with us and in a warm and friendly few words stated that any member of the O.C.A. would always be welcome to attend the annual celebration of their Association which takes place at St. Niklaas during September each year. He then called upon his President José Huybrecht to present suitably engraved medallions to Maj. Gen. Gordon, Col. Griffiths, and our Hon. Sec. Major John Tamplin. The beribboned medallions were placed over the head of each recipient with much acclaim from the assembly, and encouragement given for the Continental embrace on each cheek!

In return, Col. Griffiths presented an engraved glass goblet to each of the Belgium Patriotic Committee members.

The evening continued in a most convivial manner and many with destinations outside London were in danger of missing their last trains home.

Our Belgian friends had their wives staying at the UJ club and were entertained separately. The following day (Sunday) arrangements were made to take this party by mini-coach to Clandon to visit the Regimental Museum. David Smith drove the coach and others made their own car arrangements. A splendid lunch followed a tour of the Museum, all of which was organised in excellent fashion by Major Ronald Fairbairn. After lunch the party went to Guildford Cathedral to visit the Chapel of The Queen's Regt. The day was voted a great success by all concerned.

It should be mentioned that on the Saturday morning prior to the Dinner, the Belgian party were met at Victoria Station by

David Smith and Joe Rowe and were taken straight to the Regimental Memorial in Kennington Park where there was a wreath laying ceremony supported by the Royal British Legion.

KAJ



'Mini-Reunion', 2/7th Queen's

The photograph shows a group of officers of the Battalion who gathered to welcome George Oats on a recent visit to the U.K. from South Africa. In 1943/46 he had been attached from the S.A. Forces as a platoon commander and then Battalion Signals Officer, and is remembered with affection for his steady reliability and jocular dourness under difficulties and danger. He stands next to his C.O. (front right) with back row (l. to r.) "Sandy", Doc. Hymen, Eric Schnabel, Edward Dudley, Dennis Humm and front row, Geoff Grimsey, Harold Goldner, "Mac" and George. It was a pleasant and convivial meeting of nostalgia.

A.G.S.

2/7th Queen's (1939-1946) O.C.A.

On the evening of Saturday, 26th March, we held our 42nd Reunion Dinner at "The Ebury Arms", a short step from Victoria Station. This was a new venue for us, brought about by an increasing attendance from an enlarged nominal roll of 220 members, from which over the last few years our numbers have steadily risen from a low of 40 in 1984! Our expectations and hopes were duly realised this year with an actual attendance of 73, despite a few last minute non-attendances from seasonal ailments or sickness at home. In addition, we had an astonishing 64 apologies coming in to Harry Neale by letter or telephone, many of which expressed the hope of being with us next year, so it is fortunate that "The Ebury Arms" has room for extra numbers again?

An excellent evening it was, with good food, good company and good service at table and at the adjacent private bar. And marvellous it was to see a dozen or more new 'old faces', some even from our earliest reunions. There was zest and enthusiasm at re-meeting old friends from times past, with Company men making themselves known to their Platoon Commanders or O.C.'s, and with erstwhile Signallers and 'Mortars' in notably good numbers. It was great to have RSM Gary Lockwood, DCM, once again amongst us after some enforced absences from illness in the last few years. He was in good form and called the assembled company to order in stentorian tones for 'Grace' by President "Mac". There was a continuous and indescribably hubbub from 73 voices until the Loyal Toast and then Absent Comrades, coupled as always with the names of deceased comrades since the last reunion. A précis of news from the many letters is then the tradition, whether they be two page efforts or just a line or two, telling of happy or sad reasons for absence. There was a varied range of news to relate coming from members far and wide, at home and overseas, and attentive ears listened to hear the names of comrades they knew and remembered, of their joys and their troubles. In the case of the latter, Toby Sewell reminded us that Regimental Funds are there for ready help, and he gave us also the Regimental Diary dates for us to note and observe. Brigadier "Mac" wound up the proceedings in humorous vein, and passed a vote of thanks to the Committee and Harry Neale in particular, for his coping with all the "Admin" of a successful gathering.

For the evening, we had been pleased to have with us some 169 Brigade Queen's men, and John Tamplin to represent our 1/7th parent, The Queen's (Southwark). John has kindly mentioned that they have a coach leaving Kennington for



Bassingbourn on 10th July, and any takers should ask Harry (01-693 5074) for a possible seat.

For next year's dinner, our date, please note, is Saturday, 1st April 1989, and if by any chance, you did not hear from us this year, or your address should change, Harry's address as always is 63 St. Aidan's Road, London SE22 0RW. Do keep in touch!

AGS

5 Queen's O.M.A.

In October Ron May attended the annual dinner of C Coy Cranleigh at Cranleigh cricket pavilion. Les May was in the chair and the President Lady William Mullens also attended. Among the guests was Bishop Reindorp a former bishop of Guildford. Other members who attended were Reverend Castle, Pat Jobson, the Bn MO and Jack Petch.

Remembrance Sunday in November dawned a fine sunny day and this contributed to the turnout of 35 members of the OMA at Holy Trinity in Guildford. The march past after the church service was led by the Band of the WRAC whose excellent music kept us all in step.

The salute was taken by the Mayor Cllr Andrew Hodges, wreaths were laid in Holy Trinity by Col Toby Sewell on behalf of the Queen's Royal Surrey Regimental Association and at the castle by Lt Col Foster Herd on behalf of the OMA.

We are looking forward to the Freedom Marches in Guildford on 15 June and Reigate on 16 June. It is hoped that as many members as possible of the OMA and their wives will attend. Light refreshments will be supplied at both venues after the marches.

All particulars concerning the 5 Queens OMA can be obtained from Doug Mitchell, 3 Littlefields Way, Fairlands, Guildford, or phone Worplesdon (0483) 232043.

Annual Reunion



Whiteley Village for the Elderly

The Secretary has been given details of this village near Walton-on-Thames. Very briefly, the purpose of The Whiteley Homes Trust is to provide retirement accommodation for those who meet the specified "Qualifications for Entry", which are, that they should be of at least retirement age, (65 men, 60 women) and not be over 75 years of age. They are required to give full details of their financial means and must also pass a medical examination.

If you are interested you should write to:- The Warden, Colonel W A C Brown, Whiteley Village, Walton on Thames, Surrey KT12 4EH.

Book Review

'The Flame of Freedom' by Robert Hamond.

The unusual surname of Pagani may remind older members of The East Surrey Regiment of this Regular soldier who served in the 1st Battalion in Fyzabad, Khartoum and in France. On return to England after the 1940 Campaign, he applied to join the Reconnaissance Corps and was posted to the Reconnaissance Battalion of the ill-fated 18th Division.

This book, by the author of 'A Fearful Freedom', recounts Pagani's escape from Singapore at the time of the Capitulation and his subsequent exploits in the Burma jungles, among the Karen Levies and as a Prisoner of War of the Japanese. Major Hamond has researched his book in great detail and he has produced an intriguing story of loyalty, treachery, hardship, courage and brutality.

In 1946 Pagani received a Military Medal through the post, but was disappointed that it was not presented to him officially. He was at that time still a serving soldier. He retired in January 1959 after 25½ years service.

'Territorial Battalions of the Regiments of Surrey and their successors'

This excellent book has recently been published by The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Museum. It gives very detailed accounts of the Territorial battalions of The Queen's Royal Regiment (the 4th Queen's, 5th Queen's, 22nd London and 24th London) and The East Surrey Regiment (the 5th Surreys, 6th Surreys, 21st London and 23rd London) from their formation as Surrey Rifles Volunteers in 1859, to the Territorial Force in the First World War when the number of Battalions had trebled. Then on to the Territorial Army in the twenties and thirties and the Second World War when the original battalions doubled and four fought as tank regiments or anti-tank or anti-aircraft regiments. Finally to the post war years and the changes that brought five battalions into the Queen's Surreys in 1961 and all eight into 6th (Volunteer) Bn The Queen's Regiment by 1971.

Not only is this covered very fully in the book but there are also a large number of personal accounts by former members of the battalions which are full of interest.

Many people at the Queen's Surrey Museum were involved in the production of this book. They are to be congratulated. At the ridiculously low price of £2 plus 40p postage it is a very good buy. It will be of interest not only to those who served in these battalions, but also to those serving today as a record of the traditions they inherit.

A.R.M.

History of the British Battalion in the Malayan Campaign 1941-42

Mr Chye Kooi Loong was born in 1929 and in December 1941, as a boy of 12 was present at the Battle of Kanpar, Malaya when the British Battalion first came into his life. The friendship he had with the survivors of this unique and outstanding Battalion, formed from the 1st Bn The Leicestershire Regiment and the 2nd Bn The East Surrey Regiment, culminated in 7 years research, primarily in the United Kingdom, Japan and Malaysia, for his book on the history of the Bn. A manuscript of his book was presented to both Regiments when Mr Chye visited the United Kingdom in 1984.

Due principally to the efforts of Mr Richard Lane, a former Territorial Officer with 5 R Leicesters, the book is now to be published by the Syston Printing and Bookbinding Company of Leicester. The book is a comprehensive and extremely well researched work, including 25 detailed and easy to read maps. It has been written as a personal tribute to all the men who served in the British battalion. It encapsulates the bravery, humour, adaptability and sheer stubbornness of the British soldier in adversity. The Association owes a great debt to Mr Chye for writing such a splendid book and to Mr Lane who has gone to very great personal trouble to not only edit and set up the print run of the book, but also to underwrite, personally, the whole 1500 copy production.

The book is produced in hard cover, and will be approximately 300 pages long which includes coloured maps and a number of appendices. It is sold on a non profit basis. The book is obtainable from the Secretary, Royal Tigers Association, TAVR Centre, Ulverscroft Road, Leicester, price £18 per copy (+ £1.50 postage and packing U.K. only).

THE THIRTY FIRST REGIMENT IN THE FIRST AFGHAN WAR, 1839 - 1842

The Occupation of Afghanistan

In the early years of the nineteenth century Afghanistan, lying to the north west of British India, was regarded as a buffer against a possible invasion from Russia. When, in 1837, an Afghan chief seized the throne of Kabul, there were fears for the safety of our north west frontier. The Governor General of India accordingly decided to invade Afghanistan and to restore the rightful ruler to the throne.

The British Army entered Afghanistan by the Bolan Pass in the south in December 1838 and occupied Kandahar without difficulty in April 1839. The great fortress of Ghuznee, which was strongly defended, fell to the Queen's in July. A month later, Kabul was captured, the dictator overthrown and the deposed ruler reinstated. All the Governor General's objectives had been achieved.

Although the British occupied Kandahar, Ghuznee and Kabul, most of the people remained loyal to the deposed dictator, and an uneasy peace prevailed. Then, in December 1841, an insurrection broke out and two senior political officers were assassinated, one by the son of the former dictator. The Afghans then captured the supply depot. The British general at Kabul was old and ill, and after two months resistance during which there was skirmishing in and around Kabul, he felt there was no alternative but to negotiate with the Afghan leaders. On the promise of a safe conduct to India, over 200 miles away, he handed over four British officers, the contents of the Treasury and nearly all the guns.

The Retreat from Kabul to Jalalabad

On 6 January 1842, the demoralised garrison, numbering 4,500 men of whom only 700 were British, emerged from Kabul, their progress impeded by over 12,000 refugees and camp followers. It was mid-winter and bitterly cold. The Afghans were not long in displaying the treachery for which they were renowned. The tribesmen were lying in wait and fell upon the convoy as it wound its way through the hills. Day after day men, women and children were massacred by bullet and the sword. Even Afghan children were given a free hand to disembowel and mutilate the casualties. Before the column had reached Khurd Kabul Pass, about 15 miles from Kabul, over 15,000 had been slaughtered, of whom 5,000 were fighting men and the remainder non-combatants. The remnants hopelessly struggled on, faced with certain death. At Jagdalak, 25 miles further on, only 200 remained. Finally, at Gandamak, the end came. The gallant 44th, 170 strong, faced their enemy and were overwhelmed. In a week all those who had set out from Kabul had died, some from sickness and cold, but the great majority butchered by Afghan talwars. On 13 January 1843, one officer, the sole survivor, managed to struggle into Jalalabad. The fortress was repeatedly attacked by hordes of Afghans, but the garrison of the 13th Light Infantry and some other troops held out gallantly. Elsewhere in Afghanistan, Kandahar was safely held, but Ghuznee fell to the enemy.

The Avenging Army returns to Kabul

This humiliating disaster had to be avenged. Two Armies marched from India on Kabul, one by Kandahar and the other by the Khyber Pass. The latter had to fight its way up the Pass before it reached Jalalabad on 16 April 1842. The Siege had been raised nine days earlier by the Somersets who had forced their way out and routed the enemy. The way seemed clear to resume the advance on Kabul.

The 31st Regiment at Agra had been ordered to join the Avenging Army. They marched, nearly 1,000 strong, northwards from Agra on 15 January, arriving at Peshawar fourteen weeks later, on 21 April. It was not until 5 May that the Regiment joined the main body at Jalalabad, where they formed part of the 4th Brigade. Unfortunately there was insufficient transport for a further advance towards Kabul, so the force had to remain in Jalalabad during the hot weather while the administrative support was being built up. During this time the 31st took part in a Brigade expedition against the Shinwaris, a hostile tribe based on the stronghold of Mazina, some 15 miles to the south. This was the Regiment's first experience of mountain

warfare, and it was carried out in intense heat. On 26 July Mazina was attacked and captured after fierce fighting. The operation lasted seven weeks when the Brigade returned to Jalalabad.

It was not until 22 August that the Army moved off from Jalalabad towards Kabul. Progress was slow, but there was no great opposition at first. There was a brisk action at Jagdalak on 8 September, but the enemy's main defensive position at the Tazin Pass, held by 20,000 men, lay some twenty miles to the west. The British force, handled with great skill, forced in succession the Passes of Jagdalak, Khurd Kabul and Tazin. The Afghans made a final stand on the Haft Kotal hills, but their defence was broken.

The Army advanced without further opposition and entered Kabul on 15 September, a day before the arrival of the Army from Kandahar. British casualties during the final advance were 185, and it was estimated that the Afghans had lost 700 men. The officers, women and children who had been hostages in Kabul were released unharmed, and the British occupation of the city re-established. The 31st Regiment formed part of the garrison of the Bala Hissar, the Citadel. The destruction of the Chahar Chuttah, the Grand Bazaar, was carried out by four companies of the 31st on 9 October 1842, and three days later the return march to India commenced.

The Return March to India

The column made slow progress, hampered as it was by several thousand refugees, the necessity to picquet the heights overlooking the road and the constant attacks of Afghan tribesmen. On 18 October another sharp action was fought at Jagdalak, and a number of casualties incurred. The Afghan may have been defeated in the field, but he had lost none of his capacity for vicious guerrilla action. It was impossible to provide complete protection and stragglers and isolated bodies were continually attacked, and many wretched people butchered. In addition, many people including soldiers, died from sickness arising from malnutrition.

The 31st Regiment reached Jalalabad on 23 October and left four days later. Eventually the safety of India was reached on 12 November, a month after leaving Kabul. The Regiment did not halt at Peshawar, but encamped four miles beyond the city. The campaign was over, but it took the 31st another five weeks marching to reach Ferozepore in the Punjab. Even this was only a temporary camp, and the Regiment did not reach their permanent station at Ambala, 170 miles south, until 27 January 1843. The Regiment had lost seven officers and many men during the seven months of the campaign, for which the battle honour 'Cabool, 1842' was awarded.

In the 'Afghan Church' in Bombay the names of the seven officers who had died in the campaign are recorded in the memorial to the 31st Regiment. Most had died from disease or exhaustion, and a note of their service may be of interest.

'The Afghan Church' - Bombay

Recently when in Bombay I had the chance to visit the 'Afghan' church which will be well known to those who served in the Bombay area before the war.

It's correct name, the Church of St. John the Evangelist was originally a spiritual home to the Bombay Army, and to all those who made it a modern city and a safe place to trade. In addition it was to be a memorial to "The Officers whose names are written on the walls of the Chancel, and of the non-commissioned Officers and Private Soldiers, too many to be so recorded, who fell, mindful of their Duty, by Sickness or by the Sword, in the Campaigns of Sind and Afghanistan - A.D. 1838 - 1843."

It was completed in 1857, and with time there appeared on the walls marble tablets commemorating "the mighty deeds and heroic deaths of the men who died in the Afghan Wars."

It is still very much in use and kept in a beautiful condition by a devoted Indian staff. The object of my visit was to find the memorials to the 31st., and the Queens. I found that the tablets were in alternate black and white marble, and some so high up that they were impossible to photograph. I photographed the Queens plaque easily enough, but have to thank Lt. Col. Eric Dickens late R.A.S.C. (the son of an officer serving in India before the war. He had sung in the choir as a boy) for his efforts to take that of the 31st.

The names on the 31st memorial are:- Lt Col Skinner CB, Major Shaw, Captain Marshall, Lieuts Pender, Bayers, McIlveen and Tritton. The names are much clearer on the white marble of the Queens:- Capt Keith, Lieuts Gravatt, Halkett, Sparke and Nixon, also Asst. Surg. Hibbert MD.

I now hoped to find out about these engraved names, who they were and what part they played in their Regiments in India over one hundred years ago. It was not now possible to do any research into Queens as I had no access to their history for that period, so I would have to concentrate on the 31st and see if any of the names appeared in our Regimental histories. There were seven of them, I would probably be lucky if I could find anything on more than one or two.

Thomas Skinner

An old Etonian who in 1816 joined the 16th. In March 1824 was appointed Captain in the Thirty first. Luckily he was not in the 'Kent' when it caught fire in the Bay of Biscay, and while waiting for the remainder of the Regiment, he and his brother (in the sixty first Native Infantry) went exploring as far as the sources of the Ganges. In 1833 after home leave, he travelled back to India via the Holy Land, and Bagdad to rejoin his Regiment. An account of these travels was published in 1836 - 'Adventures during a Journey overland to India'.

He played an important part in the battle of Mazeena and at Kabul commanded the five companies of the Regiment which stormed and captured the Great Bazaar. In 1842 he was promoted Lt. Col. and made a Companion of the Military Order of the Bath. A year later he died 'from disease brought on by privation and fatigue' during the Afghan campaign.

His funeral was attended by a large number of native troops, and all the Europeans, civil or military in the garrison (Mussoorie). The Government of India awarded him the silver medal of Cabool, bearing one side "Cabool 1843" and on the other "Victoria Vindex". In a Regimental Order, which did him full justice it reads "As a good and gallant officer he was devotedly attached to his profession, and that he was the warm advocate and steady friend of the well deserving soldier."

Charles Shaw

He was in the troopship 'Kent' when in 1825 it caught fire and was lost in the Bay of Biscay. (In passing it is interesting to note that all the officers were saved, but on the other hand 21 children out of 73 drowned). He was Adjutant at the time. When in 1841 General Elphinstone surrendered to the Afghans in Kaul, it was decided to send an 'Avenging Army' back to avenge the disgrace, and if possible rescue any surviving prisoners. The 31st on reaching Jalalabad were soon involved in heavy fighting in the mountains roundabout. Charles Shaw took part in these operations, but died of exhaustion from the severe heat, at Kati.

G.C. Marshall

To start with, on the advance to Kabul little opposition was expected, but the troops suffered great fatigue dragging the artillery and stores along the very rough roads. There were several deaths due simply to overwork in appalling conditions. Among those who died was Captain Marshall, an excellent officer, who died at Futehabad.

Thomas Pender

After the destruction of the Grand Bazaar at Kabul by the 31st under Major Skinner, the long march back to India had to be undertaken. Some 2,000 of Elphinstone's camp followers, many of them cripples, had to be brought back. It was a terrible journey, bad sanitation brought on dysentery; and in addition constant skirmishes with the Afghans. At Jugdulluch Pass the Afghans attacked in strength, but eventually the Ghilzees were put to flight with great slaughter. Lt. Thomas Pender received a severe wound near Sch Baba, from the effects of which he died. He is described "as a noble fellow and as brave an officer as ever held Her Majesty's commission". He is said to have died through the neglect of his native servants - hardly surprising!

H.K. Sayers

R.B. Tritton

Both these officers died during the long march back from Kabul to India. The former from smallpox, and the latter from dysentery. (R.B. Tritton must not be confused with C.H.G. Tritton who at the Battle of Sobraon [1846] carried the Queens Colour was shot through the head; and Ensign Jones bearing the Regimental Colour was also mortally wounded. The Regimental Colour falling to the ground was seized by Sgt Bernard M'Cabe who, rushing forward crossed a ditch and planted it on the enemy ramparts. Lt. Noel somehow picked up the Queens colour and carried it in front of the Regiment, the staff of which 'was shivered in his hand'.)

Dalway McIlveen

Towards the end of the march to Kabul the opposition grew stiffer and so the Brigadier (Monteath) prepared to attack the Afghans near Mazeena with his whole force. The 31st 'seconded' by two Native Infantry Regiments ascended the heights, driving the tribesmen (Shinwarees) from their breastworks. On the heights the enemy disputed every foot of ground until taken at the point of the bayonet. McIlveen was killed while gallantly leading an attack of this kind against a vastly superior force.

So just a small fragment of the lives of those seven whose names appear on the 31st memorial plaque have been salvaged from the records of well over one hundred years ago.

Maybe if members of the Regiment ever visit Bombay and can spare a moment or two, they should look at the memorials in the 'Afghan' Church and perhaps those names carved in the cold marble will have more meaning. PRISTINAS VIRTUTIS MEMOR seems a very apt motto.

R.C.T.

POSTSCRIPT

Since writing the above Major Peter Hill has been able to provide me with just a little information on the six members of the Queens Regiment whose names are recorded.

Capt Keith

Was born in 1796, and commissioned into the 69th foot. He served in France and Flanders and was slightly wounded at the Battle of Waterloo. Transferred to the Queens Regiment in 1825, and died in Bombay in 1839.

Lt. T. Gravatt

Commissioned into the 2nd Queens in 1824. Served throughout the campaigns in Afghanistan and Baluchistan. Was present at the capture of Ghuzorel, but was shot through the head at the storming of the fortress of Kehlai, in 1839.

Lt. H. Halkett

1831 ensign in 2nd Queens. 1838-1839 served throughout the campaigns in Afghanistan and Baluchistan as ADC to Sir Thomas Willshire. He was present at the storming and capture of Ghuzorel and Kehlai, and died in 1839 in Upper Scinde, the H.Q. of the Army of the Indus.

Lt. T. Nixon

He was an ensign in 2nd Queens in 1834 and died in 1839.

Lt. E. Sparke

An ensign in 27th foot, exchanged to 2nd Queens in 1835, and died 1839.

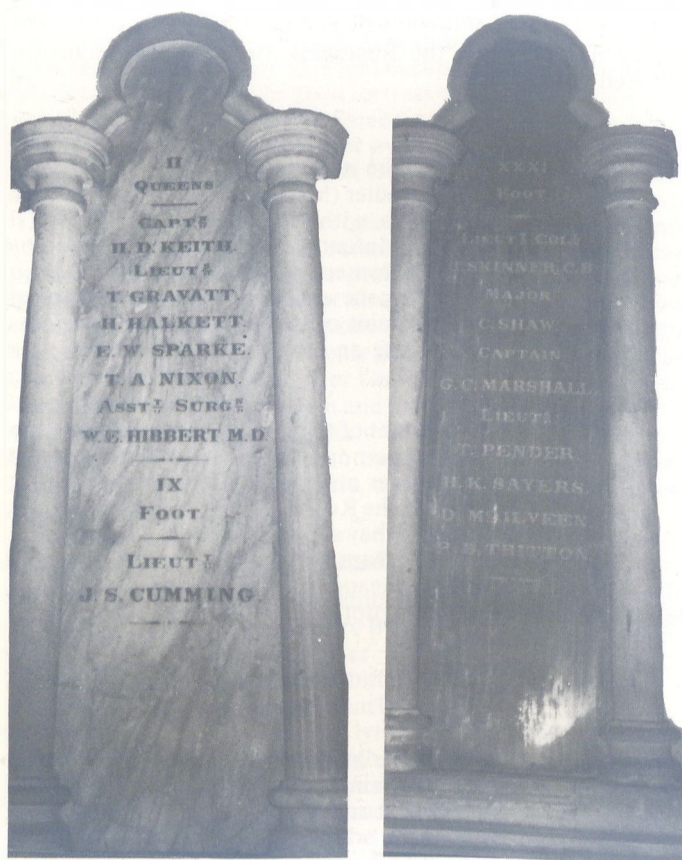
Assistant-Surgeon W. Hibbert

Died 1839.

The last three named officers (Sparke, Nixon and Hibbert) went out to shoot game which was said to be very plentiful by the banks of the Indus. As they were late in returning another officer and 6 natives, as well as a troop of the 1st Light Cavalry, were sent

to search the jungle for them. Nixon's dog eventually wandered into camp, and later the Light Cavalry found the bodies of the three officers who had been burnt to death. Some days earlier it had been rumoured that some Baluchis had set fire to the forest; the officers had climbed trees to avoid this but a change of wind had sent the fire towards them. The bodies were only distinguished by the rings they were wearing. They were buried with military honours, every officer in the camp attending.

R.C.T.



A Wartime Journey to Switzerland

In 1942, Bill Baynes was one of the signallers attached to B Company 1st Bn The East Surrey Regiment. During the withdrawal from Tebourba on 4th December 1942, he became detached from his Company Headquarters, and during the night joined the stream of soldiers from several units heading westward. The next day an enemy force of a tank, some half-tracks and motor cyclists suddenly appeared, and, as Baynes says, 'That was that!'

They were taken by MT to Tunis Airfield. Although there were smashed aircraft everywhere – fighters, dive-bombers and transport planes – the airfield was operational. The prisoners were flown to Trapani on the west coast of Sicily where they were well looked after in the Luftwaffe barracks. Two days later they were handed over to the Italians and taken to the notorious prisoner of war camp in the mountains above Palermo. After three wretched weeks the party moved by ferry across the Straits of Messina to the Italian mainland.

A long train journey brought them to the large PW camp at Capua where they spent two months. The next move was to Sevigliano, a well organised camp, regarded as escape-proof. From here those below the rank of sergeant were transferred to working camps, and on 6 June 1943 Bill Baynes found himself at Camp 146 near the Lombardy town of Pavia, south of Milan. Conditions in this camp were reasonably comfortable, but security was strict. The working parties were sent to neighbouring farms where they got to know the local people. There was great excitement when Mussolini was overthrown, and the village went wild when the Italians surrendered. The Commandant of the Camp, a portly middle-aged lieutenant, announced he was going to find out what was going on. He left the Camp and was never seen again. The next day the Italian guards handed over their weapons and disappeared.

The British prisoners broke up into small groups and made for the open countryside, living rough in the woods by day and coming together by night. They were nearly caught one night by an SS Patrol at a farm where they had been promised a meal. It was a hazardous existence. Bill Baynes recalls another such escape, 'I was doing some work at a large farm when the farmer's son came running, shouting 'Tedeschi!' (Germans). I made for the wall which was about nine feet high and sailed over like a bird. I bolted for the rice field and fell smack in the mud. Then I heard the voice of Carla, one of the farm girls, a nice girl with a figure like Mae West and the voice of a sergeant major: "Guillamo! Niente Tedeschi!" A fat old Jerry riding a push bike had been the cause of all the panic.'

'One night, on my way to the woods where I usually slept, I saw a small party of men moving across my path. They called out to me to halt, and it was then I saw they were British. They told me they were going to Switzerland the next day and would introduce me to the people concerned. This they did. I never saw them again, but they must have been successful for the guide returned. I was told that the guide would only take us in parties of four. I would be informed when a party had been assembled, where I was to stay and that my food would be brought to me. Above all, I was not to tell anyone that I was going. A loose word could bring the destruction of the escape organisation and of the whole village.'

'I was put in a small barn behind the church from where I could see and hear the German transport as they passed through. My party formed up: L/Cpl Sid Hill of 1 Surreys, a gunner and a private from 2 Hampshires. They were soberly dressed, but I was issued with a green jacket, with thin red stripes, a green shirt, a bright-coloured tie, silver grey trousers, ammo boots and an Andy Capp. I must have looked a proper spiv! Among the organisers were a woman courier, a mountain guide from an Alpini regiment and a man believed to have been one of the leading Fascists in the area.'

'We travelled by bus to Lodi where there was a column of German troops marching through. When we reached the station our guide told us to climb over the fence while he got the tickets. The platform was crowded with German soldiers, sitting on their kits, looking tired and dejected. Eventually, at 5 p.m. the train for Domodossola arrived, and we found ourselves in a compartment with two German NCOs. Our guide chatted away with them. They seemed an amiable pair, but I was relieved when they got out. We arrived at Domodossola at 11 p.m. There was a group of Carabinieri in the booking hall, but they showed no interest in us. The guide took us to a house, gave us some food and showed us where to sleep.'

'The next morning we rose early and went to the station where we boarded a train which in peace time ran to Locarno in Switzerland. We eventually reached what the guide said was the last stop before the Swiss Frontier, and got out. From now on we had to foot it all the way. Suddenly our guide motioned us to get down as a German troop train had just pulled in. After a while he whispered us to follow. He set a cracking pace up steep slopes and through the trees. After a couple of hours he halted us and pointed out how to reach the Frontier. He tore up our train tickets, relieved us of our Italian money, shook hands and disappeared.'

'We pushed on until we found a boy cutting grass, and asked him if we were in Switzerland. He replied, "Yes, I will fetch the Guardia Federale." They soon arrived and congratulated us on our escape. Our journey was over, and we were safe.'

Annual Reunion



Regimental Deaths

- Baker* – On 29th November 1987 Corporal G. Baker, The Queen's Royal Regiment. He served in both Regular Battalions in Malta and Hong Kong.
- Baldwin* – On 20th October 1987 Sergeant L.M. Baldwin, MM aged 98 years, 8th Bn The East Surrey Regiment. He was a very loyal old soldier and wrote many articles for the Newsletter. He appeared with Harry Secombe in the Armistice 'Highway' programme in 1986.
- Brown* – On 12th December 1987 WO2 Ernest Brown aged 80 years, The East Surrey Regiment. At the time of his death he was an In-Pensioner at The Royal Hospital Chelsea.
- Chatterton* – On 12th November 1987, Brigadier George Chatterton, DSO, aged 75 years, The Queen's Royal Regiment and Commander of the Glider Pilot Regiment during the Second World War.
- Dennis* – On 30th December 1987, RSM D. Dennis, The Queen's Royal Regiment. RSM Dennis served for many years with A Company 1/5th Queens.
- Estall* – On 15th February 1988 Captain Charles Martin Estall, MC, RVM, The East Surrey Regiment.
- Fisher* – On 30th December 1987, Corporal Frank Frederick Fisher, aged 71 years, The Queen's Royal Regiment.
- Flack* – On 30th November 1987 6077876 W.C. Flack (Charlie) aged 86 years, The Queen's Royal Regiment. Cpl Flack served on the North West Frontier with the 2nd Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment and was awarded the Indian General Service Medal with two bars. During the 1939-45 War he served in the Postal Service of the Royal Engineers in East Africa. A very loyal old soldier who maintained his regimental friendships right up to the date of his death.
- Fraser* – Major (QM) D.H. Fraser, MBE, The Queen's Royal and The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiments.
- Grantham* – On 4th January 1988, Bandsman Ernest Grantham aged 84 years, The Queen's Royal Regiment.
- Grindley* – On 10th April 1988 Major Cyril James Grindley, MBE, The Queen's Royal Regiment.
- Harbourne* – On 23rd December 1987 Lieutenant Colonel Leonard Harbourne MC, The East Surrey Regiment.
- Harvey* – On 30th October 1987, C/Sgt Sidney Kenneth Harvey aged 70 years, The East Surrey Regiment. After emigrating to Australia he worked with The State Electricity Commission of Victoria. He retired in 1983 as Technical Services officer. He was Mentioned in Despatches during the War.
- Hope* – On 24th March 1988 Captain Stanley Hope, The East Surrey Regiment. Stanley Hope served with 1st Bn The East Surrey Regiment in North Africa and was wounded losing an eye.
- Kilpatrick* – On 29th November 1987, John Kilpatrick, The Queen's Royal Regiment. He served with 2nd Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment in the Chindit campaign, and was for many years a member of The Burma Star Association, West Somerset Branch.
- Knight* – In October 1987 Private C Knight, 2/5th Queen's.
- Long* – On 8th May 1987 Private Mervyn Long, The Queen's Royal Regiment. He served with 1/5 Queen's in the Desert and was a carrier driver being severely wounded.
- Maltas* – In January 1988, Lieutenant George Maltas, 2nd Bn. The Queen's Royal Regiment, at his home in Harhare, Zimbabwe.
- Mileham* – On 12th April 1988 Captain George H Mileham, MBE, The Queen's Royal Regiment and the Royal Corps of Signals.
- Moon* – On 1st October 1987, Private Oswald William Moon aged 67 years, The East Surrey Regiment.
- Pilgrim* – The Reverend Colin Pilgrim aged 61 years. Padre Pilgrim will be remembered with much affection by Territorial soldiers of 5th Queen's Royal Regiment and 3 Queen's Surreys.
- Sands* – On 1st March 1988, Private J. Sands 1/5th Queen's.

Senior – On 2nd March 1988, Brigadier Ronald Henry Senior, DSO, TD, The Queen's Royal Regiment.

Shaw – On 17th November 1987, WOII Tom Shaw, The East Surrey and Queen's Royal Surrey Regiments T.A. He was for many years Secretary of The Warrant Officers and Sergeants Association.

Sheldon – On 29th December 1987, Lieutenant Colonel Laurence Stewart Sheldon, aged 81 years, The Queen's Royal Regiment.

Stone – On 23rd February 1988, Lieutenant Colonel C.J. Stone, The East Surrey Regiment.

Webb – On 5th March 1988, Private Victor Webb, The Queen's Royal Regiment.

Regimental Families

Amor – On 28th November 1987, Mrs Margaret Amor, the widow of the late CSM Harry Amor of The East Surrey Regiment.

Paskins – On 11th January 1988, Mrs Muriel Paskins, wife of Major Paskins.

Spearing – On 18th December 1987, Muriel Spearing, wife of Major H E P Spearing, The East Surrey Regiment.

Obituaries

Captain C.M. ESTALL, M.C., R.V.M.

When I joined the 1st Battalion of the East Surrey Regiment in Hong Kong in 1924, I was posted to "B" Company of which C.Q.M.S. Estall, M.C. was the Acting C.S.M. Other than myself, there was no other subaltern in the Company at the time, the only other one on the strength being away on a course in England. The Company Commander was a Major Drake who appeared to me to be elderly, if not old. I was, therefore, something of a lost sheep, especially as the Company was located away in a barracks by itself.

Never before had I seen an N.C.O. with an M.C. (nor in my 25 years' service did I ever see another), and with his stern expression and ramrod backbone, C.Q.M.S. Estall was, to someone just out of his teens, an awe-inspiring spectacle.

I need not have worried. While he might well have treated a newly-joined subaltern with some contempt, never did he ever treat me with less respect than he treated any officer of any rank. Not only that. Over the years we served together, he was always a tower of strength and the greatest possible assistance to me. I would like to say he was a true friend, but he was not the type who could be described as a friend to an officer. That he would have regarded as undue familiarity.

And why was he still only an Acting C.S.M.? The reason was that he could not pass the 1st Class Certificate of Education which was (and may still be) an essential qualification for promotion to Warrant Officer. He had taken the exam so often and had failed each time that it had become a complex, and he felt he would never pass the unspeakable exam. The extraordinary thing was that he was very intelligent, had the most perfect handwriting, and could produce first class reports, programmes and accounts. Very sensibly, this vacancy for W.O.II had been kept open for him as he was so obviously the ideal to fill it. But this could not go on for ever and Estall knew it. The one good turn I may have done him was to encourage and persuade him that of course he could pass the exam. Eventually the great day did arrive when he was successful, and he at once became a W.O.II.

When I left the 1st Battalion on transfer to the 2nd Battalion, Estall soon followed me. I, of course, continued as a subaltern, but he was promoted to the glittering height of R.S.M.

From then on I was to see little of him owing to my having a series of secondments. The last kind act he did for me before I left the Regiment was to organise a whip-round to present me with a silver salver as a wedding present from all the members of the Sergeants' Mess with whom I had served.

D.J.ff.C.

Rev. R.C.L. Pilgrim T.D., M.A., Ch.D.

Richard Colin Laurence Pilgrim was born in 1926, joined the Royal Artillery in the Near East, before going up to Cambridge and then served with the TA from 1958-74.

He was Honorary Chaplain to the 5th Bn Queens Royal Regiment (TA) in 1958 and joined 3 Queens Surreys on amalgamation. On re-organisation he continued to serve with units in Kent and London.

Colin will always be remembered as someone who, not only made friends, but was a constant friend. He accepted people as they were and would listen quietly or join in to the full as was appropriate.

One of his first duties as Chaplain was to assist at the Dedication of the new Regimental Chapel in Guildford Cathedral, before the Cathedral itself was consecrated, when a congregation of over thirteen hundred attended, including civic dignitaries and regimental guests.

His early association with Guildford Cathedral and The Queens Chapel, as Chaplain in charge of the district, led to many regimental Christenings and he also, in other churches, carried out wedding services for us. I know my four children, all Christened by Colin, held him in very high regard.

Colin was present at the last official parade in consequence of the amalgamation when the Colours of the 5th Bn. Queens Royal Regiment were laid up at Holy Trinity, Guildford in 1964. His sermon was, as usual, to the point and memorable. "The ideas and thoughts of Service without material reward, epitomised in the Colours, will be a source of strength in the years which lie ahead".

Colin was delighted to be awarded the T.D. He enjoyed the military way of life, he liked to organise his holidays in an orderly fashion, which amused his children, as they saw a parallel with Annual Camp.

He will be sadly missed by his very many friends from The Queens and our deep sympathy is extended to his wife Anne, and children Mark, Alison and Sue.

D.A.R.

Brigadier R.H. Senior, D.S.O., T.D.

It was with great sorrow that the news of Brig. Senior's death on 2nd March, 1988, became known to ex members of the 1/7th Bn. Queen's Royal Regt. Brig. Senior first joined the Territorial Army as a 2nd Lieut. in 1924 in the 24th County of London Regt. at the age of twenty. He became a Capt. in 1928 and commanded 'A' Coy from 1929. He was subsequently promoted to Major in 1934. The Bn. had now changed to 7th (Southwark) Bn. The Queen's, and he took part in the Coronation parade of 1937 and received the Coronation medal.

The outbreak of the 1939-45 war saw him as Second-in-Command to the Bn. which was sent to Dorset for intensive training. Then embarkation to France, and in the campaign leading up to Dunkirk Major R.H. Senior was awarded the D.S.O. for his courageous handling of the situation. After reorganisation in U.K. the Bn. assumed a defensive role in the S.E. In May 1942 the Bn. embarked once again to join the 8th Army in the Desert. Major Senior was still 2 I/C. Following the battle of Alam El Halfa during which 132 Bde. suffered severely, Major Senior was appointed to command the 5th Royal West Kents. In the initial attack at El Alamein 1/7 Queens had considerable losses including their C.O. (Lt. Col. R.M. Burton) and in view of his long association with the Bn. Lt. Col. R.H. Senior returned from the West Kents to command the 1/7th. In the middle of the battle of El Alamein the Bn. was reorganised into Lorried Infantry and was attached to 7th Armoured Division, the Desert Rats.

I had the honour to be Adj. to Col Senior from Alamein to the Mareth Line at a time when 1/7th Queen's played a conspicuous part in the pursuit of the enemy across the Desert. He keenly claimed the right for his Bn to play the leading role in almost every engagement of 131 Brigade, and the Battle of Medenine was described by Gen. Montgomery as a model and triumph for infantry against Panzer Divisions in which almost half of the enemy tanks were destroyed. Following this battle Lt. Col. R.H. Senior was awarded a bar to his D.S.O. and promoted to command a Brigade of 50th Division.

With 56th Infantry Bde. Brigadier Senior saw service once again in Europe until the end of the war. He was appointed Hon. Col. of 1/7th Queens in July, 1946 retaining the honorary rank of Brigadier, finally relinquishing the appointment of Hon. Col. in July 1955 after 31 years distinguished service as a Territorial and being awarded 2 Bars to the T.D.

In private life Brigadier Senior was from 1948, Chairman of the Port Line, a Director of Australia and New Zealand Bank Ltd., and Chairman of Cunard Steam Ship Co. as well as many subsidiary companies.

K.A.J.

Captain D L Urquhart MC

Few of our readers will have heard of Captain Urquhart who died on 24th April 1988, yet he had been connected with our Regiment for a number of years. He served in The Gordon Highlanders in the Eighth Army, and was awarded the Military Cross. After the War David came to live near Huntingdon, and became interested in the association between the 31st (Huntingdonshire) Regiment and the County, and in 1983 produced an excellent short history of the Regiment. His researches in the County have added much to our knowledge of our old Regiment.

PGEH

Brigadier G.J. Chatterton, DSO, OBE

Brigadier George Chatterton who died last November was initially a pre-war officer in the R.A.F., but after a flying accident he transferred to the Army and to The Queen's Royal Regiment. He went to France in 1940 as a Captain in 1/5th Queen's. After the return from Dunkirk when the Prime Minister, Winston Churchill, ordered the formation of "a corps of at least five thousand parachute troops" the then Captain Chatterton volunteered to join the force being set up by Major J.F. Rock RE., who had been appointed "to take charge of the military organisation of British airborne forces", as a glider pilot. When later Lt-Col Rock was killed in a crash, George Chatterton took over command of 1st Glider Pilot Regiment, and led them in the invasion of Sicily. In spite of being released into the sea he got ashore, and for his overall gallantry was awarded the DSO. After this he went on to control and direct the Glider Pilot Regiment for the Normandy invasion, Arnhem, and the crossing of the Rhine - the successful landing of the Airborne Divisions on each of these three occasions owed a great deal to his training and the spirit and standards he had insisted upon for the Glider Pilot Regiment. In his Obituary published in the national newspapers much was made of the fact that he learnt such standards from an attachment to The Grenadier Guards in Northern France in early 1940, however one suspects that some may have stemmed from the standards set within 5th Queen's, and particularly by the Adjutant and subsequently 2 I/C of the time, the then Major L.C. East.

After the War he retired, having become a Brigadier at 33, and went into the City as a stock jobber. He was then much involved with charity affairs, the organisation of employment for former glider pilots, and finally the Thalidomide Trust. He however found time to play cricket for The Queen's Royal Regiment at Stoughton Barracks for a number of years - he was a robust batsman and an effective "military medium" bowler.

His Memorial Service took place at St Martin's in the Fields in January 1988 and more than 400 attended, many of them eminent wartime airborne leaders and a large turn-out of glider pilots, to pay tribute to a founding father of the modern Army Air Corps. The Regimental Secretary of The Queen's Regiment, Colonel J.W. Francis, represented the Regiment to which Brigadier George always belonged, since The Glider Pilot Regiment as with The Parachute Regiment was then only filled by secondment. We can take pride with them in one who added great distinction to The Queen's, old and new.

JWS

Lt. Colonel L.S. Sheldon

He and I soldiered together, on and off, for nearly 25 years; we have been in touch for some 60 years while we still communicated at Xmas this last year. We first met when he came over from Sandhurst with Dennis Gibbs, to the Depot at Stoughton in December 1925 before he was commissioned and went out to join 2/Queens in India. He was Second-in-Command 2/Queens on its disbandment in Berlin in October 1948. General Sir George Gifford's comment on all Ranks on that Parade are on the record and could hardly be more favourable. He was a magnificent Regimental soldier while undoubtedly "thinking" was his strong point and accordingly his success as a Staff Officer and Assistant to the senior officers under whom he worked. He graduated from the Quetta Staff College in 1941 and held a number of Staff appointments, the final two being G.S.O.2.SHAFF 1944/45 and D.A.A. and Q.M.G. Caribbean Area 1950/53.

His death will be a loss to all the Regiments of the present Queens.

Possibly his greatest asset to me was his sense of fun. He never resented being mocked for his good looks and for this earning him the nickname of "RUDIE" in imitation of that celebrated film star Rudolf Valentino.

In his retirement he devoted much of his time and energies in serving the Community whether it be his church, The Royal British Legion or his village, where he was very well-known as a caring person to whom anyone could come for help or advice and where he will undoubtedly be sorely missed.

His first wife, Margaret, died only 3 years after their marriage and left him with an 18 month old daughter. Later he married Rosemary with whom he shared some 40 very happy years.

To his widow Rosemary and his daughter Susan and all her family we send our deepest sympathy at this time.

L.C.E.

Brigadier H. Wood DSO, Croix de Guerre

Brigadier Henry Wood who died on 7th April was a distinguished officer of The Queen's Royal Regiment. He was born on 26th March 1906, and was commissioned from The Royal Military College, Sandhurst in September 1925 going on to join the 2nd Battalion in Khartoum. He then served with the Royal West African Frontier Force from 1929 to 1935, rejoining the 2nd Battalion at Parkhurst in the Isle of Wight in January 1936.

Subsequently he qualified at the Staff College and gained a Mention in Despatches in 1940 before being appointed to command 1/5th Queen's in 131 Brigade in March 1944. He led the Battalion into Normandy and through the very intense fighting at Villers Bécage and Livry, for which he was awarded his DSO. Then in early July 1944 he was selected to command 146th Brigade.

After the War he served as Deputy Commander, British Military Mission Greece, and was Deputy Director TA at The War Office before retiring on November 4th 1949. JWS

Lientenant George Maltas

George Maltas joined the 2nd Bn. The Queen's Royal Regiment in Ceylon in 1942 after being commissioned at the Middle East O.C.T.U. in Cairo. He came to the Middle East from his home in Rhodesia early in the war, and originally served with the Rifle Brigade when they were in a forward position in contact with the enemy before the battle of Sidi Barrani.

He was badly hurt in a carrier accident with a train while in training in Ceylon, as a result of which he was repatriated and suffered from a limp for the remainder of his life.

In civil life George was a keen business man in Rhodesia and as President of the local Chamber of Commerce he often visited England and America. He enjoyed a happy retirement in spite of two severe heart attacks, and eventually died from a similar attack after playing 18 holes of golf.

Our sympathy is extended to his widow Jean and his two sons. RM

Lt. Col. L.A.S. Harbourne, MC

Len Harbourne joined the 1st Bn The East Surrey Regiment in April 1944 when the Battalion was in the 'Bow' area at Cassino. He was posted to B Company which held a position

on the 'Snakes Head' opposite and in full view of the Monastery. He remained in B Company throughout his service with the Battalion and was awarded the Military Cross for energetic and aggressive patrolling. Len was an extrovert and a rather forceful platoon commander.

After the war he was a well known figure at Clapham Junction Drill Hall where he worked tirelessly on behalf of the Cadets and eventually became Commanding Officer of the Cadet Battalion stationed there. In 1960 he retired from the Cadet Force and thereafter was seen on many occasions at various Regimental functions.

PGEH

Sir John Clements

Sir John Clements, the outstanding actor-manager, died in early April. Anyone serving in 1st Bn The East Surrey Regiment in 1938 will remember that he and the late Sir Ralph Richardson played the leading parts in the Korda film "The Four Feathers". The Battalion provided the British soldiers for that film. They also made and staffed the camp for the film company, in the desert some 50 miles from Khartoum. The Commanding Officer of the Camp was the late Brigadier C.D. Armstrong, CBE, DSO, MC.

Monte Cassino 1989

The Monte Cassino Veterans Association are organising tours next year (1989) to coincide with the 40th Anniversary of the Battles for Cassino.

Approximate cost, which may vary slightly, of the three options available are:

- By AIR (possibly Jumbo Jet) departing 12 May 1989 from London and Manchester to ROME — FIVE NIGHTS, 3 or 4 star Hotel, with continental breakfast and evening meal at CASSINO or GAETA: £ 319.
- As above, with the visit extended to 12 nights, the extra nights being spent at the coastal resort of GAETA: £ 459.
- Accommodation as above, with arrangements being currently negotiated for travel either by coach or rail — FIVE NIGHTS in CASSINO and FIVE NIGHTS in GAETA with a two day journey each way with overnight stops — 14 DAYS IN ALL: £ 305, departing 10 May 1989.
- THESE PRICES INCLUDE:

Fully comprehensive insurance cover
Transfers by coach from ROME AIRPORT TO CASSINO — GAETA
In-flight meals or overnight stops
Hotel Accommodation as detailed above.

A registration fee of £ 50 per person is payable to the Travel Agency when booking, but does not necessarily guarantee a place. Should the chosen tour be fully booked an alternative tour will be offered. Registration fees will be refunded less 20% administration fee. All bookings and travel queries should be made direct to the Travel Agent:

Mr. Gordon Rangeley
PRESTON'S TRAVEL AGENCY
130 BURY ROAD
WHITEFIELDS
MANCHESTER M25 6AD
Tel: 061-766 2184

BOOKINGS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED AFTER 30th SEPTEMBER 1988.

In conjunction with the people of CASSINO, under the auspices of the Mayor, various functions, visits, festivities and parades, over the first five days, will take place. A Drumhead Service on Sunday 14 May 1989 will provide an opportunity to lay Poppy Wreaths in memory of their fallen comrades. Medals should be taken.

You are asked to address all queries (other than travel queries) direct to:

Mr. John Clarke, Secretary
THE MONTE CASSINO VETERANS ASSOC.
41 ALDERMARY ROAD
MANCHESTER M21 2QW
Tel: 061-881 4594

1939/40 - Learning the hard way!

The Secretary of State for War announced the doubling of the T.A. at the 6 Queens prize giving in April 1939. 2/6 Queen's was formed in May; and was based at B. Coy, 6 Queens Drill Hall at New Cross. 6 Queens was unable to supply a suitable senior major to command and Brevet Colonel B. Hughes-Reckitt, who had relinquished command of 6 Queens in 1935, was asked to take the new battalion. The 2IC was a T.A.R.O. officer who had commanded in 1930. A walk round the Stock Exchange produced another three WWI officers and also several younger men. There was a cadre of six existing T.A. second lieutenants and the remaining officer posts were soon filled with eager applicants for commission in those heady days before the war.

The first adjutant - briefly - was a young ensign from the Coldstream Guards, but quite soon Captain F A H Wilson, a T.A. Company Commander took the post. The Q.M. came from the R.A.R.O., one D'Albertanson. He was the only regular officer, and he together with the R.S.M., also from the reserve, were the only two persons with any real solid experience. Archie Wilson, the adjutant, was eccentric and later proved to be gallant in the desert, but administration was not his forte.

We started with about 300 other ranks, and in the short space before 3 September, we shot our course on the rifle at Purfleet, and in early August went to camp at Falmer, being fed and quartered by 1/6 Queens.

Towards the end of August, when the storm clouds were gathering, I called in at the Drill Hall on my way to visit my girl in Blackheath. Archie Wilson casually asked me if I could get leave from my job to billet the battalion in Caterham. I thereupon became the Unit Billeting Officer and spent the next week in Caterham, demanding spare rooms to sleep soldiers and requisitioning empty buildings for offices and stores. Feeding arrangements were made with cafes, and I have always wondered what the Brigade of Guards thought of D. Coy, 2/6 Queens who ate at a cafe immediately opposite the gates of Caterham Barracks.

I took command of D. Coy, and stayed with it for two years. My first Company Sergeant Major, an old sergeant of 6 Queens, could neither read nor write, and I was very fortunate that after a few weeks, I was given the only P.S.I., Joe Stewart. He was a wonderful fellow, and taught me all I ever knew about basic company administration and organisation.

Looking back at those first few months at Caterham, it is a tribute to the spirit of those Bermondsey and Deptford volunteers - clerks, dockers, drivers, shop assistants, butchers, - that we became trained soldiers. Each man lived in billets with kind helpful families, and to disseminate daily orders, we had a muster parade each evening after tea, when company detail was read out by the Company Sergeant Major. Home in London was not very far away, and there must have been a number who popped back in the evening to see the girl or wife. Nevertheless, I cannot recall that we had absentees in any number when we mustered again at 8.30 a.m. We had one or two men who were bed wetters and these slept at the back of the company office, being roused every hour or so until they were cured.

It was not until March 1940, just prior to leaving for France, that the private house billeting ceased, and the company was housed in requisitioned empty houses, sleeping on palliasses and those old grey or brown blankets.

From the start my company was deployed in guard duties on vulnerable points, known as V.P.s, firstly at Surrey Docks, then at an ammunition dump at Banstead. By the time we reached Banstead in October, the weather had broken. No great coats were available and so the blue meltons of the old London General Omnibus Company were issued. There was also a shortage of boots which caused difficulty. The first night at Banstead was an evening of pouring rain. Several men fell sick and our mad Australian Medical officer diagnosed typhoid, and put us into quarantine for a further week. My gloom was complete when an orderly upset a cauldron of hot cocoa over his legs and had to go to hospital.

Our routine continued until after Xmas with guards, - including R.A.F. Biggin Hill, - alternating with individual training. Thanks to Company Sergeant Major Stewart the drill was excellent, and weapon training on the rifle and the bren improved. At the beginning of September 1939 there had been much concern, because no one had the faintest idea of how to write out a training programme. Accordingly the Commanding

Officer arranged for two young officers, each with two years T.A. service, to visit the Depot for a few days to find out how to proceed with this most abstruse task. They filed up to the Depot Adjutant, now a distinguished retired General. He took one look at them and said, "The first thing is for both of you to go up to Edward Smith's in Cork Street and get yourselves a decent hat. Fall out!" Memory is that they got little out of the visit.

Over those first six months of the war the Commanding Officer disappeared, as did the 2IC, and so did others who were called back to civvy street. My overriding impression is that we had not a single soldierly forthright personality in the Unit. In 2/5 Queens on the other hand Lt. Col. A.F.F. Young commanded strongly for three years. He also had T. Featherstonhaugh, R.L. Moore and H.R.N. Rickett. 2/7 Queens, although their Commanding Officer left early, included such personalities as D.C. Baynes, and A.J. Renshaw, who both eventually commanded, and best of all, M.E.M. MacWilliam who eventually commanded a regular Brigade.

By April 1940, we were competent in individual training, the administration worked, but we were leaderless. At this moment Lt. Col. E.F. Bolton was appointed to command and we went to France to act as pioneers, helping the French to build a rail-head.

The battalion left behind all those on courses and embarked with personal weapons, one bren per platoon, one anti-tank rifle per company, and minimum transport. There was no 2IC.

The story of France 1940 has been told many times.

S.W.P.

See letter from Colonel Ling on Page 14



Annual Reunion

