

THE QUEEN'S REGIMENT ASSOCIATION QUEENS SURREYS



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ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

Number 51

President's Notes

In the last newsletter General Mike Reynolds, Colonel of The Queen's Regiment wrote about the forthcoming amalgamation of the Queen's with The Royal Hampshire Regiment. It is now known that amalgamation day will be on 9th September 1992. This date is Salerno Day, one of the Queen's Surreys proudest battle honours of which many of our members will have such personal memories. The first battalion of The Queen's Regiment with which our association has maintained particularly close links, disbanded in Germany in August this year.

The formation of the new Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment will not in any way affect our Queens Surrey Association. Our activities will continue as usual and our interest in, and when necessary our care of, our many members will be unaltered. Our county connections with today's 1 Queens which we have been so pleased to maintain will be difficult to repeat with either of the two regular battalions of the new Regiment. Nevertheless the Association will of course give its fullest support to our successors in the new Regiment as a whole.

It is hoped that the November edition of this newsletter will contain a supplement giving details of the battle honours, traditions and practices to be continued, affiliations, dress and other facts about the, by then newly formed, Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment.

Because of the amalgamation this year's Grand Reunion of the Queen's Regiment at Basingbourn which is always so well supported by our members, will be the last as The Queen's Regiment. I do hope therefore that as many readers as possible will make a real effort to be at Basingbourn on Sunday 5 July and join the Queens Surreys Association contingent in marching past the Colonel of the Queen's Regiment for the last time.

I look forward to meeting you there.

Mike Doyle

From the Past



2 Queen's married families, Allahabad, India 1924

Editorial

Since the last Newsletter arrangements for the forthcoming amalgamation with The Royal Hampshire Regiment has taken priority at Regimental Headquarters. Our President has referred to this in his notes and I do not intend to dwell any more on the subject in this editorial.

As Brigadier Mike Doyle has said the care of our old comrades remains of primary concern and whilst I have referred to the subject of benevolence many times before, I make no apology for once again drawing your attention to this very important part of our Association affairs. If any of you know of a pal, or a widow of one of our old soldiers who is in need of help please do let me know so that action can be taken to assist - if we are able to.

Once again I have been lucky with your letters and articles, please do keep them coming in - if they are not used in one Newsletter I will always try to fit them into a future edition.

I hope as many of you with your wives will attend the annual church service at Guildford Cathedral on the 14th June and of course The Queen's Regiment reunion at Basingbourn on the 5th July.

Les Wilson

Merry Christmas



In-Pensioner Sam Dickason sends Christmas greetings to his niece in Australia, courtesy of Merrill Lynch an American securities firm. This is the sixth year that the London branch of the firm has arranged for pensioners to phone anywhere in the world for a half hour free telephone call at Christmas. Over 400 pensioners participated last year. This picture appeared in the Times Business Supplement and we are most grateful to The Editor of The Times for allowing us to print Sam's picture.



THE QUEEN'S REGIMENT AND THE QUEEN'S SURREY ASSOCIATION EVENTS

1992



7th May	Spring Meeting - Richmond Golf club. Details will be sent to members
1st June	THE GLORIOUS FIRST OF JUNE
4th June	Memorial Service - Brig Gen F C More-Molyneux CMG DSO Holy Trinity Guildford, 11.30am.
5th June	Presidents Reception for Freedom Town Mayors, Guildford - Kingston upon Thames Reigate and Banstead, Regimental Museum, Clandon.
11th June	Memorial Service - Colonel P G Wreford - Brown, All Saints Church, Kingston upon Thames 12 Noon
14th June	Annual Church Service - Guildford Cathedral, 11am for service at 11.15am, the preacher will be The Dean of St Paul's Cathedral. It is hoped that our cadets will take part. A bar will be arranged as normal in the refectory.
1st July	Royal Marines match - The Golf Society - Northants, Fleet - Details will be sent to members.
5th July	Queen's Regiment Annual Reunion - Basingbourn, Details in May Newsletter.
5th September	2/6 Queens Salerno Reunion - Union Jack Club. Details from:- S Pratten MIM 58 Sandford Road, East Ham, London, E6 3QS.
9th September	SALERNO DAY
1st October	Autumn Meeting The Golf Society - Woking Golf Club. Details will be sent to members.
2nd October	Queen's Surreys Officers Club Ladies Luncheon - Clandon. Details to members in May Newsletter,
3rd October	Museum Open Day - Clandon
10th October	Queen's Regiment, Past & Present Dinner WO's & Sgts - Basingbourn. Details in May Newsletter
24th October	East Surrey Regiment Reunion - Drill Hall - Clapham Junction. Details from S Jude, 68c Havelock Road, Wimbledon, London, SW19 8HD
24th October	5 OMA The Queen's "El Alamein" Dinner - Sandfield Terrace. Details from D Mitchell, "Dunroamin" 3 Littlefield Way Fairlands, Guildford, Surrey.
24th October	6 OCA The Queen's Dinner Dance, UJ Club
5th November	St Margaret's Westminster, Field of Remembrance (to be in position by 1130 hrs).
6th November	Queen's Surreys Annual Reunion - Union Jack Club - Details in May Newsletter, This popular event will be on a "first come - first served" basis.
8th November	Remembrance Day Parades - Guildford - Kingston - Bermondsey, Southwark under local arrangements.
20th November	Queen's Regiment Officers Club Dinner, Park Lane Hotel. Details from RHQ The Queen's.
20th December	BRITISH BATTALION DAY

1993

10th February	SOBRAON DAY
27th March	Association Trustees & Committee meetings, Clandon.
23rd April	YPRES DAY
23rd April	23rd London/42 RTR Lunch.
23rd April	East Surrey Officers' Dinner, Simpsons-in-the-Strand.

Benevolence

During 1991, 259 cases were investigated and 209 grants-in-aid were approved. This was a slight increase on 1990 by 6 cases investigated and an additional 19 grants-in-aid. The 50 cases rejected were all investigated by SSAFA and British Legion but after careful consideration of all the facts, grants were not approved.

We now administer 43 individual cases receiving the Army Benevolent Fund Supplementary Allowance. In 1990 we had 39 cases, there has been 4 deaths but overall our numbers continue to rise with regard to this allowance.

Nursing home applications continue to come forward. During 1991, 20 applications to the Army Benevolent Fund were processed with a further 4 awaiting confirmation.

The Supplementary Allowance and Nursing Home cases are NOT included in the above figure of 259 members or dependants receiving grants-in-aid.

The Royal Alexandra Hospital Home at Worthing continues to assist Association members for short term holidays and one member stayed for a period of 5 weeks during 1991.

A brief summary is shown below:

a. Association Grants-in-Aid	- £29,730 (209) average £142.25 per case
b. Nursing Home Fees	- £11,200 (20) average £560.00 per case
c. ABF Supplementary Allowance	- £7,488 (43) average £3.35 per week

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THE QUEEN'S REGIMENT

1661

Amalgamation

The date of our amalgamation with The Royal Hampshire Regiment to form The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment (Queen's and Royal Hampshire) (PWRR) has been advanced to 9 September 1992. (Salerno Day)

HM The Queen has appointed HRH The Princess of Wales Colonel-in-Chief of the new Regiment and HM Queen Margrethe II of Denmark Allied Colonel-in-Chief. Subject to Royal Assent, the Colonel of the Regiment will be Major General Anthony Denison-Smith MBE, late Grenadier Guards.

The Regiment will consist of two Regular battalions, two TA battalions, a TA Company and, for a limited period, Regular reinforcement sub units badged PWRR to serve in Ulster with other regiments. The 1st Battalion will initially be based in Colchester and the 2nd in Canterbury. The 5th (Volunteer) Battalion will cover Kent, Surrey and Sussex with its HQ in Canterbury and the 6th/7th (Volunteer) Battalion will have companies in Surrey, Sussex and Hampshire with its HQ in Horsham. Meanwhile, the 8th Queen's Fusiliers will be replaced by the 'London Regiment', made up of four cap badges, of which B 'Queen's' Company will be based in Edgware and Hornsey. The Regular reinforcements will provide one company to 1st Battalion The Duke of Edinburgh's Royal Regiment and platoons to 1st Battalion The Royal Scots and 1st Battalion The Royal Welch Fusiliers.

Regimental Headquarters will remain in Canterbury (colocated, it is hoped, with the UK-based battalion) but with an Area Office in Winchester.

The new badge will be a Paschal Lamb within a Garter surmounted by a Royal Crown and with a scroll bearing the name of the Regiment below. The collar badge will be a rose and crown, and buttons will have the Princess of Wales's cypher ('D' below a coronet) within a laurel wreath.

Further information will be published in due course on other items of Dress, Colours, Marches, Regimental Days, Alliances and Affiliations, Traditions and Silver etc. Suffice it to say that all these matters are being dealt with by the Amalgamation Committee with the aim of continuing the best of both Regiments.

News Of The Regular Battalions

Our 1st and 3rd Battalions will move back from Minden and Episkopi respectively, to Canterbury and Colchester in August and will immediately start integrating with our 2nd Battalion and 1st Battalion The Royal Hampshire Regiment to form the two Regular battalions and reinforcement sub-units of the new Regiment. In the meantime the 2nd Battalion, which returned from Northern Ireland in March, after an extremely successful tour of duty, is sending a strong company group to the Falkland Islands July until November. Among recent notable successes, the 1st Battalion won five out of six bouts in the BAOR Individual Boxing Championships and these Queensmen have now gone on to the Army Finals. The 2nd Battalion teams won both the Silver and Bronze Medals in the Cambrian Patrol Competition and their Rugby XV was only narrowly defeated in the semi-finals of the Army Cup.

TA Battalions

All the TA battalions have, as usual, been training hard. The 6th/7th (Volunteer) Battalion won the TA Bronze medal in the Cambrian Patrol Competition, and once again had excellent results in the South East District Orienteering Championships, coming 1st and 3rd in the Men's Events and winning The Veteran's class. The same battalion won the Infantry prize in

Army Cross-Country Driving Championships competing against both Regular and TA units. The 6th/7th (Volunteer) Battalion have also helped to raise over £100,000 for Charity during the last three years. All three battalions are content that they have been dealt with fairly in the reorganisation following the Options for Change study.

Regimental Grand Reunion

The last Regimental Grand Reunion before amalgamation will be held at Bassingbourn on Sunday 5th July. This will be a very special day and we hope to see as many Members of the Regimental Association there as possible.

JJW

First Battalion The Queen's Regiment

Six months is a long time in the life of a Battalion! We ended 1991 preparing for the amalgamation of The Queen's Regiment and The Royal Hampshire Regiment, expecting to leave Germany in February 1993 but not knowing where everyone was going and with the name of the new Regiment still undecided. We now have a good name, The Princess of Wales Royal Regiment, and our move back to England has been brought forward to August 1992 to enable the amalgamation to go ahead more smoothly. Most people know where they are being posted to, either the new battalions in Colchester or Canterbury, but some will have to go as reinforcing companies or platoons, as a temporary measure, to other battalions who are short of men for operational tours.

Life has not stood still while all this debate has been going on. On the training side we have been concentrating on individual skills to ensure that everyone is course qualified and as well prepared as possible to take their place in the new Regiment when the time comes. We have run Milan and Mortar cadres and a highly successful PNCOs cadre in Berlin. We have completed a gruelling two week field firing period at Sennelager which included a helicopter exercise and a patrol competition as well as our first live firing of Milan from the Milan Compact Turret. Sadly this was our last deployment as a Battalion as we now start to prepare for the drawdown in earnest.

To carry out an amalgamation is a difficult enough problem but to strip down and hand back everything in your barracks at the same time is a Quartermasters nightmare and really concentrates the mind! Our Mark 1 AFV 432 fleet are being prepared for disposal and Boards of Officers have been going on in every area of Battalion life. Yet, despite it all, we have still found time to compete in the Garrison Military Skills Competition, the Divisional Skill at Arms Meeting and prepare for visits by Canadian and CCF cadets!

The Corps of Drums, British Battalion Day 1991



Dmr Sands, LCpl Foy, Dmr Parsons, Dmr Domeney, Dmr Barford, LCpl Jenkins, Dmr Mitchell, LCpl Dhaliwal, Dmr Burton, Dmr Fuller, Dmr Simunons, Dmr Budd, Dmr Buckley, Dmr Woolcock, Dmr Paeth, LCpl Mulroy, Cpl Brabrook, DMaj Barden Capt & Adjutant A. R. Bolton, Sgt Hansen, M. LCpl Lane, LCpl Wilson

Sport and Adventure training has not been allowed to suffer either. Although our Novice Boxing Team has not done quite so well this year, seven boxers have gone forward to the Army Individual Boxing Finals and we have had two working with the Army squad all season. As a result of this continuing success Brigadier Charles Millman has again kindly awarded the Battalion his trophy, something the Team were particularly pleased to receive, other sports are also thriving. The Cross Country and Orienteering teams have both reached the BAOR Finals, and our Rugby, Football, and Basketball teams are all doing well in their respective Divisional leagues. On the skiing front we entered teams in both the Alpine and Nordic disciplines, with the Nordic skiers doing particularly well to reach the Army finals. We have also managed to get a number of parties of soldiers away for a week's skiing in Austria.

But there is no doubt that the underlining concern is our future. Now we have a much clearer view of what is happening to us all and the work of the Amalgamation Committee is proceeding well, the benefits of this process are much easier to see. After many years of undermining the prospect of life in a battalion with no shortages is only just around the corner. Many of our finest traditions, such as Sobraon Day and the Third Colour look like being carried forward into the new Regiment and so our heritage will live on. There is a very positive atmosphere in the Battalion which bodes well for the future and the new Regiment. Our final parade is at the end of May and the weekend of the Glorious First of June will certainly be celebrated in style. We very much hope that it will be possible for some members of The Queen's Royal Surrey Regimental Association to join us for the occasion.

ACM

Chief Yeoman Warder D. Harding MVO

Denis Harding joined the Army in September 1944 in The Queen's Royal Regiment. After training he joined 1/6th Queen's at Helmsley in Yorkshire. On December 23rd the battalion embarked on H.T. Orion. After a short time at Qassain they moved to the Lebanon to assist in peace keeping duties during the hand over from French to Lebanon control. In June 1945 Lt Col H G Duncombe DSO took over command from Lt Col TV Close DSO and shortly afterwards the battalion left Syria being the last British Troops to do so. They moved to Palestine and were again employed on peace keeping duties.

In February 1947 the order came for 1/6th Queen's to pass into suspended animation.

Denis Harding then joined 2nd Bn The East Surreys at El Ballah Egypt. 1st and 2nd Surreys amalgamated and he then served with 1 Surreys in Greece before returning home in September 1948. He continued serving with the Surreys until they amalgamated with The Queen's in 1959. He continued to serve at Regimental Duty with The Queen's Surreys and Queen's until his retirement as a warrant officer in 1968.

For a time he was employed as Head porter at Keynes College, University of Kent. He applied for a post as a Yeoman Warder but had to wait for a vacancy until 1973.

In 1985 he was promoted to Yeoman clerk and in 1986 he was again promoted to Chief Yeoman Warder, a position he held until his retirement on his 65th birthday on February 13th 1992.

During his time at the Tower he served with other characters from the Regiment including Jack Chaffer MM, Pip Piper and Peter Harding, (who also served with the SAS). Other Yeoman Warders who have served with our regiments are of course RSM Fred Harcup and Sgt Curtis VC who won his Victoria Cross whilst serving with 2 Surreys in the Boer War. His action is depicted in the museum at Clondon.



In the 1992 New Years Honours, Denis Harding was awarded the MVO.

All members of the Association congratulate him on this very unique honour and wish him and his wife many happy years of retirement.

Rangoon War Graves Cemetery, Htaukkyan



Footnote, See Recollections of a Pilgrim

Congratulations to:-

Squadron Leader Gerald Alan Morris, OBE has celebrated his 100th Birthday. He joined The Queen's (West Surreys) on 5th August 1914 and served with The First Surrey Rifles, 21st Bn The London Regiment. He served in France as a rifleman and was commissioned into the 7th Bn The Royal North Lancashire Regiment in 1915. In 1916, he was seconded to The Royal Flying Corps and left at the end of hostilities as a Captain.

He re-enlisted in 1939 in the RAF and saw service on the staff of Marshall of the RAF - Sir Arthur 'Bomber' Harris, as his Chief Photographic Interpreter.

His medals include the 1914-15 Star, 1914-18 Croix De Guerre with Palms, 1939-45 Star, France and Germany Defence Medal and 1939-45 Victory Medal with Mention in Despatches. He was awarded the OBE during the Second World War, after spending much time in the USA and Russia, explaining the impact and strategy of Bomber Command to leading military and political figures of both countries.



Squadron Leader Morris pictured on his 100th birthday

Ernest (Pop) Burchett who celebrated his 100th birthday on December 17th 1991. Ernest and brothers Jack and Tom were all members of 7th Bn The Queen's (West Surreys). Tom who was a Sergeant was killed on August 3rd 1918. Ernest and Jack survived the Great War but Ernest was invalided out of the Army in 1917 after being wounded on the Somme.

Golden Weddings

No fewer than four former members of The East Surrey Regiment celebrated their Golden Weddings on 7 March 1992. They are:-

RSM and Mrs H J (Jack) Chaffer

Major and Mrs A L A Bishop

Major and Mrs P C A Bridgeland

Major and Mrs F J Reed

Mr and Mrs E (Drummy) Fulker who celebrated their Golden Wedding on 29th November 1991.

Major and Mrs P Freeman who celebrated their Golden Wedding on 15th December 1991.

Sadly both Major Peter Freeman and 'Drummy' Fulker have since died. See deaths

Mr and Mrs A E Weston who celebrated their Golden Wedding on 29th May 1991.

Silver Weddings

Lt Col and Mrs Foster Herd who celebrated their 25th (Silver) wedding anniversary on the 28th March 1992.

Mr J T Jones who celebrated his 88th Birthday on 19th November 1991.

Mrs Rachel Roupell who celebrated her 80th Birthday on 26th November 1991.

Brigadier Charles Millman who has been appointed Deputy Lieutenant for, and in the County of Kent.

Awards

Major (QM) Vic Ebbens on the award of the MBE in the New Years Honours, Vic was QM of 1 Queen's but is now Quartermaster of 4th Armd Div in BAOR.

Corporal Ron Brill on his award of the BEM in the New Years Honours. Ron Brill joined The Queen's in Tampin, Malaya and has served with them continuously since then. He was Pioneer Corporal for many years, now retired from the Army and working in the Medway area.

Retirements: Brigadier A F S Ling OBE retired from the Army on 2nd April 1992.

Donations: The Trustees wish to acknowledge with grateful thanks the Ladies and Gentlemen who have contributed to our funds:-

H S Cranfield, W H Harrison and J Palmer and Mrs M E Rowe. Also to the many members who add "a little more" to allow for Newsletters to be sent to less well off comrades.

Meeting in Australia

On a recent trip to Australia, Our President met an old member of 1 Queen's Band at Sydney Airport, George Corbett. George joined 1 Queens Band in Tampin, Malaya as a Boy. He had lost touch with the Regiment and was delighted to bump into Brigadier Mike Doyle. Both played hockey for the Regiment. George played hockey for the Regiment when it won the BAOR Cup in 1957-58.

George now lives at 41 Albion Street, Roseland, N.S.W. 2196 Australia. The President was most touched when George came to the Airport to see him off. Needless to say, George has now received his Newsletter and intends to keep in touch.

Hockey Team, 1st Queen's BAOR

BAOR Inter Unit Hockey Champions 1957-58



Cfn. E. Tatham, R.E.M.E. Backs 2/Lieut. R. S. Hill 2/Lieut. A. W. Fuller Halves 2/Lieut. M. J. Power Bdsman. G. W. Corbett 2/Lieut. J. W. Farrar Forwards Lieut. J. G. W. Davidson Lieut. B. D. S. Burton Maj. J. W. Sewell 2/Lieut. S. T. W. Anderson Sgt. R. Lancaster.
Commanding officer, Lt Col (1958-59) D I. Lloyd-Owen DSO, OBE, MC.

A Visit to Tangier in 1991

When I wrote my first article for the Queens Surreys regimental journal in May 1991 about the silver Communion set for the 17th Century Anglican church at Tangier, I had not appreciated the wide circle of interest it would arouse, nor the number of people I would meet as a consequence.

Last Autumn, while my wife Joan and I were at our holiday home in SW France, we were invited by Professor Mohammed Abu-Talib, The Head of the Faculty of Letters and Human Sciences at the University of Rabat to attend a seminar in Tangier between 23 and 26 October; we would be accommodated by the organisers, "all you have to do is make your own travel arrangements".

We loaded the car, and set off for a memorable adventure full of interest en route to Morocco via the Pyrennees, Spain and the port of Algeciras where we left the car after covering 1400 miles. The ferry linking Europe with Africa takes 2½ hours through the scenic and historic straits at the entrance to the Mediterranean; they have been of great strategic and mythical importance since they were called the "Pillars of Hercules" in ancient times.

The seminar was on the subject of "Tangier in the Imagination" as described by authors, poets, playwrights, painters and film producers through the ages, and sponsored jointly by the Universities of Rabat and Tetuan. It was held in the School of Translation in Tangier, which is an offshoot of the latter, and was attended by a large number of academics from many countries. Presentations and discussions were conducted in block sessions of Arabic, Spanish, French or English, with the programme largely written in Arabic - so that at first we found it difficult to follow, until we realised one starts at the back cover and reads forward right to left!



Gateway from Kasbah into Medina

Suffice to say that the presentations we attended were very interesting, and that I had a display of text and photographs in the main foyer about the British and regimental connections with Tangier. We made friends with many of the delegates during working hours and at the social events held in the evenings, which included three memorable Moroccan banquets hosted by the Vice Chancellor of Rabat University; by His Majesty King Hassan II of Morocco (who could not attend); and by Dr Idrissi the Principal of the School of Translation. There is a limit to the time one can spend sitting in total incomprehension of Arabic sessions and we took those opportunities to do some sightseeing and exploring in Tangier.

For those who have never visited Morocco I should remind them that it is of course, an Islamic third world country which was never part of the Ottoman Empire and that its Moorish inhabitants still retain close links with Southern Spain. Tangier is not typical of the rest of Morocco as its situation as the closest part of Africa to Europe has always made it very cosmopolitan and International.

Indeed from the end of the last century it was an international neutral territory administered jointly by Spain, France and Great Britain until it reverted to Morocco in 1956. As a consequence their languages are widely understood. The upper or old town of the Medina is still girdled by its ancient walls first constructed by the Portuguese, and later defended by the British garrison including our regimental forebears from 1662 to 1684. It is a mass of narrow winding streets with picturesque houses and shops (like an Arabic sukh) situated on twin hills overlooking the sea. At the top of the Kasbah which was the citadel and Sultan's Palace, and built on the site of the upper castle and Peterborough Tower at the time of the 17th century British occupation.



Site of 3 gun battery beside York Castle

The line of the old Portuguese fortifications is unmistakable, including watch towers and the "Irish Battery" on the southern point of the battlements, but Catherine Gate and its ravelin have vanished - perhaps as a result of Lord Dartmouth's demolition plan in 1684? We saw the fig tree planted by Samuel Pepys, the treasurer for the Tangier Commission when he stayed in a house near the Kasbah in 1683. Its now enormous, and I am told that Moorish women used to touch its fruit to enhance their fertility!



Look out on Portuguese walls with harbour in background

The town outside the Medina is quite modern with several three and four star international hotels where one can stay very pleasantly close to the sea. One of the attractions is that one can enjoy modern comforts and yet be only 10 minutes by taxi or car from sights, sounds and smells which come straight out of the Arabian nights. At the risk of sounding like a travel bureau I will conclude by saying that several package tour companies run inclusive half board package tours by air to Tangier from the UK, and that out of the high season they are very competitive. We found the Moroccans very courteous and friendly, their cuisine ranks next after the French and Chinese and the winter climate is a delight. The countryside behind Tangier is very beautiful and there are many places to visit inland or by the sea. We plan to go back.

PGC

Museum Notes

1991 was a good year for the museum. The National Trust House, Clandon Park, where we are accommodated, had its best ever recorded attendance and we benefited from it. When we were visited in September by the officer conducting the MOD review of corps and regimental museums we were able to demonstrate the excellence of our location alongside the restaurant for attracting the general public to the museum. We were able to brief him about the President's annual reception to mayors which took place in June, the well supported Regimental Open Day in September, and the museum's forthcoming participation in a museums and craft exhibition at Woking by the provision of an attractive stand of photographs depicting the Regiment's association with the town. Our visitor enjoyed his lunch. He also said he was greatly impressed by the style of the museum's displays, which are in keeping with the rest of the house, the availability of so many photographs, Regimental journals and histories for members of the public who want to explore their connections with our Regiment, and the helpfulness of our museum team in meeting requests and answering other questions.

MOD financial support for museums is currently based on an administrative instruction drawn up in the 1970s which states that "the primary role of regimental and corps museums is to collect and preserve regimental and corps relics and make them accessible to the regiment or corps and to the public, thereby fostering an interest in the past, present and future of the regiment or corps, and also providing an educational facility for the general public". The most recent statement of the Army Board's view was in 1981 when it reaffirmed that regimental and corps museums played a valuable role in the Defence interest, "contributing to morale within the Army, helping to keep a favourable image of the Army in the public mind and thus providing an important, if unquantifiable, aid to recruiting". More recently, moreover a report in 1990 for the Museums and Galleries Commission by Admiral Sir David Williams, a former Second Sea Lord, concluded that it is in the Defence interest to acknowledge that "in terms of educating tomorrow's citizens, keeping the Services in the public eye and improving public understanding of their role and importance", the museums are a quintessential part of the fabric of the Services! But which museums? We have sought continued recognition of the role of regimental museums as defined in the 1970s. We have also claimed that in view of the greatly reduced size of the Army, regimental museums such as ours have increased in importance because of their local accessibility for the general public and the desirability of maintaining county connections.

We now have to wait and see what the MOD will come up with. Meanwhile as a precaution, and to strengthen our case, we are in the process of applying for Registration Scheme under the Museum and Galleries Commission's Registration Scheme. The aim of the scheme is "to ensure that registered museums maintain a certain minimum standard and thus to create a climate in which they can prosper and enjoy increasing public support". Registered museums will become eligible for grant aid and subsidised services provided by the Commission and by the Area Museum Councils. Registration is not concerned with the scale of a museum's operations, nor with making detailed qualitative judgements about each museum's activities, but it does necessitate the appointment of a professional curatorial adviser. In our case we have invited Mr Matthew Alexander, who is the Curator of the Guildford Museum, and he has accepted with enthusiasm. We look forward to working along with him to our mutual benefit.

One of our strengths has been our dedicated team of volunteers which has been reinforced by Colonel P.A.W.G. Durrant O.B.E. who joined us last June. We were delighted when he subsequently agreed to become a Trustee. And we are particularly indebted to those helpers who turned out during the season to help man the

museum when it is open, keep an eye on security and attend to the visitors. They are absolutely vital for the museum's well being and we hope to form from them a Society of Friends of the Museum who live locally. Some are long established members of the Museum General Committee, others are relative newcomers.

We have been grateful for a number of interesting acquisitions during the last year. Among the medals have been those of Sgt J D Donaldson DCM, Queens and then of two Queen's Territorials, father and son - Col B L Evans TD, whose splendid array spans two world wars, and Major D F L Evans TD. We have received a number of interesting photographs, especially Major Philip Doyle's collection depicting the Surreys in Gibraltar in 1927 and Lieutenant Colonel Anson Squire is busy placing all our photographs in Regimental albums which will be readily available to those old comrades and their families wishing to indulge in nostalgia.

We have also been given a number of documents and books to add to our archives, among them the diaries and papers of General E O F Hamilton the period 1873 to 1911, the diary of James Wilkins, a soldier of the Queen's, dated Belgaum, East Indies, 1840, and a few volumes of the official History of the Great War - Military operations France and Belgium 1914 - 1918. The latter was presented by Major Derek Conran TD, Queen's Surreys. He wrote that they had belonged to his uncle who served with the 2nd Royal Munsters and won the MC at Loos in 1915 and a bar to it at Le Catelet in 1918. He also mentioned his father's quite remarkable career during World War 1. He was a mining engineer in South America when the war started. In 1915 he and a number of wealthy Englishmen with estates in Brazil and Argentina sailed with their horses and equipment and persuaded Lord Kitchener to allow them to form the second regiment of King Edward's Horse. Later on he was commissioned into the Royal Engineers and sent to Gallipoli. Later still he became a pilot in the Royal Flying Corps and flew Sopwith Camels during Allenbys' campaign in Palestine.

The winter closed period has as usual been a busy one and a number of projects have been completed. We were most grateful for the help of members of the Walton-on-the-Hill NADFAS in cleaning all the medals and uniforms. Colonel Durrant, assisted by Mrs Roupell and Mrs Hill have produced a new booklet "The Surreys in Malaya" on sale in the shop alongside Brigadier Geoffrey Curtis's "Salerno Remembered". Also on sale is a splendid new edition of the T.A. book "The Territorial Battalions of the Regiments of Surrey and their Successors". It became necessary to reprint the book so we have taken the opportunity to update it, and to include many topical photographs, which make it well worth buying even if you already have the original version.

Two important events have occurred during the closed season. Firstly, Chris Allen, the National Trust Administrator of Clandon Park retired. At a farewell party, attended by over a hundred of the Trust volunteer workers, the Museum Trustees presented him with a suitably inscribed regimental plaque to commemorate our happy association with him. His successor is Mr Dixon Asquith, retired North Yorkshire factory manager, subsequently Dean's verger at St Paul's and for the last four years Administrator of the nearby National Trust Hatchlands house which he will continue to look after.

The second event, and a sad one, was the retirement of Major Peter Hill as a Trustee. He felt that having arrived at a certain memorable age it was time for him to stand down, and we could not gainsay him. He was a founder member of our museum in 1979, he knows far more about it than anybody else, he is a mine of information about Regimental History, he has set the highest standards. Thank goodness he has agreed to continue as a committee member. In immense appreciation of all he has done for the museum, and to commemorate his 60 years of service to the Regiment, the Trustees presented him with an illustrated chart

beautifully painted by our museum artist, Mr Wally Heath, and prepared in complete secrecy and much consultation by Peter Durrant and Daphne Hill. We suspect that in the end Peter knew all about it, but as always the perfect gentleman he pretended not to.

It is with much sadness that we have just learnt that Major Ronald Fairbairn TD has had to resign from being a Museum Trustee because of poor health. He has been a Trustee since 1983 and we shall greatly miss his comradeship and his wise counsel.

The 1992 season runs from 1st April until the end of October during which the museum will be open daily from 1.30 to 5.30pm except Thursdays and Fridays. In order to visit the museum admission to Clandon Park is free on production of the Regimental Association membership card. Do come and see us.

MJAC



Christmas 1991 - Mrs James 'decorating' Private Tommy Atkins

Enrolled Pensioner Force

As one who sometimes stumbles over Enrolled Pensioner Guards during my delvings at Kew, I was particularly interested in MSB's excellent article about the Western Australian Enrolled Pensioner Force in the November Association Newsletter.

MSB deals with the uses that the British Government made of its Army pensioners over many decades, and points out that the origins of Enrolled Pensioner Guards effectively stemmed from the ancient Independent Companies of Invalids and the later Garrison and Royal Veteran Battalions of the early 18th century.

In general, those Battalions were formed, as MSB says, from the Army of Reserve, a body of Chelsea and Kilmainham Hospital out-pensioners, who had received their discharges from the unlimited service engagements on which most had originally enlisted by virtue of wounds, injury or disease, or by having become worn out.

In amplification of what MSB says in the article, it may be of interest to anyone who may wonder how these veteran soldiers were recalled to read the following quaint, but very clear, terms of a Horse Guards notice that appeared on the front page of Aris's Birmingham Gazette on Monday, July 18th, 1803 and doubtless in other newspapers, when Britain was in fear of a French invasion. It stated:-

"HIS MAJESTY doth hereby direct and require THAT all the LETTER-MEN, SERJEANTS, TRUMPETERS and DRUMMERS on the Out-Pension of the CHELSEA or KILMAINHAM HOSPITALS, residing in SOUTH BRITAIN, whether discharged from the REGULAR CAVALRY or INFANTRY, or from the MILITIA or FENCIBLES Do personally appear on Monday

the 25th of this instant July, at the places hereinafter mentioned, and there put themselves under the Orders of the Officers who have been appointed to take them in Charge, and to cause them to be examined as to their fitness for Duty, either in the Royal Army of Reserve, or such other Service as HIS MAJESTY may think proper to employ them upon, for the Defence of the Realm."

The notice then lists places of assembly within the English counties and warns:-

"Out-Pensioners who shall not appear at the Times and Places herein appointed, will be considered as otherwise provided for by Government, or as Dead: and they will accordingly be struck off the Books of the Out-Pension of the said respective Hospitals of Chelsea and Kilmainham, without any Prospect of being restored thereto."

"By His Majesty's Command. (Signed) C. Yorke."

EAG

Golf Society

The Autumn meeting was held at Woking Golf Club on Thursday 17th October. 21 members played in the morning round, the winners of the competitions were:-

Autumn Bowl	M. J. Power Esq	(70 Net)
Glasgow Greys Cup	Lt. Col. F. B. Herd	(74 Net)
Heales Memorial Trophy	Col. J. W. Sewell	(35 Pts)
Veterans Halo	Col. J. W. Sewell	(38 Pts)
Petri Plate	M. J. Power Esq	(142 Net)

The Afternoon Foursome competition was won by Lt. Col. H. M. W. Harris and M. J. Power with 23 points and 14 Holes.

The sweep was won by Major P. Carroll.

Richmond Golf Club celebrated its Centenary in 1991 and, to mark the long association between the Golf Society and the club, it was decided to present an inscribed bench seat to commemorate the event. The presentation took place on Tuesday 29th October, representing the Golf Society General Tony White (East Surrey) Major John Clarke (Queen's Royal) Lt Col Foster Herd (Queen's Surrey).

FBH



So There We Were

1682 The Queen's in Tangiers were engaged in frequent skirmishes with the Moors and one party of five hundred English troops, led by Lt. Col. Fiennes, was ambushed by the enemy and suffered heavy losses.

1692 The Queen's landed at Ostend to take part in the Low Countries Campaign but did not see any real action until the following year.

1702 King William III signed the commissions of George Villiers, Alexander Luttrell and Thomas Carew to be officers in the newly formed Regiments of Villiers Marines, the predecessors of The East Surrey Regiment. The Queen's, returning from Spain, were on board British ships which inflicted defeat on the French at Vigo Bay. Unfortunately, some subsequent looting resulted in the Court Martial of Sir Henry Bellasis, a fact which is recorded as an item on a "Colonels of the Queen's Royal Regiment" display board at Clandon Museum where it elicits frequent questions from visitors.

1742 If not "all at sea" the Queen's were partially so, a draft from Gibraltar having been put aboard the galley *Mary* in May of that year and later discharged to the *Panther*. The 31st Regiment embarked at Deptford for the Continent where they were quartered at Bruges and Ghent in preparation for participation in the Austrian War of Succession.

1752 The 31st Regiment were in Minorca, having been there since 1749, but returned to England later in the year. The Queen's, in Ireland, seem to have been very much on the move, having at various times been quartered at, or marched through, Enniscorthy, Wicklow, Arklow, Bray, Ballyboys, Banagher, Loughrea and Galway. Irish service must have carried certain advantages and privileges as "A warrant was issued on 14th September to exempt Major-General Fowke from a tax of four shillings in the pound, as Colonel of a Regiment of Foot in Ireland".

1782 The 70th Regiment were in America where all fighting in the War of Independence had ceased. It was at this time that the Regiment received an English County title, being ordered to style itself the 70th (Surrey) Regiment. For recruiting purposes an additional (or depot) company was formed and stationed at Kingston-on-Thames. Detachments of the Queen's (not for the last time) were at sea and serving under Lord Howe whose ships were escorting transports to Gibraltar under threat of attack from French and Spanish Fleets. Part of the Regiment were on shore in England and moving about considerably in the Hampshire and Surrey areas.

1802 The Queen's were in the Mediterranean sphere, being stationed at Syracuse, Minorca and Gibraltar. On 3rd September a letter was sent to Lt. Col. Jones at Brighton refusing to grant him an extension of leave as there was no Lieutenant Colonel with the Regiment at Gibraltar. The 70th Regiment, coming by sea from Jersey, were landed at Deal from whence they marched to Dover Castle and then on to Chatham where they were engaged on routine duties which included such tasks as Dockyard guards.

1822 In Ireland the 31st Regiment were stationed at various times at Belfast, Armagh, Newry and Dundalk. Further afield, the 70th were in Quebec. Also bound for Irish service, the Queen's left Liverpool for Dublin where they were quartered in the Royal Barracks.

1852 Kaffir rebellions in South Africa were keeping the Queen's busy. A relief draft of fifty men, under Lt. Boylan, was on board the ill fated H.M.S. *Birkenhead* when she was wrecked off Point Danger, fifty miles from Simon's Town with heavy loss of life. The exemplary conduct of troops in allowing the rescue of "women and children first" remains a legend of gallantry to this

day. Also at sea, the 31st were in H.M.S. *Simoon*, bound from Cork to Corfu which they reached in safety.

1882 The East Surreys were in Gibraltar and in that year were granted the honour "Dettingen" in commemoration of the share in that battle borne by the 31st regiment in 1743. The Queen's, in India, left Peshawar for Subathu and Jutogh.

1902 The Queen's and The East Surreys were in South Africa when peace was thankfully declared in May. The Regiments had served with distinction, both showing themselves to be adaptable to various roles, including that of Mounted Infantry. With the end of hostilities, many officers and other ranks departed for home but some members of both Regiments found themselves in India before the end of the year.

1922 In India the Queen's were encountering trouble from rebellious tribesmen and also the weather. Heavy rains made communications so difficult in Waziristan that at one time troops in the Jandola area had to be put on reduced rations. The East Surreys were in Egypt where in Cairo, they mounted a Guard of Honour at the British Residency on the occasion of the visit of the Prince of Wales who was returning from his world tour.

1932 The bands of the Lincolns, Seaforths and Royal Sussex "played off" the Queen's as they left Dover for Aldershot. A busy training programme followed, broken at intervals by ceremonial marches through such places as Reigate and Guildford, where salutes were taken by the respective Mayors, and through Dorking before Lord Ashcombe, the Lord Lieutenant. The East Surreys were training in warmer climates in Dagshai in India and later at Kasur from whence a party made an expedition to the Sutlej River to visit the battlefield of Sobraon where the 31st Foot fought their famous battle in 1846. Two days later the Commanding Officer and two others visited the scene of the battle of Ferozeshah.

1942 The East Surreys were fighting desperately in Malaya, linked with The Leicestershire Regiment to form The British Battalion. Many deeds of heroism were performed before final capitulation at Singapore in February. The Regiment was also involved in other theatres of war during the year, particularly in Tunisia where their arrival at Castiglione was so unexpected that they found a dance in progress. The Queen's were in India (where they saw service on the North West Frontier) and also in Ceylon. Jungle warfare training was undertaken in preparation for an offensive against the Japanese.

1952 By 1952 both Regiments had been reduced to one battalion each, the East Surreys being in Libya and Egypt while the Queen's were in Germany. The wind of change was already beginning to blow.

Correction

The article in the November Newsletter No. 50 under the heading "The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment 1950-1970" contains an error;

6 Surreys celebrated its centenary in 1959 not 1961. The same error occurs in 'The History of The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment'.

The predecessors of 6 Surreys were the 6th, 9th, 15th and 16th Surrey Rifle Volunteer Corps. The 6th Corps was raised in 1859.

Calling all Prisoners of War

The National Ex Prisoner of War Association are holding their Annual Reunion at Warners, Holiday Centre, Hayling Island 23rd - 26th October 1992. Any reader interested please send a SAE to C F Jago, 74 Norfolk Road, West Harnham, Salisbury, Wilts SP2 8HG (0722 - 333599).

A Quick Flash

The origin of the cloth 'flash' depicted in colour on the centre pages of the May 1991 Association Newsletter is generally considered to be the Boer War when a number of units cut off the white worsted titles on the scarlet shoulder straps of their 1880 vintage scarlet frocks and stitched them to their foreign service helmets. In the case of the Queen's this was first sewn onto a royal blue rhombus of cloth.

Like Major Hobrow I had worn this on the right hand side of my bush hat when with 1st Queen's in Burma and Siam. I suppose we were the last to wear this. Bush hats were still worn when the Battalion was at Sungei Patani. By the time of the presentation of the new colours in July of 1947 bush hats had given way to the wretched cap G.S. and floppy drill hats for training. But what of earlier periods?

A number of photographs have been published recently in the Association Newsletter. There is the 1942 2nd Battalion Officers' Ceylon group in November of 1987, the 1940 group taken in Dulikhet and the Tientsin guard order photograph of 1929 - both published in the November 1991 edition. All depict the cloth flash worn on the right hand side of the solar topi.

But now I turn to the May 1949 edition of the old journal of The Queen's Royal Regiment. In this was published a most interesting series of photographs of the 2nd Battalion taken during the Waziristan campaign of 1920-21. One of these is of the Sergeants and Warrant Officers of the battalion posed against a rocky crag. In the middle is the legendary R.S.M. Sullivan. In the left foreground is C.S.M. (later Major) Waspe. All wear serge service dress. Since the photograph was taken pre-1924 brass collar badges are not worn. The headgear is the Wolseley helmet and on these the cloth regimental flash can be seen clearly and on the left side of the helmet, exactly as drawn by Brian Fosten.

So we come to the problem. At one time did a difference exist between the battalions? If it did it was clearly resolved prior to 1942. So when was the change made. Does anybody now remember?

So much for the regular battalions of the Queen's. The photograph of the T B Holdforth group on page 16 of the November 1991 Newsletter raises other issues. Here we see Wolseley helmets in the 1914-18 war with a different pattern of flash and worn on the left hand side of the helmet. It could be that this comprised a brass badge mounted on a piece of contrasting cloth...possibly royal blue. But this is speculation on my part. The wearing of this flash too requires further description and documentation. Any takers?

AJP

The Fishing Fleet and Early Life In India

In 1936 my mother, Diana Raynsford, joined the "Fishing Fleet", the convoy of eligible unmarried ladies who sailed to India in search of husbands. She lived in Northamptonshire, the daughter of a former commanding officer of 1st Battalion The Northamptonshire Regiment. Obviously the followers of the local Pytchley, Quorn and Cottesmore Hunts were not to her taste. My Father Hugh Wakely, had graduated from the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich, and St John's College Cambridge as a 2nd Lieutenant in the Royal Engineers. His father, Sir Leonard Wakely, was a career civil servant and had received the now extinct decoration of Knight Commander of the Indian Empire without ever having been near the sub-continent, an early example of "distance learning".

In any event it was perhaps natural that father should seek secondment to King George V's Own Bengal Sappers and Miners, partly to make up for his father's lack of intimate knowledge of India and partly to have a go at the Pathans who

were giving a lot of trouble on the North West Frontier. After a courtship in which I would guess mother took the leading role, father announced to his CO that he wished to be married. These were the days when Army officers did not contemplate marriage before their majority. Senior officers put every bit of advice and every possible obstacle in father's way but of course they were aiming at the wrong target. Mother arranged everything and they were duly married in New Delhi in December 1937, both being the tender age of twenty five. Neither set of parents was able to be present.

In January 1939 the writer of these notes appeared on the scene at the British Military Hospital, Roorkee, a town about 100 miles north of Delhi and the home of the Bengal Sappers and Miners. For most of the next five years we were in Roorkee whilst father went off to Africa to re-build bridges that the Italians and Germans had blown up. Before I reached the age of conscious memory two events happened which left their mark, one metaphysically, one physically. First mother had a row with the Padre about some matter of doctrine and converted to Roman Catholicism. Father was indifferent to matters religious but, in this burst of zeal, I was made an instant convert at the age of eighteen months. It is interesting to note that, although I was educated at C of E schools as a concession to father and grandparents, I have never converted back. On the other hand mother converted to Russian Orthodoxy in 1972 after "Bloody Sunday" in Northern Ireland, when she heard Irish Roman Catholic priests saying un-Christian things about the British Army.

Secondly, at the age of two I liked to climb over dry stone walls which were a (probably the only) feature of the Roorkee landscape. These walls were made from the sharp edged rocks that littered the countryside and, probably chasing a lizard, I slipped and cut my face open from the lip to the cheek bone. The scar, much reduced in size fortunately, is still with me.

Memories of Roorkee still linger after all this time. We had a bungalow with a large verandah on which we slept. The house looked out onto a yellow arid plain, criss-crossed by the above mentioned dry stone walls. Very, very, very far away there seemed to be small hills which were presumably the first bit of the foothills of the Himalayas. The sun always seemed to be shining and thereby hangs a tale. Mother, who maintained a Northamptonshire farm girl's mistrust of Indians personal hygiene, had employed as an ayah, not an Indian woman, but an Australian. This lady may have been clean about the house but she had some odd ideas. The main one was that children should strengthen their eyes by looking direct into the sun for half an hour each day. Accordingly my sister (a year younger) and I were thrust outside hatless every morning to stare at the sun. No wonder Noel Coward wrote his ditty about mad dogs and Englishmen but at the age of fortynine I had never worn glasses or sunglasses.

Dogs were everywhere but none of them was particularly attractive. I remember being bitten by the next door neighbour's dachshund and not thinking much of it. Everyone else got into a terrible state and watched me closely for the early signs of raving dementia (my colleagues in The Queen's Surreys would say that these dormant signs emerged in Aden in 1961). However, I survived and the poor dog was put down.

To escape the sun there were occasional visits to the hills but the only one I remember was to a place called Mussouri. I remember this visit because the purpose of it was to have my tonsils out. We seemed to wind our way through thickly wooded hills for hour after hour in a rickety bus. Years later I read J G Farrell's unfinished novel "The Hill Station" which reproduced the scene exactly. The operation went smoothly but I remember the dream I had while under the gas. I was stranded on a very high trestle bridge which crossed an extremely wide but completely dry

watercourse. These bridges and watercourses were a feature of the Indian landscape. The dream recurred throughout my childhood but I never fell off the bridge! Again the scene was reproduced almost exactly in the film "North West Frontier". Mother tells me that train journeys were often badly affected by flooding but I do not remember any stretch of water anywhere until I saw the Indian Ocean at Bombay in 1944. In fact I have always been somewhat apprehensive of water.

Train journeys were interminable. I vaguely remember a journey from Roorkee to Quetta, which was (is) about 60 miles from the Afghan border. The journey probably took two days and one seemed to spend more time in stations than actually travelling. Stops at night were particularly lengthy. At each station on the plain a huge oblong block of ice was placed in a tin bath in the carriage. This measured about three foot by one foot by one foot and melted quickly away during the day but at night it was a godsend. The other memorable feature were the beggars. These were nearly always children and their faces and/or limbs would be eaten away by leprosy or other hideous tropical disease. What was left of the face was covered in flies which they made no effort to brush off.

Quetta, alas, I hardly remember. Father had been recalled from helping Spike Milligan fight Hitler in the Western Desert in order to attend the Indian Army Staff College at Quetta. It was presumably only six or seven years since the great earthquake in which of course The Queen's Royal Regiment had had a memorable part to play. All I recall was the rugged landscape and deep snow everywhere. (Seven years later I went back to Quetta in the summer as father was an instructor at what had become the Pakistan Army Staff College. Although only eleven, I played some cricket with the Pakistani officers and even then I found the umpiring idiosyncratic).

Another vaguely remembered visit was to New Delhi to visit father's brother who was in the diplomatic corps. It was the first time I saw gardens and the wide streets were impressive. Buildings were huge and white, rather than the yellow mud structures I was used to.

My last memory of Roorkee was the birth of my brother Bill (later to be a Royal Fusilier) in September 1943. After two hospital births, mother decided to stay at home as she distrusted all professionals. The result was that I had a very disturbed night's sleep. Being very hot, we were both on the verandah and mother yelled blue murder all night until 5am when Bill appeared. Ever since I have tended to be unimpressed when people scream - nobody comes close to Diana Wakely with all the stops out.

In July 1944 we set sail for England from Bombay. As stated above, it was the first time on a large ship (the *Strathclyde* or *Strathmore*, I think). So fascinated was I that I put my large head through the deck railings to view more closely the fire-tugs in the harbour. Unfortunately I could not get my head back again. All the efforts of the ship's engineers pushing, pulling and greasing, were to no avail and eventually a team had to be called from shore to cut the railing itself. I felt very important but got a sound thrashing for my pains.

Eventually we moved through the Suez Canal - presumably one of the first, if not the first, "family" convoys to move through the Mediterranean since the capture of Rome in June 1944. I remember being confined to bed because I was "sea-sick", though I am not quite sure how anyone could be sea-sick in the Suez Canal - probably mother's wry sense of humour. Nevertheless the colour and life of Port Said was indelibly printed on my memory and when I returned to Suez in 1960 on the troopship *Dunera* as a subaltern in the 1st Battalion The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment it was as if nothing had changed. There were still a myriad of little boats alongside, full of persuasive Gippis (sorry!) enticing you to part with money in exchange for

hieroglyph-encrusted wallets smelling alluringly of brand new leather.

In the open sea the most exciting aspect of life was the morning gunnery practise. There were two aircraft carriers in the convoy and other leviathans provided more excitement than a little boy could ever dream of in a million years: planes taking off, circling the convoy and landing, anti-aircraft guns loosing off at the targets towed by the planes, ships' guns booming off at nothing in particular and all the time destroyers screaming to and fro with everything behind the funnel (sorry, aft of the stack) awash with foaming seawater. It was no wonder that, twelve years later, having seen John Wayne in "Task Force", Van Johnson in "Men of the Fighting Lady" and William Holden in "The Bridges at Toko-Ri", that I wrote to my parents and said that I was determined to join the Fleet Air Arm. Having met a nice young Captain in Cyprus called Mike Reynolds, father wrote back to say that I would be much better off with my feet on the ground in The Queen's Royal Regiment.

On arrival in Liverpool, apparently my first words were "What ugly-looking people!" Certainly after the life, colour and sunlight of Bombay, Liverpool must have looked utterly depressing but alas!, apart from a summer holiday in Quetta in 1950, I have never been back to the Indian sub-continent.

Footnotes: Unbeknownst to me, in August 1942 my future wife Susan Ubsdell was born in Srinagar, Kashmir, daughter of Edward Ubsdell, Somerset Light Infantry, killed in Germany in 1945. As a result we appear as immigrants on census forms and, when our daughter was born at Riteln, Germany, in 1969 we had tremendous difficulty registering her as a British subject. The consular official at Hanover was not impressed when he learned that both our sets of parents had been married in India. Our daughter was finally saved from German or Indian nationality by the fact that my father had been born in Wimbledon.

When the series "Jewel in the Crown" was recently shown on TV, mother said that she could not bear to watch it because it would remind her of the jewel Great Britain had given away.

GW

Remembrance Day 1991 - Kingston



Bill Warren, Jack Chaffer and Jack Warner - Remembrance Day 1991. Jack laid a wreath at the Memorial in Kingston to the memory of all members of The East Surrey Regiment who gave their lives.

Colours of The East Surrey Regiment

And their forbears The 31st and 70th of Foot

31st Regiment 1864 - 1881

1st Bn The East Surrey Regiment 1881 - 1903

New Colours were received in 1864 while the Regiment was stationed at Aldershot, and were taken into use three years later on the departure of the Regiment from Ireland on foreign service. No formal presentation of these Colours to the 31st was ever made, and the reason for this has never been discovered. A tradition grew through the years that the Regiment would not see active service again while these Colours were carried.

During the forty years this stand was in service the Regiment became the First East Surreys in 1881, served three short tours in Gibraltar and one period of over nineteen years in India, but saw no action. They were laid up on 13th July 1904 on the south side of the nave of the ancient parish church, All Saints, Kingston upon Thames, which contained the XV Century Chapel of Holy Trinity, restored in 1920 as the East Surrey Memorial Chapel by the relatives and friends of some of the 6,000 officers and men of the Regiment who gave their lives in the 1914-18 war.

From the church floor the Colours appear to conform to the size laid down in the 1868 regulation, four feet flying by three feet six inches deep, and there is a Royal Crest replacing the spear point on the pike. (not illustrated)

70th Regiment 1867 - 1881

2nd Bn The East Surrey Regiment 1881 - 1945

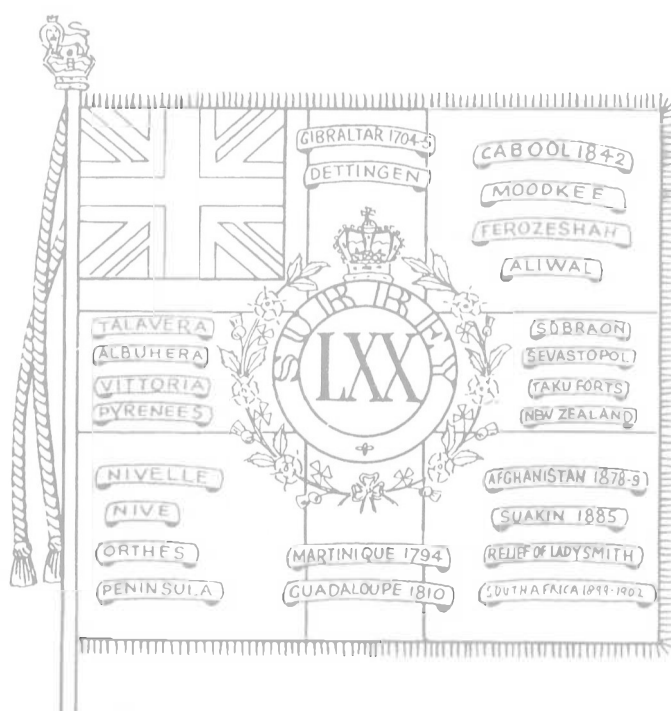
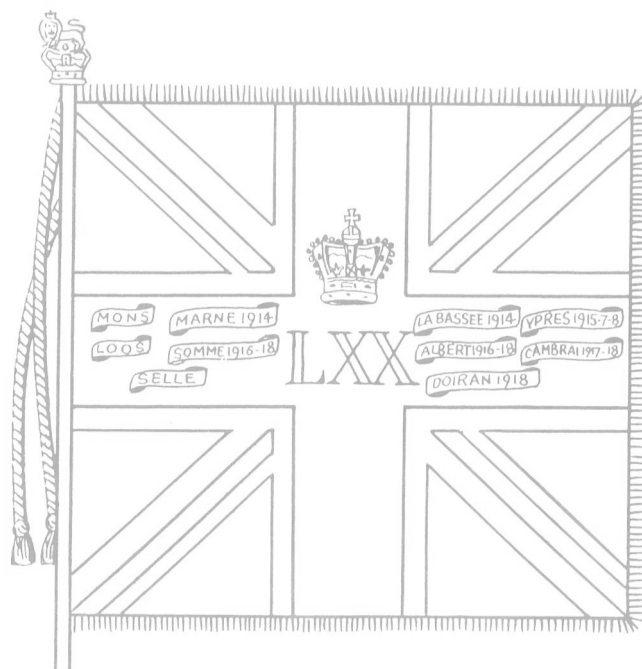
This is one of the two Stands with which the writer had personal associations, being on parade when these 1867 Colours were trooped for the last time in 1945. They were presented to the Seventieth at Aldershot by Lady Scarlett, wife of the G.O.C. Sir James Y Scarlett (of Balaclava Heavy Brigade fame). They were carried for 78 years, at one time being among the oldest in the British Army, and seemingly anticipated the Queen's Regulation of 1868, which ordered the final reduction in size of Colours to 3ft 9ins horizontal by 3ft vertical.

After a successful tour of duty in Ireland, the 70th served in India from 1872-1884, during which period the reorganisation of Line Infantry, on a territorial basis, took place, and the 70th became the Second East Surreys. Active service in the 2nd Afghan War of 1878-79 and against the Mahdi's lieutenants in Suakin in 1885 was followed by a short tour in Malta 1893-95. The Colours accompanied the Battalion to South Africa where only Spion Kop and Colenso may be mentioned of the many actions in which it was involved with a loss of 290 killed and wounded. The Colours also survived both World Wars and were naturally held in great esteem.

When the 2nd Bn went to serve in the Far East in 1938, the Colours went with them, and as the Japanese threatened Singapore, they were placed in the vaults of the Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank.

As the enemy came nearer it was suggested that the Colours should be sent home, but the C.O. said they should remain and take their chance with the Battalion. During the occupation the Japanese evidently had examined these by now much faded flags and had thrown them on the floor of the bank vault, whence they were found in August, 1945, by Colonel Stitt of the Gordon Highlanders, who arranged for them to be brought home on the Battleship *HMS 'Nelson'*, in charge of the Royal Marines.

They were marched on parade, furled, at West Chilmington Camp, near Pulborough, on 30th November 1945, by a Colour Party made up of recently repatriated members of the original 2nd Bn, who had lost over 300 men fighting in the Malayan campaign and later as prisoners of war. They were then trooped in slow time through the new, re-constituted young battalion, and being



re-furled after the General Salute were marched to the rear of parade to the tune of 'Auld Lang Syne'. This famous old pair of colours are now beautifully framed and exhibited at Clondan Park. The black facings of the 70th contrast well with the red St. George's Cross on the Regimental Colour, the small union in the dexter canton providing an attractive design. A rather large and incongruous "LXX", set on a piece of red cloth on the faded central red cross, would appear to be a later renovation on the Queen's Colour.

31st/1st Battalion, The East Surrey Regiment 1903-1960

In 1881 the Thirty-First amalgamated with the Seventieth, and became the 1st Battalion The East Surrey Regiment.

Advantage was taken of the return of the battalion from India in 1903 to present new colours which would bear for the first time the insignia of The East Surrey Regiment. These were the only such colours carried by the battalion, and were presented on Queen's Parade, Aldershot, on 26th May 1903, by Lord Roberts, the Commander in Chief. In his address the Field Marshal said: "You may indeed be proud of belonging to a regiment which

during an existence of 200 years has served with distinction in so many climes and in every quarter of the Globe".

This stand saw service in many countries, and the Regimental Colour was last trooped by the First Battalion on Sobraon Day, 1958. Following the amalgamation of the East Surreys with the 2nd Foot, Queen's Royal Regiment (West Surrey) in October 1959 (one of the more successful regimental 'marriages'), these colours were laid up on 29th September 1960 in the regimental chapel of the newly forged County Regiment of Surrey in Guildford Cathedral, dedicated by the Lord Bishop of Guildford on 19th July 1959. They are in beautiful condition, and hang appropriately alongside the last colours of the 1st Battalion Queen's Royal Regiment, laid up at the same time. Nearby are the only colours carried by the amalgamated regiment, 1st Bn The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment, during its short existence from 1960 to 1966. The latter were also borne by the 1st Queen's until May 1974, when they received new colours from Queen Margarethe of Denmark, Allied Colonel in Chief, The Queen's Regiment.

Members interested in these Standards of loyalty will appreciate the beauty and solemnity of the laying-up ceremony. The last Commanding Officers of 1 Queen's and 1 Surreys handed their colours to the Provost of Guildford with these time honoured words: "These consecrated colours, formerly carried in the service of the Queen and country, I now deliver into your hands for safe custody within these walls".

These colours are of the size laid down in the Queen's Regulations of 1868. Three feet nine inches horizontal by three feet vertical, exclusive of a two inch fringe - dimensions which remain unchanged to the present day.

DJ

Warrant Officers and Sergeants Association

On Saturday 21 December 1991 the Warrant Officers and Sergeants Association held a special function at the TA Centre, Kingston upon Thames, to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the formation of the British Battalion. The support for this event exceeded our expectations mainly because practically the whole of our current membership turned up with their families and friends. Some who had been members of the British Battalion travelled quite a distance to be with us and in this respect I would mention Dave Clemens 'Dinky' Dines and Harold Ruoff.

We were particularly pleased to welcome the Chinese historian Chye Kooi Loong and his wife Lai Fan. Mr Chye had taken the trouble to research in detail the history of the British Battalion, including Japanese records, and finally produced the book "The British Battalion Malaya 1941 - 42". Mr & Mrs Chye had been staying with Mr Ruoff who kindly brought them along to join us at Kingston.



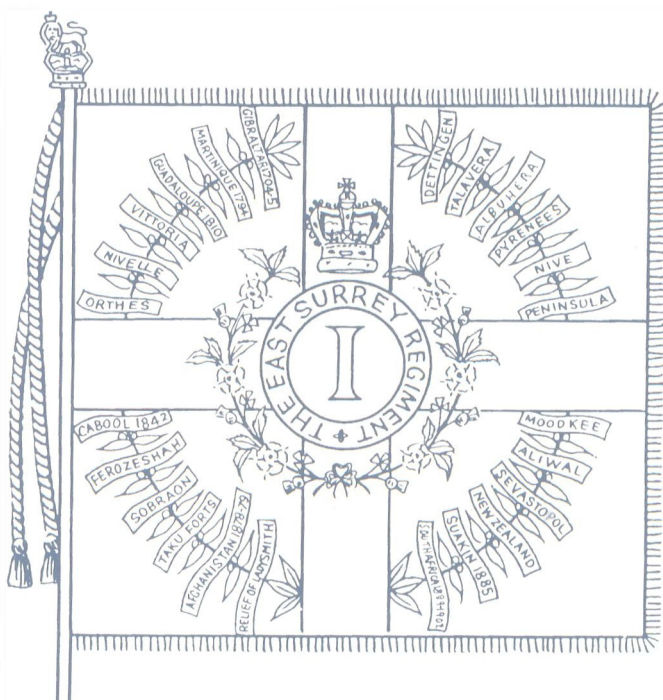
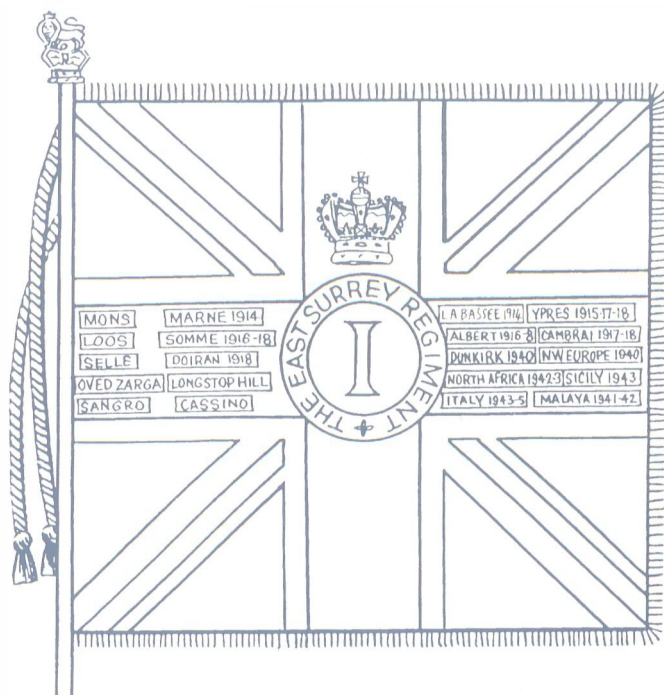
Chye Kooi Loong, Frank Trusedale, Jim Browning, Dave Boorer, Cliff Martin, Dinky Dines, Mrs Chye, Lew Jelley, Dave Clemens, Jack Griffiths Harold Ruoff, Mr Brewer, Cyril Harmon.

We were also very pleased to have the company of Colonel McConnell, Chairman of the Regimental Association, and Mrs McConnell. Colonel McConnell kindly agreed to propose the toast to the British Battalion, which was drunk in champagne donated by members of the WOs and Sgts Assn. In answer to the toast Dave Boorer gave a potted account of the activities of the British Battalion including the Battle of Kampar for which the Regiment was awarded the Battle Honour.

Finally I would like to say that those of us who served in the British Battalion make no claim to have performed with higher distinction than any other battalion but having been steeped in the traditions of the "Surreys", we feel we had done our best to uphold those traditions.

We are however proud of the uniqueness of the title as we believe that nowhere in the history of the British Army was there another unit designated as "The British Battalion".

CM



A Dunkirk Diary

Called up in mid-October 1939, I became 6144634 Pte. Hitchcock A. of The East Surrey Regiment. After completing basic training (with somewhat inadequate resources) at Kingston, Bisley and Richmond Park and a brief stay at Seaford, I was drafted to the 1/6th Bn.

(It was our first taste of battalion life and we soon detected a certain amount of rivalry between the few Regulars and Reservists, the Territorials and the Conscripts but after our return from Dunkirk this was largely replaced by "I woz there") We were now fully equipped and after embarkation leave were off to France on the 'Ulster Prince' on April 5th 1940. We stayed a few days at Conlie, south of Le Mans then entrained for Grandvillers from whence we marched some 100 miles in a few days. ('showing the flag') to Siracourt near St. Pol.

While looking at debris from 1914-18 in fields near Ballieul my Sergeant (Riches) asked me if I would like to join the Intelligence Section. As I spoke a fair amount of French and was pretty good with map reading it was agreed with the Intelligence Sergeant (Coltman) that I should be transferred. At the end of April personal diaries had to be handed in, so the entries which follow were reconstructed from memory and battle notes and checked against battalion records after the diary was returned to me on Nov 5th 1941.

May 4th Battalion transferred to 4th Division under the policy of one Territorial battalion in each Brigade. Moved by M.T. via Armentieres and Lille to Wattrelos. Billeted in part of a wool factory.

May 5th Went into Roubaix in the evening - the biggest place I've been in in France.

May 6th Helped Royal Engineers building pillboxes to extend Maginot Line to cover Belgian Frontier.

May 7th Transferred to Intelligence Section in Headquarters Company. Chaps seemed a bit strange at first but soon got on OK. (Lt. Homersham, Sgt. Coltman, L/Cpl. Moore, Ptes. Blythe, Cotter, Poole and two others).

May 8th Battalion Headquarters is in an old restaurant. Like being back at work again! (I was a chef by profession). During the next few days I had a 'Crash Course' in Intelligence Section work.

May 12th (Whit Monday) All shops closed but borrowed tools from a cafe/barber shop to cut each others hair!

May 14th Air raids early, no bombs in our area. Moved by M.T. into Belgium via Courtrai and Alost to Vilvorde. Night march to Diegem - East of Brussels.

May 15th Lots of refugees passing through. Quite a shock when one with strong Lancashire accent enquired about trains from Brussels - wonder what happened to her. German pilot who baled out must have been fired on by every Bren for miles around - such was the anger at 'disguised' parachutists.

May 16th Could see smoke from Louvain burning. Heavy raids round Brussels. Jerry planes came very close - one lower than the water tower we were using as O.P.

May 17th Bn spent the night destroying food etc. moved back to railway at Vilvorde, held on till Brigade passed through. Marched all night back round Brussels. (In the dark went down 2 or 3 steps in a pavement on a section bicycle we were allowed to ride in turn!) Planes machine gunning during day.

May 18th Arrived early morning near Welle south of Alost. (Saw a motorcycle blazing at road fork near Alost.) L/Cpl Moore and I nearly got left behind when on O.P. couldn't keep properly

awake and almost missed time limit. Moved by M.T. separated from HQ slept the night in a chicken run. Lost my torch (focusing from Woolworths 6d each part (2) plus battery.)

May 19th By M.T. to join rest of Bn marched to Driesch. Army food running short, having to take stuff from houses. Beds. & Herts and DCI.I in position along the River Escaut. Bn in reserve in Driesch.

May 20th Early morning air battle. Very high. Got paid! made nice dug-out - never used! Our O.P. in roof gave accurate positions of gun flashes but they were mostly ours. Heavy artillery fire. Bn has first casualties.

May 21st Bosch heavily shelled, one or two near us. Had chicken for supper! Relieved DCI.I who had heavy casualties in front line at Wafflestraat. A, B and C forward, D Coy in reserve.

May 22nd In action properly for first time. Moore and I went to look for an O.P. Got mixed up in two lots of heavy shelling along the canal. No practical O.P. Going back to H.Q. along a ditch were fired on by D Coy, fortunately without harm. 6 men wounded at Bn HQ retired after dark, covered by carriers (and 4 Pl.)

May 23rd Marched all night re-entering France through Muscron to Neuville-en-Ferrain. (Broken tram, phone and light cables everywhere, catnaps during 10 min. halts. Men virtually asleep on their feet bumping in to carriers etc.) Late in day about 40 men left behind turned up in odd clothes. Rumours of Gamelin being 5th Columnist. In defensive positions B C D forward A in reserve. Started O.P. in 1907 house.

May 24th On O.P. with Moore. Very sick in early morning but felt much better after porridge and tinned fruit provided by Royal Engineers demolishing other houses to clear a field of fire. C.O. (Lt. Col. 'Nipper' Armstrong) took out carriers to engage enemy cars and M/c's around the cemetery. (The action around the cemetery I understand largely contributed to 'Nipper's' DSO which he richly deserved by giving confidence to a unit largely consisting of men barely 6 months in the Army.)

May 25th Carriers in action. One carrier lost, driver killed. Major Duncombe-Anderson killed. Enemy at Halluin.

May 26th Slight Artillery activity. Few casualties.

May 27th Bn HQ shelled as a C.O.'s conference broke up. Sheltered in cellar of 'our' house and found someone had left two live grenades just outside the entrance! No casualties. Had to abandon a meal I was preparing, chicken, new potatoes and macaroni pudding as the fire got put out.

Wonder if 'Jerry' enjoyed it? Relieved by a Guards Bn at 1900hrs, marched back to Tourcoina then by M.T. into Belgium.

May 28th Bn arrived Landslyght near Ploegstreete. Heavy shelling and rain. Packs (which contained food we had been able to carry from shops) loaded on trucks ready for an attack, last we saw of them! Positions in forward edge of woods. Bn to attack Voormezele. Carriers enter and hold until arrival of C Coy. Artillery from both sides, considerable casualties in C Coy 2100 hours withdrew to Dickebusch.

May 29th Stayed a few minutes, shelled, marched on to near Eikhoek. Believe definitely going home. Orders to get new clothing, boots etc. and dump the old in the farm pond. (Must have broken Capt Ridger's the Quartermaster's heart! Found a pack, some honey abandoned at Furnes where the ditches were full of trucks deliberately damaged as much as possible. Guns also being destroyed as perimeter closes in. 1600hrs. Arrived Ooste-Dunkirk. C and D Coys under Major Keane on left, B in centre. A on right in defensive positions behind Nieuport Canal, enemy in town and on canal. Told we have to hold for 4 days to cover evacuation through Dunkirk.

May 30th Heavy shelling and bombing. I was attached to D Coy as runner, had some corned beef stew mostly living on biscuit and honey!

May 31st Moved up in early morning to wood not far from Nieuport. Got shelled several times. Germans shelters from 1914-18 useful but a bit dodgy as open side faced the enemy! Walked miles to and from Bn HQ. Meal came up in evening. Oxo and tinned fish - took some to 19 Pl. Heavy shelling and attack. Some casualties. B Coy caused heavy enemy casualties then were relieved by B Coy 1st Surreys. 2200hrs Bn commenced withdrawal to La Panne.

June 1st Marched through Coxyde and on to beach at La Panne. Heavy shelling. Helped carry a wounded gunner on to beach. Lost contact with D Coy. Beach covered with men. Marvellous sight, all the ships (Navy). Couldn't get to them - tide out. Found Maj Mayne (HQ Coy) about 8 of us walked to Bray Dunes, tried one or two stranded boats but too heavy to move. Waded in sea but decided it was pointless as tide still falling. Found rest of Bn. Machine gunned by plane. Went with Maj Mayne to RASC Depot along the front and got Bovril, hard (4"x3"x1/2") Belgian Army biscuits and a few other things. I always remember a lone Bren gunner with (a completely exposed) AA tripod blazing away at any plane that came near the depot. Obtained water from a garage under a house opposite us where two French soldiers, complete with a light tank spent the day brewing coffee - for themselves. Brewed Bovril but some chaps apprehensive that smoke would attract German shells although half the town was on fire! Moved out in early evening. "Nipper" insisted that every man should be fully armed and equipped - 'Plenty on the beach if you've lost yours' (A guardsman was only allowed to join us after he had smartened himself up!) Marched as a unit, - one of the few who did - and joined the queue on the wooden jetty in Dunkirk.

June 2nd Naval guns on shore firing at enemy made us jump at first as we didn't know they were there. Shells coming nearer from Jerry. 3 am. Left for home on HMS *Venomous*. Sat under depthcharge gun, going so fast that although I was dead tired and wearing a greatcoat I was too cold to sleep! 5.30 am. arrived Dover. Our progress to Twezeldown was more like one of triumph than a great escape. Food, drink and postcards offered to us at every station. Still a bit jumpy if there was anything of a bang or a plane passing over but great to get our boots off and have blisters treated.

June 3rd & 4th Spent mostly sleeping and eating - felt much better.

June 5th Went by train to Yeovil - slept the night in grounds of Barwick House - 4 Div Collecting Centre.

June 6th Rejoined Bn at Crundle Court, Milborne Port. Most of the rest of the Int. Sec. turned up during the day (All returned safely).

June 8th Went home on 4 days leave just as I returned, except left off my greatcoat, rifle and equipment remained at Milborne Port. Mum surprised to see me, didn't dream I had been in action. Fancy only one week since I was in Dunkirk! (My home was in Bath so the contrast made it difficult to absorb).

AWEH

Saratoga

In the Association Newsletter No 49 RCT refers to the surrender by British Forces at Saratoga in which the flank companies of the 31st Regiment were taken prisoner. The identity of the composition of the various units and their commanders in the wars of the 18th century occasionally makes it difficult to trace their history. Nevertheless, there was a link with the 31st (Huntingdonshire) Regiment and the flamboyant General John Burgoyne.

In 1774 Burgoyne was sent to America to reinforce General Gage. During the enforced idleness there he engaged in lengthy correspondence with the colonial General Lee who had served with him in Portugal. In 1776 the Secretary of War gave orders for a force of 7,000 men stationed in Canada to be handed over to the command of General Burgoyne who was instructed to march them south and place himself under the command of General William Howe, the C in C, North America at Saratoga. On their expedition they prevailed at Ticonderoga against the colonial forces but met with eventual disaster at Saratoga.

The battle which took place at Saratoga in 1777 between the British and the colonists resulted in the surrender of General Burgoyne in a somewhat theatrical manner. From behind a bulwark of champagne cases and surrounded by a praetorian guard of courtesans he gave himself up to General Gates. His Bucolic style seems to have appealed to the rough farmers who opposed him for he at once obtained leave from General George Washington to return to England. John Burgoyne, a product of Westminster School, married Lady Charlotte Stanley the daughter of the 11th Earl of Derby. Their home for a while was "The Oaks" in Carshalton - Woodmansterne area of Surrey. The house which contained fine furniture and art treasures was demolished in 1950 by a local authority which pleaded that it had no funds to restore the building for posterity. Nevertheless its name is commemorated by an annual horse race which takes place at Epsom - on a proposal by the then Duke of Richmond and friends who, at one time, had met and dined at the mansion.

John Burgoyne in addition to being a soldier attracted attention as an MP, actor and playwright. Some of his plays which included "Maid of the Oaks" "The Lord of the Manor" and "The Heiress" had obvious titles. The bicentenary of his death in 1792 in his Mayfair home is almost here. He is buried in Westminster Abbey.

HS

A Chivalrous Accolade

It was in December 1944 that we were informed that the 1/6th Battalion of The Queen's Royal Regiment was to leave 131 Lorried Infantry Brigade in the famous 7th Armoured Division and to be withdrawn to an assembly area. We were clearing enemy remnants in Holland at the time.

When the movement order came through it directed the Battalion to proceed in convoy back to Ypres. There, to hand over all Transport and to disperse personnel. Some 100 all ranks were to return to England to form a training Battalion. The remainder to fill gaps in our sister Battalion the 1/5th Queen's. Our other Battalion, the 1/7th Queen's was similarly treated.

On the ordered day and time the Battalion convoy led by the Carrier Platoon, crossed the start line. There to our surprise, lined up to the right and left of the track exit from the assembly area were the guns of our supporting Field Regiment of the Royal Artillery. Their gun barrels were elevated to an angle of 60 degrees so as to form a triumphal arch. As we made our way through this guard of honour the gunners on either side cheered and applauded a brave but battered Lorried Infantry Battalion whom they had accompanied and protected all the way from North Africa.

This chivalrous accolade made a deep and lasting impression on a very apprehensive carrier Platoon Commander whose task it was to lead the Battalion convoy unerringly to its final destination.

We are now threatened with losing our identity under the so called "OPTIONS FOR CHANGE" I believe that this proud incident in the history of the 1/6th (Bermondsey) Bn. of The Queen's Royal Regiment deserves to be recorded. It is hoped that it will not be forgotten as those who took part finally fade away.

A.F.P.

A Letter From the Trenches

An interesting letter has recently come to light, written by 2nd Lt. C F Austin, attached to the 2nd Battalion of The Queen's in Belgium, shortly before Christmas 1914.

The 2nd Battalion had landed at Zeebrugge in October having returned from Cape Town to England on 19th September and had been brought up to strength by a draft of 300 men from the 3rd (Militia) Battalion. It had then joined the 22nd Brigade of the 7th Infantry Division (2nd Queen's, 2nd Warwicks, 1st Royal Welch and 1st South Staffordshires). The Division then marched north to establish a base at Antwerp and so outflank the German Armies moving into France. Only a week later, the Division was pulled back from Antwerp and rushed into the line at Ypres where on 29th, the 1st and 2nd Battalions held the line side by side.

In August 1914, the 1st and 2nd Queen's were two of the finest infantry battalions in the Army, unsurpassed for smartness, efficiency and professional prowess. By November, the 1st Battalion had been reduced to 32 effectives, and the 2nd Battalion had sustained 676 casualties out of a mobilised strength of 988.

On 14 December a strong draft of reservists from a number of regiments joined the 2nd Battalion. The draft included 2nd Lt. Austin; three other Officers of the Artist's Rifles, Lieutenants Rought, Humphries and Messom; and Lieutenant Ramsey of The Royal Sussex Regiment.

On the 18th, two companies of The Queen's supported the Warwicks in an unsuccessful and costly attack after which the Germans in the opposite trenches initiated a local truce in order to collect and bury the dead. In the course of this activity, they managed to entice 2nd Lieutenants Rought and Walmisley with seven stretcher bearers into their trenches where they were made prisoners. The truce was ended by a sudden cannonade from the British artillery. The actions of the 18th and 19th cost the lives of 2nd Lieutenant Ramsey and seven soldiers. Captains Fearon and Lee, Lieutenant Allan; 2nd Lieutenant Burkett and thirty-nine soldiers were wounded, besides those taken prisoner.

The letter spells out what happened in some detail.

*Letter Card postmarked "Army Post Office 66 Dec 22 (1914"
Addressed to:- Capt C F H Greenwood, Artists Rifles BEF.*

From 2nd Queen's

Dear Greenwood

I have to tell you the most tragic news. The Warwicks and 2 companies of Queens made a night attack on the 18th on the main German trenches which unfortunately failed. My own opinion, though perhaps I shouldn't state it, is that to anyone with the least knowledge of the state of affairs here it should have been obvious that it couldn't succeed in the way it was done. However - "Ours not to reason why" - and the result is that among the killed are STANDRING and MONK of ours. G V Pearce is missing. His body has not, as far as I know been identified and we are hoping that he is only wounded and a prisoner. STANDRING was hit in the arm and neck. He was brought back alive but bled to death before anything could be done for him. MONK was found right up on their barbed wire, so we know how he died. They are going to do what they can to get him mentioned in despatches. Of our chaps only RANDY BRIGHT (ROUGHT) was out, MUCKOM (MESSOM), HUMPHREYS and I being in 'A' and 'B' Coys which held the lines against a possible counter attack. RANDY escaped unscathed. You can't imagine the hell of fire those poor chaps went through and the distant yells of wounded which went on all

night was simply appalling. During the night the Germans must have been out collecting some of the wounded near their trenches. We could see them with flashlamps. I only hope PEARCE and another chap of ours, RAMSEY, who is, also missing were taken in. If you write to PEARCE's people please rub this hope in, though I fear it is only a slight one. When daylight came both sides left their trenches, as by a magical understanding and started picking up wounded and burying the dead. They had a good few too I am glad to say. A lot of our officers and men were out chatting with the Germans who were very decent and offered them cigarettes and sweets - English ones too! There are always some dirty swine among them though. Some of them came up to ROUGHT and WALMISLEY (cousin of the G coy man, whom please inform) and said something about "wounded officer - come", beckoning to their trenches. Thinking, I suppose, of PEARCE and RAMSEY they went, all unsuspectingly and must have been made prisoners, for they never emerged, words can't convey to you how affected we all were by the loss of these brave chaps. It was a ghastly business and I believe an egregious blunder from start to finish. That is what makes us so savage. It may be our turn next - let's hope not. Meanwhile, with what cheerfulness we may, have a Merry Xmas to you and all and God grant the end will come soon. Love from all 3 of us to all the Coy and Corps. Yours ever.

*Alfred, C F Austin
2nd Lt*

The atmosphere of good feeling engendered by the Christmas truce did not last beyond the New Year. The high command on both sides disapproved of the ceasefire and determined to press on with operations. In the vicious fighting at Loos in early 1915 was buried the goodwill of Christmas 1914, Austin himself was killed with the Battalion at Ypres in March 1915, Humphreys also fell a few days later and Messom wounded. The local truce of 19th December was to be followed on 25th and 26th by a more widespread cease-fire, the famous Christmas Truce of 1914:

"On Christmas Day and also on the 26th there was again an informal armistice, when the German officers provided lists of British Officers recently captured and promised to try to effect the release of 2nd Lieutenants Rought and Walmisley so basely captured and detained on the 19th" (1)

These two did not, however rejoin. Robert Graves, who served with the 1st Royal Welch, also in the 22nd Brigade, wrote of this same Christmas truce in his autobiography. Goodbye to all that and in a short story, "Christmas Truce" (2)

"Christmas Eve, at 7.30 pm, the enemy trenches suddenly lit up with a row of coloured Chinese lanterns, and a bonfire started in the village behind. We stood to arms, prepared for whatever happened. Ten minutes later the Fritzes began singing a Christmas carol called "Stilly Nucked". Our boys answered with "Good King Wenceslas", which they'd learned the first verse of.....Then a Fritz with a megaphone shouts "Merry Christmas.....!"

"Christmas was a peculiar sort of day....Hobnobbing with the Hun, so to speak: swapping fags and rum and buttons and badges for brandy, cigars and souvenirs".

"No Man's land had seemed ten miles across when we were crawling out on a night patrol; but now we found it no wider than the width of two football pitches".

As far as can be discovered, none of The Queen's Officers mentioned survived the war.

(1) H C Wyley History of The Queen's Royal Regiment Vol. VII, pp 92-3

(2) Robert Graves "Christmas Truce" in The Shout and other stories, (London 1965).

5 Queens OMA

The date of this year's Reunion Dinner has had to be changed due to unforeseen circumstances, and will now be held on Saturday 30th May. 6.00pm for 7.00pm dinner.

The Cranleigh Company Dinner, organised by Jack Petch and his committee was held at the Cricket Pavilion, Cranleigh, and was attended by 40 members and guests. Chairman Les May suggested that with the passing of time it would be more convenient to hold a luncheon in future.

The Remembrance Day service at Holy Trinity was well attended. The wreath was laid on behalf of the Regimental Assn. by Col Toby Sewell. The March Past to the castle grounds was led by the band of the WRAC and the salute was taken by the Mayor, Cllr Doreen Bellerby. Lt Col Geoffrey Wright was once again the Parade Marshall. Wreaths were laid at the castle grounds by Col Toby Sewell on behalf of The Queen's Royal Surrey Regimental Assn., and by Lt Col Foster Herd on behalf of 5 Queens OMA. We were delighted to see a good contingent of the TA Company on parade.

Our congratulations to Eric and Rita Saunders, 2/5 Queen's, and Mr and Mrs Weston, 1/5 Queen's on their Golden Wedding Anniversaries.

If you require any information concerning the OMA please contact our Hon Secretary Doug Mitchell, 3 Littlefields Way, Fairlands, Guildford. Tel. 0483 232043.

6th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment OCA

The Dinner and Dance held at the Union Jack Club on Saturday 26th October 1991 was attended by more than 80 members, wives and friends. The Guests of Honour were Capt & Mrs Perdue and Mr & Mrs Pratton.

The Loyal Toast was proposed by Major Maurice Nason and the toast to the guests by Colonel C H Nice.

After an excellent meal, the tables were cleared away and the assembled company danced the night away until the bewitching hour.

During the next few months we can look forward to a trip to Bassingbourn on July 5th 1992. The Association will again be organising a coach to this event from the Drill Hall, Jamaica Road. If you have never been on this trip I can recommend it as it is a good day out, and you may meet many old friends with whom you have lost touch with. I myself over the years have met many old colleagues at this reunion. If you wish to attend contact any member of the committee for further details. If you require lunch tickets let the Secretary know and I will order them as soon as I have the details, or you may order them yourself direct from R.H.Q. Canterbury.

Although the trip has not been arranged I expect that there will be a trip to Ghent in September. Details will be available at a later date.

The Association will be holding a Dinner Dance on October 24th.

JTB

1/7th Bn. The Queens Old Comrades Association

The Annual Dinner was held at the Gascoigne Rooms Union Jack Club on 7th March 1992.

The President, Members and their guests were assembled to remember the 6th March 1943 (Battle of Medenine) a landmark in the history of the battalion.

The occasion also served to welcome officers of the Patriotic

Committee of St. Niklaas Belgium and their ladies in order to thank them for their kindness and generosity each September at their "Liberation Celebrations".

Following a convivial dinner and the Royal Toasts to HER MAJESTY and KING BAUDOUIN the members were entertained to a series of amusing recollections by Major General Gordon CB. CBE. DSO., who had commanded the battalion for a long period during the War.

He recalled with great pride and affection those days with 1/7th and concluded by thanking all for their support and devotion to duty in the past and wished everybody the 'Best of Luck for the Future'.

A memorable night of that special comradeship to those who have served together in hazardous conditions and in particular by members of our Regiment. We then dispersed vowing to meet again next year — the 50th Anniversary of Medenine.

SP

Memories of an Orderly Room Sergeant.

Reading "Memories of Ninety Years" by Princess Alice, Duchess of Gloucester, published last year I found a photograph taken in St. Moritz in 1929 of a Winter sports party which included Gaspard Ponsonby. It stirred memories of Autumn 1940 when, fresh from training at Stoughton Barracks (under "Old Pick" - Lt-Col. Pickering) I found myself in D Coy 1/5th Battalion The Queen's Royal Regiment. The company commander was Gaspard Ponsonby, then Major Lord Sysonby, DSO.

"Pongo", as he was known by his troops, had set up his headquarters in a lighthouse where the River Nene empties into the Wash. It had mural decorations inside by a previous occupant, Peter Scott, the naturalist. Sysonby was of aristocratic bearing and wore a monocle. His father was private secretary to three sovereigns - Victoria, Edward VII, and George V. He himself had won his decoration in France before Dunkirk.

I was not with Sysonby long as the adjutant, Captain John Dewsnap, found that I knew shorthand and typing and quickly mustered me into the Orderly Room. Lt.Col. G.V. Palmer was CO. This experience repeated itself in 1942, when I was posted to 2/5 Queen's from a convalescent depot and once again the adjutant, Captain A.W.Gadsden, seized me for the Orderly Room, then in a turmoil preparing for embarkation. The CO was Lt-Col (later Maj- Gen) J.Y. Whitfield.

It is just on 50 years (25 August 1942) since 169 Queen's Brigade, with the rest of 56 Division, sailed from Glasgow for overseas war service. A lot of time was spent at sea: to Bombay via Cape Town (8 weeks), then through the Gulf to Basra, and three crossings of the Mediterranean. The worst ship was the *Rajula*, disgustingly insanitary, in which 2/5 Queen's sailed through the Gulf. In this vessel I was allowed into the wireless room to take shorthand notes of BBC broadcasts on Montgomery's battle at El Alamein (in which 1/5th were involved). Our first ship, *Johann Van Oldenbarnvelt*, 18,000 tons, was acquired after the war by a Near Eastern company and had her name changed. She eventually caught fire and sank in the Mediterranean with much loss of life. In the Polish ship *Batory* (from Taranto to Port Said, April 1944) I was temporarily employed in the ship's orderly room and invited to take meals in the first class dining room with the officers. My wife still has a letter written on board complaining of endless eggs and bacon for breakfast. Bacon and egg breakfasts were unheard of at home because of food rationing. *Batory* was very comfortable as she had not been fully stripped out for troop carrying. After the war she was often at Tilbury for cruise holidays.

LWG

50 Years On

On 5th February 1992 a group of Far East P.O.W.s, widows and relatives, 130 in all, left Heathrow, destination Bangkok and Singapore. In the group were six members of the 2nd Bn The East Surrey Regiment - Harry Bull, John Davies, Jack Griffiths, John Orchard, Harold Wise and myself. During our eight day stay in Thailand, we spent a couple of days in the Kwai Valley. The first day we boarded a train which took us over the 'Bridge over the River Kwai', and around the Wampo Viaduct. Later that day we visited Hell Fire Pass. The next day we were off to Kanchanaburi and Chungkai War Cemeteries, where we were joined by another member of the Surreys, Harold Ruoff. Services of Remembrance were conducted at both places by an Australian Minister who is resident in Thailand. Tributes, including wreaths bearing the East Surrey badge, were laid at the memorials in each cemetery, in memory of friends buried in these places. A Thai army bugler played Last Post and Reveille, which was greatly appreciated by the ex military people present.

On then to Singapore, where we met and had dinner with, a party of 120 who had travelled there with the Royal British Legion, a most enjoyable evening. The next day, the 15th February, the Fiftieth Anniversary of the fall of Singapore, we all assembled at Kranji War Cemetery for a Memorial Service organised by the Ex-Services Assoc. of Singapore, Ex P.O.W. Assoc. of Australia and Eight Australian Div. Assoc.. Over 2000 people attended the service, which was performed by Leaders of the Inter-Religious Organisation of Singapore. The Lament was played by pipers of the Gurka Contingent Singapore Police Force whilst wreaths were laid at the memorial - including one from our regiment. The Last Post and Reveille was played by buglers of the Singapore Infantry Regiment Band. A most moving ceremony which we were all so pleased to have been able to attend. This service began at 7.30a.m., so we were all quite happy that refreshments were available afterwards. Here we were able to cast an eye around at the other people who had attended this anniversary service, and we were so happy to meet up with two other Surreys, Wally Lord from Australia and Bill Marks from Canada.

All in all a worthwhile and very memorable trip.

IJ



SIGNALS

For President and all members Queens Royal Surrey Regt FM CO and all ranks the First Battalion PD Best wishes on the 146th anniversary of the Battle of Sobraon PD looking forward to celebrating many more

The President and all members of the Queens Royal Surrey Regiment Association send best wishes to all members particularly those members who served with the British Battalion formed in Malaya fifty years ago on December 20th 1941

From RHQ R Anglian

To 1 Queens, 2 R Anglian, RHQ Queens

President and all ranks the Royal Tigers Association send greetings to the President and all ranks the Queens Royal Surrey Regiment and Association CMM all ranks one Queens and all ranks two Royal Anglian on the fiftieth anniversary of the formation of the British Battalion PD We remember with pride the undaunted courage and fortitude of that magnificent battalion formed from our two regiments.

From 1 Queens

To RHQ Queens, RHQ R Anglian

The CO and all ranks First Battalion send best wishes to you all on the golden anniversary of the formation of the British Battalion

From HMS Leeds Castle - 23 April 92

To 1 Queen's and Queen's Surreys Association

Best wishes and congratulations on this glorious day 3 VCS a day keeps the enemy at bay Exclam

From Captain S Bolton HQ 56 London Brigade

To Queens Surreys Association

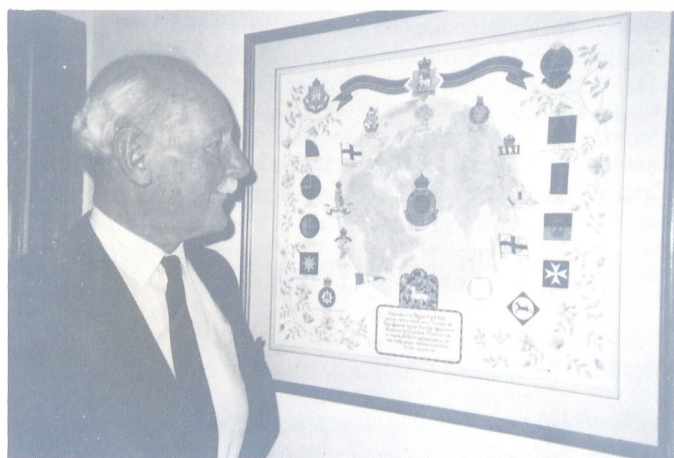
Loyal Greetings and best wishes on this the 77th Anniversary of the Battle of Ypres

From RHQ Queen's April 92

To 1 Queen's (Minden)

For CO and all ranks PD From President and all members Queen's Surreys Association PD Best wishes on this anniversary of Ypres Day

Pristinae Virtutis Memor



Major Peter Hill admiring his illustrated Historical Chart of his service to The Regiment

Militia Battalions of The Queen's Royal West Surrey and The East Surrey Regiment.

The Militia was the oldest constitutional English military force, originating in the reign of King Alfred, c.AD 871. From the 16th century the Lords-Lieutenant of the Counties had the charge of raising Militia in their respective shires on a quota basis proportionate to the population.

After the Civil War the Commonwealth allowed the Militia to lapse as a proper organised military force but it was revived and remodelled in 1661 and was called out during the troubles between James II and William III and again in 1715.

In 1756, for fear of a French invasion, an Act was passed for the full embodiment of the Militia and for it to be raised by lot or ballot, the men (between 18 and 50 years old) serving for three years with the Colours and training four times every year. During the remainder of the 18th Century it was at intervals, either embodied, disbanded, augmented or supplemented under a miscellany of Statutes. Up to 1798, Surrey had only one Militia Regiment, variously referred to in contemporary documents as "The Royal Surrey", "The Surrey Regiment of Militia" or the "Old Surrey Militia". The Surrey contingent was then expanded, the 1st Royal Surrey Regiment established at Richmond, the 2nd (or 1st Supplementary Battalion) at Guildford and the 3rd (or 2nd Supplementary Battalion) at Kingston. The 3rd was, however, soon reduced to a nominal title.

In 1802, the Militia Acts were again revised but powers to raised units by ballot were further retained. In 1808 a "Local Militia" was instituted and in many cases whole regiments of Volunteer Infantry were drafted into the Militia. At that time there were 17 regiments of Regular Militia containing a total of some 151,000 men.

Acts of 1816 and 1817 permitted Annual Training to be suspended by an order in Council and until 1852, the Militia, as a recognisable force, ceased to exist leaving the old regiments represented only by cadres of Officers and small staffs of NCOs and Drummers.

In 1852, there was a revival and the Militia was re-organised on a voluntary enlistment footing although powers to raise by ballot were still retained if necessary.

From 1854, the Militia was raised solely by voluntary enlistment and the old ballot system was finally abandoned.

The 3rd Royal Surrey Militia was then reinstated. The 1st Royal Surrey Militia retained its precedence in the List of 20th and the 2nd Regiment, the 11th (both numbers established by lot). Regular training was resumed and in 1854 the force was embodied on the outbreak of war with Russia. During the Crimean conflict at least ten battalions of Militia, all volunteers, relieved regular battalions on garrison duties overseas. Training then remained fairly regular until the end of the century. The Militia was further in embodiment during 1857 and 1858 (for the Indian Mutiny) and during 1899 and 1903 for the South African Wars. In 1871, The Regulations of the Forces Act transferred the overall command of the Militia from the Lords-Lieutenant to the Crown and the Officers thereafter received their Commissions directly from the Queen. At that time drill for recruits could be extended, by order of Commanding Officers, to six months at a time.

In May 1872, a War Office Circular directed that, in future, the Militia and the Volunteers were to be generally styled "The Auxiliary Forces". In November 1873, the period of service in the Militia and Reserve was extended by War Office Circulars from 5 to 6 years and thereafter annually for one month. The strength of the 2nd Royal Surrey Regiment was then 26 Officers, 35 Sergeants, 29 Corporals and 565 men. In 1908, the Militia

finally disappeared as a consequence of the Territorial and Reserve Forces Act 1907. Strangely, the Channel Islands, Bermuda and Malta retained the ancient title "Militia" for their defence forces.

During the 1914-1918 War practically all the reinforcements for the 1st and 2nd Battalions of regular infantry were drawn from the 3rd (former Militia) Battalions although by then they were styled The Special Reserve. In 1921, during a major re-organisation of the reserve it was decided that one Militia Battalion should be maintained for each regiment of regular infantry.

The Militia are said to differ from the regular soldiers in that they do not serve continuously for terms of years, and from Volunteers, in that they serve only in War or undergo their military training in peacetime, by legal compulsion.

In 1881 the 1st Royal Surrey Militia became the 3rd Battalion of The East Surrey Regiment, The 2nd Royal Surrey Militia became the 3rd Battalion of The Queen's (Royal West Surrey) Regiment. The 3rd Royal Surrey Militia became the 4th Battalion of The East Surrey Regiment.

Uniforms

Until 1836, there was no definite distinction between the uniform of the regular Line Infantry and the Militia Regiments. The prime distinction then established was for gold lace or embroidery to be worn by the Line and silver for the Militia but of course this applied only to the Officers. The Line rank and file continued to wear their pewter buttons and their Staff Sergeants had silver lace until 1855, and the Militia the same. From 1855, although the Line received brass buttons, the Militia continued to wear their pewter ones. The distinction of the metal then became the complete distinction between regiments dressed in red and remained so until 1881, applying also to the chevron badges of rank of Sergeants and Staff Sergeants and their other appointments. Rifle Corps were not affected. When the 1852 revival took place certain Militia Regiments began adopting tunics instead of coats and even took helmets of various designs in lieu of shakos. However, when the new uniform for the Line Infantry was established the Militia properly conformed to it.

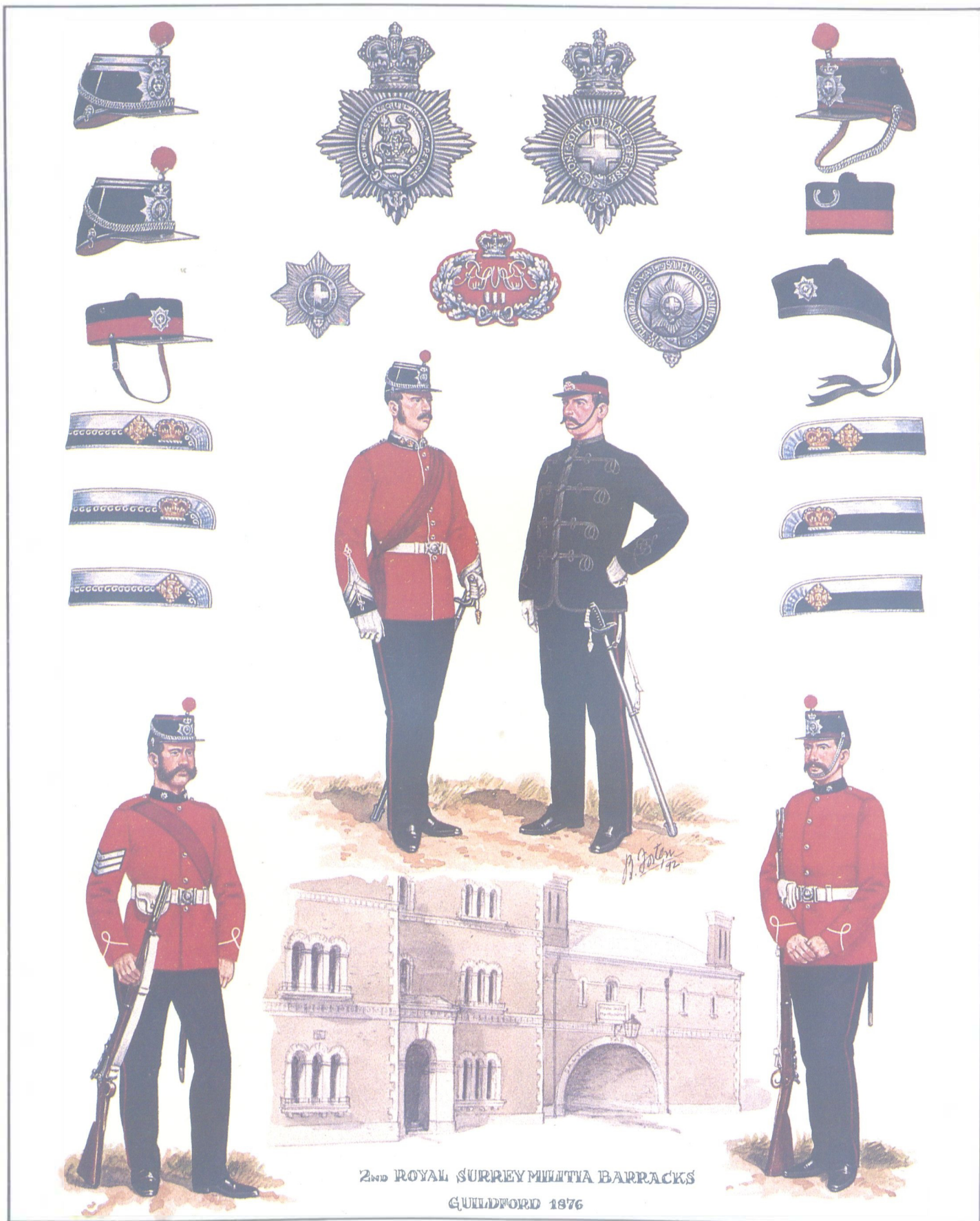
When serge "frocks" were established as the undress tunic for the Infantry, in lieu of the old shell jackets, the issue of full dress tunics to the Militia rank and file ceased and the simpler scarlet "frocks" were the standard wear for all occasions. The general issue of dress headdress was similarly discontinued for the Militia and the Glengarry was always worn. Officers, however, did wear shakos in Review Order and when they were in the field brigaded with the Line. In some Militia units shakos (and later helmets) for the NCOs and men were kept, usually out of regimental funds, and were worn for ceremonial and gala occasions. This is confirmed by a plate in the "Historical Records of the 2nd Royal Surrey Militia" compiled by Captain John Davis of the regiment in 1877.

The shoulder straps of the frocks were quite plain throughout the period. The badges worn on the old forage caps were described as "half circle bands with small foliation at each end". They were without any numerals by explicit order of the Horse Guards, Circular 7.10.1858. The Officers had regimental pattern shako plates, most based on an eight pointed fluted silver Star, with Crown and central badge.

From February 1872, the mounted Field Officers were ordered to wear pantaloons and knee high boots and to carry sabretaches when on parade.

Uniforms

The direct ancestors of the 7th Surrey Volunteer Rifle Corps, the Newington (Surrey) Volunteer Association, were based at



The 2nd and 3rd Royal Surrey Militia, 1877 At the top of the illustration are shown the silver shako plates of the 2nd, left, and 3rd, right, Royal Surrey Militia. At this time many militia regiments had the garter star embellishment on the shako. Below the shako plates are, to the left, the collar badge of the 2nd R.S.M. and to the right, the collar badge of the 3rd R.S.M. both of which are for other ranks. Between them is an officer's forage cap badge of the 3rd R.S.M. At the top, on the left, is a Field Officer's shako of the 2nd R.S.M., a Company Officer's shako of the 3rd R.S.M. and an officers forage cap of the 2nd R.S.M. On the right, from the top, an Other Rank's shako of the 3rd R.S.M. and a kilmarmock forage cap with the peculiar curved badge of all militia regiments until replaced by the glengarry about 1870. This is shown with the badge of the 2nd R.S.M. Officers' rank distinctions were worn, at this period, on the collar. In descending order from the left being; Colonel, Lt. Colonel, Major, Captain, Lieutenant and Sub Lieutenant this latter being changed, in 1876, to 2nd Lieutenant. The central figures are both Company Officers of, on the left, the 2nd R.S.M. (from an illustration in the Historical Records of the 2nd R.S.M.) and of the 3rd R.S.M. in undress patrol jacket and forage cap. At the bottom left is a sergeant and, right, a private both of the 2nd R.S.M. Apart from facing colours and badge details the majority of militia regiments of this period would have appeared the same. Both are armed with the Snider rifle. The sketch of the Militia Barracks is taken from an illustration in the Historical Record.



4th Volunteer Battalion, The East Surrey Regiment. The large badge, centre top, is the sergeant's pouch belt badge of the 7th Surrey Volunteer Rifles. On the left is the collar badge of the 4th Volunteer Battalion, East Surrey worn by officers before adopting the badge shown right. Both embroidered and metal versions are shown in photographs. On the left is an officers' rifle green helmet of the 7th Surrey R.V. and on the right an officers' blue helmet with silver plate of the 4th Volunteer Battalion, East Surrey. Below these are, left, an officers' forage cap with silver and enamel badge, 1898 and right, an other ranks' field service cap with white metal badge. Officers' rank distinctions were changed in 1880 and removed from the collar to cord epaulettes. On the left, in descending order; Colonel, Lt. Colonel, Major, Captain, Lieutenant and 2nd Lieutenant. (In 1902 the Captains' distinction was changed from two stars to three, the Lieutenant to two stars and the 2nd Lieutenant to one star. The central figures show, on the right, a Field Officer in Review Order, 1896, and a Private in Marching Order, 1899. At the bottom left is a Sergeant of the 7th Surrey Rifle Volunteers, 1883 and, left, a Private of the same Corps. Both are armed with the Martini Henry rifle. The sergeant has a sword bayonet. The sketch at the bottom is taken from the Regimental History and is the Headquarters of the 4th Volunteer Battalion from 1902 to 1908. The building is still in existence at St John's Hill, Battersea.

Southwark. They were uniformed in red faced dark blue with white waistcoats and breeches and wore fur created Light Dragoon style helmets with dark blue turbans. All the facings were trimmed with yellow pipings.

The Regimental History of the 23rd Bttn, The London Regiment, by Capt, Larkin, published in 1912, confirms that the 7th Surrey Rifles adopted, from its raising, the uniform of the 60th Rifles, dark green faced scarlet.

The corps wore the shako until the introduction of the home service pattern green spiked helmet in 1878. A portrait of Lt. Col. G.C. Porter confirms that the helmet plate was an eight-pointed white metal or silver star with Crown. The buckled strap was inscribed "SURREY RIFLES" and "TUEBOR" and had "7" in the centre. Until 1900 the 50 strong Band wore helmets with dragoon style horschair plumes.

A group photograph shows a seated Officer wearing a "pork pie" forage cap with top button and chin strap and a frogged Rifle tunic with drops and loops. An Acting Colour Sergeant has a 7 button tunic and a forage cap with a flat peak and chin strap. A private has a similar cap and tunic and clearly has Austrian knots over the cuffs. Both the Officer and the A/Colour Sgt. have pouchbelts with whistle and chains and large badges those of the officer being silver. The private's cap shows a scarlet cap band and a large crowned buglehorn badge with a "7". The NCO also has a buglehorn badge with the "7" but no strings or Crown. A portrait of Lt. Col Tully shows the straight sided forage cap with a drooping silver trimmed peak. His badge is an eight-pointed star with Crown and the Castle in the centre. In the Army Lists as late as 1883 the corps is still referred to as the 7th Surreys and the new scarlet uniform with white facings of the 4th (Volunteer) Battalion were not adopted until Col. Bowen assumed command in 1889.

Volunteer uniforms were initially at the discretion of the Lord - Lieutenant of the County but were subsequently regulated by Regulations of 1878, 1881 and 1883. As a Volunteer Rifle Corps dressed in green the unit was not permitted gold lace and the tunics of the NCOs and men were distinguished from the Rifle Corps of the Line by having light green Austrian cord knots over the puffs. The Infantry sash was not worn by Officers or Sergeants. In lieu crossbelts with pouches were worn. In 1879 the Martini-Henry rifle began to be issued but only on a limited basis. General issues were not made until 1881 and it was not until 1885 that Sniders were finally phased out. In April 1881, new Volunteer Regulations laid down new instructions which brought the Volunteer Battalions into line with the regular infantry. Officers' badges of rank were to be worn on the shoulder straps, collar badges were ordered and NCOs chevrons were to be worn on the right sleeves only. Scarlet was to be worn with the facings of the senior regular battalion - white in The East Surrey Regiment. Volunteers were to be distinguished from the line by having black cord Austrian knots above the "jampot" cuffs. A photograph in the History shows the 4th Volunteer Battalion at its Annual Inspection on Horse Guards Parade in 1896. They are dressed in scarlet faced white. The Officers have silver lace and white crossbelts. A Sergeant on the left flank of the front rank has a similar crossbelt. All ranks wear the spiked helmet and have short gaiters. The mounted Field Officer has a plain black sabretache. The large Band have white plumes. In another photograph Officers dressed for the Coronation of Edward VII are similarly dressed and the men are on parade in helmets, tunics and gaiters but without equipment, apart from waistbelts. There is no evidence of the Austrian knots over the cuffs. In a group the Surgeon-Captain has the departmental crossbelt and a spiked helmet but his Lieutenant has a helmet with a ball. A further group taken at the Annual Camp at Aldershot in 1902 has Officers in folding side caps and scarlet frocks with white Prussian collars and pointed cuffs and flapped pockets. Two are dressed in dark blue patrols.

A final photograph of the Sergeants Mess of the 23rd Bttn. London Regiment taken in 1911 shows the scarlet tunic with white faced collar and pointed cuffs. Red shoulder straps with white piping and the broad crowned, peaked forage cap with a Star badge. The permanent staff Sergeant Major has silver lace trimming to the collar, four chevrons worn points up above the right cuff, surmounted by a Crown. He has a long metal-topped cane. The Colour Sergeant Instructors also have silver lace on the collars. The Sergeant Drummer has laced wings, gauntlet gloves and badges of rank (not visible) on the lower right sleeve. All full Sergeants, Colour Sergeants and the Sergeant Major have sashes as worn by the Line. Lance Sergeants have no sashes. All NCOs appear to have brown waistbelts. The Adjutant, a Captain of the Northumberland Fusiliers, is in review order.

A photographic portrait of Quartermaster Sergeant Jones confirms he also has silver lace trimming to the collar. His successor Quartermaster Sergeant Martin, confirms the badge of rank was four chevrons worn points up above the right cuff, surmounted by a star.

4th Volunteer Battalion, The East Surrey Regiment

In May 1859, as a result of public anxiety of the possibility of French aggression, Lord Derby's Government authorised the formation of Volunteer Rifle Corps, The Staff of these small enthusiastic units, as in the Militia, included an Adjutant, a Sergeant Major and two or three permanent Sgt. Instructors detached from regular Line regiments. They ranked as senior to all Volunteer NCOs. In Surrey there were 26 Volunteer Corps, the 7th, the direct ancestor of the Newington Southwark Volunteer Association of the 18th century, being the Southwark Corps. In 1861, these small corps were generally grouped for administrative purposes into Battalions, the 1st including the 2nd, 4th, 8th, 20th and 26th; the 2nd the 6th, 9th, 11th, 12th, 15th and 16th; the 3rd the 5th, 13th, 14th, 17th, 18th and 22nd, to which the 24th was later added. The 4th Battalion included only the 10th and 23rd.

A table for 1881 showing the Surrey Rifle Volunteer Battalions in their proper seniority at that date also gives the ultimate re-numbering under the Cardwell reforms. The 7th Surrey Rifle Volunteers had remained independent under the 1861 groupings and was destined to become the 4th (Volunteer) Battalion of The East Surrey Regiment. In 1881 it was based in Kennington Lane, Southwark. There were estimated to be 254,000 Volunteers under arms in the United Kingdom at that time.

The 7th Surrey Volunteers

Shortly after the Government's approval to the raising of the Volunteer Rifle Corps a local MP decided to sponsor the raising of a Southwark unit which became the 7th (Southwark) Surrey Rifle Volunteer Corps with the motto "TUEBOR" (I Will Defend). The first uniformed parade took place in March 1860. The uniform was that of the 60th Rifles, rifle green faced scarlet. A Band of Music was formed. The HQ was originally at Hall Place, Lower Kennington Lane and the ranges at Wimbledon Common.

In 1880, the 7th was amalgamated with the 26th Shaftesbury Park Rifles, based at Battersea. In 1873 a closer association with the regular forces and the Militia was approved. The UK was divided into infantry sub-districts to each of which were assigned, for recruiting purposes two regular line battalions, two militia battalions and the local volunteers. One line battalion was nominally to be stationed abroad the other (which fed the overseas battalion) at home. The depot, militia and volunteers plus the reserve men were termed the sub-district brigade, under the orders of the Commanding Officer of the brigade depot. When the sweeping changes in organisation came into force under General Order 70 of 1881 the regular 31st and 70th Regiments became the 1st and 2nd Battalions of the new East Surrey

Regiment, the 3rd Battalion the former 1st Royal Surrey Militia and the 4th Battalion the former 3rd Royal Surrey Militia. There were four Volunteer Battalions, the 1st (Camberwell), the 2nd (Wimbledon), the 3rd (Kingston) and the 4th, the former 7th Surrey Rifle Volunteer Corps. A year later, as the 4th (Volunteer) Battalion it was reviewed at Portsmouth and fielded eight strong companies.

The Volunteers of the battalion furnished 13 officers and 235 men for service with the Volunteer Service Companies of the East Surrey Regiment, the C.I.V, the Surrey Sharpshooters and other units of the Imperial Yeomanry, during the South African War. In 1902 a fine new HQ for the left half battalion was opened at Clapham Junction, Battersea. In 1908 the battalion was re-organised and in April became the 23rd (County of London) Battn, The London Regiment. It was re-numbered 1/23rd in 1915 as part of the corps of The East Surrey Regiment. Thereafter there were the following changes in title:-

- 1920 23rd (County of London) Battalion, The London Regiment
- 1922 23rd London Regiment
- 1927 23rd London Regiment (East Surrey Regiment)
- 1937 7th (23rd London) Battalion, The East Surrey Regiment
- 1938 42nd 7th (23rd London) Battn. Royal Tank Corps
- 1939 42nd 7th (23rd London) Battn. East Surrey Battalion
Royal Tank Regiment, shortly altered to
42nd Royal Tank Regiment.
- 1956 Re-converted to Infantry as the 23rd London Regiment as part of the corps of The East Surrey Regiment
- 1961 Amalgamated with the 6th Battalion.

The Reunion

"That's him over there", said Les Wilson in the sort of whisper which has reduced men to jelly at a hundred yards. It was at the Annual Reunion in November last year and perhaps it was not surprising we didn't recognise each other as the last time I saw Ralph Currie was at Salerno on 9th September 1943. He was then a section Commander in my Platoon in 2/6th Queen's.

We were the follow up battalion in 169 Queen's Brigade in 56 London Division in the assault landing that morning on the Italian Mainland at Salerno. We had gained our objective, Montecorvino Airfield, some three miles from the beaches at around midday and I was ordered to clear through the airport buildings. Unfortunately 2/5th Queen's the other side of the airfield, had suffered a major counter-attack and had been unable to match our advance. As Corporal Currie led his section he was hit by a burst of Spandau machine gun fire from the other side of the airfield. He was severely wounded and evacuated from the battalion area.

I never saw him again. Through the years I have often wondered what happened to him. He was my only casualty on D Day and when I wrote "Salerno remembered" I recalled the moment when Corporal Curry was wounded. I may have misspelt his name, but I hadn't forgotten him. Well it's always been the same in 'The Queen's' hasn't it? If in doubt Curry it!

48 years and 53 days later we were together again. What a marvellous reunion. I had no idea whether he had survived his wounds. Not only had he recovered (albeit medically down-graded,) but he had been commissioned into the RASC, served in Malaya, and was not discharged until 1948. Much water has flowed under many bridges since then, but last year the old wound erupted again. Ralph went into the King Edward VII hospital "where the military atmosphere and the time spent



Ralph Currie, Stan Blay and Brigadier Geoffrey Curtis

immobile brought all the memories back. So much so that I then went back to Salerno and visited the War Cemetery," he told me. Now there was a great deal of catching up to do, but surely this is what reunions are all about. How sad it is "they" understand so little about the strength of the Regimental system which brings back into the family a man after 48 years they can destroy a Regiment at the stroke of a pen. But they can never destroy the memories of 'The Queen's'.

GBC



Annual Reunion UJ Club 1991



The article on the service of James Wilkins published in the November 1991 News Letter prompts a closer look into the circumstances in which he passed that service. The years 1825 to 1845 are generally regarded as part of the long peace following the Napoleonic Wars. Peace there may have been in Europe, but there was plenty of active duty abroad. Wilkins was enlisted into the 2nd or Queen's Royal Regiment in 1825. 1825 was the year in which, just before sailing for India, the Regiment paraded at Chatham. This was a parade unique in military history for it was the occasion of the restoration, by Command of HRH King George IV, of the Third Colour. The old Colour had lain at Kilmainham since 1750 and had been reworked, to a completely new design invented by Sir Henry Torrens, Colonel of the Regiment. Lady Torrens herself worked the colour and placed it on the parade into the hands of Ensign George Raitt, the junior subaltern of the regiment. His father had been PMC in Egypt in 1800 and had ensured victory at Rosetta by an ingenious stratagem. A consignment of port had followed the Regiment to Egypt, but had become so affected by the heat as to be undrinkable. Raitt took the socks from French casualties, soaked them, and wrapped them around the bottles. The result was entirely satisfactory and fortified by their wine, the Officers of The Queen's led their men on to victory!

The Regiment reached India after a voyage of four months and until 1838 remained on garrison duty on the plains of India. On its departure from England, a newspaper report, 'The Sun Feb 3rd 1825, stated that:

"It is not perhaps too much to say that The Queen's Royals are at this moment a military spectacle in discipline, conduct and efficiency; they can hardly be exceeded. During the last twelve months a corporal punishment has not been inflicted in the Regiment....."

The following year, 1826, saw the regiment well established in Poona. In that year a new uniform was issued: broader loops on the mens' coats which were of a tighter cut and with long skirts; grey or white trousers depending on the time of year and bell-topped shako-evidence more of fashion re-establishing itself after ten years of peace than of any attempt to provide a uniform suitable for active service. For active service followed in September 1827 when the Light Company of the Regiment was ordered to Kolapore, followed in January 1825 by the rest of the Regiment to campaign against a hostile native force. The mere presence of the force was, however, enough to settle the matter without a fight.

In 1829 the Regiment was saddened by the death of its popular Colonel, Henry Torrens, who died of apoplexy at an early age. Torrens had been a Major General at the age of 35 and Adjutant General of the Army as well as Colonel of the Regiment. He was succeeded by General Sir William Keppel GCB.

At the end of 1829 yet another change in uniform was ordered. A much neater and plainer double-breasted coat was introduced which, with dark blue trousers, remained unchanged until after the Crimean War. A forage cap with a flat stiffened top was also introduced for the first time. This year also saw the introduction of a Regimental order of merit or meritorious medal, although there had been a medal of merit since Peninsular days. The introduction, surprisingly, earned a rebuke from Commander-in-Chief Lord Hill who remarked that under all circumstances the soldier should look only to the King for honours and distinctions. However, in May 1855 the Regimental order of merit was superseded by the award of Good Conduct badges (or stripes) such as are still worn.

Moving to Colaba in 1830, the battalion took part in riot control duties. In 1833, permission was granted to display the battle

honours VIMIERO and CORUNNA on the Colours. The battalion's next move was to Poona in 1834, where it was reported that after only a short period in Command, General Keppell had died, to be succeeded in Command by Sir James Kempt.

Following hard on the heels of the rebuke over the Regimental medal came the sad news that the new King, William IV, had ordered the withdrawal of the Third Colour only eleven years after its restoration. The only consolation was that the Colour was not actually withdrawn but was never to be displayed in the ranks of the Regiment. This rule has been observed ever since, except for one occasion - The King's Birthday Parade in Hong Kong, 1927.

Belgaum, where the Regiment moved in 1837, was not a happy station. First came the news of the King's death; next came the trial by Court Martial and removal of Command of the Commanding Officer, Colonel Baumgardt. His fault seems to have been an unruly tongue which brought him a charge of insubordination. The Colonel remained in the Service, however, and even achieved Brevet rank as Colonel in the campaign in Afghanistan the following year. Next came a violent disagreement between "Tiger Tom" Willshire, the brigade commander, and Major General Sleight the divisional commander which eventually resulted in Willshire retiring home. How much of this Wilkins would have noticed is uncertain, although the removal of the Colonel and the death of the King must have been major events in the soldiers' lives.

These squabbles were put aside in 1838 when the Regiment was ordered into active service in Afghanistan. This war, which was to bring both glory and shame to British arms, was the result of fears of Russian infiltration into India. Spurred on by fears of Russian annexation the Government of India determined to take over Afghanistan, remove its ruler Dost Mohammed, and replace him by the more pliable figurehead of Shah Suja.

The Queen's travelled by sea to the mouth of the Indus in late November 1838 before beginning the long march to Afghanistan on Boxing Day. A trek of 700 miles faced the troops, across first barren desert where soft sand made marching a severe test for men laden with full field gear and a tight uniform. Next came an easy stage along the bank of the Indus to Hyderabad, but after Hyderabad, came the traverse of the mountains by the Bolan Pass, harassed by wild Ghilzai tribesmen. There were no roads so guns and heavy gear had to be manhandled or packed on camels across the steep, craggy terrain. Exhausted, frozen cold at night, the soldiers also had to suffer hunger since the supply system could not hope to keep up with such a march. Nor was foraging possible - even if forage could be had, small parties were extremely vulnerable to ambush and massacre by the tribesmen.

On 4th May after four months of extreme effort, The Queen's reached Kandahar. Here, Shah Suja was installed as Amir of Afghanistan in spite of the scorn of the populace, which clearly regarded him as a British stooge. It now became clear that, before the march on the Afghan capital of Katul could be resumed, the great stronghold of Ghuznee fort would have to be stormed. There would be no question of a protracted siege, and it was therefore decided to carry the place by storm.

There followed two days of preliminary operations to clear the surrounding area before the main attack just before dawn on 23rd July 1839. The plan of attack called for sappers to flow in the main gate. Then a storming party consisting of Light Companies (including that of The Queen's) under Brigadier "fighting Bob" Sale would force the breach, followed by the main column of the infantry attack.

The assault began at dawn. At first, the Sappers' charges would not ignite, but at last a terrific explosion tore down the gate, a sector of the wall and adjoining buildings and then, covered by the fire of artillery, the storming party rushed into the breach.

After a desperate fight the storming party secured the bridgehead and with repeated volleys kept the Afghans at bay.

Meanwhile the main body was marching forward in columns of fours, maintaining step and dressing. Morale was high: Lieutenant Holdsworth of the Queen's later wrote that "While we were marching down to the attack the fire on both sides was at its height; the noise was fearful and the whole scene the grandest, and at the same time the most awful, I have ever witnessed our Artillery fired beautifully and sent their shot close over our heads on the ramparts Add to this that it was dark as pitch, and you may judge to the effect" (1).

Once the main body had entered, Afghan resistance crumbled. Soon after dawn, the Union flag was flying over this formidable fortress. Despite the violence of the assault, The Queen's lost only 4 men killed and another 6 Officers and 27 Soldiers wounded. One of these was Wilkins, injured by a plank of wood falling on his chest, a wound which was eventually to lead to his discharge.

After two days rest and leaving a small garrison of Indian troops in Ghuznee, The Queen's again took up the march. Wilkins was still with the Colours. By the 16th August the troops had marched to within 3 miles of Kabul. The following day the city was entered in triumph through huge crowds, but, however, the reception accorded to Shah Suja was cold.

The occupation of the city was to lead to the disastrous withdrawal of the following year, the destruction of the 44th at Gandamak and the siege of Jellalabad. So it was as well for The Queen's that, with the rest of the Bombay contingent, it was ordered back to Quetta. The Regiment reached the town by way of Ghuznee on 31st October, but there was no time for relaxation. On 5th November the regiment marched with a column bound for the fort of Khelat, some 113 miles away, to subdue the hostile stronghold of the Afghan Chieftain Mehrab Khan.

By the 12th the column was within eight miles of Khelat. The next, after a brisk skirmish with Afghan cavalry, the fort of Khelat was seen for the first time as the troops emerged from a narrow pass. After a short reconnaissance, General Willshire decided to storm the place without further delay.

Three assault columns were formed from The Queen's, the 17th Foot and the 31st Bengal Native Infantry. After a preliminary attack to clear the surrounding hills, the British artillery - four field pieces and two howitzers - was brought up and blew in the gates of the fort.

Then with a loud Hurrah The Queen's rushed downhill towards the fort. "Forward Queen's" shouted the General "or the 17th will be in before you". On rushed the troops into the city, where the narrow labyrinthine streets dramatically slowed further progress until a soldier of the Light Company of The Queen's discovered a way up to the citadel. Eventually small groups of men managed to infiltrate the Citadel in the face of desperate fighting by the defenders. Lieutenants Stock and Addison, the Ensigns, attempted to plant the Regimental Colours on the top of the citadel but were forced back. It was not until late in the afternoon, with Mehrab Khan dead - shot by Private Maxwell of The Queen's - that the fighting in the town was over. The severity of the combat can be seen by the casualty figures: nearly one quarter of the strength of The Queen's were casualties.

This campaign added three new battle honours to the Colours: AFGHANISTAN 1839, GHUZNEE and KHELAT. Bearing in mind the length of the approach marches, the climate, the roughness of the terrain and the ferocity of the enemy, the capture of Ghuznee and Khelat must count among the great feats of British arms in the nineteenth century.

Wilkins must then have returned with the Regiment to Southern India early in 1840 at the end of its campaign. He must have been

present when new percussion muskets were issued, replacing the Brown Bess after nearly 150 years of service.

The Queen's did not leave India until 1845. Before then the Regiment took part in the campaign against the Mahrattas in the Kolapore District, although Wilkins' diary makes no mention of it. We must presume therefore that his injuries at Ghuznee precluded him from further active duty. The Queen's returned to England in late 1845, leaving behind some 319 men exchanged into other regiments, after an absence of 21 years abroad. Wilkins himself was, as we know, discharged as unfit for further service in 1846 after twenty years with the colours.

1. Holdsworth Campaign of the Indus

Michelin Man

The 1st Bn. The East Surrey Regiment spent the summer of 1942 training in Scotland, part of the newly formed 78th Division, and preparing for an assault landing somewhere or other. Combined Operations with the Royal Navy around Inverary and Loch Fyne were new to us, and for some weeks we had marvellous 'billets' on board a passenger liner just back from America. Our arrival on the 'Euterie' entitled the civilian crew to 'danger money' and when we left my steward refused a tip as he said that his pay was far higher than mine as an army captain!

Training involved several large exercises in which we had to march in full kit about 100 miles in 4 days, to represent a 'long sea voyage'. After these marches and almost dead beat we were supposed to assault some marked out fields representing the hostile beach.

Being somewhat lazy I never carried all the kit I was supposed to, but maybe I was not the only one! What I did carry was heavy enough and any excuse not to march about in too much was welcome. After all it was only an exercise!

In due course we sailed from Glasgow and when well out to sea (off the Azores we met up with the American convoys) were told that our landings were to be on the shores of Algeria - 'Operation TORCH'. The landings are fully recorded in the Regimental Histories and I am merely recording that when we eventually landed what we had to carry with us was a bit of a shock, at least twice as much as even the most conscientious of us had carried on the exercises.

To start with normal F.S.M.O. and partially inflated 'Mae West', 48 hour rations in the two halves of our mess tins in the small pack, respirator, gas cape, ground sheet, water bottle, binoculars, compass, revolver and ammunition, two 36 grenades, maps, message pads, air photographs. All this was normal but I also required my ash walking stick, spare pipes and about a pound of pipe tobacco.

But once well out to sea (in my case in 'Karanga' - later sunk in Algiers harbour) all sorts of bits and pieces began to appear. We each had to take a 'toggle' rope which was about six foot long and to be draped over our shoulders for use should we have to climb any cliffs. I was then given a 75 ATk mine to attach to my belt. Then the maps and silhouettes of 'Apples Green' beach all to be packed away somewhere, some spare field dressings and finally a machette to be draped from my webbing.

Having to put all this on I could hardly move, but we managed somehow when exercising on deck. If this was what I was to wade ashore with I could just about cope.

When the night of the landing arrived I dressed in my cabin and flopped into a chair to await orders. C.S.M. 'Wacker' Welch came in, reminded me to half inflate the 'Mae West' and although already looking like a Michelin man could I hang somewhere the wire-cutters? I stood up and he wandered round me eventually finding somewhere to hang them. Once in the chair again I felt

like one of those medieval knights who when in full armour became so cumbersome and heavy that before a battle they had to be winched into their saddles, and if they fell to the ground could not get up again unless assisted.

A few minutes before moving off to the scramble nets and L.C.A.'s I staggered to my feet and hung onto the side of the chair wondering if I could ever get to the assembly point. At that moment 'Buck' Buchanan, 'B' Coy Commander put his head round the door with a tin of peaches in his hand, "Could these go anywhere?". He opened my B.D. blouse somehow and felt around, the 'Mae West' was in the way but he managed to stuff it in somewhere. (He also had to carry a waterproof package containing 10 gold sovereigns for local purchase when once ashore). I prepared to move off, walking stick in one hand, the other to hang on to the various rails en route.

Then the steward appeared with a beautifully wrapped packet of sandwiches. Where were they to go? He also walked round me several times peering here and there but soon realised that there was no place whatsoever where they could go. So he put them in my free hand and I went on my way. With all the weight and both hands occupied this was not easy and going down the scramble nets to reach my L.C.A. I had to put the sandwiches between my teeth, so at least I had one hand free.

For 10 miles we were guided to the beaches by a submarine but 3 miles from the shore were left to go in on our own. The coast became visible in the dawn light and remembering the air photographs soon saw that we were nowhere near our beach. (In passing we had all been given a 'tot' of rum before leaving and the gentle swell soon brought on sea sickness so the L.C.A. was soon awash with it, but the aroma not unpleasant in the warm air).

We were several miles east of where we were due to land and from the maps knew that there were rocks just below the surface, and sure enough my L.C.A. struck and stuck fast. The Naval officer at the stern ordered, "Kedge anchor away, and ramp down". We slithered out of the bow and up to our shoulders into the warm water. As my breath was taken away by the shock of this I let go of the beautifully wrapped sandwiches and have a vivid memory of seeing them bobbing away in the slight swell and out of my reach - but I managed to hang onto my 'ash plant' walking stick.

The sea became shallower and after about 100 yards hauled ourselves ashore with several gallons of unwanted sea water to contend with. We all flopped down unable to move, but I well remember Pte. Brighton, the Coy. runner emerging from the sea, first head and shoulders, then the appearance of the Coy. bicycle still firmly gripped, having been pushed along under water. One German or Vichy French soldier, with a rifle could have picked off the lot of us.

But we had to clear the beach as soon as we could and linking up the 'toggle' ropes eventually climbed the cliffs which were not supposed to be there anyway. Arriving in some cultivated fields we met a somewhat surprised Arab on a donkey presumably on his way to work. He kindly directed us to our destination the strangely named village of Fuka Marine - our Company objective.

So ended our first assault landing: Michelin man had made it.

R.C.T.



FROM THE EDITORS POSTBAG

Ex Cpl K A Higgins writes:-

I was demobilised from 1st Bn The East Surrey Regiment in January 1948 having spent three years on National Service. I have kept in touch with some of my comrades at that time over the ensuing years and from time to time we meet for a meal and a chat over old times. Four of us met on the day that I received the November Newsletter so I thought our small reunion would be an apt opportunity to show it off. It transpired that I was the only one who had joined the Regimental Association and received the Newsletter. My mates were most impressed and now want to join. Please send details to R V Kellaway, G N Prior and G Spriggs.

We were all full Corporals at the time of our release and we all served with the 1st Battalion in Greece.

Bob Edwards writes:-

May I take this opportunity to congratulate you and all those who have contributed to the Newsletter and the printer of the magazine for the quality now being produced. The Regimental calendar is excellent. The first one I received while working in the Philippines which was immediately hung in pride of place in the apartment we rented out there. As you can imagine it invoked a great deal of discussion amongst our Filipino friends for them to see what they thought were very strange uniforms for soldiers. Unfortunately I had left all the photos I had taken while serving in 1 Queen's - 1953-10-56 at home, so was unable to convince them that, despite all the traditions and the colour of ceremonial events that are often celebrated, we were real soldiers as well.

The latest addition to the Christmas package, that being the small Regimental pocket Calendar is well received, a neat but handy little reminder of proud time serving with the best Regiment in the British Army, which as I kept reminding the locals during my time in the Philippines is the best in the world.

Indeed I spent a lot of time trying to teach the locals to be somebody of importance, on entry or exiting the many buildings where armed guards were present I was given a salute but of course the influence was ever present resulting in the sloppy American style. I think that the message was getting through to those that saw me regularly but I would have needed more than the year I had to make a real improvement.

Having spent the last year working in the Philippines my wife and I travelled over to Singapore and Malaysia, an area where I spent two years serving with 1 Queen's. I hope to be able to follow up to my article which was published in the Newsletter 46 or 47 about the changes that have taken place in the 35 years since I was there with the Regiment. Hopefully ready for the next edition.

Frank Beville writes:-

I was very interested in W H Hill's letter on page 35 of issue No. 50 of the Association Newsletter, more so because he refers to a Lt. Gilbert. Presumably this is the Lt. Gilbert who was one time a platoon commander with the 2/6th Bn. The Queen's and who travelled abroad with us in August 1942 on the *RMS Franconia*.

If this is so, I was in almost daily contact with him when I was C/Sjt in 'R' Coy and found him a most likeable and efficient officer.

I wonder if any of your readers who may have been on that voyage can recall Lt. Gilbert portraying Carmen Miranda, complete with the huge head-dress of artificial fruit, and giving an excellent performance in the WO's & Sjt's Lounge one evening? The following evening I believe he gave a similar performance in the Officers' Lounge and I heard afterwards, although I cannot vouch for its authenticity, that the following morning he had to appear before the Divisional Commander who was on board. Perhaps he did not agree with one of his officers masquerading as an artiste!

Leaving the battalion in Kirkuk in 1942 I lost touch with him, but I did hear he became the Divisional Entertainments' Officer when the Division arrived in Egypt. The last time I saw him was in a small supporting film at my local Odeon, when I think he was playing the part of a manager of a boutique or some-such. I have often wondered what became of him.

I have been trying hard to recollect Mr Hill who wrote to you, but have failed to do so. However, he states he knows Sid Pratten and me. Perhaps he would be kind enough to refresh my memory. I literally met thousands of men during the war in my travels and it is hard to recall them all.

I enclose a photograph of the *RMS Franconia*, sometime after the war, she ran aground on a reef in the St. Lawrence river a mile from Quebec. She hit a submerged barrier a few minutes after leaving for Liverpool carrying 800 passengers. Eventually, she was replaced by a modern '*Franconia*'. I have in my possession the original berthing and, I shared a cabin with Sgt Paine; Sgt Bell; Sgt Showler; Sgt H White and Sgt Eaves. I wonder if any of them are members of the Association or any of your readers know if they are still alive?



RMS Franconia

C Rose writes:-

Recently I saw the name of an East Surrey Officer of many years ago while I was attending to family duties at Mitcham Road Cemetery, at Croydon, Surrey.

I arrived very early and while passing the time away I was intrigued by the number of servicemen whose names were on the headstones, from both World Wars. As I wandered on round I came across a dark marble vault of the Michell family. It is in good condition and on it was the name of one of our World War One officers. He was Lieut Philip Michell, of The East Surrey Regt and The Royal Flying Corps. He must have been one of the earliest fighter pilots, and of course one of our regiments officers. I thought that it may be interesting for our Newsletter, there may still be someone around who knew him.

S Mountain writes:-

I am enclosing a photograph which you can keep, it looks like paschal floor tiles in a new shopping centre in Camberley, Surrey. I work in Camberley, and spend my lunch time around the A30 and the town.

The lamb is halfway along the GRACE REYNOLD'S WALK, which runs between the HIGH STREET, and the MAIN SQUARE.

Well sir, I must close, so would you please give my best regards, a happy Xmas, and a very happy new year to all QUEENSMEN where ever they may be.



Henry Lewis writes from Prescott, Canada.

Reading the November 1991 issue, I was very disappointed to learn that The Queen's are to be amalgamated with The Royal Hampshire Regiment in 1993. Please add my voice to the chorus of protests. I realize we live in tough economic times, but do politicians to-day have no appreciation of old traditions?? We have the same problem with our Government in Canada, always looking for ways to reduce the Armed Forces, and combine.

Looking at page 25 and reading the letter from Neville Jackson from Australia he mentions an episode involving RSM Tasker. I received my basic training in the summer of 1944 at Invicta Lines Barracks. When Percy Tasker drilled us on the parade square, we could hear his voice boom out even at the back rows. It came right from the bottom of his boots and he did not need a microphone!!

Under Regimental Deaths you make mention of Lt. Robert Maxwell, MC. I was also originally from Czechoslovakia and served with him in the 1/5th Queen's in 1944 and 1945. After my release in 1947 I worked for him until 1952, when we emigrated to Canada.

Keep up the good work with the Newsletter!!

A.J.P. writes:-

Major Tony Hobrow is right to say of the 'patch' worn on the solar topi or bush hat 'we always wore same on the right'. He is supported in this by the photograph on page 35 of the same issue of the Association Newsletter which shows a soldier in Guard Order and taken at Tientsin in China. This would have been in 1931.

But strangely enough the illustrator, Bryan Fosten is also right to show the 'patch' on the Wolseley tropical helmet as being on the left side. The well known photograph of R.S.M. Sullivan and the NCO's and WO's of the 2nd Battalion of The Queen's Royal Regiment taken at Haidra Kach on the North West Frontier of India in 1920 clearly shows Wolseley helmets with the regimental patches on the left. (This photograph was reproduced in the Association Newsletter of November 1988 at page 10).

The changeover occurred following the Report of the Committee appointed by General Sir Charles Monro, then Colonel of the Regiment, in 1922 to consider 'certain matter of regimental interest set out in the terms of reference and to make recommendations thereon'. This report was then circulated to the Commanding Officers of the 1st, 2nd, 4th and 5th Battalions and they added further comment. The whole of the findings were published in the Journal of The Queen's Royal Regiment in the May, 1927 edition.

Under the heading 'Patches' the Committee recommended that for both officers and other ranks the continuance of the design 'as now worn on the Foreign Service Khaki Helmet'. A note was added - 'This design originated when drafts were being prepared for service in the South African War 1899-1902, and answers the purpose'.

During the consultation period the Commanding Officer of the 2nd Battalion proposed that the 'patch' be moved. The final recommendation was that - 'For the reasons stated by O.C. 2nd Battalion we recommend that the patch be worn on the right side of the foreign service khaki helmet instead of on the left as at present'. This recommendation was approved by the Colonel of the Regiment. Bryan Fosten has depicted a pre-1927 helmet.

Mrs. Eva Hockley writes:-

I am happy to tell you that my husband is enjoying the independence that the wheel chair gives him, and never misses a chance to say how much he appreciated the help received from the Regimental Association.

I enclose a photograph. He was called up on 9th October 1939 and went to Stoughton Barracks, the following spring to France, and came back at the time of Dunkirk. Following reorganisation, he was transferred to the 1st Bn East Surrey.

He was released for essential work in industry. He joined the army again and was finally de-mobbed in August 1947.



Mrs G B Lindsay writes:-

Thank you for your kind letter, but one correction, I am a war widow, it will be ten years this month since my husband collapsed and died, while we were out buying plants for the garden, he had an aneurism brought on by his war wounds, he lost his right leg in the battle for Cassino after being with the 1/6th Surreys from 39 to 44.

What memories I had reading your Newsletter, the Surreys were in Southampton during the awful bombing in 1940 and early 1941.

Jim was on his way back to barracks when he noticed incendiary bombs on the roof of the tobacco factory behind the barracks, he took some men and helped to put the fire out, but it meant they were out after time, his CO at that time "Nipper Armstrong" (page 28) congratulated the men, had them marched out and then brought back again, they got seven days CB for being late in, for their trouble they got cigarettes, but Jim thought very highly of his CO.

I often wonder if there are any Surreys left that got back with Jim at Dunkirk, on a boat from La Pann, taking turns to sleep on a coil of rope, while they steered by the stars, till rescued in the Channel, I must not go on anymore.

D Papworth writes from Megalaya, India:-

And yet another little groan - A.J.P.'s rendering on the 7th Indian Division sign which, theoretical in design, always points to the North West Frontier. This Division was transferred to the Pakistan Army on the partition of India and thereby had the very great honour of serving again under General Messervy as the then Commander-in-Chief of that Army. A.J.P.'s article quotes from a small booklet, "Golden Arrow", the story of the 7th Indian Division. Note: NO author is given and was published under the authority of the Director of Public Relations, War Department, Government of India. In the context of his article this is misleading. A proper, and indeed authoritative, book, also named "Golden Arrow" - 'The Story of the 7th Indian Division in the Second World War 1939-1945' is by Brigadier M. R. Roberts, DSO, and it is surprising he does not quote from this - and it would be well to reflect on the final paragraph in the 'Preface' to this book. A.J.P.'s compass bearings would indeed confuse the enemy - and THANK GOODNESS for that.

AJP writes in reply to D Papworth's letter:-

I do not think that everyone understands exactly how much trouble Editor Les Wilson takes to ensure that those who contribute to the Newsletter are accurate in what they write and are not allowed to make fools of themselves. When I first wrote about the shape of the badge of the 7th Indian Division Les sent me a copy of an entry in 'Formation Badges of World War Two' by M. Cole. This tended to show that I was in error and that the badge had always been square.

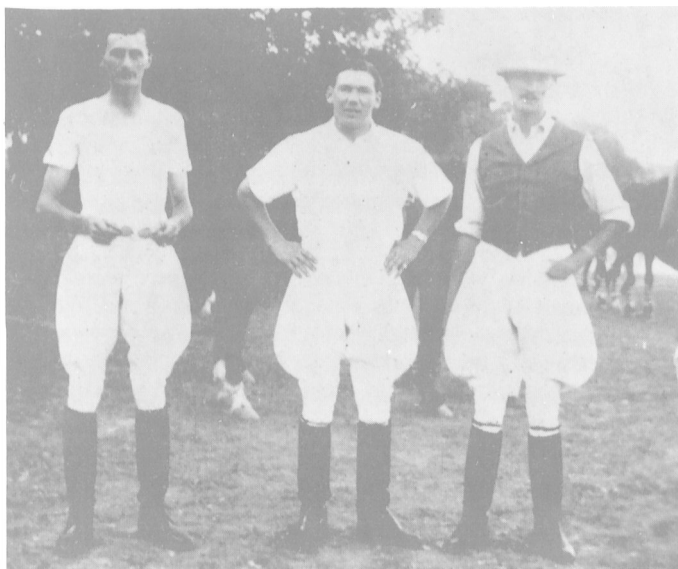
I could have responded by relying on personal memory but since 'old men forget' I deemed it to be more prudent to supply Les with photographic evidence to support my contentions. I sent two slim books in the post to Les in order to do just that. Being of an economical disposition one of those slim books was the small booklet version of the Division's story. I certainly agree that it is less authoritative than the full hardback history but for my purposes it was ideal. I was looking for photographs and not text, and it cost less to post!

Incidentally, in M. Cole's book mention is made of the 'north-west compass bearing' explanation of this Divisional sign.

Major John Wyatt writes:-

Thank you for another excellent Newsletter, which I have read avidly and am now passing on, as I always do, to the 3rd Battalion at Episkopi for circulation among those interested. It will then go to Neville Quinn.

I note that there will be an obituary in the May 1992 edition on my old friend and brother officer, Major Ian Thomson. He and I were commissioned from Sandhurst in the same year (the only Terms to be commissioned by Edward VIII) and I enclose a photograph which you may find of interest of Ian Thomson on my left and Major Norman Marsden on my right, taken on the polo field at Allahabad in 1940 where 1st Bn The Queen's Royal Regt was stationed prior to moving up to Razmak in Waziristan in October 1940 - If convenient I would like it back in due course so that I can pass it on to Ian's son who is a pilot with Cathay Pacific.



Major-General Michael Forrester writes:-

7th Armoured Division Officers' Club Annual Dinner 1992

This year's dinner will be held at the Naval and Military Club, Piccadilly on Wednesday, 4th November, the 50th Anniversary of the Break-Out at El Alamein.

Members and their guests will be welcomed by the President, General Sir Thomas Pearson, and the speaker will be The Viscount Montgomery of Alamein.

The Club has about 250 members of whom 90 - 100 usually attend the Dinner.

All officers who served in 7th Armoured Division during or after the 1939-45 War are eligible for membership and those who have not yet joined the Club are encouraged to contact the Hon. Secretary Major Christopher Milner M.C., Mill Lane, Radford, Inkberrow, Worcester, WR7 4LP.

K H Barber writes:-

It was sad to read in the October issue of the passing of Col Wreford-Brown he was well respected by the National Servicemen of my time and would get back to see 1 SURREYS as often as he could after his promotion.

The move in 1951 of the battalion to Tripoli was indeed a work of art as we had been away in Norfolk for many weeks on training exercises building up to a huge 3 DIV exercise known as "SURPRISE PACKET". On our return to Shorncliffe we were assembled in the gym and told "Well here is another "SURPRISE

PACKET" we are off to the Middle East next week" and so we were.

All credit to Col Wreford-Brown and the Quartermaster Staff.

I still have my hymn sheet of the Drumhead service Tripoli 1952 celebrating the 250th Anniversary.

Strange how we take part in history and do not realise it at the time.

T J Branson writes from the Isle of Wight:-

Herewith my cheque for Newsletter subs as I would hate to miss an issue.

It all seems a long time ago now. I was called up in June 1940, and in August 42, after spending most of the time with the 15th Battalion was posted to the Far East, where we joined the 2nd Battalion in Ceylon.

I am now in my 79th year, but I have always felt that if I had to go to war, I am glad it was my good fortune to serve with The Queen's Royal Regiment.

Robert Mullins, TD writes:-

May I add a few lines to Peter Trench's comments in the November issue. I was fortunate to share a state cabin with Arthur (Trench) on our six weeks "cruise" to Suez on the Strathalan in 1942. He was a delightful companion and his death was a sad blow to me and to all in the battalion.

A. Horwood was a corporal in my platoon in 'A' Company at the outbreak of war and on promotion to sergeant he was transferred, much to my regret, to 'B' Company before we left for France. He was commissioned in The Northamptonshire Regiment., posted to Burma and awarded a posthumous V.C. A splendid man.



Cpl Horwood is seated on the extreme right front row

E. Jephcote writes:-

In the last Newsletter page 26, R A S Currie wrote of Colonel Kealy and Brigadier Geoffrey Curtis OBE MC, when Cpl Currie was wounded I was rifleman to the Bren group and at his side when he was evacuated with Cpl Currie our first casualty and Pte Sam Mittalman was also badly hit. I/Cpl Shaw took over the remainder of D Coy section. Sgt Major "Tiger" Postlethwaite and Cpl "Perth" Lodge were also very familiar names indeed! Captain Hooper was our company commander and our company clerk was named Battersby - calm in any storm!

Congratulations to Cpl Currie on his deserved promotion. Many adventures later, I trust he still remembers his time spent in Kirkuk oilfield winding the small gramophone playing that Paul Robeson classic, "The Canoe Song". Best wishes Cpl Currie I knew you would survive, good luck comrade.



PAY ATTENTION CAN YOU HELP?

Who are they?

The negative of this photograph was found in the pages of the 1931 Standing Orders of the 1st Battalion The East Surrey Regiment.

Can any reader identify the bathing party and say where the photograph was taken?



F. Thompson writes from Welwyn Herts:-

During the winter of 1939 I was in B Company 1/5th Queens stationed in Sherborne, Dorset. Our billet was the Wesleyan Chapel in Tony Street. I met a local girl and we were married on March 27th 1940 in Sherborne Abbey. The Company turned out in force and we had a military guard of honour. A number of officers also attended including Major Clarke, Lt Carpenter and Lt McFarlane.

When I read the Nov 1990 Newsletter I saw the name of the Reverend Brode. He was the padre who married us. Two of the witnesses were E C Goode and B Mullen. If anybody remembers our wedding or me from those days I would be so pleased to hear from you.



Footnote: F Thompson is on the extreme right of the group above.

Later whilst we were in the BEF I was taken prisoner at Oudenarde in a forward position when we were completely

encircled by German troops. I was a POW in Thorn in Poland and Danzig, then the open cast coal mine at Spremberg (Stalag IVA) I became the camp interpreter at the last camp. At the end of the war we were marched to Prague and there we waited until we were released by the American forces. I returned home on May 21st 1945.

Both my wife and I are hoping this letter will jog a few memories somewhere, so please write.

F Thompson's address is:-

6 Maran Avenue, Welwyn Herts, AL6 9HS.

C T Murray

My brother was killed in action in France on 20th May 1940, serving with the 2/7th Bn The Queens. He was Private Frank Murray 6090205.

I visited his grave in France last week and was rather surprised to find ten lonely headstones in a corner of a civilian cemetery in a village called Saleux (just outside Amiens). He was buried with six of his comrades of the 2/7th Battn:-

D H Binmore	5439024	aged 21
F W Davies	6093955	aged 20
P Randall	6087008	aged 20
S H Brown	6092822	aged 20
D G Foster	6092816	aged 20
H S Hamerston	6092658	aged 21

I have been able to learn that on 20.5.1940 there were three Queens Royal Regiment Battalions (the 2/5th, 2/6th and 2/7th) in position near Abbeville, and I am intrigued to know how seven of our lads were near Amiens which was attacked by heavy German armoured units on the morning of 20th May 1940.

I realise it would be impossible to describe the understandable chaos that prevailed at this time, but if anyone has any knowledge of this particular situation at Saleux at this time I would be profoundly grateful.

I intend to visit the graves again in the near future (when the weather improves). My photographs were a disaster on my last week's visit. I may even make some enquiries at the village church records.

If any reader can help Mr. Murray please write to him at Flat 2, 84 Maryon Road, Charlton, London SE7 8DJ.

K N Smith

K N Smith is seeking assistance regarding his Grandfather PSM (Platoon Sergeant Major) J E Smith of the 2/5th Bn The Queens Royal Regiment. His Grandfather is mentioned in Vol 8 of our history, he writes "I would dearly love to know anything about Joseph Edwin Smith during his time in the Queens including his capture in June 1940 while withdrawing across the Somme, his eventual containment as a POW at Stalag 383 in Germany, and his death in the Camp in February 1945".

If any of our readers can assist please write direct to K N Smith, 45 Bassett Road, Maybury, Woking, Surrey.



The Queen's Camp at Stoughton Barracks, Guildford

With the disbandment of the Women's Royal Army Corps in April 1992 and the intended closing of Queen Elizabeth Park, questions have arisen about the origin of the ATS/WRAC Camp. There is very little recorded about Stoughton Barracks during the period, 1938 - 1941. The huts were built for the National Servicemen (Militia) on open ground at the back of the barracks, some of which appears to have been a pig farm. Was it common land or did it belong to the War Department? Eventually on 4th January 1940 the Queen's took over the new huts, which became known as 'Queen's Camp'. One Queensman remembers that you spent two weeks in the barracks and then moved out to the hutted camp for the remaining basic training.

The Depot, which was in Stoughton Barracks, became the Queen's ITC in September 1939, closing in August 1941, and was amalgamated with that of The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment at Maidstone to form 13 ITC. During its existence the Queen's ITC saw at least 500 officers and 6,000 men pass through.

In September 1941 the camp became No. 7 ATS Training Centre. The Queen's commanding officer and staff remained behind to help Senior Commander Peggy Wagstaff in the formation of this unit. The camp continued to be occupied by ATS, and in 1951 became the home of the newly formed corps, the Womens Royal Army Corps being renamed in 1953 Queen Elizabeth Camp after the Queen Mother. The camp was rebuilt in 1960 and given the title 'Barracks' and became the Queen Elizabeth Park in 1970.

It is not generally known that during the War the ATS numbered more than the whole of the Regular Army. Many members of our Regimental families served in the ATS or the WRAC and wore our Regimental badges.

It was decided under Options for Change that the WRAC Regular officers and servicewomen working with other corps would transfer to these corps. In December 1990 the Army Board announced the formation of the Adjutant General Corps. This Corps came into being on 6 April 1992 through amalgamation of the RAPC, RAOC (Staff Clerks) and the WRAC with headquarters at Worthy Down.

So, after 51 years the WRAC lose their association with the Camp and Guildford. On 24th March 1992 the WRAC marched into history! With their band leading, they exercised their privilege of marching through the Borough for the last time. This sad occasion was observed with dignity and ceremony. The next day the Queen Mother, the Commandment in Chief, accompanied by the Duchess of Kent, the Controller Commandment, attended a service of thanksgiving and farewell in Guildford Cathedral. That afternoon more than 2,000 servicewomen, marching in sixes, marched past the Queen Mother, followed by many Old Comrades. The day ended with the Beating of Retreat by the WRAC Band on the large parade ground in Queen Elizabeth Park.

Do any of our readers remember the opening of the Queen's Camp and the ATS Training Centre?

Were there home produced concerts and dances as well as square bashing?

D.H.W/124451

G Peake writes:-

I was interested to read in the May 1991 Newsletter the letter from Dr Seigelman in Bury, Lancs.

In Oct 1945 I was a 17½ year old at Enfield Grammar School and had obtained an Indian Army Cadetship. Like others, I had been enlisted into The Queen's Royal Regiment before I was 18, to avoid the unwelcome possibility of digging coal as a Bevin Boy!

In Jan 1946 I reported to Wrotham for basic training. On completion, I transferred to Invicta Lines, Maidstone for pre-OCTU with the Indian Army Holding Detachment.

While at Maidstone, I recall that one of our PTT's was Staff Sgt Wally Barnes (of Arsenal fame).

I was always proud to have been a Queensman but curious to know why The Queen's Royal Regiment was the War Office choice for Indian Army Cadets?

Calling all Prisoners of War

The National Ex Prisoner of War Association are holding their Annual Reunion at Warners, Holiday Centre, Hayling Island 23rd - 26th October 1992. Any reader interested please send a SAE to C F JAGO, 74 Norfolk Road, West Harnham, Salisbury, Wilts SP2 8HG (0722 - 333599).

Calling Old Comrades, Down Under

Reg Dickinson and Syd Libbiter have both recently rejoined the Association and subscribe to this Newsletter. They met after Reg Dickinson was given Syd's address by another member of our Regiment, Bob Bookham. Reg Dickinson is asking if any member living in Australia would care to write to him, and perhaps arrange to have a 'get together', his address is:-

R M Dickinson Unit 12/1, Bellview Village, Waygara Street, Eumemmerring Victoria, Australia 3177

W K Jones

W K Jones is trying to trace an old mate he hasn't seen since 1943. Private Vic Clarke (or Clark) were both Surreys. Private Clark was captured near Tunis early in Dec 1942. They were in Italian P.O.W. Camps PG59 and 146.

Clarke escaped over the wire on 6 September, 10 September, and finally on 11 September.

W Jones writes that when they were captured on 9 September Vic Clarke sang 'O Sole Mio' to the Police in Mortara Police Station.

Ex-Trooper Aubrey Finnis

75 Coleford Bridge Road, Mytchett, Surrey GU16 6DN

Tel: Farnborough (0252) 549644 is trying to contact any ex East Surrey veterans who served in the North Africa Campaign especially anyone who soldiered with Sgt Robert Finnis (6139287) killed in action 28 February 1943.

Any reader who can help please contact Mr Finnis direct.

I want to thank you for the help you gave me in finding out the information on the torpedoing of the *SS Yorkshire*. I wrote to the Ministry of Defence and I enclose a copy of their answer.

"Thank you for your letter of January 1992 regarding your experiences on the SS Yorkshire. We have gathered the following information.

About 19 ships left Bombay on or about 28.8.39 carrying women, children and invalid soldiers. After a short stay in Mombasa, the ships moved on to Port Said and arrived there on or about 1.10.39. The ships then proceeded to Gibraltar and disembarked there to be transferred to other ships. All invalids including women and children were put on the SS Yorkshire the remainder on the SS Saigang and SS Britannia. Together, with 19 other ships the convoy left Gibraltar Friday 13 September.

On 17 October 1939 a German Submarine was sighted and at 3.30 pm the SS Yorkshire was torpedoed, sinking in 9 minutes. Listed amongst the survivors is a Pte Souter and Pte Wells both of The Queens Regiment".

There is one other matter I am asking you for help with, will you put a request in your 'Can you Help' column to see if anybody knows if Pte Souter is still alive. I would very much like to get in touch with him again. Also on the ship coming home was the wife and children of a Sergeant Wells. We were all in 1 Queens in India. I think she survived. I remember that we lost 52 men, women and children on the SS Yorkshire.

If any reader can help Mr. Wells please write to him at 40 East Avenue, Kenfit Mill, Bridgend, Mid Glamorgan, S. Wales, CF33 6NN.

**THANK
YOU!**

**STAND
EASY!**



NEWSLETTER SUBSCRIPTIONS

1. Subscriptions for this year's Newsletters are now overdue. The subscription remains at £1.60 per year.
2. No action is required by
 - a) Those who have already paid in advance;
 - b) Members of the Officers Club whose club subscription covers the cost of the Newsletter;
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3. If you would like the Newsletter sent to a friend, please send his name and address, and enclose £1.60 for a year's subscription (2 Editions)

IF IN DOUBT - PAY!

KEEP IN TOUCH

MAJOR JOHN FOWLER TD.

*Thank you John once again for
your MATERIAL help in
producing our Journal.*

Book Reviews

And all my war is done by Stephen Abbott

This is a most readable and interesting book written by Stephen Abbott who, born in 1919, was commissioned into The East Surrey Regiment on the outbreak of the Second World War. Fighting in the Malayan Campaign he was eventually taken prisoner at Singapore and later incarcerated in the Niiigata P.O.W. Camp at Aomi.

His descriptions of the bitter fighting before capture and the appalling conditions of captivity afterwards are graphic and moving. The cruelties and weaknesses of the Japanese captors are fully described as are the sufferings, trials, strengths and occasional failings of the captives, a few of whom, like the author, eventually derived an inner and, sometimes spiritual, enrichment from the experience.

Surprising and saddening are the Appendices, showing the author's efforts to obtain justice and retribution on behalf of the former prisoners, and his compassion for the relatives of those who died.

A hard back book of 154 pages, published by Pentland Press and priced at £12.50, it is a worthwhile addition to the bookshelves of anyone interested in the history of the Far Eastern war and the experiences and characters of those involved in it.

R.F.

Billie - The Nevill Letters: 1914-1916

This book by Ruth Elwin Harris is on the war-time life of Captain Wilfred Nevill who, on 1st July 1916 at Montauban Ridge, in the Battle of the Somme, gallantly led the 8th Battalion of The East Surrey Regiment over the top and towards the enemy lines while kicking footballs before them. Nevill had promised a reward to whoever "scored a goal" in enemy trenches. The goal was scored and reached in every sense, but sadly Nevill was not there to pay the reward. He was killed on reaching the German wire.

The book is based on Nevill's letters from the Front and typifies a young officer's life in the First World War. Everything is there. The initial enthusiasm on arrival in France, the impatience to get to the front line, the humour, attempts to allay the fears of those at home, the increasing realisation of the dangers and horrors of war, and the final disillusion that brings forth the comment, "Lord, what a ghastly thing war is".

His last Field Service Post Card to his family at home, four days before his death, was simply worded, "I am quite well". Presumably that was all one could ask, or expect, of life.

The book, in hard back form, is well presented with the letters produced in good sequence and variety and suitably interspersed with comment and explanation where necessary.

At £17.99 it is a good buy and a worthy addition to any Military History collection.

R.F.

The Curator's Story

Richard Ford, Curator of the Regimental Museum at Clandon, has recently written and published his autobiography in a booklet entitled "FIRE, LAND AND SEA - Service With Interest". It covers his fifty years of public service in the war-time fire brigade, the Royal Navy, British and Colonial police forces, a local authority council and finally the museum.

Copies can be obtained from him at "Bayshill", 15 Ormonde Road, Horsell, Woking GU21 4RZ - price £2.50 including postage.

The Recollections Of A Pilgrim

Rangoon Airport, 21st November 1991, 16.30 hours.
I rested my head against the head-rest on flight TG 306 - Burma to Bangkok - clicked my seat belt, closed my eyes and remembered.....

The memories kept flowing, my mind reverberating from all the experiences of the last few days, the last 96 hours in particular. Here we were - at last on our return visit to Thailand, having seen, felt and smelled the wonders of a country such as Burma.

This trip to the War Graves at Rangoon, by courtesy and kindness of the Royal British Legion and the Ministry of Defence, had sent the senses and feelings of thirty-one people, all Pilgrims on a mission, reeling. The incredibility of having achieved such a trip, the relief of actually vacating the country without mishap and the general tiredness of travel had made us all a little quiet and reflective.

The trip had begun at the Union Jack Club, London, on Thursday 14th November 1991. Fifty-two people, we pilgrims, two doctors, two nurses, two Standard bearers and British Legion personnel assembled to meet each other and to begin our sojourn with a Reception and, surprise, surprise, we were transported to....Number 10 DOWNING STREET and a cocktail party hosted by no less than Mr John Major, a charming and very congenial host to us all. What a start to an eventful, interesting and exciting mission to the Far East and the Orient. A mission which meant, for all these people, a lifetime's desire and dream to visit the graves of their loved ones or friends, a fulfilment which had seemed an impossibility and certainly an improbability in the past.

Daylight had just broken as we approached Magical Thailand. This was Bangkok - "City of the Angels". Tired, but very excited, we arrived to a greeting of garlands of Thai Orchids strung around our necks as we walked out of the Airport. Although it was early, the City was full of hussle and bussle and the air was full of the sweet scented flowers - soon to be full of the turgid smell of pollution! However, that remained unnoticed as we approached the sophisticated facade of the Montien Hotel and the charm of the door boy and the welcome which was awaiting us.

Soon we were within the confines of our rooms - home for the next few days, exploring excitedly all the contents, unpacking and freshening ourselves after fourteen hours' travel. A refreshing drink and then lunch, followed by a well-earned rest and then another wonderful Reception, this time at the home of the British Ambassador HE Mr Melhuish CMG and his wife. Time sped by as we were introduced to Embassy staff and made to feel relaxed and welcome with drinks and interesting Eastern titbits. It was soon back to the Hotel, dinner and collapsing into bed, tired but happy.

Sunday was spent in a more relaxed style. A visit to the Floating Market via a River Trip - the Chao Phraya River flows directly through the City of Bangkok. A dirty, polluted water full of long-tailed boats, the Thai answer to the buses of the canals for a fast, exhilarating ride to the Floating Market. Women in their dark blue peasants' skirts and colourful sarongs paddle Sampans laden with fruit, spices, flowers and sun hats to trade either with buyers or with each other. There are many souvenir stands and if you are thirsty there are lovely coconuts to quench your thirst.

Then, again down the River, to the Temple of Dawn passing, en route, houses on stilts with washing lines full of gleaming, clean washing; junks moored by the river bank crammed with a domestic scene, children, dogs and more washing! And everywhere, a cross-section of Thai life.

The Temple of Dawn is 104 metres tall and climbing the eastern staircase you have a first-class view of the city. There are statues

depicting the four important events of Buddha's life. The flowers decorating the whole of the face of the Temple are fashioned from broken pottery pieces and seashells and in the first light of dawn glisten in the early morning light. 92% of the nation profess to Buddhism, which teaches a doctrine of acceptance of the vagaries of life and it would seem that Thai tranquillity comes from a supreme tolerance of others.

Now, away from the River, by bus to a Gem Factory to lust after beautiful jewels of sapphire and ruby. A few buy, but also the vibrant colours of Thai silk take your fancy and soon Thai Bahts are fast coming out of pockets and wallets in exchange for these beautiful goodies! But we must remember to save enough for Bangkok nightlife, to sample a few beers, barter at a market for fake watches, Gucci bags, etc., and wonder at the titillation of the "menus" of the bars - did some partake I asked myself?!!

Monday morning started differently. We thirty-one Burmese Pilgrims were now also endeavouring to battle with the complexities of the completion of the red tape Customs' forms for the entry into that country. The atmosphere was tense as the more elderly amongst us touselled with trying to value items such as jewellery, cameras, etc., into US Dollars, and endeavoured to sort out currency values on forms which necessitated many copies. What bureaucracy, but what an intolerable socialistic, bureaucratic country of incredible corruption. Many everyday commodities become available only on the black market, a very flourishing outlet. It is a country run by the Military and on every street corner a soldier, complete with machine gun, stands or walks looking vaguely out of place and somewhat lost.

Our Hotel, the Inya Lake Hotel in Rangoon, stands by the lake of the same name; imposing in structure and set in delightful grounds of wild, jungle-like countryside. This imposing mausoleum, built by the Russians in 1960 and then run by the Israelis and now owned by the Government, is the complete opposite of the luxury to which we had by now become accustomed.

At the entrance of the impressive driveway is a "hut" guarded by two soldiers leering at us as we pass by in the coach - we do not smile back.

Our breath is taken away as we are shown to our rooms - not in admiration but in total disbelief! The rooms smell musty with damp, mould growing on the walls and the ceilings, more black than white with fungus. It is impossible to open a window because of the mosquitoes! The plumbing is unbelievable - something out of the last century and, upon discussion, it seems some loos don't work either! However, the showers do work if you are brave enough to stand in the stained bath.

Some of us actually see cockroaches enjoying themselves running riot in the rooms! And this is supposedly the best hotel in Rangoon?!! What are the others like I wonder? Drinks at the bar are ridiculously expensive if you pay by local Kyats (pronounced 'Chats') but cheaper if you pay at the end of your stay in US Dollars. More corruption, more black market.

We learn so much more about Burma when again we are entertained at the home of the British Ambassador HE Mr J Hartland-Swann CMG. The house, being an old Colonial Tea Trading Office, now delightfully elegant and dignified. The Ambassador, his wife and their lovely, happy staff are such congenial hosts for the evening.

Rangoon is fascinating, the buildings typically colonial just as the British built them and left them when the Burmese received their freedom in 1947. Nothing seems to have been touched since then and certainly nothing has been painted, cleaned or restored. It is just like retracing one's steps 30 or 40 years. However, there are cinemas brandishing modern day films and posters urging "unity". Propaganda is everywhere.

Tuesday morning early we pile into the old coach - no air conditioning, just draughty old windows and we are now seriously going towards our Mission. Rangoon Cemetery at Htaukkyan (pronounced "Towchan") is approximately 20 - 25 miles north of Rangoon. We pass people on their way to work and children going to school. Life seems the same everywhere at times. However, the local colour, flavour and slow speed, the old trucks - probably leftovers from the war - mixed with a few modern vehicles, girls and women carrying loads on their heads, dressed in sarongs brightly coloured, remind one that this is different, another culture, another life.

En route we pass men sitting by the roadside laying, by hand, stones for the foundation of a new road and girls with shallow bowls tentatively balanced on their heads full of cement which has been taken from an ancient concrete mixer. This is technology at its rawest. People are loaded into buses, spilling out of the sides and the backs, hanging on like grim death.

Then, at last, the Cemetery. We look at it wondrously. The Memorial standing sentinel over rows and rows of graves. As we enter, the sun now hot on our backs, we notice the incredible beauty and feel the peace and serenity of this lovely place. The flowers, shrubs, trees, the overall colour against the green grass cut and trimmed to perfection around each and every grave and the sweet aroma of beautifully scented flowers.

We walk slowly, carrying our individual poppy wreaths, towards our personal grave, my mother and I walk to the Memorial where my father's name is engraved on Page 4 - I.I. A G Horwood, V.C., D.C.M., Queen's Royal Regiment. We find it halfway down the pillar and I feel a tingling feeling all over of pride and a very big lump in my throat. We stand solitary for a while and think; my mother remembers. His Citation is situated in a cubbyhole in one of the pillars along with all the names and information of all these men.

That evening we all remember and pray in the Anglican Cathedral in Rangoon, presided by the Archdeacon and Archbishop of Rangoon. The British Ambassador, his Defence Attache, Colonel Bill Clements and their wives accompany us. The procession and the choir pass in front of us and, whilst we sing and pray, two bats flutter and fly around but our thoughts are elsewhere and we are not distracted by these creatures of God.

Wednesday morning we return to our Cemeteries. It is very hot and we are prepared for the Service in the open air below the Memorial which bears the names of 27,000 men, all of whom have no known grave, facing the cross in the midst of those who do have a resting place. All is serenity, the heady scent of flowers and the sweet singing of the birds pervade into our inner senses and help us to keep our minds in the present. The simple Service of Remembrance touches every nerve in one's body, the unaccompanied singing of hymns reminds one of our vulnerability in life and in death and somehow one can feel the closeness of those spirits of the loved ones to whom we had come so far to pay our respects. Tears flowed unashamedly in our humility to those who had given their lives in adversity for our freedom, peace and happiness and for all those future generations. What a price to pay. What can we say, just a simple "thank you, we miss you". The poignant moment is lost in words. The paradox being that we feel purged, cleansed of the wonderings and imaginings of the past years and we are at peace with ourselves in the knowledge that the souls who have surrendered to Heaven are at rest.

And so I sit on the aeroplane returning to a known civilisation thinking and remembering, leaving the place which had once been an imagination and now is a realisation. We have seen it, felt it, sensed its peace and tranquillity and left a part of ourselves there forever. Will one return I wonder? I doubt it. The deed is done.

Burma has left me mesmerised. The Pagodas, the Buddhist Monks in their orange robes and the Nuns in their pink robes, the beautiful girls, the happy children and the gentleness and the humility of a wonderful people will stay with me for the rest of

my life. The memories will not be clouded by thoughts of an evil Government. Good will always overcome evil. Burma is beautiful.

I cannot say enough regarding the extreme professionalism in which this trip was run. The kindness, thoughtfulness and patience which was shown by all who carried through the efficient service to the relatives and friends of those who have given their lives, was utmost in all respects. They, too, have succeeded in the call of duty.

We had tears, we had a lot of happy laughter and a great deal of fun. Thank you to everyone who made this trip a possibility. It was a trip of a lifetime - never to be forgotten.

CHF



Lt Horwood was awarded the DCM in May 1940 whilst serving as a Sergeant with 1/6th Queens. He and an officer, Captain A R Trench were captured and were prisoners of war for four days, they escaped and were behind enemy lines for a number of days before rejoining their unit. Captain Trench was awarded the MC.

Horwood was commissioned and was serving with the the First Battalion The Northamptonshire Regiment at Kyauchaw, Burma when he was awarded a posthumous Victoria Cross. His citation is shown below:-

London Gazette, 30th March 1944

"Lieutenant Alec George Horwood, VC DCM. The Queen's Royal Regiment (West Surrey) attached 1st Bn The Northamptonshire Regiment. 21st January 1944."

At Kyauchaw in Burma. On 18th January, 1944, Lieutenant Horwood with his forward mortar observation post accompanied the forward company of The Northamptonshire Regiment into action against a Japanese defended locality. Throughout that day he lay in an exposed position under intense fire and effectively shot his own mortars and those of a half troop of another unit, returning at night with valuable information about the enemy. The following day he moved forward with another company, and from an observation post which he established on a precipitous ridge, directed accurate mortar fire in support of two attacks. He also deliberately drew enemy fire upon himself. So that the fresh company he was with could see the Japanese positions. That night he remained on the ridge, and on the morning of 20th January again directed mortar fire in support of an attack. In the afternoon while leading another attack, he was mortally wounded at point-blank range.

Lieutenant Horwood set the highest example of bravery and devotion to duty, to which all ranks responded magnificently. His cool calculated actions during these three days, coupled with his bravery, very largely contributed to the ultimate success of the operation and the capture on 24th January of the Japanese position."

Regimental Deaths

Batten - On 28th March 1992 Private 'Bill' Batten aged 71 years 2nd Bn The East Surrey Regiment.

Beckett - On 22nd February 1992 Colour Sergeant John (Joe) F Beckett aged 68 years, The Queens Royal Regiment.

Bench - On 26th January 1992, Corporal Edward Robert Bench, aged 70 Years, The East Surrey Regiment.

Corporal Bench died in Australia. He was for many years with the Traffic Police in Perth. He was awarded the Polish Army Medal and the Polish Home Army Cross for gallantry whilst serving with the Polish partisans.

Brown - On 26th December 1991, In-Pensioner Victor Joseph Brown, aged 93 years. The East Surrey Regiment.
I/P Brown was in The Royal Hospital, Chelsea from 1984 till his death.

Bryder - On 26th October 1991, Ted Bryder, 2/5th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment.

Bucknell - On 26th September 1991, Brian Bucknell, 1/5 Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment.

Cardwell - In October 1991, Captain Frederick Cardwell, 2/6th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment.

Cole - On 23rd September 1990, Private Patrick Cole, aged 64 years. The Queen's Royal Regiment.

Cooper - On 24th February 1992, Corporal Tom Cooper, 1/5th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment.

Cregan - On 5th October 1991, Sergeant Thomas Henry Cregan MM, aged 79 years. 1/6th Bn The East Surrey Regiment.
Sgt Cregan was awarded his Military Medal at Dunkirk for gallantry and leadership.

Dart - On 2nd March 1992, Corporal William (Bill) Dart, 1/5th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment.

Deluce - On 26th February 1992, Private James William Deluce aged 99 years. The East Surrey Regiment.
Private Deluce served with the 5th and 8th Battalions. Whilst with a mortar section he was badly wounded and returned to the UK. He was Mentioned in Despatches.

Duffin - On 3rd March 1992, Frank Septimus Duffin, The Queen's Royal Regiment.

Edwards - On 16th April 1992, Company Sergeant Major William Gordon (Viv) Edwards aged 81 years. The Queen's Royal Regiment. CSM Edwards was an In-Pensioner of The Royal Hospital Chelsea for many years.

Everitt - On 27th December 1991, George Murray Everitt aged 76 years. The East Surrey Regiment.

George Everitt volunteered quite early in the 39/45 war. He went to OCTU and was commissioned into The East Surrey Regiment. In June 1940 he was posted to the 1st Battalion at Axminster where it was reorganising after Dunkirk. George commanded 10 Platoon of D. Coy.

He was still commanding 10 Platoon for the N. African landing in November 1942 and was involved in the fighting up to and including Tebourba. Early in January 1943 the battalion were at Sidi N'Sir some twelve miles forward of the main defence line. Contact was maintained with the enemy by very active patrolling. On one of these patrols at the end of January George and six of his platoon were ambushed and taken prisoner. George was a P.O.W. for the rest of the war.

Freeman - On 6th April 1992, Major Peter Cuthbert Freeman MC aged 75 years. 1/7th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment.

Fulker - On 2nd April 1992, Drum Major Edward C Fulker BEM The East Surrey, Queens Royal Surrey and The Queens Regiments.

Gray - On 12th April 1992, Lieutenant Colonel Colin Blakeney Gray MBE, The Queen's Royal Regiment. Died in America.

Hubbard - On 20th February 1992, Company Sergeant Major Charles Hubbard, 2nd and 1/5th Bn's The Queen's Royal Regiment.

Kenyon - Sergeant E Kenyon 1/6th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment.

Lee - On 28th January 1992, Sidney Lee, The East Surrey Regiment. Mr Lee had been a resident of The Royal Star & Garter Home since 1985.

Merrett - On 27th December 1991, Corporal Albert Edward Cyril Merrett, aged 87 years. The Queen's Royal Regiment.

He served from 1921 - 1928 and served with both the 1st & 2nd Battalions in Ireland, India, Sudan and as an instructor at the Depot. In 1920 he was serving with 5th Bn Somerset Light Infantry as a 15½ year old and during the Second World War he was a Lieutenant in the 2nd City of London Battalion, The Home Guard.

Nall - On 6th December 1991, Corporal James Francis Nall, 2nd Bn The East Surrey Regiment. He was a Prisoner of War of the Japanese. In June 1979, he was awarded the Imperial Service Medal for his services as a Cartographical Surveyor Draughtsman.

Oatley - On 9th March 1991, Corporal Edwin Ernest Oatley aged 73 years. 2nd Bn The East Surrey Regiment. He was a Prisoner of War of the Japanese during the Second World War.

Perry - On 23rd April 1990, Private Douglas John Perry, aged 72 years. The East Surrey Regiment.

Private Perry was taken prisoner on 12th June 1940 and was a POW at Stalag 9c. He worked with Temple Sylvester brother of Victor, the dance band leader entertaining the prisoners of war. They both received a citation for their efforts.

Pound - On 21st November 1991, Staff Sergeant Albert Pound, aged 82 years. The Queen's Royal Regiment. S/Sgt Pound had been an In-Pensioner since 1988 of The Royal Hospital Chelsea.

Rumbold - Sidney Rumbold, 1/5th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment.

Sager - On 25th October 1991, Sidney Sager, 1/5th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment.

Sawford - Sergeant Roy Sawford 1/6th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment. Served throughout the Second World War with his Battalion.

Shove - On 9th February 1992, James Shove, aged 73 years. 2nd Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment. Served with his Battalion in North Africa and the Far East.

Smith - On 20th November 1991, 6088046 Private Thomas Alfred Smith MM, aged 70 years. 2nd Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment. Private Smith was awarded a Military Medal whilst serving with A Company The 2nd Battalion at Beit Lid, Palestine.

Smith - On 29th May 1991, Colour Sergeant Kenneth Algie Ronald Smith, aged 65 years. The East Surrey Regiment. C/sgt Smith served in The 1st and 2nd Battalions of the Regiment, in NW Europe, Middle East, Palestine, East Africa and Greece.

Smithers - On 16th December 1991, Private Alf (Joe) Smithers, The Queen's Royal Regiment.

South - On 30th March 1992, Private William South, 1st Bn The East Surrey Regiment - 1930-1940.

Thomson - On 4th October 1991, Major Ian Thomson MC, aged 75 years. The Queen's Royal Regiment.

Tourle - On 16th March 1992, Private Ronald Tourle, aged 69 years. 1st Bn The East Surrey Regiment.

Walsh - On 17th August 1991, Private Patrick Thomas Walsh, aged 70 years. The Queen's Royal Regiment.

Waters - On 10th March 1992, A A J Waters, The Queen's Royal Regiment.

Webb - On 30th July 1991, Captain Walter Webb DCM, The Queen's Royal Regiment.

Walter Webb enlisted in 1922 and was granted an Emergency Commission in 1941. He finally retired from the Army in 1960. He was awarded the DCM in The London Gazette, 14th July 1939. He was presented with his medal at Stoughton Barracks in 1940 by H.M. King George VI. He died in an Isle of Wight nursing home.

Wellington - On 7th December 1988, Lance Corporal Henry William (Duke) Wellington, aged 69 years. 1/6th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment. L/Cpl Wellington was very seriously wounded on D Day +3 and as a result of his wounds was discharged and received a 100% disability pension.

Yeo - On 23rd December 1990, Private Herbert Yeo, aged 82 years. The East Surrey Regiment.

Young - On 22nd September 1991, Corporal William Young, 2/7th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment.

Regimental Families

Hubbard - On 29th January 1992, Monica Hubbard wife of CSM C Hubbard, The Queen's Royal Regiment.

Pope - On 30th November 1991, Doryce Pope widow of the late Colonel Rex Pope, The Queen's Royal Regiment.

Obituaries

Colonel H H Walker, TD.

Hubert Horace Walker, known as 'Humphrey' by many of his friends died on 7th January 1992 at the age of eighty. He was educated at Felstead school and commissioned in 6th Bn The East Surrey Regiment on 9th March 1935. On Guy Fawkes Day in 1938 Humphrey married Magda Metcalfe and commenced their long and happy partnership.

On the doubling of the Territorial Army in 1939 he was appointed adjutant of the 2/6th Battalion and then had the vast and novel administrative task of mobilising the Battalion. He served as adjutant in England and France until 12th June 1940 when the remnants of the Battalion were ordered to surrender at St Valery and he became a prisoner of war of the Germans.

He was mentioned in Despatches for his sterling leadership and courage in the desperate fighting before the French surrender. After five long years of captivity he was released.

In May 1947 when the 6th Battalion was reconstituted he immediately rejoined and served as company commander and later as second-in-command.

On 1st May 1954 he was appointed to command the Battalion and after three very successful years in command was promoted Colonel and appointed Training Colonel of 131 Infantry Brigade (TA) which appointment he held until transferring to TARO.

In civilian life Humphrey was a member of the London Stock Exchange. He will be remembered by All Ranks who knew him as a very loyal, kind and jovial man determined to do his best for those under his command.

Our sympathy is extended to his wife Magda, their daughters Sally, Susan and Tiny and the eight grandchildren - now very grown up.

GLAS

Lieutenant R Maxwell MC

As reported in the national Press and the last Newsletter, the death occurred last year of the former Lt. Robert Maxwell M.C. of the 1/5th Queen's Royal Regiment. He gained his decoration for distinctive service in operation "Blackcock" at Paarlo in Europe when he gallantly led a counter-attack, supported by tanks, against buildings occupied by enemy forces. He further distinguished himself in a later battle for the capture of Sudweyne near Bremen, and is listed in the History of The Queen's Royal Regiment as being one of the officers who crossed the Rhine.

Major I P Thomson MC

Ian Thompson died on 14th October 1991. Born in 1916 in India and educated at Radley and Sandhurst.

He was commissioned into The Queen's Royal Regiment in 1936 and joined the 1st Battalion in India at Allahabad. In 1940 he moved with the Battalion to the North West Frontier Province, where he was to take part in a number of operations. On one occasion when one of his platoons received some casualties from the tribesmen, he immediately led another platoon to the top of the escarpment to engage the enemy and to cover the withdrawal.

During 1942, Ian joined 1/6th Queens in the 7th Armoured Division in North Africa. Just prior to the break-out at the battle of Alamein, during extensive close quarter exchanges of fire on the night of 25/26 October, a number of parties including the CO, Lieutenant-Colonel Denis Gibbs and Captain Ian Thomson got separated and were taken prisoner.

Thomson was moved to Stalag 344 (Lamsdorf) in Germany. Shortly after arrival he exchanged identities with a private soldier which enabled him to join working parties outside the camp, from one of these he escaped over the wire. Whilst on his way to France a document check resulted in him being recaptured and returned to Lamsdorf and put in solitary confinement. With the aid of a file smuggled to him; he cut through the bars of his cell and got himself "lost" amongst the other prisoners.

He took part in digging two tunnels for a mass escape, which were in due time discovered. Following a further failed attempt to escape, he finally broke out in May 1944. Wearing a beret and posing as a French workman he travelled by train and crossed into France on foot.

He joined the Maquis and helped in the training of the French resistance. Ian became very popular with the Union des Amicales, the group with which he fought: he regularly corresponded with them and attended their reunions. He was awarded the Military Cross in 1944.

After the liberation of France, Ian was employed in the War Office and posted to Palestine in 1946 towards the end of the British mandate, when terrorist activities were rife. He was Mentioned in Despatches. During 1947-1948 he was on the Staff with HQ Far East Land Forces in Singapore. This was followed

by the Staff College Camberley and BAOR then back to Malaya with the 1st Battalion as a Company Commander; the communist terrorists insurgency was then at its peak.

Later in the 1950s he was posted to West Africa; as Ian charmingly said at the time, "I'm going to be C-in-C the Gambia", it was a major's appointment. After another appointment in the War Office and BAOR he left the regular army and served with the TAVR in Liverpool.

Ian was a very courageous and resourceful man with a fine military bearing. His warm and charitable personality made him instantly likeable. His junior officers and soldiers were reassured by his quiet laid back manner when they were confronted by what they thought was a tricky situation. He enjoyed a party and was amusing company. He had a great knowledge and a passion for horse racing and was an enthusiastic player of all sports.

His wife Denise died in 1983. He and his old world charm will be much missed.

Our sincerest sympathy to his son Martin.

MAL.

Colour Sergeant J F Beckett

John Beckett, known to his friends as Joe, was born in Germany in 1923 and came to the UK in 1936. At the beginning of the Second World War, he was sent to Canada, where he worked in a logging camp for about a year before returning to the UK.

He took British Nationality shortly after his return and early in 1944, enlisted in the British Army.

Soon after the Normandy landings, John joined 1/6th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment as a reinforcement from the 13th holding Bn. He served in the N.W. Europe Campaign until prior to the Rhine Crossing, he returned with the 1/6th to the UK.

He was a very early volunteer when the 6th Bn was reformed in 1947, serving first in Bermondsey until the amalgamation in 1961, and then with the 3rd Bn The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment (T.A.), attaining the rank of Colour Sergeant, which he held until retiring in 1967.

John then joined the 6th Queen's O.C.A. and from the first was a great supporter, so much so, in fact, that for a time he financed the O.C.A. from his own pocket until funds built up to become self sufficient. As treasurer to the association, none could be better, he was meticulous in all the financial dealings and was the greatest possible asset to the Old Comrades Association.

Major P C Freeman MC

Peter Freeman died suddenly from a heart attack on April 6th 1992 at his home in Kinner Stourbridge aged 75 years. He was commissioned in 1940 and posted to 1/7th Bn Queen's Royal Regiment with which unit he served until wounded at Villers Bocage, Normandy in June 1944. Finishing his war time career at 13 ITC Maidstone as a Company Commander.

Peter was a very fit and strong fellow who had played rugby and other sports. These included shooting, in which he had the distinction of being selected after the war for the pistol shooting team of Gt. Britain, and competing in International matches. His ability as an infantry officer was soon recognised and he commanded the battalion Carrier Platoon for a long period during the Desert campaign in which time he was awarded the MC. He landed at Salerno, Italy as the Commander of "D" Company, continuing in this role until returning to UK with the Bn following the Volturno river crossing. After the period of re-equipment and training in Norfolk he embarked with the Bn for the "D" Day landings. It was when advancing on foot at the head of his Company he was shot at almost point blank range from the

machine gun of an enemy tank, four bullets passing harmlessly between his body and his arm, and the fifth passing through the lower part of his arm, but serious enough to cause him to be evacuated.

At the end of hostilities Peter continued his great interests with the army by joining the Army Cadet Force and finally resigned his commission in Dec 1957. He has always taken an active interest in The Queen's (Southwark) Regimental Association and as recently as last month attended the annual dinner at the Union Jack Club, looking hale and hearty.

He was always regarded with great affection by his brother Officers and men, and was a true and staunch friend. To Peggy and his family go our heartfelt sympathy in their, and our sad loss.

KAJ

CSM E C Hubbard

Charles Hubbard died on 20th February 1992 at the age of 90 after a short stay in The Grayshott Nursing Home. He enlisted in The Queen's Royal Regiment in April 1919 at Norwich. After 2 years in the United Kingdom he was posted to "C" Company 2nd Battalion stationed at Kailara, India. He represented the company in hockey and football and was a keen rifle shot.

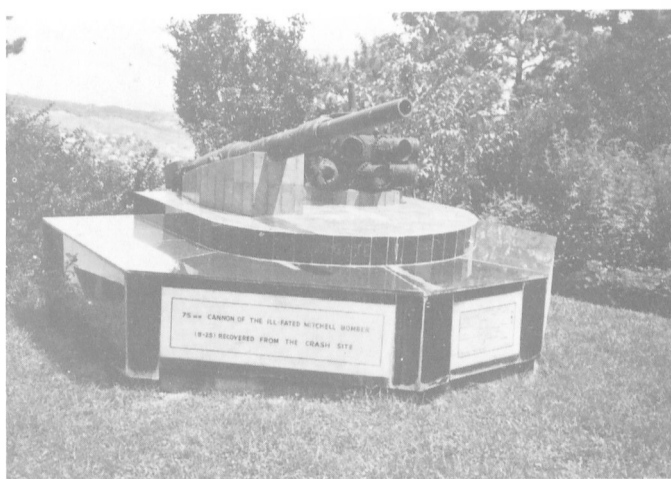
He saw further service in the Sudan before returning home in 1927. In 1928 he was married to Monica and they set up home in married quarters at Stoughton Barracks, a spell at Parkhurst Barracks I of W. before moving to The Drill Hall at Dorking as area recruitment officer until the outbreak of war.

He was discharged in January 1953 after a total of 33 years service. A further period up to 1956 was spent as an active member of the Home Guard as RSM.

Charles continued as caretaker of the Drill Hall at Dorking until his retirement when he and Monica moved to Westcott, enjoying their retirement until ill health curtailed their movements. In January 1992 it became necessary for them both to move into a nursing home. Monica died on the 29th January and Charles passed away on the 20th February.

ACH

The Wingate Memorial



The Wingate Memorial at The Assam Rifles Headquarters at Shillong, taken by D Papworth. The 75 mm cannon from the Mitchell Bomber was recovered from the crash site.

East Surrey Memorial Gates

Readers will be pleased to know that the damage caused by vandals to the Memorial Gates at All Saints Church, Kingston has now been repaired.

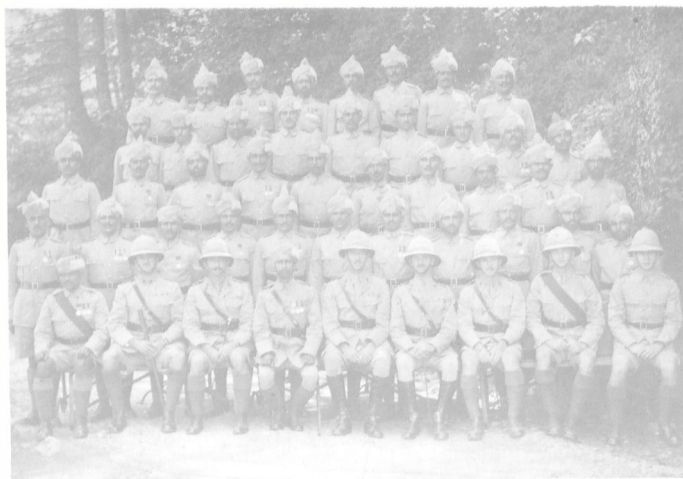
Horse Soldiers

It must seem almost incredible to soldiers of today that, in spite of the introduction of motor transport units in the 1914-18 War, the first-line transport of an infantry battalion was still horsed at the outbreak of the 1939-45 War. On training, the officers of Battalion Headquarters, the company commanders and the officers of the machine gun company were all mounted. At home limbered GS wagons provided the first line transport for medium and light machine guns. The company cooker, drawn by two sturdy light draught horses, accompanied the marching troops, and at the end of the march there was a cooked meal all ready for them. The MO had his own two-wheeled 'Cape' cart which brought up the rear of the marching column. GS wagons, drawn by enormous Argentinian mules trundled around barracks delivering rations, stores, baggage, etc.

There was great enthusiasm for the annual Infantry Transport competition. The bright work was burnished, the leather and the horses coats groomed until they shone, the wagons re-painted and the Transport Section immaculately turned out with their white lanyards, bandoliers, breeches and spurs. The accompanying photograph shows the 2nd Battalion The East Surrey Regiment entry for the Shorncliffe Garrison Horse Show in 1935, which collected two first prizes and one second.



In India first-line transport was provided by pack mules or by draught mules drawing AT (Animal Transport) carts. The transport animals and vehicles were looked after by the Indian Platoon attached to the Battalion. For moves to camp the tentage and heavy baggage was carried in bullock carts, and sometimes, by camel. There must be many old sweats with recollections of horse and mule in the service of their battalion.



Footnote: British Infantry battalions serving in India before the War had an Indian Transport platoon attached to them. Their role was to look after the mules which carried the Vickers guns and drew the AT (Animal Transport) carts. The Indian Platoon took part in all exercises and training with the Battalion, of which it was very much a part. The sepoy's wore the Regimental flash in

the pagri and were loyal members of the Battalion. The Indian Platoon was commanded by its own Viceroy Commissioned Officer who was addressed as Jemadar Sahib.

PGEH

A Gallant "Queen's Man"

The medals and decorations of Sir George Pomeroy Colley, a former distinguished officer of The Queen's Royal Regiment, were recently offered for sale by Sotheby's, Medallists and Auctioneers.

Sir George joined the Regiment in 1858 and later held various important appointments including those of Brigade-Major W. District (1864), A.D.C. to G.O.C. S. District (1870), Commander of Transport, Ashanti Expedition (1873), Military Secretary to the Viceroy of India (1876), and Governor and Commander-in-Chief, Natal and High Commissioner for S.E. Africa (1880).

He was killed at the Battle of Majuba Hill in February, 1881. At the time of his death he was reported to be "one of the finest soldiers of his generation".

In "The Story of a Soldier's Life," Lord Wolseley alludes to him in the following terms:-

"He was all-round one of the very ablest men I ever met. Perfect as a man of business, I never served with anyone who could so absolutely evolve order from confusion, or straighten out the most tangled web of difficulties so effectually as he could. Always cool, even in the greatest danger nothing could, apparently, ruffle his calm decision of character. He was a deep, sober, and active thinker, who calculated out in his logical brain all the chances and possibilities of any undertaking he had conceived himself, or had been proposed by another, before he accepted it".

"In the field, as I knew him, he was an extremely clever, hard working man of great bodily activity, who never spared himself. When this little war (the Ashantee War) came to an end, I should have picked him out as the ablest Officer in the Army, and, in all respects, as the man most fitted to be a General.... though luck turned against him at Majuba, I do not believe our Army at this moment possesses an abler soldier than he was."



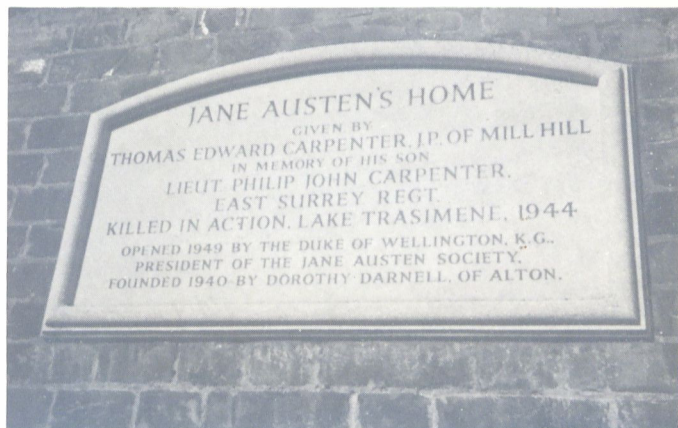
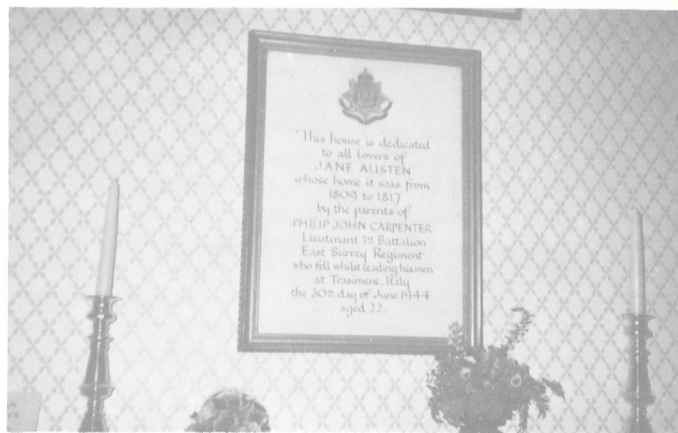
Footnote: In Stoke Parish Church, Guildford there is a five light stained glass window, (St Mathew, St Mark, Our Lord, St Luke, St John) to the memory of Major General Sir G Pomeroy Colley CB CMG KCS placed there by his brother officers of the 2nd Queen's.
Our thanks to Mr D Erskine-Hill of Sothebys for the photographs.

Jane Austens House

Major Peter Bridgeland wrote in to say that he and his wife visited the Jane Austen House near Alton recently. The house is well worth a visit and it is of particular interest to former Surreys as the house was given by T E Carpenter JP of Mill Hill in memory of his son, Lt Phillip John Carpenter, The East Surrey Regiment who was killed in action at Lake Trasimen Italy on 30th June 1944, whilst serving with the 1st Battalion.

Major Bridgeland recalls that Lt Carpenter was serving with 2/6th Surreys when they were stationed at Alnwick, north of Newcastle in March 1944. Lt Carpenter left shortly after having been posted to CMF on a reinforcement draft to 1 Surreys.

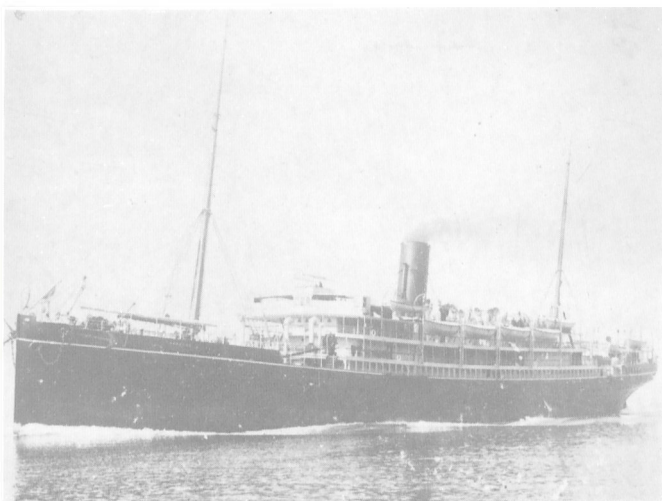
Footnote: Readers will remember that JWS wrote an article for this Newsletter in the May 1985 edition.



S. S. Sobraon

The Battle of Sobraon is honoured in the Colours and History of The East Surrey Regiment and in that of today's Queen's Regiment where Sobraon Day on 10th February is officially and ceremoniously remembered.

Few people may know, however, that the name of Sobraon was once borne by a ship. During the South African War the P and O shipping line built three vessels specially for trooping, namely Assaye, Plassy and Sobraon. They were twin screwed steamers of 7,400 tons and had a speed of 16 knots. P and O carried some 150,000 troops in nine ships during the war (many probably from the Queen's and Surreys Regiments) but the largest providers of ships for trooping were the British India Company with thirty-seven vessels involved.



SS Sobraon

Photo P & O Shipping Line

The value of the work of transport vessels in the South African War of 1899-1902 and in the China War of 1900 was recognised by King Edward VII in 1903 by the institution of the Transport Medal for award to certain officers of such ships. It was originally intended that it should be granted "in future wars to the officers of the Mercantile Marine serving in the transports" but during the First World War it was superseded by the Mercantile Marine War Medal and in the Second World War members of the Merchant Navy received the same awards as those of the Royal Navy.

HMS Sea Eagle and The Queen's



The Captain and Commander HMS Eagle and The Queen's party on the Autumn Cruise in 1929. The Queen's party were the winners of the Captain's Cup for Gunlaying.

Note: This party was from 1 Queen's who were stationed in Malta at that time.

Woking Exhibition

At the Woking Craft and Historical Exhibition in December The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Museum stand excited much interest. On display were photographs, a scarlet tunic, model soldiers and memorabilia connected with the Regiment particularly with regard to its associations with Woking. Of current interest, and attracting attention, was a photograph of the late Robert Maxwell who was a commissioned officer in The Queen's Royal Regiment in the Second World War and who was decorated with the Military Cross for his gallantry and leadership when heading a counter attack against German troops in the village of Paarlo on the River Roer in January 1945. He showed further gallantry in April 1945 when his platoon cleared the enemy from the village of Sudweyne, near Bremen.

Other photographs and pictures showed various aspects of Regimental life (including that of the Territorial Army) of combat, ceremonial, social and sporting natures and brought many questions from visitors, some of whom had direct or indirect connections with the Regiment. The Mayor of Woking, Councillor Dick Williams, at the official opening of the exhibition, was pleased to state that he had served his National Service with The East Surrey Regiment and had, at one time, been stationed at Howe Barracks, Canterbury.

The exhibition brought favourable comments in the local Press who, in speaking of the Regimental Museum stand, said "This example strengthens people's demands that the town should have its own museum, where we can honour our own heroes".

RF

Unknown Soldier/Pilot

G Openshaw has sent this picture of an unknown Queens officer c1918, taken by a Dorothy Wilding of 264 Regent Street, W. (opposite Jays). Despite considerable research we have been unable to find out any more details of this officer. We have established that Dorothy Wildings premises were bombed during the war. The RAF museum is also keen to establish his identity. Can any of our readers help?



Regimental History as seen by G. Robinson

