

MAY 2000



NUMBER 67

THE QUEEN'S ROYAL SURREY REGIMENTAL ASSOCIATION

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NEWSLETTER



SOUTH AFRICA 1899-1902

RELIEF OF LADYSMITH

To Bombay 3550



Regimental and Association Events

2000



27th May	5 OMA Annual Dinner, Drill Hall, Farnham - Details from: I Chatfield, 13 Wood Road, Farncombe, Godalming, Surrey GU7 3NN Tel: 01483 429425
1st June	THE GLORIOUS FIRST OF JUNE. (1794).
4th June	Queen's Surreys Association Annual Church Service, Guildford Cathedral, 11 am for 11.15 am service.
7th July	PWRR Officers' Club Cocktail Party - London.
14th July	WOs and Sgts Association 50th Anniversary dinner. Details from J Izant, 81 Hawley Road, Camberley, Surrey GU17 9ES.
1st August	MINDEN DAY (1759).
2-6th August	PWRR and Buffs Regimental Tent at Canterbury Cricket Week.
August	1 PWRR to Kosovo - return to the UK Feb 2001.
August	2 PWRR to Aldershot.
9th September	SALERNO DAY (1943).
16th September	2/6th Queen's OCA reunion lunch, 11 am for 12 noon. Details from Major M Nason TD, 64 Westfield Road, Barnehurst, Kent DA7 6LR - Tel: 01322 527017.
17th September	Museum Open Day - Meet your Mates - Clandon.
6th October	Queen's Surreys Officers' Club, Ladies Luncheon, Clandon. (Details enclosed with this Newsletter).
11th October	Golf Society Autumn Meeting, Woking.
14th October	East Surrey OCA Reunion, Clapham Junction. Details from F A W Ramsey MM, 20 Lavender Road, Carshalton, Surrey SM5 3EF (0181) 4012070.
14th October	40th Anniversary of the formation of The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment.
October	2 PWRR to Bosnia - return to UK Apr 2001.
28th October	Laying up of Colours 6/7th Queen's - Chichester.
3rd November	Annual Reunion - Union Jack Club. (Details enclosed with this Newsletter).
9th November	Field of Remembrance - Westminster Abbey - London.
12th November	Remembrance Day Parades - Guildford - Kingston - Stailes Church Camberwell, - Southwark, Bermondsey and the Cenotaph, London.
24th November	PWRR Officers' Club Regimental Dinner - Guards and Cavalry Club, London.
20th December	BRITISH BATTALION DAY. (1941)
Laying up of 5 Queen's Colours planned for 10th June 2000 has been postponed until 2001. Further details will be circulated when known.	

2001

2nd February	Queen's Surreys Regimental Council Meeting - Clandon.
10th February	SOBRAON DAY (1846).
10th March	Queen's Surreys Territorial Trustees Meeting - Clandon.
17th June	Queen's Surreys Association Annual Church Service, Guildford Cathedral, 11 am for 11.15 am service.

Fronspiece, background a map of South Africa c 1900, photo of Private (later Sergeant) A E Curtis VC., 2nd Bn The East Surrey Regiment and his medals, (see The South African War 1899-1902 pages 16 and 50). His medals were sold by Spink and Company in October 1999 and realised £40,000.00.

The 2nd Bn The Queen's (Royal West Surrey) Regiment and the 2nd Bn The East Surrey Regiment were awarded the Battle Honours "South Africa 1899 - 1902" and "Relief of Ladysmith".

Acknowledgments to David Erskine-Hill of Messrs Spink and Son Ltd for allowing us to reproduce the photograph of Sgt Curtis's medals.

Editorial

This Newsletter, the first of the new millennium has with it a Supplement on the Bands, Drums and Music of our Regiments. I had hoped to produce the music scores for the marches and bugle calls, but whilst I had the copyright holders permission to print a number of them, there were others I did not have the necessary authority for. Efforts are still being made to obtain permission and if obtained we will probably print them all in a future edition.

In the future it is hoped to publish further Supplements on various regimental themes, but commencing with the May 2001 issue the Newsletter is likely to be smaller. At present a new Editor has not been found but efforts are continuing to find a "willing volunteer"!!?

Your memories and experiences are of vital importance to our records. You should all continue to send them in so that even if they are not immediately published in the Newsletter, they can be recorded for the future. I draw your attention to Colonel Mac McConnells letter on page 6.

You will read elsewhere in this issue that the future of the museum still occupies centre stage of Association thinking. The President is having consultations with the National Trust in the near future.

Colonel Mac McConnell relinquishes the Chairmanship of the Museum Trustees in July and we are all so grateful for all he has done to secure the future of the museum during his tenure as Chairman.

With all good wishes, take care
Les Wilson

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President's Notes

Towards the end of last year it was finally accepted that a stand alone museum was not a reality. We were therefore able to look ahead and plan the finite future of our Association and with this in mind I asked Brigadier Mike Doyle to chair a small committee to review all aspects of the Association's work and activities. The Committee's excellent report gave a clear steer on how we should gradually rundown whilst maintaining our responsibilities for benevolence to our old soldiers in need and endowing a Regimental Museum for the long term future. The recommendation to wind up the Association in 2010 was accepted as the formal planning date but we expect and will be encouraging all reunions and branch activities to continue for as long as possible.

The Doyle Report highlights the need to continue our benevolence work and the Regimental Council and Charity Trustees will make provision for this important aspect of the Associations work which will continue after the formal winding up of our Association.

The very idea of winding up will not please some but it would be irresponsible not to plan for the future. We have considerable assets and the disposal of these must be carried out in an orderly and responsible manner.

It is still our hope that the National Trust may agree to the Museum remaining in Clandon Park and that at some date in the future they may take over our collection with a generous endowment to maintain it. I am now in touch with the Regional Director and expect to meet him during April. I will keep you informed of the outcome. Plans have been made to bring the Museum up to date and introduce new interactive technology but this will be very costly. The Trustees have said they will commit the necessary funds but only when they know the long

term future of the museum which depends on successful discussions with the National Trust.

The Doyle Committee's report enables us to view our finite future positively and to meet the future with dignity. It will prevent us drifting into oblivion. I am very grateful to Brigadier Mike Doyle and his team for their work.

Colonel McConnell hands over as Chairman of the museum Trustees in July and I would like to take this opportunity to thank him for his unstinting efforts to secure the future of the museum.

With my best wishes
Bob Acworth

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The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment

The first time for many years RHQ at Howe Barracks is without a PWRR resident Battalion. The 1st Battalion moved to Tidworth in December 99 and was replaced by The Royal Irish Regiment. Our status as a lodger Unit has been accepted by the Royal Irish and we find them a very professional and friendly Unit.

The move of 1 PWRR to Bhurtpore Barracks in Tidworth went very well. They are now in a bigger but older style Barracks that has been painted and modernised in some parts. The Battalion is now in the middle of converting to the Armoured Warrior role (see picture). This has involved a great deal of training for drivers, commanders and gunners. The Battalion has a large exercise in June where elements of 3 PWRR will join them for their annual camp. The Battalion then deploys to Kosovo 4 - 10 August 00 and returns to Tidworth 4 - 10 February 01. They expect an exciting tour with the usual rumblings of trouble in yet another part of the former Yugoslavia.

The 2nd Battalion said goodbye to Lt Col Richard Dennis who after 2 years command moved on to the staff at Upavon. He was replaced by Lt Col Simon Deakin. The Battalion has been on Spearhead during which time they provided the Guard of Honour for Her Majesty Queen Margrethe II of Denmark during her State Visit (16-18 Feb 00). The First Guard was at Windsor Castle for the official arrival of Her Majesty and the Second Guard the following day in the City of London (The Guildhall). Both guards went extremely well and Her Majesty was very pleased with her Regiment. At the time of writing the Battalion has a strong company group completing Jungle Training in Belize.

The Battalion is equipped with the Saxon vehicle. In August this year the Battalion will Arms plot from Tidworth to Aldershot to then be grouped in their appropriate Brigade for deployment. In October the whole Battalion will then deploy to Kosovo with their vehicles for a 6 months tour returning in April 2001.

We as a Regiment will have both Regular Battalions in the Balkans - a wonderful chance for the men to earn yet another medal.

The 3rd Battalion has now settled down after the Strategic Defence Review and the Presentation of Colours.

Their locations are:

Bn HQ plus HQ (The Buffs) Company	Canterbury
A (Queen's Royal Surreys) Company	Farnham with a Platoon at Camberley

B (Royal Sussex) Company

Brighton with a Platoon
at Worthing

C (Royal West Kent) Company

Canterbury with a Platoon
at Dover

Kohima Band & Corps of Drums

Canterbury



They held a very successful Open Day at Camberley where over 500 eligible youths visited. Some will join others will keep it in the backs of their minds.

The Battalions Annual Camp will be with the 1st Battalion training in the Armoured Warrior on Salisbury Plain. So far at least 15 TA soldiers have volunteered to go to Kosovo with the 1st Battalion. It all makes more interesting training for the TA soldier and also offers him a chance of combat experience.

B (The Queen's Regiment) Company of the LONDON Regiment continues to flourish. They yet again won the Courage Trophy under the command of Major Giles Morgan. It was also good to see so many of the company officers' at the Regimental Dinner last November.

C (The Duke of Connaughts Own PWRR) Company of the Royal Rifle Volunteers is located in Portsmouth and a platoon in the Isle of Wight. Coy HQ and 2 platoons are now based at the TA Centre, Peronne Close, Hilsea. This was a move from the Connaught Drill Hall well situated in Portsmouth to Peronne Close - not a popular move. As a result the company suffered but is now gradually adjusting to their new life and location. If any one wishes to visit call Capt Harry Wragg on 01705 675833 or send along recruits!

In summary the Regiment is in fine form.

AM

Congratulations and Best Wishes



Diamond Wedding Congratulations to:-

Fred and Evelyn Byatt, who celebrated their Diamond Wedding Anniversary on the 7th August 1999.

Mr and Mrs Norman Bundy who celebrated their Diamond Wedding Anniversary on 5th January 2000.

Bill and Doris Petch who celebrated their Diamond Wedding Anniversary on 5th March 2000.

Harry and Violet Smith who celebrated their Diamond Wedding Anniversary on 13th April 2000.

Major and Mrs John Evans who celebrated their Diamond Wedding Anniversary on 6th September 1999.

40th Wedding Anniversary Congratulations to Joe and Barbara Gooden.

Birthday Congratulations to:-

Norman Riches TD on his 90th Birthday on 16th April 2000.

David Hosken on the occasion of his 81st birthday.

Charles Alfred Parsons, East Surreys, celebrating his 80th Birthday on 29th May 2000.

Rachel Roupell and Moyra Reed who celebrated their birthdays recently.

Best Wishes to:

Major John Redfern and Mrs Rachel Roupell both recovering from hip operations

Freedom of Woking Borough

Congratulations to Major David Robinson MBE TD JP DL SB St J., who on 20th April 2000 had the Freedom of the Borough of Woking conferred on him. One of his privileges as a Freeman of the Borough allows him to drive a flock of sheep across the canal bridge. Very fitting too for a Queensman, but we hope the sheep are all in step!

Congratulations and Best Wishes to:-

2/Lt Alice Kealy who passed out at Sandhurst in April 2000. She follows a distinguished family tradition. Her Grandfather was Colonel John Kealy, a pre-war regular officer in the Queen's who was awarded a DSO whilst commanding 2/6th Queen's in Italy. Her Father, Major Mike Kealy was commissioned into The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment and whilst serving with the SAS in the Oman was also awarded a DSO. Tragically her Father died on a training exercise in Wales shortly before he was due to assume command of one of the SAS Squadrons.

He had shortly before his death been a Company Commander with 1 Queen's in N. Ireland. Her Uncle Peter, also served with distinction in The Queen's Royal Regiment.

Her Stepfather, Major General Arthur Denaro is currently commandant of the academy and it was he who was responsible for a change in the procedure of the Passing Out Parade. All senior cadets carried swords instead of rifles.

The photo shows 2/Lt Alice Kealy holding the sword which had been her grandfathers and then her fathers which she had proudly carried on her Commissioning parade.

All members of the Association will wish to send her our congratulations and best wishes for the future in her career. Infantry regiments are still closed to women officers, and so 2/Lt Kealy will join the Royal Artillery, a loss to the Infantry but a great gain for the Artillery.

Acknowledgments to the Daily Telegraph for allowing us to reproduce the photograph.



By aborting the Centenary Hall project (as reported in the last Newsletter) much of the Forward Plans have had to be abandoned, but the key strategic aims remain and the first is and remains the need for a secure and permanent home. In this regard the Trustees are grateful for the initiative of the President of the Regimental Association, Brigadier Bob Acworth who has undertaken responsibility for achieving it. Further, the Regimental Charity has committed itself to the payment of substantial sums for refurbishment of the rooms and overall modernisation of the exhibition provided the Collection is to remain on a long term basis at Clandon.

Space shortage, restricted opening days and doubts about our future at Clandon all inhibited the development and implementation of our Education Policy, now our second most important strategic aim. Centenary Hall promised space, open days coincidental with School terms, the use of an adjoining building as a lecture room and help from the Town Museum Staff. Rather than abandon the Policy we must again attempt to implement it on an assumption that we will remain for the foreseeable future at Clandon. So in the application of the Policy to schoolchildren, we are seeking the help of local school teachers and the County Educational Department. Meetings have been held and talks proceed. In its application to adult groups we will again try to recruit an historian with good communication skills capable of applying the Policy by giving lectures and conducting adult tours. There are literally hundreds of schools and adult learning organisations all located within easy travelling distance from Clandon who would visit us given the promise of expert guidance.

We hope to agree with the National Trust some improved signage for the Museum e.g. at the entrance, in the car park and by the House, as well as greater prominence in National Trust literature and advertisements. For some years the Museum has been mentioned in the National Trust Handbook, but rather as a footnote to the Clandon Park entry. We consider that the Museum is, and should be recognised and advertised, as an asset of the House and therefore of the National Trust. Its existence has, as visitors constantly complain, hitherto been understated and by implication under valued. We are confident that the Museum when modernised and properly advertised will considerably increase visitor numbers to the House.

In the seven months the House was open to the Public last year, visitors to the Museum numbered 27,603, about 2800 less than last year (which apparently is in line with fallen attendance at most other Museums). On the other hand enquiries by researchers and others increased to 540 and these enquiries continued to increase during the winter months. This growing awareness seems directly attributable to our accessibility on the Internet since last Autumn and illustrates the interest we generate and the importance of the services we provide.

Our Educational resources have, during the year been enhanced by more videotaped chapters of "living history", i.e. personal accounts of the military experiences of former members of the Regiment. Some are very moving and all are interesting and historically valuable. We also plan to make a short introductory Film, tracing the history of the Regiment, playing some of the Regimental Music, incorporating some of the "living history" material and describing some of the more interesting artefacts.

This will be a fairly costly venture but we hope to recover some of the cost by selling copies of the video tape.

Conservation work has continued through the winter months. Several old framed photographs of considerable historic interest have been cleaned remounted and reframed by

approved professionals who carried out last year's survey. Our un-framed photographs have now been placed in acid-free, dust resisting transparent envelopes.

Exhibition presentation has been improved by the use of a recently purchased laminating machine. Exhibitions both internal and external will also benefit from an even more recent acquisition, namely a fully portable display screen. A generous grant from the TA Trustees covers the cost of the screen and will also cover the cost of a digital camera, the primary purpose of which is to add digital imaging to our data base to assist identification, retrieval, and security.

During the year under review we have produced or co-operated in the production of several exhibitions including a House of Commons exhibition in co-operation with the Army training and Recruitment Agency. To commemorate the anniversary we have reproduced, with the aid of the laminating machine, in Book form, photos and documents covering aspects of the Regiment's participation in the Boer War whose anniversary is now in progress. In that context we have, we hope, assisted several South African researchers. In compliance with our obligation to keep the Army in the public eye (a condition of MoD support) we intend later this summer to exhibit a selection of the entries by the winners of the Army Photographic Competition. We are also co-operating with the British Mountaineering Society in what promises to be a prestigious international exhibition of the History of Mountaineering. Our contribution consists of our photos and records of the epic attempt in 1937 by Corporal Ridley and four other soldiers of 1st East Surreys to climb Mount Kamet, at about 25,000 feet one of the highest peaks in the Himalayas. It is expected that the exhibition will open in 2002, coincidentally the 300th anniversary of the formation of the East Surrey Regiment's predecessors, Villiers Marines.

Association members will be interested to learn of our receipt of the following artefacts since the last Newsletter:-

From their families, medal groups of the late Major F J Reed (East Surreys), Pte J T Holloway and C/Sgt A E Janes (both Queen's Royal Regt). From the Territorial Trustees some important silverware no longer required because of reductions in the size of the TA, viz The Onslow Cup (5th Queens), The Sgts Mess Punchbowl (6th Surreys) and the Sgts Challenge Cup (23rd London).



Mrs Daphne Hill and Colonel McConnell with the late Major John Reeds medals at the museum.

From Mr Andrew Graham a large dioramic relief model of the Salerno region. Its provenance is in doubt, but there is evidence to suggest it was prepared by or for the German Army before their expulsion from the region by TA Battalions of the Queen's! Unfortunately it is in poor condition, but when time, cash and exhibition space permit, its relevance to Regimental History qualifies it for serious refurbishment or

even replication along the lines of the Waterloo diorama in the National Army Museum.



Clandon workers, past and present. Penny James, Richard Ford, Roy Harding, Jean Ann Stock and John Woodruff.

Finally some words of thanks from the Trustees. Our membership of numerous Museum Bodies is the only way we can know what is going on in the Museum world, and where to turn for help. During the year we have attended sixteen meetings of these bodies, and their officials have visited us on a large number of occasions. We are pleased to acknowledge the financial and other help, support and advice we receive from all of them. We also acknowledge with gratitude the generous financial support we receive from the Regimental Charity and from the Territorial Charity. We are deeply grateful to all our Stewards who voluntarily give up their valuable time at week-ends and public holidays to safeguard the Collection, and answer visitor's questions. Because they have their fingers on the pulse, they frequently pass on to the Curator much constructive help and advice. Our warmest thanks also to all the other volunteer helpers for their time labour and expertise so generously given. Between them they possess an encyclopaedic knowledge of the Regiment and its history. Their work for the Museum covers much ground and is supportive of every aspect of Museum management. Last but not least our thanks to Penny and Roy for their hard work, frequent inspiration and unswerving dedication. The Museum is a tribute to them all.

WEMcC

Letter from Colonel Mac McConnell

Dear Les

On behalf of the Museum Trustees I am writing to congratulate and thank you for another excellent Newsletter. I hope you will find space to publish this because I suspect it is not generally appreciated that the Newsletter is almost our only source of new historic information and eye-witness accounts of Regimental service and activity. Education and information are fundamental objectives of every Museum and although the Official Regimental Histories and Regimental Journals provide the bare bones, these eye-witness accounts-put-flesh-on-those-bones, and make history more interesting, more human and easier to understand. Our records and archives are consulted increasingly by students, authors, historians and people tracing relatives who served in the Regiment. Occasionally a visitor sees something among the artefacts that interests him and calls into the office seeking further information. Last year we dealt with a record 540 research enquiries, and our accessibility on the Internet since last August promises continued growth. So please keep up the good work!

As to the November Newsletter I found two articles of particular historic interest. Colonel Robert Lyle's escape from Malaya (which I suspect greatly understates his own leadership and heroism) and Peter Henmans account of the work of the Home Guard in defence of London during the air raids of the Second World War. The latter was particularly appropriate to the November Issue whose front page commemorates the stained glass windows of the Regiments' own Home Guard Battalions. His comment about members of the Home Guard killed on active service caused us to make enquiries about Regimental War Memorials. We discovered one in the British Legion hall at Mitcham It commemorates the death of 15 soldiers of a local (East Surrey) Battalion who lost their lives when their post received a direct hit. We also learnt that the Imperial War Museum has appointed a Project Co-ordinator to compile a National Inventory of War Memorials and is anxious for detailed information as she has virtually no information about our Regimental War Memorials, Home Guard or otherwise! To provide the co-ordinator with information about all our War memorials is outside the remit and available time of the Museum staff but it would be a comfort to know that all the Regiment's Memorials were centrally recorded, as this is likely to confer long term protection, so if any one is prepared to volunteer, an information leaflet can be obtained from us at the Museum or from the Imperial War Museum.

(Please see article on page 7)

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Can anyone help?

The Mount Kamet Expedition, 1st Bn The East Surrey Regiment, 1937

Recently a collection of negatives came to light in Blackpool depicting the expedition to climb Mount Kamet in the Himalayas made by Cpl R Ridley and four companions in May 1937. 1st Bn The East Surrey Regiment were stationed in Fyzabad at the time. Lt Col G R P Roupell VC had just taken over command of the Battalion. Ridley and his companions applied for leave "to go trekking and camping in the hills" but instead climbed almost to the top of this giant of the Himalayas, reaching 23,500 ft of the total 25,447 ft. They planned, financed and equipped the expedition themselves and their true intentions remained unknown until after their return. Their achievement gained considerable publicity at the time and is well documented in the regimental history and in the Journal of May 1938. However, it is proving difficult to find out personal information about the individuals themselves.

The Curator of the regimental museum very much wants to find out as much as possible about these five men because she is working with the owner of the negatives to help mount an exhibition about this achievement. Hopefully this exhibition will be mounted in 2002 to coincide with the 300th Anniversary of the raising of Villiers Marines. The names of the five climbers are:

Cpl R Ridley	L/Cpl J Williams (?Pinkie)
L/Cpl J Bull (?Johnny)	L/Cpl L Hamilton
Pte S Hillier (Syd)	

**Can anyone remember them? Are any of them still alive?
Can anyone remember what happened to them in subsequent years?**

Does anyone still have contact with their families?

Please write to or ring or e-mail:

Penny James, The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Museum,
Clandon Park, Guildford, Surrey GU4 7RQ - 01483 223419
e-mail: queenssurreys@care4free.net

Regimental e-mail overtakes snail mail

If you have a computer and a modem, then you have access to the World Wide Web. Just type in a query and in seconds a list of possible sites is on the screen in front of you. So when people around the world type in "E Surreys" or "Queen's Royal Regiment" they are likely to find the new Queen's Surreys Museum site at Clondan. This gives them information about the museum and also allows them to address queries to the museum staff. Since the service was started at the back end of August last year we have had over 250 such communications.

The majority of these messages are from people looking for information about their relatives who served in the Regiment. But there are other requests.

What was the Regimental Motto of The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment? 3 PWRR Recce Platoon". Well do you know?

"Is my father's Croix de Guerre in the Museum?" We were able to confirm that it was.

"I am looking for information on William Heathcote who was a teacher with the Second Queens Regiment of Foot. William arrived in South Africa in about September 1850 and was stationed at King Williams town." We had no information.

"I have just visited your website and found it very interesting. The history of the regiment/s seems very well documented, and I wonder if you could help me with a mystery. I have been searching for a missing ancestor - my grandfather, Maxwell James NAGEL." Can you help?

"Thanks so much for taking the trouble to pass my query on. I know there's not much likelihood of finding out anything about my grandfather, but I'm a desperate woman! I appreciate you taking the time." Now, who is it that deals with desperate women? (Editor - correspondence will **NOT** be allowed on this subject).

"I am writing to thank you for making it possible in having parts of The East Surrey Regiment book photocopied for me. I am truly indebted. The day to day descriptions of the battles my ancestor was involved in is intriguing and add so much to his life story. I would never have been able to find such details in Australia." It is nice when they say thanks.

"Off to Barbados for a couple of weeks on Sunday, so don't expect a prompt reply." Won't hold my breath - I'm off to Bognor. So there!

"Thank you for the information you sent; for it to arrive on Armistice Day was most apt. It was surprisingly moving to read about the action on that day and pleasing to know that so much of the detail is safely recorded." Some you win....

"I am attaching a photo which I believe is of my relative Aaron Weblin. I think that the uniform he is wearing is of The East Surrey Regiment circa 1916." And some you don't.

"One thing which I am not sure on is regarding the medal Harry won. I have not seen the medal but it was described to me as follows. A green and mauve ribbon with a round medal with the inscriptions of his service number and the words India." We e-mailed back a picture of the medal.

"I am very keen to find out any information about my Grandfather who was a soldier in the Queens during World War 2. My Grandfather's name was Frederick Milligan and he served in Burma." Anyone out there remember Fred?

And finally - bringing us right up to date in this millennium year.....

"My name is Sgt Steve Gaskell and I'm a serving member with the 2nd Battalion The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment. As you are probably aware a Special day in the WO's and Sgt's Mess is Sobraon Day on the 10th February and each year as a mark of respect and tradition one of the Battalion Sgt's is named as the years Sobraon Sgt, a great honour. This year I am proud to have been named as that Sgt and as such I, for the Sgts Mess, take the Regimental Colour from the Officers Mess. In the evening, after much celebration we have a regimental dinner and I am to make a speech. I am writing to ask if you could e-mail or send me any information on the battle and more importantly the man himself." Sgt Gaskell kindly e-mailed us a copy of his Sobraon speech after the eventful day.

www.surrey-online.co.uk/queenssurreys/index.htm - is the full website address for the museum
queenssurreys@care4free.net - is the e-mail address.

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The National Inventory of War Memorials

The National Inventory of War Memorials, a national research and recording project, urgently needs your help. The project was jointly initiated in 1989 by the Imperial War Museum and the Royal Commission on the Historic Monuments of England, (which merged with English Heritage on 1st April 1999) to record the estimated 50 - 60,000 memorials throughout England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. The ad hoc nature of memorial building by British communities led to a lack of any centralised archive of information about them, and the NIWM was founded on the premise that the key to successful preservation lay first in the creation of accurate records.

The last few years have seen an explosion of interest in the First World War generally and war memorials in particular, which reached its peak on the eightieth anniversary of the Armistice in November 1998. Popular interest has been reflected by an increasing concern for the fate of memorials and for their long term survival. In the last 10 years the project has collected information on approximately 35,000 of these memorials, 24,000 of which have been computerised onto our database.

The Inventory's data has all been collected by fieldworkers, members of the public from many different backgrounds, interests, and ages. Many of our volunteers are members of associations such as the Royal British Legion or the Western Front Association. We also have over 80 schools nation-wide collecting data as part of their school projects on the First or Second World War. Information needed includes details of a memorial's exact location, the conflicts it commemorates, its type and materials, dimensions, details of artists or manufacturers, its condition and any other background details.

The Inventory catalogues any tangible object which has been designated as a war memorial, from simple plaques and tablets, to crosses and ornate sculpture as well as gardens of remembrance and memorial halls. Other memorials include memorial homes, bus shelters, sports grounds and libraries. These date from any conflict throughout history including the two World Wars, the Boer War, Crimean War, the Falklands, the Gulf War and beyond. The oldest contemporary memorial currently recorded commemorates the fallen of the Battle of Bloreheath in Staffordshire, during the War of the Roses in the 15th Century.

Memorials are often found in everyday places such as business premises and schools, beside highways and in parks, as well as the more expected locations of places of worship or village greens and volunteers collect information by completing standard recording forms and taking photographs.

Once completed the Inventory will be a vital research tool for those interested in commemoration, military history, local history and so much more. Many school children find their ancestors names on the town memorials which they study and so form a connection with their own history and that of the world around them.

It is hoped that in the future, names of individuals which appear on memorials will be recorded and perhaps people may be able to research their family's service history.

Already, we gain many requests for help with art history research, such as those with an interest in the most memorable and thought-provoking war memorial sculptors, including Charles Sargeant Jagger, sculptor of the Machine Gun Corps memorial on Hyde Park Corner.

Many areas of the country have been comprehensively surveyed, but in other areas we are still very much in need of help. The largest areas yet to be covered are the Midlands and North Wales, yet in most counties there are certain districts in which we need volunteers. Gathering information can take as little or as much time as you have to spare, from taking a few photographs to investigating parish records. The current funding for the project expires in 2001 and we are obviously keen to gather together as much information as possible before then. There can be no doubt that maintaining a record of such a significant part of all our pasts though to the new millennium, before it is lost forever, is vital.

If anyone is interested in becoming involved with the Inventory, feel free to contact us at:

The National Inventory of War Memorials
Imperial War Museum
Lambeth Rd, London SE1 6HZ
tel: (020) 7416 5353/5281
fax: (020) 7416 5379
e-mail: memorials@iwm.org.uk
web: www.iwm.org.uk/lambeth/niwm.htm

Lorraine Knight
Project Assistant
National Inventory of War Memorials

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Italy Star Association

Among the "Star" Associations that of the Italy Star 1943-45 seems to be thriving as shown by a report of a visit to Italy in September 1999 received by the Editor from the National Secretary, Graham Swain, 2/7th Battalion The Queen's Royal Regiment.

Leaving the UK at Dover on Monday 6th September with a complement of 49, the group finally returned later still with 49, none having fallen by the wayside. A few minor ailments were treated by Julian Bihari, their travelling medical officer, to whom grateful tribute is made. Commencing at Calais and Eperney a journey through France took the group on the first leg of their trip to Cervia via Milan and Bologna. A free day followed to recover from travel fatigue. Friday 10th, saw onward travel to the hilltop village of Gemmano to attend a ceremony at the new memorial which was unveiled in September 1998 in the presence of Colonel Toby Sewell and others who fought for the liberation of Gemmano. On this latter occasion Mayor and Town Council were present as were members of the Scottish Branch of the Association. Wreaths were laid and there were speeches of welcome. From Gemmano a short distance was travelled to Coriano Cemetery where graves were visited and it was then on to Rimini where a

further Mayoral and civic and public greeting was received in the Piazza Pavour.

Day 6 saw a visit to Florence, unfortunately delayed by a serious accident on the motorway, but interesting nevertheless. On Sunday, 12th September a visit was made to Forlì Cemetery where the Chairman laid a wreath on the grave of his driver, Joe Morley who is buried there.

Tuesday 14th saw a memorable ceremony at Beach Head Cemetery, Anzio where a guard of honour was provided by the Italian Army and local Mayors and dignitaries attended, Group Captain Jim Drysdale, Royal Air Force, represented His Excellency the British Ambassador. A further ceremony was held on proceeding from the Beach Head Cemetery to the War Cemetery where a single red rose was placed on the grave of the brother of Jim King, an HQ member, by Nancy Swain. Still in Anzio, a further move was made to the Museum where there were refreshments, and speeches and hand written certificates were presented to each member who had been on the beach head.

The next day was one of the highlights of the tour when Rome was reached. A visit was made to the Vatican where arrival was just in time to hear the Pope hold a traditional audience on the steps of St Peter's. Colonel Tom Huggan from the Embassy accompanied the visitors on a tour of Rome, including a visit to the Commonwealth Cemetery. The Ambassador himself, together with his wife and other ladies, hosted the group to a real English tea.

Options were open on the following day. Some members visited Cassino and at the Cemetery. George Perks paid his respects to his brother. The monastery was unfortunately closed to visitors.

The journey back commenced the next day and was accomplished in stages via Pisa, Lugana and Eperney. After journeying through the First World War battlefields in France an early ferry was caught to Dover and the end of an enjoyable and highly satisfactory tour.

Such trips are always likely to bring about strange coincidences, but how about this one for a topper. Two members of the party were named Swain, both had served in the Police Force, and both retired in the 1970s in the rank of Detective Superintendent. Until this trip they had never met.

A video of the trip will be made in due course.

Graham Swain is pleased to report that the Queen's membership of the Association is now 38, the largest of any single Regiment. Several have joined as a result of reading about it in the Newsletter and it is hoped that all others will soon follow their example by becoming recipients of our vitally important Regimental Association link.

o o o

Major J L A Fowler TD

*Thankyou John for your ever growing help,
this time with our Music Supplement
as well as the Newsletter*

Association Affairs 2000

The Regimental Council

Brigadier R W Acworth CBE - President of the Association.
 Lieutenant Colonel F B Herd TD JP DL - Chairman of the Association and Chairman of The Queen's Surreys Territorial Trustees.
 Brigadier M J Doyle MBE - Past President.
 Colonel J W Sewell - Past President.
 Colonel W E McConnell TD - Chairman, The Museum Trustees.
 Brigadier M J A Clarke MBE - Past Chairman, The Museum Trustees.
 Colonel P A W G Durrant OBE - Past Chairman, The Museum Trustees.
 Colonel J W Francis.
 Major M J Jarratt - Honorary Legal Advisor.
 Lieutenant Colonel J B Ray MBE - Chairman, The Officers' Club.
 Major J C Rogerson - Honorary Secretary.
 Major P C Aitken
 Lieutenant Colonel L M Wilson MBE - Assistant Secretary and Editor of The Newsletter.

Trustees of The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Charity:

Brigadier R W Acworth CBE	- Chairman
Lieutenant Colonel F B Herd TD JP DL	
Colonel A C Ward OBE	
Colonel J W Francis	
Major P C Aitkens	
Major J C Rogerson	- Hon Secretary
Major M. Jarratt	- Hon Legal Adviser
G A J Cameron Esq	- Hon Treasurer

Colonel D J C Dickins MBE and Major D A Robinson MBE TD JP DL have agreed to be Trustees with effect from April 2000

Trustees of The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Museum:

Colonel W E McConnell TD	- Chairman
Colonel J W Sewell	
Lieutenant Colonel F B Herd TD JP DL	
Lieutenant G L A Squire MC, TD	
Lieutenant Colonel L M B Wilson MBE	
Major R B Johnson	
Major P C Aitkens	
Major R I Hopper	- Hon Treasurer
Captain A Birtles	
Mrs P James	- Curator - 01483 223419
Mr R Harding	- Museum Assistant

Branch Secretaries

5th Bn OMQ-QRR:	J Chatfield Esq , 13 Wood Road, Farncombe, Godalming, Surrey GU7 3NN	Tel: 01483 429425
6th Bn OCA-QRR:	J T Brown Esq 6 Lawrence House, Millbank Estate, London SWIP 4ED	Tel: 0207 8210028
7th Bn OCA-QRR:	Maj J M A Tamplin MBE TD 10 Hugh Street SWI	Tel: 0207 8340120
2/6th Bn OCA-QRR:	Maj. M A Nason TD, 64 Westfield Road, Barnehurst, Kent DA7 6LR	Tel: 0132 2527017
2/7th Bn OCA-QRR:		
East Surrey Reunion:	F A W Ramsey Esq MM 20 Lavender Road, Carshalton, Surrey SMS 3EF	Tel: 0208 4012070
WOs and Sgts Assoc:	P Henman Esq 35 Downside Road, Sutton, Surrey SM2 5HR	Tel: 0208 6420585
60/70 Assoc:	W L Soffe Esq 19 Gale Close, Mitcham, Surrey CR4 3QG	Tel: 0208 6481675
2/6th East Surrey St Valery Assoc:	Maj A J Redfern MC TD Courtlands, 12 Kent House, Sheen Rd, Richmond, Surrey TW10 5AV	Tel: 0208 9402191
QRS Kent Branch:	R F Harper Esq 7 De Havilland Close, Hawkinge, Kent CT18 7FE	Tel: 01303 891970
QRS Suffolk Branch:	D J Gardner Esq 106 Oakes Road, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk IP32 6QS	Tel: 01284 753160
1st Surrey Rifles	T W Young Esq BEM 38 Stanstead Manor, St James Road, Sutton, Surrey	Tel: 01242 239121
QRS Southwest	Mr H Stewart, 1 Evenlode Av, Waddon, Cheltenham, Glos GL52 5NR	Tel: 01242 239121

The Secretary's Report

During 1999 a total of 230 cases were investigated and 205 individual grants-in-aid were approved. In the majority of cases the grants were for home furnishings and for household debts particularly gas, electricity, rent arrears and travel. The Association helped provide 26 further wheelchairs or mobility scooters, 14 sets of orthopaedic furniture and contributed to 12 convalescent holidays.

We now administer 35 ABF Annuities and the ABF generously contributed £45 per week per case. During this period we have arranged for 11 Nursing Home Fees of £624 ABF and £154 Association annual grants per case, for our old soldiers or their widows to be looked after. We have one resident in Gifford House, Worthing (Bill Roadnight), with one other member in on short stay during the year.

The Association paid out £41,208 as individual grants-in-aid. Of the 25 cases not receiving a grant, 11 were assisted by local Council/Charities or other Regimental Charities after we had contacted them. 8 cases were not receiving such allowances as Attendance, Mobility or Rent Rebate. The ABF total grants and annuities in support were £20, 978.

Association Branch Secretaries have the SSAFA/ Forces Help half yearly Handbook, for them to deal direct with local case workers.

I should again like to pay tribute to the Army Benevolent Fund who are always extremely helpful with prompt action and advice. SSAFA/Forces Help and The Royal British Legion investigate the majority of our cases and I am particularly grateful to the staff and case workers for all their dedicated support. During 1999 we have also assisted St Dunstaners and members who are being cared for by the Ex Services Mental Welfare Society, Combat Stress, The Officers' Association, The Hospice Care Centres and The War Pensions Agency.

Letters of appreciation

B Murphy a SSAFA/FHS Caseworker writes from Lavenham:- I am happy to report that Mrs Butler has now acquired her electric wheelchair and I have much pleasure in enclosing a photograph of her driving it. She wishes me to thank you for the contribution you have made which has provided her with both freedom of movement and independence.



— o o o —
Patrick Tootal OBE, Kent County Field Officer RBL writes:- Thank you very much for your letter together with your generous grant of £500 to Mr A towards a Legionnaire 686 Scooter. Mr A will, of course, be advised of your kindness. I am most grateful for your assistance with this application.

— o o o —
Mrs G Gregory-Smith a SSAFA/FHS caseworker writes:- Thank you very much for your letter of the 23rd November 1999 enclosing a cheque for £300. I have informed Mrs B that the Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Charity made this grant and she is extremely grateful. In fact the old lady was in tears. She finds life a bit of a battle these days and your generosity has overwhelmed her. She asked me to thank you most sincerely for the money. I think she feels a little nervous about writing herself. I have arranged for Courts to order the carpet and they have assured me it will be laid by Christmas.

— o o o —
Devon County Field Officer writes - Thank you so much for your grant of £250 towards a wheelchair for the above-named. I am most grateful to you and will pass on your Association Newsletter.

— o o o —
Colonel W H F Stevens OBE County field officer Hampshire and Isle of Wight writes:- I write to acknowledge receipt of the generous grant that has been awarded to Mr C. We have received the cheque for £630.00 via The Queen's Royal Surrey Regimental Association to whom I copy this letter. The money has now been passed to the local branch of The Royal British Legion who will administer it accordingly. Thank you once again.

— o o o —
Captain Streatfield James RN (Rtd) a SSAFA/FHS case worker writes:- Thank you so much for your letter of 11th January and the cheque for £500.00 enclosed with it. Would you please pass to the President and Trustees of your Benevolence Committee my sincere thanks for their speedy help to Mrs D. I will be delighted to administer the grant and will ensure that it is used for the approved purposes. It has been a special pleasure to look after the dependant of a Queensman: after all as a one-time EXCELLENT we marched a long way together - to the music of Braganza! If I can do anything to help in the future, please let me know.

— o o o —
A letter from the Hon Sec Haslemere Division SSAFA/FHS:- Your Regimental Association has been helping Mrs E via my caseworker, Captain J J Streatfield James, RN. I thought you would like to have this very appreciative letter from Mrs E. Many thanks for your help.

I would like to say thank you for the help my husband and I have received from the Queen's Royal Surrey Regimental Association before his death and the kindness shown to me since. I just want to say thank you, just to know people care means so much.

— o o o —
I was delighted to learn from SSAFA this morning of the generous grant made to my husband following his disablement due to a severe stroke. This will be used for my husband's physiotherapy and chiropody needs, administered via SSAFA, and I am so grateful for this help. Please pass on my thanks to all concerned. Out of interest, the Queen's Royal Surrey Regimental Association Newsletter arrived here last week and I was able to read various articles and news of interest to my husband. It is an excellent magazine, and although unable to read due to his sight being partially affected my husband enjoyed looking at the photographs and particularly the illustrations of the old Militia uniforms, and was interested in the article about the statue of Queen Catherine of Braganza proposed for New York as he had been in the Territorials pre-war at Braganza Street in London. Many thanks again.

— o o o —
When I opened your letter and enclosure of the 25 Oct and read it, I was completely stunned at the generosity of the Association. That completely unexpected cheque has helped to make possible a long cherished wish to visit an old friend. I shall continue to find extra pleasure in reading the Newsletter. My most grateful thanks for such thoughtful kindness. May you be blessed in your work.

— o o o —
I am writing to you, to say a Big Thank You for your contribution towards the cost of the "Ramp". My wife is now able to get easy access to her Hospital Car three times a week to go to Derriford hospital where she is a kidney dialysis patient. Also she can now leave the home anytime she likes with "no stress" at all. I only received your address yesterday from Mr Eden, until then I could not contact you.

— o o o —
Thank you so very very much for the funding we received via The Royal British Legion, towards the cost of our new boiler. It has been installed and our bungalow is nice and warm again. We are very grateful to you and The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Association.

I regret that it has been so long before I could write to thank the Association for their help to me in acquiring a stair lift. This was fitted on January 4th and now after a few teething problems it is working satisfactorily. It is a great help as now I can get upstairs and get on with what I intend on doing without having to stop to regain my breathing and settle down. It has been a long haul but John Houghwaite of SSAFA has been a very great help not only with the stair lift. I am very greatly thankful for all the help that I have received.

I want to thank you for the grant of £100 to help me out of my difficulty. The Newsletter was very interesting also the Sports Record. I recognised some of the names. My electric scooter is my life line now as I am unable to walk very far with the aid of two walking sticks. Thanking you once again.

I would like to say thank you very much for your help in getting me a mobile scooter, it is very much appreciated. Would you please also thank the Army Benevolent Fund for their generous contribution.

I am writing to thank you and The Queen's Royal Surrey Regimental Association for the speedy and generous contribution sent through SSAFA towards the cost of my stairlift. The lift was installed last week and has made a world of difference to my lifestyle. It is now a pleasure instead of a misery to go upstairs and down! How nice of you to remember and be so nice to an old comrade.

Thank you for your kind letter dated 28th October 1999 together with the enclosures in remembrance of my dear husband. I have looked at the Newsletter and the beautiful collect over and over again, thank you again. He was so proud of his regiment, The Surreys. I have not written before because it is very hard to write any letters about C. I hope you will accept my apologies. I would like to say that the real kindness that I have received from The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment and SSAFA. I wish I could put into words how I feel. Thanking you and God bless you all.

Dear Sir I must thank the regiment for helping me out. I lost my dear wife last July. After that everything went wrong. We were married for 55 years. Coming up this week the 22nd of March was our wedding day. I must say again I am overwhelmed at the grant you sent Lt Col Egan of SSAFA to assist me. God bless you all, from an old 2nd Queen's man, I am seventy seven now.

I write to you to convey my thanks and appreciation for your most kind and timely grant of £400. On behalf of my wife and my grandchildren we all send our sincere thanks for the wonderful help you have given us.

I am writing to express my gratitude as well as appreciation for the grant of £325 which the Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Charity awarded me to cover the cost of two pairs of glasses. Also I wish to say how grateful I am to you for forwarding a complimentary copy of their Association Newsletter which I find of great interest and look forward to future Newsletters. Many thanks once again.

Christmas Cards 1999

The President, Secretary and Editor would like to thank all those Association members who sent 1999 Christmas cards to them.

They much appreciated receiving them but due to the large numbers sent were unable to acknowledge each one.

Once again thank you and the cards have been passed on to a good cause.

Unfortunate Colonels in Surrey

Police records show that in bygone days it was the practice for the Army authorities to pay rewards to police officers who apprehended deserters. Doubtless such emoluments were welcome additions to the poor constabulary pay but certainly in one instance the system seems to have led to an excess of zeal by two Surrey Constables. PCs Larke and Ryland "Apprehended, on suspicion of being a deserter, Colonel The Hon H H Clifford, Assistant Quartermaster-General at Aldershot, without reasonable grounds whatever on 18th July 1862". Doubtless the Colonel was displeased as was the Chief Constable, for on the following day PC Larke was dismissed and PC Ryland was reduced in grade.

Tragically more unfortunate, however, was another similarly ranked officer. On 17th June 1875 Colonel Valentine Baker, Assistant Quartermaster at Aldershot, indecently assaulted a girl in a railway carriage on the Woking-Waterloo train. Terrified, the victim actually climbed out of the carriage on to the external running board where she was eventually rescued from her plight when the train stopped at Esher. The Colonel was sentenced to one year's imprisonment with a £500 fine. Cashiered from the Army, he later served with distinction in the Ottoman Army in the Russian-Turkish war. On his death in 1887 Queen Victoria with surprising compassion, gave permission for him to be buried with full military honour in Cairo.



"Goodbye Dolly Gray"
(Soldiers departure song)

One hundred and one years ago, on 11th October 1899, war was declared by the British Government on the Boers in the Transvaal following a long series of territorial disputes extending over many years. The British, anxious to get to grips with a foe who had been a source of trouble to them, hastily despatched troops to South Africa convinced, as in many other wars both past and yet to come, that it would soon be over. But it was to be a long, hard and bitter struggle.

Mobilisation of the 1st Army Corps, ordered four days previously on 7th October, was quick and efficient, particularly as regards Reservists who responded to their recall to the Colours with alacrity and enthusiasm. (The matter of Reservists seems to have been under active consideration for some time. As long ago as January 1899 the Secretary of State for War had circulated all police authorities in the country enquiring what percentages of their men were ex soldiers and particularly what were their Reserve obligations).

Both the Queen's and the Surreys were destined for early action, their respective 2nd Battalions being retained in the Brigade of Major General H Hildyard together with old comrades, The Devon and West Yorkshire Regiments.

The Queen's

After a fortnight's hurried preparation at Guildford and Portsdown Forts the Queen's left Cosham station for overseas service on the 20th October. Indicative of their close associations with the Royal Navy, they were escorted by the band and ship's company of HMS *Excellent* whose crew lined the streets on this occasion. From Cosham the battalion entrained for Southampton where they embarked under Lieutenant Colonel E O F Hamilton in the transport *Yorkshire* with a strength of 25 officers and 1062 non-commissioned officers and men, 341 men who were too young for service were left behind in England. The Surreys, under Lieutenant Colonel R H W H Harris similarly embarked on the same day in the *Lissmore Castle* and *Harlech Castle* with a strength of 26 officers and 1660 non commissioned officers and men, 378 young soldiers were left behind. Voyages of all three ships were uneventful and troops were kept occupied and fit by various forms of physical exercise and training and recreation. Particular emphasis was laid on shooting practice, the targets



The Queen's disembarking at Durban and entraining, November 1899.

sometimes being floated in the water. Life in the troopships of those days is described in the book "*OIIMS - An Illustrated Record of the Voyage of S S Tintagel Castle*". Ships companies and troops seem to have been amicable to each other, enjoying, among other things, the usual frolics at Crossing the Line. Ship's menus show that the food was good, a typical day's provisions for the troops consisting of:- **Breakfast** - Porridge and golden syrup, stewed steak, bread and butter and coffee. **Dinner** - Soup, roast beef, boiled mutton, cabbage, boiled potatoes and compote of figs. **Tea** - Cold meat, pickles, jam, bread and butter and tea. **Supper** - Bread and cheese and biscuits.

(Demands on shipping for trooping were to grow progressively heavier as the war continued and the P&O Line eventually built three ships specifically for the purpose viz: *Assaye*, *Plassey* and *Sobraon*, (the last named being unfortunately sunk on her third voyage when she struck a reef in the China Seas).

After a brief call at Capetown the *Yorkshire* proceeded under immediate orders to Durban where the 2nd Queen's disembarked at 10. 30am on 14th November and proceeded by rail to Maritzburg where the greater part of the 2nd Brigade had already concentrated. The same evening A and H companies were dispatched under Brevet Lieutenant Colonel Pink DSO to hold the railway bridge over the Mooi River, reported to be threatened by the enemy. On the following afternoon the detachment was reinforced by D Company which, with H Company remained on guard for several days. A Company, however, rejoined Headquarters on the 16th, having been detailed to travel in an armoured train escorting a field battery on its railway journey to Estcourt. After a brief halt at Maritzburg the bulk of the battalion railed, in company with the Brigade Staff and The East Surrey Regiment, to Estcourt, arriving on the 16th and encamping there and preparing defensive positions. Their precautions were well advised for on the 18th a Boer Commando with two or three guns took up a position on the nearby Beacon Hill. A column under Colonel W Kitchener, which included companies of the Queen's and the Natal Volunteers and a battery of Naval 12 pounders, was detailed to capture the position and drive off the enemy. The task was successfully accomplished. (Naval guns, landed in dismantled form from ships and then re-assembled as necessary on land, played an important part in the South African War and the practice gave rise to the Field Gun Drill Competition, which until 1999 was competed for annually at The Royal Tournament).

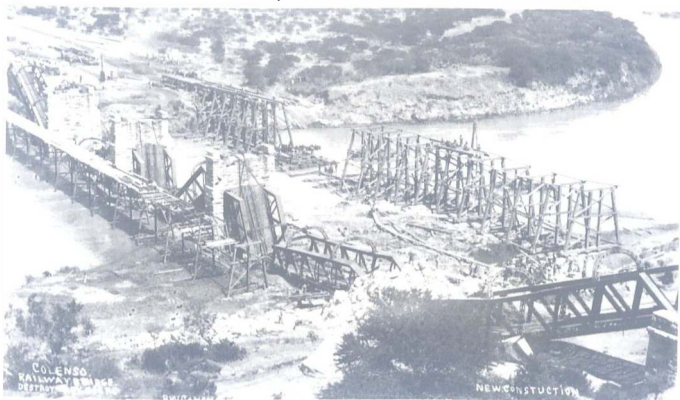


Naval 12 pdr and 4.7 Bl guns Defence of Durban, November 1899

The threat at Mooi River ended when the enemy withdrew towards Ladysmith so General Hildyard moved his troops to Frere where his detachment was now increased to 3 Batteries of Artillery, 7 Battalions of Infantry and a number of Colonial Irregular Mounted troops. Frere was within earshot of the

cannon and was unpopular with the troops on account of the prevailing dust being raised from the dried mud of the location.

Resulting from the action of the Boers in blowing up a bridge over the Tugela River at Colenso a strong force of Infantry, including the Queen's, Mounted Irregulars and a 12-pounder Naval gun were despatched in that direction but the gun became stuck in soft ground so the force withdrew without accomplishing anything. On the 12th December the troops moved to Chieveley, a few miles south of Colenso, where the Naval artillery vigorously shelled the Boer position but with no response and no result other than to warn the enemy of impending British activity.



Colenso railway bridge destroyed by the Boers. Temporary road and railway bridges Colenso, March 1900.

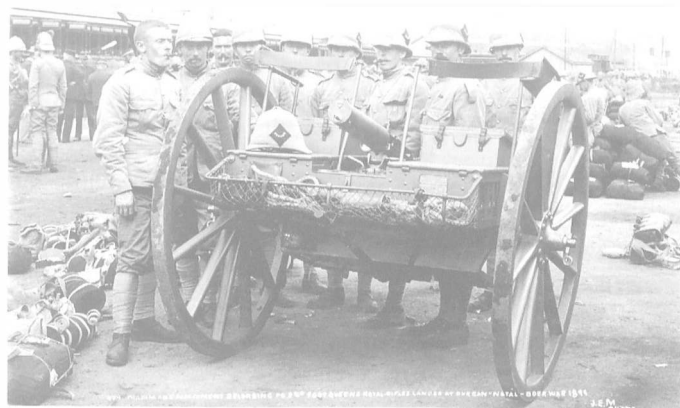
On the 14th December, the attack on Colenso commenced, with the Queen's on the west of the railway line in fairly open ground. Opposing fire, both from shells and bullets, became intense but the soldiers advance, firstly in steady formation and then by half-company rushes, until in company with men of the Devons they entered Colenso. Due to lack of ammunition, however, they were unable to hold their position and were ordered to retire. As the Queen's fell back and passed through their lines The East Surrey Regiment, in support, took up the action. The Queen's certainly weren't disgraced. General Buller himself expressed appreciation of their efforts. Their casualties had been comparatively heavy, amounting to nearly 100 of all ranks.

Christmas Day 1899 was passed in a mixture of training and recreation but due to the presence of dust and accompanying bad weather the men's health began to suffer and there were several cases of dysentery.

To counter transport and communication difficulties, and so as to render the Army independent of the railways, Sir Redvers Buller had an Advanced Depot formed at Frere whilst to each Battalion were allotted seven wagons, four ammunition carts and one water-cart. In each wagon was to be carried, besides the kits of the officers and men, one shelter for every two men, one waterproof per man, two days' meat, three days' grocery and a biscuit ration, together with wood, forage and fifty rounds of ammunition per rifle.

The New Year quickly brought promise of action. On the 6th January 1900 firing was heard from the direction of Ladysmith and information was received by heliograph that a general attack was in progress. The 2nd Brigade at Chieveley, including the Queen's were ordered to make a demonstration towards Colenso to relieve the pressure on the Garrison. This they did, leaving camp at 2.15pm and returning at about 8.30pm without having fired a shot.

On the 8th January a re-organisation of forces took place, the 2nd and 5th Brigades being formed into the 2nd Division under Major General Sir F Clery. On the following day orders were given to march westward and infantry, accompanied by both Army and Navy artillery and about 400 mounted troops moved



Maxim gun of The Queen's, Natal, Durban 1899

in close proximity to the Tugela River to Deel's and Porrit's Drifts near the junction with the Little Tugela.

Crossing of the main Tugela River could not be made as it was in flood but a crossing was later effected across the Little Tugela. From there the Brigade advanced to the road between Springfield and Spearman's Farm, the Queen's being under Brevet-Lieutenant Colonel F J Pink DSO. Marching continued and by the 20th January the Queen's were involved in skirmishes with the enemy in the vicinity of Bastion Hill. 2nd Lieutenant Du Buisson and Lieutenant W H Smith were both wounded in these operations. In all 6 men were killed and 5 officers and 31 men wounded.

On the 24th January British forces, including the Queen's, attacked and captured Spion Kop which they successfully held until the 26th when they had to withdraw due to lack of water supplies. By this time Sir Redvers Buller was intent on relieving Ladysmith and marches, sometimes accompanied by clashes with Boers at various locations, were in that direction. On the 30th January the Queen's were pleased to welcome a reinforcing draft of 33 men composed of Volunteers from the Army and Militia Reserves, bringing the Battalion strength up to 21 officers and 936 non-commissioned officers and men.

Advancing in the trying conditions of excessive heat, the 2nd Division were within heliograph signalling range of Ladysmith, by the 14th February water was short, having to be brought forward by ox-wagons. The Queen's were in positions on the outskirts of Ladysmith by the 26th February and on the 3rd March the Natal Field Force entered the town to be welcomed by such of the Garrison who were fit for duty and who lined the roads.

The Brigade then marched through the streets of the town and went into bivouacs at Surprise Hill with outposts on Thornhill Kopje. By this time the ranks of the 2nd Queen's had been severely depleted by casualties and sickness.

Since the commencement of the war 3 officers had been killed or died of wounds and 10 had been wounded. Of the non-commissioned officers and men 30 had been killed, 2 had died of disease and 245 had been wounded. In such circumstances they greeted with extreme pleasure reinforcements in the form of Volunteer Battalions of the Regiment who, for the first time in their history, had been called upon to fight in support of the Regulars. 3 officers, 5 Sergeants, 5 Corporals and 102 Privates comprised the company who arrived under Captain L S de la Mare consequent on Major General Hildyard having been posted to command the 5th Division on 19th April, Lieutenant Colonel E O F Hamilton was selected for the Brigade and command of the Battalion therefore devolved on Major Burrell. On the 25th April the Battalion was further supplemented by a draft of one officer and 98 rank-and-file.

At the beginning of May General Buller received orders to occupy the attention of Transvaalers and prevent any movements in the Free State to oppose Lord Robert's advance on Pretoria. The Queen's marched on the 8th May and reached Vermaak's Kraal on the 12th. Receiving reports that a large hostile force was advancing down the Helpmaakar Road, the Queen's, with the East Surreys, manned defensive positions but no attack materialized. On the following day the Queen's made a successful attack on Mount Uithoek, surprising the Boers by means of a well executed precipitous climb from an unexpected direction.



The occupation of Pretoria, June 5th 1900. The arrival of Fd Marshal Roberts.

By means of a forced march of 25 miles in 12 hours the Queen's reached Newcastle at 3.30pm on the 18th May to be received by cheering crowds who were glad to be rid of the Boers. But the Battalion was not to remain for long. On the 21st May they marched off under Brevet Lieutenant Colonel F J Pink DSO to Ingogo to reinforce the 4th Brigade. They were escorting two 4.7 and two 12 pounder Naval guns and their route was over dusty roads and cold, wind-swept and barren uplands. Ingogo was certainly not a welcome place of residence, being bitterly cold and subject to high dust laden winds. Nevertheless, health of troops was generally excellent and the situation was improved by the issue of serge suits on 4th June.

The next objective was Spitz Kop which was captured by mounted troops and infantry whose ranks included both Regular and Volunteer companies of the Queen's.

Forward movement continued on the 11th June and the troops, marching northwards reached the junction of the Gansvlei and Klip Rivers in Transvaal territory at 5.30pm, 12 miles west of Majuba. At 2.30pm the next day an attack was mounted against the northern mountain of Allemand's Neck, the Queen's and East Surreys being first in line, supported by the West Yorkshires and Devons and heavy guns. The Queen's came under heavy fire against which they gave determined retaliation which, together with artillery fire caused the Boers to withdraw. The Queen's lost 2 men killed and 29 wounded in this engagement. Tents were pitched for the first time in six weeks when the marching troops reached Charlestown and camped near Laing's Neck.

Leaving camp on the 19th June the troops marched to Joubert's Farm and then onwards to Zandspruit and Paardekop which they reached on the 21st. Meeting no Boer opposition they pushed on to Kalbosh Spruit and Standerton which they reached on the 24th. On the 26th June the 11th Brigade were sent northwards towards Pretoria and the Queen's and Devons were transferred to a point about a mile to the east of the town so as to be in a position to meet an attack from this direction. They were later moved to the west of the town where they were occupied for the next month in excavating trenches, building



Officers 2 Queen's, South Africa

blockhouses and effecting repairs to the railway line. Boers were active at this time and the line was a favoured target.

An attack on Boers reported to be threatening the line west of Standerton on 30th July was only partially successful, the element of surprise having been lost due to the activities of enemy spies in the area. A similar affair took place on 4th August when three companies of the Queen's and three of The West Yorkshire Regiment were sent to support mounted troops who were to burn De Lang's Farm. The task was accomplished without the infantry being engaged. Still relative to the importance of guarding railway communications, the Queen's relieved The King's Own Royal Lancaster Regiment on the line between Zandspruit and Paardekop, a distance of about twenty miles, on the 28th August. For many weary months onward the Queen's took no part in the campaign but were engaged on railway security duties with occasional punitive expeditions to burn and strip Boer farms, not the type of activity likely to appeal to British soldiers.

On the 14th September General Buller, passing through the area by train on his way home saw the Commanding officer of the Queen's and subsequently paid tribute to them, saying *"The people of Surrey may safely feel proud of their Regiment"*.

The Volunteer Company was sent by rail to Maritzburg on 8th October under orders for England which were later cancelled when they were posted to the Composite Volunteer Battalion.

Wishing them farewell on their departure from the Regular Battalion, Major Burrell said that they had *"shown themselves zealous and steady in action and well behaved in camp"*. Towards the end of 1900 skirmishes, mainly against the railway line, took place between the Boers and British mounted patrols. Resulting from this a Regimental Mounted Infantry Company was formed.

December 1900 brought bad weather in the forms of heat, rain and thunderstorms, accompanied by troublesome flies, and about this time Major Burrell was temporarily invalided, the command then devolving on Brevet Lieutenant Colonel F J Pink DSO. Health generally began to suffer in the Battalion but thankfully the strength was raised in March 1901 by the arrival of drafts amounting to 5 officers and 190 non-commissioned officers and men.

In May weather became cold again. A welcome relief from tedious line of communication duty occurred when two companies of the Battalion, under Brevet Lieutenant Colonel Pink DSO, were dispatched with members of other units to co-operate with a Column under Colonel Colville in clearing the Verzamalg Berg of the enemy. They met with no opposition as the Boers, pre-warned, had fled the district.

Success came to the Battalion on the 22nd of the month when Captain Bottomley and Lieutenant Smith, with a mixed party

of about seventy men, engaged a party of Boers at a farm and took several important prisoners including General Joubert, Commandant of the Wakkerstrom Commando. A month later the major part of the Battalion thankfully left railway line duties to join the Columns of Colonel Rimmington and Colonel Colville. But active service, in the true sense of the word, now seemed sadly lacking for the Queen's whose duties were mainly to consist of marches, outpost duties and baggage guards. On the 4th November the companies in Colonel Rimmington's Column were relieved by the Black Watch. Praising them on their departure, he said that "*Their smartness and high state of efficiency have been an example to all*". Those who served in Colonel Colville's Column were similarly praised by him on their departure on 19th December.



The position of The Queen's, February 23rd 1900

By this time the "blockhouse system" was being operated with the idea of isolating and dividing enemy forces and curtailing their movements. The Queen's operated blockhouses in the Kalfontein-Doorn Kloof area, again not a very satisfying or rewarding task. No large Boer force passed through the line held by the Queen's. On the 2nd February 1902 a small draft of 33 Non-Commissioned Officers and men joined, bringing with them 22 pipes presented by Queen Victoria for distribution to the best men in the Battalion. This was the second occasion on which Her Majesty had remembered her troops as she had earlier donated scarves, knitted by herself, for award to the most deserving non-commissioned officer or man. Colour Sergeant Ferrett of D Company was the lucky recipient. Between then and May there were changes of personnel as some drafts, including Volunteers, were sent home while others arrived from England. By 31st May, however, peace terms were agreed and the Boer War (otherwise known as the South African War) was over. Victory had been obtained but, as in all wars, a price had been paid. The total casualties in the Queen's were 3 Officers and 36 non-commissioned Officers and men killed or died of wounds, 2 Officers and 97 Non-Commissioned Officers and men died of disease, 10 Officers and 260 Non-Commissioned Officers and men wounded. None were taken prisoner. To the long roll of battles and campaigns on the Regimental Colours were added the words, "*South Africa, 1899-1902*" and "*Relief of Ladysmith*". As General Buller had said earlier, "*The people of Surrey (could) safely feel proud of their Regiment*".

The Surreys

The 2nd Battalion The East Surrey Regiment arrived at Durban Harbour on 14th November 1899 and from then on were certainly not inactive. Disembarking quickly they entrained for Pietermaritzburg in three trains as soon as very limited baggage and stores could be landed. Arriving in the evening they were briefly accommodated in barracks before departing northwards by train on the 16th for a destination, at that time

uncertain, but which eventually proved to be Estcourt where they arrived on the same day. On the night of the 17th an attack was expected so the battalion furnished four and a half companies (out of seven) for out-post duties. Relieved early on the 18th they were soon recalled, breakfastless, to their posts when marauding Boers appeared in the distance and later were seen to be examining a railway bridge about 1200 yards away. These were fired on by A and D Companies under Lieutenant North and for the Surreys these were the first shots of the war. But there were soon to be more.



Col H B Treeby DSO, 2nd Bn The East Surrey Regiment, wounded in South Africa, and awarded the DSO.

On the evening of the 23rd November the Battalion advanced to Brynbell Hill and, after a steep ascent in inclement weather, took part in an attack that was mounted at 3am the following morning against Boers on the summit. The attack was successful in that the position was initially captured, but after coming under increasing rifle and pom-pom fire from surrounding Boer vantage points the British troops, on the orders of Colonel Kitchener, retired. Two privates of the Battalion were killed and twelve non-commissioned officers and men were wounded.

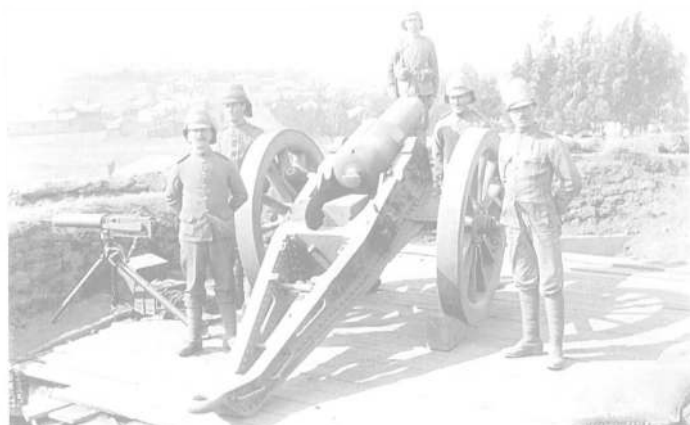
An advance to Frere and Chieveley followed and was then continued, following the railway line at a distance, towards Colenso. The troops were a mixed body and included mounted troops, infantry, artillery and the ubiquitous naval guns. A primary objective was to cross the Tugela River at Bridle Drift. The river was reached on December 15th but stiff opposition, and a misunderstanding about a crossing point, caused heavy casualties among the British troops who were forced to withdraw, only narrowly saving their guns. Notwithstanding this reverse the attack on Colenso was continued and at 9.30am on December 15th it was occupied by the Queen's supported by the Devons who successfully reached enemy guns.

But again, subsequent harassing fire from other guns on Boer ground forced a withdrawal which was effected on the night of December 16th when the Army retired towards Frere and Chieveley. The East Surreys were prominent in covering the withdrawal. Casualties were one private killed and 31 NCO's and men wounded.

On January 10th 1900 the 2nd Brigade marches westward to take part in General Buller's second attempt to relieve Ladysmith and by the 15th were at Springfield. By dawn on the 17th they were on the hills covering Trichard's Drift on the Tugela, crossing the river by a pontoon bridge on the following evening.

Between the 21st and 23rd January the Surreys were part of forces mounting generally unsuccessful attacks on Bastion Hill from which they eventually withdrew. On the 24th January Spion Kop was captured by a force under Major General Woodgate and the Surreys and Devons occupied the nearby Picquet Hill in a supporting capacity. But on the 25th retirement was again ordered and the Battalion withdrew across the Tugela River.

The Spion Kop operation cost the Surreys 5 men killed and one officer and 20 other ranks wounded. Thankfully losses were made good on January 30th when a draft of 130 men under Lieutenant de la Fontaine arrived, bringing the Battalion strength up to 1013, exclusive of officers.



Captured from the British in 1881. Recaptured from the Boers 1900, 6.4 pdr.

Following the withdrawal from Spion Kop Sir Redvers Buller and his staff looked for another point of attack and the choice fell on a ridge called Vaal Krantz. The British infantry camped at Springfield from January 27th until February 4th by which time twenty guns had been laboriously placed on a wooded hill called Zwart Kop to cover the intended crossing of the Tugela River. Vaal Krantz was captured on the afternoon of February 5th, so successfully that the Surreys, advancing towards it across the river were recalled. On the following day they, as part of the 2nd Brigade, relieved members of the 4th Brigade on the hill where they made strenuous efforts to improve the defences by making use of stones found on the scene. On February 7th intense heavy artillery fire from the Boers made the hill untenable and General Buller ordered a withdrawal which was effected during the night. A further encampment at Springfield followed.



4.7 gun position Pieters Hill, February 27th 1900 (Railway Hill)

These sporadic clashes with the Boers were typical of the type of warfare of the times. By mid-February General Buller's clear objective was to get through to the besieged Ladysmith. By February 19th the 2nd Brigade were within distant view of the town. After a reconnaissance, the Surreys took up a defensive position on Monte Cristo and by the following day no Boers remained south of the Tugela. Covered by the Surreys, the Engineers soon constructed a bridge across the river and the advance continued, the Surreys being at Wynns Hill near Odensbruer Spruit, Natal on 23rd February. It was here that the Regiment's first Victoria Cross was won when Privates Curtis and Morton crossed open ground under Boer

fire to succour and carry in their badly wounded commanding officer, Lieutenant Colonel R H W H Harris. Curtis was awarded the Victoria Cross and Morton the Distinguished Conduct Medal.



From then on the advance to Ladysmith, although punctuated by various clashes with the Boers, was steady and determined and the victorious troops entered the town on February 28th 1900 to be followed by General Buller himself on 1st March. Their reception was naturally rapturous. Unfortunately the insanitary state of water supplies, polluted by Boers, caused much resulting sickness among the troops, of whom 2000 were eventually hospitalised. The East Surrey battle casualties from February 18th to 27th inclusive were:- Killed, 1 officer and 26 other ranks. Wounded, 6 officers and 133 other ranks Total, 7 officers and 159 other ranks. Of the wounded, 6 other ranks died.

Thankfully reinforcements arrived on April 12th in the form of 100 men from Maritzburg, under Lieutenant Smalley, and a Volunteer Service Company, 105 strong, under Captain Collyer. The East Surreys, like the Queen's, were well served by supporting volunteers, many of them from Volunteer Battalions in England. A further reinforcement of a draft of 100 men arrived on April 25th. The next task facing General Buller was the arduous one of capturing or turning the Boer position of Lang's Neck where there was thought to be a possibility of the Boers negotiating for peace. Terms were offered on June 5th but refused. By June 10th Buller's troops were preparing for a fight at Alleman's Neck, a different position which was strongly held by the Boers, but was nevertheless successfully overwhelmed by the British.

Railway communications were becoming increasingly important in the South African campaign and during July 1900 the Surreys were on railway guard duties south of Standerton. Companies were later stationed at important points on the railway at Leeuw Spruit, Kromdraai and Katbosch. Duties in the area of Plastrand followed, often involving the burning and destruction of Boer farms, a duty which the troops did not particularly welcome. Remaining in the area into the New Year of 1901 the Battalion encountered increasing activities from the Boers and on January 7th 1901 had to beat off an attack on a mounted observation post between Plastrand and Zandfontein by a commando of about eighty men. In February the "block-house system" was adopted in the Heidelberg-Stanton area, effecting an economy in manpower.



Willow Grange Station, South Africa

In April 1901 the Surreys were relieved from lines of communication duties and divided into two half-battalions, one joining Colonel Colville's mobile column and the other Colonel Rimington's. As such, both saw much varied action in succeeding months. It was with great sorrow that the Surreys were party to the breaking up of the 2nd Brigade in November 1901 when Brigadier-General E O F Hamilton and his staff removed from Platrand to the Orange Free State. The close of the year saw the Surreys constructing garrison posts and obstructive barbed wire entanglements in the Paardekop area. An attack on the railway line by the Boers near Paardekop on February 5th 1902 was driven off by the timely arrival of the armoured train which was on one of its frequent patrols.

A draft of 150 men from the 1st Battalion under Captain Paterson arrived from India on March 7th. Presumably working on a "one for one" basis he departed for India on March 11th taking 150 other men, mostly young soldiers, with him. Such changes were indicative that the war was drawing towards its close. On May 14th the Volunteer Service Section, under Lieutenant P Hallett, left for home taking with it the thanks and tributes of the Battalion Commanding officer. Sadly, one of them, Private Lee, died suddenly from heart failure during the night before departure. During a church service on Sunday, June 1st, the Commanding officer received a telegram saying that peace had been signed the previous evening.

The war in which the 2nd East Surreys had served from first to last was over. On June 2nd the following telegram was received:-

"Lord Kitchener to Officer Commanding Paardekop 2nd June.

Please communicate to your troops the following message which I have received from His Majesty the King and for which I have thanked him in the name of all concerned. Begins:- "Heartiest congratulations on the termination of Hostilities. I also congratulate my brave troops under your command for having brought this long and difficult Campaign to so glorious and successful conclusion".

The Battalion casualty bill was heavy, amounting to 1 officer and 45 other ranks killed, and 10 officers and 234 other ranks wounded. An additional officer and 66 other ranks died of sickness, mostly enteric fever. The strength of the 2nd Battalion on the declaration of peace was 31 officers and 1036 other ranks.

Many lessons had been learned in the South African War and regretfully they were soon going to have to be put into practice for another more costly war.

The Volunteers and Mounted Troops

In the 19th century in England there existed many Volunteer Battalions of Infantry together with mounted troops of Yeomanry. They were, however, intended for Home Defence only and the South African War was the first occasion when, by special legislation, they were allowed to serve overseas in support of the Regular Army. They were sorely needed, battle casualties and sickness were depleting the Regular ranks at an alarming rate. Surrey Volunteers were not lacking in willingness or enthusiasm for overseas service.

The 1st Volunteer Battalion, the Queen's sent 5 officers and 200 other ranks to South Africa while a number of officers and other ranks from the 5th Battalion were similarly dispatched. A Volunteer Service Company was raised from The 22nd London Regiment and went to South Africa as similarly did volunteers from the 24th. The 3rd Volunteer Battalion of the East Surreys supplied 4 officers and 99 other ranks while the 5th Battalion provided a service company. Further detachments went from The 21st London Regiment while the 23rd made a major

contribution of 13 officers and 235 other ranks. For their services overseas the 5th Queen's, the 5th East Surreys and the 21st and 22nd London Regiments were granted the distinction "South Africa 1900-1902".



Breaking up rifles captured from the Boers, Johannesburg Fort, July 1900

A lesson which had to be learnt the hard way from the Boers was the matter of mobility, at which the enemy, on their hardy veldt ponies, were past masters. Regular British Cavalry and Yeomanry were insufficient for the needs so Mounted Infantry Battalions were formed. In November 1900 both the Queen's and the Surreys provided companies for this purpose and they operated mainly in the Standerton area, often involved in "running fight" clashes with the enemy and also engaged in seizing Boer farms and stock. With the end of the war horses were handed in to the Remount Depots and men returned to their battalions.

The importance of the horse in the campaign cannot be over estimated. Over 400,000, obtained from all over the world, passed through the hands of the Remount Service to fulfill roles in Cavalry, Yeomanry, Artillery, Mounted Infantry, Transport and General Service purposes. Mules and Oxen were also used.

Home and Memories

With the exception of some Regular troops who went on to further overseas service, most troops gradually returned home after the war. They rightly received tumultuous welcomes, cheered as they marched through the streets and feted at Town Halls and Civic Receptions. Their valour and sacrifices are still honourably remembered in their Regiments and in no place better than in The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Museum at Clandon Park, Guildford. Here, in one of the show cases, are to be found many souvenirs and relics, a selection being:-

'Embroidery made by a soldier during the war. Medals of various members of the Regiments. Boer leather water bottle, coind and pipe and tobacco pouch. Horse bit taken from the Transvaal Staata Artillerie. Tin of chocolate, HM Queen Victoria's gift to troops in South Africa. Pipe with silver band-a gift from HM Queen Alexandra. Clay pipes donated by a Kingston tobacconist. Signature of P Kruger. Model of a blockhouse. Leather bandolier worn by Mounted Infantry. Various photographs and sketches, including Private Curtis winning VC. Also a replica VC.

One of eight scarves crocheted by HM Queen Victoria and presented to selected soldiers for distinguished conduct. One scarf was awarded to C/Sgt H G Clay, 2nd Bn The 'East Surrey Regiment, another scarf was presented to C/Sgt T Ferrett, 2nd Bn The Queen's (Royal West Surrey) Regiment.

There are many other exhibits of this and other wars. It's well worth a visit.



Guildford Station 1904/5. Queen's awaiting arrival of 2 Queen's from South Africa (Troops from Depot)

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The Veldt Victoria Cross

The story of the gallantry of Pte (later Sgt) A E Curtis and Pte Morton of The East Surrey Regiment during the South African War has "come to the notice of the police" as they say. Told in verse in the poem **The Veldt VC** by Richard Ford, it has been published in the Metropolitan Police History Society, Millennium issue Magazine.

The Veldt V.C

*'Boer rifles firing round by round,
The Colonel lies in open ground,
Wounded, bleeding, close to death,
His men all watch with bated breath.*

*Then Curtis crosses the barren space,
Making towards the Colonel's place.
And after several efforts tried,
He reaches his Commander's side.*

*With both now under Boer attack,
He strives to get the Colonel back,
'Exhausted, weakened, almost beat,
He won't give up, he won't retreat.*

*'Desperate now, he calls for aid,
Morton answers, unafraid,
Both men's courage none could doubt,
They mean to get their Colonel out.*

*So grasping hands, and side by side,
'East Surrey's men with Surrey's pride,
They lift the Colonel, bring him in,
Back from the fight they had to win.*

*And Curtis now his duty done,
A well deserved VC has won.*

The Queens (Southwark) Regimental Association

The annual lunch took place at the Union Jack Club on March 18th 2000, when 62 members and guests attended under the Chairmanship of Major A Playfoot MC.

Before the lunch wreaths were laid at the 1/7th Memorial at Kennington Park on behalf of St. Nicholas Town Council and the Association.

Major Burrell MBE was the Guest of Honour, Alderman and M de Cuyper from St. Nicholas in Belgium attended as usual, and we also welcomed members from the 6th Queens OCA, and the Southwark British Legion. We were very pleased to see Ron Harper (ex 1st Queens) with his wife, Ron's Father served with our Regiment from the early days. Another ever present guest, our youthful oldest member Lieutenant Colonel A S Bookless TD., aged 92, came along to see how his "young lads" were behaving.

During the proceedings the National Anthem, the Belgium National Anthem and "Braganza" were played at the appropriate moments, any misgivings were unfounded, the quality and timing were excellent.

Major Burrell spoke of how proud he was to have served with the 1/7th. Queens and of his time with the Regiment, unfortunately he was badly wounded during the attack on Panheel Lock on November 14th 1944, when as a Lieutenant his platoon was involved in the first assault.



Alderman de Cuyper gave glowing praise to the Regiment who were involved in the liberation of St. Nicholas and said how much the yearly visits by a delegation of members and wives were welcomed by the people of his Town. The Association are most grateful for the hospitality shown to those who attended.

The President in his speech warmly welcomed all the guests and paid tribute to the sterling work of the Secretary Major J M A Tamplin MBE TD and his Committee for making sure that the lunch was enjoyed by all, he also thanked Chris and Steve Rowe for organizing a very successful Raffle, Mr Ted Bussey for his moving tribute to "Absent Comrades," and all members, guests, Wives and Widows, who give this function continuing support.

Remember please:- Our members attend the Dedication by the Queen Mother of the Field of Remembrance at Westminster Abbey on the Thursday before Remembrance Sunday, there are two Plots attended, also on Remembrance Day we parade at the 1/7th Memorial at Kennington Park, we would welcome any Queen's men and relatives who wish to be present.

Our lunch is held on the nearest date to March 6th, on which day in 1943 the three Queen's battalions repulsed a heavy and determined attack by tanks and infantry at Medenine in Tunisia, some 27 Tanks were disabled or destroyed on the

1/7th front, and three infantry thrusts thrown back. Lieutenant General Sir Oliver Leese wrote concerning this action:



"The Queen's Brigade has done magnificently. A few days ago Rommel lashed out at the Eighth Army and the brunt of the attack fell on the Queen's Brigade. The three battalions, especially the 1/7th, without mines or wire saw off two Panzer Divisions, every one agrees - it was a most magnificent performance"

Our next, lunch is at the Union Jack Club on March 10th 2001.

JR

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Newsletter Subscriptions

The cost of the Newsletter and particularly postage are ever increasing and unfortunately not all members are paying their subscriptions on a regular basis, which is causing a shortfall to a heavily subsidised publication. Would all members please make sure that they have paid up to date and if preferred, payment can be made by Bankers Order, which is enclosed. The present cost of the Newsletter is £2.00 per year, so regular payments by all will help avoid an increase.

Would all those, who have already kindly filled in a Bankers Order, please resubmit the enclosed new Bankers Order as the main account is now merged into one Charity account.

Personal Records

Thank you to all those who have sent in their Personal Records returns. These details, with a few photographs have been recorded and administered by Ron Harper. These records are proving to be a valuable source of information. Any interesting records and photographs will, with the individual's permission, be published in the Newsletter.

Would those members, who have not sent their personal details, please fill in the enclosed Records form and return with a photo to the Secretary.

The Jerningham-Kandler Wine Cooler

As I am currently serving with The 3rd Battalion The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment, I have the opportunity to polish "The Flying Tits" on a frequent basis in preparation for Battalion functions and Regimental Dinner Nights. The article on page 46 of the May 1999 edition of The Association Newsletter gave a fascinating account of the origins and manufacture of the original Jerningham-Kandler Wine Cooler, made by John Michael Rysbrack in 1734. A silver replica of the original is currently held by our Battalion and is an elaborate and unusual piece of silver. The account of the original Wine Cooler ends with the object being found in Russia in 1880, but the current whereabouts was not revealed.

My wife and I recently took part in an adventure trip during Christmas and New Year, visiting Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania, Finland, St Petersburg and Moscow. The trip of a lifetime was organised by a friend who is currently serving in Latvia as part of a multi-national force, teaching the Baltic States NATO tactics. During our time in St Petersburg, we visited The State Hermitage Museum, one of the worlds oldest, most famous and fascinating museums. The museum is located in 5 adjoining historical buildings, including the Winter Palace - the former residence of Russian Tsars. The buildings of the museum are themselves works of art, and the collections of the Hermitage number over three million items from prehistoric to modern times. The whole of the Hermitage would take several visits to see all of the exhibits and Art, but probably the most spectacular halls are the State Rooms, which are filled with the most ornate and priceless treasures.

It was whilst we were walking around one of the large State Rooms that I nearly fell over in amazement when I saw the original Jerningham-Kandler Wine Cooler in all its glory in a glass cabinet. Although not quite as clean as the replica in the silver room in the TA Centre in Canterbury, it was still a most impressive sight! The original is far larger than the 'clean' replica held by our Battalion and is made from one piece of solid silver. Myself and Vic Ebbens would certainly have difficulty lifting it onto a table as a centre piece! Although it was forbidden to take photographs in the Hermitage, I took my life in my hands and took one, as I knew Les Wilson would not accept any excuses! When I showed the photo to Colonel Les at his recent birthday party, he snatched the photo from me and told me he wanted an article for the Newsletter, yesterday!



St Petersburg is a most interesting and beautiful city with museums on almost every street corner, exhibiting almost everything, but the Hermitage is most definitely worth a visit. If the article in the May Newsletter sparked anybody's interest, I hope that being able to reveal the current location of the original Jerningham-Kandler Wine Cooler brings the history up to date.

Editors note: The author of this article is Captain John Baynham, Adjutant, 3 PWRR at Leros TA Centre, Canterbury.

The life and times of a Victorian Officer and a Gentleman



Brigadier F J Pink CB CMG DSO

A manuscript entitled Brigadier General Francis John Pink CB CMG DSO. A perspective of a Victorian Officer by Captain K W Brooks gives a full and informative account of the life and succeeding times of an Army officer of the Victorian era.

Born on 19th November 1857, Francis John Pink was the second son of Mr Charles Pink of Wooden House, Hampshire and was educated at Hyde Abbey School, Winchester. On his 17th birthday he entered the Royal Wiltshire Militia as a 2nd Lieutenant and from

there was gazetted in the same rank to the 2nd Queen's Royal Regiment in March 1878. Transfer from the Militia was a popular method of obtaining a commission in those days and was dependent on gaining a recommendation from the Militia CO and achieving success in examinations on both educational and military subjects.

The newly commissioned 2nd Lieutenant Pink spent some months at the Regimental Depot at Guildford before joining the 2nd Queen's in India. At some time during 1879/1880 he volunteered for duty as an Officiating Sub-Assistant Commissary on the Khyber Line of Communications and was attached to a post at Barikab about fifteen miles from Jalahabad. In an action on 30th April 1880 he distinguished himself by overpowering and taking prisoner a raiding party of over fifty men who had attacked and looted a Kuchi convoy. A continuing Afghan campaign was waging at that time and only ended after the successful battle of Kandahar on 1st September 1880 following the successful march of troops under Sir Frederick Roberts from Kabul. After the end of the Afghan war a campaign medal was awarded to all participants including 2nd Lieutenant Pink who returned to Regimental duties.

Later the Battalion moved to Rawalpindi and then to Peshawar, Subatha and Umballa, finally arriving at Cawnpore in December 1884. During this time 2nd Lieutenant Pink had been gazetted Lieutenant on 8th March 1881 and at various times acted as Assistant Musketry Instructor to the Battalion and as Railway Transport Officer at Allahabad where he was involved in arrangements for, and dispatch of, the Indian Army contingent for the operations at Suakim. He was also called upon to act as DAQMG to the Allahabad Division for two months during the seasons of 1883-4 and 1884-5. All this was valuable training for later appointments.

In October 1886 the Battalion sailed from Calcutta to Rangoon to take part in the Burma War and was soon involved in operations in the Tongoo-Pyinmana area. Hot jungle conditions made movement difficult with transport being made by rail, river boats or overland using elephants as beasts of burden. The situations were not improved by the presence of hordes of mosquitoes, and diseases of cholera, malaria and dysentery were mortal enemies which proved worse than the Burmese themselves. Operations involving lengthy forced marches through steamy swampy country had debilitating effects on men and beasts and were of a type to be endured by later generations of Queen's men in the Second World War. Burmese resistance gradually weakened to a stage where it was possible to withdraw the Queen's to India where they arrived

at Umbala on 12th March 1888. Only two days later they were inspected by Lord Roberts who confirmed their efficient state and fitness for service anywhere.



2 Queen's, Calcutta, 1868

Lieutenant Pink had been attached to the staff at this time, serving as General Lockhart's orderly officer and as such had been brought to the notice of the GOC Burma. He had also received special mention by Brigadier General Collett to whose staff he was attached during the concluding period of the war. Pink had also shown himself to be something of an artist, executing some very high standard water colours and sketches at the time, some of them showing a sense of humour.

It would appear that Pink remained in Burma after the 2nd Battalion had left as there are written notes of service throughout the Karen campaign, followed by his appointment of Assistant Intelligence Officer and Transport Officer to the first Anglo-Siam Boundary Commission. A very interesting letter book of his reveals, among other things, that there was an early introduction of a system of Burmese Police, Civil Commissioners and Magistrates into areas being pacified. Marauding gangs of dacoits were apparently a problem as Pink recorded that in one engagement twenty-two soldiers fired 1,600 rounds of ammunition in a fight lasting eight and a half hours. A written report had to be submitted in justification. Another matter which could result in a court of enquiry was the loss of elephants which were a valuable source of transport. For services rendered Lieutenant Pink received the Burma medal with clasps for 1885-87 and 1887-89 together with two mentions in dispatches.

The next few years, 1891-93, seem to have been spent in India. The 2nd Battalion arrived home at Dover in February 1894 and in March, Pink, at his home address in Wiltshire, received a letter from Lord Kitchener, at Headquarters, Egyptian Army Cairo, requesting his services for which application had already been made to the war office.

Egypt and the Sudan

At the time of "Kitchener's Call" Egypt was in a turbulent state, the Khedive having been virtually deposed by Arabi Pasha's rebellion in 1882. European powers decided on armed intervention and then promptly left the task to Britain. Twenty five British Officers were seconded to train a small Egyptian army. One of these was Kitchener who, although a sapper became 2i/c of a cavalry regiment.

On the 26th January 1885 General Gordon was killed at Khartoum and Kitchener was one of the Desert Column which just failed to reach him. He felt this very deeply. The Egyptian army were then given the task of holding the frontier between Egypt and the Sudan. Skirmishes frequently took place including small battles in 1889 at Argin and Toski where Kitchener commanded a brigade. After Toski he became Sirdar i.e. Commander in Chief in 1890.

Following what were considered to be "hostile" moves by the French and Italians, who were demonstrating increasing interest in the upper reaches of the Nile, it was decided to conquer the Sudan using the Egyptian Army which in terms of infantry, cavalry and artillery had been improved, strengthened and modernised under Kitchener's command. The Army contained both Egyptian and Sudanese troops. Why Kitchener asked for Pink is uncertain, although they were believed to have been boyhood friends. On arrival in the territory Captain F J Pink DSO was appointed to the 11th Battalion Assouan (Sudanese), but later transferred to the 3rd Egyptians with whom he served as Bimbashi (Major).

In the opening stages of the campaign against the Sudan a distinct victory was gained in a battle at Firket on 7th June 1896 when a Dervish force of 3000 men and 57 Emirs was put to flight by Egyptian army troops, including Pink's 3rd Battalion. Following this success a pause was made to build up lines of communication for moving supplies. Operations were frustrated and delayed by bad weather in the form of winds and floods and sickness in the form of dysentery and typhoid. In August an advance was started towards Hafir on what tragically became known as the "Death March" when the 3rd Egyptians suffered heavy casualties from exhaustion in severe sandstorms. Ninety cases were fatal.

Hafir was reached on 19th September 1896 after a march of about a hundred miles. At Hafir the dervishes were assembled in strength, mustering about 7000 men of all arms, but after a stiff engagement they were defeated and cleared from the area and Kitchener's troops went on for another thirty six miles to capture Dongola. Interestingly, on this occasion, on 23rd September 1896, Kitchener's forces included the North Staffordshire Regiment and the Connaught Rangers, both of whom wore red in action. On Dongola being captured it was placed under Egyptian rule. Kitchener's Army meanwhile prepared for the next phase of the campaign which was a year away.

Participants in the campaign were awarded the Khedive's Medal with clasps for Firket and Hafir. Captain Pink together with all other British officers in the force was mentioned in dispatches.

In 1897 no actions were fought although a further clasp was added to the medal in recognition of the efforts made and results achieved. Captain Pink was promoted to Major as from 30th December 1896 and in the next few months was promoted to Kaimakan (Lieutenant Colonel) in the Egyptian army to take command of the 2nd Egyptians with whom he was to serve until the end of the campaign.

After a passage up river, in which Major Pink and the 2nd Egyptians played a significant part, Abu Hamed was captured, resulting in Pink's name being mentioned in Lord Kitchener's dispatches together with those of three Royal Navy officers - Commander Keppel and Lieutenants Hood and Beatty. In the light of difficulties experienced in river passages of this time, construction of a large scale desert railway was commenced on Kitchener's orders to run from Wady Halfa to Abu Hamed.

Preparations were now being made for a battle at Atbara. Reinforcements of British infantry arrived and Captain Douglas Haig was seconded from the 7th Hussars to improve cavalry training. Atbara was a fiercely fought engagement in which the enemy forces were finally routed. Major Pink was again mentioned in Lord Kitchener's dispatches for valuable services with the 2nd Egyptians. He was then able to enjoy some home leave. A clasp to the Egyptian Medal was struck for "The Atbara" (Decorations on Major Pink's chest were steadily spreading).

After Atbara preparations were made for what was hoped would be the final battle for the Sudan - Omdurman. The operation commenced on 2nd September 1898 and in fierce engagements the battle swayed backwards and forwards over broken difficult ground, with infantry, cavalry and artillery all being brought into action at various times, but victory eventually went to Kitchener's forces. In the defeat of the Dervishes the 2nd Egyptians had played a significant part. In addition to being mentioned in dispatches Major Pink was personally thanked on the battlefield by Lord Kitchener for the "conspicuously steady and gallant conduct" of his Battalion.

By letter of 11th April 1899 from D A G Omdurman the appointment of Lieutenant Colonel Pink as Kaimakan of the 2nd Egyptians was ended and, resigning from the Egyptian army, he handed over command at Duem. He had seen some hard service. More was to follow.

The South African War

After some home leave Lieutenant Colonel Pink joined the 2nd Battalion The Queen's in time for the move to the Portsmouth forts outside Portsmouth in September 1899 in anticipation of the outbreak of the South African War which occurred in the following month. The Queen's, fully mobilised and supplemented by recalled reservists, marched to Cosham station on 20th October behind the band of HMS *Excellent* to entrain for Southampton and embarkation for South Africa. It was a pity that their high state of efficiency was not matched by the rest of army organisation in general. There were many deficiencies, particularly in matters of supplies and equipment.

The 2nd Queen's disembarked at Durban on 14th November 1899 and proceeded by rail to Maritzburg where the 2nd Brigade was concentrating. Brevet Lieutenant Colonel Pink took two companies forward to hold the railway bridge over the Mooi river twenty miles to the north which was being threatened by the Boers.

By December the Queen's were involved in the battle for Colenso which went badly for the British Forces under General Buller. Although Colenso village was initially taken and occupied a withdrawal became necessary due to shortages of ammunition. Of the Queen's Buller commented "*The Queen's have behaved splendidly and I have never seen a retirement better carried out*". Buller's tactics and generalship were considered bad and he was eventually relegated to the command of Natal only on the appointment of Lord Roberts as Commander in Chief for South Africa.

On 6th January Ladysmith signalled that they were under heavy attack and requested diversionary support. Buller decided to make for Ladysmith by way of crossing the Tugela River at Potgeiter's Drift from whence a good road ran to Ladysmith. The Drift was seized on 11th January in a daring action by the South African Light Horse. The officer concerned was refused a DSO because he was not a regular soldier. Other troops under General Sir Charles Warren crossed the river by way of Trichardt's Drift about 4-5 miles away. His forces included the 2nd Queen's under Brevet Lieutenant Colonel Pink and they crossed over on 18th January to undertake outpost duty.

On the 24th January the catastrophic and mismanaged battle of Spion Kop took place. The 2nd Queen's were involved and were the last battalion to leave the disastrous scene, covered by a mounted squadron. Despite varying misfortunes the attempts to further the advance to Ladysmith continued. Fierce fighting took place at Wynne's Hill and Horseshoe Hill. Lieutenant Colonel Harris CO of the East Surreys, was wounded nine times and his rescue from perilous circumstances occasioned the award of the Victoria Cross to Pte (later Sgt) A E Curtis. The hard pressed East Surreys received assistance from two

companies of the Queen's who moved up on their left. The East Surreys were withdrawn on the night of 23/24 February. Casualties had been heavy i.e. 55 Queen's men and 86 East Surreys. By 25th February an armistice had been arranged to allow the removal of casualties, some of whom had been suffering for three days and nights. With the cessation of the armistice on the following day, operations were resumed and Buller pressed on towards his target of Ladysmith. After some more hard fought skirmishes, with various changes of fortunes and misfortunes, he eventually entered Ladysmith on 28th February 1900 to relieve a siege which had lasted for 118 days. The campaign had been long, hard and bitter. Casualties suffered by the Queen's were typical of the whole force, namely 50% of officers and 24% of other ranks. Troops were showing signs of exhaustion but welcome reinforcements were on their way from England, including some volunteer companies of whom the Queen's was one. This was the first occasion of volunteers serving overseas alongside their regular colleagues. Major Burrell became CO of 2nd Queen's. More training in the new type of warfare was introduced and a detachment of mounted infantry left the Battalion to join the Composite Regiment of 2nd Mounted Brigade on 5th May.

In early May a British Force left Ladysmith to attack Boers at the Biggarsberg range when they were blocking the Durban to Johannesburg railway. At Biggarsberg an attack by the enemy was expected and a force which included 2nd Queen's was deployed in anticipation. But the attack did not materialise and the Biggarsberg position was turned on 13th May.

The advancing British Forces reached Laing's Neck on 18th May where they halted to bring up their supplies. Brevet Lieutenant Colonel Pink received orders to take the 2nd Queen's with two 4.7" guns and two Naval 12 pounders to Ingogo to reinforce 4th Brigade who were already there. After reaching Ingogo the 2nd Queen's under Pink formed a baggage guard. On 9th June an advance into the Orange Free State started and the Transvaal was entered the following day. Camp was made at the junction of the Gansvlei and Klip rivers where the baggage guard rejoined the Battalion.

After a fierce battle at Laing's Neck the Boers evacuated the position on 12th June and it could then be said that Natal had been cleared of them.

Forward movement was started again on 14th June with an advance to Paardekop via Zandspruit and then on to Standerton. On one occasion the Queen's marched 22 miles in 12 hours as an advance guard. Not one man fell out. There were prospects of better transport arrangements as the railway line through the district had been recaptured from the Boers, together with rolling stock, and efforts were being made to get the system into operation again.

On 28th August the Queen's received orders to take up guard duties on the railway from Paardekop to Zandspruit, a task which proved monotonous and in some ways very unpleasant as by this time they were required to take part in the burning of the farms and confiscation of stock of recalcitrant Boers. Boer activity increased in November when there were daily skirmishes with railway demolition parties. December brought heavy rain and thunderstorms together with excessive heat and plagues of flies. Major Burrell was invalided and command of the Battalion devolved upon Lieutenant Colonel Pink. A welcome reinforcement of 2 officers and 140 other ranks joined the Battalion.

Outpost activities continued for the next few months and health problems occurred, mainly through dysentery. Another welcome reinforcement draft of 5 officers and 190 men arrived during March 1901. On 16th May Lieutenant Colonel Pink took mixed companies of infantry, cavalry and artillery to cooperate with Colonel Colville in clearing the Verzamml Berg of Boers.



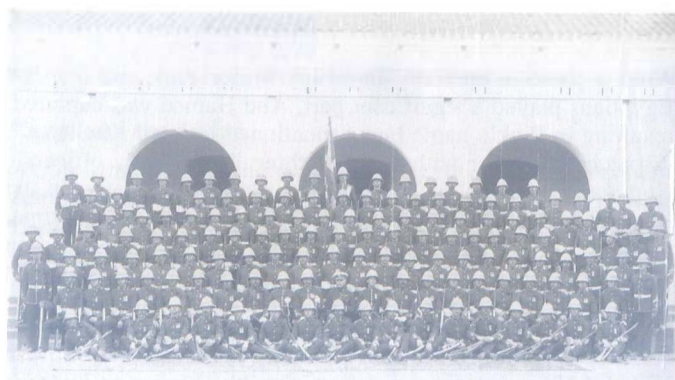
2 Queen's officers' lunch in the field

Although arduous, the operation was a welcome change from the monotonous railway guard duties. By November 1901 the Queen's under Lieutenant Colonel Pink were involved in the construction of blockhouses. For readers interested in statistics a blockhouse cost £16, exclusive of labour, and 8,000 had been built by May 1902. They were linked by barbed wire and ditches covering 3,700 miles and required 50,000 white troops supported by 16,000 African Scouts to garrison them. The relevant duties were again monotonous.

Peace in South Africa was finally concluded on 31st May 1902. The 2nd Battalion Queen's moved to Kronstadt where it stayed for nearly two years under canvas. By the time it left South Africa it had served there for four years and never once in a permanent building. Casualties, of all kinds, as reported by Lieutenant Colonel Pink, were 17 officers and 390 NCO's and men. Of these 3 officers and 36 other ranks had been killed or died of wounds. None had been taken prisoner.

Brevet Lieutenant Colonel Pink DSO was made Companion of the Order of St Michael and St George in addition to a further mention in dispatches. The Queen's South Africa Medal with five clasps was awarded as was the King's South African Medal with two. Lieutenant Colonel Pink was entitled to all of them. A spell of home leave followed, including an investiture at Buckingham Palace, and Pink then returned to South Africa for duty as commander of Kroonstadt Sub District. He finally returned to England with his men in the troopship *Soudan* arriving at Southampton on 7th June 1904. They were feted and honoured at Guildford and Lieutenant Colonel Pink received a Brevet Colonelcy awarded on 16th November 1904.

India and Aden



1st Bn The Queen's (Royal West Surrey) Regiment, Royal Guard of Honour for HRH The Prince of Wales at Rawalpindi 1905. Commanding officer Lt Col F J Pink CMG DSO, Officers' Captain Pickard, Lieutenants Fry and Sodsriple.

After a few months at home with the 2nd Battalion, and probably some leave, Brevet Colonel Pink was appointed to command the 1st Battalion at Sialkote in India, to be effective from 2nd March 1905. The Battalion went into the Murree Hills



Colonel F J Pink with the Signal Platoon, 1st Bn The Queen's (Royal West Surrey) Regiment.

during the hot weather. In November they concentrated at Rawalpindi en route for manoeuvres before the Prince of Wales. The Battalion provided a guard of honour of 4 officers and 136 other ranks for the Prince and Princess of Wales during their stay at the camp of the Commander in Chief. The Commander in Chief later received a letter from the Military Secretary expressing his high appreciation of the guard saying *"...the smart and soldierly bearing of the officers and men at all times were worthy of the distinguished Regiment to which they belonged"*. In addition the Prince of Wales graciously and personally complimented Colonel Pink on the efficiency of the Battalion during manoeuvres.

It was in 1905 that the Battalion won the Kitchener's Cup, i.e. the Infantry Efficiency Prize. This was intended to be an annual competition to decide the best battalion in India in every respect of regimental activity throughout the year. Conditions were so exacting, however, that the contest was not repeated and the cup became the property of the Regiment. In addition Lord Kitchener presented two statuettes, a silver one of an officer and a bronze one of a warrant officer, to the respective messes to commemorate the occasion.

The year 1906 passed quietly but the annual inspection report was again very satisfactory. An amusing story of this period indicates Colonel Pink's independence, individuality and strength of character. On the march, with other Regiments for the 1st January Proclamation Parade, Colonel Pink, on horseback, was leading the Battalion with the Band and Drums who were playing both loudly and proudly. An ADC galloped up to the Colonel and said, *"The General's compliments, Sir, but he would like your Band and Drums quickened a little. None of the other regiments can keep in step"*. Came the reply, *"young man, go and tell your General there are only two people who can give orders to the Queen's Band and Drums. One is the Lord God Almighty and the other Colonel Francis John Pink"*.



The Pink Column. Presented by Colonel Pink for annual competition between the Officers' and Sergeants Mess.

That Colonel Pink was an experienced and practical soldier, unafraid of authority, is shown by the fact

that he later produced an authoritative and critical document on *"A short Sketch of the Origin and Practice of Manoeuvres"*.

The Battalion moved from Sialkote to Agra in December 1907 except for two companies which were detached for service in Delhi. The 1907/08 Annual Report was again good, the Battalion being described as *"a splendid Battalion and thoroughly fit for active service"*. On 2nd December 1908 the battalion left India for Aden where it arrived for its final stage of foreign service soon afterwards. Colonel Pink's tenure of command was by now fast drawing to a close. On 1st March 1909 he bade the 1st Battalion The Queen's farewell, thanking them for their loyalty and support and bidding them maintain the high standards of the Regiment. He was placed on half pay the following day but his years of active service were not yet over.

As from 10th October 1909 he accepted the post of GOC Khartoum district, an appointment in the Egyptian Army carrying a Brevet of Lewa, i.e. Major General, granted by the Khedive. He returned home again to go on half pay before taking up command of No. 10 district at Hounslow in November 1911. On 20th August 1914 Colonel Pink was granted the temporary rank of Brigadier General and assumed command of the Reserve Brigade at Weymouth. In 1916 he was appointed to the Humber Garrison in what was to be his last command. He transferred to the half pay list in December of the same year and in April 1917 was granted the honorary rank of Brigadier General, being awarded a Distinguished Service pension of £60 per annum. There was also a further Mention in Despatches. Sadly, his wife, Alice Evelyn, was not there to see his final achievements. She had died on 9th June 1916 after only seven years of married life.

In retirement Brigadier General Pink involved himself in many charitable works on behalf of Servicemen, particularly prisoners of war. He died at his home at Coombe Bissett near Salisbury on 24th November 1934 aged 77 years. He was sadly missed and mourned.

Of Brigadier General Pink it can be said that he was truly the Victorian Officer. Even more important, he was also truly the Victorian Gentleman.

Between Gentlemen

The so called *"niceties of war"* are contained in an interesting letter a copy of which is in the archives at Clandon. It is a communication, dated 23rd January 1900, from Colonel Baden Powell, commanding besieged troops at Mafeking to his opposite number General Sneyman of the Boer forces.

Referring to previous correspondence, it commences *"Sir, I have to thank you for your courteous reply to my letter of the 21st instant"*. Continuing, it expresses concern over an occasion when Boers allegedly fired on a white flag, an incident which the Boer commander apparently tries to attribute to one man but which Baden Powell asserts involved *"20 or 30"*.

Seemingly there were complaints from both sides about allegations that defensive works were being carried out on Sundays. Not keeping the Lord's day holy in the midst of war was obviously viewed seriously. One thing on which both sides agreed was the desirability of not getting the African natives involved in the war, it being felt that they should best be left alone with their cattle herding ways of life.

Such courtesies between opposing Generals may seem strange in this day and age but it is refreshing to know that in the bitter conflict of the South African war the qualities of gentility and humanity were not completely overwhelmed by those of cruelty and brutality.

Reunion - 40 years on

Forty years after serving together in Aden, 13 members of B Company, 1 Queen's Surreys (1960 - 1962), accompanied by wives, held a reunion at the TA Centre in Farnham Surrey on 5th February 2000. Their Guest of Honour was Mrs Rosemary Yonwin, widow of the late Major Keith Yonwin, who had been their Company Sergeant Major in Aden. Rosemary was accompanied by her son Graham who had also been an officer in the Regiment.



Paul Gray and Graham Yonwin

Although several reunions have been held over the years this reunion marking '40 years on' was rather special, and thanks to Captain John Gilfoyle and his staff at Farnham an excellent dinner and the facilities of the centre were provided to mark the occasion. A video showing cine films taken whilst in Aden and Mukerias was provided by David Burgess (OC 6 Pln), which stirred the memories and caused a great deal of amusement.

After a most memorable and enjoyable evening most of the members returned to the Hogs Back Hotel where they stayed the night. However many hours were still to pass with much reminiscing and drink before beds were found in the early hours of the morning



Foreground left to right:- Tony and Sylvia Carey, Rear left to right:- Daphne Mason, Rosemary Yonwin, Geoffrey Mason, Maurice Tyson.

Company members attending were

Geoffrey Mason - (Coy Comd) now living near Ipswich, Suffolk. Paul Gray - (2i/c) now living in London. David Burgess - (OC 6 Pln) now living in Cheam, Surrey. Eric Lockwood - (6 Pln) now living in Eastbourne, Sussex. Jim Matthews - (6 Pln) now living in Walton on Thames. Maurice Tyson - (Coy HQ) now living in Worthing, Sussex. Roger Mould - (4 Pln) now living in Wadebridge, Cornwall. Tony Carey - (Coy HQ) now living in Aylesbury Bucks. Len Cable - (4 Pln) - now living in Basing Hants. John Rogers - (4 Pln)

now living in Bearstead Kent. Ken Hone - (5 Pln) now living in Addlestone, Surrey. Tony Goldsmith - (6 Pln) now living in Dorking, Surrey. John West - (4 Pln) now living in Bracknell. Apologies for absence were received from Keith Burnett (2 i/c, due to ill health) and Bob Bevan.

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Brotherhood of the Regiment

I would like, through the medium of the Regimental Newsletter, to offer my sincere congratulations to 'Tommy' Atkins, one time soldier of The Queen's Royal Regiment and now author, on his book **'Toil Tribulation Triumph'** which I, also a former Queensman, have just finished reading. It is a very well put together account of one man's life experiences from his very early days leading up to his joining the Regiment to present day. I would go as far as to say it is one of the best small books I have ever read. Anybody who has not purchased the book should do so, my wife who is not really interested in military stories having read it has come to the same conclusion.

We found the early chapter recording his life before joining the Queen's very moving, with both my wife and I coming from fairly large families where money was also tight, we felt a great deal of empathy. Although we were more fortunate than 'Tommy' in that whilst we got our fair share of deserved smacks they were smacks not beatings but maybe this proves a point, despite a degree of corporal punishment, we turned out to be responsible adults.

I personally found the account of his service with the Queen's good reading because not only did I serve with 'Tommy' Atkins in the 1950's, where I got to know the man probably a lot better than many other serving soldiers, reasons to be explained later, also many of the soldiers mentioned in the book were familiar to me and so I was able to put a face to the name and in some cases the person's character. People like 'Buzzy' Waspé, who as a retired officer at Stoughton Barracks when I was a raw recruit in January 1953 was responsible for me becoming a life member of the OCA (Old Comrades Association), he always showed great warmth to recruits who he often stopped and spoke to. Of course most of the men serving during WWII are simply names, some never to be forgotten like Major General David Lloyd Owen, who I did meet and speak to much later when passing through Stoughton Barracks on demob in December 1955 after my time with the 1st Bn in Malaya, or were of soldiers that were known to long time serving comrades that I did my time with.

Throughout the book 'Tommy' describes how the older and more senior NCO's, WO's and Officers did him kindness by offering and giving him help in times of need, this generosity must have rubbed off on him and I would like to describe a couple of incidents where this was to my benefit.

I joined A Company 1st Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment in June 1953, straight from Stoughton Barracks as a 17 year old, at that time 'Tommy' Atkins was A Coy CSM. As recorded in his book and as known to all those in the battalion at that time, it was preparing to leave Iserlohn, Germany, for Invicta Lines, Maidstone, to prepare for service in Malaya. As such the last few weeks were all packing, bull and farewell parades, not ideal for the average soldier. But I got lucky, while this was going on during a Free From Infection (FFI) the battalion medical officer noticed an unsightly wart on the back of my hand that I found rather embarrassing when in the company of young ladies, so when he told me that his dermatologist friend in BMH Iserlohn just loved to remove such things if I wanted it done, I jumped at the chance. Whilst the minor operation to remove the wart took no time at all it appeared that the time needed for the resulting hole to heal would take a lot longer and so I was given a few light duties and excused all parades.

As such I landed up in the Company Office promoted to General, General Dogsboddy that is, coming in close daily contact with CSM Atkins. The regular clerk was Johnny Crumplin, an extremely fast sprinter who, if my memory serves me correct, won the BAOR sprint title and I understood to have recorded the 3rd fastest time for 1953 after the great Macdonald Bailey and Brian Shenton. One day I was asked to move the Company typewriter from one desk to another and for some reason, maybe due to the bandage on the now wart free hand, I managed to drop the thing damaging it beyond repair causing much concern, resulting in me facing a Court of Enquiry which was scheduled for later when we were settled in Invicta Lines in a few weeks. It was at this enquiry that I experienced one such kindness shown by CSM Atkins. Obviously the main witnesses to this affair were he and myself and after he gave his evidence and character reference, much to my relief I was found to be not negligent and the matter closed. If he had not been so honest and slanted the case in my favour it could well have been a different result.

It was very shortly after the Enquiry while still working in the Company Office CSM Atkins remarked that my boots, while having an adequate shine, lacked the something extra that made the difference between an average pair of boots and a pair of a very high standard. This I had to agree, I had always thought that both my working boots and my best pair did lack that something special, they were somewhat insipid in colour, more a grey/brown rather than a deep black. It was then that CSM Atkins offered his years of experience, setting to, to show me how to bring them up to the very best standard.

I just wish I had known this technique much earlier in my service because, although I was very grateful for this tuition, it was not to do me much good as we were shortly to embark on the troopship *MV Georgic* bound for service in Malaya where our best boots were to be exchanged for canvas uppers and rubber soled jungle boots and so never was I able to show off my new found skills on future kit inspections or ceremonial guard duties.

After extensive training at Far East Land Forces School at Kotta Tinggi, the battalion finally reached the area in Malaya allocated for active service, taking over duties from The Gordon Highlanders. A Company were based in and around a town called Bahau in the State of Negri Sembilan not really on jungle patrol, more on food control and so although Company HQ was in Bahau itself along with one of the three rifle platoons, the other two were on detachment in much smaller kampongs (Malay villages) often with just a platoon section performing the duty of guard and food control. For those who are unfamiliar with this role it has to be remembered that we were fighting a campaign against communist terrorists who spent most of the time on the move in the jungle thus not being able to grow or catch food but relying greatly on villagers for supplies either by coercion, or from a few sympathetic supporters. Early in the campaign the authorities recognising this fact rounded up all the local inhabitants into modern, well facilitated villages, which were surrounded by double perimeter fencing with either a single gate in or out, or, in the case of the larger towns like Bahau, two gates in or out. By policing the gates during daylight hours, there was a dawn to dusk curfew, and searching all traffic vehicular as well as pedestrian, and patrolling the perimeter fences at night, very little, if any food or medical supplies were getting to the terrorists. A very valuable job but not so exciting as actual jungle patrols on search and destroy. However after a few weeks on the smaller detachment, the platoon I was with, No 2 platoon, were moved into Bahau to exchange duties with the platoon located there.

It was here that my final encounter of the close kind with CSM Atkins took place, one that did not have such a pleasant result

as the previous two. As I have already reported, in the town of Bahau, in addition to the full strength No 2 platoon were A Company HQ staff, these extra numbers allowed for the normal food control duties as well as some actual patrols to police the surrounding areas to look for terrorists, it was not jungle only rubber plantations, and the patrols were usually on a day basis very seldom longer but at least we felt we were really doing something we had been trained for. It was one of these such daily patrols that lead up to the incident. Being on active service we all had our respective weapons, mine was a Bren gun, of which once issued was by your side night and day as was the ammunition. The camp at Bahau was tented, lozenge shaped tents, six men to a tent in two rows of three. On this particular day I returned to my bed to find a rifle on it, remember I carried a Bren, the tent was empty as most of the guys had just returned from patrolling the rubber and were either in the shower or having a cold drink in the char wallahs (no NAAFI out there), on looking at the rifle number I recognised it as belonging to the soldier that slept on the bed diagonally opposite to mine. It was not difficult to identify who it belonged to as these rifles were specially adapted lightweights for the Malayan campaign and had quite short numbers and this particular rifle had been mine before I swapped it for the Bren and so I knew who had taken it over. While walking across to deposit the said rifle on to the said soldiers bed I noticed that it was still cocked but knowing that the procedure when taking out a patrol was that immediately on passing through the perimeter gate the senior NCO in charge would line up the patrol to load the weapons including one up the spout and safety catch on. On returning to camp immediately before entering through the gate, would again line up the patrol and clear the weapons making sure that no cartridge was left up the spout. At least that is what I thought I knew, because on releasing the safety catch and squeezing the trigger there was a very loud crack as the one still up the spout was fired. Fortunately for me, my very basic training of ensuring you never ever under any circumstances point a weapon loaded or unloaded anywhere but in the air, unless of course you are aiming to kill the enemy, did not desert me and I was pointing the rifle in the air when it was fired. A hole in the tent was the only damage. Needless to say the shot resulted in a rush of everybody to investigate, one of the first on the scene was CSM Atkins. On being really relieved there was no serious injury or damage he immediately put me on a charge and warned me that it was a Court Martial offence, I'm not sure if this was the case or he was just trying to frighten me, if he was he certainly managed that. Fortunately for me it did not come to this, I was placed on CO's orders and punished with seven days pay stopped. Whether CSM Atkins, or perhaps my platoon officer or Company Commander put a good word in for me or not I do not know but I was very relieved to get that over. Although it could be said that I got off lightly, to this day I consider I was wrongly charged as I felt I was an innocent party but then to quote a phrase from 'Tommy' Atkins book. SOME YOU WIN, SOME YOU DON'T. Incidentally the NCO who should have ensured the weapons had been cleared was posted from the Battalion to a desk job in the training school in Kota Tinggi.

That was the last time I saw 'Tommy' Atkins as readers of his book will know he was soon to receive a temporary promotion and move away from the battalion to serve the rest of his stay in Kuala Lumpur, that is to say the last time I saw him in the flesh, for a few years later, much to my surprise, I saw his face filling the screen for a very brief time when I saw the film "Carry on Sergeant".

There are a couple of points that I would like to concur with 'Tommy' in his book, the first is the issue he raises when dealing with the modern scourge of PC (not Personal Computers but Political Correctness), like many of the soldiers

serving in Malaya I knew 'Darky' Isaac and all who knew him greatly respected him as a person and certainly as a soldier and NCO. I suppose I too could take offence and no doubt find somebody to sue under some rule or another that exists now for the upset caused when the battalion civilian Bengali barber used to call me 'Darky' because I go quite dark when sun tanned!

Another point raised in the book was the comradeship, almost a brotherhood, that develops within the battalion. I can best illustrate this with an incident that happened to me on my return from the battalion to Stoughton Barracks prior to my demob. I returned with a small group, maybe seven or nine other Queen's men, flying home from Singapore, one of the first groups being flown as opposed to the traditional troopship. We arrived at the Depot late evening and when we reported to the guard room we were told by the Orderly Officer that as we were not expected, there was nothing ready for us (maybe because the system was so new) but that he could arrange for a travel document to take to our chosen destination and back to the Depot in the morning if we so wished, or we could sleep in the cells for the night. Needless to say, having been out of the country for nearly two years, it took very little time for the decision to be made, we took the travel warrants. While most of the group were Londoners (I can only remember the names of two of the group, one was a Cpl Weston and I believe his cousin the other was named 'Barnie' Barnes, who when demobbed, was anxious to get back to his profession of running a fruit stall at London Bridge), who would have no difficulties in getting home from the main line station. There were two of us who were not Londoners, an ex Corporal from The Royal West Kents who lived in West Wickham, Kent and myself who lived in Carshalton, Surrey. We all boarded the train to London and settled into the old fashioned carriage and discussed how we two non-Londoners would make our way home after leaving the train. Having spent the last two years in Malaya where initiative was a key issue, and in those days it was common practice for servicemen in uniform to hitch lifts, we both decided this was the action to take when the only other passenger in the carriage, a lady in her mid thirties or so asked us where we wanted to go. Having been told, she suggested we should get out with her at Wimbledon Station and then get a taxi to our final destinations, fine we said but having just got back from Malaya we had no British currency. No problem she said, she would loan us the money and we could pay her back later. This seemed an excellent idea and so it was agreed, talking to this lady she explained that her husband had served as an officer with the Queen's in the second world war unfortunately not surviving but that the help and support she had received from the Regiment and fellow officers, meant she was thankful she was able to help us in some small way in our time of need. Thus it was that the two Queen's men and this lady detained at Wimbledon where she put the ex RWK into his taxi, discussed the fare with the driver, passed over the money and he left on his way, she then took me to the next taxi and did the same but before drawing off I asked the lady for her address so that we could repay her when we had the money, she told me it was OK as she had already given her address to the other soldier and so I could confer with him when we next met up and make the return of the money then.

It was in this way that I returned to my family, very late, that foggy night, so late in fact that everybody was in bed but the key to the front door was in its usual place, on a piece of string hanging behind the letter box, normal practice in those days of very low crime, and not ever bolting the doors I was able to gain entry and spend my first night home on the settee. The morning was full of shouts of joy when Mum the first member of the family came down so that the rest of the family were soon awake with the noise. However this was short lived as I had, with the rest of the group, to report back to Stoughton

Barracks for further instructions. I arrived back in the barracks meeting up with the rest of the group including the Ex RWK, where I learnt that the lady who was so kind to us had told him, when he asked for her address, that she would give it to me and so not too worry, it would appear she had no intention of giving either of us her address and so to this day we were never able to either thank her for her generosity nor her kindness.

I guess this is the sort of Brotherhood in the Regiment that 'Tommy' Atkins meant in the writing of his book. Incidentally on arrival back at the Depot that morning we were immediately given four weeks disembarkation leave, the appropriate pay and travel warrants and told to go home again.

One final point, the theme of cutting back firstly on battalions, then on Regiments constantly runs through the book and the wisdom of these cut backs was questioned. It would appear that nobody listens to the people who know best because even this week we read that due to the cost cutters the Royal Navy cannot operate all its ships nor can the RAF fly its planes. Some things never seem to change.

Bob Edwards

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A reward of merit

Illustrated here is a silver medal, apparently previously unrecorded, belonging to a distant antecedent of the Territorial element of The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment.



At the time of the threat of invasion during the French Revolutionary Wars, two volunteer corps were raised in Bermondsey as the 'home guard' of the period; the Bermondsey Volunteers was the earliest, formed in July 1794, followed by the Loyal Bermondsey Volunteer Association, enrolled in May 1798. Evidently the medal was awarded by the first of these. The Bermondsey Volunteers, which agreed to serve in any part of the Southern District 'in case of real danger', consisted of two companies, each of 70 men. Their Major-Commandant was Thomas Gaitskill, who also led the First Company; the Second Company was commanded by Simon Field.



The obverse of the medal depicts a member of the unit, with the legend 'Reward of Merit' and motto 'Pro Aris et Focis'. The uniform shown conforms with that depicted in Thomas Rowlandson's *Loyal Volunteers of London and Environs* (1799), and consisted of a fur-crested light dragoon helmet with black turban, a label inscribed 'Bermondsey Volunteers' and a white plume with red tip; a red jacket with black facings and shoulder-wings and gold lace; white waistcoat and breeches with short black gaiters, and an oval shoulder-belt plate bearing the motto 'Pro Aris et Focis', as inscribed on the medal. The reverse of the medal depicts a target (presumably it was an award for proficiency with the musket), surrounded by a wreath of oak leaves, with the legend 'Gift from the Officers of the Bermondsey Volunteers'. Neither of the Bermondsey corps continued in existence beyond the temporary cessation of hostilities with France brought about by the Peace of Amiens in 1802.

PJH

A Regimental Time-Line

From

To

Queen Catherine 1661

Queen Victoria 1875

Centre top: The three regiments at the time of their raising. In the middle a junior officer of the **1st Tangiers Regiment 1661**; On the left a marine of **Villier's Marines, 1702**; A fifer of the **70th Parslow's, Regiment, 1758**.

Top left: A private of the **Queen's Own Regiment, 1730**; An officer of **Handasyde's Regiment (31st), 1743**. Shown here with the usual silver lace, although CCP Lawson quotes gold lace,

Top right: A private of the **2nd Queen's Royal, Regiment, 1793**; At this time aboard the *Queen Charlotte* for the 'Glorious First of June'; An officer of the **31st Huntingdonshire Regiment, 1802**, at this time in the Mediterranean.

Bottom left: A sergeant of the **2nd, Queen's, Regiment, 1813**, in the Peninsular. A sergeant major of the **70th Glasgow Lowland Regiment, 1814**; At this time in Guadeloupe.

Inside bottom left: An officer of the **31st Huntingdonshire Regiment, 1842**, at Sobraon. A corporal of the **70th Surrey Regiment, 1857**, during the Indian Mutiny.

Inside bottom right: A private of the **2nd Queen's, Regiment, 1860**, in China. An officer of the **70th Surrey, Regiment, 1861**, during the Maori Wars.

Bottom right: A sergeant of the **31st Huntingdonshire Regiment, 1875**; A bugler of the **70th Surrey, Regiment, 1875**, during their dual occupation of the new Kingston Barracks. The miniature portrait, top left, is of **Queen Catherine of Braganza** and, top right, of **Queen Victoria** soon after her accession.

Caption to centre page

WOs and Sergeants Mess, Depot The Queen's Regiment - Canterbury 1970



Back row: S/Sgt T Gavin, Sgt J McEniry, S/Sgt F Blakey, C/Sgt R Speakman, Sgt P Sheridan, Sgt P Mead, Sgt D Eames, Sgt M Morrison, Sgt W McLean. Middle Row: Sgt J Scudder, Sgt E Close, Sgt P White, Sgt J Martin, C/Sgt R Recton, WOII Hannigan, Sgt H Samson, Sgt K Andrews, Sgt J Bugden, WOII E Harris. Front row: WOII E Nash, WOII Clark MBE, WOII Hazelwood, WOI D Sandland, RSM W Histed, WOI D Pryce, WOII S Billett, WOII D Lay, WOII B Matlock

Nearly "Up the Spout"

In a letter to the Editor George Thornton, formerly of The East Surrey Regiment, tells of a "near miss" he and colleagues had on one occasion during his service. Manning a Bren gun they were engaging hostile snipers near Tebourba when the weapon suddenly jammed. Magazines were hastily and successfully changed and the action continued, eventually bringing down two snipers. George, meantime had slipped the extricated magazine into his webbing equipment. Later he was horrified to find that a sniper's bullet had penetrated it and was still lodged there. He says that he and his mates nearly fainted on seeing what could have been potential disaster for all of them.



1ST TANGIER REGT 1661

VILLIER'S MARINES 1703

70TH PARSLOW'S REGT 1758





QUEEN'S REGT 1782 31ST HUNTINGDONSHIRE REGT 1782 70TH SURREY REGT 1782



LETTERS



Dave Howe (ex Surreys Band) writes from Hemel Hempstead:-

I regret to say I have now reached a 75% state of disability so therefore am unable to attend the functions of the Association, and also my own OCA. Because of this I must add how important the Newsletter has become to me. Keep up the good work. Best wishes to all.

Editor's note: Since this letter was received Dave Howe has died. His death is recorded in this edition of the Newsletter.

Ron May writes from Guildford:-

Thank you for another great Newsletter, there's always something of interest, its a pity more of our era don't send in some of their stories, perhaps they are like me, think it would not be of interest to other members. One day I will put pen to paper on some of my episodes in the 1/5th, although I was not a Territorial man to start with, I was one of the first Militia men at Stoughton in July 39, and in the October that complete intake was drafted to 1/5th Queen's, Sherborne, and I never regretted that as there was so many of the lads I knew from the Guildford area, and that is why so many of our OMA members are from that batch, seems a life time ago now.

Editor's note: Ron May has just retired after acting as treasurer to the 5 OMA at Guildford for many years. So he will now have plenty of time to put pen to paper and write his memories!?

Mrs C Williams writes -

Please find cheque for Sergeant Major A H F William's subs. He is still in hospital - it will be 3 years in April. I read the Association Newsletter to him which he enjoys and it keeps him in touch.

Dom Papworth writes:-

My letter of the 11th January was of the non-arrival of November's Newsletter. This did arrive on the 20th in two months, actually a fast mover in that three months is the norm. A poor reflection on our wartime post, even under jungle cover, took about three weeks! The gentleman who answered the phone, and gave his name which I failed to note, was good to be able to decipher an impaired voice - my apologies.

I received the sad news of Tony Hobrow's death when I phoned his home from London. Although a very recent and grievous loss, Mrs Hobrow was most kind and patient in giving news of Tony, and I did appreciate her friendliness.

It was good to see a mention of the RPDD at Canterbury and my letter on the Territorial Supplement. The Newsletter and Supplement are really the best and as excellent as always.

A W E Hitchcock writes:-

Please find enclosed my cheque which I hope is still adequate to cover the cost of the excellent Newsletter. It is always interesting to read of others participation in events in which you have also participated.

Best wishes to you and all members for 2000 (makes 1940 seem a long time ago doesn't it?).

M F Smith from Warlingham writes:-

I was searching through some family treasures recently when I came across an old pocket-book case which was carried by my Grandfather who was in the trenches with the East Surrey Regiment during the First World War. The case contained an old playing card and a newspaper cutting both of which are in fairly good condition in view of their age.

I thought you may find them of interest and possible use in a forthcoming Association Newsletter.

Card-Players of Pozieres

In September, 1916, I was with my battalion in reserve trenches near Pozieres, on ground recently vacated by the Germans. Some comrades and myself were scrounging for souvenirs when I found a practically undamaged dug-out.

On descending the steps I had the surprise of my life, for, sitting round on upturned buckets, were three Germans, playing cards! I dodged back and we cautiously investigated. We found that the three Germans had been dead for some days. We guessed that the concussion of a shell must have killed them instantly, for their positions were undisturbed and the cards with which they had been playing were lying on the bucket or on the ground.

One man actually had the card he was about to play still clutched in his fingers, and I gently took it from them. It was a curious old German card with a view of Hanover at the bottom. That card is in my pocket-book as I write it is the eight of hearts. - A C Smith (late East Surrey Regiment) 81 Northborough Road, Norbury, SW16



Chris Reeves writes from Victoria, Australia:-

It's been a long time since I've communicated with the Association. I recall speaking with Les Wilson some few years ago and throughout this time I have been regularly receiving my copy of the Associations' Newsletter which is, as always a delight to read and to catch up on the activities of past friends. The latest edition, plus a number of other letters was forwarded to me from my previous address. Could you please change your records to note my current address.

I have now retired from business, bought 10 acres in the country, 60 Kms East of Melbourne and am learning the art of free range chicken farming. Sadly I no longer get the opportunity of flying back to the UK regularly as I once did with my Company. However it's good to have the occasional

visit from one or two ex Regimental members - Colin Howard, Nigel Harris, Paul Gray, and I shall look forward to seeing Ralph and Adele Ewart this month who will be visiting their son Ralph who is also farming out here.

Do please give my address to any who may remember me. Chris's address is: 20 Daveys Lane, Hoddles Creek, Victoria 3139, Australia. His E-mail address is: chriss@scservnet.com

George Watson writes from Thetford:-

Thank you for the November Newsletter which was waiting for me when I arrived home last week from South Africa, I had been staying there since October after the sudden death of my dear wife Sally, she had just had her 83rd birthday and we had our 60th Golden Wedding in August so you can see I feel a great loss, and she always felt proud that I had served in the Surreys.

Since I have been home my youngest son has gotten me a computer and has put me on the internet, so if there is anyone out there who knew me I shall be glad to hear from them, if I can start on a computer at 80 years old I am sure the others can if they are still around, my army number was 6145709 Cpl George W Watson.

Replies to G Watson, 11 Laburnum Grove, Thetford, Norfolk IP24 3HS, or E-mail george@cplgww6145709.fsnet.co.uk

Gareth Hughes writes:-

Your excellent and outstanding Supplement to the November 1999 Newsletter was read with great interest especially that relating to the 1930's.

In letters home from Peking Pte Gwyn (George) Hughes, Pioneer section wrote "*Plenty of sport here playing hockey and football*". He also played cricket for the Legation.

In Quetta after the earthquake he writes "*still playing plenty of sport and keeping fit*". In September 1935 HQ Wing Queen's played the 7th Light Tanks in the final of the Earthquake Cup, the result 1 - 1. The cup was to be presented by General Kerslake, alas his next letter gives no information on the replay.

In early 1936 still in Quetta he writes "*I started a rugby team in this battalion, they have never had a rugby team before....got an officer interested in it and now the team is well on the way of becoming proficient*". The officer in the team's first game against the RA received concussion. I wonder who the officer was? He continues "*it rather damped the ardour of would be players but I succeeded in turning out a team to play them again and we came through with no casualties*".

On coming home in early 1939 having served his seven years, one of his souvenirs was a cloth shield bearing the Paschal Lamb and the words "Queen's RFC" and mounted on a black painted stand holding about 18 porcupine quills which formed a canopy over the shield. Does anyone remember this?

Sport in Britain was also avidly followed "*listening to all the rugby matches on the wireless*". He adds "*I got up at 3am to hear the (Jack) Petersen fight. (A British and Welsh Heavyweight Champion). 'Nearly had a fight myself for waking the others up, gave them the works after he had won*".

On moving to Allahabad he writes "*plenty of opportunities for sport, and was delighted to see green pitches after Quetta earth.....its a bit brown but still grass. It's a treat to play on them*". In 1938 he was selected to play for the Allahabad fifteen, travelling to Jhansi for the game.

Mobilised in August 1939 and posted to the Second Battalion he was sadly and tragically killed in Palestine on the 24th December of the same year.

Ted Jephcote writes from Nuneaton:-

I enclose my subs to cover the Newsletter which I enjoy so much in my leisure hours. The added bonus of sporting Records and Military Achievements to end the last century, I found of great interest as a conscript. I ran as a 2/6th Queensman cross country and our team of six gold medals was the winning team effort. My congratulations on the achievements of all concerned in the production and distribution of the Newsletter.

Thanks to all who make my leisure hours possible. I served from February 1942 until May 1946.

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Like Father, Like Son

An unusual father and son connection with The Queen's Royal Regiment is reported in the Surrey Advertiser.

Richard Johnson of Guildford began his military career as a territorial in the Queen's and was on exercise on Salisbury Plain when the First World War broke out in August 1914. He rejoined the Queen's again as a territorial in 1933 and became a sergeant instructor. In the Second World War he was first at Aldershot before transferring to the Pioneer Corps to be based at the prisoner of war camp at Merrow Down, Guildford. He was demobbed in 1945. His son, Richard joined the territorials soon after leaving school in 1936. He was called up in September 1939 and from then until December of the same year he served in the Queen's at the same time as his father. He then went into the Royal Artillery, leaving the Army in 1946. He rejoined as a territorial in 1948 and, like his father before him, became a sergeant instructor. He finally left in 1962 but then joined Civil Defence. Father and son often joke about the fact that while the former went through two world wars and ended up with seven medals, his son only went through one war but received six.

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Officers' Club Lunch, Clandon. Brigadier Charles Millman and Mrs Val Jones.

PAY ATTENTION CAN YOU HELP?



SKIN CANCER

Servicemen that have served in tropical climates during their engagement and subsequently develop skin cancer (basal cell carcinoma, rodent ulcer, squamous cell carcinoma, Bowens disease, malignant melanoma) may qualify for either an enhancement of their pension or a lump sum gratuity. The development of the skin cancer may take place at any time after leaving the tropics. A latent period as long as 60 years is not unusual. Any person developing such a skin cancer should contact the Pensions Agency (telephone number 01253 858858).

We are indebted to Dr C J W Guerrier a consultant Dermatologist for drawing our attention to the notice above concerning skin cancer. Dr Guerrier is a member of our Officers' Club.

Mrs Angela Murphy, 38 Rosehill Avenue, Horsell, Woking, Surrey (Tel. 01483 832943) is anxious to obtain information regarding her late brother 14386545 **Pte Colin Vincent**, The Queen's Royal Regiment who was killed in Burma (believed at Arakan) on 7th March 1944. His name is on the Rangoon War Memorial, Face 4.

Any replies direct to Mrs Murphy please.

Lt Col George H Kelling (US Army Rtd) writes from 4223 Dauphine Drive, San Antonio, Texas 78218 US of A: I hope you will be able to assist in a search for a British soldier captured at Singapore in 1942.

A friend of mine was captured in the Philippines and spent the war as a POW, first in the Philippines and then in Japan. While in the transit camp in the Philippines, he became friends with a British soldier, captured at Singapore and in transit in the Philippines en route to Japan. Since I am a historian, he asked if I could assist him in finding if his friend survived the war, and perhaps to see if he is still alive in England. The British soldier went to Japan on a later ship and they have been in contact since 1944. The British soldier's address at the time of his capture was: **Samuel Shurey**, 134 Light Street, West Molesay?, Surrey. He was in The East Surrey Regiment. I would welcome any information or ideas. Thanks and all best wishes from Texas.

If any reader can assist please write to the above address or email: g.h.kelling@worldnet.att.net

Miss S Stanley, 44 Durley Crescent, Ashurst Bridge, Totton, Southampton SO40 7QA is asking for assistance in tracing any comrades who served with her Grandfather **Charles Alfred Parsons** who served in the Surreys during the Second World War. He was also admitted at one time to Netley Military Hospital, suffering with bomb blast injuries to his face. He celebrates his 80th birthday on 29th May 2000 and his

Granddaughter is trying to make it a special day for him. If you can help or remember Charles Parsons please contact Miss Sturley at the address above.

Colin Dewey writes from 29 Church Walk, Yaxley, Peterborough, Cambs PE7 3YD (01733 240466). He and his son are researching the battles in Normandy particularly the actions in Villers Bocage. They are trying to locate and talk to veterans of the Queen's battalions who fought in these actions.

If any member is willing to speak or write to Mr Dewey please contact him at the address above.

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Golden Glory

The story of the Battle of the Glorious First of June and its effects on Regimental history are well known to our members. Less well known, however, is the resultant effect that the battle had on Naval dress.

To commemorate the battle George III authorised the introduction of stripes of gold lace on uniform cuffs; admirals to wear three, vice admirals two and rear admirals one. Later the distinction of wearing gold lace was extended to all officers from sub-lieutenant upwards, thus resulting in variations of the numbers and breadth of the stripes together with the addition of the distinctive "curl" above them.

In the writer's days in the Royal Navy during the Second World War, Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve Officers wore waved stripes, thus earning for themselves the nickname of "Wavey Navy", while the Royal Naval Reserve Officers wore crisscrossed stripes. Different branches were denoted by varying coloured cloths between the stripes viz: red for doctors, orange for dentists, purple for engineers, green for electricians, blue for schoolmasters and white for paymasters. Wren officers, who at that time were not an actual integral part of the Service, wore no gold braid but only blue stripes.

In later years the systems were standardised. All gold braid stripes became straight, coloured bands, except red for the doctors, disappeared and the WRNS, on integration into the Royal Navy proper, also became gold braided.

George III would no doubt have been proud of his work and its results.

Source - "JUST AN OLD NAVY CUSTOM" by A Cecil Hampshire.

RF

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The Printer takes a day off!



George and Joy Harris at Clandon



Book Reviews

Military and Naval Silver

(Treasures of the Mess and Wardroom) By Roger Perkins

Probably it will not help a young officer in his hopes for promotion if he becomes an expert, and is at all interested in the mess silver. On the other hand this knowledge is important if he is to understand his regiment and its past.

Officers' come and go, their presence in their regiment being transient. The future of the regiment is unknown, the past can be recalled in a museum, but what is permanent and unchanging are such things as the Regimental Colours and the silver in the officers and sergeants messes.

To see and handle the pieces in ones regimental mess reinforces the permanence of the regiment. I remember as a young subaltern before the war, gazing at the splendid Arab centrepiece, 'A Halt in the Desert'; the camels and their spear-carrying riders surely depicting something to do with a battle in the desert long ago. To handle and use at dinner the few pieces saved when in 1858 a flooded river at Nowshera, in India, washed away most of the silver of the 70th, must mean something, especially as some of the few pieces saved had been presented to the regiment when stationed in the West Indies in 1806. At the very least it links the past with the present.

For most of us to look at and handle such treasures is not now possible, but at last we have a book to take its place. Beautifully produced, there are pages and pages of photographs of exceptional pieces of silver from most regiments, and also the Royal Navy and RAF. Not only the photographs, but also the stories behind them, show their importance, and are well written up. Queens and Surreys silver is not very prominent, but the unremarkable acquisition of 'The Halt in the Desert' appears on p. 52.

Considering its quality and content (over 200 pages) the book is not expensive at £39.50. The opening chapters deal with the various ways in which regimental 'family silver' has been conceived and created since the 18th Century. Other chapters are for collectors past and future. A book so packed with photographs and stories show extensive research and also the added help of some 200 other contributors.

This is the only book there is connecting regimental silver with military history. Mr. Perkins must be congratulated on discovering the need for a book such as this and researching so skillfully to fill the gap.

It is quite unique and well worth the price for anyone interested in the subject.

Copies are available from the author, **R Perkins, PO Box 29, Newton Abbott, Devon TQ12 1XU.** Cost £39.50 plus £3.50 postage and packing.

RCT

Born to Survive

(Privately produced, copies available from author **Charles E Ferris, at 4 Wilton Close, Stenson Fields, Derby DE 24 3AW.**)

This little book is an autobiography, and a very interesting life story. Charles Ferris was born on the Isle of Dogs in 1919, he left school at the age of fourteen but finished his full time working life as a Warrant Officer, retiring in 1961.

Of especial interest to readers of this Newsletter will be the author's account of his years in the Queen's Royal Regiment. Called up for National Service, he joined the Regiment at Stoughton Barracks in October 1939, and after basic training he was posted to C Company, 1st/5th Queens, with whom he went to France. He describes very vividly the move to the Belgian frontier, part by train part on foot, and the confused engagement with the advancing Germans ending in his capture. He had perforce to spend the rest of the war as a prisoner, escaping briefly for only two days. His time was spent in German occupied West Poland and Eastern Germany, working on farms. He gives a bright cheerful account of learning to live as a farm labourer/prisoner, of their arrangements for little extras of food and of preparations of schnapps for Christmas. Among the many illustrations are ones of a 1943 Christmas Party of prisoners of war wearing hats made from the cardboard of Red Cross parcels, and a sketch of the "POW Distillery" for fragmenting sugar beet. In the last weeks of the war, Ferris, with other prisoners, was marched westwards as the German Army retreated in face of the Red Army, eventually being liberated by Americans and returned home to Britain.

Thereafter, after a brief spell in the Royal Artillery, Ferris served in the Intelligence Corps on border security work in Germany, with a brief spell in Libya and Cyprus. An engaging little book, and a small but useful contribution to British social and military history as well as an interesting page in the story of our regiment.

AHleQC

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Rupert's Progress by Peter Cornewall

As Peter mentions in his book, never be in Les Wilson's debt, as he will surely call it in. I am much in Les's debt over the many happy years we have served together, both on the Active List and at Regimental Headquarters, so that is why I am writing this Review to-day!

I, like many of us who read The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Association Newsletter with such pleasure, share Mike Doyle's delight, that Peter Cornewall has compiled the experiences of Rupert into one book and so marvellously illustrated by Chris Collins.

For us who have served in the Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment and in one or both of it's distinguished Forebear Regiments, we are fortunate that Peter, although commissioned into the Queen's Royal Regiment, also served with the East Surrey Regiment prior to amalgamation and by doing so, covers all the characteristics that makes our Regiment so special.

This is a highly readable and amusing account of the life and experiences of serving in our very fine Regiment, but also includes his experiences as a staff officer, on secondment to the Trucial Oman Scouts and Sierra Leone. To those of us who have been privileged enough to have been commissioned into the Regiment, and been a 'Rupert' in our time, this is a must buy, even to those who missed the extra experiences of undergoing initial training as a National Serviceman. It is also

a 'must buy' for all those distinguished and much respected warrant officers and sergeants, who had the expertise and patience to train and mould us 'Ruperts' into something worthy to lead those we had the privilege to command. The debt we owe is rightly reflected by Peter, but in this marvellously humorous way he has, drawing on anecdotes involving Tommy Atkins, Les Wilson, Bert Quickenden, Mo Jennings and Paddy Hannigan, to name a few.

Those in senior appointments in the Regiment also do not escape Peter's observations, they also have their place whether it be forgetting a name, a Rowley Man's bulldog, a fearsome adjutant, a desert encounter with Bundo Craig Adams or realising that your absence serving away from the Regiment for a year or two, has not been noticed!

All this is drawn with a perceptive insight, with which we all can recall with great pleasure and leaves us with a warm glow and and realisation, if we need reminding, how privileged we are to belong to this wonderful Regimental Family of ours.

This highly readable and amusing account of Rupert's Service experiences is a book no 'bedside locker' should be without, or if preferred, 'loo'.

JWF

Copies will be available from the Regimental Museum, Clandon Park, Guildford, Surrey in June. (Please see Regimental Museum book price list).

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Rupert goes back to the Jack

The Memsahib kindly dropped me off at the station. The last time I had been anywhere by train it was run by British Rail. Now there had been many changes and rumour had it that it was being run by a Virgin. There was no obvious sign of change except that none of the trains stopped; they just tore straight through the station with the passengers inside looking warm, smug and condescending. The only trains that stopped were on the other platform and going the wrong way. Somewhere down south there must be an enormous gathering of trains all milling around but refusing to go to London. At last, a train slowed as it approached the station, but then, quite deliberately, it went on at walking pace until the last carriage slowly disappeared out of sight. They were teasing us. This could be serious. Apparently no one seemed aware of my appointment at the annual reunion in the Union Jack Club.

After an hour of waiting I gave up, crossed over the footbridge and made my way back to the ticket office. *"I want my money back. You're selling tickets under false pretences."* He was quick to defend his position. *"Oh no Sir, everything will be alright now, the train has definitely left and will be here within ten minutes time."* *"Well why don't you make an announcement over the Tannoy and keep us informed?"* *"Oh dear sir, there have been so many people complaining very loudly that I have not had time."*

The logic defied my reason, so I shut my gaping mouth and trudged back over the footbridge, to the small but efficient wind tunnel that doubled up as a waiting room. *"Ladies and Gentlemen, look on me as your station announcer. I am assured that the train will be with us in eight minutes."* They very kindly gave me a small but heartfelt round of applause. The train duly arrived within the allotted time and I sank back in my seat aware that all over the land former members of the Regiment were converging on Waterloo station. I hoped that Waterloo was prepared. In the event Waterloo was completely awash with people. There were thousands of them just standing around in forlorn little groups. It looked as if the Regimental Association

had made a monstrous error. To get this lot into a reunion, you would need Wembley Stadium. Happily it turned out that most of them were waiting for trains. Apparently most of the rolling stock had gone missing or was simply sliding around on leaves somewhere near Brighton. The assembled multitude was not expecting a beer with old friends in the Union Jack Club. Just as well, they were beginning to look ugly.

On arrival it was evident that Ron Harper and his team had made a superb job of reception and each person was handed a nametag. I found this very comforting and pinned it in a prominent position above my breast pocket. In previous years General Mike Reynolds had always greeted me effusively with the words *"Ah, Christopher, how good to see you."* I was never quite sure how to tell a General that my name was not Christopher. But not this year – he was right on the ball and even went so far as to buy me a beer. But enough of that, I now found myself deep in conversation with General Rowley Mans. It was my night for Generals. And here I have to mention the fact that most old soldiers, and some younger ones, myself included, do not have the best of hearing. The noise generated by an anti tank gun could shift more earwax than anything else I have ever come across. It shifted the wax and then compacted it somewhere in the middle of your brain leaving you ever after with a cocktail of 'white sound' as a permanent background noise. Which in part explains why I was not following the general drift too well. Especially since at this moment a Cadet band struck up in the background with a spirited rendering of 'Soldiers of the Queen.' But I distinctly thought I heard the General say *"Of course you remember Allenby ..."* My mind went back to stories of the Western Desert; but wait a minute Allenby was way before that. He had seen off the Turks at the Battle of Megiddo in 1918 and had been made a Field Marshall in 1919. He came well before the likes of Wavell and Montgomery. *"Well no General, I am not really that old."* *"You must remember him – he was at the Depot when you were there."* I frowned with intense concentration; this was going to get difficult. It was some time before it dawned on me that we were talking about his old bulldog. Every time it barked, you thought that the Provost Sergeant was summoning you to the Guard Room for some imagined sin.

Major John Rogerson appeared and handed me my nametag. Apparently I had failed to apply the safety catch correctly and the aforementioned tag had discharged itself negligently on to the floor. I sat down and repaired the damage. Next to me I got chatting with an old soldier who had served with The Queen's Royal Regiment in the early days of National Service. The odd thing was that he was a Geordie. He had made the trip all the way from Durham with the intention of meeting up with some of his old pals. So far he had not had any luck. I admired his dedication to his friends, to his regiment and to the railway system. He had more tenacity than I could even imagine.

Looking around the gathering I was struck by a very odd thing. Everyone looked much older and much greyer and the majority had put on several pounds in weight, whereas I had stayed youthful and slim. Very strange. But then I went and talked to Major Roger Jennings. He was most kind and made a very good job of pretending that he knew who I was. After a moment or two a veil was lifted from his memory and the painful recollection of an inept young platoon commander came flooding back to the consciousness of a once highly efficient platoon sergeant. He simply frowned and took another pull on his beer and hoped that the vision would depart. Mind you, I wasn't going to try and remind him about 'the good old days' or even mention my outstanding qualities of leadership when I commanded 8 Platoon C Company – facts that were often commented on at the time. I was just interested in what became of his old Morris 8. He bought my old Series E Morris 8 for spare parts to keep his going. But somehow I forgot to mention it. To be honest I do not think he did buy it – I think I

Having said that most of the crowd gets older and greyer – there are exceptions. I must find out what simian glands or special hormones Lt Col Geoffrey Mason is taking. He just goes on looking exactly the same as he ever did. Wherever he went, there was a small circle of ex B Company people making sure that he was looked after. In fact old B Company men were much in evidence and like the cowboys on the plain, they circled their wagons in to small exclusive huddles. From each could be heard code words like “Muкеiras”, “Big Jim” and “see you at the ‘B’ reunion.”

It was also good to see – as usual – Tommy Atkins. I had just finished reading his book ‘Toil, Tribulation, Triumph’ and it renewed my respect for the man who had been the Regimental Sergeant Major when I first entered the gates at Stoughton Barracks. Brigadier Bob Acworth rightly gave the book a handsome ‘plug’ during his short speech. If you haven’t done so already buy it and find out what real men did to overcome adversity - and feel humble.

At this point I must make a small detour by way of the Regimental Museum and tell you how the same Tommy Atkins nearly finished the life of Roy Harding – our indispensable Museum Assistant. It was all because Tommy had been a Chindit and the museum has 96 steps up to its storeroom. Tommy kindly donated his small pack and pouches made up in Chindit fashion. In all they weighed about 50lbs. Roy set off for the storeroom, with this latest acquisition – up the winding, wooden, steep, 96 steps. Up and up he trudged. By the time he reached the top landing, Roy had harsh thoughts about the Chindits – well, one particular Chindit and serious doubts about the thumping noise coming from his chest. He was not best pleased to learn later that the packs were filled with sand. But the outcome was that someone else had learned the hard way, just what an effort had been made by those men in Burma - and they had been doing much, much more, than just climbing wooden stairs.

But all too quickly the raffle had been raffled with the same inevitable result, the buffet had been despatched and it was time to scoff the Centenary, or was it Millennium, cake and toast 'The Regiment.' At last I had found a likely friend for 'Geordie'. He had been 'called up' around the same time and thought he remembered a Geordie soldier in the Queen's. I went to find him and introduce the two. But sadly, like all old soldiers - Geordie had simply faded away.

But there is always next year. Do you remember that time when.....

Rupert

With reference to the item on Police Bands, under the heading "Policeman's Notes, in the May 1999 issue. It seems that Police Music has been re-vitalised and is definitely coming into its own in the New Millennium as shown by the following advertisement in "Off Beat" the Newsletter of the Surrey Police.



Contributing to the making of an inter-active video were various members of the former Regiments who came to the Museum at Clandon on the 25th and 26th January with their memories obviously crystal clear, to be interviewed and filmed.

As the former curator of the museum, and an ex Royal Naval man, I have always been proud of my honorary membership of the Regimental Association, a pride that was confirmed by my two days experience at Clandon on the 25th and 26th January.

*At the invitation of Lieutenant Colonel Les Wilson I attended the museum to assist. Acting as an observer, and recording written notes, I soon realised that I was not engaged in a task but was the recipient of a privilege. The whole experience was an education in itself and can only be adequately described in one word - **Fascinating** - as the reader will find when perusing the following accounts. I am pleased to have had the chance to write them.*

RF

First in the “*hot seat*” was ex **RSM Tommy Atkins** of The Queen’s Royal Regiment who explained that his initial attraction to the Army had been occasioned by his boyhood experiences and sights when living in Aldershot where the Army in those days was omnipresent. On joining the Queen’s in April 1937 he entered Stoughton Barracks for his recruit training which was strict, well disciplined and subject to a formal routine, mainly regulated by bugle calls, with which the recruits quickly had to become familiar. Pay was fourteen shillings per week. Of the “*free board and lodge*” food was adequate and substantial. One of his early and very impressionable sights was that of the glittering and immaculate form of the Regimental Sergeant Major emerging from his quarters. From then on such an appointment was to be his goal in life.

Tommy's first posting was to Palestine. Leaving Southampton by troopship on 1st January 1939, he did not realise how long it would be before he saw old England's shores again.

In Palestine the troops were engaged on security and anti-subversive duties. Tommy by that time having become an MT driver. But the outbreak of war saw the Palestine situation going into suspense by way of the greater commitment to the widespread North African conflict.

After some time in the dry hot sands of the desert Tommy was onward bound to the steamy heat of the jungle as a Chindit where conditions were very hard. Marches were long and arduous. Equipment had to be carried on men's backs or on the backs of mules. Some supplies were dropped by air often in darkness. Pay surprisingly was maintained although often there was nothing to spend it on except the occasional Naafi canteen.

A return to peace did not necessarily mean a relaxation of strenuous activity and effort. In 1948 Tommy, by then a Colour Sergeant, was involved in the Berlin Airlift, a major and costly effort which nevertheless successfully thwarted Russian aims and objectives in the German capital. From Germany he returned to England and a tour of duty at the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst where standards and performances were understandably high.

But most satisfying of all to Tommy, and the high point of his career, was his appointment as Regimental Sergeant Major at the Depot at Stoughton. His ambition of 1937 had been fulfilled. Asked what the Regiment meant to him Tommy replied, *"It grows on you. It's like a family"*.

On the subject of the Regimental cap badge he said its origin was uncertain although it was believed to be connected with the House of Braganza as well as having a possible religious

significance. On the point of religion itself in the Army he commented that in his early days Church Parades were compulsory. In time of war he found that there were many active Army chaplains, particularly Roman Catholics. He himself had converted to Catholicism.

While the seat was still warm it was occupied by **Len Jelly**



who had joined The East Surrey Regiment at Kingston in 1936. By the end of 1938, aged only nineteen at the time, he was in Shanghai which to a young soldier appeared a fascinating and impressive sight. Duties were mainly guarding the international Settlement with troops of other nations.

Later, drafted to Malaya he participated in the desperate and ill fated campaign when the decimated Surreys and Leicesters combined to form one British

Battalion. Wounded, he ended up in hospital at Singapore where he was captured among anguished and brutal scenes where nurses were raped and others ruthlessly bayoneted.

Later taken to Thailand he worked on bridge construction over the River Kwai, living in huddled accommodation of bamboo and palm leaf construction. Falling victim to rheumatic fever he was again hospitalised.

The news of the end of the war was first received in stunned silence by the prisoners, followed by chaotic jubilation. The National Anthem and Rule Britannia were noisily rendered. Repatriation was by way of an air flight to Rangoon in Dakotas and then onward passage by troopship.

Concluding his story, Len said that he has several times revisited the places where he served in the Far East, understandably, he commented that he has no forgiveness for the Japanese and their atrocities.

In contrast to the pre-war regular soldiers, **Roy Harding** joined The Queen's Royal Regiment as an eighteen year old National Service man in 1953. Later he signed on for three years regular engagement (one of the inducements being the immediate grant of a thirty-six hours leave pass). Initial training took the form of the usual "square bashing", field craft and various exercises. Of conditions he commented that he "just took the rough with the smooth".

In August 1953 he was posted to Germany and later, on returning to England, he took part in the Freedom of Guildford parade through the town. The loud clapping of the crowds threw the marching rhythm into confusion and the cobbled stones of Guildford High Street were hard on the feet.

Demobbed in 1956, he was recalled as a Reservist at the time of the Suez Crisis and joined The Royal Fusiliers at Dover. Later embarking at Southampton he went to the Canal Zone where he and his comrades were engaged on security duties around Port Said. Speaking of present times, Roy expressed disappointment at the Regiment's loss of its title and traditions. Emphasising their importance, he made particular reference to the Battle of the Glorious First of June and its proud place in Regimental history.

Bringing a touch of salt air to the proceedings, **Major Ron Wildgoose** confessed that his service career had commenced in

the Royal Marines with whom he served a "Hostilities Only" engagement from 1943-46. He then joined the Army enlisting in The Queen's Royal Regiment.

Obviously with the benefit of his previous experience, he became a Drill Corporal and then a training Sergeant at Guildford. Training lasted from 8.30am-5pm daily and followed a strict Regimental routine.

He later became a PSI (Permanent Staff Instructor) to the 5th Battalion at Sandfield Terrace where training was given in the use of the rifle, Bren gun, trench mortars and hand grenades. He and his wife lived in married quarters at Stoughton Barracks which he described as "basically Victorian, comfortable but not luxurious". Later he served in Hong Kong and Germany.

Making steady upward progress to the rank of RSM he served at the Depot, with the TA and with the 3rd Queen's Surreys and 1st Queen's Surreys in Hong Kong and Münster. A well earned commission later followed and he eventually retired with the rank of Major.

Asked what he thought of the Regimental system he described it as "the best in the world".

Having served in both The Queen's Royal Regiment and the East Surreys, former **Warrant Officer Dennis Percy Harding MVO** took the chair. First joining the Queen's he later transferred to the East Surreys with whom he was to spend the rest of his service. He described his Army service as the twenty-four happiest years of his life. During that time he served in Palestine, the Canal Zone and the Middle East area. In England he served with the TA and the training staff at the Depot, Kingston. Weapons for the part-time soldiers of those days were rifles and Bren guns.

Retiring from the Army in 1964 he went to the Tower of London where he eventually became Chief Yeoman Warder, in which capacity he met many important and interesting personages including Her Majesty the Queen. Asked what the Regiment meant to him he simply replied "everything".

Cliff Martin, former CSM of the East Surreys described his Army life in graphic detail, particularly his Far Eastern experiences. In 1937, unemployed, he joined the Army in London and in the following year went to Shanghai with the Regiment. In November 1939 he went to Tientsin where he remained until the following August and then, disastrously, to Singapore where he was part of the troops who met the Japanese onslaught.

As a member of the British Battalion, formed from the remnants of the 2nd Surreys and 1st Leicesters, he remembered the desperate hand to hand fighting and recalled personally bayonetting a Japanese soldier, an incident which he described as "haunting him to this day".

Taken prisoner he went to Thailand where he was engaged on bridge building over the River Kwai and was later transported to Japan in what he described as a "hell ship". Some such ships were occasionally sunk by the "friendly fire" of Allied submarines.

In Japan, Cliff was engaged on work on hydro-electric installations. The dropping of the atom bomb ended the Japanese war and Cliff thankfully came home to freedom. After the war he became the Officers' Mess caterer at the Depot, Kingston upon Thames. Asked about Regimental traditions he quoted such occasions as Sobraon Day, Ypres Day and the Cricket Week with the Royal Marines.

Of the Japanese he said his feelings had mellowed and he concluded the interview by reading his copy of a letter which King George VI sent to all former Prisoners of War.

A distinguished Territorial Officer, **Lt Col Foster Herd TD JP DL** commenced his Army career as a National Service man conscripted into The Cameron Highlanders in 1950. Later he was commissioned, in The South Lancashire Regiment, a unit which was then part of emergency stand-by forces casually known as "*the Army Fire Brigade*".

He joined the Territorial Army in 1958, in the 5th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment. Asked his reason for joining he said that he "*wanted some extra-mural activities*" separate from his normal business life. Describing the Territorials as normally volunteer soldiers he pointed out, however, that in his early days some members were former National Service men fulfilling a reserve liability.

Training, mainly carried out in Drill Halls located in various parts of Surrey, included such matters as map reading, weaponry, drill and night exercises.

In 1966, under Foster's leadership as Platoon Commander, the 3rd Queen's Surreys won the prestigious Courage Trophy, otherwise known as the TA Marathon. A test of endurance it involved, among other things, a strenuous 25 miles march with various accompanying hazards.

Following a CO's Designate Course at Aldershot, Foster succeeded to the post of Commanding Officer of 6/7th Queen's, a worthy reward for a dedicated and competent officer. He joined the Regimental Association and he described its aims and purposes to the interviewer.

Early into the chair on the second day of the interviews was **Graham Swain**. Originally enlisted in The Ox and Bucks Light Infantry, he later became a Queen's man in the 2/7th Battalion. Of his war-time service in Italy he recalled a couple of hair raising experiences. Once a house was shelled and demolished on him and his comrades. On another occasion, sheltering in a ditch at night to avoid an oncoming enemy tank, they were later surprised at daylight to find that the ditch was full of mines.

Describing communications of the times he said that British equipment was primitive, that of the Germans being generally superior. Simple codes were used but often it was just a matter of plain language.

After the war's end the battalion were in Venice, Graham and his mates were billeted in a hotel with the luxury of sheets on the beds. Living definite "*tourist class*" for a time, they were later earmarked for Japanese service but due to events this did not materialise.

As the current National Secretary of the Italy Star Association, formed in 1987, he described its aims and objectives and said that anybody holding the Italy Star was welcome to join.

With the Queen's still represented, **Lt Col Mike Lowry MBE MC** took centre stage. Saying that he had always wanted to join the Army he described his entry via Sandhurst in 1938 and his commissioning into the Regiment in July 1939 when war was imminent.

Posted to Far Eastern service he arrived in Bombay in September 1939 and then went on to Allahabad and service on the North West Frontier where he was wounded during a punitive expedition. Later, in the Japanese war in the Arakan area, his men, well trained and experienced by their North West Frontier service, "*gave the Japs a bloody nose*" in their first encounter.

On one occasion he and his men were cut off by infiltrating Japanese behind their lines but they managed to rejoin the Regiment. Food supplies were often American ration packs dropped by air. The purpose of the Arakan operation was to draw the Japanese forces away from their main objective of Assam. The Queen's were involved in heavy fighting at

Kohima and Jail Hill where they were within grenade throwing distance of the enemy. Casualties were heavy and were evacuated to the Regimental Aid Post.

Asked what the Regiment meant to him he said that "*it meant a lot to him. It was a source of camaraderie-a family*".

Major General Mike Reynolds CB was another who had "*always wanted to be a soldier*", having seen something of the Army during the war years when he was still a boy.

Entering as a National Serviceman he was posted to The Black Watch, with whom he was commissioned, but later came to The Queen's Royal Regiment. After service at the Staff College he joined The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment with whom he served in Germany and then went to Canada on an exchange system. Further service in Germany was undertaken in Berlin and then a posting to Ulster in 1969 where, although riotous, the situation had not then developed into the shooting and bombing stage.

He continued to a post with NATO followed by service in the 2nd Battalion of the new Queen's Regiment as Commanding Officer. Further upward progress to the rank of Brigadier and to an appointment at the Defence College. Finally he became a Major General, commanding troops of six nations. Asked what the Regiment meant to him he described it as "*a high standard Regiment*".

Questioned as to what was the hardest decision he ever had to make he replied that it was whether to leave the Army at the time of the Korean War. Forthright in his comments, he was of the opinion that the Army had not learnt much from the Second World War, becoming poorly equipped and trained. In the Korean War it "*lurched from one crisis to another*", eventually becoming bogged down in static warfare reminiscent of the 1914-18 conflict.

Of Northern Ireland operations he said that they developed initiative in young NCOs. When he was asked what qualities were needed to become a General he listed power to delegate and trust and the ability to generate happiness which in its turn led to efficiency.

Museum trustee and volunteer helper **Lt Col Anson Squire MC TD** said that he was a Territorial Lieutenant in The East Surrey Regiment in 1939 and then progressed to Captain. Describing the Regiment he said, "*It's a family, irrespective of rank*".

Recalling his active service life during the war, particularly in Italy where he served from 1943 onwards, he said that times were very hard especially as regards the wet and cold climatic conditions. His first experience of action was at Monte Casino where he was wounded.

Lt Col Les Wilson MBE who joined 2 Queen's Royal Regiment and then served with the Queen's Royal Surrey and Queen's Regiment, found himself under something of a barrage of questions to which he was more than able to supply the answers.

He spoke on the of the origins of the Regimental Badge, and he also mentioned the term Kirke's Lambs, acquired relative to the Commanding Officer at the time of the Monmouth Rebellion. He described the "*golden age*" of the Regiment as being from the time of its formation to the time of its eventual amalgamation. He was emphatic that "*we are the best*".

On the subject of change he said that the Army had changed as Britain has changed. Stressing the importance of tradition he quoted such items as Customs, Battle Honours and Regimental Days. (Some examples were The Salt Ceremony, Sobraon Day and the Glorious First of June).

He also made mention of the important role of music in Regimental history. Bands, bugles, pipes and drums all made

vital contributions, particularly on such occasions as Beating Retreat and Tattoos, both of which originally had an operational significance. Of Regimental marches he described the origin of "*Braganza*" the march of The Queen's Royal Regiment. Referring to the drums he said it was the custom for them to bear Regimental Battle Honours. Of equal importance he mentioned the role of sport in Regimental life, saying how it fostered the characteristics of the competitive spirit and the will to win.

When interviewed In-Pensioner **John Arthur Kershaw** tactfully declared his Army Age as 84.



Joining The Queen's Royal Regiment in pre-war days for what he described as "*a bit of excitement*" he first saw overseas service in India and was present at Quetta at the time of the disastrous earthquake in 1935. Other activities were principally of a security nature, particularly on the North West Frontier where weapons were mainly rifles and light machine guns.

After Eastern service John returned to England and then as a reinforcement to The Dorset Regiment saw action on the Continent where he was eventually captured at Arnhem. As a prisoner of war he worked in quarries and lead mines. Philosophically he said that conditions "*were not too bad*". In retirement he is now an In Pensioner of the Royal Hospital Chelsea and he appeared resplendent in his scarlet uniform and medals.

A former Grenadier, but later a Queen's man, **Colonel Toby Sewell** said that he had decided on a military career early in his life. After enlisting in the Guards in 1941 he was commissioned into The Queen's and served first with 2/7th Queen's in Italy, he later served in various operations and spheres, including a term as Second in Command of the 1st Queen's Surreys in Hong Kong. Speaking of his eventual rise to Command he generously attributed it to having good support and stated that his philosophy was for people to work as a team.

He told of the amalgamations of the Regiments and how they developed, the policy nowadays being for large Regiments. Related to the pride of the individual Queen's and East Surrey Regiments, was the fact that they had received the Freedoms of the principal boroughs in Surrey.

Henry Albert Barker, formerly a Captain in The Queen's Royal Regiment, said that he joined the Army at the age of fifteen and went to China when only sixteen. Recalling an early misdemeanour, when he broke camp by going over the barrack wall, he said that the subsequent harsh term in detention taught him a lesson and made him a better soldier.

He was at Quetta at the time of the earthquake in 1935, which he described as "*horrible*", and then went to Allahabad. Returning to Home Service he was posted to the Isle of Wight and from there he went overseas again to Palestine in 1938. The war took him to the Western Desert and in 1944 he became an RSM. A commission followed and he eventually became a Captain and Acting Major.

Asked what the Regiment meant to him he said, "*It's in your blood*". He served in the Army for thirty years and retired at the age of forty-five.

Sidney Barker MM, brother of Henry, was another Queen's man in the chair. Originally trying to enter the Rifle Brigade at the age of 17½ he was refused as being under age, so six months later, now the requisite eighteen years, he joined The Queen's Royal Regiment at Stoughton Barracks in January 1939.

Posted to Palestine he was engaged in the pre-war counter-insurgency operations and on one occasion had the misfortune to accidentally shoot a woman in the leg.

On the outbreak of war he went to Jordan and then on into the Western Desert where he became a Bren gunner. He also served with an Australian unit and received his Military Medal for assisting in the capture of 1000 Italians. He met his brother Henry on one occasion while on overseas service.

Of the Regiment he said, "*I would give my life for it*" and he confided that he had the Lamb and Flag tattooed on his arm. After the war, still inclined to uniformed service, he later served in the London Fire Brigade and London Ambulance Service.

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Sporting records

The supplement on "*The Sporting Records and Military Achievements of The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment and its Forebears*" has obviously been closely read in some quarters as is shown by an appreciative letter to the Editor from Lieutenant Colonel John Wyatt who also supplies some valuable information regarding his own sporting prowess.

While with the 2nd Battalion of The Queen's Royal Regiment on the Isle of Wight he played hockey and cricket for Aldershot Command in 1936 and 1937 and received his Army Hockey Cap during the same years. He was also awarded his Kent County Cap for Hockey in the years 1936 and 1937 and played cricket regularly for the United Services Portsmouth.

A newspaper cutting regarding a hockey match between the Army and Cambridge University (won by the Army 4-3) shows Lieutenant J S Wyatt as playing at back while another cutting concerning a match between the Army and Beckenham describes him as being "*the outstanding player in the Command defence*".

More sporting records

Examples of how official records can be supplemented by personal memories are shown by a letter to the Editor from former Queen's man F Watson who disputes a statement that once "*sport in Shillong was non-existent*". He says that he was an active participant in both cricket and football as indeed he was at Bangkok.

Boxing was obviously a favourite sporting activity at Bangkok, the local Press giving a detailed account of a programme presented by The Queen's Royal Regiment at Chulalongkorn University. Dutch and Siamese contestants also participated. The outstanding bout of the evening was one where BSM O'Sullivan (British) beat Wittenburg (Dutch) on points after a ferocious three round contest.

Details of the football activities at Shillong and Bangkok are contained in extracts from "*Lamb's Tail*", Queen's Royal Regiment No.1 - New Year 1946. Despite difficulties due to demobilisation and repatriation of the times The Queen's must still have fielded some good footballers as they were currently second from the top of the Bangkok League.

These instances show that whether or not they are subject of official status and recording, the British soldier will always find some sort of sporting activity wherever he may be.



The author J H Day

Being out of the line was very much like being in the line, in that one never went back to the same place. On this occasion we were billeted in a house, and slept in the loft. Downstairs there was a fire in the living room. There were long seats on either side of the fire, and everybody sat on these seats, because there were no draughts there. We sat with the Italian family and chatted. My Italian certainly improved.

In the loft it was bitterly cold. All we had were the three regulation blankets and a

groundsheet laid on the wooden floor. The only things that we took off were our boots, denim and battledress blouses, and our trousers. If you woke up during the night you put your trousers back on.

Our meals were served outside and we took them to our billets. They put out tropical butter, which came in a tin. This butter did not melt in the hottest weather, so one can imagine what it was like during an Italian winter. It was like solid rock. There were broken knives and forks lying around all over the place. One had to chop it with a machete, and then take a piece to your billet and melt it by the fire before it could be spread on bread. If you did not heat it sufficiently to be soft enough right through, the bread would break up as you tried to spread it.

(Editor's note - Tropical butter was in fact olio margarine, some of it manufactured to be hard for summer, and some soft for winter. However, the supply was often for the wrong season!).

Back in the line I shared a trench during the night with Bob Waldron again. I wanted a smoke, which meant that we had to rig up our gas capes over our heads before lighting up. Bob suddenly decided that he was not going to allow me to smoke. He snatched the cigarette from my mouth and stamped on it. With that I smacked him on the chin with my fist, and he staggered to the other end of the trench. The trench was about 6ft long and 2ft 6" wide. I followed this up with another punch to the chin with my other fist. He was much bigger and heavier than I was, and he half hit and half pushed me away, causing me to stagger in my turn to my end of the trench. On the way back I caught the Bren gun, which was resting on the parapet, with the lapel of my greatcoat, which was not buttoned down, and the gun fell butt downwards into the trench. The gun fell in between us, and although the safety-catch was on safe, nevertheless as the butt hit the ground the recoil spring was forced back and fired the gun. One red tracer round climbed up towards the sky! There were only inches between us when the gun went off, since Bob was coming forward to hit me again, and I was preparing to give him another punch. Bob gave a yell and grasped the left side of his face, staggering backwards. The fight was immediately forgotten. I picked up the Bren and put it back on the parapet as it was in the way. "Bob, are you alright?" was my main concern. I had a look at him in the artificial moonlight, and I could see a black scorch mark running up the side of his face. The bullet had come that close! Our quarrels were forgotten, and we spent the rest of the night trying to please each other. He kept encouraging me to smoke, and I kept refusing, and telling him it did not matter!

On one occasion I was on guard in the line, when suddenly a mobile van rolled up to the bank. It was our turn to man the bank that day. I went over to it, to find that it was a Salvation Army canteen. A lovely girl got out and came to meet me. I

was amazed that she had been able to get so far. I asked her what she was doing. She said that she had come to serve us teas, wads, and the other little luxuries of life. I explained to her that she was as far forward as she could get without actually meeting the enemy. Just over the bank, which was really a sort of built up bund at that point, sat the Germans, and if they heard her, they would certainly mortar us. This scared her. I pointed to some houses, which was the location of our Company HQ. I told her that it would be better if she turned her van round as quietly as possible, went round behind those houses, and she would probably be safe to sell and serve her wares there!

After spending another night on the bank we were relieved, and after stand-to we had a sleep in a cow shed. We were suddenly awakened by the shout of "Grenade!" and everybody was running out of the room. I jumped up, grabbed my rifle, and stood against the door jamb covering the lads while they got out. I thought that we had been attacked and the Germans had thrown a grenade through the shell hole in the wall. The last man had just got out when the grenade exploded. The right hand side of my body was slightly exposed. I felt a pain in my index finger and wrist, but the pain in my ear was agonizing. I thought that my ear had been blown off. I put my hand to my ear as I staggered back. Luckily it was still there, but the blood was pouring from it. As I was the only casualty, everyone was concerned. They looked at my ear, but all that had happened was that a little piece of shrapnel had knocked a small bit out of the lobe of my ear. The index finger and wrist were worse.

The grenade that exploded was one of our own. Apparently we were short of hand grenades. The supply which came to us consisted of some that were primed and had 7 second fuses. They all had to be checked and primed with 4 second fuses. Then this nutter - L/Cpl Jimmy Ethridge, no less - instead of taking the base plug off and looking to see if there was a detonator in the grenade, pulled the pin out and let the plunger strike the base plate. All was well provided there were no detonators in the grenades. Eventually, of course, he picked up a grenade which had a detonator in it. It fired the grenade, whereupon he dropped it and yelled "Grenade!" and ran out of the room, the first out!

I went to the RAP. The MO looked at my hand and ear. The Orderly wrapped up my hand and put my arm in a sling. He also put a dressing on my ear, and kept it in place with a piece of plaster. I thought to myself that I might be in for a spell in a comfortable bed in a nice warm hospital, out of the snow, ice, and sudden changes of the front line. No such luck! I was sent to the elements of my Company that were at B Echelon until the Company came out of the line. I had to have my wounds dressed every day. My ear soon healed, but my hand was slow, due to the fact that the frost was getting at it.

During the day I was a guard for the deserters who were awaiting trial. However, one night I had to ride shotgun in a 15cwt truck. Riding shotgun meant that one had to sit next to the driver as a guard. The term was taken from Western films, when someone armed with a rifle sat next to the driver of the stage coach to ward off would be bandits and the Indians. I took my rifle, even though I could not use it properly, since I had a thick padded bandage around my trigger finger in an effort to keep the frost from my wounds, as it was bitterly cold. We were taking blankets to the front, and we eventually got up there and unloaded them without any problem.

On the return journey we were the last truck in a convoy of three. We were following white tapes, which had been laid as a safety measure and a guide in order to avoid mines and craters, as the road had taken quite a hammering from shells, mortars and bombs. We were also helped by the artificial moonlight provided by our searchlights. The trucks, of course, were being driven without any lights. We were going along nicely until suddenly one of the front wheels hit something. The steering

wheel was wrenched out of the driver's hands, and we veered all over the road until the truck overturned. The next thing I knew I was thinking to myself "where am I?" It took me a moment or two to realize that we were upside down in a ditch. I tried to get out of my door, but it was too close to the side. I shook and pushed the driver until he answered me. 'Where are we?' were his first words. I told him we were upside down, and asked him if he could get out his side. He could not fully open his door, but by winding the window down we were able to crawl out. It was a very deep ditch, as we had to stand on the underside of the truck in order to step out onto the road. Luckily it was not full of water.

We walked back along the road to investigate the cause of our misfortune. We soon found the reason. The white tape ran across the edge of a bomb crater. The other two trucks had been lucky, since they both must have just missed it; but we, presumably, had been following the tape too closely, and the front wheel had dropped into the crater. We moved the tape and secured it so that it would not move over the crater again, and considered what to do. The other two trucks had long gone, and would not miss us until they arrived back at B Echelon, even though each truck was supposed to keep an eye on the truck behind in case anything like this should happen to it - some lookouts they had been! The driver said that there was a REME light Aid Detachment just up the road, and left me guarding the truck whilst he went to get help. I stood on the bottom of the vehicle, where I could see quite a bit of the road, and the river bank a couple of hundred yards away. I wondered how far off Jerry was. It was pretty quiet, with not a lot of gunfire, and what there was was going over my head - that is, until the recovery vehicle came along!

This recovery vehicle was the noisiest vehicle that I have ever heard. It came ambling down the road at about 20 mph. The hydraulic brakes hissed and screamed every time they were applied. I then discovered how far away Jerry was! As soon as he heard the brakes screaming, it attracted the attention of a Nebelwerfer, or six barrelled mortar. Suddenly the skies lit up on the German side of the river, and six orange balls leapt upwards, accompanied with a loud groaning and grunting, rather like a giant with bad bronchitis. In Italy the Nebelwerfer was nicknamed the "hurdy-gurdy". Jerry must have been about 400 yards away, and I do not think that they realized how close we were, as the river bank was hiding us. The first bombs fell well clear of us.



An op post near River Senio

As the recovery vehicle pulled our truck out of the ditch the screaming brakes were working sixteen to the dozen. The Nebelwerfer did not find our range, although firing salvo after salvo whenever the recovery vehicle made a noise, but the smaller mortars dropped closer every time they fired. The recovery team did not seem to be bothered, and, funnily enough, neither were we! Eventually our truck was placed right side up on the road, and, surprisingly, it was hardly

damaged. We got into it, it started first go, and, after thanking the LAD recovery team, we went back to B Echelon. It was 4 o'clock in the morning when we arrived back to get a few hours sleep. Unfortunately I had to be up for breakfast in order to get my hand dressed.

The next time that the lads went into the line my hand was still not better, so I had to stay behind again. A night wiring party was required to go up to the line to put coils of barbed wire out, because the Canadian Division was to be pulled out in order to reinforce the Canadian First Army in North-West Europe, leaving us rather thin on the ground. I was told I was on this party, although my arm was still in a sling.

We loaded the wire on a truck. I kept my arm in the sling all the time! We were taking some of the deserters with us, and, when we were ready to move, one refused to get in the truck. The Officer called him "a cowardly bastard" and ordered us to put him on the truck. I turned my back and refused to take part. The officer got annoyed as we would not put this deserter on the truck. Finally a sergeant took him by the arm and tried to push him in the vehicle. He shook the sergeant's hand from his arm, and told him that he would have him up for assault if he did that again. The officer's face was red with rage. He screamed at us to put him on the truck, but nobody moved. As far as we were concerned we did not want him with us, as he would require too much looking after. He eventually got on the truck by himself.

On the way to the front he started crying. The Corporal in charge of us was a light heavyweight professional boxer from Norwich called Jim. Upon joining the Army he had reached the Championship Class, but at Croce a piece of shrapnel was passing by as he looked round a corner, hit him in the jaw and broke it, so putting a stop to his boxing career for ever. He came from a well known family in boxing circles. Jim was a kindly fellow, and put his arm round the lad to console him. The lad confessed that when he stopped a Spandau bullet at Gemmano, it had unnerved him from facing any small arms fire again.

We dismounted on the near side of a Bailey bridge. Just before we crossed the bridge a lance-corporal from our Company came swaggering back across this bridge with a Luger automatic strapped to his side like a six-shooter. He was going on leave and was full of egoism. It was still daylight as we were about to cross the bridge, and he said, "Watch it! There's a Spandau on fixed lines firing right across the bridge." Well, that did it! Our deserter would not put a foot on the bridge. There was no way he was going to cross that bridge. We all stood in a group arguing, until I realized that we were vulnerable to a chance shell coming over - and bingo, we would have had it! Fifteen Platoon were on the same mission as us, and they all went across with no problem. We pointed this out to the deserter, but it made no difference. I was standing near the bridge when Jim, who had his arm around the deserter, said, "Go and walk across the bridge and stand halfway for a minute." "Oh yes! And what is wrong with you doing it?" I asked. "Because I said so, and I'm in charge. And this says so as well" and he shook his big right fist. So I walked up and down the bridge, then stood; then walked up and down and stopped again; and finally I walked off and went to them. He still would not cross. Then I had an idea, remembering how I had got Tommy Hinnigan past the black spot at Gemmano by holding his hand and running by. I went to Jim and told him, and he said we would try it. So we all stood hand in hand in a line. I asked how high the bullets would come. Someone put his arm up to his chest, and we all ducked until we were below the level of his arm, with our deserter in the middle, and ran across the bridge. I bet that we looked a right set of wallies, bent over, running over the bridge one behind the other, holding hands! But it did the trick.

Once over the bridge we reported to the Company HQ. When darkness came, and the searchlights gave us the artificial

moonlight, we started wiring. The wire was supplied in coils about 5ft across, with a carrying handle on either side. Two of us picked up a coil, carried it to a spot near the bank, stood it on its side, cut the binding wire, and then pulled it out by the handles to its fullest extent. We worked as quietly as possible, since the least sound could bring a salvo of mortar fire down upon us. Everything was going fine, until suddenly a 25pdr field gun opened fire. We heard it whistling overhead, and then we realized that it was dropping short of the bank onto us. I was carrying some wire, so we dropped it smartly, and crouched down while it exploded just yards away. This happened every few minutes. Fifteen Platoon ceased wiring, but we carried on. Our deserter was quite calm. It was only bullets that he was afraid of!

Back at the place where we picked up the wire, we asked for the gun to be stopped. We were told that it was a New Zealand battery that was firing. We did not care who it was - *"just get it stopped!"* It seemed to be ages before it finally ceased firing, as we completed several excursions carrying the wire before it did so. When we had finished, we set off back to the Company HQ, without any casualties from the shelling by our own artillery! Fifteen Platoon were just going forward again to resume their work, and they asked us to give them a hand with their wiring. We told them, *"Not on your life!"* Knowing Fifteen Platoon, if it had been the other way round, they would have been away as fast as their legs could carry them. An argument ensued. They tried to play on our consciences. It worked with David Adamson and a couple of others, but the rest of us made our way back to the Company HQ, and sat around a fire, waiting for them to finish.



Advance towards Ferrara Knocked out German MK VI (Tiger) tank on left.

When they were eventually on their way back to the Company HQ, they were caught in the open by harassing fire, which caused a number of casualties. We all dashed out to help, including our deserter. Over half of them had been hit. We brought them back into a house, and then went out again to help the rest. We bandaged their wounds with their shell dressings, which we all carried. David Adamson had been wounded in the leg. He was worried about his loaded rifle which he had left behind. He was worried that some child, and there were quite a few around even there, would find it, as he had left it propped up against a wall. I told him that it would be alright, but he insisted and tried to get up to go for it himself. I pushed him back and went out to look for the rifle. I soon found it, as it was exactly where he said, and brought it back to him. There was one lad, a driver, who was so badly wounded that he was dying. We all stood around watching him die. There was nothing that we could do.

We made our way back to the trucks after putting our wounded into the ambulances. To get to our trucks we first had to negotiate the bridge again with our deserter friend. He had

done well during the wiring and shelling, and had proved his worth. It was ironic that he would get 3 years at least in detention because he could no longer face small arms fire. Its only consolation was that in the First World War he would have been shot. However, we got to the Bailey bridge, someone indicated the height at which the bullets would come over, we ducked below that level, held hands, and ran across the bridge to the trucks; and so to B Echelon, our blankets, and a well earned sleep.

The next time C Company went into the line, I went with them, even though my hand was not quite healed. I bluffed the MO; or rather the MO was not bluffed. Because we were short of infantrymen, especially experienced men, he was quite prepared to let anyone go, who wanted to go, even though they were not quite fit enough. The MO was a thick set, balding fellow, who rode a motor-cycle everywhere. He always had a crash helmet on, sometimes even on sick parades. He was usually known as *"Crash Harry"*. I never knew his name. He was either the MO, Crash Harry, or The Quack.

We received a new Second-lieutenant, or *"one pipper"*, as we used to call these junior subalterns. He was keen, enthusiastic, and wanted to gain his laurels. In fact, he was a bloody nuisance! One night it was bitterly cold at the front. We used the old trick of having a tommy cooker in the side of the trench, but we had become sophisticated, and had a sandbag over our hole to help the water to boil quickly. We were drinking a mess tin of hot chocolate, when we spotted this one pipper sneaking up on us. He asked us what we were drinking. *"Chocolate,"* was our reply, and we gave him a drink. *"Mm! Lovely,"* was his answer, and away he went. Within minutes he was back, enquiring about where we got the drink from. It had just dawned on him that it was hot! We lifted our sandbag and showed him how we made it. He then told us that he did not want us making any more. *"Yes, sir!"* we said, but that was an order that would certainly be ignored.

In this position we had one section up on the bank by day, and two sections up during the night. We swapped around so that each section had a turn doing both night and day on the bank. We took over on the bank just before stand-to for the day shift. There were three of us in the trench, Tubby Smith, Bert Moore and myself. Tubby had not been with us for very long. He was about as tall as myself, with a mop of ginger hair, and was decidedly fat, weighing about 11 stone 7lbs. He was a very clumsy man. After stand-to we put a tin of water on the tommy cooker at the bottom of the trench. It had almost boiled when Tubby walked across the trench and kicked it over. After cursing him we put another tin on, and blow me if he did not manage to knock that over too. Although we had plenty of water with us, it was not going to last long at the rate that Tubby was going on. After another cursing, we told Tubby not to move until we had boiled yet another tin of water and cooked our breakfast.

I once found myself with Bert Moore in an old building as part of the outer defences. We had knocked a hole at the bottom of the front wall so that we could lie on some straw with our Bren gun, and still had a good field of fire. Tubby and Jock, a Scotsman in our section, were in a barn quite close to us, but looking out away from us for anyone approaching from that side. I was on the Bren gun while Bert was having a rest. I had just had a yawn, and put my hand to my mouth, when from our right came into view a soldier, then another, and yet another, until there were five of them. I stifled my yawn. Who were they? Why had they not been stopped before now? Where had they come from? Surely Jock and Tubby should have seen them. We knew the Gurkhas were on our right. I nudged Bert, who immediately brought my rifle to his shoulder. I said the password. No reply. I told Bert to get the first one, and I would get the rest. However, I said the password again, only louder. The one in front heard me, spun round in surprise, and

answered with the correct reply. Bert went out to them. They were from the 2/5th Queen's, and had just taken over from the Gurkhas. They were a patrol sent to contact us because we had not been informed of the relief, Bert directed them to our HQ.

When Bert came back I told him to take over, since I was determined to find out what Jock and Tubby were doing. When I went into the barn they were standing quite correctly by the window looking out. I suppose they must have heard me coming. I asked them what they thought they were doing, since we had almost shot up a patrol of the 2/5th. They told me that they had not seen anyone. I told them that they wouldn't if they hadn't been looking! I found out later that Jock was covering up for Tubby. They were spelling each other, with one resting whilst the other kept watch. When it was Tubby's turn to watch, Tubby had looked out of the window for a few minutes, and had then sat down beside Jock. Hence the reason why the 2/5th patrol went past undetected. It could have been an enemy battle patrol; or it could have resulted in our killing our own friends. We were learning that Tubby was as reliable as the English weather. He was a nice kid and we got on with him, but to have him as back-up, he was a health hazard.

We were so short of men that the listening patrols had to be done by only two men. We had one listening patrol out on the bank during the night to listen and watch for any enemy patrols crossing the river in an unmanned area. I went along with our Section Corporal called Bill Wright. He was a few inches taller than myself and a couple of stone heavier, with fair hair, and he wore glasses. He was not a bad sort, and we got on with him. It was still cold but the snow was going. The artificial moonlight was giving us plenty of light. As we lay there listening and watching, I kept my eye on Jerry, who was systematically mortaring the bank with harassing fire. It would not be long before we received a salvo for ourselves. Eventually I told Bill that I predicted that the next salvo would come down on us, as I knew that he had not been taking any notice as they crept nearer. I advised a withdrawal until it passed over. He said, 'Our orders are to stay on the bank.' He never did listen to advice from private soldiers. I told him to sit tight if he wished, but I was moving back. I walked down the bank about 50 yards and lay down, and sure enough, down it came! There must have been about six bombs dropping round our position. I thought to myself "*I hope he's alright, or I'll have to find a good story if he's dead.*" When the mortaring moved on, I went back to the bank. Bill was alright, but he was shaking like a leaf, and his face was whiter than that bit of snow which was still lying around. It was the first time that he had been so close to death. Later, when the salvos started coming back along the bank, he came down with me until they passed over.

I had a similar experience in a house near the front. We were sitting with the Italian family, whose house it was. I was doing a jigsaw puzzle? at the table with one of the daughters, aged about 12 or 13 years old. Jerry was systematically shelling the area with one 88mm gun. Every time a shell came crashing over, she looked scared and said, "*Tedesco?*" I would reply, "*No. Inglese,*" in order to reassure her. These shells kept coming over, and I was hoping that they would all drop far enough away so that they would not scare her too much. Suddenly one came screaming over straight at us. I grabbed the girl and pulled her under the table with me. It dropped almost outside the door. She played hell with me, as if it was my fault! When we left we were pals again. She kissed me and cried, as she knew that she would never see me again.

When we pulled out of the line we were relieved by the New Zealanders. As we were marching out in single file, a staff car pulled up, the window was wound down, and someone inside called one of us over. Jimmy Richards, our Wireless Operator, went across to him. When he caught up with us, he told us that it was the New Zealanders' General, Lieutenant-General Sir Bernard Freyburg, VC, and that he had given him a bag of

toffees. However, as we marched along there were no toffees forthcoming! I eventually asked him for one, and he reluctantly took a toffee out of the bag. I took the bag off him and told him that I would pick my own, took one out, and passed the bag on to Bert Moore, telling him to pass it on. Jimmy Richards was doing his nut, as he ran up the line trying to get the toffees back. He seriously thought that Freyburg had personally given him the toffees. Well, he had! But the intention was that they should be shared with the rest of us.

Back in the line we were again patrolling and guarding the bank, but by day we were pestered by a sniper. He was hidden somewhere on the bank, and one or two of the lads, including a battalion sniper, had had a go at him, but had lost their encounters. Another sniper, Pip Poole from Derby (who had fallen into the dead cow at Croce) went to a house set back from the bank, climbed into the roof, and slightly lifted up one of the top tiles, high enough to observe through with a telescope and fire through, but not so high as to make the German sniper suspicious. Day after day Pip and a friend sat up there scouring the bank with their telescope, while we kept teasing the sniper by using dummies. Then one morning Pip gleefully announced that he had spotted him. He was lying under a log. A gap had been scraped under this log so that he could lie camouflaged in it, and his face also was camouflaged. On this particular morning, for some unknown reason, he had left off his hat, and it was his fair hair which Pip had spotted. This enabled him to make out the whole shape of his face. Previously they had checked that log a hundred times without spotting him. The German had made a fatal mistake, which had given his cunning position away.

We continued to play with this sniper all day with our dummies, whilst Pip zeroed his rifle, fitted with his sniper's sight, on a twig well away from him, so as not to arouse his suspicions. His mate also looked through the telescope and told him when he was spot on. Then Pip decided that it was time to get rid of our sniper friend. He took careful aim and fired. His bullet hit the German full in the face and lifted his body above the log. He and his mate then took the props away from under the file, and returned to their normal duties.

When we were finally pulled out of the line, it was daylight, and we were relieved by a London Irish battalion from the 78th Division. We were marching on one side of the road in single file, and some New Zealanders were marching up the other side in single file to relieve someone else. We waved to each other as we passed. We had just got past them when there was the wuff-wuff of mortar bombs dropping around us, catching us by surprise, and much too close for comfort. Before I could get to the ground, I was hit in the face, which knocked me flat on my back. As I lay on my back I thought that I had been wounded, but when I put my hand to my face, I found that it was a piece of mud. We had been lucky in that the bombs were dropping into soft ground, which deadened a lot of their impact. If it had been hard ground, or the road itself our casualties would have been much heavier than they were. My piece of mud could have been something much harder and sharper.

In fact, there were quite a few casualties in the Company, and six of the men in front of me were hit, including Captain Carney, who was hit in the elbow, and Lance-Sergeant Green. We were lucky that no one was killed.

George Kelly, who had just returned to us after being wounded at Gemmano, was also a casualty. He was from Liverpool, 6ft tall, and always ready for a laugh and a joke. On his return he had told us what had happened at Gemmano. He was in a large patrol with their Platoon Sergeant and Corporal Bathy leading it. Both the Sergeant and Bathy were killed, and George was hit in the wrist by a sniper. The rest of the patrol got away unscathed.

George also told us an amusing story about what had occurred before this patrol. Apparently, after they had reached their objectives on Gemmano Ridge, they were told to dig in. While they were digging in they could hear someone else digging in not very far away. They stopped digging and asked each other who it was that was digging over there. Nobody knew. They were all mystified, so George decided to take a walk across and investigate. He did not take his rifle with him, but just sauntered across with his denim blouse wide open, and his hands in his trouser pockets. When he arrived, much to his surprise - two Germans! One was digging, whilst the other was crouched over a hole with his trousers down relieving himself. As soon as George walked up they both flung their arms in the air. The poor man caught having his constitutional just stood there with his trousers round his ankles and his hands in the air. George indicated to him that he could pull up his trousers, but he picked up his belt as a souvenir, and walked them back to the platoon. On arrival he felt sorry for this Ted having to use his hands to hold up his trousers, so he gave him a lanyard to tie up his trousers with.

After everyone had picked themselves up, we dashed forward to our trucks, which were not far away. The transformation of L/Sgt Green was surprising. He could not get away fast enough. This was his third separate wound, and three wounds on three separate occasions meant that he would be excused battle zone, and would get a posting outside the battle area. He pushed and shoved his way to the front to ensure that he was the first into the ambulance!

Once we were on our transport we moved to Forli for a period of 3 weeks rest and training. Although Forli was a small front line town, many amenities were provided for the troops resting from the front line. We were sent to a barracks on the outskirts. It was an old Italian barracks, then occupied by the Germans, and finally used by the British. It still retained its German name, the Adolf Hitler Barracks!

JHD RBJ

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Sergeant Fred Isaac MM CPM

The article in the May 98 issue and the photograph in May 99 has prompted me to dig into my memory and records. Sergeant Isaac was my Platoon Sergeant in 5 Platoon, B Company, 1 Queen's in Malaya from 1955 to 1957 during which time he regularly demonstrated all those very special attributes mentioned by TLT and during which time he was awarded his MM. For the record I would like to add one 'bon mot' and complete another. In the time we were together Darky confined himself to one individual when referring to the colour of his skin. Thus we heard on many occasions "*Goble boy you turn me white*". Pte Goble was a National Serviceman who had some difficulty with the basic elements of drill. Another frequently used comment, and perhaps my favourite, was "*Youse not soldiers youse monkeys wit boots on!*".



If Mr Goble (spelling?) is alive and well, or if anyone knows of him, I am sure that Darky wished him well then and still does.

In August 1993 my wife and I visited St Helena en route from Cape Town to Cardiff aboard the mailship St Helena. We were able by means of that modern contrivance, the ship's radio, to warn Darky of my imminent arrival and of course he met us, introduced us to his family, and showed us *St Helena*. He gave us a personally guided private tour of Napoleon's residence or place of detention and we also managed to have a couple of beers together.

GBR

St Helena and Sergeant Isaac

Being interested in Napoleon I seized a chance recently to cruise to South Africa calling in at St Helena on the way. I wished to visit Longwood House where he spent the last few years of his life in exile. Mentioning this to Les Wilson, he told me at once that I must meet Sgt. Fred Isaac, M.M. C.P.M. (Colonial Police Medal) who had served with great distinction in the Queens.

St Helena is an island where time stands still. Luckily it has no airport and being 14,000 miles from anywhere is seldom visited. The tiny island (about 6 miles by 4) is a delight. Steep rugged cliffs all round so that there can be no proper harbour, and visiting ships have to anchor a mile or so off shore and visitors have to land (if it is not too rough) by motor launch.

On climbing the steps of the jetty one enters the capital Jamestown, (population 1500 where the Union Flag still proudly flies over Government House. Seeing a few locals standing around I asked if they knew Sgt. Fred Isaac? I had already sent a cable from the ship so they seemed to know who I was and took me at once to the harbour-master's office, and in no time I was on the telephone arranging to meet at one of the two small hotels.

My tour round this enchanting island was brief, but at Longwood House, now a well maintained museum, I was able to indulge in the real reasons for my visit. I was surprised to see the French flag flying but soon learnt that the house and gardens, designed by Napoleon himself, were now part of France, having been given in perpetuity to that country by Queen Victoria.

The visit over I was ready to meet the person I had also come to see. Some time ago the Mail on Sunday produced an article about St Helena in which of course Sgt. Isaac featured prominently. Colonel Tim Trotman took this up in the Newsletter (May 1998) and from this I learnt I was not only to meet someone of importance but also a real gentleman.

I was not to be disappointed. Never having met him I was not quite sure how we would recognise each other. Not having Bermuda shorts, a multi-coloured shirt, or a baseball cap, I knew I would stand out from the other visitors, but never the less and not to let him down I settled for pre-war 'tropical' including highly polished brown shoes and regimental tie. Remembering the famous meeting of Stanley and Livingstone in darkest Africa as an example of good manners, I was all prepared to raise my hat and say, "*Sgt. Isaac I presume?*"

Our little tour ended in Jamestown so I went to the hotel that was to be our rendezvous. Soon everyone around seemed to know who I must be and were eager to present the great man to me. When he appeared, ushered in by a few locals, I was having a beer with some other passengers. There was no need for my planned introduction, as I knew at once that I was in the presence of someone of distinction. Brown 'tribby' hat, smart suit, Queen's Surreys tie, Queen's regimental tie-pin.

It transpired that he had already ordered lunch for me at the better of the two hotels, so there he took me. The light lunch



was ideal and we soon settled down to talk about life on the island and in the regiment. He said he had been quite ill and apologised for wearing sandals and not proper shoes, as he was also having trouble with his feet. As we chatted he produced his old photographs. Groups of soldiers in Korea, in Hong-Kong, and in Malaya. I only recognised C.S.M. L. Wilson, the burly young Sgt Isaac being very different from the slight figure at my side. Of the officers he mentioned, the only one I knew was Tony Lynch Staunton who had been his company commander in Malaya where he won his MM.

On the island he had been in the police for about 25 years becoming Senior Sergeant with around 60 under him. There is little crime on St Helena and there can be no doubt that for many years Sgt Isaac was 'the law'! All parades, such as Remembrance days and other official occasions were organised by him, so it is not surprising that everyone on the island knew him.

After an hour or so his daughter Caroline, who is a nurse in the local hospital joined us, and explained that her father had wanted to take me to his home to meet his wife, but she thought that in his present state of health it would have been too much for him. When the time came for me to leave she drove a little way through the town for me to see some more of this pleasant island.

The launch was waiting when we reached the jetty, so with a handshake, a final chat and many thanks I was away. I had achieved my ambition to stand on the ground where the frustrated Napoleon had so often paced up and down during those last sad years. My visit was a success, and I only hope that my arrival on the island was also something to be remembered by the elderly gentleman who I had been so privileged to meet.

RCT

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Royal Hospital Chelsea



President and Secretaries visit our In-Pensioners, Christmas 1999

Golf Society

The Autumn meeting was held at Woking Golf Club on Wednesday 6th October. Once again we were blessed with good weather. 20 members attended and all the competitions were closely contested, none more so than the Autumn Bowl and Petri Plate, both won on countback. Jumbo Fuller had a round that most golfers only dream of to win the Junior Division Trophy. We were delighted that Stephen Petzing, on holiday from Canada was able to play.

The Winners were as follows:

Autumn Bowl Senior Division	
Capt B M L Scripps	73 net
Glasgow Grays Junior Division	
A W Fuller Esq	64 net
Petri Plate Aggregate Spring and Autumn	
Capt B M L Scripps	142 net
Heale's Memorial Trophy Stableford	
Lt Col F B Herd	36 pts
Veteran's Halo	
Col J W Sewell	39 pts
PM Greesomes	
Col J G W Davidson & Maj R A Green	
Society Sweep	
1st Maj S J Petzing	
2nd C E J Allanson Esq	
3rd M J Power Esq	

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In-Pensioner Albert Whiting with his Great Grandson Alexander John Whiting, Founders Day, 1999.

That Lamb and Flag again

General Sir Charles Carmichael Monro is known to history as a leader during the war of 1914-1918 and the officer who ultimately took the decision to abandon the Gallipoli operation and to evacuate that peninsula in 1915. Within the Queen's Royal Regiment he is known additionally as a much respected Colonel of the Regiment from 1920 to 1929 and who set up a committee in 1922 'to consider certain matters of regimental interest, set out in their terms of reference and to make recommendations thereon'. This committee, a small one, comprised Lieut. Colonel C. Parsons DSO as chairman and Major W H Alleyne, both on the reserve of officers plus Major G N Dyer DSO., who was the editor of the Queen's Royal Regiment from its first publication in November 1925 until he handed over this editorship in May of 1946.

One of the terms of reference of this committee was 'The Regimental Crest', rightly so for at the time when the committee first deliberated there was little uniformity in the depiction of the well-known 'Lamb and Flag'. In an attempt to resolve this the committee went to the 'fons et origo' of matters heraldic and consulted the College of Arms in London.

"We have it on the authority of the Garter King of Arms in his capacity as Inspector of Regimental Colours that the ancient and historical crest of the regiment, as registered at the College of Arms, is a Paschal Lamb bearing on the 'off' shoulder a pole to which is affixed a flag rectangular in shape, the whole surmounted on a scroll with motto PRISTINAE VIRTUTIS MEMOR.

On the colour, circa 1806, illustrated opposite page 68, Vol IV, of Colonel John Davis' History of the Regiment the flag is thus shown, though this illustration does not bear out the contention that the pole is borne on the 'off shoulder'.

Here the committee might have pointed out that the Lamb described did not have a nimbus or halo. Further, on the same page of the history is shown the Regimental Colour of 1800 and on this the Lamb bore no flag, had no nimbus and stood upon a green mound rather than a scroll bearing a motto.

"Turning to the colours of the 1st and 3rd Battalions we find the design of the College of Arms carried out in all respects. When or by what authority the flag borne by the Lamb was converted into a 'pennon' or 'fishtail' or flown as a banner we have not been able to discover, but it is to be found in that form in the volume above referred to opposite page 263 and thereafter in almost every illustration of more recent date and on all badges which we have examined".

Page 263 of Davis' history depicts Regimental Orders of Merit and a Regimental Silver Medal. In all three cases the flag is shown in the 'fishtail' form. On the Orders of Merit the flagpole is borne on the 'off' front leg and on the Regimental Silver Medal on the 'near' leg. This last is dated 1814. Opposite page 6 of Volume IV of the history is illustrated an officer's silver gorget dated 'about 1795'. Here the Lamb has a nimbus, a flagpole borne on the 'near' leg, a cross rather than a spearpoint at the top of the pole and a 'fishtail' flag flown as a banner. Beneath the Lamb is a scroll worded 'The Queen's'. Disregarding such precedents the committee continued.

"The existing Regimental Colour, dating from 1857, of the 2nd Battalion also shows the flag in 'fishtail' form. In 1889 this colour was practically remade, as on the return of the Battalion from Burmah there was little of it left but pole and tassels. The arrangements for remaking were made with a firm privately by an officer deputed by the 2nd Battalion to do so, and we are forced to the conclusion that this officer accepted - erroneously we think - the type and style of badge then in use as the authentic and historically correct design of crest".

Here some evidence regarding the design of the Lambs on the 2nd Battalion colours when presented in 1857 would have been

of some assistance. Historically there seems to be much said in favour of the 2nd Battalion's conclusion that the correct way to depict the badge was with a 'pennon' or 'fishtail' - possibly flown as a banner. Despite the committee's strictures the 2nd Battalion declined to change and the 1857 colours, preserved at Clandon still display their 'fishtail' flags.

"That the Paschal Lamb is the ecclesiastical badge of St John the Baptist and is also the badge of the Merchant Taylors Guild, renders it the more important that in the case of the Regimental Crest historical accuracy should be preserved in all its details. The most recent illustration of this principle is the crest on the 'Book of Life' which forms part of the Regimental War Memorial in the Holy Trinity Church, Guildford".

The logic of the argument here propounded is hard to follow. No evidence is presented as to the correct form of the Paschal Lamb as adopted by the Guild of Merchant Taylors. Accordingly no valid comparisons can be made. Turning to the Paschal Lamb as depicted on ecclesiastical buildings and monuments it is surely artistic license and seldom church regulations that governs the design and depiction in these cases. Examples of variation within churches are legion.

The committee turned its attention to the scroll then to be found beneath the regimental Lamb.

"It seems to us superfluous to indicate on a scroll, as has been the case in recent years, the particular Regiment to which a crest belongs. It is not done in the case of crests belonging to old English families, mottoes only are used, and we recommend the use of the motto only in this case also".

This approach may well have been valid in the consideration of the badges of English families but the committee was supposed to be considering regimental badges. Of 69 Infantry badges of the period examined, as many as 42 are found to have on them a scroll indicating the name of the regiment to which the badge relates.

So the committee came to its recommendations-

"Badges -

We regard the type of badge - viz., a plain Lamb - worn by Officers prior to 1900 as the most suitable for every article of uniform, both for Officers and Other Ranks on which a badge is worn. A scroll is necessary and would, in our opinion, with the lengthened title, be clumsy. Moreover, identification is provided by numerals on the shoulder, when worn.

Note-

The badges worn by Officers and Other Ranks (a) in khaki drill to be bright (b) in khaki service dress to be bronzed".

This last recommendation, although approved was never put into effect. One can search in vain for photographs of Other Ranks with bronzed badges upon caps or upon the collars of service dress - they were always bright and polished! Officers, when wearing khaki drill service dress wore bright badges upon their collars and in addition 'Queen's' titles upon their shoulder straps.

In 1950, due to the introduction earlier of the beret, the size of the cap badge was reduced from 1 7/8" high by 2" wide to 1 1/4" high by 1 3/8" wide, the old collar dog size in fact. This new size badge was to be brass or gilding metal.

The opportunity to change Officer's bronze collar badges was not taken and so arose the rather odd situation where the same badge was to be found in bright finish on the S.D. cap and in bronze finish on the collar badges. (The photograph of RSM Atkins on page 8 of the May 1989 Newsletter well illustrates this anomaly!). Whilst on the subject of collar badges, these were always worn so that the two Lambs faced inwards towards each other. The committee had this to say-

"...it is to be noted that the collar badges worn on the right side of the collar differs slightly from the orthodox pattern. It is

clear that with this badge the pole cannot be borne on the 'off' shoulder of the Lamb, and meticulous accuracy must give way to symmetry in appearance. The Pole is therefore placed on the 'hidden' shoulder and the further leg suspended".

One may be forgiven for reaching the conclusion that the 1922 Committee quite early on reached a decision radically to change the pattern of the badge of the Regiment. Having done this it searched around to find back-up evidence and found this at the College of Arms and the Regimental Colour of 1806 as depicted in Volume IV of Davis. Its recommendations were published in the 'Journal of the Queen's Royal Regiment' for May of 1927. They must by this time have been pretty old hat for the new cap badge had previously been introduced to the 1st Battalion at Aldershot on the 5th of January, 1925!

Having criticised the methodology of the committee it is only fair to say that the new badge was superior to the old in a number of ways. The treatment of the fleece was much better and the Lamb altogether more upright in the head and sturdy in the neck. The rectangular flag is neater and the pole looks better capped with a spear point as opposed to a mere blob. The fact that the pole is carried on the hidden shoulder obviates the need for it to curve around the neck of the Lamb. The revised nimbus is of a better shape and more prominent than the older version. Lastly, the wreath at the base of the revised badge appears to be a throw-back to those wreaths of cloth that were used to bind the crest of the warrior of old to his helmet and so is a nice heraldic reminder.

From my research I conclude that General Monro was right to be concerned in that prior to 1922 the design of this regimental badge had come to depend almost entirely upon the whim of the designer. At times two examples of supposedly the same badge showed variation. Such was the case with the Officer's shako plate of 1830. After the 1922 committee reported no more was seen of the 'swallow tail' flag or the scroll base to the metal badge and this uniform position has been continued up to the present time with the buttons of the Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment conforming with that committee's recommendations and designs.

AJP

Footnote:

During the discussions in 1992, the Amalgamation Committee considered the name of the new Regiment, Battle Honours, Customs and of course the Cap Badge. The badge on the left was considered by the Committee and rejected in favour of what was the old Queen's Regiment cap badge with the addition of a Hampshire rose within the circle beneath the dragon and the title of the new Regiment to be The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment (Queen's and Royal Hampshires).



LW

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Against all odds

Critical reports on the Kosova campaign indicate dissatisfaction with aspects of command, organisation, communications and equipment. A somewhat depressing picture all told but not new in the annals of British warfare where such complaints in some form or another, arise in our history with consistent regularity from the Crimean War, through the South African War, the two World Wars and down to this latest conflict. But, seemingly against all odds, we always manage to win in the end.

A diary kept by an officer whilst serving in Gibraltar in 1727 and quoted by The Rt. Hon. Sir John Fortescue's history and later in the Journal of The East Surrey Regiment, November 1929 makes interesting reading on such matters.

One of the first problems mentioned is that of defective artillery, 78 pieces of British ordnance "*blew themselves to*

Regimental Colour 1747	Volume III Page 82, Davis History
Gorget circa 1795	Volume IV, Page 6, Davis History
Regimental Colour 1800	Volume IV, Page 68, Davis History
Regimental Colour 1806	Volume IV, Page 68, Davis History
Regimental Silver Medal 1814	Volume IV, Page 263, Davis History
Officers Breastplate 1828	Volume IV, Page 346, Davis History
Officers Shako Plate 1829 - 1844	Volume IV, Page 347, Davis History
Officers Shako Plate 1830 - 1844	Messrs Wallis & Wallis advertisement for a sale
1st Battalion Colours 1847	Journal of Q.R.R. for November 1947
Officers Shako Plate 1856	Badges of the British Army F Wilkinson No 57
2nd Battalion Colours 1857	Regimental Museum Clandon House
Glengarry Badge post 1880	Author's Collection
O.R.'s Helmet Plate post 1880	Author's Collection
Officers' Helmet Plate post 1880	Author's Collection
Collar Dog Flat Base	Badge of the British Army F Wilkinson No 71
Collar Dog Scroll Base	Badge of the British Army F Wilkinson No 69
Bimetal Cap Badge pre 1925	Author's Collection
Redesigned Cap Badge post 1925	Author's Collection
Final Pattern Cap Badge 1950	Author's Collection
Queen's Surrey's Cap Badge TA	Author's Collection

wreck". Best use was made of all available ammunition and when four cannon-balls, presumably fired by the opposing Spaniards, came into Colonel Betsworth's house his woman housekeeper took them to the King's Battery where they were loaded into guns which she herself fired "*and seven more after them*".

Cannon-balls were not the only things to come over from the enemy. There was an influx of numerous deserters, although the traffic was not entirely, one way. So serious was the problem from the British ranks that a reward of ten pounds was offered to anyone who should prevent a desertion or bring back a deserter dead or alive. Drunkenness was also a problem, eventually leading to the rationing of drink to one pint of wine per day.

Lawless women were also subjected to severe punishment, either being placed in the dungeon or in the "*Whirligig*". This was a cage, which, as its name implies, was then whirled

round on swivels until the occupant was either sick or very giddy. Men at that time were literally living in barracks (Barracas Huts) which they eventually burnt for fuel, resulting in themselves and arriving supporting troops being moved into tented accommodation.

A Spanish deserter informed his captors that on the enemy side the Duke of Wharton never came into the trenches except when he was drunk. Drunk or sober, he was on one occasion accompanied by his Duchess who the British complimented *"with every cannon and mortar (they) could"*.

The arrival of transports by sea brought not only reinforcements but Lord Portmore as Governor.

Enemy fire was heavy around this time causing many casualties whose numbers were increased by the onset of sickness, principally dysentery.

Presumably arising from similar problems on both sides, a flag of truce with suspension of arms was announced on June 12th 1727. British casualties from all causes, including desertion, numbered 308. Spanish casualties, in far worse plight, numbered nearly 2,000. Between February and June the British had fired 53,000 round shot and over 25,000 shells. On the other side the Spaniards had on a single day, May 4th, fired 115 bombs and 1,500 round shot. As if there wasn't sufficient official fighting there were some internal disputes among the British ranks. *"Two sergeants of Bissett's (later 1 East Surreys) drew and killed each other on the spot"*.

Lord Portmore took advantage of the cease-fire to repair and restore his batteries and this brought some Spanish protests which his Lordship treated with contempt. (Aged 80 years, he was nevertheless a doughty and determined defender and leader). Internal disputes were not confined to the lower ranks. Two officers, going to a convenient place *"to decide a quarrel with the sword"* were prevented by their superior officers and confined. Life seemed to have been too hard for one Cadet who got drunk and shot himself in his quarters.

A *"private gentleman"* who applied to his Commanding Officer for permission to marry a lady of somewhat doubtful character had his application refused. Persisting with it he received a whipping, but eventually authority relented and his wish was granted, the nuptials being celebrated *"with great pomp and splendour"*. An interesting nautical arrival was *"a ship from Ireland laden with women from whence came great numbers of these necessary evils"*.

What would nowadays be worthy of an entry in the Guinness Book of Records was the passing of a sentence of 12,600 lashes on a soldier for slaughtering his Colonel's horse and selling the hide. In the event he only received 1,800 the remainder being remitted. Another record holder was a drummer of The Lancashire Fusiliers who in 16 years service received a total of 30,000 lashes.

Desertion continued to be a problem. One deserter from Newton's (1st Dorset) fell from the Rock while decamping and broke his back. National prizes seem to have been prominent as Scots, Welsh and Irish members all celebrated their various Saints' Days in appropriate manners.

A party of fishermen in the bay were threatened by enemy forces but the latter withdrew in the face of counter threats by Lord Portmore and other officers.

In March 1728 the diarist embarked for England in a man-of-war and landed at Spithead on 9th April. Affairs at Gibraltar had been settled and *"all things (were) in a fair way to general peace"*. Once more, against all odds, the British had triumphed.

Searching for my Grandfather

George Frederick Cook was the Grandfather I never met. In fact until recently, he was the Grandfather I knew nothing about. He was killed six weeks before the end of the First World War fighting in France. The War Office sent my grandmother a report that he had been killed in action on September 21, 1918 but she was so upset that she refused to believe it and for weeks she would go to Brighton station to watch for returning soldiers and to wait for the husband who never came back.

As the months passed she must have come to terms with the fact that he was dead but she could not bring herself to talk about him, not even to her son who was only four years old at the time. My father never spoke about him either and it was only recently when my father died that, found among his papers, was a whole history of my Grandfather's death.

There was a photograph of him standing proudly in the uniform of The West Surrey Regiment, a bundle of love letters that he sent from France to his beloved wife, Florence, and in one envelope an embroidered silk handkerchief. There was a field service postcard sent from the Front Line one week before his death saying that he had received a letter from his wife three days earlier and that he was quite well.

There was also a description of the battle from his best friend who went over the top with him. Their advance had been at 4.30am but they had become separated by "Jerry's fire" and he did not see what happened to him. His last words as they went over the top were *"Well mate, I wish you the best of luck and hope we meet over in the other sunken road."* His friend, W. Wood, was injured in this attack and was in hospital for 10 months.

There were my grand-father's medals, the fateful letter from the War Office and another from the Imperial War Graves Commission, giving the exact location of his grave. Meath Cemetery, Plot 2, Row A. Ten miles south of Cambrai, one mile south of Villers Guislain. Nobody had been to his grave. I decided to alter that.

On a hot, shimmering summer's morning I set off from my home in Greenwich to find my Grandfather's grave, just before I left I grabbed a handful of soil from the garden and put it in a plastic bag and set off to Folkestone and the Channel Tunnel. Two hours later I was driving south on the A26 from Calais.

As I sped along the empty motorway, sun streaming through the windscreen, radio playing, I covered the 100 miles to Junction nine in a jaunty holiday spirit but as I turned off towards Villers Guislain my mood became more sombre. I switched off the radio and slowed down to a snail's pace. I did not know what I expected or how I should have been feeling but after a journey that had taken only four hours it seemed indecent to hurry, especially as my Grandfather had lain there unvisited for 81 years.

The village was empty, save for a couple of young mothers and their babies chattering in the town's square. An old man with a stick on the outskirts of town pointed me in the direction of a signpost with the names of three war cemeteries. The road changed to a single track as I passed the first "Villers Hill" and then sloped down with banks coloured bright red with poppies. I found myself singing the title song from *'Oh What A Lovely War'* and thought of the rows of white crosses as that film ends. I stopped and picked a handful of these fragile flowers and put them on the back seat with the portrait of my Grandfather that I had brought with me. The track got steadily rougher as I passed Targelle Ravine cemetery and then the road petered out into a hilly cornfield at the top of which, silhouetted against the skyline, was a cross.

I drove up the field, grasses brushing the bonnet, baked crumbled earth beneath the tyres. At the top, in total contrast, was Meath cemetery. Immaculately looked after with bowling green grass and gleaming white headstones. I started walking along the rows of dead soldiers reading the names and ages of the 104 men buried here and realising that all of them were killed on the same day, September 21, 1918.

I walked past boys of 18, 19 and 20 years who gave their lives fighting for England and suddenly there it was. Private G. F. Cook of The West Surrey Regiment. I stood there for a moment in silence and then scattered the English soil and poppies. I knelt and said a prayer to the Grandfather I had never known, to the father my father had hardly seen and to a husband that my grandmother had never forgotten.



21st September 1918

Ian Cook's article in the November issue of SAGA magazine recounting his search for his Grandfather's grave is rather poignant and he may wish to know the outline facts of the battle in which Pte George F Cook was killed on that dismal, wet day - 21st September 1918.

On 18th September the 1st Battalion The Queen's (Royal West Surrey) Regiment moved from their billets at Manancourt to their assembly positions for the attack on the outer defences of the Hindenberg Line. The 19th was the day the battalion moved forward to low ground nearer their objective and to relieve the 6th Battalion The Leicestershire Regiment. The relief was completed at midnight and a quiet night with no casualties was reported. On 20th a Warning Order was received from Brigade HQ that the Battalion would attack on the 21st. Meanwhile, a quiet day was reported with slight shelling and some rain.

21st September - zero hour was 5.40 am and the attack started on time. However, information as to its progress was slow in being received. The OC C Company came back to report that the right company had inclined too much to the right and was held up in front by machine gun fire from the direction of Meath Post and Limerick Post. A few minutes later a message was received from flanking troops saying they were also held up. The whole front was prevented from going forward by the intense machine gun fire and it dug in on the line reached and held on there until dark.

The Queen's was now reorganised and small parties of isolated men were collected. "C" and "D" Companies dug in on a line parallel to and about 400 yards east of the Sunken Road, while "A" and "B" Companies, now greatly reduced in number, were withdrawn to the Sunken Road itself. The absence of information early in the attack is probably due to both Company Commanders and many of the Company Officers having become early casualties. Apart from heavy shelling, the night of the 21st/22nd passed quietly.

It can never be established as to how Pte Cook died but he fell during a very hard-fought engagement, very typical of the short, sharp battles fought by the Allied troops against a brave and stubborn enemy who, by this stage of the war, knew that the sands were running out. The Battalion had suffered heavily during the attack or operations connected with it. 6 Officers and 39 NCOs and men were killed. 5 Officers and 184 Other Ranks were wounded, while 89 were missing. On the evening of the 22nd The Queen's were relieved and marched to bivouacs in the rear.

JGW

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Surreys and Signals

Reminiscences of Army life continue to reach the Editor's desk, the latest being from Douglas Campbell who on 19th April 1945 answered his call up papers and reported to 12 Primary Training Wing, Infantry Training Centre, Canterbury Barracks.

After initial training he and two colleagues were posted to The East Surrey Regiment but remained at Canterbury for further training. Completion of corps training saw a chance to specialise and Douglas was pleased to get a posting of his choice to the MT Section. On completion of the course there was a 72 hour leave and then a posting overseas to Northern Ireland not, generally speaking, in the throes of the troubles which were to follow. The country impressed Douglas as being truly the "Emerald Isle".

The next move was to Italy, the journey being accomplished through Switzerland in a train which was locked to preserve neutrality status. Staying in a transit camp at Taranto the troops were able to see the sunken Italian Fleet in the bay. Further onward transmission followed to station the soldiers at Glyfadha some ten miles outside Athens. While there Douglas obtained a welcome appointment as company clerk. Life was not all work. One week's local leave was granted and spent in Aliko Rest Camp.

On the occasion of the visit of the American Fleet to Faliron Bay, the battleship USS *Missouri* was seen, this being the ship on which the Japanese surrender was taken in Tokyo Bay. The next time the Fleet came in Douglas and colleagues were able to visit the aircraft carrier USS *Franklin D Roosevelt*.

One of the biggest problems at the time was theft and misappropriation of stores. Everything from boots to tents would disappear, finding their way into various shady hands at

a profit. Due to Army reorganisations in 1946 Douglas was transferred to the Royal Signals as a dispatch rider which resulted in a posting to Salonika. Passage was taken in the SS *Tripolitania* in which Douglas carried out cooking duties. In Salonika he was allocated to dispatch riding duties. On a sombre note, he saw that some of the local population were in such dire states of poverty that they salvaged food from the Army swill bins.

Christmas and New Year were both celebrated in limited form but at the end of January Douglas went home on a month's leave, travelling by sea and trans continental rail routes to Calais, Dover and eventually home. During the whole of his leave snow was on the ground, it being the worst weather for many years. On a trip to London to keep a date with a girl friend he had unfortunately left his leave pass at home. This resulted in his arrest by Military Police at Waterloo Station and a three hour incarceration in cells at Scotland Yard until the matter was satisfactorily cleared.

His return to Salonika at the end of his leave was roughly by a reversal of the same route as his earlier homeward journey. But more moves were afoot. After a spell in a transit camp at Suez, Douglas's ultimate destination was Palestine and the Command Signal Regiment's Barracks at Jerusalem. From there, still classified as a dispatch rider, he went to Sarafand Camp, about 25 miles west of Jerusalem. Due to the political and security situations dispatch riding was carried out in armoured cars and arms were carried at all times, whether on or off duty. Later, having had previous clerical experience, Douglas was appointed Duty Signals Officer's Clerk. On the recreational side he and friends went on Army Educational trips to such places as the Dead Sea, Bethlehem, Church of the Nativity, the Inn of the Good Samaritan and the Wailing Wall. Swimming in the Dead Sea he found it was literally impossible to sink.

Terrorism was at its height at the time and a sad duty, which occurred far too often, was the attendance at military funerals, sometimes of colleagues.

A short spell in hospital due to undiagnosed stomach pains did not prove too unpleasant particularly when Douglas was involved in some light cookhouse duties.

With demobilisation in the offing, Douglas applied for, and was appointed to, a course in heavy vehicle driving. Driving of any nature was hazardous at that time due to terrorist ambushes on the roads. He had no regrets on leaving the territory, homeward bound for demobilisation. The journey home was by sea, eventually terminating at Liverpool from whence there was onward transmission by rail to Woking, Surrey where the Demobilisation Centre was located at Inkerman Barracks. On 7th May 1948 Douglas became a full blown civilian but his soldiering days were not over. About May 1951 he was recalled to the Colours as a Reservist and posted to the Honourable Artillery Company in which he served on MT duties, presumably until the end of his service as his story ends there.

DC&RF

The Wellington of Wembley

In the article "Soldier on a white horse" in the November 1999 issue, mention is made of "the policeman on a white horse of Cup Final fame". Well known, the incident occurred at the Wembley Cup Final of 1923 between West Ham and Bolton Wanderers. The maximum crowd invaded the pitch before the start of the match and seemed likely to effect its cancellation. They were gradually manoeuvred back to the touchlines by police officers both mounted and on foot. Distinctive among them, and playing the leading role, was PC George Scorey on his white horse Billy. It was the tactful

persuasion and horsemanship of Scorey and his colleagues that was perceived as really winning the day.

Little known, but probably of interest to our readers, is the fact that as far as PC Scorey was concerned, there was an Army

connection. He was an ex cavalry man and there is little doubt that his previous military training, discipline and horsemanship were significant factors in the successful action which made him famous.

Born in Bristol in 1883, George Scorey enlisted in the Royal Scots Greys at the age of fifteen in 1898. In a military career spanning twenty-one years he served in the South African War and the First World War and achieved the rank of Trumpet Major. On leaving the



'The Wellington of Wembley' and his white horse 'Billy'.

Army in 1919 he joined the Metropolitan Police and was eventually posted to the Mounted Branch. As a result of the Wembley incident the media created the catchphrase the "Wellington of Wembley" and his horse Billy became the "White Horse of Wembley".

PC Scorey died in 1965 at the age of eighty two. Billy, of course, had long predeceased him.

RF

Information and photograph by courtesy of the Editor of the Metropolitan Mounted Police Journal.

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Black Gang reunion at UJ Club



Front row: Sam (the General) Sambrook, 'Robbo', Dave Deadman. Rear row: Mick Sewell, Sid Lea, Bill Billingham, Ron Sandy and the Goddard Brothers.



On 23rd February 1900, at Onderbank Spruit, during the South African War, with his Commanding Officer, Colonel Harris lying badly wounded in an exposed position, Albert Curtis of The East Surrey Regiment, after several attempts under enemy fire, reached his CO and was able to bring him back to the unit lines. For this act of outstanding bravery, he was awarded the Victoria Cross. At that time, 2nd Bn the East Surrey Regiment were part of General Buller's Force attempting to relieve the siege of Ladysmith.

Exactly 100 years later, on 23rd February, 2000, a Memorial Service was held at St Stephen's Chapel, Bells Hill, Chipping Barnet for Albert and Annie Curtis, and to re-dedicate their grave with a new headstone.

When Albert Curtis left the Army in 1910, he became a Yeoman Warder at the Tower of London, where he lived and worked until 1931, before moving to Barnet.

Among those attending the Memorial Service were descendants of Albert and Annie Curtis; Field Marshal, the Lord Inge, Constable of the Tower of London; Major General Geoffrey Field, the Resident Governor; Mr. J Cohen, the Mayor of Barnet; Sir Sydney Chapman, MP and a contingent of Yeoman Warders led by the Chief Yeoman Warder, Hugh Thompson. Organisations represented were the Victoria Cross and George Cross Association, Middlesex Regiment Association and the Royal British Legion. The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Association Standard was carried by Mick Etherington and the Association was represented by Peter Henman, Tony Ramsey and Maurice Nason, all former members of The East Surrey Regiment.



In her address to the congregation, the Reverend Canon Christine Farrington, a great niece of Albert Curtis, welcomed everyone, particularly the three families to which Curtis had belonged. Namely the family of the East Surreys, the family of those from the Tower of London, and all the members of the Curtis family, many of whom had not met each other until that day. Continuing, she spoke of the importance of families in our lives, and recalled stories told to her by her mother about "Mr. Curtis", as he was known to them, the title he had carried at the Tower of London. A modest man, when asked about his award, he denied any bravery on his part, claiming that he had not been paid for several weeks and only saved the Commanding Officer's life to ensure that he got his money!

Prior to Canon Farrington's address, Yeomen Warder Alan Fiddes had read Rudyard Kipling's Ballad "Tommy".



At the end of the Service the congregation moved out to the Churchyard for the re-dedication of the grave of Albert and Annie Curtis, previously unmarked, but now marked with a new granite headstone, on which, was carved the badge of the East Surrey Regiment and the Victoria Cross. During the short service, the Last Post and Reveille was sounded by a Drummer of the Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment.

Much credit for locating the unmarked grave must go to Mr. David Tomlins, of Burnt Oak, whose life's work is to locate the unmarked graves of holders of the Victoria Cross. It believed that there are in excess of 100 unmarked graves and it took Mr. Tomlins four years to find the grave of Albert Curtis and to ensure that it was now properly marked.



MRN

The Village War Memorial

by Richard Ford

*It stands there now, a solitary cross,
Memorial to a village loss
Of men who marched away with pride,
And bravely fought, and nobly died.*

*And once a year a saddened crowd,
Stands round in silence, heads all bowed,
And in their hearts pray yet again
That those who died, died not in vain.*



Among the names of the First World War fallen on the war memorial at Horsell, Surrey is that of Lieutenant Percy Frank Anderson Cocks, Queen's, who is also commemorated on the wooden panelling of the baptistry in the parish church of St Mary. The inscription reads, "In loving memory of Percy Frank Anderson Cocks, age 19, Lieutenant 3rd/5th Queen's West Surrey Regiment who died on active service in Mesopotamia and

was buried in the Arabian sea 25th May 1916. The Lord shall be unto thee everlasting light and thy God thy Glory".

Regimental Deaths

Ashcroft - On 25th August 1999, Company Sergeant Major Jack Ashcroft, 1/5th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment. Served 30 years with Surrey Constabulary.

Bennett - On 2nd November 1999, Drum Major Lancelot Gerald Albert Bennett, aged 83 years, The Queen's Royal Regiment.

Biffen - On 20th October 1999, Charles A Biffen, The Queen's Royal Regiment.

Bodman - On 28th December 1999, Bert Bodman, The Queen's Royal Regiment.

Boustred - On 25th December 1999, Corporal Donald L Boustred, aged 76 years, The East Surrey Regiment and The Buffs.

Brackley - On 7th December 1999, Private Brian James Brackley, aged 72 years, The East Surrey Regiment.

Caryer - On 14th January 2000, Stanley W Caryer, aged 81 years, The Queen's Royal Regiment.

Chartrey - On 19th February 2000, Company Quartermaster Sergeant William Chartrey, aged 84 years, The Queen's Royal Regiment.

Cross - On 7th February 2000, Adrian Cross, The Queen's Royal Regiment.

Davies - On 2nd January 2000, Private Dennis Edward Davies, aged 80 years, The Queen's Royal Regiment.

Ellis - Recently, James Ellis MBE OBE., aged 73 years, The Queen's Royal Regiment.

Gibbens - On 1st January 2000, Company Sergeant Major Alfred John Gibbens, aged 78 years, The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment.

Gibbs - On 15th November 1999, Lance Corporal Harry Gibbs OBE., aged 79 years, 1/6th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment.

Girling - On 5th December 1999, Major Marcus Edward Girling, aged 68 years, The Queen's Royal, The Queen's Royal Surrey and The Queen's Regiment.

Harris - On 9th December 1999, John W Harris, The Queen's Royal Regiment.

Hibbert - On 24th January 2000, Sergeant Ernie Hibbert, 2nd Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment.

Hornby - On 24th December 1999, Richard M Hornby, aged 73 years, The East Surrey Regiment.

Howe - On 1st January 2000, Bandsman David Sidney Hastings Howe, aged 73 years, The East Surrey Regiment. Howe was a trumpet and cornet player and served with Bandmaster Harriott in Kingston and Salonika, Greece.

Hurley - On 10th March 2000, WO2 Ian Hurley, aged 72 years, Served in both battalions of The East Surrey Regiment. He served in Malaya with 1st Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment. In addition he saw service in Palestine, Greece, Egypt, Cyprus and Libya. For a short period he was an In-Pensioner at The Royal Hospital Chelsea.

Johnson - On 31st March 2000, Thomas Johnson, The Queen's Royal Regiment.

Langley - On 1st January 2000, Lieutenant Michael John Langley, aged 66 years, The East Surrey Regiment.

Luxford - On 13th April 1994, J A Luxford, The Queen's Royal Regiment.

Melmoth - On 9th October 1999, John Melmoth, The Queen's Royal Regiment.

Messenger On 14th February 2000, Captain Sidney Messenger, aged 82 years, The Queen's Royal Regiment and the Royal Engineers.

Mills On 8th October 1999, Samuel John Mills, The Queen's Royal Regiment.

Newton On 20th November 1999, Major Arthur H Newton, The East Surrey Regiment.

Norton On 25th December 1999, Major Cyril J Norton CBE., The Queen's Royal Regiment.

Palmer On 12th March 2000, WOII Alec Palmer, aged 70 years, The Queen's Royal and Queen's Royal Surrey Regiments.

Perdue On 25th January 2000, Captain Albert Perdue TD., aged 79 years, The Queen's Royal Regiment.

Pickett On 3rd February 2000, Private Geoffrey H Pickett, aged 81 years, The Queen's Royal Regiment.

Quinn In March 2000, Colonel Neville Owen Quinn, aged 89 years, The Border Regiment and 2/6th Bn The Queens Royal Regiment. Quinn was commissioned into The Border Regiment in 1936. From 1939 to 1942 he was attached to the RAF and qualified as a pilot. He served with 2/6th Queen's in Italy and was wounded. He then became DAA & QMG of 169 Brigade.

Promoted Lt Col in 1954 and Col in 1956, he served with 1 Borders and with The RWAFF on the Gold Coast. On retirement he was bursar of Hilton Abbey School, Dorset. For a period he retired to Cyprus but returned to the UK shortly before his death.

Randolph On 12th July 1999, Lieutenant Roy J Randolph, aged 77 years, The East Surrey Regiment.

Richer On 15th February 2000, Private Joe Richer, 1/5th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment.

Roberts On 19th December 1999, Private Leslie Marsden Roberts, aged 80 years, The Queen's Royal Regiment.

Scammell On 27th February 2000, Major Oliver Hugh Scammell MC and Bar, aged 78 years, 2/7th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment.

Smith On 7th March 2000, Private Cecil James Smith, aged 84 years, 2/5th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment.

Smith On 23rd December 1999, Private Norman Smith, aged 80 years, The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment.

Steers On 11th March 2000, Private Bill Steers, The Queen's Royal Regiment.

Steinman On 26th March 2000, Bandsman Louis Steinman, 1st Bn The East Surrey Regiment and the Band of The Irish Guards.

Stephens On 1st January 2000, Major Ronald Walter Stephens, ERD., aged 86 years, 23rd London Regiment and The East Surrey Regiment

Thomas On 22nd October 1999, Captain Lester (Terry) Cherrington Chapman Thomas DSO., aged 76 years, The Queen's Royal Regiment.

Tydemans On 24th December 1999, Private Harry Victor Tydemans, aged 80 years, 2nd Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment and the Chindits in Burma.

Tyler On 26th March 2000, Major Hugh Tyler, The East Surrey Regiment. (Obituary in November Newsletter).

Velvick On 6th January 2000, Private Herbert Ronald Velvick, aged 77 years, The Queen's Royal Regiment.

Williams On 10th March 2000, CSM A (Pinkey) Williams, 6th and 2/6th Bns The East Surrey Regiment.

Willmot On 10th January 2000, Sergeant Frederick T Willmot, The Queen's Royal Regiment and Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment.

Regimental Families

Arnold On 28th March 2000, Muriel Arnold, beloved wife of Ex-Band Sergeant Dennis Arnold, The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment.

Ede On 12th December 1999, Mrs Florence Georgina Ede, beloved wife of Ex-Corporal Ede.

Pullen On 28th December 1999, Mrs Celia Ada Pullen, beloved wife of Colonel D B Pullen OBE TD DL.

Skilton On 16th July 1999, Mrs Jessie Skilton, after a long illness, beloved wife of Ex-CSM H G A Skilton.

Watson In October 1999, Mrs Sally Watson, beloved wife of George Watson.

Obituaries

Lieutenant Colonel J Hatt-Cook MC



John Edward Hatt-Cook was born on March 15th 1913 and was educated at Bradfield College before qualifying as a soldier in 1936 and later working for Scotland Yard.

In the Second World War he was commissioned into The East Surrey Regiment and served in North Africa, Italy and Greece. It was in Italy that he was awarded the Military Cross when commanding a platoon on the night of November 8-9th

1944. While trying to reinforce troops who had advanced in front of them the platoon were pinned down by enemy machine-gun fire.

While covered by fire from his own men, Hatt-Cook and his runner stalked the machine-gun post, killing one German and capturing the other, thus enabling the reinforcing operation to succeed. Continuing the action, Hatt-Cook showed further leadership and outstanding courage in destroying an enemy rearguard post, killing three of the enemy and taking five prisoners. From September 1945 to May 1946 he was on the Staff in Italy.

After the war he resumed his career as a solicitor in Wiltshire, appearing in Magistrates' Courts, County Courts and Assizes. He became President of the Salisbury Solicitors Association and of the South West Area Legal Aid Committee. He was also Chairman of the Royal British Legion Housing Scheme for Salisbury.

When the local Home Guard was resuscitated in the 1950s he was appointed to command it.

Of athletic inclination, he was a lover of long walks with his labrador dogs. In his younger days he had played hockey for Salisbury and the county. He married in 1930 Lavender Helen Coverton who, with their son and daughter, survives him.

Major A Newton

Arthur Newton served with 1st Battalion The East Surrey Regiment in Fyzabad in 1936 and subsequently in Khartoum. During the war he served with 1/6th Surreys and in 1944 was wounded whilst commanding a company at Monte Cassino. After the war he served the reformed 2nd Battalion and commanded a company of the amalgamated 1st and 2nd Battalions in N. Greece.

Arthur was a very smart and meticulous officer and a loyal supporter of the Regiment. He was a very private person and his shyness sometimes gave the impression of brusqueness which disguised the kindness of his nature.

He enjoyed 40 years of very happy marriage to Jo who sadly pre-deceased him and he was a much loved father and Grandfather.

Major M E Girling



Major Marcus Girling was the younger son of the late Colonel F E B Girling OBE MC., The Queen's Royal Regiment, and brother of John Girling, who served in the regiment both before and after his graduation at Cambridge University.

Marcus was educated at Haileybury and Sandhurst, gaining his commission in The Queen's Royal Regiment

in 1952. He served with 1st Battalion, The Queen's Royal Regiment in BAOR, Malaya and Singapore. Later, with battalions of the successor regiments, he served in Aden, Hong Kong, Northern Ireland, West Germany and the UK. Additionally Marcus served at Depot, The Queen's Division and various staff appointments in BAOR and MOD (Army) before his retirement in 1986.

In 1959 Marcus married, Jane daughter of the late Lieutenant Colonel J H F Johnson OBE TD JP., The Queen's Royal Regiment, and twin sister of Major Jeremy Warner-Johnson. Jane died in 1976 and, several years later, Marcus married Susan, much to the great pleasure of his and Jane's children - Sarah, Ann and James.

Marcus enjoyed the affection, trust and respect of those who served with him, or under his command. He maintained a high degree of integrity combined with a staunch sense of loyalty, which endeared him greatly to his family as well as to those who were fortunate to know him.

He was a son of the regiment and indeed one of today's true gentlemen, whose loss to his family and many friends is considerable.

To Susan and his family we offer our sincere condolences

JVWJ

Major R W Stephens ERD

Major R W Stephens joined the old LCC in the early thirties as a clerk. He enlisted with the Westminster Dragoons in 1936 and, when the War came, he was called up and sent to OCTU.

He was commissioned in to the Second RTR and served with them both in the Western Desert and in Burma. After the war he was promoted to the administrative grade in the London County Council.

He joined the 42nd RTR and served for a time as Second in Command. His cheerful personality and his friendly approachability made him ideal for this role. After retirement he acted for many years as both President and Chairman of the 23rd London / 42nd Royal Tank Regimental Association.

He held it together during a very difficult time when the future of the Regiment, and indeed of its Headquarters, were in doubt. Inevitably cheerful 'Not to worry' was his favourite saying. After his first wife, Joan died, he married Pam, a widowed neighbour.

DHC

Major O H Scammell MC FRICS



Hugh Scammell was a wartime officer, who was awarded the MC in September 1943 and a Bar in April 1945 both when serving in Italy with 2/7th Battalion The Queen's Royal Regiment.

After education at Reading School Hugh joined the Queen's Westminster Rifles TA in February 1939 and was commissioned into the Queen's in August 1940 at the age of just 19. He then joined 2/7th Queen's who were located at Faversham, soon becoming MTO with particular responsibilities for the movement

of the Battalion to counter invasion threats anywhere in East Kent. When the Battalion moved overseas in August 1942, Hugh became Anti-Tank Platoon Commander, and with the move of 56th Division from Iraq to Tunisia he took them into action at Enfidaville at the end of the North African campaign. He was then appointed OC 'D' Company leading them into the assault at Salerno and advancing with his Company into the foothills above Faiano. Here he was engaged in intensive action round Torello as the Germans counter-attacked the bridgehead. For his leadership and control in both attack and holding his positions he was awarded his first MC. In the breakout immediately afterwards 'D' Company undertook a high impossible task up the precipitous slopes of Monte Stella (3,000 ft) in support of the main 169 Brigade attack. At the end of another intense action Hugh was found to have a very high fever and this led to his being invalided out of battle and subsequent downgrading.

At the end of convalescence Hugh Scammell was appointed Staff Captain first in Naples and later in Rome, and did not rejoin the Battalion until mid-December 1944 when he took over 'A' Company. He immediately made an impact with the successful seizure of a small bridgehead over the R. Lamone, and then organizing his Company throughout the series of winter actions on the R. Senio floodbank. In April 1945 the final offensive of the Italian Campaign started, and after crossing Lake Commachio in "Fantails", Hugh Scammell's 'A' Company led the Battalion's attack north of Filo through the flooded areas towards Argenta; an advance of three miles was achieved against sometimes heavy resistance. After further continuing actions 'A' Company were again particularly to the fore when a small bridgehead was established over the R. Adige against what was the final strong resistance from the German Army. Three days later the Battalion was in Venice. For his leadership in all these actions but particularly for that north of Filo, Hugh received the Bar to his MC.

Hugh Scammell remained with 2/7th Queen's and for a short time with 2/5th Queen's until his release in July 1946. He then rejoined Cluttons, the Estate Agents, and continuing with the firm until retirement as a Senior Consultant in 1986. Besides having been a Senior Partner, he had become a Crown Estate Receiver, Surveyor for London University and Agent for a number of other prestigious organizations.

Hugh married in 1942 Iris Blake, who served at Stoughton Barracks Guildford with the ATS from 1943-1945. They had two children, both of whom after marriage moved to the USA, and Hugh spent the last years of his life in New Hampshire, USA where he died surrounded by a large family.

Hugh was a caring and practical man, who combined determined and effective leadership with an easy going approach when no more than that was required and a ready wit. He is remembered with much affection by all who served with him.

Afternote:- It is to him that the Regimental Museum owes the recovery of the Regimental Badge made by the Royal School of Needlework and presented to the MV "*Johanne van Oldenbarneveldt*" which took 2/7th Queen's and others to Bombay in 1942. The Badge was returned when the ship was sold and became the ill-fated "*Lakonia*".

AGS/JWS

Captain A F Perdue TD.

Albert Frank Perdue died peacefully in hospital on 25th January 2000 at the age of 79 years, whilst undergoing treatment for lung cancer. His funeral took place at Garston Crematorium on 3rd February 2000.

Educated at Bedford School, Albert joined the Territorial Army in October 1938 with the Bedfordshire Yeomanry. In 1940, he went to France with the British Expeditionary Force, was posted missing, but escaped back to the United Kingdom via Dunkirk. On his return to this Country until 1944, he served with various Coastal Units of the Royal Artillery, being commissioned in November 1941. In 1944, he was transferred to the Beds and Herts Regiment for infantry training, before joining 1/6th Bn. The Queen's Royal Regiment in Normandy in June 1944. Albert returned to the U.K. with the Battalion in December 1944, and later was posted to 2nd Bn. The Wiltshire Regiment for service in Germany, until his discharge in July 1946. He was awarded the Efficiency Decoration (Territorial).

On his return to civilian life he took up a career in accountancy with the Cambridge Instrument Company, later moving on to Richard Thomas and Baldwin (British Steel), where he advanced his career until he retired. Sailing the Norfolk Broads and cruising the Inland Waterways were among his many interests, which also included sport and music. Among his favourites were the works of Gilbert and Sullivan and Mozart.

After the tragic death of his wife, Betty in 1992, he turned to another of his interests, playing Bridge. It was here that he met Dorothy, whom he married in 1993.

An active member of the 6th (Bermondsey) Bn. The Queen's Royal Regiment Old Comrades Association, he has been their Auditor for many years. A gentleman in all respects, he will be sorely missed by those who knew him.

He is survived by his sons Clive and Peter, and his wife Dorothy.

MRN

Lieutenant M Langley

Michael Langley, who died on 1st January, was born on 23rd January 1933 and was educated at King's College School, Wimbledon and King's College University where he studied Law.

Joining the Army as a National Serviceman in 1953 he served firstly in The Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders and then in 1954 in the 4th Battalion Nigerian Regiment, Royal West African Frontier Force before being commissioned in 1955 into The East Surrey Regiment with whom he served until 1957. Later, from 1961-65 he served in the Territorial Army with the 21st SAS Regiment.

In civilian life he was engaged in law at Grays Inn and also served in the Colonial Service as a District Officer in Northern Rhodesia. A keen author he wrote eight non-fiction books, one of which was The History of The East Surrey Regiment as part of the Famous Regiments series. He contributed numerous articles to The Times, History Today and Commonwealth Development and a number of talks, mostly on African subjects. He was a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society. As well as writing and speaking he was interested in drawing and caricatures while in athletic spheres he played rugby and cricket and was a middle distance runner. Afflicted by

increasing blindness in his latter years, he nevertheless made a sponsored parachute jump in 1998 which raised more than £500 for the Royal National Institute for the Blind. Unmarried, he lived in the Reigate area for more than fifty years.

Lance Corporal H W Gibbs OBE



Harry Gibbs was one of Britain's most famous boxing referees, probably best remembered for awarding Joe Bugner a points verdict over Henry Cooper in their controversial heavyweight title fight in 1971. A popular and well respected man Harry was mourned by over 200 relatives, friends, colleagues and comrades at his funeral at Chelmsford Cathedral on November 29th 1999.

Harry was born Henry William Gibbs, in Bermondsey, South East London on October 3rd 1920. Harry came from a military background, his father Gus served in The Royal Navy as a stoker for over 18 years, before going to work in the docks after the First World War. Harry shared his happy, if poor, childhood with his four brothers and two sisters.

The young Harry was a keen sportsman. He enjoyed playing football. At eleven Harry joined the Oxford and Bermondsey Boys Club, where he learnt to box, as opposed to the street fighting he had previously indulged in. Upon leaving school at 14 Harry took on a variety of jobs. He worked as a vanboy, in the lime pits and trained as a French polisher, before following his fathers footsteps into the Docks.

In 1939, with war looming once again, Harry signed on with the Territorial Army at The Queens Drill Hall in Bermondsey, along with his friends from the Stansfield Boys Club. Following an annual camp Harry was called up as part of 1/6th Bn The Queens Royal Regiment, on 1st September 1939, and posted to B Company. On April 1st 1940 the battalion travelled to Cherbourg, France. After marching across France to the Belgium border the company fought in the trenches beside the Oudenarde Canal. After being over run by German soldiers most of the company was forced to surrender on the 21st May. As the prisoners were marched to Brussels Harry's initial priority was to take care of his boyhood friend George Tucker who had been shot in the ankle. Harry, frightened by stories of the Germans shooting the wounded, assisted and carried George for many days.

Eventually Harry arrived at his first prisoner of war camp at Bremen Wurde, Sandbostel. He was later moved to Stalag XXB at Marienberg, Poland. As a prisoner of war Harry's indubitable fighting spirit culminated in him making three brave escape attempts.

In 1945, as the Russians advanced the prisoners were forced to march across Poland. After two days Harry and his comrades Sonny Richards and George Merritt made a run for it, before being captured and imprisoned once again. After the prison was liberated by the Guards Armoured Division, Harry was initially transported to Brussels, before being flown home. After five long years in captivity he returned to Bermondsey for a joyful reunion with his family.

Back in London Harry resumed his boxing career. Unfortunately the terrible years as a prisoner of war had taken their toll on his stamina, forcing Harry to retire from professional boxing after just seven fights, six of which he won. Ever resourceful Harry decided to put his boxing skills to good use and became a boxing instructor, later elevated to an England coach. A talented coach, he spent 14 years teaching

the true amateurs of Belsize Boxing club, loving every minute of it.

In 1957 Harry was granted his referees license, quickly gaining the respect of his peers. In a referring and judging career that spanned more than thirty years, Harry travelled all over the world, refereeing all the greats, including Ali, Frazier, Ray Robinson, Emile Griffith, Conteh and Buchanan. Harry holds the record of rising from the beginner 'B' class official to Star grade 'A' Referee, in four years.

Reg Gutteridge, the boxing commentator, remembers Harry judging when Buchanan became world champion in Los Angeles and there were still aftershocks of an earthquake. "Don't mean nothing son, when you've been through a war." Harry said. A patriotic man Harry was honoured to be awarded the OBE for his services to boxing and his work for charity, in February 1976. He often recalled his visit to Buckingham Palace as the second proudest day of his life. The proudest day of his life being August 31st 1946, the day he married his beautiful wife Phyllis.

Harry Gibbs OBE died suddenly on the 15th November 1999, whilst on holiday in Spain with his wife Phyllis. He was 79 years old. Harry is sadly missed by Phyllis, his daughter Sheila and grandchildren Nicola and Matthew.

LW

Susteren remembered

From 10th January 1945 onwards Operation Blackcock was launched in an effort to bring the Allied line up to the River Roer in the Netherlands on a front of about twelve miles. The leading part was to be played by the 7th Armoured Division, with the 8th Armoured Brigade and the 155th Brigade of the 52nd Division under its command.

Between January 16th and 20th the 1/5th Queen's attacked the village of Susteren from the west, approaching from Gebroek and across the Vloed Beek. Weather conditions were bad and it was impossible even to get 6-pounder anti-tank guns across the dykes. As The Queen's commenced the crossing of the Beek they came under heavy counter-attack by Spandau teams which were thankfully repulsed although heavy casualties resulted.

B Company under Major J E Evans gained a foothold in the northern part of Susteren. Subjected to further counter attacks by enemy infantry and tanks, the Queen's held on, again with heavy losses. Major Evans was severely wounded.

Susteren was later liberated but the grateful villagers never forgot the gallant action of The Queen's.

A framed embroidery in the Regimental Museum at Clandon Park is itemised as being "*presented by the Dutch village of Susteren in gratitude for its liberation by B Coy 1/5 Queen's under Major John Evans DSO after heavy fighting on 17th January 1945*". In Susteren itself a school is named R K Basisschool "Major Evans" in recognition of his gallantry and leadership. A touching tribute by the headmaster, staff and children of the school is shown in a letter to Major and Mrs Evans on the occasion of their Diamond Wedding anniversary, congratulating them and covering the forwarding of presents in the form of a drawing of the school and a work of art representing the narrowest part of Holland, the municipality of Susteren, the so called waist.

By special request of the "*Harmonie St Cecilia*" the Headquarters of Army Music at Kneller Hall supplied them with the full musical score of Braganza. Latest reports showed that the band, 60-70 strong, was learning to play it.

Susteren has indeed remembered its liberators and benefactors.

Always somebody's son, always somebody's child

Between 1914 and 1918 over one and a half million British and Dominion servicemen, and women, lost their lives in what is now commonly known as the First World War. The greatest part of this enormous cost, in terms of human sacrifice, was claimed on the European mainland along a continuous line of trenches, breastworks and highly fortified positions stretching over 700 miles from the Belgian coast to the Swiss frontier - The Western Front.

Utilising the Michelin 1:100000 overprinted touring maps, whereupon every Commonwealth War Graves Commission cemetery is marked, the old Western Front appears as an unbroken purple necklace of sorrow.

As an author/Great War historian dedicated to perpetuating the memory of those who gave their lives, and the actions they took part in in the service of their country, it has been my privilege to annually conduct small group tours to the cemeteries, memorials and battlefields of Flanders and Picardy at Armistice time. For the most part those who I accompany are first time visitors but, no matter how many times one visits the large cemeteries and memorials of the Somme and Ypres Salient, both are breathtaking and emotionally devastating - the sacrifice too much to comprehend. Explaining the actions that brought these places into being helps to give them perspective but the question remains an accusatory "Why?".



In November 1999 marking the last Armistice of the Millennium we visited over 70 cemeteries in France and Belgium where a short explanation of the actions that took place thereabouts was given and many individual graves visited. The most emotive part of this tour (according to later testimony) was our attendance at the Menin Gate Memorial to the Missing of the Ypres Salient on the morning of the 11th where we took part in the Services of Remembrance and wreath laying at 11am.

The Menin Gate records the names of 54,896 officers and men who fell in the defence of Ypres to whom the fortunes of war denied the known and honoured burial given to their comrades in death. Many of these drowned in a sea of liquid mud their bodies sucked down deep below the desolation of the battlefields hereabouts, others were simply blown to pieces and scattered on the winds. Many, however, lie buried in the nearby cemeteries beneath a Portland headstone simply engraved '**A Soldier of The Great War. Known unto God**'.

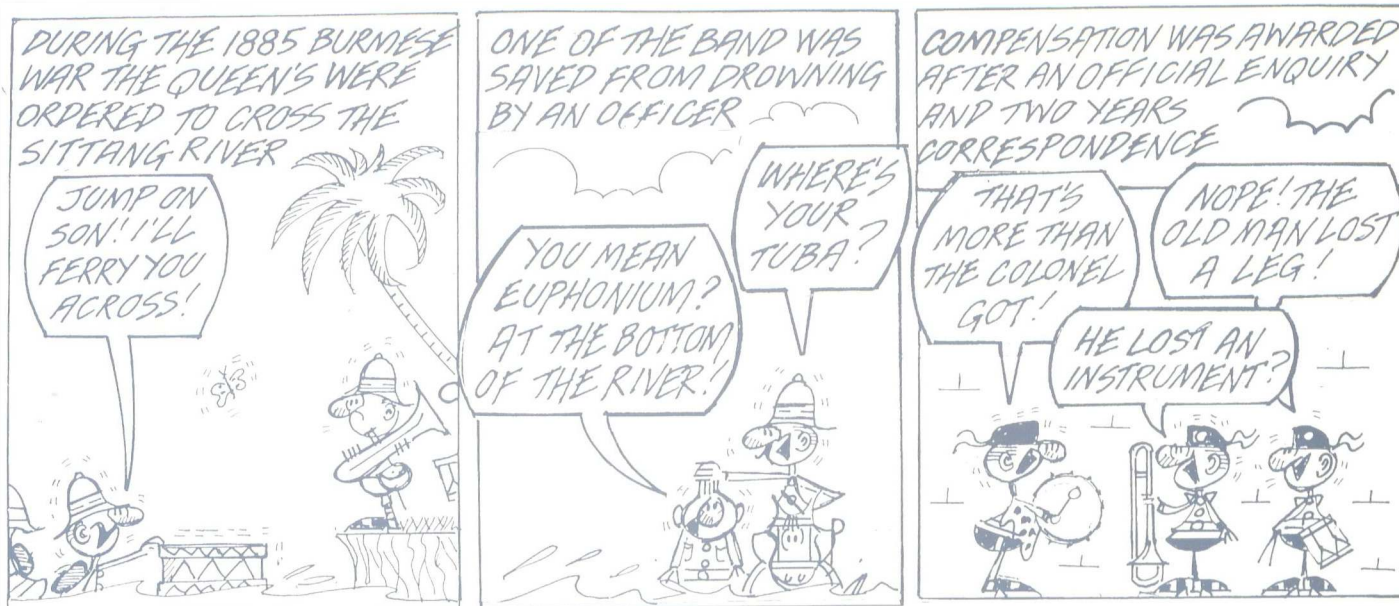
Everytime I visit the memorials and silent cities of the dead, these Unknowns always bring to mind the words Field Marshal Sir Hubert Plumer used in July 1927 when he inaugurated the Menin Gate "*He is not missing he is here*".

Always somebody's son, always somebody's child.

PRC

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Regimental history as seen by G Robinson



Back cover: Drums and Silver at Dover Castle

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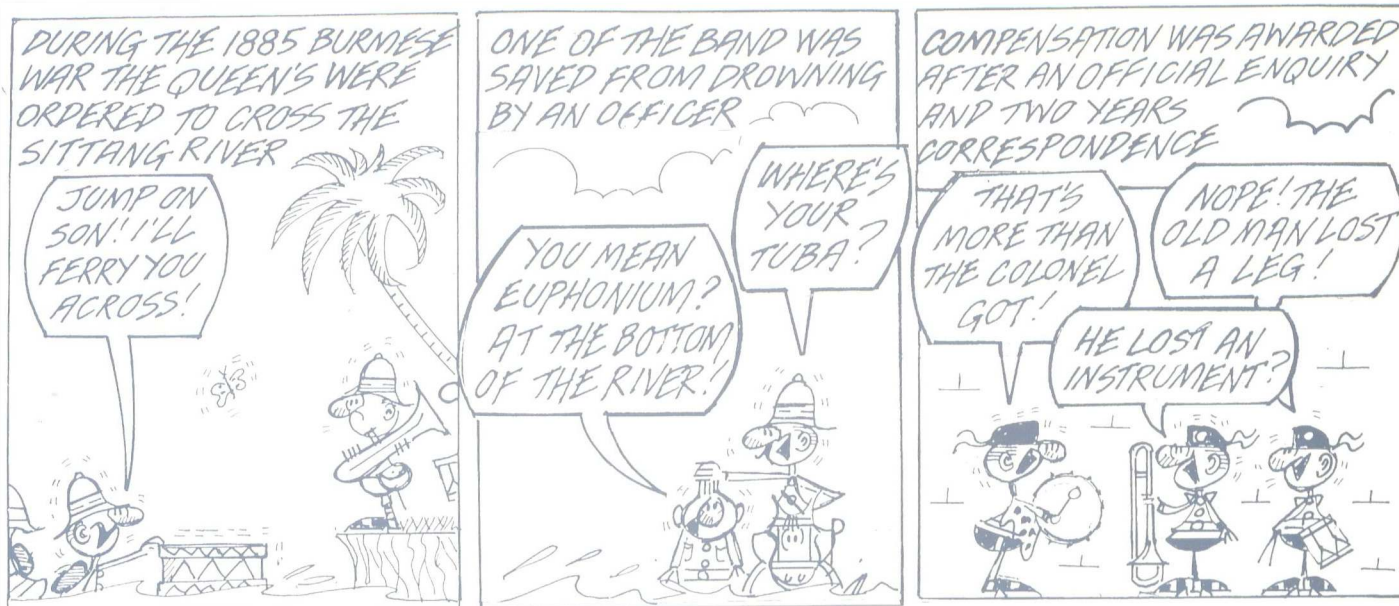
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