

NOVEMBER 2006

THE QUEEN'S ROYAL SURREY REGIMENT ASSOCIATION



NUMBER 80

President
Colonel A. C. Ward OBE

Chairman
Lieutenant Colonel F. B. Herd TD JP DL

Association Secretary and Editor
Major A. W. Russell MBE

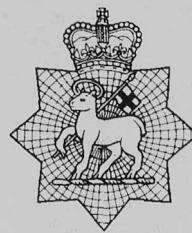
Benevolence Secretary
Major J. C. Rogerson

Association correspondence to:
42 Lincoln Drive
Pyrford
Woking
Surrey GU22 8RR

Telephone/Fax: 01932 344150
E-mail:
secqueensroyalsurreys@hotmail.co.uk
Regimental website:
www.queensroyalsurreys.org.uk

NEWSLETTER





Forecast of Events

2006

20th December

BRITISH BATTALION DAY (1941).

10th February

SOBRAON DAY (1846).

18th March

The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Museum Re-Opens.

19th March

The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Association, Charity Trustees and Officers' Club Meetings – Clandon (change to forecast date).

29th March

The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Museum Trustees Meeting - Clandon.

22nd April

The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Museum Open Day for Regimental members.

23rd April

YPRES DAY (1915).

26th April

The East Surrey Regiment Officers' Club Lunch.

3rd May

Regimental Golf Society Spring Meeting – Sudbrook Park.

16th May

ALBUHERA DAY (1811).

21st May

President's Reception for the Mayors of Surrey – Clandon.

(date tbc)

5 Queen's OMA Annual Dinner – Farnham. Details from: I Chatfield, 13 Wood Road, Farncombe, Surrey GU7 3NN.

1st June

THE GLORIOUS FIRST OF JUNE (1794).

17th June

The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Association Annual Church Service - Guildford Cathedral 1130 a.m.

1st August

MINDEN DAY.

9th September

SALERNO DAY.

1st October

The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Officers' Club Ladies' Luncheon - Clandon.

10th October

Regimental Golf Society Autumn Meeting - Woking.

October (date tbc)

The East Surrey OCA Reunion.

2nd November

The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Association Annual Reunion - Union Jack Club.

20th December

BRITISH BATTALION DAY (1941).

President's Notes

The end of 2006 will be the 40th Anniversary of the formation of The Queen's Regiment. I well remember the day in Munster when the 1st Battalion The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment paraded for the last time. It was bitterly cold and as we marched off parade we noticed that the Assault Pioneers had changed all the signs to read 1st Battalion The Queen's Regiment (Queen's Surreys). Thus the title The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment only existed for some 7 years. That such strong bonds exist even forty years later owes much to the leadership of many. Some of those leaders are no longer with us and though always invidious to name individuals (for fear of offending those not mentioned) tribute must be given to Colonel Toby Sewell and Lieutenant Colonel Les Wilson. Both over the years have done so much to keep our Regimental family together, and our history and traditions alive, not to mention the establishment of our museum.

Your Association seeks to preserve our unique family spirit. We are more fortunate than many other Regiments who were amalgamated at that time in that financially we are not poor – the Regimental Charity has investments worth some £2.1 million. It is the Trustees' objective to ensure that our top priority is benevolence. Elsewhere in this Newsletter is an article reminding how your Association can assist any of you who find yourself, or your dependant, in difficulties.

The second objective of the Trustees is arranging opportunities to maintain comradeship and friendship. Friends are one of the most important things in life. Do make every effort to come to the various reunions and our Cathedral Service. Perhaps branches could arrange a coach? Your Association can also consider helping with the branches' travel costs. Do contact the secretary. The sermon at the June 2007 Cathedral service will be given by Colonel Rev Peter Hewlett-Smith who I first met nearly 50 years ago when Hugh Greatwood was our platoon commander and Paddy Hanagan was our platoon sergeant!!

Gill and I wish you all a very merry Christmas and a happy 2007.

Tony Ward



2007

Benevolence

Each edition of the Newsletter reports on the benevolent support which has been provided by the Regimental Charity and from other sources. In the first nine months of this year RHQ PWRR disbursed over £20,000 in benevolent support to individuals on our behalf.

However, it is apparent from time to time that not all who could be eligible are aware of the support which may be available.

WE ARE HERE TO HELP

Please remember and tell your dependant that there are many Service Charities, including your Regimental Charity, that are available to help if you, or your dependant, are in any kind of difficulties. Don't be hesitant to ask for advice or help; after all most of you will have contributed to Service Charities and even if you haven't you may still be eligible for help if you have served for more than one day, including the Reserve and TA.

Assistance can be provided in a wide range of circumstances: help with Care Home fees, small annuities (including £12 p.w. RBL widows allowance), stair lifts, electric buggies, holidays, funeral expenses, debts and debt advice, help obtaining State benefits, legal expenses, housing advice, new cookers, fridges and other white goods, care phones and many other eventualities.

To get help you should contact either:

our Secretaries, John Rogerson 01227 818053 or Tony Russell 01932 344150, or,

your local SSAFA or British Legion Branch (telephone number in phone book or ask at your local Citizens Advice Bureau).

They will arrange for your local SSAFA representative to visit you, who will confidentially complete a report detailing your circumstances. He/she will then approach your Association and other Service Charities to provide the assistance identified. Help can be arranged very quickly. Even if you don't require help now keep this article handy and ensure your dependant sees it; a leaflet is also enclosed with this Newsletter.

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Museum News

(by Ian Chatfield)

During the past year the Museum has received some really interesting medal groups very kindly donated by the descendants of the recipients. These groups include a Military Medal and WW1 trio awarded to L/Cpl H C Mills of the 8th Bn The East Surrey Regiment awarded for action at Cheras in May 1917 donated by his nephew Mr David Mills.



Presenting the medals of L/Cpl Mills



L/Cpl Barrett MM in 1917

A third Military Medal group was donated by the two daughters of Arthur Moss another East Surrey soldier who was awarded the MM for repeatedly risking his own life to deliver messages and saving wounded comrades whilst under fire.

Another interesting group donated by the recipient's son are from a local man, Arthur Hayden who volunteered for The Queen's Royal Regiment and served first in India then on to South Africa for the Boer War. Arthur took his discharge in 1908 having served nine years but was recalled to the colours in 1914 and served until 1916 when he lost an arm and was medically discharged: but Arthur made little of his disability and continued to lead a normal life as a gardener and gamekeeper. We have also

received the medals of Lt R Edwards (Queen's), Cpl H W Smith (East Surrey and RAF), Pte F Matthews (East Surrey), L/Cpl Eatwell (East Surrey), Pte J Wright and Pte J O'Donnell (East Surrey), Lt B L S Rich TD (Queen's), Pte E J Scriven (Queen's), and Sgt F W Griffin (Queen's and RASC).

To discover the stories behind the award of these medals please visit the museum where we will be pleased to see you and tell you all we know about the recipients and their medals.

The Museum closed for the winter on 29th October but we are still in attendance should you need items from the shop. "Open Day" for Regimental Association members and their families next year will be on 22nd April when we very much hope you will be able to come to visit your Museum.

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THE PRINCESS OF WALES'S ROYAL REGIMENT

(by Major A J Martin)

With battles raging on two fronts with Iraq and Afghanistan, the services are rarely off the front pages of all newspapers. With our scarce resources, limited manpower and failing equipment it is amazing how efficient we are proving. The resourcefulness and bravery of the British soldier has always won the day and this seems to be evident. At last the senior officers also seem to be supporting the soldiers where in this open society the press run rampant over every day actions, sometimes supporting us, other times not too complimentary. We wait and see how the recent turmoil reflects in deployment and senior managerial skills!

The 1st Battalion is in Iraq. They deployed in May 2006 and return in November 2006.



The tour has been characterised by change. Op Telic 8 was advertised as the tour that would realise force level reductions and this would be achieved through transition in the provinces to Iraqi control. Al Muthanna province

was transferred in July 2006. Dhiqar transferred in September and Maysan will eventually be handed over to Provincial Iraqi Control (PIC). It is a difficult period and is by no means completely successful. Force levels reductions have not been achieved. The Battalion has conducted border operations, escort duties and even rescued an Iraqi Army Battalion that was mutinying and disintegrating. After a short time the backbone was put back in them. Operations continue in Basra City: in one contact for 3 hours – 3000 rounds were expended – unaccountable numbers of enemy killed.



On return the battalion will move back to Paderborn and hopefully have a quiet 2007 – no tours are planned (at present!).

The 2nd Battalion is in Ballykelly (NI). HQ 8 Brigade moved out in August 2006 and now the battalion is under command 39 Inf. Bde. Force levels have reduced and by 1st August 2007 the war will be officially over. No more medals (GSM), no more extra finance. The province should revert to pre 1969 force levels and life??!

The battalion obviously continues at a high state of readiness, manning a permanent post in Londonderry and always on standby. They sent a company group to the Falklands Island in July/August, which made an interesting break.

They have recently trained as a battalion at Stanford Training Area – a rare feat in today's overstretched army.

Ballykelly is an old air force base – called Shakleton Barracks after the Shakleton aircraft which was based there during their Submarine Atlantic Search Missions during the Cold War. It was with surprise that they saw a Ryan Air passenger plane land on the closed airport one morning. The pilot had confused the airstrip with Londonderry. After an amusing scene the passengers were bussed out and the plane removed by a different pilot!

The battalion will remain there until the end of 2007 and then move to Cyprus for a 2-year tour.

The 3rd Battalion has increased in size. They have now inherited the Company at Portsmouth, which is now called 'D' Company. This Company has lost the IOW platoon to the RLC. The Battalion has also been authorised to form up a new Company in Rochester. This is excellent news but it will all take a bit of time to consolidate. The Battalion had a very successful annual camp in Okehampton and have at present up to 30 All Ranks serving with 1 PWRR in Iraq. There are constant manpower demands on the Battalion, which is coping very well and recruiting well.

'B' Company the **London Regiment** is now administered and run by the **Guards Division**. They are still capbadged PWRR but sport the Guards Divisional Flash on their uniforms. It seems to be working and poaching has not taken place! Annual Camp this year was in France at La Courtine in the Massif Central. This was training for Somme Company, which will be a composite Company that will deploy with the 12 Mechanical Brigade to Iraq in Spring 2007. Members of 'B' Company will be part of that Company.

The Regiment is in good form. Recruiting is a problem and everyone is working at it. We are under strength along with everyone else. A strong effort is being made to make up the shortfall.

Pte Beharry VC is now an L/Cpl having been promoted in October 2006. He is still Y listed and will soon commence work with the Central Recruiting organisation in London. He recently published his own book, which is good reading.

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Presentation of Colours: 22nd April 1960

(The following extract from the historical report of 1st Bn The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment describes the day; photographs are from the Regimental Archive)

A glorious sunny spring morning dawned for a day looked forward to for so long by everyone concerned in the preparations. Some 1500 guests were expected and began to arrive about 0930hrs. Thanks to the RAC's road signs and the police, traffic to the four car parks flowed easily; once cars were inside the camp, the many ushers took over and guided guests quickly from their cars to the parade ground. A large seating stand had been erected by the Assault Pioneers from materials supplied by the REs. His Royal Highness Prince Philip arrived by Heron at Honington at 1015hrs and with a police escort reached camp at about 1040hrs. Most of the guests were already seated by this time and at 1045hrs the senior guests arrived: these included:

General & Mrs Riches

General & Lady Dowler

General & Mrs Hobbs

General & Mrs Hughes
General & Mrs Talbot
General & Mrs Vesay
General & Mrs Kendrew
General & Mrs Whitfield
Brig & Mrs Roupell
General & Mrs Batten
Capt & Mrs Dalgleish RN
Lt Col Davies – Queen's York Rangers
Major Ray – South Alberta Lt Horse Regt

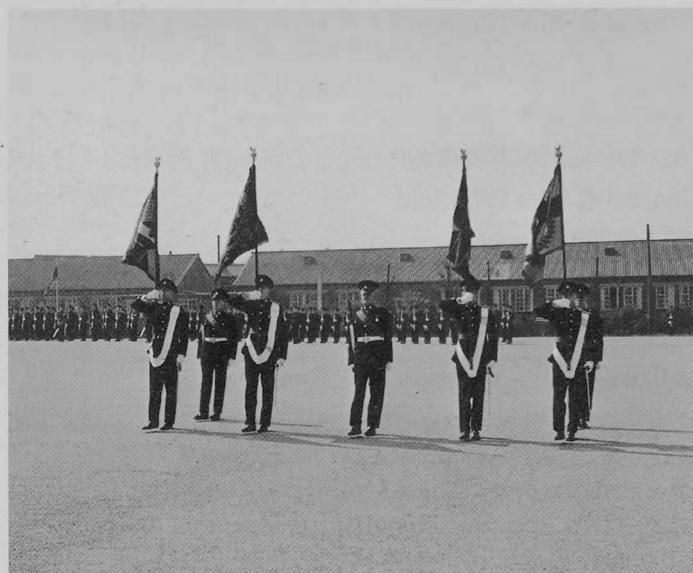
The last two mentioned, Col Davies and Maj Ray, had come from Canada specially for the parade. They are members of the affiliated Regiments, the Queen's York Rangers and the South Alberta Light Horse Regiment respectively.

Just before 1100hrs Gen Lathbury, the Army Commander, came on parade. He was greeted with a general salute. At exactly 1100hrs HRH Prince Philip came onto parade with Gen Metcalfe, the Colonel of the Regiment.



Still in sunshine, the parade, the men in No 1 Dress blues and white buff, the Sgts with their crimson sashes and the Officers in ceremonial, were called to attention by the Commanding Officer for the Royal Salute. After an inspection during which HRH spoke to a few of those on parade, the four old Colours were trooped and it was a sad and moving experience, a few minutes later, to watch them march off parade for the last time.

It was the simplicity of the farewell which made such an impression: the band playing Auld Lang Syne and the four subalterns, completely alone, slow marching away to join the escort.



The Old Colours are slow-marched off to "Auld Lang Syne"

It was a most telling moment when suddenly the sadness at seeing the death of two Regiments became joy as the New Colours were uncased for the first time. They were consecrated by the five Chaplains, the ACG, Rev HLO Davies & Revs Bown, Barrett, Houghton and Wade. These last three are the Bn Chaplains resident in Bury.

Prince Philip then handed the Colours to Lts Trotman and Ridger who rejoined the parade for the March Past.



Prince Philip then spoke to the Parade.

It was generally agreed that the parade was of the highest standard and amply rewarded everyone for their hard work.

As soon as the parade ended, Prince Philip returned to the Officers' Mess with the Senior Guests and then, at his request, drove in an open Army Champ to the town for lunch at the Athenaeum. A huge number turned out to cheer him, en route, and were well rewarded when HRH stood up in the Champ to wave to them.

On arrival at the Athenaeum, the Officers of the Bn were presented to Prince Philip as were many other guests, both civil and military. Lunch for HRH was arranged upstairs with the Colonel of the Regiment, the Commanding Officer and the senior officers of the Regiment with the Generals who attended the parade. Prince Philip left about 1415hrs and returned to Honington.

During the remainder of the afternoon, preparations were made for the Sgts Mess Ball and the Beating of Retreat. The latter took place at 2015hrs on Angel Hill and was really the Regiment's farewell to Bury. It was an exceedingly fine performance, though the Band & Drums now numbering 72 must have been very short of room. Once the performance was over, guests went to the Athenaeum once again transformed to a Ballroom. This was the end of a most memorable day – enjoyed by all who had a hand in making it such a success.

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Recollections of the Battle of Medenine

(Medenine, 140 miles from Tripoli, was described by Field Marshal Montgomery as a model battle. Between 4-7th March 1943 the Queen's Bde supported by 22 Armd Bde, both of 7th Armd Div (Desert Rats), fought off a series of determined German counter attacks.

At first light on 7th March the ground before the infantry positions was littered with wrecked enemy tanks. There were 27 alone in front of 1/7th Queen's. The infantry anti-tank crews, unprotected by either mines or wire, had fought with great valour. No. 5 gun of 1/7th Queen's (Sgt Andrews) claimed eight tanks and No. 7 gun (Sgt Crangles) fourteen. Both NCOs were awarded the DCM. The outcome of the battle allowed the 8th Army to secure the approach to the Mareth Line.

Harry Odgaard, who died on 9th July 2006, was a member of the crew of No. 7 gun. After the war he changed his name from Odgaard to Peterson (his father Hans Peter Odgaard was from Norway) when he became distressed at continually being accused of being a German. The following passage was his recollections of the action at Medenine.)

MEDENINE 6 MARCH 1943

Number 7 gun

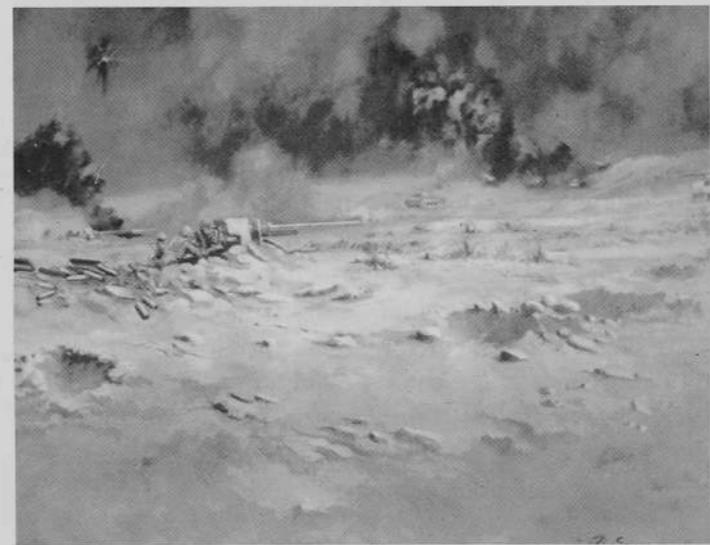
- No. 1 Sgt J (Paddy) Crangles
- No. 2 Pte Harry Odgaard (Peterson) - Loader
- No. 3 Pte Noel Falls-Phillips - Layer
- No. 4 Pte Spreckley - Ammunition
- No. 5 Pte Smith (Smudger) - Ammunition & Bren Gun
- No. 6 Pte Chadwick - Driver

We had been told the previous night that we could expect a German attack the next morning and accordingly we stood-to earlier and did not stand-down, although Paddy Crangles sent Smudger and Spreckley to brew up and cook the burgoo whilst Paddy, Phil and I remained by the gun. Jerry started shelling, not heavily and not particularly close to us but enough to confirm that something was going to happen.

I think that a platoon, or what was supposed to be a platoon (I think there were about 18 men) was dug in just to our left and a few yards forward: presumably the right flank platoon of 1/6th Queen's. Sergeant Vincent's gun was on top of the wadi to our left and rear. I expect this was to cover our right flank because although we had a good forward field of fire we did not have a full traverse to our right and ultimately this proved to be our undoing. Anyway, to proceed, the shelling became steadily heavier then tanks could be heard approaching. (I must point out at this stage of the proceedings that we still had the camouflage net on the gun and were well concealed as the net was a very fine sand coloured net and our emplacement was very sandy as we were to experience to our cost later).

At this juncture Smudger Smith shouted "Burgoo's ready". Paddy said "Sod the burgoo - get to the gun". We removed the net, loaded and waited not long and then we joined action.

Paddy was great, he let the tanks come very close then we fired the first round — the gun roared in a cloud of sand and the trails dug in well.



We continued to fire and then the tanks got onto us and we were blown out of the gunpit. I received a small but very painful wound in the inside of my left thigh. We got back into the gunpit; the gun was undamaged but the shield had several holes and it was being nibbled away just like a mouse nibbles cheese — it fascinated me.

Now our troubles really began: I was finding it harder to load because, as I said previously, it was very sandy and the breech was very difficult to open and close. In fact, to close the breech I had to lie on my back and kick it

like hell; added to which I had to get more ammunition from the ammunition pit as Smudger and Spreckley were otherwise engaged.

We were again blown out of the gunpit and again the gun was still able to be fired but I was finding it harder to close the breech and the strange thing is that I was cursing and shouting at the bloody breech yet I couldn't hear a word I said nor did I hear what Paddy or Phil were saying at any time.

I think I saw Sgt Vincent's gun fire once or it may have been a shell exploding by his gun, at any rate time was running out for us.

Now came the moment of truth. As I have said earlier we did not have a full traverse to our right as the ground rose and although I think we were able to get round we could not depress the gun low enough to engage a tank which had come along a track practically on top of us - there was a tremendous explosion and we received a direct hit on the recuperating springs and again we were blown out of the gunpit; fortunately none of us was hurt (I think Sgt Crangles would be able to tell what happened when we were knocked out but I think if Sgt Vincent's gun had been in action he would have covered our right). We dived into an ammunition pit with our rifles and every time we moved this tank opened up with its machine gun.

What happened after that is just a haze. I remember being blown up - my trousers torn from me in the process - gushes of blood - Phil putting my First Field Dressing on a huge hole on the inside of my right thigh and a numbness round my genitals and me thinking that I had lost my manhood and then being with the Jerries and in the bag - which is another story.

I would like to say that I think Sgt Crangles was magnificent - I understand he got the DCM: it should have been the VC. Old Phil, he kept going as dependable as ever; I never saw Smudger or Spreckley during the action but from the accounts I have read elsewhere they did some handy work with the Bren.

You know, considering we were infantrymen with a gun we had only once fired in practice, we didn't do too bad but I think that the discipline which we had instilled in us enabled me personally to overcome the fear barrier and kick hell out of that bloody breech.

(Despite his injuries, as a PoW Harry made constant efforts to escape, finally crossing over the mountains in Austria. He was to suffer for the rest of his life as a result of his injuries and experiences.)

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Surrender in North Africa

(In 2005 Maureen Creek edited and published "John Creek's Story" based on a manuscript written by her late husband who had died in March 2001. The book covers his life prior to retirement to Italy and includes a number of reminiscences about his experiences in the Army. After finishing in a "reserved occupation", John Creek had been called up in 1941 as a private soldier.



He was subsequently commissioned into The Queen's Royal Regiment and for a time served with 2/7th Battalion. He was demobbed in early 1946 as a Lieutenant Colonel and went on to have a successful business career. The following passage from "John Creek's Story" recounts the surrender in N Africa in May 1943; he was Adjutant 2/7th at the time.)

The campaign in North Africa was now clearly drawing towards its close. At the time we had on our left General Le Clerc's Senegalese troops, tall, muscular, black and shiny. They were collectors of wrist watches and many of them had four or five on each arm which they had taken from enemy they had killed or taken prisoner. Their arrival in our area of operations had led to my being called upon to furnish a French speaking Lieutenant to serve as a liaison officer between General Le Clerc's troops and our Divisional Headquarters. I had such a Lieutenant available, a quiet Cambridge graduate, who jumped at the job with visions, I believe, of drinking wine in the evenings and perhaps even sharing a little foie gras and so on in the Mess. When he came back from the assignment, however, he was nervous and quite pale. He did not say much about the Senegalese but we gathered he had been living on things like lizards and nuts and other rather esoteric dishes and that French wine had been notable for its absence.

Behind us was the splendid 4th Indian Division, with two British Brigades and two Indian Brigades. It was from this Division that I was informed that a Gurkha fighting patrol would pass through our battalion one night at exactly midnight and return exactly two hours later. The forward companies had to be warned not to fire on them or interfere with their passage. The Gurkhas certainly passed through us that night, outgoing and again in return; but not a single officer or man in our battalion reported seeing anything of them on either journey. Further back, returning to their unit, they displayed quite a collection of

enemy heads that they had kukried off and carried back as evidence that their fighting patrol had been successful.

We thought that these particular Gurkhas might have been the reason for the remarkable message which passed between the German High Command and the Eighth Army Command during the next forty eight hours. My battalion was involved in two message carrying incidents between the opposing Forces. The afternoon after the Gurkhas had passed through our lines, I was rung up from Brigade and told to expect a liaison officer from Division to deliver to us a German POW during the afternoon. He was carrying a message from Army Headquarters to the Axis Command proposing that they should accept surrender terms.

The German private duly arrived, surly to a degree. He had been given a white flag and was to be put through our forward company at first light and headed out through the minefield in the wadi in front of us towards the Axis lines.

The early morning part of the exercise was carried out without any problem. But there was a hazy mist over no man's land at first light and the German wandered far off his line. Not long on his way, he stumbled across a British sergeant of a neighbouring Brigade who had taken part in a recent attack on that flank and who was now lying out in a shell hole with a badly damaged leg which had not even allowed him to crawl in alone. The sergeant pulled the unarmed German messenger into his shell hole as he was passing by with his white flag held up high and held him there at Tommy gun point throughout the day until evening, when he made the German pull him back into the British lines. Some time during the long hours there had been something of a skirmish and the German POW had a black eye to show for it when he was eventually taken back to Brigade and then to Division.

The following morning another instruction came down to us from Brigade. Another attempt was to be made to get the message through, this time with two message carriers, the same German and an Italian POW. They were delivered to me again at Tac HQ by mid afternoon, the German surlier than ever but the Italian highly delighted about the whole affair and full of smiles. I took the opportunity of practising my fairly elementary Italian on him and that amused him still further.

At first light next day they were both put through our forward lines but this time two of our Intelligence Section accompanied them into no man's land for a short way, after steering them through the minefield in the wadi. At that point a German machine gun opened up on the party, which scattered. Our men headed back to our own lines, but one of them perhaps too quickly: he stood on an S-mine in scrambling to avoid the machine gun bursts and was killed.

As we learned later, this time a message did come back. The German Commander of the Axis Forces replied that

as a professional soldier he could not and would not surrender. But he would at the same time ask that the Eighth Army Command would ensure that their coloured troops desisted in future from mutilating Axis troops. This could have been a reference to the Gurkhas' highly effective fighting patrols, which were clearly making the enemy more than nervous.

Whatever the effect of these interchanges of notes by hand of the enemy POWs ferrying back and forward, there was no doubt that surrender was imminent.

At ten o'clock on 13th May 1943 the Brigade Major, Desmond Gregory, rang me. "John, it's all over. Surrender today. Do you know how to take a surrender?"

"Exactly when is it all over?" I asked.

"From three o'clock this afternoon. No military action by the enemy or by us after that time. They will have to use the road, so they will be surrendering on your 'B' company front. I gather Chippy" (our CO's nickname) "isn't with you at the minute, but you've no problems about it, have you?"

"OK, Desmond. But how do you take a surrender?"

A silence. Then, "Oh, look it up in your Field Service Pocket Book, John. It will all be there."

The FSPB was a remarkable affair, a collection of clear, concise and painstakingly detailed pamphlets on any of a hundred or more situations in which one might find oneself in the Army, written to be clearly understood by the slowest moving mind of the most modest private soldier. I had pamphlets on how to strip a Bren gun; how to deal with a dead soldier's identity disc, pay book, private possessions if any; how to dig a latrine in boggy, rocky or sandy ground; and on scores of other military situations: a splendid 'vade mecum' – but no pamphlet on surrenders, offered or taken.

I rang Desmond at Brigade. "I know, I know," he said immediately. "I've been through it too. There isn't a pamphlet. I imagine what we should do is this" And we decided together how to make this a sufficiently important and effective if not exactly a festive occasion.

We set up posts on each side of the road a little ahead of our forward company and, fifty yards ahead of those, down the road towards the enemy, two similar posts; and fixed a Bren gun at each of the four posts. Between the forward and the second posts we marked out large squares with marking tape, where enemy troops would leave arms or other junk they might be carrying in.

The CO now showed up and together we reckoned that from our side we would probably be wise to expect, in rising order of importance of rank: our Brigadier; the Divisional Commander; the Corps Commander; and the Eighth Army Commander, Lieutenant-General Sir Bernard Freyberg VC, of the New Zealand Forces,

who was temporarily in command of the Eighth Army in General Montgomery's absence on the First Army front. Add a staff officer in support of each on the list and including the CO and myself, as we were the hosts on the ground, we looked like being a reception committee of, say, a dozen, of whom I would once again be the only non-field officer on parade.

Between eleven and twelve in the morning flights of American light bombers, nine at a time, had rained down hundreds of bombs along the top ridges of the escarpment, where so many 88mm guns were dug in and behind which mortars and some medium guns were in position, which had been lobbing over disconcerting stonks from time to time.

By ten minutes to three everybody was assembled and then just before three o'clock silence fell across the whole front except here and there in the hills where spasmodic explosions made it clear that, in defiance of the surrender document that had been signed, Axis formations were spiking their guns and making them unfit for any further use. In our reception area there had been some necessary salutes, some introductions and hand shakes. Then our party stood about in silence, a little on one foot and then on the other, watching a small black patch at the far end of the road from us, downhill to where it reached the foot of the escarpment. The black patch became bigger and bigger and then could be identified as a continuous stream, as the enemy troops started to march up the road towards us.

Suddenly the silence was broken, and alarmingly, by the sound of a shot from our left, inland and almost, it seemed, on a level with the line of our front. A gun had been fired, and no sooner had we heard the muzzle discharge than the shell went streaking over our heads, across the road and our front line on the right of the road, and landed in the sea. In a split second, the dozen members of the reception committee were all flat on the road on their stomachs; and then slowly and rather shamefacedly getting to their feet and dusting down their uniforms. The Brigadier bore down on the CO and me and wanted to know what the hell had happened: and hadn't I better find out, and quickly?

I commandeered a platoon commander and a posse of men from the flanking company and sent them off into the middle distance on my left. There were no more shots or alarms and excursions; and a lot of surrendering had been going on before we got any details of what had startled the reception group. Away on the left beyond our furthest company was a German 88mm gun emplacement whose crew wanted to get into the surrender act when they saw the troops marching up the road towards our front. But their gun emplacement was surrounded by minefields from which, since they knew they would never advance again, all their markings had been taken up so that anyone from our side making their way across that territory would be in trouble. The gun crew might perhaps have safely made their way to the rear, but they

wanted to come across more directly to join the surrender. They were not prepared to risk walking onto their own unmarked minefield and so they had put a round of solid anti-tank shot into their gun and fired it over the reception party's heads to draw attention to their plight.

They had succeeded. But they nearly got the CO and myself into hot water for insufficient security; and when these enemy gunners were eventually traced and brought in they were given a chilly reception.

When the approaching column was a short distance from our first reception set-up they halted and figures at the head of the column re-formed themselves before moving forward again. It then became clear that there were four or five in the van, General Messe, senior officer of the Italian troops, and General von Arnim, Commanding Officer of the now much reduced German element in the Axis forces still in North Africa, together with their supporting staff officers. In the past fortnight or so, with the Eighth Army holding the line beyond Enfideville and the First Army squeezing the Axis forces from the west, there had been mass enemy evacuations and attempted evacuations up northwards towards Tunis and Bizerta. The Germans had unhesitatingly evacuated their own troops and armour to the virtual exclusion of the troops of their partners, the Italians.

General Freyberg received the two Axis leaders, talked briefly with them and introduced some of the reception committee. Then the first surrendering group and some more senior Axis officers were moved back to transport that would take them away, first to interrogation and then to internment.

Before night fell thirty eight thousand prisoners passed along the road through our company lines, around ten thousand of them Germans and twenty eight thousand of them Italians. The number of surrendering senior officers reached a total of nearly forty. Officers of lower rank were separated out and escorted away in their turn. Non-commissioned officers remained with the Other Ranks and when later we accepted responsibility for them in prisoner of war cages these enemy NCOs were responsible for taking command and ensuring order.

All officers had been disarmed before being escorted away. Men dumped arms they carried into the areas we had laid down for them. For the most part that dealt with the German element; not a few Italians on the other hand brought in not only arms but ammunition boxes and all sorts of other carriers stuffed with food and sometimes the most curious personal kit with which they were often very unwilling to part.

The Germans were unemotional and accepted the whole operation as a military necessity. To many of the Italians, this was a much longed for end of the war. By the time they had got rid of their rifles they were already starting to see themselves no longer as serving soldiers but rather as out of work civilians, looking for food and medical

services. There was no actual singing but many of them were smiling broadly or laughing.

What impressed me perhaps most of all was the complete absence of any ill feeling towards the Germans and Italians by any of our officers or men, as far as I could see. Some wounded limped in, perhaps leaning heavily on a colleague, and immediately someone intervened and saw they were taken away carefully and handed over to the medical staff on duty. A few Italians gave a little trouble, but only because in their simplicity they feared they were going to be ill treated, perhaps shot out of hand. They were quickly reassured by the obviously non-hostile reception that awaited them.

To many of us it was a great mental relief. Whether we had been fighting only a short time, as in our case, or for many months, like the 4th Indian Division and the Highland Division and many scores of Eighth Army Armoured and other units, it was a moment when one could take off a steel helmet without feeling that one was perhaps taking a risk and when one did not have to wonder whether the aeroplane up above was ours or theirs. It was a moment when, however hard and long the struggle to come was to be, it was later and not just round the corner. It was a time for easing springs and for sitting back thankfully.

Steel helmets were off and more comfortable headgear was being worn. There was time for swimming and relaxing, but we immediately had two urgent tasks to carry out. One was the organisation and looking after some of the thirty eight thousand who had surrendered; the other was battlefield clearance.

The Geneva Convention, it appeared, called for prisoner of war cages one hundred metres square and surrounded by a two metre high barbed wire fence. We had the land area – a lot of it, desert on all sides – but not a foot of barbed wire for building cages. So we marked out squares one hundred metres each side by digging a little ditch with entrenching tools and at each of two opposite corners we put two Bren guns, as it were back to back, each covering one side of the perimeter. Into each square we put and held four thousand men: crowded, not luxurious, but room enough, and undoubtedly healthier than Belsen.

The cages were within reach of the sea, and every morning the enemy NCOs marched their men out to bathe. The Germans marched as they had fought, smartly, regularly in rank or file, obedient to the NCOs' commands. On the beach they faced the sea in long ranks, stripped off and marched into the sea in order, eventually coming out in reasonably orderly ranks when called upon to do so. The Italians were quite different. They had to have a section of the beach far enough from the Germans and they made their way down to the sea from their cages rather like a school crocodile, not particularly in step, not particularly taking any notice of the NCOs in charge of them, often holding hands and chattering like magpies. In the sea they were clearly there not so much to wash off dirt as to have a rollicking time knocking each other down and

generally making the best of the occasion. The crocodile back to the cages was even more disorganised.

One day the CO thought we had better give them something more to do and which would take them away from us and the area for a little longer time. They were all issued with haversack rations and the NCOs in charge were given a compass and instructions: leaving camp, they would march on a compass bearing for two hours and then on another bearing for another two hours, and so on. They would eat half way round the circle, as the compass readings were calculated to bring them round after eight hours' march in a circle back to the point from which they had left. They went off at staggered times and on differently plotted circles in the cool of the early morning and we looked forward to meeting them in at mid afternoon.

In the event, when the CO and I posted ourselves to watch them come in out of the desert so that the CO could take the salute from them as they went by, the first Germans were a little point on the horizon and marched in in good order virtually to the minute they were expected. Once again, the Italians were another matter. When first sighted they were something over half an hour behind their set time and they did not look much like a military unit. The NCOs completed the march and handed over their compasses but brought in very few men marching steadily in file. Fortunately the desert here was flat with no undulations for many miles around, so that those Italians who were a quarter of a mile or more behind at least knew in which direction to march, or amble, or stumble.

Even so, in the end it became something of a preoccupation for us, as there was a risk that some who had set out would not come back. If they did lose contact, the odds were not much in favour of their knowing well enough where to head for before nightfall. The Germans had all answered to roll call immediately they arrived back. But the Italians were reporting a few missing until the following morning, when two or three groups of two or three men came slowly back to the lines. We did not dare risk sending them out a second time: clearly the desert was too much for them.

Battlefield clearing was dangerous, with so many unmarked minefields all over the area, but it had its compensating interest. We captured a mobile bath unit which was an Italian issue. The tubing was of light gauge aluminium and the whole set-up could be carried by relatively few men and put together in half an hour. Any similar unit that we had come across from WD stores comprised heavy gauge galvanised steel tubes, massive joint pieces and fixtures, which needed considerable squads of men to tote round and various heavy keys and gadgets to assemble and hold the unit together.

In German lines we found some very fine advanced surgical kits apparently capable of making possible a range of operations in the field which were beyond the

means of our own medical services. A welcome find was an enormous stock of Westphalian cigars, thin little stinkers, but enough of them to supply every member of the battalion with a couple of cigars a day for two or three weeks. These, plus red wine which we managed to 'find' in a Tunisian village, enough to give each Other Rank half a pint a day to keep his cigars company, gave the troops the feeling that now there was no immediate fighting to be done they could live it up splendidly.

In an officers' mess emplacement we found a huge stock of excellent liver sausage paste, a welcome addition in our officers' mess. But the find which perhaps made us twitch more than anything was in a supply formation supporting a crack tank regiment. There were loaves of bread packed in greaseproof paper with each slice individually wrapped. These were a godsend to officers who were being victualled from India and Australia and who were not unaccustomed to getting the odd issue of weevil filled biscuits as standard rations. Lucky Strike Indian cigarettes had already succeeded in stopping some troops from smoking, perhaps for the rest of their lives, and Corio whisky from Australia had certainly turned many officers for life off any whisky which did not have its Scottish ancestry clearly marked on its label.

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The Courage Trophy

(by Lt Col Foster Herd)

Tony Russell asked me to write an article for the Newsletter about the Recce Platoon exploits in the Courage Trophy Competition. My recollections of the competition some 40 years ago are a little hazy, but still fill me with pride for the team I was lucky enough to lead on that weekend.

In 1961 London District decided to promote a Tough Training Competition in late March for all Territorial units within the London District, the Home Counties and East Anglia. The form of the competition changed little between 1961 and 1967, but in 1964 became known as The TA Marathon or The Courage Trophy on account of the trophy being presented by Courage Brewery. At the same time a new trophy was presented for the Chuck Wagon Competition by Home Counties Dairies.

Most of the teams taking part were either company teams or composite teams drawn from a battalion. In the early years the Competition was dominated by 10th Bn Parachute Regiment, but by 1963 the 3rd and 4th Bns Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment were becoming a major force, the 3rd Bn securing 4th place in 1963, and 2nd place in 1964. In 1965 the Competition was won by B Coy 4th Bn led by 2/Lt Omar Bhur, with the HQ Coy team led by Lt RM Arnold in second place. 10 Para's stranglehold on the Competition was finally broken!



2/Lt Bhur receiving the trophy

This account is about the Recce Pln, B Coy 3rd Bn Queen's Royal Surrey Regt. The Platoon team had been placed 13th out of 50 in 1963, 10th in 1964, and 4th in 1965. These were all very creditable performances considering we had always been at a disadvantage in the competition by having to select a team from a platoon of just 20. In 1966 however, as part of B Coy we were able to strengthen the team by including three members from other platoons in B Coy.

The team of 10 had to include one officer and one sergeant. All members had to wear and carry the prescribed kit plus rifle. This was checked at the start and throughout the weekend, and anything amiss would result in the points being lost. The marching element of six included the officer and sergeant. The 3 ton vehicle driver with the three remaining members in an Austin Champ made up the Chuck Wagon party.

The team having been driven on Saturday morning in the 3 tonner to Biggin Hill, now split up. The Chuck Wagon element, joined by the 3 ton driver, moved to Mereworth Woods to set up the night bivouac area, cook an evening meal for ten to a prescribed menu, with raw ingredients supplied to the overnight venue by the Army Catering Corps. The Champ driver meanwhile was required to undertake a cross country driving test.

The marching section started from Biggin Hill on Saturday morning covering the 12 mile course in under 3 hours. We then fired the range course and marched a further 8 miles in under 2 hours to the night bivouac area. After the evening meal of brown stew and dumplings, followed by rice pudding, all ten competed in the night compass march, starting at 20.30 and finishing at around midnight.

Sunday morning saw an early start. The 3 tonner, carrying the marching element, plus the Champ with Chuck Wagon crew on board, undertook a vehicle map reading rally, passing through a number of check points, to Richmond Park.

The marching group then took part in another forced march across the Park to the Windmill on Wimbledon

Common. There we completed an assault course before marching on to Clapham Common where we made a water crossing in inflatable dinghies over one of the lakes. Having crossed the lake we were immediately involved in a two point stretcher suspension rescue operation from the top of a building. It was then on at full speed to the finishing line at the Duke of York's Headquarters in Chelsea. We completed the 12 mile march within the 3 hour limit, and were greeted by the Chuck Wagon crew whom we had last seen at Richmond Park.

The rest is history. The team won not only The Courage Trophy, awarded to the overall points winner, but also the HCD Cup for the best team in the Chuck Wagon Competition. The cups were presented to us by Field Marshal Lord Alexander of Tunis. To my knowledge we are the only team to date in the history of the Competition to win both cups.

Forty years on, my abiding memory of the event was of my Sergeant, Joe Nugent taking off his boots, full of blood, to reveal no skin on the soles of his feet. Plus the support of the wives and girl friends who followed us in a bus from Clapham Common, stopping at various points to cheer us on. It was a real family effort, which typified the esprit de corps of the Recce Platoon.



Today's Territorials are asked to undertake long tours of duty in Iraq, Afghanistan, Bosnia and other areas of the world. But 40 years ago it was a different world.

In 1966 that was One Tough Weekend.

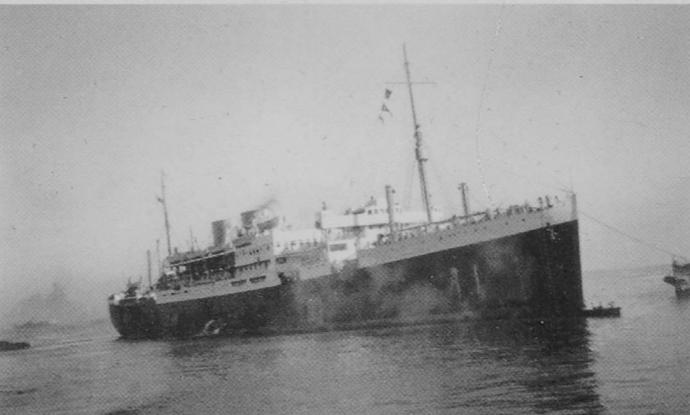
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Our thanks are due again to
Major J L A Fowler TD
for generously supplying the paper
for the Newsletter

Leaving India

(John Stanley Murray, who will be 80 in January 2007, served from March 1945 to May 1948. He spent most of his time with 2nd Battalion The Queen's Royal Regiment, initially in India and then in England and Dortmund. Below is his account of the return voyage from India to England. John would be delighted to hear from anyone who served with him and can be contacted at: 2up The Quadrangle, Morden College, 19 St Germans Place, Blackheath SE3 0PW)

In January 1947 our Regiment was preparing to leave India and return to England on board the ship the 'Highland Princess'; one particular event is clear in my memory.



The Highland Princess in Bombay harbour

We were nearing home and entering the 'Bay of Biscay' when bad weather appeared to be heading in our direction. The sea had taken on a heavy swell and continued to get worse by the minute. It was not long before the full force of the storm hit our ship and everyone including the crew had been, or was being, sick.

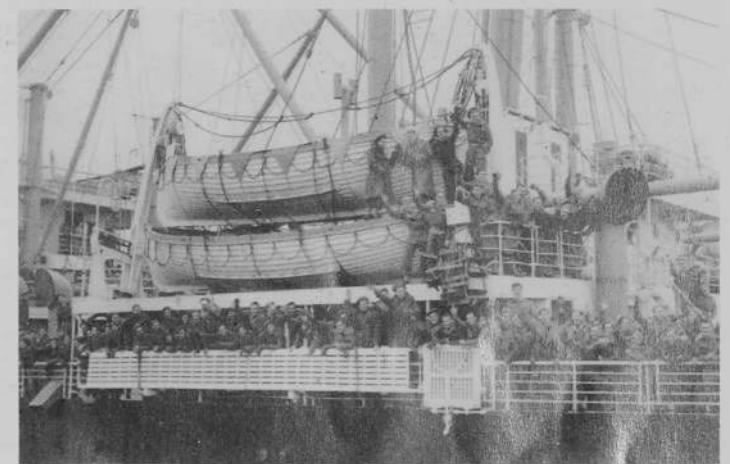
The sea was one minute towering above the ship some 40 to 50 feet and then sinking below to an equal depth. I looked to the bow of the ship and saw it disappear beneath the waves and the stern rising high with its propellers out of the water, making our 16,000 ton ship shudder from stem to stern. At this point, I decided to go below decks for a while. The sea was getting progressively worse and I was not feeling too good.

Below deck was awful. There was no escaping this storm, with the sea water slopping backward and forward across the lower deck into which everyone had been sick. Trying to reach the toilet meant sliding and falling into this mess, and getting into our hammocks was an absolute nightmare.

Once the storm subsided, the captain informed us that King George V, the Queen and the two Princesses had also been riding out the storm, some miles to our portside. They were now steaming toward Cape Town, South Africa, on board our newest Battleship, *H.M.S. Vanguard*, which was launched on the 1st December 1944.

Our arrival back in England in February was to coincide with the most severe period of cold weather which Britain experienced in that never-to-be forgotten winter of 1946/1947.

There were unabated frosts and blizzards combined with dwindling stocks of coal. This all led to great hardship at home for the British people, and to the discomfort of all our troops arriving home from India. The morning before leaving our ship, we had only freezing water in which to shave; needless to say it was the worst shave that I ever had.



Arriving home from India

Some leave was due to us at that time, which was given at Easter from the 2nd April to the 10th; after that we prepared for Germany.

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East Surrey Regimental Reunion

This year's reunion was held at the New Drill Hall, Clapham on 7th October. There were just under 100 attending, with friends who have attended regularly over the years joined by others who were there for the first time. Col Bishop gave the President's speech this year, and Col Francis will be the President for next year. Mr and Mrs Daniels laid on an excellent buffet and bar facilities, and we all enjoyed the afternoon.

The Reunion is helped by a grant from the Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Charity as well as by the raffle run at the reunion. Costs were higher this year, but we were able to keep the ticket price to £5 per head. Next year, however, it will need to be raised to £6. (photographs of the function appear on the centre pages).

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Recent Events

5 Queen's OMA Dinner



Officers' Club Lunch



Lunch after the Association Annual Church Service



Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment Golf Society:

Spring Meeting 2006

The Spring meeting of the Golf Society took place at Sudbrook Park, Richmond on Thursday 4 May on a glorious hot Spring day.



Warming up the putter before teeing off

Nineteen members of the Society took part in the various competitions. The course had been remodelled since last year's meeting with additional bunkers, and as always was in excellent condition. Col John Davidson was able to join us in the putting competition in spite of a serious back injury.

A delicious lunch was enjoyed by all members, after which prizes were presented by the President MJ Power in the absence of the Captain Maj RA Green.

Prize List

Challenge Cup

MJ Power Esq. 81 gross

Dodgson Trophy

BA Hoffman Esq. 80 nett

Heales Memorial

CM Howard Esq. 35 pts

Veterans Halo

Col JW Sewell 37 pts

Harry Adcock Trophy

Col JW Davidson

The 'Sweep' on the morning's play:

1st JL Midwood Esq.

2nd JL Midwood Esq.

3rd Lt Col PGFM Roupell



Comparing notes before lunch

The AGM of the Society was held after the Prizegiving. Col D J C Dickins was elected Captain for the years 2006-2008. The Spring 2007 meeting will be held at Sudbrook Park on Thursday 3 May 2007.

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"That will be the day" 47 Years On

(by Maj John Rogerson)

Late autumn of 1959 and I had just arrived as a new entrant to the 1st Bn The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment, Blenheim Camp, Bury St Edmunds- a keen fresh faced ex- East Surrey Regiment Junior Leader. The first person of authority I literally bumped into, rushing to CO's Interviews, was CSM Bert Quickenden who immediately took me to task over my Battle Dress trouser weights and boot polish tin backing behind my shiny new cap badge; needless to say I eventually arrived in front of the CO somewhat enlightened as to things to come and when Lt Col "King" White asked what my career aspirations were I immediately said "To join the MT and learn to drive sir!" (anything to avoid going into CSM Quickenden's Company!).

Since the battalion was short of drivers I was soon sitting behind the wheel of a bull nosed, double de clutch Morris 1 ton truck under the instruction of Cpl Hollingsworth whose party trick was to place the pupil driver's wrist watch just behind the rear wheel when practising pulling away on the hill; an expensive business if you rolled back! Capt (Col) John Francis was my first MTO with Sgt Jesse James as the MT Pl Sergeant and Cpl Topper Brown, Details Clerk.

My first detail, on passing my test, was to deliver an unaccustomed Land Rover and trailer to Colchester and bring back an even stranger new Champ vehicle and trailer for driver trials, a true baptism by hairy driving, through the Blackwall Tunnel. After that, driving the 10 forward and 10 reverse gears Champ cross country was easy.

Our National Service (NS) soldiers were a wonderful mix of all British walks of life. There were privates and corporals who were bank managers who just wanted an easy two years without much responsibility and there were the Eaton Hall trained Subalterns from humble beginnings out to prove themselves.

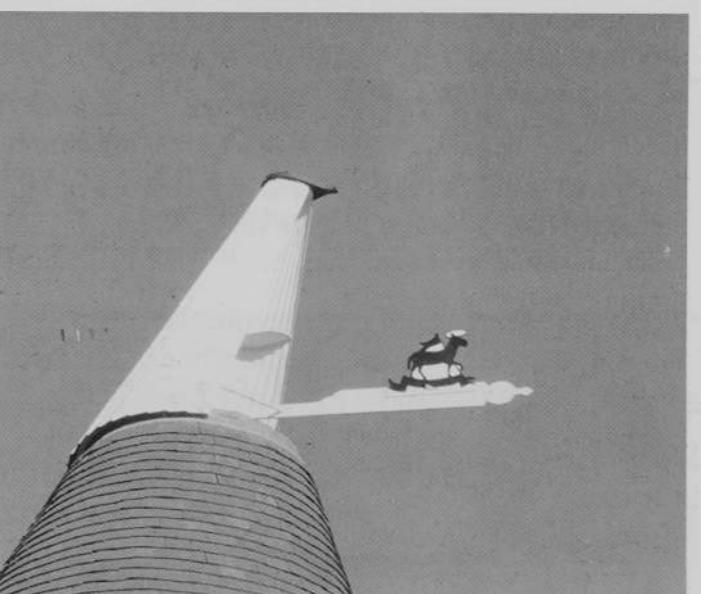
This made for a very interesting and dynamic and somewhat upside down structure; with NS subalterns struggling to pay their mess bills and some NS other ranks living in luxury with no food and accommodation to pay, unlike today.

One NS private that I became friendly with often used to point out models and actresses appearing in films at the local cinema that he had been out with at weekends, whilst on leave in London; we were very sceptical of his boasts. One day the CO ordered this NS friend, who was a good artist, to brighten up the walls of the NAAFI and Cookhouse since, as those who were there will recall, Blenheim Camp consisted of the old black Nissan Huts.

Soon everyone was admiring the very cheerful Renoir styled bathing scenes, to the songs of Guy Mitchell, Brenda Lee, Bill Haley and Alma Cogan *et al.* on the NAAFI juke box. On moving to Colchester the incoming CO of the Suffolk Regiment refused to take over the camp until the said, now demobbed, artist returned to paint bikinis on the lovely bathing belles.

The camp was destroyed some time ago and I wrote to NAAFI saying that it was a pity they did not salvage the murals as they would now be expensive since the artist was one Pte Jason Monet, the great grandson of the French impressionist Claude Monet: and no he was not bluffing, as his wedding appeared on the headline pages as "Chelsea's Beatnik wedding of the year" - we Regulars were all impressed.

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George Redfern wonders whether anybody else has their Regimental badge on their roof

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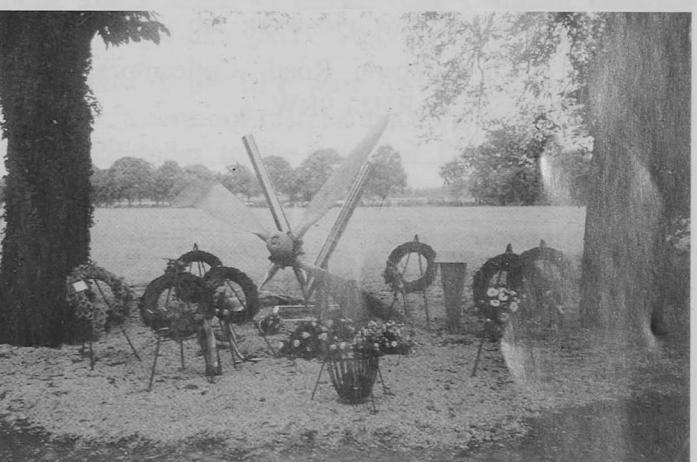
Aircrew Remembered

In September 2006 Sidney Bowbrick was invited to attend the ceremonial unveiling of a monument commemorating the crew of an RAF aircraft which had been shot down near Lilbosch Abbey, Echt, late on the night of 10th September 1942. The unveiling by the Abbot, Annabel Jenissen and Sidney followed a memorial service in the Abbey.



Sid and Annabel laying flowers

Annabel was the granddaughter of Joep Jenissen; a local 16 year old farm worker at the time of the crash, decades later as a councillor he had campaigned for the monument but died in 2000. The event was covered by the press and televised.



The monument unveiled



Sidney (who has just celebrated his 88th birthday) enlisted into 1/5th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment in 1939. His service included the BEF, N Africa, and Italy before landing in Normandy and fighting through Belgium into Holland. He had fought with the battalion in the Echt area.

PAY ATTENTION CAN YOU HELP?



Frederick Thomas Plume would like to establish contact with any former comrades from The Queen's Royal Regiment. Fred served with the 1st Battalion The Queen's Royal Regiment during the Second World War in Burma. He acted as a battalion runner for a period in the Arakan, although for much of the time he was a member of 'A' Company; he was at Kohima. He can be contacted at: 106 Kingsland, Harlow, Essex CM18 6XW.

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Former Bandsman D Caudrey writes: I and some ex-Band members of the Queen's Regimental Band meet on a regular basis for lunch at various restaurants. We are interested in increasing our lunch parties by contacting ex-Band members who served in Aden, Hong Kong and Germany from 1960-67. They can contact me at: Heathers, 3 St. Sampson Road, Cottesmore Green, Crawley, West Sussex RH11 9RW.

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Debbie Burton (née Reeves) is trying to discover anyone who knew or heard of her late grandfather Lt Joseph Henry Reeves who served with 42nd (23rd Bn The London Regt) Royal Tank Regt.

The family were always led to believe that Lt Reeves was shot and wounded whilst trying to escape from Camp 66 Capua Italy, in August 1942, and was transferred to Caserta Hospital where he died 3 days later. Information she now has gives a different slant to the story.

She has United Nations War Crimes Commission Sheets, with signed affidavits by officers, and legal documents headed "THE MURDER of LT J REEVES".

It would appear that he did attempt to escape with Capt Spragg-Mitchell at 2.45am 19th August 1942. The belief is that the Italians were forewarned of the escape, and they lay in wait for them.

One volley of shooting began and Spragg-Mitchell was killed. Lt Reeves was wounded in the legs and could not move so he surrendered; allegedly the Italian patrol surrounded him and at close range began shooting at him again. Still alive he was taken into the camp and put

into the infirmary, where the British Officers and British Medical Officers were not allowed to see him or the body of Spragg-Mitchell for three hours. To the best of anybody's knowledge Lt Reeves received no medical help during this period. Eventually he was taken to Caserta Hospital where Col Sinclair operated on him.

Col Sinclair states that a blood transfusion could possibly have saved his life, but the Italian Medical Officer refused. Col Sinclair does state that he would be noting down this refusal and his disgust with the medical officer.

The following names are mentioned in the affidavits:

Lt Col M R Sinclair

Maj J L Martin

Capt R C Glover

Driver Harold James House

Capt J L Alexander

Capt George Burnaby Drayson

Capt H J H Gatford

Reg Sgt (?) Charles Henry Burgess

Lt John Burman (Friend and last one to speak to him in Caserta Hosp)

Capt Anthony Dunlop Steven.

Debbie Burton can be contacted at: 83 Poplar Drive Herne Bay, Kent CT6 7PZ.

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Les Fisher writes:

It was with great interest that I received a page from the Surrey Advertiser from my sister, who lives in Normandy, Surrey. It was headlined 'Did you fight in the jungle of Malaya'; well I did, although 'fight' might be a bit of an exaggeration. It seems that I was just a bit earlier than the people mentioned, but I would love to meet up with old service comrades. Just in case this is possible I would like to give you my details.

First of all is the fact that I altered my name when I got married. When I was in Malaya my surname was just 'Fish' and I had 'er' added later.

At the time I was called up to do my National Service I was living in New Haw, near Weybridge. This was August 1953. After training at Stoughton Barracks I went to Malaya where the Battalion was stationed at Tampin, Negri Sembilan. I along with 'D' company then went to somewhere near Mount Ophir. I did many patrols from there for about 9 months.

When visiting the battalion at Tampin I would always meet up with lads from the Band as at the time I was trying to play the clarinet. The Band Master tried to get me to sign on for nine years on the promise that I would

go to Kneller Hall and be taught properly, but it was too long. The top clarinettist in the band said that it would be easy to get a transfer to the Corp of Drums and then he would be able to give me private lessons.

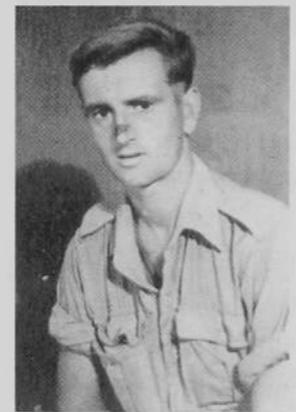
This I did and got transferred back to Tampin. At this time it was announced that 'Drummers' would have to do jungle patrols as well, and knowing that I had had a fair experience of this, I got roped in on every patrol that they did.

I returned to England for demob in August 1955. I took my wife on holiday to Malaya in about 1985 and we had a great time. I even found the barracks in Tampin and they let me in the camp, and I found the old hut that I lived in.

(*Les Fisher can be contacted at: 19 Sturmy Close, Long Stratton, Norfolk NR15 2XU*)

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Peter Robinson writes: I hope that you may be able to assist me in my search for accurate information concerning my late uncle, William Henry Potts.



*Bill Potts
(with desert sore on nose)*

He served with the 57th East Surrey Anti-tank Regiment during the Mediterranean campaigns of WW2 and at the end of the war with the 149th anti-tank but all my research has left me with many unanswered questions! I have all his army details and have spent quite some time at the Royal Artillery library combing the regimental diaries. Ray Goodacre, who is undertaking the writing of a book on the 57th, has been able to help me a little and believes that my uncle belonged to the 226th Battery.

Unfortunately the only way to obtain the required information is to try and meet up with any of his surviving comrades and this is where I hope you may be able to help me. I have supplied copies of photographs of him and some of his mates.



If the photo or details of my uncle could be circulated within your association and/or newsletter it may generate a response.

(*Peter Robinson can be contacted at: 26 Mary De Bohun Close, St. Dials Wood, Monmouth, Monmouthshire NP25 5UB*)

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Stuart Foley is trying to contact anyone who knew his late father 3963517 Private Edward David Foley. Pte Foley joined the Army in 1939 in a Welsh regiment, was transferred to the Royal Artillery and then transferred to The East Surrey Regiment's 5th Battalion and then the 1/6th Battalion.

(*Stuart Foley can be contacted at: S E Foley, 5 Gate Rd, Penygroes, Llanelli, Carmarthenshire SA14 7RL*)

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Hugh Sebag-Montefiore's recently published book 'Dunkirk: Fight To The Last Man' contains a new angle on how the 1940 British Expeditionary Force came to be evacuated from Dunkirk: it was not just because of the courage of the men on the beaches as they were rescued by the Navy and those celebrated little ships. According to Hugh Sebag-Montefiore, the evacuation would never have taken place had it not been for the bravery of the British soldiers who were left behind to hold back the Germans while the evacuation went ahead.

While most of the BEF were retreating to the Dunkirk perimeter, a series of rearguard actions was being fought around 20 miles to the south of Dunkirk that would determine the fate of the British Army. Battle was joined there because the British commander-in-chief Lord Gort had decided there was only one way to save the majority of the British troops in France: the infantry had to shield the corridor up which the British Army was retreating to Dunkirk by holding a string of strongpoints. They were to stand and fight, whatever the cost, even if they had to fight to the last man. This they proceeded to do. However their rearguard actions fought at towns and villages such as Cassel, Ledringhem, Wormhout and Le Paradis have been omitted from previous histories about the 1940 campaign.

The author has stated that he would have liked to cover the part played by the 1st East Surrey Regiment at Nieuport, within the Dunkirk perimeter, but was unable to do so because of his failure to find vivid accounts about the action there. If anyone is holding an account about what happened in and around Nieuport, Hugh Sebag-Montefiore would be interested to hear from them at 37 Tanza Road, London NW3 2UA ideally before he finalizes the text for the paperback version of his book.

Dunkirk: Fight To The Last Man is published by Viking/Penguin and can be purchased from most bookshops for £25.

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LETTERS



Tony Clayton, on 28 June 2006, wrote:

Being a 'next of kin' of a Victorian VC winner, I was present at the VC and GC Westminster Abbey Celebration Service. After the Service was over coaches took us to a splendid reception. We all wore badges with our names and that of the VC winner with whom we were linked.

By at least a thousand to one chance while waiting for the bus in the very large crowd, I noticed a group whose name tags recorded 'Pte J Harvey'. I went up to them and introduced myself as a former Bermondsey QUEENS officer, saying that of course I knew the story of Pte Harvey's award. The group included Harvey's granddaughter and were so thrilled that someone emerged from the crowd who knew all about the award. It made their day.

I think that it made mine, too.

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1/7th Queen's Visit The Town They Liberated on 9th September 1944

(by Peter Dear, nephew of Pte William (Dusty) Miller)

Major Norman Burrell MBE [82] and Sergeant Harry Buckland [86] representing 1/7th Queen's returned to Sint Niklaas the town they helped liberate in Belgium 62 years ago. They, together with eight family and friends, were guests of the Patriotic Committee of Sint Niklaas. On Saturday 2nd we were royally entertained to dinner and during speeches it was said that 1/7th Queen's Liberators together with friends and families will always be welcome for giving the people of Sint Niklaas their freedom again.

"We shall remember them"

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Furthest left Sergeant Harry Buckland and third from left Major Norman Burrell MBE 1/7th Queen's, together with representatives of the Patriotic Committee and other groups.

As we gathered around The Queen's memorial there was a slight breeze and the sun came out as Major Burrell stood in front of the Memorial, wreath in hand all in silence. As the band started to play 'God Save The Queen' there was a very strong gust of wind bringing autumn leaves showering down on all those around the memorial. As we finished singing our National Anthem the wind dropped and peace returned. After this ceremony several people commented on how the leaves seemed to represent poppies and came at such an appropriate time whilst remembering fallen comrades and the past.

After completing the laying of wreaths and paying respects there was a reception held at the magnificent town hall.

On Monday there was another wreath laying carried out by Sergeant Harry Buckland in respect of an allied bomber crew that had crashed near the town. This was followed by coach trip in the local area followed by a farewell dinner at which Major Normal Burrell MBE thanked our hosts for their continued hospitality and close friendship.

"We shall remember them"

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Sunday 3rd was dominated by Remembrance; firstly with Holy Mass [RC] with local dignitaries, representatives of the Patriotic Committee, 1/7th Queen's, Belgium, Poland and Holland; secondly, headed by a large band, the parade marched to five war memorials. These are The Belgium, 1/7th Queen's, a Resistance Group, The Dutch and The Polish. Major Norman Burrell MBE laid a wreath at The Queen's memorial and Sergeant Harry Buckland laid a wreath at The Resistance Group memorial. The son of Sergeant Jim Allen MM 1/7th [deceased] laid a wreath at the Polish memorial.

Regimental Deaths

Allfree - On 10th June 2006, Philip Allfree who was commissioned into The East Surrey Regiment, serving with the 1st Battalion.

Bailey - On 20th June 2006, Mike Bailey of Sidcup, Kent.

Bingham - On 24th June 2006, CQMS W T Bingham, who served with the 2nd Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment.

Bird - On 18th August 2006 aged 87 years, Major Patrick Gwynne Bird TD. He was commissioned into 6th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment in 1937. On mobilisation he served with the Battalion in France, before becoming Intelligence Officer 131 Bde. He subsequently served on the headquarters staff of 56 Div and then 2nd Corps before becoming GSO2 (Disarmament) in Norway. He was demobilised in March 1946 and returned to work at Lloyds of London.

Boddy - On 1st February 2006, Corporal Arthur Leonard Boddy. Having initially enlisted into 6th Bn The East Surrey Regiment in September 1938, he was subsequently a member of 1/6th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment. His service included BEF, North Africa and Italy.

Bookham - On 6th October 2006 aged 86 years, Corporal Robert Bookham. A pre-war Territorial, he served throughout the Second World War with 1/5th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment, including with the BEF, in North Africa and in Italy, and through Normandy to Berlin. He was demobilised in 1946.

Cable - On 5th May 2006 aged 67 years, Philip Edward Clark Cable (see obituary).

English - On 18th June 2006 aged 82 years, John William English. He enlisted into 2/5th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment in November 1941, subsequently transferring to the Royal Signals and then the Royal Engineers. His service prior to discharge in July 1952 included the Middle East, North Africa, Sicily, and Italy.

Forrester - On 15th October 2006 aged 89 years, Major General Michael Forrester CB, CBE, DSO and Bar, MC and Bar (see obituary).

Goode - On 8th June 2006 aged 93, Brigadier George Henry Wallace Goode CBE, DSO (see obituary).

Greatwood - On 24th August 2006 Richard Egerton Walter Greatwood, who was a National Service Officer with The East Surrey Regiment 1955-57.

Hankin - On 6th September 2006 aged 87 years, Thomas George Hankin. He enlisted into 2/6th Bn The East Surrey Regiment in 1938 and whilst serving with the BEF he was taken PoW at St Valery in 1940. He was held at Stalag XXB in Poland; following his release, he was discharged from the Army in June 1945.

Hinton - On 21st August 2006 aged 85 years, Sergeant Arthur Ronald Hinton. He enlisted into 1/5th Bn The

Queen's Royal Regiment, later serving with 2/5th Bn. Prior to his discharge in July 1946 his service included North Africa and Italy and a period with 13th Holding Bn Gravesend.

Hopwood - On 26th February 2006, James Robert Hopwood who served with The East Surrey Regiment during the Second World War, including in Italy.

Jackson - On 20th April 2006 aged 93 years, Arthur Frederick Jackson. He joined The East Surrey Regiment in January 1931. After a period at Catterick, he joined the battalion in Lahore in December 1932, becoming a medical orderly. He was discharged from India in 1938. He was recalled in August 1939 and went to France with the BEF. He was evacuated from Dieppe in 1941 due to ill health and was subsequently medically discharged.

Milligan - On 11th October 2006 after a lengthy illness, David Knowles Milligan who served during the Second World War and on the NW Frontier.

Moody - On 2nd January 2006, Joseph Anthony Moody. Having initially joined the Norfolk Regiment, he was soon transferred to The East Surrey Regiment. He saw service in the Western Desert and in Italy including at Monte Cassino. He was serving in Greece when he was injured in a motor accident, following which he was repatriated to the UK and discharged.

Morris - On 27th July 2006, Ronald Leslie George Morris. He enlisted into 2/7th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment in December 1939. His service prior to his discharge in December 1945 included France, Belgium, North Africa, Italy and Northern Europe after D-Day.

Parker - On 23rd July 2006 aged 69 years, Michael Parker (see obituary).

Peterson - On 9th September 2006 aged 84 years, Harry Peterson (formerly Odgaard). Originally enlisted into the 8th Bn The Middlesex Regiment in April 1939, he was subsequently transferred to The Queen's Royal Regiment. Having served with 2/6th Bn, he was then posted to the Anti-Tank Platoon 1/7th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment. He was a member of the crew of No. 7 gun at the Battle of Medenine and was taken prisoner having been wounded during the battle. He subsequently escaped over the mountains in Austria and met up with the Americans. He was repatriated to the UK and discharged in 1946. As a consequence of his wounds and experiences he suffered ill health for the rest of his life.

Riches - On 9th June 2006 aged 96 years, Major Norman Bertram Riches TD. He originally enlisted into 5th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment in 1928. His subsequent service included 2/6th Bn. Having been hospitalised and medically downgraded he was for a period attached as Welfare Officer at RHU Emsbatten. He was discharged from the Army in November 1945.

Ruoff - On 25th June 2006, Harold Freeman Ruoff. He enlisted into 2nd Bn The East Surrey Regiment in June 1940. He served in Malaya and was taken PoW by the Japanese at the fall of Singapore. As a PoW he worked

on the Burma Railway before being moved to Kanose, Japan in 1944. He was discharged from the Army in May 1946.

Scaife - On 15th July 2006, Dennis Scaife. He served with The East Surrey Regiment during the Second World War, including in North Africa, Sicily and Italy.

Stanford - In October 2006, Brian Stanford who was a national serviceman with The East Surrey Regiment.

Taylor - On 22nd September 2006, William Taylor, who served with The East Surrey Regiment during the Second World War and was a PoW in Germany and Italy.

Traylen - On 3rd September 2006 aged 93 years, Sydney Joseph Traylen. A 1938 Territorial at Farnham, he served with 2/5th Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment in France in 1940. He was wounded in the fighting near Abbeville and taken prisoner. After treatment in a German Field Hospital at St Riquier he was moved to Poland as a PoW, eventually returning to England in 1945

Trench - On 10th September 2006 aged 88 years, Lieutenant Colonel Sir Peter Trench CBE, TD (see obituary).

Wale - On 11th June 2006 aged 83 years, Francis William Wale who enlisted into The East Surrey Regiment in December 1940. His service prior to discharge in March 1946 included Sicily and the Italian mainland.

Warnes - On 7th June 2006, Alan Warnes whose service included Germany and Cyprus.

Westing - In January 2006, Major John Michael Westing (see obituary).

Zehntner - On 27th August 2006, Major P M C Zehntner who served with The Queen's Royal Regiment.

Obituaries

Major General M Forrester CB, CBE, DSO and Bar, MC and Bar



Major General Michael Forrester, within a very distinguished career, won special recognition during the German airborne invasion of Crete in May 1941. In October 1940 Forrester, who had already won an MC serving with his Regiment in Palestine during the pre-war

Arab revolt, and then serving much against his will as an Intelligence Officer in GHQ Middle East, was selected for the British Military Mission to Greece. During that winter he was inspired by a visit to the Greek Army then

fighting above the snow-line in the mountains, repulsing the Italians who had invaded from Albania.

When Greece fell to the Germans, Forrester left by caïque from Monavia on an eventful voyage to Crete via the islands of Kithira and Andikithera. In Crete his role became Liaison Officer to units of the ill-equipped Greek Army, and when the German Airborne invasion came on 20th May 1941 he was staying in a cottage with Prince Peter and Patrick Leigh Fermor.

After making his way to HQ New Zealand Division, he was directed to Galatas where remnants of the 6th Greek Regiment had concentrated in the area of the 10th New Zealand Brigade. He mustered some two hundred of these into a coherent force, and by 22nd May the German attacks had reached a key hill near the village, which could have led to the collapse of the whole position defended by the New Zealand Brigade.

At this moment Captain Forrester, tall, fair-haired and helmet-less led a counter-attack with his men, joined by Cretan villagers, both men and women, all running, yelling and reacting to his whistle commands. This was too much for the Germans and they ran, leaving some prisoners behind. A New Zealand officer described watching this charge as the most thrilling moment of his life.

Three days later Forrester was again prominent in the final desperate counter-attack by the New Zealanders at Galatas, but by now things had gone too far and the evacuation of Crete had been ordered, Forrester getting away on HMAS Perth. For his actions in Crete he was awarded a Bar to his Military Cross, and in his copy of I. McD. G. Stewart's "The Struggle For Crete" the author wrote 'For General Forrester whose exploits at Galatas in 1941 surprised even the New Zealanders and have become part of the legend of the battle for Crete.'; many years later in 1966 Michael Forrester was made an Honorary Citizen of Canea.

Michael Forrester was born on 31st August 1917 and after school at Haileybury was granted a Supplementary Reserve Commission in The Queen's Royal Regiment, this being converted into a Regular Commission in 1938. He went out to Palestine with the 2nd Battalion of the Regiment that year, and it was for his great gallantry in leading his platoon at Abu Salami in May 1939 that he was awarded his first Military Cross, being also wounded in the action.

After Crete, Forrester was for a short time on the staff of HQ Western Desert Force which, on the formation of Headquarters 8th Army became HQ 13th Corps. He took part in Operation Crusader before attending the Staff College at Haifa. From there he was appointed Brigade Major of 132 Infantry Brigade prior to the Battle of El Alamein, where he was again wounded and was Mentioned in Despatches.

Upon the disbandment of 132 Brigade he was posted back to HQ 13 Corps then in Syria, before joining the newly formed HQ 18th Army Group under General Alexander in Algeria. He then joined the 1/6th Battalion of his Regiment, part of 131st (Queen's) Brigade, the Lorried Infantry Brigade of 7th Armoured Division, for the capture of Tunis. He was made 2 i/c and then in August was appointed to command - he was just 26.

On 9th September 1943 the main Allied invasion of Italy took place at Salerno, with 7th Armoured Division landing on 15th/16th September for the break-out from the Beachhead. Michael Forrester then led his Battalion Group through the Veitri Pass with exceptional dash and determination, capturing intact the bridge over the River Sarno at Scafati which was held against determined attacks by the Hermann Goering Division. For his personal leadership and example Forrester was awarded a DSO.

Soon after the crossing of the River Volturno 7th Armoured Division was ordered to return to the UK to take part in the invasion of NW. Europe. After spending the first part of 1944 in East Anglia, the Division landed in Normandy soon after D-Day, and on 12th June were directed to break through south of Bayeux. Having fought through to Villers Bocage the leading Brigade was confronted by the much superior Tiger tanks of the Panzer Lehr Division and the advance turned into desperate defence against the German counter attacks.

On 16th and 17th June these fell particularly on 1/6th Queen's holding the village of Briquessard, through which the 22nd Armoured Brigade had withdrawn. Forrester again displayed outstanding courage and coolness, maintaining control throughout, in spite of, at one stage, his Battalion Headquarters being nearly overrun: he was awarded a Bar to his DSO; ten days later he was badly wounded by shell fire, and that in effect ended his fighting war.

On recovery Forrester became GSO1 (Ops) at HQ 13th Corps in north-east Italy where the Yugoslavs were threatening Trieste; and in 1946 was appointed M.A. to the Supreme Allied Commander Mediterranean.

This was followed by service as M.A. to the Head of the British Joint Services Mission in Washington, and then, after a parachute course, he joined the 2nd Battalion the Parachute Regiment as a company commander (a level of command he had not previously experienced) - this led to service in Cyprus and the Canal Zone. In 1953 he became a member of the Directing Staff of the Staff College, Camberley, and in 1955 was made GSO1(Ops) GHQ East Africa during the Mau Mau Rebellion.

In 1957 he was transferred to the Parachute Regiment on being appointed to command the 3rd Battalion. The following year his Battalion, with the rest of the Brigade, spent a long, hot summer in Jordan in support of King Hussein whose regime was under both internal and external threat.

His next appointment in 1960 was in the Military Operation Directorate of the War Office as Colonel MO4 which covered the Middle East. He then returned to Airborne Forces as Commander 16th Independent Parachute Brigade Group from 1961 to 1963. In 1962 he took the Brigade Group to Greece for a period of training, culminating in a brigade parachute drop as part of a NATO exercise in the north of the country.

The Imperial Defence College followed and command of 4th Division in Germany from 1965 to 1967. Finally he was Director of Infantry and Colonel Commandant of The Queen's Division, retiring in 1970. He had been made OBE in 1960, CBE in 1963, and CB in 1969.

In retirement Michael Forrester lived at West Worldham in Hampshire where he devoted much time to gardening and writing. He involved himself, too, in Church affairs in the Winchester Diocese, being Lay Co-Chairman of the Alton Deanery Synod and a member of the Diocesan Synod. He also supported the Associations of his two Regiments.

Michael Forrester married Pauline Fisher in 1947 and they had two sons. The marriage was dissolved in 1960.

During his later years he was accompanied by Mrs Denise Patterson, herself a lady of some distinction; they were a devoted and much admired couple.

JWS

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Brigadier G H W Goode CBE, DSO

George Henry Wallace Goode was born in Livingstone, Northern Rhodesia in 1912 where his father, Sir Richard Goode, was Chief Secretary to the Northern Rhodesia Civil Administration. Joining his brother at Oakham School in 1925, he represented the school at athletics and rugger and became Head Prefect. Again following his brother, this time to Worcester College, Oxford, he read law and joined Grey's Inn.

George Goode's Army career began with a Supplementary Reserve commission in 1931, and he trained with the Royal Leicestershire Regiment during vacations. He left University in 1933 having represented his College in athletics, rugger and rowing. The same year he was granted a regular commission in The Queen's Royal Regiment and joined the 2nd Battalion at Aldershot. In 1936 he was seconded to 1 NRR, becoming Adjutant the following year. In 1939 the battalion moved with the newly-raised units of Northern Rhodesian Army Service Corps and Field Ambulance to Mbeya and, in 1940, to Nanyuki. The foundations for great events were laid in large scale manoeuvres with 1 and 2 (EA) Brigades, before 1 NRR embarked for British Somaliland to reinforce the Camel Corps at the defensive position of Tug Argan.

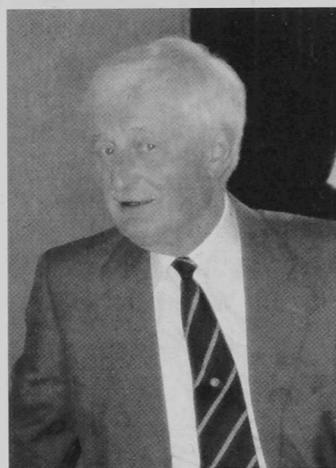
George Goode missed the August battle, having been sent to the Staff College at Haifa. Six months later he was posted to HQ EA Force. With Force HQ he served in Somalia, Somaliland and Ethiopia before becoming Brigade Major of the newly-formed 28 (EA) Brigade in August 1940, and was present at the blockading of Djibouti. He found time to marry Theodora, the daughter of Judge J A Lucie-Smith, in Nairobi in December 1940, and became a GSO 2 at Central Area HQ in 1941. He then moved to 4 NRR at Yatta as 2i/c before taking command of 2 NRR in Madagascar in 1944, returning to Yatta in August to command the Rhodesian African Rifles and to prepare them for operations in Burma. Following intensive training in Ceylon the battalion joined 1 KAR and 2 NRR in 22 (EA) Brigade. The Brigade took part in the Arakan operations, advancing down the Myebon Peninsula, followed by the Akyab and Ramree Island landings before attacking inland towards Prome, with a major battle at Tanlwe Chaung. They were all set to move into Siam in pursuit of the Japanese when the war ended. He had a fortuitous meeting with his brother, who had just been released from being a PoW working on the Siamese railway.

In 1946 George Goode returned to England. Uncertain of his future in the Army, he resumed his studies at Grey's Inn, and passed his Bar Examinations. A spell as DAAG (Legal) in HQ Central Command in 1947 (during which time he declined to join the Army Legal Services) was followed by a posting to The Queen's Royal Regiment as a company commander, first in Dortmund and later in Berlin at the beginning of the blockade.

In 1948 George Goode was posted to Fontainebleau as GSO 2 in the HQ Western Union Commander-in-Chief's Committee. He then attended JSSC at Latimer, became an Assistant Military Secretary at the War Office before returning to Lusaka in 1953 to command 1 NRR and to take them to Malaya. During this tour, his dynamic leadership during operations against the Communist Terrorists in Pahang and Johore resulted in the award of the DSO. On return to Lusaka in 1956 the battalion was handed over to the Central African Federation, and George moved to the War Office on promotion. He took command of 70 (EA) Brigade in Nanyuki in 1958. George Goode's last appointments were as Assistant Chief of Staff HQ Central Europe and then Brigadier AQ HQ Eastern Command, until he retired from the Army in 1967.

After leaving the Service, George Goode worked first as Deputy Secretary General at the Royal Commonwealth Society and then as a Company Secretary in Lusaka before moving to South Africa in 1981. In 1987 he and his wife returned to the UK to be near their family, buying a cottage in Codford St Mary. His wife died in 1989 and their son Michael, who served with The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment and The Queen's Regiment, died in 1998. George Goode died peacefully on Thursday 8th June 2006 aged 93.

Colonel G G Strong



After a short illness, following a severe stroke, Geoff died in Salisbury hospital on 6th June 2006. His funeral took place in the church of St John the Baptist, Bishopstone on the 14th June and he was buried in the churchyard. The packed church was a vivid illustration of how loved and admired he was.

Geoff was born on 1st November 1928 at Tidworth into a military family and educated at Rutlish School, Wimbledon. He was commissioned from Sandhurst into The East Surrey Regiment on Trafalgar Day 1948.

His first posting to Shorncliffe, where he was to await a move abroad, was in personal terms his most momentous. Within a few days of arrival he was introduced to Maureen, a daughter also of a military family. This meeting was to lead, six years later, to a happy marriage of 52 years.

In January 1949, Geoff sailed to Salonika to join 1 Surreys at a time when Greek forces were in the final stages of suppressing a Communist insurrection. The battalion was on hand in the event of a threat to British interests or the Greek Royal Family. In the event it was able to take advantage of the freedom afforded by spacious and largely unregulated training areas. Geoff soon proved himself a first rate regimental officer - enthusiastic, very capable and one of whom it can truthfully be said "he was universally liked and respected". Moreover, he could usually be found at the epicentre of any good party.

Late that year Geoff moved with the battalion to Italian Somaliland where its role was to prevent any disturbances during the reversion of that country to Italian administration. This took place without serious trouble and 1 Surreys returned to England.

In the autumn of 1951, serious rioting occurred in Egypt threatening British families, many of whom had to be evacuated. As part of the biggest airlift since the Second World War, Geoff flew with the battalion to Tripoli where it was on standby to intervene in Egypt should the situation deteriorate. After one aborted stand to, the battalion settled in to a training routine. In search of a fresh challenge Geoff returned home and underwent parachute training. He then reached Egypt after all, serving in the 3rd Battalion The Parachute Regiment in that turbulent period preceding the withdrawal of British forces. He was selected to march in the Parachute Regimental contingent on Coronation Day.

In August 1954, Maureen and Geoff were married at Maidstone.

In highlighting aspects of his subsequent career, two postings to France gave him a liking for that country, and in due course, a French son-in-law. His first tour there, between 1962-64, was at Fontainbleau as a major in the Plans Division of AFCENT. Seven years later Geoff was appointed British liaison officer at the Ecole Supérieure de Guerre in Paris, in the rank of lieutenant colonel. At the time of their first posting, Maureen was a fluent French speaker. His outgoing personality and diligence enabled Geoff to become likewise. Together they embraced the lifestyle, made many French friends and proved great representatives of their country.

Geoff would have been superb in command of a regular battalion, but amalgamations reduced the scope for selection. In the event he was an inspired choice in 1969 to command the Junior Tradesman's Regiment. His enthusiasm and friendly approach were just the qualities needed to inspire young soldiers at the outset of their careers.

In November 1974 Geoff was appointed Defence Attaché, Saigon. His posting coincided with the deteriorating situation during the last six months of the Vietnam War. He earned the respect of well known foreign correspondents by the way he extensively visited combat areas to report. He departed on the last helicopter to leave Saigon.

Following this attenuated tour, Geoff was appointed Chairman of a Department of Army Training Working Party 'Fit to Fight'. He was ideally suited to this task as anyone knowing him would be aware of his lifelong love of athletics; in particular middle distance and cross country running in which he attained Army standard. From 1976 to 1979 he was Chairman of the Milocarian Athletic Club. Aside from personal achievements, he took great pleasure in training soldiers, and in retirement qualified as a professional coach and became Chairman of the local running club.

On promotion to full Colonel in 1976, Geoff became Deputy Director of Army Security at a time when the threat from the IRA was high. Following this tour of duty, his final appointment was to the Intelligence Division at SHAPE where once again his knowledge of French was a great asset. He retired in August 1983, and settled near Salisbury, and worked for some years as a retired officer at HQ UKLF.

Geoff was a loyal supporter of regimental functions whether of the Surreys, Queen's Surreys or the Parachute Regiment Association. Just before his death, he was planning the next Surreys lunch, which he had organised for a number of years and had enhanced their success by tracking down former National Service officers, some friends from his days as an instructor at Eaton Hall Officer Cadets' School.

Geoff was a good man, devoted to his family and the finest example of a professional soldier. We offer our deepest condolences to his family.

NGP

Lieutenant Colonel P G F M Roupell



Peter Roupell enlisted into the Grenadier Guards on leaving Charterhouse School in 1943, was commissioned into that Regiment in 1944, and saw action with it in north-west Europe 1944/45. In 1946 he transferred into The East Surrey Regiment following in the footsteps of his grandfather, Colonel F F F Roupell, and father, Brigadier G R P Roupell VC. The latter, who subsequently became last Colonel of The East Surrey Regiment, doubtless had some influence on Peter's decision to transfer!

Peter's regimental service included tours with 1 Surreys in Greece 1946-48, BAOR 1954-57, and with 1 Queen's Surreys in Aden and Hong Kong 1961-64. He also served a two year tour with the Malay Regiment 1950-52. On leaving Staff College in 1958 Peter was appointed DAAG HQ 4 Division in BAOR. His subsequent staff appointments marked him out as an intelligence specialist and he was in turn, between 1964 and 1973, employed on the intelligence staffs of HQ BAOR, HQ Berlin, British Forces Gulf (on promotion to Lieutenant Colonel in 1969) and the MOD Defence Intelligence Secretariat.

Peter retired from the Army in 1973 to take up an appointment with Target Trust Managers arranged by the managing director, Edward Clowes, a former Queen's officer who had also served with the Surreys. Peter was based in Herefordshire, an area he loved and, as he said, he enjoyed both the job and its lucrative rewards. On retirement he became chairman of the local SSAFA, member of the Hereford Society and enjoyed to the full his painting, fishing, tennis and golf.

Peter was a quiet, relaxed man with great charm and sense of humour and a most generous host. He was not assertive, but to know him was to sense real inner strength and character. His death marks the end of a family regimental connection going back to 1867.

DRB

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Philip Edward Clark Cable

Philip Cable served with The Queen's Royal Regiment (as did his father before him) from 1957-59. Phil was a life member of the Regimental Association and a regular attendee at the Annual Reunion at the Union Jack Club. Whilst stationed in Iserlohn he joined the 1st Battalion Swimming Team, which was the British Army and BAOR Swimming Champions of 1959. From the time of his discharge until his passing, Phil was instrumental in keeping together friends from Stoughton Barracks 50th Intake at their own Annual Reunions. Phil will be sorely

missed by his wide circle of friends and family and we offer our sincere condolences to his wife Doreen, sons Lee and Ian and their respective families.

Ken Munday

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Major J M B Westing



John Westing died tragically in early January but his death was only confirmed when his car was recovered from the Thames in late June this year. John had not been a well man for many years and had been living in sheltered accommodation in Byfleet. As a contemporary at school

and then having been close friends later in the Regiment, I enjoyed seeing him whenever I visited UK. Although much changed from the delightfully carefree character of the 60's, he was still a very nice man with a generosity of spirit and impeccable manners.

Born in February 1938, he was educated at St George's College, Weybridge where he distinguished himself as a very fine First XV hooker and an accomplished half back in the hockey First XI. On leaving school he joined the Army and was commissioned into The Queen's Royal Regiment, but did not serve with the 1st Battalion. He was instead seconded to the Ghana Army as he thought this would be more interesting. This was his first - but far from last - taste of colonial soldiering, resulting ten years later in two rows of medal ribbons in an era when most company commanders could boast of perhaps one (ribbon)!

John joined 1st Bn The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment in Hong Kong and was an extremely popular officer with all ranks. He possessed that happy knack of leadership that caused people to do what he required most willingly and because they didn't want to let him down. On one occasion his fellow subalterns concealed his absence (out of barracks) for 48 hours from the Adjutant and John's company commander!

In late 1963 the Battalion moved from Hong Kong to Munster, BAOR, where a succession of visiting senior officers were fascinated by John's unusual medal ribbons and often had to be advised as to the theatre of operations! He was unfailingly charming and unassuming in his explanations, while causing much merriment among those in attendance. Apart from Ghana and the Congo, where he served with UN forces, he later was with the Malaysian Rangers and also SAF in Muscat.

John Westing was a delightful man and will be remembered with great affection by many members throughout the

Regiment. Our sympathy goes to his son Marcus and his sister Deidre.

SJP

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Michael Parker



I first met Michael on 25th January 1955, when we did our basic training at Stoumont Barracks. He was opposite me in Kohima Platoon and we became best mates. Michael was the comedian of the platoon, playing jokes on people and making them laugh. When we arrived in Malaya we asked to be posted together and went to 9 Platoon, C

Company. Michael was a countryman at heart and when we went into the jungle he came into his own.

Most of 9 Platoon had nicknames and Michael's was 'Nosey'. I remember his last day in Malaya well. He came running over to me to say goodbye. I shook him by the hand and said "It was a pleasure to have known you, Michael". He replied "For the last two years you have called me Nosey, now its Michael?".

In 1999 I met up with Michael again and by then he had married Anne, who was a match in every way and the love of his life. On our army reunions at the Union Jack Club with fellow members of 9 Platoon, Michael was always in the chair and his favourite saying was "You're welcome to join us for a drink, it's £10 in the whip".

Our condolences go to Anne, their three daughters and five grandchildren. Michael will be sadly missed.

Sam Costa

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Lieutenant Colonel Sir Peter Trench CBE, TD

Peter Trench was born in London on 18th June 1918. Privately educated in the UK and for a time in France and Switzerland, he went on to study at the London School of Economics. Having joined the 6th (Bermondsey) Bn The Queen's Royal Regiment in 1936, he was mobilised for service in 1939 and served in France and Belgium and the UK. In 1942 he went to Staff College and in the same year became Brigade Major of 218 (Independent) Brigade. In the following year, he was seconded to Combined Operations HQ as Military Raids Planner, and in 1944 became AAG at HQ 21 Army Group. Demobilised in 1946, he had been appointed OBE (Military) in the previous year.

After demobilisation, he went to St John's College, Cambridge and upon graduation he stood as an unsuccessful Liberal candidate in Bradford.

Following his attempt to take up politics, he entered the building industry and spent two years learning the practical side of the business, including working as a labourer on the United Nations building in New York. In 1954 he became Managing Director of Bovis Ltd.

There followed a number of prominent positions within the industry, and in 1959 he became Director of the National Federation of Building Trades Employers. Upon his retirement from the Federation in 1964, he was appointed CBE. Other appointments included a seat on the Board of the National Building Agency, and membership of the Prices and Incomes Board and of the Teachers' Pay Tribunal. A seat on the Development Review Control Panel and membership of the Post Office

Arbitration Tribunal and of the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service followed before he became Vice President of the National House Building Council in 1984. He was knighted in 1979.

He held directorships in several companies and was a Visiting Professor in Building Management at Reading University. Other appointments outside the building industry were as a council member of the City and Guilds of London Institute and as Honorary Treasurer of St Mary's Hospital Medical School.

In retirement he spent a lot of time in Spain with his wife Mary who sadly died in 2004. They had a son, David, and a daughter, Sally.

MRN

Branch Secretaries

5th Bn OMA-QRR:	I Chatfield Esq, 13 Wood Road, Farncombe, Godalming, Surrey GU7 3NN	Tel: 01483 429425
6th Bn OCA-QRR:	Major M R Nason TD, 64 Westfield Road, Barnehurst, Kent DA7 6LR	Tel: 0132 2527017
7th Bn OCA-QRR:	Major J M A Tamplin MBE TD, 10 Hugh Street, London SW1	Tel: 0207 8340120
2/6th Bn OCA-QRR:	Major M R Nason TD, 64 Westfield Road, Barnehurst, Kent DA7 6LR	Tel: 0132 2527017
2/7th Bn OCA-QRR:	Colonel D E Blum OBE, 85 Thameside, Staines, Middlesex TW18 2HF	Tel: 01784 450483
East Surrey Reunion:	J Broom Esq, 11 Sayerland Road, Polegate, East Sussex BN26 6NU	Tel: 01323 489262
WOs and Sgts Assoc:	R W Stebbings Esq, 5 Ebbage Court, 14 Mount Herman Road, Woking, Surrey GU22 7SX	Tel: 01483 770343
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
Queen's Surreys (Kent) Branch:	R F Harper Esq, 90 Osbourne Road, Willesborough, Ashford, Kent TN24 0EQ	Tel: 01233 634719
Queen's Surreys (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: 0208 643 6189
Queen's Surreys (South West) Branch:	H Stewart Esq, 3 Wentworth Road, Springbank, Cheltenham, Glos GL51 0NS	Tel: 01242 239121

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Covers:

The main picture on the front cover shows Gen Metcalfe arriving for the parade on Amalgamation Day, 14th October 1959; he is followed by Lt Col White, Gen Whitfield, Brig Roupell and Aides. The ceremony, whilst marking the amalgamation, was not the formal Amalgamation Parade. That event was combined with the Presentation of Colours in April 1960; an account of that day appears in the Newsletter. The photographs of The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment which comprise the montage are a selection from the Regimental Archive. Some, together with others and much Regimental information about the period 1959-1970, can be found in "THE HISTORY OF THE QUEEN'S ROYAL SURREY REGIMENT" compiled by Capt (now Maj Gen) J P Riley, copies of which can be purchased from the Museum.

