

The Die Hards

THE JOURNAL OF THE MIDDLESEX REGIMENT
(Duke of Cambridge's Own)

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THE MIDDLESEX REGIMENT (DUKE OF CAMBRIDGE'S OWN)

(57)

The Plume of the Prince of Wales. In each of the four corners the late Duke of Cambridge's Cypher and Coronet.
"Mysore," "Serlingapatam," "Albuhera," "Ciudad Rodrigo," "Badajoz," "Vittoria," "Pyrenes," "Nivelle," "Nive," "Peninsular,"
"Alma," "Inkerman," "Sevastopol," "New Zealand," "South Africa, 1879," "Relief of Ladysmith," "South Africa, 1900-02,"
The Great War—46 Battalions—"Mons," "Le Cateau," "Retreat from Mons," "Marne, 1914," "Aisne, 1914," "La Bassée, 1914,"
"Messines, 1914," "Armentières, 1914," "Neuve Chapelle," "Ypres, 1915," "Gravenstafel," "St. Julien," "Frezenberg,"
"Bellewaarde," "Aubers," "Hooge, 1915," "Loos," "Somme, 1916," "18," "Albert, 1916," "18," "Bazentin," "Delville Wood,"
"Pozières," "Ginchy," "Flers-Courcette," "Morval," "Thiepval," "Le Transloy," "Ancre Heights," "Ancre, 1916," "18," "Bapaume,"
"1917," "18," "Arras, 1917," "18," "Vimy, 1917," "Scarpe, 1917," "18," "Arleux," "Pillclem," "Langemarck, 1917," "Menin Road,"
"Polygon Wood," "Broodseinde," "Poelcappelle," "Passchendaele," "Cambrai, 1917," "18," "St. Quentin," "Rosières," "Avre,"
"Villers Bretonneux," "Lys," "Estaires," "Hazebrück," "Bailleul," "Kemmel," "Scherpenberg," "Hindenburg Line," "Canal
du Nord," "St. Quentin Canal," "Courtrai," "Selle," "Valenciennes," "Sambre," "France and Flanders, 1914-18," "Italy,
1917-18," "Struma," "Doiran, 1918," "Macedonia, 1915-18," "Suva," "Landung at Suva," "Scimitar Hill," "Gallipoli, 1915,"
"Rumani," "Egypt, 1915-17," "Gaza," "El Mughar," "Jerusalem," "Jericho," "Jordan," "Tell 'Asur," "Palestine, 1917-18,"
"Mesopotamia, 1917-18," "Murmur, 1919," "Dukhovskaya," "Siberia, 1918-19."

Regular and Militia Battalions.

1st Bn. (57th Foot). 2nd Bn. (77th Foot).
5th Bn. (Royal Elthorne Militia).
6th Bn. (Royal East Middlesex Militia).
Depot—Mill Hill. Records Office, Infantry Records, Warwick.
Pay Office—Old Infantry Barracks, Canterbury.

Territorial Army Battalions

1/7th Bn. 2/7th Bn. 8th Bn. 30th Bn.
9th Bn. 595 L.A.A., R.A., T.A.
1st and 2nd Bns. Princess Louise's Kensington Regiment.
1st, 2nd and 3rd Independent Coys.
No. 1 Heavy Support Coy.

Affiliated A/A Units of the Territorial Army

— (7th City of London) Searchlight Regiment R.A.
— (St. Pancras) Searchlight Regiment R.A.

Allied Regiments of Canadian Militia.

50th H.A.A. Regiment (Prince of Wales Rangers)
Peterborough, Ontario.
The Wentworth Regiment Dundas, Ontario.
The Middlesex and Huron Regiment London, Ontario.

Allied Battalion of Australian Infantry.

57th Bn. Preston.

Allied Regiment of New Zealand Military Forces

The Taranaki Regiment New Plymouth.

Colonel of the Regiment:

Colonel M. Browne, M.C., D.L., J.P.

Officer Commanding Depot:

Lt.-Col. A. S. J. de S. Clayton

Agents—Lloyds Bank Limited, 127 The Broadway, Mill Hill, N.W.7.

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NOTICE TO CONTRIBUTORS.

"The Die-Hards" is published in March, June, September and December, and copies may be obtained by application to the Editor.

All Contributions intended for publication should reach the Editor not later than the 1st of the month previous to that of issue. CONTRIBUTIONS SHOULD BE TYPED IN TRIPPLICATE, AND BE ON ONE SIDE OF THE PAPER ONLY, and signed, stating whether it is desired to publish the contributor's name or not. Rejected manuscripts, etc., will only be returned if accompanied by a stamped and addressed envelope. The Editor will thankfully receive Contributions from past or present members of the Regiment or others interested, but necessarily reserves to himself the right of publication. All communications concerning the paper, including advertisements, should be addressed to the Editor, "The Die-Hards" Journal, The Middlesex Regiment, Inglis Barracks, Mill Hill, London, N.W.7.

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Editor: Major A. W. Clark, O.B.E.

EDITORIAL

Most readers will have already heard of the very great misfortune of Lt.-Gen. Sir Brian Horrocks, K.B.E., C.B., D.S.O., M.C., in having to give up command of the Rhine Army because of ill health. No one can have spared himself less and more deserved a long rest, and everyone will wish him a full and speedy recovery.

As Commander-in-Chief of the Rhine Army he was to have been responsible for the vitally important task of training the bulk of the National Service recruits, a task to which he has been looking forward with all that boundless enthusiasm so characteristic of him. Plans had only recently been made for him to present the new Colours to the 1st Battalion on May 15.

By now members of the Regiment will have had time to adjust their outlook to the new position of the Regiment in the infantry.

There are bound to be regrets at much that has happened, and will happen, from these changes; indeed, it is only right and natural that there should be. But, at the same time, we must accept these changes, and in so doing must do our utmost to make the present better than the past. The good from yesterday must be carried on so that the future shall be the best of the new and the old. In this number is reprinted an article by Mr. Arthur Bryant on "The Fate of the Regiment." As Mr. Bryant says, "there is a price to be paid," but there is much to be thankful for.

The Home Counties Training Battalion (2nd Battalion The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment) are making a particular point of fostering the regimental spirit of each regiment in the Home Counties Group. Each regiment is being given a regimental room and all Middlesex men are being taught our Regimental history. No one need, therefore, have any qualms about the future of our Regimental customs and traditions.

We are including in this number the first of a series of this Training Battalion's news-letter.

The Late Col. D. C. Percy-Smith, D.S.O., O.B.E.

It is with deep regret that we have to record the death of Col. D. C. Percy-Smith, D.S.O., O.B.E., on June 1, 1948. An obituary notice by the Colonel of The Regiment appears on page 173.

Officers' Club Ties

Humphrey and Crook Ltd., 22 Suffolk Street, Haymarket, London, W.1, have Middlesex Officers' Club ties in stock, price 9s. 9d.

OBITUARY

Colonel J. L. Blumfeld

The passing, at the age of eighty-three, of Col. J. L. Blumfeld on Sunday, April 18, 1948, will leave a great gap to his many friends; it almost seems like the passing of a generation.

At an early age he spent quite a time in South Africa, and on his return joined as a Volunteer in London, subsequently becoming a commissioned officer in the 9th Harrow Rifles. During the South African War this unit was amalgamated with the 5th West Middlesex, where for many years he commanded the Stanmore Company. He became a major in 1905 and became first associated with the Middlesex Regiment when the unit was transferred to the 9th Battalion The Middlesex Regiment in 1908. In 1910 he was appointed to command, which he held until 1918. During the latter years he served in India and Mesopotamia. He became Honorary Colonel of the Battalion in 1922 and in 1931 he was made a Deputy-Lieutenant of the county, and up to the time of his death was President of the Old Comrades' Association.

He was one of the first members of the Territorial Army Association and served for a great number of years.

Col. Blumfeld was one of the first officers to initiate closer relations with the Territorial and Regular units of the Regiment, and in this work he was closely associated with Brig.-Gen. "Jackie" Hall.

No one was more popular with the Old Comrades, to whom he was familiarly known as "Jimmy." As Honorary Colonel he was indefatigable in visiting the unit when on training and on all appropriate occasions.

During the latter years, however, he was greatly handicapped by losing a leg.

Last autumn the Old Comrades paid him a visit at his home at Botley, near Southampton, which was a source of great pleasure to him and his wife and family.

Few people had to bear so many adverse blows of fortune.

He lost his elder son in 1919, who was a promising Regular officer in the Royal Navy. His younger son was killed as a lieutenant in the Machine Gun Corps at the Shumran Bend Crossing, near Kut, February, 1917, after having served in the Middlesex Regiment. His son-in-law was killed as a lieutenant-colonel in the last days of the 1914-18 war in the Royal Naval Volunteers.

In spite of all these setbacks, however, he was always most cheerful to the very last.

His passing came quite suddenly and was due to haemorrhage.

The funeral took place on Thursday, April 22, and was attended by many friends and representatives of the Regiment, including Col. Browne, Col. Beach, Col. Lamont and Lt.-Col. Fox, and representatives from the Old Comrades' Association of the 9th Battalion The Middlesex Regiment, and representatives from the Depot.

THE FATE OF THE REGIMENT

By Arthur Bryant

(Reprinted from *The Sunday Times* of April 4, 1948, by kind permission)

The safety and honour of Britain depend, not on her wealth and administration, but on the character of her people. This in turn depends on the institutions which form character. In war it depends, in particular, on the military institutions which create the martial habits of discipline, courage, loyalty, pride and endurance.

In the British Army from time immemorial the most important of these has been the regiment. The regiment is not merely an administrative organisation to be judged by its logistical convenience. Method and industry in the office and administrative tidiness—admirable qualities—avail nothing on the battlefield unless implemented by the courage and selflessness of the fighting man. War is a hateful thing. Yet, by a paradox not always realised, the soldier's is the noblest of callings. For no other man has to make such constant demands on his own nature. In him instinctive and spasmodic courage and selflessness have to be fostered and disciplined into second nature.

The regiment exists to ensure this. It is something more than a vehicle for orders; it is a school for military virtue. Its value to our country is that it evokes men's love, pride and loyalty and, by doing so, enables them on the battlefield to transcend their own natures. This sacred and undying brotherhood, drawn from all classes and standards of education, but knit together in a common pride and code, has repeatedly given the British Army a fighting strength in excess of its numbers and equipment. How many times, thanks to our national habit of neglecting our Army in peace-time, has it needed it?

A Price to be Paid

For throughout our history there has been a price to pay for the immunity from invasion and the wealth and influence that have sprung from our command of the sea. That price is paid in part by the soldier. Britain, with her comparatively small population, cannot simultaneously afford a large Army as well as a great Navy or its modern equivalent, a great Navy and a great Air Force. As soon as the memory of war recedes, the British have always demanded that the Army should be reduced in personnel and equipment to a strength far lower than those of their potential enemies. Thus, the British soldier has had to face utterly disproportionate odds in defence of military interests vital to our survival and future victory. So in the terrible winter of 1914 the little Regular Army had to defend the Channel ports, on which our sea strategy depended, almost ceasing to exist in the task while England buckled on her armour. So, too, in 1940 O'Connor's handful of Regulars in the Western Desert had to face—and defeat—forces six or seven times their own strength in order to secure the Nile Valley and the global strategy on which all our own and our Allies' future war efforts depended.

What is true of the British soldier in general is still more so of the infantryman. To none is that im-

ponderable, morale, so important. The sailor has his ship, the airman his aircraft, the artilleryman his gun, the cavalryman his tank or horse to inspire affection and loyalty. But the infantryman depends in the last resort upon one thing: his tempered and unconquerable spirit.

It is no accident that the symbol round which in the past the British infantryman fought, and which again and again he died to defend, was the Regimental Colours. For these were for him the ark of his own peculiar covenant: the exclusive brotherhood in which he had voluntarily enlisted and which he would sooner die than betray. To let down the regiment, to be unworthy of the men of old who had marched under the same Colours, to be untrue to the comrades who had shared the same loyalties, hardships and perils was more than even the least-tutored, humblest soldier would do. And it was always a peculiar and special pride, so dear to the hearts of the free men of our race. "Neither King's nor Queen's nor Royal," shouted the proud Colonel of the Gloucesters, "only old Bragg's Brass before and Brass behind; Twenty-eighth Foot—shoulder arms!"

Regimental Pride

Again and again this pride in the continuing regiment has enabled the infantryman to stand firm and fight forward when the bravest without it would have failed. It is a pride which turns disaster and injustice—the lot of the British soldier at the outset of all wars—into a challenge to endure and suffer. "Ah!" said the Iron Duke when a battalion had to be sacrificed to plug an awkward gap in his line, "The Twenty-third—that is the very thing!" There cannot have been a fusilier who did not glow with a grim pride when he learnt of the Duke's ominous words. Or as an officer of the same regiment wrote during another test of endurance a century later:

"Lucasta! he's a fusilier!
His pride keeps him there."

It has been the realisation of this that has caused those in high command to resist logistical arguments that a common Corps of Infantry would be easier to administer than 69 separate regiments. During the 1914-18 war, and again during the late war, it frequently proved impossible, when heavy casualties had been suffered by a particular battalion, to reinforce it with men from the same regiment. For this reason men who had been trained to regard loyalty to, say, the Northumberland Fusiliers as the ultimate virtue might find themselves, to their disgust, in the hour for which all their training had been a preparation, fighting in the ranks of a regiment, equally glorious to its own men, but of whose traditions they knew nothing. The very purpose of regimental *esprit de corps* was thus defeated.

It was to meet the criticisms of the administrator while preserving the priceless attributes of the regiment that Maj.-Gen. Wimberley, during his spell as Director of Infantry at the end of the war, devised the new grouping of the infantry into 15 groups of regiments, each, except those of the Guards, the Light Infantry and the Rifles, based on an area whose inhabitants possessed

a common regional pride. Thus the Devons and Dorsets—the “Bloody Eleventh” and the “Green Linnets”—the Gloucesters and the Wiltshires, the Royal Hampshires and the Royal Berkshires have been grouped together in a group or brigade based on Wessex manpower and patriotism. In principle, officers and other ranks in such a group may be posted to any of its regiments in peace or war as need may dictate, but in practice every effort will be made to avoid taking men from their own regiments.

There has been a further reorganisation. Most of the regiments of the British Line since the Cardwell reforms of 1881 have consisted each of two former regiments, with their separate traditions, funds and charities. One constituted the first battalion of the regiment, the other the second. The general rule was that, while one served abroad, the other served at home. The relinquishment of Imperial responsibilities and the reduction in the Army's fighting “teeth” in proportion to its technical and administrative “tail” have necessitated a peacetime establishment of only one battalion for every regiment.

Surplus Battalions

The problem of the surplus battalion has presented colonels of regiments with grave difficulties as to regimental funds and treasures, as well as with intangible sacrifices which mean more to a soldier than any civilian can comprehend. But the necessity for these evolutionary changes has been made clear and the all-important historic principle has been maintained.

The old soldier and the antiquarian must bid farewell to much that they hold dear, but what matters is that the recruit of the future should be strengthened by the same regimental loyalties and *esprit de corps* as his father. All 69 infantry regiments are to continue their existence and will, it is hoped, in their new grouping continue to serve the great ends of their being. As Field-Marshal Montgomery wrote during the war: “We must be very careful what we do with the British infantry. They are the people that do the hard solid fighting. . . . Their fighting spirit is based largely on morale and regimental *esprit de corps*. On no account must anyone be allowed to tamper with this.”

OFFICERS' CLUB NOTES

Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee of the Middlesex Regiment Officers' Club held at the Junior United Services Club, Charles II Street, on Thursday, April 29, 1948, at 11.30 a.m.

PRESENT—Brig. B. B. Rackham, C.B.E., M.C., Col. M. Browne, M.C., D.L. (Colonel of the Regiment), Col. C. P. Rooke, D.S.O., Lt.-Col. T. S. Wollocombe, M.C., Lt.-Col. M. Crawford, D.S.O. (Chairman), Lt.-Col. W. L. Roberts, O.B.E., M.C., Lt.-Col. A. S. J. de S. Clayton, Major A. W. Clark, O.B.E. (Secretary).

Apologies for non-attendance were received from Brig. E. E. F. Baker, Col. G. Beach, Lt.-Col. J. D. Robbins and Major H. Marsh.

Election of Vice-Chairman

Lt.-Col. A. S. J. de S. Clayton, having recently taken over command of the Depot, was elected Vice-Chairman, Lt.-Col. M. Crawford being due to take over command

of the 1st Battalion at a future date. A vote of thanks, proposed by Col. M. Browne and seconded by Lt.-Col. W. L. Roberts, was passed to Lt.-Col. M. Crawford for his excellent services as Vice-Chairman during his command of No. 57 Primary Training Centre.

Secretary's Report

The secretary reported that the membership of the Club to date was 328 and that more subscriptions were due at the end of April.

Election of New Members

The Committee approved 10 applications for membership to the Club as presented by the Secretary.

Officers' Club Dinner

The Committee approved of the change in connection with the Officers' Club Dinner; notification of this had been circulated to all members. The number of tickets sold to date was 98.

6th Battalion Funds

Correspondence in connection with these funds between Major H. K. Hardcastle and the solicitor acting on behalf of the trustees were produced before the Committee and it was decided to leave this matter in the hands of Major Hardcastle.

Middlesex Regiment Golfing Society

The Spring Meeting was held at Hendon on May 6 and 7 during a happy spell of the most glorious weather.

On the first day the annual match between the serving and retired officers took place. The serving officers were particularly anxious to avenge their last year's defeat. But Lt.-Col. W. H. Samuel, who once again did all the preliminary work and letter writing to raise the retired officers' side, proved himself too wise a captain to allow such a thing to happen. In the morning, in the top match Major Beadnell and Lt.-Col. Crawford found themselves five up at the eighth against their more illustrious opponents; however, a clever billiards shot by Major Perkins at the next hole stemmed the tide, and what appeared likely to be a big win for the present eventually became a victory for the past. Gen. Bucknall and Lt.-Col. South proved themselves too strong for Brig. Weston and Major Chattey, but in the next two matches youth had its day, and at lunch the position was level, with each side seven holes up.

But after lunch the story was the same as last year. The serving officers could not stay the course. Cols. Samuel and South, playing a strong game against their younger and lower handicapped opponents, set an excellent example, which Gen. Bucknall and Major Anderson copied and rubbed in with a vengeance, the final result being a victory for the retired officers by a margin of eight holes, which was exactly the same as last year. The serving officers consoled themselves with the thought that, had Gen. Bucknall not changed sides, the result might have been different.

On the second day, in brilliant sunshine, competitions for the scratch, handicap and foursome cups were played. Major Perkins repeated his victory for another scratch cup, but the round cost him nine strokes more than in the autumn. Major J. W. G. Ormiston, with a very fine round of 65 net, won the handicap cup for the

third time, and will very soon be sharing Lt.-Col. J. R. B. Worton's reputation. A magnificent matched set of woods, presented by Mrs. Perkins, the wife of Major C. H. Perkins, were also won by Major Ormiston. These were put up for auction by the winner and after much spirited bidding were purchased by Major G. B. Anderson. The proceeds (£13 13s. 0d.) have been paid into the Regimental Memorial Fund. This is the third set of clubs that has been given by Major and Mrs. Perkins as prizes for our competitions. We must congratulate both the donors and the winner on their generous action.

In the afternoon more foursomes were played, this time against bogey. Partners had been drawn for from the Chairman's hat, and it was fortunate how, in nearly every case, a short and long handicap player came out together. Majors Beadnell and Anderson, who had both been playing very well throughout the meeting, started favourites and finished strong winners with a score of two down; at the turn it was reported on the “bush” telegraph that they were two up, but on the homeward walk a few slips allowed the Colonel to reassess himself.

It was altogether a very successful meeting, and the kindness of the weather did much to help, but to many there was something lacking, and that was the presence of Lt.-Col. H. Phillips. Unfortunately, at the last moment ill health prevented him making the journey from Wales. This is the first meeting that Col. Phillips has missed since the start of the Society. A newcomer, Major G. Lerwill, who has recently joined the Regiment from the Indian Army, made a welcome entry into golfing circles, and we hope that it will not be long before he features among the winners. New blood in the Society is badly needed, and at the Annual General Meeting it was decided once again to allow long handicaps up to 24, and in the case of beginners up to 30, in order to encourage the younger members of the Regiment to take up the Royal and Ancient game.

THE MIDDLESEX REGIMENT GOLFING SOCIETY

Thursday, May 6, 1948

SERVING OFFICERS v. RETIRED OFFICERS

The serving officers are named first.

1000 HOURS

First pair: Major L. C. Beadnell and Lt.-Col. M. Crawford, D.S.O., 0; Major C. H. P. Perkins and Major G. B. Anderson, M.C., 1 0.

Second pair: Brig. G. P. L. Weston, D.S.O., O.B.E., and Major T. W. Chattey, 0; Lt.-Gen. G. C. Bucknall, C.B., M.C., and Lt.-Col. T. South, O.B.E., T.D., 6 0.

Third pair: Major J. W. G. Ormiston and Lt.-Col. R. A. Gwyn, 3 up; Lt.-Col. W. H. Samuel and Major C. T. Whinney, M.C., 0.

Fourth pair: Major G. Lerwill, M.C., and Capt. J. Bywaters, 4 up; Lt.-Col. T. S. Wollocombe, M.C., and Lt.-Col. S. F. W. M. del Court, M.C., 0.

AFTERNOON

First pair: Major L. C. Beadnell and Brig. G. P. L. Weston, D.S.O., O.B.E., 0; Lt.-Col. W. H. Samuel and Lt.-Col. T. South, O.B.E., T.D., 3 up.

Second pair: Lt.-Col. M. Crawford, D.S.O., and Capt. J. Bywaters, 2 up; Major C. H. P. Perkins and Lt.-Col. S. F. W. M. del Court, M.C., 0.

Third pair: Major J. W. G. Ormiston and Major G. Lerwill, M.C., 0; Lt.-Gen. G. C. Bucknall, C.B., M.C., and Major G. B. Anderson, M.C., 7 up.

Fourth pair: Lt.-Col. R. A. Gwyn and Major T. W. Chattey, 0; Lt.-Col. T. S. Wollocombe, M.C., and Major T. C. Whinney, M.C., 0.

Result: Serving officers, 9; retired officers, 17. Retired officers won by eight holes.

HENDON GOLF CLUB

May 7, 1948

RESULTS

Scratch Cup: Major C. H. P. Perkins (winner), 78; Major J. G. Ormiston, 83; Lt.-Gen. G. C. Bucknall, 85; Major L. C. Beadnell, 86; Major T. South, 86.

Handicap Cup (and matched set of three woods): 1, Major J. N. G. Ormiston (winner), 83—18 = 65; 2, Lt.-Col. T. South, 86—18 = 68; 3 (tie), Major T. W. Chattey, 89—14 = 75, and Capt. J. Bywaters, 89—14 = 75; 5 (tie), Major G. B. Anderson, 91—15 = 76, and Lt.-Gen. G. C. Bucknall, 85—9 = 76; 7, Major L. C. Beadnell, 86—8 = 78; 8 (tie), Major D. R. Pattison, 93—12 = 81, Major C. T. Whinney, 89—8 = 81, and Lt.-Col. M. Crawford, 89—8 = 81; 11, Major C. H. P. Perkins, 78—4 = 82; 12 (tie), Capt. R. E. Guest, 98—14 = 84, and Lt.-Col. W. H. Samuel, 100—16 = 84; 14, Lt.-Col. T. S. Wollocombe, 104—18 = 86; 15 (tie), Lt.-Col. R. A. Gwyn, 110—18 = 92, Major J. G. P. Hunt, 110—18 = 92, and Lt.-Col. F. Gordon Parker, 110—18 = 92; 18, Lt.-Col. S. F. W. M. del Court, 110—16 = 94; 19, Major G. Lerwill, 124—18 = 106; 20, Brig. B. Rackham, disqualified.

Foursomes v. Bogey: Major L. C. Beadnell and Major G. B. Anderson (winners), 2 down; Lt.-Col. T. South and Lt.-Col. M. Crawford, 3 down; Capt. J. Bywaters and Lt.-Col. S. F. W. M. del Court, 4 down; Major J. G. Ormiston and Major D. R. Pattison, 6 down; Brig. B. Rackham and Major C. H. Perkins, 6 down; Lt.-Col. W. H. Samuel and Major C. T. Whinney, 6 down; Lt.-Gen. G. C. Bucknall and Major G. Lerwill, 9 down; Major T. Chattey and Lt.-Col. R. A. Gwyn, 9 down; Capt. R. E. Guest and Major J. G. P. Hunt, 10 down; Lt.-Col. F. G. Parker and Lt.-Col. T. S. Wollocombe, 14 down.

At a General Meeting of the Middlesex Regimental Golfing Society held at the Hendon Golf Club on May 7, 1948, it was decided by the Committee that the Autumn Golf Meeting would be held at the Hendon Golf Club on October 28, 1948.

COLONEL OF THE REGIMENT'S NOTES

General

On Saturday morning, April 17, the most tragic news that I received since the war ended reached me when I read in the *Daily Graphic* of the sudden illness of Lt.-Gen. Sir Brian Horrocks, K.B.E., C.B., D.S.O., M.C. Plans had only recently been made for him to present the new Colours to the 1st Battalion of our Regiment stationed in B.A.O.R., and we were expecting His Majesty The King to grant his Royal permission for this ceremony to be performed on May 15, and the Commander-in-Chief had promised to stop with the Battalion after he had presented the Colours so as to be with the Battalion on the anniversary of Albuhera (May 16, 1811). I myself was to have stopped with him at his official residence during a visit to B.A.O.R. from May 12-19. My readers will recollect that the General had only recently had his seventh operation, which, at the time, seemed entirely successful, and I hasten to add that, beyond the fact that he had suddenly become ill again, we do not know officially or for certain exactly what the situation is about his health, and I know that all ranks of our Regiment, and, in fact, the vast numbers in the Army who know and have served under him, will pray with me for his quick and, we trust, complete recovery.

I feel the fact that the new Colours cannot be presented next month is of but slight importance, for there will be other opportunities for that ceremony to be performed, and we shall continue to hope that he will be the person to carry it out, for no one could ever take his place.

What is of major importance, if true, and I pray it be not so, is the suggestion that his task as Commander-in-Chief of the Rhine Army will not be carried out. He was to have been the Trainer-in-Chief of the National Service Recruits, and I well remember during a visit to the Depot on March 22 last how he spoke with deep enthusiasm of his task; how he conceived it must be done; and, finally, the very vital importance of his task being successful if the ranks of the future Territorial Army were to be willing and keen members and not merely unwilling conscripts. To us who know him there could never be any doubt about his success, just as we expected him to be victorious in battle as he was throughout the campaign in North Africa (until he was so severely wounded) and during the final victorious operations in North-West Europe. The General has been to me a pillar of strength throughout my service as Colonel. His advice was always available and first-class in quality, and whenever I needed his support in difficult times he gave it without restraint and continued to press for what the Regiment needed without regard to himself. No one could feel this blow as I do, and I ask all who read this letter to add their prayers to my own for his swift recovery.

I know that I shall have the sympathy of all ranks, both past and present, when I go to visit our 1st Battalion during the Albuhera anniversary period, remembering, as I surely shall, that I was to have had his company on this occasion and to have been his personal guest but for this sudden and unexpected illness.

On March 16 I was present at a passing out parade of No. 57 P.T.C., at which Maj.-Gen. J. C. O. Marriott, C.B., C.V.O., D.S.O., M.C., G.O.C. London District, was the inspecting officer. He previously lunched in the Mess and I had the pleasure of being with him. He was very pleased with all that he saw.

On March 30 I was again present at the final passing out parade of the P.T.C. On this occasion the inspecting officer was Maj.-Gen. P. G. Gregson Ellis, C.B., O.B.E., who is also an officer of H.M. Foot Guards. He also complimented Col. Crawford, the O.C. No. 57 P.T.C., on the excellent standard of drill and dress attained by the recruits after some six weeks' service. At his request I myself presented certain medals and certificates to other ranks, with all of whom I was personally acquainted. The list appears below:

6215660 Sgt. J. Watson: Certificate of Mention in Despatches.

6340056 Pte. J. Blogg: Long Service and Good Conduct Medal.

6193991 Pte. G. Lonsdale: T.A. Efficiency Medal.

6198742 C Sgt. E. Phillips: Long Service and Good Conduct Medal.

6975788 Pte. J. Gray: Long Service and Good Conduct Medal.

On this final parade a special extra ceremony was added at the end, in which the ranks on parade, by a clever drill manoeuvre, turned outwards and marched off parade, each rank disappearing into a doorway on either side of the clock and mirror in the centre of the barrack block which borders the north side of the square. During the movement the Band played the tune "Auld Lang Syne," a song which always moves me deeply. It caused my mind to turn back to countless New Year's

nights when I have been present at all ranks' dances in the Regiment and clasped hands with many of my comrades during the past 45 years since I served first in the Regiment. Joy and sorrow are always mingled on these occasions.

On March 24 I was invited by Col. G. Beach, their Honorary Colonel, to be present at the old 9th Middlesex Drill Hall at Kingsbury, now occupied by that unit in its new role as 595th L.A.A. Regiment, R.A. (new is not quite true, as it commenced some eight years ago). The unit was being inspected by Maj.-Gen. Heath, commanding the A.A. Division. This gunnery officer was C.R.A. in 43rd Division when Lt.-Col. Crawford was commanding the 8th Middlesex, then Divisional M.G. Battalion. In addition to a team of the Regiment, a party of cadets of 461st (C.) Regiment, R.A., was being instructed in A.A. gunnery. Also present was a detachment of the Legion of Frontiersmen, allied to the Canadian Mounted Police, whose picturesque dress was pleasant to view after our sombre battle-dress. Later we visited the canteen and the two Messes, and I was glad to see such comfortable rooms for all ranks, and I feel that this unit can certainly be proud to know that the wishes of the C.I.G.S., Lord Montgomery, are being carried out so fully. He stressed that such Regimental institutions must surpass all civilian clubs, etc., if the T.A. was to encourage volunteers to enter its ranks as instructors for the National Service soldiers. The cadets that we saw were a stalwart body of young men and belong to 461st L.A.A. (C.) Regiment, R.A., commanded by Lt.-Col. J. Hugh Jones, D.L., who was Mayor of Finchley during the early part of the last war and was responsible for a large number of woollen gifts being presented to other ranks in the Regimental M.G.T.C. The Depot Company, under Major S. Emery, M.C., received a good share of these things, and he was always confident that they would be worn by Finchley boys. Col. Hugh Jones's Finchley Welfare Fund was also responsible for the £1,000 presented to our War Memorial Appeal Fund by the Mayor of Finchley last summer. I feel sure all my readers will be pleased to have seen that Lt.-Col. Hugh Jones was recently appointed a Deputy Lieutenant for the County of Middlesex.

On Tuesday, March 16, I had the pleasure of accompanying Lt.-Col. and Mrs. Crawford and Major Clark to a variety concert in Tottenham Municipal Hall. There the Variety Artists' Association, under Mr. Harry Straw as compere, gave an excellent performance in aid of the Mayor of Edmonton's Middlesex Regimental War Memorial Appeal which he has made to his borough. The hall was packed and I am confident that the borough will present the Regiment with a very handsome cheque later on this year. The artists were very amusing and, speaking to some of them on the final curtain coming down, I was conscious of an intense desire to do their best for us and produce a good show.

On April 16 Col. Crawford very kindly took me to the finals of the Army Cadet boxing at the Albert Hall, where we sat next to Brig. Basil Rackham, M.C., and several young relatives of Mrs. Rackham. Only two cadets in the County of Middlesex took part in the finals, so that we had no hope of winning the championship. Cadet Knapp, 2nd (C.) Battalion, was defeated after

putting up a good show. Cadet L/Cpl. Giles, of 7th (C.) Battalion, won his fight. The weights of cadets varied from 6 st. up to 11 st. 6 lb. Curiously, there were no knock-outs in the 20 fights. Placings in the County Championships were Glamorgan first with 13 points and West Lancs with 12 points were second. Nineteen counties were included in the finals. Neither Col. Crawford nor myself was impressed by the standards displayed in these finals, and we felt that our young soldiers at Inglis Barracks had put up rather stronger fights, but we realised a third of the competitors were a good deal younger, being fourteen to fifteen and a half only. We also thought the person taking the part usually played by the R.S.M. in infantry boxing contests fell far short of the standard set by R.S.M. McLoughlin, who was a model for all such occasions.

I am glad to learn that our R.S.M. is to go as R.S.M. to the A.B.T.U. (the 2nd Battalion of the Royal West Kents) at Shorncliffe. That A.B.T.U. is very fortunate in obtaining such an R.S.M. and our loss is their gain. I hope before many months are past I may again have the pleasure of seeing him on parade at Inglis Barracks.

I have during the past few months attended several meetings of the Inglis Barracks Old Comrades' Club. The club is splendidly run by Capt. Smith and the numbers attending are certain proof of its popularity.

On Easter Sunday the local Old Comrades of the Regiment paraded at Inglis Barracks with the 3rd (C.) Battalion Drums and attended divine service in the Chapel dedicated to divine worship. I shall take this chance of telling all ranks how very excellently our Chaplain, the Rev. A. E. Gibbins, has carried out his duties. He served in the war with Col. Crawford in 43rd Division and the latter C.O. told me of his devotion to his duty and his bravery in action. This reunion here was a happy one for both officers, and I know that many young soldiers have received great help from his counsel in religious and other matters. I know all my readers will have realised the great influence for good which religious counsel gives to us all, and I have on many occasions referred to the need for religion to be followed with the deepest sincerity if our beloved country is to emerge victorious from its encounters with national difficulties common throughout the world, but even more so if we are to defeat the forces of evil, that is to say, the Devil. He besets us now and we shall never conquer without God's help.

On March 19 Col. Crawford, Major Clark, L/Cpl. Snell and myself had the great pleasure of attending the second Annual Dinner of the Uxbridge and District "Die-Hards" Club. The function was held at "The Golden Lion," Hillingdon, and we spent a most enjoyable evening. There was a great number present, and Lt.-Col. Hall, who formerly served in 1st Middlesex as Second-in-Command under Lt.-Col. Picard Hall, acted as chairman. Brig. Basil Rackham, Col. Sherbrooke Walker and Brig. Baker were among the guests. Most of us were called upon to make speeches, and all who have that task thrust upon them will know that it tempers their enjoyment until the duty is done. I must say, in spite of this fact, I thoroughly enjoyed a very friendly evening at which I met many old friends.

On March 18 Col. Crawford and myself visited the

R.M.A. to meet the 12 candidates for our two Regular commissions in 1948. We saw the Chapel, and the Memorial plans were explained to us in detail, and I am glad to know that our Regiment is to take a full share in meeting the expense so far as our share is concerned. We had a very good lunch and a delightful drive in the C.O.'s car, for the day was beautiful. Major John Ormiston, our representative, made excellent plans for the visit, and Lt.-Col. John Willoughby, an instructor at the Staff College, lunched with us. Unfortunately, Lt.-Col. Batten was engaged, so we could not meet him. Many of my readers will remember him in the 2nd Middlesex, in which he was a foremost athlete, being an Army representative runner. He was given accelerated promotion into another regiment and we lost him. He became a brigadier in this war.

I am most deeply distressed to report the death of Col. Douglas Cyril Percy-Smith, D.S.O., O.B.E., on Tuesday, June 1, in the Cottage Hospital at Leatherhead.

The Colonel has been thrice gravely ill with pneumonia during the last 18 months and on this final occasion his strength gave way. I will write more fully at a later date about this most lovable and popular officer of the elder generation, as I am too sad to do so now.

He was a very dear friend to me personally and I have seen him frequently during the past years, and it was always a joy to be with him, for he never altered.

Our sympathy from all ranks has been conveyed to his widow and only child, Nell, both of whom I know well, and have often visited him at his home, "Little Ballands," Fetcham, near Leatherhead.

He was born on November 14, 1875, and joined our Regiment on April 4, 1900, retiring on September 16, 1925 (serving in both 1st and 2nd Battalions during that time), after which he was employed as a retired officer (D.A.A.G.) on the staff in Guernsey for some three to four years. He fought in South Africa and also saw service in India, the Sudan and in the Great War in Palestine. Some 10 years of his service were spent with the Egyptian Army, in which he rose to high rank as Pasha.

Homecoming of the 2nd Battalion

I was delighted to go down to Southampton to meet the Battalion, which reached the port in the troopship *Strathnaver* on Thursday afternoon, June 3. I was in the charge of Col. W. H. V. Jones, O.B.E., who served for many years in the Regiment and is now the principal staff officer charged with all movements and embarkation on the South Coast arrangements and holds the rank of substantive full colonel.

He arranged for myself, Lt.-Gen. Sir Evelyn Barker (G.O.C.-in-Chief Eastern Command), Colonel Commandant R.R.C. and the colonel of a cavalry regiment (R.A.C.) to board the ship with him as soon as the medical staff declared the ship free of disease. There I spoke to Lt.-Col. Henderson, in command of 2nd Middlesex, and all ranks (approximately 200, inclusive of some 15 officers) on their troop deck. I reminded them that last time I saw the Battalion was just before D-Day in the woods outside Rowlands Castle, where the Battalion lay concealed from the air. The Battalion, on

conclusion of operations in N.W. Europe, proceeded to the Middle East, where it was largely engaged in Palestine operations until their departure from Haifa on May 22 in the troopship. The Band was present with the Battalion. On arrival at the quayside it was splendid to see our Regimental flag flying at the mast-head, and it was the best and most outstanding flag of all there. We have been very proud of the splendid behaviour of the Battalion in Palestine, where they have earned the praise of all their commanders. I met many old friends in the ship and I was deeply moved, but speaking was somewhat stilted due to numerous interruptions on the loudspeaker, now a feature of all ships, and doubtless very useful for commands and instructions, but disconcerting to anyone trying to welcome home a battalion he has himself served with for nearly 12 years and had the honour of commanding. However, I managed to do so and, being few in number and below deck, speech was easy to throw out.

The Battalion reached Inglis Barracks on the evening of Friday, June 4. During the weekend all ranks proceeded on well-earned leave and the cloud of anxiety of many relatives was raised after a period of endurance for nearly three years. The stories of murderers and their acts in Palestine must have been a source of deep fear to many relatives who never know when the dread telegram telling of death by foul means might not arrive at any hour, day or night. Only those who have friends or relatives in such countries can realise their feelings and the patient endurance demanded from them.

Mrs. Tidbury also visited the port to meet her son, Charles, serving as a captain in the K.R.R.C., who arrived in the same ship as did the 2nd Middlesex.

SANDHURST CHAPEL MEMORIAL

The amount of our donation to the above fund has now been over-subscribed and the Colonel of the Regiment takes this opportunity to thank all officers, past and present, for their generous response to his appeal.

REGIMENTAL ASSOCIATION NOTES

Minutes of a Meeting of the Committee of the Middlesex Regimental Association at the Middlesex Guildhall on Thursday, April 29, at 2.30 p.m.

PRESENT—Brig. B. B. Rackham, C.B.E., M.C. (Chairman), Col. M. Browne, M.C., D.L. (Colonel of the Middlesex Regiment), Lt.-Col. C. P. Rooke, D.S.O., Lt.-Col. W. L. Roberts, O.B.E., M.C., Lt.-Col. T. S. Wollocombe, M.C., Col. G. Beach, C.B., O.B.E., T.D., D.L., J.P., Lt.-Col. J. D. Robbins, O.B.E., Major H. K. Hardscastle, T.D., Lt.-Col. M. Crawford, D.S.O., Lt.-Col. A. S. J. de S. Clayton, C.S.M. Jennings, Sgt. E. Fletcher, Mr. A. Todman, Major A. W. Clark, O.B.E. (Secretary).

Apologies for non-attendance were received from Brig. E. E. F. Baker and Major H. Marsh.

Secretary's Report

The Secretary reported that the number of cases assisted during the quarter ending March 31, 1948, was 109, at a cost of £550 12s. 6d. In addition, £20 was obtained from the 51st Highland Division Trust Fund to assist a further case. The Secretary was authorised by the Committee to expend £600 for the quarter ending June 30, 1948.

Report of the War Memorial Committee

Col. G. Beach reported to the Committee that further progress was being made in connection with the appeal.

HARRINGAY (Harringay Arena). Mr. F. S. Gentle has promised to arrange for a large boxing show in the arena in August which is likely to produce a large donation.

UXBRIDGE are holding a flag day in connection with the appeal on July 3, 1948.

EALING are now willing to help and are going ahead with a programme to support the appeal.

WOOD GREEN have applied for collection cards, which are now to hand.

EDMONTON AND TOTTENHAM. Assistance from these boroughs has been promised.

HENDON have forwarded a cheque for £775 as a first donation.

Regarding the site, tenders for the preparation of roads have been circulated and it is hoped to have this completed by the end of the year and to commence building the Cottage Homes next spring.

Finance

The Finance Committee have reviewed grants for the quarter ending March, 1948, and approve of the Secretary's report, also recommended the Committee to approve that the Secretary be authorised to expend £600 for quarter ending June 30, 1948.

The Finance Committee have referred the question of charging rent for the Cottage Homes until the next Meeting.

The Finance Committee recommended that a certain amount of money held on deposit at Lloyds Bank be invested in short-term stock.

Col. Browne wished to express his and the Committee's thanks to the Finance Committee for their excellent and untiring work in connection with the Association Funds. The Finance Committee's report was adopted by the Committee.

O.C.A. Reunion

The Secretary reported that the applications for tickets for the Reunion Dance had been below expectations; only 300 tickets had been sold to date. The Vice-Chairman was holding a meeting of local Secretaries of Clubs on May 3 in an attempt to bolster up enthusiasm. The Committee agreed that a further review of the situation be made to the Chairman by the end of May, 1948.

Roll of Honour

Lt.-Col. Crawford reported on estimates in connection with the Roll of Honour and they approved of the estimate of Mr. Fisher of £40 for two copies be accepted. One copy for the church and one copy to remain in the Secretary's office.

Drm. Stagpoole's Grave

The Secretary reported that Messrs. Kelly hoped to complete the headstone by the middle of July, 1948, and that the O.C. 1st Battalion had contributed £25 towards the cost.

Other Business

The Secretary produced two estimates in connection with the engraving of the existing War Memorial, and he was instructed by the Committee to obtain two more by the next Association Meeting.

Life Membership

The Committee decided to defer the question of Life Membership until the next Meeting.

The Committee passed a vote of thanks to Lt.-Col. M. Crawford, D.S.O., for his work in the capacity of Vice-Chairman and welcomed Lt.-Col. A. S. J. de S. Clayton, now Commanding Officer of the Depot, in his stead.

DONATIONS TO WAR MEMORIAL COTTAGE HOMES

(February 3 to May 12, inclusive)

£775.—Borough of Hendon (first donation).

£34.—17th Battalion The Middlesex Home Guard.

£15 15s. od.—Major P. C. Tuckey.

£13 13s. od.—Major G. B. Anderson, M.C. (bidder at auction of set of golf clubs presented by Mrs. Perkins, wife of Major C. H. P. Perkins).

£10 10s. od.—Mr. M. R. Hardy, J.P.

£10 5s. od.—Old Comrades, "C" Company, Home Guard.

£10.—Lt.-Col. C. D. Drew, D.S.O., O.B.E., Lt. A. R. Cowan, Major G. C. Dawson.

£9 11s.—Laver de la Haye whist drive per Brigadier and Mrs. O. H. Tidbury.

£5 6s.—Canons Lodge No. 5933.

£5 5s. od.—Jersey Masonic Lodge No. 2163, Major S. C. Jay, Ickenham St. Giles Lodge No. 6028, Lt.-Col. E. N. Trevor, T.D., Major J. Florio, D.S.O., Major H. K. Hardscastle, T.D., Mr. H. W. Morris, Maj.-Gen. A. E. Davidson (on behalf of five grandsons of the late Ensign Thomas Elliott), Mr. H. Dixon (in memory of his son, who died whilst a prisoner of war in Japanese hands), Mr. H. Bosman.

£5.—Major H. Cooper, D.L., Middlesex Century Lodge No. 5837, Major G. W. P. Hodding, Mr. Frances Winham, P.M.C. Depot, Middlesex Regiment (further donation), Major F. G. L. Larkworthy.

£4 14s. 6d.—Argus Lodge No. 5903.

£4 5s. 3d.—Ladies' Guild.

£3 16s. 6d.—Hornsey "Die-Hards" Club.

£3 3s. od.—Pari Passu Lodge No. 5943, Mr. W. Payne, O.B.E., Brig. H. G. L. Prynn, C.B.E., M.C., T.D., Mr. A. E. Shock.

£3.—Sudbury Lodge No. 4529, Major P. D. ff. Powell, "The Maggs Pokey Die Fiends" (per Mr. F. Fenemore).

£2 2s. od.—Heston Lodge No. 4880, Mr. J. K. Couper, Mr. J. R. Spooner, Kenton Mart Lodge No. 901, Ickenham Lodge No. 5770, Lady Gluckstein, Mrs. M. Salmon, Capt. V. W. Denny, Mr. H. Abrahams, Mr. H. Selby, Major V. Belsem, Mr. Clarence Trevor, Major E. L. Stacey, Mr. J. Mather, Messrs. R. P. Benjamin and Co., Major F. F. Sharples.

£2.—Capt. G. A. Binney.

£1 16s. 10d.—O.C. 7th Battalion The Middlesex Regiment (T.A.).

£1 10s. od.—Rev. E. Stogden, Ealing Social Club (collecting box per Major W. D. Ellis).

£1 6s. od.—Capt. J. Bywaters.

£1 4s. 7d.—The Ship Social Club (collecting box per Mr. Boen).

£1 1s. od.—Mr. M. Morris, Royal Savoy Lodge No. 355, S/Ldr. F. Marshall, T.D.

£1.—Mr. F. Edmunds, Mr. T. H. Stroud.

£17s. 8d.—Hornsey "Die-Hards" Club (collecting box).

£17s. 3d.—7th Battalion The Middlesex Regiment (T.A.) (collecting box per Major Denton).

£17s. od.—"B" Company, 2nd Battalion The Middlesex Regiment.

6s. od.—Mr. W. E. Reading.

5s. od.—Mr. H. C. Yallop, Mr. R. C. Monti, Mr. C. Baker.

3s. 6d.—Mr. J. Read, Mr. P. Dawson.

2s. 6d.—Mr. A. C. Cordell.

2s. od.—Mr. and Mrs. Viner.

REGIMENTAL DEPOT

Since the last issue of this journal the scene at Inglis Barracks has undergone a complete and somewhat sad change. The once busy square is now silent and deserted, the barrack blocks which housed 240 recruits are empty and the fortnightly passing out parades have ceased.

The Depot still carries on, however, in a drastically reduced form, consisting of a permanent staff of only 18 all ranks from the Regiment, together with four A.C.C. cooks who minister to bodily requirements. Although a small family, it is a happy and indeed versatile one. Witness the case of L/Cpl. Marable, who combines the roles of Q.M. storeman, N.C.O. i/c coal yard, sports storeman and relief driver.

We are looking forward keenly to the arrival of the 2nd Battalion from their difficult and exacting duties in Palestine. They are due to arrive here within the next few weeks, and we shall do everything possible to make their stay at the Depot a happy one.

We bid farewell and the best of luck to Lt.-Col. M. Crawford, D.S.O., who has now left us to take command of the 1st Battalion. We offer him grateful thanks for all his wise guidance during his tenure of command at Inglis Barracks, and our congratulations on his new appointment and his promotion to the substantive rank of lieutenant-colonel.

We welcome to the Depot, as Col. Crawford's successor, Lt.-Col. A. S. J. de S. Clayton, and we look forward to another happy period under his command. He comes to us fresh from his appointment at Combined Operations Headquarters, but there is no truth in the rumour that a landing will shortly be made by troops of the Depot on the shores of the Welsh Harp.

Other officers who have now left us include Major H. Marsh, who is now commanding a joint Middlesex and Royal Sussex Regiment company at the A.B.T.U. at Shorncliffe. Capt. J. G. Stevens is carrying out an attachment to the R.A.O.C. at Bicester prior to receiving a Regular commission in that arm. Major G. W. P. Hodding, Capt. R. G. Taylor and Lt. H. J. A. Moore are awaiting embarkation for the Middle East, West Africa and Germany respectively, while Lt. A. N. Jordan is now engaged in parachute training.

We have said farewell to R.S.M. J. McLoughlin, who is now R.S.M. at the A.B.T.U. at Shorncliffe. He was a tower of strength to the P.T.C. and his hard work with the recruits never failed to produce excellent results. C.S.M. H. Jennings is about to join the 1st Battalion, while C.S.M. P. Donovan is now C.S.M. to Major Marsh. C/Sgt. Freshwater is now on the permanent staff of the Staff College, while C/Sgt. Moody, M.M., is now at No. 164 O.C.T.U. in Cheshire.

Space forbids the mentioning of every individual, but we would like to wish all those who have left the Depot the very best of good fortune in their new employments.

Sport has naturally been somewhat conspicuous by its absence recently; it is difficult to raise teams from a total strength of 40 or so, of whom many are "transit" personnel. It may not be out of place to place on view the consolidated achievements of No. 57 P.T.C. during the past winter. In recording these successes we

acknowledge the valuable help we received from "B" Company of the 1st Battalion during their stay at Inglis Barracks. A number of their stalwarts were members of the unit team in several of the sports enumerated.

ASSOCIATION FOOTBALL

Winners, Home Counties District Inter-P.T.C. Competition.

Winners, London District Midweek League.

Runners-up, Home Counties District Open Competition.

RUGBY FOOTBALL

Winners, Home Counties District Inter-P.T.C. Competition.

Runners-up, Home Counties District Open Competition.

BOXING

Runners-up, Open and Inter-P.T.C. Competitions.

HOCKEY

Runners-up, District Inter-P.T.C. Competition.

Two of the unit's boxing team, Ptes. McKay and Farey, went on to win their respective weights in the Eastern Command Championships.

Needless to say, we anticipate a return to real sporting activity when the 2nd Battalion joins us, and to that end cricket fixtures are being made for the months of June, July and August.

Albuhera Day, 1948

Although the Depot is such a small concern, it was decided to do everything possible to ensure that the 137th anniversary of Albuhera should be celebrated in fitting style. As Albuhera Day fell on a Sunday, the festivities were spread over the weekend.

The main interest was a cricket match between a Depot team, slightly reinforced from outside by Major C. M. M. Man, M.C., now at the War Office, and Lt. N. Legge from Shorncliffe, and an Old Comrades' team including such eminent "Die-Hards" as Majors G. Kaines and W. A. Raindle and ex-C.S.M. Williams ("Tich").

The game was fought out at fever pitch, and the efforts of "Dingley" Dell and "All" Muggleton were as nothing to the output of energy on this occasion. The combined ages of the Old Comrades' team reached a total of which even the Australian team would be proud, but their ages were belied by their agility in the field and their running between wickets. Captaining the Old Comrades' team was ex-Sgt. "Tom" King, and it was, no doubt, due to his cunning leadership that age and experience triumphed over comparative youth.

Among other events which took place were shooting on the 30 yards range, where the number of alleged 1-inch groups was truly amazing. There were races on the cricket field under the watchful eye of Major G. Lerwill, M.C., and we felt it a pity that the Olympic selectors were not present or, conversely, that the horse and jockey and three-legged races are not on the agenda for this year's Games. If such were the case, then Mill Hill would be well represented at Wembley.

Altogether some 300 members and ex-members of the Regiment, together with their wives and families, came in the afternoon, and by the time evening came and the Albuhera Ball commenced these numbers had swollen to between 450 and 500. The Ball was as successful as had been the afternoon's events.

Albuhera Day began with the sounding of Reveille in barracks by the Drums of the 3rd (Cadet) Battalion The Middlesex Regiment (D.C.O.), who had already done yeoman service on the Saturday in entertaining the crowd on the cricket field. In the morning a parade service was held in the Depot church and was attended by over 50 Old Comrades. After the service the parade marched past the O.C. Depot, Lt.-Col. A. S. J. de S. Clayton, who was accompanied at the saluting base by ex-C. Sgt. Barney Ryan, the oldest soldier on parade, who was a soldier of the 77th in the South African War and celebrated his seventy-seventh birthday on Albuhera Day. After the march past the Old Comrades were found to be thirsty and an adjournment was immediately made to the Crawford Hut, where the position was remedied.

Later in the day the customary exchange of visits between Officers' and Sergeants' Messes took place, and so, after two days of glorious weather and many individual as well as collective reunions, the Albuhera celebrations came to a close.

OLD COMRADES' SOCIAL CLUB (DEPOT)

Past, present and future are embodied in the atmosphere which prevails in the Crawford Hut, Inglis Barracks, on the last Saturday in each month.

The hut is, for all time, to be the home of the Depot Old Comrades' Club, irrespective of the future of the barracks, and is named after Col. Crawford, who was instrumental in obtaining this concession.

The activities of the club have increased beyond expectation during the past quarter, with a new members list running into three figures. This is excellent progress, and Capt. "Dick" Smith and his able assistant, Mr. George Kerswill, must be congratulated on the hard and industrious work they have put in.

The ideal, however, has not yet been reached. It is hoped to contact all ex-members of the Regiment and have them enrolled on one or other of the branches' books. For information to reach everyone, all present members are asked to make a special effort to rout out all Old Comrades. Let us have their addresses and we will notify them of future gatherings and activities.

To alleviate a little the many duties of the Officer i/c Club, it was decided that a committee should be formed, and resulted in the selection of Capt. Honeybun and Messrs. Kerswill, Harrison, Taylor and Firth.

Members are reminded that a general committee meeting takes place in the club at 12 noon on each Sunday morning following the monthly meeting night, and all are welcomed to attend and put forward suggestions and discuss future activities. It is your club, so do come along and help to run it.

Of more domestic news, a representative party from

the Hounslow Branch (8th Battalion) visited the Depot during March and showed their prowess at darts. This resulted in a win for the 8th at the end of a very convivial evening.

Early May saw a return match, when the Depot went by bus to "The Duke of Wellington," Hounslow. The Depot were successful on this occasion, which leaves the score at one "leg" apiece and means another meeting must ensue.

The 7th Battalion (Hornsey) are to be our next victims, we hope, but, whatever the result, we are looking forward to seeing them on one Saturday in June.

Mid-May brought the traditional celebration of the Battle of Albuhera. Long hours and arduous work on the part of a very small and depleted Depot staff produced a show of the highest standard, comparable with those of previous years. On entering the barracks on the afternoon of May 15 in brilliant sunshine, one traversed the flag-bedecked roads and followed the arrows, which led to the cricket ground. Here several marquees had been erected for the serving of teas, and by the pavilion the bar was in full swing. On the cricket pitch were an Old Comrades' team and a Regimental side who were battling it out under their respective captains, Mr. Tom King, and the Adjutant, Capt. Denis Binder. Well, done, Tom! Congratulations at still being young enough at seventy-two to lead your team to victory.

Behind the tents children's sports were in progress, with donkey rides for those not immediately participating. In the distance one could hear the occasional crack of shooting, for the "old 'uns" were proving they could still align the sights with deadly accuracy. Punch and Judy was another attraction for the children, and during the tea interval the Drums and Fifes of the 3rd Cadet Battalion paraded with a selection of march tunes.

The assembly for dancing in the evening was in the gymnasium, which was brightly decorated with bunting and balloons and a display of Regimental silver. Here some 500 people gathered, and there were many renewals of friendships formed in the battalions in all parts of the world over a period extending to the past 50 years or more.

May 16, Albuhera Day, broke with the promise of continued fine weather, and with it came Capt. Smith and the Drums and Fifes from the Cadet Battalion to blow Reveille and start the day with the correct military ceremony.

At 11 a.m. 57 Old Comrades, together with their wives, families and friends, attended church in the barracks. After the service they formed up in front of the square and, accompanied by the Drums and Fifes of the Cadet Battalion, they marched round the barracks and past the war memorial, where the Commanding Officer of the Depot, Lt.-Col. A. S. J. de S. Clayton, and the oldest soldier on parade, Mr. Barney Ryan, took the salute.

It will be a memorable day for Mr. Barney Ryan, for, apart from being selected to take the salute, it was found that he was celebrating the seventy-seventh anniversary of his birthday on this day. Well done, Mr. Barney Ryan! Congratulations, and may you, and every other Old Comrade taking part on parade with you, appear at every such ceremony for years to come.

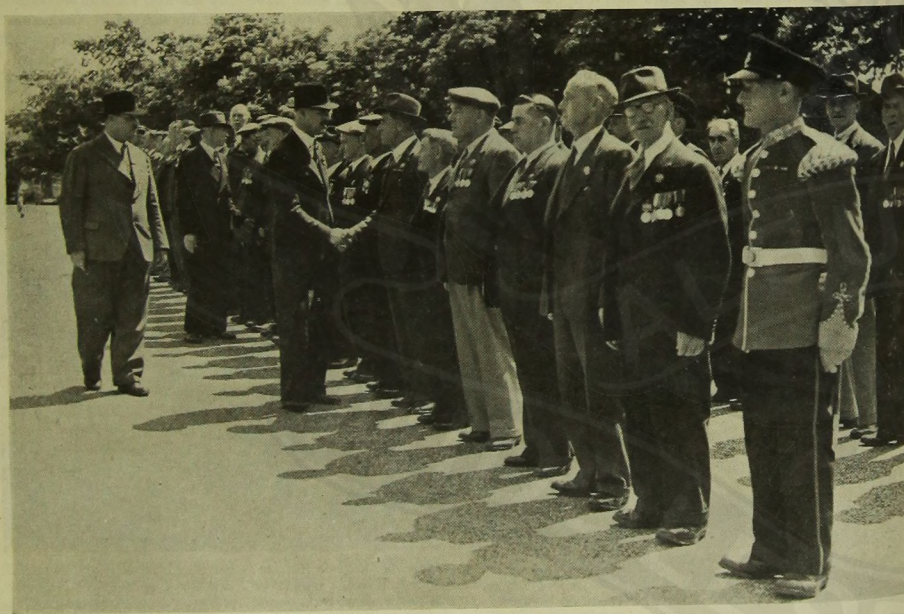
Time and space have only allowed for a brief résumé of events, but one thing must be written in conclusion: if the numbers of uniformed members of the Regiment are getting a little low, the spirit of the "Die-Hard" out of uniform is as great and loyal as ever. As proof, come and see on the last Saturday of each month.



Albuhera Day, 1948. O.C. Depot and the oldest Old Comrade taking the salute on parade at the Regimental War Memorial. The salute was taken by Lt.-Col. A. S. J. de S. Clayton and ex-C. Sgt. Ryan. Officer i/c Parade: Capt. R. W. J. Smith. The figures 57 and 77 again were prominent on parade. It was the 77th birthday anniversary of Barney Ryan and the number of Old Comrades present was 57.



Albuhera Day, 1948. Group photograph of Old Comrades taken in front of the Depot Officers' Mess.



Albuhera Day, 1948. O.C. Depot inspecting Old Comrades after Church Parade.



Combined Platoon, "C" Company, Home Counties Training Battalion. Winners of Battalion Inter-Platoon Competition.

HOME COUNTIES BRIGADE TRAINING BATTALION, SHORNCLIFFE

As most readers are aware, for the last year the Home Counties Brigade Training Centre has been established at Shorncliffe for the purpose of completing the training of National Service personnel who have been received from the Primary Training Centres of regiments in the Home Counties group. When this training has been completed, the Home Counties Brigade Training Centre has been responsible for holding trainees until drafted to regiments of the group. At the same time, all other personnel of the regiments of the group, while awaiting posting orders, etc., have been held on the strength of the Training Centre until posted.

In order to save man-power, the War Office at the end of 1947 decided on a new system for the training of National Service personnel, which, in general terms, can be said to be as follows:

- (a) All P.T.C.s are abolished.
- (b) Regular battalions are now required to undertake the complete training of National Service personnel.
- (c) Units such as the Home Counties Brigade Training Centre, as previously constituted, are also abolished.

Consequent on this new organisation, the 2nd Battalion The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment, on its return from B.A.O.R., have been nominated to be the first battalion of the Home Counties group of regiments to undertake the training of National Service personnel on behalf of the Home Counties group. It is understood that this commitment will be held in rotation at Shorncliffe by the different regiments in the group

and that the normal tour of duty will be for not less than two years.

Therefore, on March 4, 1948, the 2nd Battalion The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment took over its new role from the Home Counties Brigade Training Centre under the title of 2nd Battalion The Queen's Own Royal West Kent (Home Counties Brigade Training Battalion) Regiment.

The Battalion are at present organised into four training and two holding and drafting companies. The permanent staff for the companies are members of the different regiments of the group, and each training company represents one or two regiments as under:

"A" Company: Queen's and East Surreys (O.C., Major P. Kealey, Q.R.R.).

"B" Company: Buffs and Royal Fusiliers (O.C., Major S. Rose, R.F.).

"C" Company: Sussex and Middlesex (O.C., Major H. Marsh, Middlesex).

"D" Company: Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment (O.C., Major C. H. Keenlyside, R.W.K.).

In addition, the permanent staff of the holding and drafting companies contain representatives from all regiments and are at present commanded as follows:

No. 2 Company: Major P. Lewis (The Buffs).

No. 3 Company: Major B. Wills (The Buffs).

National Service trainees on arrival are posted to the company of the regiment covering the area where they live. It is, of course, appreciated that when personnel complete their basic training at Shorncliffe they are liable to be posted to any of the regiments of the group, but later they have the chance of going back to their own county regiments when they leave the Army and start

their T.A. service. All trainees during their time at Shorncliffe wear the badge of their own county regiment.

It will be appreciated that one major object of the training battalion is to foster a group *esprit de corps*, and from all reports received, this has been achieved without difficulty, and it is probably correct in saying that most members of the permanent staff have welcomed the opportunity of making new friends of members of other regiments of the group with whom they have always been so closely associated. At the same time every effort is being made to retain the identity of individual regiments by observing regimental days and the establishing of regimental rooms in which are displayed regimental trophies, records, etc., which can be seen and studied by recruits. These regimental rooms are now an outstanding feature and well worth a visit from any members of the Regiment who may find themselves at Shorncliffe.

The Home Counties training battalions are occupying all of the four barracks at Shorncliffe overlooking the English Channel, and with the coming of summer there can be few pleasanter places in the whole of England in which to soldier. Sport is now in full swing, with a long list of cricket fixtures to be played, together with an inter-company cricket tournament being run on a league system. The unit athletic meeting is due to take place on May 19, prior to the District sports meeting early in June. In addition, a team representing Eastern Command is now in training to take part in the obstacle race demonstration, which is to be an event in the Royal Tournament at Olympia.

On May 2 the Training Battalion received a visit from Gen. Sir Evelyn Barker, who spent two hours inspecting the recruits under training, while on June 8 the Battalion is being inspected by Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Kent, when it is planned to hold a ceremonial parade, which will be of interest to many of the young soldiers who have not, as yet, taken part in such a parade.

It is hoped in future issues of this magazine to include as a regular feature items of news from Shorncliffe.

In conclusion, it is emphasised that all ranks of the Training Battalion are most anxious that all members of the regiments of the group will look upon the Training Battalion as a unit connected very much with their own regiment and that any officer or other rank who may feel he would like to see something of the work that is being done will always be most welcome.

1st BATTALION THE MIDDLESEX REGIMENT (D.C.O.)

Editorial

The last quarter's Journal found us in what the Press Officer chose to call "a transitional period." We were at that time in the process of losing the kit, equipment and Regimental necessities of a machine gun battalion and wondering whether we would be run down before we could reorganise in an infantry role.

At the time of going to press we have been granted a new lease of life in a new location. In the last week of March the Battalion was moved to Wandsbek, and for the summer months at least we will be carrying out the

thankless tasks of garrison troops in the city of Hamburg. This involves the daily mounting of several guards, both by night and day, and the maintenance of a police post in the centre of the city. Though the Battalion has been strengthened by over 140 men from the Foresters, our commitments, aided and abetted by the ruthless strain of release, do not leave us the opportunities we would desire for the military improvement of the young soldiers entrusted to us.

We have, however, carried out an extensive sporting programme, both inter-company and inter-unit. At the time of writing full details of the Albuhera Shield Competition are not yet available, but we can congratulate "H.Q." Company on a hard-earned triumph. As the hockey and Rugby season draws to a close, not a completely successful, but always a hard-fought one, all companies are busy preparing themselves for the athletic sports. We had hoped to combine this with the customary Albuhera Day celebrations, together with the honour of receiving our new Colours from Lt.-Gen. Sir Brian Horrocks, K.B.E., C.B., D.S.O., M.C. We now learn with regret that an illness will prevent him retaining his post in B.A.O.R., and the whole Battalion join in wishing him a very speedy recovery. The presentation of Colours has now had to be postponed indefinitely, but we believe we may have the pleasure of seeing the Colonel of the Regiment with us on Albuhera Day.

We feel that we will all suffer a great loss with the departure of Lt.-Col. J. G. E. Reid to take up his new appointment, and we wish him a very successful tour of duty.

During the last quarter Capt. G. H. Wilde has joined the Battalion from No. 163 O.C.T.U. and Lts. Phillips, Swarbrick, Chipp, Chalk, Hunter, Collis, Kay, Caiger, Wallace and Pattinson left us to return to civilian life. To all of them we send our best wishes for the future.

"H.Q." COMPANY

General

Almost a year to the week since we moved into Iserlohn we found ourselves packing up the Company once again in preparation to move out. After many false rumours as to our ultimate destination, there came the correct and official news that the Battalion was to move to St. Patrick's Barracks at Wandsbek, Hamburg, on March 5, 1948. There began the usual preparation for moves, the various departments in the Company got down to packing with a will, and in a very short time all was ready. The Company M.T. Officer, 2 Lt. Savill, and Sgt. Davis, M.M., the Transport Sergeant, must look back on the packing of the M.T. stores as a bad dream. They will no doubt on future moves keep a close watch on the M.T. types who persist in packing 5-cwt. lots of M.T. kit in boxes made to hold nothing heavier than indents. It will be much easier than picking up the pieces in the long run and cost far less effort.

On February 23 the advance party moved off by road to take over St. Patrick's Barracks from the Sherwood Foresters. Sgt. G. W. Bailey and Pte. F. West (70b) travelled as the Company's "Q" representatives.



"H.Q." Company, Winners, Albuhera Shield, 1947-48.

At 0400 hours on the morning of March 5 the Company moved out of Iserlohn by rail and after an uneventful journey reached Hamburg in the late evening. The first impressions of the barracks and of the district is that it is a poor swap for our previous station; no majestic pine-clad slopes look down on us here, nor are there any of the delightful rides and tracks through fields and woods which we had become accustomed to find in the Sauerland Hills about Iserlohn. In the place of all this we now have as our immediate surroundings the ruin and desolation of the city of Hamburg, hardly a fair exchange.

Prior to the move the Company was completing the change in establishment due to the Battalion turning over to an infantry role.

In the process we lost many old faces who were declared to be surplus to establishment. The R.E.M.E. L.A.D., which had been part of the Company for a number of years and which had contributed many outstanding sportsmen to the Company and Battalion, was among the departments which had to go. A.S.M. Letchford, W.O. i c, who had been with us so long, will be greatly missed in the Company and Battalion cricket and hockey teams. The other notable personality to go was Sgt. Lovell, an outstanding performer at almost every sport. His loss will be felt very keenly in the coming season's sporting events. We are all sorry to see them go, and thank them and the other R.E.M.E. personnel for their efforts on behalf of the Company and wish them the very best of luck.

Releases have slowed down considerably in the quarter under review. Included among those who have left us for civilian life are Lt. R. Chalk (Signals Officer), Sgt. Boucher (Signals Sergeant) and L. Cpl. Bayley, our hard-working Company Clerk. It came as a great shock to all who knew Sgt. Boucher to learn of his tragic death in a motor-cycle accident whilst on his demobilisation leave, and everyone will, I am sure, join with me in extending our sympathy to his parents.

We welcome into the Company Lt. B. M. Savill, joined from O.C.T.U., and who is carrying out the duties of Signals Officer, also Lt. R. F. Coker, who has taken over the Intelligence and Messing Officers' duties. Our congratulations to Sgts. Miller (Signals), Belton (Intelligence Office) and Nicholson (B.O.R.) and to Cpl. Shone (B.O.R.) on their promotion.

Sport

In the first of a series of inter-company .22 rifle shooting competitions the Company came out winners by a large margin. Drm. Weir is to be congratulated on obtaining the highest score in the competitions.

At soccer we came out runners-up to "C" Company in the Albuhera Shield knock-out, but beat them in the final of the hockey league.

We are leading in the Rugby league and stand an excellent chance of winning the knock-out series, which should leave us in an unassailable position at the head of the Albuhera League.

Stop Press News

As we go to press we learn that "H.Q." Company won the Albuhera Shield for the 1947-48 season.

"A" COMPANY

The Company has, since the departure of Major A. R. Waller in December last year, been commanded by Major J. N. Shipster. The last few months have indeed seen many changes, and as fast as the old faces disappear so new ones arrive to take their place.

Our arrival at Hamburg seems to have created two very distinct phases in our existence, which are somewhat remote the one from the other. Whether this is due to distance or change of surroundings, we do not know, but the fact is that Iserlohn and what went on there seems so very far away.

At Iserlohn we had, just before we left, what was, in

our opinion, the best hockey side in the Battalion, but we were, unfortunately, beaten by "H.Q." Company in the knock-out competition, the moral being that matches are won and lost by goals and not by opinions. After winning the Soccer Shield we were again beaten by "H.Q." Company in the soccer knock-out. Owing to the impending move little else happened in the sports world until our arrival in Hamburg.

Most of us were sorry to leave Iserlohn, but, taken by and large, we are better off in our new home, especially as regards facilities for recreation.

A large draft of some 40 Sherwood Foresters brought the Company up to strength and now some 50 per cent. of the Company have only been with us a few months, but the material is there and we should do well in the field of sport during the coming months.

At the time of writing we have just won the Battalion Basketball Shield after defeating all our opponents by a wide margin of points.

Summer is upon us and cricket not far off.

"B" COMPANY

General

In the spring issue mention was made of our imminent return to the Battalion. Just how imminent was that move few of us knew at the time. Sufficient to say that we received orders to strike camp at Mill Hill on March 8 at very short notice indeed, one officer even having the misfortune to be recalled from leave. Now that we have left the U.K. we should like to thank Lt.-Col. M. Crawford, D.S.O., and all ranks of the Regimental Depot for being our hosts for just under four months. We thoroughly enjoyed our stay. Not by any means least among the many things which impressed us was the phenomenal capacity of No. 57 P.T.C. to lay on motor coaches to convey spectators to the scene of any sporting activities in which the "Die-Hards" were participating. The most outlandish places never seemed to present any sort of problem to the generous owner of the hand which was dipping liberally into the unit coffers. We are all deeply grateful that we were allowed to share in all these activities.

Class "A" release is not a thing we care to talk about, since it robs each of us, at some time or another, of our particular friends. It should be enough to say that it remains a constant millstone around the neck of progress, but special mention must be made of Lt. D. G. Fry, who was a very popular officer and a good friend of us all. He did Trojan work on the difficult task of organising and training a Company Rugby XV. This latter project was, unfortunately, stifled in its infancy due to the greater popularity of soccer. Lt. Fry left us shortly before our return to B.A.O.R. to undergo an operation for appendicitis. He made a very rapid recovery and proceeded on sick leave. Because of his imminent release we did not see him again and consequently most of us were unable to say our farewells. We all wish him God-speed and every success.

The Company Second-in-Command, Capt. P. G. V. Bellers, has recently gone on leave to get married. We should like to take this opportunity of wishing him and his future wife the best of luck and every happiness in the future.

Quite recently news was had of Capt. P. W. Galvin. It seems he found himself suddenly whisked off to West Africa. His letter bore an address near Freetown. He appears to have settled down to the life of a white rajah and was, at the time of writing, happily anticipating the arrival of Mrs. Galvin and baby John. We wish them good luck and happy times and hope to hear more of their doings in the future.

Many of the older members of the Battalion will remember L/Cpl. K. Kemp, who left the Company on release last August. He wrote to wish us well and expressed the hope that we were continuing to exhibit our prowess on the soccer field. L/Cpl. Kemp was, of course, a very definite king pin of the Company soccer team from the early days and had been given his place in the Battalion 1st XI before the Company's departure to England in January, 1947. He tells us he is quite happy in civilian life, having found a job to his liking, but that he often longs for the return of the good old days. To him, too, we send our best wishes.

Warminster Platoon

The 4.2-in. Mortar Platoon continues its tour of demonstration duty with the School of Infantry at Warminster under the command of Capt. T. Tarmey. Lt. K. W. Sherriff, another very popular officer, left the Platoon in December for civilian life. Again, in late January, the Platoon suffered the loss of its Second-in-Command, Lt. R. Bailey, who had been with the Mortars since October last, having joined them from the Battalion. We wish them both God-speed and every success.

Only recently orders were given that the Warminster Platoon would be removed from our jurisdiction and come under "H.Q." Company for all administration. Thus a long association between "B" Company and No. 14 Platoon, "D" Company, is brought to a close. We have only regrets that this should be so, for it has been a very happy association. Throughout the whole of last year the two organisations, so different in their weapons, worked together as a team under the command of Major G. O. Porter. We have missed them since we left them at Warminster, but we now feel that our last ties with that great crew have been broken.

Sport

Due largely to the accelerated release programme, and in some measure to our nomadic existence of late, we cannot lay claim to any great feats, as a Company, in the field of sport. Well worthy of mention, however, are the number of excellent performances put up by individuals of the Company in a variety of sporting activities. Both Capt. Bellers and Cpl. Harrington continue to play in the Battalion hockey team, the exploits of which have already been adequately dealt with elsewhere in this issue. Ptes. Clarke (27) and Rees were constantly in demand, during our stay at the Depot, to play in the No. 57 P.T.C. soccer first team. They played consistently well throughout the Home Counties Football League, which was won by No. 57 P.T.C.

Cpl. Riley and Ptes. Beedle and Mills all represented No. 57 P.T.C. in the Home Counties Cross-Country

Championships, which were run at Shorncliffe over a gruelling six and a half miles. Of the 140 competitors, Cpl. Riley and Ptes. Beedle and Mills won placings of 68th, 26th and 29th respectively.

L/Cpl. Langford and Pte. McSweeney acquitted themselves extremely well in the boxing ring, McSweeney winning his bout with a wide margin of points. L/Cpl. Langford, though he lost his bout on points, is to be congratulated. In the first round he fairly tore into his man with the obvious intention of putting him away without further ado, but, unfortunately, his opponent was as slippery as an eel.

The Inter-Company Basketball Championships for the Albuhera Shield have just been played off. We met "H.Q." Company and succeeded in beating them 23-16, only to come up against "C" Company and be thoroughly trounced by 26-8. In a further match with "C" Company we were able to retaliate to the tune of 26-14.

As these notes go to press the accent is very much on athletic training in preparation for the Inter-Company Athletic Championships, which are to be held on May 17 and 18 this year. Every available member of the Company—and very few they are at the moment—is set on the practice of one or more field events.

Cricket nets have suddenly sprung up on a piece of waste ground opposite the Officers' Mess. The crease is being levelled, and in the past few days hundreds of gallons of water have been poured on it. It should not be long before the first ball is lost.

"C" COMPANY

The year 1948 has produced nothing startling. A steady flow of all ranks departing for release reduced the Company to a record low level, 95 all ranks.

The first two months of 1948 the Company was busily employed on weapon training, miniature range firing, assault course training and an extensive sports programme. Our object was to make all ranks 100 per cent. physically fit and to practise them in section field training and handling of weapons. The standard of miniature range shooting improved steadily.

In the world of sport the Company has made an astounding revival, and the keenness amongst all ranks is most noticeable. With perseverance a Rugby team has been produced second to none. The soccer team won the Albuhera Knock-out Competition and we were runners-up at hockey. These successes have raised the morale considerably, and we hope to do still better next April in the start of another year of the Albuhera Shield.

Hamburg is a welcome change as far as entertainment is concerned, but our duties are strenuous, particularly for the N.C.O.s, who are particularly thin on the ground at the moment. We had a draft of 40 from the 1st Battalion The Sherwood Foresters and four from the East Surreys, which has brought up our strength to 127 all ranks.

Guards and escort duties have filled our time to some extent. The rest of our training has been of an educational nature, and a great deal of drill in practice for the presentation of the Colours.

"D" COMPANY

This has been a unique period in the peace-time history of this Company, as at no other time has the element of surprise, so vital in war, been so successfully and frequently used in peace. We have been living, literally, from day to day and have imagined ourselves in that uncertain and acrobatic position of being on the fence with one ear on the ground. For a long time we did not know whether we would fall down one side and return to the U.K., or fall down the other and move to some place in Germany.

By keeping in touch with the military hierarchy we knew that both were possible, as well as many other alternatives, and that they were all certainties and the latest situation. The actual sequence of events was remarkably like Alice's trip down the rabbit hole, but we eventually arrived in Hamburg.

The old cliché, about anticipation being better than realisation, was proved wrong in connection with our move. We all imagined living in stuffy barracks on the edge of a blitzed city, with nothing but desolation around us, but found almost the opposite. The barracks are extremely comfortable, with quite pleasant surroundings. Most of the adjacent houses, occupied by industrious Germans, have well-stocked gardens, and there is an abundance of blossom to enrich the balm of spring. To add to the beauty of the local countryside are numerous birds, some of which, according to our ornithologist (Major Clayden, "C" Company), are comparatively rare. Our married families quarters are well situated, although quite a good walk from barracks.

The activities of the Company have been directed to the Albuhera Day parade for which we have been training, and guards and various garrison duties fill up each week. Nevertheless, we have found time for games and played a considerable amount of hockey, Rugby, soccer and basket ball. Now we are training for the forthcoming athletic meeting and have been fortunate to secure the services of the former Olympic javelin record holder who was in the last German Olympic team.

There have been a number of changes in the Company this year. Capt. Orr is leaving us, on his return from leave, to take over the duties of Battalion M.T.O. and has already been relieved by Capt. G. H. Wilde. Lt. B. E. Hayman has now left us on release and we wish this popular officer the very best of luck in civilian life. C.S.M. Renwick has gone to the B.A.O.R. Training Centre and his relief, C.S.M. Mitchell, D.C.M., has just arrived.

We have been considerably reinforced by a draft from the Foresters, the battalion we relieved in Hamburg, and now have quite a strong Company. The men are fully occupied all day, not only by their duties, but by using the excellent welfare services in the town. These include many cinemas and clubs as well as the garrison theatre and the Hamburg State Opera House. At the latter there have been some excellent shows recently, including most of the well-known operas and a very good ballet, up to Covent Garden standard.

It is most encouraging to see how well these shows are attended by all ranks.

CORPS OF DRUMS

The present quarter finds us very comfortably installed in the Albuhera Block of our new barracks. As this also happens to be the Q.M.'s block, it can well be imagined how comfortable we really are.

The Corps has given a number of public performances, both in and out of barracks, all of which have been the subject of compliments. It must be admitted, however, that the usually imperturbable Drum-Major was somewhat shaken on one occasion when arriving to perform at an important football match in Hamburg—the promoters asked if he would play some dance music.

Dr. Calvert broadcast during April over the BFN and gave us some revealing facts about his service. During the same month we paid a very interesting visit to the printing offices of the Soldier Magazine and actually saw the periodical going to press. A very detailed description of the magazine's make-up was given by the editor, who is a former officer of the Regiment. Another very enjoyable and instructive afternoon was spent in the studios of the local broadcasting station, and a tentative arrangement has been made to broadcast the beating of Reveille on Albuhera Day.

We continue to supply our quota to the Battalion and Company sports teams and had no less than six in the Company's very successful hockey side. We are glad to see that Cpl. Brown is playing himself into the Battalion hockey team and with L/Cpl. Winsborough forms a very good left wing. Dr. Munday was a regular member of the Battalion cross-country team and was always in the first five or six home, and Jake Cullen is already limbering up in preparation for the cricket season. We have all been assiduously practising under the Drum-Major for the inter-Company sports, but are keeping very quiet about the talent discovered. The hockey team still continues to be successful and has been unbeaten in our new station, scoring 17 goals to one.

Old members will be pleased to hear that the "Snake Charmers' Club" continues to flourish and, mainly due to the energy of Dr. King, the Quiet Room was quickly opened after the move. Monopoly appears to monopolise most of the time of the patrons of the club.

Departures continue to play havoc with the flock and there are now only six members who were with the Corps a twelve-month ago. Amongst the latest to go are Cpl. Doe, an irreplaceable loss in the sporting world, Dr. King, our somewhat shy and reserved storeman, and Dr. Calvert and Gracey, the former, with Cpl. Doe and Dr. King, being a founder member. All will be sorely missed and when thanking them for all they have done we wish them the best of success in the new lives. We welcome into the fold Ptes. Johnstone, Parkinson, Newton, Smith and Winstanley and are glad to see how well they are settling down.

We conclude, as ever, by sending our best wishes to the "Snake Charmers" of the 2nd Battalion and all our ex-members, wherever they may be.

RUGBY

Many fine players have passed through the team and they will not be forgotten.

Lt. Phillips, a fly half, whose loss was irreplaceable (his reverse pass was the best); Lt. Swarbrick, a strong

and knowledgeable forward; Lt. Chipp, an energetic and useful scrum half; Sgt. Lovell, an all-purpose player of some renown; Pte. Bridgeman, who in three weeks learnt the game and became the hardest and fittest attacking forward, a man who went like mad for 80 minutes; Lt. Pattinson, a fast and most energetic wing forward with many scores to his credit; Lt. Baily, who filled an awkward gap as scrum half until his departure. One had to continually look ahead, and Major Clayden, who has been running the Rugby, has now combed the Battalion for talent and for any person likely to make a Rugby player. The effort expended in organising this sport has not been without reward.

The spirit displayed by every member of the team has been that of enthusiasm and energy, and with that fine spirit the team has gone from strength to strength, and we congratulate and thank all members of the Rugby Club for their unlimited support.

Major Clayden returned early in the New Year, having been to U.K. to represent B.A.O.R. against U.K. Army. He followed this by playing for the Army against Ulster and Leinster in Ireland. Inter-company games occupied most of the time and invaluable experience was gained to form a Battalion team.

The following is a list of fixtures and results:

Jan. 7.	40th Field Regiment	..	..	Won	8-5
Feb. 18.	1st Black Watch	..	..	Won	30-3
Mar. 10.	22nd Heavy Workshops	..	..	Won	9-5
Mar. 24.	G.H.Q. 2nd Echelon	..	..	Won	22-0
Mar. 31.	15th B.O.D.	..	..	Won	10-8
Apr. 3.	4th/6th Parachute Battalion	..	..	Won	8-5

SEVEN-A-SIDE COMPETITION, HAMBURG DISTRICT

April 13, 1948

First round:	No. 63 Company, R.A.S.C.	..	Won	17-0
Second round:	22nd Heavy Workshops	..	Won	15-0
Third round:	15th Medium Regiment, R.A.	..	Won	17-3
Semi-final:	5th Parachute Battalion "B"	..	Won	12-5
Final:	4th/6th Parachute Battalion	..	Won	5-3

This record is something of which to be proud and we, as members of the team, are justly proud of it. At the time of going to press the Battalion has won the fourth round of the B.A.O.R. Competition against 4th/6th Parachute Battalion. This was a grim struggle from start to finish, and we won in the last few minutes of the second half. The next round is against the winners of the 2nd R.T.R. and 1st R.S.F., which will be played on Wednesday, April 21.

The seven-a-side victory was a great achievement, but we suffered a great loss. Cpl. Hellon, a forward, was taken to hospital after the third game with a fractured cervical spine and we have lost a fine sportsman, a grand hooker and a really hard worker on the field. He has played for Hamburg District on several occasions. We wish him a speedy recovery. The Battalion in this tournament was represented by Major Clayden, Sgt. Pople, Sgt. Hughes, Cpl. Hellon, Capt. Bellers, L/Cpl. Evans, Pte. Holding and Pte. McCrudden, who took Cpl. Hellon's place. Every member played a magnificent game and never did a team more deserve the success they gained. They met their old rivals, the 4th/6th Parachute Battalion, in the finals and won in the last two minutes, Pte. McCrudden scoring the winning try.

Major Clayden has had a successful season, being awarded his B.A.O.R. colours and playing many representative games throughout the country. He has not

1st BATTALION RUGBY XV



Back row (left to right): Cpl. Murray, Pte. Redfern, Sgt. Hughes, Sgt. Pople, Cpl. Kellon, Maj. Clayden, Lt. Collis, Capt. Eales, L/Cpl. Evans.
Front row (left to right): L/Cpl. Shone, 2/Lt. Pat.inson, Lt. Baily, 2/Lt. Kay, Pte. Holding, Pte. Charlesworth.

missed a Battalion match, playing in the centre, and on occasion fly half.

We were sorry to see Lt. Collis depart on release, a fine forward, an able leader and a great loss. We hope he keeps up the game in civilian life.

Lt. Kay has since left. He very nobly and ably filled the full back position and greatly influenced our successes against 15th B.O.D. and 4th/6th Parachute Battalion.

Those that remain are Sgt. Pople, a veteran and a tower of strength as hooker or fly half; Sgt. Hughes, a lively wing forward, the dread of any fly half; Cpl. Hannah, the most cheerful forward we have, who really enjoys the game; L/Cpl. Evans, who came out of retirement and has been a tower of strength; Pte. Redfern, a first-class tackler; Cpl. Murray, who has played on several occasions; Cpl. Daw, a converted soccer player, our great hope in the line-outs; L/Cpl. Shone, a deceptive runner with safe hands, a little slow for a three-quarter, but he has been invaluable to us; Ptes. Holding and Charlesworth, two wingers who have done remarkably well; Capt. Bellers, also a winger, who has been of great service, his swerve and exceptionally fine tackling being a treat to watch; and Capt. Eales, a stalwart of the second row.

Newcomers are Sgt. Kendrick (leave has kept him out), Sgt. Burland, Pte. Chubb, a very capable scrum half, Pte. Cooper, a very fine wing forward, and we are more than pleased to see Capt. Cummins come out of retirement to help us out.

HOCKEY

The last hockey notes ended on a very optimistic level, for we were in the semi-final of the Rhine Army half of the Army Cup and had yet to be beaten by any side. Since then, although our standard has slightly declined, we have continued to play plenty of good hockey. We began the New Year with two easy victories, one of which (a 5-0 win over 40th Field Regiment, R.A.) carried us into the final of the 5th Brigade Knock-out Competition.

Then on January 21 we played 2nd Wilts in the long-awaited semi-final of the Army Cup at Paderborn. Despite icy conditions, both teams soon settled down. The Battalion did most of the attacking and at least two glorious opportunities of scoring were missed by the inside forwards. The second half was a repetition of the first and full-time produced no score, so an extra 10 minutes each way was played. In the first three minutes 2nd Wilts scored following a free hit just outside our circle. This goal carried them into the final. After our convincing victories earlier in the season it was a great disappointment to lose a game which we should so easily have won.

However, we were still interested in two other competitions. Again we played several friendly matches (all of which were won), in which we tried to find a satisfactory goal-scoring forward line, and on February 7 we seemed to have solved the problem when we defeated

a strong team of our old friends, the Royal Fusiliers, by 9-1, Capt. Bellers (outside right) and Cpl. Harrington, Major Clayden and 2/Lt. Kay (inside forwards) working particularly well together. It was therefore with a certain amount of confidence that we faced 42nd Field Regiment, R.A., in the first round of the 2nd Divisional Knock-out Competition. They were leading 3-1 at the interval, and soon after they made it 4-1. Within two minutes Major Clayden scored twice to make it 4-3, and, although in the last 20 minutes play was seldom out of their "25," we just could not get the all-important goal.

The last important game was the final of the 5th Brigade Knock-out Competition, against the 2nd Queen's, on February 21. Played in bitterly cold conditions, both teams produced scrappy hockey, but things went well for us and we scored two rather lucky, but not undeserved, goals through Major Clayden and Pte. Stanton. There was no score in the second half and we carried off the shield.

The team on this occasion was: 2/Lt. Savill (goal); 2/Lt. Pattinson and R.Q.M.S. Etheridge (backs); Capt. Cummins, C.Sgt. Waldron and Lt. Bailey (halves); Pte. Cope (Capt. Bellers was absent on duty), Cpl. Harrington, Major Clayden, 2/Lt. Kay and Pte. Stanton (forwards).

Others who represented the Battalion during the last two months at Iserlohn were: Sgt. Pople, Cpl. Aylward, L/Cpl. Winsborough and Ptes. Allen and Harvey.

Of the individual players in the Battalion, our congratulations go out to Major Clayden and C/Sgt. Waldron on again being selected to play for Rhine Army against various representative sides. Both have been a tower of strength to the Battalion team.

Even if the results of the last two months may not appear so outstanding as those before Christmas, we have certainly had a good season. Of 21 matches played, we have won 16. But whatever the result, and this is far more important, we have always enjoyed ourselves, and this is, after all, the object of any game.

RIDING

Once again the horses are contributing their share towards the Battalion sporting activities. Although the surrounding country is not as attractive as Iserlohn, there is a very pleasant private park a short distance away, as well as an excellent indoor school actually in the barracks.

Majors Ayre and Shipster, gallantly supported by Major Gilbert, competed in the Hamburg District Gymkhana and were unlucky not to be placed. Major Ayre was lying third until the last competitor jumped, and then moved to fourth place, with Major Shipster a close fifth. The standard was high, as both these riders touched only one fence.

A riding cadre, consisting of 36 pupils, mainly other ranks, started at the beginning of April. Those who are passed out will be eligible to join the Riding Club.

The young entry are seen out on most week-ends and include Elisabeth Peasley, Kay Lomax and Jennifer and Susan Brinley Ayre. The last two, who ride quite hard, have had some bad falls recently, but are still just as keen.

It is hoped that the club will be well supported throughout the summer and that picnics, paper chases, etc., will be organised.

CROSS-COUNTRY

At short notice the Battalion entered a team in the finals of the B.A.O.R. Cross-Country Championship, which was run at Bielefeld at Easter. A stiff course of seven and a half miles and some strong opposition (including one team with a sack of sugar for its runners) was, unfortunately, too much for us. However, we were delighted to find S Sgt. Loveday waiting for us at the finishing post when we arrived. He had run magnificently to finish in first place, and we were very thankful to rest in his reflected glory. He had been ably supported by Sgt. Salmon, not very far behind.

The team was as follows: Lt. R. F. Coker, 2/Lt. R. F. Alford, S/Sgt. Loveday, Sgts. Hughes, Salmon and Perkins, Cpl. Riley, L/Cpl. Armstrong and Ptes. Munday, Hurst, Beedle, Mills, Dolmon, Bradshaw and Fayer.

2nd BATTALION THE MIDDLESEX REGIMENT (D.C.O.)

The past three months have been a period of great activity and considerable interest. The security situation, which has done much to restrict and hamper us, has, nevertheless, given us the satisfaction of having a worth-while job of work to do in maintaining order in the large sub-district of Acre in Northern Palestine.

Lt.-Col. A. D. Henderson took over command of the Battalion, on arrival from the 2nd Battalion The Royal Warwickshire Regiment, on February 2, 1948. We welcome him most sincerely to the Regiment and hope that his stay with us will be long and happy.

Capt. P. Collins, Lt. A. N. R. Chandler (Royal Sussex) and 2/Lt. G. Hargrave have also joined the Battalion, which has, however, lost Majors R. D. Hutchings and W. A. Raindle on Python and Lts. D. N. Williams and P. W. C. West on release, which has continued to take a heavy toll of man-power and skill, only recently balanced, in part, by drafts from U.K.

Man-power difficulties have been accentuated by the permanent detachment of "D" Company at Acre, by the period which "C" Company spent on the Lebanese frontier at Eilon and latterly by the absence of "B" Company for seven weeks guarding the Brigade H.Q. Cantonment at Haifa.

The Battalion ceased to be under the command of 1st Parachute Brigade when Brigade H.Q. left for U.K. recently. We are now under operational command of 1st Guards Brigade and under the administration of H.Q. Northern Palestine District. As a result we have had an unusually large number of distinguished visitors, including Lt.-Gen. G. H. A. MacMillan, C.B., C.B.E., D.S.O., M.C. (G.O.C. Palestine), Maj.-Gen. H. C. Stockwell, C.B., C.B.E., D.S.O. (G.O.C. 6th Airborne Division), Brig. F. D. Rome, D.S.O. (Commander 1st Parachute Brigade), Brig. G. F. Johnson, D.S.O. (Commander 1st Guards Brigade), Brig. R. B. Rathbone,

O.B.E. (Commander Northern Palestine District), and Brig.-Gen. A. J. McNeill, D.S.O.

Operational duties have included five flag marches, three operations to end fighting between Jews and Arabs, demolition of two blockhouses, three turn-outs in support of the prison authorities at Acre, and regaining possession of the G.O.C.'s car, which had been held up at an Arab road block. In addition, the Battalion has provided a very great number of road block parties, as well as routine daily protection for essential military and civilian convoys. Pte. Roff was wounded when Jews blew up a railway bridge near a Battalion road block on the night of March 20-21. The Battalion has had first-class co-operation from the 3rd Hussars, the 1st R.H.A. and the Palestine Police.

Security restrictions have hampered recreation, but the Battalion reached the final of 6th Airborne Divisional Inter-Unit Boxing, provided two winners in the Divisional Individual Boxing Championships and one in the Palestine Command Championships, and came second in the Divisional Cross-Country Running Championship. Jewish detonation of an Arab explosives convoy wrecked the power lines, depriving us of electricity, and thus also of running water and camp cinema shows, for over a month. In addition, C.S.E. shows have ceased. What it has meant to the Battalion to have the Band here can therefore easily be imagined.

The future, although bright for 15 officers and 199 other ranks (including the Band) who will, it is hoped, sail for U.K. shortly after the end of the mandate, is dark in other respects. We shall say good-bye very sadly to many good friends (including over 100 Regular other ranks of the Regiment) who must stay in Middle East or go to Far East.

"H.Q." COMPANY

During the last three months the Company has remained in Camp 253 at Sumeiriya and has been busily employed. All personnel have kept fit and in good spirits, despite our somewhat restricted liberty. Operational activities have taken us into the Galilean Hills and have enabled us to get a glimpse of the life and conditions that exist in the outlying Jewish and Arab settlements.

Weapon training periods have been held daily under the able direction of C.S.M. Tarrant, while once every week the Company has had two hours' shooting on the ranges. We were to have had a sporting rifle meeting, but, unfortunately, the local Arabs looted the ranges the night before.

One is forever saying good-bye to old friends and welcoming new faces. We wish good luck to all those who have gone to other units or on release and welcome their reliefs, whom, we are sure, will soon settle down to keep the same high standard for the Company.

"Lofty" Lowe, unfortunately, had to relinquish his appointment as C.Q.M.S. on becoming surplus to war establishment, but we have not lost him, for he can occasionally be seen burrowing among the archives as Orderly Room Sergeant. We welcome in his place C.Q.M.S. Carlier and also "Paddy."

In the R.A.P. we welcome Sgt. Knowles and L/Cpl. Partridge and say adieu to Sgt. Platt, who has gone to "B" Company.

Sgt. Slade is now M.T. Sergeant and we welcome the promising number of new drivers who have recently joined.

In the Signals Section we have had a number of Regimental signallers from Catterick who have enabled us to keep our heads just above water. Operational commitments have been heavy, but with the coming of the 68 "T" sets communications have improved 100 per cent. We welcome Sgt. Michel as Signals Sergeant (formerly with the 2nd Battalion The Kensington Regiment) and say au revoir to Sgt. Davies, wishing him and all the other stalwarts the very best of luck and fortune in Civvy Street.

We heartily congratulate Bandmaster Thirtle on being awarded the Long Service and Good Conduct Medal.

The Boys' Section has diminished in numbers now that Boys Hall, Berrill, Yerby and Dawson have come on to man's service. Although they have been confined to camp, necessarily for operational reasons, they have kept up their spirits and kept fit.

In the realm of sport members of the Company have not been lacking when time, opportunity and operational activities have permitted. Friendly games between sections have been played in football, hockey and basket ball, whilst several members of the Company are occasionally to be seen disporting themselves at a friendly game of soft ball. In boxing we would refer the reader to the boxing notes for the more detailed efforts of members of the Company.

At football the following have played for the Battalion: Sgts. Davies and Jenkins, Cpls. Ryder, Dunning and Shearing, L/Cpl. Otle, Bds. Hilkene, Forsythe and Stapleton and Ptes. Meredith, Kelley, Ashton, Ingram, Long and Lovett.

At Rugby Major I. R. Burrows, M.B.E., Capt. B. K. Clayden, 2/Lt. Dawe, Sgt. Hummerstone, Cpl. Browne and Ptes. Trew and Morley have played for the Battalion 1st XV.

At hockey the Company has provided the bulk of the Battalion 1st XI, including Capt. J. G. Chiverall and Clayden, R.S.M. Painter, C.S.M. Tarrant, C/Sgt. Carlier, Sgt. Turner, Cpl. Ryder, L/Cpl. Street, Bds. Geary, Hilkene, Hazlewood and Hymas and Ptes. White and Smith (44).

In the 6th Airborne Divisional Cross-Country Running Championship, in which the Battalion was placed second, C.S.M.I. Rickman (A.P.T.C.), Sgt. Slade, Cpl. Redmond and L/Cpl. Iddon ran in the team.

Our future, however, is uncertain. Opportunity is therefore taken now to wish all members of the Company good luck and good fortune in the future wherever they may go.

"S" COMPANY

During the past three months the Company has been very much the spearhead of the Battalion's operational activities. The carrier drivers of the Inlying Platoon, who are provided by the Company, are always at five minutes notice to move out of camp in an emergency. In addition, from our small Company strength we have a Carrier Section under Sgt. Biggs and a 3-in. Mortar Section under Sgt. Stone. These two sections are

normally despatched for operations as soon as possible after the Inlying Platoon.

Despite constant demands on the Company for guards and escorts, the Carrier and Mortar Sections underwent concentrated training during January and February and have since been fully employed in trying to keep the peace.

On March 18 five gunners of 1st R.H.A. were killed near Acre whilst escorting Jews. "S" Company provided a strong escort of carriers for Brig. Rome (Commander 1st Parachute Brigade) whilst he interviewed the Mukhtar of Acre, and later, together with the rest of the Battalion, they provided road checks on the Acre-Haifa road.

Reprisals from the Jews were inevitable, and when they killed 11 Arabs and destroyed two vehicles at Ga'aton the Company acted as an infantry screen while the R.E.s demolished pillboxes from which the Jews had fired.

Two days later the Jews retaliated again by blowing up the Na'amin railway bridge, just south of Acre, thus destroying the rail communications. "S" Company, still in position as a result of the incidents on the 18th, were fortunate enough to emerge unscathed.

Good Friday ushered in the first of a series of Easter incidents, when the Carrier Section recovered the G.O.C.'s car. It had been fired on by the Arabs, abandoned by the driver and escort, and taken by the Jews. Fortunately, the G.O.C. was not travelling in the car at the time.

The complete destruction of a Jewish convoy at Kabri on Easter Saturday resulted in the biggest operation in which the Company has yet taken part.

The Inlying Platoon and Carrier Section immediately went out, followed shortly after by the remainder of the Battalion. Movement was necessarily slow owing to considerable Arab and Jewish firing, and by the time the Battalion had reached the scene of the ambush darkness had fallen. Owing to standing orders from Brigade H.Q. prohibiting operations by night, the Battalion had to withdraw back to camp under cover of the carriers.

The following morning the Company was out again and a truce was arranged to allow us to deal with the burnt-out vehicles and the 42 Jewish dead, a most unpleasant and depressing task.

Despite hope of reinforcements, our strength has remained practically unchanged, except to decrease slightly to a present total of 60 all ranks, while this number will decrease even more as further release groups depart for the U.K.

In the absence of Capt. Jeffcoat in hospital, the Company has been commanded during March by Capt. Mieville, M.C., assisted by 2/Lt. Hargrave, whom we welcome to the Company.

Operational conditions have limited our sporting activities, of course, but in the few games of football played we have beaten all companies except "C."

"A" COMPANY

"A" Company has existed during the last three months only in skeleton form, with a total strength of one officer and seven other ranks.

Capt. P. Collins commanded the Company for two months, but has now left us for "D" Company, and Major V. A. Thomas, M.C., has taken over this small but gallant band, ably assisted, of course, by C.S.M. Holdsworth and C/Sgt. Hockley. For operational purposes we have been attached to "H.Q." Company and have done our share with them in keeping the peace, but in the Unit Basket Ball Competition we have been able to take our rightful place and have acquitted ourselves with considerable distinction despite our lack of numbers.

"B" COMPANY

When we last wrote of the activities of "B" Company we were shivering on the cold heights of Safad in Galilee. At the moment we are just feeling the first days of the Palestine summer again and the change of dress into K.D. has been very welcome. At present the Company is with the Battalion (having just returned from detachment in Haifa), less two platoon detachments guarding installations between Acre and Haifa.

The Company returned to the Battalion from Safad on January 16, and with no few regrets, because, with all the trials and tribulations of that veritable hot-spot, the excitements and good living conditions made our visit there very enjoyable.

Once back with the Battalion the Company settled down to the many and varied duties which that entails. Those duties were quite heavy, but with the relations between Jews and Arabs growing more belligerent day by day it was easy to see that these tasks were not only important, but absolutely necessary, and "B" Company did their part with that spirit of which we have always been proud.

Our stay with the Battalion was destined to last six weeks, and then the word "detachment" began to be passed over the Company "grape vine." On March 1 "B" Company moved to Haifa, there to carry out the duties of defence company to H.Q. 1st Parachute Brigade on Mount Carmel.

There we spent an enjoyable, if exacting, six weeks, with a grandstand view of the fireworks in the city below us. Our last fortnight was marred by the news that the Battalion was to break up, with only a small nucleus returning home, and the very prospect of it aroused horror and consternation, especially among the Regulars.

As ever, release has given Company H.Q. many headaches and we have lost many of our old friends, including Lt. R. Arscott, Sgts. Gosling and Stevens and Cpl. Swainsbury.

To replace these we have welcomed several newcomers from U.K., and especially C.S.M. Hastie, whom many remembered with awe from the days of Crowborough.

It is with the deepest regret that we record the death, due to a shooting accident on March 15, of No. 19047811 Pte. J. Connolly. This lamentable affair mars what would have been an almost ideal memory of a very happy detachment at Haifa. His loss was a great one, as he had had many years of soldiering in the Eire Army and such a soldier can ill be spared in these days.

This will be the last time that "B" Company notes are written from Palestine, so we send our best wishes

to all our old members wherever they may be, and may those much talked about reunions come soon.

"C" COMPANY

"C" Company has now rejoined the Battalion after spending some six weeks on detachment at Eilon, a small outpost on the Lebanese frontier, in an area of mixed Jewish and Arab population.

The Company's task at Eilon was to maintain law and order within the area and there were no untoward incidents. Despite, however, the friendly relations that were maintained with both parties, constant vigilance had to be kept at all times, and, besides the camp guard, a force was always ready to go out of camp in vehicles with wireless. Patrols were also sent out, and whenever such a patrol visited an Arab village the complete patrol would be invited indoors to coffee or food. At first (when we were uneducated in these matters) sentries would be placed on vehicles, but the Arabs explained that wireless sets and vehicles were their responsibility while members of the patrol were their guests, and we soon came to appreciate their deep social code. At other times W.D. property was fair game and much sought after.

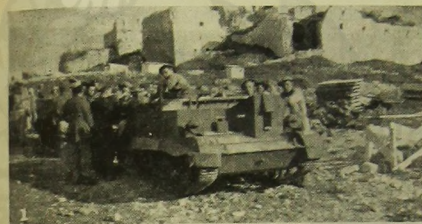
Here at Battalion H.Q. the Company has frequently formed part of flying columns, maintained road blocks, guarded vital points, etc., and practically every soldier has had his baptism of fire. The Company has been fortunate in sustaining only one casualty to date, when a soldier's arm was severely injured by a flying rivet when the Acre railway bridge was blown up by Jews.

Shortly after the Company arrived at Eilon Major V. A. Thomas, M.C., returned from U.K. and took command. Major Thomas was married while in U.K., and we take this opportunity of wishing him every happiness.

Capt. G. Kent has now taken over command of the Company, as Major Thomas has left to become P.R.I. Since our last issue we have said welcome and farewell to Capt. Holmwood, who was with the Company for a short while before returning to U.K. Lt. Holding, who was with us at Eilon, is now back with "B" Company and 2/Lt. Pielow has been appointed Battalion I.O. Capt. Robertson, although he has not left "C" Company, has been appointed Messing Officer and as such little is seen of him.

We welcome Lt. Chandler, C.S.M. Williams and a substantial number of others to our midst and hope they will have a pleasant stay with the Battalion. Those who have left the Company on release include Sgt. Gillies, Cpls. White, Shelton and John and Ptes. Chard, Mills, McCarthy, Mealor, King, Saunders, Roberts, Gibbs, Harker, Lolley and Moody. To all of these we wish the very best of luck in Civvy Street.

In closing we congratulate Cpls. Toms and Callaghan on being promoted sergeants, L. Cpls. Trinick and Bulpitt on being promoted corporals and Ptes. Clark, Flack, Griffiths, Humphreys, Morrison, Richardson, Smith and Wilder on being appointed lance-corporals.



- 1.—Part of the Carrier Section, with Jewish Colonists, at Jiddin Castle.
- 2.—Safad, "B" Company's Detachment-Location.
- 3.—Arab Legion armoured Car Patrol.
- 4.—Iqrit, on the Lebanese Frontier, visited by 2nd Middlesex Flag-March.

"D" COMPANY

"D" Company is still situated in Acre. The events and experiences of the last three months have been varied, interesting, and in many cases exciting, with several incidents.

A short well-earned rest after withdrawing the prison guard enabled the Company to recover itself after having had many heavy commitments. It also gave C.S.M. McMillan an opportunity to raise the standard of drill to a high level, and his morning drill parades are still an important feature of our daily programme. Infantry training began and with much improvisation and ingenuity (for amenities are few) we managed to cover most important points in weapon training and map reading.

Unfortunately, this lull in operations did not last long and "D" Company were soon busy again restoring order, not only in Acre municipality, but further afield towards Haifa. A chain of events culminated in some very bloody incidents, where not only Arab and Jewish lives were lost, but British also, and it was decided by higher authorities to close the Haifa-Acre road. Elements of "D" Company therefore proceeded some miles south and, digging in across the road, spent five days very happily roughing it and returned to camp extremely unburnt and in the best of spirits.

During this period there were several interesting chapters in which a railway bridge was blown up and the Acre train derailed. The latter became a source of much amusement, as nobody could be found near the scene of the wreckage and no authority seemed interested in it—least of all the railway company—and it became known as "D" Company's train." On our first venture to Jerusalem on escort duty the escorts, under Sgt. Corner, ran into quite a large battle and, having performed its duty, beat a dignified but hasty retreat, luckily without casualties. The prison has remained fairly quiet, although there have been several disturbances, which have quietened on a show of force.

Although operational, we have still managed to continue our activities in the sporting world with basket ball, swimming and soccer and have had much success in the latter under the captaincy of Sgt. Denison, results being:

- "D" Company beat Battalion 2nd XI 6—2.
- "D" Company beat "C" Company 2—0.
- "D" Company beat "C" Company 4—1.
- "D" Company drew with "S" Company 2—2.

Games have also been played against the Palestine Police and scores have been pretty even. Fishing, too, has been a success and much interest was shown when 2/Lts. Ilian and Ibrahim caught an octopus. Life has been brightened with visits from the Battalion Dance Band and, being confined to camp, we decided to hold our own weekly social. With inter-platoon darts and table tennis and a hefty "stodge-up," these proved a complete success and have become a regular feature.

Many changes have taken place since January and we have said good-bye to many old friends and welcomed many new ones. Major Hutchings left us for U.K. on completion of his Python tour and 2/Lt. Willard for demob. Capt. Young took over the Company for a short time, but has now left us, his place being taken by

Capt. Collins. 2/Lt. Ilian has taken over duties as Second-in-Command, and we welcome 2/Lt. Ibrahim from "B" Company and C.S.M. McMillan back from leave. Demob. has taken many more of our number and we wish these people luck in civilian life.

It is probable that this article will be our last, and our feelings may be guessed. Best wishes to all "D" Company, past and present, and good luck for the future.

DRUMS

Since we last went to press we have been greatly reduced in numbers owing to release, which has sent L/Cpl. Otley and Drms. Murray, Spenceley, Ingram, Jakeman, Revell, Barlow, Jones and Tull back to that weird place called Civvy Street to work for their living. We are very sorry to see them go and wish them the very best of luck in their new surroundings. We shall also soon be losing Cpl. Horn and L/Cpl. Stimpson. We shall then be left with Cpl. Purdon and Drms. Halsall, Shallcross, Simmonds-Smith and Milnes to carry on the good work as Battalion buglers. Drum-Major Hamlin is going on a course in U.K., in which we wish him the best of luck and hope to hear him sound Reveille on a six-pounder anti-tank gun. "Nipper" White has become the C.Q.M.S.'s right-hand man as storeman and Pte. Padley can now "bash the gearbox" as batman-driver as well as beat the base drum.

In closing we wish all drummers, past and present, in both Battalions the very best of luck and good hunting.

BAND

The past quarter has been busy and eventful. On January 5 tours of 6th Airborne Division began. We played both military and dance band programmes and our audiences were most appreciative. These tours were alternated with a week spent in our own camp. When "C" Company went to Eilon, and "D" Company were at Acre, the Dance Band visited them on several occasions during our "in" week.

Our second week's touring was spent with 1st Infantry Division in Central and Southern Palestine, and our first two days were claimed by H.Q. 1st Guards Brigade. We gave a concert in the N.A.A.F.I. and were honoured by the presence of Major Wilcox (Director of Music, Irish Guards) and members of his Band. Afterwards the inevitable chit-wagging of bandmen—and, of course, bottle opening—was noticeable.

On January 30 the Band of the 17th/21st Lancers came over from Tiberias to play us a game of soccer, which resulted in a terrific win for us by 8—0.

We are sorry to say that Sgt. Rolfe went into hospital on February 2 with fibrositis and is still detained in B.M.H., Fayid, Egypt. We all wish him a speedy recovery.

After many unsuccessful attempts to persuade the Bandmaster to allow Bds. Hilkene to be first string light-heavy-weight in the Battalion boxing team, Mr. Thirle finally gave in to Sgt. Lowe when the Battalion team had reached the finals of the 6th Airborne Divisional Boxing Championships. Bds. Hilkene won splendidly what was undoubtedly the best fight of the

afternoon. Our Dance Band played before the boxing and in the interval.

Our alternate weekly tours carried on until about the middle of March, when, due to the security situation, many of our engagements had to be cancelled (even, on occasion, concerts in our own camp), while on March 28 one of our almost regular Sunday morning classical concerts had to be cancelled, as the Band that morning was Inlying Platoon and we were called out to clear up the mess after an Arab-Jewish battle the previous day.

Now, of course, our thoughts are dominated by the prospect of returning home in May, and we only hope that by our performances we have been able to repay the 2nd Battalion for the enjoyable time we have spent with them.

SPORTS**Association Football**

The team has lost many of its old faces and, due to many and varied operational commitments, games have frequently had to be cancelled at short notice.

In the first round of the 6th Airborne Divisional competition we were beaten by the 8th/9th Parachute Battalion 4—3. Although the team was continually being altered due to release groups, we did manage to win six out of 12 matches.

C/Sgt. Shrubbs, M.M., the captain, has been a tower of strength throughout the season, while Bds. Hilkene has played exceptionally well at centre half. Bds. Stapleton and Pte. Meredith have played well on the wings.

Rugby

Although the Rugby XV has not had a very successful season, we have all enjoyed the few games we have managed to play. Practice games were almost out of the question, as we had to borrow pitches even to play our matches. However, we were only defeated 3—0 by 6th Airborne Divisional Signals Regiment in the Divisional Rugby Competition.

Major Burrows, M.B.E., always played a zealous game in the pack, and we often wondered how his opponents ever lived to tell the tale. Pte. Trew (H.Q.) was perhaps the most promising player in the XV, but he must learn to pass the ball when once he has beaten his opponent. Capt. Collins played extremely well as scrum half, but somehow the three-quarters seemed to lack the punch and dash of last year's team. No doubt with more practice games we could have remedied this fault. Next year we hope that the Battalion is in a quieter spot of the world, when we can once again train a team up to a standard of the 1946-47 team.

Hockey

As in Rugby, the hockey XI was handicapped by the lack of a pitch to practice on. We entered the Divisional competition with only two games played and it was not surprising when we lost in the second round to H.Q. 6th Airborne Division. Later on in the season we soundly

beat the 8th/9th Parachute Battalion, the winners of the Divisional competition. Out of the 13 matches played, we won nine, lost three and drew one.

The Regimental Band provided the majority of the players, with Bds. Hymas and Hilkene being by far the most outstanding. Major Raindle, at full back, often gave the impression of "Patsy" Hendren at his best, but, unfortunately, he was often penalised for his magnificent off-drives. C.S.M. Tarrant proved an able captain and through his enthusiasm and keenness the XI was moulded into a team and not a collection of individuals.

Boxing

On January 30 and 31 and February 4 10 boxers took part in the 6th Airborne Divisional Individual Championships. Cpl. Redmond and L/Cpl. Taylor won their weights and the other boxers all did well.

The Battalion defeated 1st Parachute Battalion by 20 points to 18 on January 26 in the 6th Airborne Divisional Inter-Unit semi-final. Ptes. Mullan and Montague fought very gamely against much bigger opponents, Ptes. Meekley and Caccavale and Cpl. Redmond won convincingly, L/Cpl. Belcher scored a knock-out in the second round, and Pte. Goodwin won the last fight decisively by quick, skilful boxing.

On February 20 and 21 Pte. Meekley won the Command Feather-weight Individual Championship after a very close fight, and Cpl. Redmond, Pte. Montague and Bds. Hilkene all reached the Command semi-finals.

On February 28 a depleted Battalion team lost to 8th/9th Parachute Battalion (the eventual Command winners) by 23 points to 16 in the Divisional Inter-Unit final. Cpl. Coyne, L/Cpl. Richardson and Ptes. Mullan, Caccavale and Montague all fought well, despite being beaten, and Ptes. Woods and Gardner boxed pluckily against heavier opponents. Pte. Keily (boxing at very short notice and in his first championship fight) fought very gamely indeed against a larger and more experienced boxer, Pte. Meekley all but won, and the Divisional Commander mentioned Pte. Goodwin as the best loser. L/Cpls. Taylor and Belcher and Bds. Hilkene all won in splendid style, and Maj.-Gen. Stockwell congratulated them and the whole team. The many successes of the season were undoubtedly largely due to the excellent training of the boxers by Sgt. Lowe, assisted by C.S.M. Parnell.

CORRESPONDENCE

Falcon Hotel,
23 William Street,
Windsor,
Berkshire.

Dear Sir,

If any past or present members of the Regiment who knew me during my service, which was in the 1st/7th Battalion and the 2nd Battalion, pass through Windsor any time, I should be very pleased to see them.

Yours faithfully,

M. NOVITT, ex-Sgt. (6214675).

7th BATTALION THE MIDDLESEX REGIMENT (D.C.O.)

During the last quarter the Battalion has continued to increase its numbers in a very minor way. We are informed that during the autumn of this year the present Government will launch a nation-wide campaign with the object of bringing the Territorial Army up to the required cadre strength for dealing with the National Service men who are due to be posted to the Territorial Army after January 1, 1950.

Little of interest has happened in the Battalion during the past quarter, but we hope that in the next issue of the magazine we shall be able to report the result of the first post-war annual training of the Battalion. Our Brigade camp is this year being held at Swingate, near Dover, which the Battalion has not visited since 1929.

The Battalion rifle team was very successful in its first .22 rifle match against the London Irish Rifles on March 25, which resulted in a win for the Battalion by 302 points against 294 points, based on the six best scores of each team.

Following the conferring of the Freedom of the Borough on the Battalion by Wood Green in 1946, we are to receive the honour of the Freedom of the Borough from Hornsey, and this ceremony is due to take place on Saturday, June 12. The Battalion feels that it is a great honour that the boroughs within its recruiting area should think so highly of its exploits during the recent war as to merit the conferring of the Freedom of the Borough, and we are sure that all members of the Regiment will rejoice with us in these honours.

As these notes are written the 7th is fully employed in making arrangements to celebrate Albuhera Day in the traditional style.

REFERENCE BOOKS

There is a serious shortage of Reference Books for officers studying for the Staff College. The Colonel of the Regiment trusts if any Battalion or Depot Library or individual officer possesses any of the books detailed below, and is prepared to present them to the War Office, the C.O. or individual will send them to the War Office addressed to the U.S. of S., The War Office (A.E.S.), Whitehall, London, S.W.1. That branch will arrange for their distribution to Command Libraries, so that officers can obtain them. They cannot be obtained from trade, being out of print in many cases or unavailable in shops.

Publisher	Author	Title
Constable	Wavell	The Palestine Campaign.
Inst. of R.E.	Massey	The Desert Campaign.
	Bowman	The Outline of the Egyptian and Palestine Campaigns.
Harrap	Wavell	Allenby, Soldier and Statesman.
Angus & Robertson (Sydney)	Monash	The Australian Victories in France.
Hodder & Stoughton.	Montgomery	The Story of the Fourth Army.
Constable	Dewar & Boraston	Haig's Despatches, Dec., 1915-April, 1919.
Hutchinson	Montgomery	El Alamein to the Sangro.
Hodder & Stoughton	De Guingand	Operation "Victory."
H. Hamilton	Moorhead	African Trilogy, 1944.
Hutchinson	Montgomery	Normandy to the Baltic.
Secker & Warburg	Shulman	Defeat in the West.
Collins	Fergusson	Beyond the Chindwin.
"	"	The Wild Green Earth.
Private	Leese	Brief History of the Operations in Burma.
Macmillan	Edmonds	History of the Great War, 1914: France and Belgium. Vols. I and II.
Constable, 1939	Maurice	Forty Days in 1914.
Heinemann, 1930	Spears	Liaison, 1914.
Country Life	William Ellis	The Tank Corps.

WINGATE'S CHINDITS THEIR FORMATION AND EARLY TRIALS

By C.S.M. H. J. Parnell

Much has been said of the exploits of Wingate and his Chindits, both on the initial ground show and the second and final air show in which this great guerilla leader lost his life, but little has been said of the men that comprised his original force and the trials and tribulations they underwent in the early days of their training.

I first met then Brig. Charles Orde Wingate in the jungle at Patharia, Central Provinces, India. His great personality forcefully struck me immediately; he was of medium build, very thick set, which made him appear somewhat shorter than he really was; he had deep-set piercing eyes and they were of a brilliant blue. The first men he recruited for his initial campaign were ourselves; we had arrived in India ostensibly to go to China as reinforcements to No. 204 Mission there, with myself as the senior W.O.1 of nine who were proceeding. I at once made contact, on interview for selection, with Lt.-Col. T. Featherstonhaugh, K.R.R.C. (commanding No. 6 Commando at the time of the unfortunate Dakar episode); our 2 i/c Force was Major Cooper-Key of the Royal Irish Regiment (No. 12 Commando). Other notable officers were Geoffrey Lockhart of Lovat's Scouts (No. 4 Commando)—he who afterwards became famous for the constant requests, whilst on guerilla operations behind the Japanese lines in Burma, for a new kilt to be dropped to him by air—and Capt. John Barrington Jeffries, an ex-sailor, of the Royal Inniskillings and No. 12 Commando, a veteran of Lofoten. It was the latter who formed one of the main witnesses in the trial of the officer in connection with the Burma "floggings," and it was primarily on his evidence that the officer concerned was found "Not guilty." "J.B." was by then a full colonel; I haunted Curzon Street during the trial in the hopes of seeing him, but constantly missed him, and I have a suspicion he was getting away by a back exit! Then, of course, "Jimmy" Molyneux, of the D.C.L.I. and No. 3 Commando, who, I understand, was killed in action. One of our, at the time, lesser celebrities was Sgt. "Bob" Blain, Dorset Regiment, formerly Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders ex-boy (No. 4 Commando); he was known among us for his completely sang froid manner and his oft-quoted "As my old grandmother says, all these things come to try us," which saying he carried with him throughout the campaign, and was awarded both the D.C.M. and M.M., afterwards becoming commissioned and reaching the rank of major.

We reached Patharia in June, 1942, and, after introductions to the Brigadier and his skeleton staff, we were told of the job ahead. We set up camp by a swift-flowing stream in the heart of a typical bamboo and Burma type jungle, which abounded in wild game, deer and pig, but also was the home of panther, alligator, a species of sacred and ferocious white-faced baboon and every conceivable species of snake. Some two weeks afterwards we were joined by a young soldiers' battalion of Gurkhas and the 13th Battalion The King's (Liverpool) Regiment (T.A.); these had all been Wingate's own selections after tours throughout India. We (my

draft, now called 142nd Commando Regiment) were reinforced by volunteers from the Suffolk Regiment, the Welch Regiment, the Wiltshire Regiment, the K.O.S.B.s and, to my surprise and pleasure, by the remnants of the Bush Warfare School from Maymyo, among whom were several old "Die-Hards" who had left Hong Kong before those fateful days of December, 1941, for employment with the School; they were "Jackie" Geist (a Jewish lad from Whitechapel, who had been one of my own trained recruits in 1935), who was the Battalion light-weight boxing champion, 1st Middlesex; there was Cpl. "Ginger" Hill, a sturdy novice feather of "B" Company, 1st Middlesex (this lad, I believe, was killed in action during the expedition), and "Bill" Seaton (another of my recruits of Geist's squad), a boxer of some ability, now a C.S.M. I have subsequently met "Bill" at Mill Hill; after the show in Burma with the original Wingate's Force he went as an instructor to the West Indies, where, I understand, he had a really good time. Last, but not least, was Laurie Priddy, whom I had left in Hong Kong as colour-sergeant, "H.Q." Company, but was now a sergeant. He did not actually take part in the expedition, but had already had his fill of the Japanese during the retreat from Burma. Also among these new arrivals were several friends of the Royal Scots boxing team from Hong Kong, notably Pte. Emberson, their middle-weight champion and a close friend of many of the Regiment. Several of them, including a Pte. Williams of, I think, the K.O.Y.L.I. (if not, then most certainly the Gloucesters), had undergone a terrifying experience when captured by the Japanese. They had been called from the ranks, six of them, and used for bayonet practice, to the general amusement of the Japanese column. In desperation both Williams and a C.S.M. Bettington (the Gloucester Regiment) had taken a chance and ran; they succeeded in evading the bullets fired at them and threw themselves into the River Irrawaddy, swimming to the other side and finally, after many hardships and narrow escapes from recapture, had found their way into the British column again. Bettington had several bayonet wounds in various parts of his body, all superficial. After being in hospital for some time, he went to G.H.Q., Delhi, for interrogation and, I believe, was commissioned and remained on the "I" staff there.

We were now complete in men and the 77th (Indian) Infantry Brigade was formed under command of Brig. Charles Orde Wingate, and with the very friendly eye of then Gen. (C.-in-C., India) Wavell on them. Now came the initial training; daily slogging for miles through thick, almost impenetrable jungle, by night finding one's way by means of the compass and known objects. It was at first a fearsome business; one could hear the soft padding of jungle animals seemingly running along parallel with the column, and there would be the soft squelch of flesh underneath foot and a quick slithering away into the undergrowth of snakes and other insects and reptiles. We were singularly fortunate in not having a snake bite case for the first two months. For food, we had outside supplies every three days, but for meat we relied almost entirely upon the jungle, and parties of three and four, under command of an officer or W.O., went into the jungle each day. We never went



Typical jungle track. Photograph taken during operations.

meatless! I remember an excellent shot among our officers, a Capt. Manford, D.L.I. (No. 5 (Madagascar) Commando); he was probably the best shot at moving animal targets I have ever seen. He and I had a narrow escape one day; I invariably formed one of his party, and this day he had already bagged two full-sized deer (it was forbidden to shoot the young or the females), and whilst we were waiting for our bearers to recover the deer two pigs suddenly appeared—they are very fast and extremely vicious and will attack without provocation. I have not seen a man move faster, nor think faster, than Capt. Manford; he had fired and bowled over a pig whilst I was getting into the shoulder, and I am always proud of my shooting experiences in the Regiment, but under different conditions. The pig appeared dead, so we approached; as we reached to within a few yards of it, it rose from the ground and, dragging a broken back leg and snuffling viciously, it literally launched itself at us. I had drawn a .38 pistol and fired the full contents of the six chambers direct into its head. Their courage is magnificent; it still attempted to get back into the attack. Capt. Manford finally polished it off by firing two rounds of .38 behind the ears. We were very alert on the way back, as he was a fully-grown male and it was almost certain that his companion had been his spouse, and there is nothing so vicious as a sow when her mate has been killed; she

will trail for miles to attack. However, we returned to camp without incident. We were all by now expert skinkers. The method of dealing with our kill was first to slit the throat, then the belly and remove the entrails. On return to camp we hung it for 24 hours and then skinned it with a sharp knife. Of course, in different conditions one did away with the 24 hours' hanging.

By this time we were becoming well trained in jungle lore and Brig. Wingate's knowledge was seemingly inexhaustible; he knew every edible plant and root there was to be had, and, additionally, we were told that at a push the rumps of a panther and the flesh of a snake, nicely cooked, made good eating.

Individual training came to an end and now at a lecture the Brigadier told us of our further training and the outline of his plans. His force was to consist of eight columns, each a company strong, from the two infantry battalions; these were to have with them a sabotage and striking force of one officer, one sergeant, two corporals and 16 privates of 142nd Commando Regiment. At this stage Lt.-Col. Michael ("Dynamite") Calvert, R.E., ex-commander of the Bush Warfare School, was commanding this unit and I was R.S.M. This popular officer will be well remembered by many ex-1st Middlesex for his exploits in swimming the stretch between Hong Kong Island and Kowloon on the mainland and his winning the heavy-weight boxing championship the same year. He was a grand and intrepid soldier, I believe still serving somewhere as a brigadier. I do not remember Major Bernard Ferguson (the monocle man), of the Black Watch, at this stage, but I do very vividly remember a young Territorial officer of No. 4 Column, Major Scott, of the 13th King's, an ex-Liverpool schoolmaster; he certainly mastered the teaching of Wingate. I did several days' training with him and his jungle knowledge was remarkable in so short a stay. I understand from hearsay he was a very successful leader in the actual expedition. To add fire-power to each column the intention was to provide a mobile Vickers machine gun section to each and a unit of Burma Riflemen to act as liaison between the villagers of occupied places and discover whether their sentiments were anti- or pro-Japanese.

We now commenced collective training, firstly as columns. Brig. Wingate had prepared a huge 500x square sand table, and there in all sorts of weather (it was the monsoon season) he dictated his policy and taught us his methods. We subsequently put his teaching into effect in the jungle. It was interesting work, but terribly exhausting, and amenities were few and far between. We did set up a contractors' canteen in the jungle; they gave us very good service, but very often it meant walking in the dead of night through three miles of jungle for a supper. Only on two occasions did we get beer. One of them will be well remembered by the Middlesex men there; we had a good old-time Regimental sing-song, including the accepted words of the two battalions' marches, together with "The Old Die-Hards." Other units soon joined in. I had almost forgotten to mention another Middlesex lad, of the 8th (T.A.) Battalion (No. 9 Commando), Pte. Kettle, a very cheerful, determined type indeed, but, if my memory

serves me right, he proceeded by air to Chungking with 32 others of my original draft to join No. 204 Mission to China. They had at this time suffered the loss that Wingate's Chindits were later to suffer, that of their leader in an air crash; he was Maj.-Gen. Dennis (possibly Denys).

Brig. Wingate, in disclosing his ideas, told us of his intentions to have an initial contact column, followed by an initial penetration column, and finally the remaining columns to make deep penetration as a result of the information received. I have not been able to discover officially whether he actually carried this intention into effect, but I gathered from writers' stories that he did.

Training went on apace and Brig. Wingate had India searched for suitable type mules, which eventually arrived in large numbers. What fun there was then. Mule leaders were trained and some of their experiences with the stubborn old mules would fill many a comic magazine. One morning when I was roused I saw a huge shape outside my tent and jumped up in alarm. It proved to be one of three elephants which had been hired locally to move our camp for us closer to the Brigade H.Q. area some four miles distant! Our men, with the customary habit of the Englishman, soon became expert mahouts.

Now tragedy descended on the Force. The monsoon broke with its customary force, the narrow and mainly shallow river became a raging torrent, and the north side of the Brigade camp was cut off from the south. The canteen was on the south side. Food was hauled across the river by taut ropes on the pulley system; good swimmers were forced to give up in their attempts to get lines across, but finally Brig. Wingate, Sgt. Macklin, of the Essex and No. 9 Commando, and "Bones" (S.M.) Hammond, of the Royal Fusiliers and No. 2 Commando, succeeded in their efforts against a mad rush of water that was by now carrying large trees swiftly down the river. That evening two adventurous lads of the 13th King's decided to swim across to the canteen; they never made it, and their bodies were later recovered from downstream. The day following a sergeant-major of the 13th King's (his name escapes me) went to the rescue of a soldier of that regiment who had fallen from the three-strand bridge that we had built the previous day; the soldier was rescued by others, but the C.S.M. was carried away and drowned. The bridge was very successful, but I have vivid recollections to this day of the precarious position I found myself in the first attempt at crossing and prior to it being more or less stabilised. I walked across it, but after a few yards found myself upside down, and I lost a perfectly new Conway Stewart pen that had been given to me as a present prior to leaving England. "Bones" Hammond was the brain behind the bridge and as it was some 50 to 60 yards wide it was no mean achievement.

With tragedy came the inevitable humour. The Gurkhas were also cut off by some three miles of swirling waters; the Brigadier, Major Calvert and again Sgt. Macklin tied ropes round themselves and, armed with torches and brandy in watertight bags, they swam out. It was afterwards said that they found the Gurkhas quite happy and safely esconced in the tree tops. The

Officers' Mess was functioning to some good extent and it was said that the bed cots made up in the tree tops would have done credit to a peace-time Guards unit. Food, from outside sources, now was ferried to us by a huge barge-like affair manned by local Indians.

Although the coming of such an unexpectedly heavy monsoon considerably affected training, we had become very expert, supply places from air to ground had been explained at great length and the system we were to adopt if engaged by Japanese in those areas. Training in demolition and explosives went on apace. During this period Gen. Wavell visited us. Shortly afterwards, the weather conditions continuing, we were compelled to abandon camp and moved into the Small Arms School at Saugor, where the amenities of civilisation were greatly welcomed by all. At this stage strengths and establishments began to come into issue and very shortly only myself and W.O.3 (temp. S.M., a/W.O.1) Miller, R.E. and No. 3 Commando, were the only surviving warrant officers of the original No. 204 Mission Force to leave England. Lt.-Col. T. Featherstonhaugh had been posted to a staff appointment on Combined Operations and Major Cooper-Key was now watching our interests. The establishment of 142nd Commando Regiment was reduced to a major's command and was filled by Major Calvert and the warrant rank of W.O.2 was filled by Miller. I found myself reluctantly leaving the Force to take up an appointment in Delhi as R.S.M. of 151st (British) Parachute Battalion. The Force moved to an area just outside Poona, where they underwent their final training; I kept in close touch with the Middlesex element and friends I had made and met them by arrangement in Bombay for a 10-day training break leave they had been granted. They told me they were ready to go, and their magnificent achievements behind the enemy's lines during February, March and early April of 1943 are now history.

ALBUHERA DAY IN SIERRA LEONE

Whilst Albuhera Day was being celebrated in units of the Regiment, a very small party met at the United Services Club, Juba, Freetown, Sierra Leone.

There should have been seven, but, unfortunately, Major Tony Hewitt was on trek exploring darker Africa and Capt. Cutts is now with the Depot Company at Daru. As a result the party consisted of Col. N. P. Procter, C.B.E., M.C., Capt. P. W. Galvin, Lt. G. E. Sander, Sgt. W. Millington and W.O. J. Carvel (R.E.).

Some may wonder why a sapper was included, but, although not in the Regiment now, his claims to be of the Regiment are strong. He was born in the Regiment, his father being Orderly Room Colour-Sergeant of the 3rd Battalion. He remembers many well-known 3rd Battalion personalities, including Capt. Blackman, who is well known to older soldiers and whose sons will be known to nearly all serving now.

W.O. Carvel's connection does not end there, as he was attached to the 1st Battalion in Hong Kong and,

in consequence, has many friends in the Regiment of a later generation.

Messages were sent to the Colonel of the Regiment and the 1st Battalion and a reply from Col. Browne was received in time to read out at dinner.

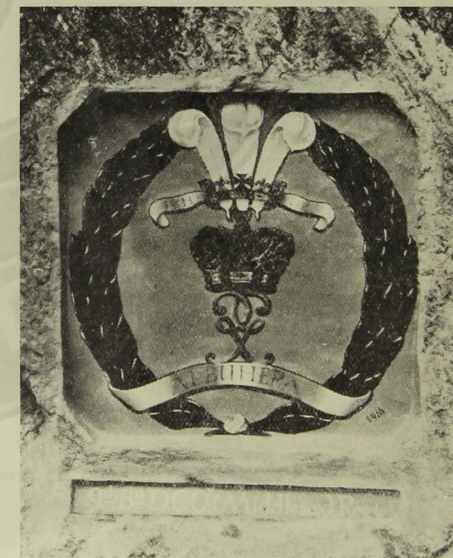
The club put on a good dinner and a pleasant evening was spent, despite a strike or two by Capt. Galvin's car, which does not hold with late nights. Principally owing to the strain of assisting with disciplining this car, one of his passengers was quite overcome.

However, all's well that ends well, and eventually all reached their beds and yet one more Albuhera Day had come and gone.

REGIMENTAL CRESTS IN INDIA

Pictures have recently appeared in *The Times* of regimental crests of units which have been stationed in India. It will probably be of interest to all "Die-Hards" to know that when the 9th Battalion was stationed at Ghora Dhaka, near Murree, the crest of the Regiment was carved in the rocks near there at Mottee Bridge. The materials were specially sent out from England and the work was executed by R.S.M. Drinkwater, who in civil life is an art master for the educational services. Undoubtedly, when completed, our crest stood out amongst the many others carved there as an outstanding piece of craftsmanship.

R.S.M. Drinkwater is well known to the Colonel of the Regiment.



THE BLOOD RIVER INCIDENT

**Breakdown of a Hotchkiss, Pietermaritzburg,
October 10, 1901**

"The Volunteers from the front who have been disbanded here bring information which puts a different complexion on the recent capture of a convoy near Blood River. The wagons were escorted by a composite detachment of Volunteers and also a detachment of the Middlesex Regiment, who had charge of a Hotchkiss gun.

"The initial blame for the whole occurrence must be laid on the scouts, who failed to discover the presence of the enemy. On the appearance of the convoy, which was in difficulties at the drift, the Boers opened a heavy fire. One shot was returned from the Hotchkiss gun, which then jammed, and was thus of no use, its mechanism being strange to the Middlesex men. The Boers surrounded the convoy, who, seeing that escape and further resistance were hopeless, surrendered.

Though they had the choice of ground and position, the enemy lost four killed and 15 wounded."

I hope some readers in the 2nd Middlesex of South Africa days may read and send some explanation of this incident.

CHELSEA PENSIONERS

Readers may be interested to know that the following old "Die-Hards" are in-pensioners of the Royal Hospital, Chelsea:

Ex-Sgt. E. L. Hurst.

A. J. C. Trusler (No. 1645, 1886-93).

E. Boulton (No. 2789, 1889-1902).

J. Downs (No. 2023, 1886-1908).

NOTICES**Publication**

"Guest of an Emperor," by Major M. P. Weedon, M.C., relating his experiences as a prisoner of war in Japanese hands, is now available from Messrs. Arthur Barker Ltd., 30 Museum Street, London, W.C.1, at a price of 10s. 6d.

Will readers who wish to obtain this interesting book, which is in the form of a diary, please apply to the publishers and not to the Secretary of the Regimental Association.



May we remind our readers of the claims of our advertisers? We suggest to readers that if they will look through the advertisements in this number, they will find that every one of their ordinary or extraordinary needs is met, and met handsomely, by a firm which has the extra attraction of supporting our Journal. In short, remember that there is always news, and good news too, in our advertisements.