

The Die Hards

THE JOURNAL OF THE MIDDLESEX REGIMENT

(Duke of Cambridge's Own)



VOL. IX. No. 1

MARCH, 1949

PRICE 1/-

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.
 "Myers," "Serlingapatam," "Albuhara," "Ciudad Rodrigo," "Badajoz," "Vittoria," "Pyrenoes," "Nivelle," "Nive," "Peninsular,"
 "Aima," "Inkermann," "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, 1914-18," "La Bassée, 1914,"
 "Messines, 1914-17," "Armentières, 1914," "Neuve Chapelle," "Ypres, 1915," "17, 18," "Gravenstapel," "St. Julien," "Frezenberg,"
 "Bellevue," "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," "Yimy, 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," "Baileul," "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," "Landing at Suva," "Scimitar Hill," "Gallipoli, 1915,"
 "Rumani," "Egypt, 1915-17," "Gaza," "El Mughar," "Jerusalem," "Jericho," "Jordan," "Tell 'Asur," "Palestine, 1917-18,"
 "Mesopotamia, 1917-18," "Murman, 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. 505 L.A.A., R.A., T.A.
 1st and 2nd Bns. Princess Louise's Kensington Regiment.
 Depot—Mill Hill. Records Office, Infantry Records, Warwick.
 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.

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

Dominion Alliances of Canada

31st Field Regiment, Royal Canadian Artillery, Ontario.
 21st Anti-Tank Regiment, Royal Canadian Artillery.
 50th H.A.A. Regiment, Royal Canadian Artillery.
 12nd (Wentworth) Field Artillery, Royal Canadian Artillery.
 The Royal Rifles of Canada.

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:
 Major R. C. H. Bellers.

CONTENTS

	Page		Page
Editorial	2	Army Reserve of Officers	22
Lt.-Gen. Sir Brian G. Horrocks	3	2/7th Battalion O.C.A.	23
Photograph of Lt.-Gen. Sir Brian G. Horrocks	4	The Story of the 8th Battalion, N.W. Europe	24
Usher of the Black Rod	5	9th Battalion (595 L.A.A. Regiment, R.A.)	27
Col. Sir Edwin King	6	2/10th Battalion Branch O.C.A.	28
Photograph of Col. Sir Edwin King	7	11th Parachute Battalion (Middlesex T.A.)	29
Officers' Club Notes	8	News from Allied Dominion Units	29
Association Meeting	9	Correspondence to the Editor	30
Depot Notes	10	Some Reminiscences of Troopships	31
1st. Battalion Notes	11	The Modern Pentathlon	32
H.C. B.T.C. Notes	20	The Middlesex Pipers	33
7th Battalion Notes	21	History of the World War I	34

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.

Subscriptions should be forwarded to the Editor "The Die-Hards" Journal. Cheques and Postal Orders should be made payable to Secretary Regimental Association and crossed "— & Co."

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION 5/- (Post Free)



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

EDITORIAL

The past quarter has been a busy one for most people as is reflected in the contributions that follow. The Editor would like to thank all those writers who have responded so well to the appeal for more news.

Every one will wish to join in congratulating Gen. Sir Brian Horrocks on his appointment as Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod. This is a position of great dignity and importance dating from 1350. An article on this office is included later on in this number. In addition to the duties to which it refers it should be mentioned that Black Rod is the Sovereign's personal attendant in the House of Lords, and Usher of the Order of the Garter. He is also responsible for keeping order in the Upper House, and, under certain circumstances, for arresting a Peer for an offence such as a breach of privilege or of the Laws of the Realm. There was a time when these two duties were tasks of very great importance.

We also wish to congratulate Lt.-Col. Andrew Man, O.B.E., on his promotion to substantive Lieutenant-Colonel. He is at present A.A. & Q.M.G. at 2nd Infantry Division in B.A.O.R.

Retirements

The retirement of Gen. Sir Brian Horrocks has already been announced. A brief account of his service is included in this number.

Major J. E. Dobbs, M.C., retired on February 15, 1949, and will be living at Tregonwith Villa, Mylor, Cornwall. He was born on July 29, 1894. He served in the ranks (not in the Regiment) for nearly eight years, obtaining a regular commission as 2nd Lieutenant on August 1, 1916. He became a Major on August 1, 1938, after 26 years' commissioned service and had a total service of some 40 years. He was a local Lieutenant-Colonel in the Malay Volunteer Force from September 29, 1941, to October 28, 1945. He was Adjutant, T.A. during his service. He served in the Great War in France and Flanders from November 5, 1914, to February 22, 1918, and again October 5, 1918, to November 11, 1918, and was mentioned in despatches and awarded the M.C.

In the late war he became a prisoner in Japanese hands after the fall of Singapore and was in prison in the terrible Railway Camp.

Major P. A. Fishbourne retired on October 14, 1948, and is living at 31 Beaufort Gardens, S.W.3. He was born on February 10, 1913. Entered the Middlesex Regiment as 2nd Lieutenant on February 2, 1933. He became Acting Captain on March 1, 1940, Acting Major, November 11, 1942, and substantive Major July 1, 1946.

Lt.-Col. F. G. Parker, until recently employed as Camp Commandant, the War Office, retired on January 23, 1949. He served in the ranks of the T.F. for 234 days becoming a temporary 2nd Lieutenant on November 27, 1915, and substantive regular 2nd Lieutenant, December 4, 1916. He commanded the 1st Battalion P.L. Kensington Regiment from March 5, 1940, and was substantive Lieutenant-Colonel on October 22, 1942.

A full account of his service will be appearing in the Colonel of the Regiment's News Letter.

Museum

The Museum has now the framed copies of the Guard Report of the first King's Guard found by the Regiment. In the same frame there is also the Guard Report for the first guard at the Bank, the loyal and congratulatory telegram sent to H.R.H. the Princess Elizabeth on the birth of the Royal Prince, and the reply from their Royal Highnesses the Princess Elizabeth and the Duke of Edinburgh.

Recently the Colours of the following Battalions came to the Depot for netting to assist in their preservation:—11th Service Battalion, 12th Service Battalion, 13th Service Battalion, 16th Service Battalion (Public Schools), 17th Service Battalion (1st Football), 19th Service Battalion (2nd Public Works Pioneers), 23rd Service Battalion (2nd Football), 26th Service Battalion (3rd Public Works Pioneers). These eight King's Colours hang in the Garrison Church, St. Paul's Church, Mill Hill Village.

They are in fair condition and all have the old type of head to the Colour Staff, i.e., a spear head instead of the normal Imperial Crown, which has been the recognised staff head since early in the reign of her late Majesty Queen Victoria.

All the Colours are of the regulation pattern with the exception of the 23rd (2nd Football) Battalion. On this Colour the Roman numerals XXIII is shown in chief dexter union, and the wording "The Duke of Cambridge's Own" within a scroll emblazoned "The Middlesex Regiment" at Fesse Point. This is a most unusual and interesting Colour.

The Curator would be grateful if any reader can give information concerning any of these Colours.

Two other very interesting exhibits recently acquired are the two German flags that were taken at Lomé, West Africa, August 7, 1914. They were removed from the Governor's Palace and replaced by the Union Jack by Capt. Edward Barker of the Middlesex Regiment (D.C.O.), who was at this date attached to W.A.F.F. (West African Frontier Force).

One is the Imperial Standard of Germany, and the other is the standard or private house flag of H.H. Adolf Friedrich, Duke of Mecklenburg, Knight of the Black Eagle, Governor of Togoland. The two flags were presented by Mrs. Stevens, sister of the late Major Barker.

The late Major Barker left the 4th Battalion when they were stationed in Dublin, 1904, and was serving in West Africa at the outbreak of the war in 1914.

The Curator would appreciate any gifts of uniforms or Wellington boots any reader likes to present. There

are one or two uniforms in hand but no helmet plates to make up groups of figures at a later date. If any reader could help would they please communicate with the Curator at Inglis Barracks.

News of Individuals

Major Bertie Lambert, R.A.P.C. (formerly in the Regiment) is now in Eritrea, his address being 12, F.B.P.O., Asmara, Eritrea.

Col. F. Walden writes from H.Q., B.T.E. and Mediterranean Command, where he is in charge of Labour Corps troops.

Major R. W. D. Sword, M.C., is now with the 6th K.A.R. in Dar-es-Salaam. He has been away in the Tanganyika Territory recruiting.

Major G. Hodding is now commanding "E" Company, Royal Pioneer Corps, at Woodlands Camp, Singapore, and Major Massby of the 2/8th Middlesex commands a company in another group.

Major E. Thompson, M.C., is D.A.A.G. at G.H.Q., Far East Land Forces.

By the time these notes are published Col. N. P. Procter, C.B.E., M.C., should be back from West Africa. He writes to say that Major A. G. Hewitt, M.C., is now in Gambia.

The Regiment are fully represented in this part of the world, and include Cutts, Hancock (late 1st Battalion), Galvin, Mr. Arthur Lewin (late 9th Battalion and now Attorney General, Sierra Leone), Taylor, R. W. H. Willoughby and D. Binder, who are both working for the Colonial Office in Nigeria.

Major Ayre is still in B.A.O.R.

Lt.-Col. A. E. Green, D.S.O., has returned to the United Kingdom from Greece, where he was with the 10th Mountain Division (Greek). He has been awarded the Greek Military Cross and is now awaiting a staff appointment in the country. He seems to have seen a good deal of very active warfare in this part of the world.

Major Aymer Clayton will shortly be finishing his course at the Joint Services Staff College. Brig. G. Weston and Lt.-Col. Willoughby are due to join the next course in May.

Major Richard Allott is now Second-in-Command of the Equatorial Corps, Sudan Defence Force.

OBITUARY

We much regret to announce the death of Maj.-Gen. C. R. Simpson, C.B., who died on December 7, 1948. He spent most of his service in the Lincolnshire Regiment, and was the first Commanding Officer of our 4th Battalion, raised in February, 1900. He relinquished command on February 24, 1904. He was born on November 15, 1856, and joined the 10th Foot in September, 1874. He was an Instructor (then called Professor) at the Staff College in 1893 to 1898, and amongst his students were Field-Marshal Lord Haig and Field-Marshal Lord Allenby. He saw service with his 1st Battalion as C.O. at Atbara and Khartoum in the re-conquest of the Sudan War, 1898. He was appointed G.O.C., Mauritius in 1912. In 1916 he was

appointed to command Ripon Reserve Centre, which he held until 1918, and he retired in November of that year.

LT.-GEN. SIR BRIAN HORROCKS, K.B.E., C.B., D.S.O., M.C.

Lt.-Gen. Sir Brian Horrocks retired from the Army at the beginning of this year. His career has been as remarkable as it has been distinguished, and in answer to many requests a brief outline of it is given here.

He was gazetted to the Middlesex Regiment from Sandhurst in August, 1914, and almost at once joined the 1st Battalion with the British Expeditionary Force in France.

On October 21, during the Retreat, his Platoon—No. 8—was surrounded and practically everyone was either killed or wounded. He himself was captured after having been severely wounded in the stomach and spent approximately a year in different German hospitals. As soon as he was fit he started to make plans to get free. He rapidly achieved a legendary reputation for escaping and as far as the Germans were concerned proved quite incorrigible in these matters. Even the most rigorous imprisonment and vigilant watch failed to break his determination to get back to France. Out of a total of ten attempts he reached the Dutch frontier twice. On his last effort he escaped by himself from a camp in the Harz Mountains and was free for fourteen days before being recaptured within sight of Holland. He was actually undergoing solitary confinement for this exploit when the Armistice was signed. For his unflinching courage and determination in these attempts he was awarded the Military Cross. Readers will find a more detailed account of these escapes in Hervey's "Caged Birds."

Another remarkable achievement during his imprisonment was that he learnt to speak fluent Russian.

Within two months of his repatriation to Great Britain he was passed as fit and had embarked for service in Russia and Siberia. He landed at Vladivostok and moved up to Omsk to join Gen. Knox's Military Mission. An Anglo-Russian Brigade was formed at Yekaterinburg (now Sverdlovsk) some thirty miles from the Siberian-Russian boundary. This Brigade consisted of British officers and Russian other ranks, and he was given command of a training school for Russian non-commissioned officers.

This Brigade was eventually disbanded and he was appointed Liaison Officer to the First Siberian Army.

The White Armies then started to disintegrate and the First Siberian Army withdrew to Krasnoyarsk, which is in central Siberia, and about 300 miles north of Outer Mongolia. Anyone who experienced this withdrawal must have relived the nightmares of Napoleon's retreat from Moscow—the confusion of an army adrift and breaking up, typhus raging, harried and cut off by the Red Army and, above all, the deadly embrace of a Siberian winter. Much of the withdrawal was carried out by sleigh and during it Horrocks developed typhus. On arrival at Krasnoyarsk he found that thousands of typhus cases had preceded him. There



GENERAL SIR BRIAN HORROCKS

The Topical Press Agency Ltd.

were no proper facilities and the sick were sleeping three to two beds with one nurse for 128 patients. Under these conditions he would almost certainly have died but for Capt. Hays (Royal Norfolk Regiment and later Commander 3rd Division) who daily managed to bring him milk and white bread. When he recovered he found himself a prisoner of the Reds.

He was moved back under escort by train to Moscow where he was put into a concentration camp. It was not until October, 1920, that he was repatriated to England via Petrograd (Leningrad), Finland and Denmark.

On his return he again joined the 1st Battalion, serving with them in Silesia, the United Kingdom and Germany. During this period he represented Great Britain in the Pentathlon team at the Olympic Games in Paris. In addition, at one time or another he represented the 1st Battalion in every sport—a very singular distinction in itself.

In 1927 he was appointed Adjutant to the 9th Battalion and in 1931 he was selected for the Staff College. Here he again managed to combine study with a leading part in sports. His innovation of requiring the last fielder dropping a catch to wear a particularly distinctive and highly coloured cap has unfortunately died out.

After qualifying at Camberley he rejoined the 1st Battalion in Egypt but was very soon appointed Staff Captain in the War Office and later Brigade Major 5th Infantry Brigade, at Aldershot. In January, 1935, he was made a Brevet Major and in July, 1937, a Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel. From 1938 to 1940 he was respectively General Staff Officer Grade 2 and General Staff Officer Grade 1 at the Staff College, Camberley.

It had been decided that he should take over command of the 2nd Battalion in the British Expeditionary Force in France on May 20. It appears that the contents of his newspaper on the morning of May 10 decided him that May 20 was leaving it a bit late and he appeared out of the blue at Louvain on May 12 and immediately took over command from Major Reid. Old members of the 2nd Battalion will remember his arrival with a very much clearer picture and grasp of what was happening and impending than any of those on the spot. The history of the 2nd Battalion during the next three weeks is the story of Gen. Horrocks' command of the Battalion. There is not space to follow the various events that crowded in on one another during those days but those who served under his command will in particular remember his limitless enthusiasm and optimism when he well knew himself that there was little justification for either, his extraordinary faculty for being everywhere at the same time, and perhaps less widely realised, but probably most important, his ability for anticipating events, so that no new order or sudden change of circumstances ever faced him with a situation for which he had not already prepared.

Two days before the evacuation from Dunkirk he was made commander of the 11th Infantry Brigade.

On the re-forming of the 3rd Division in June, 1940, under Maj.-Gen. Montgomery, he was appointed to command the 9th Infantry Brigade. From then onward his advancement was rapid; Brigadier General Staff in February, 1941, Commander 44th Division in June; Commander 9th Armoured Division in March, 1942,

Commander 13 Corps before El Alamein in August. Henceforth Gen. Horrocks' career is public knowledge and a part of English history.

After the battle of El Alamein he was awarded the D.S.O.

Hetook over command of 9th Corps during the capture of Tunis and returned to 10th Corps after the German surrender in North Africa.

In August, 1943, he had the enduring misfortune to be very seriously wounded in an air attack and was brought back to England. For his service in North Africa he was appointed a C.B.

Though still suffering from his wounds he managed to be passed fit and in August, 1944, he took over command of 30 Corps in Normandy, commanding them until the end of the war in Europe. He was created a K.B.E. in July, 1945. In February, 1946, he was promoted to be General Officer Commander-in-Chief Western Command.

In 1947 he was given the distinction of commanding the British Army of the Rhine. But all this time the insidious effects of his earlier wounds, from which he had never more than partially recovered, had been sapping his energy and undermining his health. Feeling himself unable to sustain the flow of seemingly unlimited energy he took what must have been the hardest decision of his life and asked to be relieved of his command. It is perhaps a measure of his character that at the summit of his Army career he succeeded where the greatest of commanders before him had failed in that he chose for himself the moment to turn back.

His decorations from Allied States include:—Commander, Order of King George 1st; Knight Grand Officer of the Order of Orange Nassau with Swords; Grand Officer of the Order of the Crown with Palm and Croix de Guerre, 1940, with Palm; Commander, Legion of Merit, U.S.A.

USHER OF THE BLACK ROD

Sir Brian Horrocks Comes to Whitehall from the Battlefields

(Reprinted from "The Leader" Magazine by kind permission of the Editor)

"It is not quite what it used to be," admitted the old Black Rod as he talked to the new Black Rod of his high office. "In the old days we not only had a residence here in the House of Lords, but another at Windsor Castle. Most convenient all round."

The old Black Rod was Vice-Admiral Sir Geoffrey Blake. The new one is Lt.-Gen. Sir Brian Horrocks, the soldier who once said that the ceremonies of "General's inspections" in the Army were "frightful eyewash."

No eyewash is the ceremony which Brian Horrocks (of the 8th Army and the Rhine) will henceforth adorn. The tall, lean man with the gently sardonic smile, who is the new Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod, holds an office which symbolises all that is greatest in the country's tradition of chivalry.

Every afternoon from now on, when the House is sitting, the man who a few years ago was living "hard" in the desert with his men, will don the black coat, knee

breeches and buckle shoes of the Black Rod, arm himself with a Court sword in a black scabbard and a rapier-like stick crowned with a golden lion, and attend upon the Lords.

The Conduct of Work

Yet when Brian Horrocks first came to examine the King's appointment he found oddly little information about its scope, other than that it did **not** give him a Westminster residence as formerly. The "Bible" of Westminster, the ponderous Erskine May volume, was oddly reticent; but in his naval predecessor, Geoffrey Blake (retiring because of deafness brought on by gun blast) he found a guide who had spent much of his four years of office in defining the duties and their origin.

First, and showiest, comes the summons of those three sharp raps with his Black Rod on the doors of the House of Commons.

Sir Brian Horrocks is seated during the House of Lords session in the Black Rod's box near the bar. When Bills are ready for the Royal Assent he starts on his journey to the Commons, giving warning so that just as he reaches the lower house the door is slammed in his face—in warning memory of Charles I's attempt to arrest five members.

When the door is opened he marches in and up to the Speaker and makes "his little oration," which is either "Mr. Speaker, the Lords Commissioners desire this honourable House . . ." or "Mr. Speaker, His Majesty commands this honourable House to attend immediately . . ."

The new Black Rod lives fully up to the original requirements as "one famous in Arms and Blood, living within the Dominions of the Sovereign."

When war broke out in 1939 he was an unknown Lieutenant-Colonel.

"The most I could look forward to was command of a battalion in my old Regiment—the Middlesex," was what he once confessed. He had been a Captain with a Military Cross as long ago as 1917. Promotion had been slow. Then just after Dunkirk he got his command, and shortly afterwards was promoted to Brigadier. A year later he was one of the "unknowns" who were quietly assembled around Montgomery before El Alamein to build a new army.

Brian Horrocks was a front-line soldier by instinct. He lived and slept with his tanks; he was so much a front-line man that he was almost killed at Bizerta, and it was as a result of his wound then that last October he was retired from the Army. Before that he had the IX, X and XI Corps in North Africa, and the XXX Corps after D-Day.

He became a General whose reputation for speedy advances was rivalled only by those of General Patton. By a coincidence both soldiers had in their day been in the gruelling Pentathlon Olympic contests competed for by soldiers.

Then, after the war, he was made C.-in-C. Western Command, and later commanded the British Army of the Rhine.

"Baa, Baa, Black Sheep"

Brian Horrocks may find the Box of the Black Rod too sheltered a post from which to view the battles in

the political arena, or the refined echoes of them that reach the House of Lords. For he himself is an easy and persuasive talker, with strong views and a sense of humour. Not long ago he was campaigning against the decay of religion in the Army, and illustrating this with a story of a young recruit whom he had questioned on the matter of his religious life, and from whom he had extracted the assurance that he **did** know what Good Friday was. "It was only afterwards that I learned the boy thought I was referring to someone he called 'Robinson Crusoe's sort of batman.'"

As a rugger player, Brian Horrocks is unlikely to suffer any such injury as came to one Black Rod, who was trampled upon by eager M.P.s rushing back from the Lords to get their seats after the Opening Speech. Nor, in the staid atmosphere of the Lords today is he likely to have the experience of a Black Rod who recorded that he distinctly heard the Prince Regent insert the words "baa, baa, black sheep" in the King's Speech, to discover afterwards that he had done it for a hundred-guinea bet with Sheridan.

As late as 1875 the Black Rod's job was worth £5,000 a year. Sir Brian Horrocks will get only £1,320 but holds the appointment for life. He is only 53.

RETIREMENT OF COL. SIR EDWIN KING, K.C.B., C.M.G., T.D., D.L.

NOTE BY THE COLONEL OF THE REGIMENT

In publishing this record of service I am personally very mindful of the devotion of this most distinguished member of the Regiment in the Territorial Army for our 7th Battalion. Throughout my service as Colonel since April, 1942, I have always received from him the fullest support, and have had the benefit of his wise counsel in all matters relating to the Territorial units of our Regiment. I look forward still to receive from him both support and counsel in my highly responsible and difficult task.

Col. Sir Edwin King, of The Old House, East Finchley, has just retired from his appointment as Honorary Colonel of the 7th Battalion The Middlesex Regiment, after being permitted by the War Office to serve in that capacity two years beyond the extreme age limit. He had completed on retirement over 52 years' service in the 7th Middlesex, a record that is not likely to be surpassed.

Sir Edwin King was appointed 2nd Lieutenant in 1896, promoted Lieutenant in 1897, Captain in 1901, Lieutenant-Colonel in 1907, and Colonel in 1918. He never held the rank of Major. He commanded the 7th Middlesex from 1907-1918, and succeeded the late Sir Henry Bowles as its Honorary Colonel in 1925. During the South African War in 1900 he was seconded as a Lieutenant in the Colonial Mounted Infantry. He took part in the operations in Bechuanaland, including the action at Fabers' Puts, and subsequently served with the Rhodesia Field Force in the Western Transvaal, including the attempt to relieve Col. Hore's garrison at Elands River, and the subsequent retreat to Mafeking.

During the first world war he served for a few months at Gibraltar and then in France and Flanders. During



COL. SIR EDWIN KING, K.C.B., C.M.G., T.D., D.L.

By courtesy of Lafayette Ltd.

1915 he commanded the 7th Middlesex in the battles of Aubers, Givenchy and Bois Grenier, forming part of the battle of Loos; in 1916 he commanded the 7th Middlesex on the Somme in the battles of Gommecourt, Ginchy, Flers-Courcelette and Morval, and in 1917 at Arras in the battles of the First Scarpe, Arleux and the Third Scarpe. In 1918 he was posted to the Staff of the XV Corps, with the rank of Colonel, graded as an A.A.G., and was present at the battles of the Lys, Estaires and Hazebrouck, and in the final operations known as the Advance to Victory. After the Armistice he was appointed Commander of the Lille Sub-Area, and after the evacuation of Lille, Commander of the Ypres Sub-Area.

In recognition of his services in the war, Sir Edwin King was three times mentioned in despatches for gallant and distinguished services in the field, and was appointed in 1916 a Companion of the Most Distinguished Order of St. Michael and St. George. In 1936 the Earl Marshal authorised and directed Garter and Clarenceux Kings of Arms to grant and assign a special badge to Sir Edwin King and his family, commemorating his services in command of the 7th Middlesex in the First Battle of the Scarpe, when the 7th Middlesex completely destroyed the 31st German Regiment; the badge is the severed claw of a German Eagle, charged with the figures 31.

In 1931 Sir Edwin King was appointed aide-de-camp to His late Majesty King George V, and served King Edward VIII and King George VI in the same capacity. He had the honour of riding in attendance on His Majesty at the Coronation, and retired in 1941 on completing ten years' service.

He served for 37 years as a military member of the Middlesex Territorial Army and Air Force Association; he was for eleven years vice-chairman and from 1937-1945 was chairman. In recognition of his services he was, in 1939, appointed a Commander of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath, and was in 1944 promoted to be a Knight Commander of the same Order.

During the second world war Sir Edwin King served as a Zone Commander in the Middlesex Home Guard. He is a Deputy Lieutenant and Justice of the Peace for the County of Middlesex, and was appointed High Sheriff of the County in 1935, and in the following year, accompanied by the trumpeters of the Royal Horse Guards, duly proclaimed and published from the Guildhall at Westminster the accession to the throne of His Majesty King Edward VIII. In 1945 he was created a Bailiff Grand Cross of the Order of St. John, and in the same year was appointed Chancellor of the Order and Chief Executive Officer to H.R.H. the Duke of Gloucester, Grand Prior of the Order, an appointment which he still holds.

SPRING GOLF MEETING

The Spring Golf Meeting of the Middlesex Regiment Golfing Society will take place at Hendon Golf Club on Thursday and Friday, April 28 and 29, 1949. Will retired officers who wish to play for the Past v. Present kindly communicate with Lt.-Col. W. H. Samuel, "Greenmead," Brockenhurst, Hants.

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE MIDDLESEX REGIMENTAL OFFICERS' CLUB HELD AT THE MIDDLESEX GUILDHALL, WESTMINSTER, S.W.1, ON THURSDAY, JANUARY 27, 1949, AT 2 P.M.

Present: Col. M. Browne, M.C., D.L., J.P. (Colonel of the Regiment).
Brig. B. B. Rackham, C.B.E., M.C. (Chairman).
Brig. E. E. F. Baker, C.B.E., D.S.O., M.C., T.D., D.L., J.P., A.D.C.
Lt.-Col. C. P. Rooke, O.B.E., M.C.
Lt.-Col. J. D. Robbins, O.B.E.
Lt.-Col. W. L. Roberts, O.B.E., M.C.
Major R. C. H. Bellers.
Major H. K. Hardcastle, T.D.
Brig. G. P. L. Weston, D.S.O., O.B.E. } In attendance.
Major C. M. M. Man, M.C.
Lt.-Col. T. S. Wollcombe, M.C.
Major A. W. Clark, O.B.E. (Secretary).

Apologies for non-attendance were received from: Col. G. Beach, C.B., O.B.E., T.D., D.L., J.P., Lt.-Col. M. Crawford, D.S.O., Major N. H. B. Lyon, M.C., Major H. Marsh.

1. *Minutes.* The minutes of the last meeting having been circulated were signed by the Chairman as correct.

2. *Secretary's Report.* The Secretary reported:
(a) That the paid membership of the Club on December 31, 1948, was 370.

(b) That the results of the Winter Cocktail Party held in the Officers' Mess, Inglis Barracks, on October 28, 1948, was a credit balance of £17 5s. 3d. This amount has been carried forward to the general account of the Club.

3. *Election of New Members.* The Committee approved of the following being elected to the Club: Lt. G. Sander, Major R. K. B. Allott, M.C., 2/Lt. J. C. Bucknall, Lt. P. W. C. West.

4. *6th Battalion Funds.* Major Hardcastle reported that the Charity Commissioners and United Services Trustees will not agree to any alteration to the Deed, and that the Revenue of the Fund will be applicable for the serving officers of the Regiment only. Col. Browne recommended and the Committee approved that a small Committee be formed to investigate the legal position and it was approved that the following constitute the Committee: Lt.-Col. M. Crawford, D.S.O., Major H. K. Hardcastle, T.D., Lt.-Col. J. D. Robbins, O.B.E., Major R. C. H. Bellers.

5. *M.C.C. Season Tickets.* The Secretary was authorised to purchase two season tickets for 1949 to be available to Club Members during the current cricket season.

6. *Officers' Club Dinner.*

(a) Lt.-Col. W. L. Roberts stated that he had made several enquiries as to suitable places at reasonable charges and after some discussion it was decided that he should again approach the Junior United Service Club to ascertain if a reduction in price (exclusive of wines) can be obtained. The quotation made by the J.U.S.C. of 45s. (including wines) was too high. Failing this, that the estimate of the Café Royal for dinner and one glass of port be accepted at a cost to members of 18s. per head. Lt. Col. Roberts promised to report the results of the above at the next meeting on April 21, 1949.

(b) The Committee decided that the Regimental Band would not be required to play at the Annual Dinner.

(c) The dress to be lounge suit or uniform.

7. *Rule 6 Under "B" Cricket.* The Committee ruled that Rule 6 under "B" Cricket be adhered to and that in future all meals for members of the cricket team would be debited to their account.

8. *Accounts for 1948.* Lt.-Col. J. D. Robbins reported to the Committee that owing to the increased size of the accounts he was unable to produce them at today's Committee. It was decided that in future years the January meeting be postponed until the last Thursday in February. This will allow the Auditors more time for preparation and for members of the Committee to examine them prior to the Meeting.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 3.20 p.m.

ADVANCE INFORMATION—REGIMENTAL DINNER

The date of the Regimental Dinner of the Officers' Club this year is Friday, June 24, 1949.

It will be held at the Junior United Service Club, Charles II Street, London, S.W.1.

The price of tickets will be notified later. It is hoped that a large number of officers will attend.

OFFICERS' CLUB SOCIAL ACTIVITIES, 1949

- June 18 Cricket v. Hampstead Heathens, at Hampstead.
- " 18 O.C.A. Reunion at Mill Hill.
- " 19 Cricket v. Romany, Mill Hill.
- " 20 " v. Cryptics, Mill Hill.
- " 21 " v. Incogniti, Mill Hill.
- " 22 " v. Free Foresters, Mill Hill.
- " 23 " v. Zingari. Possible two-day match.
- " 24 Officers' Club Dinner.
- " 25 Officers' "At Home," Officers' Mess, Mill Hill.

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE MIDDLESEX REGIMENTAL ASSOCIATION HELD AT THE MIDDLESEX GUILDHALL, WESTMINSTER, S.W.1, ON THURSDAY, JANUARY 27, 1949, AT 3 P.M.

Present: Brig. B. B. Rackham, C.B.E., M.C., Col. M. Browne, M.C., D.L., J.P. (Colonel of the Regiment), Brig. E. E. F. Baker, C.B.E., D.S.O., M.C., T.D., D.L., J.P., A.D.C., Lt.-Col. C. P. Rooke, D.S.O., Lt.-Col. W. L. Roberts, O.B.E., M.C. (Chairman), Lt.-Col. T. S. Wollcombe, M.C., Lt.-Col. J. D. Robbins, O.B.E., Major H. K. Hardcastle, T.D., Major R. C. H. Bellers, R.S.M. W. Weller, M.M., Mr. A. Todman, Major A. W. Clark, O.B.E. Apologies for non-attendance were received from: Col. G. Beach, C.B., O.B.E., T.D., D.L., J.P., Lt.-Col. M. Crawford, D.S.O., Major N. H. B. Lyon, M.C., Major H. Marsh, Sgt. E. Fletcher.

1. *Minutes.* The minutes of the last meeting having been circulated were signed by the Chairman as correct.

2. *Resignation of Chairman.* Brig. B. B. Rackham resigned as Chairman in accordance with Rule 6 of the Regimental Association. He regretted that he had to vacate the Chair, but owing to pressure of duties in connection with his work as Secretary to the Territorial Association and Middlesex Army Cadets he could not devote the time he would like in the interest of the Regimental Association. He desired to have it placed on record that without the continued support of Col. G. Beach, Lt.-Col. M. Crawford and Lt.-Col. J. D. Robbins he would have been unable to carry on his duties as Chairman.

It was proposed by Col. M. Browne, seconded by Brig. E. E. F. Baker and unanimously approved by the Committee that a vote of thanks be recorded for the excellent manner in which Brig. B. B. Rackham had conducted the business of the Association and Officers' Club during his tenure of office.

3. *Election of Chairman.* It was proposed by Brig. B. B. Rackham and seconded by Brig. Baker that Lt.-Col. W. L. Roberts be elected Chairman for the ensuing year. Carried unanimously.

4. *Secretary's Report.* The Secretary reported that:

(a) During the year ending December 31, 1948, £2,479 8s. 4d. was dispersed in grants. Assistance with these grants, to the value of £127 10s. 0d., was received from other Charitable organisations.

(b) The amounts dispersed in grants during the month of December, 1948, was £217 7s. 4d., in assisting 44 cases.

(c) The Secretary read to the Committee a letter he had received from Major N. H. B. Lyon regretting that he was unable to attend the meeting and requesting that he may be allowed to resign from the Committee owing to continued ill-health. The Committee accepted his resignation with regret and instructed the Secretary to write a special letter of thanks to Major Lyon expressing their regret at his resignation and thanking him for his valuable services whilst serving on the Committee. They hoped that his health would improve.

(d) The Committee approved the Secretary's application that a sum of £600 be authorised to be expended on necessitous cases during the quarter ending March 31, 1949.

5. *Memorial Committee.* In the absence of Col. Beach, Major R. C. H. Bellers reported that:

(a) During the last quarter, except for a donation of £1,000 from the Borough of Hornsey, very few donations had been received.

(b) The construction of drains, roads, sewer and pump house due to commence on January 17, 1949, are temporarily held up. Difficulties which will be shortly overcome have arisen over the demolition of the old A.R.P. buildings. The site is pegged out and the contractors can commence work at a few days' notice.

6. *Finance Committee.* Col. Robbins explained to the Committee that owing to the enlarged accounts of the Association the Auditors are finding it difficult to produce them for the Meeting in January. The Committee therefore agreed that the first meeting in the year would in future be held on the last Thursday in February, commencing in 1950.

Col. Robbins also reported as follows:

(a) That two meetings have taken place since the last Executive Committee Meeting.

(b) ASSOCIATION CHARITABLE AND RENVY FUNDS. Income and Expenditure Accounts for the year show a satisfactory position and are in accordance with estimates previously submitted. Both show a surplus of income over expenditure for the year.

(c) COTTAGE HOMES FUND. There is an excess of expenditure over income for the year amounting to £3. This is due to the increased cost of maintenance.

(d) WAR MEMORIAL FUND. A further £9,000 has been invested since the last report. Invested funds now amount to £25,000. The amount due under Covenants is approximately £1,600. The Current Account balance at December 31, 1948, was £1,556. Income from Investments for the year was £196.

(e) It is recommended that the Secretary's salary should be apportioned as below in order that the respective funds bear a share commensurate to the work involved:

	£	s.	d.	(1948)
Association Charitable	228	0	0	(164)
Renny	50	0	0	(114)
Journal	50	0	0	(50)
Officers' Club	50	0	0	(50)
Memorial, 1939-45	—	—	—	—
	£378	0	0	£378

(f) INVESTMENT. Messrs. Mullens & Co., the Stockbrokers, recently reviewed the investments of the Association and they do not recommend any changes. It is recommended that surplus money on the Association and Renny Funds, amounting to £750 and £600 respectively, be invested in accordance with the Brokers' advice.

(g) Messrs. G. Dixey & Co. request that the audit fee be raised to 45 guineas with an additional fee of 5 guineas for typing. It is recommended that this increase be accepted.

(h) Two Members of the Committee, Col. Beach and Lt.-Col. Robbins retire in accordance with the terms of their appointment.

The Committee approved the above report. Col. Browne proposed and Brig. Baker seconded and the Committee approved that a vote of thanks be recorded for the magnificent way in which the Finance Committee had looked after the accounts and it was hoped that they would continue to do so for a further year. It was unanimously agreed that both Col. Beach and Lt.-Col. Robbins be re-elected. Lt.-Col. Robbins thanked the Committee for their appreciation and agreed to continue as Chairman of the Finance Committee for a further year.

7. *O.C.A. Reunion.* The Committee discussed the O.C.A. Reunion on June 18, 1949.

(a) It was agreed that this function should take place at Inglis Barracks, Mill Hill.

(b) In was decided to ascertain from the O.C., 1st Battalion, if the Band and Drums could be made available for this reunion and if he could find a small detachment of troops to rehearse a short programme of drill or to provide some other form of entertainment.

(c) As regards refreshments, etc., the Secretary was instructed to place before the Finance Committee at their next regular meeting the estimated cost for the occasion in order that a report may be made to the Executive Committee at their meeting on April 21, 1949.

8. *Journal Committee.*

(a) In the absence of the Chairman of this Committee, Major Bellers reported that adverse balance of the Journal Account was due to reduced revenue from advertisements, reduced number of subscribers and increased cost of printing. The Journal Committee have this matter under review and are considering the best manner in which to deal with this state of the account.

(b) The Committee expressed a wish that the Journal Committee should investigate the following suggestions with a view to increasing the revenue of the Journal Account and that the result of the investigations be reported at the next meeting of the Regimental Association on April 21:

(i) Publishing more photographs of groups (particularly other ranks). Though this would add to the cost of the Journal it might act as an incentive to increase the sales.

(ii) The production of a Regimental Christmas card containing a print of a popular event (such as the guard mounting at Buckingham Palace).

(iii) The production and sale of a Regimental Diary for 1950.

9. *Other Business.* The Committee approved that Secretaries of Old Comrades' Clubs be asked to send one representative to Association Meetings commencing with the next meeting due to be held on April 21, 1949.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 4.55 p.m. Due to the Regimental Golf Meeting taking place on April 28, 1949, the next meeting will take place on Thursday, April 21, 1949, at the Middlesex Guildhall.

DONATIONS TO THE MEMORIAL FUND

DONATIONS FROM NOVEMBER 5, 1948, TO JANUARY 31, 1949

£	s.	d.	
1,500	0	0	Middlesex County Council Sunday Entertainments Fund.
1,000	0	0	Borough of Hornsey.
462	6	1	Harrow Urban District Council.
25	0	0	"Die-Hards" Club, Ealing Branch, Mr. J. A. Gould.
21	0	0	Enfield & District "100" Luncheon Club (further donation).
20	0	0	Hornsey "Die-Hards" Club, by sale of Collecting Cards.
12	18	10	"A" Platoon, 13th Middlesex Home Guard.
7	11	0	Borough of Acton (further donation).
6	0	0	Anonymous donor.
5	5	0	Mr. G. A. Lewis, Tottenham Hotspur Football Club.

- 5 0 0 Mr. T. H. Hopkins, Mr. John S. Parry, Lt.-Col. W. H. C. Davy (further donation), Mrs. R. E. Merry (sale of Collecting Cards).
- 3 0 6 "Die-Hards" Club, Horsey (Collecting Box).
- 2 2 0 Mr. T. L. Salter, Mrs. A. A. M. Spencer, Mr. H. M. Beddall, Mr. R. E. Evans, D.C.M. (further donation).
- 2 0 0 West Middlesex Joint Planning Committee.
- 1 17 9 Ladies' Guild (Collecting Box).
- 1 12 1 Horsey "Die-Hards" Club (Collecting Box).
- 1 10 0 Staff and Scholars, Bush Hill Park Secondary School.
- 1 5 7 Maggs Pokie-Die Fiends (further donation).
- 1 1 0 Capt. E. A. Moir, Miss K. N. Browne, 59th L.A.A. Regiment R.A. (Middlesex) T.A., Major P. D. H. Marshall, British Legion, Women's Section, Greenford, Mr. J. Adcock.
- 1 0 0 Mr. Amsterdam (sale of Collecting Cards), Mr. J. Boen (ditto), Mr. J. Dunstone (ditto).
- 10 6 Capt. W. R. Rosam, T.D. (further donation).
- 5 0 Mr. R. Stewart Phillips, Mr. H. Bellman, Mr. W. Winny, M.M. (further donation), Mr. J. Reed (further donation).
- 4 4 P.R.I. 1st Battalion Middlesex Regiment (Collection).

DEPOT NOTES

During the last two months the new Support Company of 1st Middlesex, under Capt. Thomas, has been formed and training has been actively carried out at the Depot, and "D" Company, 1st Middlesex, under Major Kendal-Sadler, has also been at Mill Hill.

Early in November we were asked to find volunteers for collecting at cinemas in Acton, Hendon and Wembley in aid of the Cottage Homes Memorial Appeal. Their work was well rewarded by a collection of nearly £450.

A party of 50 from the Depot attended the Armistice Service on November 7, and wreaths were afterwards laid on the War Memorial.

Our close association with the 7th Middlesex was continued and two field exercises have been held with them involving patrolling and movement across country. They were well attended and the use of wireless was practised.

Courses for adult Warrant Officers and for cadets of the Middlesex A.C.F. were held at weekends in November and January. Subjects included drill, weapon training, camp duties, administration and certificate "A." All students showed great keenness and enthusiasm and left saying they had spent most useful and enjoyable weekends.

The O.C., Depot, had the honour of visiting the H.C., B.T.B., with the Colonel of the Regiment on January 20, and was very impressed with the Regimental spirit displayed by all members of the Regiment there, and with their undoubted loyalty to the Colonel.

Liaison visits were made to the Middlesex Cadets at Tottenham Grammar School, and to the 11th Parachute Battalion (8th Middlesex). Here Lt. Drury, late Q.M. of 1st Middlesex in B.A.O.R., introduced the new Second-in-Command, Major Moggeridge, and later Capt. Smith helped to supervise a rifle competition of theirs.

A visit was also made to the Depot, The Royal Fusiliers, at Hounslow, who were found preparing to move to the Tower of London. It was remembered that the Middlesex and Royal Fusiliers shared the Hounslow Barracks together prior to Mill Hill being taken over in 1904.

Two excellent Christmas parties were held in the Gymnasium for the children. The first was run by 1st Middlesex and the second by the Ladies' Guild, and the organisers of both produced really first-class



By courtesy of the "Evening News"

parties with most appetising teas and lovely children's presents. They achieved the success they so fully deserved. Capt. Smith arriving and departing in a decorated and floodlit car made an imposing Father Christmas.

Christmas dinners were served to all other ranks at the Depot in the traditional manner. The cooks produced an excellent meal of turkey, mince pies and plum pudding, with etceteras and members of the Officers' and Sergeants' Messes acted as waiters and saw that everyone had his fill of both Christmas fare and beer. The O.C. Depot and Padre Gibbins visited all the married families to wish them a happy Christmas.

Padre and Mrs. Gibbins also organised a delightful Nativity play by the Sunday School children which was held in the church just before Christmas.

We are sorry to lose Padre Gibbins, who has been posted to Catterick, and we wish him the best of luck. It was through his untiring efforts that the church was prepared, decorated and furnished and his posting ends a long association with the Regiment both in war and peace. He has done a great deal for the Regiment, whose interests he has always closely watched, and he will be remembered not only for his devoted church and welfare work, but also for his active interest and participation in Regimental sports, particularly football.

We welcome Padre Naylor as his successor.

The 2nd Battalion Officers' Mess, Sergeants' Mess and P.R.I. silver has now arrived from Peterborough and is being placed in the silver room.

On January 24 a reunion was held in the Sergeants' Mess for Old Comrades who were at the battle of Spion Kop. A toast to them was proposed by the Colonel of the Regiment and photographs taken, and an interesting and enjoyable evening was spent by all who attended.

The Depot football grounds have been much in demand by 1st Middlesex and other units, and the cricket table is being carefully prepared for the summer; seeds sown in the autumn on bare patches are coming up well.

Spion Kop

To celebrate the 49th anniversary of the battle of Spion Kop, fought during the Boer War, January 24, 1900, a small reunion party was given by the W.O.s and Sergeants of the Depot. Five veterans were able to attend and they were kept company by three other old comrades who served with them during the early days of the century.

The following is a list showing ranks in 1900 and ages in 1949:—S/Sgt. R. E. Evans, D.C.M., 79; Sgt. J. Dunstone, 80; Bdmn. J. Ryan, 78; Dmr. W. King, 74 and Pte. G. E. Ford, 69. These five old-timers gave a score of 380 years. Also present to keep them company were Messrs. H. Clelland (R.S.M.), J. Holmes (D/Major) and T. Harrison (Cpl.).

The following officers were also invited to the reunion and were proud to attend:—Col. M. Browne, M.C., D.L., J.P., Colonel of the Middlesex Regiment (D.C.O.), Col. G. Beach, C.B., O.B.E., T.D., D.L., J.P., Hon. Colonel 9th Battalion Middlesex Regiment (D.C.O.), Lt.-Col. M. Crawford, D.S.O., Officer Commanding 1st Battalion Middlesex Regiment (D.C.O.), Major R. C. H. Bellers, Officer Commanding Depot The Middlesex Regiment (D.C.O.), Lt.-Col. J. E. F. Willoughby, Major (Q.M.) P. Newman, Major (retired) E. L. Heywood, Capt. H. Farrow, M.B.E., Capt. R. W. J. Smith, Lt. K. R. V. Argles, R.A.M.C.

After the company had settled in and checked up on companies, O.C. companies, who had eaten who's rations after the battle was over, what Major Saville said to Dick Evans, and who took "Nobby" Ford's overcoat, the guests were gathered together for the ceremony of the evening.

All glasses were filled and our Colonel proposed a toast to the gallant old soldiers who, half a century ago, had fought the last bullet and bayonet war. It was the first battle the Middlesex Regiment, as a Regiment, had fought and where the words "Die-Hards" were used by the successors of the 77th.

He recalled the hard marching prior to the battle, the climb up the steep Kop, rough, stony and dangerous, the sight of troops of another unit running down the hill in panic and the splendid discipline required to man the firing line in the face of the accurate marksmanship of the Boer troops and the turmoil taking place on the hill.

All present drank the toast with pleasure and pride in these grand old 'uns of our Regiment.

With the port the Spion Kop cake was cut and handed to all present, all, I am sure, making the wish that we will all be there at a similar function next year.

The Colonel then read out a message from Gen. Sir Brian Horrocks, K.B.E., C.B., D.S.O., M.C., who was unable to attend. The General's message was very inspiring and he expressed his admiration of the bravery of the men of the 2nd Battalion in the battle.

Photographs were taken and then the guests began to exchange memories of the days at the end of the last century and the early days of this. Jimmy Dunstone, being the oldest soldier, did his best to keep the others in order, but "Nobby" Ford, although claiming to be the youngest man of the Regiment at Spion Kop, was making so much noise that he couldn't hear the voice of authority. Dick Evans, late mine host of the "Red Lion," Hillingdon, then joined in. He, having a landlord's guile, plus a Colour Sergeant's experience, soon had a spot of discipline in the place.

Tom King was willing to run 100 yards with the best man present over the age of 30. His terms were a little harsh, he wanted the pint wager first. Whilst all this was going on, "Barny" Ryan was idly picking the icing off his piece of cake. Just like a bandsman to find the sweet eats.

Most of the younger generation present were surprised when they knew that "Chic" Holmes, as a drummer, had been equipped ready to sail for South Africa with the 2nd Battalion in 1899. Few realised that "Chic" was soldiering in 1898 and cursed the man who brought to his O.C.'s notice that he was then under age. "Chic" saw his Battalion sail and could only follow their action by letters and newspapers. He still feels sore at his luck.

Before the two veterans who had to go home could leave all present had to sing the "Die-Hards" song. We then said goodnight to Dick Evans and "Barny" Ryan, who left by car.

More reminiscences, more singing and then a final song by all to the senior present, Jimmy Dunstone, looking so noble in his snowy beard and serene expression, and so to bed.

Last thoughts as I fell asleep, "God bless 'em all, may we all be able to make the half century celebration in style next year."

R. W. J. S.

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

EDITORIAL

This quarter has been a particularly busy one. We are still working together with the 1st Battalion The Welsh Guards and the 1st Battalion King's Shropshire Light Infantry on public duties in London. Many extra-regimentally employed and retired officers of the Regiment have witnessed our King's Guard mountings at Buckingham Palace and it is good to know, according to reports from these officers, that our past high standard of drill and turn-out is being maintained. We have been delighted to see on various guard mountings Col. F. G. Parker, Lt.-Cols. S. F. W. M. del Court, M.C., J. R. B. Worton and Majors W. Ward, M.M., F. A. L. Lawrence, G. B. Ayre, as well as ex-R.S.M. Kit Fane (who left the 2nd Battalion in 1926 from Ahmednagar).

Also, we have been pleased to see some Old Comrades when we have been on guard mountings at week-ends.

Any past officers who may be watching our guard mountings at Buckingham Palace at any time will be most welcome for drinks in the Officers' Mess, which is situated in St. James' Palace.

In November, "S" Company, under Capt. V. A. Thomas, M.C., was formed in Mill Hill, and in December "D" Company, under Major E. C. Kendall-Sadler, T.D., also moved to Mill Hill as accommodation in Chelsea Barracks, which we share with the 1st Battalion King's Shropshire Light Infantry, is so limited. Specialist training is now being carried out with great enthusiasm. Field training is being done with the Scots Guards at Pirbright. "B" and "C" Companies have already completed Section and Platoon training as well as some range work. The remaining Rifle Companies should have completed their elementary platoon field training by the middle of March.

It is probable that we shall, in addition to London duties take over public duties at Windsor Castle for a month at a time beginning sometime about April.

We were delighted to see Lt.-Gen. Sir Brian Horrocks, K.B.E., C.B., D.S.O., M.C., in December, when he visited the Officers' and Sergeants' Messes, as well as the men at dinner. He was very fit and in excellent form. We are very happy to hear that he has recently succeeded Vice-Admiral Sir Geoffrey Blake as Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod in the House of Lords.

We have had a number of social gatherings. One of the most successful was the children's Christmas party held in the Depot Gymnasium at Mill Hill. The party was thoroughly enjoyed by both grown-ups and children and our thanks for organising this grand party go to Major E. C. Kendall-Sadler, and a number of ladies of the Regiment, who put in much hard work, including Mrs. M. Crawford, Mrs. N. Gilbert, Mrs. R. C. H. Bellers, Mrs. P. Newman, Mrs. H. Farrow, Mrs. R. W. J. Smith and Mrs. C. Dennis, wife of ex-Bandmaster C. Dennis. Capt. Dick Smith once again excelled himself as Father Christmas. His spectacular arrival and departure, effectively floodlit, amused and thrilled the children.

On January 13, Capt. W. R. Rosan, T.D., was presented by the Colonel of the Regiment with the Meritorious Service Medal. After a Battalion parade, which was held at Chelsea for the actual presentation, Capt. W. R. Rosan, T.D., together with his son, and Major R. T. Guscott, M.B.E., watched the Regiment mounting King's Guard at St. James' Palace and were afterwards entertained in the King's Guard Officers' Mess.

Although the war has now been over some years our officer situation remains very fluid and officers continue to be posted at short notice and very frequently. Major N. G. Gilbert, who has been second-in-command of the Battalion since its formation last July has been promoted to Lieutenant-Colonel and is now employed at the War Office on No. 2 War Crimes Board. We congratulate him on his well-earned promotion and wish him and his wife all good luck in the future.

Major G. O. Porter, who was such an asset to us, especially on the hockey field, has left for West Africa. Capt. M. E. W. Morton has handed over Adjutant to



By courtesy of the London "Evening News"

Capt. D. Sax, and is now seconded as Adjutant to the University of London S.T.C. Capt. Norman Clayden has been posted as Staff Captain, 28th Infantry Brigade. He, too, is a great loss to us, especially on the sports field where he has represented the Battalion at rugby, hockey, basket ball and athletics.

Major I. H. Battye, M.B.E., who recently rejoined us from the War Office, has been selected for a course at the R.A.F. Staff College. We are very sorry his stay with the Regiment has been so short and offer him our congratulations on being selected for this course.

Lts. P. J. A. Pielow, G. A. Dawe and W. G. Mitchell-Innes have proceeded on release and we wish them all good luck in civilian life and hope they will keep in touch with us.

We welcome to the Battalion Capt. D. B. Rendell, M.B.E., M.C., R. St. G. Mc. Young, W. A. C. Digby, Lts. G. E. Sander, R. A. Hodge from the Rifle Brigade, 2/Lts. M. B. M. Devine from the Royal Fusiliers, J. G. Bucknall, the son of Lt.-Gen. G. C. Bucknall, and E. B. Evans.

"H.Q." COMPANY

"H.Q." Company has seen many changes of personnel since the last issue of THE DIE-HARDS. Capt. J. N. Shipster, D.S.O., who was in command of the Company on arrival at Chelsea, handed over late in October to

Lt. (now Capt.) C. H. Mievile, M.C., and returned to "B" Company. In mid-November Capt. Mievile joined "S" Company to form the Carrier Platoon, and handed over the command of the Company to Capt. J. M. Longstaff, who joined us from the Royal Sussex Regiment. Lt. P. V. Bellers has gone to "S" Company to form the Mortar Platoon, taking with him Sgts. Spencely, Sharp, Landreth, Bartholomew, Buckley, Stone and many others.

78 Group has now been demobilised. A number of 115 Group and under have left us, to pass their last few months in the Service at Shorncliffe or various transit and families camps. Among the many whom we are sorry to lose was L/Cpl. Flack, our Company Clerk, and Sgt. Shrager, Stats Sergeant in the B.O.R., has left for West Africa. We wish them all good luck.

Two big drafts have arrived from Shorncliffe, via Mill Hill, to replace personnel posted. The newcomers have settled in satisfactorily. Pte. Mitchell-Gears has rejoined the Battalion and is now Sanitary Corporal. We are glad to say that C.S.M. Fuller is still with us, assisted by Cpl. Judkins, our Permanent Orderly Sergeant, and Ptes. Simmons and Diver, the Company Clerks. C.Q.M.S. Taylor is still running the "Q" Branch, assisted by L/Cpl. Langrish.

Lt. B. K. Clayden and Sgt. Michel are running a Signals Cadre comprising the Signals Platoon and driver operators attached from all Companies. An M.T. Cadre is in progress, the chief instructors being Lt. P. J. Livemore, M.C., and Sgt. Davis, M.M.

The Company's chief success at sport has been on the soccer field. Our team has been ably run by L/Cpl. Flack, and so far we are at the top of the Company league, having lost only one game out of ten. Most of the team are drawn from the Drums, including Drum-Major Holdford, Cpl. Purdon and Cpl. Brown. We entered two teams for the Company Knock-out Hockey Competition. One team from the Band and Drums combined, has reached the semi-final against "A" Company. The other team, from the rest of the Company, has reached the semi-final against "D" Company. This team has included Battalion players, such as Lt. P. G. V. Bellers, Lt. B. K. Clayden and O.R.Q.M.S. A. E. F. Waldren. At basket ball we have been none too successful, losing to "D" Company in the semi-finals. Pte. Hill (Q.M.S. Clerk) reached the final in the inter-Company Novices Boxing Competition, but lost to Pte. Noble of "A" Company. In the coming inter-Company competition we have eleven competitors trained by Cpl. Redmond of the Regimental Police. He is a very fine welter who did well in the Command Championships at Sarafand and Haifa whilst with the 2nd Battalion in 1947. Our only heavy-weight, Pte. Heath, has been posted.

Last, but not least, we wish the greatest happiness to Sgt. Thorogood, L/Cpl. Hilkene, L/Cpl. Mitchell-Gears and Drm. Munday, all of whom were married recently.

M.T. PLATOON

For the first time for eight years the M.T. are contributing to THE DIE-HARDS Journal.

The M.T. was started off under the capable hands of

Capt. Paddy Orr, M.C., who has now left us whilst seconded to the Parachute Regiment. He handed over to Lt. G. A. Dawe, who in turn handed over the M.T. at Chelsea to Lt. P. Livemore, M.C.

Throughout all these changes, Sgt. Davis, M.M., carried out efficiently the duties of M.T. Sergeant, whilst Cpl. Baker has spent much of his time on Part X Orders and requisitions for more and more transport. Cpl. Douglas leaves us soon and his duties will be taken over by L/Cpl. Buckland. Many of the older hands have taken their release and are employed in Civvy Street.

At the moment it is somewhat dangerous to walk across the Square at Chelsea without first observing all the rules of the road. Trucks and motor cycles flash from one side to the other at varying speeds and under doubtful control in the hands of the learner drivers. But what a change comes over the M.T. training ground on Wednesday afternoon when our hockey team wield sticks. We have a good team (so far unbeaten) and we managed to defeat the Band 11-2. Sgt. Davis, M.M., has undoubtedly been a great asset to us as a goalkeeper and we are indebted to him.

Cpl. Snell continues to get the Commanding Officer from A to B in good time and in safety. We see him periodically in the office where he often finds time to reminisce.

Finally we welcome to the M.T. all new drivers and hope that their stay with us will be enjoyable and happy.

CORPS OF DRUMS

The continuance of public duties has kept us fully employed during the past quarter, although we have found time to defeat both "C" and "D" Companies at football and hope to have similar success against the Corps of Drums of the Welsh Guards and the Bugle Platoon of the King's Shropshire Light Infantry. We took part in the Lord Mayor's Show and for the occasion were permitted to wear the pre-war scarlet uniform. The Corps was also instrumental in raising a large sum of money for the Regimental War Memorial Homes by collecting in the cinemas of Uxbridge, Acton and Ealing throughout the whole of one week.

Our big problem at the moment is weathering the release storm which has struck the Corps. By the time these notes appear the following will have left for civilian life:—Drms. Clark, "Scouse" Jones, Miller, Oakley, Parkinson, Shallcross, "Albert" Smith, Weir Williams, Winstanley and Woods. Truly a formidable loss. We thank them all for their excellent service to the Corps and wish them the very best of success in their new life. The brighter side of the picture is revealed by our welcoming Ptes. Barnes, Grant, "Taffy" Jones, Kelly, Rudd and Taylor. All are extremely keen and it is pleasant to observe how they have settled down so quickly.

We continue to receive visits from time to time from past members. One of our more distinguished visitors is ex-Drum. Dennison, of 1914 vintage. Despite the passing of the years he is as erect as ever and his bearing and cheerful conversation are an inspiration to us all. "Boy" King who left us at Wandsbek also came to see us and brought with him a magnificent shield bearing the Regimental cap badge, two drums and a number of

plates, all in silver. These he presented to the Drum Major with a request that the shield be awarded annually to the most efficient member of the Corps. Needless to say, there will be very keen competition to be the first name recorded on the shield. We are all most grateful to the old "cymbal basher" for this thoughtful and generous gift. We also thank the many senders of Christmas cards, including Col. J. G. E. Reid and the Corps of Drums of the Welsh Guards. We offer our congratulations to George Munday on his recent marriage and to L/Cpl. Fleckney on his wife presenting him with a baby daughter, whose godfather is the Drum Major.

Capt. R. J. P. Cummins and Cpl. Brown have represented the Battalion at hockey. It is with regret that we hear that Capt. R. J. P. Cummins will be leaving the Regiment sometime in March.

Finally, we congratulate the one and only "Dandy" for wangling out of the Educational Officer what appears to be a very bogus "Acting and Dramatic" pre-release course.

BAND

Since commencing public duties at Buckingham Palace, we have been busier than ever before, especially at week-ends.

On Saturday, October 2, after dismounting the guard at St. James's Palace we had to fulfil a recruiting campaign engagement at Ealing Town Hall in the afternoon, and on Sunday, October 3, guard mounting, followed in the afternoon by a British Legion (Highgate Branch) Church parade and service.

Other recruiting drives were at Kingsbury, 595th L.A.A. Regiment (9th Middlesex), on Saturday, October 9; Richmond, Surrey, on Saturday, November 6, and 568th S/L. Regiment R.A., at Camden Town on Saturday, December 11.

The most important parade of all was the review of the Territorial Army by H.M. King George VI in Hyde Park on Sunday, October 31, in which we led the Western Command contingent in the March Past the King.

On Tuesday, October 26, came the State Opening of Parliament, in which the Band took part with the Guard of Honour at Buckingham Palace. We played the National Anthem for the Royal Salutes and, after the King had inspected the Guard of Honour we marched past the King and Queen (in the inner courtyard) to the combined Regimental marches.

Tuesday, November 9 saw the Band and Drums, in full dress uniform, taking part in the Lord Mayor's Show, this being the first time in full dress since before the war.

We also played for two Armistice Services, with 595th L.A.A. Regiment on Sunday, November 7, and 625th L.A.A. Regiment on Sunday, November 14, this service and parade being followed by a short band concert in the Drill Hall.

On Sunday morning, November 28, we provided a band for a church service in the Guards' Chapel, Chelsea Barracks, and again on December 19, and Christmas morning a carol service.

Our first military band broadcast took place on

Wednesday, December 8, at 0630 hours in a "Bright and Early" programme in the Home Service. This was a recorded broadcast made the previous day at Maida Vale Studios which, of course, enabled us to "listen in" and criticise our own playing.

Saturday, December 11, found us in Grosvenor House, Park Lane, playing at the annual dinner of the Richmond Football Club, and on Monday, December 13 a further broadcast, in the Overseas Service of the B.B.C., the programme being made up of music in the guard mounting procedure with the script read by the announcer.

The Regimental children's Christmas party was held at Mill Hill on Saturday, December 18, for which the Band provided the appropriate music.

The year 1948 ended with yet another broadcast on Wednesday, December 29, in a "Music while you work" programme, and the Regimental dance band playing the Old Year out at the Old Comrades' New Year's Eve Ball held at Mill Hill on December 31.

SUPPORT COMPANY

On November 1, 1948, "S" Company came into being at Mill Hill with Capt. V. A. Thomas, M.C., as Company Commander, Sgt. Bignell as acting C.S.M., and C/Sgt. Redpath as C.Q.M.S. Drafts were then received from Shorncliffe and engaged in drill on the Square under R.S.M. Weller, M.M., of the Depot, and Sgt. Bignell, preparing them to fill the ranks of the guards and public duties in London.

On November 7 a Parade Service of Remembrance was held in the Barracks and some 50 O.R.s of "S" Company took part. The march past, however, was unfortunately abandoned owing to heavy rain.

It was not until the middle of November that "S" Company began to take shape and Platoon Commanders were posted to the Company:—Carrier Platoon, Capt. C. H. Mievile, M.C.; Mortar Platoon, Lt. P. G. V. Bellers; Anti-tank Platoon, Lt. J. S. C. Flavell; Assault Platoon, Lt. G. C. Foreman.

Drafts were posted both from H.C.B.T.B. and from the 1st Battalion Royal Fusiliers in Germany, and by the beginning of December "S" Company personnel had been selected. Training of the Carrier and Mortar Platoons commenced towards the end of November and the Anti-tank Platoon and Assault Pioneer Platoon got under way shortly afterwards.

We made our first entry into Battalion sport in the November boxing competition. We had so many entries that victory was almost assured. We congratulate Pte. B. Penny (Company H.Q.) and Pte. White (Anti-tank Platoon) who succeeded in winning their weights in the final as well as the rest of the team who put up a good show.

The Company has also started to take on other Companies at soccer and judging from the results of the friendly matches, so far played, we should fare well in future inter-Company league games.

Christmas dinner was served to "S" Company, "D" Company and the Depot on December 23. The Officers and Sergeants successfully acted as waiters to the men, and served without mishap turkey and Christmas pudding to everyone.

The Carrier Platoon is now in full training at Pirbright and the Mortar Platoon proceeds there for firing on the ranges towards the end of January and during February.

The N.C.O. position is improving and training is progressing quite well. We hope that we will be spared too many public duties which will thereby allow us to keep up some continuity in our instruction. There is much for all Platoons to absorb before they can reach the standard demanded of specialist in the Support Company.

"A" COMPANY

Since moving to Chelsea Barracks on September 22, 1948, we have settled down to the life of a Battalion providing public duties in London which, with guards, rehearsals, provision of troops for all major London military events and fatigues in London district, is very full. For these reasons, and owing to lack of suitable ground training is difficult. As much as possible is, however, done in barracks. Parties also go to the range at Mill Hill and N.C.O.s are sent on courses. Early in February the whole Company proceeds to Pirbright for two weeks field training.

On October 26, the Royal Guard of Honour, which was inspected by His Majesty the King, included the following Company personnel:—Major T. W. Chattey, Cpl. O'Donnell, L/Cpls. Cockburn, Dowell, Lee, Connah, Sharrock, Mayer, Smith, Ptes. Boardman, Byatt, Card, Curtis, Dale, Dolman, Hartshorne, Killen, Mankelov, Mead, Parsons, Pegg, Renton, Richards (23), Saunders, Stone, Winslade, Wood, Yerby, Jones (22), Partridge, Saul, Hale, Weaver and Lefevre.

Since the last issue of the journal changes have occurred within the Company. Lt. K. J. Carter has become Assistant Adjutant and 2/Lt. E. B. Thomas has filled the vacancy created. C.Q.M.S. Moody, M.M., Sgt. Cranfield and Cpl. Steadman, have joined the Company and L/Cpls. Connah and Savage have left on demobilisation and posting to Shorncliffe respectively. Sgts. Bignell, Biggs and Cpl. Brazil are transferred to "S" Company and L/Cpls. Armstrong and Boyd to "B" Company.

Company football, basket ball and hockey league games have been played off each week. The Company has a good football team and the following have played for the Battalion:—L/Cpl. Hale, Ptes. Manser, Ewin, Harvey, and Hartshorne. The basket ball team reached the finals of the inter-Company matches but lost to "C" Company 21-16.

In the London District Novices' Boxing Competition, Pte. Parsons reached the finals but unfortunately retired hurt. At the moment the Company team is training hard for the Individual Inter-Company Boxing Competition, scheduled to commence on January 26.

C.S.M. Tarrant has played regularly in the Battalion hockey team and Sgt. Carter in the Rugby team.

"B" COMPANY

The biggest change in the Company during the past three months has undoubtedly been the departure of Major G. O. Porter for service in West Africa. Major Porter had been with us for 2½ years. During this

period the Company had grown to know and respect him and it was with great regret that we heard of his departure. The whole Company takes this opportunity of wishing him all the very best in his new job and hope that, whenever he may return to England, he will look in on us.

The Company is now commanded by Major I. H. Battye, M.B.E., who arrived shortly before Major Porter left. Capt. J. N. Shipster, D.S.O., remains as Second-in-Command. During September and December in particular there have been innumerable changes amongst the men and at times the barrack rooms at Chelsea appeared to be more like a transit camp with all the comings and goings.

At the time of writing these notes the Company is enjoying a two weeks' extensive and vigorous training period at Pirbright Camp and it has been encouraging to see how much real progress has been made in such a short time in training, getting to know each other, and welding into a team. The cobwebs of London have been blown away with surprising rapidity and the men prefer the Pirbright life to that of hum drum garrison duties in London.

Sport in London has always been difficult to organise for a variety of reasons and we wish it were otherwise.

Capt. J. N. Shipster, D.S.O., has represented the Battalion at hockey. C/Sgt. Shrubbs, M.M., has played for the Battalion football XI and Cpl. Crowther and Pte. Isaac at rugby.

"C" COMPANY

The last quarter has been an extremely busy one for the Company. We are now old hands at performing public duties; we have, in fact, taken over, together with "A" Company, the job of actually detailing complete guards for these duties. We hope before long to have a 100 per cent. "C" Company King's Guard.

We have had many changes in personnel and we extend a hearty greeting to Capt. D. B. Rendell, M.B.E., M.C., Lt. G. Sander, Lt. J. C. Bucknall (who is at present on a Platoon Commander's course at Warminster), and Sgt. Hillman. We are sorry to have lost Lt. J. S. C. Flavell, Sgt. Preston and Cpl. Judkins. The mainstays of the Company still are Lt. R. Alford (due for release), C.S.M. Jennings, C/Sgt. Griffiths and L/Cpl. James. C/Sgt. Griffiths and Sgt. Flaherty regularly pay their weekly subscriptions to Littlewoods and still have hopes of a big financial win!

In sport we have been only really successful in boxing. On November 18, Ptes. Woodman and Rutty fought their way to the finals of the London District Novices' Competition. After two very fine fights, Woodman won his bout and Pte. Rutty finished as a very close runner-up. In the Company Individual Championships our two stars were joined as winners by L/Cpl. Pascoe, who also plays in the Battalion soccer team. Soccer and hockey have been governed by heavy guard duties and bad weather; however, in the matches we have played we have acquitted ourselves with credit. Major G. Lerwill, M.C., has played in the Battalion hockey team, while C.S.M. Jennings has represented the Battalion at rugby.

During November we were asked to provide 12 men, capable of riding horses, to participate in the Lord Mayor's Show. The required volunteers were obtained without any difficulty and were issued with colourful cavalry uniforms complete with bandoliers and spurs. As the great day approached their excitement reached boiling point, until they were told that they would not now be required in the mounted role but would partake in set piece tableaux travelling on lorries.

In December we spent a pleasant 16 days at Pirbright, carrying out extensive section and platoon training with a liberal amount of range work and field firing. The Scots Guards at Pirbright were most helpful and hospitable during our stay. We appreciated having officers and N.C.O.s from other Companies attached to us for this training and their help proved invaluable.

Now that Christmas is over we are once more concentrating on boxing and have some 18 boxers training hard for the inter-Company Boxing Competition, due to take place towards the end of January.

The following domestic events are reported:—

BIRTHS: Sgt. Budden's wife gave birth to a son, Roger David, on December 10, 1948.

MARRIAGE: L/Cpl. McHenry was married at Clifton Parish Church on November 27, 1948, to Miss Anne Kain, of Lowestoft.

ENGAGEMENT: Cpl. Walsh became engaged to Miss Kathleen Moran, of Brieffield, on October 23, 1948.

We offer these N.C.O.s our sincere congratulations. Sgt. Budden and Sgt. Gould have been allotted married quarters at Mill Hill and are now comfortably settled-in.

Lt. B. A. M. Pielow has recently attended and successfully passed a Platoon Commander's course at Warminster as well as a London District boxing course at Pirbright. Sgt. Preston was also successful on a recent N.C.O.s course at the School of Infantry, Warminster.

Major G. Lerwill, M.C., who has been with the Company since its formation last July is now officiating Battalion 2 i/c vice Major N. C. Gilbert. In the meantime, Capt. D. B. Rendell, M.B.E., M.C., is officiating O.C. Company.

"D" COMPANY

Since our last notes the Company has returned to dwell at the Depot, a move that was most welcome even though it entails journeys to Chelsea whenever personnel of the Company are on public duties. We are not alone in the Depot as the newly formed "S" Company is also here carrying out its various specialist training.

There have been a good many changes of late. Capt. Clayden has left us to take up an appointment at H.Q., 28th Infantry Brigade and we are very sorry to lose him. He was a tower of strength in all sporting activities and he will be a great loss both to us and the Battalion. We wish him the very best of luck in his new sphere. Lt. Pielow has retired to civilian life, and Lt. Dawe is on a pre-release course. We wish them both all success. Lt. Livermore, M.C., has left to take over the onerous duties of M.T.O., and Sgt. Cooper has been transferred to the Carrier Platoon; they are, also, great losses to the Company.

We welcome Capt. R. St. G. Young, who returns after many years absence in other climates; he has taken over Second-in-Command from Capt. C. N. Clayden, also Capt. W. A. C. Digby (R.F.), 2/Lt. M. B. Devine, Sgt. Avery and Sgt. Carlier, and we hope their stay will be a long and happy one. Capt. Young has taken over officer in charge of Battalion rugby and 2/Lt. Devine is officer in charge of Company boxing.

In the athletic world we still go from strength to strength. We won the inter Company basket ball by beating "A" Company in the final, and we are due to meet either "B" or "H.Q." Company in the final of the inter-Company hockey; and we are still at the top of the Soccer League. In the Battalion inter-Company and Individual Novices' Boxing Competition, Pte. Porritt had a notable victory when he knocked-out his opponent in the final of the middle weight; a great performance.

To sterner matters. In spite of the many outside calls offered us we do manage to get some training done and the Company is shaping well. On February 2, 1949, we proceed to Pirbright to carry out a fortnight's field firing and training, an event to which all ranks are looking forward.

SERGEANTS' MESS

Space does not permit a complete summary of events of the past quarter as things have moved quickly since our arrival in Chelsea, what with the formation of "S" Company, "D" Company moving to Mill Hill and a Company being permanently stationed at Pirbright.

To commence the quarter the Battalion moved to Chelsea and we took over the recently renovated Sergeants' Mess, which although not so comfortable at first, is gradually being improved upon. We held a house-warming social to which officers and ladies were invited, and needless to say a most enjoyable time was had by all.

On December 22 we had a grand Christmas draw, followed by a New Year's Eve dance. Both occasions were celebrated in true "Die-Hards" style and enjoyed by everyone.

We did not hold any social event on either Christmas or Boxing Day as most members were able to avail themselves of the opportunity of spending Christmas at home, which for many was the first time for a number of years. Those members, who through necessity remained behind over Christmas, spared no efforts to make it a very merry one, and although few in number, the festive spirit was definitely there.

Congratulations to Sgt. and Mrs. R. Budden on the birth of a son, also to Sgt. Thorogood on his recent marriage.

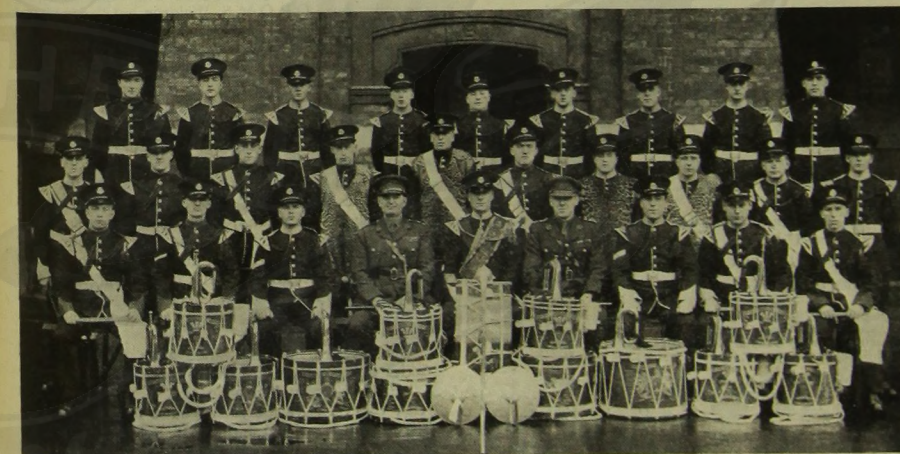
As reported elsewhere the Battalion is employed on public duties and members have been doing their fair share of guards.

We have to welcome several new faces and hope they will be happy with us. We also have had to say farewell to many members who have left us—to them go our best wishes.

In conclusion we are always open to welcome past members and members of Middlesex T.A. Messes. Drop us a line and let us know when you are coming. Dart exponents are particularly welcomed.



CHANGING GUARD AT BUCKINGHAM PALACE



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

CORPORALS' CLUB

Since moving to Chelsea it has been extremely difficult to function as an organised club. We are at present sharing a club room and billiards room with the Corporals of the 1st Battalion King's Shropshire Light Infantry, with whom we are extremely friendly.

On December 16 we attended the "Die-Hards" Christmas dance and looked upon it as our own special function. The dance was a great success and a good cheery time was enjoyed by all.

As is usual these days many of our members are leaving us and new faces appear. We send the usual greetings and goodbyes and hope that their time spent as members of the Club will never be forgotten.

We are naturally looking forward to the time when we are once again masters of our own club rooms and promise ourselves a real first-class "house-warming" party.

Finally we congratulate Major N. G. Gilbert on his promotion but are most sorry that he has been posted away from the Battalion. As he will be in London for some time we hope that he will be able to visit us periodically.

SOCCER

The season so far has been a fairly successful one for the Battalion. Unfortunately we were knocked-out of the Army Cup in the third round, but in the London District Mid-Week League the Battalion is well up the list. On the last results lists published the Battalion were third and were two games in hand.

The results so far are gratifying in the light of the difficulties that have tried the team due to public guard duties and lack of training facilities at Chelsea Barracks. In this connection a vote of thanks is due to R.S.M. R. Overy for his help in arranging the guard duties of the team to prevent clashes with fixture dates.

Recently the team has been reinforced with the arrival in the Battalion of Pte. Hinshlewood, a Fulham Club player and a welcome addition to what has been sometimes a rather weak shooting forward line.

If the team continue to put their back into their play then the Battalion should be able to look forward to a first or second place in the London District League at the end of the season.

The mainstays of the Battalion throughout have been C/Sgt. Shrubbs, M.M., L/Cpl. Pascoe and L/Cpl. Marable.

L/Cpl. Hinshlewood has been selected to play for an Army XI v. United Hospitals, and Pte. Wallis represented London District v. Aldershot District.

Results to date:—

Team	Result	Score
1st Battalion, K.S.L.I.	Won	4-1
1st Battalion The Scots Guards	Won	2-1
Household Cavalry Training Regiment	Won	3-0
Field Wing, R.A.	Drawn	2-2
War Office	Lost	1-4
C.A. and A.A. Wing, R.A.	Won	2-1
War Office Signals Regiment	Won	9-3
1st Battalion The Scots Guards	Drawn	3-3
Field Wing, R.A.	Lost	2-14

Our thanks go to Padre A. E. Gibbons, Capt. D. B. Rendell, M.B.E., M.C., and 2/Lt. G. G. Norton, for running the Battalion soccer during the past few months.

HOCKEY

Owing to guard duties, absence of home grounds (both at Mill Hill and Chelsea) and scratched fixtures, we have not had as much hockey as we could have wished for. However, a few Battalion games have been played and a start has been made in the inter-Company league games.

In the New Year we have a fuller fixture list and we hope to build up a good team to enjoy mid-week games and the occasional week-end fixture.

Results of Battalion matches are:—

November, 1948	Result	Score
1st Battalion, K.S.L.I., at Acton	Lost	2-3
R.A.F. at Hendon	Won	2-1
Army Cup game v. H.Q., Eastern Command, at Hendon	Lost	1-2
December, 1948	Result	Score
R.A.F., Uxbridge	Lost	1-2
R.A.F., Hendon	Won	3-1

Unfortunately we were knocked out of the Army Cup in the first round after a very close game against H.Q. Eastern Command. It we had had the services of Capt. C. N. Clayden (injured), Lt. B. K. Clayden (on a W.O.S.B.) and Lt. K. J. Carter (on a course) perhaps it would have been a different story. As it was the Battalion very nearly won a very even game and H.Q. Eastern Command scored their winning goal a few minutes before the final whistle.

C.S.M. Tarrant, playing in an unaccustomed position as back together with Major Porter, proved invaluable to our defence. C.S.M. Hammond scored our goal from a centre by Lt. Bellers.

Both O.R.Q.M.S. Wright and O.R.Q.M.S. Waldron played in their usual grand style and I feel sure that with our regular forward line we would have scored several times enabling us, perhaps, to go further in the Army Cup.

Against the R.A.F. at Uxbridge the team again was drastically short owing to an Army Cup rugby match on the same day. O.R.Q.M.S. Waldron led the team and Major Lerwill, M.C., played excellently at back. We certainly hope to get our revenge at a return fixture when, perhaps, we shall be lucky enough to have our full team out.

We have defeated the R.A.F. twice on their home ground and they will be after us when we next meet them in March. Both these games were most enjoyable even though the airfield was a trifle bumpy. Capt. C. N. Clayden and Major Porter played well in the first game and Lt. Livemore, M.C., and Cpl. Brown helped us immensely in the second. The team as a whole combined and played forcing games. We met our neighbours the K.S.L.I. in the first match of the season. The hockey was not brilliant and we should have done better than to lose 2-3. We hope to have many return games with the K.S.L.I., who are an excellent all-round team.

Our forward line has varied a lot owing to guard duties and absence of regular members, who are:— Lt. B. K. Clayden (left wing), Lt. K. J. Carter (inside left), Capt. C. M. Clayden (centre-forward), C.S.M. Tarrant (inside right) and Lt. P. Bellers (right wing), L/Cpl. Winsborough (left wing), Cpl. Brown (inside left), Cpl. Aylward, C.S.M. Hammond and C.S.M. McMillan have also played several times.

We have a strong half-back line in O.R.Q.M.S. Waldron, O.R.Q.M.S. Wright and Lt. Livemore, M.C.

Capt. R. J. P. Cummins has again helped us out several times, although protesting that he never has time for hockey these days.

At back we are very sorry to see Major Porter leave us for West Africa as he could always be relied upon for a sound defence. He has been partnered usually by L/Cpl. Simpson and sometimes by Major G. Lerwill, M.C., and Capt. J. N. Shipster, D.S.O.

A goalkeeper has been difficult to find. C.S.M. McMillan tried his luck in the first game; later Drm. Cullen did great things both in and out of goal and finally Pte. Pannell has emerged as our regular goalkeeper.

We shall greatly miss the skill and attack of Capt. C. N. Clayden who is posted away, but we have considerable talent amongst both officers and O.R.s to build up a good team.

It has been difficult to organise a hockey league because of the lack of a decent ground. We have, however, used the parade ground at Chelsea and started an inter-Company competition. So far "H.Q." Company and "D" Company seem to be fairing best but all games have not yet been played off. The great difficulty nowadays is to unearth fresh talent and train young potential hockey players in the Battalion. Owing to the Battalion's role and the Companies being split between Mill Hill, Chelsea and Pirbright, it rests with Companies to use those afternoons that are available for games in order to try and discover talent, but this is not always easy to do. We are now arranging many inter-Company games to give everyone a chance of wielding a stick and learning the game.

BOXING

Always a little slow to get under way, the noble art of self defence has gained popularity and there are many keen boxers in the Battalion.

In the London District Individual Novices' Championship, held at Chelsea Barracks in November, 1948, the Battalion had several entries. Of these Pte. Woodman, of "C" Company, won his weight (bantam-weight) and Pte. Rutty, "C" Company, was runner-up in his weight. Pte. Parsons, "A" Company, was unfortunate in having to retire with an injured thumb when he was boxing very well and looked well on the way to winning the heavy-weight competition.

The Battalion Novices' boxing took place at Chelsea Barracks on December 7, 8 and 9, 1948, "S" Company won the competition and are to be congratulated on having such a fine entry of young novices.

Winners of the individual weights were as follows:—	
Bantam-weight	Pte. Woodman .. "C" Company
Feather-weight	Pte. White .. "S" "
Light-weight	Pte. Noble .. "B" "
Welter-weight	Pte. Penny .. "S" "
Middle-weight	Pte. Porritt .. "D" "
Light Heavy-weight	L/Cpl. Pascoe .. "C" "
Boxer	Pte. Pritchard .. "A" "

The Battalion sent boxers to several civilian boxing meetings and also supported the programme at the R.A.O.C. Depot boxing meeting at Feltham.

At the moment Companies are training their teams in secret for the Battalion Open boxing competition due to take place at Chelsea on January 26, 27 and 28, 1949. On the results of this meeting it is hoped to pick a Battalion boxing team to represent us in our first round of the Army Team boxing championships versus the 1st Battalion The Welsh Guards, held at Chelsea in February, 1949.

We are expecting to put a strong team into the ring for this competition and are also sending boxers to compete in the London District Individual Amateur boxing championships. In this latter competition the winners of each weight will go forward to compete in the Army Individual Open Amateur boxing championships, 1949.

RUGBY

Up to the time of writing the rugby team has been beset with innumerable difficulties. Grounds have been hard to get, and, owing to the Battalion's commitments on public duties in London and training at Pirbright, there has been a severe drain on the team's potentialities. Needless to say a number of our fixtures have had to be cancelled and usually at the last moment. However, it is hoped that the situation will become easier during the latter part of the season, and an all-out effort is being made to get more mid-week fixtures.

We welcome 2/Lt. M. B. M. Devine (Harlequins player) and 2/Lt. R. J. Evans (ex-R.M.A. Sandhurst team) to the Battalion and hope that they will help us pile up the scores. Unfortunately Capt. C. N. Clayden has left us, but has stated that he will make himself available for any of the more important fixtures.

BASKET BALL

Since our move to Chelsea the sport has suffered considerably owing to lack of playing space. The only gymnasium is used by so many units for so many games that it is practically impossible to arrange more than one game a week.

We have, however, played one complete Company League series, "D" Company being the victors. A further series is at present in play, "A" and "C" Companies being the finalists. After the Battalion boxing championships it is hoped to renew some Battalion fixtures when such old hands as C.S.M.s Jennings and Tarrant will once again prove their worth.

MIDDLESEX REGIMENT WAR MEMORIAL HOUSING REGISTER

Although the cottages in respect of our 1939/45 War Memorial will take some time to build, the Committee would like to earmark the occupants before this work is completed, and any of our readers who are eligible and desire to benefit should make application now to the Secretary, Middlesex Regimental Association, Mill Hill Barracks, N.W.7.

It is well to remember that the building estate will be developed in Enfield, Middlesex.

HOME COUNTIES BRIGADE TRAINING BATTALION, SHORNCLIFFE

During the last three months life in the Battalion has been as busy and interesting as ever with a whole series of events following each other in quick succession.

Early in October the Battalion had their annual inspection which was carried out by a team of officers from H.Q. Home Counties District, led by the Deputy Commander. We are pleased to be able to say that a very satisfactory report was received after this inspection, which it is felt reflects great credit on all ranks of the different regiments of the group, who go to make up the permanent cadre of the Battalion.

Following the annual inspection we were visited by Lt.-Gen. Sir Evelyn Barker, G.O.C. Eastern Command, and later by Maj.-Gen. P. G. S. Gregson Ellis, District Commander. Other visitors whom we have been privileged to receive have included Brig. N. I. Whitty, D.S.O., Colonel The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment and Col. M. Browne, M.C., Colonel The Middlesex Regiment.

It is with regret that we have said goodbye to Major R. C. Guy, M.C., our Second-in-Command, and Major S. Rose. Both these officers have been with the Battalion since its formation in March, 1948, and they certainly will be missed. At the same time we now welcome Major A. R. Fyler as our new Second-in-Command.

Guy Fawkes day was celebrated at Shorncliffe in a big way. The proceedings opened with the Band and Drums beating Retreat by floodlighting, followed by a very fine firework display and a huge bonfire. After the display, which was watched by a large crowd of spectators, the officers gave a party in the mess which was attended by over 50 guests and 40 children.

All regiments of the group will be interested to hear that the Battalion was well represented at the Lord Mayor's Show in London. Over 100 men from the Battalion formed part of the marching detachments of the Buffs and Royal Fusiliers, while the Band and Drums of the Queen's Own in full dress were one of the many bands in the procession. A truly memorable day was thoroughly enjoyed by all who took part.

Armistice Sunday was commemorated in the Garrison church at Shorncliffe on November 7 with a big church parade made up of detachments from all units in the garrison. Music in the church was provided by the Band and the Last Post and Reveille were sounded by the Battalion buglers.

The Battalion rugby team have had a very successful season to date. In the Army Cup they defeated 14th Field Regiment, R.A., and later 1st Middlesex before being defeated by the 1st Welsh Guards in the third round by only 9 points to 3 after a gruelling game. In the District Championship the Battalion are due to play D.B.R.E., Chatham, in the final during February.

The Battalion hockey team have also done well having lost only five games out of 26. In the Army Cup the team defeated 1st Royal Sussex and 47th Coast Regiment before being defeated by the R.E.s, Chatham, who are the Army Cup holders, by a goal scored in the last minute of an exciting match.

The Battalion held a number of parties before Christ-

mas, including an enormous children's party attended by over 300 children. In addition dances were held in the Officers' and Sergeants' Messes which were a great success. Finally the majority of the Battalion were able to proceed on leave from after duty on December 23 to December 29, and certainly greatly enjoyed a well-earned rest.

Now that we have been beaten in the Army Cup at rugby and hockey, we are concentrating on our cross-country running team and are hoping to do well in the District Championships on February 2. Several Battalion cross-country runs have been held with fields of over 600 runners.

REGIMENTAL NEWS FROM SHORNCLIFFE

Since the new year considerable reorganisation has taken place here. Instead of splitting up intakes among the four training companies, complete intakes are now being posted to each company in turn.

This change means that the affiliations of training companies to specific Regiments has ended and "C" Company, while continuing to maintain the Royal Sussex and Middlesex Regimental rooms will now receive recruits badged to all the units of the Brigade.

The Regimental *esprit de corps* will continue to be fostered within each Company by running competitions between Regimental platoons or squads.

As part of the new system, the Permanent Cadre will also be redistributed equally by Regiments between all training Companies and early in January Cpls. Kent and Rigby were transferred to "D" Company. Major Clinton Nolda, their Company Commander, has now heard that he will be leaving Shorncliffe soon to take up a staff appointment as D.A.A.G., Singapore.

Until recently all drafts from Shorncliffe went to the 1st Battalion at Chelsea Barracks and Pte. King was one of the last to rejoin the Regiment. The Royal Sussex Regiment at Dover will now receive all our trained men until their establishment is made up.

Sgt. Palmer was detached from the unit after Christmas to assist in running a 3-inch mortar course at the Home Counties District Training Centre at Hythe.

The Christmas draw in the Sergeants' Mess was a great attraction, the C.O., Lt.-Col. Martyn and Major Marsh were among the officers present and were very pleased to see R.S.M. McLoughlin and Sgt. Cleland, the Mess Caterer, having considerable good fortune in winning chicken, bottles of wine and other seasonal fare.

On January 20 we were honoured by a visit from the Colonel of the Regiment who, accompanied by Major Dick Bellers, O.C. Depot, came and spoke to us all in the Regimental Room.

Over 70 members of the Regiment were present including Capt. Wilcockson and C.Q.M.S. Ure from Home Counties District H.Q., also Capt. Bissett and C.Q.M.S. Howard, who are now serving in the A.C.C. and run a Cookery Instruction Centre in Shorncliffe.

Others present on this occasion included R.S.M. McLoughlin, Sgts. Burrell, Bartle, Crittenden, Stacey, Try and Whitfield, Cpls. Gillett, Moran, Norman, Epps, Stanford and Skelding.



This photograph was taken in the Ante-room of the Officers' Mess, Mill Hill, on November 24, 1947, at the handing over of the 2nd Battalion Flag, which was left flying in error in the Stadium, Lille, during the early part of the last war. It was handed back to the Regiment by the Mayor of Lille, Monsieur Gremaux. An article of this ceremony was recorded in the March, 1948, copy of "The Die-Hards Journal".

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

The report of the Battalion's activities in the last issue of THE DIE-HARDS, gave all the news up to the time of the Royal Review by H.M. the King, which took place on October 31, 1948, and the report closed with our regrets at the loss, on posting, of R.S.M. Britton. The Battalion was without an R.S.M. until early in January this year when R.S.M. J. E. Painter joined us from the Middle East. We have bid him welcome and hope his stay with us will be longer than his predecessor's.

The Battalion carried on its normal activities during November and the beginning of December, and then a large part of the headquarters was handed over to the G.P.O. so that they could deal with the rush of Christmas parcels. We were only just able to get straightened out after this invasion in time for the New Year's Eve ball which was very well attended and which, if current rumour is correct, was a great success.

Once again the Battalion's Christmas party was held on Saturday, January 8, when we entertained about 50 children of the Battalion, 12 belonging to members of the Old Comrades' Club, and a good number of their parents. The party was on the normal lines of games followed by a large tea and a film show, after which Father Christmas arrived down the Battalion private

chimney and distributed gifts to all the children present. So far there have been no complaints from those attending this function.

It is most unfortunate that these notes must be written before by far the most important function to be held in 1949. On Friday, January 28, the Battalion is to be honoured by the presence of Lt.-Gen. Sir Brian Horrocks, K.B.E., C.B., D.S.O., M.C., who is so well known and so greatly respected by all members of our Regiment. He is to speak at a meeting to which many important and distinguished guests of the Battalion have been invited, including the Lord Lieutenant of Middlesex (Lord Latham), the High Sheriff and Colonel of the Regiment (Col. Maurice Browne) and many important local employers and residents of the district. Gen. Horrocks will speak on "The Army" and will stress to all those present the urgent need for a strong and well-filled Territorial Army. It is hoped that we shall be able to report a great increase in our numbers as a result of this singular honour.

Hornsey Die-Hards Club

The Club has had a most successful year and many new members have joined. The total paid-up members for the year was 127, an increase of 11 over 1947. Many, of course, have fallen by the wayside and we hope they



THE 21st ANNUAL DINNER OF THE 7th BATTALION THE MIDDLESEX REGIMENT OFFICERS' (B.E.F.) CLUB

will renew their membership in 1949. We would remind them that the Club at Hornsey is put at the Die-Hards Club disposal every Wednesday evening and some cheery times are spent.

A most successful dance was held on December 4, 1948, and the profit considerably helped the Club funds. The Darts Club is going well and the Christmas share-out was a big success.

We wish to thank the Commanding Officer for inviting 12 of the members' children to the Christmas party. This was a very fine show and the children thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

We were able to send to the Secretary of the Regimental Association the sum of £20 for the Memorial Cottage Homes and had an acknowledgement of "a splendid effort" from the Colonel of the Regiment, Col. M. Browne, M.C., D.L., J.P. We had hoped that our Secretary, Lt. J. W. Badham, M.B.E., would have been able to dispose of the 50 stamp cards that he had; it is, however, proving a hard task, but he is still going strong and has since sold a few more.

The collecting boxes have also been well supported and over £10 has been sent up from this source.

We send greetings to all members of other branches of the Die-Hards Club.

HORNSEY DIE-HARD.

7TH BATTALION

The 21st Annual Dinner of the 7th Battalion The Middlesex Regiment Officers' (B.E.F.) Club was held at the Trocadero on Friday, November 12, 1948.

The principal guests were:—The Colonel of the Regiment, Lt.-Gen. Sir Brian Horrocks, Maj.-Gen. G. H. B. Freeth and Col. Amwyl Passingham.

Maj.-Gen. Freeth, during the 1914/18 war, commanded the Infantry Brigade in the 56th Division in which the 1/7th Battalion served from April, 1916, to the Armistice in 1918.

Forty-six members of the Club sat down to dinner and, including guests, the total number dining was 65.

In the regretted absence, through illness, of the President, Col. Sir Edwin King, the chair was taken by Col. J. Kenneth Maitland.

ARMY RESERVES OF OFFICERS

The War Office announce that the lists of the Army Reserves of Officers are now being revised, and that officers and ex-officers of the following classes are invited to join either the Regular Army Reserve of Officers or the Army Officers Emergency Reserve:—

- Regular ex-officers who resigned with less than 10 years' service.
- Released emergency commissioned officers.
- Ex-officers who have relinquished short service commissions since the end of the war, and
- Retired and released officers formerly of the Indian Army whether they held regular or emergency commissions.

Officers with the time to spare should join the T.A., but those who cannot do so are urged to apply to join one of the Reserves. Particulars from all Territorial and Auxiliary Forces Associations, Army Recruiting Offices, Regimental Depots or the War Office, S.W.1. Officers overseas should apply to nearest Command G.H.Q. or to the War Office. Separate arrangements have been made for Released Officers of the Supplementary Reserve and Territorial Army, and also released Women Officers.



OUR FIRST REUNION DINNER

2/7TH BATTALION THE MIDDLESEX REGIMENT (D.C.O.) OLD COMRADES' ASSOCIATION

On October 30, 1948, the Tottenham Diehards Club held its first reunion dinner at the Horse Shoe Hotel, Tottenham Court Road. Some 125 members attended the chief guest being the Colonel of the Regiment. Col. S. Mirams, M.C., T.D., D.L., was in the chair as President of the Club.

The Secretary of the Club, Major R. C. Robotham, M.C., is to be congratulated on organising what proved to be a most successful and enjoyable evening.

After giving the loyal toast to His Majesty and to Fallen Comrades, Col. Mirams welcomed the guests and all members present, in particular the many who had come long distances from Scotland and other parts remote from London. He read a telegram of good wishes from His Majesty and also from Col. Sir Edwin King, who was unable to attend. After giving a brief résumé of the Club's activities since its formation he called upon Col. Browne to propose the toast of "The Battalion."

In proposing this toast Col. Browne spoke of the great interest with which he had followed the activities of

the Battalion during the war and the many tributes paid to him in respect of its achievements. He was particularly pleased to see from the gathering how alive the Battalion remained during its so-called suspended animation. He wished to place on record the fact that this Battalion was the only one to support the Regimental Association by contributing a day's pay from all ranks right throughout the war.

Lt.-Col. J. D. Robbins, O.B.E., replied to this toast, thanking Col. Browne for his kind words. He looked forward to many future similar reunions and reminded those present that, on the last Thursday of each month, many 2/7th Old Comrades foregather at 8 p.m. at the Mother Redcap Hotel opposite Camden Town tube station.

Amongst those present were:—Messrs. A. Abrahams, F. Abbott, A. E. Allchorne, Fred Allen, S. J. Allen, A. Atkinson, Amos, W. J. Battams, L. A. Barnhurst, C. E. Bowen, H. Bignell, G. A. H. Bower, S. Berryman, A. Bridle, F. C. Brock, M. G. Brock, A. W. J. Brown, W. G. Bunton, S. Chapman, R. Caldwell, E. Case, H. A. B. Claypole, L. Chandler, D. S. Cooper, A. de Chimay, C. Cross, A. E. Cutler, H. W. Daniels,

Dunford, J. Dymock, J. C. Edwards, D. Freeman, E. W. C. Flavell, H. J. Flack, A. Fairhead, D. D. Fisher, T. G. Forester, R. Forrester, S. Fletcher, E. C. Gates, L. F. Gerrard, C. Glanville, H. Glyn-Jones, A. I. F. Goldman, C. S. Goulding, E. C. Graham, W. H. Gregory, C. D. Grinham, F. G. Gurney, L. Harris, L. J. Harman, J. Harper, R. Hebden, D. L. Hemming, F. Hunter, J. D. Hiller, C. House, G. Howard, J. E. Howkins, J. I. Hymans, R. Jenkins, J. Johnson, N. E. Jacob, A. T. Jones, R. Jacklin, E. King, H. Kneebone, L. Knight, A. Lake, C. W. Lay, R. E. Lines, L. Lander, F. Latner, W. Lee, R. Leeson, C. A. Mardell, W. F. May, J. S. McCarrick, P. J. McNally, C. H. McLean, R. A. Merrell, S. Mirams, C. Moore, L. J. Mortimore, H. Maynard, F. A. Newman, H. Nicholson, N. K. Ottagiri, Powell, R. Pearce, N. Page, W. Pearce, M. I. Prevett, R. I. Proctor, A. F. Proops, F. Phillips, F. E. Phillips, S. C. Pulsford, E. A. Paterson, E. F. J. Rich, B. Ridgway, J. D. Robbins, N. D. Robinson, R. F. W. Roostan, R. E. Robotham, L. Scott, P. Sheehan, F. Slater, R. W. J. Smith, J. W. Snelson, G. E. Spain, F. H. Stacey, K. J. Stebbings, A. Tripp, L. Taylor, W. H. A. Trew, K. J. M. Wadman, E. H. E. Wallis, R. A. Ward, A. E. W. Willett, T. H. Wood.

THE STORY OF THE 8TH BATTALION, NORTH-WEST EUROPE, 1944-45

By CAPT. R. F. CUTLER

The 8th Battalion, forming the Machine Gun Battalion of the 43rd (Wessex) Division, was part of the combined British and Canadian Army Group assembled for the invasion of Europe. "D" Day on June 6, 1944, came as the culmination of the long and arduous training which all ranks had undergone in preparation for this great undertaking. The 43rd Division was a Territorial Division with a high reputation, which it more than justified during the ensuing campaign. It was a "build-up" division, earmarked in the first place for the battles which were bound to follow after the bridgehead in Normandy had been secured and the Germans had brought up their reserves in an attempt to drive the Allies back into the sea. The Territorial tradition of the 8th ensured that it always felt "at home" with the West Country infantry Territorial battalions which constituted the 43rd Division and with which it was to fight. This made for co-operation, and when the war ended there existed between the "Middies" and their Wessex comrades a very genuine respect. This feeling originated during training, and was consolidated during the bitter fighting in which both shared.

Except for the initial landings and for brief periods out of the line, the Division fought through the whole of the campaign and took part in practically every major battle. The 8th made its contribution to each of them; and its record was well in keeping with the Diehard tradition. It began to land on the beaches near Courseulles on June 23. Four days later it went into action.

For the next month the Battalion was involved without a break in the fighting immediately west of Caen. This centred on Hill 112, for which the Germans fought with the utmost bitterness because of its dominating

position. Hill 112 acted like a magnet to what seemed an endless succession of Panzer formations thrown into the battle. A series of attacks cleared the approaches to it across the River Odon. The battle for the Hill itself went on until the Division was relieved at the end of July. By this time the slopes were shared with the enemy, neither side actually holding the summit. The Middlesex machine-gun and heavy mortar platoons were constantly in action, either in support of our own attacks or in helping to beat off the heavy German counter-attacks. Such counter-attacks were frequent, and were usually led by tanks. It was in one of them, on June 27—the first day the Battalion saw action—that the 8th suffered its first casualties. No. 8 Platoon, "B" Company, commanded by Lt. Dearburgh, was attacked by three Tiger Tanks. A gallant attempt to reply with the Platoon's Piat was unsuccessful. Eventually a neighbouring infantry six-pounder picked off all three.

This period proved a severe test for the troops, most of whom had never been in action before. But their behaviour was exemplary. It was typified by the example of Lt. Ronald Waiting, a young officer who was in command of one of the "D" Company's mortar platoons. On July 11 he was directing the fire of his platoon from an O.P. in a forward position, when he saw a German attack developing, led as usual by tanks. Sending back his wireless operator and driver, he remained until the position was overrun. He himself was killed but not before he had brought down heavy fire on the approaching enemy. In one of his last messages he was able to report a direct hit on a German tank.

Men who served in the 8th Battalion are not likely to forget Hill 112, where a memorial to their Division now stands, or the days and nights they spent on its slopes. Many of their number are commemorated by the memorial, and the first of the many decorations awarded to members of the Battalion were won here. In this connection special mention should be made of Cpl. William Harewell, of "A" Company, who was awarded the Military Medal for great bravery and who was later killed.

After a few days' rest at the end of July, the Battalion went into action again. This time they were further west in the British line. Fighting now became more mobile, the break-out from Normandy being imminent. Bois de Homme and Mont Pincon are the most memorable names for the 8th during this period, which ended with the crossing of the River Noireau on August 15. On this occasion the Battalion was in action as a whole. This was not always the case. The tasks of an M.G. Battalion are varied. They range from giving covering fire to a battalion (or less) of infantry to supporting a full-scale attack on a divisional basis. The first of these alternatives can well be within the means of a single platoon. On the Noireau the whole Battalion fired in support of 214 Infantry Brigade's attack across the river. The enemy was making here one of his last ditch efforts to stem the Allied onrush, for the Allies were about to drive him out of Normandy and, indeed, out of the whole of France. For the Middlesex it was a most successful engagement. In its official history of the campaign, the 7th Battalion The Somerset Light



Infantry (one of the battalions taking part) pays warm tribute to the support it was given and refers to the hundreds of enemy dead later found in the Middlesex's target areas. Occasions such as these cemented the close ties between the 8th and the other battalions in the Division.

Meanwhile the 43rd Division had passed into 30 Corps, and so under the command of Lt.-Gen. Sir Brian Horrocks. It was a source of considerable pride to the Battalion that it was under the command of this distinguished member of the Regiment for the rest of the campaign, and that it took part in the series of decisive battles with which the name of this celebrated Corps is associated.

Events now moved much more quickly. In rapid succession the Battalion took part in two of the most famous battles of the campaign—the crossing of the Seine at Vernon, and Arnhem. The first is outstanding because it was at the pretty riverside town of Vernon that the crossing was secured which enabled the British armoured divisions to make their historic dash to

Brussels and Antwerp, thereby liberating the whole of Belgium. The Germans, following the Allied break-out from Normandy, were hastily trying to extricate as many of their forces as they could from the disaster which had overtaken them. All the bridges across the Seine had, of course, been destroyed, and a stiff rearguard action was fought to prevent a crossing. Under cover of darkness the infantry crossed the river in assault boats. Middlesex machine-guns and mortars, once the element of surprise was over, assisted them with supporting fire. The machine-gunners had taken up their positions in houses on the river-bank, and they and the mortar platoons gave very valuable assistance against the considerable enemy forces on the other side. The German answering fire was very heavy, and among the casualties was Sgt. Allen, the Medical Sergeant, who was among those killed when the R.A.P. was hit. Later the platoons crossed the river to assist in clearing the way for the armour to go through. As it did so, the battle receded, and the Battalion enjoyed its first long rest since it had landed.

Dunford, J. Dymock, J. C. Edwards, D. Freeman, E. W. C. Flavell, H. J. Flack, A. Fairhead, D. D. Fisher, T. G. Forester, R. Forrester, S. Fletcher, E. C. Gates, L. F. Gerrard, C. Glanville, H. Glyn-Jones, A. I. F. Goldman, C. S. Goulding, E. C. Graham, W. H. Gregory, C. D. Grinham, F. G. Gurney, L. Harris, L. J. Harman, J. Harper, R. Hebden, D. L. Hemming, F. Hunter, J. D. Hiller, C. House, G. Howard, J. E. Howkins, J. I. Hymans, R. Jenkins, J. Johnson, N. E. Jacob, A. T. Jones, R. Jacklin, E. King, H. Kneebone, L. Knight, A. Lake, C. W. Lay, R. E. Lines, L. Lander, F. Latner, W. Lee, R. Leeson, C. A. Mardell, W. F. May, J. S. McCarrick, P. J. McNally, C. H. McLean, R. A. Merrell, S. Mirams, C. Moore, L. J. Mortimore, H. Maynard, F. A. Newman, H. Nicholson, N. K. Ottagiri, Powell, R. Pearce, N. Page, W. Pearce, M. I. Prevett, R. I. Proctor, A. F. Proops, F. Phillips, F. E. Phillips, S. C. Pulsford, E. A. Paterson, E. F. J. Rich, B. Ridgway, J. D. Robbins, N. D. Robinson, R. F. W. Roostan, R. E. Robotham, L. Scott, P. Sheehan, F. Slater, R. W. J. Smith, J. W. Snelson, G. E. Spain, F. H. Stacey, K. J. Stebbings, A. Tripp, L. Taylor, W. H. A. Trew, K. J. M. Wadman, E. H. E. Wallis, R. A. Ward, A. E. W. Willett, T. H. Wood.

THE STORY OF THE 8TH BATTALION, NORTH-WEST EUROPE, 1944-45

By CAPT. R. F. CUTLER

The 8th Battalion, forming the Machine Gun Battalion of the 43rd (Wessex) Division, was part of the combined British and Canadian Army Group assembled for the invasion of Europe. "D" Day on June 6, 1944, came as the culmination of the long and arduous training which all ranks had undergone in preparation for this great undertaking. The 43rd Division was a Territorial Division with a high reputation, which it more than justified during the ensuing campaign. It was a "build-up" division, earmarked in the first place for the battles which were bound to follow after the bridgehead in Normandy had been secured and the Germans had brought up their reserves in an attempt to drive the Allies back into the sea. The Territorial tradition of the 8th ensured that it always felt "at home" with the West Country infantry Territorial battalions which constituted the 43rd Division and with which it was to fight. This made for co-operation, and when the war ended there existed between the "Middies" and their Wessex comrades a very genuine respect. This feeling originated during training, and was consolidated during the bitter fighting in which both shared.

Except for the initial landings and for brief periods out of the line, the Division fought through the whole of the campaign and took part in practically every major battle. The 8th made its contribution to each of them; and its record was well in keeping with the Diehard tradition. It began to land on the beaches near Courseulles on June 23. Four days later it went into action.

For the next month the Battalion was involved without a break in the fighting immediately west of Caen. This centred on Hill 112, for which the Germans fought with the utmost bitterness because of its dominating

position. Hill 112 acted like a magnet to what seemed an endless succession of Panzer formations thrown into the battle. A series of attacks cleared the approaches to it across the River Odon. The battle for the Hill itself went on until the Division was relieved at the end of July. By this time the slopes were shared with the enemy, neither side actually holding the summit. The Middlesex machine-gun and heavy mortar platoons were constantly in action, either in support of our own attacks or in helping to beat off the heavy German counter-attacks. Such counter-attacks were frequent, and were usually led by tanks. It was in one of them, on June 27—the first day the Battalion saw action—that the 8th suffered its first casualties. No. 8 Platoon, "B" Company, commanded by Lt. Dearburgh, was attacked by three Tiger Tanks. A gallant attempt to reply with the Platoon's Piat was unsuccessful. Eventually a neighbouring infantry six-pounder picked off all three.

This period proved a severe test for the troops, most of whom had never been in action before. But their behaviour was exemplary. It was typified by the example of Lt. Ronald Waiting, a young officer who was in command of one of the "D" Company's mortar platoons. On July 11 he was directing the fire of his platoon from an O.P. in a forward position, when he saw a German attack developing, led as usual by tanks. Sending back his wireless operator and driver, he remained until the position was overrun. He himself was killed but not before he had brought down heavy fire on the approaching enemy. In one of his last messages he was able to report a direct hit on a German tank.

Men who served in the 8th Battalion are not likely to forget Hill 112, where a memorial to their Division now stands, or the days and nights they spent on its slopes. Many of their number are commemorated by the memorial, and the first of the many decorations awarded to members of the Battalion were won here. In this connection special mention should be made of Cpl. William Harewell, of "A" Company, who was awarded the Military Medal for great bravery and who was later killed.

After a few days' rest at the end of July, the Battalion went into action again. This time they were further west in the British line. Fighting now became more mobile, the break-out from Normandy being imminent. Bois de Homme and Mont Pincon are the most memorable names for the 8th during this period, which ended with the crossing of the River Noireau on August 15. On this occasion the Battalion was in action as a whole. This was not always the case. The tasks of an M.G. Battalion are varied. They range from giving covering fire to a battalion (or less) of infantry to supporting a full-scale attack on a divisional basis. The first of these alternatives can well be within the means of a single platoon. On the Noireau the whole Battalion fired in support of 214 Infantry Brigade's attack across the river. The enemy was making here one of his last ditch efforts to stem the Allied onrush, for the Allies were about to drive him out of Normandy and, indeed, out of the whole of France. For the Middlesex it was a most successful engagement. In its official history of the campaign, the 7th Battalion The Somerset Light



Infantry (one of the battalions taking part) pays warm tribute to the support it was given and refers to the hundreds of enemy dead later found in the Middlesex's target areas. Occasions such as these cemented the close ties between the 8th and the other battalions in the Division.

Meanwhile the 43rd Division had passed into 30 Corps, and so under the command of Lt.-Gen. Sir Brian Horrocks. It was a source of considerable pride to the Battalion that it was under the command of this distinguished member of the Regiment for the rest of the campaign, and that it took part in the series of decisive battles with which the name of this celebrated Corps is associated.

Events now moved much more quickly. In rapid succession the Battalion took part in two of the most famous battles of the campaign—the crossing of the Seine at Vernon, and Arnhem. The first is outstanding because it was at the pretty riverside town of Vernon that the crossing was secured which enabled the British armoured divisions to make their historic dash to

Brussels and Antwerp, thereby liberating the whole of Belgium. The Germans, following the Allied break-out from Normandy, were hastily trying to extricate as many of their forces as they could from the disaster which had overtaken them. All the bridges across the Seine had, of course, been destroyed, and a stiff rearguard action was fought to prevent a crossing. Under cover of darkness the infantry crossed the river in assault boats. Middlesex machine-guns and mortars, once the element of surprise was over, assisted them with supporting fire. The machine-gunners had taken up their positions in houses on the river-bank, and they and the mortar platoons gave very valuable assistance against the considerable enemy forces on the other side. The German answering fire was very heavy, and among the casualties was Sgt. Allen, the Medical Sergeant, who was among those killed when the R.A.P. was hit. Later the platoons crossed the river to assist in clearing the way for the armour to go through. As it did so, the battle receded, and the Battalion enjoyed its first long rest since it had landed.

The first part of the campaign was now over. The 8th had taken part in some of the stiffest, though not always the most spectacular, fighting. Casualties had been heavy, and many valued members of the Battalion had been killed or wounded. There were many new faces, but some familiar ones had returned. It was now a battle-trained Battalion, proving that the long years of training in England had been on the right lines.

In the next battle—Arnhem—it played a very different part. The name of Arnhem is, and always will be, associated with the 1st British Airborne Division. No other formation can lay claim to the glory they won there. But the Guards Armoured Division and 43rd Division both shared in that epic story. In that order they dashed northwards from the Belgian-Dutch border along a single road, which the Germans often cut behind them, in an effort to link up with the Airborne and secure the vital Rhine bridge. It is a country of dykes and wide streams. A succession of bridges had to be captured or Bailey bridges built. The last crossing before Arnhem was at Nijmegen. Here, after bitter fighting and great heroism, the Guards captured both bridges intact. The eight miles of country between the two arms of the Rhine at Nijmegen and Arnhem were quite unsuitable for tanks, and the 43rd Division therefore passed through the Guards in a final effort to reach the hard-pressed Airborne. By this time, however, the problem was to relieve the Airborne rather than to secure the Arnhem objective.

The 8th took part here in fighting as fierce as any they had known, even on Hill 112. It was not only that the Airborne had to be reached, but that the determined efforts made by the Germans to recapture Nijmegen had also to be repelled. The long supply line behind, along the single road, was precarious, and ammunition was getting short. But the south bank of the Arnhem branch of the Rhine was eventually reached. On the night of September 25/26, under cover of a screen of 43rd Division infantry put across the river, 2,800 of the Airborne were brought back. The Battalion's machine-guns and mortars continued to fire throughout the night. One Company dashed backwards and forwards along the bank in their carriers, firing from different positions across the river. This helped to confuse the enemy.

The Battalion remained on the "Island"—as the area between the two streams was called—for another ten days. By the end of it the enemy attacks had been broken, and the Germans had given up their desperate attempts to drive the British back beyond Nijmegen. The "Island" had now joined Hill 112 in the 8th's memory as the scene of the fiercest fighting. In particular, men serving in "A" Company's machine-gun platoons and "D" Company's mortar platoons on the right flank will always remember the seemingly incessant enemy shelling and mortaring and the constant counter-attacks which they helped to repel from the very exposed positions. It is one of the fortunes (or misfortunes) of an M.G. Battalion that its platoons always seem to be fully deployed. There was thus little opportunity of one platoon relieving another. It was a case of sticking it out, and this was done.

From mid-October, 1944, to early February, 1945,

the Battalion's history was perhaps less adventurous. But it was not less arduous. The winter was severe and life was hard indeed. A long period was first spent in the line south-east of Nijmegen, and then, for most of December and January, the Battalion found itself on the extreme right of the British line on the Dutch-German frontier. A short rest, which included Christmas in Belgium, separated two offensives in this southern sector. The first of these, directed against Geilenkirchen and its neighbouring villages, was an eventful one for the 8th. Supporting fire from mortars and machine-guns, assisted by other weapons, took on a new form when the Battalion invented and fired the first "Pepperpot." Chosen targets were subjected to a veritable hail of bombs and bullets in accordance with a carefully worked-out programme. Our attacking infantry were thus safeguarded from interference from the enemy, in the areas so fired on, at the crucial moments of their attack. This form of concentrated supporting fire was fully developed and eventually adopted throughout the 2nd Army.

During this same offensive, the 8th became the first Middlesex battalion to fight on German soil. They could have wished that it had been a little less muddy. This early part of the winter was remarkable for its wetness. Weapon-pits frequently filled up with water as soon as they were dug. The mud was so heavy that some of the more forward troops could hardly be reached. The specially light carrier, known as the Weasel, was the only means of getting supplies to them. The route to one such position was under constant enemy fire, and L/Cpl. Bacon, of "H.Q." Company, was awarded the Military Medal for the courage with which he plied his carrier backwards and forwards along this route, contemptuous of all danger.

Another name to be mentioned here is that of Lt. Eric Taylor. Originally M.T.O., he had taken over at his own request an M.G. platoon in Normandy, although not previously a machine-gunner. From then on he led his platoon with exceptional skill and courage, particularly on the "Island" at the time of Arnhem. He was killed near Geilenkirchen on November 24 by enemy fire and was one of many lost during these three months whom their comrades will always mourn.

The second offensive in this area took place after Christmas in the most intense cold. The campaign was now approaching its climax, and the Battalion next moved north back to the Nijmegen area to take part in the Reichswald battle for Cleves and Goch and the west bank of the Rhine. Here the 8th joined forces with 1/7th Battalion in a "Pepperpot" in support of the opening attack on February 8. The battle went on for a month until the Germans had been driven across the Rhine, with Cleves Forest, Goch and Xanten as the principal names in the Battalion's record.

A fortnight later the 8th joined forces with the 2nd Battalion for an even greater occasion—none other than the crossing of the Rhine itself. The first infantry crossed the river in their assault boats on the night of March 23, and the two battalions, sharing the same command post, took part in the terrific fire programme in their support from prepared positions on the river bank. It was an impressive moment when all the

weapons, massed in a small area, opened fire. The enemy's shelling in reply was heavy, and more than annoying, but in comparison it was insignificant.

Very soon the 8th itself was across the river, taking part in the series of attacks which swiftly beat back the broken German armies. There followed a period of rapid movement, with the Battalion spread out as it had never been before and its platoons always in action on some part or other of the huge, broken front. The Germans opposite were parachute troops, still fighting hard. Even at this late stage casualties were not light. But it was very near the end and by the end of April Bremen had been reached and captured. After taking part in this battle the 8th moved northwards. It was engaged on the drive on Bremerhaven when surrender came on May 5.

It was a moment of triumphant rejoicing for the whole Battalion. Yet it was impossible not to think of the 61 officers and other ranks who had been killed or of the many among the 235 wounded in the Battalion whose injuries would always bear witness to the extent of their brave share in victory. All members of the 8th Battalion had played their part in maintaining the Regiment's reputation for conduct in war; but it is to these that the chief honour must be given.

Men of all ranks had distinguished themselves for outstanding bravery, for devotion to duty, or for selfless and unremitting participation in the work of the Battalion as a whole. One officer of the Battalion was awarded the D.S.O., eight the M.C., and one the Croix de Guerre; one Warrant Officer was awarded the Croix de Guerre and seven N.C.O.s and men won the M.M. Eighteen members of the Battalion were mentioned in despatches, while twenty others received awards which, though less striking in themselves, were honourably earned and equally deserved.

9TH MIDDLESEX (595 L.A.A. REGIMENT, R.A.)

The Kingsbury L.A.A. Regiment are a very happy and proud Regiment. Over 85 per cent. of their number attended camp during the second and third weeks of September for the full 15 days and the remaining 15 per cent. returned, full of regrets, after the first eight days.

Without a doubt the first annual camp of 595 L.A.A. Regiment, R.A. (Middlesex) T.A., was voted very successful, and everyone has many pleasant memories to recall during the coming months. The reason for this fine camp was the grand spirit shown by every member everywhere; on the firing point, where a plane sometimes failed to appear on time; the sports field which was a little short of grass; the messes or the canteen where cigarettes were as difficult to buy as in Civvy Street; the liberty truck when gunners were kept waiting for a few moments by those of higher rank—one always heard the same good old crack coming out. It seemed but yesterday that many packed their kits to go back to Civvy Street and rejoined the new Territorial Army.

Yes, the Terriers back in camp were the same boys of '39-'45, with the spirit of the old Terriers, ready to work hard and play hard.

The gunnery teams were ably knocked into shape by the Regimental gunnery instructors, Capt. Allan Buckland-Nicks and Capt. Hugh Price, the former being an old 9th officer and both of whom were gunnery instructors during the war. The gunners' great moment came when they knocked their first sleeve and also an O.Q. 3 out of the sky early in their ack ack shooting. These trophies have been duly brought back to a last resting place in respective messes at their town H.Q., where they rest, suitably autographed and inscribed to record the successful shooting of the first annual camp.

All the excitement was not confined to the gunnery—10 keen Terriers were enlightened as to the mysteries of the I.C. engine by B.S.M. Copcutt and Sgt. Davies, an old 9th Battalion sergeant, now back again for another "do." Col. Beach paid a surprise visit to this class one afternoon while they were having a lecture on traffic accident reports, and made a remark that he wished the public could be as well instructed as the Territorials in this procedure.

The highlights for these lads came on the twelfth day when they went out with tractors and motor cycles for cross-country driving and hill climbing. All passed the test with flying colours, including the Commanding Officer, Lt.-Col. W. W. Gray, M.B.E., T.D., who dared the hazard of the hill climb on the motor-cycle, much to the enjoyment of the M.T. Class, who laid odds as to whether he would fall off coming up. (I am able to state on good authority he would have been quite willing to take odds himself that he would come off).

Camps are never complete without the visits of some Generals, and Stiffkey Camp, being a camp for Territorials, it naturally had to be well looked after, and those who inspected the Regiment during training included the G.O.C.-in-C., A.A. Command, Lt.-Gen. Sir G. Ivor Thomas, K.B.E., C.B., D.S.O., M.C., the D.G.M.T., War Office, Maj.-Gen. C. B. Callender, D.S.O., M.C., and Brig. C. G. Bicknell, C.B.E., M.C., Command 82, A.A. Brigade, R.A. (T.A.).

The second week in camp we had a very welcome visitor in the Honorary Colonel, Col. G. Beach, C.B., O.B.E., T.D., D.L., J.P., now recovered from his long illness. He stayed at Brancaster and came over several times. He also brought with him on one occasion Col. B. L. Sutcliffe and Major H. K. Hardcastle, both of whom have long associations with the 9th Battalion The Middlesex Regiment, T.A.

Regimental sports day on the first Wednesday showed that two years with the Canadian Army had ingrained baseball into our system, and some lusty hitting by the Officers and Sergeants overwhelmed the other ranks. (Well, let's not mention the score).

Most evenings of the week happy loads of chaps went off either to explore or renew the friendships of war days in the East Coast towns of Cromer, Sheringham, Yarmouth and Hunstanton, the hunting area of the Regiment under its former title of 126 L.A.A. Regiment, R.A. (T.A.) (Middlesex), and as the second week drew to a close the usual farewell parties that had been talked about for days before took place. O.R.s had farewells with the friends in Weybourne, officers met the sergeants in Sheringham, officers' and sergeants' messes had the

usual parties, and then Saturday morning the train party, road party and rear party, all trekking home to civvy jobs on Sunday or Monday, and we knew that all over the country there were hundreds more like us, back to be one of the boys who continue to give spare time for Britain.

The last echo of the last man leaving Kingsbury T.A. H.Q., "See you on training, Wednesday, at 7.30 p.m."

This Regiment wants still more chaps with L.A.A. experience who will give some of their spare time for Britain, and whose wives and girl friends will come and join us at socials and dances on Friday and Saturday evenings.

Sunday, October 3, 1948

On Sunday, October 3, 1948, the Band of 461 (Middlesex) A.A. Regiment, Army Cadet Force, sounded the General Salute and after the singing of the National Anthem, the Under-Secretary of State for War, Mr. Michael Stewart, accompanied by Mrs. Stewart, officially opened a motor cycle gymkhana organised by 595 L.A.A. Regiment, R.A. (Middlesex) T.A., commanded by Lt.-Col. H. W. W. Gray, M.B.E., T.D., assisted by the Territorial Army Motor Cycling Club (London).

Mr. Stewart gave a brief history of the Middlesex Regiment, 595 being the old 9th Battalion, and asked for expert motor cyclist and tradesmen recruits from the 4,000-5,000 fairly local spectators who lined the arena.

The official opening was preceded by a fancy dress parade on the parade ground at the T.A. H.Q., and then a procession of the carnival riders—two L.A.A. equipments and R.E.M.E. workshops equipment led by the Drummers of 461 (Middlesex) A.A. Regiment Cadets.

The Cadets had previously played and counter-marched for twenty minutes in the forecourt, and attracted quite a large crowd.

Entries for the gymkhana came from the Regiment and the Surrey-Sussex Motor Cycle Combine, and a varied programme of events provided the large crowd with thrills and laughs. The competitors in the first heat of an hilarious obstacle race started the programme off, as, bedecked in fancy dress, they encountered and overcame obstacles which had a fairly strong resemblance to what was known during training days as "assault courses." The Terriers had many successes including first place and second place in musical chairs, first place in tent pegging and first place in the obstacle race, only to be disqualified because W.O. II Copcutt failed to retain on his head a size two in bonnets.

The biggest thrill came when R. Dancer, of the T.A. Motor Cycling Club, jumped his 350 c.c. Triumph through a wall of flame.

A motor cycle exhibit erected in a marquee, consisting of sectionalised engines and parts from the Regiment's M.T. Training School, and in which the centre-piece was three Matchless machines, drew the spectators in between events, and a steady stream of enquiries regarding Territorial service.

The gunners could not let the motor cycles have all the limelight, and during the afternoon a gun detachment under Sgt. O'Keefe, gave a convincing demonstra-

tion of Bofors gun drill with a broadcast commentary by Capt. Hill.

"C" Battery Cadets (the Little Gunners), who are always ready to assist the Big Gunners, used their walkie-talkie sets with great success by assisting in passing official messages and results from all corners of the arena.

No. 6 A.A. Workshop Battalion, R.E.M.E., who had a very good show of workshop lorries on view, also looked after a sideshow, the bullet-proof Mercedes Benz car, once the property of the late unlamented Reichsmarshal Goering, and collected approximately £17 for Victory Club funds by charging 6d. to view.

The whole afternoon was the highlight of Kingsbury Terriers' efforts during the last 18 months, and was a great success.

Saturday, October 9, 1948

An impressive band performance was given first at the Queensbury Roundabout and later at T.A. H.Q., 595 L.A.A. Regiment, R.A. (Middlesex) T.A., Drill Hall, Honeyopt Lane, Kingsbury, N.W.9, by the Regimental Band, 1st Battalion The Middlesex Regiment (D.C.O.).

During the playing two L.A.A. guns of 595 L.A.A. Regiment, R.A. (Middlesex) T.A., arrived and went into action on the two flanks of the Band and gave a very good demonstration of Bofors drill.

An impressive exhibit at this performance mounted on a three-ton lorry was the O.Q. 3 wireless controlled target for L.A.A. gunners, as used at all practice camps, and which the 595 L.A.A. Regiment knocked out of the sky with two shots.

Those who have inspected the T.A. exhibit at Messrs. Burbons, Ltd., in Kingsbury Road, will have seen the fragments of the O.Q. 3 and the empty cartridge cases (now highly polished) from the projectile which hit the O.Q. 3 out of the sky. The window display has been quite an attraction during the last week, and the photos of 595 in camp certainly look as if things were going well.

Recruiting for the local unit is steadily improving. More experienced L.A.A. gunners and tradesmen are still wanted.

2/10TH BATTALION BRANCH MIDDLESEX REGIMENT O.C.A.

Service of Remembrance

On Sunday, November 7, 1948, the old comrades of the above branch mustered at Chiswick Parish Church for their annual Service of Remembrance. It was a good gathering as, with friends, they numbered over 100. Through the kind co-operation of the Vicar, the Rev. A. H. Rees, the service and the hymns were arranged to suit and please the congregation of old soldiers. Wreaths were offered to the padre who placed them on the Battalion memorials. The wreath bearers were Mr. Len Tomes for the 2/10th, Major F. Overbury for the 1/10th—some 40 of whose old comrades were present—and Major A. Hart for the 3/10th.

During the Act of Remembrance, after the placing of the wreaths, a trumpeter in the church porch blew the Last Post and Reveille, the notes sounding sweetly and softly inside the church.

After the service a brief reunion took place in the Church Hall, kindly lent by the Vicar. Once again refreshments were provided by those very good friends of the 2/10th, Mrs. P. Cumming, Mrs. W. A. Lovegrove and Mr. C. Rush, and grateful thanks are extended to them for their kindness and generosity.

A collection was made and handed to the Vicar to go towards the expenses of the Church Hall.

All the arrangements went very well and thanks for that are due to 2/10th Branch Hon. Secretary, Mr. Archie Cumming, of 21 Hounslow Road, Feltham, Middlesex, to whom any changes of address should be notified.

2/10th Battalion 1914-1918 Memorial in Chiswick Church

The Vicar of Chiswick has drawn attention to the 2/10th War Memorial and its need for restoration after nearly 30 years. Although the cost will be between £30 and £40, the Branch Committee were confident that all members would wish the work to be done and accordingly asked the padre to go ahead.

B. K. C.

11TH PARACHUTE BATTALION (MIDDLESEX) T.A.

As we write these notes we learn with regret that our Battalion Second-in-Command, Major Neil MacP. Boys, is to leave us. We are sorry that his tour of duty with us, seconded from the Regular Army, has been so short, and our changes of permanent staff are so frequent. Neil Boys has certainly left his impression on the Battalion, since he has taken a keen interest in the welfare and sports of the unit, and on many a Saturday afternoon he and our C.O., Lt.-Col. S. Tyrell, are to be seen encouraging our football team from the touch line. In his place we welcome Major C. P. B. Moggridge, M.C., and hope his tour of duty will be a little longer than that of his predecessor.

On October 31, three officers and 21 other ranks formed part of the 16th Airborne Division Contingent at the King's Review of the Territorial Army. The Division formed up at Eastern Command H.Q., Hounslow, and thence they travelled by special train to Hyde Park Corner and marched to the forming up place in the Park. Though the weather was overcast it remained dry, and the King, during his inspection, passed along the front of the Division in his Land Rover car. After the inspection all contingents marched past the saluting base at which the main crowd had collected, and where the King had been joined by the Queen, Queen Mary and other members of the Royal family.

Prior to Christmas, parties were held at all Drill Halls. "C" Company held a dinner for members of the Company and their ladies. Major Bill Corby, with his wife, presided and the Adj., Capt. Peter Bates, was the guest from Battalion H.Q. A cup, presented by Major Firman for the T.A. soldier completing the

maximum training during the year, was won by his son, Sgt. E. Firman, who served in the 2/8th Middlesex prior to joining the Parachute Regiment in the early part of the war. "B" Company held a very successful children's party at their Drill Hall and "D" Company had only just moved into their new H.Q. at Church Road, Edmonton. "H.Q." Company held a smoking concert on December 23, which carried on until the early hours of the morning. They are most fortunate in having such an accomplished pianist in Cpl. Rea.

Individual training has been carried out during the winter months, but we still require more specialist instructors and look forward to some assistance from the Regular Army when possible.

"C" Company are to be congratulated on winning the Divisional inter-Company Miniature Rifle Competition. The Battalion came third in the inter-Battalion Competition.

The Mortar Platoon, under their Pl. Comdr. Lt. R. Sweet, and Pl. Sgt. Cadman, carried out field firing on the week-end of January 14, and all who took part are to be congratulated, since it showed that we have formed an efficient cadre of mortar trained personnel. On January 16 the 1. and Signal Sections proceeded by road, under Lt. G. Otway, the I.O., and Sgt. Manders, the I.S. Sergeant, to the Redhill District where a useful map and compass exercise was carried out controlled by wireless.

Our new Divisional Commander, Maj.-Gen. G. W. Lathbury, D.S.O., M.B.E., visited Companies on January 6 and 24. After watching training he addressed all ranks and said how pleased he was to be with us, and stressed the importance of enthusiasm in the Territorial Army.

NEWS FROM ALLIED DOMINION UNITS 102nd (Wentworth) Field Battery, Royal Canadian Artillery, Dundas, Ontario

This news comes from Major G. E. Ward, Commanding the Battery.

Very many thanks are due to you and Major Clark for writing to us and sending THE DIE-HARDS so faithfully for so many years without even a word of acknowledgement. Nothing can really justify this laxity on our part, but I might say by way of explanation that since the end of the war we have had a great deal of work to do with hardly any officers to do it.

I regret that during the war the records of the Battery became so badly jumbled that I have not been able to discover any previous correspondence with you, and am, therefore, unable to tell how well posted you are on our news. However, you apparently do know that the old 77th Wentworth Regiment was converted to the 102nd (Wentworth) Field Battery, R.C.A., in 1936, under the command of Lt.-Col. (then Major) A. B. Smith. Col. Smith eventually mobilized the Battery for active service in 1940 and in 1941 took it to England as part of the 5th L.A.A. Regiment in the 5th Canadian Armoured Division. The Battery served in England on A.D.G.B., and went to Italy with the Division in November, 1943, under the command of Major J. E.

Builder, one of the original Dundas officers. After participating in the Italian campaign with the 8th Army, the Battery, with the rest of the 1st Canadian Corps, was transferred to North-West Europe to join the rest of the Canadian Army. The Battery served with distinction and gallantry in all theatres and it had a glorious homecoming to its own Armoury in Dundas in January, 1946. At home in Dundas the reserve or, in a sense, the Depot Battery, acted as a recruiting centre to supply and train reinforcements for overseas.

My immediate predecessor in the reserve unit was Major A. E. R. Turner, M.C., who had been prevailed upon in 1943 to take command of the Reserve Battery here in Dundas to keep it functioning, as most of the younger men were overseas. He was a very happy choice as he had served with great distinction in France in the first world war with the Wentworth Regiment, and he has always shown a keen interest in the Dundas Unit.

I joined the Battery in October, 1945, and took command a year later. I blush when I tell you that at that time there were only two officers besides myself. Our N.C.O. strength had been sorely depleted by a housecleaning of overage personnel that had been ordered. As our Government has not yet seen fit to legislate for any form of compulsory military training, you will understand that the problem of filling even the officer and N.C.O. establishment has been a trying one especially as most of the returned men have been very busy for the past three years establishing incomes, homes and families.

We have, however, started our present training period on a somewhat better footing with eight officers out of an establishment of ten and a full complement of W.O.s and sergeants. For the past three summers we have sent small contingents of officers and N.C.O.s to training camp at Petawawa, Ontario, and the reports in every case have been just as good or better than those of other units attending.

You may possibly be interested in a word about myself. I graduated from R.M.C., Kingston, Ontario, in 1939, and upon graduation took a commission in the 11th (Hamilton) Field Battery, R.C.A., which was mobilized in 1940. I proceeded to England as Adjutant of the 12th Field Regiment, R.C.A., in 1941. In 1943 I was given command of the 61st Battery in the 8th Field Regiment, R.C.A., which went to Italy as the self-propelled field regiment in the 5th Canadian Armoured Division. In September, 1944, I was wounded in the fighting near Rimini and was hospitalised back to the U.K. where I remained until my return to Canada in June, 1945. Shortly after this I received my discharge from the active Army and joined the 102nd Battery.

I realise that the above is only a very sketchy outline of news for you and that it does not begin to compare with the very complete account of your activities contained in THE DIE-HARDS. Because of this I would ask you to be good enough to write to me again requesting specific information about news items which I have doubtless overlooked telling you in this letter.

Before closing I want to take this opportunity to extend to you and all ranks a cordial invitation to visit our mess should you ever be near this part of Canada.

CORRESPONDENCE TO THE EDITOR THE EDITOR.

DEAR SIR,

On behalf of the "Die-Hards" ex-2nd Battalion, now serving with the "Bufs" in Hongkong, I would like to wish all serving and ex-members of the Regiment a prosperous new year.

It was with much regret that we had to leave the "Midds" when they left Palestine for home. Most of us have settled down in the "Bufs," but should the "Midds" return to Hongkong or the Far East, I can see a good number of the lads asking for a transfer back to the old mob.

I assure Col. Brown that we will not forget we are still "Die-Hards." He is right, no order can ever remove that dignity from us.

I remain, sir,

Your obedient servant,

G. E. SMITH, Private.

"A" Company 1st Battalion,

The "Bufs" Regiment,

Stanley Fort,

c/o G.P.O., Hongkong. December 1, 1948.

LT. R. F. FENDICK, R.C.E.M.E.

Lt. R. F. Fendick, of the R.C.E.M.E., who served with the 2nd Battalion in North-West Europe, sends greetings to former members of the 2nd Battalion, "A" Company in particular. He writes:—"It would be greatly appreciated if you could publish my address as I have lost touch with many of my former comrades and would like to hear from them."

His address is now 3460 St. Anne d'Arc, Apartment 5, Montreal, Canada.

SSAFA MARRIED FAMILIES CLUB

14-16 Nevern Square, Earl's Court, London, S.W.5
Telephone: Frobisher 5774 and 3347

The Club, which has 38 bedrooms (single and double) is for the use of members of H.M. Forces below commissioned rank either serving or ex-Service, and their wives and children. To ensure that use of the Club is confined to members of the above category, visitors are asked to show proof of their eligibility.

Charges are:	Per person
Bed and breakfast, including bath (children s. d.	
five years and under, half price) ..	5 0
Midday dinner, 12.30—1.0 p.m. (Sundays only) ..	2 3
Supper, 6.30—7.0 p.m. (not Sundays) ..	2 0

A large comfortable lounge is available for the use of residents and their guests. A nursery is available for children. Rooms may be reserved in advance on payment of a deposit of 10s. od. Maximum period of stay, two weeks. Applications to be made to the Manageress at the above address. Guests must bring their own soap and towels. A laundry room is available, but a nominal charge is made for the use of electric iron. Under Ministry of Food regulations, ration books or cards must be surrendered for a visit of five days or over. Supper must be ordered before midday.

No animals are allowed. The Club closes at 11.30 p.m.

SOME REMINISCENCES OF TROOPSHIPS

By L/CPL. LANGRISH

The following account of my travels whilst serving on troopships during the period January, 1945 until January, 1947, might be of interest to some of the old members of the Regiment.

On January 1, 1945, after being discharged from hospital I was ordered to report to the Embarkation Officer at Tilbury. I arrived there about 10 o'clock at night and was taken to the office where I was told to go with a driver and get some sleep in one of the transit camp huts. The next morning at 0400 hours I was woken, and had breakfast, after which the Embarkation Officer, a Capt. Craig, took me and introduced me to the O.C. Troops on my first troopship, who was Capt. Wiegner, of the Royal Regiment of Artillery. This ship was manned by naval ratings. It was on the Tilbury to Ostend service. That morning and afternoon before we were due to sail I was introduced to the mess deck, where I was to spend some very happy times with the ratings. That evening, at 1600 hours, we started taking aboard some troops who were going over that night. Some of these were going back from leave and some were going over for the first time. At 1730 hours we slipped away from the quayside at Tilbury and started on the trip across the Channel. When we reached the mouth of the Thames at Southend we dropped anchor for a short while until our escort destroyer, the "La Combantant," was ready and the boom defence was opened for us to proceed. The destroyer was the first to clear the boom followed by us about 300 yards behind. The trip across was uneventful. We docked at Ostend about 1000 hours the following morning and all troops were disembarked. In two hours' time we were hard at work taking on troops going back to England. Some of these were coming home for compassionate reasons, leave and courses, so they were very anxious to start. After clearing Ostend all passengers had to go to emergency boat stations. After boat drill the escort destroyer, which had been waiting for us outside the harbour, took its position and we started on our way. On the way home I had my first U-boat scare, the destroyer picked up something on its Asdic and went off to investigate. On picking up speed she put up the black pennant indicating that she was going to attack and all naval gunners on the troopship were ordered to close up on their guns. We were very lucky that time to be able to see them drop some depth charges which shook the troopship and broke some of the crockery on board, but there was no sign of what they attacked. The ship was in the meantime going at full speed, which was somewhere around 26 knots and vibrating heavily. After about a quarter of an hour the destroyer came up alongside us and sent a message to say that whatever was detected had not been heard since, so they left off and carried on home with everyone's blessings. We passed through the boom defence at Southend that night at about 2300 hours and had to wait at Southend until daylight when we carried on up to Tilbury. This trip was done every two days but we were never certain of getting the same excitement as on my first trip.

After doing this trip some two months we were

going across one stormy night when we picked up an S.O.S. from a Liberty boat that had been torpedoed just outside Ostend and was sinking fast. We put on speed and pushed on to reach them as soon as possible. We reached their location about 8 o'clock in the morning and found that all the crew had been taken off by another boat before us but some of the ship was still showing above the water and the gunners had orders to shell it and sink it before it became dark.

We carried on this trip until we were ordered to go around the coast to Falmouth, in Cornwall, where we were to pick up some Commandos and take them to an unknown destination. We set out on this run about three hours later and many extraordinary rumours started going round the ship. Some said we were going to raid the German-held islands off the coast of Holland, others that we were going to the Channel Islands. After we had cleared the land and were on our way the Captain had a few words to say. He informed everyone that we were going to carry out a task that some of the crew had been anxious to do ever since the Germans had invaded certain islands. But he did not name them as we still had to visit Falmouth and pick up our Commandos.

We reached Falmouth about 3 o'clock the following afternoon after a very nice quiet trip, and began to get stores aboard and water ship, which took until 4 o'clock the next morning. About 5 o'clock we started getting our Commandos on board, and what a job that was, as we had to drop all our lifeboats and take on in their place landing craft, and we had to do all this in the dark as they wanted to leave before it got light. We managed somehow to get away on time and then settled down to the task of getting these special service troops to their destination.

After going out of sight of land we proceeded up the coast and when we had been at sea about four hours we were all told that that night we should be anchored in Plymouth Sound and that shore leave would be granted to members of the crew and ship's staff but we had to be back on board by 8 a.m. the following morning. We had the irksome task of waiting now for orders to leave to come through, and everyone was getting quite excited as such a lot of ships like us were all coming in and dropping anchor and then just awaiting orders. The next afternoon the orders came through and we started on our way to the unknown destination. It was a very impressive sight to see all the escort boats and even the battleships that were going with us steaming out of Plymouth Sound to the accompaniment of cheering from Plymouth Hoe. That night we passed the Eddystone lighthouse, set a course for the open sea, and everyone was told that we were going to liberate the Channel Islands. The members of the crew who had relations on these islands were so overcome by this news that they were quite stunned. We were still out of sight of land the next morning and the Captain passed an order that Divine Service would be held on deck that night. If anyone wanted to attend they could. At 10 o'clock that night everyone was told that from then on they would have to wear steel hats wherever they went, as we would be in enemy waters and we did not know what sort of reception we would get.

The following morning we were woken at 4 o'clock and told that breakfast would be served in half-an-hour's time. By this time we were in sight of the Channel Islands and although the distance was too great for us to see much of the lay of the land I think most of our hearts stopped beating for a little while as we wondered what lay ahead. At 5 o'clock the ship's bell sounded the general alarm and everyone had to go to their action stations until we had got our passengers away and could get out of the danger zone again. By this time we were in quite close to the coast of Guernsey and we were still steaming along making for our landfall which would be St. Peter's Port in the island of Jersey. At 7 o'clock we were steaming into position to get our first troops away and everyone's nerves were beginning to tighten with the strain of wondering whether the Germans on the islands would make a fight of it or not. At a quarter past seven we saw a sight that cheered us up wonderfully. We heard a dull drone in the air and looking up into the morning sky we saw line after line of Spitfires and Hurricanes coming into the attack and following them lines of bombers if they were required.

Now the time had come to get our first troops away. Everyone was beginning to feel a lot better as we realised that we would not be let down if we had to make a fight for it. The first wave of troops got away to time and they were watched by everyone on board that had a position to see them. Those that were unable to see were kept in touch of events by the loud-hailer system, which was giving a running commentary of the operation. At about 8 o'clock the first troops landed in St. Peter's Port and they reported that the harbour was deserted and that the other troops could come in. The following wave was by this time in position in the landing craft, and as a result could leave immediately, which they did. Then the job of ferrying the troops to the land began in earnest, and what an impressive sight this was, as they all seemed to be coming from different directions. But there were a few boats coming out from the harbour by this time and our fears were allayed as they reported that the people were quietly waiting for our troops and had been watching us come in all that morning. By 10 o'clock we had all our troops ashore, and then we began to see some of the inhabitants of the only English country that had been invaded by the Germans, and to talk to them as they came out in boats to speak to us. They told us that the Germans had placed a demarcation line across the island and that there were no Germans in the port area except a few that were on sentry duty, and these were being relieved by our troops as they got ashore.

That afternoon we were all invited to the celebrations ashore. Although some of the crew were unlucky and had to stop on board, quite a few got the opportunity to go ashore for a few hours. For those that had to stop on board there was swimming in the crystal clear water. I had the pleasure of being able to go ashore that afternoon with the O.C. Troops. While we were on the island we found certain Merchant Navy ratings who had been taken prisoners by the Germans during the raid on the Normandy beachhead about six months before.

The following afternoon we had to load up with

German prisoners of war and transport them to England. This was done and we left the island that night and docked in Southampton the following day. We had the pleasure of going back to St. Peter's Port for a day after about a week of liberation, and the difference in the appearance of the islanders was most remarkable. Whereas before they had looked tired and emaciated they now looked perfectly normal and fit, with a cheerful and brimming confidence in the future. After bringing home another load of prisoners to Southampton we set sail for Tilbury with the thought that we had done a job worth doing. Two days later we were sailing up the River Thames on our way to port and leave. That day will always remain in my mind for as we came up the river we were almost deafened by the tug boats' welcome blasts and the cheers of the people waiting to greet us. The following night I said good-bye to the ship that had been my home for so long, and which I was now so sorry to leave.

THE MODERN PENTATHLON PENTATHLON RIDING

The organisation for, and the preparation of the riding event in the Modern Pentathlon Competition included in the recent Olympic Games, was an Army responsibility. Before going into more detail on the subject a word is necessary about the competition as a whole.

In ancient Greece the pentathlon was considered the primary competition in the games, and the winner was acclaimed as the champion of the games. Today this ruling still holds good and although many people did not at the time realise it, 34-year-old Capt. W. O. C. Grut, of the Swedish Army, was the champion athlete of the XIV Olympiad.

The competition itself consists of five separate events, held on five consecutive days. Each competitor has to compete in the cross-country run, swim, fence with every other competitor, shoot with the revolver and ride cross country. It is said that the idea is to test a soldier who might be required to deliver a message on the battlefield. Before the message is delivered safely the soldier, who sets out on horse-back, loses his mount and has to continue on foot. Later in the journey he is forced to swim a river and fight with both his sword and pistol. No mean achievement for a Company runner! And indeed, to be able to do this the soldier must be not only exceptionally fit, but a first-class athlete. It requires a lot of hard training, in fact Capt. Grut began to train for the pentathlon in 1936—12 years before he was able to not only win the event, but to set up an Olympic record in doing so.

About 50 entrants were expected to compete in the Modern Pentathlon of the XIV Olympiad, and Great Britain had to provide them with suitable mounts for the riding event. With this in view, about 50 horses were shipped from Germany in late 1947 to Lord Burghley's estate in England. These horses were later to be joined by others from various sources in England, to bring the total to about 60. But the original 50 formed the nucleus of what was to become one of the more unique formations in the British Army, namely

"H" Squadron, 3rd Dragoon Guards (Carabiniers). "H" Squadron was commanded by a Carabinier Major and had a Carabinier 2 i/c. The remainder of the officers were volunteers from a variety of Regiments. Represented in this manner were units of the Polish Army, Lancers, Hussars, Tank Corps, Parachute Regiment and last, but not least, the infantry. In this last heading were officers from the Lancashire Fusiliers, the Royal Berks and the Middlesex Regiment (D.C.O.). Similarly the grooms were also drawn from many different regiments.

In March, 1948, the horses were sent to Aldershot by special train which, in common with all Army trains, arrived in the very early hours of a rather cold morning. Once off-loaded the horses were led in hand to their new stables in Buller Barracks. The stables in the Buller lines began to appear as they might have done in 1910!

To describe in any sort of detail the ensuing training of the horses would take up a complete copy of THE DIE-HARDS journal. So only a very brief description can be attempted. A detailed training programme had been compiled long before the arrival of the equine members of "H" Squadron. The object of the programme was to train the horses up to the standard of first class hunters in four months. It was assumed that all the horses were of the same standard to begin with, namely, "green." Firstly they had to be schooled to respond to the simpler "aids" and later to the more difficult ones. Then each horse had to be schooled to jump all manner of obstacles. As "H" Squadron later built the actual course, this rather resembled digging one's own grave.

The first week the training consisted of merely leading in hand. And not until the second week were any of the horses actually "backed." Then began the long and often tedious business of "balancing" the horse and schooling him to the simple "aids." A lot of use was made in this stage of woods. The trees provided excellent markers to negotiate, and although this was at the time very tedious, it paid ample dividends later on in the training. Next training was advanced and included trotting, trotting-out, reining-back, turning on the forehand and cantering. To school a "green" horse to canter from the halt, striking off on the correct diagonal, is easy enough when one has plenty of time at one's disposal. But by now the games were not far off, time was getting short and the horses hadn't begun to jump yet.

And when all the horses were, for want of a better term, can be called "a balanced ride," what was perhaps, the most interesting part of the training began. And it began by riding the horse over a pole lying on the ground and continued in easy stages until the animal was able to jump nineteen obstacles, spaced throughout a three-and-a-half mile course. From the beginning of this stage of the training, all the obstacles had been solid ones, this ensured that the horse did not try to go "through" the jumps later on, with, of course, the exception of the bush obstacles. On the actual course the jumps were all "natural" ones and no two were exactly alike. There were bush fences, open ditches, double-exers, a stile, "in and out," brick wall

and pile of logs. Some of these were on the flat, others uphill and others downhill. In fact, a fairly comprehensive course, which had to be done in ten minutes, or at about 500 metres per minute. It can be seen that to manage this without serious mishap to mount and rider, the horse had to be fairly "useful." That the training programme was a success was proved by the fact that, with one or two exceptions, all the horses completed the course without fault in the trials. And on the day of the actual event they were all successful.

During all this time "H" Squadron had, of course, its fair share of both falls and frivolity. One little grey mare decided rather suddenly that a bath was in order and without more ado proceeded to roll in a large and very muddy pool, much to the annoyance of her rider and the tumultuous applause of the assembled multitude, namely, the remainder of the riders. Another mare, "Carmen" by name, slipped when taking off over a ditch and rail. She landed with her forelegs one side and her hindlegs the other side of the pole, her rider landing well clear of the jump and some 30 yards in front of it. So precarious was "Carmen's" predicament that the whole obstacle had to be dismantled before she could be freed, none the worse for her experience. Yet another mare decided that jumping over open ditches was just not on and when confronted with one invariably climbed into it and climbed out again the other side. There was no time to cure her of this distinctly annoying habit, so she did not go to her post on the day of the event. She was, however, allowed to watch things in the shape of a course official!

Perhaps the most satisfying part of the work was being able to watch the horses performing for the various competitors in the games. And undoubtedly the worst part of it was being present at the public auction when they were all sold after the games. As far as the British Army is concerned, it can only hope that Finland asks for volunteers to train their Pentathlon horses in readiness for XV Olympiad, which will be held in Helsinki in 1952.

B. A. M. PIELOW

THE MIDDLESEX PIPERS

In THE DIE-HARDS journal for December, 1948, an enquiry was made in respect of the history of a Middlesex Regimental badge with a Gaelic inscription. This enquiry produced some very interesting results.

Capt. R. Maurice-Hill, a member of the Society for Army Historical Research, wrote to me giving a very interesting account of the Pipers of our 16th Battalion (Public Schools) during the war of 1914-18. He also referred me to the book "The Pipes of War," by Br.-Col. Sir Bruce Seton and Pipe Major John Grant.

I then asked Brig.-Gen. J. Hamilton-Hall, C.M.G., D.S.O., who commanded the 16th (Public Schools) Battalion from September, 1914, to February 21, 1917, if he could help me in tracing the badge. Brig.-Gen. Hall then kindly sent a history of the 16th Battalion, a labour of love by ex-Orderly Room C/Sgt. H. W. Wallis Grain. Readers who have these treasured copies of our various regimental histories will appreciate the kindness of Brig.-Gen. Hall in giving this copy.

Later I hope to publish extracts from these books. In this issue of THE DIE-HARDS I will give briefly extracts of my own from the books and letters received.

No member of the 16th Battalion can remember seeing this badge in use by the Pipers and as our records tell us that a number of the pipers were recruited from Glasgow, these old soldiers, wishing to continue the comradeships and *esprit de corps* of the war years may have formed their Old Comrades Club with their own badge complete with Gaelic inscription. Brig.-Gen. Hall thinks the inscription might be meant for "King & Country" instead of "King's Country" as shown.

The 16th Battalion, Duke of Cambridge's Own (Middlesex Regiment) (Public Schools), were the first English Regiment to have a pipe band, the men being recruited for the purpose from Glasgow. Only two purely English Regiments had Pipe Bands, viz., 16th Battalion Middlesex Regiment and 23rd Battalion The Royal Fusiliers (1st Sportsman's Battalion). Although a reference is made to a Sgt. Kirkland, who transferred as a piper of our 11th Battalion, I can find no trace, to date, of the 11th Battalion having a Pipe Band.

A Middlesex Regiment with Pipers! That's strange, surely! This remark and question were heard on numerous occasions. H.M. King George V and H.R.H. the Prince of Wales were heard to ask this question when they saw the Pipers in France.

Major McKay, through his study of Regimental History, had discovered that prior to the raising of the 77th Foot in 1787, there had been two other units with this number. In each case the Regiments were Highlanders.

The 77th Foot first appeared in the Roll of the British Army in 1756 as the Montgomerie Highlanders. After distinguished service against the French and Indians in America, they were disbanded in 1763.

The next 77th Foot was raised in 1775 and were known as the Atholl Highlanders. This Regiment was raised for service in America against the North American Colonies. In 1783, when stationed at Portsmouth, it was placed under orders for service in the East Indies, but this being at variance with the terms of their enlistment, the men objected to the proceeding and this led to the disbandment of the corps the same year.

Major McKay, himself a Scotsman, asked and was granted permission from the War Office to recruit a band of Pipers and thus preserve the Highland origin and association of the first two Regiments numbered 77.

The Pipers were equipped at the expense of the original officers of the Battalion and out of compliment to Major McKay were dressed in McKay Tartan kilts. Later they wore the Murray tartan, which is the clan tartan of the Atholl Highlanders.

When the Battalion was disbanded, the Pipers were transferred to the 2nd Battalion. The Pipers fought valiantly at the Battle of Rosiers, March 27, 1918, when Brig.-Gen. Grogan, V.C., with two Battalions and a number of details, including the Pipe Band, Drums, Tailors, Shoemakers and Storemen of the 2nd Battalion, made a most successful counter-attack and retook Harbonniers and Vauvillers.

The Pipers headed the 2nd Battalion on the official entry into Mons in November, 1918, while a few weeks

earlier they had played the Battalion into Douai when the town was recaptured. The 2nd Battalion was then under the command of Lt.-Col. E. E. F. Baker, D.S.O., M.C.

An amusing anecdote is on record of an incident on one occasion after the late Dmr. W. R. Stoney had been put in kilts when the original Pipers and Drummers were depleted. He looked a genuine Scotsman although a Londoner. When the 2nd Battalion were billeted near the Scots Fusiliers, one pukka Scot said to Stoney, "What part o' Scotland are ye fra, Jock?" to which Stoney, with true Cockney pride replied, "Gaw blimey—Woolwich." No record exists as to the subsequent conversation.

R. W. J. S.

NOTE

The Curator would appreciate any information Old Comrades may be able to give of our 16th Battalion Pipe Band. Also if any know of Pipers in our 11th Battalion. Any reminiscences will be welcome. Members of any of our Battalions are asked to send in any recollections of their service. Letters to be addressed to Inglis Barracks, Mill Hill, London, N.W.7.

HISTORY OF WORLD WAR I. 1914-18

Military Operations: France and Belgium, 1917 Volume II

Volume II of the "History of the War on the Western Front in 1917" is now ready. It is based on official documents and prepared by the direction of the Committee of Imperial Defence. Like the earlier volumes of the series, the book has been compiled by Brig.-Gen. Sir James Edmonds and his assistants.

Volume I of 1917, containing the Battles of Arras, April-May, 1917, was published in 1940. The late appearance of Volume II, after the publication of the final volumes of 1918, is due, first, to the reduction of staff, when 1917 and 1918 being in course of publication, it was decided to push on with and finish 1918 first as containing more instructive matter for the Army; and, secondly, to the difficulties involved in printing and binding under post-war conditions.

A brief note of the contents is given below.

Price, including 29 maps and sketches and 8 photographs issued with the volume is 30s.

The volume contains the account of the two Flanders offensives in 1917, the very successful Battle of Messines, with its tremendous artillery bombardment and its record explosion of land mines, and the long drawn-out "Battles of Ypres 1917" (July 31-November 10), with eight distinct phases, terminating in the First and Second Battles of Passchendaele, a name often mistakenly applied to the whole series.

The very cogent reasons, not revealed at the time, for the much criticised persistence of Field-Marshal Haig in continuing the fighting after abominable conditions of weather and ground prevailed in mid-October are fully set forth. Shortly, they were the demands of the Admiralty on account of the rising successes of the U-boats based on the Flanders ports, and the demands of Gen. Petain, on account of the French mutinies, for the Germans to be kept away from his front.