



The Die-Hards

NEWSLETTER

No. 15

AUGUST 1971

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Deansbrook Road, Edgware, Middlesex.

ALBUHERA DAY

This year arrangements were made to hold the annual Service of Remembrance in the Regimental Memorial Chapel in St. Paul's Cathedral on Saturday, May 15.

The service was very well attended indeed by approximately 350 Old Comrades, their relations and friends, and, by special permission of the Dean and Chapter, the sermon was preached by the Rev. P. L. Pearce Gould, OBE, MA, who gave us an excellent address.

Amongst the large congregation we were particularly glad to welcome three of our In Pensioners from the Royal Hospital, Chelsea, namely C/Sgt. C. King, and In-Pensioners J. Green and F. W. Worton.

At 11 a.m. on Albuhera Day itself a beautiful wreath in regimental colours was laid by our Association President, Col. A. S. J. de S. Clayton, at the foot of the Memorial in Inglis Barracks. Afterwards, up to about 50 Old Comrades and their relations assembled quite unofficially at the Drill Hall at Edgware to celebrate the great day.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Date	Event
Friday, October 1	2/7th Battalion (1939-45) Dinner at Victory (Services) Club, Seymour Street, London W2.
Friday, October 8	Autumn Golf Meeting at North Hants Golf Club, Fleet.
Saturday, November 13	Ceremony at the Field of Remembrance, Westminster Abbey.
Sunday, November 14	Remembrance Day Service at Inglis Barracks, Mill Hill, followed by a Reunion at T & AVR Centre, Edgware.

Notes on visit to Hong Kong

The following notes made by Col. A. S. J. de S. Clayton on his visit to Hong Kong as representative of the Queen's Regiment at the presentation of a Guidon to the Royal Hong Kong Regiment (The Volunteers) will be of considerable interest to many of our readers.

Left Brize Norton by VC10 at 10.00 hrs. on May 4. Delayed at Singapore 24 hrs. on May 6 due to hydraulic troubles. Arrived Hong Kong 18.30 (local time). Met by Honorary Colonel (Col. H. A. de Barros Botelho, OBE, ED) and my "ADC" (Capt. S. M. Churn, ED). The C.O. (Lt.-Col. A. T. P. Millen) would have met me if I had arrived on May 5 but was holding a parade rehearsal on May 6.

On May 7, I met the CO and we had a lengthy discussion on matters of mutual interest. I lunched in the Volunteer Officers Mess afterwards and was delighted to see many familiar smiling faces. In the evening I attended the dress rehearsal of the Guidon Parade and was amazed at the ambitious parade that was planned—in fact, it went off well.

On May 8 a Hong Kong Royal Auxiliary Air Force helicopter was placed at my complete disposal and I made a most interesting and detailed tour for over 1½ hours. The pilot kindly made two chukkas round (over forbidden territory) the Middlesex Regimental badge on the side of the hill overlooking San Wai Camp. I had a photographer on board and he took two photographs—if they are failures, as they may be, due to an overcast sky, I have been assured of another sortie. The badge is kept up by the Royal Hong Kong Regiment but unfortunately the annual wash and brush up is not scheduled for a few more weeks and therefore it was not as clear-cut as I would have liked for photographic purposes. (*Editor's note.*—Unfortunately the photographs were not clear enough for reproduction.)

My No. 3 uniform, tailored by Royal Hong Kong Regiment, was delivered some hours before the parade and, to my amazement, fitted extremely well. I was also loaned a sword.

The Regiment was formed up in line—Nos. 1

and 4 Guards on foot with Nos. 2 and 3 dismounted in front of their Ferrets and Land-Rovers—in the Government Stadium under floodlights. The Old Colours were marched off in slow time with the floodlights dimming until eventually they disappeared into inky blackness to Auld Lang Syne—most impressive. The Guidon was consecrated by the R.C. Bishop in the presence of the Anglican Bishop and some five other clerics including the Buddhist potentate in his saffron robes. It was then trooped and took up its position in front of a Ferret and two Land-Rovers in the centre of the parade. The parade then marched past in column with the Guidon party and Nos. 2 and 3 Guards in vehicles. The timing was perfect and performance excellent. The parade then marched past in line—an extraordinarily difficult manoeuvre with men on foot and vehicles intermingled—yet it was a brilliant success. Having formed up again in line the whole parade advanced in Review Order—men on foot and vehicles together—and I do not understand how they all halted completely together which they did. The next attempt to dice with fate was a “*Feu de joie*” in which Nos. 2 and 3 Guards, still mounted in vehicles, took part—again the timing was incredible. It was an extremely ambitious parade which went off perfectly and, in the words of Commander British Forces later, “The CO of any Regular Regiment would have been overjoyed if his Regiment had achieved a similar precision”. There were some 5,000 spectators and I sat between Mrs. Derek Horsford, wife of the Commander Land Forces, and Lady Lindsay Ride, wife of the former Commandant of the Royal Hong Kong Defence Force and ex-Vice-Chancellor of the Hong Kong University whom I already knew.

The parade was followed by a reception for some 500 at the Hong Kong Club where I met HE The Governor, Commander British Forces, and Lady Ward and very many other lesser potentates. Everyone was clearly thrilled with the parade and most impressed—so was I, as, being a cautious type, this sort of parade would never have entered my head even in a nightmare. It was also clear that the alliance means a great deal to the Regiment in particular and the Colony in general. The Governor expressed his great pleasure at the presence of myself as representative of the Colonel of the Regiment and of the Queen's Regiment as a whole. The reception was such a success that the Governor overstayed by some 40 minutes and would have liked to have stayed on to the bitter end. I was able to leave for my downy couch around 02:30 hrs. but I gather many went happily on until 04:30 hrs.

On May 9 I visited several old friends and spent the day recovering from the excesses of the previous evening.

On May 10, I, with Botelho and Anthony Millen and his wife, lunched with the Governor—a very pleasant informal luncheon party of six—the sixth being HE's ADC, Capt. Peter Harvey, Scots Guards, whom I already knew and who organised the “priority” for my return to UK.

On May 11 I was the guest for luncheon of some 40 past and serving officers, all of whom I knew when I was CO at the Volunteer Officers Mess. Tremendous fun, and I was delighted to hear that three of the past officers had been gathered back into

the fold as a result of this luncheon. That evening I attended an excellent Chow with Botelho, who incidentally had put me up in his flat for my stay. Anthony Millen met his successor in the evening at Kai Tak.

On May 12 I had another session at RHQ Happy Valley with Anthony Millen and I was very pleased to meet his successor, John Chapman. I realised that Millen was extremely pushed, particularly since Chapman had just arrived, and I persuaded him that there was no need for him to feel that he should see me off from Kai Tak that afternoon. Therefore I was escorted to Kai Tak by “Bots” Botelho and Churn and seen safely into the VC10. The plane took off at 18:00 hrs., May 12 (local time) and touched down at Brize Norton at 09:27 hrs., May 13 (BST) with stops at Gan and Cyprus. At the former I was pleased to discover that scotch was only 4½p per tot and this enabled me to get some 2½ hrs. sleep!

Summing up, I feel that the visit was very worth while, that our alliance is as strong as ever, that Royal Hong Kong Regiment will always look after and fete any Queensman who may arrive in Hong Kong, and that Royal Hong Kong Regiment are anxious to do all they can to foster this alliance. In return, I feel we should do our utmost to entertain members of Royal Hong Kong Regiment when they are in UK and, whenever possible, arrange short attachments to one of our Battalions. With this aim in view, I have invited Anthony Millen and his Regt. Second-in-Command, Major Gordon Hampton, as guests to the next Middlesex Officers' Club Dinner on July 16, 1971. Millen leaves for UK by ship on May 13 and is due towards the end of June. In September he is to take up his next appointment as GSO 1 (Ops and Plans) HQ N. Ireland.

THE MICHAEL TROTOBAS SOCIETY

Information has been received that the 26th anniversary of the death of Michael Trotobas, who went to France with the 2nd Battalion in 1939, and later in the war became one of the finest leaders in the French resistance movement, will be observed during the weekend of November 20 and 21 next, and an official invitation is expected shortly from the Mayor of Goudecourt, where the 2nd Battalion was billeted during the early stages of the last war, inviting Michael's friends over for that week-end.

No firm details are yet known, but the President of the Society is hoping that up to 40 will be able to be present. Anyone who intends to do so is asked to get in touch with the Secretary of the Regimental Association, who will be making arrangements for the outward and return journeys.

It is understood that week-end accommodation for all male members of the Middlesex party will be provided free under arrangements to be made by the French police, but this cannot be extended to the ladies for whom other arrangements will be made.

Further details will be notified as soon as they are available.

REGIMENTAL DERBY SWEEPSTAKE, 1971

The Derby sweepstake organised by the Regimental Association in aid of the Charitable Fund was again well supported this year.

The receipts from the sale of tickets and the distribution of prize money were as follows:

RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURE	
	£
Received from sale of tickets and donations	167 54
Less	
Printing and stationery	21 50
Postage	2 51
Registration fee	1 25
	25 26
Available for distribution	£142 28
	£
Association Charitable Fund (50% of net proceeds)	71 14
Prize money:	
1st Prize (20% of net proceeds)	28 45
2nd Prize (15%)	21 34
3rd Prize (10%)	14 23
Other horses drawn (5% of net proceeds—19 at 34p and 2 at 33p)	7 12
	71 14
Total	£142 28

The following were the winners of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd prizes:

- 1st—Miss L. Taylor, Lloyds Bank Ltd., 127 The Broadway, Mill Hill, NW7.
2nd—Mill Hill Branch, Die-Hards Club.
3rd—Mr. C. J. Cox, 8 South Hill Road, Hemel Hempstead, Herts.

THE MIDDLESEX REGIMENT GOLFING SOCIETY

The Spring Meeting 1971

A very successful meeting was held on the links of the North Hants Golf Club, Fleet, on Friday, May 7, when a total of 20 took part.

We were particularly pleased to welcome four new players—Messrs. C. D. Matthews and T. F. Jones who were taken prisoner after the fall of Hong Kong in 1941 when serving with the 1st Battalion; Mr. H. A. Oxley, a First World War veteran who had served with the 23rd (Footballers) Battalion; and Howard Clayden, the nine-year-old son of Lt.-Col. Norman Clayden, who is by far the youngest competitor to take part in any of our Meetings and shows much promise as a golfer.

We were also very pleased indeed to welcome Lt.-Col. John Bell, 13/18th Hussars, a former Commanding Officer of the Royal Hong Kong Regiment (The Volunteers), who was invited as a regimental guest.

The detailed results of the various competitions, each decided over 18 holes, were:

Singles Medal Comp.—Scratch and Handicap			
	Gross	H'cap	Net
Mr. C. D. Matthews (winner, scratch and Transvaal Cup)	83	10	73
Mr. R. H. K. Hardcastle (runner up, scratch)	90	12	78
Mr. A. G. Torrie (winner, handicap and Darjeeling cup)	92	14	78
Lt.-Col. J. W. A. Stephenson	92	12	80
Mr. M. R. T. Walden	93	12	81
Major A. R. Bisset	93	11	82
Lt.-Col. J. R. B. Worton	95	16	79
Mr. H. J. Chillery	96	17	79
Lt.-Col. T. W. Chattey	96	14	82
Lt.-Col. C. N. Clayden	97	18	79
Mr. H. A. Oxley	98	14	84
Lt.-Col. J. W. Bell (runner-up handicap)	101	23	78
Mrs. H. K. Hardcastle	101	15	86
Capt. R. J. Tarrant	104	24	80
Major W. G. A. Crumley	109	24	85
Master Howard Clayden	115	30	79
Col. I. R. Burrows	117	24	93
Major P. D. H. Marshall (Divot)	130	24	106
Mr. T. F. Jones	NR	10	NR

Stableford Foursomes

	Points
Capt. R. J. Tarrant and Mr. R. H. K. Hardcastle (winners, Cooper Cup)	32
Major W. G. A. Crumley and Mr. C. D. Matthews (runners-up)	28
Lt. Col. J. W. A. Stephenson and Capt. R. D. Latham	26
Lt.-Col. T. W. Chattey and Mr. H. A. Oxley	26
Lt.-Col. C. N. Clayden and Master Howard Clayden	26
Mr. H. J. Chillery and Mr. A. G. Torrie	26
Major W. G. A. Crumley and Mr. M. R. T. Walden	23
Mrs. H. K. Hardcastle and Lt.-Col. J. W. Bell	23
Mr. J. F. Jones and Lt.-Col. J. R. B. Worton	15
Col. I. R. Burrows and Major P. D. H. Marshall	8

Hidden Holes Competition

	Net Score
Mr. R. H. K. Hardcastle and Mr. M. R. T. Walden (winners tied)	28
Mr. C. D. Matthews	29
Mr. H. A. Oxley	30
Lt.-Col. J. W. Bell	30
Lt.-Col. J. W. A. Stephenson	30
Lt.-Col. J. R. B. Worton	30
Major A. R. Bisset	31
Lt.-Col. T. W. Chattey	31
Lt.-Col. C. N. Clayden	32
Mr. A. G. Torrie	32
Mr. H. J. Chillery	33
Major W. G. A. Crumley	34
Mrs. H. K. Hardcastle	35
Capt. R. J. Tarrant	35
Major P. D. H. Marshall	37
Master Howard Clayden	38
Col. I. R. Burrows	44

At the conclusion of the meeting Mrs. “Tossie” Worton very kindly presented the prizes.

Free ‘Newsletters’

The Editor wishes to thank Mr. R. E. Booker, Capt. B. A. Carlston, Major C. F. Carvell, Mr. R. J. Cubitt, Mr. F. J. W. Kedge, BEM, Mr. R. M. Lawford, Miss Dorothy Longe, Col. J. R. Maitland, MBE, MC, TD, DL, JP, C/Sgt. J. Meacock and Mr. A. Nicholson for their generosity in paying extra subscriptions so that free copies of *The Die-Hards Newsletter* can be sent to deserving old comrades.

RETURN TO HONG KONG

Earlier this year Mr. W. H. Franklin, one of our pre-war 1st Battalion veterans taken prisoner when Hong Kong fell on Christmas Day 1941, revisited the Colony and, on his return wrote some interesting notes on his visit which we have much pleasure in reproducing below since we are sure that they will be read with considerable interest by all our readers who have been stationed in Hong Kong, and especially those who were serving with the 1st Battalion in Shamshuipo Camp, Kowloon, up to the time of the Japanese invasion in December 1941.

On April 6, 1971, after a lapse of nearly 30 years, I returned to Hong Kong. We landed at about 3.30 p.m. and were met by a friend of pre-war days who made the visit possible.

After Easter, my wife and I contacted Major Webb of the Royal Hong Kong Regiment, who very kindly provided a Land-Rover and driver to take me around the island. I visited the two War Graves cemeteries and, whilst making these visits, I saw some of our old pill boxes. I noticed that those which were still intact are apparently being used by the Hong Kong Government for the storage of road-mending material!

Next day I decided that I would like to go over to see our old camps at Lo Wu and San Wai. I decided to go to San Wai first but could not find it so I asked a Gurkha soldier and was directed to Gallipoli Camp. After talking to one of the British officers I was told that I was, in fact, standing on the site of our old camp. On the hill beyond it is still possible to see our old cap badge, which is shortly due for a clean up by the Volunteers. After being taken on a tour of the camp, it became so hot that we were forced to leave to have a shower and change of clothing. Unfortunately, we never did return to find Lo Wu.

On our return to Kowloon we visited our old barracks at Shamshuipo. There also were many changes. One can now drive straight through the barracks to Lai-Chi-Kok. The old pier has gone and a slip-way has been built, up which are floated landing craft. Part of the camp is now a REME workshop and there are other small units. Jubilee Buildings are still there and are in use as married quarters for one of the Indian units. We were offered the pleasure of a trip to Stonecutters Island but after learning of the snakes left on the island by the Japanese we politely declined.

Nathan Road has now been made into a dual carriageway.

Whitfield Barracks is only half its former size, the remainder being now known as Whitfield Park. For those, like myself, still interested, the old Nathan Hotel still stands although much grander looking. The cinema a few doors away remains unaltered.

Further down Nathan Road near the Star Ferry a new hotel called the Hong Kong Hotel has been built and adjoining it is Ocean Terminal, a vast building containing shops, car parks, restaurants, etc. The Peninsular Hotel, with a face-lift, still stands. Kowloon Bay is no more; it has been reclaimed and is now a huge industrial area.

We crossed over to the island again to visit the China Fleet Club for lunch. Nearby, a Heliport is being set up and at present there are two helicopters in use. Further along, work has begun on the building of a tunnel under the harbour.

One day we decided to go up on the Peak tram to the top. Such is the change in the roads there that I could not find it. This was not the first of such problems so I bought myself a street guide. At the top there was no great change of note except that more and more buildings were going up everywhere, so after a stroll around we returned to sea-level.

On another day we had thought that a day at Repulse Bay would be nice. What a surprise! That lovely bay was simply littered, just like Southend. The number of buildings has to be seen to be believed. The original hotel is still there although there are plans for rebuilding it. Another place we visited—a must—was Aberdeen. We went aboard the Tai Pak, the floating restaurant, for a very enjoyable fish meal. Aberdeen is now a very large town with no less than five floating restaurants moored there.

On the occasion that we went to Beaconsfield House, the home of the Volunteers, we had hoped to meet many other ex-Middys who were living in Hong Kong but, unfortunately, only two were able to be present, Derek Crowther and Joe Lapsky. Both say that they are returning to England this year so we can look forward to seeing them soon.

The last day of any note was when we attended the Queen's Birthday Parade which was celebrated on April 21, 1971, at Victoria Park. This ended with a pleasant invitation to the Officers Mess where we were given champagne in which to drink the Queen's health and anything else we wanted for as long as we cared to stay. What a day! I had never experienced one like it before and I do not suppose that I will get the chance again.

All in all, it was a really wonderful holiday made possible for my wife and myself by a very good friend. I am sure that many of the pre-war members of the 1st Battalion will be able to follow my route and recognise many of the names and places that I revisited and that many would jump at the chance to go back for a short while.

It has been reported in the national press that two Oxford scientists had discovered that 94 coin-makers, accused by King Henry I in 1124 of using tin to debase silver coins, were almost certainly innocent. The coin-makers were castrated and had their right hands amputated.

Using a new technique known as X-ray fluorescence, some of the coins were analysed quite recently and showed no evidence of debasement.

RETURN TO HONG KONG

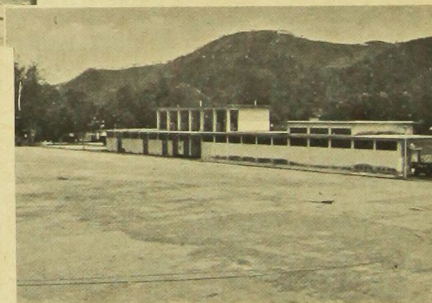
The entrance to Gallipoli (formerly San Wai) Camp.



One of our old Pill Boxes on the Island now used for storage of road mending material.



A view of Gallipoli (formerly San Wai) Camp with Cap Badge Hill in the background.



Regimental Museum

Curator: Major R. W. J. Smith, MBE, TA & VR Centre, Deansbrook Rd., Edgware, Middx.

The following are recent acquisitions to the Museum:

Book of Common Prayer.

Photograph of 9th Battalion Dinner.

BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER

This book is the regulation Official Copy as supplied to all serving personnel and was given to Richard John Harris (6201831) on his Confirmation, August 15, 1943, by the Rev H. L. O. Davies, CF, in Shamshupo Prisoners of War Camp. Happily, both the Padre and the recipient survived the war and are members, respectively, of the Regimental Officers Club and Regimental Association.

It is evident that at one time Dick Harris was not so sure he would survive his incarceration in the Japanese POW Camps as on the back fly-leaf he had written:

Richard John Harris is my name,
England is my nation,
Faversham is my dwelling place and
Christ is my salvation.

When I'm dead and in my grave
And all my bones are rotten
Take this book and think of me
When I'm quite forgotten.

However, he lives to tell his own story and join in mutual reminiscences whenever he meets the ever popular Padre Davies.

*Presented by Mr. R. J. Harris,
late 1st Battalion.*

PHOTOGRAPH OF 9TH BATTALION DINNER

This photograph was taken in the 1920s when the 9th Battalion held their dinners in the Drill Hall at Pound Lane, Willesden. The writer of these notes believes it was the Old Comrades' Dinner of December, 1922, when members of 1/9, 2/9 and 3/9 Battalions assembled under the chairmanship of Col. J. L. Blumfeld, TD, supported by Lt.-Col. G. Beach, TD, Lt.-Col. W. P. Hewett, TD, Captains Heffer, Sherwood, Hewlett and Scott and several junior officers as well as a number of non-commissioned officers and men.

The band was under the conductorship of Mr. H. J. Rouse, whilst a good musical programme was given by the 7th Battalion concert party under the direction of RSM Price.

The dinner was the close of a busy two months for the 9th Battalion. The Regimental War Memorial had been unveiled in the presence of HRH The Prince of Wales in November, a Guard of Honour had been provided for HSH Princess Marie Louise on the occasion of her opening the St. Andrew's Bazaar on December 9, and a memorial service was held to coincide with the unveiling of the 1/9th Battalion Memorial in Dinapore Church, India, on Armistice Day by Sir Henry Wheeler, KCSI, the Governor of Bihar and Orissa.

The past was commemorated in style, but the future was also in the committee's mind. After seasonal greetings the last sentence of the records reads "We might, incidentally, mention that the New Year is a splendid time for 'paying subscription' resolutions (!)".

Framed and presented by Mr. R. T. Meers.

OFFICERS' CLUB DINNER

The Officers' Club Dinner was held at the United Service and Royal Aero Club, Pall Mall, SW1, on Friday, July 16.

Col. A. S. J. de S. Clayton presided and the official guests were Major-General J. B. Dye, Director Volunteer Territorials and Cadets and Colonel Commandant, The Queen's Division; Brigadier A. W. Wise, lately Divisional Brigadier, The Queen's Division; Col. B. R. Wood, the last Honorary Colonel of the Princess Louise's Kensington Regiment, and the newly appointed Chairman of the Greater London T. and A.F. Association; Lt.-Col. A. T. P. Millen, lately commanding The Royal Hong Kong Regiment (The Volunteers); and Major G. Mason, Commanding 4th Battalion, The Queen's Regiment, Albuhera Company.

Others present were:

Lt.-General G. C. Bucknall
Major-General G. P. L. West-
on
Major-General Sir John
Willoughby
Brigadier A. E. Green
Brigadier B. B. Rackham
Col. I. R. Burrows
Col. W. D. Ellis
Col. A. M. Man
Col. R. D. Sherbrooke-
Walker
Col. M. H. Summers
Col. F. Walden
Lt.-Col. G. T. Birch (private
guest)
Lt.-Col. J. D. Gunnell
Lt.-Col. P. J. Hall
Lt.-Col. A. S. Hewson
Lt.-Col. R. D. Hutchings
Lt.-Col. D. E. Simpson
Major M. J. Beaumont
Major R. M. Cain
Major R. A. J. Cheffins
Major H. E. Couch
Major W. G. A. Crumley
Major P. Donovan

Major J. W. Doyle
Major H. K. Hardcastle
Major S. L. J. Henshaw
Major J. M. Hewson
Major R. J. Leighton
Major P. D. H. Marshall
Major F. J. Millard
Major E. J. Naish
Major L. F. E. Nicholls
Major M. F. Pearson
Major C. E. E. Scott
Major L. F. Shaw
Major R. W. J. Smith
Major M. P. Weedon
Major H. N. Wigan
Major V. Williams
Capt. S. Le M. Enthoven
Capt. C. A. Lamb
Capt. P. J. T. Lane
Capt. J. G. Lofting
Capt. P. F. Murray
Capt. J. S. Richards
Capt. C. G. Webber
Capt. G. J. Young
Lt. R. T. Douthet
Lt. E. C. Graham
Lt. M. F. Hedgecoe

OFFICERS' CLUB COCKTAIL PARTY

A total of 91, including official guests, attended the cocktail party held at the United Service and Royal Aero Club on Friday, May 14, 1971.

Following our usual custom the nearest relatives of former members were invited as official guests and the following attended:

Mr. and Mrs. F. A. Bicknell, son and daughter-in-law of the late Lt.-Col. H. P. F. Bicknell.

Mrs. M. del Court, former wife of the late Lt.-Col. S. F. W. M. del Court.

Mrs. S. F. Hedgecoe, widow of Col. S. F. Hedgecoe.

Mrs. H. J. Jennings, widow of Capt. H. J. Jennings.

Mrs. A. V. Weller, widow of Major A. V. Weller.

REGIMENTAL GOODS

The following regimental goods are available:

Ashtrays, glass crested	£0.25
Badges, blazer	£1.50
" car (bar or grill-type fitting)	£2.13
" OCA (lapel or brooch type)	£0.15
Cravats, Regimental (old pattern) Terylene	£1.45
" (new pattern) Terylene	£1.45
Key fobs, black or maroon background	£0.20
Ties, Regimental (old pattern) Terylene	£0.50
" (new pattern) Terylene	£0.50
" Officers' Club	£0.80
" Middlesex Association, silk	£0.95
Heraldic Shields, Middlesex Regiment	£1.80
Books, "Die-Hards in the Great War" (Vols. 1 & 2)	£0.75
Both vols.—paperback	£1.05
Print, "Steady the Drums and Fifes" (coloured)	£1.05

Postage has been included in the cost of goods.

Cheques/Postal Orders should be made payable to "The Middlesex Regimental Association."

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tings, Folkestone, Bexhill and Lewes.

PERSONAL JOTTINGS

As we go to press we hear that Col. Ian Battye has been admitted to the Queen Alexandra Military Hospital, Millbank, for an operation which, we are pleased to be able to report, was very successful. He is now convalescing well, but is likely to remain in hospital for a while yet.

Those of our readers who were serving with the 1st Battalion in Austria will be pleased to hear that ex-Pte. D. Buck (22886480), who for so long looked after the Sergeants Mess bar in the Battalion, has been in touch with us and has expressed a wish to join the Regimental Association. He is looking forward to attending the monthly meetings where he hopes to renew the acquaintance of some of his old comrades.

Congratulations to 2/Lt. Alan Carter, now serving with The Junior Infantryman's Battalion, on his promotion to Lieutenant as from June 15 last.

That 4th Battalion veteran of the 1914-18 war, J. W. Cleave, who always keeps in such close touch with the Regimental Association, writes in sorrow to let us know that, after living in Shepherds Bush for the past 44 years, he has had to move to Peacehaven in Sussex to be looked after by his daughter, as he is now an invalid and cannot fend for himself. In the circumstances we are sure that the change will be good for him, and send him our very best wishes.

One of our Hong Kong veterans who has recently joined the Regimental Association is Dave Cook (6141207). He enlisted in a TA Battalion of the East Surrey Regiment in 1935 and a year later signed on for a regular engagement in the Middlesex Regiment (DCO). He was posted to the 2nd Battalion and served with that Battalion until February 1937 when he was posted to the 1st Battalion then stationed in Singapore.

As he is a member of the Mill Hill Branch he is hoping to meet some of his old friends again at the Branch monthly meetings.

One of our older Die-Hards who has been in touch with us is John Cox (L/16093). He enlisted in August 1915 at Chatham where both our 5th and 6th (Reserve) Battalions were stationed, and eventually was posted to the 8th Battalion (TF) then serving with the BEF in France. He was gassed during one of the battles at Lens in 1917 and, after a period of convalescence, he was posted to the 23rd (Second Footballers) Battalion. He was serving with this Battalion when in October 1918 he was wounded, which necessitated his evacuation to this country. He was eventually demobilised in January 1919. He now lives in Woking and hopes to be able to attend some of our reunions.

An unexpected visitor to RHQ at Edgware recently was G. W. (Babe) Denton, ex-"A" Company 1st Battalion, of Singapore and Hong Kong days. He was a member of the small draft which left Hong Kong in April 1940, thereby escaping the Japanese upheaval. This draft never reached England, being stopped in the Middle East where he was attached to

a battalion of the Royal Northumberland Fusiliers. After the Italian campaign the draft, together with a draft from the Manchester Regiment, formed the first Bomb Disposal Unit in the Middle East, dealing with many unexploded parachute mines and bombs in the Nile valley and Suez Canal areas.

"Babe" now lives at Northampton where he is working for Green Shield Stamps.

Die-Hards passing through Guildford will find ready welcome awaiting them at The Spread Eagle Hotel where ex-WO2 Mike Elston (22774695) and his wife, Ann, have settled in as host and hostess.

Ex-Pte. Bill Evans (L/16471 and 6189257) is another of our old soldiers who has been in touch with us. He enlisted in the 5th (Reserve) Battalion at Chatham in April 1916, and on completion of his initial training, was posted to the 13th (Service) Battalion in France. He remained with that battalion until January 1918 when he was posted to the 21st (Islington) Battalion. After the war he completed his service with the 4th Battalion in Gibraltar, being employed as a cook in the Sergeants Mess.

Another new member of the Regimental Association is ex-Pte. Bob Fitch (19039564), who served with the 1st Battalion during the fighting in Korea. He now lives at Sevenoaks in Kent and we shall look forward to seeing him at some of our Association functions.

Lt.-Col. Peter Galvin is finding his work as AQMG at Headquarters, Northumbrian District, no sinecure and is kept extremely busy. In a recent letter he informs us that he has bought a house in beautiful country overlooking the Tees valley just outside the village of Ovington, near Richmond, Yorks.

In a letter received shortly after the Annual Reunion, ex-Sgt. H. C. Griffiths (6197330), who as reported in the May issue of the *Newsletter*, was a new member of the Regimental Association, sends his best wishes to all Die-Hards.

Ex-Sgt. J. D. Hills, our most newly-joined member of the Association, spent 12 years in the Army. On the completion of his initial training he was posted to the 1st Battalion, and stayed with that Battalion when it became 4th Battalion The Queen's Regiment. On the disbandment of the latter he was posted as A/Tk. Platoon Sergeant to the 3rd Battalion The Queen's Regiment from which unit he was discharged last January. He now lives at Havant in Hampshire, where he has landed himself a good job with the Prudential Assurance Co. Ltd.

It is excellent news that Major Les Honeybun is progressing so well after the nasty accident when he fell from a ladder whilst decorating his house and suffered severe concussion and a fractured leg. We wish him a speedy recovery to full health again.

Ex-WO2 Fred Hutchings (6127148), who served with the 7th (TA) Battalion from 1947 onwards after being in the RAF during the 1939-45 war, is now a

member of the Mill Hill Branch of the Die-Hards Club.

Capt. Malcolm Montgomery, now serving with the 2nd Battalion The Queen's Regiment, has been selected as a Training Officer at Fort Benning, Georgia, and leaves to take up his new appointment very shortly. He has been one of the most frequent callers at RHQ at Edgware and has never missed an opportunity of doing so whenever he is in this country. We wish him the best of luck and will look forward to his next visit on his return from the USA.

We were very sorry to hear that, as a result of an accident when parachuting, Major Geoff Norton was unable to attend the Officers' Club Dinner on July 16. The accident, fortunately, was not serious and he is now more or less fully mobile again.

Our latest pensioner to be admitted to the Royal Hospital, Chelsea, is ex-Pte. Arthur Rathbone (6195916), who served with the 2nd Battalion as a cook during the 1939-45 war. Prior to the war he had served in the TA and then on a regular engagement with the Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment. He transferred to the Army Catering Corps in May 1944 and was finally discharged in November 1945.

The Regiment now has a total of 11 In-Pensioners at the Royal Hospital.

We send our heartiest congratulations to Lt.-Col. John Shipster on his promotion to Colonel, which took effect from June 30 last. As a result of his promotion he has been appointed Garrison Commander, British Honduras, and leaves to take up his new appointment early in September.

Ex-Bandsman Reg. Smith (6203540), one of our Hong Kong veterans who became, as he describes it, a "Kobe House Rice Basher", sends his best wishes to all his old comrades. He is now living in Colchester and "doing fine".

Our oldest Die-Hard, Colonel the Hon. Charles Stallard, QC, DSO, MC, ED, who has lived in South Africa for many years, celebrated his 100th birthday on June 4 in a blaze of military glory. Three hundred men of the Witwatersrand Rifles, of which he was Honorary Colonel, led by 100 pipers paraded at Hope Woolith, near Johannesburg, to salute him.

Although he was posted to the Middlesex Regiment (DCO) in October 1917 he was employed on the staff in a legal capacity. He was a most distin-

guished member of the Bar in South Africa and was Minister of Mines in the Smuts Government.

A recent welcome visitor to RHQ at Edgware was ex-WO2 Tom Steward (6923739) who is now working for Grey Green Coaches. We shall hope to see more of him after the summer season, which keeps him fully occupied.

We were very pleased and most surprised to receive a visit in July from an old pre-war Die-Hard, C. C. H. Tanner, on his way back to King's Lynn, where he now lives. He enlisted into the Regiment in 1935 and served in the 2nd Battalion until 1938 when he purchased his discharge. At the outbreak of the 1939-45 war he was recalled and in 1940 he got a commission and was posted to the 1/7th Battalion. Later he transferred to the Indian Army and served with the 9th Gurkha Rifles. From 1952 to 1958, when he left the Service, he was seconded to the Malayan Volunteer Force and Singapore Volunteer Corps, and finished up with the rank of temporary Lt.-Colonel. He has now been enrolled as a member of the Middlesex Regimental Officers' Club and we shall hope to see him again at some of our functions.

Lt. Paul Truman, now serving with 1st Battalion The Queen's Regiment, was promoted to Captain with effect from July 23, and we offer him our heartiest congratulations.

It was particularly pleasing to note that at the recent Sovereign's Parade at the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst, where the salute was taken by King Olaf of Norway, the son of Lt. F. C. Webb appeared in the list of those who had successfully passed out. Lt. Webb has been closely connected with the Die-Hards for many years, both as a CSM and, later, as RSM of our TA Battalion. He is now in "A" Company (Middlesex) 6th (V) Battalion The Queen's Regiment, stationed at Edgware.

At the Sovereign's Parade referred to above the Director of Music of the Band of the Royal Military Academy, who was an old Mess mate of Lt. Webb, played "Sussex by the Sea" as the parade marched off in return for the many favours which Lt. Webb had done for him in the past.

That active old 3rd Battalion veteran, "Bowker" White (L/13251) has just given a demonstration of Indian club swinging on Southern TV. Not a bad performance for a man of 77—but he is a Die-Hard!

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CORRESPONDENCE

From: Mrs. I. M. Northcott

32 Beresford Close,
Frimley Green,
Camberley, Surrey.
June 18, 1971.

To: Col. F. Walden
Dear Sir,

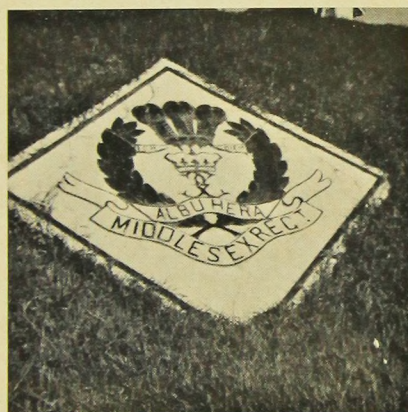
I take the liberty in sending enclosed photographs, taken by my daughter in Seletar this year. There may be many others, as well as yourself, who would like to see how well these badges have been cared for after all these years. The whole surroundings, I feel, are in good shape and great credit is due to those responsible. My daughter took these with great enthusiasm, at my request. I trust they may be of some value to you and the regiment's history.

I remain,

Yours sincerely,

I. M. NORTHCOTT.

(The following is one of the photographs taken of our badge and confirms the good state in which they are being maintained.



It has been reproduced as it will be of considerable interest to those readers who were serving at the time with the 1st Battalion in Gillman Barracks, Singapore—Editor.)

ECONOMY

In view of the increase in the cost of postage, receipts for subscriptions to the Regimental Association, Officers' Club and the Newsletter will not in future be sent unless specifically asked for.

OBITUARY (continued from page 11)

STEWART—On July 3, 1971, suddenly and peacefully in her 89th year, Hilda Hylton, widow of Col. W. A. Stewart, OBE.

WATTERSON—On July 26, 1971, Major Donald Watterson, MBE. He was one of the senior masters at Christ's College, Finchley, and commanded most successfully the CCF there for some years when it was affiliated to the Middlesex Regiment (DCO).

OBITUARY

It is with much regret that we have to announce that the following have died:

HOLLINGHURST—On June 8, 1971, Air Chief Marshal Sir Leslie Norman Hollinghurst, GBE, KCB, DFC, aged 77. He enlisted in the Royal Engineers as a motor despatch rider in 1914, was commissioned into the Middlesex Regiment (DCO) in 1916 and posted to the 3rd Battalion then serving in Salonika. He later transferred to the Royal Flying Corps and in 1918 to the Royal Air Force. He was Air Officer Commanding No. 38 Group in 1943-44 in which capacity he was responsible for the British Airborne Operations in the Normandy landings on D-Day. Known affectionately as "Holly", he spent 18-hour days on his job and flew with his men, especially on the missions at night. From November 1944 until the end of the war against Japan he was Air Officer Commanding Base Air Forces, South East Asia; from 1945 to 1948 he was Air Member for Supply and Organisation on the Air Council; from 1948 to 1949 Inspector General of the RAF, and Air Council Member for Personnel from 1949 to 1952 when he retired. He was born in London and educated at Hornchurch High School and Felstead.

MARKS—On June 8, 1971, suddenly in Dublin, Lt.-Col. Tommy L. Marks, OBE, TD, aged 59. He was educated at Eton and in the early 1930s was commissioned into the 8th (TA) Battalion and went to France with that Battalion in 1940. He was evacuated from Dunkirk and later served in the Middle East on GHQ Staff. In 1947 he was appointed Advertising Manager for BEA. In 1955 he was appointed to one of the most demanding of all advertising managerships—that of Guinness. In 1961 Marks was appointed Managing Director of Harp Lager Limited. His triumph in this field established Harp as a brand leader and this was rewarded by his appointment to the chairmanship of this Company in 1966. In the same year he was elected to the main Guinness Board. Marks's by now famous talents were harnessed by the confectionery industry; he became chairman of William Nuttall Limited last year. Much to his delight he was appointed chairman of Guinness Superlatives Limited whose most famous title, the "Guinness Book of Records", celebrated the sale of five million copies last December. His record as a soldier in war-time and as a businessman in peacetime was outstanding but gives little indication of his friendly and unassuming personality. Tommy was gifted with a tremendous sense of humour and a pungent wit which was never unkind. His memory was honoured by a Memorial Service in the Crypt Chapel, St. Paul's Cathedral, on July 20, 1971, and the presence there of hundreds of his friends and associates in the business world and in the world of art bore witness to the high regard in which Tommy was held. He will be sadly missed by all of us who were his friends but above all by his wife Ella and his daughter Suzy.

(With acknowledgments to Major G. Hartley, TD, DL, a great friend of the deceased, for providing the material for this notice.—Editor.)

MURRAY—On May 23, 1971, peacefully after a long illness, Brigadier Harold Arthur David Murray, OBE, TD, DL, aged 76. He enlisted in the Highgate Company of the 7th Battalion (TF) in 1912 and, during the 1914-18 war he served as a signaller—first at Gibraltar and then in France and Flanders. In February 1918 he was transferred to 20th Officer Cadet Battalion and, on completion of his officer training course, was commissioned into the Regiment and posted to his old Battalion on October 9. He returned to France just after the Armistice in November 1918 and, after a short attachment to the 18th London Regiment (London Irish Rifles), rejoined the 7th Battalion at Mons in February 1919, shortly before the Battalion moved into the Rhineland as part of the Army of Occupation. He was one of the five officers who returned to Hornsey with the cadre of the Battalion for demobilisation on November 3, 1919. During the General Strike of 1926 he commanded the Enfield unit of the Civil Constabulary Reserve raised from the Veterans of the Great War. He was promoted Lieutenant in 1920, Captain in 1924, Major in 1929 and Lt.-Colonel in 1932 when he took over command of the Battalion which he had joined 20 years previously as a private soldier. On relinquishing command in 1936 he was promoted to Brevet Colonel. In 1939 he raised 90 (Middlesex) AA Regiment which he commanded until the following year when he was promoted a temporary Brigadier. Popular with his fellow soldiers in all ranks he retained their affection after his retirement and was present at every dinner and reunion whilst his health allowed him to do so.

PANK—On June 22, 1971, peacefully at Potters Bar Hospital, Dorothy Annie, aged 87, widow of Col. Cecil H. Pank, CMG, DSO, TD, 7th (TA) Battalion.

PECKHAM—On July 19, 1971, at Queen Alexandra Military Hospital, Millbank, after a long illness bravely borne, Amy Louisa (Jean), beloved wife of Major D. G. Peckham, RAPC, one time the popular Paymaster to the 1st Battalion and an Honorary Member of the Regimental Officers' Club.

ROWLEY—On June 12, 1971, at a nursing home in Haslemere, Frances Helen (Nell) widow of Brigadier General Frank Rowley, CB, CMG, DSO.

STALLY—On June 25, 1971, ex-Armourer S/Sgt. David Stally, aged 77. He was the perfect example of the excellent Armourers who were attached to the Regiment during its existence. Although wearing the badge of the Royal Army Ordnance Corps from his enlistment in September 1914 he looked upon, and called himself, a Die-Hard from the date of his attachment to the 2nd Battalion in December 1931 until the day of his death. During the 1914-18 war he served with the BEF in France and later with the MEF in the Middle East. After the war he remained in the East until 1925, and completed a period of foreign service of 10 years. He was discharged to pension on July 31, 1939, and later became an honorary member of the Regimental Association.

Continued on page 10

ASSOCIATION NEWS

Secretary's Notes

Benevolent cases

During the quarter ended June 30, 1971, the sum of £338.94 was expended from the Charitable Fund in making grants to 25 ex-members of the Regiment, or their dependants.

Donations—Charitable Fund

The Secretary gratefully acknowledges donations to the Charitable Fund from "Anonymous", Major P. G. V. Bellers, Major K. R. McK. Biggs, Capt. E. F. Dark, Mr. T. Emerson, Lt.-Col. H. A. A. Howell, MBE, Mr. F. J. W. Kedge, BEM, Mr. T. Lack, brother officers of the late Rev. A. M. Mann, Capt. F. Redpath, BEM, Capt. J. R. C. Riseley, Mr. H. F. Stilwell, Mr. H. Waller and Mr. P. A. Yule.

Annual reunion

The annual reunion was again held this year at Porchester Hall, Queensway, on Saturday, May 15. The attendance was 290, which was a slight increase on that of last year.

Opinions received from various quarters to date are unanimous that this was one of the best reunions for many years, and was much enjoyed by all present.

Derby outing

A total of 46 old comrades, their relations and friends went by coach to the Derby on June 2 and spent a most enjoyable time with an excellent view of the race. A special word of praise is due to Mr. Banks who provided the most excellent picnic lunches for the party.

Beating of Retreat, Horse Guards

Although little publicity was given to it, information was received from an old comrade of 2/7th Battalion that the pipes and drums of all the Scottish regiments were to beat retreat on Horse Guards Parade on Monday June 7. As a result Branch Secretaries were notified and, with the help of the Hon. Secretary of the London Branch of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders Regimental Association, 31 tickets at £1 each were obtained for those members who wished to witness the Ceremony.

Founder's Day, Royal Hospital, Chelsea

The Founder's Day Ceremony took place in shocking weather conditions on Thursday, June 10, 1971.

In addition to our President and Vice-Chairman who, with their wives, were invited as official guests, all 24 Strollers' tickets allocated to the Regimental Association were used by members.

Divisional Depot Open Day

The members who attended this year amounted to approximately 45, which was considerably less than last year's attendance of 82.

There is little doubt that the reason for this big drop is that those who went last year were disillusioned by the arrangements made and compared

that visit most unfavourably with those previously made to Canterbury where well over 100 of our old comrades and their relations used to be present each year.

This is perhaps inevitable with the formation of the Queen's Division which, on account of its size and dispersion, is an impersonal organisation.

Military Musical Pageant, Wembley

This Pageant, which was sponsored by *Evening News* in aid of the Army Benevolent Fund, was held at Wembley Stadium on Saturday, July 3, 1971.

In view of its popularity, tickets at party rates were purchased some months beforehand. As a result, a total of 79 old comrades, their relations and friends were able to witness one of the most impressive entertainments of this nature which any of them had ever seen.

Belgian OCA in Great Britain

A detachment of old comrades with the Regimental Association banner was provided for the Annual Parade of the Belgian OCA in Great Britain, which was held on Sunday, July 18, on Horse Guards followed by a wreath-laying ceremony at the Cenotaph, when Colonel F. Walden laid a wreath on behalf of all Die-Hards.

Major R. W. J. Smith was the Detachment Commander and Mr. R. T. Meers the Standard Bearer.

On Tuesday, July 20, the Mons section of the Belgian OCA, who are associate members of our Association and had come over for the Parade, attended a reception at the RHQ Mess at Edgware. During this reception a plaque bearing the arms of the City of Mons was presented and was gratefully accepted on behalf of our Association by our Chairman, Col. I. R. Burrows.

Grand Concert at Kneller Hall

A party of two dozen old comrades, their relations and friends were taken to the monthly Grand Concert held at Kneller Hall on Wednesday, July 21. At this concert one of the guest conductors was Capt. W. T. Hughes, now in his 83rd year, who enlisted as a Boy Bandsman in the Regiment in 1903 and, after the 1914-18 war, in which he was badly wounded and taken prisoner, was appointed Band Sergeant of the 1st Battalion. He was commissioned in the 1939-45 War into the Royal Pioneer Corps as a Chemical Warfare Officer. More details of this old Die-Hard will be found in the notes of the Mill Hill Branch, of which he has been a member for some years. F. W.

HORNSEY AND ENFIELD BRANCH

At the time of writing (mid-July) the weather glorious, those of you on holiday are obviously enjoying it and I hope those of you, like myself, with holidays to come, will be equally lucky. I was sorry I could not make Porchester Hall this year, and really missed the pleasure of meeting those of you who did

—but I made up for it when I saw so many of you at Wembley for the Musical Pageant which was a great success and was I am sure enjoyed by all. Some of us managed to get back to Edgware for a natter and a drink in the WO & Sgts. Mess and this finished off a grand evening, and thanks to "Charlie" for opening up at that late hour!! After many problems due to conflicting commitments, we have at last managed to hold our Branch Annual General Meeting and once again the "old faithfuls" turned up and the same officials elected, our thanks to Lt. Col. Simpson for more accepting chairmanship, I am sure you all join with me in wishing Mrs. Simpson a speedy recovery after a major operation and we look forward to seeing her in the near future. We are having a Rifle Club Social at Bisley on August 15, a dance on October 2 and there is a 1st Battalion dinner on September 4, so let's hope we shall be seeing many of you very soon. Also, while I think of it, our Christmas Party will be on December 17, so there is no excuse that you did not know in time!!! Do please try and attend.

Bert Mellor, our very enthusiastic and hardworking Entertainments Organiser, will supply any details. Having just about exhausted my quota of words, here's hoping I see many of you on September 19—Windsor Safari.

Our best wishes to you all. Don't forget you are always welcome at Hornsey and LET US SEE SOME OF YOU PLEASE.

LES HOSSLEN

MILL HILL BRANCH

The Branch notes in the last *Newsletter* covered Die-Hards of different generations, now living in different climes. The notes for this edition are of a unique octogenarian member.

July 21, 1971, saw a coach party leaving RHQ to attend the Grand Concert at the Royal Military School of Music, Kneller Hall. It was an enjoyable musical evening, with a number of guest conductors on the rostrum. It was on turning over to the second page that I saw mentioned two pieces of music, both of which were to be conducted, according to the programme, by Capt. W. T. Hughes. It was unbelievable to me that the conductor mentioned could be our Mick Hughes (L/9155) who was a Boy Bandsman in "K" Company of our 1st Battalion in 1904, under the baton of Bandmaster Imbush. On announcing the items of music, it was broadcast that Capt. Hughes was a grandfather and approaching his 83rd birthday. To confirm the announcement, I saw Mick, immaculate in evening dress, walk from the distinguished visitors' enclosure to the rostrum where the massed bands were waiting. With great zest and command he conducted "To Your Guard" and "Clarion Call", both his own compositions, the former written for the Trooping of the Colour in 1938 and the latter for the Aldershot Tattoo in 1939. He has also composed and arranged other pieces of music; his arrangement of "Espana" became well known.

Mick enlisted into the Regiment in 1903, joining the 2nd Battalion until sailing on the trooper *Plassy* for Secunderabad, India. In August 1914, he was a Sergeant during the Battle of Mons and at Le Cateau (the Knife) on August 26, he was wounded in the head, arm and leg. Taken PoW, he, on recovery

from his wounds, formed a band from amongst the prisoners, having an especially good formation at Minden in 1917. After the Armistice he was Band Sergeant of the 1st Battalion at Milton Barracks, Gravesend; later he was principal string bass in HM Scots Guards during the tour of Canada in 1922. Between the two World Wars he was Captain and Director of Music with the Legion of Frontiersmen, later Director of Music to the City of London Police and then Director of Music to the Middlesex Yeomanry. On the outbreak of war in 1939, he packed away his baton and instruments and was commissioned in the Pioneer Corps as a Chemical Warfare Officer. He left France hurriedly on June 18, 1940. He retired from the service in July 1947.

Music has always taken priority in his life. Not only the playing of music but composing and teaching when he had a spell at the Royal College of Music as professor on the tuba. His compositions have been played on the Trooping Parade in four successive reigns, King George V, King Edward VIII, King George VI and our present sovereign. It was at the reception given to HM The Queen and Prince Philip at the Mansion House after their return from Australia that music arranged by this old Die-Hard was amongst the musical programme. When this *Newsletter* is published Capt. Hughes, who has long been an Associate of the Royal College of Music, will be celebrating his 83rd birthday and as a member of the Mill Hill Branch of the Die-Hards Club we can wish him many more years of tootling his horn with his natural zest and energy.

MAJOR DICK SMITH

PORTSMOUTH AND GOSPORT BRANCH

Well, here we are once again. *Newsletter* time rolls quickly around.

We all had an enjoyable afternoon and evening at the Albuhera Service and Reunion, and from the look of our table it would seem that a certain one of our ilk met all of his ex-Die-Hard pals on that night, but we all enjoyed ourselves.

The return south was somewhat hazardous, for after dropping Sam at Hindhead to walk the "few steps" to Haslemere we began to peter out of juice. Then followed fruitless calls at garages. But no luck. So we spluttered and petered our way to Pompey, Stubbington, Lee and Gosport, finally coming to a halt within the last half-mile of our final destinations. So it was left to our Turk town erks (namely Peggy, Lofty, my wife and I) to trudge that half mile to "Home Sweet Home" at 4 a.m.

Meetings have been held monthly with the stalwarts (Peggy, Bert, Mr. and Mrs. Wigg, Mr. and Mrs. Deans, Mr. and Mrs. McNeill, Noel Peters, Len West, and Sam) in attendance.

We are pleased to see that Len is now recovering from his operation, and wish him a quick recovery.

Likewise our condolences go to Les Honeybun after his accident and we wish him also a speedy recovery.

This seems to be the news for this time. We would still like to see a few more of our ex-comrades at our meetings.

MAC

9TH BN. BRANCH

Our Annual Reunion and Dinner on May 22 was a success. The venue was good, so were the diners and the menu.

Amongst our guests, we had the pleasure of the Deputy Colonel of the Regiment, Col. A. S. J. de S. Clayton, DL, Col. F. Walden, MBE, DL, and Major R. W. J. Smith, MBE. The last two were accompanied by their ladies.

Several of the relatives of the members who have passed away were present and, indeed, we thank them for attending. In this way we can keep the numbers up, so stopping the Branch from fading away.

Next year we do hope that those who have not attended our reunions recently, will make every effort to do so.

A few of the older members who regularly attended our dinners, Lt.-Col. G. L. Fox, Major H. Sherwood and Jock Barrow, could not make the journey this year, owing to illness. We are pleased to know that they are no worse and if circumstances permit we hope to see them next year when we shall meet again at the Victory Services Club, 63-79 Seymour Street, W2, on Saturday, April 22, 1972. So please make a note of the date. At the Association's Annual Reunion at Porchester Hall on May 15 we met the son of Capt. A. F. H. Mievile who was with us in 1914 and who died in 1961. The son is a Major in the Army and has two sons following his footsteps in the Army. What a fine tradition! During our talks with the Major, C/Sgt. Con King of the Royal Hospital, Chelsea, joined us, after he had recognised the Major, whom he had met many years ago at an Officers Training Corps Unit. Both, we hope, will be at our dinner next year.

From Major Mievile we learnt that Lt. F. Duirs of "D" Coy, 1/9th Battalion, was still alive and living in Cornwall. We corresponded with the Lieutenant and found that he is practically house-bound now, due to contracting frost bite whilst serving in the Navy during the last war. Actually, the Major is Lt. Duirs' godson.

The Military Pageant at the Wembley Stadium was one of the finest shows I have seen and if it is to take place next year, it should not be missed. It proved one thing, namely, that the word discipline has not lost its meaning in this new age. It seemed to have been inoculated into the audience, as, when they left, it was one of the most orderly crowds I have seen. The tickets were all sold, so the Army Benevolent Fund, to whom the proceeds will go, will benefit greatly. All praise to the *Evening News* for sponsoring the Pageant.

Again we have to express our sorrow in having to add the following to the list of our departed members: Lt. Col. C. M. P. Dudley, Major H. A. Neal, Canon E. G. Bucknill, H. S. Butler, T. Moore, Charles White, A. C. Hollingsworth, Alfred Devereaux and Joseph Adams. We extend our deep sympathy to all the relatives and friends of the above. R. T. M.

WO's AND SERGEANTS' BRANCH

At our Annual General Meeting held in May, Lt. F. C. Webb, our Chairman, gave notice that, owing to other commitments, he felt that he could not carry on in that capacity and though reluctant to do so, had no alternative but to tender his resignation. This being accepted with a vote of thanks for all that he had done for the branch, it was proposed that Major Les Honeybun be asked to take over

chairmanship, which he accepted. Les, as we all know, is a founder member of the Branch and attended all monthly meetings except, I think, one, when he was attending a meeting at the Gosport Branch. I am sure that under his guidance the success of the Branch is assured.

Unfortunately, no sooner had Les taken over the reins and made a good start at the June meeting, when on June 26 he met with a nasty accident. Whilst painting the outside of his house he fell from a ladder breaking a leg and injuring his head on the concrete path. He was rushed to hospital where an operation on his head was performed. He has, at the time of writing, recovered slightly, but is still hazy as to what happened. I am sure all readers of these notes join all members of the Branch in wishing him a speedy recovery. We shall miss him very much, not seeing him sitting on his stool, and I shall also miss the help he has always given me and his advice which has made the job of Hon Secretary so much easier and enjoyable. Hurry back, Les!

Our monthly club nights still maintain the 20-odd attenders, but there is plenty of room for more. To try and encourage more to attend and to get away from the housey-housey which we used to run each meeting we are varying our entertainment, by making a Committee-man responsible for running whatever he thinks would be entertaining, each one of the Committee taking that responsibility for one meeting. We hope by this means that it will produce some variety. The monthly raffles continue to be held, proceeds of which cover the cost of prizes which may have to be bought, as well as paying for the free cheese buffet which is put on each club night. The ladies, God bless them, continue to give us their whole-hearted support, not only by coming along with their menfolk and so brightening up the proceedings and keeping us in good order, but by their continuous kindness and generosity in bringing gifts as prizes for the raffles. Ladies, we thank you for your comradeship and thought.

Although a happy and convivial family spirit exists within our branch, I must repeat again what I have said many times before. We would like to see our membership grow. We can only do this by gaining the support, not only of our members, but all ex- or serving members of the various Sergeants Messes. Should you reading these notes be one of those and know of any ex-member who might be interested, please get in touch with me, Len Johnson, 78 Deans Lane, Edgware, so that I can endeavour to gain the support needed to carry out the main object of the Die-Hards Clubs, that is "to maintain that spirit of comradeship which we so thoroughly enjoyed when serving".

Jim Davis who, as reported in the last issue, was confined to his bed having injured his back, is I am very pleased to say now able to get about with the aid of two sticks. When I visited him just recently he gave me a pleasant surprise by escorting me from his front gate into his home and then seeing me off when I left. Although I think I could give him yards start in 100 and still beat him, it was great to see him on his feet, and I am sure with the Die-Hards spirit that makes him so determined to walk, it won't be long before he will be giving me 99 yards start. Bob Hadley, another member who cannot get about much, managed to attend some of the functions which have been laid on by the Association and I am sure, that if his bellows would allow it, he'd be seeing more of him at our Club nights. LEN JOHNSON