



The Die-Hards

NEWSLETTER

No. 28

DECEMBER 1974

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Deansbrook Road, Edgware, Middlesex.
(Tel: 01-952 2625)



A Merry Christmas
and a Happy and
Prosperous New Year
to all our Readers



REMEMBRANCE DAY CEREMONIES

1974

The Field of Remembrance

The annual ceremony at the Field of Remembrance at Westminster Abbey took place on Saturday, November 9.

A large number of ex-members of the Regiment were present, as well as civic dignitaries, headed by the vice-chairman of the Greater London Council (Ben Mason, Esq.).

Most of the boroughs lying within the old county of Middlesex were represented.

After the usual short service at the County Memorial in the Middlesex Guildhall, conducted by the Rev. P. L. Pearce Gould, OBE, late 1st Battalion, a procession headed by Sgt. L. T. Plumb as acting RSM and Mr S. Kerswill, as Regimental Association standard bearer, and escorted by three of our Chelsea Pensioners (Sgt Rathbone and In-Pensioners Fulton and Worton), formed up and moved to the regimental plot.

On arrival at the plot Col. A. S. J. de S. Clayton, OBE, DL, Deputy Colonel (Middlesex) The Queen's Regiment, after saying "We plant these crosses today in memory of our fallen comrades of the Middlesex Regiment", planted the first cross. He then invited the vice-chairman of the Greater London Council and Mrs. Mason, followed by the deputy chairman of the Greater London Council and Mrs. Fielding, to plant crosses. They were followed by the Chaplain and, after him, the representatives of the undermentioned battalions in the order shown:

- 1st Bn.—Col. A. M. Man, DSO, OBE
 - 2nd Bn.—Lt.-Col. T. W. Chattey, OBE
 - 3rd Bn.—Mr. A. E. Gale
 - 4th Bn.—Mr. C. Ashby
 - 5th Bn. (TA)—Lt.-Col. G. W. Webber, TD
 - 7th Bn. (TA)—Mr. A. E. Sills
 - 1/8th Bn. (TA)—Col. M. H. Summers, DSO, OBE, TD, DL
 - 2/8th Bn. (TA)—Major L. T. Honeybun
 - 9th Bn. (TA)—Mr. R. T. Meers
 - 1/10th Bn. (TA)—Brigadier B. B. Rackham, CBE, MC, DL
 - 2/10th Bn. (TA)—Major C. H. K. Fisher, MC, DL, JP
 - 12th (S) Bn.—Mr. J. Price
 - 17th (S) Bn.—Capt. E. Crook, DCM
 - 19th (S) Bn.—Brigadier D. B. Rendell, MBE, MC
- Crosses were then planted by the remaining civic dignitaries in the following order:
- The Mayor and Mayoress (Alderman and Mrs. W. G. Hart) of the London Borough of Barnet
- The Deputy Mayor and Deputy Mayoress (Alderman John Lindsay and Councillor Mrs. Anne Lindsay) of the London Borough of Enfield
- The Deputy Mayor (Councillor Ron Turner) of the London Borough of Haringey

The Deputy Mayor and Deputy Mayoress (Councillor and Mrs. N. G. Hines) of the London Borough of Harrow

The Deputy Mayor and Deputy Mayoress (Councillor and Mrs. H. L. Lewis) of the London Borough of Richmond-on-Thames

The Chairman (R. C. Politeyan, Esq.) of the Middlesex County Association

Finally a cross was planted by Mr. A. R. Drane in memory of those bandsmen and drummers of the Regiment who had made the supreme sacrifice.

Regimental Service

Following our usual custom we combined with the Home Postal and Courier Communications Depot, Royal Engineers, for the Remembrance Day service in the Garrison Chapel, Inglis Barracks, Mill Hill, and the ceremony afterwards at the Regimental War Memorial on Sunday, November 10.

Both the service and the ceremony were conducted by the Rev. A. K. Chesterton, MA, Curate of St. Paul's Church, Mill Hill, and followed the usual form. There was a large congregation present in the chapel and at the Regimental War Memorial. We were very pleased indeed to notice that, as in previous years, Highgate School CCF was represented by their commander, Squadron Leader M. G. Baker, and their sergeant-major, RSM G. Chittock, BEM.

Drawn up in hollow square round the War Memorial after the service were detachments from Home PCCD, RE, 12 Company WRAC, "A" Company (Mx), 6th (V) Battalion The Queen's Regiment, 211 (Edgware) Cadet Company, Mill Hill Branch and 9th Battalion Branch of the Die-Hards Club, with the Association standard carried by Mr. G. S. Hurlock.

After the exhortation the bugler, Mr. George Chacksfield, sounded "Last Post" to signal the beginning and "Reveille" to signal the end of the Two Minutes' Silence.

Wreaths were then laid at the foot of the War Memorial on behalf of the following in memory of those members of the Regiment who had made the supreme sacrifice:

- Regimental Association, by Col. A. S. J. de S. Clayton, OBE, DL
- 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th Battalions and Depot, by Lt.-Col. T. W. Chattey, OBE
- 5th and 6th (Militia) Battalions, by Capt. E. Crook, DCM
- "D" Company (Mx) 5th (V) Battalion The Queen's Regiment, by Lt. T. C. R. Hutto
- "A" Company (Mx) 6th (V) Battalion The Queen's Regiment, by Major D. J. Margand
- Middlesex Home Guard, by Major C. E. E. Scott
- Mill Hill Branch, the Die-Hards Club, by Mr. W. A. Wright

9th Battalion Branch, the Die-Hards Club, by Mr. R. T. Meers

WOs' and Sergeants' Branch, the Die-Hards Club, by Mr. L. Johnson

At the march past which followed the laying of wreaths the salute was taken by Col. A. S. J. de S. Clayton, OBE, DL, who was accompanied by Col. J. W. Bridge, Commandant of the Home Postal and Courier Communications Depot, RE.

After the parade those who had taken part or had been spectators made their way to the Drill Hall at Edgware, where a reunion took place.

A retiring collection taken after the service on behalf of the Royal British Legion Poppy Fund amounted to £31.50.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Date	Event
Thursday, April 17	Organised visit to Regiment Museum, Bruce Castle.
Saturday, April 26	1/7th Battalion (1939-45) Dinner at TAVR Centre, Priory Road, Hornsey.
Tuesday, April 29	Officers' Club Cocktail Party at United Service and Royal Aero Club, Pall Mall, SW1.
Wednesday, April 30	Spring Golf Meeting at North Hants Golf Club, Fleet.

REGIMENTAL MUSEUM

Curator: Major R. W. J. Smith, MBE, TAVR Centre, Deansbrook Rd., Edgware, Middx.

The following are recent acquisitions for the museum:

- Medals and bronze plaque of L/Cpl. J. Conway.
- Medals of Cpl. F. J. H. Beesley.

Medals and Bronze Plaque of L/Cpl. J. Conway

John Conway was born in Islington, Middlesex, and naturally as a patriotic Englishman enlisted into the 21st (Islington) Battalion of the Regiment as soon as he could be accepted, being given the regimental number G/15335. The Battalion joined the BEF in June 1916 as part of 121st Brigade, 40th Division. At Gouzeaucourt Wood on the night of April 9/10, 1917, three platoons came under heavy fire from three German machine-guns, causing several casualties. A patrol of eight under the command of 2/Lt. F. S. Bryan made an attempt to silence the fire but were wiped out with the exception of 2/Lt. Bryan. One of three who were killed in action was L/Cpl. Conway, the total losses being 25 killed, 38 wounded and 1 missing, (Capt. F. S. Bryan, MC, was killed in action in November 1917).

On the issue of medals in 1920 the British War Medal, Victory Medal and the bronze plaque for those who gave their lives 1914-19, bearing the name of the deceased, were in this case sent to the widow of L/Cpl. John Conway, who presented them to the Regimental Museum through the good offices of Mr. Norman Brooks, the civilian clerk employed in the office of "A" Company (Mx) 5th (V) Battalion The Queen's Regiment.

Presented by Mrs. E. Garratt, widow of L/Cpl. J. Conway.

Medals of Cpl. F. J. H. Beesley

This group of medals consists of the British War

Medal, the Victory Medal of World War I and the Defence Medal 1939-45. Frederick James Henry Beesley enlisted into the 4/10th Battalion of the Regiment on July 10, 1915, being given the regimental number TF/21511 and employed as a bandsman, an employment he retained until April 1916, when he became a rifleman. On his eighteenth birthday, January 22, 1917, he was posted to the 2/10th Battalion, then fighting in Palestine, where he later took part in the first battle of Gaza and the subsequent actions in that theatre of war. In January 1918 he was posted to Headquarters 160th Brigade, 53rd Division, in which the Battalion was serving, being employed as a driver on the Brigade Horse Transport. When the 2/10th Battalion was disbanded in August 1918 he was posted to the Royal Welsh Fusiliers and served with them when Jerusalem was captured, this being the thirty-fourth time it had been captured and recaptured in its long history. On the renumbering of the Territorial Force in 1916 he was given the regimental number TF/293646, the number stamped on his two original medals. This number he retained until his discharge on February 17, 1919. The following day he enlisted in the Post Bellum Army as a "Four-Year Bountyman" and later was posted to the 2nd Battalion, with whom he returned to the Middle East serving in Abbassia Barracks, Cairo, until he transferred to the Royal Army Pay Corps in October 1920, retaining his Army number of 6191743. In this Corps he was promoted Corporal and in this rank after service in Sidi Bisir, Egypt, took his discharge on March 3, 1923, on the termination of his engagement.

Presented by his widow, Mrs. F. J. H. Beesley.

PERSONAL JOTTINGS

We were very sorry to get news that Lt. Alan Allchorne, who had regularly attended the 2/7th Battalion dinner, was forced to miss it this year as he was just recovering from an operation.

We sincerely hope that he is now restored to full health again.

When renewing his annual subscription to the *Newsletter* recently, ex-Sgt. D. C. Barr (6208127), who served in "B" Company of the 2/7th Battalion, sent his best wishes to his old comrades.

A newly joined member of the Regimental Association is ex-Bdsm. Harry Bywaters (18829 and 6189656). He enlisted at the Depot, Mill Hill, on February 17, 1919, and served with the 2nd Battalion until 1928 in Egypt, Singapore and India. He was a good sportsman, particularly at hockey.

On leaving the service he joined the Corps of Commissionaires and was employed by General Motors, for whom he worked for 38 years.

During the 1939-45 war he was called up and served with the RAF at Uxbridge and in Egypt, which did not look so good to him the second time. Whilst with the RAF he played hockey for 42 Group.

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Congratulations and best wishes to those three 7th Battalion octogenarians, ex-Sgt. Ernie Dadson, Major Sir Harold Gillett Bart, MC, and ex-Cpl. "Mum" Ellis, who celebrated their birthdays on October 26, 27 and 28 respectively.

Her Majesty The Queen has given unrestricted permission to Lt.-Col. Julian Du Parc Braham to accept and wear the decoration of the Grand Croix of the Order of San Carlos conferred upon him by the President of the Republic of Colombia in recognition of his services.

Capt. David Falcke has been appointed Staff Captain (A) to HQ 19 Airportable Brigade, Colchester.

We were delighted to hear recently from ex-Sgt. Albert "Oscar" Geary, whom we have not seen for some time.

In order to live in comparative comfort as old age approaches he and his wife moved last October to a nice little one-bedroomed bungalow at Bishops' Stortford.

Major Malcolm Gilham, now serving on the staff of HQ South-East District, Aldershot, has been appointed to take command of the Depot, The Queen's Division in March 1976.

Ex-Drum Major "Tiny" Goddard, MM, BEM, who as a corporal won the Military Medal when serving with the 1st Battalion in Hong Kong, has recently returned from a visit to the Colony, where he met ex-Pte. Jackson, who is now a security guard at Land Forces HQ, and also Joe Lapski, who runs a printing business in Icehouse Street. During his stay he was able to pay three visits to Stanley and two to Sun Wai, in addition to a walk from his old pill box to Stanley Fort. In writing of his last-named journey he says "About 10 bloody miles, but a few cool beers at the end of the journey made it feel well worth it".

Major Ken Hardcastle informs us that he has now changed his address to "Crossways", Ringstead, Hunstanton, Norfolk, and would like all his old friends to note this.

As it was not all then available, the personal information about Major John Hesketh in the last issue (No. 27) of *The Die-Hards Newsletter* was somewhat sketchy.

On arrival in India in 1943 he was sent on an LAA course and afterwards posted to 14th Indian LAA Regiment at Mehgaon in the Central Provinces. In March 1945 he was posted as a staff captain "Q" to HQ 4th Corps, and in July that year he was posted as a staff captain to HQ 12th Army. He was promoted major in October 1945 and returned to the United Kingdom for demobilisation in February 1946.

It is probably not generally known that the originator of the Two Minutes Silence on Remembrance

Day was a Die-Hard named Edward George Honey, who served with the Regiment throughout the 1914-18 war. Writing under the *nom de plume* of Jarren Forrester he suggested this tribute in *The Evening News* of May 8, 1919, and it was adopted by all the Allies.

In August 1922, as a result of suffering from consumption and the effects of his war service, he died—in poverty. The following pathetic few words were written of him after his death: "The world has forgotten him. The world cannot be blamed for it, for it never knew him while he lived".

A recent visitor to the County Office at Edgware was Mr. L. E. Howell, who joined the 3rd Battalion in February 1917 and served with that battalion until October 1917, when he was transferred to the Suffolk Regiment. In 1919 he was again transferred, this time as a musician to the RAMC Staff Band, in whose strength he remained until his discharge from the Army. He is now employed at the Boosey and Hawkes works adjacent to the TAVR Centre at Edgware, and as a member of the Mill Hill Branch frequently attends their monthly meetings.

A quite unexpected but very welcome visitor to the County Office last month was Mr. W. McClumpha (23950821), who served in the 1st Battalion from 1963 to 1967 and then with 1 Queen's. He was also batman-driver to Major-General Christopher Man when the General was GOC of 49 (West Riding and North Midlands) Division District.

He now lives at Stevenage, Herts, and works for Bowaters.

As a result of his visit he has been enrolled as a member of the Regimental Association.

It was with some surprise that we received news last month that "Jock" McNeill, the honorary secretary of our Portsmouth and Gosport Branch, had had to go into hospital for another operation for hernia. When he wrote giving us this information he was convalescing at home and progressing well.

We wish him a speedy and complete recovery to his old form.

One of our latest recruits to the Regimental Association, ex-C/Sgt. Tom Minski, who has had a very rough time in hospital during the past few months, gave us a very pleasant surprise when we met him at the Princess Louise's Kensington Regimental annual reunion on November 9. Due to his great willpower he has made a remarkable recovery and appears now to be in comparatively robust health. Well done, Tom!

Another recent visitor to the County Office at Edgware was ex-WO2 A. P. O'Gorman. He enlisted into the Regiment in 1958 and served with the 1st Battalion in Cyprus, BAOR and at Lydd. He will be remembered as the Orderly Room corporal, and later sergeant, and also for his exploits on the rugby field.

After Lydd he moved to Home Counties Brigade Depot and then on to the Queen's Own Buffs in Hong Kong. In 1967 he became Chief Clerk at the Depot Queen's Regiment, and in 1969 he was posted to Camp Farelf, Singapore, when he was promoted to WO2 (ORQMS). In 1972 he joined 3 Queen's.

He has just been granted a Short Service Combatant commission in the Queen's Regiment and posted to the 1st Battalion.

Recently a 10-year-old boy, named Christopher Ashby, handed in to the office at Edgware an athletics team medal for the high jump for 1939 which he had found in an old typewriter bought at a jumble sale. The winner of this medal at the last sports of the 2nd Battalion before the war was Pte. Pearce, HQ Company.

If any reader knows of his whereabouts or, if he has since died, that of his next of kin, he should inform the Editor so that the medal can be returned.

Noel Peters (PS/1841), that loyal veteran of the 16th (Public Schools) Battalion, writes to let us know that a short while ago he was one of a party who made a pilgrimage to Belgium and France, and that he was able to visit Bucquoy, near Beaumont Hamel, where the 16th Battalion lost so many men on July 1, 1916. On the occasion of this visit he was chosen to carry the Union Jack at the head of a procession in which there were 42 French standards from 42 villages in the area of the Somme.

Brigadier Basil Rackham presided at the Gallipoli Association dinner which was held at the RAF Club, Piccadilly, on October 3 and was attended by 60 veterans and their guests.

The latest news of Major Michael Rose is that, although he is still in a critical condition after the mine explosion in Dhofar which necessitated the amputation of both his feet, he is making slow progress towards recovery.

He is now in the Westminster Hospital, London.

Major Lewis Shaw, formerly of the 9th Battalion and a consistent supporter of our Officers' Club functions, is retiring from business at the end of the year and thereafter will be living on the continent in Italy.

We hope, and believe, that he will still keep in touch and appear, whenever he can, at our functions.

At the annual reunion of the Officer Prisoners of War (1914-18) Dining Club held on October 30 at the RAF Club, Piccadilly, Col. Ronald Sherbrooke-Walker was in the chair.

Although he only joined the Officers' Club early last year, Major "Tommy" Thompson, formerly of the 9th Battalion, is in age our oldest member. In recognition of this Lt.-Col. Graham Fox who served with him in the 1914-18 war has kindly written an interesting article about him and his service with the 9th Battalion, which is reproduced on page 6.

In a letter to Len Johnson, honorary secretary of the WO's and Sergeants Branch, ex-Sgt. A. E. ("Ginger") Wadsworth, who will be well remembered by many Die-Hards, especially those with the 1st Battalion in Hong Kong, apologises for being unable, owing to his work, to attend many of the monthly meetings. He would, however, much like to hear from his contemporaries. His address is 15 Newton Road, Farnborough, Hants.

MAJOR H. W. THOMPSON, MBE

"Tommy", as he was known in the Regiment, was educated at Tonbridge School, commissioned to the 9th Battalion in 1908 and served with the Battalion from then until the end of 1919, when on returning home for demobilisation he transferred to the TARO.

The Battalion was embodied in 1914 when on training and proceeded to Sittingbourne, whence it departed for India in the same year. In 1915 "Tommy" volunteered in response to an appeal for officer reinforcements to go to Mesopotamia, where (I think) he joined a Regular battalion of the Norfolks. He was wounded with that battalion and returned to India, where he rejoined the 9th. When the Battalion was mobilised for service in Mesopotamia "Tommy" returned to that expeditionary force with his battalion and was present at the siege of Nejeef, the battle of the Jebel Hamreen, the crossing of the Lesser Zab and the last battle against the Turks at Sherghat. At Nejeef the Hawaish Mound which he captured with a platoon was subsequently known as "Tommy's Mound".

In the spring of 1919 a composite battalion was formed for the Army of Occupation consisting of personnel from the 5th East Surreys, the Queen's West Surreys and the 9th Middlesex. Tommy commanded the Middlesex Company in that Battalion.

When in May 1919 trouble started in Kurdistan the Middlesex Company was sent with the initial punitive force and was in action at Quara Anjir, Chem Chemal, the Bazyan Pass en route for Sulamanyah.

At the battle of the Bazyan Pass Sheik Mahmud, the Kurdish leader, was wounded and when "Tommy" found him he relieved him of his dagger and thus the notorious Mahmud surrendered his arms on the field of battle. "Tommy" has that dagger today and has promised to leave it under his will to the Regimental Museum together with his own medals.

At the end of 1919 the Kurdistan operations closed down, when "Tommy" was awarded the MBE, one of his subalterns, N. W. Clarke, having been awarded MC whilst serving with him in that campaign.

Shortly after demobilisation, on return home, Tommy developed TB and went to the TB sanatorium at Midhurst, where he made a good recovery and was able to resume his peacetime activities as a preparatory school master at Wellesley House, Westgate-on-Sea.

Despite his TB record he managed somehow at the outbreak of World War II to join the Royal Regiment of Artillery and so during the second war he served as a gunner as his old 9th Battalion did. A strange coincidence, which did nothing to affect his status as a dedicated "Diehard" now retired and living at Worthing, with a copy of "Steady the Drums" and a Regimental Ice Bucket drum to keep him going not to mention an extraordinarily well preserved batch of photographs taken during his service with the Battalion. In age the senior surviving member of the Battalion.

G.L.F.

CORRESPONDENCE

From: Lt.-Col. D. E. Simpson, TD
Deems Cottage,
Caledon Close,
Beaconsfield,
October 6, 1974.

The Editor,
The Die-Hards Newsletter
Dear Sir,

As there have been some worries expressed regarding the safety of the old Colours of the 7th Battalion since they were laid up at the Hornsey Parish Church, I have been asked by the Deputy Colonel (Middlesex) to let you know the situation and to ask you to publish this letter.

Since the old parish church was demolished the Colours are hanging in the temporary church, which is the church hall a few hundred yards west and on the opposite side of the road. The hall has been consecrated for services and is now only used for worship as a church. No other activities take place in the hall itself.

The Colours are on what should be called the "west" end of the hall, facing the altar, and our memorial screen is used as the reredos of the altar.

When the new church is built, all the plans have been cleared, there will be a 7th Middlesex Memorial Chapel incorporated in the scheme, and the Colours, together with that of the old Hampstead Volunteers, will be taken there.

That the church authorities treasure both the Colours and the memorial screen I know well, and the rector recently assured me that they are honoured to have them in their safe keeping and more than anxious to see once again a proper memorial chapel in use.

Any Die-Hard, whether 7th or any other battalion, would be welcome at the church for a service or if he wishes to see the Colours.

I hope that this will set your readers' minds at rest.

Yours sincerely,
D. E. SIMPSON (Lt.-Col.).



THE MIDDLESEX REGIMENT GOLF SOCIETY

Autumn Meeting 1974

Another very successful and enjoyable meeting was held on the course of the North Hants Golf Club, Fleet, on Friday, October 11.

A total of 26 took part, thus equalling the record attendance set up for the autumn meeting in 1972. Of the entrants we were particularly pleased to welcome as newcomers Majors Hugh Lohan and Harold Couch.

The support given to these meetings by serving members is very much appreciated. At this meeting there were six altogether, including two COs (Lt.-Col. Mike Hayward, 1 Queen's and Lt.-Col. John Hewson, 6 (V) Queen's).

The detailed results, each decided over 18 holes, were as follows:

Stableford Singles		Points scored
Major J. I. D. Pike (winner, Horton Cup)	31*
Capt. R. J. Tarrant (runner-up)	31
Lt.-Col. T. W. Chattey	30
Master Howard Clayden	29
Lt.-Col. J. R. B. Worton	28
Mr. N. A. Taylor	28
Mr. G. A. Taylor	27
Capt. P. S. Ingham	25
Mr. C. Holdford	24
Mr. T. F. Jones	24
Mr. M. R. T. Walden	24
Lt.-Col. C. N. Clayden	23
Lt.-Col. M. V. Hayward	22
Major R. C. H. Bellers	22
Mr. M. H. P. Ingham	21
Major G. Goring	20
Major A. R. Bisset	19
Major H. E. Couch	19
Mr. N. A. Brooks	19
Capt. M. J. Ball	15
Mr. M. J. Chillery	15
Mr. E. Johnson	14
Mr. C. D. Matthews	13
Lt.-Col. J. M. Hewson	11
Major H. M. du V. Lohan	11
Mrs. C. N. Clayden (divot)	8

*The winner was decided on the better score over the last nine holes.

Bogey Foursomes		Score
Major J. I. D. Pike and Mr. M. R. T. Walden (winners, Jay Trophy)	5 down
Lt.-Col. C. N. Clayden and Major G. Goring (runners-up)	7 down†
Capt. M. J. Ball and Mr. M. H. R. Ingham	7 down
Mr. N. A. Taylor and Mr. G. A. Taylor	7 down
Lt.-Col. M. V. Hayward and Lt.-Col. J. M. Hewson	8 down
Lt.-Col. T. W. Chattey and Major A. R. Bisset	10 down
Mr. H. J. Chillery and Mr. T. F. Jones	11 down
Major H. E. Couch and Capt. R. J. Tarrant	12 down
Lt.-Col. J. R. B. Worton and Mr. C. D. Matthews	13 down
Capt. P. S. Ingham and Mr. N. A. Brooks	14 down
Mr. C. Holdford and Master Howard Clayden	15 down

†The runners-up were decided on the best score over the last nine holes.

Before asking Mrs. "Tossie" Worton kindly to present the prizes, Lt.-Col. Tom Chattey thanked all those present for supporting the meeting and especially those who had come from a distance.

FREE NEWSLETTERS

The Editor wishes to thank Capt. F. G. Ashby, AM, Mr. T. A. Barton, TD, Lt. T. W. Deeves, CMG, CBE, MC, Mr. W. J. Gilyatt, MBE, Mr. H. Gribble and Mr. G. S. Hurlock for their generosity in paying extra subscriptions so that free copies of *The Die-Hards Newsletter* can be sent to deserving Old Comrades.

7th MIDDLESEX OFFICERS' CLUB DINNER

The 47th annual dinner of the 7th Middlesex Officers' Club was held at the United Service and Royal Aero Club on Thursday, November 7, 1974.

Lt.-Col. J. D. Gunnell, TD, presided and the official guest of the evening was Lt.-Col. J. M. Hewson, MC, Commanding 6th (V) Battalion The Queen's Regiment.

Others present were:

Col. A. M. Man, DSO, OBE	Capt. M. J. S. Doran
Col. J. P. A. McAdam, OBE (guest)	Capt. S. le M. Enthoven
Col. D. R. W. Thomas, MBE	Capt. J. Spencer Richards
Col. F. Walden, MBE, DL	Capt. D. O. M. Thomas
Lt.-Col. J. C. du Parc Braham, TD	Capt. J. Webb
Lt.-Col. P. J. Hall, OBE, TD	Capt. G. J. Young, TD
Lt.-Col. D. E. Simpson, TD	Lt. D. H. S. Herriott
Major M. J. Beaumont, TD	Lt. S. B. Hurst
Major R. M. Cain	Lt. T. C. R. Hutton
Major P. M. Crossland (guest)	Lt. P. J. Orino
Major S. L. J. Henshaw, TD	Lt. J. R. Spooner
Major R. J. Leighton, TD	Lt. R. G. C. Thornton
Major M. L. Muirhead	Lt. J. A. van de Pol
Major J. E. Naish, TD	Mr. D. McDavid (guest)
Major B. St. G. A. Reed, MC	Mr. M. H. D. Milne (guest)
Major R. W. J. Smith, MBE (guest)	

NEWSLETTER EXPENSES

The Editor gratefully acknowledges a donation from Mr. H. J. Mellor towards the expenses of producing *The Die-Hards Newsletter*.

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OBITUARY

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

BIRD—He enlisted in the Regiment on November 22, 1911, as George Poulter, the name of his stepfather. In August 1914 he went to the BEF with the 4th Battalion, and was with "D" Company at Obourg Station on August 23 when the opening shots of the Battle of Mons were fired. Here he was wounded and taken prisoner, returning home on the signing of the Armistice, when he joined the 6th (Special Reserve) Battalion. On the termination of his service he was employed as a tailor, a skill for which he became a craftsman as a result of his training in the tailor's shop during his soldiering days. In 1936 he enrolled in the Territorial Army, joining 345 Company, RE. In 1940 he was employed at 12th Fighter Group HQ until 1941, when he was posted to a searchlight battery as a bombardier. He remained with this unit for three years. He was then attached to the Intelligence Corps in Belgium until June 1945, when he was demobilised.

For many years he made the annual pilgrimage to Mons in August and to Brussels on November 11 for the Remembrance Day Service.

He was the secretary of the London Branch of the Old Contemptibles and published an informative and humorous newsletter to keep this rapidly diminishing group of veterans up to date with old soldier news. For many years he held office at the St. Kilda's Club at North Finchley, a club for ex-Servicemen of all arms of the service.

Harry Bird was a great character and will be missed by a host of friends, both British and Belgian.

CLARKE—On October 26, 1974, ex-Sgt. Walter Clarke (M/T 078920), aged 93. He enlisted in the Regiment in 1899, joining the 1st Battalion in India after his initial training. In 1905 he was invalided home to Netley Hospital and discharged on medical grounds due to heart trouble. Re-enlisting on the outbreak of war in 1914 he was posted to the Army Service Corps and served with the BEF in 1915 and 1916. In 1916 he was attached to the Serbian Army in Salonika as motor transport sergeant of 708 Company. He was a member of the Corps when it became the Royal Army Service Corps in 1918 in recognition of its services on the various battle fronts. He was finally discharged in 1919, again on medical grounds, and was awarded the 1914-15 Star, British War Medal and Victory Medal and, in addition, the silver badge for those invalided on war service. His last years were spent in the Star and Garter Home for Disabled Sailors, Soldiers and Airmen at Richmond. In the words of the matron, "he slipped away quietly" in the early hours of October 26.

FULKER—On October 19, 1974, ex-Pte. Henry Fulker (6090), aged 92. He enlisted into the Middlesex Regiment, Militia, in the name of Henry Faulkner on December 28, 1899. He was discharged from the Militia on February 1900, and enlisted into the Middlesex Regiment the following day. He saw service in the Boer War with the 2nd Battalion and, on returning home after the war, he was posted to the 1st Battalion in India. On August 1, 1904, he claimed a transfer to the 2nd Battalion The Border Regiment in order to serve with an elder brother. He served with that Regiment until he was transferred to the Army Reserve in February 1908 and was discharged on termination of his engagement on February 8, 1912. He enlisted into Section "D", Army Reserve, The Border Regiment, in the name of Henry Fulker on February 26, 1912. Mobilised on August 5, 1914, he was later transferred to the Military Fort Police in October 1916. He was discharged on ceasing to fulfil Army physical requirements on July 12, 1918. He subsequently served in the Metropolitan Police until his final retirement on reaching the age limit.

HAMILTON—On September 11, 1974, suddenly, Major J. A. ("Sammy") Hamilton, TD. Although he had been in ill health for some time, his death was nevertheless unexpected. "Sammy" joined the 8th Battalion in the early 1930s and, apart from a short period when he was with the Royal Military Police, served continuously with the Regiment until the end of the last war. Whilst with the 8th Battalion he was wounded at Dunkirk and never entirely recovered. On demobilisation he resumed his career in the City, where he was a partner in a large firm of stockbrokers. For 14 years "Sammy" was a member of the Stock Exchange Council and this year he was the Renter Warden of the Worshipful Company of Turners, of which he had been a member for a considerable time.

He was a delightful person with a keen sense of humour and ready wit and never seemed to change in spite of the passing years. He leaves a widow, two children and three grandchildren, to whom we extend our deepest sympathy.

(With acknowledgements to Major G. Hartley, TD, DL.)

HASTIE—On September 27, 1974, ex-WO2 Albert John Hastie (6200798), aged 60. He enlisted in the Regiment on January 16, 1933, and, after completing his recruit training at the Depot at Mill Hill, joined the 2nd Battalion at Colchester. He went to Egypt on October 22, 1935, and returned to the United Kingdom in February 1936, serving on what was then known as the "Save Egypt draft". He rejoined the 2nd Battalion and during the 1939-45 war saw active service in North-West Europe in 1939-40 and 1944-45.

He was finally discharged in January 1955 on the completion of 22 years with the Colours. On retirement he became a civil servant at Portsmouth and remained as such up to the time of his death.

He was an active member of the Portsmouth and Gosport Branch and he will be sadly missed by his many old comrades.

OSBORNE—On October 17, 1974, peacefully at home, Coralie, widow of Col. the Rev. Henry P. Osborne, Osborne, DSO, late 3rd Battalion, who commanded the 12th (Service) Battalion during the 1914-18 war.

WATSON—On August 28, 1974, Lt.-Col. Douglas Barker Watson, aged 78. He was commissioned in the Regiment at the outbreak of war in 1914 and joined the 2/10th Battalion at Stamford Brook with his brother, R. O. C. Watson, who fell at the first Battle of Gaza on March 26, 1917. "DB", as he was known to all, served with distinction throughout the Suvla Bay (Gallipoli), Egyptian and Palestine campaigns, 1914-18, and was awarded the Military Cross. Having been recom-

mended for, and taken, a Regular commission, he joined the 1st Battalion at Gravesend early in 1919 and served with that Battalion until his retirement, when he was transferred to the Regular Army Reserve of Officers. On the outbreak of the 1939-45 war he rejoined the 2nd Battalion at Gosport and went to France with that battalion. He was subsequently posted to the Royal Engineers School of Transport and then to the Railway Transport Centre, Halifax, after which he became Commandant of an Army camp at Bordon, Hants.

Between the wars and after the 1939-45 war he was employed by the Canadian Pacific Railway, finally retiring from that company as European freight manager.

For the past seven years "DB" was the president of the 2/10th Battalion OCA. He will long be remembered as a warm-hearted and generous friend and comrade, and his passing leaves us all the poorer.

(With acknowledgements to Mr. A. D. Scudamore, OBE, honorary secretary, 2/10th Battalion OCA.)

ASSOCIATION NEWS

Secretary's Notes

Benevolent Cases

During the period January 1 to October 31, 1974, the sum of £914.80 was expended in making grants to 62 ex-members of the Regiment.

An additional £844 was received from the Army Benevolent Fund as a result of applications by the Regimental Association and was used to assist 11 major benevolent cases.

Donations—Charitable Fund

The secretary gratefully acknowledges donations to the Charitable Fund from Sqn. Ldr. J. M. Bell, Mr. B. A. Crawley, Brigadier N. P. Procter, CBE, MC, Madame F. Delvaux-Wattier, Mr. R. B. Glassup, Mr. C. H. Goff and Mr. R. Groombridge.

The 2/7th Battalion (1939-45) at their annual dinner collected and donated to the Charitable Fund the magnificent sum of £45.60.

Church Service at Royal Hospital Chelsea

Our annual church service at the Royal Hospital, Chelsea, took place on Sunday, October 27, 1974. A party of 50 members and their wives attended, headed by the president of the Regimental Association, Col. A. S. J. de S. Clayton, OBE, DL, and Mrs. Clayton.

The Old Comrades, under the command of Major R. W. J. Smith, MBE, were inspected by the Deputy Governor.

The standard was carried by Mr. G. S. Hurlock. A. E. F. W.

EALING BRANCH

The proposed amalgamation of Ealing with Hounslow Branch has not materialised, so we are back to square one.

At our last branch meeting it was decided to carry on as we are, holding two meetings a year, in April and September, at 56 Warksworth Gardens, Isleworth TW7 5JP. We shall at least be able to sit and talk (and afterwards drink) in comfort.

Our very able treasurer (Andy) will get most of the boys there and I shall see that they go home reasonably sober!

The Ruston Memorial plaque was duly handed over to the museum at Bruce Castle together with a memorial plaque of the 2/10th Battalion and the medals of our late Mr. Fred Beesley of that Battalion 1914-18. Congratulations to those who run the museum—it's a picture.

Glads to report the good health of most of our members and I am sure they join me in sending good wishes to all Die-Hards.

ALBERT WHITE.

HONG KONG BRANCH

Regrettably the number of Die-Hards in the Colony has dwindled in the last few years. In an attempt to contact any who may be unaware of the existence of the Hong Kong Branch an advertisement is to be placed in the local press.

Known Die-Hards in the Colony at present are Lt.-Col. Maurice Leonard, OBE, RMP, who is APM at Headquarters Land Forces. He served with the 1st Battalion between 1945 and 1947, with the 2nd Battalion in Palestine 1947-48 and again with the 1st Battalion 1952-55. Capt. Simon Yates, honorary secretary of the Hong Kong Branch, is serving on the staff of HQ Land Forces as Staff Captain "Q" Quartering.

Mr. Arthur Jackson (6196911), served with the 1st Battalion from 1936 to 1966 and is employed by the Army Department Police at HQ Land Forces and wishes to be remembered to old friends.

Recent Die-Hard visitors to Hong Kong have been Brigadier Denis Rendell, the Provost Marshal (Army), who was passing through having visited RMP units in Singapore and Hong Kong and Major Tony Lowrie, who served with the 1st Battalion from 1964 and subsequently with 4 Queen's before transferring to the Gurkhas in 1969. He has now left the Army and is working in the stockbroking field.

The hillside Middlesex Badge, which those who have served out here will recall is on the hill to the north of Gallipoli Barracks (formerly San Wai Camp) in the New Territories, has recently been refurbished by the Royal Hong Kong Regiment (the Volunteers) and is once again a dominating landmark.

I had hoped to include a photo and negative of the hillside badge but the PR genius photographer destroyed the negative by accident!

S. Y.

HORNSEY AND ENFIELD BRANCH

Once again members of the Hornsey and Enfield Branch attended the Hornsey Parish Church Remembrance service.

The first part of the service and the Silence were held in the old churchyard of St. Mary's; 14 ex-members of the 7th Battalion paraded there along the same path where the Battalion used to line up with the Old Comrades. Our small numbers were a far cry from the days when we filled half the nave of St. Mary's Church; the band accompanied the organ and the Colours were laid on the altar.

After the Silence individual and organisation wreaths were laid in the churchyard at the old

church tower, but ours were reserved for later in the service.

We then all moved across the road to the temporary St. Mary's Church, which is the former church hall.

Here we were surrounded by familiar things. The altar reredos and the altar were from our old Memorial Chapel in the old church, the Book of Remembrance of the 1939-45 war rested on the altar and proudly on the west wall of the church were hung the laid-up Colours of the 7th.

During the service in church, after the first hymn, the Rector referred to the connections of the 7th Battalion and the church, to the altar and reredos, and the Colours, and then our wreaths were laid at the altar rail. This year the one from the Hornsey and Enfield Branch was laid by Les Hosslen and that from the 7th Middlesex Officers' Club by Lt.-Col D. E. Simpson.

What memories were recalled of services in the old St. Mary's, when three wreaths were laid, the Battalion CO marching up in company with the others! I felt their ghosts with us as we went up this year.

The service ended—back to Hornsey Drill Hall for a drink and a talk. There were about 24 Die-Hards there this year, the oldest being "Sandy" Savage, who joined the 7th in 1912.

Let us have some more of you younger old ones in 1975. You will be welcomed at church as well as at the Drill Hall.

D. E. S.

MILL HILL BRANCH

As will be seen in the obituary column, the Grim Reaper has been busy during the quarter taking his toll, especially of our own branch members. Two were nonagenarians: Walter Clark, who was 93, and Harry Fulker, who was 92—185 years between them. That takes us back to 1789, when the 77th Regiment were in Bombay preparing to take the field against Tippoo Sultan and gaining the Regiment's earliest battle honour, "Mysore". One other casualty was that well-known ebullient character, Harry Bird, who always drew a noisy and enthusiastic company around him at any gathering. You could hear his chattering whatever the subject under discussion may be, his comments being as sharp as the needles he wielded so dexterously in his chosen craft as a tailor.

The Remembrance ceremonies, as will be read elsewhere in this *Newsletter*, were well supported by members of the branch. Not only well supported, but also well recorded on an excellent film taken by Mrs. Vera Kerswill at Westminster Abbey on November 9 and at Inglis Barracks on November 10. Most striking was the alignment of the three Pensioners of the Royal Hospital, Chelsea, as they escorted the regimental standard across the grass to our own regimental plot. The dressing was perfect, giving the impression from the right flank that it was one scarlet uniformed body with six feet! At the mini-reunion in the drill hall at Edgware, after the parade at our regimental memorial on Sunday it was a pleasure to see a table surrounded by former bandsmen and drummers who had been encouraged to be present by Mr. A. R. Drane. The old "badgies" were Major C. W. Donaldson,

Messrs. Harry Bywaters, George Chacksfield, "Babe" Denton, "Wag" Hamlin, Fred Hazlewood, Ted Hill, Arthur Lewin, Stan Lloyd, Eric Phillips, John Rolfe and Ted Souch, plus "Brewer" Drane, as mentioned above, and myself, 14 in all.

The most recent event was the club Christmas draw, ably organised and run by Stan and Vera Kerswill, assisted by their daughter, Valerie. There were 100 prizes, the most expensive being a crocheted shawl donated by ex-Sgt. "Ginger" Short, MM, who won his decoration, an immediate award, in North Russia in 1919. This beautiful article was won by Mrs. Short and eventually won by Richard Plumb, the son of Sgt. Les Plumb, now a staff recruiter. In a branch newsletter I had made a humorous suggestion for members to come to the draw and maybe they would win a flask of whisky or perhaps a bouquet of thistles, due to the draw being held on St. Andrew's night. Vera Kerswill joined in the spirit of the suggestion and constructed a prize of a plastic frame coming from the earth in a flowerpot, the greenery being a sprig of thistle leaves with ill-intentioned and needle-sharp prickles, the "fruit" being two miniature bottles of whisky. The fond hope was that it would come to me as a prize, but Nemesis is remorseless and it was won by the instigator, Vera Kerswill herself. To offset this sharp riposte, a bouquet of flowers was presented to Vera to express the appreciation of the branch for the hard toil she had put in, the presentation being made by Mrs. Mollie Walden.

On this note of the start of our Yuletide festivities I must close these, the Mill Hill notes for 1974. To Die-Hards of all branches of the Association, of all generations and in all climes, we send our comradely greetings for a joyous Noel and a year of peace and contentment in 1975. God bless you all.

MAJOR DICK SMITH.

PORTSMOUTH AND GOSPORT BRANCH

It is on a sad note that I have to open this issue of our notes for the *Newsletter*, and that is the loss of one of our faithful members, namely Bert Hastie, who passed away suddenly, which was a great shock to us all.

Bert was a great believer in the Regimental Association and its ideals. He was always cheerful and had a happy, good-natured disposition.

The branch attended his funeral and the Requiem Mass held at St. John's Catholic Cathedral, Portsmouth.

Wreaths were sent by both the branch and the Regimental Association and these were greatly appreciated by his widow. Bert will be much missed by his many old pals and at the annual reunions.

Branch activities have been rather at a loss these past few months, with attendances only averaging five or six, so it is just a natter and home.

It is very disappointing and disheartening the lack of response we received in trying to get members to attend. With all the ex-members located in this area we should be able to get some really enjoyable evenings, but they don't want to know, so what does one do?

R. McN.

WOs AND SERGEANTS' BRANCH

By the time this contribution of ours is published 1974 will have drawn to a close.

Looking back over the year it does not appear to have been very bright as regards the everyday way of life. We have had power and fuel strikes and go slow on the railway, shortages of and increased cost of petrol, shortages of sugar and salt, the General Elections, increases in the cost of living and more than our share of bad weather.

However, there were some brighter moments that bring happy and cheerful memories. They were the times when, at the various functions organised by the Regimental Association and at the monthly meetings, we were able to enjoy the comradeship and happiness in meeting up with the many friends and comrades with whom we had once served. It could be clearly seen at all these events that so long as the Die-Hards spirit of *esprit de corps* is maintained, and our bond of comradeship is fostered, a silver lining will always appear in whatever dark cloud hovers above.

This spirit has certainly been shown by our members by their attendance at meetings. Throughout the year solid support has been given each month and though, as it is only to be expected, numbers dropped during the holiday season, they have now got back to normal.

Strong support has also been given to our Christmas draw this year and, with the number of tickets sold far exceeding those of previous years, gives proof of the popularity of this annual event and of the members' appreciation of those who organise and run it.

At our meeting held in September we had the pleasure of entertaining four of our Chelsea Pensioners. Proof of the enjoyment they obtained from the hospitality of members present was shown not only by their personal thanks but by their reluctance to depart when the car arrived to take them back home.

Many of our members were present at the following functions held by the Association during the last quarter: the annual church parade at the Royal Chelsea Hospital on Sunday, October 27, the laying

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of crosses of Remembrance at Westminster Abbey on Saturday, November 9, the Remembrance Day service at Inglis Barracks and the reunion at Edgware on Sunday, November 10.

We were all very sorry to learn that Harry Parnell has been in hospital for some time and likely to remain there for some time yet. Although at the time of writing these notes full details of his condition are not known, we pray that he will recover. Men like Harry are hard to find, a true and worthy Die-Hard, one who, I know, will fight with Die-Hard spirit to overcome his illness and step out on the road of recovery.

Now with the hope that you will be reading this before Christmas Day dawns, may I wish all Die-Hards everywhere a very merry and enjoyable Christmas, coupled with best wishes for a very happy, healthy and prosperous New Year. May 1975 be bright, full of joy and happiness and as the bells toll out the end of 1974 I hope that you'll join me in drinking a toast to *The Die-Hards* and to success to our sister branches.

LEN JOHNSON.

2/7th BATTALION (1939-45) OCA

The annual reunion dinner was held on Friday, October 4, 1974, at the Victory Ex-Services Club, Seymour Street, London W2, with Lt.-Col. Dennis Robbins in the chair. The 67 members present were honoured by the presence of three guests, Col.

Aymar Clayton, Col. Fanny Walden and Major Frank Waldron. Another eight members had intended being present but were prevented from coming at the last moment.

As always happens, several people were attending for the very first time, and those within reasonable distance declared their intention of becoming regulars from now on.

A number of members came long distances to attend, including Ron Trafford from Saltburn, now in Cleveland but formerly in Yorkshire, and Roland Vielvoye from Plymouth.

There were over 30 letters and one telegram apologising for non-attendance, including letters from California, Iowa and British Columbia from Den Shillington, Joe Bird and C. R. D. Hastings respectively.

During the evening the usual collection was made for the Regimental Association and, together with contributions sent through the post by those unable to attend, realised £45.60.

Everyone present appeared to enjoy themselves and finally went home looking forward to meeting again at the same place on Friday, October 3, 1975, so if any former member of the 2/7th reads this who is not on the regular mailing list but would like to attend, he should write to the secretary of the Regimental Association, who will ensure that he receives the formal notice.

RON TAYLOR.