



# The Die-Hards

## NEWSLETTER

No. 29

MARCH 1975

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Editor: Col. F. WALDEN, M.B.E., D.L., T. & A.V.R. Centre,  
Deansbrook Road, Edgware, Middlesex.  
(Tel: 01-952 2625)

### Regimental Memorial in St. Paul's Cathedral

#### AN APPEAL

Despite the very sad fact that the name of our Regiment no longer appears on the Active List of the Army, we have taken two very positive steps to ensure that our famous and honoured name is perpetuated for posterity.

These two steps were the transfer of our Regimental Museum to Bruce Castle and the inauguration of our Regimental Baptistry and Chapel in St. Paul's.

There has been valid criticism that our Baptistry is not as clearly identified with our Regiment as it should be and, with this very aim in view, I am arranging with the Dean and Chapter that special plaques are to be erected under each set of Colours explaining when, where, to whom and by whom these Colours were presented. In addition, I have obtained approval for the Chapel to be equipped with regimental hassocks/kneelers.

The first step was to obtain a design for these kneelers showing our regimental crest and in our regimental colours. This has been carried out and I have made an initial order.

My next step, which I am taking now, is to appeal to your generosity in my endeavour to raise the money to meet this enterprise.

Each hassock will cost £10 and eventually we will require a total of 172. My initial order is for 50 and,

in view of rapidly escalating costs, I have also ordered materials for the remainder. I have been promised that the first dozen hassocks will be delivered in time for use in the two front pews on the occasion of our next Albuhera service in St. Paul's on Saturday, May 17, 1975.

These hassocks are being made by a lady who lives in Norfolk and a band of expert helpers, and I can assure you that the finished product is a work of art.

Please be as generous as you can. All contributions, whether large or small, will be most gratefully received and acknowledged. Perhaps our branches may consider raffles and sweepstakes in aid of this cause. We need every single penny we can get.

Donations should be sent to the Middlesex Regimental Kneeler Fund c/o RHQ The Queen's Regiment (Middlesex Office), TAVR Centre, Deansbrook Road, Edgware, Middlesex.

(Sgd.) AYMAR CLAYTON, Colonel,  
President of the Middlesex  
Regimental Association  
and  
Deputy Colonel (Middlesex)  
The Queen's Regiment.

*(A photograph in black and white of the hassock to be provided is on page 2)*



## Regimental Visit to Lille

NOVEMBER 22-24, 1974

The party from the Regimental Association who made the pilgrimage to Lille to commemorate the thirty-first anniversary of the death of Capt. Michael Trobas, the "Capitaine Michel" of the Réseau Farmer—Sylvestre group, was very small, consisting of Col. A. S. J. de S. Clayton, President of the Middlesex Regimental Association, Major A. E. F. Waldron, Secretary of the Middlesex Regimental Association, and Major R. W. J. Smith, Assistant Secretary, all of HQ staff. Also attending the ceremonies were Major R. J. P. Cummins, Capt. Peter Lane, Len and Michele Arlington, Capt. and Mrs. Stevenson, PC Barry Thomas and Mrs. Jenny Thomas (née Arlington) and Mrs. Bonny, who aided Len Arlington with forged identity cards during the occupation; she was then Mlle. Briani and a gallant patriot. All made the journey under their own arrangements, the Arlington party travelling in a mini-coach on the same ferry as the HQ party.

On arrival in France we were met by M. Julien Gerekens and M. Roland Vanhoutte, the latter making our visit more enjoyable whilst acting as courier and chauffeur throughout the three days. As in past years, the arrangements were in the able and efficient hands of "Jacky", commencing with a dinner, where we met Col. Robert Farret and Mme. Farret. Col. Farret has succeeded Col. Silberey at No. 2 CRS at Lambertsart, not only succeeding him in the appointment, but also in the comradeship and kindness between our regiment and the Police of Lille. Major Arthur Malfait, who continued as commander of the group after the death of Michael Trobas, was also at the dinner to welcome us.

The first ceremony on Saturday, the 23rd, was in Gondecourt, where the procession formed up in the Place de l'Eglise, and, led by the Mayor, M. Edouard Montaigne, and Col. Clayton, we made our way to the cemetery, the "village policeman" walking alongside us and flagging down the traffic. At the cemetery wreaths were placed on the memorial by the Mayor and by Col. Clayton, who placed a poppy wreath, complete with regimental badge. At the house which was the home of Mme. Pachy, a heroine of the Resistance, another wreath was placed by Major Cummins. The march was followed by refreshments and lunch as guests of the municipality of Gondecourt. At this ceremony Col. Renny presented copies of his book, autographing each copy.

As in past years, the party was entertained in the hall of *La Voix du Nord*, followed by a reception and dinner at No. 2 CRS, where we were greeted by Col. Farret and entertained by a number of old friends of the staff who always make us so welcome.

Sunday, the 24th, began with Mass at the Church of the Immaculate Heart of St. Mary at Lille Sud. After the service the members of the various associations formed up at the entrance to the southern cemetery, M. Marcel Fertein, the able lieutenant of Michael Trobas, taking a prominent part in the ceremonies which followed.

Wreaths were laid at the Monument Réseau Sylvestre by Col. Clayton, at the British sections by

Major Waldron and at the grave of Commandant Georges Bayart by Capt. Lane. From the cemetery we made our way to the building where Capt. Trobas fought his last fight and was killed. Here a wreath was placed on the wall by Major Smith. From this, the last of our solemn ceremonies, we made our way to the restaurant Ma Campagne in the Place de l'Esplanade, where we had aperitifs and lunch, during which the Croix du Capitaine Michel was presented to Major Waldron and Capt. Stevenson.

Small as was the group from the Association this year, the comradeship was great enough for a brigade, the solemnity as sincere as a Mass at Notre-Dame Cathedral and friendship cemented into a still stronger weld.

R.W.J.S.

### DERBY SWEEPSTAKE

A sweepstake on this year's Derby is being organised for the upkeep of the Regimental Memorial in St. Paul's Cathedral.

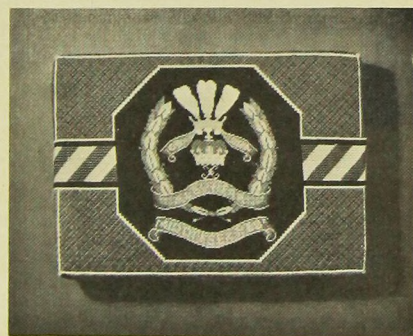
Tickets, costing 5p each, or 25p for a book of five, are now available.

Application for tickets should be made to the Secretary, Middlesex Regimental Association, Deansbrook Road, Edgware, Middlesex.

The following prizes will be awarded:

1st prize .. ..	25% of net proceeds
2nd prize .. ..	15% of net proceeds
3rd prize .. ..	10% of net proceeds

The result of the draw and the amount allocated to the Regimental Memorial will be notified to all concerned and published in the *Die-Hards Newsletter*.



A copy of the kneeler/hassock which is to be provided for use in the Regimental Chapel in the Baptistry of St. Paul's Cathedral.

It is maroon in colour with the diagonal stripes on either side of the Regimental badge in Regimental colours.

## REGIMENTAL MUSEUM

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

The following are recent acquisitions for the museum:

Medals of Lt. W. F. Jones, MC

Autographed copy of "Fragments from France"

Photograph of the First Territorial Camp

Medals of Lt. W. F. Jones, MC

This group of medals consist of the Military Cross, Queen's South Africa Medal with five clasps, King's South Africa Medal with two clasps, the British War Medal, the Victory Medal palm leaf denoting a Mention in Despatches and the Long Service and Good Conduct Medal. Before posting to the 21st Battalion (Islington), Lt. Jones had served with the 2nd Battalion The Dorset Regiment, holding the rank of corporal in 1899 and sergeant at the end of the war in 1902. The five clasps on the Queen's Medal are "Tugela Heights", "Orange Free State", "Relief of Ladysmith", "Transvaal" and "Laing's Nek". It appears that a sixth clasp, that of "Cape Colony", is missing as the Dorset Regiment was brigaded with our own 2nd Battalion throughout the Boer War in 10th Brigade, the two regiments being awarded the battle honour "Relief of Ladysmith" to be borne on their Colours. This honour covers the action at Spion Kop, January 24, 1900, where the Boers had the British infantry in a tough spot. Both Regiments also had South Africa awarded. At Allerman's Nek Cpl. Jones was in the first line, the Dorsets bearing the brunt of the attack, with the Middlesex in the second line. No details of Sgt. Jones's service with the Dorset Regiment is to hand but it appears that he was transferred to the Army Reserve prior to 1914 as his Long Service and Good Conduct Medal has the effigy of King Edward VII on the obverse. The two South Africa Medals have the regimental number 3056 engraved on the rim, as does the Good Conduct Medal. On the outbreak of war in 1914 experienced soldiers and trained non-commissioned officers were in great demand for the newly formed battalions of "Kitchener's Army". One of these battalions was the 21st (Service) Battalion (Islington) The Duke of Cambridge's Own (Middlesex Regiment) formed on May 18, 1915, having been raised by the then Mayor of Islington. On January 20, 1916, 2/Lt. W. F. Jones was gazetted and posted to the 21st Battalion. He was wearing the badges on his uniform, which he had seen so often during the campaign in South Africa, and knew he was with men whom he could rely upon to the death. Being an old soldier, he would also have known his parent regiment's history and have known that it once bore the territorial title "The East Middlesex Regiment", which was in 1809 the title adopted by the 77th Regiment, later 2nd Middlesex Regiment. Joining the BEF in France in 1916, he on August 4, 1916, led a raid on the enemy which was abortive due to the heavily fortified position of the enemy. Lt. Jones and his 10 soldiers were all wounded. For his leadership and bravery he was Mentioned in

Despatches. Returning to his battalion on recovery from his wounds, he was continuously in the line. At Mory on January 8, 1918, he was in command of "D" Company when he led a counter-attack on the enemy who had penetrated our trenches. He forced the enemy to retire after receiving many casualties, including the capture of 18 prisoners. Lt. Jones was awarded the Military Cross for gallantry, command and dash during this successful action. The battalion embarked for Folkestone on June 30, 1918, for the Division to be reconstructed, during which time the Armistice was signed and the unit disbanded in December 1918. This old soldier and officer of two wars once again retired with the satisfaction of knowing that he had served with honour the old queen, two kings and his country.

Presented by his son, Mr. F. R. Jones.

Autographed copy of "Fragments from France"

That Capt. Bruce Bairnsfather's cartoons of World War I were, and are, the most authentic picture story of life in the trenches from 1914 to 1918 is the considered opinion of many historians. This is, of course, true as far as the British "Tommy" is concerned with his ability to adapt himself with humour to weeks of subhuman and deadly existence. His "Old Bill" and "Our Bert" and "Alf" were typical of the soldiers who were credited with fighting "the Great War for civilisation", especially of the first three years. The first cartoon, "Well, if you knows a better 'ole, go to it", first published in *The Bystander*, made an immediate impact on both the serving soldier and the general public, as did the illustration of the old soldier and the youngster in the farmhouse with a shell hole in the wall, the young hand asking "Who made that 'ole?" and Old Bill's reply, "Mice". Officers, NCOs, the private soldiers, German officers and "Fritz", our own General Staff and the German High Command all come in for the humour of the artist who has experienced it all.

Bruce Bairnsfather was born at Murree in India in 1887 and was the son of a soldier. Before 1914 he had served as a Regular soldier and later as a civil engineer. On the outbreak of war in 1914 he was commissioned into the Royal Warwicks serving in France until the end of 1916 when he joined the staff at the War Office.

This copy of "Fragments" was the property of Capt. Hamilton Kenny RAMC who was apparently a close friend of Capt. Bairnsfather since written on the title page is "To E. Hamilton Kenny, Capt. RAMC", with the author's sketch of "Old Bill" and the word "ullo" and signed in full by Bruce Bairnsfather. Elsewhere is written by the author "To the one and only". The widow of Capt. Kenny gave the book to Mrs. Ceri Birdsall and eventually the book was given to the Regiment by her husband after her decease.

Presented by Mr. Freddy Birdsall, late TF/2702, 1/7th Battalion.



(EIGHTH EDITION)

*By N. M. Gregory*

*Am. No. 10*

# "THE BYSTANDER'S" FRAGMENTS FROM FRANCE

By  
CAPTAIN  
BRUCE  
BAIRNSFATHER

*-10*

*E. Hamilton. Kenny.*  
*Capt. Ramo*

*'ullo'*

*Bruce Bairnsfather*

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## Photograph of the First Territorial Camp

This photograph shows the officers of the 7th Battalion at Shoreham, August 1908. The battalion had been formed on April 1, 1908 as a unit of the Territorial Force, its previous title being 1st Volunteer Battalion, The Duke of Cambridge's Own (Middlesex Regiment). The Territorial Forces Act of 1907 decreed that the Volunteer units of the country became a part of a corps or regiment, the battalion taking its numerical title after the Special Reserve Battalion, ours at that date being 5th and 6th Battalions. The University Volunteers became Officers Training Corps. The officers in the photograph are Lt.-Col. E. J. King, later Col. Sir Edwin King, KCB, CMG, TD, DL, Lt.-Col. F. G. Collinson, VD, Major C. H. Pank, Capt. S. W. Cranfield, J. S. Drew, R. Gray, L. King, S. H. Low and L. A. White, Lts. K. A. L. Bennett, H. V. Bevington and E. P. Sells, 2/Lts. E. G. Frost, F. Gregory and A. C. Keen; the staff are Capt. C. A. S. Page (Adjutant), Capt. W. L. Gregory, RAMC (MD), and Capt. (QM) J. T. Hudson (Quartermaster).

The photograph was originally the property of Capt. Frank Gregory, who was born May 6, 1888, and was commissioned in the 1st Volunteer Battalion The Duke of Cambridge's Own (Middlesex Regiment) in November 1907, serving until 1911, when he resigned with the rank of lieutenant. In 1914 he rejoined the 14th Battalion of the Regiment and in 1915 was seconded to the 1st Battalion Royal Munster Fusiliers, 29th Division (known to the troops as "the bottle of Bass" due to the Divisional sign). He arrived in Gallipoli on May 15, was wounded on June 30 and evacuated to England. On recovery he was appointed Musketry Officer of the

14th (Reserve) Battalion. In 1916 he was posted to the 17th (First Football) Battalion and promoted Capt. in 1917 and as OC "C" Company was at the epic fight when Capt. McReady-Diarmid won the Victoria Cross, December 1, 1917. In March 1918 he was again wounded, returning to France in November 1918, when he was posted to 23rd (Second Football) Battalion. After the Armistice he was with the Army of Occupation in Germany and later posted for duty to Rotterdam, being demobilised in October 1919.

In civilian life he and his wife travelled extensively for a British firm in the Far East, Australia, West Indies and Canada. From 1940-45 he saw service as captain and adjutant the Singapore Volunteer Defence Corps and at the fall of the fortress he and his wife were interned from 1942-45. Returning to England in 1945, he settled in South Petherton, Somerset, undertaking several voluntary duties in spite of poor health and gave much time to the Royal British Legion. He died February 16, 1974.

Presented by Mrs. N. M. Gregory, widow of Capt. Frank Gregory.

The Curator is very keen to see, once more, the illustration "To the immortal memory". It depicts two of the 57th, wearing the coat of 1811 and without head-dress, in the ruins of a Spanish building, toasting the gallantry of their comrades who had fallen the day before at the Battle of Albuhera.

If any of our readers can help, it would be appreciated if they would get in touch with the Curator.



## DCMs CALLING

The Distinguished Conduct Medal League has a battle on hand—to remain in existence.

At its last rally in London only 60 members mustered for a review by the Duke of Kent. Another is planned for next summer, possibly in June, and hon. secretary Arthur McAlister hopes to do better than that. But if holders of the infrequently awarded decoration do not support their league, it could face disbandment, he adds.

Mr. McAlister, a former captain in the Royal Hampshire Regiment, who won the DCM as a sergeant-major in Italy in 1944, says: "We have about 300 members on the books, but there are probably some hundreds more outside the league, and I would like to hear from them, whether they can make the trip to London or not". His address is 29 Mountfield Road, Ealing, London, W5 (Tel. 01-998 6913).

The DCM was instituted 110 years ago and since then more than 20,000 have been awarded, the greater number of them in World War I. Seven have been won in Northern Ireland.

The DCM League, formed in 1931, is a registered benevolent organisation with headquarters in Belgrave Square, London and branches in Brighton and Bristol.

(With acknowledgments to the Royal British Legion Journal for December 1974.)



## 43rd WESSEX DIVISION

The following message, which was received by RHQ The Queen's Regiment from the GOC South-West District on June 24, 1974, and was published in the December 1974 issue of the Journal of the Queen's Regiment, is republished below by kind permission of the Editor of that journal:

"On the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the landing of 43rd Wessex Division in Normandy, GOC and staff, as descendants of HQ 43 Wessex Div, send fraternal greetings and best wishes to all members of those Regiments which served in the Division during its campaign in Europe."

Throughout the campaign in NW Europe our 1/8th Battalion was the Divisional Support Battalion to the 43rd.

## FREE NEWSLETTERS

The Editor thanks Sqn. Ldr. J. M. Abell, Lt.-Col. G. B. Ayre, DL, Mr. T. A. Barton, TD, Mr. D. G. Bennett, Mr. C. C. Bradish, Mr. E. S. Duffield, Mr. A. C. Gill, Lt. E. C. Graham, Mr. W. Hamlin, Mrs. E. T. Hastie, Major L. T. Honeybun, Mr. F. H. Nash, MBE, Mr. E. J. Soden, Mr. R. H. Taylor, Mr. A. E. Tuthill and C. G. T. Uwins for their generosity in paying extra subscriptions so that free copies of *The Die-Hards Newsletter* can be sent to deserving Old Comrades.



## PERSONAL JOTTINGS

In a letter recently received ex-CSM Ron Chapman (6207747), a well remembered member of the 2/8th Battalion and the resuscitated 1st Battalion during the last war, is anxious to purchase a copy of "The Middlesex Regiment 1939-45", which is now out of print.

If any reader has a copy which he does not want it would be much appreciated if he would get in touch with the Editor.

We were very sad indeed to learn that that devoted Die-Hard, ex-Sgt. Tom Christman (6196621), who in 1971 began to lose his sight, has now gone totally blind.

After completing his Colour service in 1932, which he spent mostly with the 2nd Battalion, he was later employed by the Post Office until 1963, except for the period of the 1939-45 war, when, shortly after he was recalled, he was transferred to, and served with, the RASC until he was demobilised in 1945.

A surprise visitor to the Regimental Museum last month was ex-Pte. L. Collier, who served in "B" Group of the 2/8th Battalion and the resuscitated 1st Battalion under Major (now Col.) Desmond Ellis during the 1939-45 war.

He now lives at Brentwood, Essex.

Capt. George Cripps, who held a Short Service commission, retired on retired pay on January 4 last.

Lt. Bob Douthet, that tough old veteran who served with the 3rd Battalion at St. Helena in 1902 and will be 90 next May, underwent an operation in St. Mary's Hospital, Paddington, about Christmas time. We are pleased to be able to report that he is now out and about again.

He sends his best wishes to all our readers who served with him in the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 1/7th and 2/7th Battalions.

Our heartiest congratulations to ex-Band Sgt. Percy and Rose Edwards, who celebrated their golden wedding on December 20 last. They were married at Aldershot whilst Percy was serving with the 1st Battalion.

They now live at Torquay and we wish them many more years of happiness together.

The following is an extract from a letter received from Lt.-Col. Rex Fendick, a Canloan officer who served with the 2nd Battalion during the latter stages of the 1939-45 war and is a member of our Officers Club:

"I enjoy immensely reading my *Newsletter* and must congratulate the faithful editorial staff who produce it. I would, of course, like to see more correspondence and reminiscences by ex-2nd Battalion 1944-45 members, but I find the wide range of material most interesting. My very best wishes for the New Year go to all Die-Hards".

If some of our old 2nd Battalion members referred to will write and give the Editor news of themselves, it will be published in the *Newsletter*.

We send our heartiest congratulations to Major Ronnie Fisher on his promotion to lieutenant-colonel as from June 30, 1974.

He has now been appointed a GSO1 (Intelligence) at a small NATO Headquarters at Heidelberg.

We were sorry to get news at Christmas time that Capt. William Fletcher, one of our more recently joined members of the Regimental Association and Officers Club, had had a major operation. He is not fit again but under general medical surveillance, which involves a periodical return to hospital for a check up.

Information has been received that ORQMS M. Flynn, now on the staff at HQ School of Infantry, is to be promoted to WO1 for duty there as Superintending Clerk next July.

A surprise visitor to RHQ, Edgware, recently was ex-Cpl. J. M. Fordham (23784246), who served in the Orderly Room of the 1st Battalion from May 1960 to May 1967.

He is now running his own firm building swimming pools and is soon going to Germany to find some more customers.

After a long lapse of time we were very pleased to hear shortly before Christmas from ex-Pte. R. H. Gilbertson (22223756), who served with the 1st Battalion in Hong Kong and Korea in 1950 and 1951. He sends his best wishes to all Die-Hards.

As the result of a letter in the February issue of *Soldier* we were put in touch with Mrs. Gillian Goold, a daughter of ex-Cpl. Sidney Smith (6191956), who enlisted in the Regiment in 1920 and after service in the 3rd Battalion in BAOR and the 2nd Battalion in Singapore and India was transferred to the Reserve in 1927.

He re-enlisted at the outbreak of the 1939-45 war and served throughout, mainly with the Army Catering Corps.

He died on July 9, 1964, but as we had no news of his decease the Regiment was unable to pay its last respects to this old Die-Hard, who will be remembered by many who served with the 2nd Battalion in Ahmednagar in the 1920s.

An old Die-Hard who keeps in touch with us is ex-Sgt. C. A. Haynes (L/21499), late 3rd Battalion.

He apologises for not attending some of our functions but, as he is 84 and lives at Brighton, he is unable to do much travelling.

Lt.-Col. Mike Hayward, after giving up command of 1 Queen's, has been appointed an Assistant Military Secretary at the Ministry of Defence, and took up his new appointment in January.

Ex-Cpl. C. J. Howlett (23487953), who served with the 1st Battalion in Cyprus and BAOR and was in "D" Company and the Signals Platoon, visited RHQ, Edgware, just before Christmas and was

enrolled as a member of the Regimental Association.

During his service he was a very good athlete, particularly at running and badminton.

Ex-Pte. E. G. Hughes is one of our 1939-45 war members who likes to keep in touch with the Regiment. After completing his recruit service at The Dale, Chester, he was posted to the 1/8th Battalion and served in the 4.2 Mortar Company of that Battalion throughout the campaign in NW Europe.

He is now running a successful grocer's business at Kidwelly in Wales.

After his retirement on retired pay on November 30, 1974, Lt.-Col. "Jeff" Jeffcoat was appointed an Assistant Administrator at Waddesdon Manor, Aylesbury, Bucks, which is National Trust property.

A recent recruit to the Regimental Association is ex-Pte. James Kinlen (14735036), who enlisted in April 1944, served with the 1/7th Battalion until October 1945 and then with the 2nd Battalion in the Middle East until his discharge in October 1947.

He now lives at Surbiton in Surrey.

Capt. Tom McMillan, who like Capt. George Cripps mentioned above, held a Short Service commission, retired on retired pay with effect from November 1, 1974.

A newly joined member of the Regimental Association is ex-Pte. A. E. Middleton, who has recently taken his discharge from the Queen's Regiment after five years' service. He is the son of the late ex-Pte. Alf Middleton, who was serving with the 1st Battalion at the time of the fall of Hong Kong and was subsequently a prisoner of war in Japan.

Although we had heard that it was taking place, we were very sorry to read in the *London Gazette* of January 13, 1975, that Major Chris Mievill had retired on retired pay with effect from December 2, 1974, after many years of devoted service to the Regiment.

Ex-L/Cpl. George Milne (6194098) is another newly joined member of the Regimental Association. He served on the Rhine with the 1st Battalion in the early 1920s until he was drafted to the 2nd Battalion in Singapore. He went with that Battalion to Ahmednagar in India, where during the last year or so of his Colour service he was employed as Sergeants Mess silverman. He left the 2nd Battalion in 1928 on transfer to the Army Reserve.

Capt. Malcolm Montgomery has left 2 Queen's for a staff tour as GSO3 (Training) at HQ 4th Division.

When forwarding his annual subscription to the *Die-Hards Newsletter* ex-RSM Frank Nash sent his very best wishes for 1975 to all Die-Hards.

Although he is very much better after his spell in hospital last year, he still has to take things easily.

After losing touch for so long one of our Hong

Kong and Lisbon Maru veterans, ex-Pte. Percy "Deadend" Nesbit (2037680) paid his first visit to the Regimental Association when he attended a recent meeting of the Mill Hill Branch. Now that he has made his initial visit he intends to come along more regularly, and we shall much look forward to seeing him again.

On November 7 last year ex-Pte. Frank George Oakley (G/24244) had been a resident of the Star and Garter Home for just 50 years. He was wounded on September 23, 1916, when serving with the 20th (Service) Battalion (Shoreditch), and it was as a result of this wound that he was eventually admitted to the Home.

Frank is a very popular figure at the home and, writing about him in the autumn issue of *The Star and Garter Magazine*, the Editor states:

"Frank has seen many changes and remembers all the many distinguished people that have visited the Home during those 50 years.

"If the home has changed, Frank has not; he remains the same witty, friendly, clear-minded person he has always been. He likes to sit out in the garden when the weather is fine, always with a book, for he is an avid reader. On these occasions I often stop for a chat with him, and he always keeps me in stitches with his reminiscences of amusing happenings at the home over the years, which he remembers so clearly and tells so vividly with an amusing twist at the end, and one always comes away with a great feeling of comradeship and good humour much better for the encounter".

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By a strange coincidence some of the medals which Col. Aymar Clayton lost after the Remembrance Day service at Inglis Barracks, Mill Hill, last November, were picked up the next day in Mill Hill and returned to him by an old soldier of the 9th Battalion, Joe Pettigrove. A good deed from one Die-Hard to another!

Joe has now been enrolled as a member of his old Battalion's branch of the Regimental Association.

Enquiries have been made as to the whereabouts of Lt. Bob Richardson, who served with the 1st Battalion during the campaign in NW Europe, but unfortunately we cannot help as he has been out of touch for so long.

If any reader has news of him, it would be much appreciated if he would get in touch with the Editor.

When paying his annual subscription for 1975 ex-CSM John Soden, now living at Wiltstead in Bedfordshire, asked us to send his best wishes to all Die-Hards, which we gladly do.

A recent visitor to RHQ Edgware was ex-CSM R. W. Sorrell, who served with the 1/7th Battalion during the 1914-18 war, having enlisted in February 1909. He is now 87 years of age.

He served with the Battalion in Gibraltar and later with the BEF in France. He was wounded at the 2nd Battle of the Somme, but rejoined the Battalion in October 1915 and served with it until 1917, when he was down-graded and transferred to the Labour Corps.

He spoke very proudly of his old Battalion. He now lives at Acton.

We send our heartiest congratulations to ex-L/Cpl. Fred and Rose Swaby, who celebrated their golden wedding last year on October 22.

Fred's service was confined to the 1914-18 war, in which he started in the 7th (TF) Battalion in 1916 and later transferred to the Machine Gun Corps.

We understand that, although well in his eighties, Fred still rides a bicycle occasionally.

They now live at King's Lynn in Norfolk and we wish them many more years of happiness together.

Ex-Pte. R. S. R. Turner (620071) is another newly joined member of the Regimental Association. He enlisted in October 1932 and served in "B" Company of the 1st Battalion in Egypt, Singapore and Hong Kong. He was compulsorily transferred to the RASC in Hong Kong in 1939 and, after the fall of the colony, he was taken a prisoner of war. After spending some time in Shamshuipo Camp he was transferred to Japan and put into Nagoya Camp. When the war ended he continued to serve in the RASC until 1961.

During his service in the 1st Battalion he was known as "Holy Joe", being secretary of the Soldiers and Sailors Christian Association.

Ex-Pte. Joseph Ullman (28278198), who was a clerk in the 1st Battalion in Cyprus, sends his greetings to all Die-Hards.

Charles Uwins, a veteran of the 13th (Service) Battalion of the 1914-18 war, is one of our regular readers. He takes a great interest in his old Battalion's

OCA, who attend a wreath-laying ceremony in October each year at the memorial to their old Division, the 24th, in Battersea Park.

Major Martin Weedon's family have been figuring prominently in the news lately.

His daughter, Susan, was married on January 4 to Mr. Graham Burrows, and we send them our best wishes for their future happiness. They have now returned to South Africa.

His son, Mark, who is married and living in Australia, became the father of a second child, a daughter, born in Mater Hospital, Sydney, December 27, 1974.

#### NEW YEAR HONOURS LIST

We send our heartiest congratulations to the following past and serving members of the former Middlesex Regiment (DCO) who received the awards stated in the last New Year Honours List:

##### CBE

Lt.-Col. E. P. Shanks, QC, Deputy Bailiff, Guernsey, formerly Adjutant, 1st PL Kensington Regiment.

##### OBE

Col. B. H. Marciandi, now with NATO in Brussels.

#### Queen's Police Medal (QPM)

Capt. J. H. Gerrard, OBE, MC, Deputy Assistant Commissioner, Inspectorate, Metropolitan Police, formerly 1st Battalion.

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## LETTERS

From: Miss Penelope Teesdale

26 Gramercy Park,  
New York City.  
December 21, 1974

Col. F. Walden, MBE, DL,  
Editor,  
Deansbrook Road,  
Edgware, Middx.

Dear Col. Walden,

I can't tell you what a delightful surprise it was to receive a copy of *The Die-Hards Newsletter*, and then to find myself in print! I enjoyed reading the extra bit of historical background you gave at the end of your article, and indeed found the whole *Newsletter* of great interest. Tom Chattey kindly gave me two more copies, which I have been happy to forward on to Mr. Minchin in Mafeking and to Walter Duxburg in Johannesburg, who accompanied me on my trip to Mafeking and whose brother, Col. Duxburg, is in charge of the War Museum in Johannesburg. I consider myself very much related to the Middlesex Regiment by marriage (!) and enjoy sharing in its history and its customs.

During my travels I often find myself in parts of the world which have provided a last resting place for British soldiers, and I always make it a point to look for the name "Middlesex", and to pay my respects generally at any Service cemetery in the vicinity of my visit.

Once again, thank you for the handsome "spread", and may I add my best wishes for the New Year to you and the *Newsletter*.

Yours sincerely,

PENELOPE TEESDALE.

[Editor's Note—Miss Teesdale's interesting article, "A Cemetery in Mafeking", appeared in the September 1974 issue.]

From: Capt. Walter Ward

51 Blindmans Lane,  
Cheshunt.  
February 14, 1975.

Dear Editor,

When I was speaking to Major Dick Smith during the Mill Hill Branch gathering at HQ I told him that with two colleagues ("Sandy" Savage and "Sonny" Salmon, two S's!) we had defrayed the cost of having our badge mounted and installed over the bar in the Royal British Legion Club at Holtwhites Hill, Enfield, alongside the badges of the Services—Royal Navy, Army, Royal Air Force and Royal Marines—and with those of other corps and regiments.

The insignia has been very nicely done, the badge mounted on a shield-shaped base, about 6in. by 5in. and finished in the regimental colours in perpendicular stripes.

On a recent visit, to my surprise, I have found that we have a duplication, so now we are represented on both sides of the Services badges. I have not yet discovered who is responsible for the second insignia, but it is proof beyond doubt that, in spite of the Regiment being dead, the spirit of the Die-Hard is not, and to this end it occurs to me that there are no doubt a large number of Die-Hards who would like to be associated with the installation of these insignia. Could I suggest to these people that a small (or large) contribution to the Regimental Association funds would be of great assistance and help in helping less fortunate Die-Hards and then those insignia would remind us always of the living spirit of the Die-Hards.

With all best wishes,

Very sincerely,

WALTER WARD.

## Forthcoming Events

Date	Event		
Thursday, April 17	Organised visit to Regimental Museum, Bruce Castle.	Thursday, June 5	Founders' Day Ceremony, The Royal Hospital, Chelsea, at 3 p.m., when Her Majesty The Queen is to inspect the In-Pensioners.
Saturday, April 19	1/7th Battalion (1939-45) Dinner at TAVR Centre, Priory Road, Hornsey.	Friday, June 6	Visit of Reseau Sylvestre, Lille
Wednesday, April 30	Spring Golf Meeting at North Hants Golf Club, Fleet.	to Sunday June 8	
Saturday, May 17	Afternoon—Albuhera Service of Remembrance at St. Paul's Cathedral.	Saturday, June 7	9th Battalion Dinner at Victory ex-Service Club, Seymour Street, London, W2.
	Evening—Annual Reunion at Porchester Hall, Queensway, London, W2.	Saturday, June 28	Summer Outing to Aldershot Army Display.
Saturday, May 31	2/10th Battalion Luncheon at Victory ex-Service Club, Seymour Street, London, W2.	Saturday, July 5	Military Musical Pageant, Wembley.
Wednesday, June 4	Derby outing.		The Officers Club cocktail party notified under "Forthcoming Events" in the December 1974 issue will NOT now take place on Tuesday, April 29.



## OBITUARY

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

**CLARK**—On Boxing Day, 1974, ex-Pte. Frederick Charles Clark, MM and bar (L/15625), aged 78. He enlisted on May 2, 1915, and was posted to the 5th (Special Reserve) Battalion, then stationed in the Great Lines Camp, Gillingham, Kent. After completing his initial training he was posted to the 4th Battalion serving with the BEF in France. Wounded in 1916, "Nobby" was evacuated to the UK and after convalescence joined the 6th (Special Reserve) Battalion at Lower Barracks, Chatham. He was posted back to the 4th Battalion in January 1917. During the Allied advance in August 1918, in which the 4th Battalion were in the thick of the fighting, he was given an immediate award of the Military Medal. In April 1919, when No. 1 Special Company the Middlesex Regiment, was formed as part of the North Russian Expeditionary Force, he was one of the men picked from regular soldiers who were forming the nucleus of the 2nd and 4th Battalions. When a mounted infantry section was formed in conjunction with the 60th Rifle Company in June 1919 he was one of the nine volunteers from the Middlesex Company. As in 1918, he was again given an immediate award, this time the bar to his Military Medal. Although keen to continue soldiering after the war, he was discharged on medical grounds on May 20, 1920. At the time of his death he had been a member of the Mill Hill Branch of the Die-Hards Club for some years.

**COOPER**—On February 12, 1975, ex-Sgt. George Richard James Cooper, MM (TF/265160 and 6193871), aged 82. He enrolled into the 9th Battalion (TF) on December 10, 1912 and, during the 1914-18 war served with that Battalion in India and Mesopotamia. He was awarded the Military Medal for gallantry whilst a private during the fighting in Mesopotamia. In the 1939-45 war he served in the Royal Pioneer Corps and was finally discharged in February 1944.

**CRONIN**—On February 2, 1975, ex-Sgt. James Patrick Cronin, MM (L/12712), aged 83. He enlisted in the Regiment on July 19, 1908 (his seventeenth birthday), and was posted to the 4th Battalion. He remained with that Battalion during its service in Ireland, Aldershot and Devonport, but did not go with it on active service. Instead he and three other NCOs from the Battalion were retained in the UK and posted early in 1915 to the 12th (Service) Battalion as instructors in trench warfare. He served with that Battalion until 1917 and took part in the Somme battles and, especially Thiepval on September 6, 1916, when a record number of decorations were won by officers and soldiers of the Battalion, and when he was wounded. He was reposted to the 4th Battalion and served with that Battalion until again being

wounded. As a result of these wounds he was discharged. He was a member of the Mill Hill Branch of the Die-Hards Club and always kept in touch.

**DOBBS**—On December 3, 1974, suddenly, Mr. John Edward Dobbs, MC, aged 80. He enlisted into the Regiment as a boy and was posted to the 4th Battalion on August 26, 1908. Ten months later he was transferred to 2nd Battalion The Lincolnshire Regiment, where he attained the age of 18 in July 1912 and rose to the rank of sergeant by November 1915. On August 1, 1916, he was appointed to a commission as second lieutenant in our 1st Battalion. For his services in the field he was Mentioned in Despatches and awarded the Military Cross. In 1919 he was posted to the 4th Battalion, where he remained until that Battalion was disbanded in 1923, when he was posted to the 1st Battalion. During his service with the 4th Battalion he was awarded the Royal Humane Society Certificate in vellum for saving life. In September 1928 he was promoted Captain and just over a year later he was appointed adjutant of our 8th Battalion (TA). On relinquishing this appointment in November 1933 he was posted to the 1st Battalion and served with that Battalion in the Canal Zone (Moascar), Singapore and Hong Kong. He was promoted major on August 1, 1938, and in September 1941 he was appointed Director of Military Training, Johore Military Forces, Malaya, with the local rank of lieutenant-colonel. He was taken prisoner in February 1942 when the Japanese captured Malaya and remained in captivity until August 1945. For his services in the war he was Mentioned in Despatches. After the war he was posted for duty with the Polish Resettlement Corps until June 1968. He retired on retired pay in February 1969.

**JOHNSON**—On December 4, 1974, Major Dudley Vaughan Johnson, MC, aged 85. Throughout the 1914-18 war he served with the 23rd (Second Football) Battalion. He commanded "A" Company, which he led into action during the Somme battles and through the main street of Flers behind a tank when these war machines were making their first appearance. He was immensely popular with his soldiers and at 23rd Battalion reunions he never failed to take the chair at the unanimous request of his veterans. He was a very keen golfer, being a member of the South Herts and Highgate Golf Clubs.

**MANDERS**—On January 28, 1975, ex-Sgt. Herbert George Manders (L/11961 and 6188507), aged 82. At the time of his death he was an In-Pensioner of the Royal Hospital, Chelsea. He enlisted on October 14, 1907, and on completion of his recruit

training was posted to the 2nd Battalion, then serving in the Channel Islands. In October 1910 he joined the 1st Battalion in India and served with that Battalion at Aden, Woolwich and in the BEF in France until September 1915, when he was wounded at the Battle of Loos. On discharge from hospital he was posted to the 5th (Special Reserve) Battalion at Chatham, where he was employed as an instructor. In August 1917 he was seconded for two years as an instructor to the King's African Rifles. After this secondment he was posted to the Depot, where he was given the task of training recruits. His next appointment was as a PSI to the 8th Battalion (TA), at the termination of which he was posted to the 1st Battalion. He was discharged to pension on October 13, 1928, having completed 21 years' Colour service and having been awarded the Long Service and Good Conduct Medal. During the 1939-45 war he was a member of the Home Guard.

**MATTHEWS**—On August 30, 1974, peacefully at his home in Dorset, ex-Lt. Edgar Charles Matthews:

At the outbreak of the 1914-18 war he was at Trinity College, Cambridge, and was commissioned from there into the Regiment as a second lieutenant on September 14, 1914. Two days later he was one of the original officers to join the 13th (Service) Battalion at Brookwood in preparation for active service overseas. He eventually sailed with the Battalion in SS *Duchess of Argyll* to join the BEF in France. He was promoted lieutenant on June 1, 1915. After having had considerable service in the trenches, he was gassed and as a result he was medically boarded and passed fit for home service only. He was then given an appointment at the War Office, where he remained until he was demobilised at the end of the war.

After a year or two as a partner in an import-export business in Morocco he went to Haileybury College in September 1922 as a form master. To the school at large he became familiar on the big school stage and famous for his production of plays, most of them Shakespeare's, which he produced at the end of the Easter term and took abroad to many foreign countries from Poland in the east to the USA and Canada in the west. There were 18 such tours from 1930 onwards, which brought both him and Haileybury more than local fame.

He was a house master from 1930 to 1953, head of the modern side from 1948-53 and senior master from 1952 until his retirement, in July 1958. All who knew him, whether staff, students or old boys, regarded him with affection and respect.

(With acknowledgements to the Editors of "The Haileyburian".)

**PARNELL**—On January 4, 1975, Lt. (QM) Harry John Parnell, aged 67. Harry Parnell was a regimental character known to all ranks in whichever unit he was serving. Vocal and agile of brain, a good boxer and fighter in the ring, an excellent instructor and a man willing to discuss any subject under the sun, in his company there was rarely a dull moment. His original enlistment was one of short duration. He enlisted in the Cameronians in

January 1924, was allotted the Army number 3239176 and was struck off strength in September the same year. Three days later he enlisted into the Suffolk Regiment in the name of Henry John Alsop and was given the number 5823556. Again he served for nine months, being struck off strength in June 1925. A week later he enlisted into the Middlesex Regiment and given the number 6196724; this number was subsequently replaced by his original number 3239176 on declaration of his previous service. He was now in the regiment he was to serve for 23 years, with the exception of three years on the roll of the Royal Fusiliers during the last war. Serving with the 2nd Battalion in India and the Sudan, he returned home with the Battalion in December 1931. In September 1937 he joined the 1st Battalion in Hong Kong, holding the rank of lance-sergeant, and three months later promoted to sergeant. In September 1939 he joined the PL Kensington Regiment, then part of the Middlesex Regiment and given his warrant as CSM (WO2). Transferred to the Royal Fusiliers in July 1940 he was appointed RSM, nine months later receiving his commission as Lieutenant (QM) in the Middlesex Regiment in October 1943. During the period between March 1942 and March 1943 he was a member of Brigadier Wingate's Chindits, where he served with illustrious Commando officers, plus a number of NCOs and men who had been his comrades in the past, such as Jacky Geist, Cpl. "Ginger" Hill, CSM Seaton, C/Sgt. Laurie Priddy, all of whom were with him in 142 Commando Regiment. Near the end of the training period Harry Parnell was posted as RSM to 151st (British) Parachute Battalion and so missed the epic fights of 1943, although he remained in touch with the Middlesex Regiment. He then served in North Africa and Italy, where his brother who had served in the 2nd Battalion until discharged on compassionate grounds in 1938 was killed at Salerno in the 5th Hampshire Regiment, to whom he had been seconded from 1st Battalion PL Kensington Regiment. This brother had enlisted in their mother's maiden name and it is as Lt. John Buller Hillman that he is shown on the Roll of Honour. In August 1945 he returned to the UK and was placed on the Unemployed List the following December. Thirteen months later he relinquished his commission and enlisted once more into the Regiment being promoted colour sergeant the following day (January 7, 1947) and to WO2 in November 1947. He served in the Middle East (Palestine) from September 1947 to June 1948, when he reverted to colour-sergeant, and took his discharge in November 1948. On New Year's Day, 1949, he was appointed to the Regular Army Reserve of Officers as Lieutenant (QM) the Middlesex Regiment, relinquishing the commission in October 1960, having exceeded the age limit for liability to recall and was granted the honorary rank of Lieutenant (QM).

After leaving the regiment in November 1948 he was employed as a prison warden. His personality soon made itself felt among the "old lags", inasmuch that he was able to nip trouble in the bud on a number of occasions. He was known as a disciplinarian, also a man to be trusted. The



prisoners knew where they stood. Retiring from the Prison Service he moved to Basingstoke, where he organised youth clubs and boxing classes, being idolised by the young and appreciated by the firm for which he worked and by parents of the youths he trained. To the last he was singing the praises of his beloved Die-Hards and kept up a lively correspondence with friends with whom he had served in the years gone by. His funeral was attended by Col. Walden, Majors Donovan, Smith and Waldron, Capt. Tarrant and Messrs. Gribble and Mellor, the senior members of the staff of his firm and officials of the clubs he had assisted since

he had lived in Basingstoke, together with the many members of his family. Two buglers from the Queen's Regiment sounded Last Post and the Reveille as the final salute and farewell to a smart soldier and worthy Die-Hard.

(With acknowledgements to Major R. W. J. Smith MBE.)

As all the information is not yet available, a full obituary notice on Col. J. W. G. Ormiston, who died on February 11, 1975, will be published in a subsequent *Newsletter*.

## ASSOCIATION NEWS

### Secretary's Notes

#### Benevolent Cases

During the period January 1 to December 31, 1974, the sum of £1,464.87 was expended in making grants to 88 ex-members of the Regiment.

An additional £1,179 was received from the Army Benevolent Fund as a result of applications by the Regimental Association and was used to assist 13 major benevolent cases.

#### Donations—Charitable Fund

The Secretary gratefully acknowledges donations to the Charitable Fund from Major F. H. Blackburn, Mr. E. G. Hughes and Mrs. F. A. L. Lawrence.

#### Annual Visit to Royal Hospital, Chelsea, and Star and Garter Home, Richmond

On December 18, 1974, the Secretary, accompanied by Major R. W. J. Smith, MBE, visited the Royal Hospital, Chelsea, and the Star and Garter Home, Richmond, and gave our pensioners a Christmas present from the Regimental Association. In the Royal Hospital, Chelsea, we have Sgt. W. Heavens, Sgt. A. Rathbone, I/P. G. Fulton, I/P. H. Manders (since died), I/P. F. Worton, and in the Star and Garter Home, Richmond, W. D. Dormer, R. Irving, G. Oakley and A. Smithers.

A. E. F. W.

#### EALING BRANCH

I had a pleasant duty to perform on January 25 last, namely, to present a floral tribute to Mrs. Ruston (the widow of the late Major Ruston of the Ealing Company, 8th Battalion, killed on April 26, 1915, at Gravenstaffel Ridge), who celebrated her ninety-fifth birthday on that day. She is a patient in St. Francis Nursing Home, Ealing, and has been for some time the life and soul of the party. After we had talked of life in Gibraltar (1914) and also the up-to-date topics of the day, she escorted me to the front door of the house as upright and full of beans as any 50-year-old butler. It is a great treat to us who remain of the Major's Company (4) to be able to bring a little sunshine into the old lady's life, and although she has a few visitors she loves to have a chat about our days on the "Rock". May she reach her 100 not out.

Back to the old days (or nights) last week. A gas explosion at 2 a.m. and I heard it over here in Isleworth, all the way from West Ealing. Arthur Werdley (90 this year), who is rather deaf and nearly blind, said it made him nip out of bed quick.

Our chairman, George Ife, has had to leave us live with a daughter in Aylesbury and that brings us down to five attenders at our meetings. We shall miss him as he is most regular and a good chairman.

I have heard from several of our house-bound members. All sent their subs for 1975 and their good

wishes to all Die-Hards wherever they may be. Major George Parr-Head (late 2/8th Battalion, 1914-18) now 82, is feeling a bit shaky and not able to get out to have his usual tonic. We wish him well and hope to see him at Lord's during the summer (if we have any). Ernie Duffield (83) is still going strong and enjoys his "snifter" in the British Legion Club at Greenford and he sometimes has a visit from Bobby Williams (83) and Charlie Brust (1/7th 1914). I am still doing a bit of home visiting but it is a bit of a job with petrol the price it is. No news lately of Bill Cook in Australia, but "no news is good news".

I am off now for my drop of "home brew" and I'll drink to all Old Die-Hards.

Cheerio! All the best,

ALBERT WHITE.

#### MILL HILL BRANCH

At a recent monthly meeting we had the pleasure of the company of one of the few surviving members of the Regiment who wear the Queen's South Africa Medal. This is Fred "Ticky" Morden (L/7651), that diminutive and alert veteran who will be 90 next birthday. Musical and entertaining he not only plays the banjo, the mandolin and various other string instruments, he also runs a dance band! He was given his nickname by his comrades as a young soldier after the South African silver threepenny-bit, called a "ticky". The eldest member of our branch, if not of the Regimental Association, is also a Boer war veteran. He is Major P. B. "Plumbago" Allott, who is a few weeks from his ninety-fifth birthday and was the Colour Ensign who carried the Regimental Colour—the Zulu War colour—on its last trooping at Allahabad, March 29, 1908.

Another expert of the branch is George Lambourne (6203802), a very skilled upholsterer who recently repaired two chairs for a relative of His Holiness the Pope. These chairs are two of a set of 10, insured for £16,000 and 400 years old, the damask fabric being 200 years old. That job certainly needed a steady hand and expertness in the craft.

The branch continues to flourish and mention of members new and old will be found elsewhere in this *Newsletter*. Even the long nights have not kept members away, nor has the inclement weather and the hazards of unpredictable public traffic services. To those staunch supporters I am truly grateful. It makes the job worth doing.

To all members of all branches, from the most distant in Hong Kong to the WO's and Sergeants who share with us the drill hall at Edgware, we send our comradely and fraternal greetings.

MAJOR DICK SMITH.

#### 9th BATTALION BRANCH

It was a very interesting account in the December issue of this *Newsletter* of Major H. W. Thompson's war experiences.

Naturally we old buddies remember him very well and are very pleased to know that some of his exploits are not forgotten. One concerned the Hawaish Mound at Nejeef which is on the River Euphrates and is one, or was perhaps one, of the oldest Biblical cities. I mention this, because this Mound I believe was the refuse dump of the city since it was built.

The project was to capture it so that a good field of fire could be obtained into the City of Nejeef and so help to capture the insurgents who had killed a political officer some weeks before. The attack commenced before daybreak, which only lasts a short time in that part of the world. As we ascended this mound on the hill, without previous reconnaissance, we experienced a horrible sensation. The mound was infested by a large army of crustaceans and they were pleased to meet us; white flesh was much better than that of those domiciled in and around the city. Needless to say, we retired before our objective was completed. That was the beginning of a "lousy" existence, which did not finish until some time after our final demobilisation.

Surely, the composite battalion referred to in that account, was the Dunsterforce commanded by the Russian-speaking Major-Gen. Dunsterville, the original of Rudyard Kipling's "Stalky".

Dunsterforce was raised after the war was over and was of high calibre, also a very expensive project. But that could be another story.

We have received many communications from our members, one being from our venerated adjutant of the 1920s, Lt.-Gen. Sir Brian Horrocks, KCB, KBE, DSO, MC, LLD, who like us old members, cannot travel now as he would wish to. The General has never forgotten the 9th Battalion.

Other letters were received from Major L. F. Shaw, who is retiring from business, and travelling to Australia for two months and then on to Italy for the summer months; and from Frank Woods and Fred Lockyer, who did have some hopes of being near us in the near future but have now been suspended.

Another letter was from A. H. Hill who was originally a member of the 9th, but transferred to the REs during the war. He was at Dunkirk and is a great supporter of the Dunkirk Veterans Association. He informs me that he is arranging a party to visit Dunkirk in the summer and that a plaque is being fixed at Dover Harbour to commemorate the bravery shown by that retiring force at Dunkirk.

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We were sorry to hear from the brother of George Cooper, MM, that George is in Park Royal Hospital, suffering from a form of uraemia. George lost his wife a few months ago and has been rehoused in new quarters by the local council as his old home was being demolished.

I went to Mount Vernon Hospital in January to visit Arthur Barrow, who was admitted for treatment after a fall at his home. He was very confused and weak and has not progressed much, so I am informed.

To both of our old members we wish them well and to resume life as it was before their incapacities.

Two of our old colleagues have taken leave of us and are on their long journey to those happy hunting grounds. They are Reg Woodford, who joined the Battalion in 1930 and served throughout the last war as a sergeant in 430 Battery of 126 LAA Regt RA, and George Lane, who with his brother joined the Battalion in 1914 going to India and Mesopotamia. George regularly attended our Reunions until a few years ago when he had to retire owing to failing eyesight.

We wish to tender our deep sympathy to the wives of our members and their relatives.

Flowers were sent from the Association and the 9th and were represented at both cremations.

There is not much more to write about except to inform you that the Association is projecting a very good programme of social events, of which you will be informed. Please give the Association your support and do not forget the 9th's own Reunion and Dinner on June 7 at the Victory Service Club. More details later. Our best wishes and hope that your shadows will never grow less.

R. T. M.

(Editor's Note—Since these notes were submitted George Cooper has died and an obituary appears on page 10).

#### WOs AND SERGEANTS BRANCH

I am sorry to say that our hopes that Harry Parnell's spirit would help him overcome the illness that had struck him down were not fulfilled. For on January 4 we received the sad news that he had fought and lost his last fight, having passed away that morning in Basingstoke Hospital. He was cremated at Aldershot crematorium on Friday, January 10. Many attended to pay their last respects to one you just could not help liking. In addition to his wife, family and relatives, the following comrades were present: Col. Fanny Walden, MBE, Major Frank Waldron, MBE, Major P. Donovan, MBE, Major Dick Smith, MBE, Capt. Bob Tarrant, MSM, Harry Gribble, Stan Hurlock and Tich Mellor, all being with the exception of Bob Tarrant members of the Branch. Also present were representatives of the firm for whom he worked, the Royal British Legion and the Basingstoke boxing club of which he was president.

Harry had over the last few months suffered greatly, and had he lived he would have been a life-long invalid dependent on a wheelchair for mobility. Nevertheless, although he knew this, he fought hard to overcome his adversity. His courage and determination to carry on the fight were greatly encouraged by the visits and many letters he received

from his old comrades. Members of the branch who made trips down to Basingstoke to see him which, as Mrs. Parnell told me, not only brought the colour back to his cheeks, but did more to bring him back to his normal cheery self than all the treatment that he was having, were Stan Hurlock, Harry Gribble, Jack Milroy, Tich Mellor and Dick Stokes. One of Tich Mellor's visits was on the Friday, the day before he died, which I am sure brought comfort to Harry, for what was destined to be his last few hours with us. To Mrs. Peggy Parnell and family we tender our deepest sympathy and say "farewell Harry boy" thanks for all the happy memories with which you have left us.

Many members with their wives and friends attended the last meeting of 1974, held on Saturday, December 14. Well over 60 gathered not only to enjoy a little pre-Christmas festivity spirit but to witness our Christmas Draw and take part in a special raffle. Both the draw and special raffle have become regular annual events now, and as in the past they were very well supported. There were 9 prizes in the draw, mostly being bottles of liquid refreshment. In the raffle we had 14 prizes ranging from a Musquash fur stole, large basket of fresh fruit, hand crocheted shawl, bottles of spirit and sherry and several gifts. Half these prizes were given by members or their wives which reflects the interest and support shown by all those who are able to attend our meetings. This support shows no sign of waning for at both meetings held so far this year good attendances have been recorded.

There will, I am afraid, be rather a solemn few minutes during our meeting on Saturday, March 8. We shall be gathered together to say farewell to Charlie and Margaret Banks who on March 14 set out to start a new life in America. Both Charlie and Margaret have given the Branch valuable and yeoman service not only by running the bar and carrying out any special catering arrangements that we have required, but preparing the room for our meetings and clearing up afterwards. Not only has this relieved the burden from the shoulders of the committee, but it has also contributed so much to the success we have enjoyed. To them both we offer our sincerest thanks and hope that it will be a very enjoyable evening which they will always remember. Many of our members who live too far away to make visits to our monthly meetings possible, or through other commitments are unable to make regular visits, keep in touch by letter. Those from whom we have heard recently are Taps Eastap, Fred Hennah, Les Honeyburn, Ron Johns, WO1 (SSM) Clive Kingston, Albert Geary, John Soden and E. Thompson. All send their best wishes and kindest regards to all Die-Hards. We in turn keep in touch with all members by not only replying to their letters, but also by our monthly *Newsletter*.

In a letter I received from Ron Johns he speaks of Christmas 1944 spent in Holland and mentions a Spud Murphy and CSM Jessup ("B" Coy 2nd Bn). He wonders what has become of them. Can anyone help? If so please drop me a line.

Now with that request which I hope bears fruit we send our best wishes for good health to all Die-Hards and may Dame Fortune smile on you all.

LEN JOHNSON.

#### 2/10th BATTALION (1914-18) OCA

Our annual Remembrance service took place at St. Nicolas Church, Chiswick, on Sunday, November 10, 1974, and was conducted by the Rev. Patrick Tuft, Vicar of Chiswick, in succession to Preb. G. A. Lewis Lloyd. Approximately 100 members, relatives and friends attended, including Col. Clayton (Deputy Colonel [Middlesex] The Queen's Regiment and President Middlesex Regimental Association) and Mrs. Clayton, Major Waldron (Secretary Middlesex Regimental Association) and Mrs. Waldron and Major Bernard Cattell (President 2/10th Bn). This was a special occasion, celebrating as it did the sixtieth anniversary of the formation of the 2/10th Battalion in 1914. Poppy wreaths were laid out on the memorials to the 1/10th, 2/10th and 3/10th Battalions and during the service the restored church clock, undertaken by our president as a family memorial, and tablet were dedicated. We set great store by this annual service and plan to appeal to local residents having affiliations with the Regiment to join with us each year in perpetuating the memory of these units. All enquiries should be addressed to the hon. secretary at "Cleveland", Byes Lane, Sidford, Sidmouth, Devon.

A. D. S.

#### THE REGULAR FORCES EMPLOYMENT ASSOCIATION

exists

to help Servicemen to find suitable employment when they leave the Forces. It also takes a long-term interest in ex-Regulars, who may use its services as often as they wish.

The Association has 42 branches in the major cities of the United Kingdom and its Employment Officers—all ex-Servicemen—are in close touch with employers. It provides all services free.

If you are leaving the Service, it would be well worth your while to get in touch with them. The telephone number and address of the nearest branch can be obtained from Corps and Regimental Associations, or from Post Offices and Employment Offices.

#### LEAVING THE ARMY

A security service managed by Sir John Waldron (formerly Commissioner the Metropolitan Police) and Major G. Gorer (late RCT) offers employment as security guards. The pay is £2,845 per annum, rising with promotion, to £3,706 per annum.

Good holidays and uniform provided. For more details write to RHQ The Queen's Regiment, Howe Barracks, Canterbury, Kent.



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