



The Die-Hards

NEWSLETTER

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Editor: Col. F. WALDEN, M.B.E., D.L., T. & A.V.R. Centre,
Deansbrook Road, Edgware, Middlesex.

TAVR EXPANSION

Government plans for the Territorial Army Volunteer Reserve, presently about 50,000 strong, is to expand it by 10,500 men by the addition of a second Yeomanry armoured car regiment, to be raised in the north and Scotland, and 20 unit headquarters and 77 company-strength sub-units with an infantry role.

The unit headquarters and sub-units are to be formed on the majority of the cadres, each of eight all ranks, which remained after the disbandment of Category III of the T & AVR in early 1969.

Unlike the former Category III units, the new infantry headquarters and sub-units will form part of the present Group A of the T & AVR and will have the same call-out liability as the rest of Group A. They will be given modern weapons, dress and other equipment.

The armoured car regiment will be eligible to train overseas every third year and will have the higher training obligation of existing Group A units—15 days in camp plus 12 days out-of-camp training, with additional voluntary training of 12 days out of camp and 30 two-hour drill periods.

It is not envisaged that the new units in the infantry role will train overseas and they will have a training obligation of 15 days in camp plus six days out of camp with additional voluntary training amounting to four days out of camp and 30 two-hour drill periods.

Most of the units in the infantry role will be formed on existing infantry cadres.

In accordance with the above the cadre of 10th (T) Battalion The Queen's Regiment has now become "A" Company (Middlesex) of the newly-raised 6th (V) Battalion The Queen's Regiment, and is based at the T & AVR Centre, Edgware, under the command of Major M. J. Beaumont.

Since its formation its first priority has been recruiting and, with this firmly in mind, an "Open Day" was held at Edgware on Saturday, April 3, when the Mayor of the London Borough of Barnet formally reopened the Centre by cutting a tape at the

front entrance. At this official ceremony the Mayor was supported by the Colonel of the Regiment, Lt.-General Sir Richard Craddock. Also present were Col. F. Walden, representing the Deputy Colonel (Middlesex) The Queen's Regiment, who was unavoidably unable to be present, Lt.-Col. J. D. Gunnell, the last Commanding Officer of 10th (T) Battalion The Queen's Regiment, Lt.-Col. D. G. Wilson, Commanding 6th (V) Battalion The Queen's Regiment, Major A. H. Warde, Second-in-Command 6th (V) Battalion The Queen's Regiment, Major M. B. Girling, Training Major 6th (V) Battalion The Queen's Regiment, and Major M. J. Beaumont.

SUMMER OUTING 1971

It has been necessary to alter the date of the Summer Outing to the Windsor Safari Park from Sunday, June 13 to Sunday, September 19.

Full details of the arrangements for this outing will be notified in due course.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

| Date | Event |
|---|---|
| Saturday, July 3 | Party to Military Musical Pageant, Wembley. |
| Friday, July 16 | Officers' Club Dinner at United Service and Royal Aero Club, Pall Mall, London SW1. |
| Thursday, July 22 | Party to Grand Concert at Kneller Hall. |
| Friday, August 20 to Tuesday, August 24 | Visit to Mons for ceremonies in connection with the 57th anniversary of the Battle of Mons. |
| Sunday, August 29 | Party to Players' League Match at Lord's between Middlesex and Notts. |
| Sunday, September 19 | Summer outing to Windsor Safari Park. |

Regimental Museum

Curator: Maj. R. W. J. Smith, MBE, T&AVR Centre, Deansbrook Road, Edgware, Middlesex

The following are recent acquisitions to the Museum:

Photographs, 2nd, 4th and 5th Battalions.
Sketches from the Crimea.
Medals of the late Capt. J. E. Coughlan, MC, DCM.
Battle dress uniform, etc.

PHOTOGRAPHS OF 2ND, 4TH AND 5TH BATTALIONS

This series of picture postcards and photographs cover the first decade of the century. They were originally the property of Lt.-Col. Claude Ash, DSO, or "Bogey" Ash as he is remembered by many admiring veterans. The details of regimental service of Lt.-Col. Ash were published in the Museum notes in the Regimental Newsletter No. 9, of February 1970. Two of the picture postcards show the 5th (Militia) Battalion in service dress uniform and Slade-Wallace equipment in 1906, two years before the introduction of the web equipment used during the war of 1914-18. Another is a coloured card, used as a postcard by the Regiment prior to 1914. This was posted in February 1909. It shows a front view of a Private—or Private Sentinel as he was originally known—and back view of a Sergeant. Both wear the scarlet tunics and yellow facings, white edgings to

epaulettes and brass fittings to the belt and frog, denoting the Regular Battalion of which there were four at that time. The soldier has a Short Magazine Lee-Enfield rifle, whilst the Sergeant is wearing the short, two-edged bayonet used with the Long Lee-Enfield. This was then common practice as a Sergeant when walking out wore side-arms and the short bayonet was looked upon at that date as a "dress" item; the soldier is also wearing a helmet, being in full ceremonial kit, whilst the Sergeant has a blue cap and walking-out cane. The photographs include one of the 2nd Battalion when stationed in Guernsey, which appears to have been taken at the Proclamation Ceremony of King George V as the troops are cheering with removed head-dress whilst the heavily-moustached civic dignity by the dais in the background is doing the same, waving his cocked-hat and looking like a benign walrus. Another is of the 4th Battalion band (Bandmaster Hawkins). All who could grow a moustache had them, as was the custom in the Army at that date; soldiers wore the moustache whilst sailors had to be clean-shaven or wearing a full set of whiskers. The last photograph of the series shows Lt.-Col. Ash reading a map whilst peering through a shell-shattered building in France. He was later to lead his battalion into the attack at Flers-Courcelette where he was mortally wounded.

Presented by Mrs. Claudia Reed, daughter of the late Lt.-Col. W. C. C. Ash, DSO.

EIGHT SKETCHES FROM THE CRIMEA

The sketches were made by Lt. Harvey of the 77th (East Middlesex) Regiment and published in the *Illustrated Times* on various dates, as follows:

1. "Conveying ammunition to the Front prior to the last bombardment", October 6, 1855.
2. "Picket in a garden near the Woronzow Road", November 3, 1855.
3. "Draining the Balacava Railway", January 19, 1856.
4. "The destruction of Fort Nicholas, Sebastopol", March 8, 1856.
5. "Relieving Night Guard—Fort Paul", March 22, 1856.
6. "Interior of officer's hut, Fort Paul Picket, Sebastopol", April 19, 1856.
7. "The road to the trenches", August 18, 1856.
8. "The trenches at midday", August 18, 1856.

Numbers 6 and 8 are very interesting, showing how the Regiment lived during the Crimean War 1854-56. The hut shown was constructed from large square stones of Fort Paul with a roaring fire in one corner, the smoke of which ascends, in a primitive fashion, by an opening left for that purpose in the roof. The inscription reads, "Not a chair has been obtainable, so on chests and seats made out of casks sit the 'goodly companie'". The walls are papered with pictures from *Illustrated Papers*: and swords, horse-furniture and other articles are hung up wherever space is found.

Allsop's ale bottles, empty, adorn a shelf or two; and a case, from which certain straws hang out, shows that a good supply of full bottles yet remains". The trench shows the troops resting whilst two sentries are on duty. To protect themselves from the intense heat of the sun, the men have spread a sail they have come by from the harbour, over the muzzles of their firelocks, the butts resting on the ground. A Sergeant has stuck his sword into the parapet and laid his cloak over it. The cannon-balls are make-shift pillows. In the sketches, the figures "77" can be plainly seen in the caps of officers and soldiers.

Thomas Peter Harvey was appointed Ensign 29.10.1854, Lieutenant, 9.2.1855, and Captain 28.8.1858. During the siege of Sebastopol, he was selected to cross the open space, under heavy fire, to stop the fire of our own eight-gun battery.

For his services he was awarded the British Crimea Medal with clasp "Sebastopol" and the Turkish Crimea Medal.

Presented by Capt. R. F. Green.

MEDALS OF THE LATE CAPT. J. E. COUGHLAN, MC, DCM

This group of medals consists of the Military Cross, Distinguished Conduct Medal, 1914 Star and clasp, British War Medal and Victory Medal.

Julius Edward Coughlan was a fourth generation Die-Hard. His great grandfather, Edward Coughlan, served in the Crimea with the 57th, and had already had his baptism of fire in the China War of 1842. During the fighting in the Crimea, he was wounded, later receiving the British Crimea Medal with clasps "Balacava", "Inkerman" and "Sebastopol" in addition to the Turkish Crimea Medal. His grandfather, Hubert Coughlan, also served in the Crimea receiving the British and Turkish medals for that campaign and later fought the Maori in the New Zealand War of 1860-66, receiving the medal with these dates on the reverse, for his services. Hubert was the youngest, and smallest, soldier in the Allied Forces in the Crimea, being only 14 9/12 years old and 4ft 7in tall. On one occasion, during the Russian Holy Week, there was a temporary truce and the officers and men of both sides fraternised. A very tall Russian officer, in all his glory, was introduced as a fine soldier and fighting man to the officers of the 57th. Col. Shadforth, the commanding officer of the 57th, quietly sent for Dmr Hubert Coughlan, and sprung him on the Russian guests as the British warrior and fighting man! They were so amused, and pleased, that they took him into Sebastopol and exhibited him as a specimen of the British Army sent out to fight their giants. He returned to the British lines loaded with sweetmeats and fruit. Capt. Coughlan's father, James Coughlan, fought in South Africa with the Regiment. The medals of Edward and Hubert Coughlan have been on display in the Regimental Museum for 40 years and are now joined by those of Capt. Coughlan.

Julius Coughlan was educated at the Royal Hibernian Military School, Dublin, where he was an all-round athlete, a reputation he maintained on joining the 1st Battalion, Middlesex Regiment, which he joined as a boy in India. He was also bright in the head as well as active of muscles, gaining his First Class Certificate of Education in September 1908, whilst still on Boy Service.

When Sergeant-Drummer James Deacon retired to pension in 1913, after 48 years' service, 11622 L/Cpl. Coughlan was promoted Sergeant-Drummer to fill the vacancy. He was 6ft 4in tall and the ideal figurehead to lead a fine battalion on the march and on ceremonial parades. Smart in peace-time, he was to prove himself able and brave in war.

Joining the fighting companies on the outbreak of war in August 1914, he was promoted to Company Sergeant-Major, winning the Distinguished Conduct Medal in 1915 for conspicuous gallantry under heavy fire by bringing in wounded men, being himself wounded in doing so. At the Battle of Loos, September 25, 1915, he was promoted to Second-Lieutenant for conspicuous bravery.

On April 25, 1916, the 1st Battalion sent out two raiding parties, under Lts. Birdwood and Coughlan, to raid the crater at Mad Point. The official citation for the award of the Military Cross reads "For conspicuous gallantry when leading a party in a successful raid on the enemy's trenches. Several of the enemy were accounted for. He himself removed obstacles in order to enter the enemy's trench".

Six months later, the battalion took over positions in front of Delville—or "Devils"—Wood. During a reconnaissance near Les Boeufs, Capt. Coughlan was killed on October 25, 1916. His Commanding Officer wrote "I have known him for years—in fact, ever since he joined my Battalion. Here, on active service, he has always shown himself to be an

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exceptionally brave soldier, and a most efficient officer. I deeply regret the loss of my comrade-in-arms, whom I viewed also as a friend. He will be indeed greatly missed by myself and all in my Battalion". Lt.-Col. Elgee who wrote these words was a martinet of the old school and very sparing in praise. He was also a taciturn man and a solitary soul. To be called friend by him was, indeed, an accolade.

Such was the popularity and reputation of Julius Coughlan that his name was mentioned at least two or three times a week in the Corps of Drums of the 1st Battalion when the writer of these notes was serving with them in 1919. In each citation above for promotion and awards of decoration, the word "conspicuous" is used, on each occasion by a different commander. Conspicuous is "viable or prominent to eye or mind". It is certainly true of Julius Edward Coughlan, born a Die-Hard who lived the life of a Die-Hard and when the Call came died hard in action whilst searching for good battle positions for his soldiers.

Presented by Mr. Charles G. Coughlan, brother of the late Capt. J. E. Coughlan.

BATTLE DRESS UNIFORM, ETC.

This uniform consists of the blouse, trousers, anklets, plus a Sam Browne belt and greatcoat. The blouse is the original pattern but has had false lapels added to cover the coarse lining which was displayed when the top of the blouse was turned back to form lapels. Officers and soldiers at first wore the same pattern clothing, the top two buttons were left undone and lapels turned to show the khaki shirt and tie in the case of officers. Later patterns had lapels built in the officers' uniform and eventually this pattern was adopted for all ranks. The greatcoat is the normal officer's pattern with Middlesex Regiment buttons; the Sam Browne also is the universal type as used by Line Regiments since the time of its invention by General Sir Sam Browne, VC, and now familiar throughout the old Empire and even copied by foreign armies.

Presented by Capt. W. Ward.

FREE 'NEWSLETTERS'

The Editor wishes to thank Major P. Donovan, MBE, Mr L. A. J. Hosslen, Mr. B. A. Pritchard, Mr. G. R. Sharp, Mr. S. F. Sibley and Mr. A. F. Wright, MBE, for their generosity in paying extra subscriptions so that free copies of *The Die-Hards Newsletter* can be sent to deserving old comrades.

CORRESPONDENCE

From: Mr. R. J. Weedon

81 Nettleton Court,
Hollingdean Road,
Brighton.
March 31, 1971.

Dear Editor,

It was very interesting for me to read about the small silk flag of No. 1 Special Company, North Russian Expeditionary Force, as I was Section Commander No. 1 Section, No. 2 Platoon, under Lt. C. T. Whinney, MC. In fact, he won his MC in the ambush on May 15 when we attacked an armoured train and succeeded in driving it off thus enabling us to capture the railway siding and we named it Albuhera Siding. Major Taffy Williams and Capt. G. N. A. Curzons were very cool a week later when the Bolshies attacked our train on a hairpin bend due to the French retiring. These two officers calmly laid on top of the awnings and opened fire with the old Lee-Enfield rifles exposed to the enemy, who eventually retired to a good 50 miles away before we caught up with them at a place named Kapasalg. Here, the Italians ran away after the Bolshies' attack and the Die-Hards, as usual, were called in to drive the enemy back again. We had one unfortunately killed.

Before closing I must mention one amusing episode. When we landed at Murmansk on Good Friday and stayed there for a week, Major Drew, DSO, our OC, found a complete set of Band instruments, also a Bandmaster from the Royal Sussex Regiment, but no Royal Sussex men. So, behold, we claimed (not pinched) the instruments and the Sussex Bandmaster joined the Middlesex and formed a jolly good Band as we had a lot of old 4th and 2nd Battalion bandmen in the company. On a big victory parade in August before the GOC, Lord Rawlinson and his staff, we led the parade, followed by French, Serbian, Italian and American contingents and our Band played all their respective National Anthems and were warmly praised by the GOC. We were all issued with a bottle of beer after the parade for a smart turn-out. I went on after returning to England and joined the 3rd Battalion at Aldershot. Major Drew and Major Williams also came with us. Happy soldiering days with a glorious Old Regiment. God Bless them. Greetings to all our Old and New Comrades.

Yours very sincerely,

R. J. WEEDON, ex L/Cpl.
(L/14843)

PERSONAL JOTTINGS

The members of our Uxbridge Branch had a most pleasant surprise when, at their monthly meeting in March, ex-Pte. R. Ball, one of the most popular and cheerful soldiers serving as a despatch rider with the 2/8th Battalion in Northern Ireland during the last war, joined them. He had heard of these meetings at the Battle of Britain Club in Uxbridge and was anxious to meet old comrades whom he had not seen since leaving the service in 1945. He has now been enrolled as a member of the Uxbridge Branch and we shall hope to see much more of him in the future.

One of our recent visitors to the County Office at Edgware was ex-Sgt. F. E. Birdsall, who served with the 1/7th Battalion during the 1914-18 War. Although living in North Wales, he regularly comes south to attend the annual dinner and reunion of the 1/7th Battalion (1914-18) OCA.



L. to R.—?, Pte. Cole 'D' Coy, Mme. Ringot's mother, L/Cpl. S. Cole, L/Cpl. F. Osmond.

The photograph accompanying this jotting has been very kindly sent in by ex-L/Cpl. Stan Cole (6207173), late Signals Platoon of the 1/7th Battalion, as it may be of interest to some of the former members serving in the Battalion at that time. It was taken on April 21, 1940, in the yard of Mme. Ringot's estaminet at Houplin, where the 1/7th Battalion was then stationed, on the occasion of the birthday of the late ex-L/Cpl. Frank Osmond (6206959), who died in 1956.

Mme. Ringot took the snapshot, kept it throughout the German occupation and sent it to Stan Cole after the war.

By the time this issue of the *Newsletter* appears in print C/Sgt. "Clem" Clements (22276303), who has been employed on the staff of the Divisional Depot at Basingstoke, will have returned to civilian life and settled down in Wellingborough, Northamptonshire. In a recent letter giving us this information he sends his regards and best wishes to all Die-Hards.

As we go to press ex/WO2 Ernie Colebeck (6202735), our Chief Clerk at the County Office, Edgware, has just been admitted to the Middlesex Hospital for observation and treatment of a skin complaint. He expects to be there for about three weeks.

Lt. Ted Conyngham, that stalwart of the 21st (Service) Battalion and staunch member of the Portsmouth and Gosport Branch, had a long and painful spell of illness in St. Mary's Hospital, Portsmouth, earlier this year, but, like a true Die-Hard, he weathered the storm, and was released in time to celebrate his golden wedding on March 28. He appears to be making a good recovery but, as he is now 79 years of age, he has been advised to take things easily.

Ex-Sgt. Len Corner has had a spell in hospital and, when he wrote giving us this news, he was hobbling around on a stick, but hoped to be fit enough to attend the Annual Reunion on May 15.

Bad luck seems to be the lot of ex-RSM Jim Davis this year. On discharge from hospital in January he fell down the stairs at his home and so severely injured his back that he has been confined to his bed ever since. We are glad to be able to report that he is making satisfactory progress, but he is unlikely to be fully mobile for some time yet.

At the end of March we received a welcome visit from ex-Cpl. J. P. A. Day (19022627), who served in "C" Company of the 2nd Battalion in Palestine in 1947.

Lt. "Taps" Eastap, who is now serving with the 2nd Battalion Royal Regiment of Fusiliers in Berlin, writes to let us know that he sees a lot of old friends who are with 1st Battalion The Queen's Regiment, also in Berlin.

Ex-CQMS C. T. Escudier (6196271), for many years a member of the Corps of Drums of the 1st Battalion, in a recent letter sends his best wishes to all Die-Hards and states how proud he is to have served in the Regiment, as did his father, who was killed in action with the 21st (Service) Battalion on March 21, 1918.

Ex-Pte. Jack Freedman (6211590), one of the 2/8th Battalion's barbers in Portrush, Northern Ireland, during the last war, has now opened up a barber's shop at Staples Corner near the junction of the Edgware and North Circular Roads.

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One of our Hong Kong veterans who paid a surprise visit to the County Office at Edgware recently was ex-Pte. "Limey" Gardner (6550608). He sends his best wishes to all his old comrades who were "guests of the Emperor of Japan".

An old Die-Hard who got in touch with the Secretary of the Regimental Association at the end of last year and subsequently joined the Mill Hill Branch was ex-Pte. Cecil Griffiths (TF/3660). He enlisted in the 3/7th Battalion in February 1915 and was later posted to the 1/7th Battalion, then serving with the BEF in France. After the Battle of Arras in April 1917 he was posted to the 2nd Battalion and took part in that vital Battle of Villers Bretonneux in April 1918, when the 2nd Battalion, under the command of the late Lt.-Col. "Nutt" Page, put up a magnificent resistance and prevented the Germans from breaking through, but at a cost of 13 officers and 530 soldiers who were casualties.

One of our most recent recruits to membership of the Regimental Association is ex-Sgt. H. C. Griffiths (6197330). He served with the 2nd Battalion in India during the 1920s and no doubt many of our readers who were serving with the Battalion at that time will remember him. He now lives at Southwell, Nottinghamshire, and in his letter applying for membership stated that he had met ex-Bdsm. C. Simmonds from Newark, who had also served in the 2nd Battalion at the same time.

In February it was announced in the national press that Major Brian Harpur, a long-standing member of the Officers' Club, who was awarded the Military Cross whilst serving with 1st Kensingtons during the last war, had been appointed Executive Director of the *Evening News*. As such he will implement new development plans covering all aspects of the paper's activities. He was appointed a director of Associated Newspapers Group Ltd. five years ago, and is also on the board of Harmsworth Publications Ltd., having been manager of the *Evening News* for nearly six years in the mid-1950s.

We send him our heartiest congratulations on his new appointment and our best wishes for the future.

Lt.-Col. Adrian Howell, who served with the 2nd Battalion immediately after the 1914-18 War before eventually transferring to the Royal Army Pay Corps, and is now a prominent figure in the public life of the city of Chester, sends his best wishes to all Die-Hards.

We were very sorry to hear that ex-Sgt. Percy Hutchins, who won the Military Medal whilst serving with the 1/7th Battalion during the 1914-18 War, has been "under the weather" lately, and trust we shall see more of this staunch supporter of the Regimental Association with the approach of summer.

Ex-Pte. W. F. Lee (6195068), who served with the 1st Battalion at Aldershot in the 1920s, recently wrote to let us know that he was unable to attend Regimental functions now, since he was confined to his home with a serious heart complaint. He states that he is glad to get news of some of his old comrades through the *Die-Hards Newsletter*.

Lt.-Col. Francis Morgan was expecting to retire at the end of March but his service on the active list has been extended for six months since he has been appointed Military Director of this year's Cardiff Searchlight Tattoo.

Congratulations to Capt. Peter Packham on being selected to attend Army Staff Course No. 7, Division 3, at the Staff College, Camberley, beginning in January 1973.

We were very pleased indeed to get news earlier this year of Major Ken Saxby, that popular officer of the Australian Military Forces, who, when he came to this country early in 1967, was attached to our 10th (T) Battalion first as a Company Commander and later as Assistant Training Officer, until his return to Australia in 1968. Towards the end of 1969 he was selected to visit the Australian Expeditionary Force in Vietnam as an observer. At the time of writing he was back in Australia and had been appointed Training Officer of 4th Battalion The Royal New South Wales Regiment.

Major Henry Sherwood wrote recently to let us know that, owing to his present state of health, he would be unable to attend any of the regimental functions arranged during the Albuhera week-end. This decision was a bitter blow to this dedicated old Die-Hard, and we only hope that, by taking things easily now, we shall have the pleasure of welcoming him to some of our functions in the near future.

In a letter received early in April ex-Pte. S. J. Wallace (6196203), who served in the 1st Battalion during those highly successful days when it was stationed at Aldershot in the Guards Brigade, sends his best wishes to all Die-Hards.

Lt. J. S. Ward Brown resigned his commission on April 14, 1971.

Former comrades of Major Martin Weedon may be interested to hear that his elder son, Mark, who was in Hong Kong for a short time when a baby, is shortly to be married in Australia and that his younger son, Christopher, after being Senior Under Officer of his company at RMA Sandhurst, was recently commissioned into the Royal Artillery, and won the Benson Memorial Prize for the best all-round Cadet of his term entering the Gunners, and also a prize for passing out within the top 20 leaving Sandhurst.

It came as a complete surprise that ex-WO2 Len West, who is such a tower of strength to our Portsmouth and Gosport Branch, had to go into the Royal Naval Hospital at Haslar, Portsmouth, on April 29 for an operation for hernia. We are very pleased and relieved to know that Len is making satisfactory progress towards full recovery.

After many years of yeoman service to the Regiment Major Jimmy Wild retired on retired pay on March 11 last, and has taken up residence in Somerset. We wish him a happy retirement and trust that living so far from London will not prevent him from supporting our regimental functions as he has done so loyally in the past.

We offer our congratulations to Major-General Sir John and Lady Willoughby's daughter Clare and her husband, Capt. Michael Mounde, RE, on the birth of a son, Mark, on February 10, 1971.

Lt. Simon Yates, now serving with 1st Battalion The Queen's Regiment, was promoted to Captain on January 16 last. Heartiest congratulations!

OBITUARY

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

BADHAM—On February 17, 1971, Capt. John William Badham, MBE. Bill, as he was known to everyone, served for 20 years in the ranks of the 7th Battalion, and was the typical Territorial soldier so badly needed by Great Britain in peace and war. Early in his service he was put in the QM's department, where he was to prove his abilities to the full. He went with the 1/7th Battalion to join the BEF in France in 1939 and, in recognition of his services during the operations leading up to the evacuation from Dunkirk, when, as RQMS, he was acting for the QM, who was absent on leave, he was awarded the MBE. He was commissioned in May 1943 at the end of the North African campaign. He was released as soon as the war ended in 1945 and was the successful Secretary of the Hornsey Branch of the OCA until he rejoined the Army for a period of short service in 1951, when he was posted to Japan with the United Nations Read Headquarters. He was promoted Captain in May 1952 and left active soldiering soon afterwards. Until last year he regularly attended the annual Regimental Ceremony at the Field of Remembrance. He was a most loyal Die-Hard and he will be sadly missed by his many old friends and comrades.

BREWER—On April 4, 1971, ex-Cpl. John Brewer (6192619) aged 70. He enlisted in August 1920 and served with the 1st Battalion until he was posted to the 2nd Battalion, then about to move from Cairo to Singapore, in December 1921. He remained on overseas service with this Battalion until April 1930 when he was posted to the Home Establishment and rejoined the 1st Battalion at Colchester, where he was employed as the Medical Officer's Orderly until the completion of his 12 years Colour service in August 1932. He was a good footballer and played several times for the battalion team. For the last few years of his life he was unable to leave his home and so could not take part in any regimental functions.

ELLIS—On March 3, 1971, ex-Bdsm. John Ellis (L5476) aged 89. He joined the Regiment a month before his 16th birthday in 1898. He well remembered his studies on the clarinet and violin under Bandmaster Robertson, the composer of the

march "El Bodon". He also told with pride of the occasion when he was a member of the champion team of riflemen, who won the NRA shield at Portsmouth, the shield being presented by Lt.-General Henry Kent, the Colonel of the Regiment. During the 1914-18 War he served with the Royal Engineers (Railway Corps) in Salonika. After his discharge in 1919 he joined the band of the Glamorgan Garrison Artillery (TA) and served with them for four years. Although he lived in Cardiff, he always kept in touch by letter and was always interested in regimental activities.

GLOVER—On April 3, 1971, ex-Sgt. Robert William Glover (L/17526 and 6189440), aged 79. Bob, or "Mutt" as he was popularly known owing to his diminutive figure, enlisted in March 1915, was posted to the Royal Sussex Regiment, and joined the BEF in France later that year. He transferred to the Middlesex Regiment (DCO) in December 1917. At the end of the 1914-18 War he was serving with the 5th (Reserve) Battalion, and was posted to the 1st Battalion in the early 1920s. He served with this Battalion continuously from May 1923 until November 1935, when he attended a course of vocational training prior to his discharge to pension on May 26, 1936, on completion of a total Colour service of 21 years 82 days. After his discharge he was employed by the Post Office. He rejoined the Colours in September 1938 and served for a short time during the emergency. He was again recalled in August 1939 and was embodied on mobilisation on September 1, 1939, with the Royal Artillery (Searchlights). For the last seven months before his death he had been very ill, but he died peacefully leaving a large family and a host of friends who will mourn his passing.

HOWELL—In May 1970 ex-Cpl. Frank Howell (TF/3412) aged 82. He joined the 2/8th Battalion in September 1914 and was one of the first members of this second-line TA unit. When the Battalion was disbanded in 1916 he was posted to the 9th London Regiment (Queen Victoria's Rifles), joining that Battalion on the Somme where he was wounded. He was again wounded later at Polygon Wood and taken prisoner. During the 1939-45 War he re-enlisted on January 2, 1940, and joined the BEF in France later that month. He was again

on the Somme when the German Army made its rapid advance. He narrowly escaped being made a P.O.W. but was able to get away on the last ship to leave Calais. He was discharged on medical grounds in October 1940. The last few years of his life were spent in the Star and Garter Home for Disabled ex-Servicemen. Unfortunately the news of his decease did not reach the Regimental Association until quite recently which prevented earlier publication of his obituary.

MANN—On December 6, 1970, suddenly, the Rev. Archie Montgomery Mann, aged 77. He joined the 2nd Battalion in June 1918 and became a Captain and Company Commander. In addition he started a concert party, called "The Pothooks", which made a great name for itself in the 8th Division. After the war he initiated an officers' annual dinner which he ran for several years. Also single-handed he organised an all ranks reunion attended by nearly 300—a colossal task for which he got names and addresses of all who served in the 2nd Battalion from January 1918 till the end of the war from the Record Office. On demobilisation in 1919 he graduated in theology at Christ's College, Cambridge, and was licensed by the Presbytery of London North in 1922. He then spent some years in the ministry in the USA. On returning to this country he was commissioned in 1934 as a chaplain in the 6th Battalion The Lancashire Fusiliers (TA). He served with the BEF in France and Belgium in 1939-40 and showed great bravery at Dunkirk. In 1948 he was inducted as minister of St Andrews Presbyterian Church, Dartford, and, after 17 years' ministry, retired in 1965. He was a popular and well-loved figure not only amongst his old comrades of the 2nd Battalion but also in the Dartford District where he spent the rest of his life after the 1939-45 War.

PACKER—On March 22, 1971, ex-Sgt. Amos Joseph Packer (5543 and G/978) aged 92. With the death of Joe Packer the Regiment has lost its last survivor of the Battle of Spion Kop fought on January 24, 1900. Enlisting on July 22, 1898, he was posted to the 2nd Battalion on its return from India, and sailed with the Battalion to serve in the Boer War in December 1899. He took part in every battle in which the Battalion was involved, receiving the Queen's Medal with six clasps and the King's Medal with two clasps. After the war he was one of a draft posted to "F" Company, 1st Battalion, then stationed at Bangalore in India. He was transferred to the Army Reserve in July 1906, and completed his Reserve service in July 1910. He re-enlisted on the outbreak of the 1914-18 War, was posted to the newly-formed 13th (Service) Battalion, and quickly promoted to the rank of sergeant. He served with this Battalion throughout the 1914-18 War. For his services he was awarded the 1914-15 Star, British War Medal and Victory Medal to add to those already awarded for the Boer War. He was later to receive the Imperial Service Medal, making a total of six which he wore with pride on the scarlet uniform of an In-Pensioner of the Royal Hospital, Chelsea, where he died.

RIDDELL—On April 1, 1971, ex-WO2 Victor Alexander Riddell (L/13979 and 6188851) aged 81. He was the son of Capt. A. E. Riddell, who was QM on the celebrated march of the 2nd Battalion from

Kamptee to Mhow in January 1890. He enlisted in October 1904 in the King's Own Scottish Borderers and served in that Regiment until January 31, 1912, when he transferred to the Middlesex Regiment (DCO). He was posted to the 3rd Battalion then stationed in India, and appointed Bandsman. In August 1914 he was on furlough from India when war was declared and, on mobilisation, joined the 4th Battalion. With that Battalion he went to France and fought at Mons and Le Cateau, where he was wounded. On recovering from his wounds he was posted to the 6th (Reserve) Battalion at Chatham, and rejoined the 4th Battalion in France in July 1915. With this battalion he remained until the end of the war. In 1919 he was posted to the 3rd Battalion and served with it until it was disbanded in 1922. He was then transferred to the Royal Sussex Regiment and in 1924 was appointed Orderly Room Sergeant and promoted to Colour Sergeant. On completing his regular Colour service in March 1931 he joined the TA and continued to serve with 4th Battalion The Royal Sussex Regiment until April 1945 when he was discharged on medical grounds. His services were rewarded in July 1943 by the grant of a certificate from the GOC-in-C, Eastern Command. He was an In-Pensioner for a very short time before his death in the Infirmary of the Royal Hospital, Chelsea.

SUMMERS—On March 12, 1971, as a result of a riding accident from which she never regained consciousness, Olive, the beloved wife of Major C. W. Summers.

TROWT—On February 21, 1971, ex-Bandmaster Charles Trowt (L/12761 and 6188613). He enlisted in the Regiment on August 13, 1909, when he was posted direct to the Band of the 2nd Battalion. He was an excellent musician, especially on the flute and piccolo. During the 1914-18 War he was wounded at the Battle of Neuve Chapelle on March 10, 1915, and repatriated to England. On recovery he was posted to the 21st (Service) Battalion where, for six months, he was the Sergeant Drummer. After the war he studied at Kneller Hall for two years and qualified as a Bandmaster (WO1). He was posted as Bandmaster to the 1st Bn The Royal Lincolnshire Regiment in November 1920 and remained with that unit until his discharge to pension in 1935. He was a member of the Mill Hill Branch of the Die-Hards Club for many years and attended most regimental functions until his health began to fail about eighteen months ago.

TURNER—On April 30, 1971, ex-Sgt. Sydney Frederick Turner (G/88) aged 76. He enlisted immediately on the outbreak of the 1914-18 War and was posted to the newly-formed 11th Battalion, the senior of our Service Battalions. In July 1916 he was wounded whilst fighting on the Somme and, on recovering from his wounds, he was posted to the 5th (Reserve) Battalion at Chatham. In June 1917 he was posted to the 2nd Battalion, then serving with the BEF in France. He was present when the late Brigadier (then Captain) A. M. Toye, VC, MC, won the supreme award for valour. In May 1918 he was taken prisoner and was repatriated in January 1919 when he joined the Depot at Mill Hill. There he remained until he was discharged in March 1919. He later joined the Territorial Army

in the 1st Battalion The Hertfordshire Regiment, where he became Signals Sergeant, and was awarded the Territorial Efficiency Medal. A very public-spirited man, he was a staunch supporter of the Regimental Association in general and of the Mill Hill Branch of the Die-Hards Club in particular. He will be greatly missed, not only by his family, but also by a host of comrades and friends.

VARE—On February 14, 1971, at her home after a long illness borne with great courage, Eileen Doreen, much loved wife of Capt. W. Normanton Vare.

WASS—On February 19, 1971, ex-Pte. John Wass (6200197) aged 57. Johnny Wass will be remembered by many of the middle generation of Die-Hards as a boxer and fighter who always gave the maximum pleasure to spectators at any tournament in which he took part. This was during the period when the 1st Battalion had a very strong team of boxers. After his discharge from the Army he became a publican and each of the houses he managed was in a district where the customers were, in the main,

tough characters. Johnny was equally tough—a fact which was appreciated by all his customers. His generosity was as quick and effective as his reaction to trouble. The degree of his popularity was evident on the day of his funeral when the cortege, two hundred yards long, left the "Sir Colin Campbell" in Kilburn High Road and slowly made its way towards the crematorium. At the crematorium the number of mourners was so great that all could not get into the chapel, many having to join in the service standing on the steps leading to the chapel and on the pathway outside. Comrades of his military service, members of his Fellowship, and men who had received kindness and help from him when times were hard were all there to pay their last respects to a man tough in physical accomplishments and gentle in heart to his less fortunate fellow men.

An obituary notice on ex-Sgt. G. Pooley (2609481), 7th Battalion, who died on April 10, 1971, will be published in the next issue of this Newsletter.

ASSOCIATION NEWS

Secretary's Notes

Benevolent Cases

During the period January 1, 1971, to March 31, 1971, the sum of £302.90 was expended from the Charitable Fund in making grants to 26 ex-members of the Regiment, or their dependants.

Donations—Charitable Funds

The Secretary gratefully acknowledges donations to the Charitable Fund from Mr. F. E. Birdsall, Major A. R. Bisset, Major F. H. Blackburn, Mr. F. S. Byers, Lt.-Col. H. W. Clayden, Mr. B. A. Crawley, Mr. J. A. French, Mr. E. A. Gardner, Mr. C. H. Goff, Mr. J. J. T. Hall, Mrs. A. Innes-Irons, Mr. B. J. Lyons, Major B. Prebble, Mr. D. R. Sankey, Mr. J. O. Taleen, OBE, Capt. C. G. Webber, TD, Mr. J. H. Wentworth and Major D. M. W. Young.

Legacies

The Secretary has received, through the Executor, a cheque for £100, being a legacy bequeathed by the late Lt.-Col. S. F. W. M. Del Court, MC, to the Regimental Association for its charitable work.

Portsmouth and Gosport Branch

On medical advice it has, unfortunately, been necessary for Mr. Bert Hastie to give up the Honorary Secretaryship of the Portsmouth and Gosport Branch. Whilst wishing him a speedy recovery to full health I would like to take this opportunity of thanking him very much indeed for all the hard work he has put in during his term of office.

Mr. R. S. McNeill has now taken over as Hon. Secretary and his address is: 22 Whitworth Road, Gosport, Hants. F. W.

EALING BRANCH

Once again we have to report the passing-on of some of our old Comrades.

Frank (Chick) Fowler aged 75 years died on February 21, 1971. Frank joined the 2/8th Battalion on its formation in 1914 and saw service in Gibraltar, Egypt (where he was wounded at the battle of Christma Hill) and in France and Belgium at the conclusion of 1914-18 War. He was a Sergeant Instructor at Sittingbourne where he stayed until his demobilisation in 1919.

Chick had a good baritone voice and had been a chorister all his life, and he was a "must" at every Battalion concert. At the time of his death he was a member of the Westbury Parish Choir, the Westbury Choral Society and was also Chairman of the Retired Railwaymen's Club in that area.

Frank joined the old GWR as a messenger boy at Paddington and on his retirement in 1960 was the Chief Rolling Stock Inspector of British Railways (Western Region). For the past 50 years, he had lived at Westbury (Wilts) but always tried to come up to Ealing to see some of the boys.

Ex-L/Cpl. Halls and ex-Pte. Zealy Kilburn, also of the 2/8th (1914-18), died sometime late in 1970.

Also Pte. Johnny Griffiths of the 1/8th Battalion, who died early this year. This is a personal loss to

me as Johnny and I were classmates at St. Mark's School, Hanwell, in 1907-8.

All out invalids are doing well and are back in their respective homes, for which I am very glad, as I do not like too much hospital visiting.

Whilst visiting Ernie Duffield in Brentford Hospital I came across another old "Die-Hard" Pte. Joe Hines of the 3rd Battalion, who was up at Ypres in 1915 and met several of us old 1/8th blokes. Small world, ain't it?

Well, that's the lot for this letter and happy drinking to all old Die-Hards.

ALBERT WHITE.

HORNSEY AND ENFIELD BRANCH

On March 6 we had another very enjoyable evening at Hornsey, and again our thanks go to our organiser, Bert Mellor and his wife, Joan, who as usual kept the liquid refreshments flowing.

Kevin O'Brien turned up trumps with an excellent buffet, and the four-piece band supplied us with a well-balanced programme for dancing.

It was very pleasing to see our Old friends, Stan Hurlock, Jack Milroy, and Dick Stokes with their ladies once again, as well as a good sprinkling of Burma Star chaps and their ladies, and quite a number of ex-Middlesex Territorials.

Eddie Johnson was another welcome figure, but his wife could not, unfortunately, be with us. Our thanks go to the three "Young Lovelies" who made such a success of selling our raffle tickets for us. All in all, another very enjoyable and successful evening in spite of the lack of postal facilities to publicise it—well done, Bert!

On March 20 the Burma Star chaps had their dance at Hornsey and although I was unable to attend I hear they all had a good time. A few of us went to a "get-together" at Uxbridge and were made very welcome, enjoying a very pleasant evening. This is the sort of thing that needs encouraging, and we will always be pleased to see any members of other branches at Hornsey.

You will all be as pleased as we were to learn of the well-deserved award to Col. Walden in the recent Queen's Honours, and we offer our hearty congratulations on his appointment as a Member of the Order of the British Empire.

Looking forward to seeing some of you at Hornsey. Best wishes to you all. LES HOSSLEN

MILL HILL BRANCH

Our overseas members have been good correspondents since the publication of the last *Newsletter*. Pip Connor, MM (G/19511), wrote from Ontario giving news of the land of the Maple leaf and sending greetings to friends who served with him in the 21st (Islington) and 2nd Battalions. It was in the latter battalion that he won his decoration in 1918. He is in touch, by mail, with ex-RSM "Rocky" Knight, MBE (6196550), that stalwart of our 1/7th Battalion. I wonder if either had a chance to see Her Majesty during her short visit to Canada where she did such a splendid job, boosting good relations between the homeland and North America. The newspapers

appear to have devoted more space to the hairy guitar-player and his wedding than to the tour, which was a shame but normal procedure nowadays.

Jack Tipping (L/12579), another veteran of the 2nd Battalion band prior to 1914, sends news from Australia. He has always kept in touch with the regiment, being one of the original members of the Romford Branch who some years ago exchanged periodical visits with us at Mill Hill. He also, in an indirect way, has connection with Rocky mentioned above. Rocky was the RSM in North Africa when, after the success at El Alamein, the 1/7th received a cablegram from Jack Tipping, which read "London busmen, Athol Street Garage, old Die-Hards send congratulations on achievements to present Die-Hards". Now after all these years and in such different parts of the Commonwealth, these two old soldiers meet on the same page of the *Newsletter*. It is these contacts from distant climes that makes us Die-Hards tick over.

Paul Gillies, BEM (23460490), is now home from Zambia for a couple of months, and paid a visit to Edgware where he shared a convivial hour or two with Harry Seldon and other old friends in addition to visiting Ernie Colebeck in hospital. Ernie and Paul have kept in touch since the days that they were in the Orderly Room together. The story of Paul's bravery in breaking up a frenzied mob of "prophets" Alice Lunshina's followers in N. Rhodesia was printed in the April 1965 Regimental Journal which no doubt most of you chaps have read.

"Tiny" Goddard, MM, BEM (6202957), has returned to Armagh from Belfast, where he and Molly much prefer to be. Dougie—or "Tiny"—hopes to visit Edgware in June. His address is rather apt now that he is living in Drumm Park, as for some years he spent his service amongst the drum an' flutes! I am sure Dougie, and many of our Hong Kong veterans will be interested to hear that Tim Carew has just had published his book "Hostages to Fortune" at £1.75. This is a follow-up story to his book "The Fall of Hong Kong" and tells the incident of the sinking of the "Lisbon Maru".

Well, we've had out little travel on paper, Africa, Australia, Canada and N. Ireland, all on the same page of the letter. I now travel with this to the Editor who will, no doubt, use his scissors and blue pencil. Do come and join us, you never know whom you will meet at our monthly gatherings. All are welcome to join our happy band.

MAJOR DICK SMITH.

PORTSMOUTH AND GOSPORT BRANCH

Newsletter time and with this issue a new scribe, having taken over from Bert Hastie who has had to give up on medical advice.

But we were all pleased to see such a wonderful recovery in Bert and trust that he is well on the way to health again.

Meetings have been few since the last issue—two, in fact—but we manage to keep the flag flying with our faithfuls.

Len West is also on the sick list, and due to enter hospital on April 29 for an operation and we wish him the best of luck.

But both our invalids are hoping to be fit to attend the reunion.

So with all this we hope to see many of our ex-colleagues with smiling faces on May 15.

At our A.G.M. the following officers were elected: Chairman, Mr. P. J. O'Neill; Vice-Chairman, Mr. A. Lowe; Secretary/Treasurer, Mr. R. S. McNeill; Committee, Mr. R. Wigg, Mr. N. Peters.

The ladies still aid our little cause by supplying the refreshments.

We had a pleasant surprise at our A.G.M. when we had a visit from Major Charlie Gatehouse, and we now hope to see more of him in the future.

Also at the next meeting we had a welcome visit from our outstation member, Sam Shawyer. We hope to see more of you, Sam.

That's it, folks, but in closing we would like to see more of our Ex's—the more the merrier.

MAC

9TH BATTALION BRANCH

The Annual Reunion and Dinner of the 9th Battalion and the 571 LAA Regt. will take place at 7 p.m. on Saturday, May 22, at the Victory (ex-Service) Club, 63 Seymour Street, W2. Particulars of the dinner have been sent to all our members.

It is noted with pleasure of the social activities of the Association.

Our Committee hope for a good muster for the Albuhera Service at St. Paul's Cathedral; no tickets are required.

Owing to the postal dispute, not much news has trickled through which, perhaps, is all to the good. No obituary notices this time, thank goodness.

In the last issue of the *Newsletter*, I wrote of the gift which Mrs. E. Midgeley sent of copies of the Battalion's magazine, which was printed and issued in India during World War I. I have found that it is the complete issue and, what is more, two other complete volumes are in existence. The magazine makes very pleasant reading, recording our first impressions of India and of our journeys along the North-West Frontier. There we saw some wonderful views of forests and mountains, particularly around the Murree Hills and Darjeeling. The march to Fort Attock and Nowshera tested the strength of the Battalion, and those who survived that march could say that they were tough.

In the magazine there is the obituary notice of Lt. N. W. Blumfeld, the son of our Commanding Officer, Lt.-Col. J. L. Blumfeld, TD, who was killed in action in Mesopotamia, on February 23, 1917. Lt. Blumfeld took his commission in October 1914 and was posted to the 2/9th Battalion, subsequently transferring to the Machine Gun Corps. He was aged 20 at his death.

The magazine also records that Lt. J. N. Lamont, whilst attached to the 4th Hampshire in Mesopotamia, was awarded the Military Cross for conspicuous gallantry in action. Eventually, the Lieutenant was promoted Lieutenant-Colonel and commanded our Battalion from 1933 to 1937. The last big function that Col. Lamont attended was the Centenary Celebration of the 9th Battalion held at Wembley (now Brent) Town Hall on October 27, 1959. This was a great occasion, and was attended not only by the present members of the 571 LAA Regiment RA (originally the 9th Battalion), but by all past members who could be notified, and their ladies.

Besides the news of the Battalion's activities, the magazine contains many good articles on

India itself, such as the Government's work, exploration of its ancient buildings, and treks made by members of the Battalion.

As I mentioned in the dinner letter, the magazine, together with photographs, will be on view at the dinner. Perhaps in some future issues of this *News-letter*, I shall be able to write more of our history.

R. T. M.

WO's AND SERGEANTS' BRANCH

Despite the postal strike, which prevented us from sending out our usual monthly letter with a reminder of forthcoming meetings, we continue to have good support from our members, averaging 25 members and friends at each of the last four meetings. Nevertheless, there is still room for improvement and we would like to welcome new members.

The monthly raffles are being well supported by not only members participating but by the generosity of those who so kindly give presents as prizes. Proceeds from these raffles not only defray the cost of the "Free Eats" provided at each meeting but leave a few bob which are credited to our Entertainment Account. We are hoping to vary the raffles by running miniature whist drives instead.

I am sorry to report that the news of one of our invalids is not so good, for Jim Davis who was discharged from hospital in January, fell down the stairs

at his home and injured his back and is confined to his bed. The latest news is that he is comfortable and making some little progress. Peter Edwards was also discharged from hospital in January and is feeling much better.

Since our last contribution was made, the interior of the Drill Hall has been redecorated, which has brightened things up a bit, and added just that little something more to the comfort of the Mess where we hold our monthly "get-togethers". Thanks to Charlie Banks, who runs the bar, the room is laid out ready for us before each meeting.

As I have said in the opening paragraph, we would like to welcome new members, so should you, reading this and not being a member, like to have further particulars, drop me a line, and I will see that you are informed. Better still, come along any second Saturday of the month to the WO's and Sergeants' Mess, Drill Hall, Deansbrook Road, Edgware, walk in, and if you do not know me ask the first person you see for Len. You should find someone there whom you know for we are well represented by all Battalions.

I am looking forward to May 15 when we hold our first Albuhera Service in our very own chapel. This Branch, I know, will be well represented and I am looking forward to meeting many comrades of the past.

To all Die-Hards we send our best wishes and to Branches our greetings and best wishes for the future.

LEN JOHNSON.