



The Die-Hards

NEWSLETTER

No. 4

NOVEMBER 1968

PRICE 1/3

Editor: Col. F. WALDEN, D.L.

VISIT TO MONS 1968

Again this year a regimental party made the pilgrimage to Mons and Obourg by coach from Regimental Headquarters at Edgware and return. On this occasion we were honoured with the company of Major General and Mrs. Man. This is the first time since these pilgrimages were started on an individual basis after the 1914-18 War that the Colonel of the Middlesex Regiment has made the trip, and his presence this year with Mrs. Man was very much appreciated by everyone.

The coach left Edgware at 6.30 p.m. on August 21, and in addition to the General and Mrs. Man, the party consisted of Mr. and Mrs. Charlie Ashby, Mr. and Mrs. Harry Bird, Mr. Bill Bishop, Capt. S. R. Bonnamy, Mr. Tom Christman, Mr. Fred Dyson, Mr. and Mrs. Percy Hutchins and family, Mr. Jimmy Jenkins, Sgt. of In-Pensioners Cornelius King from the Royal Hospital, Chelsea, Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Matthews, Major G. Parr-Head, Mr. C. Perkes, Mr. Noel Peters, Mr. and Mrs. Bob Ryder, Col. F. Walden, and Mr. "Shiner" Wright and friend. Also travelling with the party were Messrs. R. Joyce and T. Lack who had served with the 4th Battalion The Royal Fusiliers at Mons in 1914.

The party crossed by the night ferry from Dover and arrived at Ostend in the early hours of Thursday, the 22nd, where we were met by Mr. and Mrs. Bob Ferguson who had made arrangements for an excellent breakfast. Having satisfied the inner man the party continued its journey to Mons and arrived there well before noon. We were met by Major Dick Smith, who had gone over a few days in advance to make the final arrangements for our accommodation. With the valuable assistance of our Belgian friend, Charles Ottovaere, he did a first-class job, and we are indebted to him for all the trouble he took to overcome the many difficulties, with which he was faced, in order to ensure that our stay in Mons would be comfortable.

As well as M. Charles Ottovaere, other Belgian friends who welcomed us on arrival at Mons were M. Lucien Colsoule, President of the Veterans of King Albert I, and M. Edouard Dupont, a patron of our 4th Battalion Old Contemptibles.

The next day, Friday 23, being the 54th anniversary of the Battle, was wholly taken up with

the various ceremonies, which traditionally take place each year.

Our first place of pilgrimage was the "Avenue of the 4th Middlesex", which forms a crescent on the new residential housing estate built on the ground where our 4th Battalion were in position that Sunday morning in 1914. The party present, headed by the Association Standard, carried by Bob Ferguson, and by the Mons Standard, carried by "Shiner" Wright, then marched round the crescent. We then made our way back in the coach to the Hotel de Ville in the Main Square at Mons, where the Regimental flag was flying in a place of honour.

At the Hotel de Ville we formed up behind the official party of the Old Contemptibles and all marched to the memorial to the Belgians of Mons, who had died in two wars. Here a wreath, bearing our regimental badge, was laid by Major General Man, the Exhortation being recited by Jimmy Smith, who was the groom to Lt.-Col. (later Major-General) Hull, the officer commanding the 4th Battalion during the battle. The Belgian police, who were flanking the memorial, acted in perfect unison at our words of command.

From the Belgian memorial we marched to the Belfry, where stands the memorial to the two battles of Mons—those of 1914 and 1918. After the placing of a wreath by Major-General Man, a special Exhortation was recited by Chum C. J. Bougourd, in charge of the party of Old Contemptibles.

The two parties—Old Contemptibles and Die-Hards—then travelled by coach to the Hotel de Ville where we were given an official welcome by the first Alderman, M. Cunesow, in the absence on holiday of the Burgomaster, and other civic officials of the ancient city of Mons.

After lunch our party went by coach to the military cemetery at Saint Symphorien, the most picturesque war cemetery in Belgium or France. There a wreath was laid by Major-General Man at the base of the memorial to the men of "The Royal Middlesex Regiment" which had been erected by the Germans during the 1914-18 War and unveiled by the late Crown Prince Rupprecht of Bavaria.

From Saint Symphorien we left for Obourg, stopping on the way to lay a wreath at the memorial

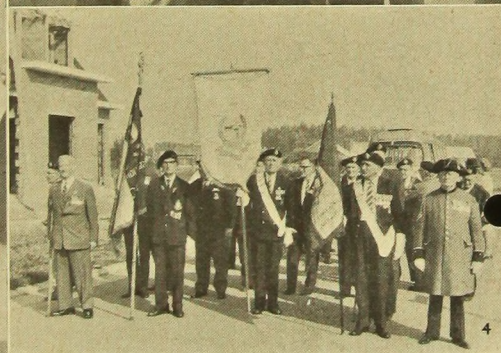
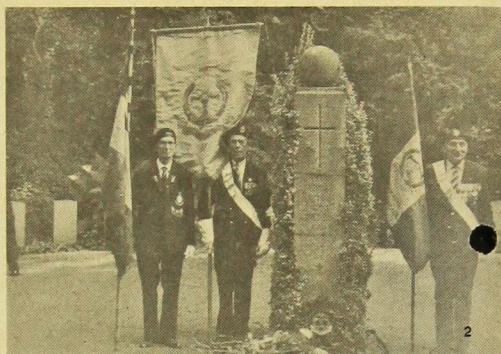
1. General Man paying homage at the Belgian National Memorial to the service men of Mons who fell in the two World Wars.

2. Memorial in St. Symphorien Military Cemetery to the "Royal" Middlesex Regiment, which was unveiled by the late Crown Prince Rupprecht of Bavaria.

3. Mr. Harry Bird explaining to General Man at the "Avenue of the 4th Middlesex Regiment" the positions occupied by "D" Company, 4th Middlesex, on August 23, 1914.

4. Front rank of Regimental party formed ready to march round the crescent of "Avenue of the 4th Middlesex Regiment", showing Mons FNC standard, 4th Battalion Mons banner and Association standard.

(Photograph: C. C. Perkes)



to our comrades-in-arms of the 2nd Battalion The Royal Irish Regiment at the Bascule junction of the Mons-Charleroi road. Then on to our own special hallowed spot at Obourg Station, where the 4th Battalion fired the opening shots of the war in 1914. Parading with us and marching to the station were our Belgian comrades of the Obourg FNC, together with their standards. Our wreath was laid by Major-General Man beneath the bronze plaque on the wall of the station commemorating the opening of the action and the gallantry of the unknown Die-Hard

who held his position on the roof until his ammunition was expended and he died at his post. After a speech from the Burgomaster praising the Regiment, to which Major-General Man replied, the parade formed up under the command of Major Smith and marched past, the Burgomaster and Major-General Man taking the salute together on the bridge which had been so ably defended by "D" Company of the 4th Battalion 54 years ago. This concluded the ceremonies for the day, and we made our way back to Mons, where we had Saturday 24,

as a free day before returning home on the 25th.

Although we were delayed on the journey home, owing to a strong head wind during the Channel crossing and an incredibly long hold up on the main road just outside Canterbury we eventually reached Regimental Headquarters in time for those who still had some distance to go to reach home that evening.

This was a memorable pilgrimage and there is no doubt that all who went on it enjoyed it immensely. That our Royal Fusilier guests, who accompanied us, did so is borne out in a letter received from them subsequently, the following extracts from which will be read with much pleasure by all of us:—

"We were greatly impressed and honoured to be able to share and show our respects to such a great Regiment (The Die-Hards) on such a memorable occasion. We would also like to thank your grand bunch of Comrades who made us so welcome when we met at Edgware and throughout the journey".

We now look forward to next year's visit, which we hope will be as successful as that undertaken this year.

D-DAY FELLOWSHIP

Next year is the twenty-fifth anniversary of D-Day, and in Portsmouth, from which the bulk of the Allied forces set sail for France in 1944, and where an ambitious project is afoot to complete the cathedral as a D-Day memorial, an organisation has been formed to keep alive the memory of D-Day and all it stands for.

Membership of the D-Day Fellowship is not confined to those who took part in the D-Day operations. Parents and other relatives may also belong. The life subscription is £1 and those joining will receive a certificate of membership. Linked with the Fellowship will be an annual service in Portsmouth Cathedral on or about the anniversary of D-Day and a special book containing the names of the members which will be placed within the cathedral.

The funds raised will help to complete the nave of the cathedral, a project which has been designed by the British architects, Seely and Paget, in collaboration with Professor Pier Luigi Nervi, the famous Italian structural engineer, who built the Olympic stadia in Rome. Seating 1,500, the nave will have a roof span of 78 feet, nearly double that of St. Paul's Cathedral. The plans have been approved by the Royal Fine Art Commission.

Empanelled in the ceiling of the ambulatory surrounding the nave will be the crests of the units of the Allied nations which took part in the D-Day operations. There will be space for 400 badges, and design and layout plans are in the hands of a Services committee representing Britain, the U.S.A., Canada, Australia and New Zealand and other Allied nations.

A stone commemorating the resolve to complete the nave as a D-Day memorial was laid in the cathedral two years ago by Field-Marshal Lord Montgomery. In a message published when the

Portsmouth Cathedral Completion Appeal was launched, Lord Montgomery said: "What we began on June 6, 1944, has made possible a new life for nations all over the world and new hope to millions, who, but for our efforts, would be living in slavery and darkness. . . . It is indeed, fitting that this day, which marked a turning point in the history of mankind, should be marked by the completion of a cathedral in which there can be enshrined a lasting reminder of the things for which we then fought."

Those wishing to join the D-Day Fellowship should write to the Organiser, the Portsmouth Cathedral Completion Appeal, Flat 2, Cathedral House, St. Thomas's Street, Old Portsmouth.

4th BATTALION THE QUEEN'S REGIMENT

Under existing Ministry of Defence plans the Battalion has been selected to relieve 1st Battalion The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders in the Berlin Brigade in spring 1970.

The tour will be for one year with families.

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REGIMENTAL MUSEUM

Recent acquisitions to the Middlesex Regimental museum are as follows:—

Beer mug from Divisional Officers Mess of the Crown Prince Rupprecht of Bavaria.

Full dress tunic and waiter's livery jacket, 1st Battalion.

Military Cross of Capt. H. F. Hill, MC.

Series of old regimental Christmas cards.

Crested envelopes of 9th Battalion (TF).

Lack of space forbids a full description of these items, therefore brief notes only are given.

Beer mug—This beer mug is one of four remaining in the Mess when the Germans were retreating in 1918. These were "acquired" by the Belgian civilian who was the barber to the mess. In later years, he gave one to his son and after two of the others became casualties, he presented the remaining mug to M. Charles Ottovaere, a Hon. Member of the Mill Hill branch of the Die-Hards Club. Three years ago, M. Ottovaere promised the mug to Major Smith, as Curator of the Museum, and during a recent visit to RHQ, duly made the presentation.

Uniforms—The full dress red tunic is the normal pattern as used by all officers of the Regiment from 1881 to 1914 and at leavers between the two World Wars.

The waiter's jacket is of "tails" pattern with white metal buttons bearing the Albuhera insignia of the 57th Regiment.

Presented by Lt. Col. D. Y. Cubitt.

Military Cross—Military Cross of Capt. Horace Frank Hill, MC. Captain Hill was awarded this decoration whilst serving with the 18th (1st Public Works Pioneers) Battalion, the award appearing in the London Gazette of January 1, 1917. He had previously been Mentioned in Dispatches on May 5, 1916.

Purchased.

Christmas Cards—An interesting number of old Regimental Christmas cards covering both wars and various battalions. The earliest one is for Christmas 1914 from the 10th Battalion (TF), the other cards being of 1st and 2nd Battalions and Depot, in addition to those from Brigades and Forces in which personnel of the Regiment served in both World Wars. These cards are a history in themselves.

Presented by Brigadier W. P. Procter, CBE, MC.

Crested envelopes—Four crested envelopes bearing the distinctive 9th Territorial crest on the flap. These were made for the use of the 9th Battalion by the firm of Hale and Anderson of Calcutta. All battalions of the Regiment had, at times, their distinctive crest of badge and are now of great interest since the recent changes in composition of the regiments in the Army.

Presented by Major H. Sherwood, TD.

R.W.J.S.

CORRESPONDENCE

From: Col. W. D. Ellis, O.B.E., T.D., A.D.C., D.L.

Lea Barn,

Winter Hill,

Cookham Dean,

Berkshire.

September 11, 1968.

The Editor,
The 'Die-Hards' Newsletter.

Dear Editor,

I would like to congratulate you and your colleagues on *News Letter* No. 3 which I have just read with great interest.

It is most encouraging to see from your Personal Jottings that more 'Diehards' of the 1939-45 vintage are now corresponding with you.

Ex-Pte. R. T. Baker (3534787) was driver to Major R. J. P. Cummins during the campaign in North West Europe 1944/45. If he likes to write to me I will willingly lend him my copy of the Regimental History.

I am also glad to see that ex-Sgt. George Bignell, an old friend of mine, is keeping touch with us. In the old 2/8th Middlesex 1939, we drew a lot of people from the East side of London. I am certain that those who survived must have returned there, and perhaps George Bignell should set about collecting them up together into a local Branch.

Yours sincerely,

W. D. Ellis.

(A copy of the Regimental History has now been obtained from ex-Pte. Baker.—*Editor.*)

PERSONAL JOTTINGS

We were very pleased indeed to receive a visit recently from ex-Pte. Michael Batten (23524289), who served with the 7th Battalion (TA) from 1957 until 1961 when he moved to Loughborough.

After 18 years in Brazil Major K. P. Baxter has returned to this country and is working once more in the City.

He served with the 2nd Battalion during the 1939-45 War, in which he won the Military Cross.

A recent newly-joined member of the Regimental Association is ex-Sgt. Joe Bromley (6200153) who served with the 2nd Battalion and at the Depot from 1931 to 1938 when he was transferred to the Army Reserve.

On mobilization in 1939 he was initially employed as an instructor at the M.G.T.C., Mill Hill. Later he was posted to the 8th Battalion (TA) and served with that Battalion until 1945 when he was released from military service.

Ex-Sgt. Cyril Broome (6209632) writes from County Durham, where he is employed with the Savings Certificate Division of the G.P.O., to say that he hopes to take a few days' leave shortly to visit relations at Finchley, where he used to live before moving north.

Major Ken Clayden retired on retired pay on July 16, 1968, and is now living in the Manchester area.

Colonel Aymar Clayton is now well established in his new job as Secretary of the recently-formed East Anglian T. and A.V.R. Association with his Headquarters at Chelmsford. He finds the work hard but most interesting, and modestly claims that for once he is earning his keep!!

One of our regular correspondents, octogenarian J. W. Cleave, who is proud of his service in the 4th Battalion, sends his kind regards and best wishes to all Die-Hards.

Congratulations to Major and Mrs. Harold Couch on the birth of their daughter, Elizabeth.

Before leaving in September to take up residence in British Columbia Lt.-Colonel "Tom" Cubitt visited Regimental Headquarters at Edgware and presented some items of uniform etc. to the Regimental Museum, for which we are most grateful.

One of our old soldiers of the 7th Battalion, Ernie Daddon (ex-Private, TF/2452), has been prominent in the local news at Stevenage recently, and his wife celebrated their Golden Wedding anniversary. Congratulations to them both and may they have many more years of happiness together.

After a life-time hobby of music Ernie took up painting four years ago, and some of his paintings were shown at a special exhibition held locally last November.

In a letter just received Capt. Mike Deakin, who

for the last nine months has been the Air Troop Leader to the Royal Scots Greys in B.A.O.R., states that he is due to return to this country in December to take up a G.S.O. 3's appointment in the Land/Air Warfare Branch at the Ministry of Defence.

We were very pleasantly surprised at Regimental Headquarters when, at the end of September, we received a visit from ex-Sgt. A. T. Dickinson, a true "old and bold" pre-war member of the 7th Battalion, who was and still is the epitome of smartness. Although no longer in the Service he cannot be out of uniform for long and for some time has been Divisional Superintendent in the St. John Ambulance Brigade in Finchley.

Our heartiest congratulations to ex-R.S.M. Len Drinkwater, late 9th Battalion, who celebrated his 94th birthday on October 24.

As we are going to press Brig. Roly Gwyn writes to let us know that he has met this year two people who would like to be remembered to the older Die-Hards.

The first of these is Felix Heerling, the young Swiss manager of the Mena House Hotel, by the Pyramids, who was such a kind friend to subalterns of the 1st Battalion when stationed at the Citadel, Cairo in 1933 and 1934. He is now the Manager of one of the largest hotels in St. Moritz.

The other is Kenneth Hamilton, the large, bearded and most co-operative Commander in *HMS Unicorn*, which took the 1st Battalion to Korea. He is now a retired Captain RN and a business Executive in Sheffield.

Lt.-Colonel John Herapath, who has been employed for some years in a Retired Officer's appointment, finally retired at the end of September. His last appointment was at Headquarters, Wales District, Brecon. He proposes to settle in Somerset and is hoping to buy a house at South Barrow, near Yeovil.

That staunch Die-Hard of the 1/7th Battalion, ex-R.S.M. "Rocky" Knight, who has been a tower of strength on the Executive Committee and the Housing Sub-Committee of the Regimental Association, eventually left to take up residence in Canada, where his daughter lives, on September 2. We shall not forget the amount of hard work he put in and the vast interest he showed in everything regimental. He will be much missed and we hope that he will be true to his promise to come back and see us in two years' time.

A most interesting and informative letter was received recently from a very well-known daughter of the Regiment, Miss Dorothy Longe. Her letter was written on September 18 which, she states, the sixty-fifth anniversary of her father's appointment to command the 1st Battalion. He was commissioned in the 57th in September 1877—just ninety one years ago!! In her very young days Crimean veterans were very ordinary, and she remembers meeting two Indian Mutiny veterans. She wonders if any old

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Die-Hard living can remember speaking to a Peninsular War veteran?!

After twenty one years in the post Tom ("Lofty") Lowe (ex-L/Cpl. 6193270) retired in June this year as Head Cellarman at the Hyde Park Hotel, having held a similar post for nineteen years with Kinloch's, the well-known firm of wine merchants. His interest in the wine business started when he was for six years shortly after the 1914-18 War wine waiter in the Officers' Mess of the 1st Battalion.

In 1966 he started, and was founder Chairman of, the Wine Cellarmen's Association.

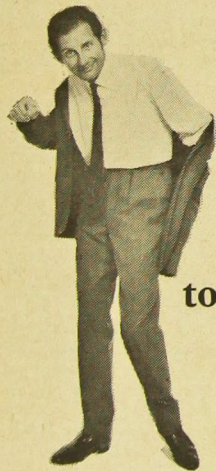
All his many friends will wish "Lofty" a happy and peaceful retirement, though it is hard to think of him doing nothing!

We were sorry to hear that Richard May (ex-Pte., 14645335), who served with the 1/7th Battalion during the campaign in N.W. Europe, has had rather a long spell of illness this year, which kept him away from work. He is now fit and well, and has recently moved to a new address in Dunstable, Bedfordshire.

Major John Moore, who is doing a tour of duty with the Sultan of Muscat's Armed Forces, appears to be enjoying life in that fascinating country. When he last wrote in August he mentioned that the anti-rebel campaign in Dhofa Province was "hotting up," and that he was expecting the rest of his tour to be busy and exciting.

Mr. P. J. McLoughlin, who was R.S.M. of the

Austin Reed suits from £25 cost nothing



to try on.

AUSTIN REED

of Regent Street

1st Battalion during the period when the Battalion carried out Public Duties in London, and later in Hong Kong, is now living at Brighton, where he is employed on the staff of The Old Ship Hotel. His Colour Service was mainly with the Irish Guards, from which Regiment he was transferred on promotion to Warrant Officer, Class 1.

We were delighted to receive early in September a visit from M. Charles Ottovaere, who is always so helpful and hospitable when we make our pilgrimages to Mons in August each year.

News has been received that Harry Sampson (6204409), who served with the 2nd Battalion from February 1938 to May 1940, when he was discharged as physically unfit, is now living in the Camden Town area of London.

One of our former National Service soldiers, B. Shearim (19119871), who served with the 2nd Battalion in Palestine in 1947 and 1948, has recently got in touch with us from St. Helens, Lancashire, where he is now living.

All his old friends who served in the 2nd Battalion during the 1920's, will be pleased to hear that Joe Smith (6197002), who collapsed on the Albuhera Day Service, made a good recovery, though in a recent letter he says that he is still under the doctor.

We congratulate Brigadier John Stanyer on his appointment as Director of Ordnance Services as from September 13.

He was Adjutant to the 2nd Battalion in Palestine in 1947 and later transferred to the Royal Army Ordnance Corps.

Ex-Cpl. Kenneth Sutton (21124794), who was badly disabled as a result of wounds received whilst serving with the 1st Battalion in Korea, writes to let us know that he has now been admitted as a permanent patient to the Queen Alexandra Hospital Home in Worthing for Disabled ex-Servicemen.

He sends his best wishes to all members of the Regimental Association.

One of our regular readers, ex-Sgt. C. Uwins (4825) writes to say how much he appreciates the Newsletter.

During the 1914-18 War he served with the 13th (Service) Battalion in France from May 1915 to June 1916, when he was wounded, and later with the 23rd (2nd Footballers' Service) Battalion in Italy and France.

Congratulations to Captain and Mrs. Peter Walden on the birth of their daughter, Susan Jane.

One of our oldest Die-Hards, about whom we had had no previous knowledge at all, wrote in September

for details of the Annual Reunion. His name is Percy Warrin and he is now in his 94th year. He enlisted in the Middlesex Yeomanry in 1896, and served in the South African War. During the 1914-18 War he received a commission in our 3/9th Battalion, and during the 1939-45 War, in spite of his age, he succeeded in getting employed on secret service work.

Colonel Sir Russell Wilkinson, one of the most distinguished Honorary members of our Officers' Club, recently made a generous contribution to our Association Charitable Fund, for which we are most grateful. In a letter to the Secretary he wrote, "I shall always remember the great joy I had in serving as M.O. to the 2nd Battalion in 1914 and 1915. They were the salt of the earth." He was wounded whilst serving with the 2nd Battalion and also mentioned in despatches. He was Physician to the late Prince and Princess Arthur of Connaught from 1918 to 1938 and to the late Princess Royal from 1925 to 1931.

Major J. Wilkinson-Latham, who served in the 2/8th Battalion before being transferred to the Royal Artillery during the last war, figured prominently in the national press early in August when he, brandishing an antique carbine, and his two sons, waving antique cavalry swords, almost prevented a 10-man gang from getting away after an armed raid on the head office of Thos. Cook and Son in Berkeley Street, Mayfair. At the time Major Wilkinson-Latham was in the antique shop next door, owned by his sons, when a woman ran into the shop and shouted that there had been a shooting in Thos. Cook's.

We were very sorry indeed to hear shortly before going to press that Mrs. John (Tossie) Worton had been laid low with illness and would have to rest for some weeks. She has always been most regular in her attendance at Regimental golf meetings, and she

will be much missed at the Autumn meeting at Warminster.

Her many friends throughout the Regiment wish her a speedy recovery to full health again.

OBITUARY

It is with regret that we have to announce that the following Die-Hards have died:—

BEADNELL—On September 8, 1968, in a car accident in Kenya Major Lawrence Christopher (Hippo) Beadnell, aged 56 years. He was commissioned in the Regiment on August 27, 1931, and, after serving in both Regular battalions, was seconded to the King's African Rifles, with whom he served with distinction throughout the 1939-45 War, being mentioned in despatches. He retired on retired pay in September 1948 and settled in Kenya to farm.

BUCKNER—On September 15, 1968, ex-Sgt. Harry Buckner (TF/204880) aged 70. He enlisted in the 2/8th Battalion on August 23, 1914, and served with that Battalion in Gibraltar and Egypt. From May 1916 until December 1918 he served with the 2nd Battalion in France. He rejoined the T.A. after the war and served with the 8th Battalion until 1926 when he was discharged.

Stop Press

Notification that the following have died has been received, but no further information is available at present:

DENTON—Mrs. C. F., widow of Capt. C. F. Denton.

LAWRENCE—Major F. A. L.

POWELL—"Pokey", late 1st Battalion.

SEALEY—W. A., late 9th Battalion.



FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Date	Event
1969 Fri., Apr. 18	Spring Golf Meeting at North Hants Golf Club, Fleet.
Sat., Apr. 26	1st/7th Battalion (1939-45) Dinner at T. & A.V.R. Centre, Hornsey, N.8.

ASSOCIATION NEWS

SECRETARY'S NOTES

Benevolent Cases

During the period May 1, 1968, to August 31, 1968, the sum of £450 os. od. was spent from the Charitable Fund in making grants to 53 ex-members of the Regiment, or their dependants.

Donations—Charitable Fund

The Secretary gratefully acknowledges donations to the Charitable Fund from Colonel Sir Russell Wilkinson, K.C.V.O., Miss Margaret Whitehead, MM, Willy Dubrelle and Joseph Thayse of the Mons Section FNC, Mr. J. W. Cleave and Mr. A. L. Nicholls.

Donations—War Memorial Fund

The Secretary gratefully acknowledges a donation to the War Memorial Fund of £22, which was the result of a collection made at the 2/7th Battalion (1939-45) Dinner on Friday, October 4.

Visit to Mons 1968

A full account of this year's pilgrimage appears elsewhere in this issue of *The Die-Hards Newsletter*.

Grand Concert, Kneller Hall

A party of 29 members and their families availed themselves of the opportunity provided by the Association of attending this Concert on August 29, and enjoyed some splendid music played by a band of 250 military students on courses at the Royal School of Music.

These concerts are held out of doors and it was a great pity that, on this occasion, rain, which had held off most of the time, came down and did its best to spoil the last item—Tchaikovsky's 1812 Overture.

Annual Reunion 1968

The annual reunion this year was held in Porchester Hall, Queensway, a change of venue from the gatherings in recent years. A hall of tasteful decor, it is, from the remarks of quite a number of people, a favourable place to hold a future meeting. At least 650 folk were present, the old soldiers representing all generations from those who commenced their soldiering at the end of the last century to the young, efficient, serving soldier of today. In three cases, there were people of the 1914-18 generation attending the reunion for the first time, having seen the announcement in the national press.

Dance music was provided by the dance band and steel band of 4th Battalion The Queen's Regiment, the successors to the Middlesex Regiment.

Seated at the large round table were groups of men who had served in the same battalions, reliving the days of their youth. In a number of cases, these groups had arrived together by coach. Other individuals had travelled many miles, in one case from Scotland and another from South Devon.

It is probable that the reunion for 1969 will be held at the same venue when it is hoped that not only will we have the company of Die-Hards who were there this year, but also many more to join in the joys and reminiscences which are always present on these occasions.

EALING BRANCH

We at Ealing are still meeting under conditions of difficulty, but at least we meet. At 7.30 p.m. on the second Friday in the month we pick our way carefully amongst scores of tables and chairs covered with thousands of Christmas cards and envelopes.

The Drill Hall is being used by the Welfare Department of the local council as a centre for light work for the elderly people of both sexes and under the supervision of a very kind and efficient Social Worker together with some volunteer helpers, the old folk appear to enjoy their labours.

At our last meeting on September 13, one of our oldest members, Arthur Wernley, 84, walked in with his wife after being ill for over 9 months, still as upright as he was in 1904 with the 1st Battalion. It was good to see him, "Carry on" Arthur.

I regret to report the death of a very much liked member of the Branch, Mr. Harry Buckner, who served with the 2/8th Battalion in 1914-18. After service in Gibraltar, Egypt and France he returned to civil life but always thought of the old Regiment. He attended most of the Re-unions of his Battalion at Hounslow and in 1961, when the Ealing Branch was at a very low ebb, he helped to re-organise things and by a letter in the local paper he brought us all together again. We are grateful for his forethought. He was buried at Farnham Royal Church on Thursday, September 19, and the Branch was represented by the Chairman, Mr. George Ife and myself (both of the 1/8th Battalion) and the widow expressed her thanks to the Colonel and all members of the Association for their kind thoughts.

We send good wishes to all members of the Association and hope to meet at Porchester Hall on October 11.

A. WHITE

HORNSEY AND ENFIELD BRANCH

The past few months have seen the Branch activities revised and also have seen "Rocky" Knight emigrate to Canada. May we wish him all the very best of health and good fortune in his new life.

Mr. Bert Mellor has "done us proud" at Hornsey—two visits to Kneller Hall and one coach tour of the Shakespeare Country. All very much appreciated by members attending and as Bert was responsible for the organising of these events, may we say

"well done Bert." We also have had a dance at the Drill Hall which was very successful. We even made a few shillings! The music was provided by Jack Warner's "Kentuckians" and a pleasant evening was had by all.

We would like to see more of you at the T.A. Centre canteen on Wednesday evenings and the entertainment committee manage to put on a social evening on the first Saturday of each month, so please make the effort.

For the next few months the effort of the Branch will, I hope, be to come along and join us.

H. THORNTON.

PORTSMOUTH & GOSPORT BRANCH

We are now completing our fourth year as a branch and although our numbers have not increased it is true to say that they have not diminished; some come while others go.

Our ladies, Mesdames West, Norfield, O'Neil, Neil and Wigg are greatly responsible for keeping us going and supply the refreshments for our meetings.

On the recent trip to Mons our branch was represented by one of the older but staunch members of our fraternity, Jim Peters. No doubt he would have been joined by Edward Conyngham but he was unfortunately otherwise engaged.

Alfie Low is on the trail of a book about the adventure of our old friend Trotabas; he is interested in it being published by the Association.

Next week 15 of us are making the trip up to the Reunion. This, of course, will be reported at a later date, but we are all looking forward to yet another happy evening.

We have recently had visits from Colonel Walden and Major Honeybun at our monthly meetings. These are held on the second Friday of the month in the RAFA Club, Stoke Road, Gosport, and all old comrades would be made most welcome should they care to drop in.

Frankie Nash has moved from his old address at Chichester and is now at 19 Albert Road, Clay Lane, Fishbourne, Chichester, Sussex.

I conclude these notes with the thought of the very reality of the death of the Middlesex Regiment and think that somewhere there is someone who will one day be known as the "Last Diehard". Perhaps someone could dream up some means of keeping track in anticipation of this eventuality.

Good wishes for Christmas and the New Year from all of us to all of you.

LEN C. (BOGEY) WEST.

2/7th BATTALION BRANCH

The 23rd Annual Dinner of the Branch took place at the Victory Ex-Service Club, Seymour Street, London, W.2, on Friday, October 4, 1968.

There were 62 members present and Lt.-Col. Dennis Robbins presided in the absence, through illness, of Lt.-Col. Stanley Mirams.

During the dinner, in accordance with the usual custom, a collection was made, as a result of which the handsome sum of £22 was handed over to the Secretary of the Regimental Association for the War Memorial Fund.

9th BATTALION BRANCH

We feel very grateful for the splendid work the Editor, Colonel F. Walden, DL, and Major R. W. J. Smith, MBE, are doing in keeping the history of the Regiment before us, by collecting the information and publishing it in our "Newsletter".

Surely their work has been enhanced with the letter all "Diehards" in the Association, have received from Major General C. M. M. Man, CB, OBE, MC, in September, in which he exhorts us to keep the Regiment's past glories always before us, and support the Queen's Regiment, as well as the Association of the Middlesex Regiment.

There are several ways of doing this, such as appearing in person at some of the functions and social events of the Association, disseminating the Association's good works and supporting them if you can, with monetary help, and if you are far away, let us hear of you.

As an incentive your committee has decided to hold next year's Annual Dinner at the Victory (Ex-Service) Club in Seymour Street, London, W.2, on Saturday, May 17, 1969 and we hope to fill to its capacity the dining room booked, namely, 110 diners.

For those members of ours, who live a good distance away, it will be an occasion to meet together and dine that night, stay in town and next day, Sunday, attend the Albuhera Day Service at Mill Hill.

Those of us, who attended the Grand Concert of the Royal School of Music at Kneller Hall, Twickenham on August 28, thoroughly enjoyed it despite the rain during the last item, the "1812" Overture by Tchaikovsky. I hope we shall have more of these visits to Kneller Hall.

When I wrote my notes for the last issue of this "Newsletter", the death of Bob Maggs had not occurred, but our Editor was able to include the sad news in the Obituary. Several members of the 9th, including Major R. W. J. Smith, attended his cremation at Kensal Green Crematorium and wreaths were sent from the Association and the Branch. We have lost a very good pal, who was so keen on building up our benevolent funds.

My best wishes to you for Christmas. Keep happy and healthy.
R.T.M.

W.O.s AND SERGEANTS' BRANCH

Even though these last three months of the year are looked upon as the Holiday Season when the majority of us like to get away from the daily routine of the other nine months of the year the attendance at our last two meetings has been very encouraging.

Les Honeybun, our Entertainment organiser, has two competitions running—a Pokey Dice Knockout, for a Silver Tankard which has been kindly presented to the Branch by Major Percy Newman, and a Ladies' and Gentleman's pairs Darts Knockout. The finals of both these competitions will be played off on December 14 when we are holding a special Christmas meeting. In addition to playing off the first rounds of these competitions we have also run the Horse Racing game, and although fortunes have not been won, it has proved rather popular. Now that our attendances have improved and a

start made on forms of entertainment, we are looking forward to a successful future. There is still room, however, for new members and we would like to welcome any of you who are eligible and who have not yet joined. Come along with your Good Lady and friends. A hearty welcome awaits you.

The last Colonel of the Regiment, Major-General C. M. M. Man, C.B., O.B.E., M.C., in his letter to all ex-members of the Die-Hards, page 4, para 3, says (I quote) "I hope that Branches will take on renewed strength from now on" (unquote). Here is a chance, if not already a member of a branch, to see that his hopes are not in vain, adopt, as he says, a positive approach, maintain the past glories of the "Die-Hards" and personal memories of the Regiment, by meeting those with whom you once served and with whom you can share those memories.

Rocky and Mrs. Knight paid us a farewell visit prior to their leaving for Canada. With them go our sincerest wishes for good fortune and happiness in the land of the Maple Leaf.

To members of the 4th Queen's W.O.'s and Sergeants' Mess and to all Branches of the "Die-Hards" we send our greetings and best wishes for the future.
L.R.J.

13th BATTALION (1914-18) O.C.A.

The 13th Battalion O.C.A. held their Annual Reunion on Saturday, October 5, 1968, when 23 members attended a luncheon at "The Rising Sun", Ebury Bridge Road, London, S.W.1, under the chairmanship of Mr. G. W. Pegram, Honorary Secretary.

After luncheon the members attended a memorial service at the 24th Divisional Memorial in Battersea Park. At this service, which has been held each year since the memorial was unveiled by the late Field-Marshal Lord Plumer in 1924, the Last Post and Reveille were sounded by buglers from the Royal Tank Regiment.

BRANCH SECRETARIES

The following is an up-to-date list of the names and addresses of Branch Secretaries:—

Branch	Hon. Secretary
Ealing	Mr. A. White, 56 Warkworth Gardens, Isleworth, Middlesex.
Hong Kong	Major W. G. A. Crumley, H.Q. Royal Hong Kong Defence Force, B.F.P.O. 1.
Hornsey and Enfield ..	Mr. H. Thornton 6 William House, Orchard Place, London, N.17.
Hounslow	Mr. A. J. Wales, 143 Waye Avenue, Cranford, Middlesex.
Mill Hill	Mr. E. C. Colebeck, Belmont, Chilton Road, Edgware, Middlesex.
Portsmouth and Gosport	Mr. L. C. West, Grove House, 59 Gosport Road, Stubbington, Fareham, Hants.
Uxbridge	Mr. R. F. Pennings, 69 Raeburn Road, Hayes, Middlesex.
2/7th Battalion	Major R. E. Robotham, M.C., T.D., 30 Cyprus Avenue, Finchley, N.3.
9th Battalion	Mr. R. T. Meers, 87 Tudor Court South, Wembley, Middlesex.
W.O.s' and Sergeants. .	Mr. L. R. Johnson, 78 Deans Lane, Edgware, Middlesex.

FREE NEWSLETTERS

The Editor wishes to thank Miss Dorothy Longe, Capt. O. G. Johnson and Mr. C. C. Bradish for their generosity in paying extra subscriptions so that free copies of *The Die-Hards Newsletter* can be sent to deserving Old Comrades.

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