

# SOLDIERS OF THE QUEEN'S

UNCONQUERED I SERVE



1966-1992

THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION  
THE JOURNAL OF THE QUEEN'S REGIMENTAL ASSOCIATION

2016



# FOREWORD



BY COLONEL JW SEWELL



It is a privilege for me to write a Foreword for our now annual Journal. Some may say "Why him?", when I expect that I served for a shorter time than most in our Queen's Regiment – just 2 ½ years. However, overall in service going back to 1941, I served with no less than five battalions of The Queen's Royal (Royal West Surrey) Regiment, one of The East Surrey Regiment and finally the 1st Battalion The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment, for whom I had the duty, as Commanding Officer, of ordering "*Lay down your arms*" and then "*Take them up as 1st Battalion The Queen's Regiment*".

This took place as you all know on the 31st December 1966, so this year sees the 50th Anniversary of The Queen's Regiment, and this is a theme of this edition of the Journal.

There are, too, many other anniversaries to recall –the original part of our Regiment first paraded on Putney Heath as The Tangier Regiment on 14 October 1661, 355 years ago, to be welcomed home 23 years later by King Charles II, as "*Our Dearest Consort's The Queen's Regiment*". The Regiment, though, traces its origin back to the London Trained Bands who in 1572 provided a force to go to the aid of the Dutch in their fight for independence from Spain. And going even further back the 14th October is the anniversary of The Battle of Hastings, in 1066, when many of our ancestors would have fought and died for England and King Harold in the defence of our Country.

To be, or have been, a member of The Queen's Regiment is thus to be connected with so many predecessors and so much history and this should be a source of pride for each and every one of us, and the pride should be carried forward to our Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment. Our pride this year has been well marked by the Dedication of our Memorial at the National Memorial Arboretum and the unveiling of the memorial plaque to our last Colonel, Major General Mike Reynolds – both of these events are reported in this year's Journal.

Finally, I record special thanks and gratitude on behalf of all of us to our President, Colonel AAA Beattie, and our Secretary, Major AM Goulden, for all that they do on behalf of the Queen's, and in stimulating our memories and our pride in our service in the Regiment.





# EDITORIAL

## BY ASSOCIATION SECRETARY

### MAJOR A M GOULDEN



Greetings and welcome to the 2016 bumper 50th Anniversary Edition of The Queen's Regimental Association Journal, celebrating all that was great about our Regiment.

This year has been one of celebration and commemoration, with most people continuing to honour our forebears who fought in the First World War (The Great War). This Journal, while it does pay homage to their sacrifice, concentrates on our own history and highlights the vitality of the Regimental Association.

As you are all aware, the main 50th Commemoration of the formation of the Regiment took place at the National Memorial Arboretum, near Lichfield. The report follows this editorial. The Memorial displays, *inter alia*, a list of 'Campaigns and Theatres of Operation' in which we served. I have used this list as the basis for this year's Journal, and it pays tribute to all of you, wherever and whenever you served in the Regiment's short life, manifestly fulfilling the promise of the Regiment's motto "*Unconquered I Serve*".

We welcome the new Scottish Branch into the Association Family. The inaugural meeting will be on 31 December 2016. Details at the back!

I would like to say a massive "*Thank you!*" to everyone who has contributed to ensure that we have covered each and every campaign and theatres of operation. A huge amount of work has gone into dragging up memories, checking facts (although some would plead the 5th Amendment on accuracy) and conferring with old colleagues. I am well aware that I have probably used up all the favours I am owed and more, but as always Queensmen have stepped up to the mark and produced what was required.

Even though our service, as Merrick Willis says in his article on Belfast, was sandwiched between the sexier campaigns of our forebears and successors, we have an enormous amount of which to be proud; there are incredible stories of fortitude, bravery and humour throughout this Journal and I do urge you to read it from cover to cover. This was our Regiment and our history.

As with last year, I have tried to include elements of all the material that has been sent in but space dictates that unfortunately not every word written can be included. Your efforts have not been wasted though because any material – especially the anecdotes – that has not been used will be filed as the start of the collection for next year.

To my proof readers, Anthony Beattie, Mike Jelf and Nick Keyes, I offer a million thanks for all your hard work in helping to get the Journal to the printers. If there are any mistakes/typos, they are mine as I had the final read!

Once again there have been a number of fundraising initiatives. A couple stand out. The first is the continuing magnificent efforts of the Queen's Regimental Riders Association – an all-battalion group – which has raised a staggering £6,250. The second plaudit goes to the four lunatics led by John Rickson who decided to complete the Fan Dance over the Brecon Beacons raising a fantastic £3,257.39, not including the Government's 25% contribution through Gift Aid. Thanks too to all those who put their hand in their pocket to support these efforts. All the money collected goes into our Benevolent Fund to benefit all ex-members of the Regiment. and where necessary, their dependants. In addition to these fantastic efforts, I was delighted to receive a cheque for £1,500 from Paddy Reynolds, ex 1st and 3rd Battalions, on behalf of his company E-Smartz in support of the Corps of Drums.

You will see from the latest report from the museum that we are still desperately in need of artefacts. Please do dig out all the old buckshee kit that you have for which you have no use and send it to the museum with the story attached

Finally the deadline for articles for next year is 7 September 2017. Next year's theme will be 'Queensmen at War'. If you served in any theatre outside those covered in this year's Journal or are able to share stories of your times in 'other' organisations in the places we as a regiment served, then please put pen to paper. Please do not wait until the last minute to send in your article but get writing and send it in straight away.

With every good wish for the coming year.

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# THE REGIMENTAL MEMORIAL

On 15 May, over 250 members of the Regiment and their families gathered at the National Memorial Arboretum, near Lichfield, Staffordshire, to dedicate a new Memorial to our Regiment. The planning for the day started over three years ago when it was decided that the 50th Anniversary of formation should be marked by the erection of a memorial to honour the Regiment and all those who had served in it.

The question was *"What shape should it be and what should go on it?"*. After a couple of false starts the initial committee of two (the President and the Secretary), along with Nick Johnson, our talented stonemason, decided on a three ton block of black polished Indian granite, responsibly sourced from a quarry in Northern India. The Secretary believed that it was his duty to fly out to India and supervise the cutting of the granite but unfortunately the President vetoed the idea! The Monument consists of three blocks - comprising a base, the plinth itself and a pyramid to crown the edifice. Standing some 8'6" tall, the Monument has four faces, each inscribed in gold lettering.

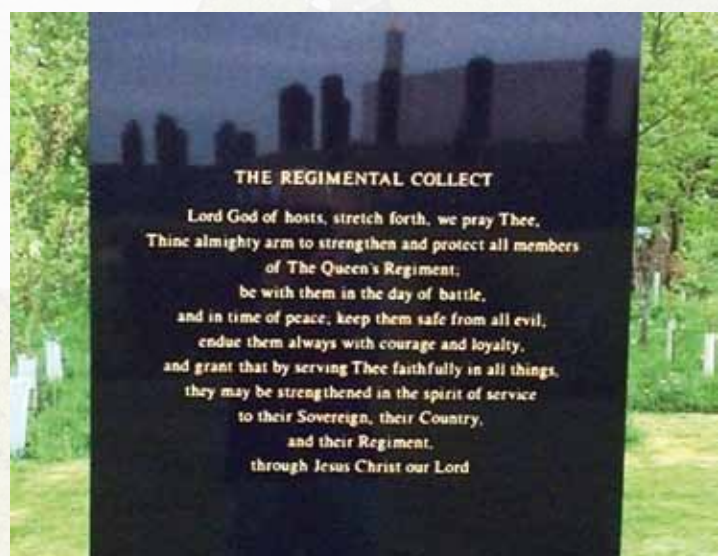
The front face on the plinth displays the Regimental badge, the Regiment's name, dates of existence, the Regimental motto, *"Unconquered I Serve"* and the three Distinctions taken from the Regimental Colour; Queen Catherine of Braganza's cipher, the Naval Crown of the Glorious First of June and the Sphinx. On the base are the words of the Silent Toast *"To The Immortal Memory"*.

The rear face has the names, royal ciphers and dates of appointment of our Colonel-in-Chief, HRH Princess Marina of Greece and Denmark, Duchess of Kent (1966-68), and our Allied Colonels-in-Chief, HM King Frederick IX of Denmark (1966-72), HM Queen Juliana of The Netherlands (1966-92) and HM Queen Margrethe II of Denmark (1972-92).

The left face has the Regimental Collect inscribed.

The right face details the Regiment's origins, lists the Campaigns and Theatres of Operation in which the Regiment served during its existence and finally gives details of the amalgamation in 1992.

On a dry but somewhat cloudy day, we gathered around the Monument, suitably draped with a regimental blue shroud, with representatives from all ranks from Private Soldier to Lieutenant General. The Guest of Honour was Mrs Anne Reynolds, wife of the late General Mike Reynolds, our last Colonel of the Regiment. The Band of the Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment was in attendance and played throughout the dedication. The Right Reverend John Kirkham (sometime Bishop of Sherborne and Bishop to the Armed Forces) assisted by The Reverend Canon Christopher Tuckwell (late The Queen's Regiment) gave the Welcome, Introduction and Reading from St Matthew's Gospel, Chapter 5, verses 3-12. The assembled company then sang lustily the hymn *"I vow to thee my country"* and the Memorial was then unveiled by Captain Harrie Welmer, Defence



and Naval Attaché to the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, to gasps of appreciation by those gathered; wreaths were laid by the Middlesex Branch on behalf of all the Association Branches, by the Queen's Regimental Riders Association on behalf of all those who had donated to the cost of the Memorial and by Mrs Olive Rogerson, on behalf of the Regimental



The Queen's Regiment  
was formed by the amalgamation  
of the four county regiments  
of Surrey, Kent, Sussex and Middlesex  
on 31st December 1966

Deployments and Theatres of Operations

British Army  
of the  
Rhine  
Hong Kong  
Korea  
Persian Gulf  
Northern Ireland  
Berlin  
Cyprus  
Gibraltar  
Falkland Islands  
South Georgia  
Belize  
Military Aid in the  
United Kingdom

The Queen's Regiment was amalgamated  
with The Royal Hampshire Regiment to form  
The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment  
on 9th September 1992





wives and families; Colonel Anthony Ward OBE DL, representing the forebear regiments, cited the Exhortation and Colonel Patrick Crowley, Deputy Colonel, representing The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment, gave the Kohima Epitaph. After the Regimental Collect and a moving rendition of "O Valiant Hearts", our President, Colonel Anthony Beattie, invited Bishop Kirkham to dedicate the Memorial. Following the Dedication, the singing of "O Trinity of Love and Power" and Blessing, the National Anthem was sung and the

ceremony concluded.

After the dedication everyone repaired to the marquee where Colonel John Davidson paid tribute to General Mike Reynolds, Colonel John Francis proposed the toast and a selection of Officers and Senior Non-Commissioned Officers enacted the Silent Toast "To the Immortal Memory" in celebration of Albuhera Day.



The Queen's Regimental Riders Association



The Last Post



Colonel Ward



Mrs Olive Rogerson





Behind the Kohima Band



Bishop Kirkham, Canon Tuckwell,  
Capt Welmer and Col Crowley



The Secretary takes  
possession of the Memorial  
from Nick Johnson



The Standards lower for the Last Post



Some of the gathered



Capt Harrie Welmer and Lt Gen  
Jonathon Riley CB DSO with Col  
Patrick Crowley



Capt Harrie Welmer NL  
Military and Naval Attache  
unveils the Memorial



Cols Beattie and Crowley, Capt  
Welmer, Col Ward and Bishop Kirkham



Col John Francis talking to Mrs Kirkham



'Bandit' lays the QRRA  
Wreath





# THE BRITISH ARMY OF THE RHINE

## THE INNER GERMAN BORDER -

A MANIFESTATION OF THE COLD WAR

By Rod Arnold

### Background

The Inner German Border (IGB) (Zonengrenze) was the border between the German Democratic Republic (DDR - East Germany) and the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG - West Germany), and existed from 1949 to 1990. Not including the similar but physically separate Berlin Wall, the border was 1,393 kilometres (866 miles) and ran from the Baltic Sea to Czechoslovakia and was the most visible manifestation of The Cold War which existed in effect between 1947-91.

It was formally established on 1 July 1945 as the boundary between the Western and Soviet occupation zones of the former Nazi Germany. On the eastern side, it was made one of the world's most heavily fortified frontiers, defined by a continuous line of high metal fences and walls, barbed wire, alarms, anti-vehicle ditches, watchtowers, automatic booby-traps and minefields. The IGB was patrolled by 50,000-armed DDR guards, who faced thousands of British, American and West German guards and soldiers.

Built by East Germany in phases from 1952 to the late 1980s, the fortifications were constructed to stop the large-scale emigration to the West of East German citizens, about 1,000 of whom are said to have died trying to cross it during its 45-year existence. The Border caused widespread economic and social disruption on both sides. East Germans living in the region suffered especially draconian restrictions.

Unlike the Americans, the British conducted only relatively infrequent patrols along its sector of the IGB, principally for training purposes and their symbolic value. By the 1970s, we were carrying out only one patrol a month, only rarely using helicopters or ground surveillance radar and erecting no permanent observation posts. It was required to conduct patrols that would ensure *'All important villages in the British Zone within three kilometres of the boundary will be visited at least once a fortnight'*.

The British border zone covered a total distance of about 650 kilometres (400 miles) along the border. Again, unlike the Americans, the British did not assign specific units to border duty, but rotated the task between the divisions of the British Army of the Rhine (BAOR).

The British Frontier Service (BFS), the smallest of the Western border surveillance organisations, also patrolled the border in the British sector. Its personnel served as a liaison between British military and political interests and the German agencies on the border. Many of its members were recruited initially from the Royal Navy and Royal Marines and its first director, a Royal Navy Captain, introduced its distinctive naval-style uniform.



East German Border Defences

The British area was divided into two sectors: the northern sector, which stretched from Lübeck to the vicinity of Lauenburg for approximately 100 kilometres; and the southern sector, which ran from Lauenburg to Schmidekoph, a distance of approximately 550 kilometres. The BAOR units, with guides from the BFS, patrolled along the southern sector once a week, and were generally accompanied by a section of the West German Frontier Police (Bundesgrenzschutz). Although the BAOR units did not patrol





The border disrupts:  
32 railway lines  
27 Federal Highways  
140 Secondary roads  
and numerous local-community roads and trails.

At present, the border is only passable at:  
8 railway crossings (including 2 for goods traffic only)  
9 highway crossings  
2 waterway crossings (River Elbe and Mittellandkanal).

Although these factors and other procedures impair travel to the German Democratic Republic, many citizens of the Federal Republic of Germany frequently visit the other German State for business or personal reasons. Large regions of the Federal Republic of Germany adjoining the 1,346 km of this border lost the major part of their natural 'hinterland'. These regions, which prior to 1945 were located in the center of the Reich, now find themselves on the fringe of the economic area of the Federal Republic of Germany and the European Community. The resulting damage necessitates thorough relief measures. For this reason the Federal Government and the Länder Governments annually subsidize these border regions with substantial funds, in order to strengthen their economy, improve the general traffic conditions and social structure, and promote cultural facilities.

In accordance with the political policy of the Federal Government, viz to consolidate peace in Europe and the world, the Treaty on the Basis of Relations between the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic was concluded on December 21, 1972. This treaty forms the basis for the normalization of relations between the two German states. On the same day the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany informed the Government of the German Democratic Republic by letter that the conclusion of the Treaty on the Basis of Relations was not inconsistent with the political objective of the Federal Republic of Germany to endeavour a state of peace in Europe which enables the German people to regain its unity by application of the right of free self-determination.

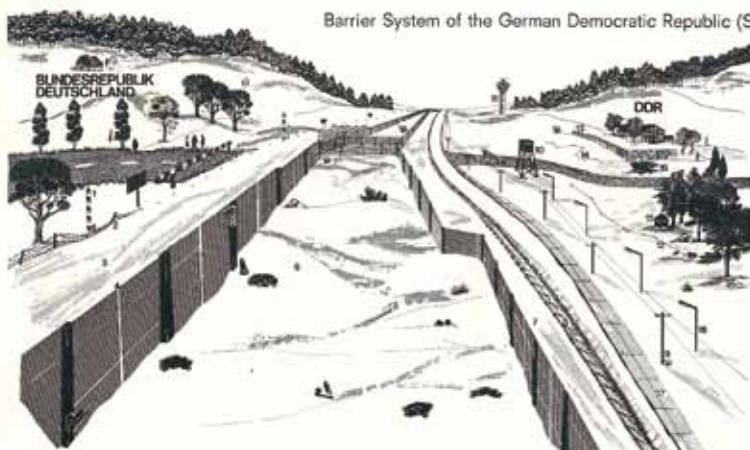
Herausgeber: Der Niedersächsische Minister für Bundesangelegenheiten,  
3 Hannover, Calenberger Straße 2

## General Information for Visitors of the Border between the Federal Republic of Germany and the GDR

This is the border, the dividing line which cuts Germany in two and which separates the Germans in the German Democratic Republic from their fellow-country-men in the Federal Republic. Its origin dates back to September 12, 1944. It was on that day, that in London the representatives of the United States, the Soviet Union and Great Britain agreed upon the course of the Demarcation Line between the future zones of occupation of the Western Allies and the Soviet Union, thus laying the foundations of the present border between the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic. This dividing line was established irrespective of geographical, historical and economic facts and without the expression of the free will of German people living on both sides of the dividing line.

The length of the Border between the Federal Republic of Germany and the GDR amounts to 1,346 kilometers. It is interlarded with extensive barrier systems and other devices intended to prevent citizens of the German Democratic Republic from crossing into the Federal Republic of Germany.

Barrier System of the German Democratic Republic (Sectional View)



1. Border post of the German Democratic Republic
2. Barbed wire fence (constructed in 1952 (now only visible in some places))
3. Control strip, width of 10 meters
4. Metal mesh fence
5. Automatic spring guns
6. Mine field
7. Control strip, width of 6 meters (ploughed and harrowed)
8. Trench (depth of up to 2 meters)
9. Border signalling system (radio/phone)
10. Observation tower (wood)
11. Observation tower (concrete)
12. Dog runs
13. Screens in front of houses
14. Trip wires for alarm system
15. Concrete observation shelter
16. Underground shelter
17. Concrete trail for control vehicles
18. Banks of flood lights

Late in 1974 these barrier systems included:  
850 kilometers of metal mesh fence;  
537 kilometers of double barbed wire fence;  
504 kilometers of fence along the protective strip (with electrical alarm system);  
647 kilometers of mine fields;  
127 kilometers of automatic spring-guns along the metal mesh fence;  
888 underground shelters;  
541 observation towers;  
444 dog runs;  
730 dogs and  
132 kilometers of banks of flood lights.

In flagrant contradiction to the 'Charter of Human Rights', severe penalties are imposed under the law of the German Democratic Republic for the illegal leaving of the country or for aiding such efforts.

From 13 August 1961 – the date when the Berlin Wall was constructed and the blocking of the Border to the Federal Republic of Germany intensified – until August 1974 sixty-nine persons were killed in Berlin and ninety-five along the border when attempting to escape while a great number suffered injuries. Despite this situation, citizens of the German Democratic Republic again and again succeed in escaping to the Federal Republic of Germany.

A total of 2,942,018 persons escaped from the German Democratic Republic in the years between 1949 and 1975. Naturally, the number of refugees fell considerably after August 13, 1961. The total number of refugees from the German Democratic Republic, and of expellees respectively refugees from the former East German territories living in the Federal Republic of Germany amounts to more than 13 millions. This number is equivalent to the population of Denmark, Norway and Switzerland.





in the northern sector, Frontier Service personnel infrequently conducted 'visits' in that area. BAOR divided the southern sector into four divisional areas, with each division conducting 3-day patrols along its sector each week. Patrols varied in size from 9 to 31 soldiers and employed 2 to 5 vehicles. Although patrol members carried weapons, they were not issued with ammunition, although it was available if the situation warranted it. Even though the frequency of the BAOR patrols had gradually increased, it was obvious that the primary mission of the patrols remained symbolic, with the primary advantage for the British Army being its training value.

## The Regiment's Contribution

All three Regular Battalions had the good fortune to send troops on these patrols and it gave young subalterns, with needless to say guidance from more experienced SNCOs, the opportunity to escape from the rigours of battalion life. Apart from learning to be mechanised infantry troops, we were delighted when tasked to carry out border patrols of the IGB. No one, certainly early on, seemed to call it the "Cold War" and we tended to view the border patrols more as an adventure, with total freedom from both Company and Battalion Headquarters. Patrols were normally carried out in the Braunschweig to Goslar area of the IGB. What was fascinating for a subaltern patrol commander was to receive orders direct from Headquarters 1st (British) Corps at Bielefeld rather than Battalion Headquarters, which made one feel very grand, even more so when one delivered the patrol report direct to Bielefeld, and merely informed Battalion Headquarters that the patrol had now returned to barracks.

The patrols tended to last for 3 or 4 days, with another day or so for travel to and from the patrol area. We normally had four to five vehicles; initially we used FV432s (armoured personnel carriers) but fairly soon converted to Ferret scout cars and Land Rovers. On one occasion we were actually allocated 3-tonners, but the MTO never tried to do so again, although we normally always had one 3-tonner as a support vehicle, as the patrols were self-contained with their own rations and cooking and camping equipment. The number of men varied, as one would take sufficient to man the vehicles and inevitably there were others, normally Gunners, who accompanied us under instruction in preparation for their own subsequent patrols. We wore normal combat suits and web equipment, and everyone had a personal weapon. Our radios worked successfully within the patrol but if one needed to contact HQ 1st (British) Corps, we had to use the public telephone!

The patrol normally lived in barns or stables, which had been pre-arranged by the BFS, who always accompanied us on patrol. There was generally a party in the barn every night as there was nowhere else to go in such remote areas for entertainment.

What was always amusing when in the depths of the German land mass was to be accompanied by a BFS representative in naval uniform. Despite this, the BFS had an amazingly detailed knowledge of their sectors and many had served there since the 1950s. They knew everything, including the best viewing points and the potentially hostile East German areas; 'hostile'

was more a case of the guard's reaction to our presence rather than to any physical threat and mainly consisted of erecting sheets of tarpaulin or other material to discourage the viewing of certain points, which we could inevitably view by observing from a flank. Above all, the BFS had so much information and an array of quips that they made the patrols really interesting and exciting.

If one is honest, the patrol seemed more like a guided tour than a military operation but was always great fun. We were always encouraged to take photographs of the East German Border Guards, and copious rolls of film were expended in doing so, while the East Germans did the same to us. I often wonder what happened to



We've all had to wear one - some have never taken it off!



them all. We were obviously required to behave with a sense of decorum as the East Germans were quick to take any pictures of British soldiers larking about, and then ‘doctor’ them to make them useful for propaganda purposes. On many occasions, we were only a few feet away from the East Germans and it was always tempting to display the contempt we felt for their stupid and murderous oppression of their own people.

A typical example of their absurd attitude was the border posts – these had been newly erected about 100 metres apart along the whole IGB, thousands of them, and were painted in the red, yellow and black of the DDR. They naturally attracted





birds, and they used them as a convenient defecation perch. To prevent such a national degradation, they were all taken down, had a spike inserted in the top, and re-erected to prevent any further perching!

One could laugh at such antics but one was always reminded of the degradation suffered by both the East German and West German people living along the border. There was a bridge over one river that had connected two communities but had been cut in half by the border. There were many villages where the border went straight through the middle of farms, properties and buildings, leaving family members and friends on either side, only able to contact each other by sight. Although one sometimes felt that the German people had brought this on themselves, it was always difficult to understand the stupid and bizarre attitude and behaviour of the East German hierarchy and their Soviet masters.

**ENCODING 4 FIG REFS (Regular Mode)**  
Example:- Grid 2346

1. **Loc. Chart B**  
23 E'ings comes between 00-24. Look down this column.  
46 N'ings comes between 25-49. Look along this row.  
Where column # row coincide letter - R.

2. **Code Table**  
Find fig. 23. Look UP to find E'ings letter - K.  
Find fig. 46. Look DOWN to find N'ings letter - M.  
∴ Grid 2346 becomes Grid RKM.

**DECODING 4 FIG REFS (Regular Mode)**  
Example:- Grid TUV

1. **Loc. Chart B**  
Find first letter of code (T) Note that it comes between E'ings 50-74 and N'ings 25-49. e.g. T U V  
E'ings N'ings  
50-74 25-49  
68 43

2. **Code Table**  
Find U in E'ings. Look down to find fig that comes between 50-74 (ie 68).  
Find V in N'ings. Look up to find fig that comes between 25-49 (ie 43).  
∴ Grid TUV becomes Grid 6843.

**ENCODING 6 FIG REFS (Regular Mode)** Example:- Grid 631 425

1. **Loc. Chart B**  
63 E'ings comes between 50-74. Look down this column.  
42 N'ings comes between 25-49. Look along this row.  
Where column # row coincide letter - T.

2. **Code Table**  
Find fig. 63. Look UP to find E'ings letter - G.  
Take last digit of E'ings - 1. Find any figure on top row (00-24) which ends in a 1 and read letter above. Note - There will be 2 or 3 alternatives O, P or F but only one is used.

Find fig. 42. Look DOWN to find N'ings letter - P.  
Take last digit of N'ings - 5. Find any figure on bottom row (75-99) which ends in a 5 and read letter below. Note - There will be 2 or 3 alternatives J, T or D but only one is used.

Grid 631 425 = TG<sup>0</sup> P<sup>5</sup> R<sup>1</sup> D<sup>5</sup>  
∴ Grid 631 425 could become Grid TGORJ or TGPPD or TGFPT etc.

**RESTRICTED**

**EXTENDED MODE (300km x 300km)**  
Grid refs repeat themselves at 100km intervals. To avoid confusion each basic 100km square has an overprint of 2 letters - e.g. ES, ER, FR, GQ etc.

**ENCODING** Example EQ 7912

1. **Loc. Chart A**  
Find E on top row label. Look down this column.  
Find Q on side row label. Look along this row.  
Where column # row coincide letter K

2. Treat remainder as regular mode.

∴ EQ 7912 becomes Grid KZJB

**DECODING** Example PDABOT

1. **Loc. Chart A**  
Find first letter of code (P). Look up to top row label (ie letter F). Look along to side row label (ie letter B)

2. Treat remainder of code (now uneven) as regular mode.

∴ Grid PDABOT becomes FR 317 575

**RESTRICTED**

**MAPCO**

**AIDE - MEMOIRE**

Used to disguise friendly forces grid refs. only.

Regular Mode (100km x 100km)  
Code gives uneven N<sup>o</sup> of letters.

Extended Mode (300km x 300km)  
Code gives even N<sup>o</sup> of letters.

Coded references must be prefixed by the proword 'GRID'

Always recheck the encoded or decoded map reference to avoid errors

PDA, ZZO PDA MB TAVR 2/7

**DECODING 6 FIG REFS (Regular Mode)** Example:- Grid DAVEP

1. **Loc. Chart B**  
Find first letter of code (D) Note that it comes between E'ings 25-49 and N'ings 50-74. e.g. D AV EP  
E'ings N'ings  
25-49 50-74  
31 31 73 2

2. **Code Table**  
Find A in E'ings. Look down to find fig that comes between 25-49 (ie 31).  
Find V in E'ings. Take last digit of fig in top (00-24) row (ie - 3).  
Find E in N'ings. Look up to find fig that comes between 50-74 (ie. 73)

Find P in N'ings. Take last digit of fig. in bottom (75-99) row (ie. - 2)  
∴ Grid DAVEP becomes Grid 313 732

**ENCODING & DECODING 8 FIG REFS**  
Last digit of E'ings & N'ings are encoded and decoded in the same way as the last digit of a 6 fig. reference. ie.  
Grid X'VYLLQKH = Grid 0345 5966

**Location Chart A**

	E	F	G
S	W	M	H
R	B	P	F
Q	K	Q	U

**Location Chart B**

	EASTINGS				
	00-24	25-49	50-74	75-99	
NORTHINGS	75-99	N	C	O	L
	50-74	X	D	V	J
	25-49	R	A	T	G
	00-24	S	E	Y	Z

**Eastings**

D	O	E	V	J	M	A	S	H	N	C	P	Z	G	Y	L	X	B	U	Q	T	F	R	K	W
00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24

**Code Table**

25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49
50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74
75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99

**Northings**

J	H	A	F	R	N	S	O	X	Q	T	K	B	G	W	L	U	P	V	C	D	M	Y	E	Z
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The British Army of the Rhine grew out of World War II. It served as a base for the bulk of the United Kingdom's ground and air forces for 70 years and now it is being phased out in the face of changed circumstances. If it hadn't existed it would have had to have been invented. I will remember it as fun, but frustrating. In a wet wood in northern Germany in 1965 the divisional commander said to Bob Acworth, who had given a wrong grid reference for a helicopter visit to an exercise "Do you realise you've wasted two hours of my time"? But he missed the heartfelt, cutting aside of Cpl Ennever (subsequently to be Mike Reynolds's C Company clerk) "Don't the old fart realise he's wasted two fucking weeks of ours"?

Tim Trotman





# HONG KONG

## HONG KONG

By Raymond Low

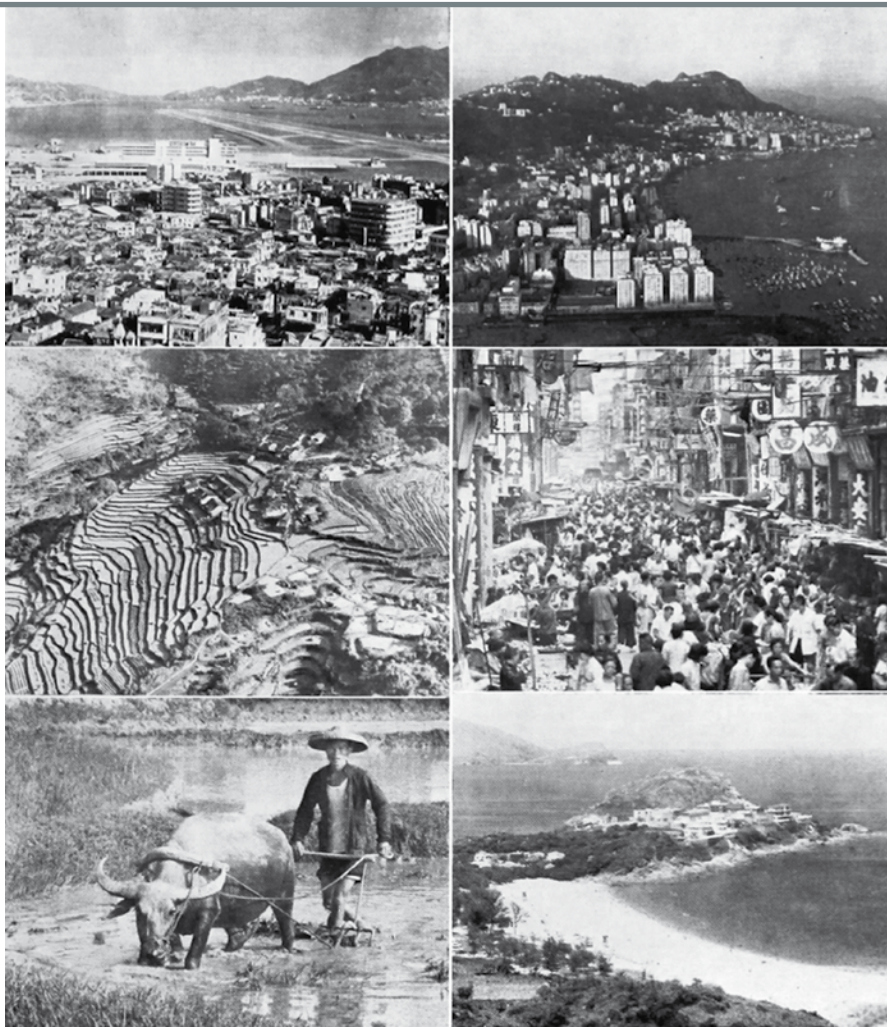
Hong Kong in the mid 1960s had been a British Colony for some 125 years and was one of the most important commercial and trading hubs in the Far East, but was very different to the territory that was handed back to China in 1997. There were high rise buildings, but nothing to compare with the majestic and overpowering clusters of sky scrapers to be found today; there were tenement buildings and slums in overcrowded dirty streets most of which have been demolished. It was truly a relic with all the contrasts and traditions of the tail-end of Empire.

It was at Hong Kong that the 1st Battalion The Queen's Own Buffs (1 QOB), (following the footsteps of General Dick Craddock who was to become the first Colonel of The Queen's Regiment and who had been CBF Hong Kong in 1963-64) arrived in September 1965. The Garrison consisted of two British battalions stationed on the Island and in Kowloon respectively whose tasks

were mainly Internal Security (IS). In addition, a Gurkha Brigade with three Gurkha infantry battalions, a field artillery regiment and an armoured car squadron were based in the New Territories assigned to border protection. All this was complemented by the usual combat, logistic and other support units, plus RAF helicopters and a RN squadron of patrol craft.

1 QOB was based at Gun Club Barracks in Kowloon with two companies detached to Erskine Camp in the New Territories and had a busy and eventful first 15 months which included IS duties in Hong Kong and an operational tour in Borneo from May to August 1966, when it was the last British battalion on duty as the "confrontation" with Indonesia came to a negotiated end. On 31 December 1966, there was a short but moving parade at which The Queen's Own Buffs flag was lowered and The Queen's Regiment flag was raised. It is from that date that this article is based.

The first few months of 1967 were relatively quiet for the renamed battalion. There were the usual programme and duties that most battalions experienced around the world: exercises over some pretty challenging terrain, cadres, range work, watermanship training, administrative inspections, the annual Queen's Birthday Parade and ceremonial guards and duties.







In particular, we carried out IS training, including “box formations” for crowd control and crowd dispersal operations. It is ironic that these would not be used in Hong Kong, but instead somewhat closer to home, in Northern Ireland, two years later.

It was especially a time for catching up with sport of all natures. In addition to the usual football, cricket, hockey, boxing, volleyball and rugby, there were opportunities for swimming, water-polo and believe it or not ‘horse’ polo, in which the battalion team, led by the second-in-command and adjutant, won the ‘Lo Wu’ cup. There are suspicions that they just had to turn up.

This quiet time was welcomed by the soldiers and especially their families who had had more than their share of separation. The weather was cool and the humidity which rears up in spring and summer had not yet arrived – a real bonus as there was no air-conditioning, or at least not for the military. The only respite from the heat in barracks was given by ceiling fans, high ceilings and doors and windows opening onto shaded balconies wrapped around each barrack building – true colonial architecture. Most of the families however, who lived in small flats in steamy Kowloon, did not even have the benefit of high ceilings or balconies; their quarters tended to be claustrophobic, airless and noisy – but in a very oriental way. There was one compensation – most married soldiers could afford a live-in servant. Whether you lived in barracks or in married quarters, you ensured that an electric light bulb burned 24 hours a day in your wardrobes or lockers during the hot season – not to do this was to invite green mould over everything!



Polo Team  
L-R Capt JGW Reid, 2Lt JRC Palmer, Capt MJ Clinch,  
Maj CJ Griffin

Hong Kong in those days was what you made of it – most loved it, but some hated it and they were usually the ones who would not have been happy anywhere. Outside the barracks, there was a huge amount to do catering for every taste: restaurants, bars, beautiful scenery, walks, and plenty of company from every nation in the world, including Yanks on R&R from Vietnam with whom the boys occasionally skirmished. Certainly there was no shortage of females, again of every variety and catering for every taste! There was never a need to feel that your life revolved around and behind barrack walls.

Shopping was cheap for what were then considered luxury items – cameras, watches, radios, tape recorders and a complete new wardrobe – the world of the iPhone, computer and iPad was a long way away. Generous Local Overseas Allowance (LOA) ensured a comfortable disposable income and reasonably priced taxis allowed freedom of movement 24 hours a day. Inside the barracks there were char-wallahs, dhobi-wallahs, boot-cleaning-wallahs, shave-you-in-bed-wallahs and every other type of wallah. Even the scruffiest soldier could look immaculate for a few Hong Kong dollars!

But all good things have to come to an end and for 2 QUEENS, our lives changed at the beginning of May. For some time, mainland China had been in the grip of a ‘cultural revolution’ as Mao Tse Tung decided that China’s elite was in danger of embracing too closely the bourgeois lifestyle and moving too far away from the revolutionary spirit. In August 1966, his revolution began in earnest, with change spearheaded by students who were organised into para-military groups known as Red Guards. Under Mao and a small clique, they were responsible for naming, shaming and undermining the ‘guilty’, thus returning China to communism in its purest state.

As the so-called revolution gathered pace in China, so the ripples began to be felt in Hong Kong. In 1967, the battalion was on stand-by to assist the police for the traditional 1 May protests and demonstrations. That year they were larger than usual and turned violent with widespread disturbances. For the battalion this meant endless differing states of alert – immediate readiness or one, two, three, four hours’ readiness to move. Married pads came in and if they were lucky they could go home if notice was lengthened – but were on call and ready to return in a hurry by taxi or whatever transport they could find. A few RV points were arranged for battalion transport, but because of the disturbances such transport could not be relied on. It was down to initiative and most of those who elected to risk going home did extremely well to return when called back.

But it was a case of stand-to without action, because at that point the Hong Kong police were a good, large (but unknown to us, corrupt – which is another story!) para-military force and was more than capable of coping. A crowd of 5000 was designated small – it had to be at least 10,000 strong to be taken seriously!

During that May, B Company's 7 Platoon were on duty as ceremonial guard outside Government House where they were subjected to daily demonstrations. Loss of face was not an option and sentries remained static outside their sentry boxes as little Red Books with Mao's thoughts were thrust in their faces to the cries of "Imperialist Running Dogs!" – whatever that meant. They attracted the attention of the international press and for a short time were probably the most photographed soldiers in the Army.

Not only were there crowd problems, but there were also incidents of random and indiscriminate shooting, and bombs. Nothing particularly sophisticated at first, but an Army bomb disposal officer was killed by a booby trap. In the meantime on the border, the Gurkha Brigade was deployed as incidents of mainland Chinese crowds attempting to storm the border posts became increasingly frequent. In one case, a border post was taken over for a few days and a Gurkha battalion carried out a battalion attack to retake it. One Chinaman stupid enough to try to separate a Gurkha rifleman from his rifle had his arm chopped off with a kukri. Incidents were less frequent thereafter.

As May turned to June, workers' strikes tended to take over from demonstrations and the readiness notice was eased, which meant that families could be reunited and a more normal existence resumed. It was a good break which allowed annual classification to take place for all the companies. There was a story, which I am sure has got better as the years go by, of one young officer who was anxious to see his girlfriend and so decided to take a shortcut for night firing by making all wear their face veils over eyes to simulate darkness! Blind firing ensued and although he did get to see his girl that evening, news leaked back and he had 28 days and nights to reflect on his ardour!

Then as the humidity peaked in July, there was an upsurge in activity. This comprised more bombs and intimidation of those who had not joined in the strikes, such as bus drivers, leading to much more active support for the police. There were mobile bus patrols to deter incidents of intimidation – hot and steamy work, but effective. Patrols were not without incident and while stoning and bottling was commonplace, there was occasion in which explosives, petrol bombs and bottled acid were also thrown. Happily we had very few casualties and all were minor. There were also numerous cordon and search operations. The one described below was not untypical:

*'An operation took place in support of the police by placing a cordon around a left-wing union headquarters at 0200hrs. While the police went in to sort things out, a number of bottles, darts and other nastinesses, including fire extinguishers and a*



Anti British demonstrations



(Top): Men of A Coy form a cordon round the Headquarters of a Communist Trade Union.

(Centre) : "After the Ball was over." Members of the Bn examine weapons seized during a raid.

(Left to right) : CSM Rickwood, Capt. Clark (RMO), Maj Woolstencroft, 2/Lts Low and Tawell.

(Lower): Pte Holderness (B Coy) guards suspects taken during a raid on a Communist Trades Union HQ

Acknowledgement : " South China Morning Post."





*refrigerator descended on the cordon from the roof and upper stories – but no one was hurt – except perhaps ears which were subjected to three hours of Mao's thoughts put to music and played over loudspeakers. At one point, the greatest hazard was the police using gas; Corporal Wallace received a particularly strong dose but fortunately managed to get his head into a 44 gallon drum of water! After three hours, the police occupied the whole of the building having killed one, seriously injured two and wounded another six. The police suffered a number of minor casualties.'*

But far worse for us than anything was the fact that China had decided to restrict Hong Kong's water supply to four hours every four days. This combined with a total lack of rain and near empty reservoirs resulted in severe water rationing. This was horrendous as any form of showering or baths were strictly curtailed with taps only being turned on for shaving in the morning. Prickly heat and all sorts of other skin complaints were rife. Even the local swimming pool was put off limits as the club considered the filth of unwashed bodies unacceptable! The one consolation was that beer became an essential, as water, even for cordials, was strictly limited.



C Coy Patrolling near the Hong Kong/  
Chinese Border

(Top): 2Lt P Cool at an OP

(Centre): Cpl Davies and his section  
moving through typical country near the  
border.

(Lower): Maj Dracopoli reports by  
wireless, whilst Pte Taylor 23 keeps  
watch.

Acknowledgement: COI, London.

August, the warmest month, continued with a full commitment of operations and incidents included two bombs being thrown over the barrack fence. But, of greatest importance to all, towards the end of the month, there were tropical downpours which allowed the reservoirs to fill and for a few days at least there was a 24 hour water supply. Two new tasks were added: one was gelignite patrols, which consisted of escorting explosives from their guarded central storage to the quarries; and another far more sinister task, which at the time we were not allowed to discuss. This consisted of guarding the special branch detention and interrogation centre. Those involved witnessed some old fashioned interrogation techniques, but nothing worse than young officers had to go through on an anti-interrogation course. The police may have been rough and ready, but water-boarding (at least as far as we could see) was for another generation.

In addition, reassurance patrols were sent to the outlying islands and to give us a break from the urban scene, there were also deployments to the border to supplement the Gurkhas.

Lest one thinks our wives were bored – not a bit of it, they had a flourishing club which arranged tours to such locations as the British American Tobacco Company where all received cigarettes, and to the San Miguel Brewery where no doubt they received refreshment. Then to ensure that spiritual as well as physical needs were catered for – they visited the Leper Hospital. Never a dull moment!

As the weather started to improve in September, so too the tempo of operations slackened off a little. During that month, the advance party returned to the United Kingdom to prepare our new homes split between Horsham and Lingfield and thoughts turned to new challenges. All too soon, the Lancashire Fusiliers advance party was with us and in early October we boarded chartered flights to return home.

For all of us who were there, Hong Kong was an unforgettable experience. We were probably the last to witness how the empire controlled its citizens and so were probably more struck than most at the changes when we became involved in the troubles in Northern Ireland. Out went a certain amateur and relaxed attitude, to be replaced by professionalism at the point of the camera, the recorder and the written word.

Hong Kong is now relegated to old soldiers reminiscing "do you remember that time in Hong Kong?"

# AN INCIDENT AT SHA TAU KOK

By Mike Adler

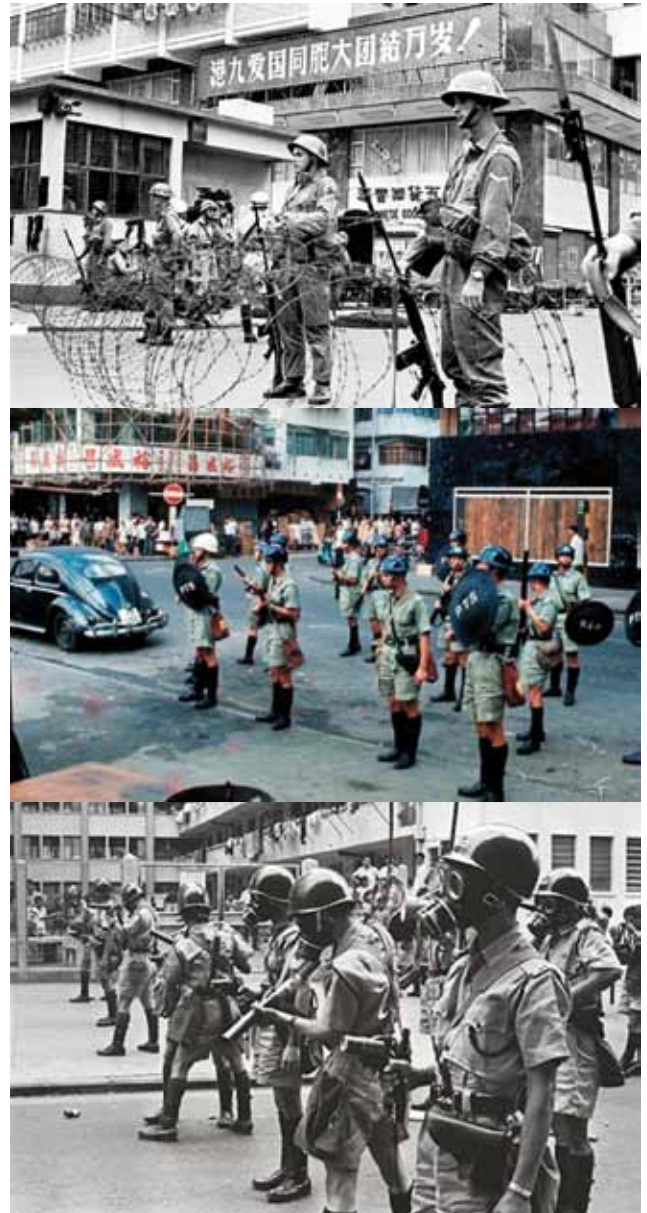
## Sha Tau Kok Riots

Not many people in the UK knew anything about what was going on in Hong Kong (HK) during the height of the Cultural Revolution, (1966/67 as far as we were concerned,) but to those of us stationed there, the prospects of war seem close enough. Take the incident at Sha Tau Kok (STK). I was the Hong Kong Battalion's duty officer serving with 1 WELCH in POLMIL on the day in question and was listening in to the police New Territories operational net. I heard several long bursts of machine-gun fire and some loud explosions as well as invective from the police officer witnessing the events. I think that most of us in Central Police Station felt that an invasion of the Colony was about to start.

There had been difficulties at STK in the morning when about 300 rioters had crossed the unfenced border which was in the village (marked only by stone posts and thrown riot stones). The Hong Kong police had responded with wooden baton rounds and tear gas (CS) fired from their Federal Gas Guns. There were People's Liberation Army (PLA) in the village but the number present and the role that they were playing was obscure. By lunchtime things were getting nasty. There had been trouble in the village since the 24th June 1967, when two police armoured vehicles had been put out of action just to the North of the village police station. It was felt that the growing tension was bound to break into violence at some time. Uniformed Chinese and rioters from Mankamto (to the West) marched down the Chinese border road into STK. Hong Kong police had deployed, two riot companies up, when firing, from the Chinese side, killed three police (two of whom were Pakistani) and wounded several others. Further bursts of fire killed two other policemen and the total wounded was at least eleven. It was not a minor action. No doubt the immediate deployment of 10 GR demonstrated to them that we were not like the Portuguese in Macau who had capitulated to violence at an early stage.

The incident at STK was just one of many on the Border, in the Territories and on the streets of Kowloon and Hong Kong Island for which our only visible reward was the "Border Tie" which had a police blue and Gurkha green background, a red line signifying the Border, a blue line the Shum Chung River, and sundry "white skinned pigs" and "yellow running dogs" covering much of the remaining space. Nowadays there would probably be a medal! On Hong Kong Island alone we had over 5,000 bomb reports in nine months. In response we used CS on only one occasion that I can recall and fired one round from an AR15 (which I believe was actually an 'ND') but this belies the fact that it was very real soldiering under police supremacy and was excellent intelligence training for me.

*(Ed: Although Mike, a QRA Member, was serving with 1 WELCH at the time I have included this article as it illustrates what the Regiment was dealing with in Hong Kong. Mike Adler served with the WELCH, RRW, QUEENS(V) and PWRR(V).)*



Sha Tau Kok Riots





# KOREA

## KOREA HONOUR GUARD 1967

Adapted from CH St John-Perry's Article

One of the 'perks' of being in Hong Kong was providing the Honour Guard detachment to the United Nations Command in Korea. Each regiment in the Colony provided a contingent of one officer and five men operating on a three-monthly rotation system within their units. Having provided this detachment in early 1966, it was once again 2 QUEENS' turn in February 1967.

### Preparation

Two weeks before the date of departure, the selected sixteen assembled at Gun Club to learn the intricacies of American-style drill. There followed a most humiliating period, under every drill instructor from the RSM down, all of whom stated that, as we couldn't perform even the basic movements of our own drill, we would never learn the American movements. Patience and brutality triumphed, however, and on 7 February, a fairly accomplished drill squad left Hong Kong to words of encouragement, interspersed with threats of violence if we misbehaved!

### The Honour Guard Company



Donghae-Bukbu line on Korean DMZ

After a long and tiring flight in a Hastings Aircraft, we landed at Kimpo Airbase on the outskirts of Seoul, to be met by a temperature well below freezing, a bleak and desolate landscape and no transport; a problem which was to plague us throughout our tour. However, things were soon sorted out and eventually we arrived at the Honour Guard building.

The Eighth United States Army Honor Guard Company consisted of a US Platoon, a United Nations Platoon and three

Republic of Korea Platoons representing their respective services. The UN Platoon consists of five Thais, eight Turks and fifteen British commanded by a British Officer. The task of the Company was to perform Guards of Honour for visiting and departing generals. The Company remains the showpiece of the UN forces in Korea and is expected to maintain the highest standards of drill, turnout and bearing. As might be imagined with soldiers of various nations under the same roof, life can be trying but never dull.

## Korea *"The Land of the Morning Calm"*

This country has seen little calm for many centuries; having been invaded by the Japanese, Chinese and (in more recent times) the Communists. Korea is still in a state of war – a peace treaty has never been signed. The United Nations and Republic of Korea forces still oppose the Communists along 150 miles of frontier, in a period of hostilities under an armed truce concluded in 1953. As a result of this truce, a de-militarised zone (DMZ) four thousand metres wide, was established to act as a buffer between North and South Korea; the DMZ is bisected by a Military Demarcation Line (MDL).

One of the duties of the UN Platoon of the Honour Guard is to guard the Military Armistice Commission meetings at Pan Mun Jom, which lies on the MDL approximately 60 kms North of Seoul.

Driving to Pan Mun Jom, the paradox which is South Korea, is vividly unfolded. Passing through Seoul, one is immediately aware of the poverty of the people but also of their intense activity. Apart from a number of people in uniform, it is as peaceful as any major city in the Far East; nevertheless, only 15 km to the North of Seoul, one enters 'Indian Country' as the 2nd US Infantry Division's area of responsibility is nicknamed.

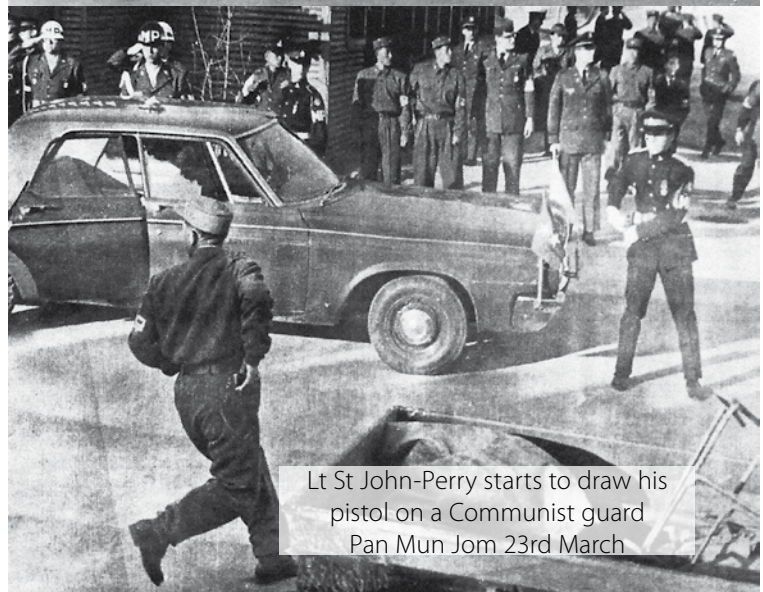
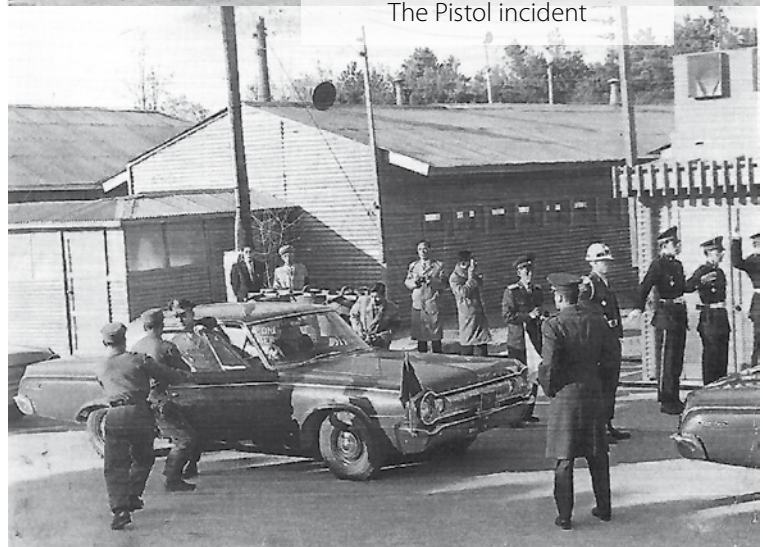
From this point northwards lies the Combat Zone of Korea where the Division is fully deployed to protect the approaches to Seoul, and the impression is one of combat readiness and vigilance.

Checkpoints, armed patrols, tank and APC convoys, barbed wire and all the other accoutrements of a division at war can be seen on every side. Some 40 km to the South of Seoul is "*Freedom Bridge*" across the Imjin River. From this point north is the 'Sharp End' and here, despite the Armistice, the war is still being waged. At the tip of the sharp end is the Advance Camp, a company-sized location responsible for the administration of the Joint Security Area at Pan Mun Jom.

### Pan Mun Jom

The Armistice Agreement established a Military Armistice Commission (AMC). Consisting of five members from each side, the duty of the Commission is to discuss violations of the armistice. The Commission meets at the Joint Security Area (JSA).

Roughly circular, the JSA is 800 metres wide and bisected by the MDL, the buildings are set squarely on the MDL and the Line of Demarcation runs through the centre of the conference table!







Each entity is allowed 35 armed guards in the area. The UN guard consists of twelve men from the UN Platoon, the remainder being American Military Police. The duties of the guard are to stand sentry on the conference building and to generally patrol the area.

Each side can propose a MAC meeting, the other side can counter-propose as to the date. The side calling the meeting presents its accusations of violation of the armistice, the other side reply after the necessary translations into Korean, English and Chinese. Since the Armistice, the UN has made over 5,000 charges of armistice violation, of which only two have been admitted, both in the first two months of the truce. All Communist charges are investigated thoroughly but only 0.2% have been found to be valid.

A typical example of the ridiculous Communist charges arose during a meeting in March. The Communists charged the UN with having tanks in the DMZ but when asked if they would like to examine the tracks, the Communists refused, stating that the tracks had been swept away by the UN!

Hostility between the sides is normally confined to the conference room, the opposing guards ignoring each other. On 22nd March 1967, however, as a meeting was ending, a North Korean pressman jumped into a UN car seeking asylum. A brawl between the guards ensued and then the car sped off, followed by a volley of shots from the Communists. After the first shot, numerous Communist guards appeared. It was later revealed that there were between fifty and sixty of them in the area.

At another meeting two weeks later, the Communist delegates left the conference room in protest over the showing of a film of President Johnson's visit to South Korea. A Communist guard tried to prevent an American photographer from taking pictures of the walkout and once more there was a struggle between opposing guards, with weapons being drawn.

Both these incidents would have had far-reaching effects had anyone been shot. They were, however, indicative of the increasing tension along the border during this period. Rarely did a night pass without some report of a clash between North and South on our side of the MDL; these ranged from two patrols bumping into each other to a company-sized attack on a UN post culminating in an artillery shoot.



United Nations Command face their North Korean counterparts across the negotiating table

For the UN forces on the border, this is still no routine guard assignment; it is a war of confrontation, with casualties exceeding those during the Borneo campaign.

## Reflections

Our tour was judged by all to have not only been a great success but also a rewarding experience; memories crowd in, one upon the other: our visit to Gloucester Valley, the site of the Battle of the Imjin; Pte Redford demonstrating British air superiority by leaping from a first story window! (As he landed safely the superiority point was made to the awe of the Americans!); of the extreme hospitality of the

American and Korean forces (not to mention the Korean girls!); of the endless succession of parties, first to greet us and, almost immediately, to say farewell, finally, our own farewell party after which the whole Honour Guard Company was declared *hors de combat* the following morning.

It was with mixed feeling that we left Kim Po Airbase on 5th May - sorrow at ending such an enjoyable posting, and relief to be returning to the comparative sanity of Hong Kong. The lasting impression for all was our satisfaction in having made our contribution, be it very small, to the UN effort in Korea.

# MEMORIES OF KOREA

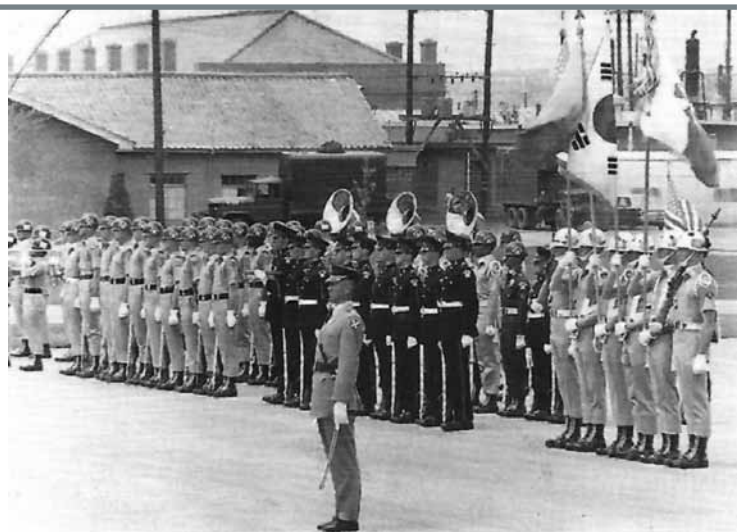
By Mike Adler

Lately of The Welch Regiment, The Royal Regiment of Wales, The Queen's Regiment (V) and The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment.

In the Summer of 1966 I was serving with 1 WELCH (the Island Battalion) in Hong Kong and was summoned to see the CO, Lt Col Lionel Harrod, and was told that I would be taking a hand-picked sub-unit of fifteen men to Korea as the British Component to the 8th United States Army Honor Guard Company. I would command the United Nations Platoon with nine Turks and five Thais adding to the multinational UN component of the Platoon.

The background to this was of course that the Korean War had never officially ended and a fragile state of semi-combatant activity continued along the Demilitarised Zone (DMZ) (and still continues to this day). In fact, as I was to find out, it was not so peaceful in Korea, particularly along the DMZ, as everyone assumed. The UN Platoon provided the guard component for the ongoing peace talks at Pan Mun Jong and also formed part of the Honor Guard Company which performed much ceremonial work at our base in Seoul.

My Platoon Sergeant, Evan Harris 46, flew to Korea as advance party, and about a week later, we departed from RAF Kai Tak in a Handley Page Hastings for a very long, slow, non-stop flight to Kimpo Airport. Kimpo was connected to Seoul by the only stretch of dual carriageway in the whole of Korea. Nearly all the other roads in the country were dirt tracks. Our base at Yong San was old style brick-built barrack accommodation with a handful of Quonset



Honour Guard Korea in Korea 1967 from 2 QUEENS

Huts thrown in for good measure. I was to live in one of these huts, neatly sandwiched between the barber shop (staffed by young Korean women) and the cookhouse, which served all ranks. The centre of most of our activity was the sand-covered parade ground, and in addition to performing perfect (British Army) drill on parade we had to maintain a 105 mm howitzer, used for saluting.

I was horrified to learn that the very next day we were expected to perform two parades for visiting dignitaries and that neither the Thais nor Turks had any knowledge of British Army drill, let alone the handling of the Self-Loading Rifle (SLR). Sergeant Harris performed absolute wonders and we worked all afternoon teaching the necessary





drill movements and co-ordinating the timing of our British drill with that of the Americans and Koreans. The parades the next day went off faultlessly and I realized what an absolute gem I had in Harris 46.

The Company was commanded by an American Captain with an American Company HQ Staff and a platoon of the American Army, most of whom were 6 feet 6 inches tall (rather dwarfing the Thais in height if not in kick-boxing ability). We also had a Korean Army Platoon, commanded by an amazingly courageous (see below) Lieutenant Charlie Lee, a Korean Navy and Marines Platoon and a Korean Airforce Platoon. It was a truly unique unit.

One of the benefits of our service in Korea was receipt of a good rate of Local Overseas Allowance (LOA) and a Special Dollar Allowance. We were not allowed to hold US Dollar currency but dealt with Armed Forces special vouchers (like BAFVS in Berlin!) and the local currency of Korean Won. We were permitted to use the Post Exchange (PX), which greatly upstaged the NAAFI, and the young Korean girls, mostly university educated, who surrounded the base, and who were desperate to marry 'Yanks' or 'Brits', were a constant source of attraction to many (despite the smell of Kinshi cabbage on their breath).

I had two personal servants, Miss Kim, my house girl, and Flash who looked after all my uniforms. Sometimes we would come straight off one parade, return to the barrack block, strip off and Flash would have me redressed and looking immaculate in less than five minutes. Our duty tour extended from baking hot summer's days to bitter cold near-winter conditions. I took to Korea with me every form of dress worn in Hong Kong and the UK and at some time I wore every single item. Miss Kim was very attractive and kept my quarters spotlessly clean. Her greatest desire was that when I left Korea I should let her keep the electric iron that I had bought from the PX. Of course I did, even though it was strictly against PX trading regulations. If I was too lazy to shave, I would toddle down to the barber's shop fifteen yards from my door and have a shave with a cut throat razor there, as well as a face and neck massage. One got pampered in this job. The barber shop girls would come to my bathroom for showers and I could often hear them squealing as they bathed - but I was too much of a gentleman to intrude!

In time, I found that many of my soldiers were living out of barracks. The Main Supply Route (MSR) ran between North and our South Camp, and for every yard of its length,

there was at least one young and very attractive girl plying her trade in the hopes that a brief union might become a marriage and then they could leave the country for ever for the delights of the USA or even Great Britain. I had to return one soldier to Hong Kong early because he became over-smitten with his partner, and such a union was strictly against the rules and regulations of the Commonwealth Liaison Mission under whose administrative command we were placed.

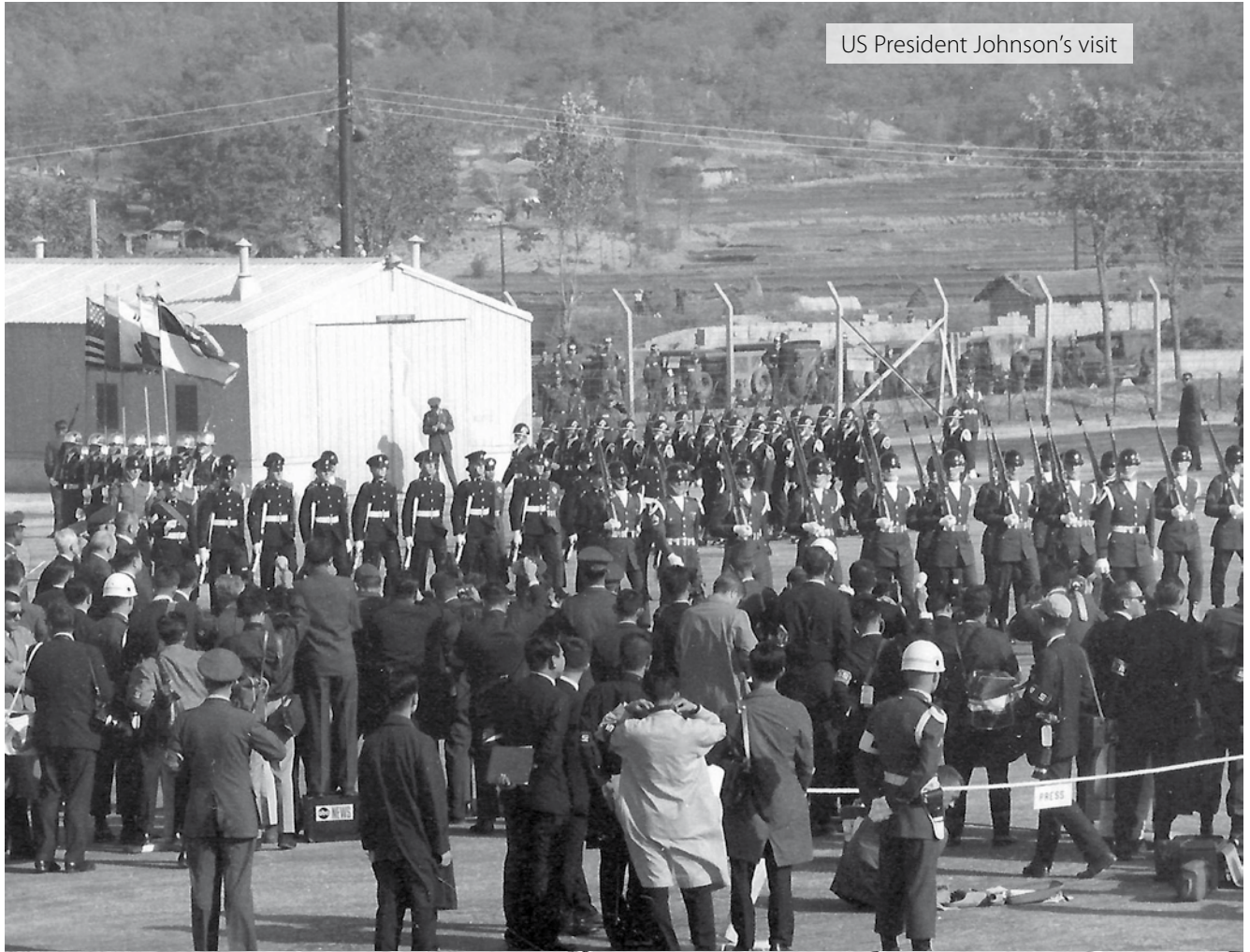
Off-duty we quickly found out that if we were in a bar at midnight, we had to remain there for the rest of the night as there was a very strict curfew, and if you were found on the streets, you were almost certain to be shot by the police or army patrols. Prices in the bars fell dramatically at one minute past midnight as you had become part of a captive audience. It did help me enormously to have Charlie Lee, of the Korean Army Platoon, as a friend and guide, and under his careful watch I was never ripped off. One of my Thai corporals (a Thai Boxing Champion) did save me one night from a possible attack but I do not remember the exact details of that event!

One memorable weekend we attended the Korean Air Force's Armed Forces Day air show in the middle of Seoul. The Han River bisected the city and in the middle of the river was an island on which the air force had built a mock village. After the usual aerobatics they put on a full weapons demonstration with live ammunition and this in the middle of the city! It started quite tamely with an F5 Freedom Fighter letting loose with its cannon and progressed from there through rocket attacks, and 500lb and 1000lb bombs being released, to a finale of nine F86 Sabres each dropping simultaneously two tanks of napalm. We must have been fifteen hundred metres from ground zero but the heat generated from eighteen napalm bombs was too hot for comfort.

In Seoul, one of our so-called privileges was to guard the Commanding General's residence. This was not a popular duty with my (British) soldiers. Only we were permitted to carry out this guard. Those involved were armed with Winchester Model 1897 12 gauge shotguns loaded with buckshot. One night one of my men caused a near-international incident by the negligent discharge of this formidable weapon. Surprisingly, they still allowed us to perform this honourable duty excluding all others!

From time to time, a major international two week long field problem (an exercise to me and you) was held. We guarded the deployed Army Headquarters and this enabled us to show our professionalism as infantry soldiers. We did not ride around in transport all the time. We deployed on foot and used fire and movement much to





US President Johnson's visit



President Johnson inspecting





the amazement of some of our transatlantic colleagues. Charlie Lee recognised kindred spirits and told us lots of war stories about his experiences on, or beyond, the DMZ. It was on one of his irregular patrols that he had captured a two-star North Korean general and brought him back alive for interrogation. The general squealed, the Int boys were delighted and Charlie was posted to the Honor Guard as his reward.

We visited units in the forward area quite often, and on one notable night witnessed a division's worth of artillery fire on a North Korean patrol that had crossed into our territory. Fire fights were routine and when staying at our Pan Mun Jong camp just south of the Joint Security Area (where the armistice talks were held) one of the camp sentries was struck in the chest by grenade fragments. His bullet proof vest saved his life but he was much bruised and very frightened.

Security duties at Pan Mun Jong were 'interesting'. We were allowed to patrol all around the conference huts, as were the North Koreans, and we were all armed with Colt 1911 .45 automatic pistols, loaded of course. The tension between the two sides was palpable. Inside the huts, our Commonwealth representative (Brigadier Dawney Bancroft) took great delight in blowing cigar smoke into the face of his North Korean equivalent sitting on the other side of the table. Just after I left Korea, there was the international 'axe incident' when a squabble over the cutting down of a tree in the Joint Security Area caused the death of an American serviceman who was cut down in turn with the said axe. The Cold War here was by no means cold, although back home who had heard of us in Korea?

Another notable event was the visit of the US President, Lyndon Baines Johnson. Our normal parade ground in Seoul was judged to be either too insignificant or too insecure for such a parade. A suitable camp was located out in the sticks. This was on a level plain and surrounded



UN Platoon, Thais in front, Turks in the rear and Brits all over the place!

by hills on which were placed a division's worth of infantry as an outer cordon. Those of us taking part in the parade were told initially that all firing pins had to be removed from our SLRs and that we would not be permitted to carry bayonets or swords. I seem to remember that these restrictions were later relaxed but nevertheless we caused another international incident! One of my soldiers had an American Bird Colonel's daughter as his girlfriend and he smuggled her onto our coach so that she could watch the dress rehearsal. Naturally the coach was searched, she was found and the CIA launched a full investigation. However, I do not remember having received a bollocking for this major security breach.

The Presidential parade itself was memorable to me because of the way that the President arrived. Six identical Sikorsky CH37 Mojave helicopters appeared and landed and the President emerged from one that had been selected at random. After that, I did not see much of him as, when he inspected the troops I was out in front of the Platoon and he passed behind me as he carried out his formal review. I seem to remember attending an evening reception at which he was present, but I was not introduced to the great man!

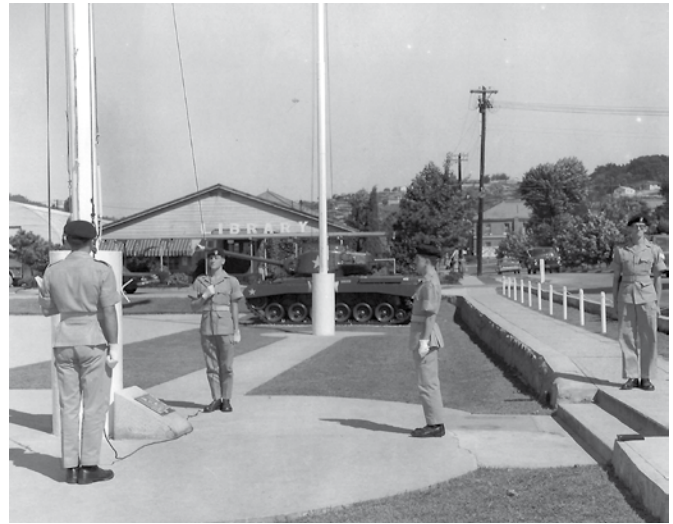
We carried out a reconnaissance of much of the forward area and this included a trip up Gloster Valley to the Imjin River and then back to Gloster Hill. It was only a matter of about fourteen years since that epic battle and the ground was still cut up by slit trenches and littered with spent rounds, grenade fragments and bits of old ammunition boxes, all bearing British markings. In some places we noticed bone fragments and we assumed that these were

from unburied Chinese. On the way back our bus driven by a KATUSAN (Korean Augmentation to the US Army), got stuck in a river. Fortunately, within minutes, a US Artillery regiment complete with a recovery vehicle came upon us and we were heaved, with terrible graunching noises, from the river bed. The KATUSAN pleaded with me to speak to his boss back at base to tell him how the damage had occurred. I did so and the man was relieved not to have been disciplined or thrown out of the service.

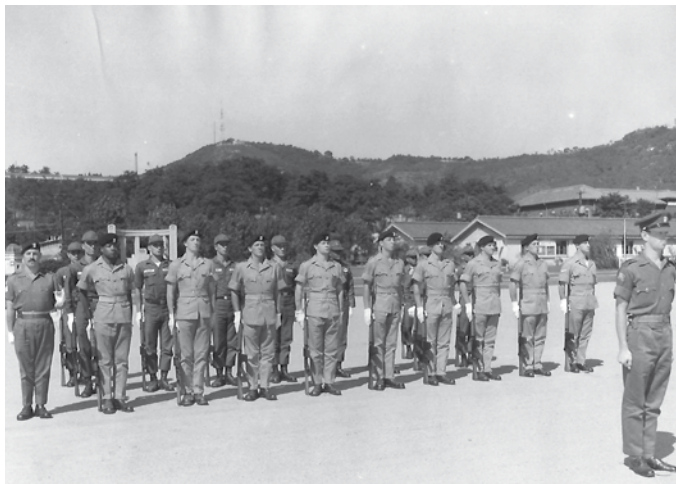
At the end of our three month tour, several officers from 1 WELCH who had fought in Korea came up from Hong Kong in the Argosy aircraft that was to take us back to the Colony. They did not even get out of camp but seemed to enjoy our farewell party. We made and received various presentations and it was the one time during the trip that Sergeant Harris 46 let his hair down. He deserved it. He had carried the Platoon and me, as a very green young officer, through three months of extreme diversity, miles away from anywhere where the British Army was to be found. He was the salt of the earth and convinced me, more than ever, that the senior NCOs and warrant officers

of our Army are truly exceptional people and worthy of our greatest respect.

In due course we arrived back in Hong Kong via Okinawa. Life in the Battalion seemed tame until the Cultural Revolution hit us, but that is another story.



Garrison Flag Day







# PERSIAN GULF

## COMMENDATION IN BAHRAIN

3 AUGUST 1968

By Paul Gray

Pte Whittington, HQ Company, 1 QUEENS was awarded a C-in-C's Commendation for brave conduct during the freak flood in the BITHNAH Training Camp on 3 August 1968. His prompt and courageous action, without consideration of personal hazard, was instrumental in rescuing the crew of a helicopter trapped in the Wadi HAMI bed by the sudden and unexpected onrush of flood waters. His conduct was in the best traditions of The Queen's Regiment and he set a fine example to all ranks.

*This is how it was reported in Braganza!*

### Johnn's Fludde

*And it came to pass in those days that Johnn and all his company, except all those who were sick, who nearly outnumbered those who were well, was sent to Bithna. And he and all his men camped in the wilderness by a dried-up Wadi; for there was no water in the Wadi. And it was very hot.*

*And when they had hardly put up their tents, behold there came a mighty wind which blew down Johnn's tent and all the tents of his captains and leaders. And much rain fell such as the people had never seen since leaving their homeland. And while all the people laughed at the efforts of Johnn and Paul, and Jack and Jim, and all the other leaders, who tried to hold their tents against the rushing wind, behold the wind blew down all the people's tents too.*

*And after the space of several minutes, there was a great calm. And John and all the people began to collect their goods together and put up their tents again.*

*And suddenly there was a mighty roar, and a great torrent of water came down the dried-up Wadi. And Johnn and all the people rushed out to look at the torrent of water, and make pictures of it. And before anyone knew what was happening, the waters had covered the whole Wadi; and the waters were very fierce so that no-one could stand up in them. And they threatened the tents of the people. And three men of the people, who were offering drink to their idol, the aluminium bubble rotor-bird, which Johnn and many of the people worshipped, were caught in the middle of the torrent; and all the efforts of Jack and all the people to get them off failed. And then there came one of the people named Harry who said "The waters may be too great for the people, but I with only my faithful Threeton will save the men in the water." And Harry and Threeton rushed into the water and saved the men trapped therein. And a mighty cheer went up because Harry had saved the three men.*



Flash Flood Fujeirah - Helicopter

*And then Johnn ordered that all the men be numbered. And Jack numbered the people and found that one, namely Jock, was missing. So all the people rushed madly down the Wadi. And when they had run two miles, and crossed the raging waters several times, they found Jock; and in his hands he clutched the two blue cushions which had floated away from the idol in the centre of the wadi. And he said that another tribe had made off with the drum and what remained of the idol's drink.*

*And after the space of one hour, the waters began to recede and all the people moved all that they possessed onto high ground. And Johnn went up onto the high ground and wrote what happened on tablets of stone. And such was the beauty of what he wrote and the hyperbole in which he wrote it, that all the tribes in Sharjah and Hamala and in the uttermost parts of the Gulf thought that a great disaster had befallen.*

Participants: Johnn - Maj John Davidson, Paul - Capt Paul Gray, Jack - CSM Warner, Jim - CSgt Carr, Harry - Pte Whittington, MT Driver Jock - Pte (from Scotland!) not very bright but "a great character". His surname is lost in the mists of time thus sparing his blushes! (Benjamin Britten who wrote Noah's Fludde which has been outrageously plagiarised!)



Flash Flood Fujairah - aftermath

## MEMORIES (Nothing to do with the Persian Gulf but it fills a space!)

*As MT and Signals Colour Sergeants respectively, the late Mickey Broad and I shared a bunk in the Garrison Mess, Airport Camp, Belize in 1980. We had lived in adjoining Married Quarters in Werl and knew each other quite well. One evening's entertainment in the Mess was based on the TV Game of the same name - "Mr & Mrs", where husbands and wives were asked three questions each about each other. As we were on an unaccompanied tour the rules were relaxed in that we could enter as 'pairs' on the strength of either working together or sharing the same accommodation. When it came to my final question I really believed I had been stitched up as the question was "Does your wife/partner/roommate have a particular saying or phrase?" I had to answer correctly (despite there being ladies present), Mickey's oft retorted statement - sometimes heard two or three times a day :*

*"What I'd give for a Pint of Tetleys, a Packet of Walkers Cheese and Onion Crisps and a Good Blowjob." We won the competition!*

Mervyn Smith





# A QUEENSMAN ALL AT SEA

By Phil Dobson

Reading our 2015 Journal, and in particular the article by 'Sunray', aka General Mike Reynolds, on Bahrain, stirred a long-lasting memory from that period which has never left me.

During our tour of Bahrain, the naval base were sending a mine sweeper to Singapore for a re-fit. Unfortunately they were short on crew and asked if 1 QUEENS could lend them six soldiers to assist on this trip and help out. As a keen reader of Part 1 Orders, I spotted the article which asked each company to provide one private soldier. I quickly volunteered and to my delight was chosen by B Company. I nearly missed out though as I had recently passed a JNCO cadre and was duly promoted to Lance Corporal prior to the sailing date. Luckily strings were pulled and I did not miss out.

We set sail from Bahrain into the Persian Gulf and onto the Gulf of Oman, moving into the Arabian Sea across the top



India Gate, Bombay

of the Indian Ocean, heading for the west coast of India and in particular the large port of Bombay. This took about ten days and whilst at sea, we carried out the duties of a normal crew member. We scrubbed decks, polished brass and took our turn on watch. We were even given our daily



Cochin

tot of rum, which I duly passed on to one of our new friends - much to his delight as it was undrinkable for someone as delicate as me.

We spent a few days in Bombay taking on fuel and provisions and of course going ashore. This mostly consisted of what you would call a pub crawl. We departed Bombay and sailed south down the west coast of India through the Indian Ocean to the port of Cochin. This is on the west coast just above the southern tip of India and yes, once again, shore leave was mostly a pub crawl.

Leaving Cochin, we sailed around the southern tip of India where three oceans meet back out into the Indian Ocean. This place is revered as a holy place by the Indians and is where some of Gandhi's ashes were scattered. This time we were heading for Colombo in Sri Lanka. Again at sea, we carried out the usual duties of the ship's crew. Then prior to arrival in Colombo, we received a signal. This was a list of shore trips once we had docked. Local ex-pats had requested to sponsor a shore trip for a number of sailors and entertain them for the day. These trips were known as 'grippas' to the sailors. God knows where that name came from! I put my name on the list with a couple of new-found sailor friends and thought no more about it.

On arrival, we docked alongside and, when given leave, went ashore with strict orders to be back on board by curfew time of 23.30 hours. A long line of shiny black limos with chauffeurs holding name cards greeted us. We climbed in our cars and were whisked out of the port through busy streets and into the country arriving at a very large, colonial-style building. We were ushered into the library and our host appeared. A stout man wearing an outrageously multi coloured Hawaiian shirt, Bermuda shorts and flip flops (I forget his name!). We joined other guests for a curry garden party.

Having an excellent time, we had told our host of curfew time just in case. As this time drew near, our host sent for the car and insisted we stop off at his club for a nightcap. Needless to say it was nearly 01.30 hours when we arrived back.

Awaiting us at the gangplank was the Duty Officer licking his lips and relishing the thought of putting sailors and Queensman alike on 'Captain's Table' in the morning and then through "the shiny door", so called because those incarcerated



Bugis (Boogie) Street, Singapore



Colombo



Penang





inside were required to shine it – a bit like the dustbin in our own guardroom! As he admonished us, a gentle cough was heard. On turning, the Duty Officer was confronted by our garishly

dressed host who quietly asked *"Is there a problem?"* After explaining he was the Assistant High Commissioner for Sri Lanka and it was his fault we were late, we were ushered off to bed and heard no more about it.

Our next leg took us across the Bay of Bengal, heading towards Malaysia and the port of Penang. This part of the trip would have given any quartermaster I know a heart attack. We were told that we would not be allowed into dry dock with bunkers full of ammo. We lined up on the stern of the ship with small arms and proceeded to convert live rounds into empty cases. I cannot recall how many rounds we fired at a target being towed behind.

However it must have been thousands and we couldn't even pick up the empty cases!

Penang came and went - more pub crawls- and eventually we arrived in Singapore. We moved into the shore base and spent about six days awaiting a flight back to Bahrain to rejoin the Battalion. We were again taken to the local bars, and of course in 1968, no trip to Singapore would have been complete without a trip to the famous 'Boogie' (Bugis) Street. As a 19/20 year old, it was an eye-opener believe me. You really could not tell the difference until it was too late - not of course that I went that far!

Altogether, our trip lasted six weeks. It was a trip I thoroughly enjoyed and will never forget. I nearly joined the Royal Navy as I had worked on the River Thames before joining up but on this trip seeing endless water in every direction, I'm glad I did not!

*(Ed: I asked him for an article on Bahrain!)*

A Coy Bahrain 1968 when they weren't swanning about with the RN or RAF! The only thing about Bahrain in this article!







# NORTHERN IRELAND

## 4 QUEENS IN NORTHERN IRELAND

BEFORE THE 'TROUBLES' STARTED

By Steve Dowse

This article intends only to jog memories and to give a vague idea of what battalion life was like in Northern Ireland before the fertilizer hit the fan. It is not an historical document. It is only lightly researched. It is written by an old rugby player who has had a few too many knocks on the head, who will plead dementia in his defence if challenged on anything.

1st Battalion the Middlesex Regiment (1MX) found themselves in Belfast in the autumn of 1965 after 2 years in Gibraltar. After a brief period to unpack, the battalion was off for a 9-month tour, from February to October 1966, in British Guiana during its transition to independence as the new nation of Guyana. 1MX was an experienced battalion with strong leadership and was full of characters. The CO, Lt Col John Shipster DSO, his 2IC Maj Nick Carter (and subsequently CO) and the MTO Capt Jimmy Wilde had all seen active service in WWII and Korea, as had a number of other senior members. RSM Ken Beale was an imposing figure and gave tremendous authority to the post. Vesting day of The Queen's Regiment was celebrated in Northern Ireland when the Battalion became the 4th Battalion The Queen's Regiment, retaining (Middlesex) in its title.

The battalion was based in Palace Barracks, Holywood, an old Victorian barracks. The barracks, MT garages and mess buildings, built around a large square, were not in the best condition. However, there were relatively modern Bn HQ and Coy HQs single storey blocks, the latter including offices, stores and armouries; also a modern gym which almost lost its roof in a storm. Most officers' and soldiers' married quarters patches were included within the barrack perimeter as were three sports fields – often very wet and muddy.

The underlying IRA threat required an armed guard and very 'bitey' war dogs which were kept loose in the ammo compound adjacent to the guardroom. One dark night there was a call to the Battalion Orderly Officer "Cpl X duty dog handler here Sir – the ammo compound dog is being idle, permission to go in and stir him up Sir?" 'Certainly Corporal, if you think it's necessary'. Ten minutes later, second call to Orderly Officer 'Cpl X here again Sir, (sounding a bit breathless) permission to call an ambulance, Sir, please!."

We worked hard and played hard. The emphasis was on fitness, particularly marching; with monthly 10 mile bashes and 8 mile BFTs. Friday afternoons often involved a CO's cross country run around the streets of Holywood and up the hills behind, with anyone coming in after the CO being invited to repeat the exercise on Saturday morning. The majority of our shooting was carried out at Ballykinler, with companies carrying out Skill at Arms camps on a regular basis. At one of these, people who should have known better, despite their disreputable records, ambushed a subaltern with a well-known voracious appetite. A sandwich, apparently cheese, but filled with grated compo soap and cut into four, was left on a table with a bite taken out of one of the quarters. You can guess the rest!

The Battalion deployed to Otterburn for a memorable session of field firing (and a lot of marching), where we fired the 84mm Carl Gustav anti-tank launcher with full calibre practice rounds for the first time, achieving



Lt Dowse digging in at Ballykinler - note the Fox's officer putties!





impressive accuracy over long ranges – an immense improvement in fire power over the 3.5 inch Rocket Launcher and ENERGA anti-armour rifle grenade. We also fired the latter with live HEAT (High Explosive Anti-Tank) rounds at 75 yards against a 3 feet square armour plate surrounded by deep, soft mud. The large number of blinds from misses created lots of fun for the conducting officers as they tried to locate the grenades in their burrows to be destroyed with demolition kits.

There were two major exercises for the battalion set by HQ 39 Bde. EX LISBURN STAKE, in June 67, involved a land and heliborne deployment in the Sperrin Mountains to track down an elusive insurgent force (the Recce platoon) – very hot, inadequate kit and a few lessons learned about fitness and living in the field. EX CORAL SEA in October 68 was a 100 mile advance to contact over three days from Ballykinler to Magilligan Camp with virtually no transport, an assault boat crossing of Lough Neagh, with all kit carried on the dreaded man-carrier frames and no issue ponchos/ground sheets or sleeping bags – improvisation was the theme. The first contact was a platoon attack by the Corps of Drums (minus steel band instruments) on the summit of the 534m high Sleive Croob, carried out 'with great dash and vigour'. The exercise ended at dawn on Day 4 with a zombie-like 5 mile approach march (via minor diversions into farm yards) from the high ground above the final objective, Magilligan Camp. Most of the Battalion covered at least 65 miles on foot over the three days.

By way of a change, the brigade staff decided that one year our ARU (Annual Review of Unit) should be based on the defence of the Ballykinler beaches against an amphibious assault by a Soviet naval infantry regiment. What? – You may well ask! The battalion, including Land Rover command vehicles, dug in and concealed itself so well in the dunes that legend has it the Bde Comd thought he had come to the wrong place on the wrong day. He soon learnt that he was in the right place when he went through the overhead cover on the trench of a certain Cpl K-L of 9 PI, C Coy, who, taken by surprise, told him to 'F\*\*\* off,' or words to that effect in a good West Country accent.

Sport featured large. Football was played not only at battalion level but there was also a very active inter-platoon league. Hockey was played. We had strong cross-country and squash teams. Rugby was the most successful however. Under the inspirational leadership of the Adjutant Capt Peter Cheeseman, over two seasons, a team was built which reached the 1968 Army Cup semi-finals, where we lost narrowly to the eventual winners 1 WELSH GDS. Lt Harry Barstow won his first Army cap at this time and over half the team played for local clubs.

All ranks enjoyed a good social life and were made very welcome by local people (including the RUC), but there was also a good awareness of the political/religious situation. Both the Officers' and Sergeants' messes held frequent social events with Sunday curry lunches high on the agenda. There was a good variety of pubs and music venues in and around Belfast. The Sunday night discos in the NAAFI were legendary. As the only place in the area providing drink and music, the young ladies of the town flocked to the front gate to be signed in by their eager hosts.



The big challenge for the provost staff was to ensure that the same numbers signed out by curfew time!

Final thoughts of those halcyon days before the proverbial hit the fan; did we really take platoons to the swimming baths near the Falls Road by 3 Tonner? Wasn't it fun dressing up as WWII Royal Ulster Rifles and try to march past Princess Margaret at 160 paces to the minute in ankle deep mud at the Balmoral Arena? Why did Lt Jim Jonklaas drive a pink car? How many broken Champagne bottles does it take to fill a big brick fireplace? Why did Capt Peter Monypenny drive a yellow car? And most importantly did the rest of the Queen's enjoy Belfast and the rest of the Province as much as we did in later years?

# 4 QUEENS 1967

Northern Ireland Diehard Style or How Archie Got It!

By Roger Gancz



## Diehard Style, 4 Queens Officers NI Sept 1967

Back row: L to R: 2Lt Roger Gancz with Archie, Capt Mike Deakin, Capt John Lofting, Maj Tony McManus.

Front row: L to R: Capt Gavin Bulloch and his dog, Capt Peter Monypenny, Lt Tony Lowrie

Archie, the Officers' Mess Parrot, with very Cockney habits, settled down happily in the kitchen where he loudly abused the Mess staff and called out to passers-by. He (we presume he was a male) developed an addiction to Guinness and strong tea and seemed to thrive on this diet. Archie, while living in the kitchen was brought into the dining room on formal dinner nights after the toasts, where he would be placed on the table in front of the CO. He would noisily parade up and down the table sampling the fruit, attacking anyone who tried to interfere with his foraging. He met a suspicious and untimely end with 4 QUEENS at Warminster in 1969, was exhumed from a flower bed, stuffed, and mounted on a stick. He went to Berlin with 1 QUEENS where he sat on a shelf in the Officers' Mess. By this time, he was in a pretty tatty state, and then one day he flew off!

Lt Steve Dowse took this photograph in 1967. It was set on the steps leading to the front door of the Officers' Mess at Palace Barracks, Holywood, Northern Ireland. Our recollections are that its theme of colonial service in a bygone age was gestated after a good formal lunch in the Mess. Just prior to amalgamation in late 1966, 1 MX returned from a tour in British Guiana/Guyana (BG) and this was our celebration of the end of the colonial era. After 50 years, our collective memories had forgotten what the occasion was, but Mike Deakin has suggested that it must have been something important to get us out of our maroon jersey pullovers and cravats and into Service Dress! Indeed it was important - the visit of the Colonel of the Regiment, General Dick Craddock, in September 1967!



The Colonel of the Regiment inspecting "Archie", the Officers' Mess parrot, with (left to right) Lt Col John Shipster, Gen Dick Craddock, Capt Gavin Bulloch, 2Lt Roger Gancz, and Capt Mike Deakin

*(Ed: It looks more as if he is sadly shaking his head in despair!)*



# BELFAST

By Merrick Willis



Divis Street Mural



Belfast 71

## ***“Not a good-looking Regiment, but devilish steady”***

The Duke of Wellington could have made the same comment about the Regiment on Op BANNER as he did of one of our forebear regiments, the 50th Foot (later the Queen’s Own Royal West Kent Regiment), at the Battle of Salamanca in 1812.

As The Queen’s Regiment, we really only have the one battle honour. With due respect to those who served on secondment in the Trucial States, in the Falklands War or places we cannot mention while on works outings from Hereford, for us Queensmen it was all about Northern Ireland. Unless, of course, you count the Cold War, in which from my experience the highest risk was the danger of being run over by a BFG car after over-indulgence in duty-free booze.

Unfortunately for us, Op BANNER was an unusual, unsavoury and very long campaign which for understandable political and presentational reasons could never be recognised as a ‘real war’.

The Regiment had come into being at a strange time. The last men to be conscripted had left the Army only seven years before, the efforts of our forebears in The Great War were being denigrated by the ‘Oh, What a Lovely War’ era, the flower power generation was supplanting the veterans of the Second World War, and Vietnam was colouring world opinion of the military. The last of the post-war colonial actions, Borneo and Yemen/Aden finished soon after we were formed and, along with Korea, constituted a nostalgically exotic memory as militarily we withdrew from Empire and East of Suez at the end of the 1960s and early 70s.

Our successor Regiment in turn took up the baton in the early 1990s at the beginning of a period of amazing military opportunity, serving worldwide with distinction in a range of conflicts in which the Army’s contribution has been valued and admired, despite the background of increasing political controversy. But we have every right to be proud of our successors and even congratulate ourselves on the grounding we provided our share of a regiment that boasts a serving holder of the Victoria Cross, countless decorations and awards across all ranks and a modern historical heritage second to none

So Northern Ireland seems the rather dull meat in an otherwise tasty military sandwich.

The Regiment was, of course, fully involved from the first day of the ‘Troubles’, 15 August 1969, with the 1st Battalion arriving in Londonderry that very week while the 2nd Battalion, already resident in Palace Barracks, Holywood, was the first battalion deployed onto the Falls Road.







Orange March



Belfast 69



Unknown Queensman  
1969



Belfast 71



5 Pl, B Coy, Falls Rd, Belfast Sep 69







They were joined in early 1970 by the 3rd Battalion taking up residence in Ballykinler.

Jonathon Riley's excellent Regimental History *'Soldiers of the Queen'* records all

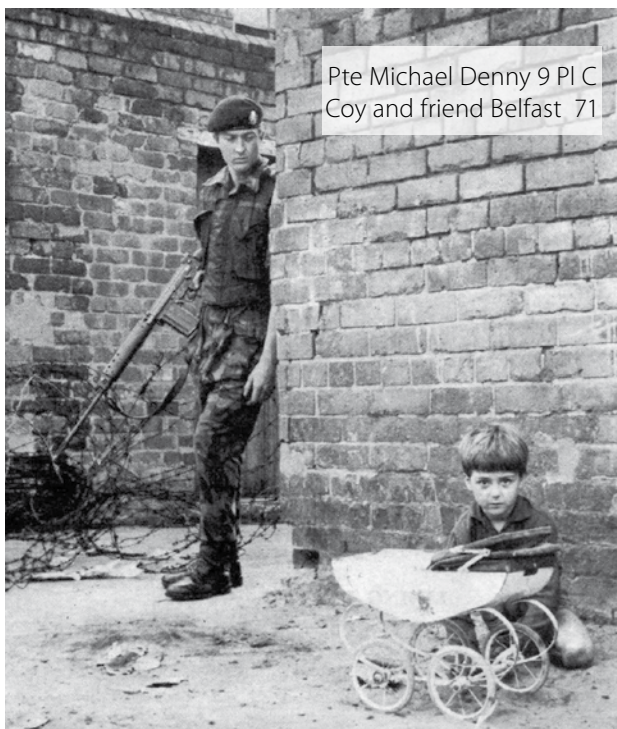
the various tours, but our Editor has invited me to *"do something on Belfast"*, which I can only do with reference to the 2nd Battalion, although all battalions served in that city.

I started my Regimental service in the City and finished with an emergency tour there when in command almost twenty years later, shortly before the Regiment amalgamated once again. My four visits reflect the changes that took place over the twenty-five years of the conflict before the IRA ceasefire in 1994.

I joined the 2nd Battalion as it emerged from its first three weeks in Belfast in early September 1969 and thus was spared the usual 'new subbie' pranks; within days we were back on the streets amidst the smell of burnt buildings, destroyed homes and the detritus of a city in crisis. Our task was to establish what was later to become the Peace Line. My platoon took up residence in a tiny school in Boundary Street off the Falls Road and at first were well looked after by the locals. I recall meals of fish fingers being brought to us and for the first time encountered the phenomenon of toast grilled on one side only, in the interests of economy. We overdosed on endless cups of tea, potato cakes and fish fingers. We were amused to hear that our successors, a troop of Royal Marines, had all gone down with food poisoning when relations soured after rioting on the Shankill in October.

Life was full of improvisation as the Army seemed determined as ever – against all the evidence – not to acknowledge that our involvement might have to continue. Having started with IS kits that had been recycled after Aden – and we really did have banners with *'disperse or we fire'* in Arabic on one side – our protective gear evolved with the use of bread bins welded by the REME onto Land Rover windscreens to prevent them being shattered by rocks and the purchase by the QM of carpet underlay which we wore to prevent the worst of leg injuries caused by the lack of full-length shields. Any number of Queensmen suffered nasty facial injuries until primitive visors were attached to helmets after months of rioting. If my memory serves me correctly, we even developed the full length, see-through perspex riot shields, a bright idea led by Maj MCDL Gilham, OC A Coy, in the interests of self-preservation.

As Province Reserve Battalion, we experienced some pretty hairy situations including the infamous Falls Road curfew in June 1970, but despite over a hundred Queensmen needing hospital treatment, including a number with gunshot wounds, the real terrorist



Pte Michael Denny 9 Pl C Coy and friend Belfast 71



The good old Humber or Pig



Crumlin Road '69



Lt Willis with two of 11 Platoon's Section Commanders Cpls Codger Thorpe and Mick Rowney

campaign had yet to start when we handed over to 1 PARA in September 1970.

Things had changed by our next visit in August 1971. The Provisional IRA campaign had generated enough grief for the Stormont Government to introduce internment without trial for terrorist suspects, but without the counterbalancing measure of Direct Rule that would have drawn the sting. This was Op DEMETRIUS. We actually arrived in Londonderry. The cover story for our deployment from Werl was that we were to be in reserve for the Apprentice Boys Parade on 12 August. Our recce gave the CO, Mike Reynolds, a great opportunity for a mini-battlefield tour of his exploits with the 1st Battalion two years earlier.

However, we were switched to Belfast on 9 August via the old Torpedo Factory in Antrim, and I can still recall the surprise of one of the QM's minions who was fired at on the way, and the late and much-loved Buggsy Wharram, the Post Corporal, indignant at receiving a petrol bomb on his Land Rover. The Province, and Belfast in particular, was in chaos with twenty-four people killed over the next couple of days, and we were soon deployed in company groups or smaller at all points of the City. Ulster had become a most unpleasant shooting war and sadly the Battalion took its first fatal casualty, Paul Carter, late in the tour during a spell in which another regiment in the Ardoyne, lost five soldiers killed in almost as many days.

2 QUEENS' next package tour to Belfast occurred in early 1977 (with the 1st Battalion filling in the preceding years in Belfast in '73, '74 and '75 and the 3rd Battalion doing its spell in '75 and '76). The Battalion had been deployed in support of Op MOTORMAN in 1972, followed only a year later by a four month holiday in Londonderry's Creggan resort in 1973/4. There followed a brief two-company foray into South Armagh in early 1976 to provide cover for the deployment for the first time (openly at any rate) of a detachment from 22 SAS.

By 1977, Op BANNER had entered its next phase. The early days of internal security had been succeeded by what amounted to guerrilla warfare for several years. The MOD had finally realised that this was not going to 'be over by Christmas', and a formalised pattern had emerged that included, fortunately, proper training with the establishment of NITATs in UK and BAOR (as opposed to the rather different NITAT (NI) which was a cover for other more nefarious activities) as well as a host of other changes. But probably the most significant was the introduction of police primacy in 1976, following years of operations being run by the military with little or no overt police involvement - much to the irritation of the 1st Battalion who were keeping the peace in Londonderry and were suddenly being told what they could and could not do by the Peelers!





The 2nd Battalion, along with the 1st, were some of the first to have to play under these new rules and it was a time of some confusion. I recall the CO, Lt Col Crispin Champion, whose Adjutant I

was, wrestling with the new relationship with the senior RUC who were penned into their police stations such as Andersonstown. The reality was that the military were still in the driving seat, with much of the intelligence gathering still in Army hands. In Fort Monagh, near Turf Lodge, we still had a screening centre where suspects were brought after early morning lifts. In fact the last screening centre, manned by the 1st Battalion in Omagh, closed in 1982, but in theory it was now the police calling the shots.

In the years before my fourth and final trip to Belfast nearly eleven years on, I had a most enjoyable rural interlude with the 1st Battalion in Omagh while the 2nd Battalion was resident in Londonderry.

By 1988, the activities of a battalion on a 'normal' tour in Belfast took place within a carefully choreographed setting. The city was wired for sound and vision, with eavesdroppers on top of Divis Mountain and cameras everywhere, although nowhere near what is available with today's sophistication but a far cry from the technological desert of 1969.

Training and possible operations were strictly constrained. The RUC were firmly in the driving seat for day-to-day operations, whilst a host of other bodies ran anything that might possibly result in proactive contact with terrorists. I hope that some of the Queensmen who were involved might be able to share some of their stories with us, but Dets, FRUs and other mysterious groups proliferated and at times appeared to be more at war with the over-powerful RUC Special Branch than the IRA. At the highest levels, relations between the head of the RUC, Sir John Herman, and the military were frosty at best.

As far as a regular battalion was concerned, it was a question, first, of keeping the closest possible relations with the local RUC hierarchy at all levels, and second, maintaining a standard of professionalism in the face of a threat to which soldiers would only vanishingly rarely have the chance to respond. Soldiers on the streets had always been targets, but well before 1988 they had become largely passive, as any chance of hitting back was now taken on almost exclusively by "specialist troops". Queensmen on patrol could of course react, with proactive platoon and company commanders trying to sort out the menace of the IED and landmine, as well as the snipers and RPG teams.

Whilst we could see the need for some 'specialist' activities, their mistakes could be galling for us to watch. I recall one particular incident in which our Queensmen were pulled off the streets while large gents in ill-fitting RUC uniforms and carrying AK47s and other odd weapons took over their posts, but failed spectacularly and, for a passing taxi driver fatally, to deal with the IRA RPG team that drove past and fired at a sangar.

I hope I will be forgiven for relating two specific incidents from the tour that, for me, sums up all that was good in our Regiment's involvement in Belfast. One involved an operation, later described by Comd 39 Bde as a model of successful Army/RUC joint working, in which a complete IRA gun team was arrested and their two RPGs recovered. It would not have happened without professionalism at all levels, from the senior ranks in the company concerned who had developed a relationship of mutual trust with the RUC, planning and working on the operation with them, to the alert young NCO searcher who found the concealed weapons.

The other was when a particularly vicious double IED attack killed two civilians and our ATO, missing the Queen's patrol for which it was intended. One of our young soldiers without hesitation went to the aid of one of the mortally wounded people caught in the blast – this in the middle of the Falls Road – giving mouth to mouth resuscitation and using his beret as a makeshift bandage.

There were huge flaws in much of what we did in Ulster. This is not the place to touch on the rights and wrongs of what are referred to in India as 'encounter killings', the so-called 'Shoot to Kill' policy adopted in the latter stages of the campaign, the use of informers and other contentious issues.

The whole Ulster saga regrettably was filled with blunders, both civil and military. While some of the early Governmental mistakes can be laid at the door of the Stormont regime that was abolished in 1972, it might be said that successive Westminster administrations made some decisions which in retrospect seem extraordinary.

From a military perspective, some mistakes were made. Some were amusing, such as sending The Queen's Own Hussars to West Belfast in the early 1970s instead of The Queen's Own Highlanders due simply to a staff duties MOD arms plot mix-up of abbreviations (true, I promise!), but others were less so. Some mistakes had far-reaching results: surely someone in the chain of command might have guessed that putting the Royal Scots, at that time a mainly Protestant, Rangers-supporting battalion, into Ballymurphy in March 1970 was neither the brightest nor most tactful move. Not surprisingly the Catholic inhabitants drew their own conclusions from the sight of soldiers wearing Glengarry caps apparently protecting

Protestant marchers with the same headgear processing down the Springfield Road. The result was the riots of April 1970 which, it has been claimed, acted as midwife to the birth of the Provisional IRA.

Over three hundred thousand soldiers took part in Op BANNER. They did so in an atmosphere of controversy, hatred and under the glare of the world's media. For every Bloody Sunday or Ballymurphy Massacre, there were literally hundreds of tours by battalions and regiments which carried out their duties with discipline, restraint, patience, professionalism and above all good humour. I am convinced that few if any other armies worldwide could have done what we did in the bizarre circumstances of Ulster without things going radically wrong, perhaps even to the extent of martial law, a government falling or some such official occurrence during such a difficult, prolonged and complex period of our history.

Most of you reading this Journal will have been part of this story – 36 tours under our belts, more than any other regiment in the British Army, apart from of course the UDR, who in different guises served from start to finish. Our Regiment was at the forefront of everything that was good about the Army's part in Op BANNER. *"Not a good looking Regiment, but devilish steady."*

In recent years, I have travelled back to Belfast on business on numerous occasions and visited many of our old haunts. Of course there are reminders of what went on, some of them frankly galling, and there are still idiots causing grief.

Overall it is great to see what has changed and how the environment, that we and the Regiment helped to create, is enabling the people of Northern Ireland to live normal lives.

We should all be very proud of what we and our Regiment, and of course the rest of the British Armed Forces helped to achieve. The official MOD figures list a total of 763 servicemen killed and 6,116 wounded but these do not include those who committed suicide. Indeed in 1972, more soldiers died than in the whole of the Iraq War – 130 in Northern Ireland against 47 in Iraq which included 9 from "friendly fire". Apart from the 11 soldiers from our Regiment who are honoured on the Armed Forces Memorial at the National Memorial Arboretum and on the Regiment's Memorial to the Fallen in Leros Barracks, many others have suffered the effects of what was known as the Troubles; but for us and for our Regiment this was our war but is now, thanks to us and the service we and the other elements of the security forces provided, Northern Ireland's hopefully lasting peace.

*(Ed: On 20 August 1971, Lt Willis, while standing outside the guardroom at the Royal Victoria Hospital, was shot from a car that came from the Falls Road and exited up Broadway. One .45 calibre round hit him in the shoulder and lodged in his back. He was taken at once into hospital and operated on. Happily, he made a full recovery. Following his final tour in Belfast Lt Col Willis was appointed OBE).*



Lt Col Willis with the R Group in 1988





# LONDONDERRY 1972

By David Wake

*"There is a green hill far away, without a city wall. ...."*

I have long held the belief that the famous hymn above was inspired by Londonderry or L'Derry, depending on your preference. It was certainly written by Cecil Francis Alexander, the wife of a Bishop of L'Derry. I have no idea what she saw in the place.

When I was contacted with a request to write something about Londonderry, I can honestly say that I hadn't given the place much thought in the preceding 30 odd years. In many respects, I would prefer not to have to rake over those particular coals. In the absence of any contemporaneous notes and the knowledge that others have written with great authority about our Regimental service in the city, I have relied on increasingly unreliable memory and a few well-honed anecdotes and personal reminiscences in an attempt to fulfil my remit.

I was to make my first acquaintance with L'Derry in August 1972 and to re-acquaint myself in 1973-74 and 1983, in all cases serving with the 2nd Battalion. The place has significance for all the regular battalions of the Regiment, as all served there at some point in the years of Op BANNER.

In July 1972, as a very green 20-year-old 2nd Lt, I was happily commanding 10 Platoon (The Lazy Saints) as part of C Company commanded by the then Maj Peter Barrow. We were stationed in Werl in Germany and were enjoying

the rhythms of a BAOR summer, anticipating a planned deployment to Northern Ireland in the autumn, with the attendant training at Sennelager. This idyll was rudely shattered by events in the Province. The CO, Lt Col Mike Reynolds, had received orders to deploy his Battalion on an emergency tour to support Op MOTORMAN, the aim of which was the retaking of what had become the 'no-go areas' established by Republican paramilitaries in Belfast, L'Derry and other large towns. This would be the biggest deployment of the Army since the Suez crisis of 1956.

Whoever said that lightning never strikes twice has clearly never watched QI and can't distinguish between the elbow and another body part! My preference for cliché is that history has a habit of repeating itself. The unfolding events of July 1972 were almost identical to the previous year when the 2nd Battalion was similarly whisked out of Germany, to support Op DEMETRIUS, the imposition of Internment in August 1971. We deployed piecemeal, to Belfast. This came as some surprise to the CO, as he was waiting for his battalion in Londonderry.

Meanwhile back in 1972 in Germany, preparations were being made for deployment and plans worked and re-worked. The Battalion Intelligence Officer, Capt Raymond Low had a plan; he was scheduled to marry Tricia and the wedding had to be hastily re-arranged to accommodate the imminent deployment. Apart from the '*unfortunate incident of the Volvo in the night*', the wedding passed off successfully and the battalion deployed to Northern



Saladin in L'Derry



Centurion RE Armoured Engineer vehicle clearing barricades in the Creggan

Ireland. However, the very green 2nd Lt referenced above, having been central to the *'the unfortunate incident'* was incapacitated in BMH Iserlohn. It was a very solitary journey to join up with the battalion in Londonderry.

My first, slightly tricky, duty was to attend a major interview without coffee with the CO in the newly established but temporary Bn HQ in Brooke Park. With several large fleas in the ear and the prospect of a lifetime's extra duties on return to Germany, chastened I re-joined C Coy.

The company was stationed in Bligh's Lane, a dis-used factory complex. It was adjacent to a working factory and, (from fallible) memory above another factory, delightfully called the Saracen Knicker Factory (go figure!). Bligh's Lane had all the charm you would expect from a place on the side of a steep hill, dominated from above by the Creggan Estate, an extremely hostile Catholic and largely Republican post-war housing estate and the Bogside (another much older Catholic estate) below, by the River Foyle. The factory space was noisy, dirty and cramped but we soon turned it into some sort of home.

Initially you couldn't move on the Creggan Estate for soldiers. One roundabout, named the Rath, was the boundary between three infantry battalions, one of which was our own 3rd Battalion. Below were even more troops; there was even a sand-bagged battalion base at the top of the hill, called "Piggery Ridge" that was later to become Bn HQ.

Eventually, there was a significant force rationalisation and the 2nd Battalion had its own TAOR in the Creggan and Rosemount. Companies were in Piggery Ridge, RUC Rosemount and on board HMS Rame Head moored alongside Fort George on the Foyle. The Battalion also manned a number of permanent VCPS and key roads leading to the Republic of Ireland.

I recall that we were equipped with the 6-wheeled Saracen armoured cars, some of which were painted sand coloured yellow, presumably dragged out from a storage facility somewhere but clearly knickerless. They were imposing, intimidating vehicles that could be heard from miles around. Stealth was impossible especially as they laboured, wheezing up the aforementioned hill. They were



2Lt David Wake in touch with his feminine side!





eventually replaced by the less intimidating but equally useless 1 tonne Humber or Pig as it was known (and not in an affectionate or Cameronian way!). It also struggled with the hills even before its engine was overwhelmed by later up-armouring.

The emergency deployment was subsequently authorised to become a full 4 month deployment, thankfully *in lieu* of that planned for later in the year. Consequently, we all settled in to try to stabilise the area, win 'hearts and minds' and take appropriate military action when able. We were confronted by a largely hostile population and there were many riots, stoning, bombings and shootings with which to occupy ourselves.

Once, as I drove around the patch in my Land Rover I heard a gunshot followed by the phrase full of forboding, "*Contact. Greenwalk. Wait Out*", over my headphones. We sped to the incident. Driving down Malin Gardens, I passed Pte Bernard d'Aguilar, doing a very passable imitation of Ed Moses running the 400m hurdles. Bernie athletically leapt over all the fences and walls in the front gardens of the houses in the street before flopping down beside me and the Patrol Comd LCpl Desmond. As Desmond briefed me, Bernie whispered "*Sir, I think I might have been shot*". I didn't have to be Dr Kildare to confirm very quickly that he had indeed been shot and we rapidly medevaced him. Despite being hit in the side by a 5.56 mm Armalite round, he was to make a successful recovery.

One personal milestone was that I celebrated my 21st birthday in Bligh's Lane. I recall that my PI Sgt, the wonderful Sgt Brian 'Lofty' Hunt, came up to me to say that the CSM, WO2 Fred Boyne, had taken delivery of what he regarded as a suspicious package addressed to me, and had placed it in a sand-bagged bay, to await my inspection. Aware of my significant birthday, I thought that it probably was kosher and contained some delicious goodies from my family. Of course these were pre-mobile phone days and I am sure that we didn't even have access to a welfare phone, contact with loved ones restricted to BFPO 'Blueys', so I was unable to confirm with family.

I approached gingerly and through binoculars could see that the parcel was indeed addressed to me but in a scrawl that I could not identify and with some clumsy spelling mistakes. Withdrawing, I confirmed to Fred Boyne that I could not vouch for the parcel. He duly arranged for its summary destruction by a hastily summoned ATO. A cursory examination of the debris, accompanied by

much hilarity from onlookers, confirmed my worst fears that it was indeed a Red Cross parcel from my mother, full of much loveliness and many goodies, taken by an aunt to London for wrapping, addressing and despatch! No wonder I hold the Londonderry place in such low esteem!!

Lofty and I had another good reason for the whole low esteem in which we held L'Derry. One evening we had reversed our trusty Land Rover, driven by Pte Quigley, into a narrow alleyway off Beechwood Crescent. A car sped past the entrance to the alley, and a loud explosion blew me over a low wall and a number of nails into Quigley's arm. Lofty, standing at the front of the Rover was unharmed and fired several shots into the rear of the departing vehicle. We believed that a grenade had been thrown at us and after submitting the usual radio reports we drove Quigley to Fort George for treatment and returned, shaken not stirred, to RV with an ATO. Whilst waiting for the ATO to arrive, we began to scour the hedgerow in the alley and discovered two nail bombs linked in series, semi-buried under the hedge. An electrical cable trailed off into the gardens and it became apparent that the explosion had not been a grenade but rather an elaborate bomb ambush that had only partially detonated. Nonetheless, in the immediate follow up, an A Coy snap VCP intercepted a car containing a number of weapons. It was not the car that Lofty had shot at. Who knows what the, presumably innocent, occupants of the original car made of the affair. To the best of my knowledge no complaint was ever received, so maybe not so innocent.

Despite the risk and high probability of conflating events from different tours, I have tried in this article to focus on the events of 1972, but there are equally dim memories and stories from other tours in L'Derry. For another time perhaps!

HMS Rame Head



# SOUTH ARMAGH

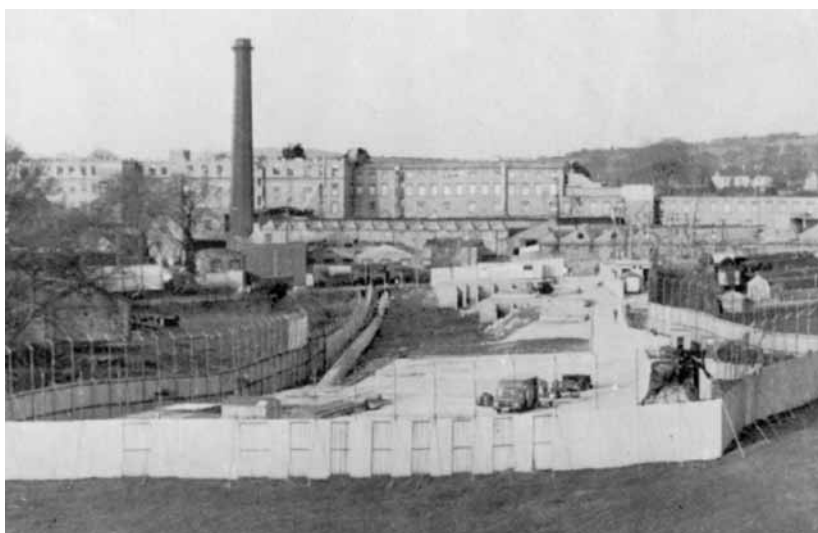
6 MARCH – 4 JULY 1979

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## Introduction by Peter Monypenny

In early 1979, 3 QUEENS was stationed in Dover under command 6 Field Force (a brigade by another name) which was based mainly in Aldershot. The principal role of the Field Force, despite being lightly equipped for air-portability, was to reinforce BAOR and, to that end, battalion training was aimed mainly at preparation for general warfare and included exercises on Salisbury Plain and in Schleswig Holstein, Denmark and Canada. All this was pertinent because the Battalion was 'arms plotted' for conversion to the Mechanised Infantry role and a move to Germany in 1981. The variety of infantry soldiering was emphasised by the Battalion's tour in Belize in 1977, by manning the 'Green Goddess' fire engines in Liverpool during the firemen's strike and by parading for the installation of HM Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother as Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports. Undoubtedly, however, the high point of the Battalion's time at Dover was the 4-month tour in South Armagh from 6 March to 4 July 1979.

In early 1979, 3 QUEENS was a relatively youthful battalion. Most of its private soldiers had not been to Northern Ireland before and many of the JNCOs had no experience of leading patrols or 'bricks' in Northern Ireland. Even the previous Northern Ireland experience of the officers and SNCOs had mainly been in the urban environment of Belfast or L'Derry, not much like the conditions to be met in South Armagh. The pre-tour training package was mainly undertaken in January on the Hythe Ranges and in the urban 'Rype' village at Lydd, followed by two weeks of rural patrol training at Stanford in Norfolk in February fog and snow which kept the helicopters grounded that were tasked to support our training. We all knew that the rural patrol in conjunction with helicopter support and the manning of isolated OPs, would be the bread and butter of operations in South Armagh and that the leadership and infantry skills of our JNCOs would be critical to the Battalion's success. Moreover, at that time, the emphasis of PIRA activity in the Province had shifted towards cross-border operations, principally in South Armagh. I had the good fortune and great privilege to be the Battalion 2IC and therefore responsible for coordinating the pre-tour training. While I know that the CO, Lt Col Gavin Bulloch, was confident of the overall competence and fitness of the Battalion at the start of the tour, I believe he shared my slight concern as to whether our pre-tour training had prepared us fully enough for operations in South Armagh. As it happened, all ranks performed admirably and the Battalion completed a highly successful tour, dominating our TAOR sufficiently to restrict PIRA activity to manageably low levels and consequently suffering fewer casualties than either of our predecessors or successors had to bear. By the end of our tour, the skill levels, confidence and morale throughout the Battalion were noticeably high.

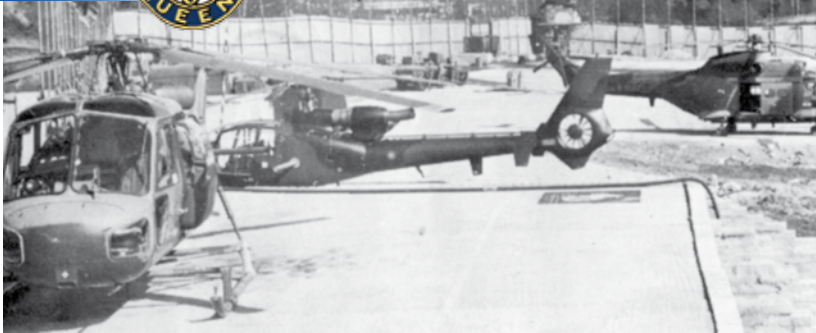


Bessbrook Mill

Battalion HQ, together with all of our logistic and administrative elements, was housed in the cavernous old linen mill at Bessbrook, near Newry. The mill was shared with C Coy which was responsible for patrolling the local area and providing the Battalion reserve. Working in the mill felt like living in the bowels of an aircraft carrier, particularly so when accompanied by constant helicopter engine noise, as we had, so our pilots told us, the busiest helipad in Europe. Bessbrook Mill was at the northern edge of our TAOR and was open to road vehicles from all points north. But no military vehicle movement was permitted to the south of Bessbrook due to the threat of roadside IEDs, and it was to the South of

Bessbrook that A Coy (at Crossmaglen), B Coy (at Forkhill) and D Coy (at Newtonhamilton) were deployed, along the border with the Republic. This gave our operations a unique character as all troop and stores movement to and between company locations was by helicopter and all patrolling was done on foot with insertion and recovery by helicopter when needed. Our





Bessbrook Mill



Buzzard  
Max Maloney

helicopter force comprised a mixture of Wessex, Puma, Scout and Gazelle helicopters piloted by a disparate group of RN, RAF and AAC officers who operated under divergent flying regulations and who had to be controlled and coordinated gamely by our MTO, Max Maloney, a man with a huge personality who alone could manage the pilots effectively and who we all referred to affectionately by his appointment title as 'Buzzard'. He told me that, by the end of the tour, he had despatched over 600 under-slung loads to the companies. The ban on road movement had the effect of isolating the companies, all of whose operations within their TAORs were necessarily independent with visitors' access only by our "chopper" service. I only once managed to hitch a lift to Crossmaglen where A Coy sent me out on foot patrol. On my return flight to Bessbrook, the Gazelle entangled itself in a telegraph wire and the pilot invited me to climb out onto the ski shaped undercarriage to disentangle us!

### **A Company at Crossmaglen by Richard Graham**

When I first heard that A Coy had been given Crossmaglen as our TAOR, I must admit to having a degree of apprehension because, at that time, South Armagh had a reputation as the heartland of IRA 'bandit country' with Crossmaglen as its iconic capital village. The reputation was justified by old and recent history and was reinforced when my recce visit to the Grenadier Guards Company, from whom we were to take over, came a week after the loss of three Guardsmen in an ambush in the village. My principal anxiety was that, although the Company had become a well-knit body of men through our training experiences in Germany and Denmark, and fighting fires in Merseyside, many of our junior ranks were young and without operational experience of the terrorist war in Northern Ireland. Although our pre-tour training prepared us well as far as our knowledge and skills were concerned, there was an important extra dimension to the task in hand, that of our mental approach to it. I was determined that we should not be overawed by PIRA's reputation and that we should take the fight to them. It was important that each time our soldiers deployed out of our company base they were aware of the dangers facing them but were confident in their ability to deal with them. Recent successful mortar attacks on security force bases had turned the bases themselves into part of the war zone, and it would have been all too easy for an over-defensive mentality to influence our approach to dealing with an enemy who had many advantages on his side. I need not have worried because, not for the first time in the Regiment's long history, our young men rose brilliantly to the challenge. The tour got off to an unconventional start for me during the handover/takeover. It was customary to trickle-post departing and incoming personnel over a period of a week or so, but on day two or three of my overlap with Maj Charles Woodrow, the outgoing company commander, he was ambushed while investigating by helicopter an incident on the Concession Road which ran alongside the border with the Irish Republic. He was fortunate that he was in a Scout rather than a Gazelle because I doubt that the latter would have



Richard Graham on patrol

survived the damage which I saw had been sustained by the Scout when it limped back to the Crossmaglen base. Charles, who had been wounded in the leg, and two fellow passengers from A Coy, platoon commander Lt Mike Cooper and brick commander Cpl Bowdrey, had had an early introduction to PIRA tactics and firepower. *"It's all yours"* said Charles as he handed over to me on the base heli-pad while the RMO injected him with morphine. I was no longer OC Advance Party but OC Crossmaglen base with a mixture of Grenadier Guardsmen, Queensmen and Royal Engineers under my command.

There was a welcome simplicity about operations in our TAOR. All movement was on foot or by helicopter since the threat of roadside and culvert bombs rendered vehicle movement by road far too dangerous and difficult to guard against. I cannot recall that we had any road vehicles at all in our base. Looking back, I have the highest possible admiration for the way in which all ranks within the company performed in conducting operations against an experienced enemy in an extremely hostile environment. Most of the local population were PIRA sympathisers, and those who were not were far too intimidated to show it. One exception was 'Rats', a terrier of mixed parentage, who had been adopted by previous units and who each day accompanied our patrols within the village. He even enjoyed the occasional sortie in a helicopter. Rats had no concept of 'hearts and minds' peacekeeping; his approach was simple – if it wasn't army it was enemy, to be chased, harried and bitten. His battered body bore the signs of his many encounters with the IRA over the years and was testimony to his courage. We all regarded him as one of us. He was a major boost to our collective morale and handing him over to the Queen's Own Highlanders left hard-bitten soldiers misty-eyed. 'Rats' survived to serve as an honorary member of successive units and received the rare accolade of a personal biography published by Harper Collins, *"The Small Dog with Big Personality"*.



Rats

There are no clear yardsticks to measure the success or otherwise of A Company's tour in Crossmaglen but one clear outcome was that many young men grew up in that short time and even the seasoned hands grew in stature and professional competence from the experience. The Company suffered but one casualty. Corporal Avery of the Corps of Drums survived a serious wound to the pelvic area from a Woodmaster sniper rifle and made a good recovery from it. However, a deep sadness has remained with me ever since over the murder of



*"We don't think so"! The boys on the Concession Road*

RUC Superintendent Stanley Hanna and Constable Kevin Thompson in June 1979. Reliable sources had indicated that IEDs had been set up along the Concession Road and a large scale operation was mounted in order to locate and neutralize them. I had kept the two RUC officers close under my wing throughout the day but as daylight began to fade, and as I was preparing to leave an overnight cordon in place, I took my eyes off them for a few moments. In that time, they had begun to walk beyond the area that had been cleared. By the time I noticed this and was able to call out a warning to go no further and retreat, they were caught in the blast of a large IED that had been laid within a dry-stone wall and which had been detonated from the Irish Republic side of the border. They died instantly. It was a characteristic of RUC officers that, having to live year after year in a dangerous environment, they tended to adopt a determined refusal to allow the dangers to dominate every minute of their daily lives. This in turn led them to take risks that we as battle-primed soldiers on a mere four-month tour regarded as unacceptable. On this occasion it was a tragic risk too many, but ever since I have asked myself if I could have done more to save those two courageous Ulstermen.





Our successors in South Armagh were the Queen's Own Highlanders who, within days of our departure, suffered their first fatal casualty in Crossmaglen. Weeks later, when returning to Dover from post-tour leave, I heard on the car radio that Lord Louis Mountbatten had been murdered in County Sligo. Hours later came the news of the Warrenpoint tragedy in which the Commanding Officer of the Queen's Own Highlanders had been killed along with several members of the Parachute Regiment. It later emerged that both attacks involved PIRA members well-known to A Company in Crossmaglen, a sombre reminder of the challenge which the

Company had successfully faced.

## B Company at Forkhill by Mike Constantine



Foxfield Hill

The village of Forkhill in 'Bandit Country' is situated at the junction of two roads leading directly south to the border, at its closest point, about 700m away. The village sits in the saddle formed by high ground to the west and is dominated more immediately to the east by a feature known as Foxfield Hill. With a population of fewer than 1,000, in 1979 the village comprised one small housing estate, a school, a pub, a shop and an RUC station which had been taken over as a fortified company base with an integral heli-

pad. On the Foxfield feature was a large, well-constructed sangar permanently manned by half a platoon which dominated the village and provided good observation of the border and approach roads. PIRA knew this position had to be neutralised to safely attack the base. Due to the threat of IEDs, B Coy faced the same ban on vehicle movement as the other companies and once we became used to the arrival of helicopters at no notice, we became highly proficient at the quick turnround drills.



Lt Knight and team

With the benefit of hindsight, B Coy's tour was relatively peaceful. The fiercely nationalistic and uncommunicative locals, when not eking out an existence from their small farms, were more concerned with smuggling pigs or grain backwards and forwards over the border, allegedly accruing EU funding in both directions. We did our best to pre-empt and counter the PIRA threat by proactive patrolling, snap VCPs and good eyeball observation supported by high resolution CCTV cameras. The routine for 4 PI (Lt Sumner, Sgt Branch), 5 PI (Lt Rayner, CSgt Moss) and 6 PI (Lt Knight, CSgt Allaway) broke down into foot patrolling and guards and duties, including manning the Foxfield sangar. Capt John Rogerson ran the ops room and the "Forkhill Air Terminal" while CSM O'Sullivan and CSgt Horner looked after the base; CSgt McLeod tried to interpret local intelligence and, most importantly, Sgt Thubron ran the kitchens, providing sustenance around the clock, never knowing for how many he was catering.

The largest event of our tour was the successful operation run over three days and nights to move by road enough Sapper stores to rebuild the base. The operation required two companies to be on continuous route clearance with pickets and with search teams, helicopters, ATO and medics on call.

Other notable moments included:

- The 2IC and his patrol being blown up by a command wire IED within sight of the base. Luckily the device only partially exploded and there were no serious injuries, although at first it was thought that the RAMC medic, Pte Murdy, had had his head blown off, but it turned out that his flak jacket had been blown over his head by the blast!
- The attack on Foxfield Sangar that was thwarted by the suppressive fire of Cpl Peacock and the rapid deployment of the 5 PI QRF to the border to prevent any PIRA follow-up. A mortar truck aborted its run-in and explosions were seen across the border.
- More intimate matters such as the observation of the 'Three Steps' pub, a well known PIRA meeting spot, as well as watching the regular 'flasher' in the local housing estate, the adopted local dog being put down in the pipe range following an RTA and unreported errors in patrol navigation leading to 'sunshine trips in the south'.

### **C Company at Bessbrook by Mike Ball**

C Coy was based at Bessbrook Mill which was a bit like sharing with 'Big Brother' (Bn HQ). However, early on in the tour, demarcation lines were amicably established of 'what was theirs' and 'what was ours' and after a few altercations the system worked well for the tour. The Coy took over from the Queen's Company, Grenadier Guards whose average height was six foot four – compare this to the five foot eight average height of 'South of England's Finest' and you will understand how difficult joint patrols during the hand over period were – one step of theirs to three of ours – we were very glad to see the back of them.

Our main task was to protect the mill which involved 24 hour patrolling cover around the small town of Bessbrook. However there was an antidote to this mundane task with regular patrols to the border near Newry and Warrenpoint – sadly to be the scene of a major and tragic incident some six weeks after the Battalion left the Province..

Some five weeks into the tour, the main Belfast/Newry railway line was targeted by the PIRA by blowing up a bridge and placing a bomb somewhere on the rolling stock. Cordons around the railway carriages were extensive and seemingly endless in time as ATOs cleared the engine and carriages. C Coy was immediately nicknamed the 'Railway Children' and many days and freezing nights were spent protecting the line. This rigorous patrolling seemed not to deter the PIRA as some two weeks later, exactly the same detail was carried out and again a large operation was carried out successfully. Either the extensive patrolling worked or the PIRA got bored, as the trains ran smoothly for the remainder of the tour.

The most tragic event for the Company took place three months into the tour. Coinciding with a visit to the Battalion by the GOC, Lt Gen Tim Creasey, an enormous 1,000 pound bomb exploded on the main Bessbrook road, killing four Land Rover-borne RUC constables. The entire company deployed to assist the RUC whilst Bn HQ and admin staff were tasked to don flak jackets and take over mill protection duties.

One of the more enjoyable tasks was the Eagle VCP, conducted by a 4 man brick using a Scout helicopter to chase suspect cars and quickly set up VCPs in their path. The Company prided themselves on their expertise until one nameless soldier poked his LMG barrel through the perspex roof of the helicopter and dislodged a half-crown sized piece of plastic which



Have Gun will Travel



Protecting the Railway





was ingested into the air intake of the Scout, thus writing off a perfectly serviceable helicopter. End of Eagle VCPs for C Coy!

The last few weeks passed off peacefully. The Coy had however to be measured for No 2 Dress as shortly after the Bn returned to the mainland, it was to provide the Guard of Honour at Dover Castle for the installation of HM Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother as Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, a tribute to the flexibility of the British soldier!

## **D (Support) Company at Newtonhamilton by John Harcus**

Support Company was re-named D Coy for the South Armagh tour with the Mortar and Anti-Tank Platoons organised as rifle platoons supplemented by an Intelligence Section. We were commanded by Maj Graham Brown (now sadly deceased) who had the dubious pleasure of being accommodated in the RUC station part of the base which threatened to be the most likely PIRA target. From my hazy memory, Colin Garton, a great soldier and personality, was our CSM while Lt Raines and CSgt Wilson were the platoon commanders. I was the Company Ops Officer.

On arrival at Newtonhamilton, I believe there was a shared feeling that D Coy had been dealt the least exciting TAOR and that the western end of the Bn's TAOR was considerably less sexy than being based at Crossmaglen or Forkhill. Both of these had an extremely violent recent past and were largely responsible for South Armagh's reputation as 'Bandit Country'. We soon found that our position in the West of the TAOR was equally challenging and that the threat from the West towards County Tyrone, especially the small town of Keady, was also extremely potent. Keady was home to the infamous paramilitary Dessie O'Hare, at that time PIRA's most wanted man, and the latter end of the manhunt for him coincided with our tour.

The vast majority of our tour was spent on helicopter-inserted patrols across our TAOR and local security patrols to protect our base. We also undertook cordon & search and IED clearance operations. Newtonhamilton at the time was more of a village than a town, with rundown buildings and a quiet, almost eerie atmosphere. I was struck by how primitive the structure of the base was, even by the standards of the time. Clearly the protective measures at the base had been added to bit by bit and hence it mainly consisted of fragile prefabricated buildings around cramped walkways and step ways protected from mortar attack by chicken wire supported by wooden frames. Electrical wiring was in abundance, as more was added but the older systems left in place.



WO2 CSM Colin Garton

On 19 March at about 2pm, just over two weeks into our 4-month tour, PIRA drove a HINO truck mounted with Mk10 mortars into a carefully hidden position about 100m from the base and detonated them. Although primitive, the mortar bombs were surprisingly accurate, the first hitting the RUC station at the furthest end of the base and the others ripping through the base causing devastation. Tragically, Pte Peter Woolmore, who was in the washroom at the time, was mortally wounded. There were eight injured, including four members of the Coy, two RUC Officers and two civilian workers in the base. The hours following the attack are never to be forgotten and inevitably involved a rapid wave of external support agencies as well as quick reaction forces from within the Battalion. I remember well that our close proximity to Bde HQ in Armagh resulted in the Bde Comd arriving even before our own CO. Both were incredibly supportive, appreciating the essential need for immediate and firm direction to resume operations, deal with casualties and restore basic needs within the base. Dust was everywhere and this continued for several days while the process of restoring some degree of comfort and repairing the base took the remainder of the tour to achieve. There was also the importance of regaining confidence in our local security. I was aware of a natural reaction in the Coy in the days after the attack that most of our number preferred to be on patrol rather than inside the base. However, time, and Graham Brown's success in re-focusing the Coy on operations, helped to restore normality. There was always plenty to do, including giving support to the local community. I remember on one occasion even having to arrange the rescue of a herd of submerging cows by helicopter under-slung load!



Newtonhamilton Base after the Mortar Attack

Fortunately, the rest of D Coy's tour passed without further serious incident or injury, achieved I believe by domination of our TAOR through relentless and long hours of patrolling. Of course we were keen to return to Dover but, having seen paramilitary action at close quarters, we had gained considerable experience as soldiers and had certainly matured as individuals.

### Postscript by Peter Monypenny

I have two abiding personal memories of our South Armagh tour and one of the aftermath. One is, while the CO was away on R & R, when I was obliged to spend most of a night in a small office in conference with the Bde Comd, Brig David Thorne, and the Chief Constable of Northern Ireland as a consequence of the incident on the border Concession Road, when two RUC officers, one a superintendent, ignoring

the advice of the Company Commander and an ATO, walked into a remote-controlled roadside IED and lost their lives. The other, a fond memory, is of the day of the Bn's departure from Northern Ireland which coincided with my 40th birthday and led to a great party on board the Landing Ship Logistic (LSL) taking us to Liverpool. Finally, I vividly remember the moving service of Remembrance that was held in the church at Dover Castle for Pte Peter Woolmore.

# OMAGH

## NOVEMBER 1982 TO JANUARY 1985

By Peter Swanson

After half a dozen tours in Londonderry and Belfast, we had a change of scene. From November 1982 to January 1985 1 QUEENS carried out its first residential tour in Northern Ireland (NI) and their first as a predominantly 'rural' battalion. We were also to be the first Infantry unit to be based in Lisanelly Barracks, Omagh, this having previously been the Royal Armoured Corps' only permanent base in NI, a legacy of the pre-Troubles days.

C Coy was first in, and for 5 months on a monthly rotation, the companies looked after the West Tyrone TAOR inherited from our predecessors with its centre of activity in the town of Carrickmore, a key area of the 1956 campaign. Many major PIRA members lived within the TAOR but their focus of operations tended to be more towards East Tyrone and away from their own doorsteps! More intensified patrolling than our predecessors helped to keep this area relatively quiet, although the IRA did mortar the RUC station during the battalion's time there, thankfully causing no casualties. For a year the battalion also had a platoon in Strabane, which witnessed the Battalion's first contact with the Mortar Platoon being mortared, mercifully off-line! - see last year's Journal! By February 1983, the Battalion assumed its long term

responsibility for South-East Fermanagh – and it was decided that our '2 year tour' would start from then!

After cutting our teeth in mid-Tyrone, the Battalion settled down to a routine of one company on operations in the mixed area of South-East Fermanagh, with Coy HQ in Lisnaskea; one company on Guards and Duties in Omagh, also providing the Quick Reaction Force (QRF) and Strabane platoon; one on reserve tasks/training based from Omagh; and the fourth company on post-operations leave and other activities which could be out of Province. Battalion Main remained based in Omagh but an intelligence and logistics group supported the Lisnaskea operations company. Int, comprising of the main cell in Omagh under the auspices of the IO, Alasdair Goulden and Int WO Jock Patterson, had a full time Int Cell in Lisnaskea under CSgt Howard and two outposts manned very effectively by LCpl Dickie Bird in Rosslea, and LCpl Mac McGregor in Newtonbutler. The remainder of HQ Company sustained us in an excellent manner from Omagh. Rotations were to be at approximate one month intervals but this was varied on occasion so that we did not become too predictable. And, whilst they couldn't tell us what they were doing, we knew the Close Observation Platoon was working





extremely hard doing critical tasks across our Brigade area.

Operations were, of course, our focus. Principal tasks were to dominate the area as best we could, prevent the

movement of weapons, explosives and wanted personnel, gather information, carry out search operations, and provide reassurance to the local population, including the many police and Ulster Defence Regiment (UDR) soldiers who lived within the TAOR. One of our key responsibilities was the operation of seven Permanent Vehicle Checkpoints (PVCs) which interdicted all the open cross border road routes within our TAOR. Whilst this was a good way to monitor cross border traffic and people and inhibit illicit activity it swallowed up most of the manpower available to one company. Fortunately, our camp was guarded by a company of 4th Bn Ulster Defence Regiment (4 UDR) which was under Tactical Command and provided additional patrol support, mainly at night and weekends. We also had oversight of one of the companies of 6 UDR on our northern border although this company worked fairly autonomously.

There had been many incidents in the area in the past, ranging from IEDs on major routes (the most notorious being the Dash, so called because it was straight and long and one dashed down it as fast as one could with the hope that the timing of the detonation of any CWIED would be difficult to judge!) to mortaring of PVCs and assassination of off-duty police and UDR. So all movement had to be on foot, by helicopter, or civilianised vehicle – they were certainly not covert as, given the location of our base and the lack of civilian vehicles which would genuinely blend into the local community, we were easily 'dicked' on entering and leaving base. Our company cars seemed to be the only Vauxhall Cavaliers driving around South-East Fermanagh (on one occasion the IO being provided with a purple version which he disguised by putting in hay bales, much to the irritation of Vic Ebbens, the MTO!) and the vans were not much better! Our only defence was to be as unpredictable as possible in respect of timings and routes, and to practise deception.

The troops performed fantastically given the monotony of the task in the PVCs where they were on 50/50 shifts, and great responsibility was placed on our NCOs, who responded so well. Periods spent on patrols were welcome even if they were definitely not as dry as the PVCs! With our limited deployment capacity, we did our best to carry out unpredictable activity within the TAOR to keep the opposition off balance. In addition to maintaining a high profile, there was a constant need for these patrols to clear

routes, both to help the RUC operate safely and protect our own movement. Search would be on the task list of almost every patrol, sometimes based on information, sometimes speculative. PVCs would aim to inhibit any illicit movement of material within the TAOR and gather information on the population and who associated with whom.

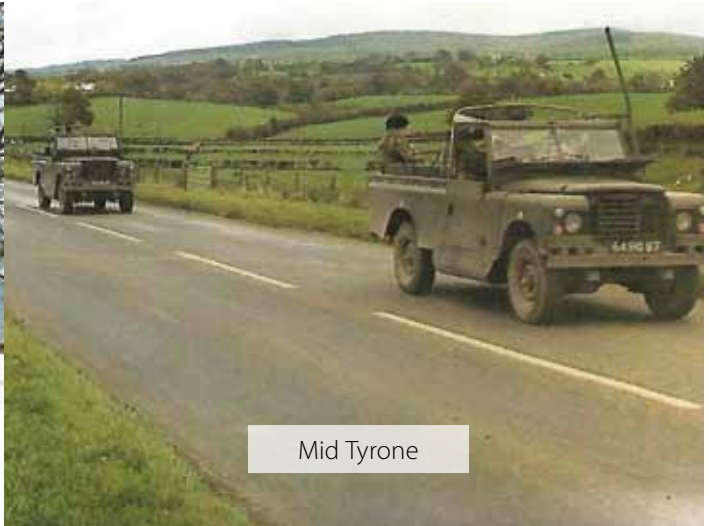
Unpredictability was essential and I think my company will recall '*Leapfrog ops*'! Often we had to provide cordons for suspected IED clearances or border barrier improvements, but invariably received support from the reserve company for this. Whilst we seldom saw the direct dividend, the collation of all information gathered by the PVCs and patrolling contributed to the 'bigger picture' which could ultimately be turned into intelligence, the heart of all counter-terrorist activity. On occasion we would surge with support from the Omagh-based reserve company. I recall the CO, Lt Col Paddy Panton, on one occasion briefing me about such an operation with graphics drawn in the dust on his car, only for him to depart with the deployment plan still on his bonnet!

Whilst major incidents for all companies were relatively few, when spread across the two-year period, all had periods of excitement, including finds of weapons and ammunition, reaction to bombs and finds of actual or hoax IEDs, assassination attempts and punch-ups at PVCs. I well recall one day when we were dealing with the aftermath of an IED near Ballygawly. This had swallowed up manpower as always. An assassination then occurred of an off-duty UDR SNCO in the 6 UDR company area and, whilst we were reacting to that, a police car was shot up near our base in Lisnaskea, fortunately without casualty. This and the aftermath was probably our most challenging time during the tour, and thank goodness for both RAF and AAC helicopter support – one always hoped for the latter if the weather was bad, as you knew they would still come for you!

Back in Omagh, the reserve company had relatively little time for training as deployments were frequent, almost permanently in support of 6 UDR in the Castlederg salient and often to the Lisnaskea ops company. Sometimes these involved the complete company. LCpl Smythe on deployment on the border near Castlederg almost became my company's only casualty for the tour when an IED exploded literally a metre from him, knocking him over, but the boggy ground channelled the explosive vertically and saved him from further harm. The Battalion's only major casualties were the sad result of an off-duty incident when two of our attached ACC cooks were blown up in their car outside the Royal Arms Hotel, Pte Biddle tragically dying and LCpl Parker severely injured. But on



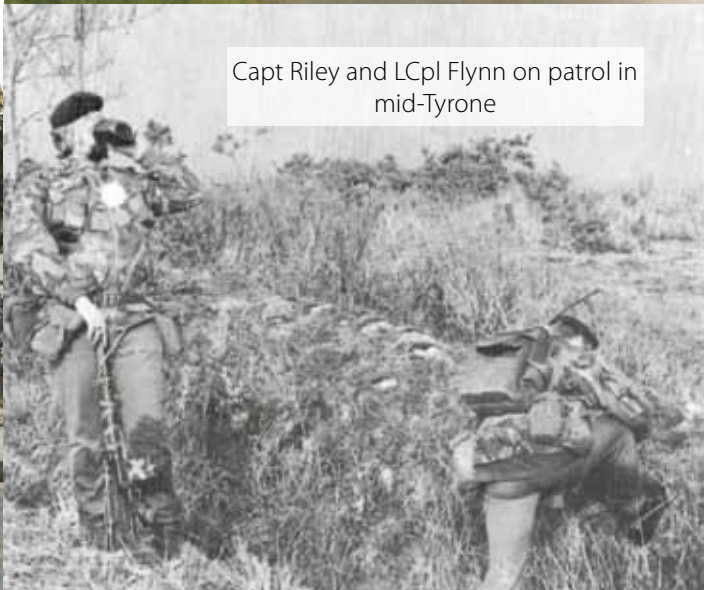
Rural Patrol



Mid Tyrone



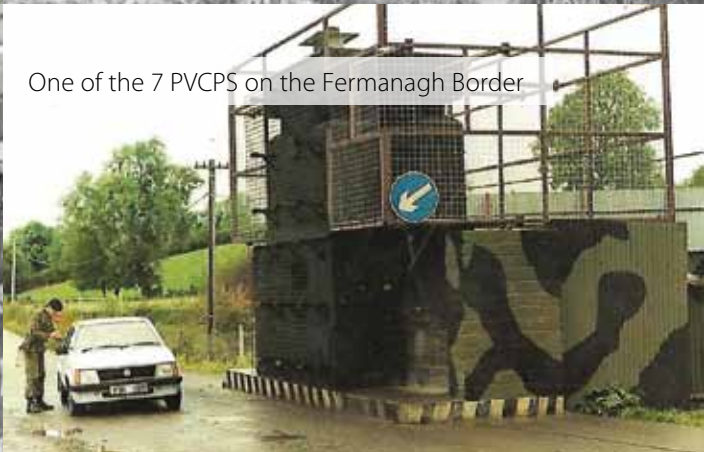
Omagh



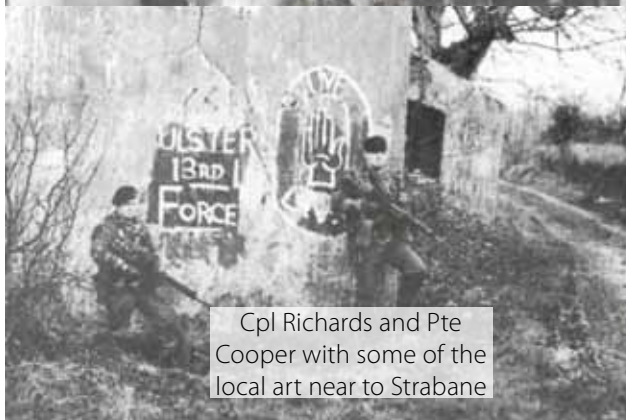
Capt Riley and LCpl Flynn on patrol in mid-Tyrone



LCpl Locke and Ptes Plunkett and Humphries declare Lucky Bridge PVCP a nuclear free zone



One of the 7 PVCPS on the Fermanagh Border



Cpl Richards and Pte Cooper with some of the local art near to Strabane



The Rosslea Arms got a better class of customer for a change - Samantha Fox, Miss 1 QUEENS





a resident tour, life had to go on and, although there were strict rules, the troops continued to be permitted to go into the town off duty albeit via 'The Awareness

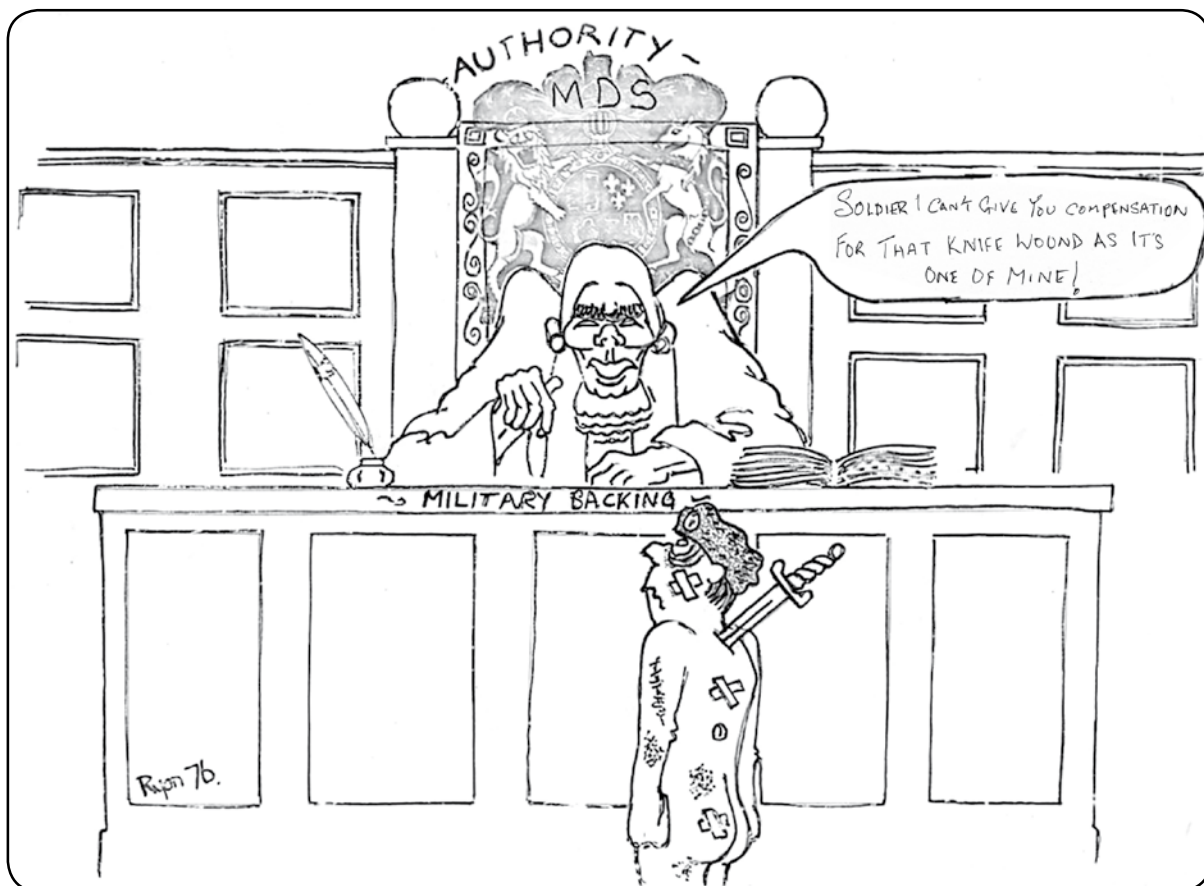
Room' each time they went out – a practice soon adopted almost Province-wide.

Recreational activities were pursued, including mess functions, and everyone looked forward to the post-deployment company parties before leave. Life had to be made as bearable as possible for the wives too, almost all of whom loyally followed their husbands to Omagh, many with children. A very successful families' day was held with Samantha Fox, Miss 1 QUEENS, being in attendance – with all her clothes on much to the disappointment of many! Events were organised in camp for the families and there were day trips, even including some to the Irish Republic, which meant passing through our own PVCs!

The taking over of the cavalry stables run by the wives with a motley selection of nags helped and the Officers' Mess shoot, run on one of the local estates, provided many

with excellent exercise and game for the pot. Families and indeed off-duty personnel had to get used to personal security aspects such as always checking cars before driving off. Considering the time their menfolk spent away, the wives bore up magnificently and supported their men during this very busy tour.

We tried to maintain general training standards as best we could and even managed to run the annual inter-company Kirkes Competition, albeit in adapted format, my company having the satisfaction of keeping it throughout the tour! The tour was most certainly hard work and nights away from home were as high as 70% in some cases. Post ops leave/other activity month was always highly prized and, in addition to leave, we managed adventure training camps, sometimes taking families in tow, and a bit of conventional training. The accolades for the tour must go first to our wives and families for their support throughout long periods of separation while they were stuck behind the wire and of course our soldiers who with good humour reacted in a highly professional way throughout and thus maintained and enhanced the high reputation of the Battalion.



*Ed: And doesn't this censored cartoon of Paddy Ryan's sum it all up?  
See book reviews for details of how to buy 'The Complete Paddy Ryan'.*

# SERVICE WITH THE ULSTER DEFENCE REGIMENT 1970-1992

By Mike Jelf



'The Troubles' were our operational experience. DSOs, MCs, MIDs and more were won there, careers were made and broken. The Queen's Regiment's life was just 26 years, but it is very easy to forget that a number of our officers, RSMs and SNCOs also found themselves serving in key posts within The Ulster Defence Regiment (UDR), and Royal Irish (Home Service), as it became, for over 22 of those years, coming to love, respect and occasionally dislike those in a very different regiment than our own.

It is important to recognise the efforts of those members of the Regiment who served alongside these troops who were raised locally in Ulster, and immediately expected to take up operational roles across the Province in support of the British Army and the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) after the disbandment of the Ulster Special Constabulary (USC) or 'B Specials', a deeply unpopular and heavily Protestant para-military branch of the RUC. The

UDR remained committed to its operational role for the full 22 years of their existence. Today, already 24 years on from its merger with the Royal Irish Rangers, the UDR is rapidly passing into history and soon the sacrifice and role that the Regiment played during 'The Troubles' may no longer be fully appreciated.

Members of our 1st and 2nd Battalions witnessed the extent and level of unrest on the streets of Londonderry and then Belfast in August 1969 that threatened to overwhelm the RUC and led to the deployment in mid-August of Regular Army battalions to assist them. By Christmas 1969, the Hunt Report had recommended the disbandment of the USC and its replacement by a locally-recruited part-time force called The Ulster Defence Regiment.

Initially the Regiment had seven battalions, with four additional battalions being added in 1972 making the UDR a strong presence (9,200 strong - 50,000 served over its lifespan) right across the Province, particularly in the countryside. 'It is a strange fact that, in such a small country, different areas of Northern Ireland have different characteristics as varied as the countryside that shapes them. This, coupled with the manner in which battalions were raised in the first place – those mainly USC and those who spread their net more widely – meant that throughout the life of the UDR, each battalion had its own distinctive character<sup>1</sup>, style and opinions. As local people, they knew their way round, knew the people, knew the potential trouble makers, knew the warning signs and had a loyalty to the Province that the 'blow-in' battalions on emergency tours could never be expected to achieve. The *roulement* battalions' contribution was more centred upon the main urban areas, as we all remember.

Despite early recruiting difficulties and lack of equipment, the UDR was 'called out' for periods of full-time service to meet operational requirements, including Op MOTORMAN in 1972, and gradually increased its operational efficiency from the earliest days, when patrols sometimes deployed in private cars and communications often centred on local telephone kiosks, to the point where it was able to assume tactical responsibility for 85 per cent of Northern Ireland as the first line of support for the RUC. As a result, the number of Permanent Cadre soldiers also increased and by 1980 they were in the majority. The Regiment was almost twenty years ahead of the rest of the Army with the introduction of female soldiers (nicknamed 'Greenfinches') on patrols in 1973, initially to search females, but



UDR on an early patrol





going on to play a fully integrated part in the Regiment's continuous operational role and form some 10% of a battalion's establishment.

However, in the early days it was soon recognised that the UDR needed an influx of experienced officers, warrant officers and SNCOs to provide direction and Regular Army operational, administrative and training experience – effectively to increase credibility and greater experience of the Army generally. And so, gradually from early 1971, the Regular Army complement in battalions rose to include Commanding Officers, Intelligence and Security Officers (or TISOs) – later Second-in-Commands, Training, Quartermasters, RSMs and Training/Intelligence SNCOs, an invaluable nucleus of comparatively young commanders and trainers with experience of the Regular Army, that had useful contacts, worked the system to obtain



Greenfinches 7 UDR training Oct 1980

kit and training support, and fostered the essential links with Brigade and HQ UDR staff, many of whom they knew personally. HQ UDR mirrored the battalions, with its commander and key staff posts filled by regular officers, and was enormously supportive. It was principally to 5, 10 and then 7/10 UDR that The Queen's Regiment posted its officers, warrant officers and SNCOs.

I am sure that all of us who were fortunate to serve alongside the UDR officers and soldiers had to throw out the many pre-

conceived ideas of the UDR that we all arrived with. We were the 'new-boys', with bright ideas, new enthusiasm, and an injection of pace derived from our own Northern Ireland tours and wider military experience, the next one in a long line of two year tour 'blow-ins'. Such seconded service from the Regular Army could have been compared to colonial service had it not been carried out within the United Kingdom. It was very different from that to which we were used. We had to learn fast, often without much in the way of initial briefing; we needed to be tactful, understanding, constructive and learn to live with the unexpected ways of the UDR. Above all, we had quickly to show a level of 'commitment to our new Regiment and Northern Ireland whole-heartedly and unsparingly, without concern for future careers. Even if our appointments were viewed with some apprehension, our new battalions soon won us over' <sup>2</sup>.

The UDR had seen it all before, certainly in the latter years but how warm and welcoming they all remained, how patient in explaining that *"we've tried that"*, *"not a good idea around here"*, or *"the part-timer must be able to go to work, Colonel"*, all done with a kindness and good humour that may not have been expected. Frankly they were a joy to serve with.

Did any of us realise the pressures that existed on the UDR soldiers before we arrived? The day-to-day enormous personal risk, the fears of leaving your front door, keeping a personal weapon at home, avoiding mentioning your job to friends and neighbours, being recognised in uniform – pressures I suspect that were far greater off-duty than in the security of one's fellow soldiers out on patrol. Sadly, there was a much higher than average incidence of suicide in the UDR, as in the RUC, due in part to the close proximity of the Personal Protection Weapon (PPW), but mainly due to the stress soldiers were constantly under. It was no good just leaving the UDR either; 60 men were killed after they had left the Regiment, over and above the 197 serving soldiers who died in service, the majority of whom were killed whilst off-duty. The bravery of the very few Roman Catholic soldiers was especially impressive as they continued to be targeted throughout the life of the Regiment.

For some, their ingrained political and cultural bias meant that they tarnished the reputation of the UDR and detracted from the overall record. The media regularly splashing accusing UDR headlines across its newspapers never helped, but exacerbated the difficulties and misinformed the public and wider Regular Army alike about what was truly commendable about the Regiment. There is no doubt that such a regiment as the UDR was required in the Province, but the title was wrong from the start. It should be remembered that it was not the soldiers of the Regiment that chose it, it was politically driven and

11 UDR assist ATO  
Lurgan May 1990



Mahon Rd Attack  
Mar 1990

'had a lasting and telling effect in the minds of Nationalist MPs and the Catholic community, the first seeds of distrust about the new regiment before it had even begun'<sup>3</sup>.

Work hard they certainly did with the Part-Time companies delivering night after night on ops or training and at weekends, rarely short of manpower as all had no wish to let anyone down. This left the Permanent Cadre to conduct the larger operations and be deployed to other battalion TAORs as required.

But play hard they could also do and the 'plastic pub' within the camp served as a great place for a party to let the hair down whilst the string of Christmas parties was typical of the warmth, generosity and good humour that we have come to know in the Irish whether from Eire or Ulster. Humour abounded, but then how else did they cope with the pressures of being in the UDR except by laughing at themselves and masking reality with black humour?

One could go on forever but I hope the above reflects the flavour of a very different lifestyle. The two years were an unforgettable experience for all of us, including our families - rewarding and frustrating in equal measure; energising and





exhausting, and certainly very different. Above all, for Regulars it was not like returning to your own regiment; we had the challenge of getting to know a completely new and very different set of individuals whose loyalty to the Regular element continued well after our tours.

I doubt there are many who did not thoroughly enjoy the experience of service alongside The Ulster Defence Regiment CGC<sup>4</sup>. What we should be proud of, looking back, is the significant contribution that our regiment, in providing COs, 2ICs/TISOs, QMs, RSMs and Trg CSgts, made to the military capability and knowledge that the UDR developed over the years enabling it to merge confidently to form the Royal Irish Regiment (Home Service). We provided an operational and training hand on the tiller; the UDR quite simply enriched our experience of Ulster and its people.

**Acknowledgement:** I am most grateful to Raymond Low, Tony Ward, John Russell, John Acworth and Peter Baillie (RHQ Royal Irish Aftercare Service) for their assistance in the production of this article. Also to John Potter for his book *Testimony to Courage* that was a most helpful source of information.

<sup>1</sup> From *A Testimony to Courage* by John Potter, which tells, for the first time, the story of the UDR's life. First published in 2001

<sup>2</sup> From *A Testimony to Courage* by John Potter

<sup>3</sup> From *A Testimony to Courage* by John Potter

<sup>4</sup> On the 6th October 2006 prior to the disbandment of the Home Service (formerly UDR) Battalions of The Royal Irish Regiment, Her Majesty The Queen presented The Royal Irish Regiment with the Conspicuous Gallantry Cross - a unique honour within the British Army to ensure that:-

### **'The extraordinary record of The Ulster Defence Regiment and the Home Service Battalions would always be remembered'**

#### **Commanding Officers' Memories**

*On arrival at Aldergrove, Paul Gray immediately gave me a right bollocking: "Colonel (incidentally, the first time I had been called that!), I told you to come NOT looking like an Army Officer and here you are - tweed suit, Staff College tie and chukka boots!"*

*When a senior Republican by the name of Gerry Adams was wounded in an assassination attempt by three members of the Ulster Freedom Fighters (UFF) it was an off-duty full-time corporal of 10 UDR who gave chase in his car and arrested them, assisted by an off-duty policeman. He received the QGM for arresting the gunmen. In the long term however, the soldier was intimidated out of his home and the UDR as a direct result of these arrests.*

**Tony Ward – CO 10 UDR**

*Early in my tour, I popped into the Mess that was close to my office one lunchtime where one of the Mess Staff was tidying up the bar. After a short while chatting, I got the message that perhaps there was a little concern in the Battalion that I was Roman Catholic! "Wherever did you get that from?" I asked, somewhat surprised. "Well Sir, your religion is not on your personal documents and we assumed that you didn't want us to know," came the reply, sensing an error. "I think it best if we just left it that way, don't you think?" I quickly interrupted. "My religious background should be of no concern to anyone". I heard no more.*

**Mike Jelf – CO 11 UDR**

*I was told on first joining by Commander UDR that some major problem would be a definite at some point of my command - so keep a little bit of energy to one side. Sure enough I lost all the weapons in my armscote at Coleraine to an inside job! On the day this occurred, I received a call from CO 8 UDR saying that he and the other COs had decided to form a UDR COs' Fuck-up Club and would I give the inaugural speech?!*

**Raymond Low – CO 5 UDR**

*There was the laconic Part-Timer in a Belfast battalion sangar who was visited by dignitaries so frequently that, on opening his trap-door to another visiting General is alleged to have said: "Don't bother climbing up, Sir. Plumber, Wife plus two at school, In 13 years, Still a Private, Barry Budden next year, Need more bounty, Loving it", before slamming shut the door. Exit red-faced CO who realised that his many rehearsals had led to the guys answering before being obviously questioned first by the great and the good.*

**Anon**

Service by Members of the Regiment in the UDR and R IRISH (HS)

Name & Rank at Time of Service	Appointment & Unit	Approximate Date
Maj JDK Russell	COS HQ UDR	1990
Lt Col RMM Low	CO 5 UDR	1986
Maj J C Acworth	7/10 UDR	1986
Maj PP Critchley	5 UDR	1986
Lt Col AMF Jelf	CO 11 UDR	1989
Maj RAM Christmas	7/10 UDR	1990
Lt Col RW Acworth	CO 10 UDR	1982
Lt Col AC Ward	CO 10 UDR	1980
Lt Col Trotman	CO 10 UDR	1978
Lt Col RH Chappell	CO 11 UDR	1972
Maj W Snowden	QM 2 UDR	1976
WO2 JA Frost	5 UDR	1982
WO1 WR Munday	RSM 10 UDR	1983
WO2 I Lawrence	10 UDR	1983
WO2 D Tonks	10 UDR	1983
WO1 JE Tombling	RSM 5 UDR	1982
CSgt M Anderson	10 UDR	1983
CSgt P Bradley	10 UDR	1983
CSgt S Manji	10 UDR	1983
CSgt AJ McIvor	7/10 UDR	1987
Lt Col RM Arnold	CO 5 UDR	1984
Maj NCG Cann	5 UDR	1987
WO1 DH Moore	RSM 5 UDR	1978
WO1 DA Sharpe	RSM 9 UDR	1978
WO1 SR Bream	RSM 5 UDR	1985
WO2 DS Bailes	5 UDR	1985
Lt Col HN Tarver	CO 5 UDR	1979
WO1 PJ Anthony	RSM 10 UDR	1982
Maj A B Cowing	5 UDR	1979
Maj PA Gray	Trg Maj 10 UDR	1979
Maj AW Russell	TISO 7/10 UDR	1990
Maj WR Harber OBE	TISO/2IC 5 UDR 5/R IRISH	1991
Maj AM Goulden	2IC 5 R IRISH	1992
Lt Col WR Harber OBE	CO 4 R IRISH	1994
Capt C Gray	Regtl Sec R IRISH	Current

UDR Service

This list is incomplete. Anyone who is missing is asked to contact the Secretary and let him know so that we can complete the record.

DISCONNECTED THOUGHTS  
FROM A COUNTRY CHILDHOOD  
DURING ‘THE TROUBLES’

By Henry McNeill



The Editor met me at an event one evening and discovering that I grew up in Northern Ireland during the Troubles felt that reflections from one of your “customers” would be appropriate to round off this section on the Northern Ireland campaign.

What’s the first impression that comes into your mind when ‘The Troubles’ are mentioned? Deprived areas of Belfast with the flash of sectarian tension and matching petrol bombs? Saracens driving through barricades? The grim fear from all sides visually captured in the recent film 1971? Sorry to disappoint,





but this is not my memory as I grew up on a farm outside Portadown, Co Armagh, the 'Orchard of Ireland'.

I was 10 when 'The Troubles' started in 1969. My teenage

years were among the darkest in Northern Ireland's history, where politics, religion and education appear to dominate the news. The former two may be obvious, but the latter may be more surprising. Educational quality was taken much more seriously than in England and I am a product of high quality schooling. I remember working towards our 'O' and 'A' Levels and we used the English examining board papers, such as AEB and Oxford & Cambridge, just for fun. NI GCEs were for real talent!

But, as schools remained predominately segregated by religion, the division between the two communities easily assisted with a lack of human integration and shared experiences. I worked in the family fruit wholesaling business which gave me frequent opportunity to meet people from the 'other side'. Even though I attended a liberal school, I got the impression that this was not a common occurrence. However, I must admit, I did not conduct a survey of my friends in case it rankled!

In retrospect, we did have some amusing 'trouble-orientated' incidents. I had just popped out through the back-door of our house on the outskirts of Portadown and saw some rustling in the distance. I thought our time was up when someone in camouflage with a rifle approached the house, only to be greeted by an English accent saying there was nothing to be worried about. A new UDR camp had been commissioned and the soldiers were carrying out some searches to make sure all was good. We did get a box of chocolates from the Commanding Officer to quell our shock.

Road-blocks and security checks became an intrinsic part of our culture as I was growing up. Many market-towns just had one big high street, blocked-off at each end with massively unattractive security posts checking vehicles that wanted to gain access. While these were obviously visible, the midnight temporary road-blocks were directly the opposite, where a soldier would stand in the middle of the road with a dim flashlight trying to stop oncoming drivers. How there were not more accidents in this situation remains beyond me.

One evening, driving home from a heavy night out, we were stopped. One of my colleagues said what he thought was an innocuous comment about the

aforesaid flashlight, but was taken the wrong way. It was then I found out the depth of experience the Army had in searching a car. The air in the car tyres was about the only thing unexplored and we were left with a grown-up version of a Meccano set to assemble before going home.

The first time I travelled to London without my parents was at the end of the 1970s. London was a place of freedom. It took us time to stop looking for security guards stationed in the major shops. But, oh joy, the many music concerts available to the music connoisseur! Groups, especially punk rock, had difficulty obtaining the necessary insurance to stage concerts in Belfast. Being able to see the bands one had read about in *New Musical Express* was a heaven that the rest of the world took for granted.

Punk music was a great leveller across both sides of the divide. At last there was a non-denominational thing that everyone could talk about and enjoy. Little punk bands, such as the Undertones, became popular and a growing local music scene, which 'The Troubles' had extinguished other than the populist, 'adult' Showbands. Dear reader, please watch *Good Vibrations*, a film about Terry Hooley, who found the Undertones and kick-started the new wave music scene in NI.

As part of my degree course, I worked for a year in Dublin in 1980. The Irish economy was measured by the price of a pint of Guinness. The economy was in a downturn plus the government was under pressure to raise funds, so I remember this being increased from 69p to £1.01 in just over a year. Also, drugs had taken a major hold in Dublin, much more than Belfast at this time. These led to a high degree of civil crime I had not come across in Belfast. Walking from the main train station in Dublin to O'Connell St was not exactly a pleasurable experience. I remember on one occasion, I was walking with my friend and his mother and I thought she had tripped on the pavement, only quickly to find out her hand-bag had been snatched.

It is wrong to think that everyone wants to leave Northern Ireland. Many people are happy to go through our Universities and develop their successful careers and businesses in the six counties. We have a thriving family run and small business community, with innovation hubs being developed in the impressive Titanic Quarter. Me? I found out at the age of nine on a trip to London with my parents that big city life was for me and it was the huge metropolis that pulled me away and not 'the Troubles' that pushed me.



# BERLIN

## BORDER PATROL BERLIN STYLE

By Paul Edwards

To my great surprise, I had passed the aptitude test for the Army Pilots Course and in August 1979 handed over as 2IC A Coy, 3 QUEENS to front up at Middle Wallop to learn to fly! That is a story in itself but in short, to my even greater surprise, I actually passed off the course on 13 July 1980, proudly sporting a pair of Army Wings!

On the evening of the Wings Parade (a Friday) we partied the night away and after a couple of hours 'shut eye' I started driving to West Berlin where I had to report for duty with 7 Flt AAC on the Monday morning and take over as 2IC of this independent unit. Some 18 hours later, I had made it across the continent, through Checkpoint Alpha, along the East German Road Corridor and into Berlin through Checkpoint Bravo - but only just (another unique story!)



Queensman Lt Paul Edwards and Lt Ian Corner RM

Berlin during the Cold War was often described as the 'spy city of the world' and I quickly understood why. Buried in Soviet East Germany over a hundred miles beyond the Inner German Border (IGB), West Berlin was bounded not just by a wall but by mine fields, dog runs, watchtowers and patrolling guards. The city was divided into four sectors; the Russian Sector comprised the whole of East Berlin and West Berlin was divided up with the French in the north, the British Sector in the centre and the US to the south.

Our task was to patrol the whole 113 miles of wall around West Berlin, gathering intelligence and taking photos from the air from very low level up to 10,000ft, the limit of our 'cone' of airspace. There were certain memorable moments. Occasionally we found it great sport to descend to low level, almost touching the wall and follow one of the many East German motorcycle patrols causing the rider to wobble as he turned around to look while riding along the narrow central strip, and once even,

to fall off. As a minimum, we could easily get the dogs to bark uncontrollably!

Much of the time was spent trying to get useful photos from 1,000ft in the hover and one time we witnessed a successful escape across the wall into West Berlin. It was the only time I called "Contact wait out" during my time there. Choosing his moment, one border guard unslung his rifle and shot his companion, before running



Berlin Sectors



West meets East





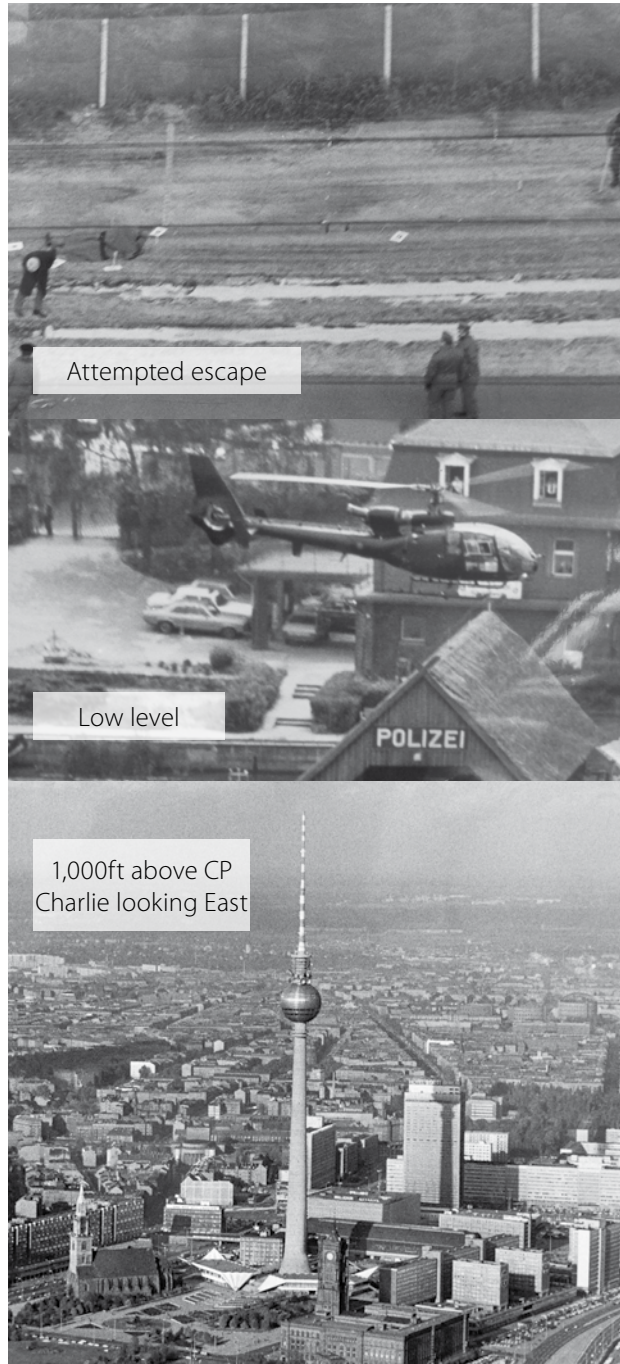
across the remainder of the strip and throwing up a rope with hook to pull himself up and over as a hail of gunfire rained forth from the nearest watch tower. We watched and reported as he fell injured onto the western side, and minutes later the police, whom we directed to the scene, picked him up. East German border guards at that time were under orders to shoot anyone, including their own, who might make a run for it and this rather explains why the first action of this man was to shoot the other guard before running. In the West, he was convicted of

manslaughter and served a year in prison before being released in the West. Many of course were not so lucky, and on another day, we arrived just after a truck had crashed through the first wall but further into the strip, hit a mine, blowing off a wheel. After the combined crossfire of the East German Border Guards, no-one was left alive.

Then there were direct confrontations of sorts. Part of our inventory of intelligence gathering was to climb to 10,000ft, the limit of our airspace, to take high-level photos of Soviet equipment on the other side. The left-hand seat would be removed and my observer would lie with his feet towards the perspex bubble and his head to the rear in order to take photos with a long lens through the message chute located in the rear cabin floor. This technique worked well because at that height, I could bank the helicopter to left or right and get some good shots a long way over the wall. The problem was the lack of a buffer zone. It meant that Soviet aircraft could also fly at that height but no lower, evidenced on one occasion when a pair of Migs decided to do an intercept when I was in the hover at 10,000ft, which is scary enough when looking down between one's feet! They passed a few hundred yards either side as I put the stick forward and dived, wobbling violently through their wake turbulence with my observer throwing up in the message chute.

However, they didn't get it all their own way. Returning to our base at RAF Gatow one afternoon, the control tower warned of a large helicopter in a high hover at the other end of the runway close to the the Wall. The only other helicopters in Berlin were five US Hueys and I had heard nothing over the radio. As I approached the airfield I could make out a Russian HIP at the other end of the runway. Accelerating from 30 to 120 knots, I called '*overshooting the landing spot*' and gave pursuit! He turned and fled so it was 'one all' that week!

Berlin was a unique and wonderful place to fly because when rebuilt after the war, the law required there should be no wires above ground. This meant that for tactical exercises or landings in the city we could fly along the streets, jinking left or



right to avoid large statues and the like. The military government in each sector regarded such practice as necessary and we enjoyed good relations with Berliners. It also meant that photos were possible from almost ground level and there was a point where the "S Bahn" (an underground/overground connection between East & West) went under a bridge and there were often Soviet tanks on the other side. To photograph the scene, we would hover a couple of feet above the line with the rear passenger's head out of the door to look for trains coming from behind us!

Sadly, I only had a year in Berlin before being posted to Detmold from which I conducted some flying patrols of the IGB, which was nowhere near as much fun. Winding forward to 1989 as a staff officer in 22 Armd Bde, I became one of the first to drive a Volvo Estate through a newly created hole in the wall of the Inner German Border not too far from Hohne, conscious that from that time, a week after the fall of the Berlin Wall, that there would be no more border patrols.

*(Ed: Paul Edwards served in both The Queen's Regiment and the Army Air Corps and was appointed MBE)*

## BERLIN

*There was a lot of East/West tension and I did come into contact with and saw a fair bit of the Soviet forces – enough to impress me with their ruthlessness and sturdy, uncomplicated equipment, which looked likely to overwhelm us if it ever came to the crunch. I think the West Berliners were mostly friendly towards the Brits. They despised the French for two reasons: first, because the French were an occupying power of Germany, despite having been defeated by the Germans on the field of battle; secondly, because the French took all that they possibly could from the occupied city. For example, the three French battalions were actually three basic training units. The Americans were highly respected, but not loved. They looked as if they meant business. The Brits tried to steer a middle way! Almost all the little obstructive games played out on the access routes through East Germany were directed at the Americans. The Brits were rarely involved and the French were largely ignored by the Russians.*

Tim Trotman



### A "BERLIN BULLETIN" SUPPLEMENT

## FAREWELL

to

### The First Battalion The Queens Regiment

#### SPECIAL ORDER OF THE DAY

by

**Brigadier P. A. Downward, DSO, DFC**  
**Commanding Berlin Infantry Brigade**



Next week, 1st Battalion The Queen's Regiment leave Berlin Infantry Brigade for Bulford after a tour in Berlin of two years.

I cannot think of a function or activity that has gone on within the Brigade that 1 Queens have not taken part in. They have thrown themselves into everything with infectious enthusiasm and cheerfulness, and no task has ever been too great for them to undertake.

Their name on the sports field has been one to be reckoned with not only in Berlin, but also in BAOR and Army Championships. They proved themselves fit and tough opponents in the various Brigade football leagues and knockouts, particularly in the last season when they managed to win most of the Berlin soccer events. They gave a good account of themselves in the Boxing by winning the 1972 Berlin Inter Battalion Boxing competition, and getting two boxers through to become Army Featherweight Champion and BAOR Bantamweight Champion respectively. As a sign of their versatility, they have shown themselves equally adept on the water by becoming the 1971 Army Canoe Team Champions, and as a parting shot, won the Inter Battalion Sailing Trophy only a few days ago.

All who have known 1 Queens cannot fail to conjure up a picture of their smartly turned out soldiers and their immaculate Band and Drums (not forgetting their famous steel band) who have appeared at so many military and social functions during their time in Berlin, culminating in the Queen's Birthday Parade of 1972 when the Regiment 'trooped' its colour in front of Her Royal Highness Princess Margaret. This was a proud moment for us all.

The Regiment has made many friends amongst Germans and Allied Forces alike, and their 'freundschaft' with their Berlin neighbours and affiliated Bezirk will long be remembered after the conclusion of their very successful tour in Kladow.

The Battalion goes to Northern Ireland later this year and will, I know, take this as much in their stride as they have their posting here in Berlin.

I wish to thank 1 Queens for the tremendous help they have given to Berlin Infantry Brigade and, on behalf of all ranks in the Brigade, I wish every Queensman and 1 Queen's family the best of good fortune.





# CYPRUS

## UNITED NATIONS IN CYPRUS 1982

### A COMPANY COMMANDER'S PERSPECTIVE

By Peter Cook

#### *Kalimera!*

B Coy 2 QUEENS deployed to Dhekelia in Cyprus in late 1981, initially for three months as part of the Eastern Sovereign Base Area (ESBA) infantry battalion (though with only two companies). Then in early 1982, we 'rouled/moved' to our United Nations Peace Keeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) home for the next 3 months. For us the Box factory (a disused fruit packing installation) and a number of platoon and section bases along with A Coy formed the BRITCON element of the UNFICYP Green Line. We were tasked with keeping Greek and Turkish Cypriots apart, a role the UN had undertaken since the 'invasion/intervention' by Turkish forces in 1974, and still undertakes today.

The Company tasks were to preserve the status quo by preventing any incursions into the DMZ and to provide hearts and minds support, particularly to the Greek Cypriots who farmed the area. These tasks were undertaken by constantly manning a series of OPs and by foot and vehicle patrols. The work could become monotonous, though we were blessed by not being deployed during the heat of summer. Everyone was encouraged to engage in adventurous training activities, mainly in ESBA, and to participate in the battalion R&R scheme, which by an almost voluntary early saving scheme allowed many to visit nearby eastern Mediterranean countries. We also all got very fit, possibly at my instigation!

My relations with both the Turkish Army and the Greek Cypriot military were cordial and fairly straightforward as long as we got the protocols right (they had been at it for 7 years). I particularly enjoyed discussions with my Turkish counterpart, a very professional officer supported by some excellent NCOs, though blessed with some fairly disinterested conscript soldiers keen to be back home in mainland Turkey. We of course were offered proper Turkish Delight rather than the version sold in the south of the island.



Cyprus Mounted patrol

Turkish discipline could be extreme. On one occasion one of our OPs noted that the Turk in the adjacent OP had fallen asleep at his post. He was discovered by a visiting Turkish officer, pistol whipped and carried down unconscious to a jeep, thrown in the back and driven away. Or at least we hope that he was just unconscious.

Our international neighbours to the west were DANCON, which provided very useful opportunities for sporting and social events with

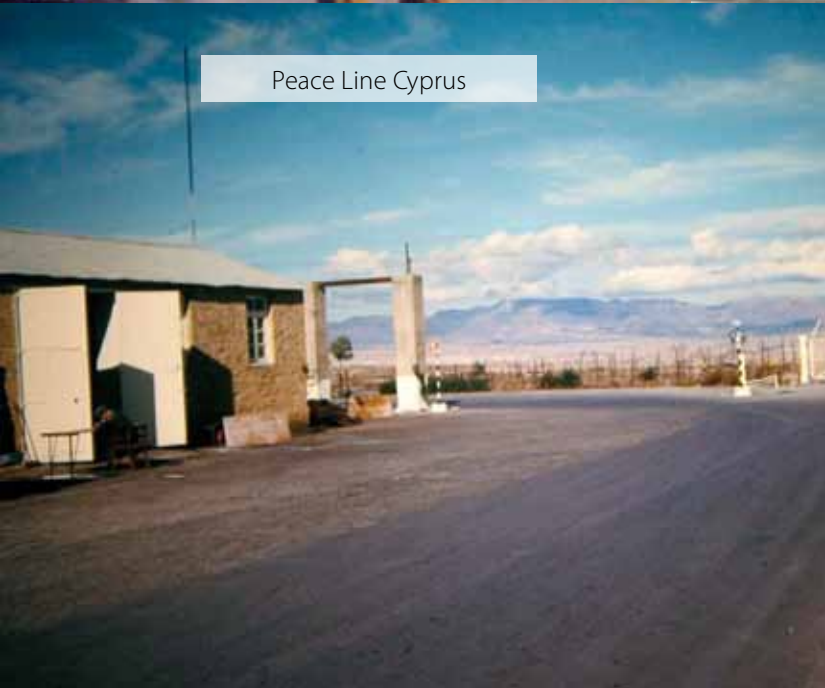
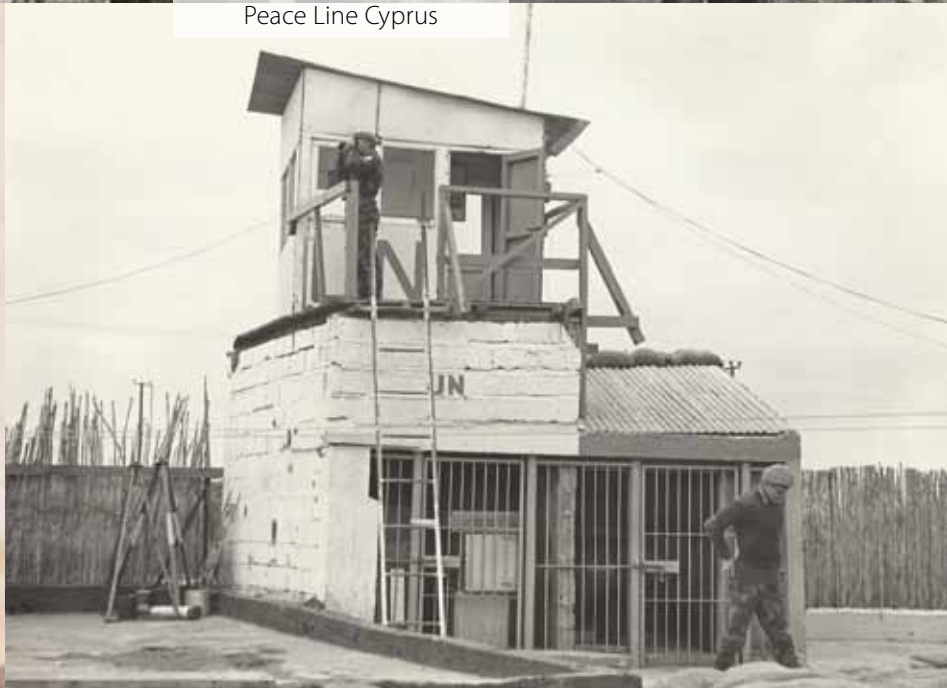




Peace Line Cyprus



Steve Bailey 2 Queen's



Peace Line Cyprus



L-R Top: Pte Shevrell, Pte Wilson, Capt Harcus, Pte White, NK  
Bottom: Pte Farm, Pte Cole, Pte Stone, Pte Jones





them using HM The Queen of Denmark, our Colonel-in-Chief, as the excuse. Like other UN Scandinavian contingents, they employed 'professional' UNFICYP volunteers who spent years in the same OP with brief visits home and therefore made their military OP locations into highly domesticated homes, something of a shock when first encountered. Once discovering how much they got paid, it had a degree of logic.



Pte Cole

The Danes organised a gruelling 6-monthly march, so it was possible to be awarded not only the UNFICYP medal but also the DANCON march medal, which a number of the Company achieved.

During our tour, the Falkland Islands were invaded. As the head of UNFICYP was an Argentinian, this made for some delicate avoidance tactics. We felt that we were perfectly placed to become part of the Task Force to be deployed by Margaret Thatcher to recapture the islands. We were already free of domestic ties, very fit and very well integrated as a unit. However, sadly (from our perspective) the powers that be removed public duties battalions to participate in that great amphibious operation. 2 QUEENS was to find itself in the Falkland Islands three years later as the garrison battalion.

The company's TAOR included a location manned by Lt Derek Phipps' platoon, which, because of its very high water tower OP, gave an excellent view over the demilitarized zone. As a result, it was a magnet for VIP visitors of all nations to visit. The format was straightforward. The VIP would be briefed by the CO, Lt Col Peter Packham, in the platoon ops room, and I would then escort the VIP up the vertical 40 ft ladder to where a member of the platoon would give him the bird's eye view briefing. We were visited by one very senior British General who after the briefing confided in a whisper to me that he would prefer not to climb the ladder. I explained that with the international body of hangers on present, that would not be very good for UK Ltd and that I would be right behind him to steady him if the worst happened. Very slowly we climbed the rungs, my nose very close to his bottom and eventually we arrived at the top. I paused and counted to 50 to let him clamber on top where he would be welcomed by Private Jones 73 with a crashing salute. When I arrived on top I was surprised to see that the General and Pte Jones had disappeared into the very small "sentry box" in the middle of the very large concrete roof where efforts to brief him coherently were not going well. This was not helped as the bevy of hangers on had now appeared and were blocking any decent line of view for Pte Jones to point out the salient features. Then we had to get him back down (me first). So a possibly boring three months had its moments.



Our tour ended with the awarding of UN medals in a grand parade on the disused Nicosia International Airport. Everything that moved on behalf of the UN was painted white in order to give the parade a bit more presence. Various vehicles paraded with us, including the Ferret scout car troop and the never to be forgotten sludge gobblers – you can work that one out for yourself.

**Gule gule!**



# GIBRALTAR

## GIBRALTAR

By Patrick Crowley

Some time ago, in the 1980s, it was normal for Infantry battalions to be posted to 'sunshine' locations after serving as 2-year resident units in Northern Ireland. The choices were based on Cyprus, Hong Kong, Gibraltar and Berlin (not so sunny!). It was a sort of reward for all the hard work in the Province, though often there were plenty of different types of hard work in the new postings.

And so, 1985 marked the start of a post-Omagh journey for the 1st Battalion to Gibraltar under the effective command of Lt Col Mike Ball. Both the 2nd and 3rd Battalions had spent tours there in recent years. I was one of the few platoon commanders who had completed all of the Omagh tour, and was very recently married, so looked

forward to the posting. We had a flat on Buena Vista and overlooked the Bay of Gibraltar and the coming and going of Royal Navy ships and boats.

At the time, relationships with Spain were not great. However, within a month of arriving, the Spanish reopened the border and we were able to gain some extra freedom as we could drive off the 'Rock' into Spain for the first time for years. Much exploring went on by many in the battalion to places like Ronda and Granada. A must trip was across the water to Tangier – the first posting of the Regiment in the 17th Century!

We were busy, however, in a deterrent and ceremonial role and maintaining excellent relationships with the



Queen's Birthday Parade Quebec Coy Hitchcock Crowley and Bourne





Guard Commander Sgt Jacobs Mortar Platoon



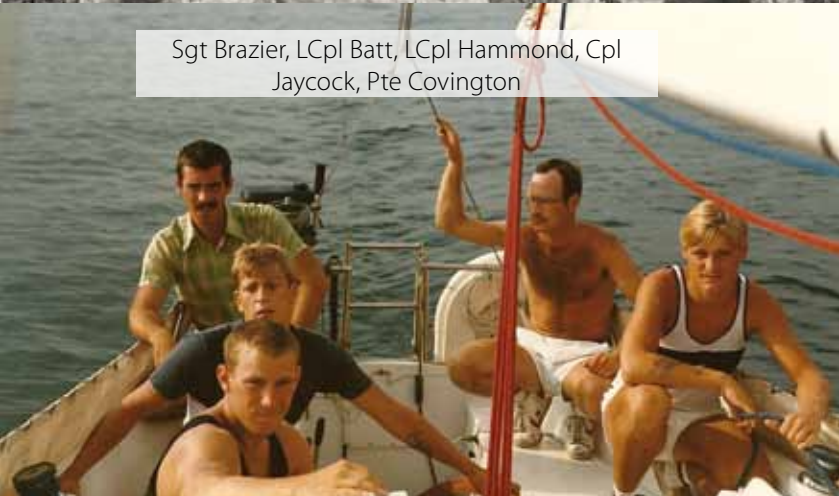
Lt Crowley Ceremony of the Keys



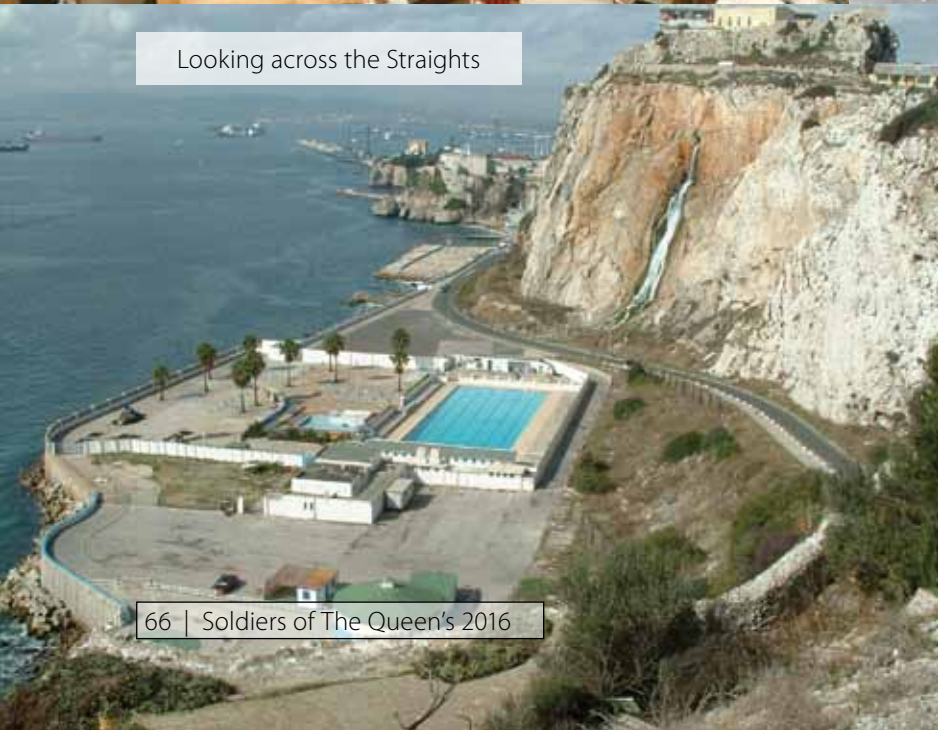
It's a long way to the top



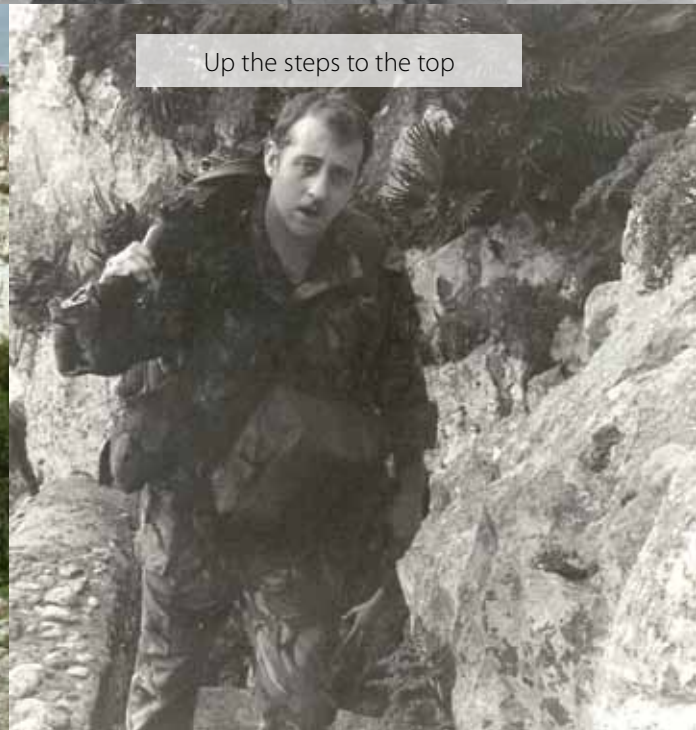
Sgt Brazier, LCpl Batt, LCpl Hammond, Cpl Jaycock, Pte Covington



Looking across the Straits



Up the steps to the top





locals was critical. We were all very much 'on show'. Ceremonially, life rotated around weekly 'Convent Guard Mounting' parades, the Ceremony of the Keys and the annual Queen's Birthday Parade.

The Corps of Drums was magnificent under the great Nigel de Warrenne Waller, who bravely always threw his mace into the air and caught it, with the CO crossing his fingers each time. At one stage he had his Number One Hat pinched out of his room by a Rock Ape! He always sported his magnificent waxed moustache. The Albuhera Band, under WO1 Hills also maintained the highest of standards and, apart from the usual parades, also entertained people in the amazing surroundings of Saint Michael's Cave.

As the Adjutant, Henry Eagan kept a tight grip on the subalterns and, along with the RSM, 'Prof' Boden, maintained incredible fortitude in the face of so many parades and much kit to clean! Most of us had not had to purchase Number 4 Dress before and had a job lot made locally. This was fine until we realised that we were all dressed in a shade of pink!

'Quebec' (Support) Company Commander, 'Rocky' Hitchcock, was a 'natural' in the Gibraltar environment; giving enough direction to us support platoon commanders, excellent at entertaining and even managing to run his own classical music radio programme, locally. Another highlight was his Gibraltar Military Tattoo (The Rocky Horror Show!). WO2 Dobson was his right hand man.

My Mortar Platoon, steered by Sergeants 'Dolly' Walker, then Jacobs, did have the occasional opportunity to live-fire and, in the first year, we had cracking exercises on Salisbury Plain and Otterburn; the platoon went to Portugal with John Powell in the second year. However, the most novel experience was live-firing off the Rock at moving targets on rafts. On one day, there was a mist over

the sea but the Gunners' radar declared that the waters were clear, so we could 'bed-in'. Each barrel launched its first two rounds and whilst they were in the air, rather like in the film *'Airplane'*, the hulk of a massive oil tanker was seen to appear though the mist, within arcs of fire. All fingers were crossed as I watched my future career potentially come to an end! Fortunately, the tanker was not hit, the mist cleared and we could carry on! You do not forget moments like those. As an aside, we also had direct comms to Air Traffic Control so they could tell us when aircraft were coming in and we could check firing.

Adventure Training and watermanship were really important to keep everyone motivated. There were opportunities to sail, rock-climb and windsurf all under the direction of 'cuddly' Ken Hames. Everyone was able to enjoy unique experiences. I remember pot-holing one day, then sailing to Ceuta, the Spanish territory in Morocco, the next. There was also a great skiing trip to the Sierra Nevada with Stephen Thorpe fully kitted in *'Heroes of Telemark'* skis and equipment.

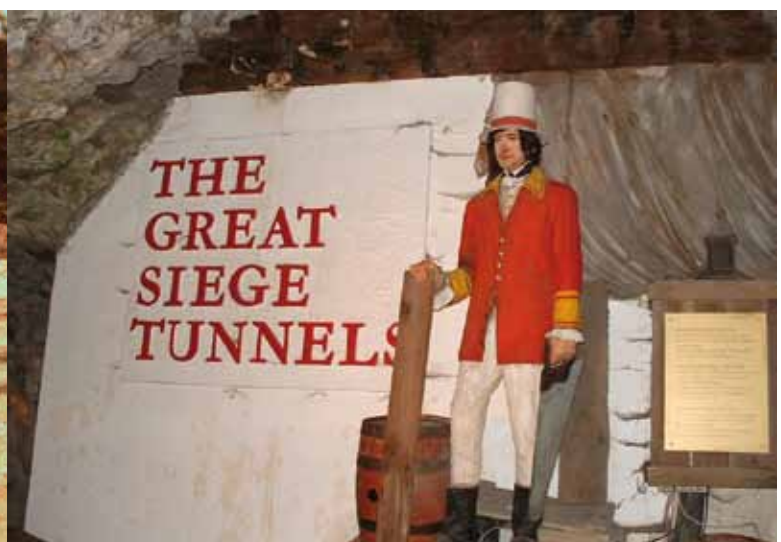
There were unique opportunities to see the Royal Navy, whether in one of their Wardrooms, our Mess or at sea; a great Glorious First of June Summer Ball and a Battalion vs Royal Navy cricket match. Some of us went live-firing in the Mediterranean on board HMS Alacrity and visited USS Mississippi and you could be a good 'spotter' ticking off the various naval vessels as you saw them.

For an historian, the rock was a dream with all of the fortifications and guns. Along with a few others, I became a Gibraltar Tunnel Guide - 34 miles of tunnels were there to explore and it was fun taking both military and tourist groups underground.

So what? A great posting if you took the opportunities available. In between the 'staggering on' and the ceremonial activity, you could have a great time; we did.



Mortar firing off The Brewery Crusher to the East of Gibraltar and the safety systems in place included a direct line to air traffic control







# THE FALKLANDS

## FROM HOT TO COLD... AND BACK AGAIN!

By Mark Rayner

Cyprus is a constant thorn in the side of Army planners. The perception is of two Infantry battalions sitting there enjoying days in the sun and nights in Ayia Napa while the rest of the Army clocks up nights out of bed on ops and training. (By the time 2 PWRR arrived on the island, a very real solution had been found in the form of the Theatre Reserve role for Afghanistan and then the Middle East in general.) The first scheme to get operational value out of the island was to place it on the roster for the Infantry company tour of the Falkland Islands. 3 QUEENS became the guinea pigs for this in the Summer of 1991. The word 'Summer' is a bit ironic in this context as the Mediterranean Summer became the Austral Winter with a temperature dip of getting on for 50 degrees in the course of a chain of flights passing through Brize and Ascension. 'Company' is stretching it a bit too as the total package to go to the Falklands and South Georgia was 210 all ranks: a headquarters and five platoons (including a support platoon of four mortars and four Milan) to Airport Camp and a headquarters and recce platoon to the remotest deployment on earth down in South Georgia. This coincided with the first Gulf War which understandably

absorbed the lion's share of staff attention and logistics on Cyprus and elsewhere.

And so it was that B Coy was selected to form the 'RIC' – a ghastly acronym (on many documents it was explained as 'Resident Infantry Company' – on a four-month tour!) so we insisted throughout our time that we were 'B Company' and forbade the horrible abbreviation. The orbat took up a lot of the fighting strength of the battalion: a good chunk of HQ Coy, two-thirds of the support weapons, and over half of the available rifle company strength. Astonishingly – and to the author's best knowledge – every soldier volunteered (apart from the author) defying one of the most sensible maxims of the Army. I interviewed the lot and got used to the theme: NI was great – lots of soldiering – the beaches and nightclubs here are great – but guarding installations sucks and a bit of soldiering in a far away land, save a few pennies, sounds good for 4 months. There was one exception. Cpl Brown sat in front of me, pale skin and ginger hair, and said: *"Look at me – I walk out of the barrack block in the morning and it hurts"* Fair point.





Rayner – still confused following the long journey

Training could arguably have been more realistic. We formed up and we went on a number of exercises, including a beach landing at Melanda Beach, but harbouring up in orange groves proved little preparation for the extremities

of the South Atlantic. Nothing prepares you for horizontal rain that takes the temperature down to minus twenty with wind chill or patrolling the severest terrain with 100lb on your back. But the oranges were nice. We bonded and







a company ethos developed. We also held a few social events so that the wives and families could get together although they were looked after superbly by the Battalion HQ and families set up once

we reached the other side of the world. The icing on the cake was providing two guards for the Queen's Birthday parade; handy preparation for settlement patrols.

The journey placed us in the hands of RAF movements for three consecutive days and staged us through Brize and Ascension. A book could be written about the deployment and recovery but the reader can easily join the dots at this point. Most of them have moved on now and work for Southern Rail. Arrival, handover and settling in were fine and exactly how it should be between two infantry companies. The accommodation was awful; it had been allowed to deteriorate enough to deserve the nickname the 'Bronx' and was witness to years of Infantry company/Royal Engineer squadron rivalry. It was not up to standard for Queensmen so we sorted it out. We needed shovels and skips and a bit of money from the admin branch and, moreover, the effort and attitude you get with a Queensman, and it became fine. Generally speaking the amenities and social areas were pretty good given that it was all portakabins but the major transformation came from stripping and decorating the 'RIC Bar' and transforming it into the 'Crazy Parrots' - pub sign and all - lifting the culture of a haunt from the Limassol strip and creating it as home 7,000 miles away. So, a half-way decent room, great gym facilities, good food and a bar to go to...makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise?

There is no doubt about it, the Falklands is a staggeringly beautiful place with some wonderful views. It is also a lot more hostile than anything any of us are ever likely to encounter again. A wonderful clear sunny vista can turn to freezing driving rain in a matter of minutes. A canny

patrol leader will keep an eye out for the next storm (just look out to sea from time to time) and look for some temporary shelter. We had five platoon tasks. The first was to maintain a patrol footprint across the islands to give the locals the warm feeling that HM Government was committed to the security of this British Overseas Territory and to send a clear message to Argentina. These would normally last 5-6 days and involve patrolling all sorts of terrain (but avoiding the ankle breaking rock-runs) from dawn until dusk. A good day would end at a settlement with a barn and a lamb stew and occasionally a bevvie. A bad day would end in putting up a bivvy in horizontal rain trying to get some hexy going. We returned from these patrols looking pretty gaunt and needing a good feed, a few beers and some kip. But the rewards were great - the locals were grateful, and worth the effort, and the landscape could be breathtaking. Next up was a week of guarding Airport Camp - no further description required. After that, Mere Harbour. This was a platoon outpost at the harbour at the disposal of the platoon leadership, with a few local patrols and QRF thrown in. The highlight was the arrival of company headquarters doing their weekly stamina training - always brings a smirk. Then some training up on Mount Onion - The Onion! We met with some friendly contractors who were happy to help us transform an *ad hoc* set of portakabins into a training camp to accommodate two platoons at a stretch. Onion Range saw more live firing than Salisbury Plain and Sennelager together that year. Platoons (and Company HQ) tabbed the severe climb to better last week's time and it became a centre of excellence. There was always one platoon live firing and one dry training or facilitating.

The essence of all five tasks was making the most of it. Yes, it was freezing - sometimes sleeping out in minus 20 with wind chill, and a dangerous and hostile environment on the far side of the planet. There were few luxuries and a buzz of excitement went round twice a week; Timmy and Tommy were the two Tristars that brought either freight (fresh food) or passengers (fresh faces and another week

closer to going home) but both brought mail. There was an adventure training lake with a few windsurfers and dinghies but it was frozen over for our entire tour! We got hold of some disco equipment and persuaded the powers that be to allow us to open the 'Crazy Parrots' every night and not just once a week. So there was some limited social life and distraction for the single men. We were also immersed in a tri-Service environment. The upside was a fabulous relationship with HMS Alacrity and HMS Leeds Castle (exchange of duties – airborne MFC parties – joint live firing –social and sporting) and active air squadrons. We ran two company live firing exercises, both involving a frigate, Offshore Patrol Vessel, light guns, Phantom jets, Hercules and Chinooks...then flown back to base by the 'Eric's' (Bristow contracted helos). Platoons established *ad hoc* relationships with RN, RAF and other Arm units and it took us out of our shells a little. The live firing exercises gave riflemen the opportunity to manoeuvre around machine-gun fire, MILAN (we fired 24 missiles) mortars (nearly a thousand 81mm HE rounds) naval gunfire support and 120mm artillery. We reeked of cordite.

R&R provided a unique opportunity to see stupendous wildlife in its natural environment. Penguins (blimey, they stink) were two a penny until you came face to face with an Emperor, a Gentoo or watched the Rockhoppers leaping about, plenty of Caracara, Albatross, Skuas and Petrels, to name only a few. The highlight for me was a colony of Elephant Seals guarded by two males, each the size of a low minibus. Today, a tour from the UK to do the same would cost £7-8K. It was an utter privilege to share the world of these animals. The boys on South Georgia also got to see whales and deer and, being recce platoon, developed a taste for venison (government culling programme, before the Greens have a go at me).

It's difficult to imagine how Cyprus and the Falklands could be more different. Obviously the climate; 50-60 degree

variation with wind chill. The Mediterranean slow tempo was a far cry from the staccato as the islanders went about their business to stay warm and keep going. The Falklanders mentality was outwardly brusque and insular but they took the British soldier to their hearts and into their homes. Evidence of the war was still all around us. Most apparent were the uncleared minefields and beyond them the crashed aircraft skeletons, abandoned cooksets and rotting equipment. The battlefield tours revealed to most of us that the Argentinians had put up more of a fight than we perceived at the time. It made the 'green line' in Cyprus look a bit childish to be honest.

The real and lasting privilege was to serve in the company of such fit and motivated men. I have never seen a bunch of men so capable, eager and fit. (I was told privately by one of the senior staff that B Coy was 'head and shoulders above any previous company'.) It seems wrong to name a few when you can't name them all so at the risk of offending... CSgt Jock McLaughlen received a well deserved BEM for running rings around the RAF QM system and providing us with everything we were entitled to and plenty that we were not. CSM Jim Murphy was awarded the Regimental Medal for herding 210 and keeping us in order and CSgt Nigel Watts received a GOC's commendation for exceptional fire support. Had there been any more going CSgt Zip Nolan would be next on the list. He would have strapped a Norwegian container of stew on his back and run up to the Onion if necessary. LCpl Wiseman and friends – making my life interesting, Richie Cornhill a fighting performance on the 5-a-side court, Pte Danskin – that man could swim, Capt Dwyer and the guys who walked home. It is the author's privilege to name a totally subjective 'man of the tour': step forward Gibbo, my radio operator and driver, LCpl Gibson, who with his spindly legs followed me up and down every hill, never complaining and always providing me with a cup of tea whenever we stopped!

The author and Gibbo  
Training on 'The Onion' –  
clearly loving it







# SOUTH GEORGIA

## SOUTH GEORGIA AND THE SANDWICH ISLANDS

By Garrison Commander Magistrate, Harbour Master, Fishing Protection Officer and Postmaster  
Bob Wilby

Once in a while, a chance of a unique posting comes along but I was lucky to undertake two tours of South Georgia as Garrison Commander first, in late 1985 and then early 1991.

Its location, 800 miles from the Falklands translated into 2.5 days fast steaming for a ship or a six hour flight for a C130 Hercules but with nowhere to land. The terrain of South Georgia can be described as similar to the high Alps but at sea level. No matter what time of the year, it was often possible to experience all four seasons in a day. The garrison accommodation was in an old British Antarctic Survey (BAS) base that was spartan but comfortable. The islands only other permanent residents were a small BAS research team in an isolated location 90 miles to the North.

The garrison's mission was to maintain British Sovereignty of the island by a military presence undertaking various civilian administrative functions. Militarily, it boiled down to guarding the base at King Edward Point (KEP) and patrolling the local area, and if push came to shove, to give any Argentinian invader a bloody nose before retiring to a number of safe huts, or caves, to be ready then to secure a beachhead and provide guides for a relieving force.

The garrison comprised of 40 all ranks with the largest element being a small infantry HQ with a strong platoon, plus attachments. For both tours, it was drawn mainly from the Recce Platoon. Each tour was four months with little opportunity to get off the island and limited communication with families and friends back home. Attached elements included a doctor, a Royal Marines Mountain Leader SNCO, two cooks and a pay clerk. Inherited *in situ* was a section of Royal Engineers plus a Royal Signals detachment. The former spent most of their time maintaining the obsolescent facilities and fabric of the base.



The Garrison in 1985/86

The signal detachment handled our communication with the outside world that was principally by secure teleprinter, or HF radio, to Headquarters British Forces Falkland Islands (HQ BFFI).

Patrols consisted of a strong section and would be of various durations. Apart from seeking for signs of any incursion, they included checking and rotation of food, fuel, and ammunition caches in safe/refuge huts and caves dotted along the coastline and in the hills. The going along the narrow coastal strip was reasonably easy with the main danger being angry fur seals launching attacks against the unwary. Further inland, the going was more arduous but did give the opportunity to include movement over glaciers for some routes. Insertion away from the small peninsula where the garrison was based relied on the Royal Navy or the Royal Fleet Auxiliary during resupply runs for the first tour. For the second tour, Sapper-manned 'Rigid Raiders' were available. The unpredictable weather made patrolling interesting and on more than one occasion resulted in delayed recovery. Night locations included tents, refuge huts or buildings in abandoned whaling stations, the latter two often.

When not patrolling, general military skills were maintained. The uninhabited area around the base allowed plenty of scope for some, often too realistic, live firing exercises very close to the doorstep.

The administration of the garrison was not without its problems. Regular resupply was by ship at four to six weekly intervals. If items were out of stock at HQ BFFI, or if equipment failed in between times, the garrison went without until the next resupply. With the resupply came members of BFFI staff, all wanting a look at South Georgia. Justification of their trip was a variety of the staff inspections that the British Army so loves. In my entire military career never so often were so few inspected by so many. As well as fresh food and beer for the next period, the resupply also brought morale-boosting mail. It was also the main route for mail out. The garrison breathed a collective sigh of relief with the departure of the resupply circus and went back to the solitude that it had become accustomed to.

Interim resupply of small urgent items, mail and the odd bit of fresh foodstuff was by a C130 airdrop planned at 10 day, or so, intervals. These rarely went to schedule with the weather often causing postponement. Delivery demanded skilful flying to parachute packages into the sea which required speedy recovery by a couple of Sapper manned boats pre-positioned in the drop zone.

Other visitors to the island included Antarctic Survey vessels, Antarctic cruise ships, Russian and Japanese fishing fleets plus the odd, (very) intrepid yachtsman. It was for these visitors that the Garrison Commander had been invested with various civilian roles. As Harbour Master, he indicated where they could anchor or berth, and then to complete the necessary paperwork to charge them for the fees due. Being Postmaster involved selling stamps, special edition first day covers and postcards and then process the mail generated. The role of Fisheries Protection Officer involved the inspection of fishing log books and confirmation that species caught were correct by physically inspecting the catch. Should misdemeanours occur it could be dealt with by the OC's capacity as Magistrate assisted by two SNCOs acting as Special Constables!

Both tours are fondly remembered for the almost daily challenges that had to be overcome, or worked around, due to the climate, terrain and the logistic effort to sustain such an isolated garrison. None of these could have been achieved without the hard work, stoicism and great humour in adversity of all those involved.







## Memories of South Georgia

First impressions of South Georgia, stepping ashore onto a beach full of Elephant seal bulls, cows and newly born pups. Later that day it was explained they had to be counted and the numbers included as a section in the daily SITREP to HQ BFFI! There was also a section for penguins which were less frequent visitors.

Of boarding a Russian Antarctic survey vessel in 1985 with the shrouded outlines of two HIP helicopters visible on deck and meeting some rather military-looking "civilian pilots" aboard. They and the Captain were extremely hospitable though, even to the extent of getting the Captain's special assistant (political commissar) so drunk he could no longer ask a coherent question and had to retire early. Once done, the Captain's stash of Western alcohol, cigarettes and cassette player appeared and proper conversation started. I seem to recall that the "Soviet Contact Report", insisted upon by some idiot at HQ BFFI, required a 3 metre long teleprinter print-out the following day.

Of the Garrison being given a gift of a Christmas tree in December 1985 by a Russian Antarctic research vessel. Being too big for the accommodation hallway, a certain CSM solved the over height problem by cutting the top off!

In early 1986, a group of Swedish researchers were permitted to stay with the South Georgia garrison whilst collecting bird and other specimens for a Swedish Institute. When asked whether they would like to throw their rations in with ours to eat centrally, they declined. They anticipated that their main source of meat would be from the specimens they caught. I can certainly testify that a penguin does not have a chocolate centre and once eaten, never again. At the same time, the British soldier showed his sense of fun and sentimentality by sending the researchers on many a wild albatross chase for specimens which, had they bothered to look, could have been found close by in the opposite direction.

Of the OC, at the start of the 1991 tour of South Georgia, opening the operational plan document and finding that it was the one he had written and signed in late 1985.

During the 1991 tour of South Georgia, a certain Recce PI 2IC asked to accompany the OC on a fishing fleet inspection. Boarding was effected from a 'Rigid Raider' craft onto a rope and wood ladder hanging over the ship's side. The trick was to go alongside, wait to get the rhythm of the rise, fall and frequency of the waves, and then pick the right moment to get a foot on a rung on the rise. The rise and fall was about six feet that day with waves at about a 45 second frequency. The ex-Para forgot the briefing and immediately "went for it", on the fall. Cue much mirth from the OC and the boat handler at the sight of the individual hanging on to the bottom loop of the ladder, with feet scrambling to get purchase on a slippery steel hull until he received a nudge up as the raider came up again with the rise.

One of the OC's responsibilities was Fisheries Protection Officer. Each fishing vessel, mostly Russian, that came into the bay had to be inspected. The ship's papers and fishing logs were scrutinised with random hold inspections undertaken to check their catch. Not being a Russian speaker, nor a fisherman, this was done with the aid of a crib sheet with pictures, on my side and on theirs in broken English. Once the formalities were complete, there came the, eventually dreaded, words "*Paperwork done....., now we drink*". Multiple vodka toasts with sausage or smoked fish roe on rye bread ensued. Whilst this was fine for a single vessel, on more than one occasion a fleet appeared with a mother ship. Transshipment was by crane in a ropey rusted cage. The process was repeated until it was back to the mother ship for a final "*paperwork done*" and even more hospitality. Thankfully, it was a tradition that the mother ship would arrange the boat back to shore avoiding the necessity of clambering down rope ladders in a less than fit state. Needless to say, transcribing the crib sheet notes into the official fishing report log could be a bit problematical after about the fifth vessel.....



# BELIZE

## 3 QUEENS IN BELIZE

By Chris Charter

The Battalion moved to Belize between 14–19 February 1977, just days after Lt Col John Francis handed over command to Lt Col Stewart Anderson MC. The Regiment has been no stranger to Belize with the 2nd Battalion having deployed there in early 1976 and the 1st Battalion carrying out a tour in 1980/1. I rejoined the Battalion some two weeks later as I was on the Regimental Signal Officer's Course at Warminster. Keen to put into practice all I had learnt, especially about the A13 HF radio, it was a great surprise to be told I was to be the Operations Officer. After a short briefing, I quickly settled into the routine of the operations room, coordinating the various jungle patrols, flying tasks and studying the many contingency plans.

The Battalion enjoyed the new challenges of the jungle and each company in rotation was able to experience patrolling in primary forest, swamp and semi-cultivated-secondary jungle inhabited by Maya and Kekchi Indians. There were also opportunities for adventure training at St George's Cay with sailing, snorkelling, kayaking and 'island survival'. For those in Airport Camp, there were the sights of Belize City to explore and for some a visit to the Big C (use your imagination!!). For the officers on most weekends there were trips either to San Pedro by Puma or to one of the many spectacular cays by boat for a day of snorkelling, a barbecue and a glass of lemonade or two!

A strange feature of life in Belize was the sudden appearance of land crabs everywhere in Airport Camp



Salamanca camp



In the wet



Drowning the Drummer





and the surrounding area. For a few days you could not walk or drive anywhere without squashing a crab – it was most off-putting. There was the daily ritual of “Swingfog” – not to be confused with “Swingfire!” – a man going round the camp churning out smoke that was supposed to help keep mosquitoes at bay. Albuhera Day was celebrated in style with sports events and the traditional ‘soak a drummer’. We also celebrated the Queen’s Birthday with a parade that was attended by all the dignitaries of Belize and during which I was privileged to be presented with the Queen’s Silver Jubilee Medal.

For many years there had been an uneasy situation with Guatemala’s claim to the entire territory of Belize (formerly British Honduras). Guatemala had repeatedly threatened to use force to takeover British Honduras. In early July, the danger of invasion from Guatemala suddenly increased and reinforcements were deployed to Belize. These included the Spearhead battalion (1st Battalion The Irish Guards and a company of The Staffordshire Regiment) in a continuous

stream of VC10s. A most welcome and very significant addition were six Harrier aircraft that immediately began flying along the border, providing a major deterrent to any possible attack by Guatemala. The sight and sound of the first two Harriers was reassuring to us all. At the same time, Hercules aircraft with various stores and ammunition landed and were quickly unloaded. Some seventy plane-loads of stores were unloaded in four days of non-stop work in the heat. As a precaution, once all aircraft had been unloaded, the runway was blocked with vehicles to prevent any landings by Guatemalan aircraft. The Royal Navy Guard Ship, HMS Ariadne, also positioned herself off the coast. Overall, I think we all felt well prepared for an invasion. However, the situation was quickly defused and it appeared the threats were a political ploy in support of the Guatemalan position at talks being held in Washington DC.

So in August the Battalion returned to Somme Lines in Catterick sun-tanned, having gained valuable experience in jungle warfare and was very quickly mobilized to Merseyside on Op BURBERRY, fire-fighting duties during the national fireman’s strike.

On the Sibun River



Harrier



Crabs







Belize Adventure Training Centre



Queen's Birthday Parade



On Patrol



The Author welcoming the Top Brass



Meeting 'other' types of soldier!



Unloading of the war stores



Calgary Stampede  
Belizian style



Belize Toledo District





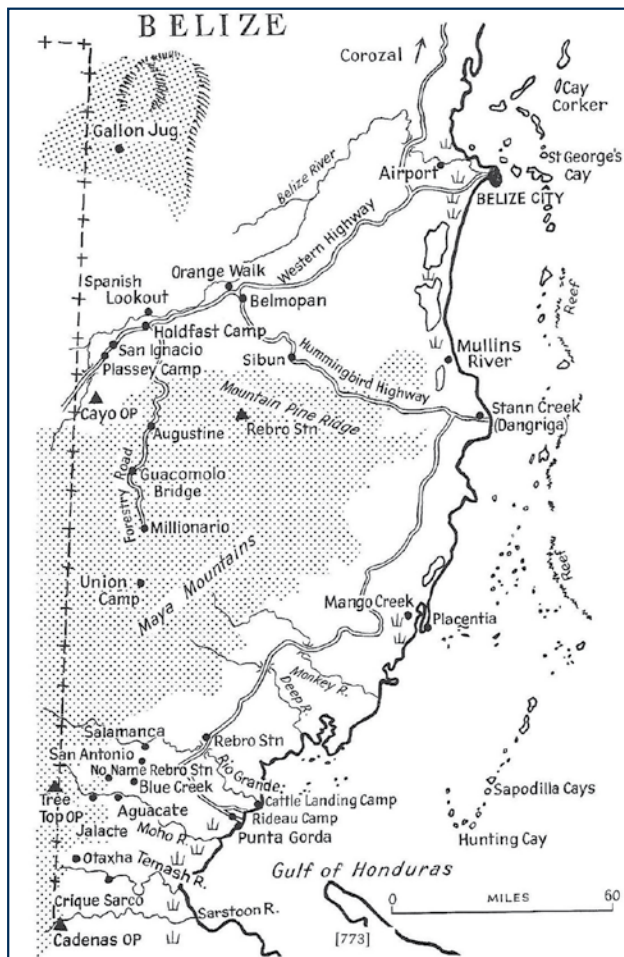
# ALL QUIET ON THE BELIZIAN WESTERN HIGHWAY - 1980/1

By Scipio (aka Rocky Hitchcock)

**For those who don't know ...** Belize, formerly called British Honduras, is a former colony situated south of Mexico and north and east of Guatemala, on the Caribbean. Guatemala has laid claim to the territory since partial independence in 1964 and was only deterred from invasion by the arrival of RAF aircraft in the 1970s (the best form of marijuana in Belize is called 'Harrier' – it makes you fly higher!). The Army maintained a permanent presence there until 1994 by 'rotating' Infantry battalions on six month tours. It was, in fact, the major non-Armoured Infantry overseas training area.

The country, 'the size of Wales with the population of Newport' according to the (Welsh) Commander British Forces (briefing soldiers whose knowledge of geography tended to be limited to London and Northern Ireland), could, roughly speaking, be divided into two halves bisected by the Great Western Highway, which runs from Belize City on the coast to the Guatemalan border in the West; the Northern half being flat agricultural land and the Southern half consisting of primary and secondary rain forest. It has an amazing diversity of animal and bird life, not to mention 65 different types of snake and well over 75 types of butterfly, including the fabulous 'Belizean Blue'

The 1 QUEENS Battle Group, which had elements from the Royal Engineers; the Royal Horse Artillery; the Royal Hussars, 1/2 GR (Gurkha Rifles), was essentially split in half with Lt Col David Dickins commanding the torrid South and Maj Rod Arnold the marginally milder North.



Scrambling up the bank



**RentAGrunt Ltd.** The company based at the Forces' HQ in Airport Camp (APC) had little to do, other than provide fatigue parties for the plethora of other units that were much too important, at least in their own minds, to do the duties themselves. As the standard daily uniform was beret; T-shirt; shorts and boots, Holland Company decided that it would do no harm to draw attention to this fact and incorporated 'RentAGrunt Ltd' and wore customised T-shirts to advertise the fact. The OC was the 'Chairman', Captain Les Edwards, the 2IC, was the 'Finance Director', CSM John Taylor was the 'Managing Director' with CSgt Jimmy Pyper as the 'Logistics Director'. All the platoon commanders had similarly spurious titles designed to irritate the humourless.

**There Are No Lemons in Belize.** Holdfast Camp was situated a couple of miles to the East of the small, but strategically important because of the bridge over the Macal River, outside the town of San Ignacio, where the Corps of Drums were based in their own small encampment, Plassey Camp. Holdfast was ideally situated for forays into the primary and secondary rain forest to its South. To the North were the flatlands of Cayo County with its Mennonite farming communities. The Mennonites are Anabaptist Christians, originally from Prussia, who think that modern farm equipment contaminates their faith (although some, dubbed 'Mechonites' don't) and continue to use horse-drawn implements. Holdfast was surrounded by fruit trees.

One evening, the Company Commander asked the tireless Mess Orderly, LCpl Burbridge for a gin & tonic. When it appeared, shock! horror! There was no lemon! The hapless Burbridge was ordered to stand on a table and look to the North;

"What do you see?" - "Trees, sir".

"Lemon trees, Burb. Look to the South and what do you see?" - "More trees, sir."

"Exactly, lemon trees, Burb, and to the West?" - "Lemon trees, sir?"

"So, can I have lemon in my G&T?" - "Sorry, sir, there are no lemons in Belize!"

In truth, there weren't; at least for the Army, as the NAAFI in its wisdom, bought lemons in from Mexico. That evening, Capt Les Edwards the 2IC was told to go out and buy fruit trees; oranges and bananas for outside the soldier's accommodation, a lemon tree and an avocado pear tree for the officers and sergeants. They came to fruit, though sadly not until 1 QUEENS was long gone from Belize.

**Knowledge Dispels Fear.** As Col Amédée Mieville was fond of saying, 'all Indians walk in single file – at least the one I saw did', so it went without saying that, for most soldiers, all snakes are poisonous. As Belize hosted some 65 different varieties of snake, it seemed like a good idea to collect some snakes to dispel the myth. A *vivarium* was constructed with the aid of the PSA in the Officer's Mess garden. The first inhabitants were small 'Coffee Snakes' (*Ninia Sebae*), non-poisonous and all given names such as 'Nescafe', 'Maxwell House' etc, and were used to entertain the officers during the morning break. They were followed by a variety of others including Boa Constrictors – one found curled in a running shoe was named 'Adidas'- and some exceedingly poisonous but docile Coral snakes (*Micrurus Mirabilis*).

A large number of soldiers kept 'bird-eating' spiders (*Theraphosidae*), the largest spider in the world, with a painful but not particularly dangerous 'bite'. When the Royal Signals rear link operator went on leave, he didn't trust leaving his spider to







the attentions of the brutal and licentious in his absence, so he popped it into what he thought was an empty cage in the *vivarium*. Sadly, inside this cage was an extremely rare Coral snake (*Micrurus Nigrocinctus*) that mimicked the common Coffee snake.

It can be imagined his distress when he discovered that his spider had scoffed Rocky's snake like a kebab and the snake, which was due to star in a wild life film on mimicry, was no more. A late snake!

# THE BATTALION'S JUNGLE BUNNIES

By Rob Walker

If Belikin Beer did postings, the Jungle Training Centre (JTC) would have been it! As a young 23 year old subaltern posted with a crack, some might say crackpot, team of SNCOs and specialists, this was the dream posting. We were two hours' drive along Mountain Pine Ridge from Holdfast and the nearest senior officer. The team consisted of me, the late great CSgt Barry Camille, CSgt Jimmy Juhel, Sgt Robbo Robinson and Sgt Martin Guilfoyle (instructors), CSgt Chalky White (CQMS), LCpl Barry "Chopper" Harris (Signals), LCpl Clive Marshall (Medic), Pte Mac MacDonald (Cook), and Pte Alan Hayman (Driver).

Our camp at Guacamallo Bridge was made up of three *atap* huts, two for accommodation and one for communal gathering and included a small cooking area. The only facility was a thunder box in a small wooden hut on top of a 30ft hole! The washroom was the river, as long as it wasn't in flood! All very primitive but nobody cared until you were hit by a bout of Montezuma's revenge from which everybody at some point suffered!

Due to the location and the novelty of jungle warfare for the senior officers in the battalion, we were very much left to our own devices. We designed a 12 day course that each platoon would undergo, followed by two days relaxation for the JTC team before the next course arrived. As Jimmy, Robbo and I had undertaken the Jungle Warfare Instructors course in Brunei, we arrived first, as the advance party, to take over from the outgoing battalion, recce the area and plan the course, which included full platoon live firing. All those weeks at Warminster designing live firing ranges were at last going to come in useful!

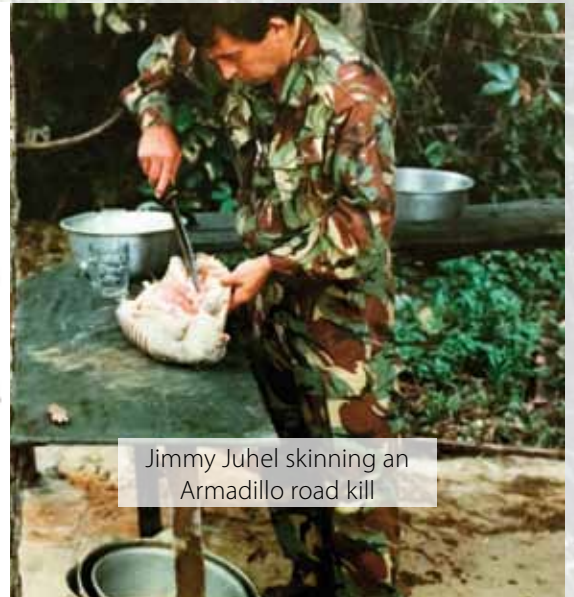
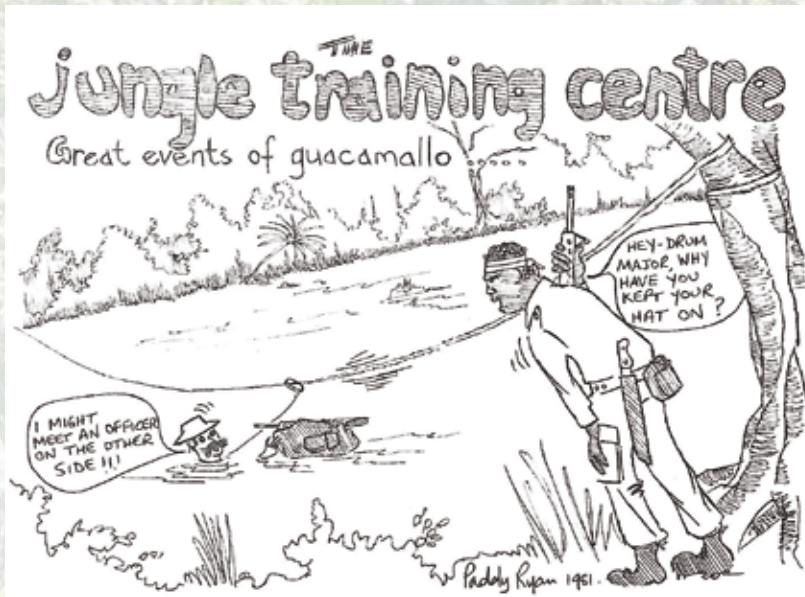
On arrival the outgoing instructors presented us with the head of a *Fer-de-Lance*, a particularly aggressive snake commonly known as a 'Yellow Jaw', in a jar of formaldehyde. It had fallen through the *atap* roof of our living accommodation! To cap that, the following day Jimmy, Robbo and I were walking along a dried-up stream bed when I spied about three feet from me what I thought was fungus growing out of a tree, but I soon discovered was a living breathing 'Yellow Jaw'. I leapt back and, much to the amusement of Jimmy and Robbo, fell over into a crumpled heap. Once they had wiped the smiles off their faces, one of them shot it, much to my relief!

We were delighted when the rest of our team arrived and we were soon into the rhythm of training, with platoon after platoon passing through our hands. It was incredibly satisfying, as almost without exception, the troops arrived wide-eyed and enthusiastic to learn. Unsurprisingly, it took people time to adjust both mentally and physically to the unusual physical demands of the inhospitable environment of the jungle. It constantly rained and in people's minds, around every corner lurked a poisonous snake or a deadly scorpion.

In 12 days, we covered everything from live firing, extracting the wounded, and setting an ambush to survival training. One of the most essential lessons was about personal hygiene. As it seemed to rain incessantly it was essential to be disciplined and to keep one set of dry clothes for sleeping in, changing back into the wet ones for the next day. Many regretted not following this advice and spent many an uncomfortable night!

We introduced 'Ronnie the Rubbish Rock' for anyone that left rubbish lying around and 'Willie the Weapon Rock' for anybody that left their weapon more than an arm's length away! Culprits were expected to carry the rocks for 24 hours.





.....AND ONE OF THE USES OF THAT TRAINING.....



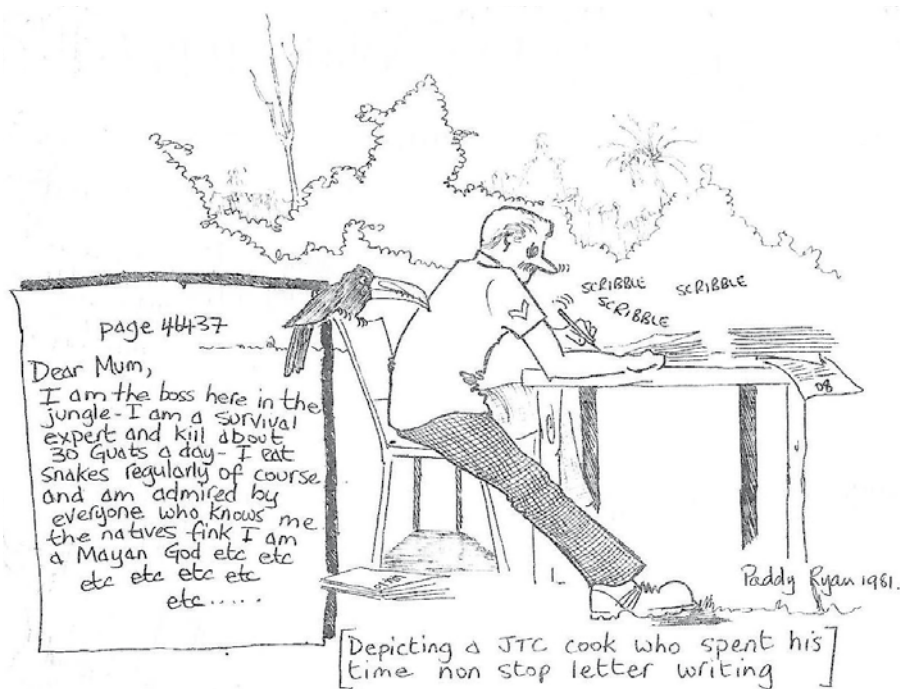




There were many amusing moments during our time at Guacamallo Bridge. I will never forget the night Barry Camille woke in the middle of the night in some distress. He had a tick on his scrotum. Needless to say the buddy-buddy system failed and he had to remove it himself. Throughout the 6 month tour the WO's and Sgts' Mess devised the 'Gumball Rally' to raise money for their welcome home party. Mess members were given a marked coin which they had to carry with them at all times. When challenged by a fellow mess member it had to be produced. Failure to do so invited a £5 donation to the party fund. The best 'Gumball' I saw

was when Drum Major Smith was in the middle of a crossing over a fast flowing river. He was nervous of the water swirling around his neck and was clinging on for dear life when he was called to show his coin. He grimaced and opened his mouth where his coin was nestling on his tongue!

There were many good hunting stories of the hapless iguanas that ended up as very tasty curry. Then there was the Boa Constrictor destined to become a hat band for Martin Guilfoyle, seemingly shot, but it came alive in his bergen, slithered out and decided that Horace the JTC dog would make a suitable snack!

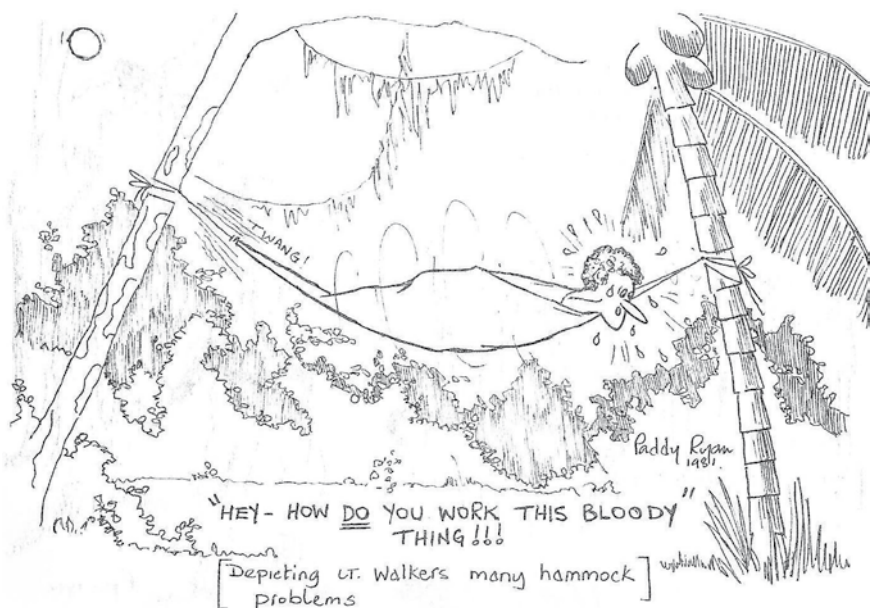


Over the 5 months living at Guacamallo Bridge, we made ourselves comfortable, making the most of the environment. We set up a farm for edible snails, ate fresh fish from the river, bought fresh bread from the local logging community and made friends with the Irish family that ran the forestry plantation on Mountain Pine Ridge. They arranged football matches between us and their staff and invited us to join them for an extraordinarily entertaining Christmas.

Jimmy Juhel decided that for the advancement of science, we should try eating as varied a diet as possible. I fondly remember

the wild venison but the armadillo and snake less so. Skinning the armadillo was particularly challenging as was killing it; where the Armalite failed, the ¾ ton Land Rover running over one didn't!

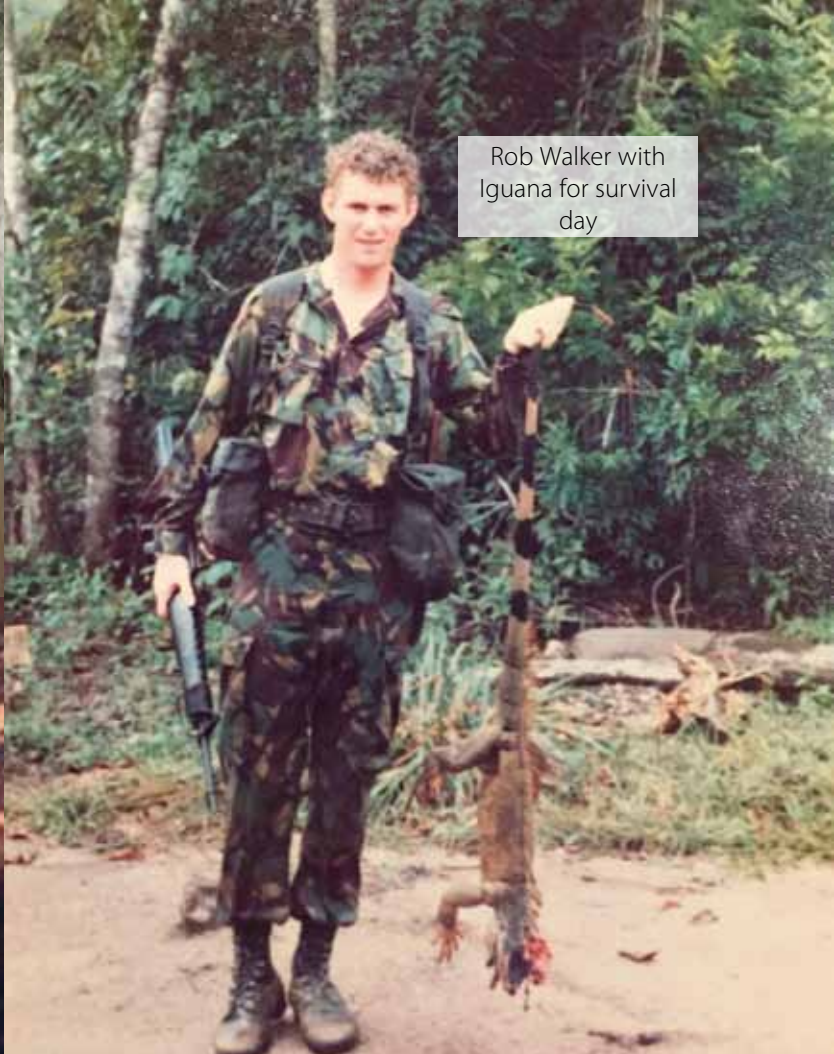
Guacamallo Bridge was a fantastic experience for all involved. We were a close team and left with some very happy memories. Hopefully along the way, we also imparted some useful knowledge to the soldiers that passed through our hands. Every young officer should have a similar opportunity!







Nigel Armitage - Smith being pranked by Jimmy  
-honestly sir the generator went that way



Rob Walker with  
Iguana for survival  
day



The only running water



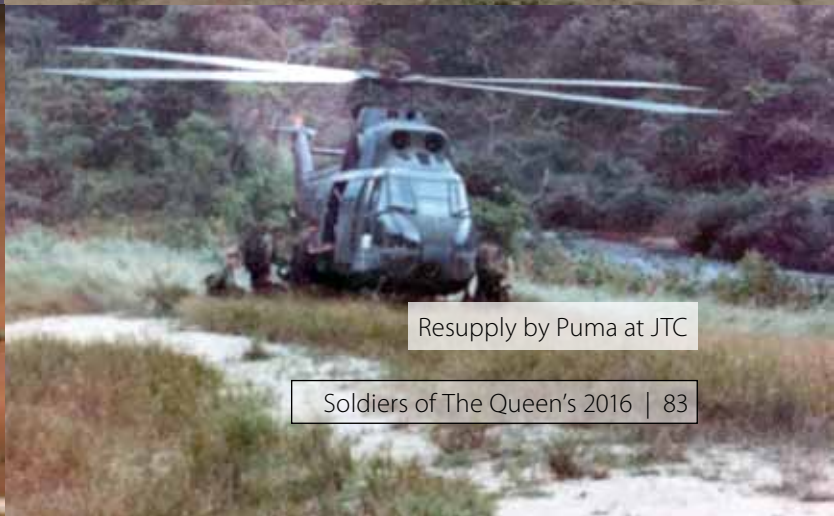
Robbo and Martin Guilfoyle butchering wild venison



The Team



Fer de Lance



Resupply by Puma at JTC





# MILITARY AID IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

## DEFENDING THE HOMELAND

(WELL, SOMEONE HAD TO DO IT)

By Derek Harwood

Home Defence was an important part of Government strategy during the Cold War. Apart from the military, it involved all tiers of public service including Local Government, the Fire Service and of course the Police.

In 1972 it was decreed that certain Infantry units of the Territorial Army would be converted to 'Home Defence Battalions'. This article deals with 6/7 QUEENS in general and the predecessors of B (Queen's Regiment) Company, The London Regiment in particular.

On formation of The Queen's Regiment, B Company became part of 5 QUEENS (V) and as such was equipped overnight to a scale that we could previously only dream of. B Company then became a part of the new 6/7 QUEENS. We were not sure what this would mean but we soon found out.

The immediate effect was the removal of all our equipment. The scale for Home Defence units was a

shock. Transport per company consisted of three troop-carrying HGVs that were intended for commercial use, and one GS Land Rover. The troop carriers were never intended for off-road work.

The communication system was the infamous 'Pye Westminster'. The set up consisted of a relay station that could be *'lashed into the back of your GS Land Rover or simply set up on a desk in the office'*. Each platoon had a receiver that consisted of a telephone handset resting on a box and carried in what can only be described as a paperboy's sack. Huge masts completed the set-up. The most frustrating change was the reversal from '58 back to '37 pattern equipment. We were not having that. We 'obtained' some very serviceable '44 pattern equipment and soldiered on. In fairness, both the transport and communications system were quite adequate for the job. It was us, we simply did not want to adapt!



Ex Sgt now Pte Drage of the ever reliable HSF

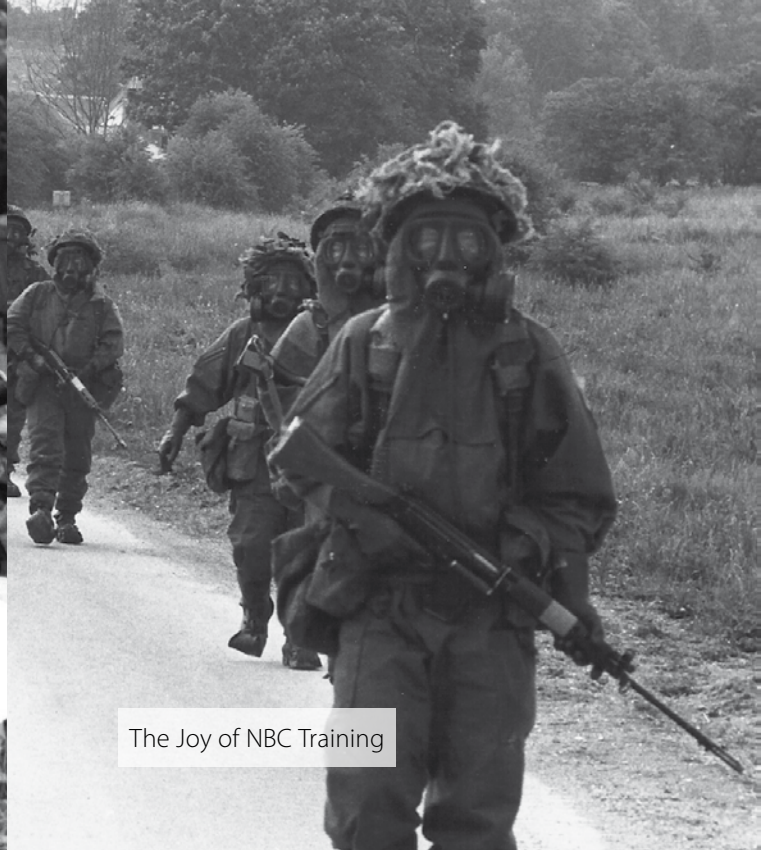
Camming up the commercials - Cpl Smith and the MT section



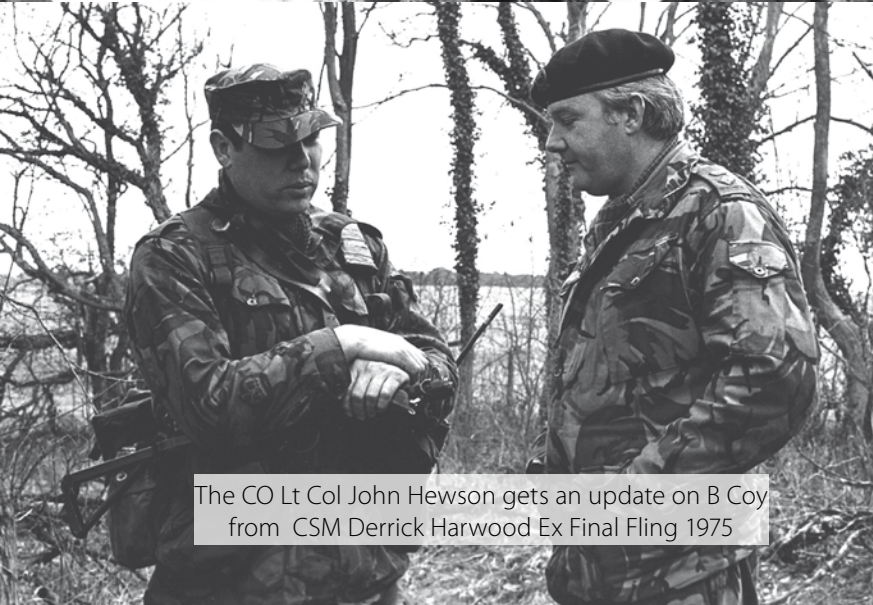




Lt Piers Storie-Pugh, Sgt Trevor Pidgeon and the Edgware Platoon



The Joy of NBC Training



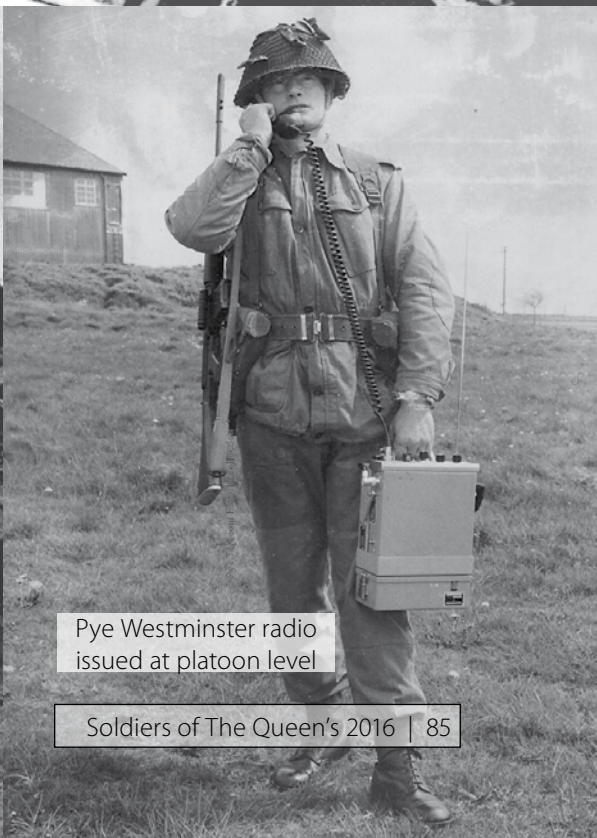
The CO Lt Col John Hewson gets an update on B Coy from CSM Derrick Harwood Ex Final Fling 1975



LCpl Micky Traynor in the operations room at TAC Edgware 1973



Hele Ops



Pye Westminster radio issued at platoon level





In those early days, there seemed to be an absence of doctrine that made clear what we were supposed to be doing, so we carried on with conventional infantry work with the bits about key point

defence, road blocks and the politically sensitive 'Aid to the Civil Power' thrown in. However, the loud chugging of the Pye Westminster generator drifting through the cool night air gave the game away, an annoying reminder of what we were really supposed to be about.

Then after about a year, it all began to change. The magic pamphlet came on stream with all sorts of abbreviations that we had never heard of before like TAOR (Tactical Area of Responsibility) as well as situation headings such as 'Decline in the political climate'. By the end of 1978, we had been re-equipped with just about everything except support weapons. There was now much emphasis on Nuclear, Biological and Chemical (NBC) training and we practiced mobilisation procedures with great enthusiasm. The plan was that, once mobilised, we could expect to spend up to three weeks in the drill hall. Kitchens were installed with sufficient equipment to feed a company on a long term basis.

In 1982 6/7 QUEENS raised its own Home Service Company. These reliable soldiers brought a depth of experience from the 1960s when post-nuclear strike training was a TA responsibility.

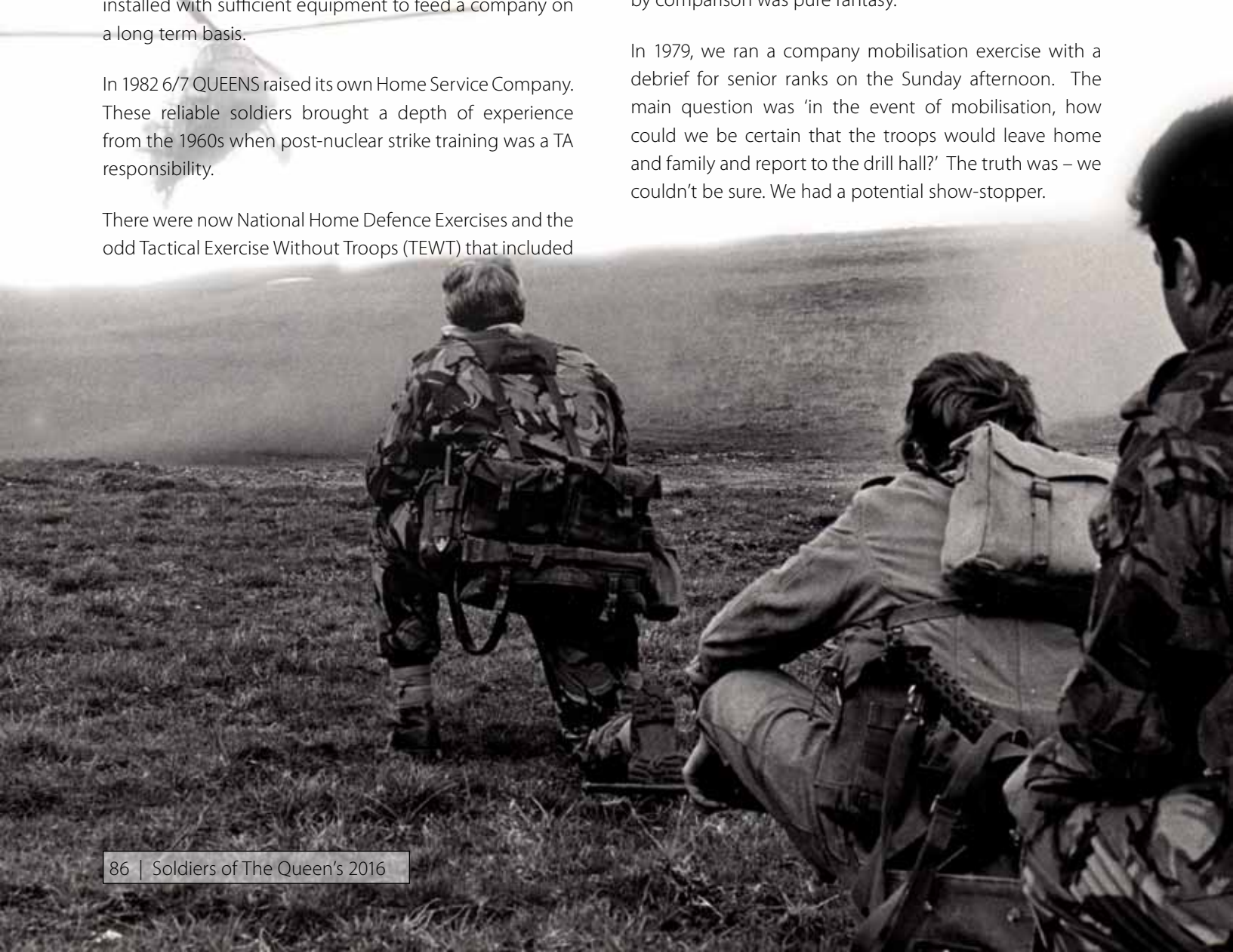
There were now National Home Defence Exercises and the odd Tactical Exercise Without Troops (TEWT) that included

input from the emergency services. The culmination in 1985 of all this activity was the national home defence exercise called BRAVE DEFENDER. This was essentially a section commander's war and the MOD arranged for each section to be issued with a 12-seater minibus under the 'Contract Hire' scheme. Ex BRAVE DEFENDER and other exercises were enjoyable as well as useful. We didn't have to imagine the non-existent platoon on the right flank or the notional troop of tanks. What you saw was what you got. Dealing with irate fathers accusing the troops of all sorts of things, hysterical housewives or pushy policemen was a new experience. The Spetznaz were apparently everywhere.

Training films were well made but a bit unrealistic. *There Will Be Survivors* was a film dealing with the aftermath of a nuclear strike but somehow cheerful Tommy leading the survivors out of danger didn't ring true.

In 1965 the BBC produced *The War Game* a docudrama which was immediately banned. I remember it being shown at annual camps, but only officers were allowed to see it. When the film was finally released in 1985, I could understand the reason for the ban. *There Will Be Survivors* by comparison was pure fantasy.

In 1979, we ran a company mobilisation exercise with a debrief for senior ranks on the Sunday afternoon. The main question was 'in the event of mobilisation, how could we be certain that the troops would leave home and family and report to the drill hall?' The truth was – we couldn't be sure. We had a potential show-stopper.



In 1988, B Coy left 6/7 QUEENS to join the new 8 QF and we were no longer home defenders. Our initial fears that a home defence role would affect our recruiting proved unfounded and it was a good strong B Coy that marched into St John's Hill on Albuhera Day.

About 10 years ago, I and three others who had served in 6/7 QUEENS visited the 'Secret' Nuclear Bunker, Kelvedon Hatch, Brentwood, Essex, CM15 0LA (well worth a visit!). This huge facility was a Centre of Regional Government in the event of nuclear war. Everything is still in its place just as the last occupants left it. Home Office training films

flickered from the monitors and the sitreps from long forgotten exercises still adorned the plotting boards. The commentary delivered via your 'wand' as you walk on the visitors' trail is delivered with not a little humour as the speaker relates the downside of such a facility. To those who were involved in Home or Civil defence it is black humour indeed.

We 'Brave Defenders' did not worry much about the bigger picture we carried on simply taking it for granted that nothing was going to happen. The chilling thought is still supposing it had, what then?

## HOME SERVICE FORCE

By Mike Smith

### E (HSF) Coy 6/7th (V) Battalion The Queen's Regiment

In 1982, the MOD issued a discussion document to Home Defence Battalions of the TA seeking their opinions on forming another Home Defence Force to undertake static guard duties at certain key installations and airfields. This would free up the Regular battalions for quick reaction to other threats against the mainland.

The consultation was positive and a pilot scheme was launched on a small scale. Such was its success that in 1985 the Home Service Force (HSF) came into being across the whole of the UK.

Entry to the HSF was for men and women between 20 and 60yrs old and medically sound. Entrants had to have served at least two years in either RN, the Regular or Territorial Army, RAF, or MOD Police. Officers and adult instructors from the Cadet Forces were also eligible to join.

The thinking behind the two year service was that all entrants would have some reasonable grounding in military skills, thus removing the need for basic training. Refresher training was all that was needed. However, the age of most of the subsequent entrants was around the 40/50 year mark. Some of the entrants had last fired a .303 SMLE and also trained on the Bren Gun, so they needed to be familiarised with the SLR and later the SA80. All entrants enlisted as private soldiers and suitable JNCO/SNCOs were appointed, depending on what rank they may have achieved in former service.

Both 5(V) QUEENS and 6/7(V) QUEENS raised HSF companies. During the life of the HSF over 50 companies were raised throughout the UK. Whilst the HSF was part of the TA, the annual training commitment was lower. Soldiers were expected to attend on only four or five weekends each year, and to parade with their host company about two evenings each month. The HSF were paid and earned a bounty for effective service each year on a lower scale than the mainstream TA. There was no requirement to attend the annual two week training camp.

In reality many HSF soldiers attended more weekends and paraded with the host company once per week. The HSF soldiers also attended some weekend training with their host company.



Copehill Down Village Salisbury Plain -©Flickr Scotbot



Imber Village





I joined the HSF in 1989 having previously been an officer/instructor with the ACF for 10 years. I took on 16 Pl, D Coy which had its base at Stonecot Hill TA Centre, Sutton. I found out that

there was also a group of HSF soldiers who were at Hornsey, North London, who were also part of 16 Pl, so I made the journey to North London two evenings each month to train with them. For weekend training the Hornsey men travelled to Sutton, from where the transport took us with D Coy, to the training area.

The skills of the old soldiers of the HSF came to the fore when training with the youngsters of the other companies. Cunning and subterfuge always defeats youthful exuberance! We carried out quite a lot of Fighting in Built-up Areas (FIBUA) training on Salisbury Plain at Imber village and Copehill Down. If mobilised, we would become a static guard force



Mk 1 Ferret



Final Muster February 1992



Former members of 16 Platoon E Company John Sajdler, Ken Nye, Trevor Pidgeon, Mike Smith, Mike Palmer, and Peter Drage.

at key points, so with FIBUA, we were always the enemy hidden in the buildings and surrounds.

The aforementioned cunning and subterfuge then took over, which sometimes evoked complaints from the attacking companies, if they thought that we were not playing the game, for example, positioning men outside the buildings in any thickets etc. Once the attacking company passed these hides our men opened up on them. One young company commander, after his troops were deemed by the PSI umpire decimated and therefore no longer effective, complained bitterly to the umpire that the HSF were not playing fairly! But then neither do the enemy!

My platoon took the Dad's Army theme to heart. Our youngest member was 28 yrs old, so he became 'Pikey'. The platoon sergeant became 'Uncle Arthur', and another member had snow white hair and was a little portly, so he became Pte Godfrey. Within this element of fun though, we had a mix of both former regular and TA soldiers who trained hard to reach high standards of readiness if mobilised, bearing in mind that the Cold War with the Soviet Union was still a reality.

In 1992 the Cold War ended. The Berlin Wall came down, and all was well, so the politicians said that the HSF were to be disbanded with indecent haste as they were no longer required. And that was the end.

*(Ed: Sadly, two weeks after submitting this article Mike Smith, an enthusiastic supporter of the Queen's Regimental Riders Association, and the Association as a whole, was tragically killed in a motorcycle accident.)*



# MILITARY AID TO THE CIVIL AUTHORITIES

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## THE GREAT SURREY FLOODS OF 1968 By Jonathon Riley

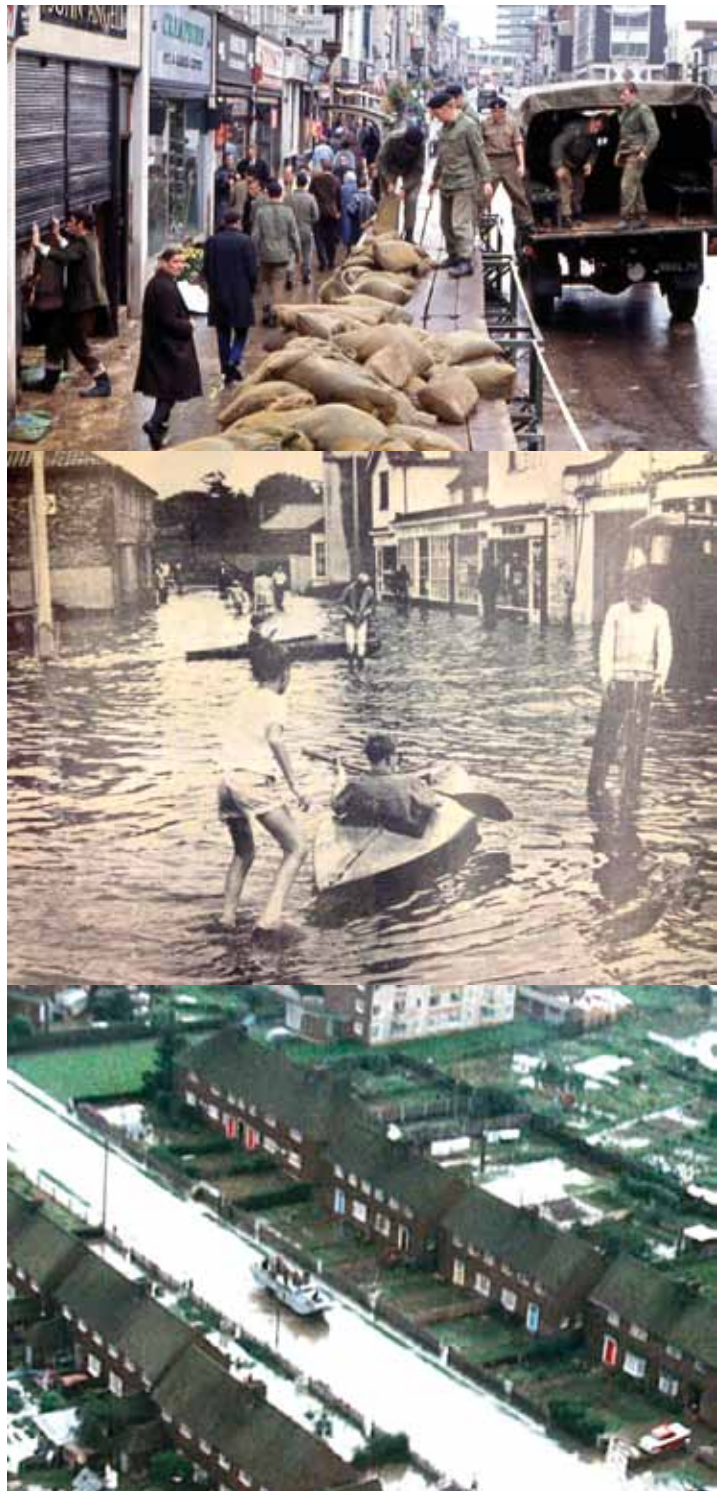
Floods: they are all about climate change and we have never seen anything like the floods of the last couple of years, right? Wrong. In September 1968, following the wettest summer since 1931, there was torrential rain across Southern England and in particular in Surrey where within the catchment areas of the Rivers Wey, Mole and Ember, tributaries of the Thames, 140 mm of rain fell in 48 hours. This was enough to trigger a flood which was classified as an event likely only to occur once in 200 years.

By Sunday 15 September, the rivers could take no more and the next day rapidly rising water entered homes and shops and made roads and railways impassable. In Walton and Hersham, more than 1,000 people were made homeless. Water from the Ember and Mole invaded Esher, while, in Cobham, Downside Bridge was swept away and, in Weybridge, the Wey flooded homes in Brooklands Road and the Hamm Court estate. But it was Molesey that was, perhaps, worst affected, with water in many parts of the town reaching a depth of 8 feet.

The police, fire brigades and the Regular Army in the shape of the Royal Engineers set up a relief operation based at the Metropolitan Police horse and dog training centre. This was in a former country house and its grounds at Imber Court, between Esher and Thames Ditton. Being an older property it was on slightly higher ground than more recent developments and so remained unflooded. I remember it well, as my parents' house, one of a few older properties in the area, was very close to the Court and so it, too, escaped.

As well as the RE, the local TA battalion, 6 QUEENS, was also mobilised to help sandbag properties, rescue stranded people using boats and the old Second World War DUKWs, and run temporary accommodation in the Court, church halls, schools and the like; and to run drying centres, with large industrial machinery, in Molesey, Cobham and Claygate to dry large household items like carpets.

Within a couple of days, the flood waters had started to subside — but the clean-up and post-mortems







into why such a disaster had occurred went on for quite a while.

The RSM of 6 QUEENS, Alf Colyer, was particularly active and visible in the military efforts – not surprisingly, since he lived 200 yards from Imber Court and his own house was under four or five feet of water. He and his team from the battalion rescued stranded people, delivered food, helped with the clean-up and even arrested several looters who were handed over to the police – with a full set of lumps, knowing Alf. I of course, then aged 13, had a wonderful time: no school, running errands for Alf and generally getting in the way, returning home filthy and wet through – bliss.

Elsewhere, the Battalion's drill halls, especially those at Kingston, Chertsey and Cobham, were full of people made homeless and who were looked after by the battalion, an effort coordinated by the then CO, Lt Col Bill McConnell and the 2IC, Major Desmond Wilson.

The real irony was that the 6th Battalion was one of those non-NATO TA battalions, which were meant for exactly this sort of job - but which had been earmarked for disbandment under government cuts only a few weeks before. In the aftermath, some awkward questions were asked of the then government, but the cuts went ahead and the 6th Battalion – along with our 7th, 8th, 9th and 10th Battalions – was reduced to a cadre on 31 March 1969. Happily, the cadre was expanded again two years later and formed part of the new 6th, later 6th/7th Battalion.

# THE ULSTER WORKERS STRIKE MAY 1974

By Mike Hurman

While on Op SPEARHEAD, (high readiness battalion on standby for operations), 1 QUEENS was deployed at short notice to Belfast to assist Headquarters Northern Ireland (HQNI) during what was called the Ulster Workers Strike. We had recently just returned from a 4-month tour of Belfast in February so we were well tuned in to the task and knew the trouble spots of Belfast well.

The strike was called by the Unionists in opposition to the proposals of the Sunningdale agreement. In essence, a large section of the civil community staged a rebellion through strike action against the Crown and won. This was to be a rare event in British history. The Sunningdale agreement proposed that the Government of the Republic of Ireland would have a direct say in the running of the North. The Unionists were most unhappy with this idea. The power-sharing Northern Ireland Executive which had been formed to enable the Sunningdale agreement, was brought down by the strike. The Unionists accomplished their opposition through their strike actions. The 15-day strike deprived most of the population of food, water, electricity, gas, transport, money and impacted on every form of livelihood.

On 17 May 1974, 1 QUEENS, based at Kiwi Barracks in Bulford, was given notice to deploy to Belfast. By 23 May the Battalion was complete in Belfast. B Company departed RAF Brize Norton at 0100 hrs Thursday 23 May arriving at 0215hrs. We were then transported to Palace Barracks and fed some breakfast, before being moved on to Sunnyside TA centre in East Belfast.



The Protest



Ulster Workers Council Checkpoint

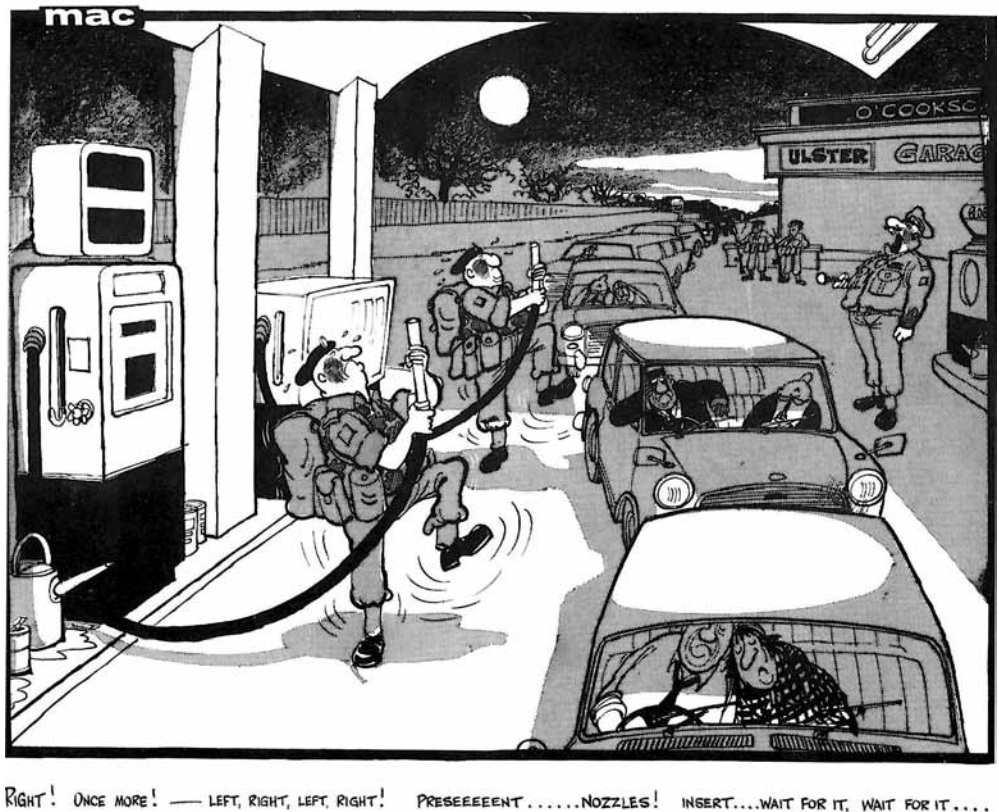
The centre had not been used for some three years. We needed to make it habitable, sweeping a thick layer of dust from our accommodation to the moans of "Join the Army, see the World, Join 1 QUEENS and sweep the .....clean". By 1900 hrs, we were operational and for the next two hours we familiarised ourselves with the area by foot and mobile patrols. At 2200 hrs that night, we were stood down to catch up on some well-earned rest.



The first days were quiet so we just patrolled some peaceful Protestant areas where we could get many cups of tea from the locals and establish ourselves in an area of Belfast that had not seen troops for some time. This made a pleasant change from our previous tours that were more full on with regular "Contact! Wait Out!" One memory was that the Sunnyside kerbstones were painted Red, White and Blue, a novel way to mark territory.

Then the mood of the peaceful protests and blockades throughout Belfast changed to open confrontation. The Battalion now took over providing essential services within our TAOR. B Company, commanded by Major Bob Acworth, took over the task of escorting fuel and bread deliveries with RCT and RMP assistance. 6 Platoon was commanded by Lt David Pollard. My section Commander was Cpl Brian Kelling and we delivered fuel to petrol stations within Belfast. One of the other rifle company escorts was immortalised

in a Mac cartoon after the RCT tanker driver refuelled a filling station's petrol tank with diesel. (I think it was on the Falls Road). Cars would break down soon after filling up! We also delivered fuel to outlying farms where we were welcomed with open arms and of course some excellent farmhouse teas! Another essential service was the 'bread and cake deliveries' to shops. We would collect from the Ormeau Bakery, which was just down the road from Sunnyside and deliver to the shops. Somehow I remember a few spare cakes ended up remaining in the back of the Pig escort vehicle for us to share out and eat later!



After one week of our essential delivery tasking, the strike ended, the Unionists had won and the Power Sharing Agreement ended. We were to move back to the UK on Wednesday 5th June, 12 hours before the 14 day deadline to receive the new £1.50p per day danger money, a bitter-sweet ending. Looking back, it is interesting to note that we played our part in an unusual historical event where the UK government was forced into a U-turn through strike action.





# CALLED UP TO FIREFIGHT

By Rob Hook

*"Fire!"* in military parlance is usually preceded by the words *"Ready, Aim..."*.

But in 1977 it was different. For the men of 3 QUEENS, it was another type of fire altogether. In 1977 the Fire Service went on strike over pay and conditions. Given it was 39 years ago, the details of the strike action are a distant memory. What remains after all these years are the incidents that occurred when we were called out. Here are some of my memories.

## Training

In preparation for being called up, we went to a military garrison in the north to do our training. We duly arrived and in the next 8 hours were given some basics as to what causes fires, how fires behave, why some fires are more serious than others and the things to watch out for when attending a fire. Of these the most dangerous was smoke inhalation, as we were not given breathing apparatus, and synthetic materials gave off noxious fumes in fires. All good stuff but then it got interesting. We were let loose on a real hose!

We learned how to connect different types of hoses, turn pumps on, aim the hoses at the base of the fire and had a jolly time getting soaking wet. Inevitably however, all good plans go south. The pressure in the hoses was significant and needed two men to keep them under control. Our hands were wet and cold, we were tired and in a flash the hose had slipped from our grasp. It went absolutely berserk. The nozzle, which is a serious lump of metal at the end of the hose, went crashing around like the wounded basilisk from a Harry Potter book. If it had hit anyone, they would have suffered serious injury. So how did this professional band of would-be fire fighters deal with it? To a man they all stood there looking at one another

with the kind of look that said *"Well why don't you do something?"* Eventually the trainer gave up waiting for a response and shouted *"Water off!"* and the hose relaxed. *"Why didn't you shout 'water off'?"* he bellowed. *"We thought that was an officer's job"* came the reply!

## The Green Goddess

A phone call came into a rural fire department all excited saying, *"Come quick, my barn's on fire, my barn's on fire."* The dispatcher said, *"Calm down now, just tell us how to get there."* The caller replied *"Oh, don't you have that big red truck anymore?"*

In 1977 we didn't have the shiny red trucks. What we had were dull green wagons dubbed *'Green Goddesses'*. They were rudimentary in the extreme. In essence, they were a large tank of water on wheels with attachments for a few hoses, and, for good measure, a ladder perched on top. As we were not an official emergency service, on call-outs we were forbidden to use blue lights, so we had a police escort everywhere. It was an exhilarating experience following a police car at full tilt with their sirens



going and blue lights flashing. It was the thrill of breaking almost every single rule in the Highway Code.

On our first outing, we tried to keep up with the lead car. We rounded a bend and then realised that the water in the tank was mobile! We careered across the road, mounting the far side pavement. We were tacking along the road as the water sloshed from side to side, the driver's eyes almost popping out on stalks as he wrestled for control, pedestrians diving for cover and road signs going down like nine-pins. When we stopped, there was a moment of absolute silence whilst we

took it all in. What happened next defined our stay in Liverpool. Everyone around the stationary engine clapped us and shouted words of encouragement. They came up and shook our hands saying how glad they were that we were doing our job and if we ever wanted anything we need only ask. Priceless!



### Getting it all wrong

One call out was memorable. Two cars had collided leaving one upside down. We parked up and unrolled the hoses and took stock. The police took control and after they had secured the scene, and the injured were taken care of, they suggested we move the cars. We pushed one out of the way then set about turning the other. We were just about to give it the old heave ho when a man came running gesticulating wildly. *"Don't move that car...."* We stopped and waited until he got closer. He was one of the Fire Managers who were not on strike, and had agreed to offer advice to the military. *"Why not?"* I asked. *"Look behind you"* he said pointing at our Green Goddess. All the while we were waiting, the upturned car had been leaking petrol which had flowed to form a perfect pool under the wagon. *"One scrape would have sent your Goddess skyward and most of you with it"*. Ooops!

### What did we learn?

My one big take-home point that I use to this day is the ability of the British Army as a whole and the Regiment in particular to respond to any emergency at short notice and do a great job. Whether it was taking military action or supporting the civil services, when the call came, we responded and, despite the appallingly bad equipment, did a great job.

Here's why. We have some of the finest serving soldiers and a well-trained officer corps. Combined, they are a formidable force wherever they are deployed. On top of that we have hundreds of years of experience in doing the difficult and overcoming. Hats off to everyone that took part.

There are many more memories that I have. But what about you, were you there? If you can recall them, I would be very happy to read them. Please forward them to the Editor who will no doubt publish them in future journals.

*(Ed: Allegedly, one call out required the rescue of an old lady's cat which was stuck up a tree. Unfortunately, after consuming the tea and cake provided by the grateful lady, they managed to run over the rescued cat on departure! This was reported on 'News at Ten', (thus enhancing the Army's reputation!) and Reginald Bosanquet, the ITN Newscaster, nearly got the sack for laughing!*





# PUTTING THE QUEEN'S BACK INTO THE PWRR & QUEEN'S MUSEUM

By Catherine Holt, Assistant Curator

## Background

As many of you will no doubt be aware, the Dover Museum was 'cutting edge' when constructed in the mid-1980s and very effectively provided an insight into the traditions of The Queen's Regiment and its forebears. However, the current museum does not reflect the 26 years of The Queen's Regiment and in particular its commitment to Northern Ireland and BAOR. This is something we hope to change in the near future.

## Op REVITALISE

The PWRR and Queen's Museum is planning a major refit project – Op REVITALISE. This project will allow the museum to modernise some of its current displays and also to re-rationalise the focus of the museum. There will be a much stronger emphasis put on both the PWRR and Queen's.

With the commencement of Op REVITALISE, we hope to get a much larger percentage of the collection on display to help illustrate The Queen's Regiment in much greater detail. This means we need to have a detailed understanding of what the collection consists of.

Since taking over as Assistant Curator of the museum in June of this year, I have already come across some very exciting objects related to The Queen's Regiment.

Recently, I came across a Queen's Regiment beret in a box. I noticed that it was damaged and decided to investigate further. What I found was a fascinating story. Sergeant Tom Creighton of the 3rd Battalion missed death by millimetres while on riot duty in Belfast. It happened during the night when terrorists ambushed his patrol. Tom's beret badge deflected a bullet which could have killed him. The bullet dented the badge and clipped the side of his beret, grazing his forehead. Sergeant Creighton dived for cover. It was only later when he retrieved his beret that he realised it had been one of the closest near misses in military history.

This is just one of many remarkable and exhilarating incidents from the 26 years of the Regiment's existence and these stories need to be told.

## How can you get involved?

In order for us to be able to tell these stories we need your help. We need objects for display. This could be anything from uniform, medals, equipment, certificates, photographs, anything that you would be willing to donate from your time serving in the regiment. More than physical objects, we also need your memories; we need as much information as you can give us about your time in the regiment, from the extraordinary events which took place to the day to day routine, all of it is part of a much bigger tapestry which makes up the history of the regiment.

It's your story! Only you can help us tell it.



# SURREY INFANTRY MUSEUM

By Stephen Johnson



Last year's article concentrated, not surprisingly, on the catastrophic fire at Clandon Park which destroyed the vast majority of the Surrey Infantry Museum's (SIM) collection. Nearly eighteen months on from the disaster, we are able to report more positively on what has been an extremely challenging period in the museum's history.

Returning briefly to the fire and its aftermath, the official Surrey Fire and Rescue Service report published in December 2015 concluded that the cause of the blaze was an electrical fault in the mains distribution board. A number of factors contributed to the ferocity of the blaze including the absence of bulkheads to prevent its spread, uncharted voids and flues acting as chimneys, the tinder-dry mostly wooden interior and a stiff westerly breeze, gusting to gale force which fanned the flames.

As previously suspected, it would appear that all the artefacts made of combustible material, both in the museum itself and the reserve collection in the attics above, have been lost. The salvage operation, carried out by professional archaeologists wearing full body suits and respirators due to the high level of toxic fire-residue, began in the autumn of 2015. The last of the debris, painstakingly sifted, was removed from the interior in May 2016: objects found in the wreckage had their locations carefully noted and were removed to storage where they were catalogued and sorted. The artefacts identified as museum property have been taken to the museum's restoration company in the Midlands for decontamination and cleaning: this process is ongoing and a clearer picture of what has survived will emerge over the next few months.



Salvage October 2015



Guildford Museum







The personal effects of Lt Col St B R Sladen, killed on 12th March 1918, commanding 1st Bn Queen's, by 'a shell whilst going around lines'



The medal group of Pte A W G Martin 1st Bn East Surreys, including the MM awarded at Tebourba, November 1942



The battledress tunic worn by Sgt Andrew Jones 1/5th QRR at the Victory Parade in Berlin, July 1945.

About 400 of the medals recovered from the drawers of the display cabinet, on the day following the fire, have already been returned: these medals had suffered only minor or no damage. Cleaned and with replacement ribbons, they are ready to be put back on display in a new custom-made cabinet along with a further 800 still undergoing restoration. We are hopeful that the remainder of the medal collection which was located in other areas throughout the museum will have survived, although some of these are likely to have sustained significant damage.

The museum administration is currently operating out of the Surrey History Centre in Woking: this is the county archive to which, with admirable foresight, the museum’s collection of documents and photographs was transferred about ten years ago. This can only be a temporary home, but we are discussing a proposal from Guildford Borough Council for the museum to move into the town’s local history museum as part of its refurbishment and extension project.

Meanwhile the museum continues to stay in the public eye by taking its pop-up display and living-history reenactors to venues and events across the county, such as the ‘Over The Top’ football tournament held on the 1st July 2016 exactly 100 years after the East Surrey’s ‘Football Charge’ on the opening day of the Somme.

We are increasingly confident that with the combination of new and restored objects there will be enough worthwhile content to warrant re-establishment of the Museum.

The Museum has also received a gratifying quantity of ‘new’ and interesting material from private donors to help rebuild the collection.

**Pristinae Virtutis Memor**

# PHOTO OF THE YEAR



Capt (later Col) Alain Chissel trying to keep his weapon dry!





# COMMEMORATIONS AND CELEBRATIONS

## CHELSEA AND BOB

*"I heard that Bob is beyond reproach as his Christian teetotal monastic existence means it's highly unlikely there will be any stories. So don't believe anything that gets sent to you!"*  
Message on Facebook after stories on the two had been requested – probably sent by Bob!

**Stephen Kilpatrick**



Bob Fisher and Chelsea Hall

The Army has finally got rid of Maj Chelsea Hall and WO2 (RQMS) Bob Fisher. It is believed that their story is a unique one. On their retirement in November, both had served man and boy in the Regiment, Regular and Reserves, for nearly 45 years. They share the same birthday and joined the Army as junior soldiers at Bassingborn Barracks on the 9th May 1972 aged 15 years old. Their careers have been intertwined. Not only did they join the Army together at the same place, on the same day; they served for many years in the same Battalion, 1 QUEENS, and were also selected for WO1 on the same day. Having then decided to take different paths, one choosing to commission, whilst the

other didn't, they both found themselves again together in 3 PWRR when they left the Army together on their 60th Birthday, 27th November 2016 having entertained many of their friends in their own inimitable way at a final bash in Leros Barracks.

I was fortunate enough to be amongst the many who served with Chelsea and Bob. Although I couldn't make it to their final dining-out event, I really wanted to say my piece.

In 1992 in Minden I was company commander of C Coy 1 QUEENS, of which Bob Fisher was the Company Sergeant Major, and I commanded 1 PWRR when Chelsea progressed from Families Officer and Parachuting Officer to Gunnery Officer, serving in Canterbury, Tidworth and Kosovo.

I use the term 'commander' but in truth it is not a term that accurately reflected our relationship, and there were times with both men when I felt that I was under their command, rather than the other way around. Let me explain.

I arrived in Minden from the Staff College, brimming with enthusiasm and doctrine. On my first day I strode into the Company Block at 0815 expecting to see the Company Sergeant Major (there was no Company 2IC at the time). I was told that he was away for a run. Some 45 minutes later, in walked this goliath of a man, with a big smile on his face but dripping with sweat. We shook hands and he sat down on a plastic chair in my office, and carried on chatting...and dripping. I was surprised at this and even more surprised the following morning when he did exactly the same thing. Is this the way things are done in the 1st Battalion, I wondered? So on the third morning, I fixed him. I moved the chair into the clerk's office across the corridor, and waited. He strode in, dripping and chatting, looked at me quizzically, wandered out, picked up the chair, brought it in to my office, sat down and carried on talking. And so the stage was set for the next 6 months. I feel that there was mutual respect but I never quite felt that I was fully in charge....and, I sense, nor did he.

He was a towering Sergeant Major both physically and mentally and the troops held him in awe. He thrashed us round the barracks on the 2-miler, and around Minden we ran, back and forth, because he felt like it. Professionally he took everything in his stride, and he never appeared taxed or flustered; but I will always remember how we laughed incessantly, because he never took life in Minden too seriously, and he knew that he had very little to prove to anyone, me in particular. We used to have to empty the company phone box, and would have a wager as to how much money there was before we counted. He always won, and I swear he must have counted it the night before.

Bob as a soldier was intensely professional, frighteningly fit and hugely capable. Bob as a bloke is the epitome of loyalty to his friends, peers and subordinates. He was very loyal to me and I count myself very fortunate to have served with him.

Whilst serving in Minden, I encountered Chelsea Hall for the first time, since he was Company Sergeant Major to Les Edwards in B Company. I just remember him as the most voluble soldier I had ever met. When I had the good fortune to assume command of 1 PWRR, I raised an eyebrow to learn that he was the Families Officer. Knowing that I had a 5 Brigade 'pass' from Hereford to attend the jumps course, he bullied me into cashing it in. He is the only reason that I completed it, knowing that I would have to front up to him if I had left the course. I hated jumping, but I just couldn't face the prospect of letting Chelsea down.

Everyone knows Chelsea. You cannot be in the same barracks – let alone the same room – as him and fail to know he is there. Hugely enthusiastic, and by golly he can talk. He was an unlikely but effective Families Officer, not least because he was a brilliant foil to the 'good cop' of the padre. He would allow the Padre to say his piece then add....*"what the Padre is saying, Private Smith, is that you are a useless little scroat and if you marry this girl, then, whilst the Army might have to give you a quarter by law, I can guarantee that she will have left you within 3 months for a lad in C Coy and you will be left to pay all the bills. Do you understand, you little moron?"*

Chelsea became the Battalion Gunnery Officer for our move to Tidworth and against advice and convention I made him my vehicle gunner. I did so because he was such good company, and I knew I could rely on him to stand by me in a fight. He proved this in Kosovo, where, if I had let him, he would have taken the fight to the enemy and no doubt won a VC - posthumously. After one firefight, I found him giving an interview to camera for a visiting media crew that began....*"Yeah, it's a fair one. Today NATO got its backside kicked and we had to bail them out!"*

Chelsea, like Bob, does not adhere too rigidly to rules and he views them more as vague guidelines. I recall an occasion when he drove a military vehicle from Canterbury to Thetford. By the time he arrived, we had received three complaints from fellow drivers regarding his driving. He seemed to struggle in particular with roundabouts. But even then the interview without coffee turned into farce amidst gales of laughter.

I ought to correct one popular misconception, that Chelsea is a good navigator. This is tosh, he is useless and could not find his way out of a paper bag, let alone get us across Salisbury Plain in the dark. But for all that, he was just brilliant for me in the Battalion, and he, like Bob, always saw the funny side of any situation.

When people talk about soldiers 'being the salt of the earth', they have blokes like Bob and Chelsea in mind. Professional, enthusiastic, humorous and loyal. For me it was an absolute privilege to serve with both of them.

### Patrick Crowley

It is extremely sad to see both Chelsea Hall and Bob Fisher retire after such long and dedicated service to the Regiment. I have known them both since the 1980s when I was serving as a platoon commander in 1 QUEENS. Subsequently, Chelsea and I served at the same time with 1 PWRR when I was OC B Coy, then Bn 2IC.

These two men are stalwarts, who have served Queen and Country and their Regiment proudly for a very long time. They have also helped shape the lives of many dedicated soldiers, both regulars and reservists. They are both loyal enthusiasts whose lives have been dominated by the Regiment and what it has done; whether in Northern Ireland or other operational hotspots more recently. And let us not forget their contribution in the Cold War, which seems a long time ago now. More recently, they have been pivotal in the development of the new Army Reserve, within the 3rd Battalion, leading the way for other Reserve units to follow.

You will both be sorely missed and I wish you all the best in the future as you become part of another section of the Regimental family – the Veterans.

*(Ed: I too have served with both Bob and Chelsea and their loyalty to the Queen's Regiment has been continually manifested in the support they have given me as Association Secretary over the last 4 years. They were and still are top blokes!)*





# THE INDIAN DEFENCE SERVICES STAFF COLLEGE AND THE QUEEN'S REGIMENT

On Sunday 18 September, Lt Col Rajendra Pal Singh, 3rd Battalion, The Parachute Regiment (Special Forces), Indian Army, met the President and Secretary to present them (and Brig Mike Constantine and Maj Douglas McCully who were unable to attend) with copies of "Ode to The Owl", a celebration of The Indian Defence Services Staff College, of which all four Queen's officers were alumni. The celebration included a message from The Honourable President of India, Shri Pranab Mukherjee extending his warm greetings and felicitations.

Lt Col RP Singh, who attended the college in the same year as the President, was accompanied by his family. Col Beattie was accompanied by his son, Nicholas, who was born at the College in 1983.

The 3rd Parachute Regiment was formerly 94 Russell's Infantry, raised on 8 March 1813 by Sir Henry Russell, British Resident in the Court of the Nizam of Hyderabad. Major Goulden's father was sometime physician to The Nizam of Hyderabad (deposed in 1948) during part of the 1960s.

L-R Nicholas Beattie, Mrs Mira Singh, Col Anthony Beattie, Lt Col RP Singh, Maj Alasdair Goulden, Mrs Nadia Singh, Shri Giri Singh, Shri Gooch Singh



Lt Col R P Singh  
presenting  
The Editor  
with his copy of  
'Ode to the Owl'

# FRED TREE'S 100TH BIRTHDAY AT BLIND VETERANS UK

By Peter Swanson



Fred cuts his cake

Fred Tree was born in Wales but moved with his family to Hastings where he spent his childhood. He enlisted as a Regular into the Queen's Royal Regiment in 1934. He was initially posted to the 2nd Battalion and was on parade for the visit of King George V and Queen Mary to Aldershot in April 1934. He was subsequently posted to the 1st Battalion in India where he served for several years. During WW2 he fought with 2nd/5th Battalion the Queen's Royal Regiment and was a corporal with the Battalion when it landed as part of 169 (Queen's) Brigade at Salerno (famously commemorated in the picture now hanging in RHQ). In the heavy fighting that ensued after the landing, the relatively lightly equipped Brigade resisted and held the line against a ferocious German counter-attack by a panzer division. Fred was badly wounded and captured during the battle and spent the rest of the war in prison hospitals and camps, returning home in 1945. His leg wound never fully healed and sadly resulted in amputation below the knee. After medical discharge, he lived in Luton, where he worked for Vauxhall Motors until retirement. With his sight deteriorating in later life, he lived with his daughter for 10 years before his condition required more permanent care and three years ago he was granted a residential place at Blind Veterans UK.



Fred as a young man on joining



Some of Fred's 300 birthday cards

Fred with all his Regimental visitors





Fred celebrated his 100th Birthday on 25 April and a concerted campaign by the South East Reserve Forces and Cadets Association (Fred Hughes) and our own Association Secretary resulted in him receiving some 300 birthday cards to help him feel remembered. These were all proudly displayed in Fred's room and were greatly appreciated by Fred and his family. Lt Col Peter Swanson mustered a number of former Queen's Royal Regiment veterans to join Fred's family for a birthday afternoon. These included: Col Toby Sewell, a veteran of 2nd/7th during the Italian campaign; Patrick Murphy, Sidney Levy and Steven Birchmore from the 6th (Bermondsey) Battalion OCA, themselves veterans of 1st Queen's in Malaya 1954-56; Eric Lockwood, formerly of the Queen's Royal Regiment and son of the RSM of 2nd/7th at the time of Salerno. Colin Reilly from 'All the Queen's Men' Re-enactment Group arrived in full battledress, blanced belt and anklets and sporting the badges of 56 London Division of which 169 Brigade had been a part. It was excellent that SERFCA and the CO authorised the attendance of soldiers from the 3 PWRR Brighton Company: the PSI and two soldiers appeared immaculately turned out in No 2 Dress and presented Fred with a gift of a PWRR Regimental family tree, and had a good chat to Fred.

In addition to a lot of talking about old times and the Queen's, Blind Veterans had organised one of their routine afternoon entertainment sessions and Fred and other residents were treated to an abundance of old songs sung by a most attractive girl dressed in the style of the 1940s. A cream tea and mass singing of Happy Birthday with a fantastic cake crowned proceedings, by which time Fred was ready to stand easy. It really was a great privilege to be able to celebrate the 100th birthday of this old soldier of one of our forebear regiments and especially a man who had been at the Salerno landings, one of the Regiment's most notable battle honours.

### Steve Richards

I had the great pleasure of meeting up with Cpl Fred Tree, 2nd Battalion The Queen's Royal Regiment, at Blind Veterans UK, Ovingdean near Brighton. What a gentleman he is, staunchly proud of his service in the regiment.

We had a great conversation mainly about our military service. Fred served from 1933 till he was medically discharged at the end of WW2 in 1945. Fred unfortunately lost his leg due to injuries he received in Italy. Having been shot in the hip, he was captured by the Germans, and spent two and a half years in the Military Hospital; nobody in the hospital spoke English, and Fred didn't speak German, and as he told me *"I didn't want to learn their language for what they had done to my mates!"*. Fred did say that they treated him well. Eventually Fred was liberated by the Americans. He was shipped back to England to an American Field Hospital in Dorset, whereupon Fred's parents were informed that he was indeed alive. Fred told me that he remembered it like it was yesterday. *"There he was stood at the end of my bed, my dad, it was very emotional."* As he told me, he had a tear in his eye.

I had the pleasure of meeting Fred's daughters, his grandchildren and his great-grandchildren. Fred's daughter pointed to the drawer near Fred's bed. She opened it and pointed out all the birthday cards Fred had been receiving since it was announced by the Association that he would be 100 years old on 25 April 2016. God Bless you Fred.



Steve Richards with Fred



Col Toby Sewell with Fred

## THE QUEENS' REGIMENTAL ASSOCIATION WEDDING OF THE YEAR

Dick Scales, Secretary of the Farnham Branch, finally made an honest woman of his partner Sharon at the Farnham Legacy Hogs Back Hotel on Saturday 23rd April. Marsha Hayward was Maid of Honour and Steve Hayward was Best Man – all are Association members. Sharon and Dick rolled down the aisle on Marsha's "scoot", suitably bedecked with flowers and the accompanying music was the opening bars of "Ride of the Valkyries". We wish them well!



## HASTINGS BRANCH 50TH

By Trevor Foord

On Saturday 20 August 2016, the Hastings Branch held a parade to mark the 50th anniversary of the formation of The Queen's Regiment. We formed up in the town centre on Saturday 20th August and marched through the town, being honoured by Colonel Anthony Beattie, the Association President, taking the salute and addressing the parade. The numbers were not as good as we would have liked, but we went ahead anyway. The Union Flag and four Standards were paraded.

After the parade we repaired to the Clarence Public House for refreshments where we presented an engraved glass tankard to Colonel Beattie, and a bouquet of flowers to the Mayor, who also attended.

The landlord of the Clarence Public House allowed us to use his function room at no cost and donated a barrel of beer for our refreshment. We also had a raffle with many prizes. Mr Martin Potter, ex 3 QUEENS and 1 R SUSSEX took the photos.



A few of the old and bold



Peter White and Col AAA Beattie





The Standard Bearers



Col AAA Beattie addresses the parade



Start of the March

# CHICHESTER BRANCH

## 50TH AND 69TH

By Eddie Drew

The Royal Sussex and The Queen's Regimental Associations held a 50th Anniversary Dinner at the City Club in Chichester to celebrate the formation of the Regiment on 31 December 1966. It was well attended by Members, Ladies, the guest of honour, the Mayor of Chichester and other guests including Mick Kippin, who started out with the Royal Sussex, later Queen's, before transferring to the Intelligence Corp. He is now a Chelsea Pensioner! Mick Kippin was granted Honorary Membership by the members of the QRA Chichester Branch.

We all sat down to a fantastic roast beef dinner followed by mixed fruit crumble.

After the Toast and presentations John White led the singing of *'Sussex by the Sea'*. Everybody was in fine voice and a good time was had by all.

PS The real reason for the dinner was to celebrate the Chairman, Dave Tilley's, 69th Birthday. He wanted a big do! Once again all were in good voice as we sang *'Happy Birthday'* to him. He did a runner when somebody shouted to give him the bumps!







# REMEMBRANCE SERVICE

AT THE BRITISH CEMETERY (O CEMITERIO DOS INGLESES),  
ELVAS, PORTUGAL

By Kevan Milsom

At 1100hrs on 11 November 2015, a few ex-pats from Gibraltar and Santa Margarita Spain, Stewart Streeting, 1 QUEENS and 2 PWRR, Mark Bates, 3RGJ, Neil Holding, COLDM GDS, Kevan Milsom, 1 QUEENS and 1 PWRR and June Brooker attended the service at the British Cemetery in Elvas, Portugal to remember the Fallen.

The ceremony was hosted by Stewart, who gave an outstanding account of why everybody should halt for the 2 minutes silence. June read the poem 'In Flanders Fields'. We all played a part in this momentous occasion with Mark laying a wreath for The Middlesex Regiment, Neil laying a wreath for The Buffs/QUEENS and I laid a wreath for the PWRR.

Representatives from the Portuguese Army and the Spanish Army laid wreaths in honour of their fallen; three chaplains were present to give sermons including the Queen's Chaplain.

We had attended the Remembrance service in Gibraltar on the 8th November but being in Elvas at the ceremony on the 11th made it an even more special and heartfelt event.

I would recommend that if anyone is interested in history and has the time next November to attend the ceremony at the British Cemetery in Elvas. You will not be disappointed and we will see you there.



The British Cemetery, Elvas

## A Poem for Remembrance

*We gather this day in numbers vast,  
To remember the fallen that have died in the past.  
They gave their lives without remorse,  
So that we could progress as a mighty force.  
Let us never forget what they gave on their day,  
So I'll be there next year remembering this day.*

## DUE RECOGNITION!

*I have always rather prided myself on an ability to remember names and faces - particularly of soldiers I have had the privilege to command - and thereby to apply one to the other. At the 2015 AGM and Reunion I noticed a young man whom I was sure I knew but simply could not place exactly. During a conversation with him, unfortunately truncated due to whatever was going on, I said to him, 'I am sure I know who you are. Don't tell me, but by the end of lunch it will have come to me and I will remember where we served together.' He replied, 'Yes, I think I remember you too.' We parted company to eat.*

*During lunch it came to me and I recalled he had been a drummer called \*\*\*\*\*with 3 QUEENS in Cyprus when I was CO. Pleased as punch, I went up to him and said who I thought he was. 'That's right', he said, 'and I remember you: you was the \*\*\*kin' Bandmaster!' Collapse of stout party.*

Anthony Beattie

# SOMME 2016

## THE UNIQUE COMMEMORATION FOOTBALL TOURNAMENT

By Patrick Crowley

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The game of football is highlighted a few times in the history of The Great War, including the informal playing of the game by British and German troops during the famous Christmas truce of 1914 and the 'Loos Football', kicked into No Man's Land by Sergeant Frank Edwards of the London Irish Rifles in 1915, as the Battalion assaulted enemy trenches at the Battle of Loos. Arguably, the most famous of the footballing stories is that of the 8th (Service) Battalion of the East Surrey Regiment on the first day of the Battle of the Somme.

On 1 July 1916, a number of footballs, different sources say two, three or even four, were kicked 'over the top' just before 'Zero Hour', 0730 hours, by The East Surreys, to encourage the attack. The commanding officer had agreed that they could be dribbled across No Man's Land, *'on condition that he and his officers really kept command of their units and didn't allow it to develop into a rush for the ball'*.

The idea belonged to OC B Coy, Capt Wilfred 'Billie' Nevill, who had purchased some footballs on his last leave trip to Blighty. He was a popular officer who looked after his soldiers and studied his men's characteristics and motivation. Football was a popular pastime of the battalion and Capt Nevill believed that the use of footballs in the assault would calm his men. Prior to the attack, one football had '6' and 'B' written on it; 6 Platoon, B Company. One ball had chalked on 'The Great European Cup-Tie Final. East Surreys v Bavarians. Kick off at zero'. Another had 'NO REFEREE' written on it.

The battalion had moved into the forward trenches on 30 June, nearing the end of the 7-day British artillery bombardment. There had been three days of rain, leaving water in the trenches, though the 30th was sunny and warm. The troops hoped that the enemy wire had been cut. During the night, B Coy helped move friendly wire out of the way. However, enemy gunfire hit their trench and the unit lost three dead and ten wounded before the attack had begun. Breakfast of rum, bread, biscuits and chocolates was brought up to the men by men of the 7th Queen's Own Royal West Kents and at 0630 hours a mist lifted to reveal a clear blue sky and what was to be a hot day. Both battalions were in 55th Brigade, which had the objective of securing the western end of Montauban Ridge and the village of Montauban. Other units in the brigade were 7th Queen's (Royal West Surreys) and 7th Buffs. All these battalions were forebears of the The Queen's Regiment.



At the Commemoration Service L-R Penny Mordant MP, (Armed Forces' Minister), Mr Michael More-Molyneux (HM Lord-Lieutenant for Surrey), Col Patrick Crowley, Dame Penelope Keith and Sgt Johnson Beharry VC





Col Patrick Crowley (Dep Col PWRR and ex-Queensman) and Lance Sergeant Johnson Beharry VC



The troops watch the football





The East Surreys were told that *"All ranks are reminded that it is absolutely forbidden to use the word 'Retire' for any purpose. It can only originate from the enemy"*. The Battalion had a frontage of 300 yards, B Coy left forward and C Coy right forward, however, B Coy had the furthest to go to reach the German front line of trenches; 400 yards. As the attack began, Private Price of the 8th Royal Sussex recorded:

*"I saw an infantryman climb onto the parapet into No Man's Land, beckoning the others to follow. As he did so he kicked off a football; a good kick, the ball rose and travelled well towards the German line. That seemed to be the signal to advance."*

Different sources state that B Coy's second-in-command, Lt Bobby Soames, and Pte Fursey kicked two balls forward. They reached the enemy trenches within twenty minutes, but it was during this short period that most of the casualties took place, including Capt Nevill, who was seen carrying a grenade and was shot through the head. Unlike most of the Somme attacks, this one was relatively successful with all objectives captured by 1330 hours. It was, however, at great expense. 50% of the East Surreys were dead, wounded or missing, including seven officers killed and seven wounded. For just this action, the Battalion was awarded two Distinguished Service Orders, two Military Crosses, two Distinguished Conduct Medals, one bar to the Military Medal and 8 Military Medals. Amidst the bad British news of the day, in which there were nearly 60,000 casualties, of whom about 20,000 were dead, this was some good news that the newspapers made the most of. It spawned these lines in the Daily Mail:

*On through the hail of slaughter,  
Where gallant comrades fall.  
Where blood is poured like water,  
They drive the trickling ball.  
The fear of death before them,  
Is but an empty name:  
True to the land that bore them,  
The SURREYS played the game.*

A unique commemoration based on the East Surreys' football story took place at Surrey University's Guildford Sports Park on 1 July 2016, to mark the Centenary of the Battle of the Somme and the ultimate sacrifices made by the soldiers from the South East of England. Our successor, The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment, ABF the Soldiers' Charity, the South East Reserves' and Cadets' Association and Surrey University put a special one-off event together. Eighteen civilian and Army football teams enjoyed playing football together all day; it was a mixture of men, women, cadets and local schools having fun. The final between the Royal Logistic Corps and Guildford Football Club was won by the Royal Logistic Corps.

There then followed a poignant commemoration ceremony led by the Lord-Lieutenant of Surrey, Mr Michael More-Molyneaux, with poems read by Dame Penelope Keith. Descendants of Billie Nevill awarded souvenir medals to all those footballers who participated in the days events. One



Nevill's Grave



The remaining surviving original football kicked 'over the top' on 1 July 1916, on display at the Queen's Museum Dover Castle





of the original footballs still survives and is normally in the regimental museum at Dover Castle. For the ceremony in Guildford, this 'sacred emblem' was on display, next to a new replica ball, which replaces the other original ball which was destroyed in the fire at Clandon House, near Guildford, in April 2015.

Everyone had remembered the fallen and the sacrifices made by our forebears, the soldiers of the South East of England at the battle of the Somme, in a unique and moving manner.

# THE WESSEX BRANCH TRIP TO THE WESTERN FRONT

By Billy Bolton

In March this year, it being the 100th anniversary of the Battle of the Somme, and in particular the anniversary of the death of Capt Wilfred (Billie) Nevill, OC B Coy 8th East Surreys, we decided that a visit to his final resting place was in order.

We set off from Wiltshire at some ungodly time on Friday morning bound for the Port of Dover. After a pretty dreadful breakfast on board and disembarking, we proceeded to our first stop of the trip: the new WW1 museum called Lens 14-18. This is to be found near the village of Souchez which is about half way between Arras and Lens in the Pas-de-Calais region of France. Only opened in the summer of 2015, we thought it sadly lacking. However, just up the hill is the French National War Cemetery at Ablain St-Nazaire which is definitely worth a visit. It is the world's largest French military cemetery. Adjoining this is the also highly impressive, newly built Ring of Remembrance which

records the individual names of every soldier killed in The Great War in alphabetical order regardless of nationality. After a thought provoking couple of hours we, in time-honoured military tradition and holding back the urge to whistle, *'Inky Pinky Parlez Vous'*, sought solace in the local *'estaminet'* (or tavern to those of you who voted Brexit!) to sample the local ale.

Our business done, we set off north, leaving France heading to Ypres in Belgium. Driving around this region is interesting as the road signs read like a list of battle honours. Bethune, Armentieres, Comines, Poperinge, Messines and Hazebrouck to name but a few. Having checked into a very fine hotel in the centre of the old



At The Menin Gate



Billy Bolton being Billie Nevill at Carnoy

town, we changed and, having dusted off our tonsils in the bar, made our way to the Menin Gate in readiness for the famous Last Post ceremony, all sporting our Queen's Regiment berets. This was a profoundly moving experience and we couldn't recommend attending highly enough. Red meat and red wine were then taken aplenty before retiring to our respective dugouts in readiness for Saturday and the main reason for the trip.

After a wholesome Belgian breakfast we set off south again, back into France heading for the Somme, and the tiny village of Carnoy, where just outside is the cemetery where Billie Nevill lies. We parked by the cemetery and had a quick walk around, the weather it should be said was glorious, especially so given the time of year! As we were putting our boots on we overheard English voices discussing their plans – this turned out to be a pair of extremely well-upholstered ex-members of the RAF Regiment! After the obligatory quips by both sides about the 'Five Miler of Death', off they waddled, dressed as if they were going to spend several weeks in the field. We too then set off; our mission was to try and find the actual trench positions of B Coy, 8 Surreys on 1st July 1916. As we strolled through the village we were unexpectedly reunited with our Rockape chums heading back in the direction from which they came and who, red in face from both exertion and embarrassment, confessed to having left their water behind in their car! We did very well not to laugh too loudly.....

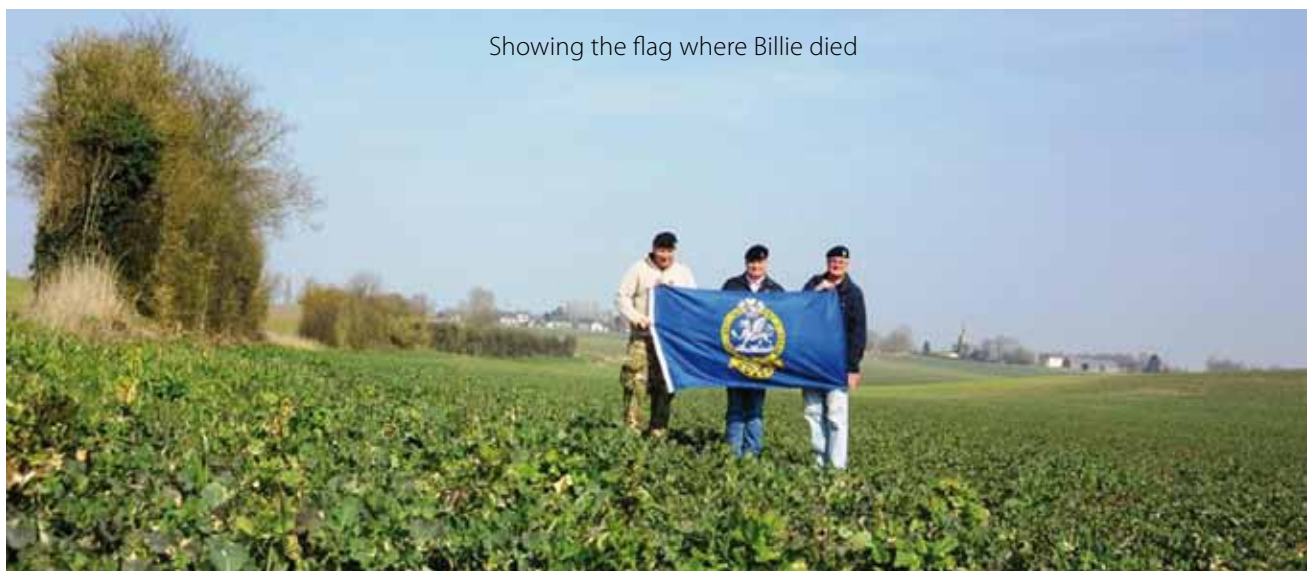
With the help of contemporary aerial photographs, maps and Tommo's painstaking research, we found the front line and indeed, where B Coy's trenches would have been. After a quick photo call, we then set off in the direction of Mametz and the German wire as Billie and his men had done nearly a hundred years before. It was a sobering occasion to be honest; it took us about half an hour to cover the ground that had taken the Surreys nearly a

day. There was no one else around but one couldn't help sensing the presence of those who had made the same journey all those years ago. Having reached the German line, we paused to remember Billie, for this was where he died, and his men, our forebears, made the ultimate sacrifice on the Western Front.

The return march from Mametz was brisk as lunch was calling. From the sunken road we could once again see the Short Range Desert Patrol Group, this time bimbbling around on the distant skyline and presumably well-watered but clearly lost. After a little longer in the cemetery (where we would have laid wreaths and planted crosses had someone remembered to bring them) and some re-enactment by another Capt Billy, we bade farewell to Capt Billie and went to Albert for lunch.

In the afternoon, on the way back to 'Wipers', we stopped at several of the many CWGC cemeteries en route including Thiepval, all of them, large or small, beautifully maintained and humbling. The Saturday evening crowds at the Menin Gate were heaving and overly populated by noisy school children, so we opted to watch the ceremony from the sanctity of the closest pub. Whilst blowing the froth off a couple of Belgium's finest, we were approached by a fellow who had recognised our ties – a small world, he turned out to be a one-time bandsman from the 2nd Battalion whose name sadly went missing as the evening progressed.

On Sunday morning we checked out reasonably early so we could visit Tyne Cot cemetery and then the Passchendaele Museum in Zonnebeke where we bumped into Piers Storie-Pugh, before heading back to catch our ferry. So impressed were we by what we'd seen, we will mount a similar trip early next year, the planning for which has already started. Wait out for further news.







# BENEVOLENCE

## INTRODUCING QUEENSMAN ROCKET

By Alasdair Goulden

This is an introduction to 'Queensman Rocket', whom the Association has acquired (paid for!) for one of our members, Tony (China) Robinson. Rocket is being trained as a medical alert dog specialising in pain detection. China's first, and, as far as we are aware, the only trained pain detection dog in the UK, called 'Ssafa', is now 10 years old and is coming to the end of her time in this specialised role. Rocket needs approximately 18 months to be trained to take on Ssafa's role. China suffers from a very debilitating condition which leaves him in pain continually and his condition is subject to surges in the level of pain he experiences. Ssafa's role, and now Queensman Rocket's, is to detect when this surge is about to happen. The dog is then able to warn China that a surge is on its way, allowing him to increase his drug dose to cope with it. By doing this he avoids the need to rush by ambulance to hospital for treatment and reduces the stress on his family. I am sure that you will welcome Queensman Rocket to the Regimental family and wish China, his family, Rocket and of course Ssafa, in her retirement, every good wish.

Queensman Rocket is just one of the requests for help that have been received so far this year. In 2015 a total of 69 cases were investigated and 67 individual grants-in-aid were approved totalling £109,891.28. In the majority of cases the grants were for household expenses, debts and rent arrears. The Benevolent Fund paid out a total of £21,198 as individual grants-in-aid, having arranged for the remainder to be paid from other sources thus preserving our own funds.

All ex-members of the Regiment and their families are entitled to apply for help. To receive help, the first port of call is to SSAFA (the Charity not the hound!) by phoning 0800 731 4880. They will assess the requirements and make a recommendation to the Trustees of the Benevolent Fund. This ensures that we comply with the rules laid down by the Charities Commission and your money is not given to someone not entitled to receive it.

Help can be arranged very quickly and you are urged to get in touch straight away if you have a problem and we will do our utmost to help. Don't delay – get in touch!

Should you wish to donate to the Benevolent Fund you can do so by visiting [www.queensregimentalassociation.org](http://www.queensregimentalassociation.org) and clicking on the "Donate" button. Alternatively you can send a cheque, made out to The Queen's Regiment Benevolent Fund, to The Secretary, 5 Alfred Square, Deal, Kent, CT14 6LU, not forgetting to Gift Aid it if eligible to do so!



Queensman Rocket

# FAN DANCE

By John Rickson

Inspired by a report that the Benevolent Fund had helped out one of our number, four of us decided to do something to raise a bit of cash for the fund. We had all served together during the 1980s and remained good friends over the years, meeting up for the odd social event and Remembrance Sunday.

It's not the first time any of us have undertaken tough events in the twilight of our youth. Mark Birch, Jerry Pickers and John Rickson, had already completed the PARA 10 held at Catterick 2007, and Mark went back for more and completed the PARA 10 at Colchester twice.

Mark B is on the Royal British Legion committee for Pettswood Branch and I am the Standard Bearer. After completing a parade and having a few too many beers, Mark suggested we put a team together to undertake one of the toughest events in the UK, the Fan Dance. To be honest people didn't take much convincing, but this was largely down to the fact that we had all consumed too much alcohol.

Our journey began early in Dec 2015 with a few light runs and meeting up for a chat about training methods etc, sharing ideas on the best recovery methods. Mark aka Birchie swears by a good old ice bath, although some of his colleagues were not convinced, it was more to do with the fear of losing their middle stump!

The training went very well. Graham Warne, aka Scrawney, took a different approach and covered a lot of miles on his road bike, which I believe is a great method and holds less chance of any injuries. He regularly met up with Jerry Pickers







in Beckenham (Kent). This became known as "Beck y Ham". Birchie trained with and without weight, and met up with Jerry for a tab or two at Beck y Ham.

The full story can be seen at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=04rVDDmBH9c](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=04rVDDmBH9c) with the "stars" of the film being :

Jerry Pickers - SF nickname "Lofty"  
Graham Warne - SF nickname "Dinger" -  
Mark Birch - SF nickname "Legs" -  
John Rickson - SF nickname "Length"



This confirmed what I have always said about ex-forces, "You can take the man out of the Army, but you can't take the Army out of the man."

(Ed: They completed the Fan Dance on 9 July and in the process raised a magnificent £3,257.39 not including the 25% Gift Aid that we can claim from the Government! A truly outstanding effort!)

## COMMANDING OFFICER MEMORIES

*When commanding the 1st Battalion in Belfast in 1975, I would periodically go out with a patrol on the streets. On one occasion I was part of a four man 'brick' somewhere in the New Lodge when a group of underage yobbos started stoning us. It was not very pleasant. Two members of the patrol were black and as the local yobbos were unfamiliar with our West Indian brethren, the patrol commander shouted to one of the black soldiers to "sort it out". He immediately yelled across to his black mate on the other side of the street: "Eh Rastus, ah's feeling hungry". The youths, presuming that they were cannibals, disappeared with alacrity.*

John Davidson

*I was reminded of a 1 QUEENS TEWT in 1977 somewhere deep in the War Zone when we gathered under the eagle eye of some Brigadier, with our map boards at the high port, peering into the distance over the very area where the Russians would shortly arrive. The first task, as ever, was to "Describe the Ground" in the set format 'Left, Centre, Right' etc. When 2Lt F\*\*\*wit (whose name I will keep secret to spare his blushes) was tasked he replied "Very pretty country, Brigadier!" Pea-brained Subalterns at their best!*

(Ed: On this occasion it wasn't me!)

Paddy Panton

# My Charles Millman Moment



Brigadier Charles Millman  
OBE ADC

Judging by the number of CM (Charles Millman aka Dustbin Charlie) stories that appeared in the 2015 Journal, those who were not ...er... fortunate enough to have served under him in 1 QUEENS might be forgiven for thinking they had missed something. You did! I have some sympathy for Roddy Mellotte (*Buck House Billy*) with his rusty gun (more on this in a minute), but only a little for our President (AAAB) who, had he sought my advice, should have worn service dress trousers and a greatcoat buttoned up to the neck over his pyjamas!

I, together with many other Diehards from the disbanded 4 QUEENS, was posted to 1 QUEENS at Lingfield a few months before the battalion moved to Berlin in 1970. I took-over the anti-tank platoon from Roddy, thus relieving him of any further risk from a rusty WOMBAT.

In due course, it was my turn to be the Orderly Officer. I don't remember doing many. I think there must have been quite a few subalterns' best friends taking the strain. I progressed through the list of duties that were all too familiar to the seasoned subaltern until I arrived at the MT department. Now, there are places, such as the MTO's and QM's departments, in which subalterns should never loiter, even if they are the Orderly Officer acting as the CO's representative. These fiefdoms were ruled by what appeared to be grizzly, old warriors who had been RSMs; had been elevated in rank, and still had a part to play in a young officer's military education. I had no time to loiter before I was accosted by the MTO, Frank Oram, in a none too friendly manner, who enquired as to what the hell was I doing in his vehicle shed. Having had my fair share of 'wise words' from similar warriors such as Pat Donovan, Jimmy Wild, Tom McMillan and Ron Morris in 1 MX and 4 QUEENS, I declared that I was the Orderly Officer and was inspecting his shed to ensure that there were no discarded toffee papers lying around. This left Frank speechless long enough for me to inform him that I was content that his shed was clean before making a hasty exit. I think we got on quite well after that.

Later that night, I visited the guardroom unannounced and ordered the guard to stand-to for inspection. This they did, but I was left with the impression that this was something they did not normally expect from the Orderly Officer.

The following morning, I reported to the Adjutant; probably the same person who had had no sympathy for Roddy. His opening remarks left me in no doubt that tongues had been wagging. Linking the adjutant's and CO's offices was a small hatch with a sliding shutter. As I started to make my defence against the accusation of overstepping my authority, the shutter was suddenly thrust open. The hatch was just big enough for CM to get his head through. The sudden appearance of his florid features like some grotesque cuckoo clock looked very undignified and just a little amusing. Now, I had also had my fair share of COs 'wise words' so was preparing myself for the worst. "Don't you take any nonsense from that young officer. I knew him when I was DQ (DAA&QMG) of 39 Brigade in Northern Ireland!" - or similar words. With that, the head withdrew and the shutter slammed shut. Left facing the adjutant, I was determined to stand my ground. This I did successfully without incurring any extras!

It must be said that the generous and understanding manner in which CM integrated such a large contingent from 4 QUEENS into his battalion is worthy of note - (17 officers and 250 NCOs and men). This and the esprit de corps so evident set the Battalion up for a very successful tour in Berlin under our new CO, Lt Col Tony Pielow.

Roger Gancz

*(Ed: Never has one Colonel of the Regiment generated so many urges to burst into print. I think that CM has had sufficient exposure and perhaps it is time for stories of our other Colonels to be aired. Please send them in for the 2017 Edition!)*





# OBITUARIES AND MEMORIES

## WO1 (RSM) JACK CHAFFER MM 1924 – 2015

By Bryn Evans



**A veteran of the Grenadier Guards in World War II who led a life of service and set an example for everyone**

On 8 December 1941, the day after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Jack Chaffer presented himself at the Caterham Barracks of the Grenadier Guards' recruitment office. He was only seventeen, but stated that he was eighteen to gain acceptance. Jack was a strapping six feet tall, and the recruiting sergeant quickly had him signing the papers. Like many other recruits, before he sailed in early 1942 with the 5th Battalion Grenadier Guards for the North African campaign, Jack married the girl he loved, Doll.

Jack served with 5 GREN GDS through the Tunisian and Italian campaigns of the Second World War, in momentous battles such as Djebel Bou Aoukaz and Longstop Hill in Tunisia, and Salerno, Anzio, Cassino and the Gothic Line in Italy. After being blown up by a mine north of Rome he was hospitalised in Orvieto. A few months later Jack returned to the Grenadiers to win the Military Medal in the Tuscan Apennines on the Gothic Line, for outstanding courage, coolness and efficiency under enemy fire.

At the end of the war in Europe, Jack was redeployed almost immediately with the Battalion to Scotland. Whatever the Army's reason for this move, it seemed that reuniting with his wife Doll, his family and friends in Kingston-upon-Thames in Surrey, seemed farther away than ever. In late 1946, Jack was promoted to Company Quartermaster Sergeant with 2 GREN GDS, and found himself moved to a station in Germany. Finally they returned to the UK in 1947.

At last Jack was back with Doll, from whom he had been separated, apart from brief snatches of leave, since March 1942. Like many women, Doll had spent the war years employed in the munitions industry in the war effort. She had begun work at fourteen at a bus factory, which was converted to making parts for mortar bombs. Later, in 1947, Jack left the Grenadiers and the Army but, like so many others, faced the austerity of post-war Britain, and the scarcity of employment opportunities. Despite this, he soon gained work in the locally-based Hawker Aircraft Company, and his son Michael and daughter Jackie were born. But a longstanding desire to join The East Surreys Regiment, with whom his father had served as RQMS, would not go away.

After being approached by the CO, Lt Col Buchanan, of the 6th Battalion, The East Surreys, in the Territorial Army, Jack enlisted again as a company sergeant. The horrors of North Africa and Italy were in the past, yet those experiences and the military bonds had changed him. The call of the military life, its more varied demands and challenges, were too ingrained, and in 1956 he joined the full time Regular Army, as a sergeant in 1st Battalion East Surreys.

Jack's post-war service soon came under The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment, after the amalgamation of the Queen's with the East Surreys in 1959, and included deployments to Hong Kong, Germany, Somalia, Aden and Cyprus, where their operations countered the EOKA terrorist campaign. On the formation of The Queen's Regiment in 1966, Jack joined the 5th Bn before moving to the 4th Bn in 1972, where he gained the rank of RSM, which he held until 1976.

The post-war years also saw Jack and Doll bring up their two children, Jackie and Michael, and in between the many overseas postings, they based themselves in their home town, Kingston-upon-Thames. Jack was a keen sportsman, and for many years was the goalkeeper for the Regiment's hockey team.

On leaving The Queen's Regiment in 1976, Jack was invited to join The Yeomen of the Queen's Body Guard Extraordinary, popularly known as the select thirty-five Yeoman Warders, or Beefeaters, guarding Her Majesty's Royal Palace and Fortress of The Tower of London and its Crown Jewels. After being sworn in at St James' Palace, Jack and his Beefeater colleagues performed a policing role within the Tower's grounds, entertaining the millions of curious tourists. On Jack's retirement from the Beefeaters, he and Doll moved to Northampton, where Jack lived up to his death with his daughter Jackie and husband Mick, and close to his son Michael. Among their many visitors were also six grandchildren.

From the East Surreys, and its eventual successor regiment, The Queen's Regiment, Jack retained a wide circle of old comrades, who ranged from generals to National Service privates. Every day he carried the ball-bearings and shrapnel in his body from the anti-personnel mine explosion which he survived in Italy. The field

surgeon at the time, who was facing a constant queue of urgent cases, said they were too difficult to extract. Those ball-bearings were an ever recurring reminder of that nightmare journey of many hours, by stretcher and an ambulance laden with other wounded, which eventually saved his life.

Despite the trauma of losing his wife and life-long partner Doll in August 2011, and the incapacities that came with advancing years, Jack continued to be an engaging character and personality in the regimental community, and a notable and stalwart regular at the Queen's Royal Surreys' Association's various functions and annual reunions. The resilience and spirit of Jack's and Doll's lives, no matter what adversity, still shines through undimmed.

A former Lieutenant Colonel of the Surreys has said of Jack, "He was the model of a Regimental Sergeant Major for any regiment. Jack Chaffer was an example for us all to follow."

## HONOURING MAJOR GENERAL MIKE REYNOLDS CB

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On 5 June some 75 members of The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment and The Queen's Regiment, gathered in the presence of Anne Reynolds and the family, at the Queen's Royal Regimental Chapel in Holy Trinity Church, Guildford, to honour, by the dedication of a plaque, Major General Mike Reynolds, our last Colonel of the Regiment. The service was conducted by Canon Robert Cotton, memories of General Mike were given by Colonel John Davidson, a reading was given by Colonel Tony Ward OBE DL, and the following tribute was made by Association President, Colonel Anthony Beattie:

*"It is a great honour for me to have been asked by Anne and the family to say a few words about General Mike as both Colonel of The Queen's Regiment and, latterly, the first President of the Queen's Regimental Association. The obituary published in the Association Journal last year details his other senior appointments in the Army and has been reproduced in the Order of Service.*

*General Mike assumed the colonelcy from Charles Millman as the fifth appointee in 1989 in the footsteps of, inter alia, Generals Fergus Ling and Rowley Mans, both of whom were also late of The Queen's Royal Regiment. In hindsight, given the political climate following the fall of the Berlin Wall, taking the appointment might be considered something of*



Major General Mike Reynolds CB  
Last Colonel of The Queen's Regiment





a hospital pass and there is no denying that the unexpected decision to amalgamate and reduce the QUEENS hit General Mike personally very hard. It was thus with characteristic determination that he embarked on a campaign to redress what he saw was an unconscionable grievance visited upon his Regiment.

Throughout 1991 he lobbied parliamentarians, the Prime Minister, the Army Board, the Arms Directors and many others in an impassioned battle to have the decision - which affected the QUEENS alone of the existing large regiments - rescinded. That his plea fell on deaf ears was - as he had no qualms in telling abroad - as much as anything else a function of the composition of the Executive Committee of the Army Board including as it did two generals who were Colonels of single battalion regiments, neither of whom had any wish for their Regiments to amalgamate with the Royal Hampshires or to go to the wall.

It is testament to his efforts that a few years later at a dinner at Armoury House, Field Marshal Lord Bramall, a former Chief of Defence Staff, singled him out, stating to the assembled company that, and I quote, 'No one could have done more to try to save his Regiment than this officer.'

As the Regiment drew down in preparation for amalgamation, he visited all battalions both to say farewell to the officers and soldiers and to encourage them to look forward, proud as they could claim to be of their service in the Queen's. On the Glorious First of June 1992, the Colonel's Colour was handed into his care by the 1st Battalion; the 2nd Battalion in Canterbury held a weekend around a family reunion, culminating in a final Beating Retreat by the Albuhera Band; in Episkopi, Cyprus, the 3rd Battalion held a formal parade, after which General Mike joined all ranks and families for a battalion party. While inspecting the parade, his 'double take' when the Quebec Band struck up the forbidden 'Old Queen's' was a joy to behold. It was a possibly childish, but nevertheless deeply satisfying cock of the snook at the Army Board which had so spectacularly offended our Colonel.



The plaque



Canon Robert Cotton, Ann Reynolds and Family



Lt Col McClelland, Cols Ward, Beattie and Davidson



Some of the Congregation

Retirement brought the opportunity for him to exercise his prodigious talent as a military historian and author, and as speaker on what amounted to 41 battle field tours of the Battle of the Bulge. His biography of the infamous Joachim Peiper, 'The Devil's Adjutant', a particularly acclaimed work. David Wake, the last Commanding Officer of the 2nd Battalion, recalls, 25 years after serving under General Mike as a subaltern in the battalion, that he unexpectedly met him in a queue at the Calais ferry and was promptly sold a copy of the book which Mike had, suspiciously conveniently, stored in the boot of his car.



The Queen's Royal Regimental Chapel

All of us who came across General Mike in a professional, social, family, formal or informal capacity cannot fail to have been touched by his sense of humour, his kind and caring advice and the equally kind and caring way in which he dealt with the regimental families. We are all privileged to be here in Guildford today for the dedication of the plaque to his memory in The Queen's Royal Regiment Chapel.

*His military service overall was little short of exemplary and he was an impeccable regimental officer. But especially, as its last Colonel, he served The Queen's Regiment with a drive, determination and loyalty all so characteristic of the man we knew."*

Following the service, the congregation gathered in the Royal Oak Pub to continue honouring General Mike's memory!

# MEMORIES OF JACK CHAFFER AND MIKE REYNOLDS

By Roddy Mellotte

Jack Chaffer held a very special place in my life having recruited me, been my first CSM on commissioning, organised a Guard of Honour and held a sword at my wedding.

When I walked into the Central Recruiting Depot, Whitehall in 1960 to join the Army, I had intended to join the Royal Fusiliers. Luckily for me, the recruiting sergeant on duty or allocated to me was one Sgt Jack Chaffer MM. He would have none of it, insisting instead that I join my County Regiment, The Queen's Royal Surreys. It was an event that he remembered and frequently reminded me of, for I think that I was his first potential officer recruit.

The image overleaf shows my 'Notice Form' made out by him and where we both signed on the dotted line, Jack as the witness. On the right, Jack is shown meeting the infamous Jack Profumo who, a year or so later, was to become entangled in the sex scandal that took his name ultimately forcing his resignation. Since it was about the same time as he recruited me, we have joked that he was being congratulated on doing so!

About three years later, I was commissioned into the Regiment and joined 1 QUEENS SURREYS, newly arrived in Münster from Hong Kong. I was posted to C Company of which the by then A/WO2 Chaffer was CSM. Peter Roupell still commanded,





although within weeks, Mike Reynolds arrived to take over from him. So was born their famous and outstanding partnership and lifelong friendship from which we platoon commanders were to benefit so much. How lucky I was to serve my apprenticeship under such a pair!

Mike's unique style of leadership and command together with Jack's traditional but effective stewardship quickly bore fruit, making C Company the best one in the Battalion and which later came to be regarded as the best one in his Brigade by Brigadier Dunbar, our brigade

NOTICE PAPER—REGULAR ARMY Army Form B.271a (Revised 1958)  
(To be used for all enlistments from 1st January, 1959).

FORM 1  
NOTICE TO BE GIVEN UNDER SECTION 2(1) OF THE ARMY ACT, 1955, TO A PERSON OFFERING TO ENLIST IN THE REGULAR FORCES.

This paper sets out the questions you will be required to answer before the officer who will attest you for Her Majesty's Army, and the general conditions of the various engagements.  
Under the provisions of Sections 19 and 61 of the Army Act, 1955, if any person knowingly makes a false answer to any question contained in the attestation paper he is liable to punishment.

QUESTIONS TO BE PUT TO THE RECRUIT BEFORE ENLISTMENT

Q. 1. What is your name? (a) Christian or Fore Name(s) (b) Surname  
ROGERICK THOMAS WALLACE MELLORTE

Q. 2. What is your address?  
FACE HOUSE  
HARRISON RD. LONDON S.W. 11

Q. 3. State day, month, and year of your birth.  
17th May 1942

Q. 4. Where were you born? Parish Town County  
WATFORD Herts. Bucks.

Q. 5. What is your nationality now?  
English

Q. 6. What was the nationality at birth of: (a) yourself? (b) your father? (c) your mother? (d) your wife/husband?  
English English Austrian

DECLARATION

I, ROGERICK THOMAS WALLACE MELLORTE, do solemnly declare that the above answers made by me in the above questions are true, and that I am willing to fulfil the engagements made.

14 NOV 1960 (Date) Rogerick Mellor (Signature of Recruit) J. V. Chaffer Sgt. (Signature of Witness)

Note.—On signing the above declaration and taking the Oath the recruit becomes a soldier of the regular forces and subject to military law.

Central London Recruiting Depot  
Great Scotland Yard S.W. 1



The Two Jacks  
Sgt Jack Chaffer and Secretary of State for War Jack Profumo.

commander. Mike, professional to the core, was nonetheless determined that soldiering under him should be fun and set about making it so. In this he was supported magnificently by Jack and his sense of humour, bottomless bag of stories and jokes to match every conceivable event and occasion. We worked hard and played hard. The following tales are of that unforgettable era.



The Soltau Plain

The Soltau Plain could be very difficult to navigate across since the maps bore little resemblance to the reality that was the bare, featureless, dusty countryside. Mind you, one's navigation skills were not helped if one's mind had been dulled by spending the previous evening at one of the C Company combined officers and sergeants mess get-togethers under the supervision of Jack Chaffer and, of course, Cardinal Puff. I recall being fairly lost on one such occasion, bumping across the area in my Humber Pig, that monstrous, useless so-called 'APC' now remembered more for its service in Northern Ireland. We

were on some sort of navigation exercise. My platoon was gallantly following me in the other three Pigs, if only out of curiosity, and we no doubt were late for an RV. Eventually, Mike came up over the A31 radio strapped to the top of the vehicle:

"Hello, 39 for 31, where are you. Over?"

31 for 39, I'm temporally uncertain of my position. Over" I replied confidently pleased that my 'smart' holding reply which I had borrowed from someone hoping it would buy me a bit more time to find out where on earth I was.

"39. You mean you're f....g lost" came the instant response summoning up the situation with his normal succinctness!

"31. Roger. Out!"

During that same camp, the CO, the rather humourless and dour Scotsman, Eric Woodman, had strictly forbidden anyone from going up the road to Hamburg to experience its particular brand of entertainment. Mike regarded himself responsible for the 'rounded' education of his young officers and was also probably mightily irked by this directive, not least because he had probably been planning to go. One evening, he suddenly said *"Which of my subalterns has not been to Hamburg?"* None of us had, so he told us to report to him at his Land Rover a short while later, giving us time to change out of our dusty uniforms, and off we went, his ever faithful driver (Pte Reason?) having been also summoned. A great time was had by all but that is another story: it included water pistols, padres, Prince Michael and a great deal of laughter and beer!

It was not often that we subalterns got the opportunity to get one over Mike. However, on one occasion, I think I may just have done so. On the long, boring drive back in convoy to Münster, Mike leading the C Company group, he sailed on past the exit (*'Ausfahrt!'*) for Münster and on towards Cologne. Being numerically the 'senior' platoon, I was directly behind his Land Rover so I was faced with the dilemma of whether to follow him and risk a rocket for not using my initiative or not doing so and getting a rocket for not following him as ordered – perhaps he was just going another way. Alternatively, should I consider the possibility that, contrary to his own strict instructions, he had in fact just fallen asleep and this was a moment to demonstrate my initiative? I took the exit and led the rest of the company back to Oxford Barracks. When we were joined by Mike later, he simply said somewhat sheepishly but with a wry smile, *"Well done. Touché!"*



Mike Reynolds, Richard Bing and Jack Chaffer

At the end of another training period at Haltern, which was about 30 miles from Münster, he suddenly announced that half of the company would be broken down into twos and threes and we would have to make our own way back to barracks – as fugitives! We were warned that if we were caught, and there would be people searching for us, we would be taken back to the start. Basically, we could only travel by night since with all the wide open spaces and at least one helicopter and the battalion's Reconnaissance Platoon with its eight Land Rovers deployed to try and catch us, it was simply too dangerous/risky to travel during daylight hours. To ensure that the platoon commanders had the most difficult task, he applied certain extra restrictive conditions. My travelling companion was Percy Wretham.

I think we were given several hours grace so could get well away from Haltern. Most of the detail has now gone but I do recall travelling by night and lying up during the day and we did indeed evade capture. However, as we got near to home, the more difficult it became as the hunters concentrated on the last few miles. Indeed, the place was crawling with them. The only way into Oxford Barracks was through the main gate, and that was heavily guarded. I came to the conclusion that the only way that we could actually get into the barracks, which otherwise had a pretty high wall around it, was to respond with a bit of guile. Accordingly, we went to a nearby Gasthaus from which I rang up a fellow subaltern, Colin Howard, from another company who had a car and asked him to come and rescue us.

This he did and we hid in the boot and sailed into barracks undetected. I had quite a high price a (lot of free beer) on my head so Mike was 'furious' that I had got in and we wouldn't tell him how we had done it – we were amongst the first in and lots of people had been caught and taken back at least several miles. I had sworn Percy to



Oxford Barracks





secrecy but he couldn't resist swanking about it in the NAAFI and eventually Jack Chaffer's spies got hold of it and reported back.

Later the following morning, when some people had still to return, I was summoned to Mike's office and, as I went in, I noticed Chaffer had a sort of satisfied smirk on his face. I was given an almighty 'bollocking' for 'cheating' and not staying within the so-called spirit of the exercise. At the end, he broke into a broad smile and said "Well done, you used your initiative, beat the

system and got home first. Now, for goodness sake, let's go to the mess and I'll buy you a beer!" That was 'very Mike'. As we left his office, it was I who had the smirk on my face!

Another personal and very special reason for remembering Jack was that, some years later, he did me the extraordinary honour of organising and commanding a Guard of Honour at my wedding in Bath.

One memory of that day I have was persuading my future father-in-law that the small barrel of beer he had intended to provide would probably be inadequate to quell the thirsts of both the Guard and the Buglers at the reception. He upped it to a firkin (72 pints) or larger but it was still emptied well before the reception ended! In the picture, Jack is seen immediately behind the Bride. Max Maloney is on the extreme left.



Guard of Honour

## Following on from 2015 - Extras and the Right of Reply

*As is often the case with young officers, I think that AAAB's recall of the number of Extras he was given by BAMP may be prone to exaggeration. I have never heard of anyone being awarded 50 Extras, 30 being the maximum single award, although it is certainly possible that he accumulated that number, especially after the 'mixed dress' incident. The Extras he 'won' on that occasion were not so much for the breach in Dress Regulations but the fact that he was still wearing Rupert Bear pyjamas. The other major difference was that he, unlike me, undoubtedly deserved his maturing and character forming awards. Furthermore, I am sure that my judgement had not been at all swayed by his tactless questioning of the green grass stain on my riding breeches after a rehearsal for the Queen's Birthday Parade which resulted in me having to stand a round of drinks!*

Roddy Mellotte



# IN MEMORIAM

The following is a list of our comrades who have sadly passed on since the last Journal. Members are requested to keep the Secretary informed of those who pass away in future so that this list can be updated. Please email [queensregimentassociation@gmail.com](mailto:queensregimentassociation@gmail.com) or write to The Secretary, 5 Alfred Square, Deal, Kent, CT14 6LU, using the form that accompanies this Journal.

DATE	NAME	BATTALION
<b>2016</b>		
10 Nov	WO2 Peter McFadyen	1st, 5th and RAF Regiment
5 Nov	WO2 Mike Ward	10th, 5th and Mddx
14 Oct	Maj Paul Mallalieu	1st, 4th and Mddx
4 Oct	Lt Mike Smith	6/7th
27 Sep	WO2 (BSM) Jeffrey Lemon	2nd, QRS and QOB
21 Sep	Cpl Mike Peterson (Postumous)	2nd
Sep	WO1 (RSM) David Moore	2nd, 5th and QOB
25 Aug	Cpl Robert (Peanut) Perry	5th
Jul	Sgt Alan Collins	5th
2 Jul	Pte Ross Noe	1st
5 Jun	Cpl George Bonner	5th, 6/7th, 5 MX and HSF
19 May	Pte Calvin Cable	5th
15 May	CSgt Bob Gill	Jnrs, 1st, 2nd, 5th and QRS
13 May	Cpl Martin J Robinson	3rd
9 May	LCpl Steve (Bing) Crosby	1st
2 Apr	Col Robin McNish	3rd and R SUSSEX
31 Mar	CSgt Peter Guillaume	2nd
24 Mar	Dmr Nigel Shute	2nd and Jnr Sldrs Corps of Drums
17 Mar	WO2 Henry Green	3rd
17 Mar	Pte Clem Lee	6/7th and B Coy (Queen's) The London Regiment
Mar	Pete Wells	2nd
24 Feb	Maj Trevor Fisher	1st, 3rd MX and RRF
17 Feb	Cpl David Brian Mockler	2nd
8 Feb	LCpl Kenneth Askey	3rd and 4th
7 Jan	LCpl Vic Anderson	1st
<b>2015</b>		
31 Dec	Sgt Steve Lambert	8 Queen's Fusiliers, Queen's Company
7 Dec	WO1 (RSM) Jack Chaffer MM	1st, 5th and QRS
4 Dec	Pte William (Bill) Porter-Bean	1st, QRS, 4 BUFFS and Westerham Cadets
25 Nov	CSgt Bob Goodman	1st
23 Oct	Sgt Roger Bobrow	2nd and QOB

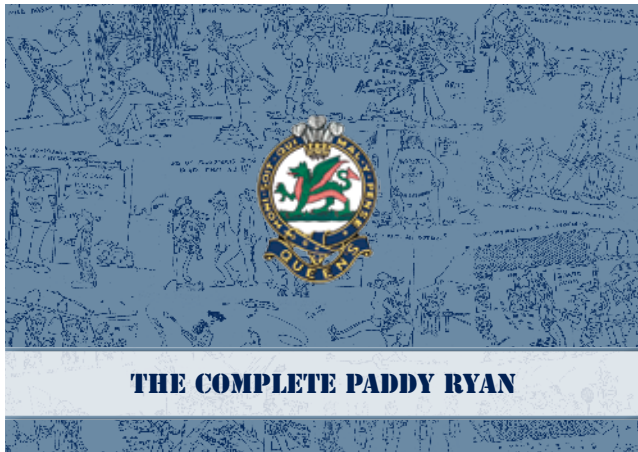




# BOOK REVIEWS

## THE COMPLETE PADDY RYAN

Every regiment has its comedians in one form or another. Paddy Ryan MM is one of those talented people who always managed to see the funny side of our military lives and where better to bring out humour but on an operational tour? In "The Complete Paddy

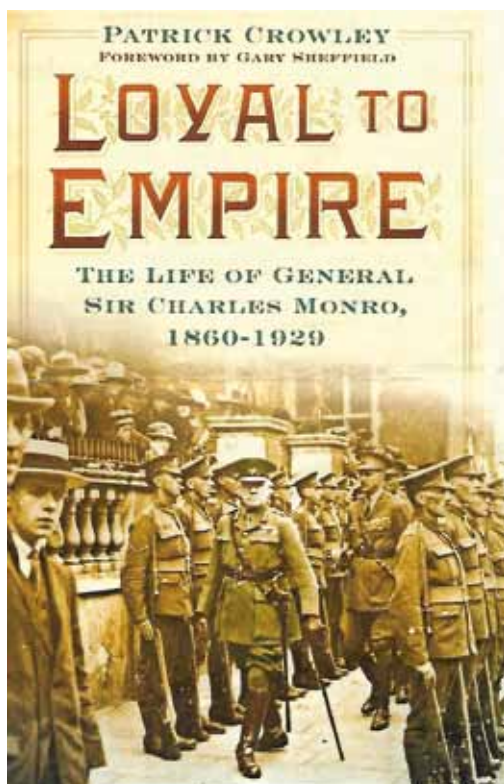


Ryan" the reader has a glimpse of his funny, sometimes tragic but always pertinent view of life in Northern Ireland. Paddy's collection of cartoons will resonate with every member of The Queen's Regiment and at a minimal donation of at least £7 (payable to The Queen's Regiment Benevolent Fund and sent to the Secretary using the form that comes with the Journal) to cover the cost of printing and postage and packaging, it is a bargain.

Not only that but Paddy has generously donated all proceeds to the Benevolent Fund, so not only will you be having a laugh, you will also be contributing to the welfare of some of our comrades who need our help.

## LOYAL TO EMPIRE

By Patrick Crowley



***Loyal to Empire***  
The Life of General Sir Charles  
Monro, 1860–1929  
Patrick Crowley  
May 2016 Hardback £25.00

Winston Churchill did not describe General Sir Charles Monro in the most glowing terms. Referring to Monro's brave decision to recommend a withdrawal from the Gallipoli disaster, Churchill said: 'He came, he saw, he capitulated.'

Monro was one of a handful of senior officers selected to command a division in 1914 with the BEF and he also led a corps and army on the Western Front. After Gallipoli he supported the war effort from India as Commander-in-Chief and was involved in the aftermath of the Amritsar massacre. He was also responsible for dramatically improving tactics within the army.



Available from good bookshops,  
[www.thehistorypress.co.uk](http://www.thehistorypress.co.uk), and  
direct sales on 01235 465500



# OFT IN DANGER

THE LIFE AND CAMPAIGNS OF GENERAL SIR  
ANTHONY FARRAR-HOCKLEY

By Jonathon Riley

This is the biography of one of the most distinguished commanders of modern times, who turned to scholarship and writing at an early stage of his career and pursued both professional military life and historical study in parallel. In later life he also took to broadcasting and commentating. Half his military life was spent abroad on operations. His career began with the Second World War, in which he served as a platoon and company commander, winning the MC in Greece and being mentioned in despatches, and then the campaign in Palestine. He fought in the Korean War, during which he was at the Imjin River – where he won his first DSO – and then spent three years as a prisoner of the Chinese, during which he made six escape attempts, was beaten, starved and tortured. He then served in Cyprus, at Suez and in the intervention in Jordan. He commanded 3 PARA in the Radfan, where he won his second DSO. He then served in Borneo and was later the first Commander Land Forces in Northern Ireland. He ended his military career as Commander-in-Chief of NATO's Northern Region. Understanding Farrar-Hockley the soldier is impossible without also understanding Farrar-Hockley the scholar; the reverse is also true. He was never a stranger to controversy – Margaret Thatcher valued his candid advice because, as she said to him, “*You tell me things I didn't know*”; and he never walked away from a fight in his life. He was a man of redoubtable character and huge achievement, an inspirational leader and commander in peace and war, at every level.

*Jonathon Riley's book is a magnificent and fitting tribute to TFH; not only an outstanding fighting soldier, but also a fine writing soldier. Some soldiers are successful at some levels of command, less so at others. TFH was a master of his profession at all levels.*

Major-General Julian Thompson CB OBE

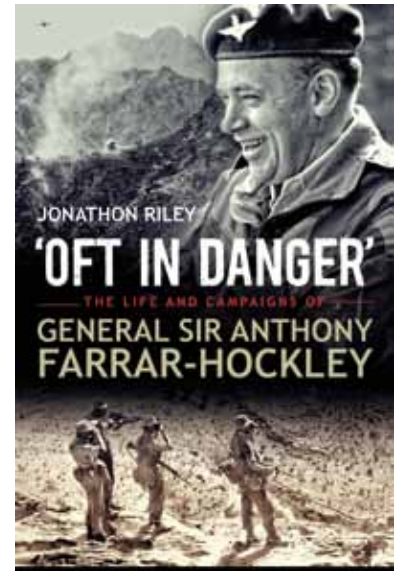
*Tony Farrar-Hockley was a man of many parts, and in this immaculately researched book, written by a battlefield-experienced commander himself and so aptly titled “Oft in Danger”, is a very good read.*

Field Marshal Lord Bramall KG GCB OBE MC

*As a soldier-scholar who achieved high rank and commanded in the field, Jonathon Riley is very well qualified to write the biography of Anthony Farrar-Hockley. The result is a fascinating portrait of one of the most important British soldiers of the second half of the Twentieth Century.*

Professor Gary Sheffield, University of Wolverhampton

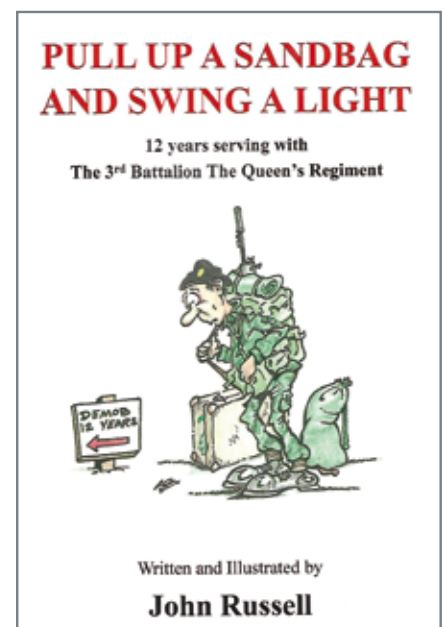
“Oft in Danger” can be purchased from [www.helion.co.uk](http://www.helion.co.uk) for £26.96 saving 10% on the purchase price.



# PULL UP A SANDBAG

By John Russell

‘Pull Up a Sandbag and Swing a Light’ is a wonderfully entertaining account of John Russell’s 12 years of army service between 1972 and 1984 with 3 QUEENS. It is written in an engaging style and employs John’s considerable skills as a cartoonist to illustrate each chapter. This book reflects the author’s humorous take on life despite some serious aspects of serving in the Army. In his own words, “*I wrote this book with the intention of showing the more humorous side of the military because we witnessed the most bizarre incidents and declared “You couldn't write a book about it could ya!” Well I have, because it would be a shame not to!*” Available from Amazon for £12.95, this is a great read for anyone and a must for anybody who has had any contact with the military.







# BRANCH REPORTS

## CHICHESTER

By Paul Daines

The Chichester Branch has been busy this last year. We had our Christmas Dinner at the Chichester City Club, and again it was very well attended with over thirty members there. All had a good time and most people won a raffle prize. Our thanks to our treasurer, Eddie Drew, for arranging the dinner, and to the chef as the food was excellent.

I would like to say a big thank you our out-going President Colonel David Beveridge MBE who is leaving due to poor health. He will be missed very much for all the hard work that he has done for the branch over the years. We wish him all the very best.

The Branch celebrated its 20th anniversary in April with a dinner. It was a very good turn out from the members. All the members and guests enjoyed the day.

We sent a representative group for the Dedication of the Queen's Regiment Memorial which impressed us enormously.



In May we had our annual Albuhera Dinner at the Beach Croft Hotel in Bognor Regis. Once again it was very well attended with over 60 people there, including a number of new members. The Guest of Honour this year was the Lord Mayor of Chichester and his Lady. Thanks to Peter Alner and his wife for organising the dinner and for running the raffle. Paul Daines gave the talk on the battle.

## EAST KENT

By John Redfern

Since founding the Branch in 2004, focussed on East Kent, I can say that we have had the busiest year yet! Our membership stands at 115 and is continuing to increase, with the inclusion of new members from the former B Coy 5 QUEENS based at Broadstairs. We welcome, serving/ex PWRR, ex Territorials, ex Regulars, NRPS and all those who served with our forebear Regiments and who live locally.

Over the year our new website has received great praise and may be viewed at [www.pwrr.co.uk](http://www.pwrr.co.uk)

We welcome stories from your previous service and suitable photos can be included in our Gallery section. Please contact either me or John Bennett our Branch Secretary to do this.

The year started well with our first 'Pop-up Lunch' at the Rose and Crown in Stelling Minnis, when over thirty ex-members of HQ Coy 5 QUEENS enjoyed a very pleasant lunch and a trip down memory lane. In May we gathered for the final Ladies

Guest night at Canterbury Golf Club when fifty members, partners and friends joined us for a four course dinner. Our thanks go to Alan Marchant for organising these dinners.

The Branch was represented at a number of significant events through the summer; at the Queen's Memorial dedication at the National Arboretum, Somme 1 July 16 commemorations in France and at the Regimental Football Match Guildford. Special thanks go to Rick Bamford for being the Branch Standard bearer, who has attended many events, several funerals, Armed Forces Day and the Commemoration of The Dover Patrol.

Our annual Branch BBQ at the MOD Manston Defence Fire School was exceedingly well attended this year with over 75 appreciating the good food and live band. This was mainly due to the enhanced communications we now have via the electronic e-newsletter. Contact John Bennett to get on the mailing list: [johnbennett@pwrr.co.uk](mailto:johnbennett@pwrr.co.uk) John is the new Branch Secretary, having taken over from Bill Gawler last year and we thank them both for their hard work in keeping us in touch.

On 7 August, twenty four members marched in the parade contingent in Canterbury commemorating Buff's Sunday. It was a great day, with good food and company. We are keen to support this event next year; more details will be available from our newsletter.

The next 'Pop-up Lunch' will be in September and we will parade in Canterbury in November for Remembrance Sunday and curry lunch with 3 PWRR.



Pop-up Lunch

The 2017 calendar is already well planned with events including the Albuhera Lunch in May, the Branch BBQ in July at Manston and a Branch Band Concert in the autumn. We look forward to a good time for our members and hope you join us in the near future. See the membership application at [www.pwrr.co.uk](http://www.pwrr.co.uk) and future events.



John Bennett and Sgt Johnson Beharry VC





## HORSHAM

By Andrew Byford

The main event for Horsham Branch was attending the Worthing vs Canterbury rugby match. Branch representatives from 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 6/7th Battalions were in attendance. We began the proceedings with a beer course. This was followed by lunch and a beer course. The game began and as half-time approached, Ginge Sayers and I went to the bar before the masses. I have to admit, we remained there for the duration, talking with Mick Sayers, Graham Booker, John Taylor, Paddy Ryan, James Thompson and his son, after which Graham Morrison and Yvonne joined us at full time! It was a marvellous afternoon!



## LONDON

By Adrian de Villiers

2016 sees the second year of the Branch's existence. During the last year the Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment (Queen's and Royal Hampshire's) Association London Branch has followed the example of the East Kent Branch and merged with the Queen's Regimental Association Branch to form the Queen's and PWRR London Branch. Major (Retd) Richard Thornton continues to serve as the Queen's Association London Secretary and representative to the Committee, advising on all things Queen's Regiment related. The merging of the two databases is an ongoing process and I would encourage any of you that have previously been registered with the Queen's London Branch, and have not heard anything from us in a while, to get in touch. Contact details are contained in the list of branches.

2016 saw the Middlesex Regiment Association lay up their colours. I know that many members of the Middlesex Association remain active and we very much want to continue to support them and cater for them in all we do. Richard

Thornton and I will be meeting with Major (Retd) Dennis Bradley later this year to make sure this happens as seamlessly as possible.

During the last year branch committee members Richard Moore and Sean Smallbone undertook the Mental Health First Aid course. This is a new initiative, but has at its heart the concept of Association branches having members trained to respond to service related mental health matters within the branch area, focusing on regimental veterans and reservists who do not have access to the same metal health support as those in the regular battalions. They are trained to help, advise and act as a bridge between veterans and reservists and whatever services they may need. This has been driven by Regimental Headquarters and is part of a wider strategy to build a regimental network that does more than just arrange social functions (important though those are) and underpins a regimental commitment to all who serve and have served. I would encourage those with an interest to get involved.

It is immensely rewarding to be involved in something that makes a real difference. I am very proud to belong to a regiment that has both the foresight and the drive to put this in place. On a less serious note, the past year saw the Branch enjoy a great day out at the Army vs Navy match as well as an excellent Albuhera dinner at the Union Jack Club. The branch continues to grow and develop. All in all, a successful year with much achieved.



Army and Navy Match Twickenham



The Loyal Toast at the Albuhera Dinner



Albuhera Dinner at the Union Jack Club





## MIDDLESEX

By Trevor Canton

2016 heralded the 30th anniversary of the Middlesex Branch of the Queen's Regimental Association which was originally founded at the Hornsey Drill Hall, Priory Lane by members of 6 Platoon. Sadly some are no longer with us, but the Branch continues to flourish with a total of 117 current members, of which there are six Distinguished Life Members, four Associate members and three Honorary members.

We kicked off the year with our annual New Year's Lunch at the Edgware ARC with a record 48 members with their wives and partners plus guests attending. This caused some seating problems, but the tight squeeze created a more intimate occasion and everyone seemed to enjoy themselves.

Our next function was in May when we normally organise the Albuhera Dinner evening. But for this anniversary year we renamed the event the 30th Anniversary Dinner and the Branch Committee hoped we would exceed the earlier luncheon numbers. Responses started off fairly slowly but eventually we had a grand total of 58 members, their partners and guests sitting down and enjoying the evening. Our Guest of Honour was Colonel Anthony Beattie, who gave a wonderful speech and wished us many more future anniversaries, and was accompanied by his lovely wife Jo.

June saw an intrepid group of members travelling to the Netherlands for our annual Battlefield Tour. This year we covered the airborne landings at Arnhem under the Garden part of Operation Market Garden. This was a very informative and enjoyable trip and certainly brought home the shortfalls of this operation and the courage and tenacity of the troops involved in that operation. The visit also included the crossing of the River Rhine and the various battles involved in that event. One of our coach party, a veteran Royal Engineer, had actually been involved in constructing bridging equipment across the Rhine at the area we visited. This again made for a very interesting part of the trip which was enhanced by having an actual veteran on the tour.

Members of the Branch were invited to accompany B (Queen's Regiment) Company, The London Regiment on an exercise to France to commemorate the Battle of Flers-Courcelette, one of the conflicts during the Battle of the Somme in 1916. This battle was fought by members of the 1/7th Battalion, The Middlesex Regiment, a predecessor regiment of B Company, who left the Hornsey Drill Hall for France in 1914. The Battle of Flers-Courcelette saw the demise of this pre-war Territorial Battalion and only 36 members of the original battalion returned to Hornsey in 1919. We stayed at Ypres for this weekend trip and the Branch laid a wreath at the Menin Gate in honour of those fallen. We then travelled to the area of the battle and



Soldiers from B (Queen's Regiment) Company, The London Regiment with members of the Middlesex Branch at the Menin Gate

covered the ground in great detail with much more in-depth information than we had expected based on our previous battlefield tours. In addition, we also covered other locations that were completely new to us even though we have done other Somme trips in the past. Although not a part of the Branch's annual functions, it is hoped that B Company will continue with similar trips in future years and that Branch members will again be invited to attend.



Arnhem Bridge backdrop with the 2016 Battlefield Tour Branch members



Our Guest of Honour, Col AAA Beattie delivering his entertaining after-dinner speech with his wife Jo on his right



Members and guests enjoying the New Year luncheon





The Lodge goes from strength to strength, and is now over 80 strong and continues to grow.

The current Worshipful Master is Johnny Wallace, an ex 2nd Bn man, and the third in the line of ex 2nd Bn members; our next Worshipful Master is likely to be Ray Heathfield also of the 2nd. This will likely be followed by our very first Queensman Initiate, Kev (Catman) Midmore from the 3rd Bn.

We took a party of 19 Masons over to Guernsey for the second year running (including Billy Bolton whose liver took a pounding), and we also look forward to a smaller group travelling over in October. We have been happy to receive a visit from one of the Guernsey Lodges that we visit who have come to see us perform a quadruple initiation. Normally Lodges only initiate one at a time. However we have a good few candidates lined up.



Albert Prangnell being raised to the Master Mason Degree

Kevin Pearson, ex 2nd Bn, has stood down as the Lodge Director of Ceremonies and for my sins I have stepped into the breach; George Young has moved from Treasurer to Lodge Almoner, to both of them and all the officers of the Lodge, thank you so very much for the time, and work that you have dedicated to the Lodge over the last 5 years.

We held an extra meeting in April in Canterbury and managed to secure St George's Day for the meeting at which Barry Miller (APTC and 3rd Bn) was passed to the Degree of a Fellow Craft Mason. The festive board after was treated to some flute and drums playing organised by David Kirby and Kevin Pearson, providing some nostalgia with his on screen display which was greatly appreciated.

Bert Prangnell was raised to the degree of Master Mason at a ceremony conducted on our behalf at The St Andrews Lodge 4097 in Devon earlier this year for which we are very grateful. Once you have joined our Lodge, we do endeavour to advance brethren where possible nearer to their home town.

**The following is a brief article from Dennis Oliver (2nd Bn) in which he describes his first steps into the Craft.**

*My name is Dennis Oliver and I was a member of the 2nd Battalion from 1971-1984. I served mainly as a member of the Drums Platoon. After attending many reunions, I was asked on a number of occasions if I was interested in joining the Queensman Lodge. It was after a number of requests that I finally said "Yes" and spoke to Messrs Kirby and Edwards informing them that I was interested.*

*At that time I knew nothing about Freemasonry whatsoever, and had always considered it to be a 'secret club for old men'. However, after talking to other Lodge members in of all places, a pub called the Pillars in Great Queens Street London, I was introduced to the ins and outs of Freemasonry and gave my life history to them. It was then that the path was laid for me to walk down. On my initiation day, 12 September 2012 we met up in the pub and I was surprised to see a lot more Lodge members. Then came the time for me and three others to take the first step into our Masonic journey. The events were a bit daunting but I can say I was surprised by all the banter that was flying around - just like being at a reunion!*

*After the initiation and becoming an Entered Apprentice, it was back to the pub for one or two well-earned drinks before having a great meal and more banter.*

*On the 21 April 2016, I completed my 2nd degree on the road to Freemasonry and became a Fellow Craft Mason. The ceremony was conducted at another Lodge but the people there were just the same - banter and laughs but in a civilian way. I am now looking forward to my 3rd degree ceremony, on my Masonic journey in October 2016 to become a Master Mason.*

*I seemed to have had a bit of a following at my initiation. A high ranking mason was present and at my 2nd degree ceremony there was a group of overseas masons visiting, as well as a senior mason from the Province of East Kent accompanied by his team. As many will know, with these people comes a lot of bling and boy the bling was flowing that night.*



Dennis Oliver being passed to the degree of a Fellow Craft

*Thanks to Brothers Kirby, Edwards, Franklin and Kitchen and others for badgering me. I can fully recommend it to all Queensmen.*

If you have an interest in Freemasonry, please do not hesitate to contact John Edwards or anyone that you know from the Lodge. Not only is it a fantastic opportunity to meet old mates but will give you a new perspective to life.

### **"A MASONIC LODGE WITH A MILITARY TWIST"**

## THE QUEEN'S REGIMENTAL RIDERS ASSOCIATION

By Pronto (aka Julian De-Zille)

Another busy year has been had by all in the QRRR. We have met up with old friends at various places, unfortunately not always for good reasons. We have continued to cement our relationship with the villagers of Wingham, who are actually starting to refer to us as 'the QRRR Villagers'.

We attended the unveiling of the plaque to Gen Reynolds and as with all things these days we were double booked; half went to one function while half a dozen of us went to the Church for the unveiling, then over to the Queen's Regiment Memorial Woodland for their second anniversary celebrations. I have to report it is as nice as it looks in the photos, and is a peaceful place to walk round.

As you all are aware, this year saw the unveiling of the Queen's Regimental Memorial at the NMA. We arrived in Lichfield on the Saturday and bomb burst out into the countryside to get to our overnight stops, and met up again in Lichfield later in the day as guests of Russ Tomlinson and his good lady for a night of pulling up the sandbags and lamp swinging. Sunday morning: another

RV, and after breakfast off we went to the NMA. The ceremony was well attended, and we all agreed that the effort and organisation that had gone into it was first rate, and made the day as good as it was.

Once again the Brothers in Arms called and as beer was involved, we answered and off we went. After much debate, we had decided that a long boat ride and a shorter bike ride would be better than the other way around, so after an early meet up on the A2 off we went to Harwich and the trip over to Holland. Luckily the boat was quite empty, so we all promptly went back to sleep for most of the journey, only waking up when someone said "Breakfast". Once disembarked and ride order sorted, Bard (Steve Barden) led the way out. After the inevitable stops for fuel, we arrived about mid-day. Straight into tent erecting and getting sorted. As per last year some tents looked like harems! Once settled, we joined our Brothers in Arms at the bar. There was a surprising mix of nationalities there. This year I spotted a gent from Australia, a couple from Canada and I believe there were a group from Latvia as well as most other countries from Europe. As always with





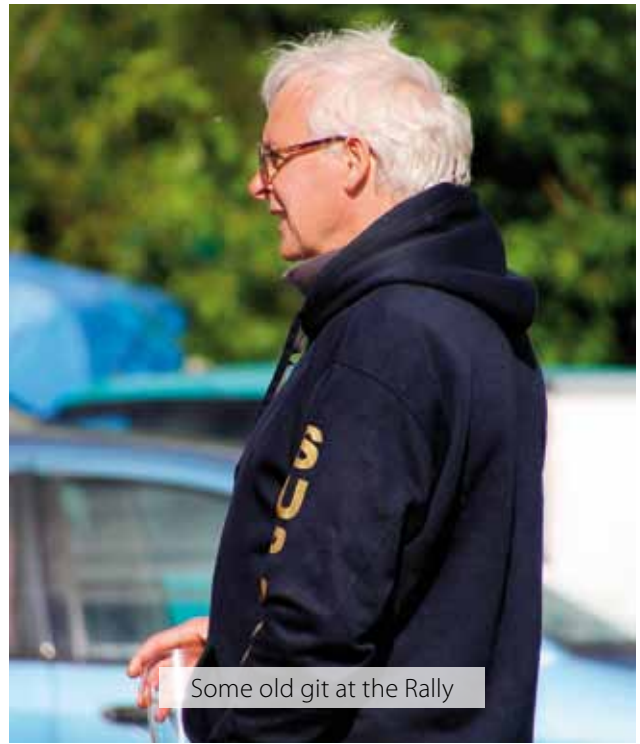
this Rally, all went really well, we were royally entertained fed and beered .

Sunday dawned quite shortly after we had got into our maggots, so up we bounced,

as Bard had planned a route to Amsterdam, as there was the best satay chicken and chips to be had there. So off we went to Amsterdam and the mad house that is that city's traffic system. Bard was right, the satay chicken was good. He then gave us a guided tour of the better known 'district' of Amsterdam, including a sex museum!

Another night of revelry followed, and the next day we packed, bade our Brothers farewell and started the fuel hop journey back to the docks and the journey home which we shared with about 300 scooters, who nearly choked us all to death when we arrived as they all started up on the boat deck. Fresh air never felt so good! A good weekend, well organised by Bard and to cap it all off, we are now able to sport the "Brothers in Arms" badge on our cuts (*Ed: that's leather jackets with no arms and lots of badges to the uninitiated!*).

I hope by now that members of the Regimental Community have heard of our 'One Aim' Rally, held each year on the first weekend in July. This is our main event of

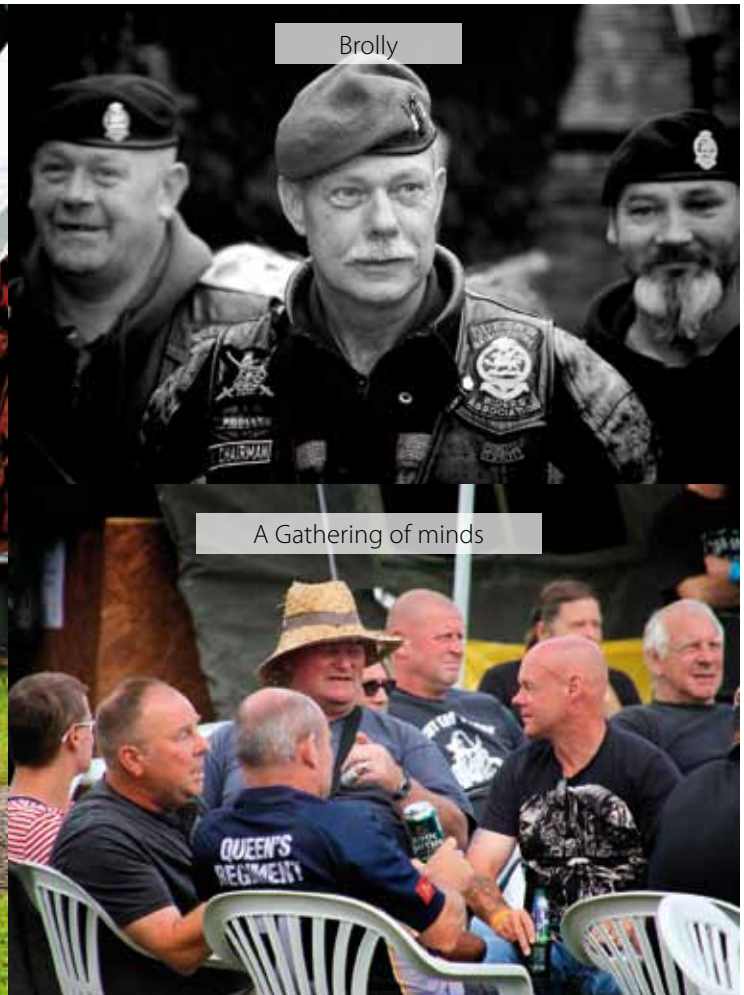


Some old git at the Rally

the year and enables us to put something in the pot for regimental benevolence. This year was a stunning success. As always the team of Bandit, Bard, Donk, Frosty and a lot of the QRRR members and friends worked extremely hard to put on a good show, which we managed in spades. (Special thanks to Jon McEwan for stepping in to manage



Bard issuing orders



Brolly

A Gathering of minds

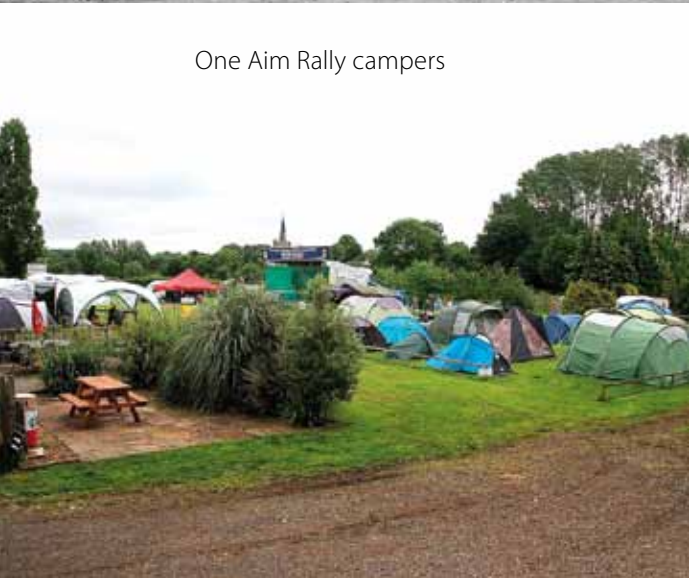




Brian 'No Name' Bartlett tagging on



Grizzly, Dog and Passport



One Aim Rally campers



Wingham Church



Bandit and Frosty present the Cheque





the entertainment and bands). On the Friday it looked as if everyone within 200 miles who owned a bike turned up at the gate to be let in. Truly it had to be seen to be believed and by the end we think

everyone who came agreed that it had been the best rally yet. We were all proud of what had been achieved. We hope to see more of our comrades next year. You are all welcome whether you own a bike or not, so please put the first weekend in July in your diaries, come on over to Wingham, near Canterbury and join us, see old friends and make new ones.

In the presence of Councillor Sue Chandler, Chairman of Dover District Council, Councillor Bryan Curtis, Chairman of Wingham Parish Council and Ms Kerry Coltham, Wingham Parish Clerk, Major Alasdair Goulden, accepted a cheque for £6,250 from Clive Tidey (aka Bandit), Chairman of QRRRA on behalf of The Queen's Regiment Benevolent Fund (QRBFB). The money was raised during the One Aim Rally. Accepting the cheque outside The Queen's Regiment Museum in Dover Castle on Saturday, Major Goulden expressed his heartfelt gratitude to the Riders for their magnificent efforts on behalf of all those soldiers who have served their Country and through no fault of their own found themselves on hard times. The QRBFB supports all ex-members of The Queen's Regiment and their families when in need and last year helped over 100

ex-members in a number of ways. In his view what the Riders had achieved, not just this year but in previous years, epitomised the *camaraderie and esprit de corps* shown by the soldiers of the Regiment throughout its short history. Councillor Chandler congratulated the Riders on their outstanding event and promised that she would attend next year's Rally. Councillor Curtis thanked the riders for all their efforts in the Wingham Community noting that the town had taken the Riders into their hearts.

I cannot finish without mentioning the Somme Commemoration, a solemn time for us all to remember the sacrifice our forebears made, for our freedom today. We as a club decided, and were invited, to join the good people of Wingham for the 0730hrs Service to remember them. We even had an original trench whistle that had been blown on the day to remember this tragic battle. We turned up at 0700 hrs and waited for the villagers to arrive. We had a look round the church and soon realised that there were a lot of military items within the church. We found kneeling cushions with Royal Sussex badges, the Paschal Lamb badge and others remembering specific soldiers that had passed on. The villagers seemed happy to be with us for the service and we all stayed, had a cup of coffee with them, then got back to work. I'm glad to report that this simple Act of Remembrance touched the villager's hearts as their web page was full of praise that we wanted to be with them on this most special of days.

Steve Barden (Treasurer QRRRA) Cllr Chandler, Cllr Curtis and Maj Goulden



Once again the Branch was well represented at the Regimental AGM in London this year. It would appear that the venue for this is changing and by all accounts this will be a good thing, so a plea in advance, please support next year's one kindly hosted by London UOTC. The AGM is one of the few times the whole Regimental family can get together so it is well worthwhile putting just one day in the year aside for it. That being said, this year we had several Regimental 'one offs', they being the unveiling of our Memorial at the National Arboretum, again with a good Wessex Branch turn out and also the dedication of the plaque honouring Major General Mike Reynolds in Guildford, both of which has been covered in depth elsewhere in this journal.

The Branch held a small gathering in Salisbury in the New Year when we were pleased to welcome a few new faces to the fold. Due to other events, the Albuhera/Glorious 1st June get together held in the centre of Salisbury to the astonishment of the locals and tourists was dropped this

year but will happen next. We did however meet with other Queensmen in the Infantry Mess, Warminster, on Albuhera Day when Lt Col Gordon Fotheringham read the Special Order of the Day. The Latham Centrepiece was kindly lent to us by 3 PWRR.

Several members paid a visit to the Western Front in March, the main aim of which was to visit Captain Wilfred Nevill's grave in the centenary year of his death as well as to do a recce for a larger trip next year. Please see the separate report under 'Commemorations'.

Messrs Locke and Thompson seem unable to stay away from the Western Headquarters and Museum and were given another tour of Bulford following a quick Regimental history lesson. The proudly fluttering Queen's flag took some explaining to the RSM of 4 MI Bn when he spotted it flying above his camp, but having met the 'Committee' and adding the years' service up between them, he sat down and joined in the chat!



Queensmen at Warminster with the Albuhera Loving Cup and the Latham Centrepiece





# ASSOCIATION BRANCHES

## ASSOCIATION CONTACTS

**President** - Colonel AAA Beattie, Barn Cottage, Fisherton de la Mere, Warminster, Wilts BA12 0PZ

**Secretary** - Major Alasdair Goulden, 5 Alfred Square, Deal, Kent CT14 6LU

**Email:** [queensregimentassociation@gmail.com](mailto:queensregimentassociation@gmail.com) - **Mobile:** 0771 484 4069

**Web:** [www.queensregimentalassociation.org](http://www.queensregimentalassociation.org)

## 1 QUEENS BRANCH

The 1 QUEENS Branch meets on an *ad hoc* basis and all past members of The Queen's Regiment or their associate regiments are very welcome to attend any event. The annual reunion will be held at the Herne Bay Angling Association, 59 Central Parade, Herne Bay, Kent, CT6 5JQ. All are welcome to attend. Details are posted on the 1 QUEENS Branch website. .

For more details of the branch please contact:

**Steve Parsons:** Mobile: 07392 572 312 - Email: [steveparsons@1queens.com](mailto:steveparsons@1queens.com) - Web: [www.1queens.com](http://www.1queens.com)

[www.facebook.com/groups/61525655230/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/61525655230/)

## CHICHESTER BRANCH

The Chichester Branch meets on the last Wednesday of each month at 7.30 pm in the City Club, North Pallant, Chichester. They hold an annual Albuhera Dinner and always march at the Chichester Remembrance Day Parade with their Standard.

For more details of the branch please check the website or contact:

**Chairman** - Dave Tilley, 3 Mumford Place, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 2BG - Email: [davetilley@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:davetilley@hotmail.co.uk)

**Secretary** - Paul Daines: Tel: 01633-872132 - Email: [paul.556daines@btinternet.com](mailto:paul.556daines@btinternet.com)

or use the 'Email us' facility on the website: <http://www.freewebs.com/qrachichester/>

## EAST KENT BRANCH OF THE QUEEN'S AND PWRR ASSOCIATIONS

This branch has kindly agreed to be a part of both Regimental Associations and welcomes everyone who served in the Queen's, PWRR and forebear regiments. They meet informally in Canterbury on a regular basis.

For more details please contact:

**Chairman** - John Redfern TD: Tel: 07989 582211 - Email: [JohnRedfern@castleinterim.co.uk](mailto:JohnRedfern@castleinterim.co.uk)

**Secretary** - John Bennett: Tel: 01227 709840 - Mobile: 07754 812898 - Email: [johnbennett@pwrr.co.uk](mailto:johnbennett@pwrr.co.uk)

## HASTINGS BRANCH

The Hastings Branch meets on a regular basis at the Clarence public house, 57 Middle Street, Hastings, TN34 1NA. All members of The Queen's Regiment, forebear regiments and PWRR are welcome to attend.

For more information please contact:

**Chairman** - Peter White: Email: [p.white115@btinternet.com](mailto:p.white115@btinternet.com)

**Secretary** - Trevor Foord: Tel: 01424 552260 - Email: [trevorfoord@btinternet.com](mailto:trevorfoord@btinternet.com)

## HORSHAM BRANCH

The Horsham Branch meets quarterly (generally on the first Mondays of March, September and December) plus the Monday closest to 16 May (for Albuhera).

For more details of the branch please contact::

**President** - Colonel Richard Putnam

**Chairman** - Steve Bell

**Secretary** - Jonathan Purdy: - Email: [j.purdy1@btopenworld.com](mailto:j.purdy1@btopenworld.com)

## LONDON BRANCH OF THE QUEEN'S AND PWRR ASSOCIATIONS

The two London Branches of the Associations have combined and meet informally quarterly. In addition the Branch meet at Twickenham for the Army vs Navy Match (29 April) and after the Cenotaph Parade on Remembrance Sunday (12 Nov). All past members of the Queen's, PWRR or their associate regiments are very welcome to attend any event.

For more details of the branch please contact:

**Chairman - Major Adrian de Villiers:** Tel: **07941 367051** - Email: [adrian.devilliers@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:adrian.devilliers@hotmail.co.uk)

**Queen's Secretary - Major RGC Thornton TD,** 2 Norfolk House, Ellensden Road, St Leonards, East Sussex, TN37 6HZ  
Tel: **01424 434002** - Mobile: **07956 586444** - Email: [thorntonrgc@hotmail.com](mailto:thorntonrgc@hotmail.com)

## SCOTTISH BRANCH OF THE QUEEN'S AND PWRR ASSOCIATIONS

The Scottish Branch has its inaugural meeting on 31st December to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the formation of the Regiment. All are welcome.

For more details contact:

**Chairman - Steve Wall,** 10 Carn Elrig View, High Burnside, Inverness-shire, PH22 1UL

Mobile: **07958 596598** - Email: [steve.wall@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:steve.wall@hotmail.co.uk)

**Secretary - Dave Lee,** 36 Katrine Drive, Paisley, Renfrewshire, PA2 9BS. - Mobile: **07840 977009** (evenings only)  
Email: [dgldavelee@gmail.com](mailto:dgldavelee@gmail.com)

## MIDDLESEX BRANCH

The Middlesex Branch holds four or five events a year, usually meets at the TA Centre in Edgware. All ex-Queensmen are very welcome.

For more details please contact:

**Chairman - Trevor Canton:** Tel: **0208 368 0407** - Mobile: **07891 577119** - Email: [queensman@orangehome.co.uk](mailto:queensman@orangehome.co.uk)

## QUEENSMAN LODGE 2694

Queensman Lodge 2694 is a Freemasons Lodge within the Metropolitan Grand Lodge of London and also a member of the Circuit of Services Lodges. Membership is open to all members of forebear regiments, Queen's, PWRR, Queen's Division and any attached personnel. Membership application is by being proposed and seconded, and by interview.

For full details please visit the website or contact:

**John Edwards:** Tel: **01462 834134** - Email: [john@bedsib.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:john@bedsib.fsnet.co.uk) - Web: <http://queensmanlodge.co.uk/>

## QUEENS REGIMENTAL ASSOCIATION CORPS OF DRUMS

The QRA Corps of Drums meets on a regular basis and performs for the benefit of the Queen's Regiment Benevolent Fund. To join please contact:

**Tony Philpott or Amy Holden:** Tel: **01843 491962**

Email: [qracorpsdrums@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:qracorpsdrums@yahoo.co.uk)

## THE QUEEN'S REGIMENT MEMORIAL WOODLAND

The garden lies in the heart of the Surrey countryside, and is focused on providing peace and tranquillity for people to remember our lost and fallen. There is always plenty to do in the woodland as the seasons change, maintaining the woodland and planted areas of the grounds. We have group working weekends, so do keep an eye on the events page of the website and come and join us.

The Queen's Memorial Woodland is located at Pasture Wood Road, Holmbury Road St Mary, Dorking, Surrey RH5 6LG (300 metres past).

For more details of the branch please contact:

**Chairman - Paul 'the Hat' Cooling**

**Secretary - Debbie Hornblow:** Tel: **07778 873806** - Email: [debbiehornblow@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:debbiehornblow@yahoo.co.uk)

Web: [www.queensmemorialgarden.co.uk](http://www.queensmemorialgarden.co.uk)





## THE QUEEN'S REGIMENTAL RIDERS ASSOCIATION

This Branch is open to all ex-members of The Queen's Regiment, PWRR and forebear regiments who own and ride a motorbike or trike.

For more details please contact:

Secretary - Julian De-Zille: Mobile: [07702 167 128](tel:07702167128) - Email: [joe.761@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:joe.761@hotmail.co.uk) - Web: [www.qrra.co.uk](http://www.qrra.co.uk)

## WESSEX BRANCH

The Queen's Regimental Association in Wessex, known as the Wessex Branch, meets on an *ad hoc* basis in the Salisbury area. For more details of membership and any events.

Please contact:

Secretary - Captain Anthony (Billy) Bolton: Tel: [07530 429926](tel:07530429926) - Email: [Queensmen1661@gmail.com](mailto:Queensmen1661@gmail.com)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/QueensWessexBranch>

## VIPERS

The VIPERS' Branch meets on an ad hoc basis and all past members of The Queen's Regiment and the forebear regiments are very welcome to attend any event.

For more details of the branch please contact:

Blue Cooper, 43 Suffolk Road, Canterbury, Kent, CT1 1SA - Tel: [01227 453810](tel:01227453810)

Or Email [davecole91@btinternet.com](mailto:davecole91@btinternet.com)

## FRIMLEY AND CAMBERLEY CADET CORPS

The Frimley and Camberley Cadet Corps, which started over 100 years ago, rebadged back to the Queen's Regiment and continues to parade under The Queen's Flag. Boys and girls, from a variety of backgrounds, aged 6 to 13, are instructed by volunteer staff in their personal development based upon military procedures and discipline.

The HQ is at Caird Hall, Camberley. The Corp is fully self-funding as it is not supported by the Army, TA or ACF.

For more details of when they meet and how to get involved please contact:

Nigel Ferris, 13 Jesse Close, Yateley, Hampshire GU46 6AH

Email: [nigel@fdi-european.com](mailto:nigel@fdi-european.com) - Mobile: [07836 726236](tel:07836726236)

## ENFIELD BRANCH OF THE MIDDLESEX REGIMENT ASSOCIATION (Affiliated Branch)

For details please contact : Mr Alfie Burford Tel: [01323 733983](tel:01323733983)

## Non Affiliated Groups which have contact with ex-members of the Regiment

Website:- [www.1royalsussex-3queens.com](http://www.1royalsussex-3queens.com)

# SIGNIFICANT DATES FOR 2017

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## **Regimental Association**

- 4th March - AGM and Annual Reunion at London UOTC, Handel Street, London WC1N 1NP
- 13 May - Albuhera St Paul's Cathedral Service and Silent Toast at UJC and HM Tower of London.
- 30 June - 2 July - One Aim Rally at Wingham, Kent the Association main benevolent fundraiser.
- 12 November - Remembrance Sunday at the Regimental Memorial to the Fallen, Leros Barracks, Canterbury  
This will be held at 12.30 NOT 1100 hrs to allow member to attend Canterbury commemorations first.
- 12 November - Remembrance Sunday at the Cenotaph. Tickets to be obtained from Henry Thomas, Area HQ PWRR, Leros Barracks, Sturry Road, Canterbury, Kent CT1 1HR. Email: henry.thomas112@mod.co.uk.

## **Scottish Branch**

- 31 December 2016 - Inaugural Meeting and 50th Anniversary of the formation.

## **Middlesex Branch**

- 8 January - New Year's Luncheon.

## **London Branch**

- 29 April - Army vs Navy Rugby, Twickenham.
- 13 May - Albuhera St Paul's Cathedral Service and Silent Toast at UJC and HM Tower of London.
- 12 November - Cenotaph Remembrance Parade followed by lunch. Details from the London Secretary.
- Date TBC - Christmas Drinks.

## **Chichester Branch**

- 13 May - Albuhera Dinner and Silent Toast.
- Date TBC - Christmas Dinner.

## **East Kent Branch**

- 13 May - Albuhera Lunch.
- 1 July - BBQ Manston.
- 6 August - Buffs' Sunday, Canterbury.
- TBC Oct - Band Concert.

## **1 QUEENS Branch**

- 27 May - Herne Bay Reunion. Herne Bay Angling Association, 59 Central Parade, Herne Bay, Kent CT6 5JQ.

## **Middlesex Branch**

- 27 May - Albuhera Dinner.
- 29 July - Battlefield Tour to Passchendaele.

## **QRRR Branch**

- 30 Jun - 2 July - ONE AIM RALLY and the Association's (consistently) major fundraising weekend



# SOLDIERS OF THE QUEEN



*We were boys when we volunteered,  
To serve before the Crown,  
We took the oath, our country's coin,  
Left the streets of our home towns,  
Strangers to each-other, how little we knew  
then,  
That this rag-tag band of innocents,  
Would soon be fighting men.*

*At the training camp we assembled,  
These long haired 'Jack The Lads',  
Dressed in the latest fashion,  
Our colourful glad rags,  
The instructors looked and smiled,  
Like us, they once had been,  
Now they were trained fighting men,  
And 'Soldiers of the Queen'.*

*With subtlety they broke us down,  
We didn't see the change,  
Strangers became like brothers,  
Our lives they rearranged,  
From the scruffy chicks that came to them,  
The eagle soon would fly,  
Disciplined, smart, no longer boys,  
But men prepared to die.*

*Basic training over,  
We went our separate ways,  
Off to our battalions,  
New friendships to be made,  
We learned the art of fieldcraft,  
And how to stay unseen,  
They taught us what it really took,  
To be 'Soldiers of the Queen'.*

*We fought together on war torn streets,  
And all around the globe,  
We followed without question,  
And brought our comrades home,  
But now the years have passed us by,  
New faces fill the ranks,  
With pride and honour, they take our place,  
With our eternal thanks.*

*Tactically, the old guard,  
Retreats to history,  
The bugler sounds the Last Post,  
As we pass from memory,  
But we marched behind The Colours,  
Proud that we had been,  
Of service to our country,  
And 'Soldiers Of The Queen'.*

Alan Faraway (aka Andy (Smudger 23) Smith)

# ATTEN - SHUN! YOU'RE FIRED

**Report by  
Matthew Presland**

**THE COLONEL of The Queen's Regiment – a victim of deep defence cuts announced this week – has accused the Government of singling out his force in a "cruel and vicious" way.**

Major-General Mike Reynolds's angry outburst follows Defence Secretary Tom King's decision to amalgamate The Queen's three regular battalions with the Royal Hampshire Regiment to form a new regiment of just two battalions.

Nearly 1,000 men will be lost from England's oldest infantry regiment, based at Canterbury.

The cut was worse than Gen. Reynolds had feared. His regiment will not only lose numbers - but also could stand to lose its name as well.

The Lord Mayor of Canterbury, Cllr. John Purchase, says the news is an "insult" to the people of Kent and Canterbury, and he has urged everyone to write in protest to the Ministry of Defence.

"The Queen's are getting a very raw deal – possibly the worst in the Army," said Cllr. Purchase.

## **Frightened**

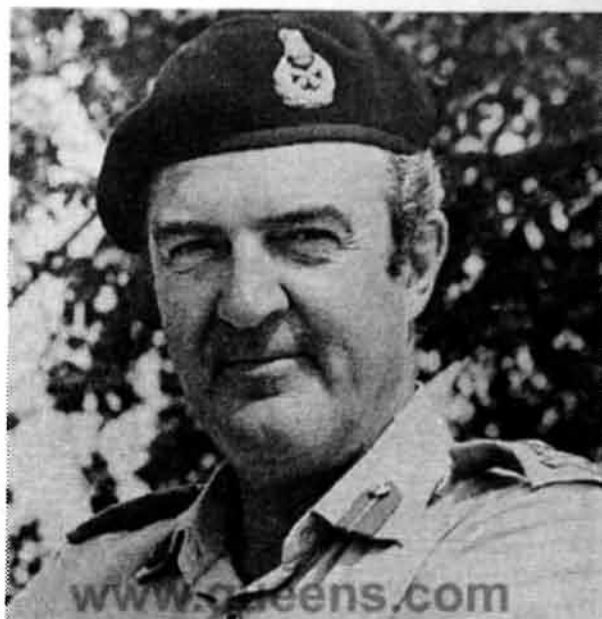
"I'm extremely sorry for the people of Kent, and Canterbury in particular, because they are the ones that will suffer if the name goes."

The Queen's recruits from the South East and maintains strong links with the region. It traces its history back to 1572, although today's regiment was formed when southern county regiments merged in 1966.

Gen. Reynolds is furious at the way Mr. King's axe has fallen, claiming the British Army will never again be able to mount a campaign on the scale of the Falklands.

"I'm extremely angry and sad for my own regiment, which has been singled out particularly cruelly.

"I believe it has been done for political reasons. Here we have a perfect example of the north and south divide within our country. The northern regiments have survived untouched because the Government is frightened of unemployment up there, whereas the rich south can afford to take the cuts.



*Major-General Mike Reynolds – asking the Chief of General Staff to justify "vicious cuts" on The Queen's Regiment.*

## **Fury as 1,000 soldiers axed from Queen's**

"I'm going to see the Chief of General Staff and ask for some reassurances on behalf of my officers and men for their careers. And I'm going to ask how he justifies these vicious cuts on my regiment."

The commanding officer of the Queen's 2nd Battalion, currently based at Canterbury's Howe Barracks, says while his battalion must accept the cuts, it should fight to keep its identity.

Said Lieutenant-Colonel David Wake: "The battle to be fought is what title do we have. Our view is that the Queen's name should remain. After all, you just have to look at the components that will go to make it up. There are three battalions of the Queen's and one of the Royal Hampshires. It's a simple matter of mathematics, in my view."

**In the adapted words of General Mike Reynolds – May God forgive them on this 50th Anniversary of our formation, for we never shall!**





*The Royal Cyphers*