

MARCH, 1944

THE QUEEN'S OWN GAZETTE

50th

(The Queen's Own)

97th

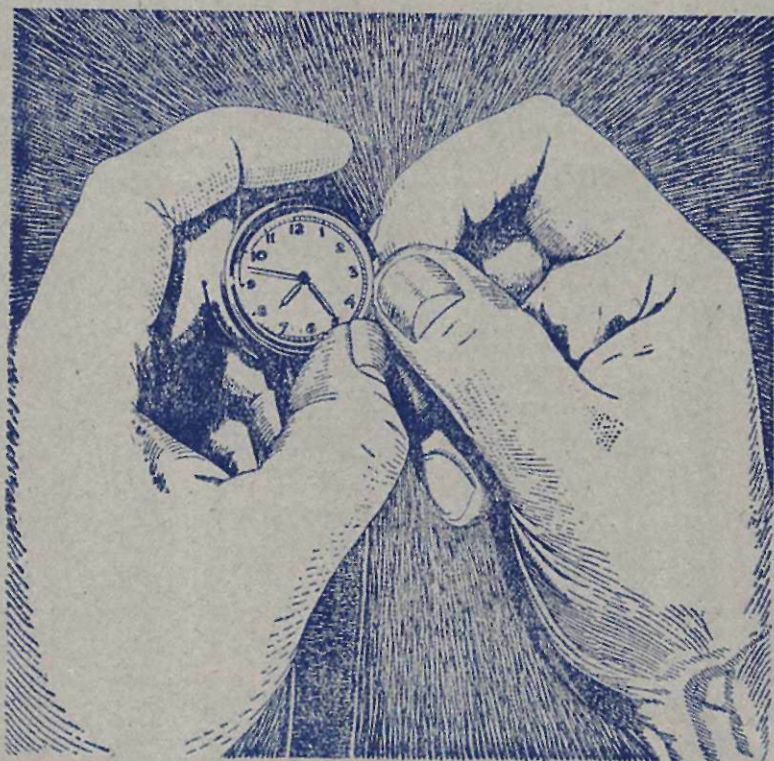
(Earl of Ulster's)



THE QUEEN'S OWN ROYAL WEST KENT REGIMENT

Allied Regiments of the Dominions:

The Carleton & York Regiment, Woodstock, N.B. Canada
The Kent Regiment, Chatham, Ontario, Canada
The Canterbury Regiment, Christchurch, New Zealand



A 'TIMELY' TALK

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THE QUEEN'S OWN GAZETTE

The Regimental Journal of The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment

No. 336.

MARCH, 1944

Vol. LXII. No. I.

THE QUEEN'S OWN ROYAL WEST KENT REGIMENT. (50)

HOME COUNTIES AREA.

"Quo Fas et Gloria Ducunt."

BATTLE HONOURS BORNE ON THE REGIMENTAL COLOUR.

The Sphinx, superscribed "Egypt"

"Vimiera," "Corunna," "Almaraz," "Vittoria," "Pyrenees," "Nive," "Orthes," "Peninsula," "Punniar," "Moodkee," "Ferozeshah," "Aliwal," "Sobraon," "Alma," "Inkerman," "Sevastopol," "Lucknow," "New Zealand," "Egypt, 1882," "Nile, 1884-85," "South Africa, 1900-02," "Afghanistan, 1919."

BATTLE HONOURS BORNE ON THE KING'S COLOUR:

"Mons," "Ypres, 1914, '15, '17, '18," "Hill 60," "Somme, 1916, '18," "Vimy, 1917," "Italy, 1917, '18," "Gallipoli, 1915," "Gaza," "Defence of Kut Al Amara," "Sharqat."

THE GREAT WAR BATTLE HONOURS—18 BATTALIONS:

"Mons," "Le Cateau," "Retreat from Mons," "Marne, 1914," "Aisne, 1914," "La Bassée, 1914," "Messines, 1914, '17," "Ypres, 1914, '15, '17, '18," "Hill 60," "Gravenstafel," "St. Julien," "Frezenberg," "Loos," "Somme, 1916, '18," "Albert, 1916, '18," "Bazentin," "Delville Wood," "Pozières," "Guillemont," "Flers-Courcelette," "Morval," "Thiepval," "Le Transloy," "Ancre Heights," "Ancre, 1916, '18," "Arras, 1917, '18," "Vimy, 1917," "Scarpe, 1917," "Oppy," "Pilckem," "Langemarck, 1917," "Menin Road," "Polygon Wood," "Broodseinde," "Passchendaele," "Cambrai, 1917, '18," "St. Quentin," "Rosieres," "Avre," "Villers Bretonneux," "Lys," "Hazebrouck," "Kemmel," "Amiens," "Bapaume, 1918," "Hindenburg Line," "Epéhy," "Canal du Nord," "St. Quentin Canal," "Courtrai," "Selle," "Sambre," "France and Flanders, 1914-18," "Italy, 1917, '18," "Suvla," "Landing at Suvla," "Scimitar Hill," "Gallipoli, 1915," "Rumani," "Egypt, 1915-16," "Gaza," "El Mughar," "Jerusalem," "Jericho," "Tell 'Asur," "Palestine, 1917, '18," "Defence of Kut Al Amara," "Sharqat," Mesopotamia, 1915-18."

THE QUEEN'S OWN

FOUNDED—



PAST & PRESENT ASSOCIATION

JULY 1911

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GENERAL SIR CHARLES BONHAM-CARTER, G.C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O.
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Mr. M. R. Audsley, 54, Spur Road, Orpington, Kent.

Membership is open to all who are serving or who have served in The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment. Subscriptions are: Life Membership; Officers £2/10/0; Other Ranks 10/-; or an Annual Subscription of: Officers 5/-; Other Ranks 2/-. The object of the Association is to foster esprit de corps, to help members keep in touch with one another, and to assist those in distress. The Association is affiliated to the British Legion.

Editorial

In this issue we have altered the make-up of the pages, and more prominence is given to The Queen's Own Past and Present Association. From the usual position of Cover iii. the feature has been transposed to the first text page, and in its new position we hope it will be brought more to the notice of readers and so help to increase the membership of the Association.

General Sir Charles Bonham-Carter, G.C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., Colonel of the Regiment, and President of the Association, is very enthusiastic about the post-war aims of the Association, and is at present actively engaged on work to further the good work he has done in the past. If Commanding Officers of Battalions would assist in creating interest in the serving Officers and Other Ranks we feel that our and their efforts will be worth while.

In another sphere we trust that some of our readers can and will assist in providing information of regimental bandmasters and additional notes to those already published elsewhere in this issue for the compilation of a reference book of bandmasters of the Regular Army.

The Regiment was glad to receive a greeting card from the Canterbury Regiment of New Zealand, one of our allied Dominions' regiments, and we heartily reciprocate the good wishes it contained.

News from our Battalions serving overseas is given on other pages, and provides interesting reading for all at home, especially to those who served with the Battalions and are now in England. It is pleasing to note the spirit of cheerfulness in this news, how lightly they regard their part in the fierce fighting which has taken place in their area, and which has been brought to the forefront by the Press of the world, also the radio.

Old members of the Regiment will devour the experiences of other days by Captain C. L. Norman, with the continuation promised for next quarter.

A memoir of Brigadier B. Howlett, D.S.O. and Bar, coupled with a very feeling tribute by Colonel E. S. Kerr, is another contribution to this quarter's "Queen's Own Gazette," while humour is provided in an article by an Officer who for years has been actively engaged in the production of the regimental journal.

William Curran Reedy provides his usual poem, and he pays tribute to a section of the working community who are matching their skill against the Axis powers — the ship-builders.

Social and Personal

We have received a letter from Colonel A. A. E. Chitty in which he pointed out that when awarded the D.S.O. he was serving as a Temporary Lieut.-Colonel, and was not Acting Lieut.-Colonel as stated in the Honours and Awards printed in the "Queen's Own Gazette." Colonel Chitty was also mentioned in despatches (London Gazette, April 29th, 1941).

Discrepancies and omissions we are glad to hear about, and we thank Colonel Chitty for his information.

Major H. N. Edwards is back at the Depot temporarily, and we are glad to see he is looking and feeling fit.

BRIGADIER B. HOWLETT, D.S.O. AND BAR.

Brigadier B. Howlett, D.S.O. and Bar, was killed in Italy in November last by a stray shell whilst going forward on reconnaissance with his artillery officer.

Bernard Howlett was born on December 18th, 1898, the only son of the Reverend T. E. Howlett, and was educated at St. Edmund's, Canterbury. He joined The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment from the R.M.C. as 2nd Lieutenant in April, 1918, and saw active service in France during the last war.

In this war he commanded a battalion of the Regiment, which was among the first to land in North Africa in the early stages of the campaign, and incidentally the first unit of the First Army to make contact with the German forces. For his gallantry he was decorated with the D.S.O.

Promoted a Brigadier of the brigade which distinguished itself at Longstop Hill and Centuripe in the Sicilian Campaign, he was in the thick of hostilities all the time the brigade were pressing forward through Bronte and Monte

Rivolia, and he served with great credit against strong enemy resistance in the hilly country south-west of Etna. In recognition of this further distinguished service he was awarded a Bar to the D.S.O.

The following appreciation by Lieut.-Colonel E. S. Kerr expresses the feelings of his regimental friends of earlier days.

BRIGADIER B. HOWLETT, D.S.O.

The news of the death in action of Bernard Howlett will have brought sadness to a host of Kentish hearts, and not least to those of the old 1st Battalion.

The chances of the war years sent us different ways, but between the two wars we served together at Gravesend, Agra, Calcutta, the Depot, then Poona and round Southern India, all these places bringing back happy memories of games, and this surely means happy memories of "Swiftly"—playing hockey with intense energy and considerable skill, addressing a golf ball with earnest concentration, but mainly and principally of "Swiftly" bowling ferocious in-swingers with undoubted skill and indomitable perseverance. Although he played with distinction for Kent and for the Army, he was in his element in the best club cricket—in Regimental cricket he was a team in himself. As a bowler he was extraordinarily unlucky, for no other ever seemed to have so many clumsy fieldsmen behind the bat. I was one of the worst offenders but never did a word or look of reproach come to any of us from that great-hearted bowler.

He was largely responsible for the formation of the Regimental Cricket Club, and no Regimental team was complete if he could not turn out. When the side next takes the field its grandest player will not be there.

I make no apology for writing so much of cricket in this short memoir—for "Swiftly" was cricket, all that is best in cricket—and that is very good indeed.

As for his military record, his fine and very gallant leading of the — Battalion, and later of his Brigade, in Tunisia, Sicily and Italy, tell it far more clearly than I could ever do.

Now he has played his last and greatest game of all.

Well bowled, "Swiftly"!

E.S.K.

NEWS OF LIEUT. WEYMOUTH.

Lieut. Guy U. Weymouth, who was a prisoner of war in Italy at Campo P.G.21, has arrived home in England and is staying at Park Cottage, Hartwell, Aylesbury, Bucks, where he would be glad to hear from friends.

W.O.II. (S.S.M.) A. E. PHILLIPS.

We regret to announce the death in action in the Mediterranean theatre of war of 6342486 W.O.II. (S.S.M.) A. E. Phillips, which occurred on October 5th, 1943.

Corporal Phillips, the rank he held whilst at the Depot in 1938-9, was on the Physical Training Staff, and was well known to all at that time. He was transferred to the Reconnaissance Regt., and eventually was promoted to the rank he held at the time of his death.

On September 23rd, 1943, S.S.M. Phillips was mentioned in despatches for distinguished service.

NEWS OF MEN REPORTED AS MISSING.

Official notification has been received by the father of Pte. Jack Ellwood that he has been reported missing since November 16th. He was called up at the outbreak of war and sent to France, but was wounded in the left leg and returned to this country. The last news received from Pte. Ellwood said that he was with the Middle East Forces.

Previously reported as missing, the wife of Corporal R. Ogilvy has received the good news that he is now a prisoner in German hands. He had been serving in the Middle East after going through the Malta blitz. A regular soldier for seven years, Corporal Ogilvy was recalled to the Colours at the commencement of hostilities, after being in civilian life for only six weeks.

The wife and parents of Corporal F. C. Taylor would be grateful for any information of him after receiving the news that he is posted as missing. Corporal Taylor has been with the Middle East Forces since November.

LIEUTENANT R. A. JAMES.

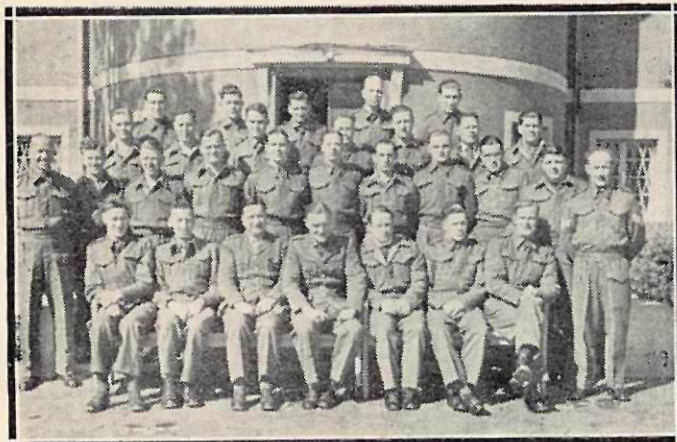
His many friends in the Regiment will be pleased to know that we have received official notification that Lieut. R. A. James, who was previously reported as missing, is now a prisoner of war.

TONBRIDGE DOCTOR BACK IN GERMAN PRISON CAMP AFTER RUNNING NEW P.O.W. HOSPITAL IN POLAND.

One of the results of the repatriation of British prisoners of war may be that hospitals in Germany established for looking after Allied sick and wounded, which are usually run by captured medical personnel, may become badly understaffed.

This is revealed in a letter from Capt. P. T. Cooper, of the R.A.M.C., to his former senior partner, Dr. N. R. Houston, of Lyons, Tonbridge. Dr. Cooper, it will be remembered, was associated with Dr. Houston for over two years prior to the outbreak of war, and is well known in the district.

"We have seven medical officers at present," writes Dr. Cooper, speaking of the hospital at Obernassfeld, to which he has just returned after being for 20 months in charge of a hospital for Allied nationals in Poland, "but how long we shall retain this number we do not know, because we believe there



Dr. P. T. Cooper (centre, front row) and his staff photographed outside a Prisoner of War Hospital. Nearly all the men are from the R.W.K. Regiment.

will be another repatriation party next month, and these will include some doctors left over from the recent one."

The letter was written on November 14th, so that Dr. Cooper was apparently a little previous in his conjecture.

"I am afraid my return is not yet," he says, "but as long as I am looking after our men I must rest content."

Talking about the new hospital in Poland, Dr. Cooper wrote: "It was very interesting to meet all those different patients of various nationalities. It was good for learning, good for organization and good in many other ways, and especially for the conditions in which we lived, which were better than any place I know in Germany. The drawback was the paucity of English-speaking patients."

At Obernassfeld there are 300 patients — English, American, Canadian and other Allied nationalities. At least 60 of them are officers.

Dr. Cooper, who was in the Royal West Kent Regiment, was taken prisoner at Dunkirk, and has been at Obernassfeld for most of the time since, except for the 20 months in Poland. — (Tonbridge Free Press).

NEWS FROM STALAG 383.

To the Editor of The Queen's Own Gazette.

Sir,—Since my last news letter to you on the 1st May, our ranks have swollen again, five additions arriving during the month. These were C.S.M. Dumbrell, P.S.M. Hayward, Sgt. Raper, Sgt. Foulser, and "Tiffy" Reynolds.

We hope to gather in full all ranks of the Regiment in captivity in time, as we understand some more are on the way.

Our sporting activities for the month met with varying success. On the 16th May we defeated the Croydon Club 6—1 at football. Basket ball results for month: 20th, v. "Bullring" Club, lost 12—4; 23rd, v. North Staffs, won 7—4; 30th, v. Middlesex, lost 12—6.

C.S.M. Glue and Sgt. Bavister played for England in the International Hockey League.

The Empire games were postponed pending the opening of a new sports ground, and were finally held on the 13th June.

The result was: England 87½ pts., New Zealand 72½, Scotland 68. A good day's sport was enjoyed by all in spite of the weather, which did its best to be typically English!

Basket ball results for June: 6th, v. Leicester Club, won 12—2; 20th, v. East Anglia, lost 10—0; 27th, v. Liverpool, lost 13—0. We still get more hidings than victories, but it's good fun.

On the 6th July we beat the Men of Kent Association 2—0 at football. At basket ball the story is much the same: 4th, v. Devon and Cornwall, lost 11—12; 18th, v. Sussex, won 14—6; 25th, v. Glasgow, lost 3—14.

On Bank Holiday Monday, August 2nd, the Camp staged a carnival and sports day. The carnival procession had to be abandoned owing to "local opposition," but the Bank Holiday atmosphere was well maintained by the uproar of some 40 stalls of the "get-rich-quick" variety. Invicta Club ran the "Hohenfels Museum," full of bogus oddities of every description. When I tell you that the "One Man Band" was a Red Cross armlet you can visualise the rest! A handsome profit was shown, which went to the Welfare Fund, Theatre Fund, and so on.

C.S.M. Dumbrell has started a P.T. class before roll call each morning. Some two dozen energetic souls foregather daily at 7 a.m. for half-an-hour's "bending." More support has been called for!

On the 14th August a further draft gave us nine new members, as under: R.S.M. Sivers, P.S.M. Simpson, Sgt. Drummond and Cpl. Parsons, Sgt. Bray, Sgt. Williamson, Sgt. Heasman and Corpl. Bolton; and Sgt. Cooper. This brings our strength to 77.

I have just received a nice letter from Major Love, notifying us of the despatch of chevrons and badges, and of consignments of books. These we shall look forward to. Some Regimental groups have been taken, and as soon as they are available I will send home one of each.

With the best wishes of all members of the Invicta Club.—I remain, yours sincerely,

L. GAILLARD, C.S.M., Secretary.

THE QUEEN'S OWN ROYAL WEST KENT REGIMENT IN ITALY.

The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment are fighting with the 8th Army in Italy. They landed at Termoli in the first week of October, and, though heavily attacked by powerful German forces, including elements of the 16th Panzer Division, stood their ground, thereby greatly contributing to the forcing of the line of the Biferno. By the 9th of October they had advanced to take part in the capture of Guglionesi. The formation with which the unit was serving fought its way up the coastal road, capturing Montecilfone on October 19th and repelling subsequent counter-attacks.

The Royal West Kent Regiment were in the very severe fighting on the Sangro. Patrols from their brigade crossed the river as early as November 10th, and 10 days later were engaging enemy patrols to the west of the Sangro. On the 23rd November the Royal West Kent Regiment were among the troops who established the main bridgehead across the river, after one of the hardest fights of the campaign.

Previously the Royal West Kent Regiment had fought in Sicily, in North Africa — where they were the first unit of the 1st Army to make contact with the Germans — with the 8th Army from El Alamein through the advance across Africa, and in France in 1940. The Royal West Kent Regiment went to Sicily during the fourth week in July, they were sent to the central front, where they fought sturdily against strong enemy resistance in the hilly country south-west of Etna. Their brigade reached the area of Centuripe on August 1st, and later pressed forward through Bronte to Monte Rivolla, which they reached by August 11th.

Other Press reports have been printed recording the sterling fighting performances, holding out against overwhelming odds and going forward to re-capture lost ground until the day was theirs. Of a battalion of the regiment who travelled 200 miles along the east coast of Italy in nine days to come in contact with the German forces. The D.C.M. won by Sergt. A. S. Obbard, after having already won the M.M. in Sicily; how Sergt. R. A. Knight penetrated four miles behind the German lines with a companion and brought back valuable information and was awarded the M.M. The daring of Corpl. J. Pickford, when he cleared a minefield and won the M.M.

The address must NOT be typewritten.

TO:- THE MEMBERS,
THE QUEENS OWN EAST &
PRESENT ASSOCIATION,
MAIDSTONE BATTN.,
GURRY FARM,
EAST EARLEIGH, MAIDSTONE,
KENT.

PAID BY CENSOR

NO. 5515

John

73386

Write the message very plainly below this line.

Sender's Address: *K.K. B.N.C.*



MERRY XMAS

And a VICTORIOUS NEW YEAR

Greetings from all 30-41.

The address must NOT be typewritten.

TO:- THE QUEENS OWN, ROYAL WEST
KENT, REGIMENT
INVICTA, LINES,
SANDLING, PARK,
NR. MAIDSTONE,
KENT, ENGLAND.

566676

Write the message very plainly below this line.

Sender's Address: *6342026 Cpl. BAKER, Sg. R.W.K. C.I.C.E.*



**CHRISTMAS GREETINGS FROM
THE MEDITERRANEAN**

*from AN OLD BOY OF THE REGT
SID BAKER.*

Airgraphs of greetings for Christmas and the New Year arrived too late from abroad to be included in our December issue. We print them, however, bearing in mind that the wish is equally as sincere in March as in December.

Honours and Awards

In recognition of Gallant and Distinguished Services in Italy.

BAR TO MILITARY CROSS.

Capt. S. Stewart, M.C.

MILITARY CROSS.

Capt. P. Beall.

MILITARY MEDAL.

Sergt. S. G. P. Smith.

In recognition of Gallant and Distinguished Services in the Field.

MILITARY CROSS.

Major (temporary Lieut.-Colonel) D. E. B. Talbot.

MILITARY MEDAL.

In recognition of Gallant and Distinguished Services in Sicily.

Corpl. R. Armstead.

Mentioned in recognition of Gallant and Distinguished Services in N. Africa.

Lt. (tempt. Capt.) M. B. Wallace.

Corpl. D. V. J. Wylie (died of wounds).

Pte. T. Robinson.

Pte. P. C. Thomas.

[In Honours and Awards in December, 1943, issue, delete "Carleton and York Regiment" against the name of Captain (Temp Major) A.G. S. Cobb, M.B.E.]

THE ROLL OF HONOUR

KILLED.

Pte. R. F. Avis, Pte. D. S. Bennett, Pte. W. Cummings, Pte. A. F. Day, Pte. G. H. Fish, Pte. A. Lee, Pte. R. Parker-Bull, L.-Cpl. A. W. Shemmonds, Pte. F. R. Stuart, Pte. B. Wrench, Capt. W. R. Follett, Capt. B. E. Harvey, Lt. W. M. Kerr, W/Lt. I. S. Marshall, Capt. L. T. Mead, Pte. F. W. Auger, Cpl. S. J. Blake, Pte. N. L. Cherry, Pte. S. Morrissey, Pte. D. L. Peachey, Cpl. L. E. Blackman, Pte. A. Riddick, Pte. R. Benneworth, Pte. P. Flynn, Pte. E. Kelly, Pte. W. Kershaw, Pte. J. H. Lewry, L.-Cpl. J. J. Lockhead, Pte. J. H. Clark, Pte. D. J. Skane, W.O. II, F. C. Spooner, Pte. E. A. Stanford, Pte. H. Witchalls, W/Lt. V. H. Hewett, Lt. S. A. K. Keyes, W/Lt. H. E. Wright, Pte. C. F. T. McCarthy, Cpl. E. A. Roberts, Pte. J. A. W. Butt, Pte. F. G. Cross, A/Sgt. W. H. Golledge, Pte. L. J. Murray, Pte. J. A. Smith, Cpl. D. Taylor, L.-Cpl. V. F. Barnett, Pte. F. Cox, Pte. J. J. Fry, L.-Cpl. H. J. Longhurst, Pte. A. J. Simpkin, A/L.-Cpl. H. E. Sweatland, T/Capt. R. S. Allen, Pte. J. H. Allan, Pte. W. R. Chattenton, Pte. P. Dowling, Pte. P. Higgins, Cpl. S. G. Outram, L.-Sgt. W. T. Smith.

DIED OF WOUNDS.

Pte. A. E. Humphries, Pte. G. Cassidy, 2nd-Lt. G. T. Cooper, W/Lt. J. R. L. Leslie, Pte. C. Elliott, L.-Cpl. C. Guy, Cpl. W. F. Longmore, Pte. E. Stoter, Pte. P. Gill, Pte. T. F. R. Saunders, Pte. F. W. St. Ledger, Pte. T. W. Castle, Pte. J. Everson, Pte. C. E. Maddy, U/L.-Cpl. P. Price, Pte. R. Stead, W/Lt. V. R. Reeves.

DIED.

Pte. A. J. Dadd, Pte. E. W. G. Jackson, Pte. K. W. Sansom, Pte. H. J. Barnett, Pte. A. Edgell, Pte. J. McNamee, Pte. W. R. Ripley, Pte. J. Wackett, Pte. L. S. Clark, Pte. S. W. Nicholls.

WOUNDED.

Pte. G. C. Anderson, L.-Cpl. V. J. Bray, Ptes. R. Collins, J. H. Hayward, A. E. Jiggins, T. J. Loft, F. A. Miles, R. Perry, Sgt. A. M. Wilkins, Ptes. M. Basire, F. S. Bunch, A/W.O. II, H. F. Cowland, L.-Sgt. J. R. Foord, Ptes. W. L. Harrison, R. Pickavance, R. Roberts, E. H. Steward, S. R. A. Wallis, R. Wykes, E. P. Ash, V. C. Boyce, Cpl. K. T. F. Coutts, Ptes. B. R. Fears, E. G. Grigg, L.-Cpl. J. Hustwick, Pte. C. J. Mann, Cpl. R. C. Phillips, L.-Cpl. R. H. Richford, Ptes. F. V. Russell, L. A. Sitford, Cpl. R. T. Swallow, Pte. E. Woodrow, 2nd-Lt. R. C. Bengel, T/Capt. W. Grimsshaw, Maj. D. W. Jackson, W/Lt. R. E. Palmer, T/Capt. I. H. Roper, W/Lt. B. J. Wilkinson, Ptes. S. J. Adlem, S. S. Belsey, F. J. Boggis, Sgt. E. Brown, Ptes. A. Chadwick, E. T. Davies, Cpls. R. H. Fancourt, L. A. Freeman, Ptes. R. F. Halford, C. G. Harris, N. V. Heritage, W. Hollingsworth, A. E. Kay, E. H. J. Lawrence, J. Martin, A. S. Nicholls, S. Phillips, W. Rutherford, F. C. Sharp, A/Cpl. L. E. Shine, Ptes. F. R. E. Taylor, V. L. Wall, F. H. White, J. V. Wright, Ptes. H. A. Allen, F. R. Flood, E. C. Hendley, L. Langfold, F. W. Mabb, J. F. Manley, W. G. Pender, J. A. Ryan, R. J. Sime, S. C. Turley, W/Lt. J. B. Browne, W/Lt. J. F. Pearce, W/Lt. M. J. H. Washbourne, T/Capt. J. McC. Wollaston, Ptes. B. M. Andrews, P. G. Baker, D. F. Barrett, L.-Cpl. R. D. Bate, Ptes. G. E. Bradley,

W. G. Brooks, L.-Cpl. L. E. Covey, Ptes. W. G. Doulton, L. C. Gardinery, W. O. J. Goff, W. J. Gould, R. G. Harrold, W. T. Hine, T. Hughes, E. R. Jensen, J. W. Jones, G. A. King, C. Leavesley, L.-Cpl. G. A. Mansfield, Ptes. W. E. Mason, G. E. Money, A/Sgt. H. F. Murkin, Ptes. A. S. Nicholls, A. Penver, J. A. Reed, J. Riches, L.-Sgt. G. Stevens, Sgt. F. R. Whiting, Pte. A. J. Allen, W.O. II, H. J. Atkins, Ptes. E. R. Barnett, G. H. Bassett, N. Bird, H. S. Butler, C. Chambers, W. W. Dickings, J. A. Evans, A. J. Glover, R. Goode, G. A. Harris, F. N. Hayes, J. Hosie, J. M. James,

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS

BIRTHS.

BUDD.—On the 18th November, 1943, at Dartford, Kent, to the wife of Sgt. F. Budd, a daughter, Ann Marie.

BURNE.—On Dec. 10th, 1943, at Summercourt Nursing Home, Southborough, Kent, to Rosemary (née Smith), wife of Captain D. B. Burne, The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment, a daughter.

DARLEY.—On Dec. 28th, 1943, at a nursing home, Maidstone, to Molly, wife of Bandsman Robert Darley, a daughter.

ELLIOTT.—On Dec. 29th, 1943, at Lincoln Cottage, Pine Grove, Windlesham, Surrey, to Rosemary, (née Drake-Brockman), wife of Lt.-Col. G. G. Elliott, The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment, a third daughter.

GOODMAN.—On the 3rd September, 1943, at Bromley, to Isabel, wife of Major Eric Goodman, The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment, a son, Robin.

KER.—On Feb. 14th, 1944, at Parkvale Nursing Home, S.W.16, to Winifred, wife of Capt. Bruce Ker, The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment, a daughter, Susan Ann.

LEE.—On the 4th October, 1943, at Fulmer Chase, Bucks., to Betty, wife of Captain R. J. G. Lee, The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment, a daughter, Philippa.

RELF.—On the 9th December, 1943, at Ealing, to the wife of Pte. J. Relf, a daughter, Maureen.

RIDOUT.—On the 3rd December, 1943, at Oxford, to the wife of Pte. D. Ridout, a daughter, Maureen Frances.

WHITLOCK.—On the 1st January, 1944, at Bromley, Kent, to the wife of Pte. G. Whitlock, a daughter, Jean.

MARRIAGES.

COPPING—HAWORTH.—On the 24th January, 1944, at St. Mary's Church, Blackburn, Lancashire, Sgt. A. Copping to Elizabeth Haworth.

DUKE—LEWIS.—On the 8th January, 1944, at Leyton Register Office, E.10, Pte. W. Duke to Megan Lewis.

EIGHTEEN—RICHARDS.—On the 25th December, 1943, at Maidstone, Kent, L.-Cpl. G. Eighteen to Ethel Ivy Richards.

GARRETT—SHORT.—On the 22nd December, 1943, at West Tarring, Sussex, Colour-Sgt. F. Garrett to Patricia Mary Short.

JOHNSON—FAUTLEY.—On the 27th December, 1943, at Leigh, Kent, Pte. W. Johnson to Kathieen Florence Matilda Fautley.

NORTH—FACCINI.—On the 19th February, 1944, at Stepney, London, Cpl. W. North, M.M., to Elizabeth May Faccini.

SEAL—MENTER.—On the 4th January, 1944, at Ramsgate, Kent, Pte. G. Seal to Winifred Mary Menter.

SEXTON—COUNDEN.—On the 12th February, 1944, at Tyne-mouth, Sgt. L. Sexton to Eva Couden.

WARING—SMYTH.—On Feb. 12th, 1944, at St. Mary's Church, Offwell, Major Arthur Roy Hallowes Waring, The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment, to Pamela Smyth.

DEATHS.

STINGEMORE.—On the 27th November, 1943, at Ramsgate, Kent, Ronald, son of Pte. R. Stingemore.

YUILLE.—On the 23rd December, 1943, at Victoria Hospital, Chelsea, Roberta Alys, daughter of Pte. R. Yuille.

IN MEMORIAM.

DANN.—In proud memory on this his 25th birthday, of our dearly loved only son and brother, Major Ernest Dann, The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment (late Artists' Rifles), killed in action, Tunisia, April, 1943.—Father, Mother and Marjorie. "Your memory hallowed in the land you loved."

WOODHOUSE.—Major O. G. Woodhouse, The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment, Dunkirk, 1940.

KILLED IN ACTION.

ALLEN.—Killed in action in Italy in Nov., 1943, Capt. Richard Stafford Allen, The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment, aged 26 years, beloved husband of Bridget, and father of Jane, of Hewitt's, Horley, Surrey, and only son of the late Mr. E. S. Allen, and Mrs. Allen, of Deepdale, Westerham, Kent.

MISSING.

BLUTEAU.—Reported missing Dec., 1943, Capt. M. Bluteau, attached Carleton and York Regiment, Canadian Army, C.M.F. Any information gratefully received by his wife, 5, Carew Road, Eastbourne, or by his mother, 149, De L'epée Ave., Outremont, Prov. Quebec. (Canadian papers please copy.)

TARLETON.—In Nov., 1943, in the Middle East, Lt.-Col. B. D. Tarleton, Royal Northumberland Fusiliers, attached The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment, husband of Julia (née Mardon), Halsway Manor, Crowcombe, Somerset. [Reported in "The Times" later as a prisoner of war.]

WHITE.—Missing in Italy, Capt. Alan E. G. White, The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment, only son of Mr. and Mrs. William White, of Wallington, Surrey.

THE PASSING OF "NOBBY" ESPLIN.

We regret to announce the death, and his many friends in the Regiment will mourn the loss of "Nobby" Esplin, a famous regimental personality, who died at his home in Maidstone on March 12th, from bronchitis and asthma, aged 61.

Charles David Esplin joined The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment in 1903, and went to India with the 2nd Battalion in 1904. When the battalion were returned to England in 1919, Esplin was allowed to stay abroad, and when the 1st Battalion took up residence there he was transferred to them, and remained in India until the battalion arrived in England in January, 1938. (33½ years of continuous service in the East.)

Easily the most popular member of the 1st Battalion, Esplin remained a private during his Army career, serving as storekeeper to "A" Company throughout nearly all his Indian life. Unruffled, knowing all there was to know about the Army, "Nobby" lent the weight of his long experience to anyone who cared to ask about it, and with the young soldiers who were drafted to India he was greatly respected.

Interested in all branches of sport, "Nobby" Esplin was a first-class Army hockey referee, and he refereed all kinds of matches — from representative to platoon games — so devoted was he to the sport.

Gaining the reputation of the longest serving member of the British Army in India, "Nobby" Esplin was feted on all sides when he returned to England, and he had the distinction of featuring on the radio in "In Town Tonight". The guest of "The News of the World" while on a week-end in London, his story was written up and appeared in that newspaper as a full page article. Photographed and featured in the Kentish press, everybody in the county knew all about him.

The Regiment presented him with a silver and enamel half-hunter watch, suitably engraved, as a memento of his long service, and he treasured this gift, kept in the original wash-leather case, during his retirement.

Giving nearly all his life to the Regiment it did not surprise his acquaintances when he took up employment in the Depot as a civilian, and in the early part of the war he was to be seen handing out kit to the young soldiers who joined the Regiment. When the Regimental Depot Party was formed in 1941, he was employed by Major S. E. Brooks, and he ended his days in the familiar surroundings of the Barracks.

A member of the Sergeants' Mess, he was seen regularly on Sundays there, and he was chatting with old friends in the bar on the morning of the day he died.

Many tales are told of "Nobby," and when he was in the mood, his regimental adventures were unending, but any reference of him calls forth the regular habit which was traditional with him. Just on the stroke of noon "Nobby" used to close his store, adjust his belt, tunic and cap, and walk across to the canteen for his midday pint, just in time for the bugle to blow. People used to time their watches by his daily sojourn to the canteen, and it was undecided whether the bugle sounded the call to "Nobby's" habit, or "Nobby" his daily movement to the bugle, but they were synchronous.

Representatives of the Regiment, The Queen's Own Past and Present Association, and scores of his old battalion friends who served with him abroad and are now pensioners attended the funeral service on March 17th, and at the graveside in Maidstone Cemetery many lined up to pay their last respects. It is regretted that his death coincided with the leave of the regimental band, and that it was not possible to give him full military honours, as was his due, for no one was more deserving of the honour.

C.F.N.

Old Comrades' Correspondence

LONDON BRANCH.

It has been decided to hold the meetings of the Branch at the Green Man, Putney Heath, at 12 noon on the last Sunday of each month throughout the year. Will members and others interested please note? All are welcome, and we shall be particularly pleased to see any members of other Branches and of the Regiment who, being in that vicinity, care to drop in upon us. There is always a drink, a smoke, and a yarn.

Members of the Branch are particularly requested to assist in keeping it active by sending their subscriptions and donations for 1944 to the Secretary, Mr. W. Snell, 3, Malta Road, Leyton, London, E.10, as soon as possible.

Information about the Branch, its activities, aims and objects can be had from the Secretary (as above), Mr. H. Elson, 8, North Avenue, West Ealing, London, W.13, and Mr. W. G. Whiffen, 14, Rosehill Park West, Sutton, Surrey, both of whom will be pleased to respond to any letters received.

After recent discussion on the post-war period (referred to in the last issue of the Gazette), it has been decided to shelve this matter until a more favourable opportunity presents itself.

There being nothing further to report this month, London Branch sends greetings to comrades past and present everywhere.

W. G. WHIFFEN.

THE QUEEN'S OWN SOCIAL CLUB, DEPTFORD.

The outstanding event in the activities of the Deptford lads occurred recently, when a goodly number of them and their wives foregathered at Artillery House, Catford, to meet the President of the Association—General Sir Charles Bonham-Carter, G.C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O. The reason for his visit was a presentation to Lieut.-Colonel Lambert, 1st Cadet Bn., The Queen's Own, to commemorate his 30 years' service with the Cadets. After the presentation ceremony the writer kidnapped Sir Charles from his company and bore him in triumph to the "Canteen," where our lads were waiting. Did we enjoy a pleasant half hour with him? I should say so!! Included in those there to meet the General was old "Mike" Stone—who was the General's batman when he joined the Regiment in Ireland in 1896!!

I wonder if there are any among our readers who remember George Caley? He transferred to the 1st Bn. from the Royal Marines before the last war. He served in France with the 1st Bn. He is now in the Star and Garter Home, Richmond — where he has been since the last war. He is bed-ridden—cannot speak, and paralysed. If anyone would care to send him along a few books, his address is Ypres Ward. All are Old Contemptibles in this ward.

We regret to announce the death on Dec. 3rd of one of the old pre-last war comrades—"Banjo" Barnes—after a long illness. "Banjo" served with 1st Bn. Malta, afterwards moving on to the 2nd at Singapore, Lebong and Peshawar. He was in the old "B" Coy. (Major Woulfe-Flanagan and Lieut. Bredon, as they were in those days). I believe he was in the Machine Gun Section in Peshawar.

Gravesend, we thank you for your kind remarks in the last issue and assure you we shall take the first opportunity to pop along to "have one."

We send our greeting to all comrades of other Branches and to our boys wherever they may be serving.

PADDY DOYLE.

GRAVESEND BRANCH.

There is little to report from this branch this quarter. Poor attendances at our weekly meetings are due to members being on Home Guard and Civil Defence duties, etc., and we are looking forward to the time when the war is over so that we can get back to the well-attended meetings of other days. We held over our meeting of November 7th (Remembrance Sunday) because of our acceptance of an invitation to Church with the local branch of the Old Contemptibles. We paraded with our Colours and medals, and decorations were worn. Colonel Bratten, of the Gravesend Home Guard, was in charge of the parade, and it was headed by the Sea Cadets' Drum and Bugle Band. On our return to barracks from the march to St. George's Church, Colonel Bratten said he considered it an honour to have been on parade. A few members afterwards marched to the War Memorial and laid a wreath in remembrance of our fallen comrades.

Members extend to all battalions and other branches of Old Comrades a happy and Prosperous New Year, and a speedy return home to their folk.

A.B.

Our Regimental Museum

BY THE CURATOR.

The characters and museum in this story are imaginary and have no relation to any Regimental Museum.

During a Better and Brighter Barracks Campaign we decided to buy a new bookcase for the Mess, but we did not know what to do with the old one. This was a massive affair, each shelf had its front rank and rear rank of books, while some were three ranks deep. Although those in the front could be transferred to our new shelves, the disposal of the remainder presented a problem. We had a spare barrack room, reserved for an overflow of recruits, which had, for many years, accommodated an overflow from the Quartermaster's Store. We could not very well banish our bookcase there, it was an original member of the Mess; apart from which many of the rear rank books, although quite fifty years out of date, were presentation copies.

It was the Adjutant who suggested that we should start a Depot Museum, and even the Quartermaster, usually an obstructionist, agreed. But when we discussed the matter, we found that, apart from the bookcase and its contents, we could only contribute a cannon ball, a piece of shell (history unknown), an elephant's foot (formerly used as a cigarette box, but now badly damaged), an engraving of Wellington's Generals (minus the key), and Lieutenant Brown's Fish.

There was nothing really remarkable about this fish except that it was the first, and only, fish that Lieutenant Brown ever caught. Stuffed and set up in an expensive glass case, it had for many years decorated his room, but then he got married, and as his wife wouldn't have it in the house, he presented it to the Depot Mess.

During Major Brown's period of command at the Depot it had an honoured place in the Ante Room, but when later he was posted abroad to command a Brigade in India, the fish was moved out into the passage, where it, although rather in the way of coats on guest nights, proved a useful resting place for caps and regimental canes.

We decided that the Museum must be a Regimental one, and sent off letters to the Battalions asking for contributions. Meanwhile news of the project spread in the neighbourhood, and, within a week, we received four German steel helmets, two rifles, a respirator, two unframed lithographs, and three medals of the Royal Army Temperance Association.

An extraordinary Mess Meeting of the 1st Battalion authorised the despatch of an enlarged photograph of Major-General Smith (1832-1903), slightly foxed, a Turkish clock, two engravings (found in the Mess Office cupboard), and a parcel of books. A proposal that Lieutenant Robinson's Goose should be sent was defeated by 21 votes to 2. This bird, like the fish at the Depot, was stuffed and lived in a glass case.

Lieutenant Robinson had, many years ago, been in charge of a musketry party, when a skein of geese had flown across the range; picking up a rifle he had fired, and The Goose had fallen. That it was not the one he had aimed at no one ever knew, even Robinson himself had forgotten this before he reached barracks.

Although he retired a few years later, his name has lived through the Goose. His skill as a shot, which was really quite indifferent, has been greatly magnified, and more than one young subaltern, faced with the task of entertaining an elderly caller, has found the story of Robinson's Goose a very useful topic of conversation.

The letter from the Depot reached the 2nd Battalion, serving in India, in the middle of the hot weather. The C.O. sent for the P.M.C., who, leaving his accounts and pedalling his bicycle along the mile of dusty road to the Orderly Room, was shown the letter. The C.O. had very decided views on the matter, and that evening the Mess Sergeant supervised the packing of an astrakhan cap, worn by a former officer when serving in Nova Scotia; a jacket, which after coming unscathed through the siege of Lucknow, had subsequently been almost destroyed by ants; recent repairs, however, had made it as good as new; a parcel of books and Major Jones' picture.

This picture, by a well-known artist, was of considerable value, but the subject, a lady scantily clad, was hardly a suitable one for the wall of an Officers' Mess. It had been bequeathed by Major Jones, and after remaining for some time in a box in the Quartermaster's Store, had eventually found a resting place on the wall of the Mess Office.

Meanwhile, our Barrack Room had been converted, walls colour-washed, shelves fixed, floor stained, and a board, with the Regimental crest, painted above the word "Museum," screwed to the door.

As soon as the cases arrived from India, we wrote to the Colonel of the Regiment and sent out invitations to past and present Officers, to attend the opening ceremony.

The great day arrived, the recruits were drawn up, two deep, facing the Colonel of the Regiment. Perhaps, if he had been round the Museum before he made his speech, he would not have spoken quite so stirringly of the relics to be found therein. The door was unlocked and we entered, strictly in order of seniority. Fragments of conversations reached those of us who were at the end of the queue: "Why there's old Brown's Fish, I remember the day he caught it"; "I wonder where old Robinson is now?" "This book arrived when I was on the Mess Committee in Malta, here is the inscription I wrote in 1885"; "That jacket has lasted well"; "Dick won a sovereign from me by wearing that astrakhan cap when turning out the Guard, after a great night at Aldershot in 1890."

Afterwards, in the Mess, we gathered that the Museum was considered to be a good show, our new bookcase was much admired, so was our dark brown sherry. After luncheon, we were promised all manner of things for the Museum.

We have just heard that Brigadier Brown has been promoted and is on his way back to England. The Mess Sergeant has a key to the Museum and a vacant place has been left on our new bookcase for the Fish.

Mr. JAMES SAUNDERS.

In the September, 1943, number of The Queen's Own Gazette, mention was made in the Old Comrades News (Gravesend Branch) of Mr. James Saunders. The following letter appeared in the "Kent Messenger" of February 4th:

"QUEEN'S OWN'S" OLDEST OLD COMRADE?

Sir,—I was interested to read the account in your issue dated 21st January, of the activities of 82-years-old Mr. James Saunders, who was believed to be the oldest old comrade of The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment.

However, I think you will agree that Major J. Cpuh's record can give that of Mr. Saunders a good margin.

My father, who resides with me, and is in his 85th year, joined the old 46th Brigade at Maidstone on July 3rd, 1879, and after a short spell with the 50th, joined the 97th and saw service with them in the Natal Campaign of 1880.

He retired finally after over 40 years' service with The Queen's Own, on November 13th, 1919.

He still has many friends in Maidstone (having served at the Depot from 1902 to 1919) who may like to know that he is quite physically and mentally active and follows today's news on the wireless with the greatest keenness.

I wonder, therefore, whether any other old comrade of The Queen's Own can show a still better record.—G. P. COUCH, Bank House, Castle Street, Hinckley.

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: News from Battalions :

— BATTALION.

Hullo, R.W.K.'s! wherever you may be!

Slightly breathless from our latest cross-country performances in chasing Jerry over the hills, we pinch a few more minutes from patrols, haircuts, and roasting the local turkeys, to give you the latest "dope."

Much has happened since our last News Letter which some of you will already know. The lads here have had some exciting and stirring times, some much more pleasant in the telling in the old Rose and Crown than in the actual happening, but all taking place in the right direction, generally with a fleeting view of the Hun's rear.

And now for some personalities....

Major W. L. R. Benyon, who came to us in Sicily as 2nd in Command, stayed an all too short time with us. His fame as a forceful believer in "Comforts for the front line troops" must have spread through the country at an amazing rate, for he was soon snapped up by another Division as a Commanding Officer—where, we hear, he is already as popular as he was here. We were very sorry to lose him, but will always be glad to see that walking stick and moustache walk in to see us.

Major Benyon was succeeded by Major W. Tuffill, a West Kent returned to the fold after many years of wandering. We are sorry that he was only able to be with us for a few days before succumbing to the usual jaundice. Wherever he is, we hope he is fit again and that we may have news of him soon.

We are very sorry to have to report that we have lost more old members of the unit. Capt. P. M. Peerless, one of the oldest members of the Battalion, will be missed by all. He was the one person who could be relied upon to be unflinchingly cheerful under all circumstances. The Signals, and indeed the whole Battalion, will remember him as a morale raiser without equal.

Capt. R. S. Allen, who rejoined the Battalion after an absence of over two years, will be greatly missed by all. Although he was with us such a comparatively short time, his ready smile and cheerfulness was well-known throughout the Battalion.

For the rest, the Company news will be able to tell you better than we will, so we will let Able Company kick off.

Since the last news the Company has had two changes of command. Major Du Boulay was appointed Company Commander, but was unfortunately wounded in our last action. We were very sorry to lose him, and we wish him a speedy recovery. Old members of the Company will be interested to know that the Company is once again in the hands of Major G. K. DeFrates, M.C., whose stay in the desert seems to have given him even more than his proper quota of energy. There have been many changes in the personnel of the Company, and we welcome to the Company Lieuts. R. Gyte and A. Bloom. Lieut. Bloom, incidentally, is the brother of our old C.Q.M.S. "Blossom," now himself commissioned and—we hear—working very hard as Adjutant in North Africa. When we get back to civilisation there will be two more members for the Sergeants' Mess, namely, Norman and Coombs. Sergt. Coombs was unfortunately wounded in a small "party" out here, but we hope to see him back again soon. "Honest Abe" is still "doing his nut" and manages to keep our four-legged lines of communication open and going strong in spite of rivers of mud. Finally, we were glad to hear the other day that our old C.S.M. "Chinny" Dixon is now R.S.M. on board a troopship. Rumour has it that he has already reserved for us the best mess decks and cabins. What a hope!

"B" Coy. have been flourishing under the command of Major L. Wigram. Perhaps their biggest loss has been that of those two gallant Irish lads—Sgt. Sullivan, M.M., and Corpl. Whelan. The remainder of the Irish are, however, carrying bravely on under the leadership of Sgt. Crosby. Talking of Irishmen reminds us that we heard from Lieut. Lenihan some time ago; he was fighting on the other side of Italy. Judging by his letter it is rather difficult to decide whether he was fighting the Hun to get to Rome, or fighting the Army to get

back to our Battalion. We hope he wins the latter battle. The sooner the better. Most of our other personalities are still with us—our C.S.M. (ex-C.Q.M.S. Gilbert) has been promoted at such a rapid rate that we are expecting him to take over from "Monty" any time within the next six months. If he ever did go further the whole Company would be extremely sorry to lose him. Corpl. Rodwell still smiles his toothy smile at all and sundry, while the reins of Company Clerk are now held by ex-Company-runner Morris. He was lately mustered as a tradesman, and all other budding Company Clerks in the Battalion are now endeavouring to find out what cajolery was employed to induce the Adjutant to take such a step. Ably assisting Major Wigram in his pursuit of Italian livestock are Lieuts. W. Kennedy and N. H. Delves. Such a formidable trio should ensure that the local Italians are without poultry for the next year or so! Another interesting item occurs to us—our old friend Ernie Heaslewood is understood to be with Lieut. Lenihan.

"C" Company's officers and men send their kindest regards to all former "C" Coy. personnel and wish a speedy recovery to all who are sick and wounded. The Coy. has again lived up to its great reputation in ousting the wicked Hun, and are resigned to spending another Christmas away from Blighty. Rumours as usual are going the rounds, but we must say it is taking a hell of a time to paint those battleaxes on the "Queen Mary"! We are very glad to hear that Major Taylor is making a good recovery and that his arm is already fit enough to be bent at the elbow—an exercise which, we are sure, he will practise to his capacity! We are always ready to welcome back any of our old lads, and hope they are not developing into "Base Wallahs"! "Wog" Cleggett has still his old cry—"I haven't got any," and our old warrior Bob, the dog, is still going strong.

"D" Company have again welcomed a new Company Commander, Major J. O. Forman, from one of our sister Regiments of the Brigade. With his leading us into battle and Capt. Wakefield looking after our welfare in and out of action, the Coy. is assured of maintaining its high fighting reputation as well as enjoying all the good things of life. We were sorry to lose Lieut. Austin, and hope he will soon be back with us. Believe it or not, but "Honest Bill" was among the few casualties of recent operations. However, he kept up with us and managed to hobble around and scrounge his usual "G.10" for the benefit of all concerned. Old members are watching with great interest the growth of "Curly's" thatch! Two more hairs and the great unveiling ceremony will take place! Don't miss it. Old members of the Coy. also will be glad to hear that Sergt. Bryant, D.C.M., is doing well and sends his best wishes to Dog Company and to his many old friends in the Battalion. The same source of information that gives us news of Lieuts. Lenihan and Heaslewood tells us that Donnelly, M.M., is also in the same Battalion. We can imagine what a formidable R.W.K. force there must be driving on Rome!

H.Q. Coy., with its as usual well-scattered personnel, has seen quite a few changes recently. Capt. Peerless has been greatly missed by us all, and especially by his Signal boys. Major R. L. Clarke, Capt. W. R. A. Birch, Lieut. Bernau and Capt. Eason have all commanded the Coy. in turn for short periods, and Capt. Eason still does so in addition to his duties as "Sugar Oboe."

C.S.M. "Bob" Chambers has been in our midst too, doing all the odd jobs associated with the office of C.S.M. in H.Q., ably "stooged" by the honourable Lowman. It has still not been discovered why the strength of H.Q. Coy. on parade never exceeds six.

We are sorry to report that quite a few of the familiar faces are no longer with us; among these are The Boy Creasey and long-standing Charlie Guy of the Sigs.

Capt. Eason took over the Signals recently and has already a reputation greater than that of "Bolo" of days gone by—for laying fantastic lengths of cable to fantastic places under the most fantastic conditions.

R.S.M. Byrne continues his search for the perfect billet

and some say they never knew a man like him for "acquiring" furniture!

Col.-Sergt. Ted Gibbs makes a grand job of the notoriously simple business of running "Q" in H.Q., and has an able body-guard in "Taffy" Rees (kidnapped from the Sigs), who is his right as well as his left-hand man.

In the realm of batmen, the redoubtable Lt.-Cpl. Wood (Yes, Mate! Eh, Mate? O.K., Mate!) has left us to follow Major (now Lieut.-Col.) Benyon into his new command.

Flash . . . The Car Park Commandos had to go and get themselves involved in quite a front-line "do" (!), as a result of which we temporarily lost Capt. Nixon, but we have since been glad to welcome him back to his 4 x 4's.

That quite incredible truck (known severally as "The N.A.A.F.I. Van," "The Soapbox on Wheels," etc.), which housed the B.O.R., also strayed a bit too far and met a Bosch shell—but we have another child, almost as beautiful, in its place. There was a nasty blockage in the Part I. Order and "bump" machine when Sergts. Gore and Lewis, of the B.O.R., both decided to have jaundice together, but the former is back now and we have high hopes of seeing Lewis soon. Dear old "Daddy" Wicks made superhuman efforts during this crisis, and we congratulate him on that second stripe he now wears.

The aptly named Intelligence Section has lost its big Simmons for a time, and I.O.'s come and go—mostly they seem to go. But Sergt. Bill Baker's massive shoulders have taken the strain, and he continues his quest for the perfect meal.

The R.A.P. lost "Tuller" Bates for a spell, but we see he's now back dishing out the aspirins, and he joins us all in congratulating Sergt. Bourne on a very well deserved M.M.

Last, but so very far from least, we still have Provost Sergt. "Joe" Cottenham regarding his charges with a wizened eye and giving the most careful and loving attention to the famous blue and white flag which flutters over B.H.Q.

Some time ago Support Company welcomed a new Company Commander—Major A. H. Miskin, M.C., lately returned from his clash with the "yellow peril," although none the worse for his period in hospital. Capt. Williams has returned to his beloved "drain pipes." Everybody was pleased when "Our Dad" got his third pip some time back. We are sure you will join us in congratulating that old stalwart Sergt. Kendall, M.M., on pinning a D.C.M. to his B.D.—an award very richly deserved. The "bubble chasers" had an opportunity of giving Jerry socks during recent operations, and this they proceeded to do in no mean fashion, with many rounds rapid. In fact, the whole company has been credited with some very good work in this last campaign. You will be sorry to hear that Sergts. Ken Usher and Barden are lost to us, and we are anxiously waiting to hear they are at least fit and well. Sergt. (Watchmake) Millington has left our ranks to join "C" Coy., together with Sergt. Groves. Popular rumour puts the transfer fee at a dozen turkeys and ten litres of vino. Major Roper considers it cheap at the price! "Tojo," champion scrounger of Coy. H.Q., has been away from us for a long while to make up a deficient B.H.Q. Our losses at solo have been considerably less since his departure, but now that he has returned extra pay parades are being demanded by all our regular card-sharps.

Sergt. "Basil" turned yellow just before our last operation, but it was jaundice and not fright that took him from us. Hurry up, Basil!—and that goes for all you other Support chaps too. Cheerio!

STOP PRESS.

News which has filtered through in the last few days tells of several of our old friends.

Capt. "Mike" Wood, of "Double up, you men." and "Well done that man with the Bren gun" fame, has had a long and serious illness in North Africa, but we are glad to hear that he is at last on the mend. We promise him that our reunion with him will more than compensate for his long absence from us.

Major R. L. Clarke, M.C., is in hospital, and we have no doubt he is keeping all and sundry (particularly the Nursing Sisters!) amused from morning till night. We shall be extremely pleased to have him back with us as soon as possible.

Capt. Beall is wintering in Malta, but our latest reports tell us that he is in very good form, in spite of the amputation of one of his legs. He will be remembered by the infiltration platoon, and indeed by the whole Battalion, as an example of guts and cheerfulness.

We had a cheerful letter from Lieut. Desmond the other day, who is now in North Africa, and he again we are looking forward to seeing in dear old Blighty at the long-awaited reunion. We wish him the best of luck.

— And now our final up-to-date news of what we are doing. Imagine a narrow village street winding up to a church on

top of a hill—somewhat reminiscent of Haverfordwest! On one side of the road is B.H.Q., with flag proudly flying. On the other, we have opened a pub! A pub on English lines, with the old sign swinging outside—needless to say "The White Horse Inn." Inside, a fug of tobacco smoke, the thud of darts on dart boards, muttering of the domino players, and the quips of the local "hopefuls" at the very buxom Italian barmaid, serving our vino and ration of beer and cigarettes, etc., just like old Ma in the "local" at home. Next door we have established a chip shop where we can have our "two-pennorth" and a dash of vinegar. Preparations for a Christmas pantomime are under way. Football pitches are being recce'd, and the R.W.Ks. are walking around this little town with an air of pleasure mingled with one of "Has this really happened to us at last, or is it just a dream?"

To finish, we know that the fighting record of the Battalion is well known both in Africa and at home. We are sure you would like to know exactly what we have gained in outward and visible signs since we landed in Africa just over a year ago. So here they are:—

D.S.Os.	M.Cs.	D.C.Ms.	M.Ms.	Mentioned in Despatches.
1	12	4	16	31

— BATTALION

Another three months has brought little change to the Battalion except that we once again have many new faces with us. Training has continued as strenuously as ever in anticipation of our part in events to come so that the vision of that "civvy suit" may be much closer by the end of this year. We send greetings for 1944 to all Battalions of the Regiment and welcome those N.C.Os. and men who have returned to us after service overseas.

Christmas brought a welcome relaxation from training which commenced with an All Ranks Dance held at Tony's. The hall was packed with the Battalion and their friends, with a large crowd outside clamouring to be admitted. The dance, with C.S.M. Duffin as M.C., quickly got under way, the bar adding to the general exuberance of spirits; paper hats and streamers embellished the melée and sprigs of mistletoe were being overworked all the evening. All in all, it was a riotous success, and thanks are due to Captain R. G. J. Lee, who did all the organising, the members of the dance committee, and other helpers for their various assistance.

After church on Christmas morning we sat down to a magnificent dinner provided by the Messing Officer (Lieut. F. W. Thatcher), the usual Christmas fare of turkey, Christmas pudding, beer, etc., being enjoyed by all. As the "muckoes" did not seem able to cope with their duties very efficiently (lack of experience?) Sgt. "Threeo" Harris entertained us with his inimitable patter and colourful songs. After dinner it was "In bed or out of barracks!"

On Boxing Day afternoon the artistes of the local pantomime kindly came to give us an impromptu show in the Rest Room, where Pioneers and Signallers had been busy erecting and equipping a stage. In addition, Sgt. Harris, Lt.-Cpl. Wicks and Ptes. Harrison and Barry Hall did turns.

A small innovation instituted by the C.O. has been our wall newspaper, "The Horse and Tiger," which now appears weekly in the information room, under the editorship of Sgt. P. Smith, illustrations (which are luscious lumps of loveliness) by Lt.-Cpl. Wood. It is not known why Sgt. P. Smith put his own number down for the lucky number and then forgot to submit his number for the prize.

In sporting spheres our main and fairly successful activity is football. Platoon and Company games take place fortnightly, and great interest is centred in the Battalion team. Since our last issue we have now played the return match with the local league leaders and only conquerors.

The match aroused considerable interest locally, and was watched by quite a large crowd at the ground. Our regular left winger, Pte. Bacon, was away, and Lt.-Cpl. Lee, who took his place, had the misfortune to injure himself during the first ten minutes, so that he was a passenger during the remainder of the game. Despite this handicap, the team played a great game, and at half-time no goal had been scored. During the second half our opponents managed to make a lucky break-through and scored what proved to be the only goal of this evenly matched game. Thus our position in the league to date is: Played 17, Won 15, Lost 2, Points 30 (second place).

Hard luck, Sgt. Parker, we hope you will get your turn in the Divisional Cup competition. In this we played and defeated the Div. R.A.S.C. Coy. in the quarter finals, with a

score of 6-0, thus enabling us to reach the semi-final; we have great hopes of being successful here.

We are still very happy to have so many members of a famous regiment still with us, and trust that their stay will be a long and happy one.

I.R.P.

"A" Company.

We feel that the Company Orderly Sergt. must resemble nothing so much as the elephant these days if he is to make a success of his job, for with the constant change of faces, he must add to his lamblike meekness and his serpentine cunning, the virtue of never forgetting. Our star C.O.S. has been "Bomber" Wells, without a doubt, who appeared among us, and was one of us before you could say "Wakey, wakey." It is not at all certain what happened to him, but he returned to pack his kitbag, rouse a few more lie-abeds, and return whence he had come. We were very sorry to see him go — and wish him all the best.

"Bomber's" description of "A" Coy. when he first arrived must have been most enticing, for it was not long before others were flocking to us — not least among them Capt. Theobald, whose energy many will no doubt recall. He found he liked the place, and he liked courses too. Sgt. Davies and Sgt. Skillen came — and departed. We expect to see them again, with a change. Two other stalwarts have passed by — Sgt. Townsend and Sgt. Shoebridge — and many others who, we hope, may be reading these notes with recollections of wet, but cheerful days in a certain ruined farm not a stone's throw from here. To you all we send our greetings and our sincerest good wishes.

And what of the old place? Stands "Able" where it did? Hardly stands, possibly, but still trots along the old familiar roads, past those well-known bovine hostilities — Black, Brown and White. Still the stream drenches the unwary on the assault course; still the battle beyond the Volturino rages fierce.

Our quarters now know the luxury of a real W.T. store — the apple of the C.S.M.'s eye and the envy of the Colour-Sergeant. Lösses have decreased by 100 per cent. We now lose no pullthroughs. The Company cat viewed the changes with apprehension, knowing the significance of square-built structures from her experience of the R.S.M.'s "cat concentration camp" but was reassured by Gnr. Hook's tender calls with a saucer of milk and water.

The way up to bed is still disconcerting for such gents. as celebrate, but interesting holes in the floor promise a not less alarming route down in case of fire. We are assured that the holes are solely the Fire Officer's affair, and have no connection with the recent visit of the Company Commander to the Army School of Hygiene.

"Able" Company lives up to its name. It remembers the old names, the old faces. Remember us sometime.

THE GRENADEER.

"B" Company.

Since submitting our last news of the Company, Christmas has come and passed away. The Battalion had a first-class dance, which would have been even better had not the bar run out.

Boxing Day — artistes from the local theatre gave us a show which we thoroughly enjoyed. Pte. Barry Hall, a pleasing tenor, surprised us all, and we can listen to a little more of his singing, especially as we have since learned that he has spent some considerable time at the Opera House, Brussels. L-Cpl. Wicks accompanied Hall, and we find that he is an able musician.

Training has become even more uncomfortable than of old, instead of raining one day in two, it very rarely stops at all. Our Field Firing Exercises have become more like games of water polo played in the icy seas of the North Atlantic. Especially was this so on one exercise we indulged in, when an assault boat overturned in a deepish, fast-flowing river, resulting in steel helmets and other odd items of equipment floating gaily to the ever open sea. It seems quite possible that by now the boat is trying out an invasion by itself.

Football in the Battalion has been the leading light in the sports world, aided, of course, by two members of this Company, L-Cpl. Cohen and Pte. Dowdall. L-Cpl. Cohen has played for Bournemouth and Boscombe, and Pte. Dowdall, in a recent game, succeeded in scoring a hat trick — three goals in ten minutes. Unfortunately, the unavoidable absence of L-Cpl. Cohen on leave, and Pte. Dowdall on a course, may have weakened the Battalion side, and possibly contributed towards their defeat, in the semi-final of the Divisional cup.

We have recently heard from one or two old friends who have left the Battalion for overseas. Lieut. R. C. Ricks wrote to us from "Somewhere in Africa" saying he was

very fit and enjoying himself, also that he has a lot of old friends with him.

An old trio, Ptes. Bean, Baldwinson and Taylor, have written giving us news of themselves and their Platoon. We should like to hear more from the hundreds who have left us, and, if they have any spare photos going, we should like to be on the priority list.

Sgt. McKenzie and Cpls. Scott and Wood have recently left us, and we wish them all the best in their future wanderings.

Lieut. (Joe) Mulhall, in Africa with the — Battalion, has passed through our ranks, and, after a brief stay with us, is now at Battle School as an Instructor.

Recently arrived is C.Q.M.S. Fullwood from the — Battalion. We are naturally very pleased to see him, and hope to get a lot of useful information regarding administration in the field.

The wall of the Information Room, every week now, is decorated by a new publication entitled "The Horse and Tiger", which gives all the news from the various Companies, and the idiosyncrasies of their members. It's a headache for the Company clerks who, in addition to their many arduous duties, have to type it, but it gives us much fun and a chance to exchange badinage with other Companies. So far, as they have found to their cost, Baker Company has been able to contribute its full share.

There is nothing more of import to relate to you, our friends, in the other Battalions, so, until the next issue we wish you all the best of luck, and hope that you will soon be back with us.

BASH-ON.

"C" Company.

Last in alphabetical order only, "C" Company once again greets you. Our Company is small in numbers, but we venture to suggest that this deficiency in strength is nullified by the quality of personnel — the type of men who decide major issues on the field of combat. Apropos "major issues" we would wish to congratulate our indefatigable Coy. Commander on the occasion of his promotion to that rank. Whilst handing out bouquets, a large one must be presented to Sgt. Wenham and his wife, with every sincere wish for their future happiness. Sgt. King has also qualified for inclusion in the honours list as a reward for producing a daughter.

News is almost solely confined to training — a sore subject indeed. Recently this necessary business of training was dished out to the N.C.O.s in the form of a unit cadre, the success of which may be judged from the fact that even some of the instructors begrudgingly admitted having learned something. It is now assumed that no stone has been left unturned on X3 by successive waves of schemers. Shakespeare spoke of a "blasted heath" — we could think of stronger adjectives.

The Company Stores have now been removed to more commodious premises situated at the western extremity of "Jankers Alley," and owing to the superior layout, the C.Q.M.S. has no difficulty whatsoever in producing any desired article of G1098 equipment twenty-four hours after indent.

We wish good hunting, followed by a safe and speedy return to all those who have gone forth during the past months from this Company, and likewise a happy sojourn to all new arrivals.

Thus we go forward, a great record behind us, and an even greater one ahead.

BEN.

Headquarter Company.

We find it hard to believe that it is three months since we last reported on our affairs, but the calendar never lies, so we get to work and rack our brains to remember what has taken place in the last quarter.

We welcome to the Company 2nd-Lieuts. G. T. Morson and G. J. Coombes, and hope their stay with us will be a happy one. Lieut. F. W. Thatcher has returned to us from "A" Company to take command while our Company Commander has been away in hospital. We are pleased that he is now much better and will soon be back with us again. Another notable return to the fold is our old friend Pinky, after a long spell in hospital. We all hope he is back to his old form and has not lost the charm we knew so well.

We have said goodbye to C.S.M. Stannard and Sgt. Seahook, and wish them all the best of luck in their new spheres.

The Company soccer team has been doing well, its most notable performance being a win over the unbeatable Support Company. Well done, boys! Credit must go to "Tiny" Spencer and Sgt. Limburn for an inspiring game. "Tiny" was as good as a brick wall, and Sgt. Limburn dash-

ing about made him look like a professional. I have been asked why he did not take the ball with him.

Happy events have been a main feature in the Company news. C-Sgt. O'Keefe and Ptes. Couchman and Marchant are now proud fathers. There are some more forthcoming, according to our roving reporter, but he will not divulge the names yet.

We have a fair share of the Africa and 39/43 Stars, and offer our congratulations to all the recipients.

The outstanding occasion of the last quarter was, of course, the Christmas festivities. We had a grand time, and easily the best war-time Christmas most of us have had. It commenced with a first-class dance at the local dance hall. Spirits were high, and a really bumper time we had.

Christmas dinner was a great success amid the gaily decorated walls, and L-Cpl. Wood must be congratulated on his fine paintings. Boxing afternoon we were entertained by artistes from the local theatre, and a really good show was enjoyed.

Nothing unusual has happened in the various sections of the Company. As usual the M.T. get blamed for everything that happens, but now they get their own back through the medium of the "Horse and Tiger." The wall newspaper has been a great success, and once again L-Cpl. Wood must be mentioned for his artistic work.

In closing we should like to send good wishes to all members of the Regiment wherever they may be, and especially to old friends who have departed from our midst.

Support Company.

Writing Support Company's notes for the quarterly edition of the "Buster" is rendered more difficult because your correspondent has just finished his weekly article for the Battalion wall newspaper, "The Horse and Tiger" and the two styles do not mix!

Life in a battalion of this type does not vary very much, and we look for news to those we train and pass on to our sister battalions overseas. In this way we have received news of L-Sgt. Shepherd, now driving a "Duck" in N. Africa, Cpl. Phipps in Italy with a Brigade H.Q., and Ptes. Brown, Fisher and Keeble who have now turned up in India. To all those who we haven't heard from, we say "drop us a line".

During the last three months we have welcomed Lieuts. Oxenham, Harrad and Platford to the Company, and said goodbye to Lt. Clevedon, who was the "Mighty Atom" of the Carriers for some months. We last heard of him bound for Italy.

The Divisional boxing finals were held in our city recently, and we are sorry that our only competitor, Pte. Johnston, lost on points to Pte. McCulloch of the Black Watch in the light heavy professional final. We learn they may meet again over 8 rounds. Also in the sporting world we would congratulate C.S.M. Tuck on being selected to play for the Battalion hockey team against the Girls' Technical College — no further comment is necessary!

FOOTBALL.

Our Company team, sorry, the Battalion team (8 representatives!) has had a very successful season, and at the moment have reached the semi-final of the Divisional championship and hold second place in the local league. Our colours have only been lowered twice, on each occasion to the B— Rovers. Sgt. V. Parker is still the captain of the team, and Pte. H. Tremain is still whacking them in. We hope by the next edition of the "Buster" to report that we have won the Divisional championship.

STOP PRESS.

Football: Final Scores: Support Company 7, Headquarter Company 1.

BATTALION.

It is nearly a year since the "Q.O.G." received a contribution from us, and we were rather disheartened to find that our last effort was not published. It is charitable to suppose that possibly it never reached England and provided indigestible fare for fishes instead. Anyhow, the long account of life in the Western Desert up to and including the battle of El Alamein which, written by our sister Battalion, appeared in the number for June, 1943, might well be said to apply almost to the last detail to us as well. For with them, who were our comrades in arms, we shared the dust, the flies, the shells and mortar bombs of Ruwiant Ridge, Alim Havil and Himeimat. After El Alamein the inscrutable will of the Higher Command ordained that we should be taken elsewhere, and we were wafted away in long M.T. convoys to the land of thieves and "Pyedogs" well known to many in the last war, and we finished the winter in the interesting but edificeous environs of its

capital. Our chief pre-occupations in this land were firstly to counter the cunning of arms thieves, who appeared to have had long service in the Magicians' Circle, secondly to keep warm, and thirdly to co-operate with the local army and assist its training, thereby cementing the Entente Cordiale. The desert here was much the same as the Egyptian variety, although it bred an even worse form of dust storm. This time the dust was dust and not sand. Nothing would keep it out, and as a storm sometimes lasted as long as three days, accompanied always by a howling gale it is not very difficult to imagine what we had to put up with. One remembers particularly one night when the Officers' Mess had to be anchored to carriers, while certain Sergeants returning from their Mess to the lines—a distance of 100 yards—became so hopelessly lost that they camped down for the night on the bare desert and in the morning, having dug themselves out, discovered to their chagrin that their tents were only ten yards away.

Our recreation included football, cricket on matting wickets, and visits to the main places of interest to the historian. Inevitably this idyll could not last and springtime found us journeying further Eastward. Somewhat shaken by being greeted on arrival at our destination by a brass band and an address of welcome, the Battalion proceeded to spend a week on a train which seemed to be in continual doubt as to its destination, and finally ditched us in a haze of paddy fields and jungle scrub. Here we proceeded to become acclimatised firstly to a temperature of 114 degrees in the shade and later to a daily rainfall of 3 inches. Amenities included a swarm of "Charwallahs" and certain seedy looking individuals, who, armed with villainous looking razors, could scarcely be dissuaded from shaving us whilst still wrapped in slumber. The nearest town being a matter of eighty miles away, we were forced to invent our own pastimes. Chief of these were killing snakes, digging trenches to prevent our tents being washed away, and gardening. Company gardens, most elaborately designed, sprang up all around—most ambitious efforts being contributed by the inmates of one tent, who even built a wall and a garden gate in the best suburban style round their residence. Leave, long hoped for, gave us a welcome break during the worst of the weather and the Battalion savoured the fleshpots of C— with seeming relish, returning refreshed to face the inevitable jungle training which was promised us after the rain. Accordingly, when the monsoon let up (temporarily) we were whisked away and dumped into a patch of jungle guaranteed to provide all the recognised discomforts down to the last mosquito, and here, living like aborigines in leafy bivouacs, we learnt to forget the wide open spaces and become "Bamboo Conscious." Just in time to prevent us sprouting trunks and tails, the rain decided to return. And did it rain! Our "bivies" were excellent sieves, the rivers raging torrents; our rations not being able to reach us we somewhat ignominiously were compelled to retreat to our rations. Highlights of this period were the "In Sec's" tiger (which seen by many, grew in size until, judging by the final description, it must have been the mother and father of all tigers), the defence of "B" Echelon by the carriers against the evil intentions of a monstrous bear, and finally the introduction into our tranquil lives of a mob of mad mules. Then eastwards again (we have already made up our minds that we shall return via Hollywood), bags of marooning, and well, here we are!

Desert days seem far away, our battle dress is jungle green, we wear leaves in our tin hats, our patrols lurk about in the jungle, we carry all our possessions on our backs or on our mules; in fact, we are the complete answer to the Jap in every way. Health is pretty good and malaria cases are becoming more and more scarce thanks to careful treatment and an unceasing battle against "Mossies."

We don't know how or when we shall spend Christmas, but you can bet we shall manage to get the festive spirit somehow.

Inevitably, many old faces have left us, but we manage to retain a decent lot of Old Stagers, prominent "Die-hards," amongst the Officers, and C.S.Ms. Gammon, Foster, Copper and Morley, Col-Sergts. Lock, Eves, Chapman and Hales, R.Q.M.S. Johnson, Sergts. Underwood, Ward, Williams, Fenn and Brooks, nobly keep the Battalion's tradition alive and send greetings to their friends in Blighty.

To our new Colonel we extend a cordial if somewhat belated welcome, and if he likes us as much as we like him we shall be very happy.

We flatter ourselves that we are the most travelled Battalion in the Regiment, and are proud to carry its famous name into a fresh land. We extend our very best wishes to all old friends at home and on the other fronts and hope that 1944 may see us all together again.

H.C.S.

SHADOWGRAPH

A temporary but none the less regrettable return to hospital, coupled with an injunction against reading for some days, has allowed too much time lately for contemplation. Looking back into the past in these times will inevitably produce many silhouettes of war that rise and fall, as it were, before one's mental eye. In fact, it is rather like going to the Pictures and seeing a succession of last year's Pathé Gazettes. If you can bear it, sit with me for a minute or two and look at these old pictures. We'll make the operator hurry past the bad bits and stop his machine at a few of the incidents that do bring back so clearly a time that is, after all, only 18 months old.

He's stopped it at a picture of an empty room. It is a dark little room, but there are the remains of a pleasant garden visible outside, and the house is obviously one of reasonable respectability. Two writing tables, four hard chairs and a telephone complete the furniture of the room. We were wrong about the room being empty. Near the door and rather in the shadow two officers are standing somewhat listlessly. In case you don't recognise them, one is a Colonel and the other his Adjutant. But they aren't really listless. They are just feeling strange and rather at a loose end. For the first time they have nothing to do—no scheme to concoct, no training programme to make out, no correspondence, and no companies to go and see—for it is no good fussing round again now. You see, their Battalion is off in an hour or two to some war somewhere, and everything is done—for better or for worse—and it is only force of habit which has driven them both back to their old Orderly Room. There is not much more to be said, and each is busy with his own thoughts. They both probably feel as if they were caught for the moment—just like this picture—between two existences, the known past and the unknown future. Sometimes a slight sense of adventure will stir even in elderly and most unlikely breasts. Both start back to reality at the sound of a parade voice outside. The best of regimental sergeant-majors has detected a matchstick on the ground outside what had been the Guardroom, and a soldier is being abjured to pick it up. "I can't leave a mess like that outside me Guardroom."

Let's stop him here. It seems to be a picture taken from the inside of a ship, and looking out through what, in true land-lubber fashion, I always call "the door in the side!" From the general set-up one has the impression of a pretty big ship—and a very crowded one. There seem to be hundreds and hundreds of people hurrying past us, most of whom look as if they were completely lost. Looking out through our "door" we can see a gangway leading down to a quay. At the foot of the gangway stand two obvious members of the Embarkation Staff—and one of our corporals. The corporal was the one who hadn't "got a card." Now this doesn't mean that the corporal had come to call on the ship and left his cards at home. A brief explanation must be endured. When we had all arrived on that quay-side in all the panoply of war—that is to say weighed down with kit, and wearing very unsuitable hats—we had arrived armed with instructions about a thousand other matters—but not about embarkation cards. As we filed up the gangway every man was handed a card. On the card was printed the number of his troop deck and the number of his mess therein. Our numbers on arrival had corresponded exactly to our War Establishment—and this hadn't been achieved without some toil and pain. The number of cards in the hands of the Embarkation Staff corresponded—or so it was alleged—to that War Establishment. Anyway, the last man to reach the gangway was the corporal, and there wasn't a card for him. The Embarkation Staff swore by all their gods that the number of cards had been correct—that no sea-going soldier had received more than one, that our full complement was on board, and that the corporal might just as well go home again. It was obviously quite impossible to attempt to re-check the cards of an entire Battalion on those seething troop decks. So innumerable Embarkation Staff Officers were hailed in, and an endless argument—not unaccompanied by some acerbity—ensued. After every strength return ever submitted had been checked, and literally hours after we had first come on board, a willing and now starving corporal was allowed up the gangway, and a step nearer the war. Oddly enough, the corporal had been a ship's steward in peacetime and had served in the very ship that had for so long refused him a passage.

But we have held up the show long enough. Let us get the newsreel going again.

What is this? Ah, a close up! No, it's not Betty Grable, but a plate—a plate containing a soldier's dinner. Strangely enough, it is a stew—that is to say, some cubes of rather gristly looking meat partially submerged in a brown liquid. Flanking the cubes are firstly, a large potato, wearing what looks like a muddy and rather black jacket, and secondly some pieces of material that appear to have been cut off "capoes, anti-gas"—one. It is none other than our old friend gas cape cabbage! Now in a troopship the food is provided, not by the R.A.S.C., but by the Shipping Company concerned. The Company in wartime fill up in ports abroad, so as to make no demands on home supplies. Food long refrigerated keeps, but it does seem to lose some of its taste. Somewhere during her many voyages S.S.O.... must have taken on a vast quantity of rather peculiar cabbage. For the first few days everybody enjoyed the food—it seemed a change after Army rations. Then a certain monotony appeared to set in—and "gas cape" was daily on parade. Daily menus were put up on the Mess Decks. In these the Chief Steward was inclined to let his fancy wander back to days of peace and tourists—when passengers were enticed, but not ordered on board. Time has blurred the exact details, but a fair sample is as follows: Potatoes might be described on the menu as "Potatoes Barcelona," or even—in an extreme flight of fancy—as "Pommes de terre a l'Orient." Such terms raised hopes of some dainty and appetising vegetable dish, hopes which fell heavily to the ground when a ration tin, containing some ancient potatoes in muddy skins, picked up when the ship docked in Bombay many weeks before, was slapped down on the table. The rather natural discontent engendered by this, by the inevitable over-crowding, heat, and lack of exercise, became centred upon the peculiarly unpleasant cabbage. It was all very real and rather worrying at the time—but it is all over now. When the Battalion comes home again "gas cape," if it is still serving its country, will be regarded as an old friend. Pass, gas cape, all's well—in spite of you.

Innumerable seascapes flicker across the screen. The operator stops at a chance one. Let us see what it is. It is taken from the window of a ship's saloon. Over and beyond the promenade deck and across some 600 yards of shimmering sea is (hush) another large ship. Beyond her, and all equally spaced out are another and another. The nearest one is so close that we can see movement upon her—in fact, she looks like a vast and very mobile ants' nest. We shorten our gaze to the foreground. Here are no palms in pots, no long deck chairs, and no well-groomed figures sleeping off the effects of an overdose of Lobster Newburg. The deck is very crowded all the same. It is packed with little groups of soldiers, all clad in rather grimy shirts and shorts, and all squatting on peculiarly repulsive Kapok life jackets—for B.... cream has much to answer for. Facing each little party is another figure who is standing with his back to the sea. Each of them is giving a "Platoon Lecture." If the word "lecture" conjures before your mind a picture of hushed quiet, broken only by the level tones of the lecturer's voice, you have got it all wrong. Let us listen in for a moment. The sound of the sea forms a continuous background of noise; inevitably and invariably one or more members of the crew will be chipping paint off the ship just overhead, or dragging chains along the deck past the platoon. Just behind, in what was once the Verandah Café, a dance band is practising, or somebody will be rehearsing a turn for to-night's concert. If this isn't enough, there will be a continuous stream of passers-by who will edge between the lecturer and his audience. Some will say "Sorry" in a loud voice; others will say nothing, but will tread heavily on someone's foot instead. No, lecturing wasn't easy. Subjects for lectures were numerous, peculiar and varied. One that springs to mind was that given by Corporal George on his pet hobby "Ancient Weapons." But it will never be given again, for Corporal George lies with the others somewhere on Deir el Linda Ridge. The Padre, too, was a great draw. Among a variety of subjects was his lecture on Egypt. He had been there before, and was rash enough to say it was an attractive country. In the days to come he was not allowed to forget this. Well, the lectures did help to pass the time—and there was lots of time to pass.

One final picture before "this week's events brought to

you on the screen" flickers out. It is obviously taken from a lighter or barge. As the picture moves slowly along we blink at a glaring expanse of rather oily water. Across it, and only a few hundred yards away, lies a large ship. She is grey, rather chipped and partworn-looking, but she has been our home for eight weeks. She is also the Last Link. To each of us she probably represents something different, and something which we prefer to keep to ourselves. So we will leave her there—to turn round and chug all those miles back home again. The lighter bumps against the landing-stage, and we climb clumsily on to terra firma. It is very hot for it is mid-afternoon—and Suez in July has never been fashionable. One final glance at the last link and we turn to face the dusty, fly-blown quay—and the future.

The film fades out on the screen, the lights are turned up—and the Orderly walks in with a fresh issue of peculiarly odious ointment. **E.S.K.**

"IMPOSSIBLE BRIDGE."

The following is taken from the publication "Union Jack," which troops are able to get in Italy, and was air-mailed to this office by Sergt. W. Carter, now of the Pioneer Corps, but a member of The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment in 1934. With his good wishes and hopes for a victorious New Year Sergt. Carter mentioned that while in Italy and Sicily he had met several men with whom he served before he transferred to the Pioneer Corps.

This is the story of the "Impossible Bridge" and the impudence and courage which built it. On the 8th Army Front, Indian and British troops had their advance held up by a river, which had to be bridged. Experts said that it was impossible to build a bridge from the Allied side of the river. But Anglo-Indian sappers and men of the Royal West Kent Regiment were not to be denied their bridge. They impudently man-handled great steel girders across the river under shell-fire and actually built the bridge from the enemy's bank. Later, when the Allied troops crossed the bridge they saw on the enemy side a large notice board which read: "Impossible Bridge." Mathew Holton, of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, who told this story yesterday, described the exploits of a Sepoy soldier named Din, whose unit was faced with the prospect of retiring from a valuable position unless ammunition was quickly obtained. The situation was precarious when Din spoke up. He said: "It is a simple matter. I will go and get some ammunition." Under enemy fire D.n made four trips, and the ammunition he brought back enabled the Punjabis to hold out until after nightfall. When darkness fell, bearded Sikhs went in to the relief of their comrades. Shouting terrible cries as they approached, they charged with bayonets to their battle-cry "God is one and God is with us," and drove the Germans out to gain their objectives. Holton, giving another instance of the ability of Allied troops to adapt all sorts of weapons to their use, said that on the 8th Army front men of the New Zealand Division went forward, captured some derelict tanks and turned their guns on the enemy. Holton stated that there is a very deep bond of affection between British and Indian troops, and that once, when the Indians were in a "hot-spot," men of the Royal West Kents went to their deaths rather than withdraw.

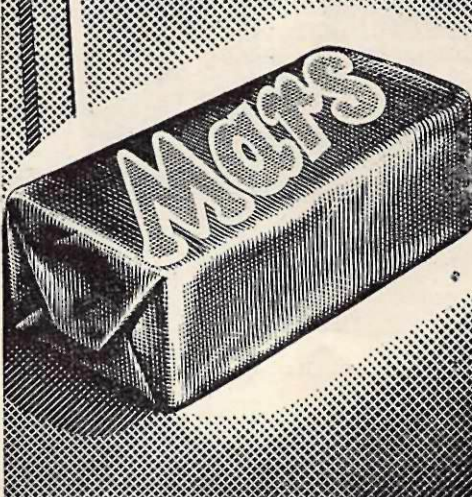
CONTEMPORARIES

The Editor acknowledges with thanks the following contemporaries:—

The Royal Army Ordnance Corps Gazette.
St. George's Gazette.
The Green Howards Gazette.
The Dragon.
The Kent Messenger.
British Legion Journal.
The Tank.
The Royal Army Service Corps.
The Sapper.
The Snapper.
The Globe and Laurel,

Made with
CHOCOLATE
...TO SUSTAIN
GLUCOSE
...TO ENERGISE
MILK SOLIDS
...TO NOURISH

Mars Bars are simply packed with energy and delicious goodness. Prolong your enjoyment by cutting each bar into slices.



OLD TERRITORIAL DAYS

By CAPTAIN C. L. NORMAN.

I took a commission in the Territorial Force in 1910, joining the 4th Battalion of The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment from the Oxford University Officers Training Corps, in which I was a full private. So I missed the heyday of voluntary service in the Volunteers when things were done on the grand scale—anyway, at night in the Mess in camp, or so the stories tell. Still, we had a very good time in the "Terriers" between 1910 and 1914, and considered that we were doing more than merely playing at soldiers. I am convinced that most men joined the Force from a strong sense of civic duty and a conviction that they added something to their country which could only be rendered by service.

Camp with the Oxford University O.T.C. in 1909 was a glorious "rag." Trinity, my own college, and Worcester were drafted together, and Lieut. H. de B. Morgan, who afterwards was commissioned to the "Buffs," was the cadet officer. One at least of our section has risen high in the Service—I. G. des R Swayne, now Lieut.-General, C.B., C.B.E., commanding the South-Eastern Area at the present time (New Year, 1944). In 1910 some of us attended grand Army manoeuvres as private cadets and formed a special wireless reconnaissance unit under the command of Major (I think) Bertrand Stewart. Eventually I was captured by the Scottish Rifles, and I remember the amazement of the N.C.O.'s and men at my marching at the tail of a company with a certain Capt. Lawrence, whom I had known in the cricket world. I took the commission after passing Certificates "A" and "B" at Oxford, my companion at work for "B" being Henry Brougham, the famous Harlequin Rugby player, who was at B.N.C., Oxford, at the time.

In the later part of the Summer, 1911, I was on the Continent, and so took part in no camp that year. In 1912, being a master at Loretto School, near Edinburgh, I was seconded to the Scottish Schools O.T.C., and attended Barrie Camp with those units. Thus my first camp with my own battalion, the 4th Queen's Own, was in 1913 at Seaford, Sussex. Lieut.-Colonel C. N. Watney, T.D., was our Commanding Officer—in fact, he was my Commanding Officer all the years I served with the Battalion—and Captain Hewitt, of one of the regular battalions of the Regiment, was our Adjutant.

At Seaford we had alongside us the 5th Battalion The Queen's Own and the 4th and 5th Battalions The Buffs, with

Captain and Adjutant Hewitt, Captain Carlile, Captain A. Cohen, Captain H. Smithers, Captain Robb, Lieuts. N. Smithers, Haslam, R. Watney, L. Lockett, F. L. Stone, W. Nash, C. L. Norman, F. C. Bourne and Clough. I fancy that Major J. D. Laurie, Captain Sir Herbert Cohen, Bart., Captain Henson, Captain Kelsey and Lieuts. Styles, Robinson and Pardington may have attended for some period of the camp.



Major Vise, Captain Cheale, Lieut.-Col. C. N. Watney.
Seaford, 1913.

For home training "G" Company (Major J. D. Laurie, Captain H. Smithers, Lieut. N. Smithers and myself) used to work certain evenings a week in the Drill Hall and also do field work in Knote Park. Lieut.-Colonel C. N. Watney used to come over and inspect these operations, I remember, and offer his helpful criticisms of our endeavours. "G" was the Sevenoaks Company in the old 8-company system of battalion organization. Practice on the range at Shoreham was always regarded as a "day out," but we got very little musketry and all too little training. However, that was not our fault, and we all tried to do our best and pulled well together, taken by and large.

Then came the fateful year 1914. Our camp that Summer took the form of a great march across Southern England by the Home Counties Division. We were brigaded with the 5th Queen's Own and 4th and 5th Buffs, as usual. I joined the battalion during the march, as Marlborough College, of which school I was then on the staff, had not broken up early enough for me to be in at the start. How tense was the feeling those hot sunny days! Not that we younger people took much thought for the future, but I remember reading the "papers" by the flickering light of a lantern in our lean-to mess tent in the evening after we had reached bivouac. We were bivouaced near Amesbury Station when the crisis came to a head. Orders were issued to break off the march, go home, and proceed to mobilization stations—Dover in our case. A few men, with myself in command, were left as the rear party to clear up our camp. Then off we marched to the station to find the train 23 hours late. Hereafter began a new era.

GEORGE CROSS ISLAND.

In the article published under the above heading in the December issue of this journal, General Sir Charles Bonham-Carter, G.C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., Colonel of The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment, and Chairman of The Queen's Own Past and Present Association, was reported to have said that Malta was conquered by the British. This statement is erroneous. "The South Eastern Gazette," the newspaper from which the extract was taken, acknowledged the mistake in their issue of January 11th, 1944, and we regret that this mis-statement was given prominence in our columns, and we hasten to amend the error.



Capt. Hewitt (Adj.), Lieut. Haslam, Capt. Cheale
(standing), Lieut. Stone.

some extra details, the names of which I have forgotten. The camp was situated above Seaford, between it and the Downs. My memory recalls long mornings on the Downs, and good evenings in the Mess, with an exciting cricket match against the local side thrown in. The great character of the camp was our M.O., Major Vise. Nobody who has ever had the privilege of attending his sick parade will ever forget the wonderful little man. From an old photo I find the officers were: Lieut.-Colonel C. N. Watney, T.D., Major Earl Stanhope,

BAND HISTORY

A reference book of Bandmasters of the Regular Army has been prepared for publication after the war. The author proposes to include a history of the Band of each Regular Battalion, and at his request notes on the Bands of The Queen's Own have been compiled for his information.

These notes are now published, as it is thought that past and present members of the Band may be able to fill in gaps and so ensure that the portion of the book allotted to The Queen's Own may be as complete as possible.

It is hoped that anyone who can give additional information will send it to the Editor of the "Queen's Own Gazette."

The following list of Bandmasters was received with the letter asking for historical details of the Bands:—

1st Battalion:

- G. Gassner, 1856—22.7.1884.
R. Broster, 23.7.1884—21.2.1890.
A. Stewart, 22.2.1890—20.1.1899.
G. Davis, 21.1.1899—10.5.1918.
P. J. Walmsley, 11.5.1918—25.4.1922.
H. L. Butt, A.R.C.M., 26.4.1922—24.2.1934.
J. R. McKenna, A.R.C.M., 1.4.1934—

2nd Battalion:

- F. Mandel, 1868—26.4.1887.
J. Graham, 27.4.1887—28.2.1897.
A. E. Ingham, 1.3.1897—28.2.1902.
T. McKelvey, 1.3.1902—25.1.1914.
A. D. W. Hunt, 26.1.1914—9.8.1928.
L. J. Halloway, 10.8.1928—7.5.1938.
G. E. Jackson, A.R.C.M., 8.5.1938—

NOTES ON THE BAND.

When Mr. Gassner left the 1st Battalion in Cyprus in June, 1884, he was given a cheque for £5 by the members of the Band to purchase an album for their photographs which they were proposing to have taken for him.

Reference was made to his twenty-eight years' service in the Regiment as Bandmaster. It would appear, therefore, that he joined the 50th in 1856 and not in 1865.

Signor Gassner was born at Naples in February, 1828, and at the age of nine was placed in the Royal Conservatoire in that city.

In 1847 he was appointed 2nd Lieutenant in the First Regiment of the Swiss Guards. After the Rebellion in Italy in 1848 he came to England, but being unable to speak the language and having no acquaintances he remained only a short time before leaving for Malta, where his musical education proved of great service to him.

He became bandmaster of the 44th Regiment, and when that Regiment left Malta about 1851 he went to The Buffs for a short period, then served on board H.M.S. Bellerophon, commanded by Lord George Paulet, until 1855, in which year he became bandmaster of the 1st Royal Lanark Militia. On the disbandment of this regiment in 1856 he joined the 5th Dragoon Guards, later transferring to the 50th Regiment.

He had a wide experience in music both in its technique and in its literature, and his compositions, chiefly for military bands, were varied and numerous.

GENERAL.

1789. Wooden drums replaced by brass ones.
1821. Strength of a Regimental Band not to exceed one Sergeant (Master) and ten Musicians. (General order dated 8th November, 1821).
1823. Number of musicians allowed increased to fourteen.
1830. Bands of Infantry Regiments to be dressed in white clothing with regimental facings. (General Order 492 dated 2nd August, 1830). Prior to this order there had not been any regulation dress for bandsmen.
1837. Colour of undress jackets of bands changed to white. (Horse Guards circular dated 4th January, 1837).
1846. Strength of the Band fixed at one Sergeant and twenty Privates.
1872. Tunics of Bands changed from white to scarlet.

50th REGIMENT:

1758. Fifers good. (Inspection Return).
1777. Drummers and Fifers appeared in hats as the caps had not been delivered. Ten musicians in all, including one sergeant and five drummers. (Inspection Return).
1789. Drummers caps received, 1777 all worn out. (Inspection Return).
1796. The black coats of the drummers and fifers were replaced by white coats with black cuffs, collars and facings. Waistcoats and breeches white.

1808. After the Battle of Vimiera, fifteen volunteers from the French 70th Regiment joined the 50th. Their long red plumes were afterwards worn as trophies by the Band of the 50th.

1813. Had musicians. (Inspection Return, Ronces Valley, October 18).

1853. According to a drawing by R. Ebsworth, the Band of the 50th were dressed as follows when he saw them at Chobham Camp in 1853:—

Bandsmen.—Brass chin chains to their shakos and long black hair plumes; white coatees with dark blue collar, cuffs and turnbacks, brass buttons in pairs, and brass shoulder crescents, lined dark blue underneath; also dark blue bell rope sash-ends with tassels. Scimitar swords with brass hilts and scabbards.

Band Sergeant.—As above, with the addition of a crimson sash with long tassels hanging on the left front, and a black cocksfeather plume instead of a hair one.

Before leaving for Plymouth, in July, 1853, some of these Regimental specialities were given up. Ball tufts were substituted for the hair plumes of the band, plain blue shoulder crescents in place of the brass ones, the swords were hung in a frog on the waist-belt, and the bell-rope sash ends were discarded. In undress the band wore red "Kilmarnock" forage caps, with a sphinx over 50, in brass, on the front; white shell jackets with blue collar, round blue cuff, blue shoulder strap and piping down the front, and the buttons in pairs.

1856. In this year a woodcut, entitled "Evacuation of the Crimea" in the "Illustrated London News." The following extract is taken from the article accompanying the woodcut:—

"We now engrave, from our own artist's sketch, the final scenes of the Evacuation at the Ordnance Wharf at Balaclava. Here the English formed in double line on one side, and the Russians on the other.

The English and Russians presented arms to each other; the band of the 50th and the band belonging to the 'Algiers' then played the Russian Hymn, 'God Save the Queen' and 'Partant pour la Syrie.' Then arose a conversation between the Russian Colonel and General Codrington; while a party of twelve Russian foot passed through the ranks with an English Officer, to take possession of the main guard. The Cossacks then dismounted and stood by their horses with lances in their hands. The 50th then marched off, four deep, on board the 'Algiers,' this being the last regiment to remain on Russian soil."

1871. A drawing by Ebsworth shows the 50th in 1869 shakos rather taller than the usual pattern (S. M. Milne mentions this as a special pattern), with the old star plate. The band in white tunics with blue and white wings. Red ball tufts for all.

97th EARL OF ULSTER'S REGIMENT.

1857. Bandsmen wore white tunics made of cloth with sky-blue facings.

1873. The following entry is in Volume xxv. Military Costume of the 18th and 19th Century in Library of the Victoria and Albert Museum. "J.C.L." had a note that Bandsmen had red Glengarry caps with black binding and black ribbons at the back. This would be for a year or so about 1873.

EYES RIGHT ON THIS NOTICE.

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Sports Wear, or in fact anything
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Maidstone & District Laundry Co., Ltd.

Loose Road, Maidstone.

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BILL BROWN, CORPORAL TWEENIE — AND ME

THE OLD AND BOLD IN THE HOME GUARD.

"Blimey, when do we get a break?".... It was Turfy Atkinson letting off steam, as usual.

And well he might!

What with "Exercise Cowslip" all Saturday night; Armistice Parade on Sunday, Specialists' night on Monday; G.O.C.'s inquest on "Cowslip" on Tuesday; C.O.'s ditto on Wednesday; Poppy Day Concert and Dance on Friday.... and a "Cuckoo" or two thrown in each night.

Still, that's the way it is. Must keep the H.G. on their jolly little old toes.

Turfy was a bit "het up" about it, 'specially the C.O.'s verdict at the inquest.

"Seems we all did damn well — 'Good show, Chaps..... what?'—if only we hadn't done it all too late."

"Licks me why anyone can't either praise you or kick you — one or the other. First 'e sez 'Standin' Patrols at BLUE and GREEN did excellently, but they should have used the 'phone as well as sendin' back the get-away men, then perhaps their messages would have been intelligible—and they *must* have all their cycles concealed. The General himself noticed this point."

"Course, 'e did. 'E knew what time the blinking war was going to start and was waitin' for 'em—never gave 'em a chance. Anyway, 'oos bikes *were* they; not *issue*. 'E'd 'ave looked funny if Old Watson 'ad let the wind out of 'is tyre, like 'e intended, only the Recce chaps come along too quick."

"The fellows I felt sorry for were the I. Section," adds Malc. "Not a bit of rest from start to finish.... I thought they did top-hole, myself.... and then to be called the negation of intelligence, just because the Brass Hats let the War start too early to give the poor old H.G. a chance. Best thing they can do is to go back to their platoons and let the Old Man get his *own* information."

Looks like we're all a bit "browned off," don't it?... but it's only a way we have in the H.G. We'll be there all right for the next exercise—or the other thing, if it comes.

If things sound a bit morbid with most of us, not so with Old Tweenie. He's properly cock-a-hoop these days, 'cos his younger son has been awarded the M.C.—not much detail yet, but it seems he's been acting like a chip of the old block somewhere near that one-time pleasant spot AMALFI. Pretty good for a chap who had hoped to be ordained in October, '39, but who became an R.A. gunner instead.

But his joy doesn't put Tweenie off his balance—he just carries on training his little squad of guides. A couple of Sundays ago they came tralling into Headquarters in the region of 13.00 hours—not too fresh, I may mention—bringing in a real breath of the countryside and looking like it... and they weren't empty-handed either. Next thing they do is to draw lots for the two rabbits that had been rash enough to fall to old Tweenie's wiles.... and cursing the other two whose speed and evasive action had enabled them to get safely back to base.

I didn't tell you about our latest intakes, did I? Our allotment was only two. But what a two! And what a contrast! G. R. Easy and Vernon Joad!

Let's take first things first—to wit, "Greasy," 'cos that's what he had to be called from the start. Greasy's a bit of a mystery. For one thing, he's dodged the column all these months.... only 45 and fit enough to lug wardrobes and pianos about all day without turning a single one of his many jet-black hairs. But it's marvellous how he comes over all weak when he gets into khaki.

Young Bill Bale got him about right, over his orangeade the other evening.... "Fourteen blinkin' stone and a bull-neck... and has to get his mother to wipe his — nose for him.".... And talking of mothers, I must tell you this one, about the woman porter at Victoria Station! She was a husky lass from down Deptford way.

Can you imagine her at ten in the morning pushing her wheels all piled up with luggage.... "Mind yer backs. Mind yer backs... Can't you move a bit, mate?" as she has to brake with both feet to avoid bumping into a gentleman in top hat, carnation and all, obviously bound for a wedding—perhaps his own?

Then she catches sight of this extraordinary war-time vision; has a good look, and then....

"Blimey, mate, 'oo 'elped yer dress yerself.... your Mum?"

But, back to our muttons. Second things second. Vernon Joad. Don't know whether to call him "Bartlett" or "Professor." Neither fits, but, by jove, he's a good scout... and he comes to us from the Sea Scouts; twenty-words-a-minute on the semaphore flags and all.

Today he carried the 18-set from 10.00 hrs. to 13.00 and covered at least nine miles.

"Fits like a glove" he says when we put it on him.

"Didn't know I'd got it," says he, for all its fifty-odd lbs., when he gets back to control.

Well, that's Joad. Wish they were all like him.

Now for Old Bill. He's had another turn on guard down on the guns. Two turns, in fact. First time there was nothing to report.... but he let out in the canteen that "They dabs didn't 'alf go down good," which goes to show that Bill had successfully liaised with the coastguard when he inspected the "trot-lines."

Second time, there was a bit of a shemozzle. This is how Bill's report ran:—

"22.35 hrs. Female party approached No. 2 Sentry. Duly challenged. Later apprehended. Unable to explain presence in prohibited area owing to continuous hiccups. 'Phoned Orderly Officer, who instructed hand over to Police."

"On arrival of P./S. Black and W./R. White female party got fresh. Necessary action taken."

"Delivered said party to Police Station by stretcher, under police escort. Incident closed 23.03 hrs."

Bill was pretty loquacious about Daisy the next evening. She's an old friend of the police.... usual charge "Drunk and Disorderly." You wouldn't be surprised if you'd seen his shins....

"Ah, and she'd 'ave kicked me in the vitals, too, if I 'adn't grabbed 'er ankle."

Well, so long. Don't forget that Bill, and Tweenie, and Malc, and all the rest of us aren't really real.... just by-products of a decrepit old Home Guardsman's feeble imagination.

All the same, we *do* have fun.

Bye-bye for now.

BUILDERS OF SHIPS.

Here, in a forest of tapering spars,
Where shapen fleets of mighty ships and small
Inertly lie, and silently at ease,
Some merely monsters in embryo,
With others whose hulls are moulded and tall;
Scurrying throngs of busy human ants
Ply their heterogeneous arts and crafts
To raise the shell-like symbols of new destinies:
There lumbering, snorting cars,
Laden with magical machinery and girders of steel,
Move, ceaseless, to and fro;
A towering, cantilever crane
With outstretched trellised arm
And the strength of a thousand elephants,
With consummate ease raises a hundred tons or so
At the undenyng behest of a small handwheel!
There the clanging rattle of rivets driven hard,
White-tempered and passionately hot,
Re-echo in their pain.
As they marry steel plates remorselessly as one.
The insistent drone of a titan power-station
Reverberates, and is never calm;
The pageant passes by, making the changing scene
A picture not quickly forgot.
Then, with the setting of the sun,
Fresh workers come to toil throughout the night
By the stabbing gleam of artificial light,
Thus to carry on the task without cessation—
Necessity holds but scant regard
For time, tide, or tribulation!
So, in the cold acetylene glare is seen
Rising on the rib-like slips
Wrath-like vessels, whose names all soon may rise
In burning homage to admiring lips:
When they steal down to the tireless, ocean ways
And fade into an all-enveloping mist
To fashion storm-tost threnodies
Or bring new honours to a lengthening list;
Adventurers of the seven seas
Let songs resound your praise,
And that of the patient, skilful builders of ships,

W. Curran Reedy.

This poem is extracted from "Spindrift and Spun yarn," published by The Fortune Press.

N.A.A.F.I. AND INVASION

By H.H.

Canteen history has been made in the present conflict.

With each assault upon enemy territory, canteen personnel and stores have followed with the least possible delay behind the attacking forces.

Although it is obviously impossible to open static canteens in the early phases, N.A.A.F.I.'s has contrived to operate bulk-issue stores within a short time of the initial assault.

N.A.A.F.I., with nearly 10,000 establishments and 100,000 staff, has grown from a comparatively little-known provider of Service refreshment and relaxation into a vital part of the war-machine, its men and women bearing uniforms and ranks of the Royal Navy, R.A.S.C. and A.T.S. The fighting personnel of the modern canteen services have suffered between six and seven hundred casualties on the various fronts, many being decorated or mentioned in despatches for gallantry.

That is N.A.A.F.I. today, geared for invasion, its personnel and supplies "priority" after the weapons and fundamentals of the front line. But N.A.A.F.I. has never relaxed its efforts to speed and further speed its "invasion service."

Few stories illustrate more vividly the enterprise of modern canteen operations than the true account of a N.A.A.F.I. mobile refreshment-van at El Alamein. So eager was the E.F.I. driver to go forward that it was not until an artillery officer cried "Get that — contraption out of the way!" did he realise that his mobile was at the wrong end of a British gun in action.

There is the equally true story of Axis troops surrendering to the E.F.I., while others tell of improvised stores set up in the wreckage of a bomber, of odd N.A.A.F.I.'s built of petrol tins and packing cases, and of a mobile canteen service operated from a captured Italian ambulance. E.F.I. men at El Daba cooked thousands of hard-boiled eggs in a bath for our retreating forces, only to be ordered to stop cooking eggs as they were holding up "the withdrawal."

A N.A.A.F.I. service was maintained at Tobruk throughout the siege. E.F.I. men unloaded stores during non-stop Stuka blitzes, pausing between spasms of work to man automatic weapons and claiming "one Stuka probably damaged." Forty E.F.I. men stayed on at Singapore to serve our rearguard troops; and none came back.

Trials of a N.A.A.F.I. detachment of three officers and six other ranks which landed in Italy soon after the assault troops are described by an E.F.I. major, who says: "This return to Europe was gratifying, as I commanded the detachment which left St. Nazaire with me in 1940 to board the ill-fated 'Lancastria.' Some of those men are with me now. They have served in Persia, Madagascar, Eritrea, Abyssinia, the Western Desert, the Dakar Expedition—and here we are again."

After landing, the party made for a town under shellfire and took a warehouse, over which they hoisted the N.A.A.F.I. crest. "Surprise showed on the troops' faces when they saw the N.A.A.F.I. sign," records the E.F.I. major. "They said they were amazed to see us there so soon and in such a hot spot." Three times the warehouse was filled with smoke from bursting shells and a lorry was destroyed. Six of the party went on stacking N.A.A.F.I. stores as they were brought up from the landing beach, where the remainder were loading the stores on to lorries for seven days and nights with little sleep and little food.

"Our main party is here," concludes the major, "and we can do what we set out to do—issue stores to the men who are beating Jerry. The town is filling. Cafes are opening. Soon we shall send our 'recco' party forward again."

Similar small parties of N.A.A.F.I. men laid the foundation for canteens in Tunisia and Sicily, first opening bulk-issue stores as they landed in the wake of the assault troops, then—being joined by their main parties—setting about taking premises for static institutes. N.A.A.F.I. took the best cafe in Catania soon after the battle for the town, and stocked and staffed it. At Benghazi, and more recently in Italy, E.F.I. men took over local breweries and started up production.

With other branches of the Services, N.A.A.F.I. has prepared for a Second European Front. The formation of the A.T.S./E.F.I.—female counterpart of the R.A.S.C./E.F.I.—was a part of those preparations. One day, in Europe, N.A.A.F.I. girls will serve in the canteens those same men whom they served in the canteens at home.

In France before, in Norway, Greece and Crete, when N.A.A.F.I. pressed hard on the heels of our attacking and retreating forces, the task of the official canteen organisation was almost insuperable. But it succeeded and made history, for never before

in our annals of war had there been a canteen contingent, trained and armed, lined up with the major forces and waiting for the word "Attack."

With its experience of operating under war conditions in many countries and many climes, N.A.A.F.I. is ready for any front at any time.

In the heat of the advance, the E.F.I. building up its dump and putting up its tents may not make the headlines. But that dump and those tents are heralds of "fags" from Nottingham, chocolate from York, blades from Sheffield, and other things that bring England nearer. Then, as the N.A.A.F.I. vanguard folds its tents and goes forward, others are opening "pukka" canteens such as we know in Aldershot and Catterick. "The same old Naffy! Still, it's not bad!"

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THE SIEGE OF LENINGRAD

In the third week of January, 1944, there came to an end a siege such as this war has never before known—the siege of a great industrial city of three and a half million inhabitants, by an army equipped with the most up-to-date weapons of war in all their destructive and terrifying variety—a siege which went on for nearly two and a half years, and ended with the complete defeat of the besiegers, the rupture of their lines, and the relief of the city by a combination of blows from inside and outside its walls.

During all these two and a half years German shells and bombs never ceased to fall on the city. It was in September, 1942, that the first of them fell, and Marshal Voroshilov, then Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Armies of the North Western Front, issued a proclamation to all workers of the city of Leningrad: "Our beloved native city is threatened with the direct assault of the German Fascist armies. The enemy is trying to force his way into Leningrad. But that shall never be! Let us form new detachments of the People's Militia to help the Red Army in action! Workers, Engineers, Technicians, work on unrelentingly; increase the production of equipment and munitions for the front! Let us be steadfast to the end, not sparing our lives! Victory will be ours!"

These injunctions were nobly fulfilled by all to whom this stirring and soldierly proclamation was addressed. But the promised victory was long delayed, and before it was won Leningrad had to pass through a fearful and costly ordeal.

When the German armies, under Field Marshal Rundstedt, closed in on the city's outskirts, the People's Militia, though it had been only rudimentarily trained, took the field beside the regular troops of the garrison. Workers, engineers, artists, book-keepers, students and writers, including many women, were included in its ranks, and their bearing and achievements won high praise from the commanders under whom they served. Behind them the whole of the able-bodied population set to work night and day to dig trenches, build strong points, lay down obstacles, and tunnel out dugouts covering the southern and eastern approaches to the city. Leningrad had become a fortress almost overnight, and its people had worked this magical transformation by their own unpretentious, self-sacrificing labour. Nevertheless, though all direct attacks were beaten off, the German ring closed inexorably round the city in those autumn days of 1941. The capture of Schlussemburg, to the east of it, blocked the narrow neck of land between the Neva and Lake Ladoga, and severed the last line of land communication with the outside world. Leningrad, it seemed, had resisted assault only to starve slowly to death when the last water route was also cut off by the freezing of Lake Ladoga.

Within a few weeks, however, a motor route, rough, dangerous, and difficult, but passable, was driven across the ice, and a fantastic service of transport was started. Many lorries were lost in the course of that first grim winter, and many lorry crews died or were crippled for life by their work in the cruel night cold—for only at night could they use this ice road, which the people of the city rightly called "The Road of Life." But the service went on. Before the beginning of 1942 it was found possible, thanks to the arrival of supplies along the ice road, to increase the exiguous civilian bread ration. By mid-January, 1942, the service was working to its full capacity, and remained so until the spring thaw again opened the Lake for shipping.

In May an observer in Leningrad wrote: "Anyone who had seen Leningrad in January would hardly recognise the city now. Then snowdrifts lay in the streets, lumps of ice were slipping from the roofs, pavements were hidden under layers of frozen snow, dirt was piled up in mounds, the yards were choked up with refuse, the debris of shattered walls lay scattered over the streets. There were bricks and broken barrels frozen into the snow, twisted, broken pipes, shattered window frames, piles of broken glass. But now you walk along clean, broad streets and splendid embankments that look just as though they had been swept by a gigantic broom. 300,000 Leningraders worked day by day to clean up the city. The rails appeared from underneath the yard-deep snow, and the first trams went along them accompanied by the applause of thousands of people. It was not a swallow, but a tram that brought spring to Leningrad in 1942."

Yet throughout that spring and summer life remained dangerous and tense. The roar of gunfire and bombing ceased only for brief intervals by day or by night. There was a steady toll taken of dead and wounded, buildings were

scarred, rent and shattered, and life was reduced to its barest elements.

Yet all the while books were written and read, there were theatricals and ballet performances, and on August 10th, 1942, the first recital was given in the Philharmonic Hall of Shostakovich's great Seventh Symphony, conceived and largely composed during the siege. Ballet teachers, whose pupils had been evacuated, formed new classes among orphan girls, whose fathers had been killed and whose mothers had starved to death—a fate which was that of many through the two and a half years of the siege. All the trees of the city had eventually to be cut down for fuel, and many of the wooden houses of the suburbs were demolished to serve the same purpose. All the city's dogs had to be killed because they could not be fed. Every patch of tillable ground, even in the city squares, was cultivated to grow cabbages and potatoes, and peasants outside sometimes managed to smuggle other food supplies through the investing lines, despite all the efforts of the enemy to stop the traffic by murderous reprisals on the villagers concerned in it.

In the second winter of the siege the road across the ice of Lake Ladoga was supplemented by a railway, and food supplies could thus be maintained at a ration at least sufficient to support life among the youthful and strong. But cold and starvation still took its steady levy of the very young, the old, the sick and the weak, and battle casualties also continued among civilians as well as soldiers of the garrison. The total of dead among the population from cold, disease and shortage of food alone during the two and a half years of siege amounted to well over a million. "The inhabitants lived like Arctic explorers, hibernating in darkness and cold, mustering all their willpower, and firmly determined to put up with everything until the spring brought warmth and light again, sometimes having to summon their last ounce of strength to carry on the daily work for the front and the city." So wrote an observer in January, 1943.

Then in that very month came the first relief. The Russian troops holding the lines on the Kolkhov river, east of and outside the city, combined with those of the garrison to deliver a concerted double attack against the German stronghold at Schlussemburg, with its powerful surrounding belt of field fortifications. It took them eight days to eject the Germans from these positions, which they had held and fortified for over a year, and which were desperately and skilfully defended. This brilliant feat of arms loosened somewhat the hostile grip on Leningrad's throat, so that she could breathe easily again and her life blood flow more freely. That night in the city "nobody slept, the radio broadcast the whole night through, and songs and music filled the air." All through the night the telephones rang, people talked in the flats, and meetings were held in the workshops. New records were set up in the armament factories. All the people put out their flags and hung them out of their houses, so that in the morning the whole city was ablaze with red bunting.

Yet it was another full year after that night of universal joy before the German grip on Leningrad was finally and for ever shaken off, and this, too, was a year of severe, though less intense and hopeless privations, shortage of food and fuel, darkness, cold, death and wounds. In the last few weeks of 1943, indeed, the enemy as if conscious that his opportunities for wanton and cruel destruction were, so far as Leningrad was concerned, already running out, increased the fire directed upon it, as if in a last desperate attempt to break the spirit of the heroic people who had defied him for so long, and if he could not, at least to leave his evil mark on their bodies and homes. In some ways this was the worst and most torturing period of the siege, for it seemed as if Leningrad might be destroyed completely, and the bulk of its inhabitants in a final holocaust of devastation and death. The anxiety throughout Russia was tense, for it was known that relief was being prepared, but the enemy's purpose was foiled by the heroic steadfastness of the garrison and the inhabitants. This final cruel ordeal was at last ended when the troops of General Govorov from inside the city and those of General Meretzkov's 1st Baltic Army to the south-east of it launched their great combined offensive, which in a few days met with swift and complete success. The guns which for so long had assailed and wounded the peace and beauty and happiness of Leningrad were silenced, never again to give voice within the hearing of her gallant and much enduring people.

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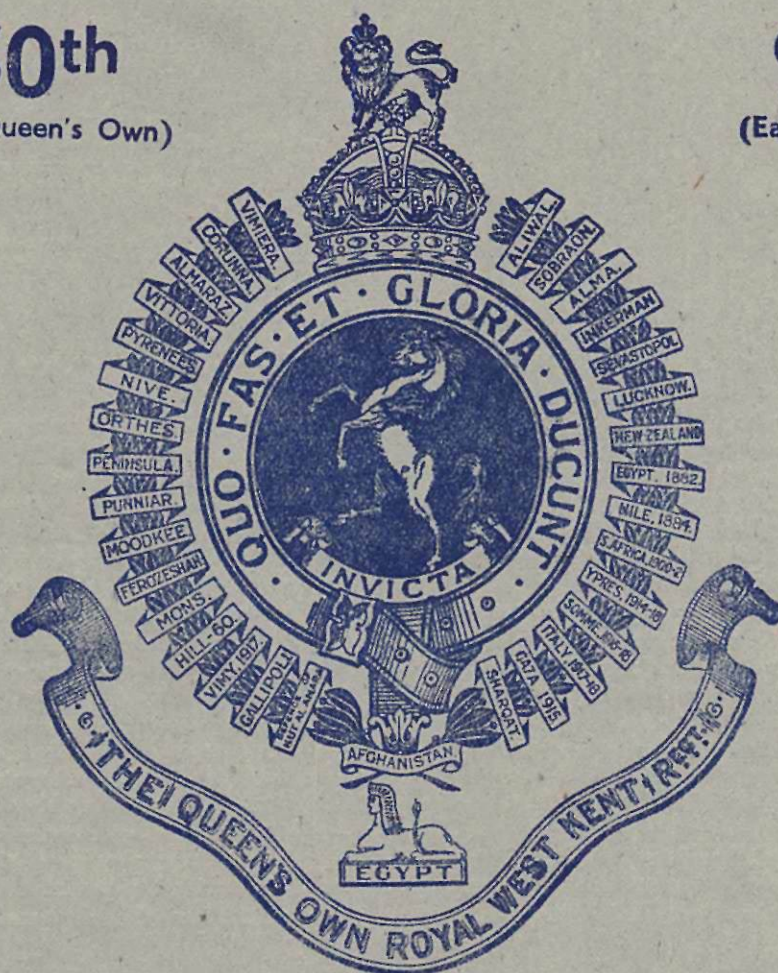
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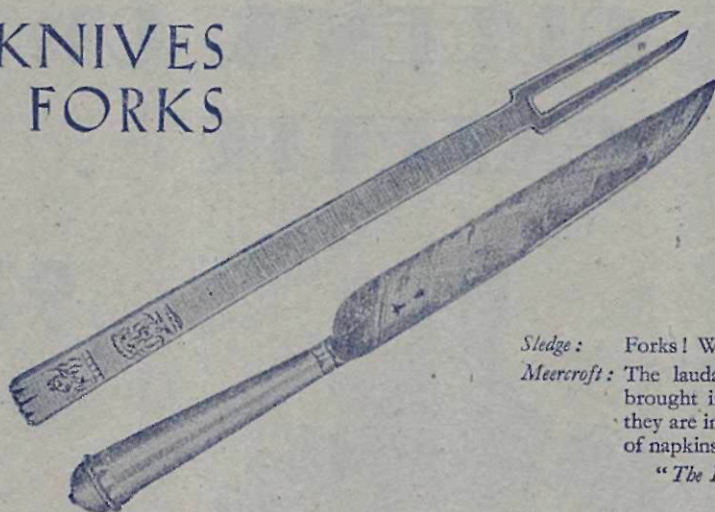
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On KNIVES and FORKS



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Sledge: Forks! What be they?

Meercroft: The laudable use of forks,
brought into custom here as
they are in Italy to the sparing
of napkins.

"The Devil is an Ass"
by Ben Jonson.

We always speak of "Knives and Forks", never of "Forks and Knives", and yet in polite society it is the fork with which we are on the more intimate terms.

The reason is, probably, that the knife existed long before the fork made its appearance and that the first "forks" were really knives . . .

Chaucer's Prioress who "leet no morsel from hir lippes fall" knew neither knife nor fork. She dipped into the dish with her dainty fingers and demurely conveyed the morsel to her mouth with the same implements. In a book on Continental travel published in London in the year 1611 we read this: "the reason for this their curiosity (*i.e.* the use of the fork) is because the Italian cannot by any means endure to have his dish touched with fingers seeing all men's are not alike clean." Thus the fork appears to have succeeded the napkin for this particular usage. The origin of the fork was probably a smaller pointed knife with which the joint was steadied whilst being carved. From that was evolved something like a skewer or one-pronged fork which later became the two-pronged fork. But these were only servers.

Individual knives probably came into polite use in this country about the fourteenth century, but the individual fork in association with the knife did not put in an appearance until the seventeenth century, though they had been in use in Italy at a much earlier date. In fact in some examples of early table cutlery which have been preserved we find sets of knives with only one fork.

English silver-handled knives and forks (two-pronged) of the eighteenth century show considerable variety and artistry of design, but as the fork developed from the two-prong to the three and later to the four-pronged and increased in utility, table cutlery tended to deteriorate in design. It has been left to the silversmiths of today to revive the combination of beauty and usefulness.

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The Regimental Journal of The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment

No. 837.

JUNE, 1944

Vol. LXII. No. 2.

THE QUEEN'S OWN ROYAL WEST KENT REGIMENT. (50)

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BATTLE HONOURS BORNE ON THE REGIMENTAL COLOUR.

The Sphinx, superscribed "Egypt"

"Vimiera," "Corunna," "Almaraz," "Vittoria," "Pyrenees," "Nive," "Orthes," "Peninsula," "Punniar," "Moodkee," "Ferozeshah," "Aliwal," "Sobraon," "Alma," "Inkerman," "Sevastopol," "Lucknow," "New Zealand," "Egypt, 1882," "Nile, 1884-85," "South Africa, 1900-02," "Afghanistan, 1919."

BATTLE HONOURS BORNE ON THE KING'S COLOUR:

"Mons," "Ypres, 1914, '15, '17, '18," "Hill 60," "Somme, 1916, '18," "Vimy, 1917," "Italy, 1917, '18," "Gallipoli, 1915," "Gaza," "Defence of Kut Al Amara," "Sharqat."

THE GREAT WAR BATTLE HONOURS—18 BATTALIONS:

"Mons," "Le Cateau," "Retreat from Mons," "Marne, 1914," "Aisne, 1914," "La Bassée, 1914," "Messines, 1914, '17," "Ypres, 1914, '15, '17, '18," "Hill 60," "Gravenstafel," "St. Julien," "Frezenberg," "Loos," "Somme, 1916, '18," "Albert, 1916, '18," "Bazentin," "Delville Wood," "Pozières," "Guillemont," "Flers-Courcelette," "Morval," "Thiepval," "Le Transloy," "Ancre Heights," "Ancre, 1916, '18," "Arras, 1917, '18," "Vimy, 1917," "Scarpe, 1917," "Oppy," "Pilekem," "Langemarck, 1917," "Menin Road," "Polygon Wood," "Broodseinde," "Passchendaele," "Cambrai, 1917, '18," "St. Quentin," "Rosieres," "Avre," "Villers Bretonneux," "Lys," "Hazebrouck," "Kemmel," "Amiens," "Bapaume, 1918," "Hindenburg Line," "Epéhy," "Canal du Nord," "St. Quentin Canal," "Courtrai," "Selle," "Sambre," "France and Flanders, 1914-18," "Italy, 1917, '18," "Suvla," "Landing at Suvla," "Scimitar Hill," "Gallipoli, 1915," "Rumani," "Egypt, 1915-16," "Gaza," "El Mughar," "Jerusalem," "Jericho," "Tell Asur," "Palestine, 1917, '18," "Defence of Kut Al Amara," "Sharqat," Mesopotamia, 1915-18."

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Editorial

Just as we are going to press the astounding news was disclosed to all the waiting world that, under the command of General Eisenhower, Allied naval forces, supported by strong air forces, began landing Allied armies on the northern coast of France. The army has established itself on a broad front, and heavy fighting is taking place in the region of Caen. In some cases the troops have penetrated several miles inland. Airborne troops on a scale far larger than ever before, were landed behind the enemy's lines with great accuracy and very little loss.

Over 4,000 ships, together with several thousand smaller craft, were engaged in the operation, and nearly 11,000 first line aircraft are available for the big battle. On the previous night, as a prelude to the landing of the invasion troops, 1,300 aircraft of Bomber Command released more than 5,000 tons of bombs on ten coastal batteries, the greatest attack ever, so far, on a single night. Shortly after dawn more than 1,000 American heavy bombers took up the attack, and in the 24 hours between 15,000 and 20,000 tons of bombs were dropped on Northern France targets.

In Italy, troops of the Fifth Army, in their advance along the general line of the Via Cassia, known as Highway 2, are pursuing the enemy in the Rome area. Good progress has been made west of the Tiber and north of Rome, where the Germans are falling back in disorder.

On the Eighth Army front, the advance is maintained, despite the strong resistance of the enemy covering his withdrawal.

We have appealed before through the columns of the regimental journal for first-hand news from the various fronts where units of the Regiment are serving. Although the present issue contains a good amount of Battalion correspondence, we think that there must be contributors of all ranks at home and overseas who could forward ample material which would be interesting to readers. Now that the Queen's Own Gazette is published quarterly, there are time and space for more contributors and contributions of short articles dealing with personal exploits. To make the Gazette as informative as it ought to be, more copy is required, and every-day incidents which at the time seem commonplace perhaps would be the basis of a story which would look well in print.

Our regular contributors have been thanked before by us, and we again take the opportunity of doing so, for we realize that present-day conditions are ample excuse for a falling-off in literary efforts, but we wish there were more writers in our columns, and we earnestly appeal to all ranks to send any recorded incident for our consideration.

Very little imagination is needed to understand how soldiers serving overseas look forward to letters and parcels from home, but quite a lot of mail is going astray, and we have been asked by the Army Postal Service to stress the importance of addressing letters and parcels correctly. This branch of the Army has a big job to do, and it is doing it very capably; but very often it gets blamed for bad service when the fault lies with the writer at home in incompletely addressing the mail. In quite a number of cases the soldier has given his relatives and friends the incorrect address, or the writer has failed to copy all the details of the address.

The Army Postal Service does its utmost to remedy these omissions; and in deciphering badly written and incomplete addresses on letters and parcels much valuable time is wasted when it could so well be devoted to something else. Instructions have been given on the subject continuously, and we impress on our readers the importance of doing their part in co-operation with this hard-working branch of the service, and so ensure the safe delivery of valued letters and parcels to the men whose every thought is of the folk at home.

William Curran Reedy is a familiar name to our readers now, for he has kindly submitted poems to the "Queen's Own Gazette" since December, 1942; he has had books of poems published — "Blue Sea Ballads and Chanties," "Spindrift and Spun yarn," and "London Garland," to name but three — and poems set to music as ballads and part-songs. He has forwarded for inclusion in this number a hitherto unpublished poem of the A.F.S., as a mark of praise to a branch of the Civil Defence which has done sterling work during the war.

Captain C. L. Norman, well known to older members of the Regiment as a serving officer, continues his interesting "Territorial Days," and our regular contributors from Battalions, and Old Comrades' correspondents give their quarterly accounts, but we need new members in our team of correspondents to keep us in the forefront of regimental magazines. May we make a final appeal?

Social and Personal

General Sir Charles Bonham-Carter, G.C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., Colonel of the Regiment, paid a visit to the Barracks on May 12th.

A welcome visitor from overseas called on us during last month in the person of Captain B. G. R. Stoneham.

Mr. W. Adam Woodward forwarded several treasures — photographs, etc. — of the late Mr. C. F. Sanderson to us during last month. We doubt very much if the photographs will reproduce for publication in The Queen's Own Gazette, but if so, they will appear in a future issue. However, we are always glad to receive such things, and our thanks are extended to Mr. Woodward.

Congratulations to the regimental band for the very fine broadcast they made on the Forces programme on Thursday, May 25th. From 11.30 to midday, under the conductorship of Bandmaster J. R. McKenna, they played music which included a Grand March, "Spirit of Pageantry" (Fletcher); Waltz, "Eton Boating Song" (Kapps); "Minuet in A Flat" (Beethoven); "The Merry Widow" Selection (Lehar); and finished with the Regimental March, "A Hundred Pipers."

This broadcast wound up an active time for the band, for throughout May they have been kept very busy, and have travelled to all parts of Kent on a "Salute the Soldier" campaign.

MR. JUSTICE BARNARD.

Mr. Justice Barnard, who was appointed a High Court Judge earlier this year, was once of the Regiment, and served as a Captain with the 5th Battalion during the 1914-18 war.

Born on 18th April, 1891, son of the late William Tyndal Barnard, he was educated at Wellington College and Merton College, Oxford. Called to the Bar, Gray's Inn, in 1913, he was appointed a K.C. in 1939. According to the current "Who's Who," Mr. Justice Barnard is a member of the United University Club.

"THE FEW" IN 1794.

Sir,—It may be of interest to recall the units concerned, as given by Fortescue in his "History of the British Army": The Royal Artillery; 18th Foot (The Royal Irish), now disbanded; 50th Foot (1st Battalion Queen's Own Royal West Kent); 51st Foot (1st Battalion King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry).

The remark your correspondent quotes was made by Sir John Moore in his diary after the surrender at Calvi on August 10th, and it was in an attack on the fortress early in the siege that Nelson was wounded and lost the sight of his right eye. The actual losses due to enemy action were small, but the amount of sickness was terrible.

A. S. COTTON (Brig.-Gen.).

Bournemouth.

—"Sunday Times."

THE REGIMENT FIGHTING WITH THE 14th ARMY

It may now be disclosed that the Regiment is represented in the 14th Army. After their heroic fighting in the Sangro area in Italy, when they were among the first troops to establish the main bridgehead across the river, units of the Regiment have served on the Arakan front and in the Bawli Bazaar area; and were part of the formation covering the south-western outposts of Maungdaw.

Bobby Shaw gave a good description of the early actions to winkle out the Japs in the jungle, and this description has been continued in a letter from the Commanding Officer. Since then it appears the Battalion put in some good work in the capture of Razabil Fort. After the 100 mile trek through the jungles of Northern Burma the Battalion crossed the Chindwin River. Operations continue far behind the Japanese lines in the upper reaches of the Chindwin, and the Battalion continues to uphold the best traditions of the Regiment. Although malaria is a nuisance the troops are fit and full of confidence. Their greatest need is letters from home. Relatives and friends should write as often as possible.

The work of the Regiment in Burma has already been mentioned in the "Daily Telegraph" and "Daily Sketch."

VICTORIA CROSS

FOR NEPHEW OF LIEUT.-GENERAL SIR JAMES O'DOWDA.

The posthumous award of the Victoria Cross for outstanding gallantry and leadership in Arakan, Burma, has been awarded to Major Charles Ferguson Hoey, M.C., a nephew of Lieut.-General Sir James O'Dowda, who was Colonel of The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment from December, 1927, to August, 1936.

According to the "London Gazette" the citation reads:—"War Office, 18th May, 1944. The King has been graciously pleased to approve the posthumous award of the Victoria Cross to Captain (temporary Major) Charles Ferguson Hoey, M.C. (71106) The Lincolnshire Regiment (Vancouver)."

"In Burma, on the 16th February, 1944, Major Hoey's Company formed part of a force which was ordered to capture a position at all costs.

"After a night march through enemy held territory, the force was met at the foot of the position by heavy machine gun fire.

"Major Hoey personally led his Company under heavy machine-gun and rifle fire right up to the objective. Although wounded at least twice in the leg and head, he seized a Bren



THE POSTHUMOUS AWARD OF THE V.C. HAS BEEN MADE TO MAJOR C. F. HOEY FOR GALLANTRY IN BURMA.

On February 16th of this year Major Hoey's company formed part of a force which was ordered to capture a position at all costs. Major Hoey personally led his men under heavy fire right up to the objective. Despite his wounds, he reached the enemy strong-point first, where he killed all the occupants before being mortally wounded. His outstanding gallantry and leadership and his total disregard for personal safety resulted in the capture of this vital position in Arakan, Burma.

gun from one of his men and, firing from the hip, led his Company on to the objective. In spite of his wounds, the Company had difficulty in keeping up with him, and Major Hoey reached the enemy strong post first, where he killed all the occupants before being mortally wounded.

"Major Hoey's outstanding gallantry and leadership, his total disregard of personal safety, and his grim determination to reach the objective resulted in the capture of this vital position."

Charles Hoey came to England in 1933 from his home in Vancouver Island with the object of entering the British

Army and making it his career. As he was over the age limit for Sandhurst, he chose the course of gaining a commission through the ranks. Accordingly he enlisted at the Depot, Maidstone, in his uncle's regiment, The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment, Lieut.-General Sir James O'Dowda being Colonel at that time.

He very soon gained his first stripe, the first step to a commission, and after serving at Aldershot in due course was selected as a candidate for training as an officer and proceeded to Sandhurst. He passed out with credit and also distinguished himself at sport in the sphere of cross-country running.

He was commissioned to the regiment of his choice—The Lincolnshire Regiment—in which his grandfather, Major-General C. R. Simpson, C.B., served for many years and who afterwards was Colonel of the Regiment for twenty-five years.

Charles Hoey proceeded to India with his regiment, where he served for six years in various districts, finishing his promising career there in the Burma Campaign, where he gained the M.C. after leading the successful raid to Maungdaw. He was for a time temporarily second-in-command of the battalion. His last gallant action in which he lost his life and gained his V.C. award has been featured in the Press and was recorded in the B.B.C. "Into Battle," where the reference "the leading company commander" applied to him.

The eldest son of Lady O'Dowda's sister, his brother, Lieutenant Trevor Hoey, is at present serving in the Canadian Scottish Regiment in England.

His father as a young man served as a lieutenant in the Royal Irish Regiment, but retired early, and with his wife made their home in Vancouver Island.

Engaged to Miss Patricia McCallum, daughter of Colonel McCallum, late Highland Light Infantry, he had hoped to obtain leave to be married, but this was not to be.

Always having a warm corner in his heart for the regiment where the foundation of his military career was well and truly laid, Major Hoey, in his last letter to his aunt, asked for news of The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment.

PERSONAL TRIBUTE — MAJOR C. F. HOEY, V.C.

I. D. M. in "The Times" writes:—

The posthumous award of the Victoria Cross to Major C. F. Hoey, M.C., seems to his many friends to be a fulfilment of an all too short life of unselfishness and devotion to duty. Charlie Hoey was a born soldier and showed this from the age of 16, when he joined the newly formed 62nd Field Battery, Canadian Militia, in Duncan, Vancouver Island, B.C., where he was born and educated. He came to England at the age of 19, determined to make the Army his career, and enlisted in The Royal West Kent Regiment. After two years he was nominated for Sandhurst, and on gaining his commission he was posted to The Lincolnshire Regiment, of which his grandfather was colonel. He was a lieutenant at the outbreak of war, and was awarded the M.C. in 1943, and at the time of his death last February, at the age of 29, he had attained the rank of major. He was always enthusiastic about everything he did and had a great love of his home and also a great love and understanding of horses and birds. He was a splendid horseman, a very good boxer, and a good all-round athlete. When in the ranks he was in the team which represented the Army in the Decathlon in the Olympic Games in 1935. Those of us who have known him since he was a small boy know how typical of his whole nature was his final self-sacrificing deed in Burma which earned him the Victoria Cross.

CAPTAIN M. B. WALLACE.

A correspondent in "The Times" writes:—

When he was a boy at Oundle Michael Wallace lost his father, Edgar Wallace. Only with difficulty was he persuaded, in exceptional circumstances, to continue his studies and to enter Christ Church, Oxford. After two terms he went off by himself to Russia and subsequently travelled and sojourned extensively in the Scandinavian countries, the Balkans and the Middle East. From his contacts with his contemporaries in these countries he became interested in the world youth movement, and helped to strengthen its central organisation in Paris. In 1938, with his colleague and wife, Betty, he organised and ran the world youth congress at Vassar, New York, a large part of the success of which was due to the enthusiasm and patronage of Mrs. F. D. Roosevelt, whose interest he had secured. Early in the war he enlisted, and was subsequently commissioned in his father's old regiment, The Royal West Kent Regiment. He became a keen soldier, and though his natural abilities opened many opportunities to accept staff training, he preferred to remain a regimental officer. In the Tunisian campaign he was mentioned in dispatches. He knew what he was fighting for and would believe he died not in vain.

DECORATED ON THE FIELD

His many friends will learn with pleasure of the immediate award of the D.S.O. on the field of battle to Lieut.-Colonel J. H. H. Whitty, M.C., son of Mrs. Whitty, of Dewhurst, Wadhurst, and 10, Hungershall Park, Tunbridge Wells, and the late Mr. Hamlyn Whitty.

In 1938 we recorded Lieut.-Colonel Whitty's award of the Military Cross for gallant and distinguished service in Palestine, where he was serving as a lieutenant in The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment.

Prior to being commissioned he joined the Supplementary Reserve of the regiment and went to Palestine in January, 1938. He gained the Military Cross for helping to bring in, under a heavy fire, a private who was reported missing.

The citation further recorded that, although injured when two Army vehicles collided, he remained on duty and went forward with the attack and set a very fine example by his coolness and courage.

LED MEN ACROSS RIVER.

His new honour was earned in the crossing of the Sangro River last November, when he led his men into a big offensive battle action with success.

They encountered enemy tanks and destroyed three with their own infantry weapons. After the battle an immediate award of the D.S.O. was made by the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief Allied Central Mediterranean Forces.

Lieut.-Colonel Whitty fought at El Alamein in the successful action against Rommel, when second in command of his battalion, and when his Colonel was wounded took over.

After rest and re-equipping he went to Iraq for intensive training, and thence to Syria, Egypt and Palestine, back to Syria in September, 1943, and then to Italy with the Eighth Army again.

Born in Australia, Colonel Whitty went to Clifton College and from there into the Army.

He is a well-known Rugby player and turned out in the scrum for the Army in the inter-Services games for three successive seasons.

He also played for Kent in the county championship. Cricket and golf are his other games.

FAMILY TRADITION.

Colonel Whitty is carrying on the family soldier tradition, for his uncle was Brigadier N. I. Whitty, who commanded the 133rd Infantry Brigade and was formerly in command at the Maidstone Depot, Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment.

Colonel Whitty, in one of his letters, gives a word picture of a recent incident which demonstrates the spirit of camaraderie between the British and Indian contingents. He writes:

"Walking round my companies some days ago and passing a platoon of heavy machine guns under my command, manned by little Indian Mahrattis, I returned a most obviously special salute from their leader. Some moments later there came two running swiftly behind me. I took one hand in each of mine and smiled. They saluted and turned back to their post. No word was spoken between us. One incident so small and yet so tremendous in this war when Indians and Englishmen are soldiering together."—Kent Messenger.

OBITUARY

MAJOR W. B. COLEMAN.

We regret to announce the death in action of Major W. B. Coleman.

Major W. B. Coleman, the youngest son of Mr. and Mrs. E. Edwards Coleman, of Harboro' House, Sale, Cheshire, enlisted in The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment in December, 1939, proceeded to O.C.T.U., Sandhurst, in May, 1940, and was commissioned to the Regiment in September, 1940. He served throughout the North African Campaign, arrived in Italy in March, 1944, and was killed in action on March 11th, whilst on patrol.

His request, should he be killed in action, that a Rupert Brooke's poem should be inscribed on his gravestone, is typical of his high sense of duty, love of England, and pride for his Regiment.

Major Coleman's hobby was motor-racing and trials, and he was well-known in these circles. His sports were boxing, swimming and hockey.

Educated at Manchester Grammar School, he served some years with a Manchester firm of chartered accountants before entering his father's firm in 1939.

LADY LEACH.

We regret to announce the death of Frances Elizabeth, widow of Major-General Sir Edmund Leach, K.C.B., Colonel of The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment from 1904 till 1921, which took place on April 29th last.

Married in April, 1869, and widowed in August, 1923, Lady Leach reached the wonderful age of 97 before she joined her famous husband in death. During her widowhood she settled down to age as if she found it very pleasant company, and retaining all her faculties, she interested herself actively in social life, especially any event connected with the Regiment. She was a generous donor to regimental funds.

The interment was in the family vault at Brompton Cemetery on May 3rd, and Major S. E. Brooks, Officer Commanding Regimental Depot Party, represented the Regiment and laid a wreath.

FORMER R.W.K. OFFICER

COMMANDED VOLUNTEERS AT MAIDSTONE

The death is announced, at the age of 83, of Mr. Frederick Norton Garrard, who lived for some time at Brasted.

For many years he was a member of the Baltic Exchange, eventually becoming chairman.

He joined the 1st Volunteer Battalion of the Royal West Kent Regiment in 1900, having previously held a commission in a London Corps, and remained with the Regiment for about ten years, retiring with the rank of Major, in command of the Maidstone detachment.—Kent Messenger.

THE DEATH OF "WATCHDOG".

His many friends in the Regiment and old readers of The Queen's Own Gazette will be sorry to learn of the death of J. Sullivan, who was for many years a regular contributor to the regimental magazine.

A very old member of the Regiment, enlisting in 1882, J. Sullivan was a Royal West Kent man to the backbone, and his pride of Regiment was apparent to all who read his journalistic efforts.

He had been ailing for a few months with severe pains in the stomach, and entered Farnborough Hospital about two months back to undergo treatment. Discharged from there a few weeks ago, after getting very little relief for his complaint, he died on May 24th, and was cremated at Streatham Park three days later.

He leaves a widow and two daughters, to whom we send our condolences.

A comrade of Watchdog's of over 60 years' standing, Mr. Audsley, sent us the news of his death — too late for a regimental floral token of sympathy to be sent — and in giving his name prominence once again in the magazine in which he was proud to contribute, we reiterate Mr. Audsley's own words: "One of the best, a good soldier, and a thorough gentleman in civilian life".

DEATH OF C.S.M. MERCER.

We regret to announce the death of C.S.M. C. Mercer, who served for many years with the 2nd Battalion.

Charlie Mercer enlisted on November 24th, 1903, and went abroad with the battalion early in 1904, serving in Malta, Hong Kong, Singapore and India. He was regimental signaller, and came home in 1914, being stationed at Fort Darland. From Plymouth he went to the Persian Gulf in December, 1914, and served in Mesopotamia for nearly 3½ years. Wounded in the chest and left arm during heavy fighting with the Connaught Rangers, he again went to India, returning to England in April, 1919. Transferred to India again in October, 1919, after over three years he returned to England and secured his discharge in January, 1923. On the reserve he enlisted with the 5th Battalion, T.A., and did good work for four years as Signalling Sergeant, being instrumental in training the battalion signallers. One of the first to join the L.D.V., or the Home Guard as we now know it, he was appointed C.S.M. of "D" Company Kent Home Guard, and he held the rank until his death on April 7th last. His serving friends describe him as a grand soldier and a good comrade and a 100 per cent. chum.

Major S. E. Brooks, Captain Wright, and representatives of the Home Guard attended the funeral, which was held at Gillingham Cemetery.

THE ROLL OF HONOUR

KILLED.

T./Maj. W. B. Coleman, W./Lieut. H. F. J. Grigsby, Capt. J. N. O. Topham, Pte. E. C. Davey, W./Cpl. J. Fitzgerald, Ptes. W. E. Mills, C. H. Pateman, F. W. H. Scott, L.-Cpl. W. H. Smith, A./Sergt. G. Bowman, Ptes. A. Crittall, R. L. Davies, F. C. Fletcher, A./Cpl. S. A. Morris, Ptes. L. J. Pollard, C. Shine, F. C. Sones, L.-Cpl. R. T. Baldwin, Ptes. H. Burdett, S. Croucher, J. B. Dench, W./Cpl. D. S. Hunt, Ptes. L. Norton, J. T. Runham, E. Smart, W./Sergt. R. Stewart, Ptes. W. J. Danks, W. G. Ensinger, L.-Cpl. J. A. Gilbert, Ptes. W. C. Hunter, R. N. G. Lingham, L.-Cpl. H. A. Philcox, Ptes. A. C. Collins, V. Dunk, Cpl. J. E. Gibbins, Pte. A. T. Harris, W./Sergt. H. J. King, Ptes. S. B. Paine, P. F. Bartlett, W./Cpl. T. H. E. Drewett, W.O.II. H. J. Gammon, Ptes. W. C. Haddow, R. Oliver, W. Timms, J. T. E. Acott, H. A. Day, W. Grazier, W. J. Johnston, R. A. J. Mitchem, Cpl. T. G. Foord, L./Sergt. C. Saunders, Ptes. G. H. Howes, H. R. Keene, M. McHale, J. F. Mather, F. Punshon, L. E. Vickrage, W./Cpl. G. Teasdale, Ptes. G. J. Long, R. Clark, L. S. Everitt, A. J. Grigg, V. J. Johncock, C. G. Marsh, J. Stewart, E. G. Benford, L. W. Cotterell, A. W. Godden, T. Johncock, H. G. Lansdown, G. R. Norton, T. Archer, D. Arnell, R. T. Baker, H. St. C. Dewitt, T. P. Soul, A./Sgt. H. J. Degens, Cpl. E. Welsh, Ptes. P. W. Corker, J. Fanning, C. M. Gutteridge, W. J. Jenkins, E. G. Perkins, E. H. South, Cpl. G. Weigle, Ptes. E. V. Daws, J. E. Gray, L. James, Cpl. T. C. Peerless, Ptes. E. F. Shelvey, A. F. Watts
Pte. D. Carey, Cpl. J. J. Curley, Pte. A. L. Gallop, Pte. R. G. Ives, Pte. J. E. Peacock, Pte. E. H. B. Saxby, Pte. F. A. Wallis, A./Cpl. F. Banbury, A./Sgt. M. J. Crosby, M.M., Pte. J. H. E. Fidler, Pte. R. P. Henson, Pte. P. Jennings, Pte. H. J. Pilgrim, Pte. J. A. Stead, Pte. F. York.

WOUNDED.

T./Capt. J. W. Kerr, Lieut. J. R. Oxenham, T./Capt. B. J. Wilkinson, W./Lt. A. W. Cleverdon, W./Lt. J. A. Eason, W./Lt. A. E. Jode, T./Maj. M. A. Read, M.C., W./Lieut. J. W. Fuller, Ptes. L. N. Johnston, A. B. Kent, K. D. Langdon, F. McCartney, H. W. Maskell, W.O.II. G. Myles, Ptes. F. R. B. Palmer, D. Pinkus, W. J. Reeves, G. F. Roberts, W. Taberner, W. H. Williamson, L.-Sgt. A. T. Barnby, Ptes. F. G. Bradford, B. G. Ellinor, L. Gartman, R. J. Harpur, A. N. Hyde, Cpl. E. F. Jones, Pte. J. Liasi, Sergt. G. R. Mumford, Pte. S. A. W. Oliver, L.-Cpl. S. J. Richardson, Pte. I. J. Skyrme, A./Cpl. J. R. A. Stallion, Pte. G. R. Tyler, L.-Cpl. A. W. Wrightson, Pte. S. J. Adlem, L.-Cpls. S. Angell, K. V. Ball, Ptes. H. P. Barrett, A. J. Baynes, N. J. B. Butcher, S. T. Cansdale, T. W. P. Davis, A. P. Giblett, E. E. Goldsmith, H. V. Gray, L. Hart, R. Holmes, G. T. Isted, H. G. Jerrold, A. Kaucher, A. C. Knight, R. R. Lewis, Cpls. W. G. Mascall, G. G. Matthews, Pte. A. H. Matthis, L.-Cpl. R. Munday, Ptes. R. K. Nash, R. J. Parish, W. M. Randall, S. Richards, L. J. Simpson, L. J. A. Webb, W. J. Yeo, G. D. Barclay, J. J. Boyle, L.-Cpl. C. A. Castle, Cpl. G. Dougan, Pte. A. C. Fry, W.O.II. J. E. Grubb, A./L.-Sgt. F. H. C. Hockley, Ptes. G. W. T. Ince, E. T. Leggett, W.O.II. L. T. March, M.M., Ptes. T. Murphy, E. J. Paul, C. B. Robson, F. E. Smith, J. Swinburne, Sergt. S. A. Walker, Ptes. C. W. Billings, R. A. Brown, Cpl. R. F. Burbidge, Ptes. E. A. Chivers, G. C. W. Corfield, Cpl. W. B. Daniel, Ptes. C. A. Edwards, A. Emery, R. Fisher, E. J. Gibbins, W. Glover, W. J. Haggerty, J. A. Hazel, F. Hope, J. Jackson, D. N. G. F. Knight, Cpl. J. W. Leech, Ptes. A. Mercer, M. Molley, A./Sgt. C. F. Norman, Ptes. D. B. Paul, E. W. Perrin, A./Cpl. E. L. F. Pope, Ptes. C. A. Price, F. Robinson, C. Skitt, J. G. B. Slade, H. W. V. Springett, Sergt. A. C. Thrift, Ptes. C. H. Underdown, J. B. Ware, G. J. Wheeler, R. Wilson.

DIED.

C.Q.M.S. H. Buckwell, Ptes. H. T. Humphries, T. S. Rigg, R. Roberts, H. G. Perfect, L. Gartman, S. D. G. Jackson, A. E. Kay, J. A. Yeates, L.-Cpl. A. West, Pte. J. E. Dean.

DIED OF WOUNDS.

W./Lt. G. E. F. Turner, Ptes. F. J. Boorman, J. W. H. Lamb, Sergt. R. J. Kirby, Cpl. F. C. Searle, Ptes. J. Chuter, E. H. Galley, A. J. Parker, G. Wilson, W./Sergt. W. D. Williams, Ptes. M. R. Jenkins, R. Angus, R. G. Coleman, T. J. Heath, F. H. G. Lugg, C. D. Luff, Sgt. N. S. Williams, Pte. E. A. Page, Pte. A. J. Fleming, L.-Sgt. J. Gee, Pte. G. W. Hallstone, Pte. E. S. Hedger, Pte. W. A. Hewitt, Pte. E. I. Mendoza, Pte. W. H. Nelson, Pte. R. H. Peacock, Pte. W. Robinson.

PREVIOUSLY REPORTED WOUNDED, NOW REPORTED DIED OF WOUNDS.

W.O.II. H. J. Atkins, Cpl. H. W. Lynn.

DIED OF WOUNDS AS PRISONER OF WAR.
U./L.-Sergt. W. C. Aldridge, Pte. M. McEvoy.

PREVIOUSLY REPORTED PRISONER-OF-WAR, NOW REPORTED DIED AS PRISONER-OF-WAR.
Pte. P. Hidden.

Honours and Awards

For Gallant and Distinguished Services in Italy.

D.S.O.

Lt.-Col. J. H. H. Whitty, M.C.

In Recognition of Gallant and Distinguished Services in Italy.

MILITARY CROSS.

Major J. D. Stocker.

D.C.M.

Sergeant A. S. Obbard, M.M.

C.S.M. H. J. Atkins (since died of wounds).

MILITARY MEDAL.

Sergeant R. A. Knight. L.-Cpl. W. A. Hunt.

Sergeant M. J. Crosby. Pte. J. Wearn.

Corporal J. J. Pickford. Pte. L. J. Webb.

L.-Cpl. J. Andrews.

Sergt. H. J. Degens (since killed in action).

Pte. C. V. J. Drew.

L.-Cpl. H. J. Longhurst (since killed in action).

For Gallant and Distinguished Services in the Field.

C.S.M. W. Greenyer.

L.-Cpl. W. P. Enever.

Pte. E. F. Godden.

In Recognition of Gallant and Distinguished Services in Burma.

Corporal A. Hay.

In Recognition of Gallant and Distinguished Services in Sicily.

M.B.E.

Captain W. F. Pearson.

M.B.E. (Military Division).

Capt. (Quartermaster) R. C. E. Mines.

B.E.M.

R.Qrm.-Sergt. A. C. Chitty.

Mentioned in Recognition of Gallant and Distinguished Services in Sicily.

Captain (Temp. Major) F. W. P. Taylor.

Captain (Temp. Major) W. E. F. Tuffill.

In Recognition of Gallant and Distinguished Services in the Middle East.

O.B.E.

(Additional Member of the Military Division).

Lieut. (Quartermaster) A. G. Blake (London Gazette Oct. 14, 1943).

In Recognition of Gallant and Distinguished Services in Malta.

O.B.E.

(Additional Member of the Military Division).

Lieut. (Temp. Capt.) E. P. Flood (London Gazette Oct. 14, 1943).

Capt. (Quartermaster) B. A. Pond (London Gazette Oct. 14, 1943).

Mentioned in Recognition of Gallant and Distinguished Services in Malta (London Gazette Oct. 14, 1943).

Lieut. (Temp. Capt.) P. C. M. Buckle.

Lieut. (Temp. Capt.) G. W. Duffield.

Lieut. (Temp. Capt.) M. R. Read, M.C.

Lieut. (Temp. Capt.) M. B. Rickcord.

Lieut. (Temp. Capt.) A. J. Thatcher.

Lieut. (Temp. Capt.) P. R. H. Turner.

Lieut. C. M. Bernard.

W.O.II. (Acting W.O.I., R.S.M.) E. C. Dunmail.

Col. Sergt. (O.R.S.) L. F. W. Martell.

L.-Cpl. S. A. King.

Pte. G. L. Barnes.

Pte. S. E. Greatrex.

Pte. R. A. J. Mitchem.

C.B.E. (Military Division).

Colonel G. E. Wingfield Stratford (late Q.O.R.W.K. Regt.).

O.B.E. (Military Division).

Lt.-Colonel P. R. Hicks.

Brigadier R. A. Riddell.

PRISONERS OF WAR FUND

Since our last contribution to the Q.O.G.—as most readers will doubtless know—our responsibilities have risen considerably. As a large proportion of the new Prisoners' Next of Kin are resident in Malta, or overseas, we are naturally being entirely responsible for their quarterly clothing parcels. We are very glad to say that their first parcels have been despatched, and as we are allowed 40 coupons for this first parcel, in comparison with 20 coupons for later parcels—we have been able to make up quite a useful one, consisting of two sets of summer underwear, 2 shirts, 4 pairs of socks, pullover, scarf, handkerchiefs, towels, as well as all toilet necessities and chocolate. In quite a number of cases a second parcel is already on the way, sending winter weight underwear, etc. Apart from the Malta Next of Kin, a large number of those here at home have taken advantage of our circular letter to them offering help, and, in fact, in many instances, have asked us to undertake the full responsibility of sending the parcels—which, of course, we are only too willing to do, as this ensures the man getting a parcel regularly. We have recently given instructions for the usual quarterly parcels of books to go to all camps, and have also just sent a further donation to the British Red Cross Society towards our boys' food parcels.

We should like to take this opportunity of expressing our gratitude to all those who—although they are not here—still remember the Fund, as will be seen by the list of subscriptions.

R.L.

RECEIPTS.

	£	s.	d.
Balance as per last account	1499	11	10½
Donations—	£	s.	d.
Rev. Medley (Union Street Church)	2	2	0
Miss E. Grandchild	5	10	0
Brigadier T. Martyn	10	0	0
R. Mathieson	2	10	0
Colonel Wingfield-Stratford, M.C.	10	0	0
Mrs. Gooch	12	17	0
Major C. Druce	5	0	0
Major E. B. Loveless	2	2	0
Lieut.-Colonel D. E. B. Talbot	2	0	0
Lady Alderson	5	0	0
Mrs. Young	2	2	0
Rev. H. H. Bradley	3	10	0
H. N. O'Connor	2	0	0
Colonel G. E. L. Pardington	12	0	0
Mrs. Utting	1	12	6
L. D. Bernard	2	0	0
Mrs. Holland	1	1	0
Lieut. J. Brummell-Brown	25	0	0
Henry Taylor	1	1	0
Captain J. E. White	9	3	3
Mrs E. M. Newbold	1	1	0
Miss O. Webb	10	0	0
Major A. A. Eason	1	1	0
Mrs. M. E. Beale	2	0	0
A. E. Chambers	6	10	0
Mrs. Butler	2	0	0
Mr. Stringer	15	0	0
Captain W. W. Stitt	1	1	0
Col. R. J. Woulfe-Flanagan, D.S.O.	5	0	0
Captain G. H. Perry	5	0	0
Bradmore College (per Miss Eawes)	20	0	0
Mrs. Dickson	1	10	0
Mr. B. Welsh	1	0	0
Mr. Solly	5	0	0
Miss O. Webb	5	0	0
Colonel H. D. Buchanan-Dunlop, C.M.G., D.S.O.	5	0	0
Mrs. Homer	2	0	0
Treasurer, Edenbridge "Salute the Soldier" Week	15	9	9
Mrs. E. F. Walker	5	0	0
Mrs. M. Lynch-White	2	12	6
Personal Parcel Donations	227	16	0
Subscriptions from Battalions, etc.	55	17	0
Unit Raffles, Dances, Pantomime and Concerts ..	307	8	11
Miss Sheila Willshire, proceeds of Pantomime ..	255	0	11
Maidstone Services' Entertainments League—proceeds of Dance	50	0	0
Collecting Boxes	10	10	0
Sale of Typewriter	12	11	3
	4	0	0

£2,422 15 11½

PAYMENTS.

	£	s.	d.
Goods for Personal Parcels	969	4	8
Donation to Red Cross for Food Parcels	100	0	0
Parcels of Books and Games	122	0	0
Postage, Stationery, etc.	27	10	4
Balance (Cash in Hand)	1204	0	11½
	£2,422	15	11½

COMFORTS FUND.

We know readers will be interested to hear that we have received numerous letters from overseas expressing our men's appreciation of the cigarettes, books, writing paper, etc., which we have sent out to them on several occasions. A further consignment is on the way, and we trust it will not be long before it reaches its destination.

D.L.

MAJOR-GENERAL ORDE WINGATE MEMORIAL.

In memory of Major-General Orde Charles Wingate, the heroic Commander-in-Chief of "Gideon Force," which defeated General Nasi and 40,000 Italian troops in the Gojjam mountains of Ethiopia, a Wingate Ward in the Princess Tsahai Memorial Hospital is to be endowed, with the approval of the Emperor and Empress of Ethiopia, and of Mrs. Lorna Wingate, the General's widow.

Donations to the Wingate Memorial will be gratefully acknowledged by the Honorary Treasurer of the Princess Tsahai Memorial Hospital Fund, Lord Horder, c/o Hon. Accountants, Messrs. H. Reynolds and Co., 1, Bloomsbury Court, High Holborn, W.C.1.

General Wingate was greatly revered in Ethiopia, where he was affectionately known as Kinfa Michael, which means in Amharic, Wing of Michael, in reference to his name and because he first appeared in Ethiopia by aeroplane on St. Michael's day.

A Wingate Ward Reception will be held at the Dorchester Hotel, Park Lane, W.1, on Thursday, June 29th, at 5 p.m. to 7 p.m., to meet the Hon. John Winant, the American Ambassador, and Lord Horder. Mrs. Wingate hopes to be present.

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SHE IS ONE OF THE REGIMENT

QUEEN'S OWN PROUD OF MRS. LOVE'S M.B.E.

In the past and during the present war many honours have come to The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment for brave deeds on the battlefield, and the regiment has again been named, but in another sphere.

The Birthday Honours List includes the name of Mrs. D. M. Love, the wife of Major R. Love, an officer of the regiment, who has been officially recognised for behind-the-scenes work in the capacity of honorary secretary of the Regimental Prisoners of War and Comforts Fund, by being awarded the M.B.E. (Civil Division).

MRS. D. M. LOVE,
M.B.E.

"ONE OF THE REGIMENT."

Mrs. Love is looked on as one of the regiment, for her untiring welfare work is carried on at the Depot.

Soon after Dunkirk, when the Prisoners of War Fund was started, she assisted with the clerical work, and it was not long after when she supervised the administrative side of the Fund.

This work comprises the list of prisoners and their transferment to different camps, their next-of-kin, the involved clothing coupon account both for the bulk purchase of clothing, wool, etc., and the personal parcels, the unending correspondence with the British Red Cross Society, the Board of Trade, and the relatives of prisoners.

HER GREATEST JOY.

With the development of the war, the list of prisoners has increased, supply problems have arisen, but Mrs. Love has faced these difficulties with her natural cheerfulness—and still the parcels go out with regularity, and will continue to do so throughout the war while there are Queen's Own prisoners.

Nothing is too much trouble for her when the welfare of regimental prisoners is to be considered, and although she is proud of her decoration, her greatest joy is when she knows that the parcels are being received by the men whose main link with the outside world is formed by comforts from home.

THE ROYAL WEST KENT REGIMENT
IN ITALY

[The following is the full story of the Regiment's activities in Italy, released by the Ministry of Information. A somewhat modified account appeared in the columns of the March edition of The Queen's Own Gazette.]

The Royal West Kents have been fighting in Italy under command of both the 8th and 5th Armies.

A unit, now with the 5th Army, landed at Termoli in the first week of October, and though heavily attacked by powerful German forces, including elements of the 16th Panzer Division, stood their ground, thereby greatly contributing to the forcing of the Biferno.

During October the formation with which the unit was serving forced its way up the coastal road, captured Montecilfone on October 19th, and repelled subsequent counter-attacks.

The Royal West Kents were in the fierce fighting on the Sangro. They were among the troops who established the main bridgehead across the river on the 23rd of November, after one of the most relentless battles of the campaign.

Later, the Royal West Kents fought on the Moro, and then moved across the mountainous spine of the Peninsula to the extreme left flank of the 8th Army in the Alfedena area.

During the third week in February they came under

command of the 5th Army, and before the end of the month had taken their place in the San Angelo area on the line of the Garigliano. Here they remained till, in the last days of March, they took their place in the newly won salient to the north of Cassino.

Another unit of the Royal West Kents has shared in the 8th Army's campaign on the western side of the Peninsula since September. It landed at Taranto on the 26th of September, and swiftly made its way up the coastal road. Patrols from the brigade with which it was serving were the first to reach Castiglione on November 9th, and on the 26th of the month elements from this formation crossed the Sangro after stern fighting north of Paglieta.

The Royal West Kents were particularly heavily engaged in the fighting west of the Moro during the last week of the year. They took part in dispersing severe counter-attacks near Villa Grande, on the 26th December, and on the 27th and 28th put in a sustained attack which led to the capture of an enemy strong point north of the town.

During January the regiment took part in a successful assault against formidable opposition along the main coastal road leading to Tollo. Later they were moved to the centre of the 8th Army's front, south of Orsogna. They resisted several counter-attacks in this sector.

On the 19th February an enemy patrol was wiped out at Villa Bona by the Royal West Kent's brigade. They remained in this area during March, and were constantly in contact with the enemy forces seeking to infiltrate north-east of Orsogna.

On March 7th, and again three days later, they helped to repel strong patrol attacks, inflicting serious casualties, and throughout the month they held their own against sustained enemy pressure upon our positions in the Orsogna area.

"THIS FOR THE A.F.S.!"

When you think and speak of service

In the forces of to-day—

Seaman, soldier, airman, warden,

Each a worker in his way—

There's another group of fellows,

Worthy greathearts none the less,

Who lay claim to your attention:

They're the cool and fearless fighters

Of the dauntless A.F.S.

God speed the A.F.S.!

Auxiliary fire squads quick you guess:

Flame, the s-s-aring, dreaded foe,

Calls them when 'tis time to go:

What a furnace, what a mess!

A speedy crew—they're aught but slow—

Watch them stage their brightest show:

Wish them luck,

Pledge their pluck—

This, then, for the A.F.S.!

Section officer to fireman,

Downward from the ladder-top,

All disdain mere mock heroics,

All forbear from talking "shop";

Still, the lads have "got to take it"—

Many must their efforts bless,

Manning "Beresford" and "Dennis";

They're the pride and talk of people

Are the dashing A.F.S.

River float and land appliance,

Here a haul and there a tow;

Cheer them as they dash for duty—

There the crews so tensely go;

Neither reck they what may follow,

As the flames around them press,

Duty's there, and duty's certain,

Close at hand are, ware and willing,

Stalwarts of the A.F.S.

W. CURRAN REEDY.

[The "Beresford" and "Dennis" pumps are heavy and light modern equipment in Fire Service use.]

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS

BIRTHS.

- EVERY.—On the 16th March, 1944, at Sandhill, Pembury, to the wife of Pte. L. Avery, a daughter, Shirley Anne.
- BANKS.—On the 3rd April, 1944, at Chatham, to the wife of L./C. A. Banks, a son, Malcolm.
- BRAZIER.—On the 25th April, 1944, at Whitton, Middlesex, to the wife of Pte. J. Brazier, a son, Ronald Philip Arthur.
- BROWN.—On the 16th April, 1944, at Balshagray Nursing Home, Glasgow, to Myra, wife of Major R. W. H. Brown, The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regt., a son, Patrick Robert William.
- BROWN.—On the 12th April, 1944, in Malta, to the wife of Pte. J. Brown, a daughter, Eileen.
- BUTLER.—On the 27th February, 1944, at East London, S.A., to Phoebe (nee Sawyer), wife of Major R. Butler, M.B.E., The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment, a daughter.
- CLARKE.—On the 5th January, 1944, at Camberwell, London, to the wife of Cpl. A. Clarke, a daughter, Maureen Patricia.
- COURT.—On the 13th May, 1944, at Maidstone, Kent, to the wife of Corpl. A. Court, a daughter, Patricia.
- DAVIES.—On the 6th February, 1944, at Maidstone, Kent, to the wife of Pte. G. Davies, a son, Harold Roy.
- DINWIDDIE.—On the 24th February, 1944, at The Orchard House, Sevenoaks, to Elizabeth (nee Glasier), wife of Lieut. G. D. Dinwiddie, The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment, a daughter.
- JACKSON.—On the 9th March, 1944, at Colt's Close, Wool, Dorset, to Betty (nee Smithwick), wife of Major D. W. Jackson, The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment, a daughter.
- MARNHAM.—On the 28th March, 1944, at Oxted, to Jean Olive (nee Tate), wife of Lieut. M. H. Marnham, The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment, a son.
- NASH.—On the 8th February, 1944, at Brighton, to the wife of Pte. R. Nash, twin daughters, Irene Mary and Rona Anne.
- PADWICK.—On the 15th March, 1944, at Orpington, Kent, to the wife of Pte. H. Padwick, a daughter, Rita Anne.

FORTHCOMING MARRIAGES.

- CLITHEROW-SMITH—FIELD.—The engagement is announced between Major Dennis Clitherow-Smith, The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment, only son of the late Mr. Clitherow-Smith and of Mrs. K. A. Clitherow-Smith, of Belfel's Green, Sevenoaks, Kent, and Diana (Paddy) Field, A.T.S., younger daughter of Mr. and Mrs. W. P. Field, of West End House, Eridlington.
- CROOK—LEWIS.—The engagement is announced between Major Paul Crook, The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment, only son of Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Crook, 91, Church Road, Wimbledon Common, and Valentine Joan Lewis, W.R.N.S., youngest daughter of Mr. William Lewis, Merelwood, Redditch, Worcestershire, and of the late Mrs. Lewis.
- MORSON—HADDOCK.—The engagement is announced between Lieutenant Geoffrey Thomas Morson, of The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment, only son of Mr. L. J. Morson, of Faircrouch, Sevenoaks, Kent, and of the late Mrs. Morson, and Diana (Anne), younger daughter of Mr. and Mrs. H. G. Haddock, of Sawbridgeworth, Hertfordshire.

MARRIAGES.

- ALLEN—HOWICK.—On the 22nd March, 1944, at Bromley, Kent, Cpl. J. Allen to Thelma Florence Howick.
- BINGHAM—DONALD.—On the 11th March, 1944, at Plumstead, S.E.18, Pte. C. Bingham to Jean Owen Donald.
- COX—SWAN.—On the 8th April, 1944, at Maidstone, Kent, Pte. F. Cox to Marjorie Roselin Emily Swan.
- CRIPPS—TREMAIN.—On the 16th May, 1944, at Chatham, Kent, Pte. P. Cripps to Gladys May Tremain.
- DE LESLIE—ROSE.—On the 3rd March, 1944, at Sittingbourne, Cpl. F. De Leslie to Annie Frances Rose.
- FRYETT—STEVENS.—On the 23rd February, 1944, at Maidstone, Kent, Pte. A. Fryett to Winifred Irene Stevens.
- GILBERT—BEDDING.—On the 4th March, 1944, at Chatham, Pte. G. Gilbert to Sheila Mary Bedding.
- LEE—WOODHAMS.—On the 11th March, 1944, at Maidstone, Kent, Cpl. N. Lee to Lillian May Woodhams.
- LUCAS—PRAIT.—On the 25th September, 1943, at Maidstone, Kent, Pte. A. Lucas to Doreen Muriel Pratt.
- MANTLE—RICHARDSON.—On 12th Feb., 1944, at Dartford, Kent, Pte. W. Mantle to Doris Eileen Violet Richardson.
- McKAY—DUNN.—On the 4th March, 1944, at Gorton, Manchester, Cpl. E. McKay to Marion Dunn.
- PEACOCK—BRANCHETT.—On the 12th March, 1944, at Chilvers Caton, Warwickshire, Pte. C. Peacock to Joyce Edith Branchett.
- PIGGOTT—LANE.—On the 14th March, 1944, at Newbury, Berks, Cpl. J. Piggott to Maud Mabel Lane.
- RIDDEN—GARDINER.—On the 12th February, 1944, at Gilling-

- ham, Kent, Pte. J. Ridden to Joan Amy Gardiner.
- VALENTINE—McNAIR.—On the 8th April, 1944, at St. John's Church, Caterham, Surrey, by the Rev. S. Heal, Captain Bryan H. Valentine, M.C., The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment, youngest son of Mr. G. H. Valentine and the late Mrs. Valentine, of Woodside, Caterham, to Sister Betty H. E. McNair, Q.A.M.N.S., second daughter of the late Mr. James McNair, and Mrs. McNair, of Richmond, Yorkshire.
- WHITE—RAMSAY.—On May 27th, 1944, at the Parish Church, Ulverston, Lancs, Captain Alan White, The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment, son of Mr. and Mrs. J. C. White, of Cranbrook House, Cranbrook, Kent, to Kathleen P. Ramsay, daughter of the late William Ramsay, of Bombay and Darlington.
- WHITE—GARMAISE.—On the 14th March, 1944, at Folkestone, Kent, Pte. A. White to Dorothy May Garmaise.
- WILLIAMS—PERRY.—On the 25th April, 1944, at Woolwich, Pte. J. Williams to Elizabeth Bell Perry.
- WRIGHT—PLUMMER.—On the 29th April, 1944, at Maidstone, Kent, Pte. G. Wright to Jane Florence Plummer.

DEATHS.

- LEACH.—On the 29th April, 1944, very peacefully, Frances Elizabeth, widow of Major-General Sir Edmund Leach, K.C.B., late of 27, Thurloe Square, S.W., in her 97th year. Funeral took place Brompton Cemetery, 12 noon, Wednesday, May 3rd.
- TURNER.—On the 13th April, 1944, at Exeter, Ruth (nee Osbaldeston), wife of Captain Victor Turner, R.W.K., of Pembroke Lodge, Hildenborough, and mother of Lieut. J. M. O. Turner, R.W.K. (P.O.W.), Prudence and Jennifer.

ON ACTIVE SERVICE.

- BUCKINGHAM.—Killed in action in May, 1944, Lieut. Bernard Oscar Buckingham, The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment, dearly beloved and only son of Mr. G. J. Buckingham, J.P., F.R.I.B.A., and Mrs. Buckingham, of Pelham Road, Bexleyheath, Kent.
- HANSEN-RAAE.—Killed in action, May, 1944, Major Wynne Holger Hansen-Raae, M.C., The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment, dearly loved husband of May ("Mickey") (nee Lindesay) and only child of the late H. A. and Mrs. Hansen-Raae, grandson of the late Mrs. A. B. Gaimes.
- TOPHAM.—In May, 1944, died of wounds received in action in Burma, John Nicholas Orme Topham, Chartered Accountant, Captain, The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment, aged 27, beloved husband of Elaine (nee Pitt), and only son of Dr. and Mrs. J. A. Topham.
- WALLACE.—In May, 1944, in action, Michael Blair Wallace, Captain, The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment, beloved husband of Betty, younger son of the late Edgar Wallace, and brother of Pat, Bryan, and Penelope.

IN MEMORIAM.

- ARCHER.—In loving memory of our gallant son and husband, David H. Archer, M.C., Major, The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment, killed in action, Tunisia, April 30, 1943, aged 27, elder son of Lieut.-Colonel and Mrs. Archer, husband of Marion. "His fight is won."
- ASHTON.—Lieut. R. C., The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment. In proud and most precious memory of our beloved Ronald, killed in action, Tunisia, April 27th, 1943.—Mum, Dad and David. "Ever in our thoughts."
- BUNNY.—In proud and loving memory of Dick, L/Cpl., The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment, on this his 24th birthday. Torpedoed at sea, September, 1942.—Irene, Jim, Daisy.
- BURKE.—June 5th. Remembering with deepest love and affection our darling Pat, Pilot Officer, R.A.F., killed flying on duty, aged 24, and his beloved younger brother Michael, Major, The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment, killed in action in Tunisia, May 6th, 1943, aged 23. Two wonderful sons. "Lovely and pleasant in their lives."
- DANN.—In proud and treasured memory of our beloved only son and brother, Major Ernest Dann, The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment, killed in action in Tunisia, April 27th, 1943.—Father, Mother and Marjorie.
- NICHOLAS.—In loving memory of Oliffe Richmond Nicholas, Lieut., 3rd Battn., The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment, attached 1st Connaught Rangers, who fell in action at Beit-Aleesa, Mesopotamia, April 18th, 1916.
- TADMAN.—Proud and treasured memories of a dearly beloved husband and father, Edward Richard, Lieutenant (Quartermaster) 6th Battn. The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment, died of wounds May 24th, 1940, aged 48. God bless.—Bess, Jean and Joyce.
- WOODHOUSE.—Major O. G. Woodhouse, The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment, killed in action, near Dunkirk, May 29th, 1940. In loving and grateful memory.

: News from Battalions :

— BATTALION.

A short while ago, at very short notice, we were forced to dig up our deeply embedded roots and move to our present location—a pleasantly situated town. It was with great regret that the Battalion left, and I would like to take this opportunity of expressing the Battalion's thanks to the inhabitants of the city for their hospitality and kindness during our stay there. An ever growing list of matrimonial unions is expressive evidence of the way in which we were welcomed by those lassies.

Shortly after our arrival here took place an event which will go down in the history of the Regiment. The Colonel of the Regiment, General Sir Charles Bonham-Carter, G.C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., visited us to inspect the parade. Many scattered all over the world will recollect the happy times they spent with this unit, be it in England, Scotland, Wales or France, and many are proud to acknowledge that they were a member of the old —.

The Colonel of the Regiment also inspected the members of the — Battalion, with whom we are happy to mingle, and together we shall be able to maintain the traditional spirit of the Battalion.

Changes in our personnel continue with unabated fury, and amongst recent new-comers to Battalion H.Q. we welcome Major D. L—, whose boundless energy is lavished on administration, entertainment, welfare, sports and fires — the latter possibly quenched by continuous dousings of tea!

The Battalion has served its part in the "Salute the Soldier" Savings campaign and received the congratulations of the Brigade Commander on their excellent turn-out. We have also assisted — in their drive; during the week some of the Battalion's equipment was on exhibition in the local playing fields, which caused great interest among the local inhabitants, and at the time of writing we are wondering how many carriers and mortars we are deficit.

Finally we send greetings to our sister Battalions at home or abroad. May your tasks soon be completed victoriously.

I.R.P.

FOOTBALL.

After taking two defeats from the same team, our football team finally had the gratification of defeating them 5—0 in the quarter finals of the local cup. This was the classic match of the season—a typical cup tie—and after a good, hard and keenly spirited match, our lads ran out worthy winners. The defence kept a tight hold on the fast Rovers forward line, and at half-time the score was 1—0. The second half saw many desperate attacks being hurled against Invicta's citadel, but goals by L.-Cpls. Ford and Cohen (his second), and a rock-like defence frustrated all efforts on the Rovers' part to score.

The semi-final saw another victory, this time five goals to one. The final, played on a professional ground, before a crowd of about a thousand, resulted in a good win against Novas by three goals to one. For the first ten or fifteen minutes play was very even, with both goalkeepers being called into action, but Invicta got over their attack of nerves first and scored twice before the interval, both goals going to 2/Lieut. White.

In the second half neither forward line could pierce the opposing side's defence, and a good deal of mid-field play resulted. From one of these bouts a long shot was tried, which Lieut. Robinson had well covered, but one of Novas forwards suddenly deflected the ball into the net with a brilliant header. After this Invicta put on more pressure, and 2/Lieut. White completed the scoring and also his personal hat-trick.

The cup was presented to Captain Sergt. "Venus" Parker by the League chairman, and so Invicta completed a very successful and happy season. We know our old team members and friends will be interested to read of our team for the final and also our record for the season, so we have set it out here.

Lieut. Robinson; Sgt. King, L.-Cpl. Thorne; L.-Sgt. Patterson, L.-Sgt. Parker, Pte. Targett; L.-Cpl. Ford, L.-Cpl. Cohen, 2/Lieut. White, Pte. Tremain and Pte. Bacon.

					Goals		
	P.	W.	L.	D.	For	Agst.	Points.
League	22	19	3	—	132	29	38
Div. Cup	3	2	1	—	8	3	Lost semi-final.
Birtwhistle Cup	4	4	—	—	19	2	Won final
Total	29	25	4	—	159	34	—

"A" COMPANY.

Once again we have the pleasure of submitting news of Able Company's activities over the past quarter. One always decides to keep a diary for the next three months—omits to start, and then when the time comes (and it flashes by these days) one searches one's mind frantically for the memory of those incidents which make life in the Battalion worth living. Like the immense fun literally hundreds of us derived from the bumping races. What! you have not heard of our B.R.'s? Well, it was the C.O.'s idea in the first place, and under the most able organisation and administration of Capt. Ruffett and Sgt. Little soon caught on and half the town turned out in their enthusiasm to see the lads practise assault boat watermanship in the most enjoyable and competitive manner imaginable, in the form of bumping races. Competition ran high and "A" Coy. held their own in all divisions. There was hardly a "shout" left in the Battalion after the races.

In our new location there is another canal handy, and we all hope before long to be running along the towpath and encouraging Able's eight to "row thro'."

In the recent local town's "Salute the Soldier" parade (which sent the savings up £4,000,000 in the day) "A" Company were very strongly represented, forming the bulk of the Unit's marching troops. Their turn-out was as immaculate as could be, and their marching through those streets thickly lined with cheering, clapping crowds, was something to be marvelled at. Many a special clap of appreciation was drawn from the crowd by their proud bearing and smart turn-out. They really excelled themselves and earned a word of praise from the Brigadier himself.

We have been given the honour of providing two more platoons for another "Salute the Soldier" parade locally, and have no doubt about their ability to raise the "kitty." You would have to salute them were you a civilian.

It is with regret that we say farewell to our Company Commander, Capt. F. C. Ruffett, to whose chair we welcome Major P. C. M. Buckle.

THE GRENADEER.

"B" COMPANY.

Since we last submitted our contribution, many changes have occurred in "B" Company.

First and foremost was the arrival of our new Company Commander, Capt. W. Grimshaw. To him we extend a most hearty welcome, as well as to Capt. A. White, who accompanied him. Capt. Sheriff has left us to join "A" Company, and we wish him the best of luck in his new surroundings. We have also said farewell to several popular officers, including 2/Lieuts. Monohan, White, Carey and Harris. In addition, Lieut. Jemmett and 2/Lieut. Silvester have departed to assume duties as instructors at a Battle School.

The recent change of location has also entailed a complete revision of the training, and, although the fundamentals (rain and mud) remain the same, our endeavours are meeting with success.

It is a pleasant change to have truly rural surroundings, free from black smoke, although the amenities of a larger town, chiefly in the form of entertainment, are sadly missed by a proportion of our numbers. We hope that in the future the

existing entertainments may be supplemented by contributions by the Battalion.

Sports have been looming large amongst our activities here, and especially with regard to football. As we now have a very good playing field of our own, we are taking full advantage of it. In fact, it seems as though we have played more games here, both against other teams from the Battalion and the town, than during the whole of our stay at our last station. An especially good game was that played against the local team recently, when we succeeded in gaining the decision. This game certainly attracted some attention from the local inhabitants. In addition, we succeeded in beating "A" Company team and lost to "C" Company. We hope, however, to have our revenge in the near future.

We congratulate the Battalion on winning the elaborate Cup, and especially L-Cpl. Cohen, who represented "B" Company in the Battalion team.

Another sporting event which aroused much interest was the winning of the mile race by Cpl. Freshwater. Indeed, it has been suggested that an athletic team should be formed with a view to participating in more events of this nature.

Another outstanding occasion, prior to arrival here, was the final placing of teams in the bumping races, when "B" Company had the honour and privilege of being Head of the River—or should we say Canal. Our two boats were skippered by Capt. Sheriff and C.S.M. Motton, who also acted as coach. He lost his voice urging the teams on to greater efforts. As can be well imagined, great relief was felt by all at this unprecedented happening.

To strike a rather different note, we should like to inform you of the tragedy in which 2/Lieuts. Monohan and Silvester were unhappily involved.

It all started with their great liking for N.A.A.F.I. rock cakes, and the sudden temptation to which they frequently succumbed when seeing these cakes unguarded in the Company Office.

After the Company Commander—not the present one—had lost his ration on two or three occasions, he decided to do something about it. He hit on the bright idea of slicing a rock cake in two, inserting a filling of Gloy, placing the two halves together on a plate and leaving the bait in an alluring spot.

Ever since the day the experiment took place 2/Lieuts. Monohan and Silvester have very forcibly expressed their dislike of cream buns!

We hope our record has not been too devoid of news, but hope to have much more for you in our next contribution. Meanwhile, we extend our very best wishes to all ex-members of "B" Company, and assure them that we would be very pleased to hear from them whenever they have the opportunity to write.

BASH ON.

"C" COMPANY.

In the past three months many events have taken place, but no event will alter Shiny "C," not even the polishing on the outside of plates and bowls on Saturday mornings. Our spacious barrack room has seen many strange happenings since our last instalment, from fire practice to final roll calls. Our R.S.M., an ex-"C" Company man, always seems to "swop" on his old Company whenever he wants men, material or to give advice.

A lot of dirty water has been handed out in recent months, but Shiny "C" has always managed to keep its head above under the guiding hand of Major G—.

Many men complained of the draught in the Barrack Room, but they ceased to complain when they got in a draft in a big one going out instead of in.

We welcome from O.C.T.U. 2/Lieuts. White, Osborne, Thomas, Rowe, Gandy, Bowman, Gardner, Withers and Smith, and have said goodbye to Lt. Strand, Lt. Chase, Lt. Euck, Lt. Maynard, 2/Lts. Manby, Cutress, Holland, Rogerson and Coles. We have waved goodbye to many Royal West Kents, among them being Cpl. "Dutchy" Hollander, Pte. Mott, Egts. Reynold and others, L-Cpl. Goffee, and we wish them all a happy landing and a safe return.

One rainy day in April we received our marching orders; the dust and moths began to fly in the stores, the Col.-Sgt. discovered things in the G.1093 he never knew he had. All notices, "Silence," "No Ammunition to be Sorted Here," were torn down, and we prepared to leave the big city. There was many a tear shed that night between the "sipping up" in the "George" and "Commercial." Unconfirmed reports have reached us in the new station that the inhabitants have missed us terribly, especially the patter of running feet down the road at 22.25 hrs., and "Hubert" now counts his coppers every night.

The new station which everyone was not looking forward to proved to be a small town, and we took up residence in a spacious camp with all modern conveniences, i.e., Assault Course and B.H.Q. overlooking, but it did not take the lads long to get their feet under the table. L-Sgt. Little has been kept busy in camp these days, he has been seen swinging the rope before breakfast.

Our football team has been proving its worth, having supplied the first team with four players who helped to win the Cup.

Capt. Ruffett now assumes 2nd i/c. of the Company, and we are sure he will assist Major G— in making "Charlie Company" one of the best commanded Companies in the Battalion.

We have just witnessed an event in the history of the Battalion. General Sir Charles Bonham-Carter, G.C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., came, and his visit ended with an All Ranks dance, which we all thoroughly enjoyed. We must leave you now until our next publication. Cheerio
ERNIE.

SUPPORT COMPANY.

After having been in one station for a period of over sixteen months, the news that the Unit would shortly be moving came as a shock to most members of Support Company, for without doubt we have all been extremely well treated by the good hearted local people.

Certain members of this worthy Company, who had "dug in" to a great depth, were visibly shaken with the news, and have since been seen wandering around in our new station like fish out of water; however, knowing the aforesaid gentlemen have a perpetual thirst, they have only been looking around for a new Company Club. We do hope that they find one to come up to the standard of the "G. and D.," which served as a clearing-house for the latest scandal and many other things.

We have to welcome Major T— and C.S.M. P. Dunton and a number of repatriated men, and we hand them the usual line of gup about their stay being a long and happy one, though judging by the amount of Jankers they've been called on to share among them we doubt if it will be. At the same time we say goodbye and good hunting to Major B— and C.S.M. E. Tuck.

Last week saw the first All Ranks dance we had held for some time, and we were fortunate in having the Depot Band with us, which had travelled here for the ceremony.

CONGRATULATORY. — Our congratulations to Sgt. Shipstone, Cpl. "Bill" Eves and Pte. Mead on their recently joining the ranks of the married men.

FLASHES FROM ABROAD.—News has been received of Cpls. Bates and Hodges, both of whom were wounded, but are now fortunately O.K. again and out of hospital. News has also been received of Lt. A. W. C—, who has been wounded and is now back in this country; he has our best wishes for a complete and speedy recovery.

RE-UNION.—We were very pleased indeed recently to receive visits from two of our old and extremely well-known members, Sgts. "Tom" Shepherd and "Tubby" Davies, both of whom have recently returned from overseas. Sgt. "Tom" immediately on arrival, in his own inimitable style, donned Battle Bowler and Denims, and complete with "clivvy" shoes, braved the wrath of the Moor with the Mortar Boys.

HEADQUARTER COMPANY.

Since the last issue of the Q.O.G. quite a lot has happened to us. The main feature is that we have moved from our home-from-home, i.e., "Scrubbing Town," to a very pleasant town in this distant corner of England. We are settling down very nicely. We feel that our stay here will be very pleasant.

We congratulate Gordon Milne on his very gallant plunge into matrimony. Best of luck, Gordon, you need it. May you follow the example of your colleague in H.Q. Coy. office, whose wife has just presented him with a bonny baby girl. Nice work, Les.

Activities of the Company have been rather restricted of late, with the exception of the "free for all" P.T. periods, which we must say have been enjoyed by all. It is agreed that S./I. Rees is a "first-class" (with apologies to Capt. R. J. G. Lee) instructor.

There have been a lot of goings and comings since our last

A land girl was receiving instructions how to milk. Her instructor told her what to do, and how to hold where the milk came from, and then the instructor continued "You —" but the land girl interrupted and said "I know, I was once a barmaid."

contribution. First our welcomes, which are many. Capt. L. G. Stanecourt has returned to us again, and to him we extend a very hearty welcome. May his stay with us be as happy as the last. Next we welcome C.S.M. Greenyer, M.M., and all the other chaps, who are far too numerous to name. We all feel very proud to amalgamate with them, mainly because they have done a really magnificent job of work since they have been abroad. Now for the farewells. We have said "Cheerio" to many, much to our regret, and we say we are happy that they left us with a knowledge that they had been with a really good and happy Unit. C.S.M. Duffin has been posted away, having completed the normal period in hospital. We hope we may see him again, and that his recovery from his illness is soon.

To all of our friends who have left us we send our greetings. Best of luck to you all. May you soon be with us and have that "booze up" which we talked about so much. Best of luck to all members of the Regiment wherever they may be. "CINDERS."

— BATTALION

Our last issue, which we hope all members of the Battalion, old and new, managed to see, finished up with a glowing description of "a narrow village street winding up to a church on top of a hill"—somewhat reminiscent of Heverford-west! On one side of the road is Battalion H.Q., with flag proudly flying. On the other side we have opened a pub. A pub on English lines, with the old sign swinging outside—needless to say, "The White Horse Inn."

Well, all this was really most pleasant, and how you would have enjoyed it with us!

Now the fact that there's a war on, and paper hard to come by, precludes a really adequate account of our Christmas celebrations in that very desirable spot. For the spirit of Christmas was patently there, preparations were on a lavish scale, and everyone "mucked in" splendidly.

We started the day with a drumhead service held in the town square, and once that was over it was a case of "all hands on deck" to get ready for the sumptuous feast scheduled for mid-day. Those of you who look back on Christmas 1942 as a tin of M. and V. and a bottle of beer (very poor beer) consumed in a slit trench while knee-deep in mud in the shade of a well-known hill—well, you just have to imagine the greatest possible contrast to all that to get any idea of the momentous occasion we are now writing about. Can you bear to see the menu? Here it is, then:—Grape fruit; soup; roast turkey, roast pork; apple sauce, cabbage, potatoes; Christmas pudding; mince pies; nuts, oranges, apples; dates, sweets; cigarettes (lots) (not V's); beer; vino—ad lib and nil desperandum.

Thus our astonished veterans rubbed their eyes at the sight of neatly-laid tables piled so high with tit-bits that they literally had to eat away a space for their dinner plates. Unseen hands replenished the mugs; not one of the waiters—very illustrious waiters, too—seemed capable of believing that anyone could possibly have eaten his fill. To say that it was a great success is to put it very, very mildly. During the dinner our Brigadier came around and gave us the seasonal toast, and we only wished that our Commanding Officer were with us too on that day, but he had gone away just before Christmas on special duty. Major J. D. Forman was commanding in his absence, and his enthusiasm and active participation in the festivities delighted us all. By the time dinner was over the normally high spirits of the lads were reaching heights which rivalled the old days at Crief. What they couldn't consume at the tables they crammed into their pockets for "further reference." Mostly everyone (and especially some) were seen almost literally to "fly through the air with the greatest of ease."

After all that, and after the celebrations which the Officers threw to the Sergeants in the "White Horse" the next day, it must needs snow—and hard! And we very nearly did then become a "lost legion," well and truly snowed up and in. So we did something we hadn't done for a long time, and went out snow clearing; which wasn't nearly as bad as it might have been, as we had acquired a real Heath Robinson snow plough, hitched it to various "pieces" of M.T., and had real fun riding on the plough itself to add weight. Which harmless amusement resulted in several notabilities being seen digging their way out of roadside drifts.

And then—well, of course, you'll have guessed—and then we changed location, went in for patrols and other delights again in a big way for almost six weeks—and moved again!

We are very sorry indeed to record the loss of Major L. Wigram whilst out on daring patrol. Though a comparatively recent arrival with us, we had come to know him as a brilliant personality and a great leader. We also regret to announce the death from wounds of Lieut. G. E. F. Turner, who joined us only recently (though an old R.W.K. officer who had been with one of our other Battalions).

The latest officer addition to the list of "yellow peril" victims is Capt. B. J. Goodenough, who is temporarily away from us with jaundice. The vacant chair is ably filled by Capt. T. R. Hartland (by kind permission of "Able" Coy.).

We have wished the very best of luck to Majors A. H. Miskin and G. K. Debrates, both M.C.; the first left us to take up abode elsewhere as an instructor, and the second (how we envy him!) has been taken back to dear old —.

One of our very oldest members—Capt. D. C. Sheffield—the "Doc"—has gone to another post (and, we hope, to promotion), and we were glad to give him a terrific send-off though very sorry indeed to lose his unfailingly cheerful presence.

Since our last issue we have proudly added the following to our longish list of decorations: Lieut. W. Kennedy, M.C.; Sgt. Obbard, M.M., D.C.M.; Sgts. Crosbie, Smith and Knight, M.M.; Cpls. Pickford and Hunt, M.M.; Ptes. Andrews and Wearn, M.M.

Now for the Coy. scribes who'll give you the local gossip of their own lawless bands:—

ABLE.

Since our last contribution, command of "Able" has changed once again. We were all extremely sorry to say goodbye to Major G. K. Debrates, M.C., but only too pleased to wish him the best of luck—and perhaps wish we had his luck too. We were pleased to welcome Capt. D. G. A. Sanders, Lieut. D. A. Kirby and Lieut. P. R. Joubert (who comes to us from South Africa).

Our dear old friend "Honest Abe" went and got himself on the sick list, much to our sorrow, just before our grand Christmas "bash." They say he is giving the nurses an awful time, which we can quite believe—trust Abe. His particular share of the Coy. worries has been shouldered by C.Q.M.S. "Slim" Davies, whom you will perhaps better remember as a member of the Signal Platoon earlier on. On his rapid rise we tender our congratulations.

One of our officer celebrities ("T.R.H.") has gone to fill a vacant chair in Battalion H.Q., and now has the pleasure of dishing out the "please explains" instead of thinking up the best answers to them.

Pte. Norman Smith (who, as you all know, has been an "Able" man for a very long time), has now left us, and we hear rumours that he is languishing in a "staff job" somewhere in the snowy wastes.

Sgt. Obbard, D.C.M., M.M., after a short spell in dock, is now back and in charge of his old band of brigands—mostly members of the original infiltration platoon.

Recent "rises" include Pte. Igoo, Coppstone and Thomas, all of whom have assumed their first tape.

"SAMMY."

BAKER.

Hello once more to "B" Company-ites, wherever you may be!

Since our last issue many changes have taken place in the old Company. We have said goodbye to Major A. H. Miskin, M.C., and were very sorry to see him go. In his place we welcome none other than Capt. W. R. A. Birch, who has done all sorts of jobs in the Battalion, but whom we hope to retain with us now. We also welcomed Lieut. J. M. Mackenzie, returned from hospital with more "verve" than ever, and Lieut. J. D. Wheeler, a newcomer to the Battalion, who has quickly become established with us. Those old-timers, Lieut. W. Kennedy, M.C., and Lieut. N. H. Delves, are still going strong, and as you will see Lieut. W. Kennedy has added an M.C. to that already long list of ribbons on his B.D. We heartily congratulate him.

Returned to the fold from hospital are L-Sgt. Breeding, L-Cpl. Denness, Cpl. Parrott, Ptes. Treweek, "Snowy" Pearson, and those two old "sweats," Ptes. Moore and Tom Miller—all faces which we are delighted to see here again. We also welcome Sgt. Frost, an old R.W.K. member.

Christmas went off very well with us this year, and everybody had both a good feed and a good time, many stages above the M. & V. of 1942!

To those of the old Company who are in hospital or elsewhere away from the fold we send best wishes for a speedy

recovery and quick return. We often talk of the old fellows, so you are not forgotten by any means, and we look forward to the day when we imbibe a pint (or more) of the good old English beer in a good old English pub!

CHARLIE.

Here we are again, lads, "Shiny C" calling old friends far and near, hoping that you're all in the best of fettle. We are glad to say that the Company is once again at its strongest, and we extend a hearty welcome to Lieut. T. R. Morris, who has made a 100 per cent. recovery from injuries received while whittling away the Hun; also to the many old and new faces who couldn't resist the lure of "Shiny C." The spirit of the Company has never been higher, we assure you.

We haven't been altogether idle since our last news item went to press, and while gaining victories in the sporting field we still found time to wrest a bit more ground from the Hun.

We congratulate Sgt. Wilkins on getting himself posted to "Home Establishment" and wish him all the luck. The Company was saddened by his departure (!), and in passing we would like to record that Sgt. Edmeades is bearing up very well, considering! Congratulations also to Sgt. Smith on his M.M.

And now for a real titbit of news for you lads—it concerns the gentleman who is to be seen before reveille, wet or fine, denuding himself from the waist upwards for his daily rinse. (No names, no pack drill.) He smokes, he drinks, and if you don't think he swears—ask the Q. But to be fair to him I don't think there are any maiden qualms yet. Now, after letting you know that miracles do happen, I must tell you of an innovation (I got that word from the B.O.R.) within the Company—one which has proved very successful—our Company "Binges" in which all troubles are swallowed up in "Wine and Swing." We have these orgies at every opportunity, and many a fine ripe story has been told by our Company Commander there. Capt. W—, M.C., has even been known to break into song at these gatherings!

Among the "old faces rejoined" are Ptes. Smart, Kent, Thompson, Redgell, Gower, Simmons, Beckway, Richford, and Norman. A big welcome to all of them on once again joining our happy band.

As in days of yore, fifteen are showing how football should be played, while Company H.Q. and the cooks can sure pot the ball; but what a job for the linesman—keeping the ball on the island!

Congrats, to Pte. A. Taylor — now a fully-fledged cook — having passed his courses. Needless to say, we get no "buckshees" now!

Well, lads, "Charlie" must fade out now, and we'll save any further news for the next issue.

"DOG."

Major J. D. Forman having wished us goodbye on taking up another appointment in the Battalion, Major D. J. Wakefield has taken over the "Dogs," and we offer him hearty congratulations on attaining his majority. We have also recently acquired two very valuable additions to the Company by the arrival of Captain J. W. Kerr ("You want a mule? I've got one") and an old member of the Battalion—Lieut. D. Tyler—who was wounded in earlier campaigning.

Our perambulations have been many and varied, and our tasks much the same. We were, however, able to celebrate Christmas in really good style. The Christmas "bash" must take its place with those Blighty efforts of old, and "latent talent" was unearthed from all ranks. All celebrations were, of course, ably led by the Company Commander. Entertainments were on a colossal scale—we had to turn down vacancies in the end!

Sport has had a large place in our programme. We still head the Soccer League, and so far this season the Company team, under Sgt. Knight, M.M., has not lost a single match—despite the absence of the redoubtable Bill Ewing, who, we are pleased to report, is making a good recovery somewhere in Africa.

The coming of colder weather has taxed to the utmost the ingenuity of the Company bricklayers (!), but the problem of keeping warm has been at least partially solved by many schemes rivalling the wildest dreams of Heath Robinson. Company H.Q. may now be seen working with respirators at the alert.

Our "A" Branch, with the "Ould" man at the keys, has been supplemented by an ex-Main "Q" representative, one Pte. Totman. "Q" Branch remains the same, with "Honest Bill," the "Artist," and "Curly" completing the rogues' gallery. Old members will be glad to know that the only "lady" on

strength—our "Syd"—still follows the trails, so far without puppies to mark her career. She did have a friend at our last location, but—alas—he mistook a trip wire for a lamp-post and the Company booby traps came well up to scratch, with wire results for "Syd's" fiancé.

Last but not least, we heartily congratulate Sgt. Knight on the red, white and blue ribbon he has pinned on his tunic. Cheerio till next time....

THE SUPPORTING ARMS.

Since our last efforts in print, the chief items of news and interest have been the change in Company Commanders and the Christmas festivities.

We were very sorry to lose Major A. H. Miskin, M.C., who left us—rumour has it—to be nearer to a certain C.C.S. We welcome in his stead Major R. L. Clarke, M.C.

Christmas festivities went without a hitch and everyone enjoyed themselves—some, in fact, too well, and there were a few sore heads the next day. The cooks, led by Sgt. Jack Gaughan, really excelled themselves with the super dishes they served up.

Quite a few of our wandering boys have returned to the fold, including "Basil," who no longer looks like an Oriental, and "Der" Hallett.

Sickness has removed our C.Q.M.S. from our midst—it is said he turned yellow at the sight of the kit deficiencies and thereupon departed for a rest. The Great Tojo is carrying on for the time being, and everyone is being "done" quite well—too well, in fact.

Our C.S.M. is still docked, and the P.S.M. carries on, at the same time keeping a wary eye on his Pioneer boys. Lieut. R. J. M. Bernau has returned once more to Battalion H.Q., but we don't doubt we'll see him back one of these days.

Mary Pickford has been the recipient of a well-deserved M.M., and is now affectionately known as "Mary Mary."

"Dad" has found a new way of moving his toys about. We believe it's a new way of saving petrol, but if it goes on very long the boys reckon they'll all be in dock for repairs. New engines being the greatest need.

We hope to see a lot more of our missing friends soon, so hurry up and get rid of those maladies and "get cracking."

THE HEADQUARTER WING.

(By paras and sub-sections).

From the Mechanical Transport.

As "Gibbo" so rightly said in his memorable speech at the never-to-be-forgotten Christmas dinner—"What abaht the M.T.?" We therefore take upon ourselves the duty of broadcasting our own news (thereby evading the dirty cracks made about us in the last issue, presumably by our infamous deputy Coy. Commander "Major" Lowman). To proceed, the cries of "I want a truck" and "Where's my Jeep?" are as numerous as ever, and the story that Frankie Noyce now sleeps and eats in his Jeep is perfectly true!

We were sorry to see that old Malvernian—Cpl. Lavers—depart for health reasons, and we wish him luck. In his place we have Cpl. Keeling, who is already talking aggressively to the D.Rs. Cpl. Martell (D.S. to you) has also qualified for the Chinese (jaundice) army and is, we hope, already on his return journey to us with lots of swing records. Chalky White and his 15 cwt recently had an argument with a Teller mine and came off second best. Chalky, at least, was not badly damaged, and will, we hope, not languish too long in hospital.

"The Baron" is as ever; much to everyone's regret he's now learning to play "Lily Marlene" on a newly-found cornet! However, Sergt. Murray has faithfully promised to solder up the offending instrument as soon as he's finished doing Pte. Peach's maintenance for him.

With a toot on the afore-mentioned cornet, and blushing modestly, we must add that our "pieces" were recently inspected by an "inspectorate," whose closing remarks were "It is a pleasure to inspect....etc...." Well, chums, need we say more?

A closing fanfare, please, Baron....

"P.O.L."

From the Regimental Aid Post.

The main item of news from this Department is the departure of our very old friend, Capt. D. G. Sheffield. He had been with us so long that we had come to look upon him as one of ourselves rather than as "Attached within W.E." Everyone will wish the "man with a smile" the best of luck in his new job.

Other old members still going strong are "Tudder" Bates, Bert Squires and "Guerrilla" Armstead, Sgt. Bourne, M.M., is, of course, still 2nd i/c. of the M. and D. Department.

We all welcome our new M.O., and hope his stay with us will be a pleasant, not to say, a peaceful one.

We have had many enquiries as to when "Tubby" Dickenson is opening his "Invicta" Fish and Chip Shop, but he says he refuses to do anything about it until he reaches Blighty's shores. You've had your fish and chips! That's all for now. Good luck to all past members, and hoping to see them soon at the grand re-union.

"M. & D."

From the Signallers.

We have been kept mighty busy since our last edition, at one time having 43 miles of cable out—and three of the Companies had exchanges! (Shades of G.10.) Linesmen were naturally in their element, and even Ptes. Stowe and Smith were known to emerge from the glow and comfort of the main exchange to repair lines. In fact, we had so much cable that we didn't know what to do with it, so we made the Bosch a present of four miles, which we understand he greatly appreciated.

The driver of our truck (one "Chalky" White) has started a new hobby—i.e., using his truck as a mine detector, and also using part of our platoon as evidence of his endeavour; thus the Signal Officer spent a fortnight away from us, and the driver a pleasant month in old haunts. During Pronto's absence we were glad to welcome a newcomer to the platoon—Lieut. W. Kennedy, M.C., who directed operations with us for that period.

We were sorry to lose Sgt. ("Slim") Davies, but congratulate him on becoming C.Q.M.S. to "Able." (Lashings of G.10!). Our congratulations also go to Cpl. Hunt on his M.M., and also on his second stripe; and to L./Cpls. Mitchell and Woodman on their promotion.

Pte. Westlake seems to have had a good holiday—if one assumes that a change is as good as. He became a "Guerrilla King" and spent most of his time accompanying guerrillas on their many expeditions; he spent a lot of that time tapping lines leading to Jerry H.Q.s.

Our best wishes to all our old boys, especially those in the hospitals and con. depots.

"S.U.C."

From the Bumph-Wallahs (sometimes referred to in jest as the B.O.R.).

We still continue the never-ending stream of "you wills," "please explains," etc., with stacks of returns wherever we set up—in mansion, barn, hovel or the great outdoors.

Shortly after Christmas (on which occasion we very nearly closed down), we welcomed back one Pte. Lewis (the "L.J.L." on your letters, you know, and one of our pioneers!), looking extremely fit after convalescence from the usual jaundice, and we should say deplorably keen to get his beloved "type" clicking again.

Another "reinforcement" we have is "Johnny" Johnson, late of Battalion H.Q. Mess, and he also is famous—for "deadly brews." "Now, there's a thing."

Then there's the tiny figure of "Cookie," alias Pte. R. H. Cook (late nightmare of the Signals), who, as a tradesman clerk, just can't find a B.D. jacket to fit. He files everything according to a "system" (he says) which is, maybe, the most useful machine yet devised for disposing of unwanted papers.

Our "covered waggon" has made several spectacular journeys, and we have accumulated so much "bumph" that we need about ten assistants when it comes to inserting a large quart into a pint pot, so to speak.

To finish, it'll maybe save some breath if we announce quite firmly that we still have NO repeat NO notebooks, pencils, paper, etc., etc., etc.—possibly on account of one or two almost inexplicable disappearances from our stocks.

"ACK."

THE BATTLEAXE.

(Reproduced from "Hops and Haggis," our Brigade journal published at Christmas.)

By TOJO.

The shades of night were falling fast
As through an "Itie" village pass
A soldier, who wore 'mid snow and ice,
A battledress, with strange device,
THE BATTLEAXE.

Though many were the miles he'd marched,
Footsore, weary and throat well parched,
He still kept marching on and on,
Knowing the nation's eyes were on
THE BATTLEAXE.

North Africa had known his face,
Sicily, too, had seen him chase

The Hun, who though he tried to stay,
Soon departed, and could not delay
THE BATTLEAXE.

A brief respite and then once more
Overseas again to another shore,
There again to face the foe.
And fight him till he came to know
THE BATTLEAXE.

Some day, it is said, he is going home,
And for a while will no longer roam,
Resting until once more he's told
To march again and still uphold
THE BATTLEAXE.

Having indulged in a series of moves which brought us ever nearer to the all-too-familiar sights and sounds; and having again traversed the perilous heights, we can add another chapter to our book of successes against the foe, though we have had our sorrows and disappointments as well. The Battalion was proud after its last action to receive the personal congratulations of a number of higher commanders and other notable people; and to our long list of honours and awards we have added the names of Sgt. Brophy, M.M., R.Q.M.S. Chitty (who now wears an attractive pink and white ribbon, the first of its kind won by the Battalion so far), the British Empire Medal; Sgt. Edmeades, M.M., and L.-Cpl. Ingram, M.M., neither of whom unfortunately is actually with us at present.

Lastly, we have been pleased to welcome some new friends from home, and as someone is bound to have met someone also way back in Blighty, we give you the names of some new officer arrivals. They are Major D. L. Spencer-Nairn, F. R. I. Williams, R. A. Fyfe, Capt. W. E. Meltzer and Capt. T. S. Evans, Lieuts. A. H. B. Sinclair, J. C. Grose, F. N. Laing, G. V. S. Sturgeon, H. C. Wallis, 2/Lieuts. J. W. P. Clark, F. T. Weedon, H. Neall, H. A. McMillan, T. J. R. Deacon, A. D. Van Gelder. Back from hospital: Capt. B. J. Goodenough and Lt. R. Gyte, both in excellent fettle again; and one event which is surely of special interest to all old Battalion personnel is the arrival in our midst once more of C.S.M. Dixon ("Chinny" to so many of us), whom we welcome back and wish the very best of luck. No "rejoin" could be more to our liking!

It is with the deepest regret that we have lost Major W. R. A. Birch (so soon after attaining his majority), and Capt. P. E. J. H. Weatherley, M.C., both of whom had shared so much with us for so long. It was a blow also to see the departure of Major J. D. Forman, Capt. J. W. Kerr, B. J. Wilkinson, T. Jarrett and Lieuts. P. R. Joubert, J. R. Oxenham, D. Tyler, J. M. Mackenzie. We send them a special greeting and hope all are doing well, and already we look forward to some at least of them rejoining us before very long.

Congratulations to 2/Lt. Knight, M.M., on attaining that rank from Sgt.—an immediate commission that delighted us all, and to Major R. K. Dowse on resuming his crown, and Capt. W. Kennedy, M.C., T. Jarrett, and E. A. Lovejoy on putting up a third pip. Though Capt. Jarrett is at present in hospital, we hope his progress is good and shall look forward to seeing him again soon.

As to our "lighter vein" activities, we must tell you of the very lively football league we ran about a month ago, the interesting results of which were:—

Final League Table 18.30 hrs. 15th March, 1944.

Company.	Played	Won	Lost	Drawn	Goals		Pts
					For	Agst.	
Sp.	4	4	—	—	10	—	8
H.Q.	4	1	1	2	3	4	4
C	4	1	2	1	3	5	3
B	4	1	2	1	3	6	3
D	4	1	3	—	4	10	2

The appearance of C.S.M. Chambers on the field as bookie, in Scotch plaid, was an unexpected attraction, and something which we believe he will never live down.

Then we inaugurated the "White Horse Building Society," a unit enterprise which aimed at producing, by competitive efforts, the "ideal home" of the front-liner! Sgt. Baker's drawings enlivened advertising. Unfortunately the scheme never saw full fruition—things becoming a little hectic for such pursuits—but one day, maybe, the organisation will rise again, with some of our readers joining in the fun.

When things had again calmed down sufficiently we had a most successful series of educational activities—lectures, quizzes, brains trusts, etc., in which Majors R. L. Clarke, M.C., and D. G. A. Sanders, Capt. B. J. Goodenough, the Chap-

Iain, and 2/Lt. R. A. Knight, M.M., did most of the talking, aided by the R.M.O. and some visiting officers who kindly gave us their services. In this activity also Sgt. Baker's superb caricatures of the speakers added greatly to the fun of the thing. The subjects? Post-War Education, "Women After the War," "This Body of Ours," "The English Legal System," etc.

The story won't be complete without mention of our new Divisional Leave Town (yes, Town!) down by the sea. A most pleasant and desirable spot, with all facilities for real rest and recreation. Club, wine bar, cinema, bathing, boating, sightseeing trips, etc.—they are all there. We are sure you will all enjoy this little town, which everywhere displays the symbol you wear on your B.D.

And now it's high time we handed over to your Company correspondents, who will retail the latest scandal in their own way.

"ABLE."

The Grenadiers have now returned to their status as a Company after a brief period of distribution amongst the other Companies. Old members of "Able" would like to thank all their hosts for the hospitality they received.

To start the ball rolling, Capt. B. J. G. presented the Company with a very welcome present in the form of a trophy for the most successful platoon over a specific period. 8 Platoon (that man Obbard again) were the first to win it.

The Company recently returned from a short period of training with some friends of ours, during which time a joint-effort concert was held. We produced a mass of talent, which included such well-known artists as Paddy Armstrong and our golden-voiced L.-Cpl. Bowditch. The former certainly did credit to the Earl of Ulster, and the latter lived up to the standards of any Eisteddfod champion.

We are glad to welcome to the Company Lt. Weedon, Lt. Laing, and 2/Lts. Neall and Deacon. We should like also to congratulate Sgt. Brophy on his M.M.

Col.-Sgt. Wog and his mascot have transferred their allegiance to the Company, and every day letters of congratulation pour in concerning our Wonder War Dog, now proud owner of the Dickin Medal. [See page 30.—Editor.]

"Chinny" has come back to his old love and rules the scribe and others with a rod of iron. In spite of the punishment they take at his hands the Company are immensely pleased to see him back once more amongst his beloved parade states.

We have had a welter of new blood in the last few days, and as a result our fighting and football stakes have rocketed. Yes, the Grenadiers are getting cracking again and will have "got" very soon.

Good luck and a swift recovery to all our old friends now in horizontal positions. Hurry up back—it's hot in bed in summer.

"BAKER, not BEER."

Well, folks, here we are nearly at the end of April! Since our last news item we have seen many changes in the Company.

We regret to announce the loss of Major W. R. A. Birch, our Company Commander, in whose place we have welcomed Major R. K. Dowse. Malaria has put Capt. W. Kennedy, M.C., "in dock" for a time, but we have been very pleased indeed to welcome him back in the last few days.

We now see many new faces in our lines, both of officers and men. Amongst those we welcomed to the throng: Lts. Sturgeon, Sinclair and Grose. The latter is temporarily "standing in" for the S.O., and so at the moment H.Q. see as much of him as we do.

Our old Company Clerk has returned to us once more—none other than the old tea-brewer himself—Sammy Iden. C.Q.M.S. Grubb is still with us, and L.-Cpl. Kidd is back from his rest in hospital. Amongst the old stagers still with us is Pte. Wearn, M.M., who has been "promoted" to the ranks of Company H.Q. in the role of runner!

Recent promotions: L.-Sgt. Bredding to full Sgt. (plus ninepence), Cpl. Brand to L.-Sgt., and L.-Cpl. Dempster to full Cpl.

As we now bring this letter to a close once more, we wish all those in hospital and various other places the best of luck, and we hope that it won't be long before we all meet over that long-promised pint in a real English pub.

So cheerio now from all members of B for Baker.

"CHARLIE."

The old Company has changed around quite a bit since our last issue, though, like Johnnie Walker, it's still going strong.

The start of the quarter found us in a period of strenu-

ous training, 13 Platoon jibel-barking under 2/Lt. R. A. Knight, M.M., whom we were pleased to welcome to the Company. Sgt. Edmeades, one of our real old timers, left us during that period owing to suspected malaria bugs, but the consolation is that we now hear he's got the M.M.

Then another "do," in which of course we did well, although unfortunately Capt. "Pip" Weatherley, M.C., was lost to us right at the start. C.S.M. Groves was another "casualty," but not a serious one, and that old war-horse, "Chinny" Dixon, was fetched along to smarten us up.

Major I. H. Roper left us to command the reconstituted "A" Company, taking with him C.S.M. Dixon, C.Q.M.S. Cleggett and Sgt. Brophy (whom we heartily congratulate on his recent award). In their places Capt. T. R. Hartland, C.S.M. Fisk (late Sgt. Fisk of "B" Coy.) and very-honest "Slim" Davies took the field. We welcome about the same time some newcomers led by 2/Lt. H. A. McMillan.

Of the old stagers, Ginger Mainwaring is still screaming "Come and get it" with all his old dash, and, as always, Hobbs is well to the front when he calls.

At a recent jollity Cpl. Bloomfield made us all homesick with his cockney songs, and L.-Cpl. Downs still sings a pretty air.

Perhaps old "C" Coy-ites will soon be able to hear them perform at a home re-union! We hope so. Cheerio.

"R./T."

"DOG."

Since the days of the last edition we have again had many changes, not only of scenery but of personnel.

Despite our wanderings, we still find ourselves under the shade of the familiar olive tree; but this time our "batting" has been in country with a well-known historical background. On the whole we prefer the hills.

Our "regues" have been robbed of their most prominent member. We are sorry to record that "Honest Bill" left us for a short time—to find out if the "Ladies in Grey" were all they are made out to be, but he's back now. We welcomed in his stead Sgt. Smith, M.M., from "C" Coy., who carried on in our best "Q" traditions during the emergency.

Another newcomer (although a very old "D" Company man) in "Q" Dept. is Cpl. Tomkins—now our chef. He is doing wonders and now we even get a hefty whack of Yorkshire pudding with our roast beef!

Among the officer "new arrivals" are Major F. R. I. Williams, who is attached to us, and Lt. J. D. Wheeler, who is our 2nd i./c. Messrs. Van Gelder and Gyte have joined us recently, and to them, too, we extend a hearty welcome.

We regret to report "hospitalization" of Capt. Jarrett, resulting from our last "innings"—congratulations to him on his promotion — and "come back soon." Lts. Tyler and Oxenham are both in hospital as well. We wish them a speedy recovery.

Other temporary losses include Sgt. Wills, Sgt. Norman, Cpl. Lloyd. Good luck to them all.

16 and 18 Platoons are now one, but we still have to put up with Chaplin's chattering, prompted by Wiseman on the mortar. The Welsh Choir has now come down to Davies '27 and Hoare—they being the only two representatives in this quarter. Most of the others are in hospital, but we're looking forward to hearing from them again soon. The two H's from the North Country still keep the Red Rose to the fore.

18 Platoon Bren gunner, Pte. Morris ("It's no good, I can't do it" plus "re-ins" Gardener, Evans 33 and Mann still keep the banner of 18 Platoon flying.

Joe Brown's "babies" in 17 Platoon keep together with Cpls. Scragg, Shine and Pte. Veron (plus the seldom very empty mug).

Sgt. Wills' boys from "A" Company recently helped us over a very tricky period, and liked us so much that they decided to stay. Our latest arrivals were also doubly welcome and have settled down like old timers.

At long last the Battalion were able to find a team (or was it teams?) to beat us at soccer. Well, we can't win always! ("O, Sailor, where art thou?").

With the above ribaldry we close our effort with the words "Don't forget to write to us."

THE SUPPORTING ARMS.

Regretfully we left our American friends with their vino and volley-balls to enjoy a pleasant night convoy in which Sgt. Brindley, his bike, and a ditch made acquaintance. Arrived somewhere, we were complete with an assault course for meals—up a rickety staircase, and also a spot of mountaineering for a bath. Leaving behind us a sea of mud we found fields afresh and pastures new, where most of us spent

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a vigorous week under the watchful eye of Major Roper. A cross-country race ensued after a mortar bomb had taken it into its head to pitch too close to an Itie peasant to be pleasant.

A few entertainments, and a local Y.M.C.A. van which normally arrived in the hours of darkness, caused a stealthy patrol; and highly competitive efforts to be first on the scene livened up the proceedings. A football competition was won by support, to the advantage of many of its members who backed it to win with bookmaker "Honest Joe" Chambers.

The days that followed were active in a different sphere, and an exceptional performance was put up by Support Company, Vickers and Mortars creating havoc amongst the Tedescl.

We deeply regret losing a few old members of the Company—L-Sgt. Gee and Ptes. Martin, Watts, Steed and Smith '66. Among the others in hospital are Capt. Wilkinson and Sgt. Ogbourne.

Then we were pleased to find with us again Pte. Cooper, plus his M.M., which he won a long time ago, but was later wounded and lost to us temporarily. Also Ptes. Bateley and Duggan, of the M.G.s., and Cpls. Bibb and Marshall, of the Anti-whatsits.

A fewfortunates have been enjoying some leave, Sgt. Dyke even having a regrettable argument with a starting handle, somewhat to the detriment of his appearance.

"Butch" Hogg and Jimmy Cooper offer to challenge anyone at quoits—played with six horse-shoes and two track pins. No doubt many of you will have seen that "Capturer of Huns"—Mason's—photograph in "Union Jack."

And so, for the present, we leave you, looking forward to reunion in that boat with the —'s painted on the sides, bound for?? Berlin? "Nobby."

HEADQUARTERS. — The departments not represented have promised a "bumph" edition next time.

"Q" BRANCH.

Just so that there'll be no nasty suggestions from a certain department, we've decided to add our contribution to the News Letter this time.

During our eighteen months in the wide open spaces, we thought we had lived in every type of accommodation it was possible to find—but the "Q" succeeded in finding something new—*Caves!* Had the weather been kinder we don't doubt that Wally Scudds would have been seen working in his cave wearing only a "cloths, sponge" (dish cloth to you), so as to be in keeping with his surroundings.

We are very anxious to learn why D.S. (M.T.) didn't run the Second Front Sweepstake? Was it because he wanted his usual 10 per cent.?

It is noticed that the "R.Q." is wearing his "Sunday" suit every day now. Did somebody tell him?

In conclusion we take the opportunity of welcoming some "Blighty Boys," and at the same time informing them—and everyone else—that we have NO repeat NO jack-knives.

"P.1954."

ORDERLY(?) ROOM.

The "bumph-waggon" (with apologies to the Adj.) has been in full use lately; no luxurious office quarters being available. We feel we've been reminded an unnecessarily large number of times that we always have an "ouse"! So now we're on equal terms with all company clerks, come and gone. Clearly, the chap who designed these travelling offices had some sort of grudge against all clerks in khaki. In recent gales we had no end of fun holding the darned thing together. We put huge boulders on all the 122's; we tightened all the straps; and in the morning—search parties found 252's and whatnot all over camp.

The mosquito bugs lurking in Johnny Johnson's bloodstream stole him from our ranks a while ago, but we're hoping he'll be back to pump the primus and lick all the labels soon.

We regret to announce that there's been an enormous illicit traffic in "pin up girls" lately, some prominent figures being involved too. (Bob Cook is, of course, the big trouble here.) The Gore-Wicks syndicate, unsuccessfully endeavouring to remain aloof from all this disrepute, has suffered in various ways which "Q" could mention, and is considering implementing A.C.I. 9999 of 1826 to remove the offenders from their midst.

Just the job, eh, R.S.M.?

"ACK."

It remains to wish you collectively all the very best of luck, and a quick recovery to those who are in "durance vile" in hospital. Come back soon, we'll be waiting for a "social evening" with you.

Cheers and good luck. Up the Kents!

"INVICTA."

— BATTALION.

"Sunny Italy"! What a difference from the Western Desert, Syria, and other parts of the Middle East. Snow, rain—and then more snow. Flooded rivers icy cold, roads that disappear beneath a sea of mud, and inaccessible towns perched on the tops of high hills or ridges and NO sunshine, that is our lot today here in Italy with the Eighth Army. Gone is the easy freedom of movement of the desert, and in its place is the wearying task of struggling forward in such difficult country that vehicles are quite useless, and in their place that sure-footed and faithful but sometimes very obstinate animal the mule.

A great change indeed, but strange as it may sound a change for the better. Nearly two years ago we were many miles away from home, but now once again we are in the mainland of Europe with our faces pointing towards the Old Country.

There are a great many new faces in our midst, and many of those who left England with the Battalion have made the supreme sacrifice, but the spirit of the Battalion remains as high as ever. We realise that there are many dangerous and difficult tasks before us yet before we once again return to our "Home Town," but we are confident that we are capable of carrying out our task that is demanded of us to speed up the early defeat of the Boche.

To all other Battalions of the Regiment wherever they are we wish them the best of luck and "good hunting," and trust that we shall all meet again soon to have that pint we have dreamed about so often at the "Star." Maidstone.

"A" Company.

This instalment deals with the period 12th August, '43, up to the present time. After leaving the sunny shores of the M.E. we journeyed across the Mediterranean amidst glorious sunshine and a very calm sea. We eventually came in sight of Sunny Italy, and on landing there we had a very pleasant change—a 10-mile march in Full Bash!

The next few days we spent in training, getting fit once again with the inevitable route marches. In the evenings some of the Company wandered forth to a nearby village and made personal (some, very personal) contacts with local "Ities." They proceeded to acquaint the boys with the joys of vino and the tasting of the ubiquitous macaroni.

Then came the rain, and despite prompt delivery of hundreds of bivvies they were found to be not really successful, so we moved into a billet—Boy, oh Boy, and what a billet! It was an old and dilapidated cinema but, wonder of wonders, we were able to watch a very old Italian-cum-German film while under our blankets.

Then came our marching orders. We were told that once again we were to have "Monty" as our Army Commander and, in a very short space of time, found ourselves only a few hundred yards from the Boche. I'm afraid the Censor bloke steps in here, but we can say that the old Battalion has really done its stuff and, on two occasions, has received the personal congratulations of "Monty." Since then, we have had the satisfaction of depriving Wehrmacht of considerable personnel and equipment, not forgetting a number of Mk. IV. specials.

Christmas this year was not spent in the usual English way, but we did manage to get some turkey, even if it was tinned, Christmas pudding, mince pies and a couple of bottles of wallop.

Security forbids us to say anything about casualties but, by the Grace of God, we have been very lucky indeed, and our fatal losses almost negligible. We were very sorry to lose Bud and Vic, but we can say that, although they have gone, their memory will always live on.

We heartily congratulate our C.O. on his D.S.O., Major J. D. Stocker on his M.C., and "Ginger" Drew on his M.M. May there be many more. Congratulations also to "Smudge" on his Crown.

L-Sgts. Barry and Gibson on their 3rd, and Cpls. Robinson, Paul, Wagstaff, Jones and Gardiner on their 2nd.

We welcome to the Company a number of new officers, Cpts. Harper and Boyd, and Lts. Askew and Kent; needless to say we rejoiced when we got Ted Rundelly back so quickly. Sgt. Dixon back in his old Company, and a number of new arrivals, some from sister Battalions.

N.A.A.F.I. supplies have been good, mail pretty good, and so, as everything in the garden is lovely, we must now conclude.

"B" COMPANY.

We were fortunate in catching the tail end of summer on our arrival in Italy, otherwise we should still be pondering as

to why Italy is called "Sunny Italy." Shortly after our arrival it rained, and we did not appreciate it as we thought we would have done, in spite of our having spent so many months in the scorching desert. It was not so much the rain that we objected to as the wringing out of our blankets, and the lack of amenities in drying them. Still, it did not take us long to settle down, for there were many attractions to make us sit up and take notice. 12 Platoon were fortunate in being assigned a rather "cushy" guard on a B.S.D.. Whether this was given them because they were the biggest scroungers, or whether it was just luck, is not known. Suffice it to say that the men were falling over themselves to volunteer for guards—volunteer, mark you!—in order to put into practice a new-found use for "bully."

This scrounge did not last long though, and they found themselves, with the rest of the Company, whisked away into harness, harness that they were to wear for many months. By a streak of fate, "B" Echelon had their re-baptism of fire before the fighting troops, but "B" Company were indeed fortunate in coming out unscathed. The first real test for all came with the crossing of the Sangro. After many hectic nights for the supply column in "bomb alley" we moved forward and laid up for several days under heavy barrages. When the time was ripe, the Company again pushed on under machine-gun fire to take the village, and it is pleasing to record that our skipper, Major J. D. Stocker, saved the day, and was deservedly awarded the M.C. L-Cpl. Harold Longhurst showed very fine qualities in his leadership and daring, both here and in subsequent actions, and gained the M.M. An old original "B" Company man since 1939 he later lost his life whilst intercepting an enemy patrol. He had many friends throughout the Battalion, and he is missed by all. Events moved quickly; villages and other important places being taken by sheer hard work, and not, as is popularly believed, taken without a struggle with people feting us right and left. Officers and men came and went, but centred around a few old stalwarts the Company carried on. Deserving particular mention are L-Sgt. "Depper" Day, Cpl. "Bob" Wrycraft, Danny Perrin, Mick Miller, and "Hymie" Hyde, of 10 Platoon; Sgt. Jack Lewer, Cpl. "Tuppenny" Fletcher, Cpl. Wood, "Chunky" Mires, Turnbull, and our pet ape, "Bimbo" Gray, and Harkness, of 11 Platoon, and Sgt. Degens, "Hank" to the C.O. ever effervescing with cheerful pessimism, Sgt. "Poo" West, and his namesake "Ginger," Baldwin and "News of the World" Lewis, recently promoted to the dizzy heights of L-Cpl. by Hank on Platoon Part II. Orders, of 12 Platoon, and many others who helped to keep the team spirit alive. Very early in the war did Major E. G. Young, M.C., foster into "B" Company the idea that more could be done with a kind encouraging word than a harsh one, and with this spirit carried on by our present skipper, "B" Company will never be found lacking. Men like Pte. Matthews, who despite poor physique, carried on through thick and thin, and showed some of us how it could be done. Well done, Matthews! The finest example of all was C.S.M. Atkins. Whenever things were "sticky," as they were often, he was always there with a quiet word of encouragement and a cheerful smile, and his devotion to duty was an inspiration to every man. It was a great loss to us all when he became a casualty, and it was with deep regret that we learned later that he had died of wounds. We can claim many successes, but not without paying the price. Cpl. Taylor, Cpl. Outram, Ptes. Saunders and Higgins of old hands; Ptes. Gully, Johnson, Cox new additions, but none the less "B" Company, were killed. Many men will not be back for some time—even Horace Maskell left us for a while, after a very gallant effort. Through very hard times we learned to appreciate the true comradeship that always has been prevalent in the Company. Lts. Watermeyer and Wilson, the latter only with us for a short time, were indeed sorry to leave us. Life, in spite of all its unpleasantness, was not without its humour. The R.S.M. took special delight in pushing "his" cooks forward. Whether he considers the cooks a necessary adjunct to C.O.'s recess, or whether he is bent on ensuring that the troops get a hot meal on arrival in freshly captured villages is not known, but far-seeing C./Sgts. are making allowances for Jerries on ration strength. Bimbo Gray once, and thankfully only once, tried his hand at a spot of cooking, and even tempted the cooks into sampling it. Unfortunately, the ingredients were not exactly a la A.C.C. with the result that all who sampled it were violently sick afterwards. The C./Sgt. himself was a victim, and swore that it contained ground moth balls, and even went outside to make sure that the dead rabbit that had been lying for days outside the billet had not made its way into the stew.

Another light spot—Capt. T. R. Van Beek reported missing, returned intact, after a hazardous escape, to answer

queries from his relatives with his own pen, for which we were all thankful.

These few lines would not be complete without paying tribute to our cooks, Ptes. Billington, Barker and "Diddy Dots," and the drivers, particularly Collard, the Jeep driver, who have put in some sterling work, more often in the line than out of it. The weather has been atrocious and conditions far from pleasant, yet they can always be relied upon to do more than their bit. Attached personnel whom we treat as part of "B" Company are always eager to get back again, and we are pleased to note that some recognition has been accorded to L-Cpl. Mead, our stretcher-bearer. Kearsy, with his comrade signallers, has put in some good work, and though his days with "B" Company in France seem long ago, he is still going strong.

Our congratulations to our Commanding Officer on his D.S.O. and to the Q.M. on his O.B.E. Though the hardest part of this war be yet to come, we can look forward to the future with confidence, knowing that our past experiences will stand us in good stead.

Just before going to press we are happy to record the award of the M.M. to Sgt. Degens, which he won for his outstanding leadership and courage during a particular trying incident. Well done, indeed, "Hank"! Also we are very pleased to welcome to the Company Lts. Greig and Farrell and C.S.M. Cousins.

So for the present we will say farewell. Eangers!
NIGHTINGALE.

"C" COMPANY.

We are now in the Eighth Army. That in itself is one of the most exciting things that has happened to us since our last article appeared. It is not the first time we have had the honour of fighting with the 8th. Alamein is still fresh in our memories.

Consequently we are now in Italy, described on travel posters in Blighty as "the land of the blue Mediterranean skies." No doubt if we stay here long enough we shall see those skies, but at the moment we are having our full share of rain and snow.

We had an uneventful trip from Egypt, and after we had landed spent the first few months with a spot of training. Route marches became longer and longer, and the supply of grapes shorter and shorter, but there appeared to be an endless supply of wine. Our camps were varied and interesting, sometimes in an olive grove and sometimes in a village.

After this spell of training we were ready to take our part in the front line, and it was not long before we made our first attack in Italy. It was a success. It just happened on this occasion that "B" Echelon received their first casualties. "Dick" Hudswell, our cock, was hit and died later in hospital. He has been a great loss to us, and we miss his expert dishes.

Our advance was swift. We went from one village to another with not a set-back. Rivers were crossed with much discomfort and hills were climbed, but we always got there.

Several old faces disappeared from our midst. Ron Stead, "Blackie" (Cpl. Blackman), Charlie Bowman, and Vic Barnett were killed. We shall always remember their courage and the good show they put up.

Occasional rest periods have been organised, and these have been welcomed. Cinemas, tea-dances and concerts were arranged, and several well-known London artists entertained us.

Leave is well under way, and a number of us have seen and enjoyed the new 8th Army Rest Camp.

Geoffrey Brookes, Mumford and "Tosh" (Lt. Thomas) number amongst our prisoners of war. "Tosh" put up a particularly fine show and we are proud of him.

We must take this opportunity of congratulating "Twink" (Major Gwilliam) on his recent promotion.

Further congratulations must go to L-Cpls. Enever and Godden on being awarded the M.M. They have done some fine work with the Company.
"SHERE."

"D" COMPANY.

Since our last contribution we have changed our abode and now find ourselves in the sunny (?) land of Italy. Our welcome was great, and for weeks our diet was vino and grapes, which caused an alarming increase in Sick Parades and Army Form Blank. Before very long we once again found ourselves up against Tedeski. The contrast to the gentlemen's war of the desert was soon noticed by all. The billets of the front line (sheets and beds, etc.) made up for the mud and cold which we had not experienced for a long time. As with all wars there is the more sombre side, and it was at Romagnoli that "D" Company felt the full weight of this. We felt the parting of many old comrades, chiefly Capt. E. L. Hill,

Lt. J. R. L. Leslie, Sgt. R. Stewart, L.-Cpls. Sweatland and Maddy, Cpl. Morris, Ptes. Davey, Murray, Fry and several others. Unaccustomed as we are to "blow our own trumpet," we must point out that it was none other than "Dirty D" who led the Battalion into battle. Needless to say the objective was taken. We thank all other Companies for their assistance.

"D" Company for a time following the battle were non-existent for a Platoon under "Bcsun," who fought on with "A" Company. With them as their guiding star we welcome Capt. Harper.

After a period of more or less normal combat we celebrated our Christmas in a bomb happy house, somewhere in the front line. The menu was punctuated by "Moaning Minnies," but our appetites were unchecked. Even Pte. Wickers (now L.-Cpl.) was satisfied. (Wonders will never cease!).

Once again our thoughts turned to battle, and again casualties. Tich Sones, or better known to all as Wog No. 1, was killed during this engagement, and Company Office will never appear the same again without Sones to take command. This "Duffy" also put into hospital several of our leading lights—namely, Capt. Wollaston, C.S.M. Ben March, Cpl. Smart, and a number of the new lads before we had a chance to really get to know them.

At long last we had our much rumoured rest. Parties were the order of the day, and anybody sober by 20.00 hrs. was the rare exception. It was during the Company party that Bob Munday taught us a new song, something about "Sunshine." At this period we welcomed back in our midst our old friend "Babs" Mott, who had been resting at "Campo."

Leave is again in the offing, and we are all looking to a spot of rest and more "vino."

We close down with wishing all the old "D" Company who are at present either in Hospitals or Con. Camps throughout Italy and the B.N.A.F. a very speedy recovery and return to Company.

These notes would not be complete without all of us offering our heartiest congratulations to Pte. Len Lamb on his award of the M.M. and remembrance to Dick Phillips who taught us how.

"H.Q." COMPANY.

Much has happened since our last contribution, and hectic times have been experienced by all. Needless to say the Company has lived up to its well earned reputation, and again proved itself efficient in battle. The battle of the Sangro was its first real test since the Western Desert, and once again "B" Echelon sustained the first casualties. It is with great regret that we have to record that our very popular C.S.M. Cowlen was seriously wounded, together with Pte. Ransome, of the M.T. Section, and that Pte. Hudswell was fatally wounded.

Since then we have been almost continuously in the line, and many old faces are missing from the ranks, but new friends have joined the Company to fill the gaps, and once again we are almost up to strength.

Our Signal Platoon has been doing great work under all kinds of conditions and Cpl. Carretta has been doing the job of Signal Sergeant in place of Sgt. Smith, who unfortunately was killed in action. Great credit must be given to all those linesmen who time and time again went out under fire to repair lines damaged by enemy shell or mortar fire.

R.S.M. Creed (now civvy attached, so he claims) has a new interest in life. He has acquired a passionate longing for sure-footed, four-footed animals, and is continually heard to mutter under his breath "Mules, mules and still more mules," and is alleged to have applied for a transfer to a Remount Depot.

Needless to say the very difficult country in which we have been operating has taught us all to appreciate those clever but obstinate beasts who on many occasions have replaced our vehicles left behind somewhere hopelessly stuck in the mud.

We welcome to the Company Capt. Ross, our new medical officer, in place of Capt. Gibb, who has left us due to sickness. He came to us at the time of some of the heaviest fighting, and with the assistance of Sgt. Cowan and the stretcher-bearers has done noble work in caring for the Battalion's wounded. It is regretted that L.-Cpl. Smith and Ptes. Lamb and Long of the medical staff have been killed in action.

The M.T. Section has been tremendously busy as can be imagined with the Battalion almost continuously on the move. Personnel and vehicle casualties have been slight, although hair-raising escapes have been many and a considerable number of vehicles have taken on the appearance of pepperpots. Our trips down "Bomb Alley" along the bank of the Sangro were an exciting experience. We take this opportunity of

congratulating Pte. Drew, of the M.T. Section, on winning the M.M., the first decoration to be awarded to "B" Echelon. He did an excellent job of work in driving a burning Portee loaded with ammunition away from other vehicles during a dive-bombing attack.

Last but not least we congratulate our Q.M., Lt. A. G. Blake, on being awarded the O.B.E. for services in the Western Desert and are pleased to have him back with us after recovering from wounds received soon after our arrival in Italy. Joe Hunt, our R.Q.M.S., has been seen to smile, and this is considered by many as a good omen heralding the early approach of the end of the war.

So in the words of the Newsreel commentator we end our epistle "And so for the present we leave you."

"ONE HOLE."

MORTAR PLATOON.

During the last three months we have said goodbye to football, and have been kicking Jerry instead — good and hard! The value of our weapon has been fully appreciated, and we are proud to have given the Battalion invaluable support during the breaking of the enemy's winter line, and in many other engagements.

But we have not come through unscathed, and it is with great regret that we record the loss of our old friends, L.-Cpl. Baldwin, Pte. R. Davies and Pte. J. Smith—all lost in action.

We have also had to say goodbye, at least temporarily, to Ptes. Overall, Murphy, Glover and Drakeford, all wounded; and this brings us to Sgt. Ringwood, our former Platoon Sgt., to whom we extend our heartiest congratulations on his promotion to Sgt.-Major of the newly formed Sp. Company to which we belong. Good luck, Cyril!

We congratulate also Sgt. Brisley on assuming the duties of Platoon Sgt., and welcome as newcomers to our ranks: Sgt. Saxton, Cpl. Smith, L.-Cpl. Pott, Ptes. Hann, Lambert, Penny, Lee, Lawson, V. Smith, Yearling, Wood, Haslam and Simpson.

We have by now become good judges of Italian wines, and experts at finding billets with fireplaces, doing our own cooking and sometimes killing, and generally making ourselves as comfortable as possible under very trying weather conditions.

The notorious mule is no stranger to us, and has on many occasions proved absolutely essential, although the language provoked has turned the air an exceedingly queer colour at times.

Reminiscent of the Company Commander who found an unexploded bomb behind his Company H.Q.—we never quite found out where the muzzle cover got to on that occasion! Nor who is was who, not content with enemy shelling, blew the wall of his billet down with a Primus!

So here's to a successful 1944!

CARRIER PLATOON.

A few things have happened since we last appeared in print, which is a few months now owing to the fact that this Battalion has been so busy that we have hardly had time even to write to the folks at home. In the first place we are no longer in H.Q. Company, as the much talked of Support Company has at last come into being, ably commanded by our old friend and Platoon Commander, Capt. "Georgie" —, whose diplomatic organising abilities should make this Company run as smooth as clockwork. As he is still more or less in command of this Platoon the loss to us is not so great as it might have been. He is ably supported by C.S.M. Ringwood, late of 3 Platoon. The "Q" side is very well run by Col.-Sgt. Davis, who was a member of this Platoon until he was called to learn by heart the queer language that one hears in Company and Q.M. Stores, e.g., "Cans, oil, Bren, Mk. III."

Other recent losses to this Platoon are the two smilers, Sgt. "Bozzle" Price and Cpl. Moore, who have gone to "D" Company as Platoon Commander and Platoon Sgt. respectively, where it is hoped that "Bozzle" will find his long sought piece of wire. Our heartiest congratulations to them all.

Up to now we have played no tactical role in this theatre of the war, but that doesn't mean we have been taking it easy at "B" Ech. All the vehicles with half the personnel have been doing a "Carter Paterson" act for the Battalion, while the rest of the boys have been doing odd jobs round the Battalion, including helping the R.S.M. with his new pastime—muleteering. I am assured that no mule has come the "old soldier" with Tim twice.

"TRACKS."

INTRODUCING THE SUPPORT COMPANY.

Crest: Atlas supporting letters S.P. with 92 on his broad chest. It could also be an advertisement for a body developer: "You, too, can have a body like mine." 'Tis said that a rose by any other name would smell as sweet—and so 3, 4 and 5 Platoons have always been Support in spirit, they are now officially united as Support Company together with that mysterious entity Assault Pioneers! But for the novice let 3, 4 and 5 speak for themselves. On with the show.

"GEORGIE."

REGIMENTAL MASCOT AWARDED GALLANTRY MEDAL.

"A biscuit for Bob" will doubtless be an "Order of the Day" for "C" Company of a Battalion of The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment serving with the C.M.F.

"Bob" is the first dog to win the Dickin Gallantry Medal of the P.D.S.A. Allied Forces Mascot Club, which is the only medal specially offered for animals and birds serving with any of the Allied Forces in this war, for outstanding acts of Courage, Endurance or Fidelity.

As a youthful recruit from the Army Dogs Training School, "Bob" joined "The Queen's Own" while still almost a puppy, and after he had thrown himself whole-heartedly into preliminary weeks of hard training he ultimately set sail to invade North Africa.

"Bob" shared the rigorous hardships of his Unit in appalling weather, sometimes with only a handful of straw and a ground sheet between him and an extremely cold world, and when later he had to work in terrific heat, although obviously feeling the strain, "Bob" kept at it, scornfully repudiating the idea of a few days' leave! Nothing daunts "Bob"—even the fact that being a white dog—in every sense of the word—he has at times had to be camouflaged!

It has been reported that "he did magnificent work throughout the whole of the North African campaign, running messages, doing patrol work, and many lives were saved by his timely warnings—it has also been said that "as a morale-raiser 'Bob' is second to none and is the envy of every dog from North Africa to many parts of Italy."

"Bob" is in charge of C.Q.M.S. R. Cleggett, and their affection is mutual. If "Bob" hears machine gun or shell fire he growls defiantly, and should his master be sleeping, he rouses him, to put a stop to such goings on! He can also be relied on to get a message to him more quickly than through any other channel.

Many men of his Regiment owe their lives to "Bob." To quote one special occasion at "Green Hill," North Africa, where, on a dark, cold and wet night, "Bob," carefully camouflaged, was sent out with a patrol into enemy lines in search of some important information. Suddenly, as the patrol moved forward, "Bob" halted, and nothing would induce him to move, although at first he was urged to go on. Finally the patrol halted also, trusting "Bob," although there was no indication that the enemy was near. A few moments proved "Bob" to be right—only a few yards ahead a movement betrayed the presence of enemy troops. Thanks to "Bob's" timely warning the patrol withdrew safely, having gained the valuable information they sought. A few steps more and they would have been prisoners—or dead.

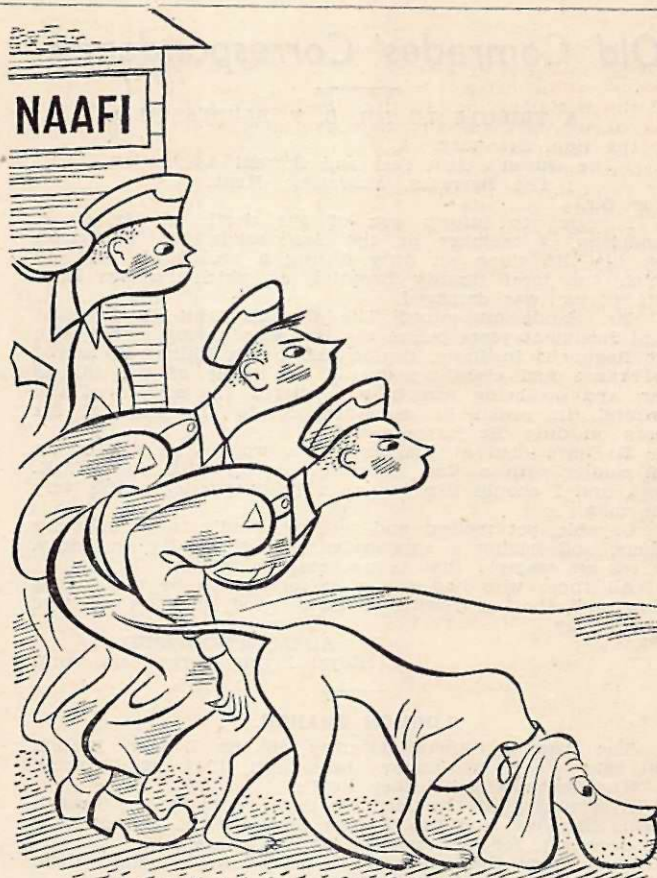
An officer of the Company writes: "'Bob'—our Company dog, is a true and faithful servant, landing with the assaulting troops in North Africa and taking part in the Sicilian and Italian campaigns."

The Allied Forces Mascot Club was founded by the P.D.S.A. in July, 1943, and has its office at 30, North End Road, Golders Green, N.11. All animals and birds officially serving with the Forces, Civil Defence Units, etc., of any breed, size, shape or temperament, are eligible. No membership fee or subscriptions, and their names are recorded in the Imperial War Museum.

A badge for all—a medal for the heroes (like "Bob" or heroines like "Winkle"—first bird to contribute to an R.A.F. rescue in this war).

Standing very smartly to attention, we salute "Bob"—first dog entitled to letters D.M. after his name!

[The Allied Forces Mascot Club was brought to the notice of C.Q.M.S. Cleggett in the first instance through the medium of "The Queen's Own Gazette".]



AH! SWEET MYSTERY . . .

. . . OF (Service) LIFE!

A mystery indeed to the Service men and women who cannot always buy their favourite brand of chocolate or sweets in the Naafi canteen. Small wonder that the soldier who prefers a chocolate cream bar, or the auxiliary with a fondness for sugared almonds, feels aggrieved when the Naafi fails to supply these favourites.

Who's to blame? The real culprits are those Terrible Twins—zoning and restrictions. Sweet zoning means that most Naafi canteens can offer only those varieties of confectionery which are manufactured within the area, or zone, in which they are situated. Naafi distributes no fewer than 198 different "lines" of chocolate and sweets to the Services. Because they are "zoned" a soldier serving in one area may be unable to buy his favourite brand; yet, on being posted to another district, he may find to his delight that his new Naafi has ample supplies. It is largely a matter of luck—and geography.

Chocolate is in great demand—and restricted supply. Large quantities are needed for the armies overseas; reserve stocks are being accumulated for the Second Front and to help to feed the starving peoples of Europe. Consequently, only a small proportion of the Service man's allocation of confectionery available at Naafi can be in the form of block chocolate; the remainder must be composed of other lines. This proportion, however, is at least as large as that available for civilians.

NAVY, ARMY & AIR FORCE INSTITUTES

Ruxley Towers, Claygate, Esher, Surrey

Old Comrades' Correspondence

A TRIBUTE TO MR. G. F. SANDERSON.

To the Hon. Secretary,
The Queen's Own Past and Present Association,
The Barracks, Maidstone, Kent.

Dear Sir,

I regret to inform you of the death of Mr. G. F. Sanderson, a member of the Association. Mr. Sanderson lost his life when on duty during a recent air raid, in which the local County Hospital, at which he was head gate porter, was damaged.

Mr. Sanderson joined The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment years before the last war, having served with the Regiment in India, Ceylon and North China; he served in France and elsewhere during the whole of the 1914-18 war, and on being demobilised entered the service of the hospital, in which he remained up to the time of his death on duty. He leaves a widow.

To have died at his post is a worthy passing of an old soldier with a fine record of service with the R.W.K. Regt. and I should like to pay a brief tribute to this very fine man.

Capable, yet modest and retiring, kindly in thought for others, and having a passionate sense of loyalty and duty, he set an example that is not easy to follow.

All those who had the good fortune to be his friends know well that men with so many good qualities are rare even to-day.

W. ADAM WOODWARD,
(Royal Flying Corps, last war).

LONDON BRANCH.

The Annual General Meeting of the London Branch will take place on Sunday, June 30th, 1944, at 12 noon, at "The Green Man," Putney Heath.

A summary of the business dealt with by the Branch during the year, and the balance sheet will be presented by the Secretary, for consideration and adoption.

It is hoped that all members whose duties permit them will make an extra special effort to be present.

The Branch sends greetings to all Battalions of the Regiment and other Branches of the Past and Present Association.

W. G. WHIFFEN.

THE QUEEN'S OWN SOCIAL CLUB, DEPTFORD.

Meetings are still being held at Ye Olde Brown Bear, High Street, Deptford, S.E.8, on the first Sunday in each month, between the hours of 12 noon and 2 p.m.

Although attendances have not been up to our usual strength we realise that war conditions are the cause of this state of affairs — and are eagerly awaiting a return to more normal times when we can again foregather as of yore. Since the last issue of the Q.O.G. several of the old regulars have been able to put in an appearance, including our old friends "Gunner" Harris and "Peter" Fleming.

The lack of numbers is amply compensated for by the enthusiasm of those present.

We regret to announce the serious illness of one of the stalwarts of the Club, dear old Press. He is in St. Alfege's Hospital, East Greenwich. Old Comrade Press is getting on in years, being now 77 years of age. He is being visited regularly by members, and is quite "chirpy." We wish him a speedy recovery, for we miss his cheery face at our gatherings.

Re-election of Officers: At our meeting in May a re-election of officers of the Club was held and the following were elected: Chairman, Mr. H. Bilby, M.M., M.S.M.; Vice-Chairman, Mr. Dan Steel; Hon. Treasurer, Mr. T. Kinnersley; Hon. Secretary, Mr. A. W. H. Rickard (Paddy Doyle); Committee, Mr. G. Stone, Mr. T. Wren, Mr. J. R. Protz.

It was with sincere regret that the members accepted the resignation of Mr. J. Robert Protz from the position of Hon. Treasurer. Increasing responsibilities connected with his Home Guard duties have forced him to take this step, very reluctantly. We are glad to note, however, that his interest in the good work is as keen as ever, inasmuch as he has consented to still serve on the committee, where his ever valuable advice and constructive suggestions will be welcome. We should like to place on record, through the medium of the Q.O.G., our deep appreciation of all he has done for us in the past.

Finally, we send our greetings to all members, past and present, wherever they may be. To those who are win-

ning fresh laurels for the old Regiment in all parts of the world, we wish the best of luck and a safe and speedy return, and assure them that we eagerly snap up any item, of news concerning their "doings." Us old 'uns are proud of the fine way the young 'uns are carrying on the traditions of the Regiment. Cheerio all.

PADDY DOYLE.

SERGT. E. M. HARPER.

His old regimental friends will regret to learn of the death on May 11th of Sergt. E. M. Harper, who was a member of the Regiment for 26 years. He died and was buried at Coventry.

Respecting his father's wish, Mr. J. E. Harper, his son, who sent us the news of his father's passing, said that representatives of the British Legion attended and gave the old warrior a semi-military funeral, and most of the wreaths were decorated with the colours of the Regiment he loved so well.

In the words of the son, who was reared at the Depot, "Having served in the same regiment during the last war, I can quite understand his pride in it. I wish all at the Depot the best of luck."

INITIATIVE!

By CAPTAIN M. NIKOLAYEV.

Captain Konstantin Yaroshchuk's best remembered experience is the fight at Height 245.3, when he demonstrated what could be done with a handful of soldiers if well directed.

Sixty German tommy-gunners attacked the height, bordered with woods on either side, which Captain Yaroshchuk and his 38 men repulsed.

The enemy were preparing for a new blow, but Yaroshchuk had left five of his tommy-gunners on the summit, stationing them at one hundred metre intervals. The rest he divided into two groups: one crawled down to the woods on the left flank, while the second slipped off to the woods on the right.

An enemy infantry company attacked the flanks of the height. One German tank advanced on the right, and three more machines moved on the left. German tommy-gunners again made a frontal attack. The Soviet defenders opened fire when the Germans were about 50 steps away, and killed sixty Germans. The enemy tanks scurried away when Yaroshchuk's gunners opened fire.

Captain Yaroshchuk got all his men back to the summit to meet the third enemy attack, realizing that the critical moment had arrived.

He led his men to the attack.

The Germans were routed. This victory inspired the young Soviet officer with new confidence.

In a further bold raid on a village held by the enemy, two mine fragments struck Yaroshchuk's left leg, but he continued to direct his men till the operation was over, and won.

"Kent Messenger"

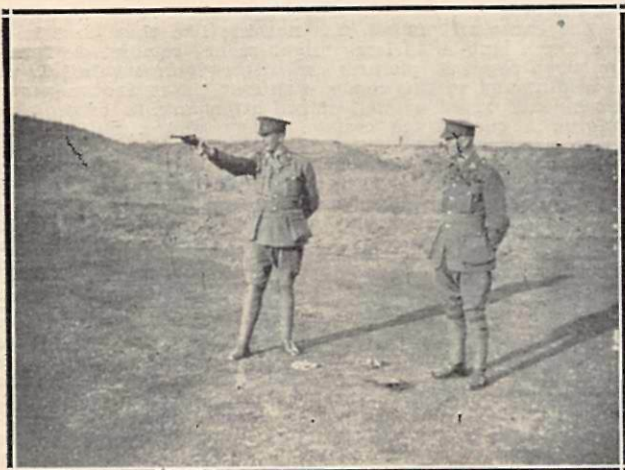
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Advertisements

AUGUST, SEPTEMBER, OCTOBER, 1914

By CAPTAIN C. L. NORMAN.

August 4th, 1914 — a blistering hot day, mobilisation, war. We slept the night at our homes — if we could — on getting back from the Home Counties Divisional March, and had orders to report next day to the local drill hall, and then entrain for Dover, our mobilisation centre. What a rush the whole thing was! I remember going to Sevenoaks Drill Hall and marching with G Company to Tubs Hill. Another Company met us there, that from Westerham and Edenbridge. My father saw me off at the station, and as the train was about to leave, Walter Styles said to him: "It's all right, Mr. Norman, I will look after Cecil." How like Walter — a true word spoken



Lieuts. Robinson and Trought.

half in jest. Little, however, did my father and I imagine that but for a very few days in October, we were not to meet again till April 3rd, 1919.

At Dover, the battalion was billeted in an old disused brewery that had not been opened for seven years: its state baffles description. The officers slept that night at an hotel a little down the road from the Lord Warden, on the opposite side of the road. How strange we all felt, our first day of war and real military discipline! It speaks volumes for Lieut.-Colonel Watney, our C.O., Captain Hewitt, our Adjutant, and Captain Hyland, our Quartermaster, that things went as smoothly as they did. They must have had the dickens of a time! We younger officers did not think much of that, I fancy, but just waited dead tired in the "pub" either for something to happen or to go to bed. We had a sort of medical inspection, conducted by Major Vise, and were then told what we were to do, and where to go on the morrow. Lieut. Peireth and I shared a room, and I, as senior officer, had the bed.

Our duty, while at Dover, seems to have been to guard the coast against both spies and marauders from land or sea. My post was in the brewery at the bottom of Shakespeare Cliff, with detachments scattered about, one on the end of the cable which came out of the ground quite unprotected, another at the far end of the railway tunnel running towards Dover, and a third at the top of the cliff. These posts had to be visited personally by me every four hours, day and night. It was a killing job, but only lasted four days, when we were withdrawn to march to our next station, Canterbury. My little party had one incident. We had been told to shoot at sight anybody without authority attempting to approach the cable. Suddenly the first night, while I was trying to snatch a few minutes' sleep in the brewery office, a shot rang out. I leapt up and ran out with drawn sword to see what had happened. I found Corporal Tooth and his men in great excitement, but luckily the shot had missed its mark. We never discovered if there really had been anybody or not.

That march from Dover to Canterbury, all uphill, on the hard highroad, and under the blazing sun — who will ever forget it? It is a long way, anyhow, and we were practically untrained. For my part, I had been previously all round my posts, including the scaling of the cliff. At last we got there and bestowed our troops in their respective quarters.

I, then, was given by the late Mr. Algy Latter, then headmaster of the Junior Dept. of King's School, Canterbury, the longest drink possible, and fell asleep in his study chair.

During our stay in Canterbury of some three weeks several new officers joined us though some whom I now mention may have done so a little earlier, or perhaps even later, while at Sandwich. If so, I ask their pardon. We now had Lieutenants Roberts, Rooker, Wilson, Wingfield-Stratford, Hartree, Douglas, Swanston, Stanforth, Craig, Golding and Trought. Several left us, as Lord Stanhope, who, in fact, was never mobilised with us, as he had been on the reserve of Guards; Major John Laurie, Captain Sir Herbert Cohen, and maybe one or two more. The time when the division of the battalion came was when we were drawn up one morning on parade, and asked to volunteer for foreign service. Those who were willing to go abroad were to step to one side, those unwilling, to the other. After that we were called the 1/4th Battalion, and a 2/4th Battalion was subsequently formed.

Training and life generally were agreeable enough at Canterbury. We were chiefly gathering our kit and so forth. The Officers' Mess was a house called St. Winifrid's. I recall one amusing incident. With G Company we had a dear old veteran from the Volunteer era for a Colour-Sergeant. We had been out for a route march, and, on getting back, I had been called away and had given orders for the washing of the men's feet. When I got back, I asked the Colour-Sergeant if the ablutions had duly taken place. His answer was ambiguous: "Maybe they 'ave, sir, and maybe they 'aven't." We travelled a long way in the following four years.

Then towards the end of August or beginning of September, we marched down to Sandwich, our last station in England. I had had a slight accident a day or two before, and so was taken down by Lieut. Pardington who owned a motor-bike and sidecar. He was our machine gun officer. Two machine guns per battalion was the allotment, and those regarded as rather a nuisance before the technique of killing became more perfected.

Sandwich was a lovely spot to be at during that glorious weather of September and October, 1914. Accommodation was good, as were the facilities for training. Shortage of every sort of equipment was the great trouble. We had men quartered in St. George's and Prince's Golf Clubs, as well as using outbuildings of the Guildford Hotel, and other places too. The Officers' Mess was Major Astor's place, "Rest Harrow," while "Four Winds," belonging to Colonel Spender-Clay, just behind it, housed a number of us. I shared a room in this latter establishment with Peireth. His method of unpacking filled me with envy and amazement. He simply emptied his kitbag on to the floor in a



Lieuts. Watney, Stone, Clough, Bourne, Haslam, with Locket and Nash in the boat.

cascade of silk underwear, then he chose what he required as occasion demanded. After parade, one had the unique opportunity of playing golf, gratis and for nothing, on either of the two championship courses, though being in

uniform was a handicap. We used them both for training, for which purpose they were eminently well suited. I can see still in my mind's eye Lieut.-Colonel Watney cantering up to view our operations, and how we hoped that we were doing them correctly. My own Company was divided between St. George's and another billet. One inspection stands out after the years: it was by His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury. He was to see us on the march. I remember that we marched a long time and waited about a longer, and I hope His Grace was edified. At that time there was much talk about spies. One evening a mysterious light was seen on the beach near the water's edge, not far from "Rest Harrow." Some bold spirits crept out of the Mess and tiptoed towards the sea. A concerted rush at a dark shape, and they had caught our R.S.M. red-handed, fishing by flashlight, in hopes of getting something for breakfast. Another incident was when two youngsters had been playing with a revolver, which unhappily went off. One was wounded, though not really seriously, and the observations made by our M.O. at having to leave the dinner table were a joy to all present. Two sand yachts were found, which afforded great fun on the long hard foreshore.

While at Sandwich we put in much hard work — drill, lectures, field training, and numerous kit inspections. For a period, certain officers from the 5th Battalion joined us. In addition to his Adjutant, Captain Hewitt, and his Quartermaster, Captain Hyland, both of whom must have wearied of the countless questions put them, Lieut.-Colonel C. N. Watney was well served by the remaining regular staff of the unit, originally posted from the 1st or 2nd Battalions of "The Queen's Own." R.S.M. Mills and Sergt. Instructors Johnson and Wood did yeoman service helping to train and giving advice to all and sundry. It was said of old time "The backbone of the Army is the Non-Commissioned man"; certainly these men used their ability and experience to influence the members of the Sergeants' Mess, and the results were soon manifest. They had good material on which to work, such Colour-Sergeants and Sergeants as Pollard of "E" Company, Carpenter of "D", Harden of Maidstone, Harden the Signaller, Morse, Latter, Weth, ex-Guardsman White the gym instructor, Hilborn of the drums, Chapman of the pioneers, and Paige the Sergeant Cook. There are others, too, many of whom came into prominence later. Perhaps one of the hardest worked and most efficient was R.Q.M.S. Wright, whose splendid presence inspired due respect.

So the time passed, rumour succeeding rumour, until report hardened into certainty. We were going abroad. Leave was granted, and the final day arrived. We left Sandwich in the dark, entrained, and travelled to Southampton, where we embarked on the good ship "Somali" of the P.O., forming part of a large convoy, "The Home Counties Division," due for India. As the boat left, our Adjutant, Captain Hewitt, was spirited away from us, and Captain Cheale took over his duties. The date was 29th October, 1914.

[Erratum in March issue: Lieut.-General I. G. des R. Swayne, C.B., C.V.O., for I. read J.]

NAVY, ARMY AND AIR FORCE INSTITUTES CANTEENS OLD AND NEW.

(N.A.A.F.I. received the following letter from a correspondent signing himself "Old Sweat," and his remarks on canteens old and new are published for the interest of "sweats" old and new.)

I'm an Old Soldier, an Old Contemptible — what the present-day soldier would call an Old Sweat. During my first years in the Army I wore scarlet tunic, pipe-clay belts and spiked helmet. I never saw khaki till we were fitted out for the South African War — before most of the soldiers of to-day were born. Although that campaign was a picnic compared with this, it wasn't all beer and skittles. I was in it from first to last, and afterwards followed the drum about the world until I caught a packet at Mons, which put me back into civvies for good.

My son was called up some time ago, and joined the same regiment, one of the grand old County Regiments, with a battle history going back beyond Marlborough and traditions and privileges earned on hard-fought fields. Men who have served in it are proud of it, and their sons follow in their footsteps.

I went to see my son the other day. It was queer going through the gate of the depot after all these years. There was the Square — and my thoughts flew back to the time when I learned to form fours and to form a square to resist cavalry. I saw the lads training, and you can take an old warrior's word for it — the young soldier of today is All Right!

But what impressed me was the comfort the boys enjoyed compared with my days in the barracks. The place is brighter, the rooms more homely, the beds more comfortable . . . soft, warm blankets (not the stiff ones I remember!) The clothing is better, too; it makes my flesh creep when I think of the rough, hairy underclothing dished out to us by the quarter-bloke. And the food! — far and away better than we had — better quality, more variety, properly cooked and decently served.

The greatest surprise was the canteen. In my day the canteen was a bare whitewashed room with sawdust on the floor, the only furniture rough forms and tables, and a counter at one end with barrels of beer behind it. You couldn't buy anything but beer, and there was nowhere else to go for recreation. The place was crowded and reeked with the smell of beer and tobacco fumes. There was a noisy argument here, a quarrel there, and men singing maudlin songs out of tune. The beer was strong and cheap, and it cost very little to get a man an interview with the colonel next morning!

The canteen, I found, was nothing like that now. It is more like a club, with large bright rooms, comfortable furniture, floor covering, pictures and other "refinements." There are reading and writing rooms with easy chairs, indoor games, refreshments served by well-trained attendants in bright blue uniform. A cup of tea costs a penny, and a nicely-served supper sixpence.

I could scarcely believe I was in my old barracks. My son introduced me to the Naafi manageress, and she told me that although this canteen was "not bad" (!) I must realise they had to do their best in an old building. If I would like to see an up-to-date Naafi, would I care to walk a couple of miles to a new camp for the A.T.S. She 'phoned and told them I was coming.

I left my boy, a private soldier in a line regiment, in an easy chair in the reading room, writing a letter on free Naafi stationery — what do you think of that, my comrades in the shades? I made my way to a hutment camp on a hill from which one can see miles of some of England's finest scenery. It is an immense camp, splendidly laid out, spacious buildings around a big parade ground — dormitories, lecture rooms, gymnasium, hospital, everything for the wellbeing and comfort of the A.T.S. girls, who come here on enlistment to be fitted with uniform and undergo training before being posted. Are they happy? I should say they are!

The Naafi I had seen at the barracks was a surprise. This one was a revelation.

The main hall is a magnificent room, with fine floor coverings and pictures on the wall, the chairs of woven cane in bright colours, and tables with coloured tablecloths. Flowers abounded. With windows all along one side, it looked like the verandah cafe of an expensive country club. At one end was a cinema screen, and picture shows are given here by Naafi/Ensa. Often the floor is cleared and a dance held, boy friends being allowed.

The rest room is delightful. There is a comfortable reading and writing room. I was shown over the kitchen, fitted with modern appliances, and saw the fine living accommodation for the Naafi girls employed here. It was, as I said, a revelation.

All praise to Naafi and its staff. I have been told of some of the wonderful jobs they do — for commandos and bomber crews. It's wonderful work, so good luck to the Naafi girls. As an Old Sweat I say — if only there had been a Naafi when I was a soldier!

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97th

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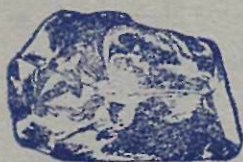
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*"This precious stone set in the silver sea,
Which serves it in the office of a wall,
Or as a moat defensive to a house,
Against the envy of less happier lands."*

Richard II, Act II, Scene I.



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THE QUEEN'S OWN GAZETTE

The Regimental Journal of The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment

No. 839.

DECEMBER, 1944

Vol. LXII. No. 4.

THE QUEEN'S OWN ROYAL WEST KENT REGIMENT. (50)

HOME COUNTIES AREA.

"Quo Fas et Gloria Ducunt."

BATTLE HONOURS BORNE ON THE REGIMENTAL COLOUR.

The Sphinx, superscribed "Egypt"

"Vimiera," "Corunna," "Almaraz," "Vittoria," "Pyrenees," "Nive," "Orthes," "Peninsula," "Punniar," "Moodkee," "Ferozeshah," "Aliwal," "Sobraon," "Alma," "Inkerman," "Sevastopol," "Lucknow," "New Zealand," "Egypt, 1882," "Nile, 1884-85," "South Africa, 1900-02," "Afghanistan, 1919."

BATTLE HONOURS BORNE ON THE KING'S COLOUR:

"Mons," "Ypres, 1914, '15, '17, '18," "Hill 60," "Somme, 1916, '18," "Vimy, 1917," "Italy, 1917, '18," "Gallipoli, 1915," "Gaza," "Defence of Kut Al Amara," "Sharqat."

THE GREAT WAR BATTLE HONOURS—18 BATTALIONS:

"Mons," "Le Cateau," "Retreat from Mons," "Marne, 1914," "Aisne, 1914," "La Bassée, 1914," "Messines, 1914, '17," "Ypres, 1914, '15, '17, '18," "Hill 60," "Gravenstafel," "St. Julien," "Frezenberg," "Loos," "Somme, 1916, '18," "Albert, 1916, '18," "Bazentin," "Delville Wood," "Pozières," "Guillemont," "Flers-Courcelette," "Morval," "Thiepval," "Le Transloy," "Ancre Heights," "Ancre, 1916, '18," "Arras, 1917, '18," "Vimy, 1917," "Scarpe, 1917," "Oppy," "Ploeghem," "Langemarck, 1917," "Menin Road," "Polygon Wood," "Broodseinde," "Passchendaele," "Cambrai, 1917, '18," "St. Quentin," "Rosieres," "Avre," "Villers Bretonneux," "Lys," "Hazebrouck," "Kemmel," "Amiens," "Bapaume, 1918," "Hindenburg Line," "Epéhy," "Canal du Nord," "St. Quentin Canal," "Courtrai," "Selle," "Sambre," "France and Flanders, 1914-18," "Italy, 1917, '18," "Suvla," "Landing at Suvla," "Scimitar Hill," "Gallipoli, 1915," "Rumani," "Egypt, 1915-16," "Gaza," "El Mughar," "Jerusalem," "Jericho," "Tell Asur," "Palestine, 1917, '18," "Defence of Kut Al Amara," "Sharqat," Mesopotamia, 1915-18."

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JULY 1911

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CHAIRMAN:

COLONEL H. D. BUCHANAN-DUNLOP, C.M.G., D.S.O.

HON. SECRETARY & TREASURER:

MAJOR S. E. BROOKS,

Officer Commanding, Regimental Depot Party, The Queen's Own R.W.K. Regt., The Barracks, Maidstone.

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Mr. G. D. Draycott, 70, Bellingham Road, Catford, S.E.6.

Additional Member:

Mr. M. R. Audsley, 54, Spur Road, Orpington, Kent.

Membership is open to all who are serving or who have served in The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment. Subscriptions are: Life Membership: Officers £2/10/0; Other Ranks 10/-; or an Annual Subscription of: Officers 5/-; Other Ranks 2/- The object of the Association is to foster esprit de corps, to help members keep in touch with one another, and to assist those in distress. The Association is affiliated to the British Legion.

The Editor takes this opportunity to wish All Members of the Regiment a Happy Christmas and a Successful New Year

Social and Personal

The report of the death of Major Couch, in his 86th year, will be read with regret by all the older members of the Regiment. "Old Couch," as he was affectionately called, was a very loyal officer of the "Queen's Own." He was always a gentleman in every sense of the word, and Officers and Other Ranks were treated with courtesy even under trying conditions.

Major Couch served in the ranks for 19 years and 297 days, and was commissioned a Lieut.-Quartermaster 26th April, 1899. He was Mentioned in Despatches 10th Sept., 1901, and granted the hon. rank of Captain; promoted Major 26th April, 1914, and retired 3rd August, 1914. Returning to the Depot on the 13th October, 1914, he served for a further five years until 8th December, 1919; during that year he was again Mentioned in Despatches.

He saw active service in South Africa, 1881, with Natal Field Force; South Africa, 1900-02; 1900 Orange Free State, Orange River Colony, Biddulphsberg, Wittelerggen, Cape Colony, 1901; Transvaal, Orange River Colony, Supply Officer, 4th October, 1900, to 28th January, 1901.

His family have maintained that with over 40 years' service Major Couch was probably the Regiment's oldest Old Comrade. Major and Mrs. Couch celebrated their golden wedding five years ago, and his death leaves his widow, two sons, a daughter, seven grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren to mourn his loss.

The Regiment have suffered a great blow in the death in action in Italy of one of the younger school, Lieut.-Colonel J. H. H. Whitty, D.S.O., M.C. Our sympathy is extended to his family in their irreparable loss.

We were glad to welcome to the Barracks Officers of our affiliated regiments, the Kent Regiment, and the Carleton and York Regiment of Canada. They seemed to enjoy themselves at the dance, and we hope to see more of them in the future.

REMEMBRANCE DAY AT MAIDSTONE.

The celebration of Remembrance Day at Maidstone War Memorial on November 11th, was very simple and quiet, and the ceremony lasted only a short while.

Although there was no official celebration, a small crowd had gathered and, with bowed heads, listened as Lawrence Binyon's immortal words rang through the frosty air:

"They shall not grow old as we that are left grow old;
Age shall not weary them nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun, and in the morning,
We will remember them."

PLACING OF WREATHS.

Then the new Mayor (Alderman Gordon Larking) walked forward and placed a wreath, on behalf of himself, the Corporation and citizens, at the foot of Maidstone's memorial.

The Mayor was followed by Lieut.-Colonel C. E. P. Craven and Major R. Love, on behalf of the R.W.K. Regiment, and members of the British Legion.

Other wreaths were from the Governor and staff of Maidstone Prison, a number of Maidstone firms, and relatives of men who fell in the last war.

At The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment cenotaph in Brencley Gardens, wreaths were laid by the Mayor, Lieut.-Colonel C. E. P. Craven, on behalf of General Sir Charles Bonham-Carter, Colonel of the Regiment, the Commanding Officer, Officers, N.C.O.s and men of the Regiment, and Major S. E. Brooks and Major R. Love on behalf of the warrant officers and sergeants.

There was also a wreath from the 11th (Maidstone) Batt. Home Guard.

EMPLOYMENT FOR EX-OFFICERS

In a letter to General Sir Charles Bonham-Carter, G.C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., Colonel of the Regiment, Field-Marshal Sir Philip W. Chetwode, Bt., G.C.B., O.M., G.C.S.I., K.C.M.G., D.S.O., President of The Officers' Association said:—

"The Officers' Association are anxious to bring the following to your notice in view of the fact that a certain number of officers are now leaving the Service on account of ill-health, wounds, etc., and more may be expected to leave in the near future and return to civil life.

"It was recently decided by the Army Council that the Employment Bureau for Retired Officers should be merged for the time being with the Appointments Branch of the Ministry of Labour and National Service, and in consequence of this the Officers' Association Employment Bureau has now been expanded with a view to helping all types of ex-officers to find employment wherever they may be domiciled. This expansion of the Officers' Association Employment Bureau has been welcomed by the Adjutant-General, who has thanked the Association for an action which he considers will contribute a very valuable supplement to the functions of the new section in the Ministry of Labour, and will ensure that existing contacts will be maintained. The Secretary of the Association of British Chambers of Commerce has already notified the Officers' Association that the Chambers of Commerce Liaison Officers in many of the large provincial towns who had previously assisted the Employment Bureau for Retired Officers are willing to continue their assistance to the Officers' Association. This is most satisfactory, and direct personal contact will be made by a representative of the Bureau with these Liaison Officers.

"The new title and the new address of the Bureau is as follows:—

The Officers' Association (British Legion)
Employment Bureau,
66, Denison House,
296, Vauxhall Bridge Road,
London, S.W.1.

Telephone number Victoria 0758, and all communications should be addressed to the Secretary at Denison House.

"The object of this letter is to supplement the communication which you have already received from Major-General Commings dated 21.1.44, and to ask your help in making a success of the Bureau. It is hoped that Corps and Regiments will make known through Regimental Journals and otherwise to both Serving and Retired Officers that an organisation still exists to which they can come and talk over matters, get sympathetic advice and be helped in every way to find congenial employment on leaving the Service."

OFFICERS' DANCE AT THE BARRACKS.

The I.T.C. held an Officers' dance in Barracks on the 24th November. Music was provided by the regimental band of The Queen's Own, and many regimental friends were present. We were very pleased to see Mrs. Howlett, Mrs. Talbot and Mrs. Knatchbull, who had managed to overcome the travelling difficulties.

H. S. Brown, M.C., came with two Officers of the Kent Regiment, C. S. Hodley and J. de Bonneville, and one from the Carleton and York Regiment, W. J. R. Newroth. The visit of these senior officers, representative of two of our Allied Regiments in the Dominions, to the Regimental Depot gives us considerable pleasure, and our thanks are due to the Brigadier for bringing them along.

It is understood that these officers are on important duty, involving a lot of hard work, but affording them considerable amusement. We hope they will be able to pay us more visits.

LIEUT.-COLONEL J. H. H. WHITTY.



LT.-COL. J. H. H. WHITTY KILLED.

Officer casualties announced include Lieut.-Colonel J. H. H. Whitty, D.S.O., M.C., The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment, who was killed in Italy in October.

OLDEST "OLD COMRADE" DIES.

MAJOR J. COUCH
(QUEEN'S OWN ROYAL WEST KENT REGIMENT).

By the death of Major Joseph Couch, in his 86th year, The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment has lost probably its oldest "Old Comrade."

His death took place at Bank House, Castle Street, Hinckley, on October 29th, 1944.

Joining the old 46th Brigade, after a short spell with the 50th, he joined the 97th, and saw service with them in the Natal Campaign of 1880, in the South African War of 1900-2, and served at home at the depot of the Regiment during the Great War.

He was finally demobilised on November 13th, 1919, after over 40 years' service, the possessor of four medals.

MAIDSTONE CONNECTIONS.

Major Couch was well known in Maidstone, for he joined the old 46th in the county town and lived in London Road from 1902 to 1936.

In 1932 unfortunately he lost his eyesight as the result of an operation, but he was quite cheerful and retained his faculties to the end.

In February, 1939, he and his wife celebrated their golden wedding.

His son, Mr. G. P. Couch, held a commission in The Queen's Own for three and a half years during the last war.

Besides the widow, two sons, a daughter, seven grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren are left to mourn their loss.

The funeral took place at Hinckley on November 1st.—
"Kent Messenger."

CONTEMPORARIES

The Editor acknowledges with thanks the following contemporaries:—

The Royal Army Ordnance Corps Gazette.
St. George's Gazette.
The Green Howards Gazette.
The Dragon.
The Kent Messenger.
British Legion Journal.
The Tank.
The Royal Army Service Corps.
The Sapper.
The Snapper.
The Globe and Laurel.

A correspondent writes:—

With the death in action of Lieut.-Colonel J. H. H. Whitty, D.S.O., M.C., The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment, the Army has lost one of its outstanding battalion commanders. Possessing unbounded enthusiasm, determination and courage, he was able, under all conditions, both in and out of action, to give that inspiration to his battalion which so largely contributed to its success in battle. Perhaps the most fitting description of John Whitty is that he was above all a happy warrior. Born in Australia in 1910, he was educated at Clifton and entered the Regular Army from the Supplementary Reserve in 1931. He will be remembered by sportsmen before the war at Twickenham, Lords, and on many of our links, where he represented the Army at rugby, cricket and golf. He played these games with the same robust cheerfulness which later was to characterise his actions on the field of battle. In 1938 he was awarded the M.C. for bravery in Palestine. In 1940 he was seriously wounded in the retreat to Dunkirk, and largely by his determination avoided capture by the enemy. Having recovered, he sailed for the Middle East with a battalion of his regiment. He was given command of this battalion in action at the battle of El Alamein at the age of 32. There followed a period of intensive training, then with the men whom he had prepared for battle with the greatest care, he sailed for Italy to lead them in action, for a year with but one small break until his death in October. Within a month of arriving in action in Italy he was awarded the D.S.O. for superb leadership. He had an exceptional gift for commanding men. The official citation read: "His leadership and complete indifference to danger inspired his unit throughout the action." He will be remembered with the greatest affection by all those who came into contact with him and by those of us who had the great honour of serving under his command.

LIKE FATHER, LIKE SON.

"MODEST" KENT SERGEANT WINS MILITARY MEDAL.

In France, in the last war, Signals Sgt. A. Brindley won the Military Medal for gallant and distinguished conduct.

In Italy, in this war, the same cool courage earned the same decoration for his son, Sgt. A. Brindley, jun., mortar platoon sergeant of a battalion of The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment, which has fought with distinction in Tunisia, Sicily and France.

Sgt. A. Brindley, jun., took over the mortar platoon when the platoon commander and sergeant were both wounded by a sniper, and kept up supporting fire at a critical time. He has since commanded the platoon on several occasions.

The Military Medal which he won was an immediate award.

To a military observer who talked to him when his battalion was resting out of the line, Sgt. Brindley, jun., confessed that he didn't know how his father won his M.M.

"Dad never talked about it," he said.

The same modesty was apparent in the younger Brindley's bearing and conversation. He just wouldn't talk about his exploits in battle.

But one of his officers paid him a merited tribute. "Sgt. Brindley is a first-class chap," he said.

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THE SILVER LOVING CUP PRESENTED TO THE REGIMENT BY THE BOROUGH OF MAIDSTONE
ON AUGUST 30th, 1944.

HISTORIC DAY FOR THE QUEEN'S OWN ROYAL WEST KENT REGIMENT

CITIZENS CHEER PROUDLY AS FREEDOM OF COUNTY TOWN IS RECEIVED.

On August 30th, 1944, the Town Council of Maidstone conferred upon the Regiment the highest honour within their power to give—The Honorary Freedom of their Borough.

The parchment which authorises the award was handed to the Colonel of the Regiment, by his Worship The Mayor (Sir Garrard Tyrwhitt-Drake), together with a very large silver loving cup.

The following account is republished by the courtesy of the "Kent Messenger":—

Having "Presented arms" to the citizens of the ancient borough, while the band played the march, "Man of Kent," The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment marched through the streets of Maidstone on Wednesday with fixed bayonets.

A few minutes earlier, while citizens cheered, the Mayor (Alderman Sir Garrard Tyrwhitt-Drake) had granted this permission following the presentation of the scroll conferring the honorary freedom of the borough on the Regiment, and of a large silver cup.

SERVICES TO BRITAIN AND EMPIRE.

The scroll recorded that the honorary freedom was presented to the Regiment in consideration of the eminent services rendered to country and Empire.

The cup was a token of the cordial relationships which exist between the military and civil authorities in Maidstone.

The ceremony took place at a gaily beflagged platform which had been erected at the upper end of the Town Hall and on which assembled the Mayor and Corporation, officials, and distinguished Army officers.

The guard of honour, which received the scroll and cup, was drawn up under Major J. T. Leigh in front of the platform, to their right was the Regimental band, under Bandmaster McKenna, and behind them in ranks members of the Past and Present Association, Home Guard, and Army Cadets.

UNIQUE CEREMONY.

As the company assembled on the platform a fanfare of trumpets was sounded and the guard of honour presented arms, while the band played the "General Salute."

The guard of honour was inspected by the Mayor and General Sir Charles Bonham-Carter, Colonel of the Regiment, who then returned to the platform.

The Mayor said it was his proud privilege to take an active part in a ceremony unique in the history of the borough, and, he believed, the south of England. On August 30th, the Town Council unanimously decided to bestow on The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment the greatest honour it had in its power to bestow on any individual or body.

He felt certain that their decision would be endorsed by every right-thinking man and woman in Maidstone.

"Our Regiment has a glorious record since its formation in 1755," said the Mayor. "It has taken part in the Seven Years' War, the Peninsular War, the Crimea, Indian Mutiny, South African, and Great War; and in the present war its battalions have been in France, North Africa, Sicily, Italy and Burma.

"Surely no honour is too great.

A SILVER LOVING CUP.

"To you, therefore, Sir Charles Bonham-Carter, as Colonel of the Regiment, I hand this parchment, on which is engrossed Borough of Maidstone, Certificate of Honorary Freedom. Be it remembered that on the 30th day of August, 1944, by vote of the Town Council passed in conformity with law, the Honorary Freedom of the Borough was conferred on The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment in consideration of the eminent services rendered by the Regiment to our country and Empire.—Given under the seal of the borough, Garrard Tyrwhitt-Drake, Mayor, Graham Wilson, Town Clerk.

"Further, to commemorate this great occasion, I ask you to accept, on behalf of the Regiment, this silver loving cup, on which is engraved: Presented to The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment on the occasion of its being admitted to the Honorary Freedom of the Borough of Maidstone.—30th August, 1944, as a further visible token of the very happy relationship which exists, and may it long continue, between the military and civic authorities of this ancient borough."

"A GREAT HONOUR."

Accepting the scroll and cup, Sir Charles Bonham-Carter said he had already, at the lunch in the Town Hall, expressed

to the Mayor and to all the members of the Council the great appreciation of every man who was a member of The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment of the great honour conferred on the Regiment that day.

As a token of appreciation by every member of the Regiment, past and present, he would like to tell them that they had on parade as a guard of honour young soldiers commanded by officers who had served with various battalions, a Regimental party consisting of officers and N.C.O.s who had seen active service abroad in the last war and in this war, old comrades who were no longer on active service, but who had served in all parts of the Empire, the Maidstone Battalion of the Home Guard, and the 4th Maidstone Cadet Battalion of The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment.

They had representatives of every branch of their great Regiment, of which he had the honour to be Colonel, and which he joined nearly 50 years ago.

CORDIAL RELATIONSHIPS WITH TOWN.

He wished now to thank not only the Council of the Borough of Maidstone, but its citizens for the admirable services and kindness which they had offered to the Regiment and members of the Regiment for many years past. He had never known a time when the relationships between the Regiment and the people of Maidstone and the Town Council were anything but cordial.

"You have always done your utmost to help and serve us, and I hope we have reciprocated in our small way," said Sir Charles.

Sir Charles not only thanked the people of Maidstone, but the people of West Kent generally for the help they had given in maintaining the prisoners of war fund, so that they had been able to ensure that every prisoner was provided with a parcel and comforts.

Without mentioning names, he thanked "many individuals," and assured everyone that they would never regret the great honour the town had bestowed upon the Regiment.

DISTINCTION THEY WOULD LIVE UP TO.

They might be certain that never, by any act or deed, whether in war, whether in peace, would the Regiment ever do other than live up to the honour and hold it in the highest esteem.

The cup was received by Major J. T. Leigh and handed to the guard of honour, who carried it in the subsequent procession. The "General Salute" was played and the guard of honour "Presented arms" to the town, permission having been granted for the Regiment to march through the streets with fixed bayonets.

This they did via Bank Street, up High Street, where the Mayor and Sir Charles Bonham-Carter took the salute from outside the Town Hall, and along Week Street to the Depot.

So the ceremony concluded. There were many favourable comments on the smart way it was carried out, especially as regards the guard of honour and the band.

THE LUNCHEON.

Prior to the ceremony the Mayor and Mayoress gave a lunch in the Town Hall, when the Mayor proposed the health of the Regiment, its officers and men, coupled with the name of General Sir Charles Bonham-Carter.

After saying that he deemed it a great privilege to entertain distinguished officers, past and present, of the Regiment, the Mayor spoke of the record of the Regiment in previous wars and in the present war, in which the 1st, 4th and 5th Battalions were in France and at Dunkirk. The 6th and 7th Battalions were also in France and were badly cut about. Two were at El Alamein and another two were the first in North Africa and fought at Long-Stop Hill. Another went through Sicily and into Italy. Another was in Burma and carried out the relief of Kohima; while yet another was through the siege of Malta, and then, having been re-equipped in Egypt, was sent as a last resource to Leros.

The Mayor said it was in 1882 that the Regimental Depot came to Maidstone. When he was first Mayor in 1915 the relationship between the Depot and the civic authorities was cool and stilted.

FEELING OF FRIENDSHIP.

When he came back in office in 1923 there had begun to grow up a mutual feeling of friendship, which, since then, had grown stronger and stronger.

"Today, I think, will put the seal on the lasting friendship between our Regiment and our town," said the Mayor.

General Sir Charles Bonham-Carter, responding, said it was difficult to express what they of the Regiment felt about the honour which was being conferred on them.

He said the connection of the Regiment with this part of Kent was much older than the opening of the Depot, and went back to the days when the 50th and 97th Regiments of Foot were joined together. The Queen's Own 50th Regiment right at the beginning of last century was drawing its recruits from West Kent.

The connection between the 1st Battalion and Kent made it quite suitable and right that it should become the Royal West Kent Regiment, the 50th and 97th Regiments having fought together in the Peninsular War, and for that reason they were joined together.

TOWNSPEOPLE'S CONSIDERATION.

The relations between the Regiment and this part of Kent and the town of Maidstone in particular were much more than an official link. They were cordial and friendly. The townspeople had treated the Regiment with the utmost consideration, and the Regiment, in turn, had tried to show their readiness to perform any little services they could.

In Maidstone, the members of the Regiment felt especially at home. It was their Depot, and a great many of them spent some part of their service in the town. There were other ties, for in the historic and beautiful Parish Church were deposited the Regimental Colours and in that church were erected their memorials.

To that church every recruit was marched and told the history of the Regiment and of the deeds it had performed. That must bring to the men who served in the Regiment a special feeling of reverence for that great church and a special feeling of affection for the town it served.

A SECOND HOME.

When members of the Regiment returned to Maidstone there was a little tug at their heart strings which made them feel it was really a second home to the Regiment.

Speaking of the Battalion at Kohima, Sir Charles said it was a place of enormous importance as a communications centre and where there was only a convalescent camp. The Battalion was sent to organise the defence. It was attacked by a Japanese division, but, with the help of the convalescents, held off and forced the retirement of the division. Part of this Battalion was always stationed at Maidstone.

Alderman T. Armstrong thanked the Mayor and Mayoress for their hospitality.

THOSE PRESENT.

Present at the lunch were the Mayor and Mayoress (Alderman Sir Garrard and Lady Tyrwhitt-Drake), Sir Charles Bonham-Carter, Colonel of the Regiment, and Lady Bonham-Carter, the High Sheriff of Kent (Sir Thomas Hohler), Lieut.-Colonel T. W. C. Carthew (Borough Recorder), Mr. Alfred Bosson, M.P. for Maidstone.

Major-General E. G. Miles, Colonel H. B. Buchanan-Dunlop, Brigadier N. I. Whitty, Brigadier T. T. Waddington, Colonel P. L. M. Wright, Colonel W. V. Palmer, Lieut.-Colonel C. E. P. Craven.

Aldermen T. Armstrong (Deputy Mayor), W. Egerton Martin, F. R. Connor, C. G. Larking, Councillors J. B. Beaufoy, Mrs. Strickland, A. H. Clark, S. J. Lyle, B. J. Watson, R. Page, E. Hall, G. Butler, C. H. Hobday, F. T. Travers, Mrs. Relf, P. Wakefield, A. Crick, G. Bensted, W. R. Hyde, Major H. R. Pratt Boorman.

Canon A. O. Standen, Chaplain to the Corporation, Mr. Graham Wilson (Town Clerk).

Many old officers and regimental friends were present, including Sir Charles and Lady Bonham-Carter, Brigadiers Whitty and Waddington, Colonels Edman, Buchanan-Dunlop, Wolfe Flanagan and Palmer, Lieut.-Colonels E. S. Kerr, Craven, Pulverman, Howe, Jackson, Majors Snelgrove, White, Bredon, Leigh, Love, Griffiths, Brown, Trumper, Craddock, Brooks, Captains Rogers, Palmer, Godley.

Several officers' wives were also present, including Lady Cory, Mrs. Howlett, Mrs. E. S. Kerr, Mrs. Woodhouse, Mrs. Pulverman, Mrs. S. Whitty, Mrs. White, Mrs. Brooks, Mrs. Love, Mrs. Williams, Mrs. Griffiths, Mrs. Leigh, Mrs. Howe, Mrs. Craddock, Mrs. Tadman, Mrs. Boot, Mrs. Severne, Miss Palmer, Miss Kerr and Miss Leigh.

The High Sheriff, G.O.C. Area, Canon Standen, the Mayor and Mayoress, Aldermen and Councillors, Borough Officials, Mr. and Mrs. A. C. Bosson, and some 100 Old Comrades were also present at tea in the New Gymnasium at the Barracks.

There were also a large number of officers, W.O.s, Sgts., etc., from the I.T.C. Despite the rain those gathered together obviously enjoyed the ceremony and the opportunity of regimental gossip.

The thanks of the Regiment are due to the Officer Commanding, the Officers and W.O.s, and Sgts. and Other Ranks of the I.T.C. for their assistance in making the party possible and enjoyable.

THE PASSING OF AN OLD BANDSMAN.

We have learned with regret from a member of his family that an old drummer of the Regiment, George Eustace Gunningham, passed away on the 5th of October, 1944.

Altogether he served 29 years in The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment—four years as a boy, and for a further 25 years. At the commencement of the last war he rejoined and served for four years. He was one of a family of boys who served with the Queen's Own.

THE "EXCEPTIONAL DEEDS" OF SGT. ENGLAND, M.M.

"The fact that his Company held firm when deprived of a commander can be entirely attributed to his initiative and devotion to duty regardless of his personal safety," relates the citation accompanying the award of the Military Medal to Sgt. Alfred Richard England, Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regt.

On June 24th, near Castiglione del Lago, records the citation, Sgt. England was platoon sergeant of 14 platoon. This was the forward platoon, and sent out patrols which found strong opposition and suffered heavy casualties.

In a confused situation, Sgt. England went forward and put the sections in position under intermittent sniper fire.

TOOK OVER COMMAND.

The company position, being discovered, was then heavily shelled, and a runner sent to company H.Q. was unable to get through.

Sgt. England volunteered to go back and report. He found his way, but at company H.Q. found everyone wounded or killed.

Under heavy shellfire, he organised the evacuation of the casualties and reported the situation to battalion H.Q.

On his own he then manned the wireless set and kept contact with the forward positions until the company second-in-command came forward to take command. Later he acted as C.S.M. and assisted in the re-organising of the company.

During the whole of this time Sgt. England was moving about in the execution of his duties under heavy shellfire.

EXCEPTIONAL DEEDS.

In a letter to Mrs. England, Sgt. England's commanding officer says: "I write to say how delighted we all were to hear that your husband had been awarded such a well-merited Military Medal. Since L-Sgt. England joined this unit in May, 1943, he has fought brilliantly, and has endeared himself to both officers and men.

"I can assure you that the story told in the citation is in no way an exaggeration of his exceptional deeds."

Sgt. England has served 16 years in the Army. He is a former Army feather-weight boxing champion.

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BAR TO MILITARY CROSS.

Capt. L. S. Callif (attached Special Service Troops).

MILITARY CROSS.

Capt. F. A. Harmer.

MILITARY MEDAL.

Pte. (A/Cpl.) I. J. Dexter.

Pte. C. Gridgeman.

Pte. D. W. Jennings (since killed in action).

Pte. D. A. E. Powell.

Mentioned in Recognition of Gallant and Distinguished Services in Italy.

C.S.M. (A/R.S.M.) C. T. W. Allan.

For Gallant and Distinguished Services in North-West Europe.

MILITARY CROSS.

Lieut. G. T. Morson.

In Recognition of Gallant and Distinguished Services in Burma.

MILITARY MEDAL.

Sgt. A. J. Goude.

Pte. (A/Cpl.) G. Nelson.

THE ROLL OF HONOUR

KILLED.

T/Major R. J. McC. Phillips, W/Lt. M. H. E. Bishop, W/Lt. A. C. Boughton.

Ptes. G. Dale, L. Giles, H. J. Heaven, A. Morgan, J. Pritchard, L. P. Rogers, L. J. Tomsett, J. S. N. Borrow, B. P. Diment, W.O. II. M. L. Halliday, Pte. T. W. Main, Sgt. W. J. W. Perkin, Ptes. T. V. Roberts, J. Sinclair, G. Barrick, T. J. Collins, E. J. Dwyer, W. E. Hancock, Sgt. T. W. Manning, Cpl. J. M. Pilcher, Ptes. E. C. Robins, E. J. Symons, H. Birch, E. J. Dickie, F. G. Greenwood, S. W. Holman, E. Neale, D. Roberts, H. G. Rose, F. J. Bird, F. C. Collins, T. Gillett, R. H. Howell, T. F. Lambert, F. A. Ogbourne, E. T. Sefton, V. D. G. Williams, W. J. Browne, W/Sgt. W. Foster, Ptes. L. H. Hudson, R. Mantle, F. G. Ryman, L/Cpls. E. Wright, B. R. Alderton, Ptes. B. Brophy, L. B. Dabon, L/Cpl. W. R. Gipp, Ptes. P. L. Kennedy, W. E. Lee, Cpl. C. J. Robins, Pte. R. C. Simpson.

Ptes. R. C. Carcas, L/Cpls. J. S. Goddard, A. Hayward, W.S. Sgt. R. Rogers, Ptes. J. H. Watson, D. L. Bunnell, E. T. Gilham, F. C. Hughes, W/Cpl. E. P. Morrish, Ptes. R. E. Silience, G. H. Webb.

WOUNDED.

W/Lt. A. Grant, M.M., W/Lt. G. T. Morson, W/Lt. H. P. Norgate, T/Capt. B. H. Valentine, M.C.

Ptes. A. D. H. Arnold, F. D. Davies, F. W. Gallagher, L. N. Hosier, W. J. Lewis, A. A. Newman, Sgt. S. G. P. Smith, Ptes. T. E. J. Bowsher, E. Gilder, F. Kettle, E. J. Mullins, J. S. Roddam, Cpl. A. Smith, Ptes. J. W. Willard, W. Ashby, W. T. Colman, C. E. Engel, G. Haigh, J. R. MacFarlane, J. Norris, W.O. II. W. Rouse, Pte. W. J. Baker, Cpl. P. J. Costello, Ptes. A. J. Escreet, G. Hay, J. Mills, D. J. Power, T. H. Bentley, H. G. Cummings, W. H. Green, I. N. Knights, J. Morton, F. Summers, R. Waters, Cpl. J. W. Bloomfield, Ptes. E. J. Darby, A. P. Gilbert, Cpls. H. V. Hickmott, E. F. Jones, Pte. C. J. Kelly, C.Q.M.S. E. J. Murray, Pte. J. H. Robb, Cpls. L. S. Tillett, H. Backhurst, Ptes. S. G. Brion, J. Egan, E. Grocutt, O. J. McCann, R. H. V. Norris, Cpl. J. W. Walker, L/Cpl. F. Bone, Pte. D. E. H. Deane, A/W.O. II. E. B. Gordon, Ptes. M. Kinsley, S. S. Naish, A. J. Thompson, F. J. Butcher, S. Gale, E. L. Holloway, R. Leah, J. P. Pearson, R. Spencer, W. H. Williams, Cpl. R. D. Buckle, Ptes. J. E. Dymond, F. C. Harvey, L. Johnson, D. E. Newman, J. Snelson, R. R. Wynn, J. Brown, A/L/Sgt. L. Dunn, Ptes. F. L. Harris, F. H. Jenkins, H. J. Moody, Cpl. C. Shipston, Ptes. S. G. Woodhouse, C. S. Breerton, S. J. Drew, Cpl. W. S. Handley, Ptes. J. A. James, G. W. Mercer, J. H. Shipp, T. W. White, L. C. Alvarez, I. Collier, R. W. F. Emerton, L/Cpl. S. H. Hollands, Ptes. A. J. Marchant, L. F. Noyce, F. Turner, E. A. Alder, R. R. Clarke, V. C. Dibden, Sgt. G. J. Ford, Ptes. E. J. Howard, A. J. Martin, L/Sgt. S. T. Ogbourne, Ptes. G. H. Clarke, R. S. Freeman, S. J. Hockings, A. W. King, F. Pickett, S. M. Tucker, C. J. Wright,

F. J. Butcher, S. Gale, E. L. Holloway, R. Leah, J. P. Pearson, R. Spencer, W. H. Williams, L. W. Abbey, B. L. Butcher, P. F. Coward, W. C. Fitch, P. Guthrie, J. Hoyle, J. B. Moore, G. F. Proberts, A/Sgt. S. H. Abrey, Ptes. L. Cohen, R. Gerrish, H. R. J. Holness, Cpl. A. J. Little, Cpl. E. A. Rayner, Ptes. E. C. Upner, L. Bregazzi, L/Cpl. J. P. Donovan, Ptes. C. Harris, H. Irwin, N. W. Selby, J. W. Weldon, E. Birtwhistle, G. W. Courtney, D. Groves, P. J. Hunt, K. A. Maskell, A. G. Robbins, H. T. Webb.

PREVIOUSLY REPORTED WOUNDED, NOW REPORTED DIED OF WOUNDS.

L/Cpl. D. H. Chamberlain, U/L/Cpl. D. Ansell.

DIED OF WOUNDS.

W/Lt. T. J. L. Farrell.

Bdsman. A. F. D. Cook, Ptes. P. Daly, L. W. Henman, D. H. Jones, J. A. Shoesmith, A/L/Cpl. R. J. Sydee, L/Cpl. D. F. Barnes, Ptes. W. T. J. Cannon, D. F. Ebsworth-Donkin, P. Godding, S. P. Mounger, P. G. E. Ross, C. Wilkins, R. Dorsett, F. C. Dunn, C. G. Knevett, A. Rockall, Cpl. L. R. Ward.

DIED.

Ptes. J. Bleakley S. A. Lambert, S. G. Tappenden.

PRISONERS OF WAR FUND

We are now glad to be able to report that the hold-up in the sending of P.O.W. clothing parcels has — for the moment, at any rate — come to an end. We have, therefore, despatched immediately a large consignment we had in readiness, and are now working on the current issue — which we hope to send off within the next few days.

There has also been some little delay in the mail service from the prisoners of war, but letters are now starting to arrive from them more regularly, and are still very cheery.

R.L.

RECEIPTS.

	£	s.	d.
Balance as per last account	1007	4	7½
Donations—			
Mr. P. A. Rice	1	0	0
Miss Yvonne Boulton	14	0	
Rev. Smedley, Union Street	5	0	0
Miss I. M. Grove	2	2	0
Mrs. Beale	10	0	
Lt.-Col. R. G. C. Brock, O.B.E.	5	0	0
Mrs. Tadman	1	1	0
R. S. Mathieson	3	15	0
Henry Taylor and Sons	1	1	0
Pte. Reynolds	5	0	
Loder and Payne	5	0	0
Mrs. Vandenberg	2	6	
Colonel H. G. Robinson	20	0	0
Mr. Akaster	5	5	0
Pte. Tubb	5	0	
Mrs. Homer	1	0	0
Mrs. Williams	7	0	
	52	7	6
Subscriptions from Battalions, etc.	123	11	1
Boxes — Colonel Howe	11	9½	
Refund on Returned Books	122	0	0
	£1308	15	0

PAYMENTS.

	£	s.	d.
Goods for Personal Parcels	391	12	3
Postage, Stationery, etc.	1	3	4
Donation — Red Cross (Food Parcels)	100	0	0
Balance — Cash in Hand	815	19	5
	£1308	15	0

COMFORTS FUND.

Since our last issue, we have sent two further consignments of cigarettes and books to all our Battalions serving overseas.

We are still receiving very appreciative letters from all ranks.

D.L.

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS

BIRTHS.

- BROOKE**.—On Nov. 24th, 1944, at the Lindo Wing, St. Mary's Hospital, W.2, to Helen (nee Tull), wife of Lt.-Col. H. J. Sinclair Brooke, Royal West Kent Regiment—a son (Paul Henry Sinclair).
- CLARK**.—On the 15th October, 1944, at Winchester, to the wife of Sgt. Clark, a daughter, Sheila Anne May.
- HINTON**.—On Nov. 30th, 1944, at Riseley Maternity Home, Horton Kirby, Kent, to Wendy (née Evans), wife of Lt.-Col. H. O. Hinton, The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regt.—a sister for Michael (Sarah Wendy).
- HARMER**.—On the 24th June, 1944, at Farnborough, to the wife of Sgt. E. Harmer, a daughter, Molly Josephine.
- JONES**.—On the 14th March, 1942, at Swindon, Wilts, to the wife of Cpl. J. Jones, a son, Raymond.
- MOLES**.—On the 23rd September, 1944, at Bury, Lancs., to the wife of L/Cpl. J. Moles, a daughter, Marilyn Susan.
- PEACOCK**.—On the 15th September, 1944, at Nuneaton, Warwickshire, to the wife of Pte. C. Peacock, a daughter, Valerie Ann.
- READ BARKER**.—On the 25th May, 1944, at Woking, to the wife of L/Sgt. W. Read Barker, a daughter, Mary.
- SAMPSON**.—On the 14th July, 1944, at Hempstead, to the wife of L/Cpl. R. Sampson, a daughter, Vivienne Kay.
- STONEHAM**.—On the 4th Dec., 1944, at the Lansdowne Nursing Home, Tunbridge Wells, to Beryl (née Eccles), wife of Major B. J. R. Stoneham, The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regt.—a son.
- TRIBBICK**.—On the 22nd September, 1944, at Sandhill, Pembury, to the wife of Cpl. C. Tribbick, a son, Paul Richard.
- WORRALL**.—On the 29th August, 1943, at Birmingham, to the wife of Pte. H. Worrall, a son, Robert Charles.

MARRIAGES.

- ALTRIA-BOWMAN**.—On the 9th September, 1944, at Staines, Pte. R. Altria to Sheila Mary Bowman.
- BLANKS-VEALEY**.—On the 30th September, 1944, at Maidstone, Pte. A. Blanks to Doreen Esther Vealey.
- BRISKMAN-KEEN**.—On the 3rd September, 1944, at London, Pte. E. Briskman to Hilda Keen.
- BRODIE-CURNIE**.—On the 16th September, 1944, at Clapham Park, London, Cpl. F. Brodie to Jean Ethel Curnie.
- BUNCH-KYLE**.—On the 1st November, 1944, at Irvine, Ayrshire, Pte. F. Bunch to Jane Celland Kyle.
- GOUGH-MILLARD**.—On the 16th September, 1944, at Norwood, Pte. C. Gough to Jessie Eileen Millard.
- HIGGS-ROSWAY**.—On the 24th August, 1944, at Hammer-smith, London, Pte. S. Higgs to Winifred Rosway.
- HOCHSTEIN-McGRATH**.—On the 30th September, 1944, at Kensington, Pte. R. Hochstein to Mary McGrath.
- HUBBARD-THOMPSON**.—On the 9th September, 1944, at Becontree, Essex, Pte. H. Hubbard to Eda Doreen Thompson.
- JONES-SKEATES**.—On the 16th September, 1941, at Swindon, Wilts, Cpl. J. Jones to Irene Edith Skeates.
- LISTON-HOWELL**.—On the 18th October, 1944, at Selling, Kent, Pte. M. Liston to Joan Mary Victoria Howell.
- MORTIMER-FLEET**.—On the 11th November, 1944, at Bromley, L/Cpl. J. Mortimer to Joyce Jessie Fleet.
- MURKIN-HURST**.—On the 9th September, 1944, at London, Sgt. F. Murkin to Alice Grace Hurst.
- OWEN-FREESTONE**.—On the 28th October, 1944, at Forest Hill, London, Pte. W. Owen to Elsie Molly Freestone.
- REYNOLDS-UNDERWOOD**.—On the 23rd September, 1944, at East Wickham, Kent, Pte. W. Reynolds to Irene Underwood.
- STONER-HIDE**.—On the 23rd September, 1944, at Pembury, Kent, Sgt. W. Stoner to Lillian Louise Mary Hide.
- WORRALL-EDWARDS**.—On the 17th January, 1942, at Birmingham, Pte. H. Worrall to Irene Doris Edwards.

DEATHS.

- COUCH**.—On Oct. 29th, 1944, at Bank House, Castle Street, Hinkley, Joseph Couch, Major (retired), late The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment, in his 86th year. Funeral was held on Nov. 1st at Hinkley.
- GOOK**.—On the 22nd October, 1944, at Maidstone, the wife of Sgt. R. Gook.

ON ACTIVE SERVICE.

- CAVE**.—In proud and loving memory on his birthday (Sept. 17th), of Major W. O. Cave, Royal West Kent Regiment, killed on active service in Burma, April, 1944.—Mother.
- DYAS**.—In Oct., 1944, killed in action in Italy, Major G. Murray Dyas, M.C., The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment (attached Hampshire), aged 33, most dearly loved husband of Barbara (nee Shaw), and beloved only son of Mr. and

Mrs. J. E. Dyas, 32, Oakwood Avenue, Beckenham, brother of Valerie and Brenda.

WHITTY.—In Oct., 1944, killed in action in Italy, Lt.-Col. John Henry Hamlyn Whitty, D.S.O., M.C., The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment, dearly loved husband of Sheila (nee Grant), of Malabar Hotel, Guildford, Surrey, adored daddy of Hamlyn and Kenneth, and only son of the late Hamlyn Whitty and Mrs. Whitty, formerly of Dewhurst, Wadhurst.

WORLEY.—In Oct., 1944, killed in Italy, Pte. George Holland Worley, Royal West Kent Regiment, dearly loved husband of Freda (Loveland), 27, Meadow Walk, and beloved youngest son of Mr. and Mrs. W. Worley, Rainham.

IN MEMORIAM.

FOLLIT.—In proud and loving memory of Roy, Capt. W. R. Follit, The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment, attached Hampshire, killed in Italy, September 16th, 1943. Sadly missed by his mother and stepfather.

FOLLIT.—In ever-loving memory of Capt. Roy Follit, killed in action September 16th, 1943.—Joan and Pera.

FREEMAN.—In fond memory of our only son, John Bentley Freeman, Sec. Lieut., 11th Battalion, Royal West Kent Regiment, killed in action at the Battle of the Menin Road on Sept. 20th, 1917, aged 20.

HEWETT.—In loving remembrance of Vic, Lt. V. H. Hewett, Royal West Kent Regiment, killed in action Nov. 16th, 1943.—Mother and Wynne. A year has passed, but not the memory of one whose life meant happiness to all who knew him.

MEAD.—Lawrence Tennent, Capt., The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment, attached 3rd (Q.A.O.) Gurkha Rifles, killed in action in Burma, Oct., 1943. Also in memory of Subedar Tilbahadur Gurung and those others of his Company who died with him.

WRIGHT.—In proud and honoured memory of T./Capt. Hector Royal West Kent Regiment, killed in action, November, 1943, who was killed in action in Italy on Dec. 2nd, 1943, an adored son and dearly loved brother.—Mother, Norman, Hilda, Lesly.

A DIAMOND WEDDING

"Oldest" R.W. Kent and His Former Maidstone Bride.

On Christmas Day, the probable oldest surviving member of The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment and his wife, a former Maidstone lady, will celebrate the diamond anniversary of their wedding, for they were married at St. Philip's Church, Maidstone, on December 25th, 1884, by the late Canon H. Collis.

The old couple are Staff-Sergt. J. Muddle, who is now 85, and Mrs. Muddle, now 82, who is the eldest daughter of the late Mr. Charles Pobjee, who carried on a business of carpenter and undertaker at Maidstone.

Joined in 1876.

The old soldier joined the county regiment in March, 1876, and after serving abroad, did duty at the Maidstone Depot until August, 1890, when he went to the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, as an instructor.

He possesses the Khedive Medal and Star, the Long Service Medal, and the Meritorious Service Medal.

Mr. and Mrs. Muddle, who are in fairly good health, reside at 46, Princess Street, Camberley, Surrey.

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The following list of books will make useful presents as Christmas and New Year gifts:—

FICTION.

- Mazo de la Roche—*The Building of Jalna*. Spring. 10/6.
 E. H. Carr—*Nationalism and After*. January. 3/6.
 Naomi Ryde Smith—*Fine-Weed*. December. 10/6.
 Captain G. C. Greenfield—*Desert Episode*. January. 7/6.
 Vera Brittain—*Account Rendered*. Spring. 10/6.
 Kylie Tennant—*Time Enough Later*. Spring. 8/6.
 Mrs. Belloc Lowndes—*Eugene*. Spring. 10/6.
 Leslie Kark—*Farewell, My Fair*. February. 10/6.
 Hilda Vaughan—*Pardon and Peace*. Spring. 7/6.
 J. B. Morton—*Captain Foulencough and Company*. Published. 8/6.

BIOGRAPHY.

- Osbert Sitwell—*Left Hand, Right Hand*. February. 15/-.
 Sean O'Casey—*Drums Under the Windows*. Spring. 15/-.
 Storm Jameson—*The Journal of Mary Hervey Russell*. Spring. 10/6.
 Charles d'Ydewalle—*An Interlude in Spain*. Translated by Eric Sutton. November. 8/6.
 Mary England—*A Knight There was*. December. 4/6.
 Richard Dobson—*China Cycle*. Spring. 12/6.
 I. Feng—*Give Back My Rivers and Hills!* Translated by Innes Jackson. Spring. Illustrated. 7/6.

ESSAYS.

- Charles Morgan—*Reflections in a Mirror*. November. 8/6.
 A. L. Rowse—*The English Spirit*. Essays in History and Literature. December. 12/6.
 Edith Sitwell—*Fanfare for Elizabeth*. Spring. 10/6.

HISTORY.

- Dormer Creston—*In Search of Two Characters*. Some Intimate Aspects of Napoleon and his Son. Spring. 18/-.
 Major H. Montgomery Hyde—*Mexican Hyde—The Story of Maximilian and Carlota*. Spring. 18/-.

BELLES-LETTRES.

- Selected Letters of Rainer Maria Rilke*. Edited by R. F. C. Hull. Spring. 18/-.

CRITICISM.

- C. M. Bowra—*From Virgil to Milton*. Spring. 15/-.
 John Palmer—*Political Characters of Shakespeare*. December. 18/-.

POETRY.

- Edith Sitwell—*Green Song*. Published. 5/-.
 Edmund Blunden—*Shells by a Stream*. October. 5s.
 Sylvia Lynd—*Collected Poems*. December. 6/-.
 Elluned Lewis—*Morning Songs*. Published. 4/-.
 D. Page—*The Martyr and Other Poems*. Published. 4/-.
 John Buxton—*Such Liberty*. Published. 4/-.
 James Monahan—*Far from the Land*. December. 4/-.
 Ian Serrallier—*The Weaver Birds*. November. 6/-.
 Susanne Knowles—*Birth of Venus*. Spring. 4/-.

DRAMA.

- Ralph Lawrence—*The Millstream*. December. 5/-.
 A Play by Gordon Glennon—*Emma*. From the Novel by Jane Austen. January. 5/-.

CHILDREN'S BOOKS.

- Eric Linklater—*The Wind on the Moon*. Nicolas Bentley drew Pictures. November. 10/6.
 Enid Blyton—*The Island of Adventure*. Illustrated by Stuart Tresilian. November. 7/6.
 Enid Blyton—*The Christmas Book*. Illustrated by Treyer-Evans. November. 6/-.
 Hilda F. K. Gull—*Heritage*. December. 8/6.

ECONOMICS.

- Professor A. C. Pigou—*Lapses from Full Employment*. December. 7/6.
 Professor A. G. B. Fisher—*Economic Progress and Social Security*. Spring. 12/6.
 G. Findlay Shirras—*Federal Finance in Peace and War*. October. 21/-.
 H. W. Foster—*Ourselves and Empire*. November. 6/-.

RELIGION.

- Dr. E. G. Selwyn, Dean of Winchester—*The First Epistle of St. Peter*. Spring. 25/-.
 Arthur T. Macmillan—*What is Christian Marriage?* December. 8/6.

PHILOSOPHY.

- Dorothy M. Emmet—*The Nature of Metaphysical Thinking*. Spring. 10/6.

BOTANY.

- L. J. F. Brimble—*Flowers of Britain: Wild, Ornamental and Economic*. November. 12/6.

LAW.

- English Studies in Criminal Law*. (Two of the five volumes already projected will be ready for publication this Autumn). Edited by L. Radzinowicz and J. W. C. Turner.

- Mental Abnormality and Crime*. Studies by thirteen distinguished authorities, with a preface by Professor P. H. Winfield, K.C. October. 18/-.

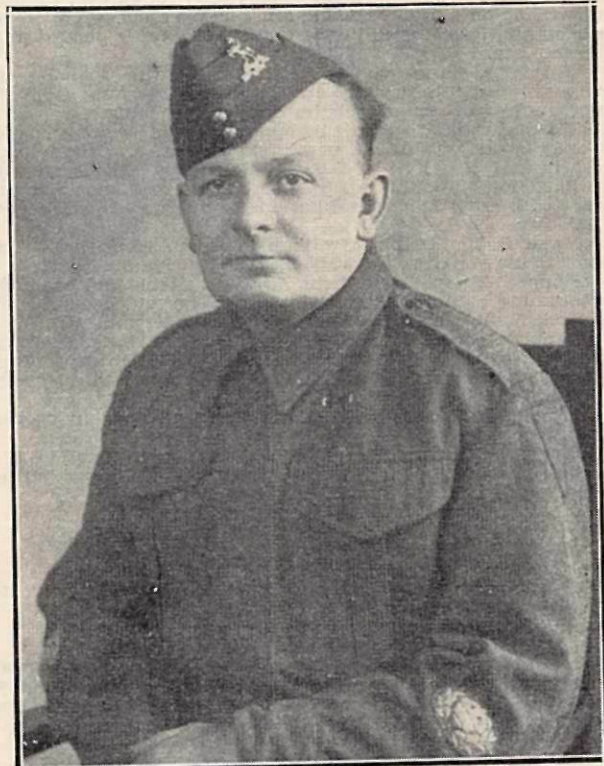
- The Modern Prison System of India*. By Lt.-Col. F. A. Barker, C.I.E. October. 10/6. Three further volumes are projected for the immediate future.

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- Published by MACMILLAN & Co., LTD., St. Martin's Street, London, W.C.2.

C.S.M. L. WATKINS

His many friends and acquaintances will be glad to learn that after serving with the Regiment for nearly 26 years, C.S.M. L. Watkins has retired on pension. An outline of his regimental career is given.



No. 7813001 C.S.M. L. Watkins enlisted 21st May, 1919, in Machine Gun Corps and transferred to 2nd Battalion early part of 1920 in the Army of Occupation of the Rhine. Served with the 2nd Battalion Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment till 1930 on posting to 1st Battalion at Bangalore. Proceeded on tour of duty at the Regimental Depot in 1935. Rejoined the 1st Battalion at Shorncliffe in January, 1938, and proceeded to France with the 1st Battalion on outbreak of present war.

Wounded at Petergen, near Oudenaarde, Belgium, on 21st May, 1940, and taken prisoner 24th of May, 1940. Was in Stalag 9—C and Stalag 383 until repatriated to U.K. on 25th of October, 1943. Returned to Depot, 1944, and was employed at West Kent Sub-District until date of discharge from Mill Hill Hospital. Date of discharge from service 11th January, 1945. Total service 25 years 236 days.

: News from Battalions :

— BATTALION.

It is a long time since the Battalion contributed to the Q.O.G., and I am afraid we must admit to slackness on our part. We have now turned over a new leaf and hope to rectify the absence of our "Gen" in your columns.

The Battalion has fought hard and long, and has acquitted itself in no mean manner. We have had our sad times, but we have also had our gay ones, and above it all is the ever increasing prospect of Victory and Peace once more.

So I will hand you over to the Companies and Platoons to tell their own stories.

Headquarter Company.

It is many months since "H.Q." have contributed to the columns of the Q.O.G. We have no excuses to offer but, well, you know how it is. When the opportunity for earnest thought and writing does occur, the old "in" basket soon gets swamped with bumph from the Adjutant and the matter is pending until it is too late.

This time, however, the journalists of the Company are being whipped into activity and requested to pause from the never ending stream of epistles and get cracking.

We would like to take this opportunity of wishing Lt.-Col. — every good luck in his new appointment, and to welcome most heartily Lt.-Col. —, D.S.O. "Col. Percy" has been with the Battalion since the fall of 1940, and is well known to and respected by us all. Congratulations to him on his well-earned D.S.O.

Major D. H. (Twink) Gwilliam joined us from the — Battalion in May, and we are very pleased to have him as 2 i/c.

"Flapper" Sharpe has left the Adjutant's table and has hopes of becoming a Staff Officer. Good luck to you, Leonard, and to Derek Scull, who has taken over your paper mill!

Captain Peter Mathewman is welcomed back again as chief "I" man, after recovering from a battle injury. Capt. Manwaring has also mended and is back at the wheel of the M.T. Section.

Michael Wallace is sadly missed by us all and our deepest sympathies go to his wife.

Finally, well done Ronnie (Q.M.) Mines on your M.B.E.

Now that the ice is broken, we will try and keep you posted with the news. Buon Giorno.

What I want to know—How old is Jock Hall?

"DUKE."

Stretcher-Bearers.

We are turning out something for the "Buster," but it's difficult with "Chopper" Sewell chanting:

"Come on, fellows, let us muster,

And write an article for the 'Buster.'"

Of the Stretcher-bearers first. If we had a group slogan it might be "S.B. de Corps." It's been like that since the days in good old Scotland, where we could clerihew the Doc. thusly:

"We're all agreed

That Doc Reid

Don't need Labs

Detecting—er, lobsters."

And it's been like that in later times, too, when the Doc and all the Group had sterner tasks to face than the mere spotting of vermin.

Let's deal with the countries we have visited. NORTH AFRICA. The first test, before Tunis. We were covered in dust and dirt, but the generous ones said we covered ourselves with glory, too.

Followed what the "Eighth Army News" has termed a "black period" for us, alongside the Mediterranean. Black or not, we had quite a good time there, opening guerilla warfare against the mosquitoes and swimming—a splendid gala in the harbour, and frantically pegging tents down in the sudden sirocco.

EGYPT. A shrill, brassy land we liked not, in spite of the super cinema by Shafto—carpets for a roof (the wind tore them all off one day) and larynx trouble in the sound box.

ITALY. From the desert sands to the mountain snows. Brrr! molto freddo. We could hang our hats on our goose pimples—how can we forget those climbs.

Followed a fortnight where we gazed at Jerry through holes in the wall, but weren't allowed to move from our shattered houses. Movement by night was made in utter silence. How this was obtained is indicated in the parody our concert turns concocted:

"Wrap your feet up in sacking,
Or the noise will get him cracking.
With old Spandau Joe,
Off we go to shuffle,
Shuffle in to"

Concerts always follow every battle, "Chopper" Sewell being our star turn, with numerous parodies. Vernon Baxter (ex-3rd of foot—he insists) is quite a Cole Porter in this respect, too.

Then the hill where Tony Marchant surprised a Jerry performing a very personal duty. Whereupon he handed out his automatic and amn., and gave himself up to Tony, who as an S.B. carries no arms! Another Jerry, thinking it a good idea, followed suit. More furious battles later, but the censor has his blue pencil at the "on guard."

Inevitably, we have lost some good boys. L/Cpls. Neville Chamberlain, Percy Ross, Ptes. Neale, Carcus, Konstantinou, the cheerful little Cypriot, and Donkin.

This hit us badly—all very brave men, and deservedly popular. Ross, a star games player, and no less conspicuous in action. Young Tony Konstantinou was always cheery. Donkin could take his jeep up a wall and did splendid work in bringing back casualties from forward areas.

All leave unfillable gaps.

There have been quite a few wounded, too. Hermy, whose first words after not seeing us for weeks, "Oi, you got my false teeth!" "Bruno" Buffin, "Chopper" Sewell, Tony Marchant, Tom Meadows, Dave Newman, Andy West, Gordon Large, Ronnie Hickson, "Eugene" Stratton, "Nobby" Clarke, Peter Knott, Lambourne and Howes, Biss and "Fish" Bate have all collected "Purple Hearts."

Our old Sergeant, Fred Langridge, left us to be Provost Sergeant—he doesn't pinch us. Arthur Stevens, ex-Clapton goalkeeper, fills the role very ably now.

TRUE STORY BY "CHOPPER" SEWELL.

During one of our Company turn-outs, I had to attend to one of the boys who'd lost a leg. He'd been bleeding badly, but I stopped it and made him comfortable on the stretcher. This had taken place near the remains of a house, so I got him in there, brewed up, and then got on the blower for R.A.P. jeep. You see the R.A.P. was a mile away and that's a lot of sweat.

Just then old Fritz started livening us up again and over came his "moaning minnies" — and another West Kent needed a shell dressing—he had a piece of old iron in his arm and he walked back to the house with me.

When we got there and found that the fellow who had lost his leg had gone, but that the stretcher was still there. I said to one of the boys, "Has the R.A.P. jeep been here?" He said "No." So I said, "Well, where's the bloke who lost his leg gone to?" The bloke said, "Oh, him—well, you know you gave him some tea....." "Yus," I said. "Well!" he said, "When you went out for the other bloke he wanted to see a man about a soya, so he got up, went outside and he found an old bike. He told me to tell you he wouldn't worry about the jeep, and off he went to the R.A.P.—Why, is anything wrong?"

I said, "No, nothing much—except that the bike has got both tyres punctured."

Signal Platoon.

Our attempts at writing are always extremely amateurish and this, to some extent, accounts for the scarcity of our contributions. At the same time, business has been brisker than usual during the past months and opportunities for writing, even to old friends at home, extremely rare.

We, as with everybody else, have been forced to undergo sad losses. Several have been killed and others wounded. To all the wounded who have been able to rejoin us we wish a speedy recovery and a pleasant meeting at the "Local" after the war. Our killed we miss greatly—Mick Tabor, Eric Wright, Ernie Weeks and Jimmy Watson, will always be in our thoughts, for their departure has left memories that can never be dulled.

Our activities have consisted mainly of trudging over miles of countryside in attempts to keep in contact with a stubborn, but retreating enemy. This rather unwelcome form of exercise has been compensated for by leave and rest periods, which have been most enjoyable.

Throughout this period we have endeavoured to give the Battalion some form of communication. Many signallers have turned grey, and many more mutter incoherently in their sleep, as a result of their efforts. "Toffee" Forster, our line corporal, has reached a new high record in the number of curses he calls down on the heads of tanks, bulldozers, Brigade Headquarters and others who, in his eyes, deliberately break his lines. Despite numerous unkind remarks, our sets have done us yeoman service and, on the whole, we find them to work extremely well, considering all they have to endure. Nevertheless, we still hope, vainly I think, for better.

Many old soldiers, now in their sixties, are still with us. Joe Rose combines the duties of A Echelon storeman, "mucko" and political speaker, with great success, whilst Jim Turner, our storeman, rules us all with an iron hand. Special praise must be given to our D.R.s, "Duke" Balcum, Paddy Hamilton, Alec Major and Harry Routledge, who have done magnificently. "Duke" even managed to liberate a village on his own, but was forced to refuse the invitation to stay, as we were "bashing on."

As our average age seems to be fifty-five, we are hoping to be somewhere near the head of the demobbing lists. So soon, perhaps, we shall have an opportunity of trying the cross-Channel route home.

To all who have been associated with this platoon in the past, we send greetings, and we specially remember our friends wounded in North Africa and those who are now serving with other units. May we all meet again under better conditions soon.

Intelligence Section.

Since our memorable day's respite after an uncomfortable time on a hill position, the section has not yet had chance to enjoy its little supper parties by candlelight. After leaving our rest area, where we collected two more members to the section, Ptes. Bedding and Thirkell, our next highlight was a stay in an ancient monastery for several days (thank goodness for the thickness of the walls). Here our old member, Stan Reavell, rejoined us, and were we glad to see him again, and we hope sincerely he doesn't try any more flying through open spaces in 15 cwt. G.S. trucks. It isn't done, Stan, really old man! Unfortunately, Bedding was injured, though only slightly, and has since rejoined us, and Pte. Thirkell went into dock, leaving us in a real mess for a day until "A" Echelon sent us our "Yid" Pte. Levy. We then spent quite a few days in —, or near enough, anyhow, after marching most of the way. There we had one of our best OPS, and spent most of our time filling in shellreps and dealing with Ities and partisans. There our mascot and oldest member came up and joined us to deal with Ities as only he can, Pierre our Interpreter.

Next to another brief rest, and some leave to Rome, and I think none of the section had a dismal time. Our section had an ideal "casa," close to H.Q., and were fed to bursting point by an Italian woman, who thought you could eat melon till you were the colour of them. "Mi Jeep" and old Marcus had little chance for maintenance, badly needed. We wish Mark would take his foot off the brake sometimes. As Mark could never find his beloved jeep anywhere when he wanted it, he gave it up as a bad job and dreamed dreams of spanners and oilcans. However, he did manage to put up an excellent show in Brigade M.T. Competition. Here, too, old Stan became an artist, painting for the garden party at Brigade. We still say he is better behind the bar (take your hand off that till!) though.

And now here we are in another new and wonderful part of Italy, seeing the sights of X and Y (why they dream about it, Lord only knows. The Ities of the anti-Fascist variety say even water is 15 lire there, so I hate to think what the vino is). Capt. Matthewman is back in our midst again, looking as fit and well as ever, and is licking us all into shape again. As our late Capt. Wallace said on many occasions, "I sections are usually an irregular crowd, and need latitude," and I'm sure he's right. Kirk, our old retainer, doesn't improve and has now taken on to himself the job of "jew-baiter" since Levy has had two days away on some feast or fast, we don't know which, and he won't say. Bedding is a quiet guy, and speaks and says nowt as usual, but he'll find his feet soon and turn out rowdier than ever. Let him remain quiet, the

C.O. can hardly hear himself speak next door as it is. "Brewing up," our favourite pastime, goes on whatever happens, and it doesn't need to tell that Pierre has taken to tea as a national drink. Now when he steals away you can usually find him round the cook-house scrounging a drop of tea, we learn 'em! "FROZEN NORTH."

M.T.

We are all very glad to welcome back into the fold Capt. H. G. M., better known as the "Cherub," who has led us many thousands of miles over the so called "roads" of more than one country.

Our M.T. stores lorry had its first real taste of action recently and is now the proud possessor of two genuine shrapnel holes, much to the detriment of the classic lines and magnificent paint work of this super lorry. It is said that the driver who was in the cab at the time made the quickest exit on record. I was a very good second.

Our worthy Fitter Sergeant, a man of generous proportions and weight, is still doing his stuff, with the help of plenty of wire and string. At the time of going to press he is engaged in very involved calculations with the aid of reams of paper on the subject of Income Tax. His fitter's lorry "Horace" bears a striking resemblance to the Caledonian Market at its best.

During lulls in the everlasting Task System, the main topic amongst the lads is the De-Mob plan, and needless to say the word "Group" figures very prominently in all conversations on this fascinating subject.

It is rumoured that the "Forgotten Body" ("B" Ech) have dug in to the depth of 18 ft., and that our worthy M.T. Sgt. Ruff has approached the Technical Sergeant on the matter of obtaining a portable lift which would be of tremendous help to these hard pressed men in ascending and descending into these tremendously deep tunnels. At the moment, our R.S.M. (also a tunneller of some renown) informs me they are making do with toggle ropes.

The envy of the entire section go to Ptes. Rogers and Collins, who were unlucky enough to "stop one" and who are now safely back in "Blighty." We should like to wish them all the very best and a quick recovery.

In closing, apologies to our readers for our long absence from this column, but much hard work has had to be done to get our "Fleet" battleworthy.

We wish "Good Driving" and "Good Hunting" to other Sections of the Regiment, no matter where they are.

TECHNICAL SGT. J.W.

Introducing "S" Company H.Q.

This is quite a new job to me. I've had many a laugh at the unlucky fellow who has done the work of scribe in the past—so now all roll up and have a laugh on me! So here we are to answer for the sins of "S" Company H.Q., which is ably led by the ex-Mortar Officer, Capt. S. F. H. Glynn, who sees us through all our troubles—well most of them anyhow! These of course are caused by our "colour bloke" Charlie, one of four brothers who have spent more years in India than the youngsters have had hot dinners—so he says!

Then of course, we have the red head from Brum, Page, our storeman, who is a good second to Honest Tom of "D" Company. We have another Basher recently joined us, an ex-bugler from the Old Kent Road (and proud of it), our Jeep driver McCarthy. We won't forget our publican, the Company Commander's batman—who to keep his hands clean is forever washing out clothes. In addition to the above we are "ably" assisted by Whittaker and Maylin, also the wax-end king and soler of boots—namely, Eggleton. We have a black sheep in this happy family though, Hills, who has deserted us because he insists the food at H.Q. is better than we are getting, so he is driving our 15 cwt. for them, but believe me he looks thinner than ever.

The Company have had quite a hectic time this past few months, lost a lot of sweat doing portering at Cassino, and made a first-class job of it, and have also given a good account of themselves in other actions.

Yes, we have a good crowd of lads—and they all know the first essential of war is a good brew up—the question is, where do the makings come from!

Mortar Platoon

It is indeed a great pleasure to be able to 'go to press' again after so long a period of absence. The main cause of this being important engagements with certain other people—much to their discomfort. However, we don't intend that this should hamper us in future.

It is with heartfelt regret that we announce the deaths of Cpl. L. Bulmer, one of the originals, and Pte. E. Stephens, one of the newer members of the Platoon, who were killed in action in the initial stages of the Italian offensive. We hope our

wounded, namely Cpl. Thompson, Ptes. Sargeant, Hyde and Webb '08, will soon be back to join the happy gang. Good luck and a speedy recovery to them all.

Welcome to the Platoon all newcomers; also we are pleased to have Cpl. Page and Cpl. Wiltshire back after their comfortable (?) stay in hospital. Apparently part of hospital treatment in a pint of Guinness per day!

SPORT. In spite of many challenges sent out with almost monotonous regularity the S.Bs. don't appear over-anxious to meet us again in the inter-platoon football championship. Maybe they don't felish our new super charge! So, having given the M.M.G's and A/Tank Platoon a setback, we remain undefeated champions of the noble art.

'BREW UP CORNER! All signs of 'Crypt Creeping' and 'Porters Stoop' have now vanished from our 'Mad Milers' — who mentioned Wooderson? It was certainly good to drive up the 'Mad Mile' without 'Spandau Joe' acting as host. At any rate that 'Spandau Joe' won't 'Spandau' any more! Who is the Mortars Cpl. D.M. who thought his carrier was fitted with a 'Joystick' and dived over a bank at 30 miles per hour in order to get a brew up?

Brushes, hand bass, are in great demand at present and disappear rather quickly. The reason? Look at the camouflage on the Platoon Sergeant's upper lip.

Who is Chuckaway Charlie, and where is "S" Company 'bucks queue'? Is it true that the M.M.G's have persuaded the Army to switch from Red Tape to White!

The activities of the Buckle Salvage and Combat Company are certainly noteworthy, and the propaganda issued from this source is certainly original if not quite 'a la Goebbels'! Having been on a mines course recently two D.C's promptly pronounced a buried bottle of 'Vino' a new Jerry booby trap. Still, Vino is some pretty explosive mixture!!

Baker Company.

On coming out of the line for a well deserved rest the Company was quartered in a school building in a quaint Italian town perched on a hill. Leave was the first priority, and the majority of the Company was able to spend a week in the Eternal City.

Upon return from leave the Company commenced work with a will and much beneficial training was undertaken. The equally important side of recreation was not overlooked and, in addition to sports, visits are being made to local towns of interest. Swimming, too, in a nearby pool is a popular pastime. Football was played on the Battalion pitch, and a game against Dog Company resulted in a draw, two goals each.

Another match which provoked much local interest, both among the Company and the townspeople, was played between the Company and the town teams, popularly known as the "Red Devils". Owing to another match on the same pitch we were unable to commence our fixture until 1930 hrs., and light was so poor at the end of the game that the Company was suggested that a Recce patrol should precede the forward line in order to find the goal. However, it was an excellent game resulting in a draw, one goal each, and it is hoped to play a return match in the near future.

Under the able direction of 'Mac' (Lt. D. J. McLelland) and his committee a first rate fun fair and entertainment was arranged with the object of raising money for the Battalion Casualty Fund. It was a jolly evening that will be remembered for many a day, and we were pleased to have the pleasure of the company of the C.O. and many guests from other Companies. There were many ingenious side shows designed to give everyone a good time and to gather in the 'filthy lucre' — a job so well done that the sum of £31 was raised for the fund. In order to assist the 'customers' in the enjoyment of the evening huge quantities of Vino, and, thanks to C/Sgt. Carr and his staff, many dainty snacks were provided free of charge. The hour was late when the last guest departed, but as he tottered off we could indeed see that he had had a 'multo buono' time.

Many newcomers have arrived to make up our ranks, and when we next cross a start line we are confident that they will carry on the fighting tradition of Baker Company.

Within a short space of time the Company has been commanded by Capt. J. H. Venn-Dunn (who has now gone to Dog Company), then Capt. J. Robson, and we now welcome Major Towers-Minors, with Capt. J. Robson as second in command. Lt. D. J. McLelland arrived from D Coy., and we also welcome Lt. R. J. Gallie, 2/Lt. R. S. McCleary (both Kiwi's) and 2/Lt. C. G. Hale, to the Company.

Sgt. A. Webb's labours have been rewarded by his promotion to C.S.M., and we are glad to see that he is remaining with us, C/Sgt. F. J. Carr still soldiers on and he is always good for a cup of tea — anytime.

We are also pleased to welcome back Sgt. S. Abrey, L/Cpl. W. Platt, L/Cpl. G. Champ, Privates Connelly, R., Bourne, G.,

Hemmings, L., McGrevey, S., Mott, A., Smith, L., (54), and Townsend, K., all of whom were wounded in recent operations and who are now restored to fitness.

L/Sgt. Arthur Brewer, our Battalion Casualty Fund representative and Football King, often has a cheerful letter from Sgt. 'Curly' Kinchin who is in hospital recovering from his recent wounds.

Congratulations go to L/Sgt. Jack Tompsett upon achieving full rank, and we are sure "A" Coy. will benefit by our loss, and also to Cpl. George Ashdown on his promotion to L/Sgt.

And so we close keeping to our motto of 'B for Bash On', and we all hope that in the near future we shall be 'Bashing On' up the streets of Maidstone to a Company Reunion.

"C" Company.

Somewhere in Italy... "C" Coy. settles down for a fleeting moment to consider its many adventures of recent weeks — under a deep blue sky filled with sunshine that makes the air dance over vineyards and cornfields. Quite the tourists paradise? Oh, no, we have only just survived a week of mud and wind, pregnant with rain.

But let's start at the beginning, if only for convention's sake. Though it may seem months ago, it is really only just recently that the Coy. "brewed up" in deep cellars and watched Jerry pay courtesy visits from one of his hide-outs to another by means of stretcher parties. Soon the lads lost their "Robert Taylor" complexion, and even the "mad mile" was no longer considered a pleasant pastime. So it was generally decided upon to give us all more vigorous exercise — and that is how the big attack started.

Midsummer Nights' Dream? It certainly seemed like it. As we moved up, nature covered shell holes and crippled trees with the kind veil of darkness, millions of glow-worms kept us company, even a nightingale in the distance.

Then... Zero Hour. The sky lit up and the air was filled with the continuous roar of the biggest artillery barrage yet brought into action.

After that, the next seven days saw us in the turmoil of battle. We added steam to an already thick smoke screen as we streaked across the river. We took ridge after ridge, till we found that our ardour had carried us beyond the objective.

At this stage it must be recorded with sincere regret that our Major and both Pl. Officers had become casualties. We have since learned that happily all three officers are now out of danger and all on the way to recovery.

We were first on to the final objective, where we unfortunately lost our Captain, the only remaining officer, through the mistaken ardour of a sniper. Though wounded in the shoulder, he would not go back until he had made sure that the Company had safely consolidated on some high ground. By now we had experienced the grave loss of our Sergt.-Major. Let his memory be honoured by this Company. Then, as later throughout the action, 'Steve and his boys,' our four S.B.'s, did the work of four such as Hercules.

Other Companies boast the capture of a German M.G. position by only one man and other similar exploits. But "Charley" Company went in for bigger prey. One tired, hungry and thirsty private sat dozing in a hedge on patrol one early morning, when suddenly a huge paratrooper turned the corner of the lane. Somehow Tommy's rifle went off and so induced our startled intruder to put his hands up. He turned out to be an officer with a map marking his Brigade H.Q. The latter was visited by the R.A.F. a very short time after the capture!

Danger seemed unknown to some of our lads. One, for instance, would stand up in his slit trench looking for a sniper who continued to chip off the woodwork of the lad's rifle — "Bad Shooting."

Clearing the Hill was like a picnic. We came down with almost more prisoners and equipment than we could manage. Talk about pack mules!...

A well deserved rest was spent visiting Naples and enjoying seven days' leave at Bari.

Coming back from Naples at night was a strange journey indeed. A merry crowd we were, laden with souvenirs and spirits of all descriptions.

Many more stories of adventure remain to be related. But space is short. So let it be enough to say that we have since had quite a job to keep up with Jerry.

Yes, we saw St. Peter's in the distance from the plain, where Hannibal fought the Roman legions. Some of us have even been fortunate to go to Rome itself for a day.

Let us conclude this letter with sincere regret for those who are no longer with us. The Company has lost a great deal in these our comrades. No men were ever more respected for their fortitude and comradeship.

P.S.—We forgot to mention the merry party we had a few nights ago. Canadian tank crews, affiliated to us, joined us in a glass of vino. We made them welcome—and smoked their cigarettes.

"D" Company.

It is regrettably a very long time since the Company contributed to the "Q.O.G.," and this contribution as a result can't hope to do more than give an outline of our activities.

Our first experiences in Italy renewed certain memories, but taught us a good deal we didn't know before. We learnt about Italian mountains, the Italian winter, and, a little, Italian vino. We were unfortunate in the early days in losing Major W. B. Coleman, who had commanded the Company since North African days, at the hands of a Boche patrol. The death of such a bold and energetic commander is deeply regretted by everyone who knew him.

During these early days the Company was brought a distinction by a very successful patrol operation led by the late Lt. S. B. Smith, M.C., another sad loss to the Company, whose immediate award was not notified until after he was killed in action during the battle preceding the fall of Cassino.

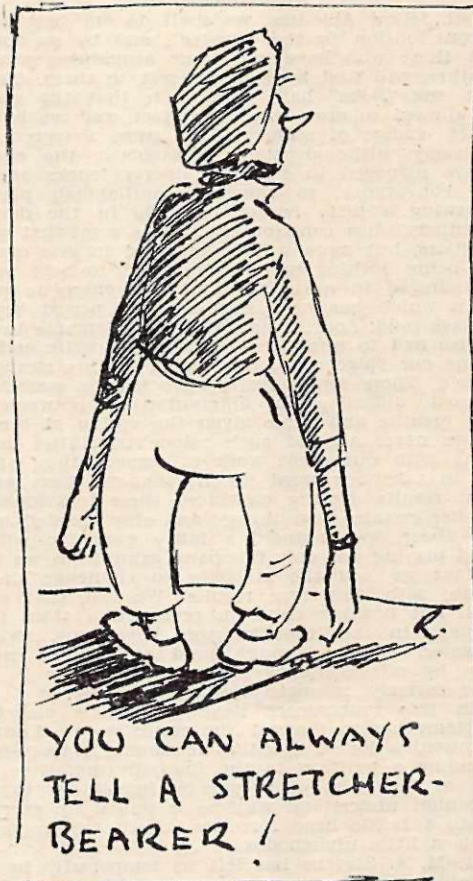


We saw out the winter with spells in several different positions of varying degrees of discomfort, with the usual rest positions in between. Then the Company, now commanded by Major H. P. Towers-Minors, embarked in May on a more energetic form of warfare. We saw plenty of action both before and after the fall of Rome, and quite a lot of Italy. In one of these actions Major Towers-Minors was wounded and for a short time "D" Company lost its identity and was combined with "B."

From these battles we have great pleasure in congratulating Cpl. Dexter, who was wounded and received the immediate award of the Military Medal. So much greater is our regret in having to follow this with the announcement of his death in action during recent fighting.

Reformed, the Company came under command of Major J. H. Brock, and after a welcome period of rest and refitting the Battalion came North to join in the battle again.

During this rest period we had the novelty of living in billets in a monastery, very convenient for a rifle company, and leaving with us as a lasting impression of the hardihood of the monks, whose departure, we gather, was due more to the presence of Boche than to the lack of home comforts.



We took our share in other battles and learnt, among other things, that the old saying that "Every commander is responsible for his own local protection" is liable to apply to Company H.Q. as much as anyone else, if not more so, and also that a grenade, when thrown, ought to go off with a bang and not just a loud click.

We are now studying the Government's White Paper and are thinking of holding a contest for the highest "demobilisation age"; and hoping that next time we will have a great many activities other than purely warlike ones to report.

BATTALION.

Having recently returned from a course in isolation in one of the more remote parts of the Empire, we are now busying ourselves with preparations for the future and speculating on our next destination.

During their stay amid the frozen wastes, Battalion H.Q. made themselves quite at home in their "circus"; many of their acts were unspectacular, but with Capt. R. J. G. Lee as "ring-master", much livening up was to be observed.

We have had the pleasure of welcoming to our ranks many intakes from several famous regiments, and sincerely hope that their stay with us will be a happy one.

We have a new C.O., who has shown a most keen and searching interest into all our work and other activities; and have bidden farewell to our old C.O., who had seen us through some most difficult times. He has our best wishes in his new unit.

We welcome a newcomer, Captain W. R. Stevens, as Adjutant, and understand he is expecting shortly to have mastered the intricate filing system in the Orderly Room.

This time we have great pleasure in congratulating

Captain (Q.M.) A. Bennett on his eventual entry into matrimonial bliss. We hope all his troubles will be ginger ones, with G.1098 and Station Stores complete.

In conclusion we wish all Battalions everywhere the best of good wishes for a victorious 1945. I.R.P.

"A" Company.

All hail, fellow Able-ites, we shall do our best to make another contribution to the "Buster", and by so doing, we hope that those who have made our acquaintance at some time or other, will find news of interest to them. Since our last effort, the "Nobs" have seen to it that the grass has not been allowed to grow under our feet, and we have seen yet another change of scenery. This time, I regret to say, to our dismay; although some, particularly the aged and infirm, have managed to scrounge liberty trucks and other modes of conveyance, to the most outlandish places, in order to swing a nifty leg or canoodle in the dark. The local "Wrennery" has contributed to this somewhat peculiar state of affairs, but more will be recorded in due course.

There being nothing better than sport to beat boredom, we have indulged in quite a lot of this energetic pastime, included in which has been a substantial period wallowing in thick black mud. Apart from having the elements to defeat, we have also had to nurse the innumerable waifs and strays that became our "pigeon" after arriving in this strange part of the world. These strays really have been a problem, one finding great difficulty in differentiating between those allowed to breathe and those given the option of breathing. However, we never allowed such minor trivialities as those to interfere with our great work of resuscitation; and you will have to take our word for it, that we have achieved magnificent results. Having convinced these individuals that life does offer certain good things, and ably assisted by Sgt.-Instructor Tozer, we produced a fairly good football team. We enjoyed playing not only Company games, but we became so good that we had the audacity to challenge the local Youth Club, with disastrous results. We lost that game 6 goals to 2, but nothing daunted, produced a team to play H.Q. Company in the Inter-Company Knock-out. Swimming through water, wading through mud and slime, and ably backed up by our Company Commander, Major P. C. M. Buckle, we severely trounced H.Q. by 4 goals to 1. Other matches in this tournament have yet to be played, and without attempting to forecast the result we do know that we have caused a lot of speculation among rivals-to-be. Our O.C. is sending a petition to the football committee asking that some of the rules of rugby be introduced to soccer, since he cannot understand why he is pulled up every time he goes into a tackle head foremost, which we are prepared to admit is a little unorthodox.

2nd/Lt. M. A. Stevens has left us temporarily to attend a course calling for strenuous physical ability, and when he rejoins us, we hope his knowledge of the service and its requirements are considerably enriched. Among us, we now have 2/Lt. J. M. A. Shaw (ex-Grenadier Guards) and we hope he enjoys his stay with us. If he can take it in "Our Reg" will fix him up, and we are sure of our ability to make him into a real live fighting man, fit for the Guards, which is a big claim to make. "Our Reg" takes a particular delight in his pupils, even if he is too old, as "The Boy" remarked.

Lieut. R. C. Miller, overtaxed by his arduous duties, volunteered for a brief stay at the hospital, wherefrom he has emerged again, to take over the safe settling of all barrels, beer, strong and light, and to his tender care. The O.C. safely commends all alcoholic stocks. More capable a barrel guardian could never be found, and Lieut. R. C. Miller wishes it to be placed on record that he strongly objects to the Signal Section screwing a telephone into the beer barrel, thereby upsetting the equilibrium of the said beer. Our O.C. has performed many astonishing feats since our last edition, among them playing football, upsetting a "Queen Bee," indenting for Wrens, performing prodigious feats in beer consumption, shooting and wading in ice cold water, and sundry other performances, each one a tribute to his desire to get out of life as much as he can before the best things run out.

Our C.S.M. in our previous issue had left us to take over the reins of H.Q. Company, and being duly left in the lurch, yours truly has had to carry on. Promotion, of course, is taboo, and consequently odd cans have made their way into the office by devious means, through the door, via the Adjutant and R.S.M., and an occasional "please explain why". However, with something a little more definite to work on, such cans could possibly be avoided, but being torn between the devil and the deep blue sea, it is a bit thick to commit oneself, don't you think? "Nigger" Field has ably taken over the Colour Bloke's job, and if the "Q" Staff stuck to their original intentions, etc., etc., he would be quite happy. How-

ever, he has a buckshee crown, worsted, small, tucked away, and hopes that one day, in not too many years' time, he will be able to stick it in the appropriate place.

Strange sights have been seen in our vicinity, strange things have been heard, which I suppose is not too unusual when a Cadre is in progress, but for our own peace of mind, we were glad when it came to an end. Needless to say, "Able" Company supplied two of the instructors, and we congratulate them on the excellent results which were the outcome of the cadre. We would also like to add our congratulations to the pupils from this Company who came out of the ordeal with flying colours. "Gally" is now "flat out" for his next course, the "pukka do", and he has certainly done his best to drive our very select Sergeants' Mess into the mad-house by his strange utterances in his sleep, knowledge tests in the Mess with "Our Reg" during the letter writing session. We would like to take this opportunity of congratulating "Paddy" Riley on gaining his third stripe. Likewise we extend a hearty welcome to our new "Cookie", Sergt. Collins, who has taken over from the immortal "Robbo".

There is little else that I can record at the present time, so this quarter's contribution must come to an end. If the "Buster" appears in time, here's wishing all readers a very happy Christmas, and let's hope that the day we are all waiting for is part of the New Year we are about to emerge into. S.G.H.

"B" Company.

Once again we have torn ourselves away from our rural surroundings and settled ourselves in yet another new home. The contrast is even greater than was the case in our previous move.

Some of our members, no doubt thinking of stations where they stayed for more than five minutes, are laying the blame at the door of our C.Q.M.S., C/Sgt. Cook. Since he joined us we have certainly embarked on some tours.

Prior to the move, we said au revoir to many stalwarts who had been with us for a considerable time. We trust that they find their present billets as good as those they left. We are always very pleased to hear from them, so, if any of them chance to see the "Buster" we hope they will respond to the invitation.

To take their place, many newcomers arrived from every direction. To-day, they can hardly be called "newcomers". They have worked together with a zest and enthusiasm that has made them old comrades. Several have become absorbed into various employments. Two especially, Pte. Heslop, as Pay Clerk, and Pte. Gwilliam in the Company Stores, have very much endeared themselves with their oft-repeated "Down to seven bob a week, you," and "Sold out; chum — haven't got any".

Neither must we forget our gallant C.S.M. Although not so well known in this Regiment, he has devoted the best part of his life to the welfare of the lads in khaki, and, in this Company, has proved himself to be very popular. May C.S.M. Pittaway long remain with us.

Since we arrived here, three of our members, L/Cpls. Cohen, Jeffery and Le Page have forsaken us for the glamour of the Signals Section. We have also lost several members to Sp. Company. The suggestion that these transfers took place to reduce the strength of "B" Company soccer team has been expressed. This hope was dashed to the ground one day last week when our gallant team commenced playing a team from the Carrier Platoon. Whether the "Bs" showed themselves a little too good, we don't quite know, but the result was that the ball burst, and the game had to be abandoned. We hope that L/Cpl. Cohen and Pte. Dewey, among others, will be as successful in the realm of football with their new Companies as they were when they represented "B" Company. We promise them a good game when they meet us as opponents.

One of the most interesting events had been the interior decoration campaign, which caused quite a stir at the time. The sight of the clerks distemping their office caused the Orderly Sergeant to wonder whether he had had a few too many in the Mess. Since their supreme effort, they have never really recovered!

It is understood that Cpl. Gamble, being rather jealous of their handiwork, is now prowling round the Company Lines with a paint pot and brush, camouflaging everything in sight with "Invicta Blue".

Recently three of our members have been appointed L/Cpls. We wish L/Cpls. Breden, Kimber and Thom success in their new rank, and express the hope that they attain still higher steps on the ladder of success.

We are hoping that Mr. Dalton, of the Board of Trade, does not forget to include various checks in the clothing materials for personnel on their release. Lieut. M. H. Marzham,

our respected Company Second in Command, is taking a very great interest in them at the present time.

On the other hand, Lieut. Riddle is causing quite a sensation (especially with his batman) by his zest in experimenting with different types of mud as camouflage for his battle dress.

Lieut. D. N. Fox is taking much delight in catering for our inner man. He belongs to the school of thought that believes there is no food without fire!

Apprehension is rife amongst the Company as to the new ideas 2/Lieut. G. M. Young may induce them to try out on his return from Battle School. They are all hoping their "Release Group D Day" arrives before then.

L/Cpl. Wicks, our pet virtuoso, after a short sojourn with Sp. Company, has now proceeded to a Pre-O.C.T.U. establishment. We wish him every success.

All members of "B" Company wish to extend their deep sympathy to the widow of No. 6341601 Pte. Saunders, T., on her husband's recent death as the result of an accident.

Summing up, we can say that, apart from the move to our present station, life has been very quiet work; not forgetting duties, guards and fatigues, have proceeded smoothly and uneventfully under the leadership of Captain W. Grimshaw. In the next issue, we hope to have more news for all ex-members and friends of "B" Company, and take this opportunity of wishing them all good hunting and a safe return.

"BASH-ON."

"C" Company.

We welcome Captain B. J. R. Stoneham as Company Commander, who has returned to the U.K. after eleven years in India. We hope his stay will be a happy and successful one.

C.S.M. C. Roberts, M.M., has, after many years in the Army, at last joined a fine Regiment. He seems to have settled down quite happily with us, and we hope he will stay with us for many moons.

It is with regret that we said goodbye to C/Sgt. Williams, also a new addition to the Battalion since last going to press. We wish him good luck in his new over-worked position. In his place we welcome C/Sgt. Sibley.

Many characters have joined us of late. Pte. Wesley, who spends all day and night on his electric plant, has tried on many occasions to electrocute Captain Mulhall while in the act of changing over the bulbs in the Officers' Mess. We hope his grandson doesn't grow up with the same evil intentions. "Pop" Pavey seems to be in his element in the cookhouse braving the wind and rain in a P.T. vest. We wonder if he is trying to get another mention added to his already long row of "gongs" and oak leaves.

2/Lieut. Shaw left us to go to "A" Company. We wish him good luck, and that someday soon he will rejoin us to get our educational scheme under way again.

The Company football team has exhibited itself only once so far, in a friendly game with "Dog" Company. With all due respects we drew the game with an already well-tried out team, one all. "Dog" Company beat "Able" Company 4-3, "Able" Company beat someone else, and so on, so we would like to warn the Battalion, especially "Sp." Company, that we have already decided to win the knock-out. Congratulations to Pte. Slyman on his excellent goal, which gave us an early lead.

"D" Company.

Having been allocated a position somewhere South of the North Pole, it is with some reluctance that we emerge from hibernating, and make this noble effort to contribute to the Gazette.

We feel that it is necessary to give a short description of our place of residence before dealing with more intimate matters.

Emerging from our Igloos, we are at once struck (literally by hailstones) by the amazing panorama that unfolds itself before our gaze. To the north, west and south we are confronted by hills for the most part heather covered, and until one attempts to walk over them, they appear to be quite inviting. However, woe to the bold men of Dog Company who attempt to. What appears to be heather from the distance is nothing more than bog, and in consequence the demand for blanco has been quite considerable. Here and there hidden away in the hills are lochs which invite the fishermen to try their luck. To the east we face the sea, and on moonlight nights it has a very attractive appearance. However, owing to the lack of suitable company, moonlight walks are at a premium.

We welcome as Company Commander Major C. H. B. Rule and Captain A. White as second-in-command. Lieut. B. W. Barnett has been in charge of the Training Platoon. Sgt.-Major Hackman has performed as our C.S.M.

It is suggested that the rivalry that exists between these four over their ability to hit anything with a .22 rifle, should be brought to a head and settled once and for all, or else there will never be any peace as long as this Company exists.

We take our hats off to the men who have taught us the difficult art of tickling trout, and in consequence have provided us with extra rations. We are not so sure, however, that the real experts first dam up the streams and then just wait for the poor fish to appear. However, it works, and who are we to argue the point with obvious masters?

Housey-housey is our chief amusement, and passes many a long evening. We all started off on equal footing, but of late the A.C.C., under the able leadership of Cpl. Voyce, have succeeded in cornering most of the successful cards.

The Company football team, under the joint captaincy of Pte. Ball and Pte. Bateman, did well in their preliminary matches, but were knocked out of the Inter-Company Cup Competition in the first round. We extend congratulations to Ptes. Carling and Bateman on being selected to play for the Battalion.

The darts tournament was won by Pte. Hayward, with Pte. Carling as a runner-up. The Sergt.-Major still considers that he is really the champion, and blames his lack of success on to the M.O., who inoculated him earlier in the day.

We send our best wishes to all.

"GONE TO THE DOGS."

Old Comrades' Correspondence

LONDON BRANCH.

Meetings of the London Branch have been held regularly on the last Sunday of the month, and although attendances have been small, a lively interest has been maintained in the activities of the Branch.

The outstanding topic of discussion since the last issue of the "Gazette" has been the presentation of the Freedom of Maidstone to the Regiment. The event was looked forward to with keen anticipation by those members able to be present. They were not disappointed. It was a ceremonious occasion which will live long in their memories. More able pens than mine will have already described the actual ceremony. How proud we Old Comrades felt, particularly when we remembered that we had, in some small part, contributed to the honour and privilege now granted to the Regiment.

The feeling that we had helped to earn the honour was endorsed by the very especial cheer given to the Old Comrades during the march past by those same citizens who had given us the Freedom of their town. The pride of achievement was ours! Even the last minute downpour of rain could not damp our spirits after that. Our thanks to all who contributed to make it such a red letter day for Old Comrades. It was a day which will not be forgotten by any one present. To those who provided for our material comforts in the shape of eats and drinks our especial thanks. How such a lunch and tea could be provided in such times of rationing is beyond our ken, but it was well arranged, and well taken.

Once again during a war period, the time has come to send through the medium of the "Gazette," best of Christmas greetings to all members of the Regiment, wherever they may be, on land, on sea or in the air. A safe and speedy return.

W. G. WHIFFEN.

A motion was put to the members present, and it was suggested that the Secretary be asked to write to Major Brooks, Officer Commanding Regimental Depot Party, the Barracks, on behalf of those members who attended the ceremony at Maidstone on October 11th, 1944. The members express their appreciation of the hospitality and cordial manner for everything done to make their visit as pleasant as possible. Many thanks to the Sergeants at the Depot.

JUST A MEMORY.

A neutral, visiting Berlin, was curious about the food situation. He turned to a native, who was acting as his guide, and asked:

"Is it true that Germans are eating horse meat?"

"Ach!" reminisced the Nazi, "those were the good old days."

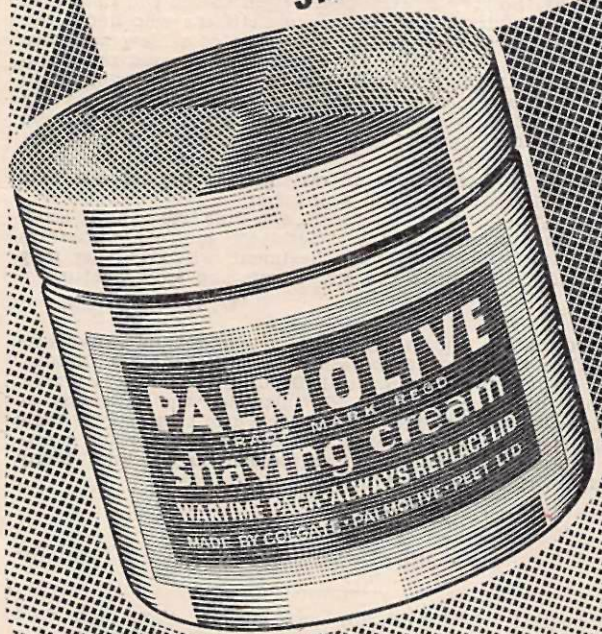
"UNCONDITIONAL

SURRENDER"

**BY BILLIONS OF BRISTLES
EVERY DAY**

to the softening
smoothing soothing lather
of

**PALMOLIVE
SHAVING CREAM**



1/6 & 2/6 Including Tax



If you had been a soldier in Flanders in 1702

You would have lived hard—bread your only daily ration—meat twice a week if you were lucky, and the cost of it, and of your clothing, stopped from your pay; other necessities being obtained from a dubious company of camp followers—sutlers—who grew fat by selling inferior goods at extortionate prices.

You might have met Kit Ross, a renowned sutleress, who stole pigs and poultry to sell to the troops, turning her waggon into a "wet canteen" in the evenings, and doing her own "chucking out" to the accompaniment of the foulest language.

It was because of the policy of graft and exploitation practised by private traders against the soldier, that the Service authorities devised the constitution and system of control of Naafi, their object being to ensure that no private individual should benefit from the soldier's trade, and that all profits should be returned to the Forces either in cash rebates, discounts or amenities.

N.A.A.F.I.

NAVY, ARMY & AIR FORCE INSTITUTES

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THE SEQUENCE OF THE YEARS

By CECIL L. NORMAN.

[This article is inspired by and based on one that appeared in the "Sunday Graphic" of early September, 1944, headed "Anniversaries."]

An anniversary is the yearly celebration of an event that we commemorate. It recalls some important experience, and there are two such that we always remember, our own birthday and Christmas Day. Another glorious though vain day of remembrance is 11th November. Let us hope that the new Peace date, when it comes, will mark the completion of the work then done in 1914-18, supplement and consolidate the meaning of Armistice Day into something permanent for the good of humanity.

September 3rd, 1939. It was Sunday morning, Big Ben chimed, and at 11.15 a.m., through the wireless, came the voice of the Prime Minister saying that once again Great Britain and her Empire were at war with Germany. The implications of Mr. Neville Chamberlain's words were dramatically hammered in by the sounding of the sirens. Then we waited.

September 3rd, 1940. What was our position now? There was no doubt as to the answer. We stood in critical danger; danger of destruction as a free nation—and alone. Poland had long since gone, France had sued for terms, and Hitler, with his lackey Mussolini, bestrode Europe like a colossus. In the Middle East General Wavell was struggling against overwhelming odds. Malta, the focal point of the Mediterranean, was hard beset. Our Navy was at a life or death struggle with the U-boats. The sea lanes were scattered with the wreckage of our Merchant Fleet. Finally, every port of Europe, Hamburg to Brest, was full of shipping waiting to cross to our shores, to carry an invasion army the like of which the world had never seen before. As Mr. Churchill, by then our Prime Minister, stated to the House of Commons, the next week or two might prove very important in our history. How characteristic of the man that remark when he knew we were all but powerless to resist and in danger of national extinction! He reminded the House and nation of Drake and Nelson, and said that he expected every man, woman and child would do his or her duty with special care and pride. It was the time of the Battle of Britain. Who will forget the climax of that aerial attack with 185 enemy bombers destroyed? Few realised at the time that that great victory, brought about by a handful of young men flying Spitfires, was the first great turning point of the war. "Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few."

3rd September, 1941. Was Britain doomed? Hitler and perhaps the rest of the world thought so. Yet "the gods make mad those whom they wish to destroy," and on 21st June the Fuehrer allowed his intuition full sway and declared war on Russia. He signed his own death warrant. Eight months of remorseless bombing had taken place, and, although the endurance of the British and, especially, of the citizens of London, had won the admiration of the world, yet even our American friends wondered if we could survive. Although our Navy was supremely efficient, and people recalled the "Ajax" and the sinking of the "Graf Spee," yet what of our military record! Dunkirk had been a brilliant reverse, but what of our ventures in Norway, Greece, or our failure to reach a conclusion in North Africa! Dogged courage as shown in the holding of Tobruk was not enough to win a war. The U.S.A. herself was at wordy warfare within her own boundaries, Interventionals v. Isolationists. Across the Atlantic the German influence was very strong, especially in South America. The clouds over the East were glowering. Then the Japanese achieved in a short 30 minutes early one Sunday morning in December what President Roosevelt had been trying to do for two years. Pearl Harbour brought the U.S.A. hot foot into the war. Hitler's death warrant had been countersigned, and that by his own allies.

3rd September, 1942. Britain was now an arsenal working to capacity, an unsinkable aircraft carrier, animated by her great leader with one, and only one, desire to come to a decision with the foul enemy once and for ever. A great citizen army had been formed. There were new weapons, and withal there was a new hope. The Allies had had fresh disasters in the East; Singapore had fallen to the Japanese, and the Americans had lost the Philippines. The Dutch East India Empire was crumbling. Yet we knew the sky was brightening despite the great Russian retreat. On 27th October the tide of war was stemmed and turned by General Montgomery and his 8th Army at El Alamein, while the Germans were halted at Stalingrad and utterly defeated.

3rd September, 1943. The tide was flowing faster still and ever faster to victory. True the enemy hit back, but everywhere he was on the defensive crouching behind his Western Wall. In Eastern Europe the Russians were everywhere advancing, cleansing their land of the foul invaders. Now Africa was cleared, Malta relieved, Sicily taken, and on that same day of September Italy invaded. At home Britain and Northern Ireland were full to bursting with troops and the weapons of war—Americans, Americans in jeeps.

4th September, 1944. Things were moving faster still. Paris freed, the German 7th Army swept from France, Brussels freed—the work of British and Canadian troops from Normandy and of the great drive of the American forces for the Rhine—and the Russians were at the eastern gates of Germany. Those who lived in South-Eastern England had endured the flying bomb attack and remained firm. What a change of scene!

History will give the answer for this signal reversal of fortune. We can now but grope as in a glass darkly. Perhaps it lies in the genius of our people and in that love of freedom which animates all people of goodwill upon the earth. However we do know that under God we are fighting for the right and all that makes life fair.

What does 3rd September, 1945, hold for us?

ALEXANDER CLUB, ROME.

N.A.A.F.I./E.F.I. Creates Palatial Club for British Soldiers Overseas.

By CAPTAIN R. J. SHILLADY, R.A.S.C., E.F.I.

Rome, city of outstanding buildings, ancient and modern, has excelled her best in the modern sphere with the C.I.M. building in Via Venti Settembre, construction of which was begun in 1941 and finished in 1942. It is doubtful that any similar building has been erected since the outbreak of war.

Designed as a department store with modern conceptions of salesmanship, it was provided with lounges, tea rooms, bars and cinema for shoppers. It may well be imagined how adaptable this building was to the requirements of a N.A.A.F.I. club for the Allied Forces.

The ground floor of this eight-storey building covers more than an acre and, with the exception of two floors, the whole building is used as a club, conducted by N.A.A.F.I.'s E.F.I.

Externally, the building is of travertine block and oxydised steel. For its internal decoration the promoters had employed Signor Gunther, Europe's leading decorative architect, whose services were retained by N.A.A.F.I.'s E.F.I. in developing the high standard of furnishing.

Every section of every floor has its own scheme of decoration, the only standard features being the staircase of marble, with chromium banisters and cut glass rails, mosaic flooring, and concealed lighting.

The decorations on the upper floors include mahogany walls with leather soundproof doors, walls panelled in white beech, and skirtings of chinaware.

Adaptable though the building was as a N.A.A.F.I. club, much preliminary work was necessary, enlarging the all-electric kitchens, installing showers and baths and extending the water supply system.

Let us look at the club as it is today.

The soldier enters by the ground floor, the whole extent of which is taken up by the restaurant, where 2,000 lunches and 1,500 teas are served daily. This restaurant has mosaic floors, marble pillars, playing fountain, and widely spaced tables draped with snow-white linen. Music is provided by Peter Barone, formerly with Mantovani, and his orchestra.

On the first floor are two snack bars, and a wine lounge serving Italy's finest wines. Here, too, are 150 tables, each with four chairs, while armchairs line the windowed lounge extending the full length of the building, formerly a show-room for mannequin parades.

On the second floor there is another snack bar, a War Map Section, and a photographic studio operated by Rome's foremost portrait photographer.

The War Map Section is of perpetual interest, with moving fronts plotted hourly as radio news comes in on the house broadcasting system with its 64 loud-speaker units. The photographic studio is of no less interest and the mails must surely be kept busy with photographs for home.

The third floor is mainly devoted to music, and here, between lunch sessions, Peter Barone plays a continuous programme of request music. A section of this floor is reserved for quiet games such as cards, chess, dominoes and draughts.

On the fourth floor is a gift shop which, despite diffi-

culties in the sixth year of war, displays attractive gifts for homefolk. On this floor also four billiards tables, six table-tennis tables and a battery of dart-boards attract hundreds of players. A clever caricaturist has been given a room on this floor and Servicemen sit for five-minute sketches.

We leave the main floors and ascend to the fifth floor, where we come to a series of rooms in which the pianist may sit and play by himself or for his particular friends. Four pianos in separate rooms are maintained for the enjoyment of individual enthusiasts. Gramophone and radio fans may indulge their musical whims in soundproof rooms.

Here, too, are rest rooms, writing rooms, well-stocked library and the club chapel, adjoining which Church of England and Roman Catholic padres have offices.

The sixth floor contains a modern hair-dressing saloon with fourteen chairs for men and four cubicles for the Women's Services, as well as a shoe-shine parlour. Nearby are a cinema, showing new films and topical "shorts," and an ice-cream and soda bar.

Twenty-four shower baths are found in the basement, and the adjoining clothes valeting service completes the picture.

General Sir H. Maitland Wilson, Mr. Clement Attlee, Sir James Grigg, Lady Freyburg and the Archbishop of Westminster are among the distinguished visitors to Rome's N.A.A.F.I. Club.

What does the soldier think? Apart from all else, they manage to consume over 30,000 cups of tea daily. At three cups per head this means 10,000 soldiers use the club each day.

Two R.A.F. men recently had a week's leave in the Rome area. They spent each day of their leave in the club from opening to closing time.

The games rooms, music rooms, library, cinema, reading and writing rooms, and many other features are conducted by members of the W.V.S., who have volunteered to run the social side of N.A.A.F.I. Clubs overseas. Their constant contact with the troops lends an irresistible touch of home. Each W.V.S. member has shoals of letters thanking her for the good times enjoyed in the club. The W.V.S. maintain correspondence with the troops' relatives at home, and receive grateful replies from wives, mothers and sweethearts in the United Kingdom.

A new feature introduced by the W.V.S. is the provision of conducted tours by motor-coach to Rome's historical show-places.

The N.A.A.F.I. E.F.I. policy is to provide bigger and better clubs for O.R.'s with every amenity in all large cities where British and Dominion Service men gather in large numbers. In the Mediterranean theatre N.A.A.F.I. first opened the Pinder Club, Algiers, then the Palace Club at Naples, acclaimed as the largest O.R.'s club in the world. Now, according to some, the N.A.A.F.I. Club in Rome—the Alexander Club—has surpassed even the Naples Palace. As our victorious Armies liberate other cities N.A.A.F.I. E.F.I. will be close behind, keen to provide bigger and better clubs for the soldiers of those Armies and their comrades of the other Fighting Services.

THOUGHTS ON CHEVRONS.

The Office Boy was bored to tears,
And being very young in years
He hadn't learnt enough of tact
To hide this rather trying fact.

He cast about for something new—
For something fresh that he could do
To occupy his restless mind
And brighten up the daily grind.

But let us briefly take a pause
And probe into the basic cause
Of why the Office Boy was slacking
And work for him so sadly lacking.

He worked in Whitehall. Where?—Ah, well!
Security forbids me tell.
Suffice to say from here, the War
In triplicate is fed from store.

He answered bells and took in tea
To thirsty men who toiled to see
That paper flowed in such profusion
And guaranteed a nice confusion.

There was a picture on the wall
Inside the vasty entrance hall—
A soldier of a bygone war
Whose sleeves were set with stripes galore.

In silent thought he sat and stared
At such a man, who all had dared
To win to fame, had served enough
To carry chevrons on his cuff.

Long Service—"I've been here a year,
I'd like to make it very clear
To Rookies, when they first arrive,
That service counts, if you survive."

He broached this matter to his Boss;
The General,—rather at a loss
To think of any other plan
Said "Yes"—that's how the thing began.

For every year completed, mind,
You get one stripe, buff—red behind.
To show it off, worn on the right
Above the cuff—a pretty sight.

And as the years roll on and on
The stripes increase—until upon
The sleeve there's such a fine array
As any tiger might display.

But someone spread the word around
That stripes were going by the pound
To show how long you'd been enrolled
As active members of the fold.

The N.F.S. first had a moan,
And asked in somewhat angry tone
Why they were not entitled, too,
To stripes, buff—red behind, when due.

The Home Guard ranks put in a claim
To be included just the same,
For were they not the Home Defence,
The Country's shield in every sense?

Civil Defence, and Women's Corps,
Protested (and it seemed with cause)
That likewise they had served the land
And ought to join the favoured band.

'Till in the end the Powers that be
Were quite unable, as we see,
To find just where to draw the line
And everyone drew stripes in fine.

All this, of course, our Office Boy
Knew nought about—in his employ
You never tell the man below
What's going on, as well we know.

His single stripe he proudly wore,
Displayed it grandly at the door
When guests arrived—and it was said
He even took the stripe to bed!

Alas! poor lad! the fates unkind
So oft conceal a sting behind
A smiling face—and fate has such
A sting for him—a cruel touch.

A boy he knew, to whom he'd shown
His stripe with pride, had he but known
One morning came in thro' the door
And on his arm he carried *four*!

He gasped at such an awful sight,
In rage he asked him by what right
He wore those chevrons on his sleeve,
What man had dared to give this leave?

His friend with supercilious smile
Surveyed the single stripe awhile
Then—"Little man, you know my line—
A District Messenger since '39!"

So what with one thing and another
The average chap thinks it's a bother
To sew the earned things on his cuff,
Their value isn't high enough!

BILL BROWN, CORPORAL TWEENIE...AND ME.

THE OLD AND BOLD IN THE HOME GUARD.

As things are, it 'ud be strange if I didn't get a bit reminiscent this time, wouldn't it? Well, to start with at any rate, I shan't be, so there! I guess there's several little bits of news you'd like to hear of our pre-stand-down days.

For instance, there's the '22 matches we've shot, with all sorts of folk Light and Heavy Ack Ack, Commandos (we always beat them), Field Gunners and such like, with varying success.

But it's the "Local Derby" I want to tell you about, between us and our chaps that man the Coast Defence guns and searchlights.

Of course, they're darn lucky—their quarters are in the basement of the Hotel—so they've a posh range (and a ballroom), tho' the rest of the place is shut up, such as isn't knocked to glory by Jerry.

We were one up on 'em, having put 'em to shade at the Drill Hall the week before, following a course of carrots to improve our eyesight. So, a fortnight ago come Thursday, they were all out for our blood on their own ground.

For a start, they got us down there half-an-hour early by some mess up over the time (Goebbelsism, if I'm not mistaken); then, not only did they open the bar half-an-hour earlier than usual, but they had spirits on supply for the first time (a shrewd blow at certain of our good officer-shots); and, lastly, they didn't produce the usual spam sandwiches till the shoot was over (another subtle weapon, if you see what I mean).

Anyhow, in spite of all that, we were neck-and-neck till Numbers 7 went down — not that either side had done anything so far to qualify for the King's Prize —

Our Number 7 was Old Turks, Transport-Social-Subsistence-Officer, and always good for a near-possible; theirs was Corporal (sorry, Bombardier) Quiddieswell (bet you can guess his nickname!); a diminutive little devil that takes "fives" in boots — the same that the Battery S.M. averred loudly one parade night had been suckled on a gin bottle. He's put up more possibles than anyone in the unit, but a bit erratic at times. We tried by taking 'im in to the bar to make it one of those times, but he didn't bite, or rather, swallow.

I won't dwell on our fade-out; no, black-out is more like it. There was their bloke putting up bulls like a Reading Cattle Sale, and poor Old Turks getting worse and worse....2 more shots to go....

77 against, 51 for.

Then 87 against, 57 for, and Old Turks, usually as calm as a moonlit sea, using most horrible language....

.... and then the final shot....8 against, 6 for, and there we were, 32 points down on one event!

Numbers 8 and 9 increased it to a final triumph by 47 points, which shows what high versus low morale will do for you, you see.

We got our own back on Old Turks, tho', for letting us down—ordered two taxis in his name to take us home!

Then there was the incident of the "enfant terrible," as Old Tweenie put it. "Holy" Barnes was the hero of that. It was the next to last night that we did the Coast Patrols—dark as Hades and damn nearly as hot (a heck of a storm did break just before dawn).

"Holy" and Ring were on the midnight to two turn on the PUTTY CREEK to DALLY HILL stretch and had 'phoned through the O.K. from No. 4 Coastguard Post, when Ring cocks 'is ear and says:

"If that ain't a footstep on the beach, I'll eat me 'at" (and 'im wearin' a tin 'at at the time, too).

Well, they stop....look....and listen,and there's no doubt about it.... Careful tiny halting steps, like someone feelin' 'is way with 'is feet....and Ring and 'Holy' expecting a mine to go up any minute, and the steps to stop.

But No..... They don't.

So Ring and "Holy" creep up as near to where they think it's coming from as they can; as far as the wire and scaffoldin', &c., will let 'em.

"Alt or I'll fire," says Ring in a lusty whisper.

No reply. But the steps stop.

"Oo are you....Come on, speak up!" hisses "Holy."

"'Spose you think you're smart, don't you?" comes a boyish voice from seawards.

"What the 'ell d'you think you're doin' down there, Come on out of it and keep close to that there groyne or you'll go up in ruddy little bits."

"What'll you do if I don't?"saucy little devil!

"Come and fetch you, and b—y quick," says "Holy."

Well the short of it was that "Holy" scrambles down through the wire and the other obstacles and grabs "his nibs," but he's as slippery as an eel and it's no fault of his that the pair of 'em didn't go up in a shower of shingle. And, by the time they got him up on to the parade, there wasn't much of his pants that wasn't hanging on the wire nor of theirs, neither, for that matter.

"What the devil you were doin' down there....and at this time o' night, too, beats me," says "Holy."

"Well, my Mum says there's a round of cheese out of the wreck at DALLY HILL, washed up just about 'ere, so I thought we could do with it," says Mister Saucy Twelve-Year-Old.

Of course, with torn pants, &c., to explain, 'Holy' and Ring couldn't hide it up or they would have just tanned the little blighter and sent him packing. But, as it was, they had to put in a report and in due time the Beak on the Bench congratulates 'Holy' on his disregard of personal danger and talks serious words to the kid — which didn't hurt like the tanning he got from his father....none other than 'Wezzie', ex-Home Guard, now Coastguard (and still at it, while we're stood-down, ha! ha!).

Can't you imagine what it feels like to us now?.....When you get home from work, you can settle down to the wireless, or the paper.....or go to the pictures if you feel like it!! That's us, now.

No standing patrols, no gutty training nights, no coast patrols, no gun-perimeter guards, no "maintenance of equipment" parades.... Gee, it's good.... Suits me....for the time being, anyway. Praps we shall soon start hankering, and have to find a dog to take for a walk (if the old canteen's still going, o' course).

Tuffy Atkinson came over all poetical (that's what he called it) about it the last official training night we had.

This is what he inflicted on us....

He'd not get lost in ARRAS.

He guessed he knew his YPRES.

In the days of horse-drawn limbers....

When he'd never heard of JEEPS.

And how about the armour?

What changes now, since when

He "over-the-topped" at DELVILLE

When "tanks" first met man's ken!

Blindfold he'd handle a LEWIS

(Had never touched a BREN).

Was acquainted with a VICKERS....

And now he's got a STEN,

....And THAT he'll soon be losing;

STOOD-DOWN he's soon to be;

Just one more p'rade in the offing,

As far as he can see.

Four-and-a-half years the FIRST time,

Four-and-a-half in THIS.

He's done his bit in BOTH lots....

Now he waits for the word "DISMISS."

Au 'voir....Happy Christmas....I'll try and let you know how the "Stand-down" Parade, etcetera, etcetera, went off.... especially the etceteras.

I've an idea it might give me a chance of a word or two about some of your old pals, including BILL BROWN, CORPORAL TWEENIE.....and, possibly, ME.

"Kent Messenger"

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Advertisements

BATTLE FOR THE SCHELDT

The interlude between the conclusion of the Allied pursuit after their victory in Normandy and their general offensive in mid-November was mainly devoted to a subsidiary but vital operation for the clearing of the lower course of the Scheldt. At the end of the pursuit a brilliant dash by General Roberts' 11th British Armoured Division had secured the port and city of Antwerp intact. This was a great prize with its 26 miles of docks and its peace-time intake of 300,000 tons of goods per week, but as it stood it was of no immediate value to us, for the entry to it by the Scheldt estuary was barred by the Germans. They held positions on the south bank between the river and the Leopold Canal and also the islands of Walcheren and South Beveland to the north of the main channel, further to the east they also held a large area of territory on the south bank of the Maas right up to the suburbs of Antwerp itself. The clearing of these approaches was the task of the 1st Canadian and 2nd British Armies during October and the first half of November. It was inevitably a slow and difficult business, for the country, cut up by a network of dykes and canals, lent itself admirably to a stubborn foot-by-foot defence, and the enemy troops, who fought stoutly and skillfully, made the very most of their advantages throughout.

The first attempt to clear the enemy from the area between the Leopold Canal and the river was made by the Canadians early in October, but though several small bridgeheads on the north bank of the canal were made and held, it was not found possible to widen or deepen them sufficiently to form a large enough jumping off area for a big-scale attack. Better success attended two simultaneous thrusts further to the east. One of these cleared the area south of the river up to Terneuzen, west of which a deep gulf intervened between the Canadians' new positions from what became known as the Breskens pocket north of the Leopold Canal. The other thrust swept the Germans back out of the northern suburbs of Antwerp right across the Dutch frontier to the mouth of the causeway connecting the mainland with the island of South Beveland, which was reached on October 10th.

At the same time a small-scale combined operation gave the Canadians a firm foothold in the Breskens pocket itself. A force was ferried across the Terneuzen Gulf and put ashore half way between there and Breskens, and though the hostile reaction was swift, vigorous and the fighting stubborn the footing was consolidated and quickly extended to a depth of two miles. This landing was at once followed up by a crossing of the Leopold Canal at its eastern end, and the troops engaged here pressed forward to link up with it. From this moment the fate of the German 64th Division holding the pocket was sealed; despite the continued savagery of its resistance right to the end, Breskens itself fell on October 22nd, and the German remnants were gradually pushed westwards towards the sea until at last they were cornered and destroyed in the area around Knocke. The southern bank of the Scheldt Estuary was thus liberated.

On the north bank the Germans devoted their main efforts to denying to the Canadians the entry into South Beveland by the causeway, and the villages commanding the mouth of the causeway changed hands several times before the road into the island was finally cleared. Once this was done, the conquest of South Beveland proved to be easier than might have been expected; the enemy troops were apparently disheartened by the failure of their efforts to bar the entrance, in which a number of good airborne units, fighting as infantry, had been engaged. All the conditions were in favour of stubborn resistance, for large areas of the island had been flooded to a depth of water varying from a few inches to three feet, and the hostile positions on the few patches of high ground left above water should have been easily held. But the conquest of the island was completed with little delay or difficulty; many of the enemy being apparently intent on escaping from it rather than defending it.

Meanwhile, on the mainland, the right wing of the Canadian 1st Army and the left wing of the British 2nd Army launched a combined offensive to clear the whole of the south bank of the Maas. This, too, met somewhat patchy resistance on the part of the enemy. Breda and Tilburg were quickly taken, and the enemy retired from Gertruidenberg across the river, blowing up the bridge behind him as he went. Around Moerdijk and Willemstadt, further to the west, the opposition was more stubborn, strong rearguards being left to hold bridgeheads to cover the retreat of the main bodies; and even after the bridges here had been blown up, these men continued a

fanatical and apparently pointless resistance until they were finally overrun and destroyed almost to a man.

It only remained to complete the clearance of the Scheldt estuary for traffic by capturing Walcheren. This island, too, had for the most part been flooded after the bombs of the R.A.F. had burst the seawall on its western side, and the enemy only held positions on what was left of this seawall, in the main towns of Flushing and Middleburg, and in a few smaller villages still left high and dry above the inundations. A converging attack upon Walcheren was planned by Canadian troops ferried across the Scheldt from the Breskens area, and by British Commando troops put ashore by the Navy on the western seawall. It was an extremely daring and difficult operation, for on the actual day the heavy air support which had been part of the scheme of attack could not be provided owing to bad weather, and the only covering fire was furnished by the small naval assault craft armed with mortars and rockets, which closed in to the shore and took on the heavier German batteries at point blank range. Losses among these little ships and their personnel were severe, but the task set them was accomplished; the commando troops were transported through the gap in the seawall to land on the narrow strip of dry ground on the far side of it, and worked their way steadily through the German defences, storming them one by one, despite the fierce resistance of the garrisons. The Canadian landings in the Flushing area went equally well, and in a few days the island was completely freed of the enemy. It now only remained to sweep the channel of the mines and other obstacles with which the Germans had strewn it. The shipping route up to Antwerp was then open, and the Allies secured a vital base port, the intake capacity of which will more than suffice for all their needs as long as the war in the West continues.

This brief account can of necessity make no adequate mention of the difficulties and hardships of these operations. The weather throughout was wet, cold and cloudy; the low-lying ground in which they took place was waterlogged, and our men had to wade through and stand for hours in water knee or even waist deep while preparing for or delivering an attack. The enemy positions, dug deep into the dykes, could often only be captured by the slow and difficult process of working along other dykes round their flanks and into their rear. Artillery could find positions only on the roads, or in some cobbled or paved farmyard nearby. In parts the hostile defences comprised concrete casements and command posts very cunningly camouflaged and pillboxes strong enough to stand up to heavy bombardment. The bad weather practically deprived the Allied troops of their best support weapon, the co-operating air squadrons, which could rarely operate and then only for short periods at a time. Most of the fighting men lived in wet clothes for days on end, yet the sickness rate seems to have been low and the morale high throughout. The whole operation was first and last and all the time an infantry battle, and in all their gruelling and arduous tasks the Canadian, British and Polish infantry proved themselves better fighting men than their enemies.

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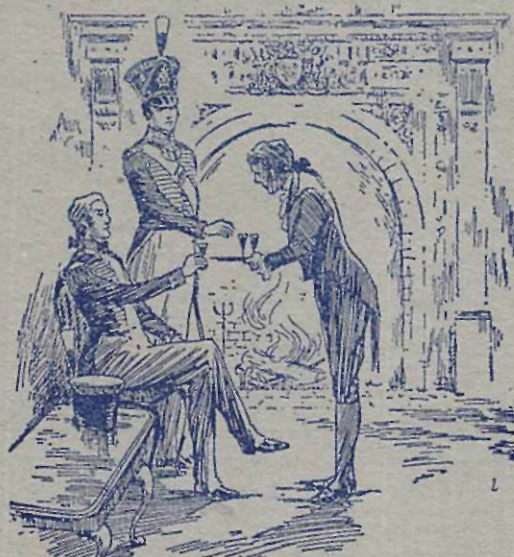
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