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THE IRON DUKE

*THE MAGAZINE OF
THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON'S REGT
(WEST RIDING)*

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The
REGIMENTAL MAGAZINE
of
THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON'S
REGIMENT
(WEST RIDING)

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Private R. H. BURTON, V.C.

[Photo by courtesy of the Daily Sketch]

THE IRON DUKE

EDITORIAL.

The hope expressed in our last issue that the war in Europe might be ended by the time this number was published has not been fulfilled, and with the turn events have now taken it may well be that another year of this dire conflict may have to be borne.

This number, if not quite so dramatic as the last, contains further interesting battle news from Battalions of the Regiment in three theatres of war. The news from a Battalion in the B.L.A. is brought nearly up to date, though unfortunately the account of a most gallant and magnificently fought action in Holland is of too recent a date to be published, for reasons of security.

The Battalion in Italy has again been in action, and though we are able to publish a military observer's story of it, unfortunately we have so far not had a more personal account from the Battalion. We however are able to record further descriptions of the fighting in the Anzio Beach-head by the officer who commanded the Battalion there, and who is now serving in another role.

From the Battalion in the Far East has come some news of the past two years, and an explanation of the long silence from that quarter. We are also very glad to be able to publish a belated account of the Battalion's part in the retreat from Burma in 1942.

On Saturday, 18th November, the Colonel of the Regiment met in Leeds, and entertained to luncheon, the 18 Battalion commanders of units of the Home Guard affiliated to the Regiment, and discussed with them plans for the formation of Old Comrades' Associations.

Since the above was written, news has come of two new honours for the Regiment.

Pte. R. H. Burton, of a Battalion of the Regiment serving in Italy, has been awarded the Victoria Cross for his bravery in the attack on Monte Cece on 8th October, 1944, the citation of which appears below. We offer on behalf of readers of THE IRON DUKE our heartiest congratulations to Pte. Burton, who has added another honour to the annals of the Regiment. We may add here a tribute to the Battalion, in which Pte. Burton is serving, from Field-Marshal Sir Harold Alexander, who in a letter from Allied Force Headquarters thanking for a copy of the last number of THE IRON DUKE, wrote:—"Your old Regiment has played a very distinguished part out here, and I am sure you are very proud of them." On page 39 we record the award of another V.C. to a previous member of the Regiment, the late Sgt. H. V. Turner.

The second honour is the granting of the Freedom of the Borough of Halifax to the Regiment, which is recorded on page 6.

PRIVATE RICHARD HENRY BURTON, V.C.

The King has approved the award of the Victoria Cross to:—
PRIVATE RICHARD HENRY BURTON, The Duke of Wellington's Regiment (West Riding)
(Melton Mowbray).

Two companies of The Duke of Wellington's Regiment moved forward in Italy on October 8 to take a strongly held feature about 1,950ft. high, the capture of which was vital as it dominated all the ground on the main axis of advance.

The assaulting troops made good progress to within 20 yards of the crest, when they came under withering fire from Spandaus on the crest. The leading platoon was held up and the platoon commander was wounded. The company commander took another platoon, of which Private Burton was runner, to assault the crest from which four Spandaus at least were firing. Private Burton rushed forward and, engaging the first Spandau position with his tommy-gun, killed the crew of three. When the assault was again held up by murderous fire from two more machine guns, Private Burton, again showing complete disregard for his own safety, dashed toward the first machine gun, using his tommy-gun until his ammunition was exhausted. He then picked up a Bren gun and, firing from the hip, killed or wounded the crews of the two machine guns. Thanks to his outstanding courage, the company was then able to consolidate on the forward slope of the feature.

The enemy immediately counter-attacked, but Private Burton, in spite of most of his comrades being either dead or wounded, once again dashed forward and directed such accurate fire with his Bren gun that the enemy retired, leaving the feature firmly in our hands. The enemy later counter-attacked again on the adjoining platoon position and Private Burton, who had placed himself on the flank, brought such accurate fire to bear that this counter-attack also failed.

Private Burton's magnificent gallantry and total disregard of his own safety during many hours of fierce fighting in mud and continuous rain were an inspiration to all his comrades.

Private Burton, who is 6ft. 3in. in height, will be 22 on 29th January. Like his father and grandfather, he is a bricklayer. He joined The Northamptonshire Regiment four years ago. He went to North Africa with The Duke of Wellington's, was in Sicily and at Anzio, and has been in constant action in Italy.

Halifax Honours the Regiment.

COUNTY BOROUGH OF HALIFAX.

The Council of the Halifax Corporation at a meeting held on 6th December last were graciously pleased to pass the following resolution :—

“ THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON'S REGIMENT.

“ That in appreciation of the glorious traditions of the Duke of Wellington's Regiment and in recognition of their long and historical association with the County Borough of Halifax, the Council confer upon the Regiment the privilege, honour and distinction of marching through the streets of Halifax on all ceremonial occasions with bayonets fixed, Colours flying and bands playing.

“ That the Common Seal of the Borough be affixed to the Deed of Grant, and that the name of the Regiment be inscribed on a panel in the Town Hall, Halifax.”

This is a great honour which the County Borough propose to confer on us, and it is suggested that a suitable date for the ceremony to take place would be Waterloo Day, 18th June, 1945. The difficulty at the moment is that we have very few of our troops located in the vicinity who would be able to take part in the ceremony. However, our readers will be delighted to know that the Council of our County Borough propose to honour us in this way.

C. J. PICKERING, Colonel,

The Duke of Wellington's Regiment.

REGIMENTAL NEWS

Italy.

THE ASSAULT ON MONTE CECE.

By a MILITARY OBSERVER.

"British troops on Fifth Army's right flank are still fighting hard for the fortified Monte Cece in the direction of Castel Bolognese." This brief announcement conceals a story of fierce attack and staunch defence by The Duke of Wellington's Regiment, a story of three days' desperate fighting in appalling conditions of ground and weather, a story of German stubbornness but of German defeat; of British tenacity and final success.

Monte Cece, 3,000 feet rock mass, dominated the British axis of advance in that sector. Its capture was imperative if the advance was to continue. After a patrol had actually reached the summit, several attempts to capture the feature failed in the face of the extremely strong resistance with which its natural defences were guarded.

At 0200 hours on 7th October, the Duke of Wellington's Regiment made their first assault on the height, "A" Company (Captain A. Burns) attacking from the west, and "B" Company (Captain E. Oliver) from the south. "A" Company made good progress and succeeded in establishing their leading platoons 200 yards from the peak. The enemy's reaction was strongest in the south. As "B" Company advanced along the bare, razor-backed ridge which led to the main feature, they came under extremely heavy machine gun fire from the north-east. For a short time they went on, but dawn was approaching and it was realised that the position would be completely untenable in daylight. The Company withdrew under a heavy artillery smoke screen, with the exception of Lt. R. H. Hoyle and nine men of his platoon who were 20 yards from the peak of Monte Cece when the German fire began. They were unable to get back before the smoke screen lifted, and remained under cover of an overhanging jut of rock.

"A" Company adjusted their positions and held them. Four of their men and an officer who was seriously wounded made their way round to the east of the feature, and these joined Lt. Hoyle. The little force of 13 remained high up on Monte Cece throughout the day of the 7th—the officer, Lt. J. L. O'Sullivan, was evacuated. The slightest movement brought fire from German snipers and machine gunners. It was a long cold day of waiting in driving rain. After dark they left the shelter of the rock, ran the gauntlet of Spandau fire and gained "B" Company's positions with only one casualty. Total casualties at this stage were one killed, five wounded.

At 1530 hours on 8th October the Dukes attacked again from the firm base established by "A" Company on the night 6th-7th. Battalion headquarters moved from its position in the south to the area of Mercatale. "C" Company (Captain P. Hathorn, U.D.F., Pietermaritzburg, Natal) on the left made straight for the peak, with "A" Company following on the right to secure the flank and the ridges running north and south-east from the peak.

Struggling against heavy rain and through mud which made it an effort for a man to lift his feet, they made almost unbelievably good time. By 1600 hours a few men of "C" Company had gained the summit and the remainder were moving round to the left. By 1730 hours both "A" and "C" Companies were on the objective with "B" Company moving up.

The mountain itself and the neighbouring ridges were shrouded in a thick, clinging, all penetrating "Scotch mist," and the ground was thick with mud. It was under such conditions that the "Dukes" withstood the ferocious counter-attacks which followed. The commanding officer directed the battle from the summit, encouraging his men in their successful resistance. At about 1745 hours he fell mortally wounded and died before he could be brought in. Captain Hathorn was also wounded at the same time.

By 1800 hours two counter-attacks had been completely repulsed with heavy casualties to the enemy. The artillery support was brilliant. Defensive fire was brought down as close as possible to our troops and undoubtedly helped very considerably to roll up the enemy counter-assault.

A company of Midland troops were placed under command and sent up to strengthen the position. Their commanding officer subsequently went up to command the combined forces of this company, the Duke of Wellington's Regiment and another company of his own battalion which had been sent up.

During the night 8th-9th October, enemy machine guns swept the ridges again and the Hun was heard to be moving into the attack. Our artillery and machine guns scattered the venture before it could form up. During the day 9th October one enemy patrol was decimated by machine gun fire, and the forward platoons of the Dukes had the satisfaction of seeing Germans fall and their comrades scatter.

Throughout those days of attack and counter-attack, of violent fire and counter-fire on the muddy slopes and the bleak summit of Monte Cece, dogged determination and disregard for danger were commonplace. One private soldier silenced three Spandaus, firing his "Bren" from the hip.

Casualties were not light; enemy casualties must have been considerably higher. Owing to the thick mist at the height of the battle only three prisoners were taken, but the observed total of enemy dead from our artillery, machine gun and small arms fire was considerable, and the full total must have been high indeed.

It was a notable success, achieved by the skill and devotion to duty of all ranks from the veterans of Africa and Anzio to the young private seeing action for the first time; also of the porters attached from the anti-tank platoon, the drivers and other support and "H.Q." Company personnel, the L.A.A. regiments R.A. who brought supplies and ammunition up muddy mountain tracks in vile weather, and their comrades the stretcher-bearers, trained and improvised, who carried down the wounded.

Some words should be said of the company sergeant-majors who during this battle as in previous ones, showed their sterling worth. They are:—C.S.M. A. Selway, M.M., "C" Company (it was this warrant officer who amputated a C.S.M.'s leg under fire in the Anzio Beach-head and earned medical commendation for his surgery), C.S.M. G. Hall, M.M., "A" Company, and C.S.M. W. Fletcher, "B" Company, the last named being wounded early in the battle for the third time since the Battalion landed at Anzio.

The following is an extract from a letter received by the C.O. from his previous divisional commander, dated 20th October, 1944:—

"I was very glad to get your letter, and to hear from you again.

"It was most awfully sad about Pat Shiel. He was killed by a burst of Spandau, just as he had finished giving out his orders for the attack. He was a very gallant officer, and the subsequent success of the attack was due in no small measure to his gift of leadership.

"The Battalion did most awfully well. They were faced with the capture of a very important hill. It was a brute of a place to take. It was terribly steep, the approaches were slippery, and the weather appalling. The Boche had no intention of letting it fall into our hands if he could possibly avoid it. But the Dukes went through, cleared it, and held it against subsequent counter-attacks.

"I am afraid it cost them a number of casualties, but fortunately the bulk of them were fairly lightly wounded. The total casualties which the Battalion suffered between 8th August and 17th October were nine officers and 202 other ranks. Rather more than 70 per cent. of these were wounded, and perhaps about half of the total can be expected back in due course. On the whole, after more than two months' pretty solid fighting, it might have been a great deal worse."

SOME IMPRESSIONS OF THE ANZIO BEACH-HEAD.

I.—THE LANDING.

It was a lovely morning. The vast armada of assorted craft had reached the coast at varying hours between 0200 of the 22nd January and about 1800 that evening. Now it was the 23rd and we were at last to land. We had arrived ourselves at about 1400 hours the day before and had—in the best military tradition—got everybody dressed up and loaded to capacity at least an hour before we could conceivably disembark. A series of maddening delays, enlivened by exotic rumours, ensued. The 2nd Brigade of our Division had accomplished the assault landing at 0200 hours as arranged and had landed successfully against trifling opposition. Mines had been few and the surprise had been utter—to a degree beyond our wildest hopes. The Guards were the next to land, but the beach had proved very difficult. It was impossible to get their craft even within wading range, and "Ducks" had to be employed to trans-ship them from their craft to the shore. While this laborious process went on all afternoon we of the 3rd Brigade milled round about a mile off shore. The Germans enlivened the proceedings by long distance shelling and by two rather inadequate air raids. Finally it was decided that we were to disembark the following morning at the actual port of Anzio itself, which had fallen to the American Rangers shortly after dawn that day.

We settled down resignedly for the night. The captain of our craft mentioned casually about 2200 hours that an E boat attack was expected. Like most expected things in the Anzio operation it failed to materialise but I was impressed by the non-chalance of the Service at the threat.

By dawn we were up and—again—dressed hopefully in full fighting order. The Boche was also awake and resumed his shelling with increased vigour and at times a certain accuracy. As we edged towards the little harbour we saw a shell hit one of the L.C.Ts. which were discharging vehicles at the quay. In sharp contrast to the naval view on the E boat menace these land-projected missiles filled the whole crew of our craft with a burning desire to get us on the beach as soon as possible and enable them to get out of range. We joined a sort of queue and, taking our turn, at last breasted the small quay. The two gangways were shot out and encouraged by the exhortations of the sailors we doubled ashore.

By a most unusual chance the L.C.T. containing some of our transport was discharging its cargo simultaneously, and as I stepped ashore my Jeep—driven by Pte. Wright ("Cushy") as opposed to Pte. Wright ("Sammy") my despatch rider—rolled off the L.C.T. The Brigadier was standing watching the disembarkation and I had a few words with him before piling into the Jeep and driving out of the little bomb-shattered port.

It was strangely peaceful. The road was lined on both sides with marching troops of the three battalions of the Brigade. The environs of Anzio looked attractive. Handsome villas and bright little farms mingled with plentiful trees to vary the landscape.

We were a trifle vague as to the situation, but the 2nd Brigade were known to have secured their initial beach-head and we were to go into corps reserve in an area picked off the air photos. I soon overshot the marching troops of our own Battalion and eventually drew up beside some tough-looking soldiers resting under some trees. These proved to be Commandos who had landed some 30 hours before. I asked them what resistance they had met. They said "Not a great deal" with a professional air. Actually they hadn't fired a shot.

At this stage Herbert Eames, the staff captain, appeared and told me exactly where to go. Our positions were in a wood and about half a mile from the main Anzio—Rome road on which we now stood. The Battalion streamed in and, having arranged for "all round defence" as advised in the best text-books, we sat down to await developments. The shelling seemed to have stopped.

II.—FLYOVER BRIDGE.

The 26th of January. We had now been ashore three days and among most of us a certain sense of disquiet had started at the apparent inaction. The original beach-head, which included a perimeter roughly seven miles from Anzio, had been made good by noon of the 23rd and no perceptible advance had been made since then. Our own Brigade being in the nebulous position of corps reserve, the Brigadier and C.Os. had had a trying and restless three days. Every day and sometimes twice a day we reconnoitred possible or impossible counter-attacks in every direction and in all parts of the beach-head. But now—at last—an advance was to be made. The Guards had located an enemy strong-point at a "factory" beyond the railway bed some three miles beyond the Campo di Carne which marked the northern boundary of our present beach-head. This "factory"—later to become so famous and to cost so much blood, British, American and German—was in point of fact an agricultural settlement established under Fascist auspices near the village of Carracetto.

Today the Guards were to take this factory and then to push on and take the line of the railway at Campoleone. At 0900 hours the "O" group of our Brigade was, as usual, on the move for some *recce*—the nature of which I have really forgotten—and were driving in Jeeps up the main Anzio—Rome road. It was an unforgettable sight. Both sides of the road were lined by marching Grenadiers. The trucks of the Battalion and their carriers drove along in the centre. Standing at the entrances to rides in the woods that fringed the road the men of the Scots and Irish Guards—waiting for their turn to follow the Grenadiers—shouted ribaldries at the marching Guardsmen. The sun shone down and it was a crisp morning. The whole atmosphere was unreal somehow and seemed like the opening phase of an exercise.

Our Jeeps were perpetually held up by the press of transport ahead and during one of these halts the Brigadier's D.R. rode down the road with a written message which he showed to each C.O. in turn. It contained the news that we were to beware of a new mine, white in colour and circular in shape, which was to be expected on road verges. We were halted by a platoon of Grenadiers commanded by an ensign called Wedderburn whom I had known in North Africa. I wished him the best of luck and told him to look after himself. "Look after *yourself*, Sir," said the boy politely—I never saw him again.

We drove on and had our first view of the later famous Flyover Bridge. Where the Campo di Carne road crossed the main Rome road the former went over by an embankment forming a flyover. We turned left here and drove along the Campo road in the direction of the sea. A line of little farms—later to become hideously familiar as they were knocked slowly to pieces by German shell fire—fringed the road, and Italian peasants stood outside the doors waving handkerchiefs or clapping their hands. Looking to the right we could see, between the trees that lined the main road, the marching files of tall Guardsmen advancing towards Carrocetto. Not a shot had been fired.

Our little procession of Jeeps halted while the Brigadier looked at his map. I was just getting out to talk to Bunny Careless of the K.S.L.I. behind me when I saw on the verge, just where I was putting my foot, a white circular object. The new mine! With exaggerated care I levered myself out of the Jeep and announced my find to John Streatfield, my I.O. Looking along the road I was slightly surprised to see a line of these objects at regular intervals following the verge. They were, of course, traffic aids.

We drove on and found the H.Q. of the Gordons. The C.O. gave us what little information he knew and said the country across the Campo road was very difficult. "A lot of Wadis," he said. We were to know them only too intimately later.

We turned and drove back along the road towards the Flyover. Some noise of shelling had started but we could still see the marching lines going up the main road. The Flyover itself presented a remarkable spectacle. Behind the embankment was now a mass of vehicles, including a number of flagged Jeeps, and on the actual Flyover itself

were the distinguished occupants of these machines. The Divisional Commander, the C.R.A. and two Brigadiers, shortly to be joined by ours, made every Red Hat we owned in the Division standing on top of the bridge, looking through binoculars towards Carracetto.

We parked our Jeeps among the others and joined the distinguished company. Looking down the long straight road we could see air bursts feathering the air over the trees. The long lines of Guardsmen were still marching steadily in extended formation down each side, but from Carrocetto itself could be heard the rattle of small arms fire. Looking at the dark bulk of the Alban Hills which formed a backcloth for the whole scene we could now see the flashes of the two 88mm. guns which were firing the air bursts. The General told me they were out of range of our guns but that he had asked for fighter bombers to engage them. It was maddening to see the exact position of the guns but yet be impotent.

For a quarter of an hour we watched the scene. It seems odd now that the Boche did not open up on the unique target offered to him. One shell on the Flyover that morning would have gained a rich return. It was actually the only O.P. in that sector of the beach-head as the enemy soon realised, and that was the first and only day in all the long agony of the Anzio operation that it was possible to stand on the top of the Flyover in safety.

I went off to contact another regiment and walked round their positions with their C.O. One of the conceits which was reeling across the brain of Corps at that time was that the Dukes might relieve them. As I passed the Flyover again I saw — who commanded our Support Battalion. He told me that — the C.O. of the Grenadiers and — his second-in-command had both been wounded but that the attack was going well. It had been a tougher proposition than had been expected. There were no spectators standing on the bridge now. A shell had burst on the road and killed the military policeman standing underneath the Flyover, and the Captains and Kings had departed.

III.—ATTACK ON CAMPOLEONE.

The 30th January. We had taken over the positions at the railway bed from the Irish Guards the night before—those same positions which we were to defend so desperately a fortnight later. To-day we and the K.S.L.I. were to take the Campoleone positions and to-morrow the armour were to go through, cut Routes 7 and 6 and end a crowded day by going to the top of Colle Laziale—the highest point in the Alban Hills.

Our start line was some 3,000 yards from the railway bed and the function of the Scots and Irish Guards was to capture this prior to our attack. All night we could hear sounds of furious fighting as the Guards struggled valiantly against bitter opposition, but by dawn the objective was still in German hands. Zero was at 1030 but two more attacks had been put in, and a company of the K.S.L.I. involved, before soon after 1300 hours the start line was at last captured. Zero was now to be at 1510 hours and to cover the considerable distance to the start line the Dukes had to leave the railway bed at 1400 hours. At that hour exactly "A" and "B" Companies advanced—followed ten minutes later by my little command post of John Streatfield, the 18 set with two signallers and myself. Behind me came "D" and "C" Companies. The main Rome road—inclusive to the Dukes—formed our night boundary, and Bruce Hindley in the carrier with the 22 set drove slowly up it.

It was a comparatively quiet start. What firing there was seemed far ahead and the companies—well extended and in perfect order—pressed quickly on across the meadows and plough which lay to the west of the road. Soon we were passing through the Foresters who were in reserve that day. They were digging in.

About 1430 hours, being near the road, I saw Bruce with my carrier and decided to get a lift forward. We piled the 18 set men on and, leaving John to follow, we pushed

on up the road. About 500 yards from the start line shelling started. To our right we could see the K.S.L.I. threading their way through the olive groves that gave them cover from view at least. A few tanks could be discerned lumbering through the undergrowth. We pressed on another 100 yards and were stopped by a blow in the road. A knocked-out tank—ominously still—further blocked the way. By the side of the road was a Jeep with a dead American officer lolling over the steering wheel. Dried blood stained his uniform and the gaudy 5th Army sign was conspicuous on his arm. I have never liked that sign since.

I left the carrier and walked a hundred yards or so into broken country on the left of the road. I could see "A" Company pressing on to the start line. Bruce found a route for the carrier and guided it off the road towards me. It was just then that the really heavy shelling started. We flung ourselves flat as a salvo of 150mm. burst near us. It was more than alarming. Enormous clouds of black smoke erupted as the missiles exploded and the noise was deafening. The leading platoon of "C" Company reached us and I shouted to them to lie down until this heavy spasm was over. From the left the sound of mortar bombs could be heard and the staccato rattle of Spandau fire. "B" Company were heavily engaged on the start line from some houses to the west which were still occupied by determined bands of enemy. A 150mm. shell hit the stationary tank on the road and it began to burn with a sullen glow.

"A" Company had pushed on beyond the start line, and as the heavy shelling lifted for a moment the two supporting companies rose and walked dourly on. There must have been few battalions like the Dukes of that period in existence, fresh, confident, battle experienced and led by company commanders who had fought in France and Tunisia in every case. The numerous wounded of the North African campaign had been back with us for some months, and the period between the end of the Pantelleria operation and our move to Italy had been spent in arduous and comprehensive training. It was a proud Battalion and full of fighting spirit. As the companies pushed on through the shell bursts and the inferno of noise I actually saw a couple of men blown feet into the air by the blast of a nearby shell, come down on their feet and walk on.

Bruce was struggling to get through to Brigade on the 22 set. We got the 18 set down in a culvert under a track and heard from "B" Company that they were held up. We got the news through to Brigade, and a troop of tanks was deflected to the left flank. The K.S.L.I. reached their objective about (?) hours but our leading companies were still (?) yards short. Jim Urmson with a little combat group of carriers and mortars was operating on the flank, but the country was difficult and hampered the limited cross-country capacity of the carriers.

The tanks fought well that day and gave our leading companies close support. They gained the objective at — and "C" and "D" Companies passed through according to plan; "C" under Brainy Benson reached their little feature just short of the railway line. The short winter day was over now and dusk was falling rapidly as Brainy saw a German armoured car drive up to a small rise near him. With his batman he went forward to investigate and found an officer and *his* batman calmly loading his kit into the car. I think this was the only instance in which the '38 revolver was used in anger in the Beach-head. Brainy shot both the Germans with his pistol and then ducked down to avoid the stream of fire that the machine gun from the armoured car directed at him as it hastily backed out of sight. With his batman shouldering the German camp bed, Brainy returned in triumph to his company.

In the inevitable confusion that succeeds an attack it was difficult to get the exact picture and it was all the more complicated by the fact that I established Battalion H.Q. in an area that was shelled all night to a fantastic degree. In contrast the companies spent a quiet night and apart from the usual patrol clashes not a shot was fired at them. Owing to our late start and the unexpected quality of the resistance we had not got the final objective of our last company. But we were established just short of the Campoleone

railway which was to be the objective next day, and the object of the Dukes and K.S.L.I. of being able to provide a firm base for the third Battalion was accomplished. All hopes of the armour going through that day had been abandoned before our attack started, and in fact where the Dukes now stood was as far as the Beach-head forces were ever destined to go until the final break out in May.

IV.—THE WADIS.

The 20th of February. We had gone through Campoleone, and the almost miraculous extrication of the Battalion from there after being surrounded. We had fought the battle of the railway bed. We were punch-drunk or in the new phraseology "bomb-happy." Every company commander, three seconds-in-command of companies, the adjutant, the signalling officer, and the mortar officer were casualties. John Streatfeild, the I.O., and Jim Sills as a sort of man-of-all-work kept Battalion H.Q. going for me. A large draft of reinforcements—good lads but quite untried—had arrived but were not assimilated. The weather was terrible. The steadily contracting beach-head was almost back to the Campo di Carne line, which had been taken the first day. If the Boche got behind that line and into the thickly wooded country beyond, the Beach-head forces had "had it."

To this cheering background of events I had heard the day before that we were to relieve the Irish Guards in the "Wadis" to the left of the Flyover Bridge. I had been up to Guards Brigade H.Q. in the woods behind the Flyover and heard the bleak description of the positions we would occupy. They were—I gathered—quite inaccessible by day as they were in full view of the German O.Ps. The Guards were sustaining a steady stream of casualties and a sort of running fight went on day and night.

In the evening the Battalion set out. With a rather defiant gaiety the troops climbed into the troop-carrying lorries. I got in my carrier with John Streatfeild. It was, as usual, full of the 22 set and its attendants. Going past Brigade H.Q. I saw the Brigadier standing by the road. He wished me luck. I felt that we needed it. Dusk was drawing in as we drove up the too familiar Rome road. Soon—in the gathering gloom—we turned up a track into the woods and bumped along in the mud and pot-holes which were the twin components of the improvised road forming the channel of communications. About two miles from the Flyover we de-bussed. The Germans selected that moment for a bout of harassing fire in the woods, and the inevitable confusion of de-bussing in the dark was complicated by the infliction of a number of casualties. As the shelling died down the companies were formed up and doggedly began to march up to the rendezvous where the guides from the Guards Brigade were to meet us. Still in my carrier, John and I pushed on. We wanted to get the cumbersome 22 set as near as we could before burdening the carrying party with the whole monstrous apparatus. The mud soon put an end to this optimistic project and—leaving John to grapple with the set—I ploughed on through the mud on foot to the R.V. There I met the Guards Brigadier. Beside him, calm and immaculate, was Geoffrey Hood of the Irish Guards who was to lead us up to the positions. Behind the veneer of rather elaborate calm sustained by everybody that night there was, I think, a thread of hysteria. We were all very tired and rather shaken. It was pitch dark. Reliefs were always an edgy business—both for the relieved and the relieving units. The companies were late at the R.V. and, heavily loaded by the 22 set, Battalion H.Q. were later still. At last we got going and Geoffrey disappeared into the darkness with Noel Wimpenny and "A" Company. The track now rapidly deteriorated and soon became a mere mud bath. The rather pampered personnel of Battalion H.Q. groaned under the weight of their loads as we floundered about in the thick slimy black clay. The Germans began then to shell heavily the Campo di Carne road. We had to cross this to get to the Wadis and the ever-haunting fear on relief nights loomed near. Would the troops be caught in the open? It was difficult to judge among the trees where the shelling was exactly, and

I got a message through to the leading companies to halt. Pushing up the track to the fringe of the wood it was possible to see that the fire was coming down further to our left—just on the line of the road. It was a terrifying sight and it made a lot of noise. The Boche knew some relief was on somewhere in our sector that night and his artillery was diabolically active. At any moment it might shift to our area. There was no option but to plug on. Geoffrey left his attendant Guardsman to guide Battalion H.Q. and pushed on with the leading companies. We gained the road and at last could walk without lifting about a hundredweight of mud on each foot. It was pitch dark but to our left the vista was balefully illuminated by the fantastic defensive fire being brought down by the Boche on the road about 500 yards away. We advanced down the road towards the barrage for about two hundred yards where a track bore off to the right and to the culvert where the C.O. of the Irish Guards had his H.Q.

There we turned off the main road and plugged up the track. It was dotted with shell-holes. At regular intervals along its first hundred yards were the derelict carriers of the Irish Guards—all knocked out while trying to bring up rations the night before. As we passed the last I heard an ominous whistle and—with John—dived into the small ditch beside the track. The mortar shell burst on the track about 100 yards off. "It's about 500 yards to go still, Sir," said the Guardsman quite unemotionally. He had remained in the perpendicular position and—feeling rather abashed—I climbed up and joined him on the track. It seemed an age but at last we reached a small bridge over a little gully, which formed a culvert. This was our R.V. The leading companies were already filing off to the right across country to take over positions there. I climbed down the bank into the little gully and edged past a wrecked Jeep trailer into the culvert. Here was the R.A.P. and also Andrew's H.Q. That imperturbable officer—wrapped in a duffle coat—presented his usual robust and faintly Regency appearance. The little culvert was crammed. The R.A.P. where the M.O. was dealing with a couple of recently wounded Guardsmen occupied half the space—the rest contained the elements of both Battalion H.Q., Duke's signallers taking over from the Guards and my own officers trying to contact their opposite numbers. Andrew and I sat on a stretcher propped up on empty ration boxes and discussed the situation. The position was fluid in the extreme, and the whole area was cut up by long deep wadis, heavily overgrown, which changed hands nightly. A sort of grotesque hide and seek had been played for days in these wadis. The "Micks" would debouch from one particular wadi and assault an enemy held one, and on their return would sometimes find the Boche in occupation of their own positions. The Guardsmen were on top all right but deathly tired. They had relieved an American unit in these positions and found a peculiar sort of "live and let live" system in being with the enemy. Their first night in the wadis, Andrew told me, had been marked by the arrival of a German at one of the forward company's H.Q. He was bearing a bottle of whisky which he had come to exchange for spam. This blond disciple of the barter system was appalled to find the Americans gone, and shrilly indignant at being deprived of his whisky and despatched—spam-less—to the rear as a prisoner. The real trouble was that maps were useless, it was impossible to move by day and impossible to see by night, with the result that no-one knew really where they were in the labyrinth of wadis. Geoffrey came in to report all companies had moved off to their positions and ask for permission to go back to Brigade H.Q. We thanked him for his good work and he walked calmly out into the night and to his journey back along the shell-haunted route. I felt proud that he was my wife's cousin.

Meanwhile at the wadi later called "The Boot" because of its shape on the map, "A" and "B" Companies had arrived and were taking over. The catastrophe, the fear of which always lurked behind every relief, befell us that night. As the troops of both battalions were actually out in the open in the act of handing over the exiguous slit trenches, a concentration of 88 shells and mortar bombs crashed into the Boot. Casualties were caused to both battalions, and Noel Wimpenny (O.C. "A" Company) was half

dazed by a near miss. The hand-over, which was bound anyway to be a sketchy proceeding, had to be hurried. It was murder to keep two sets of troops in a position where protection—dubious at the best—only existed for one lot. The main body of the Irish Guards marched off and a few officers and N.C.Os. remained behind to pass on what information they possessed to the distracted Dukes officers, pushing their men into position in the blackness and locating the wounded by the moans. A few concentrations fell round the culvert but fortunately did no damage to "C" Company (Capt. Hall) which was taking over the positions there. Andrew had done all he could do and in a lull of the shelling he moved off with his H.Q. As he left he asked me to keep a particular eye on a Sgt. Moriarty of the Irish Guards who had not yet left the Boot and who—Andrew said—had done particularly good work. At that moment, almost, the lifeless body of that gallant N.C.O. was toppling into an empty slit trench as—looking for a wounded man in the darkness—he was hit by a fragment of mortar shell.

As the tall Guardsmen filed out, leaving us the heritage of death and desolation they had borne so long, a peculiar sense of isolation struck us. The Wadis! what scenes of heroism and hideous immolation they had witnessed. In all the long drawn-out crucifixion of the Beach-head no positions saw such sublime self-sacrifice and such futile slaughter as were perpetrated in the over-grown foliage that sprouted in the deep gulleys that gashed the whole area.

The Boot, the Starfish, the Culvert, the Bottaccia! as relief followed relief through February, March, April and May, each Wadi got its separate name and each won its separate reputation and memory of horror and suspense. Platoons and companies of every regiment in the Beach-head disappeared in the sinister labyrinths which—unsuspected from any distance—suddenly yawned at one's feet as one stumbled, half lost, through the clinging mud.

This—our first tour—was destined to be the worst of all. The weather was almost our worst enemy, and the same torrential rain which sent an icy flood swirling round our knees as we lurked miserably in the culvert would at times sweep away the merciful earth that covered the poor torn bodies of casualties hastily buried in the Boot.

The Boche, who had troops to spare and more frequent reliefs, was at this stage rather in the ascendant. His patrols were all round us at night, and the quick staccato rattle of his Schmeisers would be heard at night behind us and to each flank to add to the feeling of being surrounded.

The bringing up of supplies every night was a recurrent nightmare. Carrying parties got lost, Jeeps got bogged, and then, as the cursing troops heaved at them—down would come the mortar shells. Phlegmatically sucking an empty pipe, Jim Sills was the presiding genius of these hideous performances, and it was largely due to his unostentatious courage that the companies got fed at all. Some stupendous things were done by all ranks. One thinks of the heroic death of C.S.M. McNee—of the devotion of C.S.M. Selway—of the dashing leadership of Charles Gomm. Almost imperceptibly the situation improved. Our patrols gradually gained ascendancy—our snipers made the enemy cautious and through it all the indomitable courage of the British private soldier shone as ever.

The Wadis. No soldier of the Division who fought at Anzio will ever forget them. When it was all over and we were at rest in Rome some strong spirits went back to walk the course and re-fight the battles. Personally I shrank from ever going near those gulleys of hideous memory. I could not—like a dog returning to his vomit—re-act again the long drawn out strain of hanging desperately on all day to hear the list of casualties every evening, to see again the stretcher bearers—livid with fatigue—staggering past with their load, a dirty red cross flag held aloft as a precarious appeal to the capricious chivalry of the German. NO, I never want to see the Wadis again.

A unit of the Regiment serving in Italy has been granted the privilege of wearing the Red Patch and Maple Leaf of Canada, the former on their sleeves below the brigade sign, and both on their vehicles. This distinction was given them for their co-operation with a Canadian infantry division, with whom they fought through the Gothic line and beyond. Details of this cannot be given at present, but we hope to be able to tell the whole story some day. Another recognition of this co-operation was the suggestion by the Canadians that our dead should be buried in the same cemetery as theirs, and was much appreciated by the unit; this was carried out and they lie together at Riccione, on the shores of the Adriatic.

Some notes promised by the unit have unfortunately not arrived, but we hope to receive them in time for the next number.

B.L.A.

The following is a letter from the officer commanding a Battalion of the Regiment to Major S. E. Baker:—

December, 1944.

Dear Baker,

I have been very dilatory in writing. I believe I wrote last in early September. Since then we have moved much and while we pause a bit I will try and give you a general picture of the movements of the Battalion since I wrote last.

You all knew we were "poised for the assault on Le Havre" through the courtesy of the B.B.C. ! The results of the assault on 10th-11th September are well known. The "forming up" and the "aftermath" are not so well known, so perhaps my best beginning is on 3rd September.

We had rested, reinforced (with some splendid material) and reorganised at a place called Bouqelon south of the Seine between 28th August, when we ended our share of the pursuit to the Seine, and 2nd September. On the 3rd the Battalion moved at dawn from Bouquilon in two columns, one the marching portion and the other the transport, to cross the Seine. Marchers are supposed to be slow, but on this occasion we beat the wheels and trucks by a handsome margin, thanks to Dukws which carried the marchers over the Seine in one flight in a space of 15 minutes. The transport column blame bridges and the press of traffic to Belgium for their tardiness, but we know they went through Rouen, the first town of any size they had seen since we left Southampton on 9th June !

Our first assembly area was the small village of Trouville *en route* from Rouen to Le Havre. It was here that we heard that a flag of truce had been taken into Le Havre demanding the surrender of the town and we also took note of the German refusal. This put Le Havre very much in the forefront of our pre-occupations, and every piece of the jigsaw fitted in nicely after that.

We moved forward to Grenese where we planned in very great detail. It rained depressingly and the few farm houses did not afford the Battalion much cover or comfort. But we watched the R.A.F. heavies and our own artillery at work. We crept nearer on the 10th September to St. Martin du Manoir. We were fully briefed. We were close enough to see the R.A.F. hitting, with amazing accuracy, our objective, the historic "Field of the Cloth of Gold."

But like so much in war the unexpected always happens. Our planned attack never went in. During the 11th September, when the assault was going so well, it became necessary to change our rôle four times and we carried out the final one at last light.

Our most exciting plan was number 2, which directed the Battalion, at 1400 hours, to motor into, and capture, the centre of the town. We were supported by tanks and

carried in armoured vehicles. It was a very big moment! But we reckoned without the devilish ingenuity of the Boche mines. We were advancing down a road along which hundreds of vehicles and tanks had passed before us when, at a narrow and steep corner, our two leading armoured vehicles were blown up on delay actuated mines. Most fortunately we suffered only two minor casualties but the delay was disastrous—another battalion 400 yards ahead of us, up the hill, was mounted on tanks and had the coveted honour of entering the city first.

I won't dwell any longer on Le Havre. We saw, at first hand, the effectiveness of precision crater bombing by the R.A.F. and as far as we were concerned we were satisfied. But devastation in any town is depressing and to soldiers it is more than depressing to be amongst civilians whose homes have been flattened like a pack of cards.

The aftermath of Le Havre was the announcement of the first decorations to the Battalion gallantly earned round Fontenay Le Pesnil in June and July. The M.C. was awarded to our Padre, the Rev. S. Chase, and to Lt. J. Lappin and the M.M. to Cpl. J. Simpson and L/Cpl. E. Dodd. The moment was auspicious—the celebrations appropriate.

It was a strange sensation when the Hun garrison at Le Havre surrendered. At one moment we were fighting the Boche; at the next, the front line was 200 odd miles away in Belgium and Holland. We wondered when and where we would rejoin the main battle front. It was 12 days later north-west of Antwerp. Supply and transport were the difficulty. Our rush through France and Belgium stretched the L. of C. to over 400 miles of French roads and everything had to go forward by road. This A. and Q. headache had little effect on us. We still got all the necessary supplies we needed but it hamstrung our advance forward. So we, by our own resources within our Corps, crept forward slowly to Gilcourt near Dieppe where we remained until 21st September. We took the opportunity of visiting Dieppe and of marvelling at the courage and tenacity of the 2nd Canadian Division in the Dieppe raid of 1942. The German defences were formidable. We were pleased to see the docks working in spite of extensive demolitions, and we approved whole-heartedly of the sight of thousands of Boche prisoners helping to clear up their mess.

On 21st September we moved in one bound through Abbeville and Arras to Tournai. The scars of the British armies of 1914—1918 are healed in that part of France. Here and there we passed the cemeteries (still beautifully kept) of our predecessors who fought the same implacable, fierce and baleful enemy to a standstill and then beat him. Mont St. Eloi and Vimy Ridge looked down on us, this new Army sweeping through on wheels and tracks where in 1916, '17 and '18 an advance of 100 yards could only be gained at a tremendous price in British and Canadian lives.

Our welcome in Belgium was tremendous. "Tommy" was the word on all lips. "Tommy" had come back, as he said he would in 1940, and the inhabitants of the towns and villages saw to it that they remembered "Tommy" of 1918 and 1940.

We passed on through Brussels, Malines to Herenthals on the Leopold Canal, and here on the 23rd September we went into the "line" on the southern bank of the canal at a tiny factory village of Boekel.

Our task now was to clear the Belgium-Dutch frontier areas northwards to the river Maas. The Boche had orders to delay to the utmost, making the maximum use of the advantages of canals, dykes, flat and flooded lands and long straight roads. The airborne landings at Arnhem had taken place; the weather was bad; the Boche were not feeling very good. We saw the reinforcements for Arnhem passing in air convoys. The sight was magnificent. As surely as we had command of the sea for the immense invasion convoys so we had the command of the air over France and Belgium.

On the 24th September we crossed the canal at Herenthals on the heels of the Boche and that evening we entered Turnhout on the Turnhout-Antwerp Canal. The welcome was tremendous. It was raining, the Boche held the Canal on the north of the town, and yet we found the greatest difficulty in passing through the streets blocked by amazed

and rejoicing people. War produces some strange situations and in Turnhout we found our forward companies in contact with the Boche dug in on the north bank of the canal, whilst Battalion H.Q. and the reserve companies in the town, 800 yards to the rear, found the greatest difficulty in getting about their lawful occasions due to the cheering, hand-clapping and at times, overpowering crowds of townsfolk all intent on welcoming, without stint, the appearance of "Tommy."

This unique situation lasted for two days. The Boche was of a suicidal turn of mind. True, he sat in wet ditches and flooded fields, whilst we received hospitality and cover in town. It was also true that we had unlimited O.P.s. down to the Canal edge and in depth behind. But that was all the more reason why he should have been careful. But he was quite the reverse. We shot at Boche yawning and stretching on the Canal at 30 yards. We shot at lorries full of Boche at 100—200 yards. Our gunners; our own anti-tank gunners, our mortars and our rifle companies all engaged targets at leisure and only on the last day did the Boche learn. There is no explanation for his behaviour. Perhaps he was drunk on loot or perhaps doped. We gave up keeping the score early on.

Our next move came soon and one night we slid out of Turnhout and crossed the Canal near Vlimmeren to the west. Turnhout was a "Dukes" town. "Q" was horrified at the demand for cap badges during the ensuing weeks, all lost "due to enemy action." To this day the badge can be seen in the town. There was even a "Special," a train-tram which proudly displayed the title and carried all and sundry into and through the town.

From the night we crossed the Canal and took over a bridge-head position in a sandy waste, until 19th October, we operated north of, but within easy range of Turnhout. We fought a spirited battle at De Meir, the honours going to "A" and "D" Companies commanded by Majors J. Jameson and A. B. M. Kavanagh. Pte. A. Kalahar, "A" Company, wounded in this action, won the immediate award of the M.M. for a brave and gallant action. We supported a famous armoured division forward through Merxplaas and Zondereigen to the outskirts of Baerle Nassau (a Belgian principality in Holland), and we spent seven unpleasant days in the close pine-clad country north of Poppel. During the week we were on the aggressive-defensive round a Belgian-Dutch Customs house. It was obvious to the Boche where we sat—it was obvious to us! The one and only road ran through the pine-clad wastes and ended in the one-time barrier, the Customs house, the police house, the café, billiard saloon and the garage!

The houses had no glass, they had few tiles, but a few had cellars (not in the accepted sense but in the strictly military sense). Boche S.P. guns shot down the main road and two games developed early on. One was to watch the reaction of visiting Jeeps driving towards the "Frontier" if their visit coincided with "enemy activity"; the other was the jockeying for cellars which took place immediately "enemy activity" produced a direct hit on a house. At the latter game Battalion H.Q. played a poker hand holding five aces.

One day the Battalion was ordered "to get an identification." The Battalion in a space of ten hours of daylight produced 18 live identifications. Platoon, patrol and section commanders deserve great credit. Our casualties in these difficult and dangerous "routine" jobs were two slightly wounded.

On 19th October we came out of that frontier post. Peace-time Customs troubles are a well-known trial. A visit to the Poppel Customs in peace-time may be interesting. Will the Dutch Customs officials then be more pleasant than the bark of the S.P. German gun down the road? The cellars may also be different!

It rained and poured on the 19th and 20th October. That was right and proper according to the Clerk of the Weather because it coincided with the 1st Canadian Army push to clear up to the south bank of the river Maas. Every push, in our memory, coincides with a generous helping of very mixed weather with the sun being the only ingredient left out.

For ten days we pushed. It was an interesting strategical operation and from the tactical aspect the Battalion "mixed it" freely, doing a rush forward with tanks, a firm base near Wustwezel, coming under command of an armoured force, firm base again, attack with tanks, night move and deployment up to the A.Tk. ditch defences of Roosendaal, attack and counter-attack across the ditch defences, and finally a night advance to Roosendaal to free yet another town. The ups and downs of an infantry battalion were all present in these ten days. The tank and infantry attack north of the village of Nieumoer was a copy book affair. Sixty odd Boche were captured and in the Boche counter-attack some three or four hours later, the Boche made no headway at all and were virtually wiped out by "B" Company (Major G. M. M. Smallwood) and our gunners. Our casualties were negligible.

There we sat for three days in a black bog. All companies very open and exposed. Only those who have sat still under enemy observation and fire in the saturated flat dyke lands of Holland can appreciate the comfort and security of a "hill" 9ft. high.

We were getting tired and we were very wet. So with high hearts we received orders to move back into the village of Nieumoer and rest for 24 hours, having handed over our black bog to friends. But it rained heavily as we moved back and this omen meant little rest. We were right. By 5 a.m. we were loaded and on the move into a new line—the A.Tk. ditch of Roosendaal.

This was a sticky sector. "C" Company under Major G. V. Fancourt had to cross a lateral ditch and advance 800 yards over bare open fen. The Company was sniped during their advance by all weapons, including German S.P. guns. It was only possible to crawl, and where crawling was possible one crawled in water. And yet the Company gained their objective and by so doing made the first valuable bridgehead over the defences.

"A" Company in a series of attempts to cross the main ditch killed and captured many Boche and themselves suffered casualties by sniping, shelling and counter-attack. "B" Company spent a most uncomfortable day pinned down in water ditches by close range sniping and mortaring. "D" Company protected our right flank and wholly engaged the enemy's attention on that side by offensive and very gallant patrols and raids. Battalion H.Q. was shot at from front *and rear*; mortars, antitank guns and carriers had a selection of targets which pleased even their greedy hearts and, of course, the Pioneers had a ditch to look at, measure, and help bridge! The operation was, in fact, one which kept the whole Battalion employed continuously for two days and two nights.

By 0300 hours of 30th October the enemy had had enough and under the general pressure and the artillery shelling he left in a hurry. The Battalion advanced and entered Roosendaal at 0600 hours to meet yet again the infernal anti-personnel mines which caused our leading companies some casualties. In the Boche way the mines were left for soldiers or civilians alike to walk on. No Boche defended these minefields and in fact some Boche coming in to surrender to our leading companies walked on their own mines and suffered a well-deserved fate.

We stayed in Roosendaal for some days resting. We certainly needed sleep and a clean-up. "C" Company having proved themselves such master-crawlers were ordered out one night into the real below-sea-level Polder country further north. But apart from some practice digging below sea level the journey was unnecessary and they returned to the flesh pots next morning!

And there we must leave you. Needless to say we have made up our sleep and are spick and span again.

The Roosendaalians were most hospitable and kind. The people of Turnhout were tumultuous, the Roosendaalians reserved. But in both cases we owe them our thanks for their kindness in looking after our simple needs of accommodation, warmth, hot water and, no doubt, a fair amount of darning! This is rather a long story. But we have come a long way. We have come even further and have added more lustre to the name

of "The Dukes." These future stories will be told. I hope they are being told now in England by those who have the right to tell them—our wounded.

Meanwhile our united best wishes for Christmas. We will all be thinking of you and we know that will be mutual.

Yours sincerely,

STOP PRESS.—Two more decorations for the Battalion :—

2nd Lt. W. Horne, M.C., Roosendaal.

Sgt. Higgs, M.M., Poppel.

Burma.

For more than a year our activities were so highly censorable as to reduce us to a state of complete silence. Now the veil has been lifted to a certain extent; and as the B.B.C. and the local Press has revealed that a Battalion of the Regiment has been operating as part of the Chindits, we presume there is no harm in our saying so too.

However it would be as well to turn back the pages a bit and fill in the gap. After the Burma campaign in 1942 we were further depleted by the introduction of the repatriation scheme. This affected a lot of our old soldiers who had been serving abroad since the year dot, and we said good-bye to many old friends. At about the same time we were selected for conversion to a highly specialised and rare type of unit. This promised to be interesting, but by the time we had received all our new equipment it was decided to do something else, and for a time our fate hung in the balance.

At that time the late Major-General Wingate was assembling the troops who were to take part in his next long range penetration campaign and to our pleasure we found ourselves included. There followed a period of intense training. Our Brigade was the last to be formed and to complete its training; so when others were already in Burma, we were making our leisurely way eastward. Then, as so often happens, plans were altered and we found ourselves operating in a rôle slightly different to that which we had been led to expect.

The following extract from an article in the *Statesman* gives the general idea :—

VALUABLE WORK IN DEFEAT OF JAPS AT UKHRUL AND KOHIMA.

Kandy, 10th July.—The fall of Ukhul and the earlier Japanese defeat at Kohima are due in no small measure to the activities behind the Japanese lines of a special force functioning like the Chindits, says a A.P.I. correspondent at S.E. Asia Command H.Q.

This is the 23rd British Infantry Brigade which, in a swift marching sweep from the north-west put themselves behind the Japanese Kohima area late in April.

Tough and jungle-trained, these men—The Essex Regiment, The Border Regiment, The Duke of Wellington's and the foot-slogging Gunners—were to have joined the Chindits. But before the time arrived for them to fly to Central Burma, a similar task arose elsewhere. This was a stabbing short range penetration. The march in from their base in the Brahmaputra Valley was a reproduction in miniature of the epic feat of the Chindits who walked from Ledo Road to the Chindwin.

They had to climb over a series of precipitous mountains.

Fanning out along the little-known hill tracks, the columns swooped on the Japanese at watering points, and ambushed them in tracks.

By the time the Japanese were aware what was happening in their long-stretched lines of communication through the wild rugged Naga Hills, practically every usable track from their supply dumps and rear areas along the Chindwin had been either cut, interrupted or endangered by the roving British column.

The 23rd Brigade went south by way of Jessami, and finally, had the honour of being the first to enter Ukhul.

Operations have been followed by a period of "rehabilitation" (shades of A.P.H.!) and we are now living in a pleasant camp in a pleasant climate and going on leave in batches.

OFFICERS' MESS.

It is so long since we last wrote any notes that I find it very hard to know where to begin. Naturally very many changes have taken place.

Many have arrived and recently many have departed to different spheres of activity. "The Bull" has gone and was last heard of commanding a battalion in Arakan; his place was taken by Boy S., who is now waiting to be repatriated and will be home before this appears in print. — has returned to the fold from Delhi and is in the throes of taking over command. Tiger (having returned from his world famous school), Dennis, Butcher John, Bill Hunt and Jock are just going or have already departed in a westerly direction.

Bob M. rejoined us, but within four months passed on to the Staff College, Quetta. I can state with authority that his son and heir already takes size 6 in shoes. Jos (with his red hose tops) returned to us and became adjutant for a spell. The post is now held by Shufflebottom.

Eric and Donkey Deyes are still very animal-minded and the variety of dress at the evening meet is worthy of all prizes at any fancy dress ball. The Baron is still the same and finds it exceedingly hard to keep a batman more than a week. Hamish still maintains that he's a Scot although it has been proved conclusively that his grandfather came from no further north than Berwick-on-Tweed. Peggy following his promotion, failed to moan for at least four days—this must be a record!! Steve is on an 'I' course and, since the loss of his kit in Bombay, has spent four months' pay in new clothes, powders and wicked smelling haircream. All the others are very much the same.

At present our Mess is the best that we have had for over two years—the main attraction is a bar run on truly old English publican lines, even to the sign outside—"The Iron Duke"; a dart board and poker dice complete the picture.

We cannot possibly end these notes without mention of the loss of Jock Munro and Ken Duell—their continual cheerfulness in the Mess is greatly missed. We all extend our deepest sympathy to their relatives in their bereavement.

SERGEANTS' MESS.

It is a long time since any notes appeared in THE IRON DUKE from this Battalion, but I will try to give a brief outline of our activities over the past two years.

In early February, 1942, we closed our Mess and proceeded on active service to Burma; our activities during that period have been fully explained in previous issues. After the campaign we remained in the jungle and there received our reinforcements, and of course repatriation came into being and soon the Mess was depleted of practically all its old members. To them wherever they may be serving we send our best wishes and good luck.

Our role was changed and we all developed clutch feet, and blisters were non-existent when we covered long distances on training. During the period of our new role we never really could get a good Mess functioning owing to the lack of facilities at our command. However when our training period was finished and we joined our Division we managed to form a central Mess, which consisted of a pukka Indian Basha furnished with tables and forms, barrack, and the only drink obtainable was *rum* which was bought in *forty* gallon barrels; this sold well and helped to relieve the monotony of the jungle life, and later became known as "*Red Eye* and *Punishment*," names given to it by a notable member, L/Sgt. Redfern, since repatriated.

Our period on the new rôle was short lived and during the monsoon period we went out on I.S. duties and the Battalion was split up; our activities were many and varied and we all suffered from that well-known complaint of the plains, prickly heat. From I.S. we went back to shanks pony and jungle training and joined Special Force, and for a period of five months we went through a very strenuous period of training where we earned to carry very large and heavy packs. The Battalion has now returned from what

has been described as one of the hardest periods of active service performed by any force and they are now on leave and spending a well-earned rest.

The Mess at present is a very elaborate affair for a field mess and many enjoyable evenings have been spent by all, and for the first time in over two years we have managed to have barrel beer on tap practically every evening.

To C.S.Ms. Chunky Lyons, Mousie Andrews, Jock Hamilton, Don Wrigley, C.Q.M.S. MacMachen, O.T.C.U., Sgts. Victor Longfellow, Steve O'Donogue and Garry Hall, not forgetting Checkley, who have joined the commissioned ranks, we send our best wishes.

During our period of jungle training just before we went into action we were sorry to have to say good-bye to our C.O. to a new command and to our second-in-command to command a battalion; to both we wish good luck in their new commands. We welcomed Major —, our P.R.I., and new second-in-command as our C.O. However we have learnt that his tenure of command is to be short-lived as the home country calls, and we welcome to the Battalion a well-known officer to all Dukes in Major — of boxing and rugby fame who we also hear is to be our new C.O.

New arrivals to the Mess are too numerous to mention, but we extend here our welcome to those members who have joined us from other units, and we are pleased to say it did not take them long to settle in and now they are all "Dukes" at heart. Four old Dukes we welcome into the fold are C.S.M. Nutty Metcalfe, Sgts. Reggie Mitchell, John Dawes and Nipper Dodds; Reggie by the way is still the life of the party and keeps us all amused in the Mess.

On the fifth anniversary of the war we had a very pleasant social evening to which we invited the officers. As a result of the social we realised next day that the officers had challenged us to a game of soccer which we just managed to win, the score being 2—1.

Our deepest sympathy is extended to Mrs. Hird and Mrs. Starr, wives of C.S.M. Joe Hird and C.S.M. Twink Starr (our ex-R.S.M.), news of whose deaths we were extremely sorry to receive.

To end our notes we extend our best wishes to all members of Sergeants' Messes of the Dukes in whatever sphere they may be serving.

EXTRACTS FROM A LETTER FROM BURMA.

In our last issue we published some official accounts of the fighting of a Battalion of the Regiment serving with the Chindits. We are now able to supplement them by some extracts from a letter written by the commanding officer to the Colonel of the Regiment, dated 1st August, 1944:—

"In order to explain all that has happened to us it is as well to go back to when we came out of Burma in '42. Not that I was here at the time. As you know it was only a remnant that came out and what there was has since largely gone on repatriation. We were made up by drafts from home of every regiment under the sun but precious few Dukes. As material they were not of the best quality.

They then formed us into a thing called a Support Battalion. All highly mechanised with a huge establishment of N.C.Os. We did not have the men fit to make N.C.Os. but had to complete to establishment. That was a pity. We trained in this role for close on a year when they decided to turn our Division into a Training Division, that we should cease to be a Support Battalion and should go on I.S. duties. As a result they changed their minds and sent us to become part of Wingate's "Special Force." To make us up to strength of our new establishment we got a huge draft from another regiment. They are grand chaps and we were very lucky. We got down to training all enshrouded in mystery and we could tell no one what the future held in store for us. Training was pretty strenuous and we got into the way of carting around a phenomenal weight of kit.

At the end of March we were due to move up in preparation for joining the rest of Special Force which had already marched or been flown into Burma . . .

Anyway the Battalion set off thinking that we should have a further month or so in which to polish up before getting aboard those gliders. However, it was not to be. The Jap invasion of India had reached a rather tricky stage. They had been fooling around Imphal and drawn out the divisions forming the garrison. They were threatening Kohima and one regiment was unlocated and suspected of being in the process of advancing on the Dimapur—Ledo railway line. As a result our destination was changed and within a week of arriving we found ourselves moving into the Naga Hills. This was very different from anything for which we had trained. The hills are so steep that movement is only possible along the bridle tracks and Naga tracks and they are pretty staggering gradients. However, we got used to it after a short time and moved on to our first objective. As we arrived the Japs moved out. They had been nosing north in no great strength apparently seeing how far they could get and, in addition, in flank protection of their force which by now had started a vigorous attack on Kohima. Four days later, pushing south, we had our first engagement when our leading platoon bumped them out of a village, killing six and capturing one, for five wounded. The prisoner was quite a *rara avis* at that time. He fought like a wild cat and all his friends fired at him and his captors, apparently to ensure that he should not be taken alive. We suffered all our casualties in this stage, but the troops were damned good and stuck to him like leeches. I hope to get one chap a M.M. for that show.

About a fortnight later we were only 11 miles north of Kohima where the battle was going strong. Our role was not to get too mixed up in that sort of show but to operate against the flanks and L. of C. So we side stepped to the east and got down to our proper job. When they pulled back from Kohima we moved yet further east and south and finally ended up south-east of Ukhrul, by which time the Japs were in full retreat and in mighty poor shape. They had obviously bitten off much more than they could chew and in their retreat they were diseased and starving by the hundred.

We were in for 3½ months and it was quite long enough. The fighting was negligible but the marching in those hills during the monsoons was pretty exhausting. It will be some little time before we are fit to go in again. In the meantime there is a month's leave for everyone before training starts again . . . "

THE — BATTALION IN BURMA, 1942.

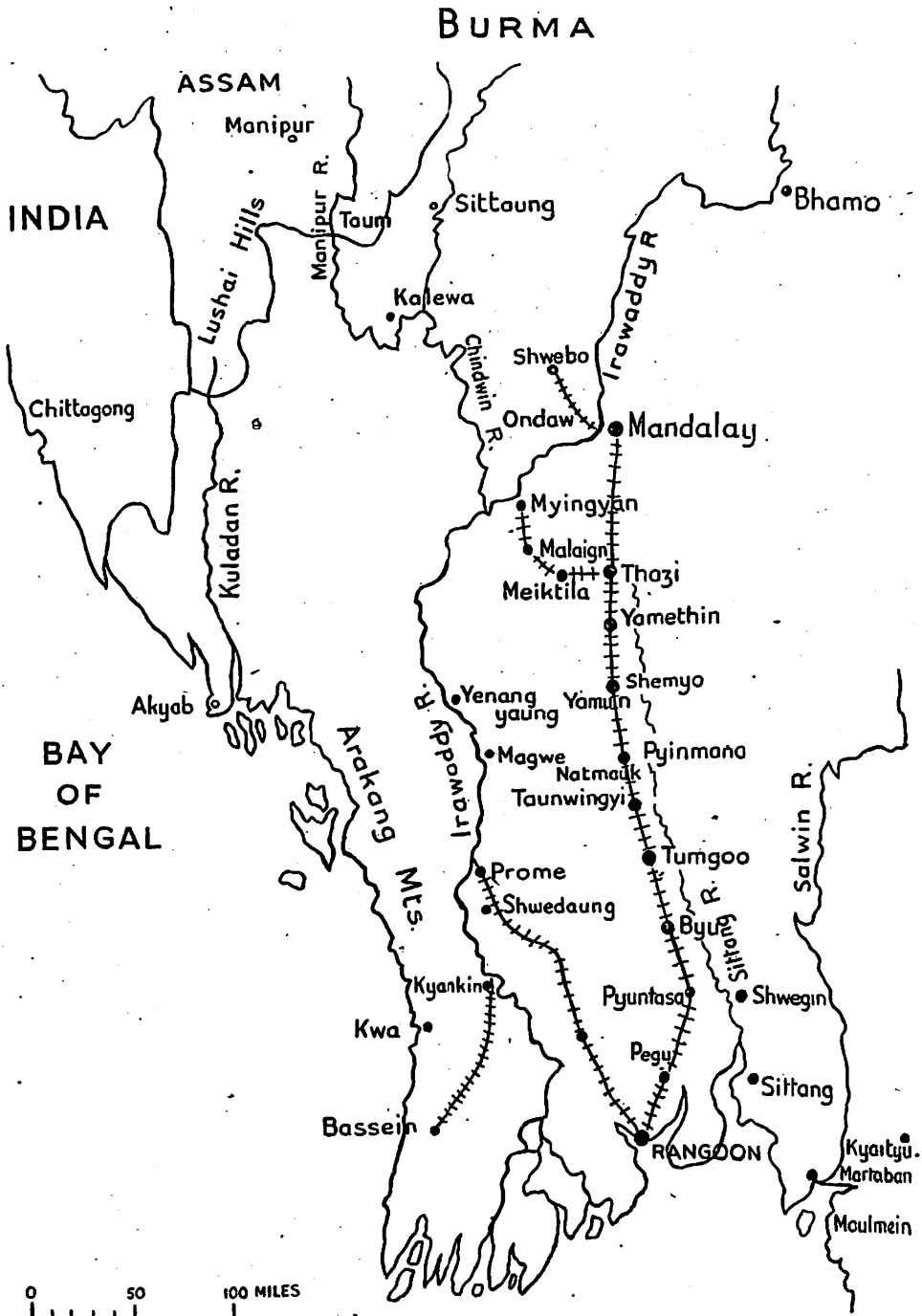
I was in hospital with jaundice towards the end of January, 1942, when I heard the Battalion were coming in from Brigade camp at Shamshattu. At first the reason for this was thought to be the weather, but the first person I saw was Donald Coningham, who told me that we were bound for "overseas." The bazaar rumours, which were varying and ingenious, had it as Australia, which proved to be a bit of wishful thinking.

After a very hectic week of farewell parties, we left for Madras on 3rd February, the train trip lasting some six days. The mobilisation had gone well on the whole, though it is worth recording that the Battalion was somewhat under strength ("A" Company in particular being less than 50 strong) and that we had been issued with "Z" mortars and Boyes A.T. rifles which a fair proportion of the men had never seen, let alone handled.

The long train trip was uneventful. At Delhi a large gathering of both sexes met the train to speed us on our way! Maybe we weren't so security-minded in those days!

The trip to Rangoon took about four days, and the Battalion went straight out to Mingaladon, where part of a Battalion of the Gloucesters was stationed. Some of us, including the author, had brought rugger kit in the hope of a needle match with them. Fate decided otherwise.

After about five days of preparation, which included an inspection by the G.O.C., we moved up to Yithan, where we took over from a battalion of the West Yorks. The next day we moved up to Kyaityu to join the 17th Division, and were just in time to join them in the retreat to Sittang and the Battle for the Bridge.



Sittang was our first taste of the Japanese and was a real "soldiers' battle." The Japs, following their usual tactics, had cut round behind us and our Brigade, the 46th, was ambushed on the line of march, while still some distance from the bridge. The transport, which had moved back earlier, met a similar fate. They received a message, afterwards thought to be false, which instructed them to pull in and halt, and were ambushed in their trucks. The resistance they put up was magnificent and Pte. Rawnsley of "B" Company earned his M.M. in this action.

Later the same night (23rd February) Sittang Bridge was blown with over two Brigades still the wrong side of the river, and the Battalion, which had become rather scattered, had a very unpleasant night. Firing was going on continuously and next morning they were bombed and mortared.

At various times next day the Battalion got across the river. The swim was about 800 yards and the scene on the bank would have made a fortune for a film producer. Rafts were made for the wounded, and kit and equipment, including arms, littered the bank. Those who could swim assisted the non-swimmers. Many non-swimmers determined to make a fight for it and have never been seen again. A bedraggled Battalion, with little uniform except under-pants, finally arrived at the far bank, where "D" Company, under Donald Coningham, had been left to hold the bridgehead. "B" Company were divorced from the Battalion and made their way around behind Sittang, and were finally rowed across by the Burmese some six to eight miles north of the bridge and arrived back at Pegu where the Battalion were re-forming and re-equipping. The first person the author saw was Bob Moran clad picturesquely but simply in vest, long shorts and a canvas water bucket in lieu of a topee.

The tragic death of Basil Owen was a great blow as he was most popular amongst all ranks. "Cushy" Mason, O.C. "A" Company, was never seen again. Peter Travis and Bill Skinner were known to have been drowned, the latter being badly wounded in both legs by the same mortar bomb which killed C.S.M. Brown of "A" Company. R.S.M. Ward and C.S.M. Hird were both missing.

In conclusion, Major Jack Robinson and "Doc" O'Hara earned their M.Cs. for gallantry, and Ptes. Fox and Roebuck the M.M.—all well deserved at a time when much was left to the individual.

The K.O.Y.L.I. had likewise suffered many casualties, and at Pegu we were combined for about a week calling ourselves the "King's Own Dukes." Lt.-Col. Tint, later killed, came from the Cameronians to take command and impressed all by his efficiency, energy and determination. His death was a sad loss. The Dukes were now reduced to two rifle companies and remained as such to the end of the campaign.

The Battalion next moved back to Hlegu where we first met the 7th Armoured Brigade, consisting of the 7th Hussars and the 2nd Royal Tank Regiment, who were both to give such valuable assistance later on.

Meanwhile the Japs had once again infiltrated behind us and had put up a block at the junction of the roads to Rangoon and Prome. The situation was very critical as many, including most of Burma Army H.Q., were on the wrong side of the block. One of the first vehicles to be knocked out was John Christison's carrier and he, with L/Cpl. Cooney and Pte. Wass, were never seen again. The block was finally cleared at some cost. The Gloucesters, fighting their first action, did very well indeed and were mainly responsible. We, in front, were not quite aware of how critical the situation was behind us.

Moving from Hlegu we passed through where the block had been and that night did our first Brigade night march. All ranks were pretty tired and still somewhat dispirited by Sittang.

After a "lift" by M.T. and a morning and afternoon digging in to protect 17th Divisional H.Q., we did the first of our train moves, and ended up just south of Tharawaddy, a hotbed of trouble in the Burma Rebellion. As usual, we dug in and had

our first taste of the Jap recce 'plane which was to be a daily visitor, coming over regularly at the same time each morning.

The Battalion next moved to Tharawaddy, where we protected Divisional H.Q., and the same night moved by train to Ogpo. By the grace of God, the Japs were not following up very fast and we were not ambushed. Our former Brigade, the 46th, had been disbanded after Sittang owing to casualties, and we were now in the 16th Brigade, which consisted of the 4th/12th Frontier Force Regiment, the 7th/10th Baluch Regiment and the 1st/9th Jats, under the command of Brigadier Jones, ex the Royal Warwickshire Regiment and the 6th Gurkhas. Lt.-Col. Faithfull was in command of the Battalion.

The Battalion stayed in the vicinity of Ogpo for about six days, digging in and constantly patrolling by day and night. The patrolling was extensively carried out and at Hlegu No. 1 Company were sending out about nine a night. The next move was to Figou, which was once more by train, where again we dug in. Our Division had a rule that both day and night positions had to be dug, and as no parapets or paradoses were allowed, trenches were often over 5ft. deep. Anyone who has dug in hard "Paddy" with no rain since the previous monsoon will appreciate my point. The news of the Japs was scarce, and they seemed to be following up fairly slowly. The Gloucesters gave them a good "crack" at a place called Letpedan where they caught them napping. Finally, news came that large parties of Japs were working round Figou, and we once again withdrew, my platoon doing escort to the A.T., as by now we had little M.T. We marched a very tough 52 miles in just over 36 hours, including a nine-hour halt, and arrived at Hmawsa, some four miles west of Prome. The remainder of the Battalion arrived after a march and a train move.

General Sir Harold Alexander had by now assumed command, and a decision to hit back hard at the Japs was arrived at. A force, including the 7th Armoured Brigade, the Cameronians, West Yorkshires, Gloucesters and ourselves, were accordingly dispatched south to just north of Paundge. The Bn's job was to send out company patrols, to get information, and if possible to get into Paundge. No. 2 Company under Jack Robinson went to join a company of the Gloucesters, who had been left as rear-guard. They had an uneventful time, although they were very nearly surrounded in a village, but managed to break out, at the cost of a few casualties.

No. 1 Company under Donald Coningham put up a magnificent show, after a long night march they had a battle just after daybreak. A young N.C.O., L/Cpl. Richard, particularly distinguished himself. He was reported to have killed about 30 Japs alone, besides putting two mortar crews out of action. However, the Japs worked around the company, and aided by two "odds and sods" plus from H.Q. Company, No. 1 Company was finally forced to withdraw, getting great assistance from the 7th Hussars, who also evacuated casualties on their tanks. Donald Coningham and L/Cpl. Richards were both killed in the withdrawal, Steve Dunn, the company second-in-command, was wounded, and Jack Sutherland received wounds from which he died a few days later. The whole force was then withdrawn as the Japanese had again got around us and established a strong block at Shwedaung village, some ten miles south of Prome. No. 2 Company coming in, just caught the tail end of the convoy as it moved back. There was no wireless communication so they could count themselves lucky. And so back to Shwedaung. The author was so tired that he slept on the tarmac beside a truck, and had quite a good sleep too!!

The attack was launched next morning (31st March) after artillery preparation, the Battalion being in reserve. No. 2 Company did a flank attack in support of the main one, to wipe out some groups who had worked their way around our flank. They were very successful, killing some 40 Japs at the cost of nine casualties. Frank Slater, who had joined us in Burma, and Cpl. "Tommy" Hardwick, a member of the Officers' Mess staff for some years, were both killed. Sgt. (now C.Q.M.S.) Chapman and Sgt. Fox, M.M., being amongst the wounded. The attack in front had not been totally successful. Some

of the transport, including the 7th Armoured Brigade, had got through, but to add to our troubles we were bombed accurately from the air. The Battalion, now doing rearguard at the south end of the village, suffered some casualties (including Major Robinson). News came in that the Japanese were following up in strength close behind us and soon the rear plus came under fire, lying in the open with little protection. Finally, as most of the force had by now got through, we were ordered to withdraw, and though a fair amount of transport was left behind, the majority of wounded were successfully evacuated.

Mention must be made of Lt.-Col. Faithfull, who by his disregard for fire and by personal example heartened all ranks, and L/Sgt. Lightfoot, who displayed great courage during No. 2 Company's attack in the morning, personally killing about ten Japs. He was recommended for an M.M. and was very unlucky not to get it.

Near Prome the Battalion re-organised and became "Divisional Troops" for some three days. On the first day of withdrawal from Prome the Battalion were again doing rearguard to the Division and received its first lift on the tanks of the 2nd Battalion R.T.R. This proved most fortunate as the column was bombed towards the evening and one battalion suffered nearly 100 casualties, being caught watering at a well. A good lesson to our men and one which was driven home. After a further march the Brigade occupied a covering position some 23 miles south of Taunwngyi. We withdrew from there the following night, our withdrawal being followed up by some Japs in private cars, presumably captured in Rangoon.

Taunwngyi was to be the "Tobruk of Burma," and during the five days or so we were there, there was little spare time for anyone. The perimeter of the town was held by our Brigade and 63rd Brigade. The other Brigade in the Division, the 48th, a very fine all-Gurkha Brigade, were out operating on the road to Magwe. The Battalion was again in Brigade reserve and completed terrific defensive preparations, no coign or nook, which could be visualised as a sniper's post, escaping the eagle eye of Bob Moran.

However, the Tobruk was not to be, and we withdrew on foot to the village of Natmauk, 48th Brigade and the 7th Hussars taking our place in Taunwngyi.

From Natmauk a subsidiary track ran across to Magwe, and the Battalion, now under the command of Lt.-Col. Thayer, was sent out with a squadron of the 7th Hussars to create a diversion and if possible to capture the aerodrome there.

The day we left Natmauk, the leading tank ran into a block some eight miles east of Magwe itself, and the crew were temporarily put out of action by some type of gas grenade. This rather gave away surprise, and when we next tried to advance the Japanese had a strong force waiting for us. No. 2 Company under Jackie Wardle had been sent off on an encircling movement, again without any good means of inter-communication, when we received a signal from Natmauk ordering us to withdraw. Tony Firth, with one volunteer, got the message to No. 2 Company, having a few narrow escapes on the way. We had caused some Jap casualties for the loss of only one man.

The Battalion's next move was to Yamun, followed by a long move to Malaing by M.T. At the latter we first met the Chinese and got on very well with them, though watch the fish on your ration truck when they're about! After Malaing we moved over 100 miles again by M.T. to Ondaw on the road between Mandalay and Shwebo. The city portion of Mandalay had been laid flat by an air raid a few days previously. 48th Brigade and the 7th Armoured Brigade were left at Kyanse, south of Mandalay, as a covering force with great success. For about 15 casualties in the whole Brigade they killed a total of at least 300 Japs. The most successful battle of the whole campaign.

The Battalion next moved some 21 miles down to the Irawaddy, and were recalled the next day, a tiring and unnecessary march.

The next move was to Yeu, where 16th Brigade were ordered to go across the Chindwin and hold Kalewa and Kalenmayu, whilst the whole Burma Army passed through. The final stages down to the Chindwin were rather congested. The mass of private cars, including the Governor's Rolls Royce, which were abandoned, would have made a scrap

merchant's fortune. I travelled at one stage in a private car which stuck in some sand. General Alexander arrived from the opposite direction and, picking up a spade, started to dig it out. I was so surprised for a moment that I stood and watched. His presence in the latter stages was an inspiration to everyone.

The author left the Battalion at Kalewa to go into hospital. The strength was then about seven officers and 170 men, all very tired but in good heart and knowing they had certainly done their bit. After five days at Kalewa, the Battalion went up river to Sittaung and marched out to Taum and thence to Imphal. This last march being the worst of the whole campaign, mainly owing to lack of water.

I must pay a tribute to the "Q" staff, under Tom Jowett, who saw to it that we never went short of a meal. "Q" department gets little praise and plenty of blame as a rule, but throughout the campaign their work was magnificent.

The Battalion had certainly no soft introduction to modern warfare and all those who came through may well be proud of themselves for keeping up the good name of the Regiment. It was reported that General Alexander said of us, "They are the scruffiest Battalion in Burma, but they can fight!" If this is true, it is praise indeed.

It would need a more vivid pen than mine to give a true picture of the campaign. An armchair critic will probably be struck by the number of train and M.T. moves the Battalion made. But the marching in a hot climate, with little water, cannot be pictured by the distances given.

Apart from the awards mentioned, Lt.-Col. Faithfull, Sgts. Yarrold and Glue and Derek Roberts, serving as an L.O. with 17th Division, were all mentioned in dispatches. Only the loss of recommendations prevented further awards.

To all those officers and men who fell we remember you with affection and gratitude.

Names: Ky is pronounced Ch, U is pronounced O.

D.W.R. Infantry Training Centre.

OFFICERS' MESS.

Life at an I.T.C. can at times be rather humdrum, but somehow with our many duties and pleasures, we manage to keep alive. Whether of course, this is due to an unofficial "ticking" party held—most Saturday evenings in a well-known "local," when affairs in general are discussed and decided upon, it is difficult to say—but we do have some good times.

The number of new faces we have seen during the last few months prevents individual mention, but to all who have shared our Castle home and passed on, we send best wishes and "come to see us again some day." To others who have left us we wish good luck, and to the new members of our Regiment, now with us, we extend a hearty welcome.

We were very sorry to lose Major Owen Price (affectionately "Dizzy" to all who know him); he left us to take up a special appointment with the resultant promotion, and we offer our sincere congratulations and very best wishes and hope he'll visit us some day.

A few changes have taken place in the administration of the I.T.C., the most notable being that Ken Whitehead includes education, billeting and parachute officer in his "Pooh-Bah" activities; his loss is greatly felt in "C" Company.

We were very pleased to entertain to a game of rugger and a week-end in the Mess officers of the — Battalion. They included several old friends and we were very glad to see them again. Judging by the amount of liquid refreshment consumed during their stay everyone had a good time, and we look forward to another visit.

We are now busy planning the Christmas festivities and are looking forward to the main event—a party in the Mess—all being well, a "truly Yorkshire do."

Very best wishes to all "Dukes" wherever you may be and a new year full of fortune and good luck.

SERGEANTS' MESS.

Little of interest has taken place since our last notes. We have plenty of indoor activity and are all looking forward to Christmas activities. Whilst we are on the job we should like to express our best wishes to Major O. Price, who left us for another duty, and we hope he is quite happy.

Arrivals and departures of Dukes lately have been few; C.S.Ms. Reed, Duncanson, Stringer and Melvin left us about two months ago. We trust they are settled down to a good job of work and are quite contented. C.Q.M.S. "Dinger" Bell is now "Mr. Bell," his over-worked legs finally gave up the struggle. All our good wishes go with him.

We were very pleased to entertain the officers to a social evening in the Mess. We beat the officers at snooker, darts, etc., quite handsomely. Still, a very enjoyable evening was had by everyone.

It's a pity we are not allowed to talk a little more freely in our notes, but let us hope it will be possible in our next issue, and that we shall be all more or less united once again in peaceful times.

Best wishes and happy landings to all the Dukes wherever they may be.

CORPORALS' MESS.

The only activities of note since the last issue have been a dance and social evening. The dance, as usual, was very successful and the very large gathering spent a very happy evening. The duties of M.C. were very ably carried out (as was expected from so exalted a personage) by "Danny" Cohen.

The social evening was quite successful, although the attendance was not quite as anticipated, owing perhaps to the wiles of the opposite sex in nearby villages, but the whist drive, darts competitions, etc., went with a swing and brought to light many dark horses. The supper which followed was thoroughly enjoyed by everyone. A good concert party rounded off the evening in fine style.

A very popular pastime now gaining favour in the Mess is table tennis, and also a game which induces parties of people to sit for hours round a table, picking up and throwing down cards, keeping very solemn faces, and finally the air is rent with either cheers or groans, but this is nothing to brag about. The interest in table tennis may be due to the fact that one has to hunt for the ball before starting. It is surprising how this ball, at the end of each game, secretes itself behind pictures, billiard cues and curtains; probably the shortage of balls causes this shyness.

Once again we congratulate those members who have left us to join the Sergeants' Mess, and extend a hearty greeting to all new members. One point we must not overlook, and that is to congratulate "Shorty Forrester" and "Harry Allen" on their swift response to Mr. Churchill's appeal for larger families. May all their troubles be little ones.

To all Dukes wherever they may be, we send our very best wishes.

COMPANY NOTES.

"B" COMPANY.—At the time of writing we are just in time to welcome back to the Company our O.C., Capt. Ellis, who left us recently to spend a few weeks with "H.Q." Company. We are glad to see that the transfer was not permanent, as Capt. Ellis has been our "Skipper" for the past 18 months and we would not care to lose him. In his absence we have been guided in the way we should go by Lt. Diggle, who very capably took the chair.

Our old friend "Dinger" has left us. He has gone to be measured for a bowler hat, taking with him the sincere best wishes of all ranks in the Company. In his place we welcome C.Q.M.S. Vardy, whom we initiated with a "four squad intake" just to break him in. Another newcomer to the Company and to primary training is Sgt. Lythe, who fills the vacancy on the P.S. left by the departure of Sgt. Reed.

We have recently had a break in the steady influx of intakes which caused most of the N.C.Os. to become "spare" (those not on loan to corps companies). The designation "spare," however, has not meant unemployed. Our popular C.S.M. "Schickelgruber Shep" has kept the "spares" fully occupied on painting and decorating the company lines. Lt. Wilcock has kept a critical and sometimes rather sceptical eye on the N.C.O's painting efforts, and incidentally, has been seen to wield a crafty brush himself on occasions.

When our C.S.M. got "brownd off" with having the white posts constantly re-measured, repainted, renewed and replaced (due to acts of sabotage by firewood seekers and handcart drivers) he went on leave in disgust. Sgt. Kaye became "Acting Oblique" for ten days, and caused some consternation amongst the corporals by his early morning trips round the barrack rooms. In fact "Tug" Wilson had to take the safety precaution of leaving his glass eye out on the steps at night to watch for Sgt. Kaye coming on one of his reveille patrols.

The Company comedian, Sgt. Caddick ("Carrot" to some of us), still keeps us well entertained with his "jeeps." He was recently heard to remark, when referring to his No. 1 jeep, that "the man who can train him!! to slope arms, can train a giraffe to jitterbug." However, in spite of our many trials, we have maintained our high standard in the pass outs, and things are well under control.

Finally, as glowing reports still come in of "Dukes" being well represented in all fields of battle, we will sign off with a message to all Dukes serving in action stations—"Good luck and a safe return."

"C" COMPANY.—We are now getting into full swing again with more squads, nearly all of which are very young. To make these youngsters feel at home we have had a spate of "interior" economy during which paint, distemper and creosote have been splashed right and left. As if to vie with the "powers" who started the decorating, the corporals have made the hut fire points look like shop window displays at Christmas, and I'm told that Cpl. Clayton is leading so far with more colour to his show.

"Wilkie" continues to stir up the wenches in true Sinatra style though not through his crooning capabilities. Old "Duff," whilst sober and properly dressed, fell from two steps and cracked his ankle. At least, that's his tale and the crutches would seem to bear it out.

We have lost Lts. Davies and Merrill who went to corps training, but we welcome Lt. Storey who arrived here a couple of days before the writing of these notes. Lt. Whitehead is now education officer, assistant administrative officer, etc., etc., but continues to take an interest in the Company. We hope that his new posts will further his desire to help the lads as he always has done. We all wish him luck.

Lately we have been experiencing battle conditions here with the wonderful weather that is peculiar to these parts. Having regard to this, our sympathies go out to our comrades in other parts of the world, and we also wish them luck and a speedy return home.

"G" COMPANY.—Several changes in personnel have taken place since the last issue. 2nd Lt. "Bill" Challis (now Lt.) has departed. 2nd Lts. Dixon, Symons and Fletcher have joined "George" and several other subalterns have come and gone. Congratulations to Cpl. Minton on his promotion, and also L/Cpl. Gill, who is now on the permanent staff.

The suggestions heard about the camp that "George" Company is turning communist are possibly due to the word "Red" being taken out of its context. There is absolutely no truth in the suggestion made by one company commander that our rifle barrels are painted red inside.

"George" Company has been well represented in the I.T.C. rucker team, and the team, under the captaincy of Capt. Bedford, has had only one defeat so far. The Company boxing team was defeated in the first round by one point. As our victors went on to

win the competition we do not feel disgraced. Company soccer and rugger have been rather at a standstill owing to bad weather causing the ground to be in a state where only water polo could be played. When these games are resumed, we hope to put up a decent show. Cross-country running is going strong, and we believe we have a "find" in 2nd Lt. Fletcher. Our stalwart cross-country runner, Sgt. Collier, is still with us, and we face the cross-country contests with confidence.

To all Dukes at home and overseas we wish the very best of luck and a speedy return home in the coming year, when victory, we hope and believe, will have been achieved.

"J" COMPANY.—From five squads in the Company we have expanded to nine, having had in the process to beg, borrow and steal N.C.Os. from other companies. The accommodation for the extra squads is situated here, there and everywhere. The term "Company lines" is used in its broadest sense. A rumour that our company orderlies draw haversack rations when calling reveille roll call is a slight exaggeration and is officially denied.

There have been so many changes in the junior officers that it would be almost impossible to name each one we have had with us. Here to-day and gone to-night has been the speed with which they have passed through in many cases. Invariably we swing from the sublime to the ridiculous. Some weeks we have an officer per squad, then, in a flash, they are whisked away, leaving Capt. Lawson and Lt. Oakes to hold the fort until the next influx, and off we go again.

As a change from the usual type of trainees, we received from a famous regiment "right of the line" thirty potential infantrymen. The hapless sergeant (Sgt. Moore) in charge of this conglomeration of humanity was seen daily clutching a bundle of foolscap on which was inscribed the enormous list of his squad's deficiencies. However, he has levelled out from the "flat spin" he was in and his eyes look less glassy, so we take it everything is more or less under control.

The usual placid calm of our Company office was shattered recently by the appearance of our new C.Q.M.S., none other than the inimitable 8.9.10 (C.Q.M.S. Glen). He only stayed a short time but his kit inspections will long be remembered as being better than anything E.N.S.A. ever put on. During his stay it was only necessary to cough twice, and the second one was on payment. Sgt. "Joe" Burland finally capitulated and we take this opportunity of congratulating him on his forthcoming marriage.

Our sporting activities have been reduced to a minimum owing to the sports fields being almost continually under water. An occasional game of hockey and the inevitable cross-country runs have been the sports programme for the past few months.

To comrades old and new, at home and abroad, we wish a happy and victorious New Year.

SPORT.

RUGBY FOOTBALL.—Capt. "Johnnie" Bedford is i/c rugger this season. C.S.M. Shepley, Sgt. Taylor, Sgt. Anderson, Cpl. Spink, Cpl. Adams, L/Cpl. Bonner, L/Cpl. Whitworth and the officer i/c are playing regularly for the I.T.C.

Up to the time of going to press, eleven matches have been played; only one, the first of the season, having been lost.

ASSOCIATION FOOTBALL.—Sgt. Walker, Cpl. Taylor, Cpl. Walshaw and L/Cpl. Fox are the "Dukes" representatives in the I.T.C. "soccer" team.

The fact that goods made of raw materials in short supply owing to war conditions are advertised in this magazine should not be taken as an indication that they are necessarily available for export.

Decorations.

War Office,
28th September, 1944.

The King has been graciously pleased to approve that the following be mentioned in recognition of gallant and distinguished services in Italy :—

INFANTRY.

D.W.R.

Lt. (temp. CAPTAIN) THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON (56864) (killed in action).

The citation of the above award is as follows :—

" At Dragone Hill on 13th September, 1943, a critical situation developed and the enemy was pressing forward and threatening to encircle the right of our position. Under heavy mortar and machine gun fire Captain The Duke of Wellington led his troop forward to the counter-attack and after close hand-to-hand fighting succeeded in repelling the enemy. This counter-attack was the turning point in the action, and Captain The Duke of Wellington's personal leadership and disregard of danger contributed materially to its success.

" At Piccolette on the evening of 15th September, 1943, he commanded the left half of the Commando in a night advance, the two in charge having been killed. Again his leadership, determination and energy were conspicuous, infusing the greatest confidence in his men, and ensuring the success of the advance in which a large number of prisoners were taken.

" Captain The Duke of Wellington had always shown the highest devotion to duty in action, placing himself in the most exposed positions in order to inspire confidence in his men, and ' proved himself to be a gallant leader and a fearless officer.' "

(Missing, believed killed, 16th September, 1943).

The following is a list of immediate awards made to officers and other ranks of a Battalion of the Regiment in Italy in connection with the break out from the Anzio Beach-head, together with citations :—

BAR TO THE MILITARY CROSS.

MAJOR T. F. HUSKISSON, M.C.

For conspicuous gallantry and outstanding qualities of leadership in the Anzio Beach-head. On the 22nd May the — Battalion was ordered to attack the Pantoni feature which was a German prepared position of considerable strength. Major Huskisson, who had recently returned to the Battalion from being wounded in February, was in command of the left forward company. The considerable artillery support failed to silence the German machine guns and Major Huskisson's company came early under a heavy volume of fire. Taking the lead, this officer gained the first objective with his company. This was the ruins of Pantoni itself, which was by-passed by the left platoon of the company and although covered by our troops still contained a dug-in machine gun post surrounded by " S " mines. Keeping this machine gun post engaged with his right platoon, Major Huskisson pushed his left platoon on to the second objective of the company. This was gained at the point of the bayonet and the platoon then withdrew according to plan.

Major Huskisson then proceeded to organise rapidly his company and consolidate the ground won. Walking about under fire, this officer established a co-ordinating defensive position, got his men dug in and the position wired. By vigorous offensive fire the German occupation of the Pantoni ruins was rendered impossible and dawn saw the company in complete domination of the feature.

Major Huskisson's conduct throughout was of the highest order and an inspiration to his men.

MILITARY CROSS.

Lt. F. P. FROUDE.

For gallantry and cool leadership in the Anzio Beach-head. Lt. Froude commanded a forward platoon of his company during the attack on the Pantoni feature on 22nd May. He led his men with such dash in the early stages of the assault that he had to halt his command for several minutes to allow our artillery to lift. He then led his platoon forward under heavy M.G. fire and by-passing the first objective according to order, passed on to the final objective of his company. Though prevented by a mine field from actually entering the enemy positions at this point, Lt. Froude so directed the fire of his platoon that the enemy had to evacuate their trenches. He personally engaged one post of three Germans with hand grenades, killing all the occupants, while the fire of his automatics engaged the remainder. For 45 minutes until darkness fell, this officer held his ground, recklessly exposing himself to encourage his men. He then crawled back under heavy fire to company H.Q. for instructions, returned, and led his platoon to its final objective, where it consolidated. Later he was instrumental in getting a number of our wounded from in front of his position and next morning went forward to our wire to secure four prisoners. The courage and utter disregard for his own safety shown by this young officer and the leadership he showed in this, his first action, were an inspiration to his platoon.

MILITARY MEDAL.

No. 6098248 PTE. S. BOURNER.

For gallantry in the Anzio Beach-head. Pte. Bourner is a company stretcher bearer. During the attack of 22nd May he evacuated five wounded men of his company under heavy M.G. fire. He was himself hit in the thigh early in the operation but despite this he continued to tend the wounded, exposing himself without any regard to his own safety. Finally, weak through loss of blood, he was ordered to proceed to the A.D.S., but having received treatment, this soldier avoided evacuation and, reporting back to his company for duty, insisted on carrying on with his duty. Pte. Bourner was instrumental in saving the life of several of his comrades and his gallantry in this, as in all other actions in the beach-head, was an inspiration to his comrades.

No. 4622882 PTE. R. C. LONG.

For conspicuous gallantry and outstanding devotion to duty in the Anzio Beach-head. Pte. Long is the driver of the Jeep which is used for the evacuation of the wounded in the forward area. He has carried out evacuation under heavy fire and sometimes in circumstances of extreme danger to himself since early February. This devotion reached a climax on the night 22nd-23rd May when, after the attack on the Pantoni feature, Pte. Long repeatedly drove his vehicle up a machine gun swept track to evacuate wounded. His complete coolness and his care of patients has been an inspiration to the wounded, and the certainty that evacuation will be carried out regardless of the risk involved to himself has been a considerable source of confidence to the fighting troops. The officers of the field ambulance find themselves unable to speak highly enough of the valuable and devoted service of Pte. Long.

No. 14646135 PTE. H. E. MARSHALL.

For gallantry in the Anzio Beach-head. Pte. Marshall is a rifleman in his section. During the attack on the Pantoni area on the 22nd May this private soldier showed great courage and determination. When his section was held up by an enemy anti-personnel mine field just short of the objective, he stood up against the enemy wire and engaged the enemy garrison of the M.G. post behind it. Under heavy fire, he threw grenades, killing several enemy and forcing the remainder to abandon their M.G. and leave the post. Later, during consolidation, Pte. Marshall repeatedly went forward of our positions to find our wounded, reassured them that stretcher bearers were on their way, and on their arrival assisted in their evacuation under fire. A gallant young soldier whose conduct was a pattern to his comrades.

No. 5049885 L/Sgt. T. SPODE.

For courage and outstanding leadership in the Anzio Beach-head. On the 22nd May, during the attack on the Pantoni feature, Cpl. Spode was a section commander. Early in the assault both his platoon commander and platoon sergeant became casualties. Cpl. Spode immediately took command and, running forward, led his platoon in a desperate assault on Green Bush Hill, which was heavily defended. Forcing his way through the wire, Cpl. Spode fired his T.M.C. into the enemy and succeeded in entering the German trench. Most of his platoon becoming casualties, the Corporal was compelled to withdraw, but he rapidly re-organised the survivors and consolidated a position about 20 yards from the enemy. Here he held his ground until ordered to withdraw. Cpl. Spode's initiative and gallantry were an inspiration to his men.

Awards for service in the B.L.A.

O.B.E.

Lt.-Col. D. I. STRANGWAYS, D.S.O.

M.C.

CAPT. THE REV. S. CHASE, C.F.

Lt. J. LAPPIN.

2ND Lt. W. HORNE.

M.M.

CPL. J. SIMPSON.

L/CPL. E. W. DODD.

PTE. J. CURTIS (since died of wounds).

SGT. HIGGS.

PTE. A. KALABAR.

THE IRON DUKE

Home Guard awards dated 15th December, 1944 :—

O.B.E.

LT.-COL. RALPH GRIMSHAW, 30th Battalion H.G.

M.B.E.

MAJOR WILLIAM NEWTON DAWSON, 26th Battalion H.G.

CAPT. LIONEL LEVENS, 36th Battalion H.G.

MAJOR GEORGE FREDERICK ROBERTSHAW, 21st Battalion H.G.

CAPT. JOHN OWEN SLAGER, 29th Battalion H.G.

B.E.M.

SGT. WILLIAM ROBINSON, 27th Battalion H.G.

SGT. PERCY WADE, 24th Battalion H.G.

SGT. HAROLD VICTOR WALKER, 35th Battalion H.G.

OLD COMRADES' ASSOCIATIONS.

The following is a summary of cases helped from funds available to the committee of the Association for the period 1st July, 1944, to mid-December, 1944 :—

Fund.	No. of Cases.	Amount Disbursed.		
		£	s.	d.
Old Comrades' Association	12	21	1	7
— Battalion Charitable Fund	5	23	0	0
Regimental Association Fund	10	34	0	0
Mitchell Trust Fund	1	13	0	0
Total ...		£91	1	7

**VOLUNTEER SERVICE COMPANY, D.W.R., SOUTH AFRICAN
FIELD FORCE.**

Once again the members of the above were restricted by the military situation to one executive meeting at the Royal Hotel, Brighouse, during September. Although weather was inclement, the following were present :—A. Parkin (Bradford), J. Bailey, J. Whiteley (Brighouse), S. North (Holmfirth), J. Kirk, J. Holmes, E. Turner (Huddersfield) and the Secretary, E. M. Ward (16 Forrest Avenue, Edgerton, Huddersfield). A letter regretting absence, due to illness, was received from J. W. Crossley.

Recognition of departed comrades during three wars was observed in the usual way. In his report for the year ending 31st December, 1943, the Secretary expressed gratification that the strength of the Association during 1943 had remained intact. There were 31 associated members. A balance of upwards of £31 was declared, from which grants were allocated to certain members. The hotel manager was cordially thanked for his provision of accommodation, and furthermore for suitable refreshment. Should conditions permit, the Secretary was instructed to convene a meeting with a view to the holding of another re-union and dinner. A whip-round for the Benevolent Fund yielded £1.

E. M. W.

"Stand Down."

We salute the Home Guard who have done a magnificent job of work throughout the country. On Sunday, the 3rd December, 1944, members of the Home Guard attended their final "stand down" parade—this in effect means that they can stand easy and we hope that the necessity to recall them to arms will not arise.

The Home Guard were organised in County Regiments and those of the County of the West Riding of Yorkshire which were affiliated to "The Dukes" consisted of the 21st to 36th W.R. Battalions and 102nd and 107th (Rocket) A.A. Batteries. Members of these units wear the badge of "The Dukes"—the badge of affiliation. To all of them we would like to say "Thank you" for the very generous help they have given to our Prisoners of War Fund, and we hope that the spirit of comradeship which has been created between them and their local Regiment will last for ever. We ask them to regard themselves as part and parcel of the Regiment and, as the wearers of the Duke's crest as their badge, to remember that "Once a Duke, always a Duke."

31st December, 1944.

C. J. PICKERING, Colonel,
The Duke of Wellington's Regiment.

History of the Regiment.

Lymington House,
Four Marks,
Nr. Alton,
Hants,
23rd November, 1944.

To: The Editor of THE IRON DUKE.

Dear Mr. Editor,

As you know, the work of compiling the history of the Regiment during the present war has been undertaken, at the request of the Colonel of the Regiment, by Major S. E. Baker, now serving at the Regimental Depot; a fact which I venture to suggest would be of general interest to all past and present members of the Regiment. The history of the 1st and 2nd Battalions, written by the late Brigadier-General C. D. Bruce, took this historical record up to 1923. There would thus be a gap of some 15 years between the end of the one history and the beginning of the other. Colonel Pickering has realised this and has asked me to attempt the compilation of the Regimental history to cover this intervening period, which I have gladly consented to do.

Since 1923 the Regular and Territorial Battalions have come together in one strong Regimental fellowship. Since 1925 THE IRON DUKE has been born and has done much to foster and strengthen this fellowship, and any further attempts to perpetuate the history of the Regiment in book form will naturally be comprehensive to all units of the Regiment. Should, therefore, any readers of THE IRON DUKE be in possession of any records, diaries, letters, etc., concerning events of important interest in the history of any of the Battalions during the period 1923 to 1939, I shall be glad to hear from them, saying what they have, and if I want the loan of any such papers I will ask for them later.

Yours sincerely,

J. C. BURNETT, Brigadier,
Late The Duke of Wellington's Regiment.

D.W.R. Prisoners of War Fund.

CASH DONATIONS FROM 5TH SEPTEMBER, 1944, TO 28TH DECEMBER, 1944.

23rd, 24th and 26th Bns. (W.R.) Home Guard; — Bn. D.W.R. (sale of loot I); Capt. J. E. Standing; Capt. and Mrs. Robert Burton; No. 2 N.C.I.D.; No. — I.T.C. Concert Party, per Capt. R. Cross; Mr. F. Crouch; Mr. J. E. Thorogood; Secretary "Ace of Clubs," Grasscroft; Mr. E. Pearson; Lt.-Col. W. A. White; Rotherham Hippodrome Concert, per Mr. W. C. Harte; Lt.-Col. F. A. Hayden; Mr. W. C. Harte; Major and Mrs. H. R. Kavanagh; Capt. R. A. Scott; Mrs. I. Croker Fox; Mrs. E. Pearcey; Mrs. Mulqueen; Capt. R. M. Hill; Mrs. E. L. C. Carter; Col. G. P. Norton; — Bn. D.W.R.; Mr. W. Patorini; — Bn. D.W.R. O.C.A., per Mr. Fred Smith; Col. F. S. Exham; Miss Jenny Baker; Mrs. H. P. Travers; Mrs. E. M. Strafford; Mrs. White; Manor Heath Knitting Party, per Mrs. E. Skaife; Col. E. G. Harrison; Collections, Royal Ordnance Factory, per Bandmaster F. Ashton Jones; — Bn. D.W.R.; Mrs. Manning; Mrs. Ellerby; Mrs. Sales; Master Donald McMahon; Mr. W. Handley; Mr. A. P. Richardson; Miss J. M. Holmes; Mr. Reed; Mrs. Douglas Jones-Stamp; Major-General W. M. Ozanne; Mrs. Pease; 262 and 282 Detachments Red Cross; Mrs. E. Beadle; Mrs. Hill; Mrs. Heslop; Mrs. Butterworth; Lt.-Col. and Mrs. C. R. G. Acworth; Miss R. M. Cole; Mrs. S. and Miss Lawson; Mrs. Whittingham; Pupils, Aireborough Grammar School; Mrs. May (South Africa).

DONATIONS IN KIND FROM 5TH SEPTEMBER TO 28TH DECEMBER, 1944.

Manor Heath Knitting Party, per Mrs. E. Skaife; Wells, Norfolk, G.F.S., per Miss Jenny Baker; Mrs. H. Holt; Mrs. F. H. Baume; Miss R. M. Cole; Mrs. W. M. Watson; Mrs. J. Chatterton; Mrs. Cecil Ince; Sowerby Bridge Red Cross, per Mrs. A. L. Sutcliffe; Miss A. Thompson; Mrs. I. S. Wildy; Mrs. C. J. Pickering; Mrs. I. Moore.

Connaught Memorial Fund.

Amount previously acknowledged	...	...	...	...	£273	2	7
Received September to December, 1944	...	...	...	...	—	—	—
Balance as at 28th December, 1944	...	...	...	...	£273	2	7

Personalia.

We offer our heartiest congratulations to Lt.-General Sir Alexander Christison on the award of the K.B.E., in recognition of his services while in command of the XV Indian Corps in the operations on the Burma Frontier.

Also to Lt.-Colonel D. I. Strangeways on the award of the O.B.E., for distinguished service in Normandy. Colonel Strangeways gained the D.S.O. earlier in this war.

Also to Major T. F. Huskisson on the award of a bar to his M.C. This is the first bar to the M.C. to be won in the Regiment during this war. At the same time we congratulate all the other recipients of decorations recorded on pages 32-34 of this issue, including officers of Home Guard Battalions.

Also to Colonel S. Naylor, M.C., on the award of the O.B.E. in the New Year's Honours for his services in Movement Control.

With reference to the list of officers of the Regiment who gained bars to their D.S.Os., recorded on page 138 of our last issue, we have received the following additional names:— Colonel C. M. Bateman, who commanded the 6th Battalion in the 1914-18 war, gained the D.S.O. in 1916 and bar in 1918. Colonel G. P. Norton, Hon. Colonel of the 5th Battalion, who commanded that Battalion in the last war, gained the D.S.O. on 1st January, 1916, and bar on 6th May, 1918. Colonel P. R. Simner, C.B., D.S.O., who served in the 9th Battalion in the last war and won the D.S.O. in 1916 and bar 1918 while in command of a battalion of the West Yorkshire Regiment.

We thank those who kindly sent us the above information and hope that should any other recipients of bars to the D.S.O. be known we may be informed.

The following births have been announced :—

MACLEOD.—On 8th October, 1944, to Evelyn (née Blois), wife of Major Iain Macleod, The Duke of Wellington's Regiment—a daughter.

CARTWRIGHT.—On 4th November, 1944, at 24 Arthur Road, Wimbledon, S.W.19, to Loveday, wife of Major G. V. Cartwright, The Duke of Wellington's Regiment—a daughter.

EXHAM.—On 6th November, 1944, at Shearwood Nursing Home, Sheffield, to Avril (née Price), wife of Lt.-Colonel R. K. Exham, The Duke of Wellington's Regiment—a son. Congratulations to all concerned.

The wedding took place at Port Elizabeth, South Africa, on 4th November, 1944, between Major Frank Jeffrey Reynolds, The Duke of Wellington's Regiment, eldest son of the late Dr. W. Graham Reynolds of Canton, China, and Mrs. Reynolds, New Road, Chatham, Kent, and Marjorie Kay, daughter of Dr. Hobart Kay, F.R.C.S.I., and Mrs. Kay of Mill Park, Port Elizabeth, South Africa. A photograph of the happy pair appears opposite page 40. Major Reynolds is the well-known English rugger international, he played for England from 1937 till the outbreak of war, and was a member of the team which toured South Africa in 1938. It was during this tour that he met his bride.

HUGGINS : STEAD.—At Bradford on the 2nd December, 1944, Mr. W. Huggins to Miss E. C. Stead.

METCALFE : STEAD.—At Bradford on the 4th December, 1944, Mr. J. Metcalfe to Miss M. A. Stead.

Both brides are the daughters of C.S.M. and Mrs. E. Stead, D.C.M., M.M., Army Recruiter (ex 1st and 2nd Battalions) and sisters-in-law of Lt. J. Wardle, D.W.R., who, with Mrs. I. F. Wardle, arrived in England in June of this year after serving with the — Battalion since 1929. The two brides and Mrs. Wardle are all daughters of the Regiment, having been born during the service of their father with the Regiment.

Captain B. Godfrey Buxton in a recent letter mentions that he was with Admiral Harwood in northern waters last October and saw H.M.S. *Iron Duke*. We have not had any news from that ship for some time, and hope this may catch the eye of some one on board, and remind them that we are anxious to hear from the ship.

Lt.-Colonel A. H. G. Wathen in a letter last October writes :—

" The following will, I am sure, be of interest to some of your older readers. During a visit to Leghorn I met a Mrs. Carter, the daughter of the late Major A. J. Preston, who served in the 1st Battalion, retiring, I believe, just before the South African war. You, no doubt, will remember him and know the details of his service ; he died in 1930. Mrs. Carter settled down in Leghorn in 1904, where her husband was in business. When the war came they were treated kindly on the whole, but at one period Mr. Carter (who had served during the last war with the British Army in Italy) became suspect and was arrested by the Boche ; he was however let free shortly before the Americans marched into Leghorn. He is now acting as liaison officer and interpreter at the local American H.Q.

" The Carters have a lovely house, very refreshingly English. I knew that I had come to the right place, as one of the first things that I noticed on being shown into the

drawing-room was a copy of THE IRON DUKE (albeit an old one!). Mrs. Carter tells me that her sister, Edith Penrose, is well, and is now living in Derbyshire, where her husband is agent to the Duke of Devonshire."

Major A. J. Preston joined the 33rd in 1871, and retired in 1890, when he settled in Co. Meath, Ireland. He kept touch with the Regiment until his death in June, 1930, and contributed amusing yarns to THE IRON DUKE on several occasions.

Colonel Wathen adds a postscript to his letter:—

"THE IRON DUKE that I saw in the Carters' house was dated October, 1930. [The issue in which Major Preston's obituary notice appeared.—ED.] There was a photograph of the farewell party to Colonel and Mrs. Freddy Wellesley. What hats the women wore!"

Mr. Owen Owen, writing from Khartoum on 4th December, says:—"I met Pat Cousens (who used to be with the Regiment in Malta in 1936) here the other day. He has been six years with the Sudan Defence Force, but is now on his way to join the Regiment in Italy. He married on 18th November, his bride having flown down from Cairo where she is working. On the day I met him I received the October number of THE IRON DUKE, in my opinion the most thrilling number ever published. We revelled in it together. . . . I have been out here since May and love it, though the climate in summer is a bit trying to one of my years. All the very best to you and the Regiment for Christmas and 1945."

Captain R. A. Scott writes that he recently met a Captain G. Dunn of the Royal Marines who told him that his grandfather was a colour-sergeant in the 33rd, and that his father was also in the Regiment until transferred to the 60th Rifles as bandmaster. The latter died in 1937 aged 63.

C.S.M. T. S. Jones, now serving with the 9th Battalion G.C.R. West African Forces on the Gold Coast, writing in November to ask some question about Regimental history, says he is the only "Duke" in the station, and continues:—"Congratulations to my friends Stanley Gill, Queenie Beech, Quirk and company. I always remember my rooky days and Stanley in France. My old company commander, D. P. Benson, I shall never see again to my utmost regret, and also C.Q.M.S. "Geordie" Daykin, and to their families I offer my utmost condolences. If Mrs. Flint, wife of the Cpl. Flint, killed in France, 1940, can give me her address, I have 'Dickie's' photograph taken from him by me as he lay awaiting the end, which I will send to her. All my efforts to trace her have failed. She did live in Sheffield. Remembering all my old pals, especially 'Sammy' Ambler, O.R.Q.M.S."

Sgt. S. F. Swift, who has contributed so many clever sketches to THE IRON DUKE for many years, is now serving with the R.A.C. in Holland. An article on his experiences appears on another page. He writes that he has run across many "Dukes" serving in other regiments. Just outside Caen he met Captain Rugg. During the forcing of a river in Belgium his tank was sent forward to test a bridge which was partly demolished by the Hun. The first person he met when he reached the other side was Lt.-Colonel Roy Exham, who stood there directing his companies, and as he was very busy, Swift did not get a chance to speak to him. "He looked very cool and just as he used to be when he was adjutant in the — Battalion in India."

We had a very pleasant acknowledgment of the copy of THE IRON DUKE we sent to Major Ralph Ingersoll, author of "The Battle is the Pay Off," reviewed in our last number. He mentions that when it reached him he was in Normandy serving temporarily with "an officer of your distinguished Regiment, David Strangeways." Major Ingersoll was one of a few Americans then on F.M. Montgomery's staff.

The death of Lt.-Colonel F. S. Raitt of Howsham Hall, near York, in November last, will recall to those members of the 1st Battalion who served at York from 1902 to 1905 the very pleasant cricket matches at Howsham Hall. Colonel and Mrs. Raitt on several occasions entertained the Regimental cricket team and many onlookers from the Battalion in royal style at their stately Elizabethan house, with its perfect cricket ground in front of it. On one or more occasions, if we remember rightly, the Battalion camped in the Colonel's park.

We apologise to Mr. G. Fricker for the misprint in our last issue, when the date of his marriage was shown as 1927; this should have read 1944.

C. B. A.

The Late Sergeant H. V. Turner, V.C.

[The following article has been sent to us by Mr. Fred Smith, an ex-member of the Regiment, and now Secretary of the Halifax War Orphans Committee. Although Sgt. Turner was not serving with the Regiment when he won his V.C., the fact that he originally joined a Battalion of the Regiment and that his father served for 14 years in it, will make this account of interest to readers of THE IRON DUKE.—ED.]

The award of the highest honour for valour, the Victoria Cross, the first to be bestowed upon a Halifax man, has been granted posthumously to Cpl. (Acting Sgt.) Hanson Victor Turner (33), West Yorkshire Regiment, whose home is at 18 Woodall Crescent, Wakefield Road, Copley, Halifax.

Sgt. Turner died on the Burma battlefield in a spirit of supreme self-sacrifice on the night of 6th June, 1944.

The official citation is as follows :—

At Ningthoukong soon after midnight an attack was made by a strong force of Japanese with medium and light machine guns. At the start the attack largely fell on the south-west corner of the position which was held by a platoon of about 20 men, of which Sgt. Turner was one of the section commanders. By creeping up under cover of a nullah the enemy was able to use grenades with deadly effect. Three out of the four light machine guns were destroyed and the platoon was forced to give ground. Sgt. Turner at once reorganised his party and withdrew 40 yards. The enemy made repeated attempts to dislodge them. Sustained fire was kept up on Sgt. Turner and his dwindling party by the enemy for a period of two hours. The enemy, however, achieved no further success in this sector. Sgt. Turner repelled all their attacks, and it was due entirely to his leadership that the position was held throughout the night.

When it was clear that the enemy was attempting to outflank the position, Sgt. Turner decided to take the initiative in driving the enemy off and killing them. The men left under his command were the minimum essential to maintain the position he had built up and no party for a counter-attack could be mustered. Speed was essential if the enemy were to be frustrated. He at once went forward alone, armed with all the hand grenades he could carry. He used his weapons with devastating effect and when his supply was exhausted he went back for more. During all this time the enemy was keeping up intense small arms and grenade fire. Sgt. Turner made five journeys to obtain further supplies of grenades, and it was on the sixth occasion, still single-handed, while throwing a grenade among a party of the enemy, that he was killed.

His conduct on that night will ever be remembered by the Regiment. The number of enemy found dead the next morning was ample evidence of the deadly effect of his grenade throwing. He died on the battle field in a spirit of supreme self-sacrifice.

The letter from Capt. R. A. Sarsby, the officer commanding Sgt. Turner's company, contained the following passages :—" He was himself hit by a Japanese grenade and was killed outright. His coolness, determination and leadership were unparalleled and were a source of inspiration to all his men.

" He was buried where he fell, along with others of his comrades, after a simple burial service. A cross has since been placed to mark his resting place.

" Sgt. Turner was an outstanding soldier of great courage. His actions will be a perpetual memory to a gallant soldier who gave his life for his King and Country. His name will live for ever on the Roll of Honour of the West Yorks, his regiment, in which he so gallantly served."

Sgt. Turner joined the — Duke of Wellington's Regiment on 24th July, 1940, at Glasgow, and after service in the south of England and in his native town, proceeded with the Battalion to India in December, 1943. Early in 1944 he was transferred to the West Yorkshire Regiment and took part in the Burma campaign.

In enlisting in the "Dukes" Sgt. Turner was following in the footsteps of his father, the late Sgt. James Herbert Turner, who served 16 years with the Regiment.

The "V.C." in civilian life was a conductor employed by the Halifax Passenger Transport and was well known for his cheeriness on the route on which he was engaged. He leaves a widow and a little daughter, Jean, aged five.

The father of the "V.C.," Sgt. James Herbert Turner (7746) joined the West Riding Regiment in January, 1904, and served 13 years 11 months with the Colours and 3 years 63 days in the Army Reserve. During the war 1914—1919 he served with the 2nd Battalion in France, and was mentioned in the communique dated 28.8.19 for valuable services rendered in connection with the war. He was discharged on 31st March, 1920, with this character, "Very good, honest, sober, and industrious." On returning to civil life Sgt. Turner, senior, was employed by the Halifax Passenger Transport until his death 14 years ago.

Whilst stationed at the Depot in Halifax, he married a Halifax lady—a union blessed with nine children—five sons and four daughters—all living, with the exception of the "V.C." :—

LEO, the eldest son—married. Service in local Home Guard.

HERBERT, staff sergeant in R.A.O.C.

ARTHUR, corporal in R.A.M.C. ; now in India.

ALLAN, lance-corporal in Royal Corps of Signals ; now in France.

EDEN, ANNIE, ALICE, EMILY, daughters, married, each husband serving—two being prisoners of war in Japanese hands.

Mrs. Turner, senior, is living and is well, proud of her family and its connections with the "Dukes." She has with her three married daughters, awaiting the return of their respective husbands, and three grand-children.

I visited to-day the home of the late Sgt. Turner, V.C. Mrs. Turner is very proud of some handwork of her husband—framed and placed in the most prominent position ; it is the design of the West Riding badge and the words :—" Virtutis Fortuna Comes " stand out bold and clear.

War Experiences of our Cartoonist, Sgt. S. F. Swift, now serving with the R.A.C.

HOLLAND, OCTOBER, 1944.

I

The scene was one I shall always remember, the road was the one which we had rumbled down earlier in the advance, now we were returning. I suppose I was too intent on the job on hand to notice the utter destruction made during the advance, now I was seeing it.

Each house was a charred heap of rubble, assorted heaps of brick, plaster, lath, beams charred and twisted into grotesque shapes ; odd walls stood defying the blast of shot and shell. Now and again thin wisps of smoke melted away into that depressing, swirling mist.

Hours before they had been proud, trim homes. Here was a cat picking its way delicately over the ruins, a garden which had grown vegetables was now a black shrivelled burnt mess.



The late Sergeant Hanson Victor Turner, V.C.

[By courtesy of The Halifax Courier and Guardian.]



Major and Mrs. F. S. Reynolds, Port Elizabeth, 4th November, 1944 (see page 37).



Lt.-Colonel B. W. WEBB-CARTER, D.S.O. and Bar.

A house farther along the road I see has escaped, but no, not completely I find ; the walls are grooved as if by the claws of some pre-historic monster, the tiles are tilted at a queer angle and it stands lonely in that all too desolate scene.

Trees, tree stumps, stark white where the fury of the shot had snapped them off. Branches shorn of leaves, making gaunt weird patterns, some like a shorn collaborator amid leafy patriots.

Trees hanging drunkenly as though they had tried hard to resist and had been left reeling.

Fields are churned up by mechanical monsters, marks are left as if two had battled to the death, for there were only the hulks of the burnt-out tanks.

I sighed, as I saw the utter waste, what was to become of it all ?

War had laid a heavy hand all around me ; then my eyes met something which instantly filled me with hope—hope for a future. This one thing made me know that life would go on, the people would plan their lives anew in some other happiness, fresh courage was already lending a hand to re-build a future full of wonderful promise. What did I see ?

It was a new, very new ploughed field, with the smell of the good sweet earth lingering on its furrowed face.

II

The tanks were moving forward in line ahead. Great land battleships that dipped and rose to the swell of the uneven ground. The troop was in the lead and we were pushing ahead, speed was the order.

The country was open for a thousand yards to left and right, then fell away to wood plantations. The visibility was poor, mist reduced the view to fifteen hundred yards.

We had stopped because the two tanks ahead had stopped. I tried to pierce the mist with my glasses. Away in front a thin column of smoke arose and lost itself in the haze. Over the air came the dramatic story of a recon tank being hit. The troop were telling the tale of their comrades in the blazing tank.

I cannot say it happened suddenly, it just happened. A blinding flash, flames, smoke. And a body rising from the mass of flame. A body twisted grotesquely in the air falling behind the inferno of flame and smoke. "Hell," I yelled, "Cowdy's had it." It was the tank ahead of me that had been hit in the petrol tank. "Traverse right, fire, smoke," I snapped. Almost as I spoke I knew we had been hit. The dull shuddering metallic clang told its own tale. However, we were not mortally hit and the smoke screen was thickening up to aid the crew of the stricken tank ahead. I saw a ghost figure stagger from the smoke, followed by another, then another, figures that staggered and rolled like men in a daze. Four, another figure followed them. What was this ? Smoke was filling the turret, we too were ablaze. I gave the order to "Bale out." We struggled out amid the smoke, hitting the ground, rolling and twisting to our feet. I knew four men were out of the blazing tank ahead, but what of the fifth ? I waited a moment and thought I saw a figure among the smoke. I called ; yes, it was the fifth man, dazed and blinded by smoke. I saw, too, that the leading tank had turned round and was coming back with his tail discharging a great column of smoke between the blazing tanks and the Hun. The dazed gunner and I struggled on to where the leading tank was now picking up survivors. All Mr. Cowdy's crew were burnt and shaken. My crew were all O.K. but shaken.

We had brewed up after being hit three times. The gun that got the two of us was an 88mm. This has taken some time to tell, but I estimate that the whole incident from the first tank being hit to our being picked up only took three minutes.

The Way Back.

“Enfin !” With a cry of triumph Commandant B. squeezed the last pair of English-made pyjamas into his already over-flowing case, threw himself upon the lid, and snapped home the catch. That case would next be opened in Paris, his native city, dear to his affections, so different, so delightfully and hearteningly different, from the grey and battered London where he had spent four years of exile with General de Gaulle’s staff . . . “Adieu Londres !” (It was impossible to mistake the note of thankfulness in that farewell.) Commandant B. was taking the road for home.

It was with such, entirely natural, rejoicing that the French and Belgian officers in England prepared for their return in the autumn days when in turn Paris and Brussels were liberated, liberated with a breath-taking speed. The days of exile were numbered, were at an end, and in the exhilaration of departure many things were voiced which, for the sake of tact and amity, had been suppressed during the long years in which they had struggled with a strange language in a strange land ; had endeavoured to accustom themselves to the oddity of the things the English said, and the even greater oddity of the things they never said at all ; had tried despairingly to become acclimatized to weather the like of which occurred nowhere else in Europe. Spurred by the knowledge that in a matter of days they would be back among familiar habits and customs, they became expansive. . . . One was to comprehend that they were grateful, grateful beyond words for the welcome and the hospitality they had received, for the continued existence of England during the dark days of 1940 when a continent went under, and in return the doors of their own homes, in Paris, in Louvain, in Marseilles, in Brussels, stood open whenever their English hosts could cross the Channel to enter them. . . . “But” (one would not of course mind their mentioning it *now*)—and here the floodgates were opened, giving the said hosts an unforeseen, and perhaps shocking, glimpse, of what England and the English can look like in foreign eyes.

They began, logically enough, with the day’s beginning, breakfast ; its early hour, its ritual silence, its porridge, its newspaper propped upon the table and against the tea pots—a hideous meal ! Why not breakfast separately, in the decent privacy of one’s own room, as did the Continent ? And then the bus queues, incomprehensible ! Nostalgic for Brussels, where the conductors set their trams in motion by blowing little horns in lieu of ringing bells ; for Paris where you draw your queue number from a slot machine at the bus-stop, and then proceed to battle briskly and without regard for sex with those in front of you, they marvelled at the silent endurance of the English queues, the philosophy with which full buses, rude conductors, and yet more waiting, were supported. . . . There were other things ; many other things, the list was in fact unending.

Our draughts ; why was it that double windows did not exist in a country whose climate necessitated a defensive architecture ? There was no doubt some political-cum-industrial cabal which hindered their introduction ? Such things were not unknown even in their own dear countries.

Our mania for punctuality. . . . Our dislike of committing ourselves in writing ; true, we kept our spoken word, but why this abhorrence of the written one ? Our



“trousers . . . designed for the anatomy of man alone.”

monastic indifference to what we ate and the manner in which it had been prepared (though perhaps this should be laid to our credit, another example of the long-suffering patience of the English race, for no-one with pretensions to a palate could *enjoy* English food).

Gingerly they touched on that most delicate of subjects for the foreigner who ventures on criticism—English women—but of course, *charming*, one was not to imagine they intended so much as a breath of disparagement, what complexions, what hair . . . but—the awkward English laugh when one ventured on compliment, the painful English assumption of an easy equality between the sexes, the habit of smoking in the street, and the trousers! Could they not, would they not, these delightful English girls, learn that trousers were a garment cut and designed for the anatomy of man alone, and ludicrously, painfully unsuitable to that of woman? Now in their own lands it was different. Earnestly and at length Col. Z, Commandant B., and Lt.-de-Vaisseau de K. pointed out how great the difference was.

They left in riotous spirits, sure that the indomitable vigour of their own peoples would soon repair the ravages of war, and that they themselves would within numbered months welcome us to the homes which possessed all the graces of cuisine and fashion we so sadly lacked.

Since then some have returned to London on service duties of one kind or another, others have written, and the flush of gaiety in which they left has shown a gradual but definite fading. Things it appeared were not quite what they had seemed in those first weeks of triumph liberation. No. It was not that the effects of battle and occupation were even worse than they had feared; those whose pre-war homes were not in the battle areas had found more unchanged than they had dared to hope, but certain circumstances had been left out of their reckoning. Populations which have had, over a period of years, to practise deception and passive resistance, do not at once return to the normal; there had been disagreeable scenes between those who had returned and those who had never left . . . there was the black market . . . there were the collaborators, of whom if those that were known were bad, those who were only suspected were even worse.

Last week Commandant B. returned to London on a brief mission. In his hotel he expatiated on his pleasure at return. How admirable was the patience of the English in the bus and train queues which were even longer now than when he had left; never a scene, a scuffle, a striking of a fellow in the long procession. And how restful, how tranquilising the English food, which even if monotonous was sold at a fixed and stated price and did not have to be paid for five times over before consumption. How economical not to have to tip the usherettes, the paper boys, the chambermaids each and every day. How excellent the traditional silence enjoined on English meals; what a contrast to Paris, where each second brought a fresh explosion on the theme of internal politics, where plates were hammered on the table to emphasise a point, and courses kept waiting while discussion grew ever more fierce. His digestion had suffered, under the strain. "En effet," it was pleasant to be back in London; there was perhaps something to be said for the English way of living; more than one had at first supposed—and as he spoke, Commandant B. shifted his chair out of the worst of the prevailing draught.

C.B.A.

Our Contemporaries.

We have to acknowledge with thanks the following regimental magazines:—*The Dragon* (Sept., Oct., Nov., Dec.), *The Snapper* (Sept., Oct., Nov., Dec.), *The St. George's Gazette* (August, Sept., Oct., Nov.), *The Suffolk Regimental Gazette* (Oct., Dec.), *The Lion & The Rose* (August), *The Journal of The South Wales Borderers* (Nov.), *The Die Hards* (Sept.), *The Sapper* (Sept., Oct., Nov., Dec.), *The Royal Army Ordnance Corps Gazette* (Sept., Oct., Nov., Dec.), *Our Empire* (Sept., Oct., Nov., Dec.).

Our Friends the French.

Travelling about in a troopship does not consist entirely of carrying British troops from A to B. Sometimes one wishes it did! The variety of people concerned with the war who have to be carried about the world is a source of unending amazement. One gets Italian prisoners, Italian co-operators and Italians in British units, Russian allies and Russian prisoners, Greek sailors and Greek refugees, Palestinians speaking every language in Europe, and small numbers of almost everything, even to Luxembourg prisoners of war.

Some of the most interesting have been our French passengers. Our first experience, when foreigners were still a novelty, was of some French sailors from their warships at Alexandria. They were at first badly looked after by a fat engineer officer, but before long a junior army officer took charge and said "fixe" on inspection in the morning and looked after them very well. They were, like most Frenchmen, very proud and demonstrative of their patriotism and displayed Lorraine crosses all over the place; they were deeply hurt when one day a swastika was found scrawled across one of these. One of those childish things which look so different in the eyes of an Englishman and a Frenchman and which lead so easily and so often to misunderstandings between us.

On the same trip we had a figure who for a time was almost legendary in the Middle East—a rotund young Frenchman in a R.A.F. fighter squadron, who was a first-rate fighter and who, shot down far from home, lived for a month with the Bedouins and got back to find his sorrowing friends having masses said for his soul.

Shortly afterwards our berthing list contained another small party of French troops, but this time Senegalese, as black as coal, and prisoners! It seemed that they had resented their platoon commander's treatment of them and so had killed him—but they were said to be perfectly decent fellows and were on their way home. Fortunately they must have been satisfied with conditions on board and there were no further incidents.

A little later we underwent the severe strain of trying to converse at meals for three weeks with the commander of a garrison in Madagascar, going to England as a prisoner and his wife and daughter. Although all South Africa had been talking of the Madagascar expedition for ten days before it landed, no hint of it had reached Diego Suavez. The French army prisoners were very friendly but the naval officers remained correct and rather distant. There is no tradition of friendship between the French and British navies, and the unfortunate events at Oran and Dakar in 1940 had done nothing to improve the relationship.

Before we reached home we heard over the wireless how some hundreds of the French troops from Madagascar had joined the Free French forces and had been landed. So they had, but they were all Senegalese whose views about different loyalties in France were probably not very clear. Since then, no doubt, all our friends of that voyage have forgotten their temporary resentment and have rallied to the new France.

Shortly afterwards we—without enthusiasm—took on board some ten French officers from South Africa, complete with families; we were all disposed to ask why, when the movement of troops was desperately urgent, some 25 berths should be occupied to move ten officers, but no doubt there was a good reason. They touched the heart of our Dutch captain to the point of persuading him to part with some of the ship's reserve of champagne, and gave an excellent party to celebrate the taking of the Bastille or some other adequate reason for a party—so we drank each others' health with eloquence on the one side and halting schoolboy French on the other. We forget whether that, or Queen Wilhelmina's birthday, provided the last champagne we saw on board a ship; those were the good days!

Since then we have carried more substantial numbers of French troops. One lot was a whole mixed brigade of excellent troops, of whom the white component had marched from Egypt to Tunisia and the black part (the two halves about equal in numbers) from

Lake Chad. The French treatment of colonial troops is interesting. To our surprise, their mixed units (white and black in each company) were completely mixed together in the troop decks on a footing of complete equality. They teach their native troops to speak French (correctly, not pidgin French), which seems a more reasonable system than ours under which our officers learn Urdu or Swahili or what not. Their discipline was excellent, their staff arrangements as simple as ours tend to be complicated. We heard afterwards that they had fought and given a good account of themselves both in Italy and in France.

Two other pictures of various kinds of French troops stick in our mind; one of a batch of troops who on arrival (one never gets particulars beforehand) turned out to be Indo-Chinese and other unexpected Oriental mixtures; the other a fairylike picture of some hundreds of Somalis embarking at night under a powerful floodlight, their hundreds of bright red caps bobbing about on the flat barge which had brought them out. They were the thinnest men we ever saw, yet their officers assured us that they had all put on 10 to 20 pounds weight as soon as they joined the army and came on army rations. There is perhaps the poorest country on earth.

Another party, this time Frenchmen, was in charge of a senior colonel who was most active in arranging concerts and sports to amuse his men though he was not their commander and the voyage was only short. We tried to help him as much as we could and after one unexpected bit of help which he had thought to be impossible he always referred to the O.C. troops as "le Bon Dieu du Bateau." We met him and his family again in Algiers, in a French officers' club which remained open (how typical) after the British officers' club had closed, and his greeting was again to "Le Bon Dieu." Among the French officers in this club we realised for the first time how very bitter is the feeling between the two sides of the French nation, and how vindictive are the Free French towards the Vichy party. If Algiers gave a fair sample of opinion, there will be some unpleasant passages in French history before the country reaches normal conditions again.

We have learnt to use considerable tact in separating nationalities in different parts of the ship. But with a usual English lack of appreciation of delicate feelings we made the dreadful mistake of putting about ten Italian officers (late arrivals) in a dormitory where there was just room with ten French officers. An indignant deputation arrived at once (from the French). With no little trouble it was found possible to separate them by taking out the French and spreading them among other dormitories, and the deputation left, undertaking to see this through. Some hours later, acting, as the police say, on information received, we visited the disturbed dormitory and found it occupied by the ten French with the ten Italians standing outside. Again our best French went into action and again, we thought, persuaded the French that our solution was best, until we let fall the remark that we were sorry that it bore the appearance of the French retreating and leaving the Italians in possession. The effect was astonishing; rather than give that impression they would all stay where they were—and so they did and lived in perfect peace, French and Italians together!

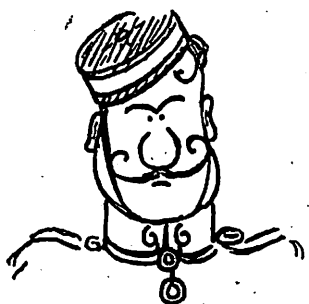
It was another example of how the Englishman fails to understand persistent ill-feeling. The French explained with eloquence and dramatic gesture that their country had been stabbed in the back by Italy, and there could never be amity between them. In vain did we explain that we had perhaps been stabbed a little also by the Italians, and that in fact we had been put perhaps to more inconvenience in the matter than the French. No, it was France that had been stabbed in the back, and France could never forgive. By a miracle of patience we avoided any reference to the effects of certain French actions during the war and the interpretation currently put on them by many Englishmen.

May we hope that our readers will try to exercise a similar patience and sympathise a little with the French—a nation of great traditions and great qualities—in their present

state of disillusion and disunity. It has been said that to understand all is to forgive all; certainly our transient friendships with Frenchmen on board ship have helped us to understand something of the French and the difficulties that face them.

G. B. H.

Tale of a Grandfather.



Grandad is an old soldier—how old exactly is a matter for conjecture. He claims, amongst other things, to have personally received the surrender of King Cetewayo at the relief of Lucknow, and attributes his present rheumatic condition to falling into the Nile at the Battle of Omdurman—the banks, he contends, being rendered slippery at the time with the blood of countless Boers he had slain.

But if Grandad's memory is occasionally at fault, there is nothing wrong with his spirit, which remains fiery and unquenchable. No more ardent patriot exists, and none more anxious to play an active part in the present struggle. He it was, who in spite of his advanced years, was amongst the first to offer his services to the Forces at the outbreak of war, expressing a preference for the Cavalry on account of his corns. They were rejected, as was also his request to a sergeant to step outside with his coat off.

And Grandad it was who, scorning the sanctuary of a cellar, went out alone, armed with only a pocket torch and a shotgun,⁷ to challenge the might of Goering's Luftwaffe, and was fined forty shillings and costs for it.

Despairing of a combatant role, he joined the A.R.P.; and with his crafty old eye glinting from under a helmet three sizes too large for him, became a prowling menace more feared than any bomb. Nervous old gentlemen, pausing to light their pipes in the blacked-out streets, soared skywards like rockets when Grandad's stentorian reproof smote their ears. Maiden ladies, with inadequately screened torches, hurried home blushing to search their dictionaries in vain for the full implication of Grandad's remarks.

The limit was reached, however, when he fetched the Mayor out of his bed at 2 o'clock on a frosty morning to look at the moon's reflection on his windows. The Leading Citizen, throwing dignity to the winds, followed the moon's example and cast a few reflections of his own.

The formation of the L.D.V. found Grandad ready and willing as ever; but their steadfast refusal to form square and fight like men—a method which he and Kitchener had adopted with striking success in the Sudan—finally led him to abandon them in disgust.

For a time he was attached in an unofficial and advisory capacity to the N.F.S., though his suggestion at their first fire that they should let it burn up a bit in order to see what they were doing, was not acted upon. An accident with a chemical extinguisher eventually cost him his position and the good will of all within reach of it.

He even offered his services to the police, expressing his willingness, for his country's sake, to overlook the twenty-eight convictions falsely brought against him in the past. Their tactful explanation, however, that they hadn't a helmet to fit him, was accepted with relief.

The Dig for Victory campaign saw Grandad an enthusiastic supporter in a pair of deep-seated corduroys. At one and sixpence an hour, parts of England's green and pleasant land were more effectively devastated than Russia's scorched and riven soil. Rockeries were torn up, trees were hewn down—one of them plunging to its doom through a kitchen window. Grandad's explanation that a sudden change of wind and the architect,

who ought to have built the house more to the left, were jointly responsible for the catastrophe, increased the tension on strained relations to a point beyond human endurance.

In a single day a famous lawn, which for twenty years had known nothing but loving care, was rendered a place fit for only the hardiest of potatoes to live in. Dissension reared its ugly head again. Lord Woolton was misquoted by Grandad. Names even more widely known were invoked by the stricken owner. Many and bitter were the words exchanged, but as usual, Grandad had plenty of words left when the other had used all his, and after prescribing plenty of grass seed for the lawn, a handful of liver pills for its carping owner, he suggested alternative accommodation for the potatoes and withdrew in good order.

But the seeds of avarice had been sown in Grandad's aged bosom. Patriotism in itself, he realised, was not enough to cope with the rising cost of beer. With a window cleaner's outfit, borrowed from a grandson serving overseas, he embarked on a commercial career.

His first attempt met with disaster. Rounding a downhill bend with his ladder cart out of control, he first scooped a curate off his bicycle and then mowed down a bus queue with his impaled victim. The curate's spirit of forbearance on being accused of sabotage by Grandad, whilst pinned to the pavement by a fourteen-stone matron, whose hard-won jar of treacle was leaking down his neck, maintained the dignity of the Church during a deplorable civic tumult in which evidence of human frailty was widespread.

Grandad achieved his objective on the second day, and spent the morning mastering the difficult art of handling an extending ladder. By noon it was in position, three bedroom windows were shattered and the telephone wires carried away. Fortified by lunch, Grandad made the ascent at 2 o'clock, and by five past his yells for help had blocked the road for twenty yards with sightseers. Overcome by vertigo, Grandad ignored advice and refused to move.

A policeman was summoned, and ascending the ladder urged Grandad to be a man and come on down. Grandad came on down as far as the policeman's fingers and then went back. The constable, disdaining the rungs, made a crash landing in Grandad's bucket.

The N.F.S. were sent for, and, knowing Grandad, they took no chances. Running another ladder up alongside, they lowered Grandad in a sling. Part of the metal troughing came with him, and the last drop of brandy in the house was awarded to the fireman who deflected it through the dining-room window with his ear.

Thereafter, for a time, Grandad retired from public life, and it was thought that his active days were over. But, in defiance of the old soldier tradition, Grandad refused to fade away; and with the arrival of our American allies at last found his ideal wartime vocation.

He has taken the Americans under his wing. Hands across the sea has been narrowed by Grandad to hands across the bar. His ideas of hospitality are such that any Chicago gangster would feel thoroughly at home in his company. He has learned to chew gum and smoke a cigar simultaneously. His customary greeting of "'Ow do" has been supplanted by the more virile "Hya buddy!" As a producer of souvenirs he is unsurpassed. So many hammers and axes used in the building of the *Mayflower* are destined to travel to the States that there is scarcely a coal shed left which has not suffered some bereavement.

But it is feared that if no check is placed on his activities, his explanations of the peculiarities of the British monetary system, and his interpretation of lease-lend from a purely personal point of view, may eventually leave the Empire with yet another war on its hands.

A Tribute to the 33rd.

Drum 2,
Grand Avenue,
Camberley, Surrey,

18.9.44.

Dear Colonel Trench,

I do not know whether you have any space or demand for historical anecdotes or references to the Regiment in *THE IRON DUKE*, but I enclose the following in case it is of interest.

I have just read a semi-historical novel called "Serjeant Lamb of the Ninth Foot" by Robert Graves. The author was, I gather, an officer in the 9th Foot in the Great War* and was interested in the exploits of a legendary character called Sjt. Lamb, who served in the 9th Foot during the campaigns in America and Canada when we were fighting the Americans in their War of Independence. After he left the Army the author went to America and managed to obtain the diary of Sjt. Lamb and also various letters and records of that period. On this data he wrote his novel. In the book there is the following very fine testimonial to the Thirty-Third.

Sjt. Lamb as a young corporal was sent with another corporal to the Thirty-Third, then stationed in Ireland, to learn light infantry work. He writes as under of his attachment to the 33rd:—

I am bound to record here that I felt a certain shamefastness, on visiting the barracks of the Thirty-Third, who were commanded by the young Earl of Cornwallis, to compare their high state of appointment and the steadiness of their discipline with the slovenly and relaxed bearing of most of our own companies. One can always correctly judge a regiment's capabilities by the behaviour of its sentries. I have already described how Maguire performed his sentry duty at Waterford, and might well have remarked then that his behaviour was not exceptional. I have seen men go on duty in the Ninth dead drunk and scarcely able to stand. But with the Thirty-Third the sentry was always alert and alive in attention; when on duty he was all eye, all ear. Even in the sentry box, which he never entered except in a downpour of rain, he was forbidden to keep the palm of his hand on the muzzle of his loaded firelock, for this was considered as dangerous an attitude as it was awkward.

During the two hours that he remained on his post the sentry continued in constant motion, and could not walk less than seven miles in that time. The Thirty-Third thus set a standard of soldier-like duty which made me secretly dissatisfied with the Ninth, and which I have never seen equalled since but by one other regiment which was brigaded with the Thirty-Third under the same Lord Cornwallis, in the later campaigns of the American War.

Yours sincerely,

C. W. GRIMLEY.

Armies with Banners.

Lymington House,
Four Marks,
Alton Hants,

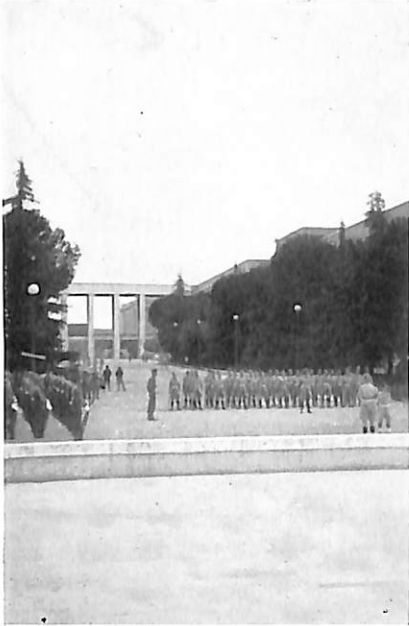
29th October, 1944.

My Dear Trench,

There is a very good article in the November number of *Blackwood's* entitled "Armies with Banners," by Lt.-Col. P. R. Butler, D.S.O. In this article there are references to the Colours of the Regiment which, although fairly common knowledge to members of the Regiment, are, I think, worth quoting inasmuch as they serve as pleasing reminders of

* Robert Graves served in the R.W.F. in the last war, *vide* his book "Good-bye to All That."—Ed.

ITALY.



Retreat Ceremony in Rome, June, 1944.
Guard of The Dukes facing camera. American
Guard on their right, with white gloves.

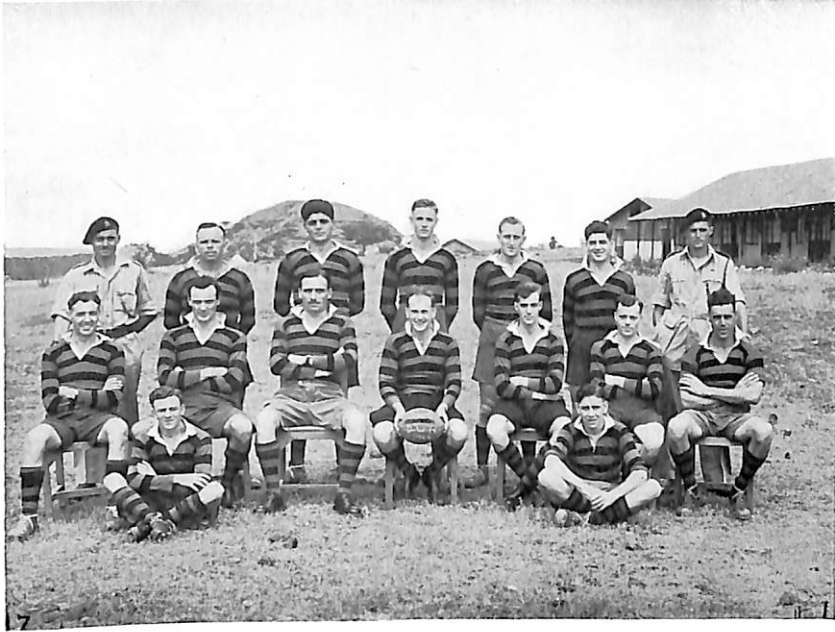


Waterloo Day parade in Rome, 1944.
The Dukes marching past the Divisional Commander.



Some old Dukes now serving with the R.A.C.
(Seated, left to right) : Sgt. S. JOHNSON, S.Q.M.S. J. JONES, S.S.M. A. GOODWIN, Capt. R. D. HOLROYDE, Capt.
and Q.M. R. A. SMITH, Capt. S. V. OWEN, R.S.M. H. CUNDALL, R.Q.M.S. H. BARTROP, S.S.M. H. MARSHALL,
S.S.M. T. WARDLE.
(Standing, left to right) : Sgt. J. W. WHITE, Sgt. J. H. BROCKLEHURST, M.M., Sgt. J. W. REED.

A UNIT IN INDIA.



Rugby Football Team.



Dance Band.

great deeds in past Regimental history and may be of interest to some of the younger generation who have not had the opportunity to make a study of this history.

I quote them :—

Unique among the regiments specially honoured by the East India Company (of course with the approval of the reigning Monarch) and unique on the roll of the British Army, is the 2nd Duke of Wellington's (West Riding Regiment), the renowned old 76th Foot (the "Old Immortals") of Lake's campaigns in India, in possessing two complete sets of Colours—the usual "King's" and "Regimental" ones, and an extra set presented to the Regiment in 1803 "for important services." Just how "important" those same services were may be gathered from any study of our Army's history in India, justifying, as it does throughout, the words of Lake spoken after he had won Laswari :—"On this, as on every former occasion, I beheld with admiration the heroic behaviour of the 76th."

Then again later in the article :—

If the Duke of Wellington's Regiment has emblazoned the crest and motto of the Great Duke's arms on its Regimental Colour,* there exist too a few instances of a contrary process.

And again :—

Deserving, as will probably be readily conceded, of a paragraph to themselves, are the armorials of Lord Harris. The first Lord of Seringapatam and Mysore belonged to several regiments in his distinguished career, and though the old 76th Foot (of the unique double set of Colours) may most justly call him particularly theirs, the "supporters" awarded him for his arms were a grenadier of the 73rd (now 2nd Black Watch), of which regiment he was for some years colonel, and a "Malay" soldier. But the noteworthy point is that each of these "supporters" carries *two* flags, which are shown one above the other, and that they are heraldically described as being :—"Dexter, the Union Flag of Great Britain and Ireland, over that of the Standard of Tippoo Sultan; sinister, the flag of the East India Company, over the Standard of Tipoo Sultan," while in addition, the tricolour of France is "entwined" on the pole which carries each pair of flags.

This last point is to me the most interesting one in the whole of his very interesting article and one wonders why, in view of the author's acceptance of the fact that the 76th had more claim to Lord Harris than other units, one of the supporters for his arms was not a grenadier of the 76th. And again, why the inclusion of the East India Colour in the armorial bearings held by the "Sinister" supporter, a Malay soldier? It would be interesting to know if any Malayan regiment ever carried an East India Colour.

Yours sincerely,

J. C. BURNETT.

Obituary.

We regret to record the following deaths :—

BARTON.—On 18th December, 1944, at the Grey Bungalow, Powick, Worcester, Lt.-Colonel Baptist Johnston Barton, D.S.O., of Greenfort, County Donegal, late The Duke of Wellington's Regiment, aged 68. Colonel Barton, eldest son of the late Col. B. J. Barton, D.L., A.D.C., was born on 21st October, 1876, and was gazetted to the 2nd Battalion on 5th September, 1896, joining them in South Africa. He proceeded with them to India in December, 1897, and served at Bangalore, Rangoon and again in India. After service at the Depot, he rejoined the 2nd Battalion in England and retired with the rank of captain on 9th September, 1911. On the outbreak of the last war in August, 1914, he joined the 3rd (Reserve) Battalion, and on 16th September went out to France with reinforcements for the 2nd Battalion. He took part in the action at Hill 60 on 18th April, 1915, in which, as mentioned in the History of the Regiment, "'C' Company had to charge over some 50 yards of open ground and suffered very heavily, Captain Barton and a few men only reaching the objective. They, however, captured the trenches allotted to them, killing and capturing a number of the enemy." After this action, when the late Brig.-General P. A. Turner and the late Lt.-Colonel W. M. Tyndall had been wounded, Capt. Barton took over the command of the Battalion, and in the gas attack of 5th May he, the adjutant, Lt. (now Lt.-Col.) C. W. G. Ince, the transport officer, Capt. (now Lt.-Col.) M. N. Cox, the medical officer, Lt. Tobias, the quartermaster, the late Major Ellam, and some 150 other ranks were all that were left out of a battalion of 20 officers and 500 other ranks. In May, 1916, Barton was promoted acting lieutenant-colonel and assumed command of a battalion of the Yorkshire Light Infantry. He was mentioned in despatches three times, was awarded the D.S.O. in 1915 and a bar to the D.S.O. in 1918, and promoted to brevet lieutenant-colonel.

* An almost unique distinction. This paper is not considering Royal personages' armorials, or those of certain historic Highland chieftains. Probably the only other example is afforded by the 7th Dragoon Guards, which regiment bears the crest and motto of Earl Ligonier (1680—1770), one of its most celebrated colonels and a field-marshal in the British Army.

Colonel Barton was married in 1908 to Kathleen Maude, eldest daughter of Egbert de Hamel, Esq., of Middleton Hall, Warwickshire. He was a D.L. and J.P. in Co. Donegal and was high sheriff in 1922. His widow and one daughter survive him.

The following is an appreciation by Brigadier J. C. Burnett :—" Lt.-Colonel B. J. Barton, D.S.O., whose death is reported in this number, will be remembered by those who knew him and served with him chiefly, perhaps, for his size, his great good nature, his love of dogs and his general usefulness at all games ; excelling as he did as a fine rigger forward in his day, and a good golfer of the ' Cyril Tolley ' type.

" He may have taken his soldiering in a light-hearted manner under peace conditions, but when it came to war, all the Irishman's flair for battle came into evidence, and as a leader he excelled, as his great record in the last war shows. Loved by his men, whom he understood, there will be many old comrades who will have happy recollections of soldiering days with B. J. Barton."

BOLSTER.—In August, 1944, mortally wounded in action in France, Lt.-Colonel G. H. Bolster, The Royal Northumberland Fusiliers. Colonel Bolster, who was born in 1902, had a distinguished record in the Army, both with his regiment and on the staff. In 1942 he took over command of a Battalion of The Duke of Wellington's Regiment, which he held for about a year. The following is from a personal tribute to him in *The Times* from a brother officer :—" The five years of war were for Geoffrey a period of unceasing labour, almost always in highly responsible and exacting staff appointments. One happy interlude came in 1942-43, when he had command of a Battalion of The Duke of Wellington's Regiment. It was soon over, and before the end of 1943 he was called back to staff duties as B.G.S. Southern Command. When D-Day arrived he landed in Normandy. There, at his urgent request, he was allowed to step down in rank to lieutenant-colonel so that he might command a battalion. After two months in the line with his new command, a battalion of The South Lancashire Regiment, he was mortally wounded while visiting his forward posts."

CHAMBERS.—On the 10th October, 1944, at his home at 4 Castle Street, Halifax, ex-Sgt. Thomas Stuart Chambers, late The Duke of Wellington's Regiment. Mr. Chambers served in the Regiment from 3rd October, 1905, until his discharge on medical grounds on 11th November, 1919. He then joined the staff of Miles Sykes of Sowerby Bridge and was with them until 1938, and in July, 1939, joined the Depot in a civilian capacity as clerk. On that post becoming redundant and after the departure of the I.T.C., he obtained employment with the local unit of the Home Guard, with whom he was serving at the time of his death. The interment was attended by a representative party of serving and ex-serving life members of the Old Comrades' Association.

CHOLMLEY.—In October, 1944, in British Columbia, Lt.-Colonel Robert Strickland Cholmley, D.S.O., late The Duke of Wellington's Regiment. Colonel Cholmley was born on 16th May, 1887, at Place Newton, Rillington, Yorkshire ; he was educated at Charterhouse and Sandhurst and joined the 2nd Battalion at Lichfield in May, 1907. In 1914 he went out to East Africa to join the King's African Rifles, and during the war saw service with them in British, German and Portuguese East Africa, Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia. He was twice mentioned in despatches and awarded the D.S.O. He came home in 1919 and rejoined the 2nd Battalion, serving as adjutant from 28th October, 1919, to 27th October, 1922. After further service in East Africa, he rejoined the Battalion in Singapore. He retired with the rank of lieutenant-colonel on 12th July, 1929. Later on he went out to British Columbia and started fruit growing there. Colonel Pickering writes :—" Cholmley never married and was always of a quiet and retiring disposition, and when I relinquished command of the 2nd Battalion in Ahmednagar, he decided to throw his hand in and go too. He started growing fruit in British Columbia and never failed to send me a Christmas letter. I shall miss this."

Brigadier J. C. Burnett sends the following appreciation :—" The death of Lt.-Colonel Cholmley announced in this number will revive a chord of memory among those who knew the 2nd Battalion in the period 1907 to 1929. ' Bill Cholmley '—for so he was always alluded to—was one whose strong and very distinct personality could not fail to arouse the regard of all those with whom he served, both officers and men. A keen student of history, a deep thinker and great reader with strong views and a forceful way of expressing them, a great lover of nature, with all the wanderer's instinct to see the world, were perhaps his chief characteristics. He hated functions, was discreetly circumspect in regard to feminine society, and found little to attract him in the hum-drum routine of the everyday life of peace soldiering. Perhaps it was for these reasons that most of his service was spent away from the Regiment with the King's African Rifles, which he joined before the outbreak of war in 1914, and with whom he served and won distinction—gaining the D.S.O. in July, 1917—until the end of the war.

" After a brief period of home service as adjutant under the late Brig.-General Bray with the 2nd Battalion in Sheffield and Ireland, he returned to Africa, where he had a colonel's command until 1928, when he rejoined the 2nd Battalion at Singapore under Colonel Pickering and went with the Battalion to Ahmednagar. Station life in India held no charms for him, his urge was to see more of the world, and retiring altogether in 1929, he set off on a protracted tour which took him across the Pacific to British Columbia and Canada. After a brief period at home, he went back to settle in British Columbia. His interest in the Regiment never flagged. From time to time he wrote interesting articles on his travels to THE IRON DUKE under the pseudonym of ' Tinker,' and whenever he came

back to England on trips from the home he had made for himself in British Columbia he invariably looked up his friends in the officers' and sergeants' messes of Regimental units stationed in England. He also never forgot the 'Old Comrades' Association.'

"All who knew Bill Cholmley will, I am sure, have the recollection of a charming and gifted man whose companionship was always worth cultivating."

PHILLIPS.—On 21st October, 1944, at the Manse, Catsfield, Battle, Major Cyril St. John Phillips, late The Duke of Wellington's Regiment and R.A.O.C., aged 55. Major Phillips served in the Regiment in France in the last war, and was wounded. Since 1922 he had practised as a solicitor at Bexhill. He rejoined the service on the outbreak of the present war and served with the R.A.O.C. for two years. He later served in the Home Guard. He was for some years president of the British Legion in Bexhill and took an active part in the social life of the district.

Mr. F. Crouch of 565 Sedlescombe Road North, St. Leonards-on-Sea, writes :—"I used to meet Major Phillips regularly every August Bank Holiday at a garden fete he was greatly responsible for organising at Catsfield, and always had a word with him, and we both always asked the same question : how was the 'Dukes,' have you heard any news? But when this war broke out he rejoined the forces and I did not meet him again until he joined the Home Guard in one of the companies of the same battalion that I was in, but he was always a 'Duke.' He will be missed in the active social life of his village."

RICHES.—On 18th June, 1944, killed in action in Normandy, Captain D. J. Riches, The Duke of Wellington's Regiment. Captain Riches was attached to a battalion of The Green Howards at the time of his death. He had previously served with the East Yorkshire Regiment through the North African campaign from El Alamein, and in the invasion of Sicily. He had only been married for a month (20th May).

RUSH.—On 28th September, 1944, after a short illness, ex-Sgt. William Rush, late The Duke of Wellington's Regiment. Mr. Rush was the son of the late Mr. Jonathan Rush, of the 1st Battalion. He joined the Regiment at Warley as a boy in October, 1886, and after serving at the Depot, Halifax, and with the Provisional Battalion at Shorncliffe, where he was promoted sergeant, he proceeded to South Africa and joined the 2nd Battalion at Pietermaritzburg in 1897. He served with them there and at Bangalore and Rangoon, where he transferred to the Indian Ordnance at Allahabad. He served in various stations in India and on the North-West Frontier, and in 1914 came to Europe to serve in the Great War as a sub-conductor. After the war he returned to India, and retired after about 30 years' service in India on pension. He came home shortly afterwards.

Mr. Rush was a regular attendant at the Old Comrades' Association dinners, and a keen supporter of THE IRON DUKE. He is survived by his widow (formerly Miss W. M. Burr of Bangalore), one daughter and two sons ; both the latter are serving in India.

SHEIL.—In October, 1944, died of wounds received in action, Lt.-Colonel Patrick St. Maur Sheil, D.S.O. Colonel Sheil was wounded and subsequently died of wounds while in command of a Battalion of The Duke of Wellington's Regiment, during the assault and capture of Monte Cece, on the road to Bologna. He had only been with the Battalion a short time, his previous service being in The South Wales Borderers.

SMITH.—In August, 1944, killed in action in France, Lt. Robert Hayes Smith, The Duke of Wellington's Regiment, aged 20. Lt. Smith was educated at Malvern College, and for a year before joining the Royal Scots served with the Bradford Home Guard. He received his commission in The Duke of Wellington's Regiment on his 19th birthday, and he went out to France a few days after D-Day. The following is an extract from a letter written by his padre and published in the *Bradford Telegraph* :—"We were all very fond of him for his own sake, and as an officer he really had done a magnificent job, and seemed to possess a head well beyond his years. Bob was commanding the company during one of their most difficult advances through a minefield and I know he did the job extremely well.

"At the time he was killed he was leading a patrol, well forward. He was shot in the head and died instantaneously. I am quite sure of this, as I went to see his company just afterwards. As his body was lying so far forward it was impossible to bury him that day, but I went myself two days later and brought his body back to a place called Cuverville, a few miles east of Caen. Here we buried him, where several others of the Battalion are also buried."

SCHOLES.—With reference to the obituary notice of the late Captain F. C. Scholes, which appeared on page 140 of our last issue, we print below an appreciation received by his widow, Mrs. Scholes, from his commanding officer :—"He fell in action on the 18th June as gallantly as he lived, leading his company in a most successful action in a difficult situation. He is quite irreplaceable to me as a friend and a leader, and he is mourned very deeply in his company. None of us can forget his magnetic personality, his amazing powers of leadership and his wonderful sunny nature and charm. We know he died instantly. We were all there at the time and my last view of Frank was his inspiring presence right amongst his men. I visited his grave last week. We buried him with our other dead in a field of corn on a high open rise just where they fell. The site is now very peaceful and beautiful in spite of

destruction around in the woods. It seems as if the area has been purged, as indeed it has been, and calm peace is restored to it."

WOODHOUSE.—Missing from operations on the early morning of 13th August, 1944, Wing-Commander H. de C. Anthony Woodhouse, D.F.C., A.F.C., R.A.F., husband of Mrs. Woodhouse, née Ruth Horsfall. Wing-Commander Woodhouse had been a group-captain with Typhoons for nearly a year, and then volunteered for Bombers. He was flying a Mosquito light bomber training for a special job, when he was diverted to Kent to intercept flying bombs. The last message his station received was to say that he was attacking one. Mrs. Woodhouse is the second daughter of the late Lt.-Colonel A. G. Horsfall, D.S.O., who was killed while in command of the 2nd Battalion The Duke of Wellington's Regiment in France in 1917, and of Mrs. Watson.

Late News.

We have just received the following air mail letter from Lt.-General Sir Alexander Christison, K.B.E., C.B., M.C. :—

Main Headquarters,
15 Indian Corps,
S.E.A.C.,
5th January, 1945.

Dear Trench,

Thank you very much for your letter and congratulations on the award of the K.B.E. It was very nice of you to write.

I am getting THE IRON DUKE regularly but have not yet received No. 59, which I expect is on the way.

My wife has seen a lot of the — Battalion, and I had Faithfull under my command here, and Bob Moran came to see me the other day. I did not get a chance of seeing my old Battalion when I was on leave but met a few old hands. I have the old — Battalion under my command . . . and spent my Christmas morning with them and read the lessons at their Christmas church parade. They all look very fit.

Again many thanks for writing,

Yours sincerely,

A. F. P. CHRISTISON.

The marriage arranged between Captain John Edward Vincent Butterfield, The Duke of Wellington's Regiment, only son of Lt.-Colonel E. Butterfield, D.S.O., and Mrs. Butterfield of Byways, Fleet, Hampshire, and Barbara Joan Hulton, Junior Commander, A.T.S., only daughter of Sir Roger and the Hon. Lady Hulton of Hulton Park, near Bolton, and Lynnhurst, Farington, near Preston, will take place on Thursday, 15th February, at 11.15 a.m., at St. Ambrose Church, Leyland.

The following births have been announced :—

BAIRSTOW.—On 8th January, 1945, at High Royd, Keighley, to Betty (née Oakley), wife of Major J. T. Bairstow, T.D., The Duke of Wellington's Regiment—a daughter.

BRAY.—On 13th January, 1945, at Courtbourn Maternity Unit, Farnborough, to Nora (née Gee), wife of Lt.-Col. R. N. H. C. Bray, D.S.O., The Duke of Wellington's Regiment—a son.

GREGORY.—On 17th January, 1945, at the Walker Dunbar Hospital, Bristol, to Philippa (née Bonham-Carter) and Major Kenneth Gregory, The Duke of Wellington's Regiment—a son.

The fact that goods made of raw materials in short supply owing to war conditions are advertised in this magazine should not be taken as an indication that they are necessarily available for export.

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