

No.61 June 1945



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)

VOL. XXI.

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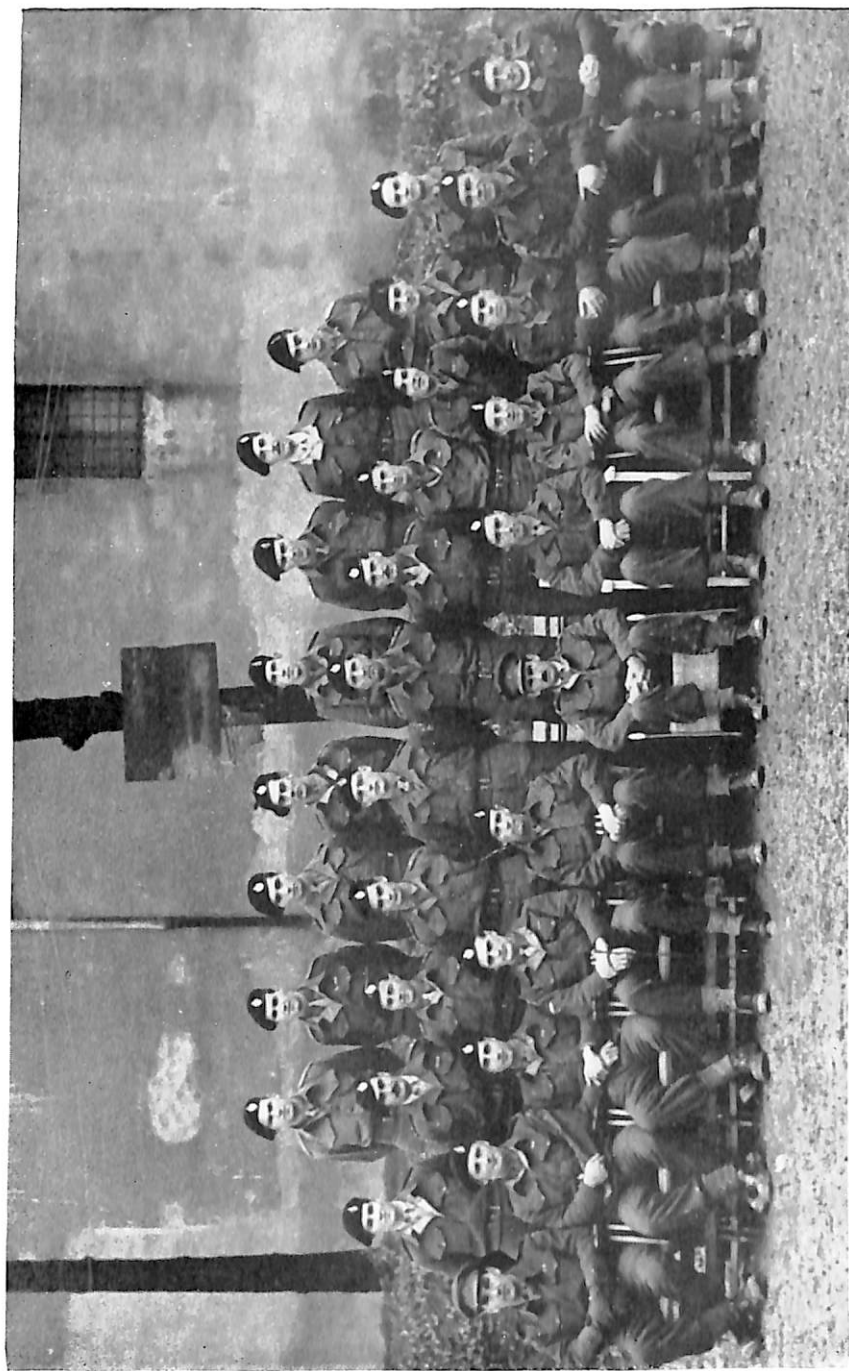
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OFFICERS OF THE 145th REGIMENT, R.A.C. (formerly 8th Battalion, D.W.R.) IN ITALY.

(See page 63.)

(Seated, left to right)—Capt. S. W. COOMBS (R.E.M.E.), Major H. FLOOD, Major N. D. PIRRIE, Major J. S. GORDON, Major H. C. M. TOBIN, Lt.-Col. E. V. STRICKLAND, D.S.O., M.M., Capt. B. JONES, Major J. MARSHALL, Capt. S. V. OWEN, Capt. and Q.M. R. A. SMITH, Capt. the Rev. W. H. HIGGINS.
 (Standing, first row, left to right).—Lt. R. M. H. GOMPERTZ, Lt. A. G. JENNINGS, M.M., Capt. R. W. HAMILTON, Capt. D. N. DRING, Lt. J. K. REYNOLDS, Capt. R. D. HOLROYDE, Capt. T. P. F. BRADLEY, Lt. F. E. ROMER, Capt. A. H. WOOD, Lt. G. R. WILLIAMS, R.A.M.C. (R.M.O.), Lt. J. E. GARDNER.
 (Standing, second row, left to right).—Lt. J. B. ASHTON, Lt. L. G. C. CATHER, Lt. G. C. VALENTINE, Lt. P. STAUNTON, Lt. S. A. MACKENZIE, Lt. I. C. BLACK, Lt. M. M. M. STANDAGE, Lt. J. R. TREZZI.

THE IRON DUKE

EDITORIAL.

To-day, as we write, is V.E. Day, a day that has been longed for by millions. In the thankfulness felt by all members of the Regiment will be mingled memories of all those of all ranks of the Regiment who have made the supreme sacrifice in this great struggle for our national existence. And, too, our thoughts will turn to those now serving in the Far East whose work is still to be done.

The censorship, so difficult to comply with, and at the same time give understandable news to our readers, is now relaxed as far as Europe is concerned, and in consequence we can give some details that have been hidden in obscurity for five years.

The Battalion which fought at Dunkirk, in Tunisia, Pantellaria and the long hard struggle of the Anzio Beach-head, and was selected to garrison Rome, is, as many of our readers may have guessed, the 1st Battalion (the 33rd); and the commanding officer who wrote such vivid accounts of their deeds is Lt.-Colonel B. W. Webb-Carter, D.S.O. and bar. An account of their last action in Italy, before leaving that country, is given on page 59 of this number. Their withdrawal from the battle line deprived them of taking part in the final victory, but their deeds, testified to by Field-Marshal Alexander, had helped to make that victory certain, and they have added imperishable renown to the traditions of the old 33rd, whose successors they are.

In the victory in the west our two Territorial Battalions, the 6th and 7th, played their part, and added fresh glories to the Regiment. They were the two Battalions that served for two years in Iceland, and on returning to England prepared themselves for the great day. They landed in Normandy soon after "D" Day, and some account of the heavy fighting in which they both distinguished themselves appeared in our October number of 1944. It was to the great regret of all concerned that the 6th Battalion were withdrawn from France on account of their very heavy casualties, and of the fact that the man-power situation did not allow them to be reinforced. The 7th Battalion continued their successes at Havre and in Holland; and in the "Island" action, recorded by their commanding officer, Lt.-Colonel Hamilton, D.S.O., they won the highest praise from their Divisional Commander. This action was selected as the subject of an article in "War," the A.B.C.A. fortnightly pamphlet.

Of our two Battalions serving in Burma we can still say little. But we are now able to disclose the fact, so carefully camouflaged in THE IRON DUKE for the past three years, that one of them was converted to a tank regiment of the R.A.C. in 1941, and has served with distinction under Lt.-General Sir Alexander Christison. Accounts of both these units appear in this number.

Another unit was also converted to tanks in 1941, and as the 145 Regiment R.A.C. fought in Tunisia and Italy with great distinction. A tribute from their Brigadier on their disbandment in the latter part of last year appears on page 65; and their liaison with the Canadians was recorded on page 16 of our last number. Both these R.A.C. Regiments wear the Duke's badge, and have kept touch with THE IRON DUKE, even when so few original 'Dukes' remained; and it was with very real regret that the Editor had to cut their news so severely.

There is no space for us here to give details of other units existing and disbanded. But a day will come, and that we hope soon, when a consecutive account, joining all the stray threads of incidents and service of all Battalions of the Regiment, will be compiled by Major S. E. Baker in his History for which he has so painstakingly collected details throughout the war.

We would draw our readers' attention to the honour to be paid to the Regiment by the Borough of Halifax on 18th June, 1945; and to stress the Colonel of the Regiment's hope that as many members of the Regiment as possible will attend the ceremony.

Finally, we would record that THE IRON DUKE, this 61st number of which is published at such an historic moment, is entering its 21st year of existence in this month of May, 1945.

Regimental Privilege.

HALIFAX, WATERLOO DAY, 18th JUNE, 1945.

The Civic Authorities of Halifax are conferring on the Regiment the title, privilege, honour and distinction of marching through the streets of Halifax on all ceremonial occasions with bayonets fixed, colours flying and bands playing.

The illuminated address, on which these privileges are set out, will be handed by the Mayor of Halifax to the Colonel of the Regiment at a ceremony to be held at Bull Green, Halifax, at 1200 hours on Monday, 18th June, 1945 (Waterloo Day). The ceremony will be followed by a march past of the troops of the Regiment, present on parade, when the Mayor of Halifax will take the salute. The troops will then march to the Parish Church where the illuminated address will be handed by the Colonel of the Regiment to the Vicar of Halifax for safe keeping.

Personal invitations are being sent to officers representing Regular, Territorial and other units. It will be appreciated that it is impossible to send invitations to all those connected with the Regiment, but Colonel Pickering hopes that as many members of the Regiment as possible will attend to mark the "Dukes" appreciation of this signal honour.

S. E. B.

D.W.R. Prisoners of War Fund.

CASH DONATIONS FROM 29TH DECEMBER, 1944, TO 30TH APRIL, 1945.

Mrs. M. Vine; Mrs. A. Marjorie May; Mrs. Kay; Major H. A. Luhrs; Lt.-Col. F. P. A. Woods; Mrs. Jones; Mrs. Ansell; Mr. F. Crouch; Skipton Home Guards Comfort Fund; Captain J. E. Pollard; 24th (W.R.) Home Guard; Mrs. Manning; 23rd (W.R.) Home Guard; H.M.S. *Demetrius*; Mrs. Wilsher; Mrs. Campbell; Mrs. Mount; Miss Taylor; Miss F. E. Jones; 25th (W.R.) Home Guard; Mrs. E. Wilson; Mr. G. Pownall; Mrs. Heydon; Mrs. G. W. Smith; Mrs. Young; Mrs. M. Flood; 4th Bn. O.C.A.; Mrs. M. Hepworth; Mrs. A. White; Mrs. Heslop; Mrs. H. P. Travers; Mrs. Sidebottom; Mrs. E. Pearson; Mrs. A. Ellerby; Mrs. Brown; Mrs. Twitchell; Mrs. Ford; Mrs. Machin; Keighley Group H.G. Comforts Fund, per Sir J. Donald Horsfall, Bt.; Mr. F. Postlewaite; 12th Bn. Sherwood Foresters; Mrs. C. I. Jones; Mrs. Copley; Mrs. W. Crannage; Mr. H. Link; Mrs. J. Davidson; Mrs. B. Lane; No. 4 I.T.C. Concert Party, per Lt. Whitehead; Mr. J. E. Baume; Rev. Kingsford; Mrs. E. A. Jones; Mrs. J. E. Thorogood; Colonel A. Curran; Miss O. E. Fraser; No. 4 Holding Bn.; Mrs. Mulqueen; H.Q., Halifax Sector, Home Guard; Wilson & Mathesons Sport and Social Club; Mr. F. Harte; Mr. W. C. Harte; Aireborough Grammar School; Mr. A. E. F. Miller; Mrs. F. P. A. Woods; 10th Bn. D.W.R.; "Ace of Clubs," Grasscroft; R.O.F. Steeton.

DONATIONS IN KIND FROM 29TH DECEMBER, 1944, TO 30TH APRIL, 1945.

Mrs. F. H. Baume; Miss A. Thompson; Wells, Norfolk, G.F.S., per Miss Jenny Baker; Mrs. E. S. Henochesberg; Mrs. I. S. Wildy; Mrs. C. J. Pickering; Mrs. E. Skaife; Mrs. I. Moore; Mrs. W. M. Watson; Leicester Sub-District A.T.S.; Mrs. H. Holt; Miss R. M. Cole; Mrs. A. L. Sutcliffe; Mrs. Cecil Ince; Mrs. Bromley.

Connaught Memorial Fund.

		£	s.	d.
Amount previously acknowledged ...	...	273	2	7
Lt.-Col. W. G. Officer ...	...	5	0	0
Balance as at 30th April, 1945 ...	...	<u>£278</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>7</u>

REGIMENTAL NEWS

Italy.

ADVANCE THROUGH THE GOTHIC LINE.

THE 1st BATTALION IN THE ACTION ON M. CECE—6TH—9TH OCTOBER, 1944.

On 5th October, in an atmosphere of rain and glutinous mud, all thoughts were turned towards M. Cece, which was firmly held by the Germans, and which by its commanding view of the surrounding countryside successfully barred any further advance towards the plains beyond. It is a long razor-backed feature running in a north-westerly direction, culminating in a steep wooded pimple, from which there is an almost precipitous drop down into the wadi. On the south side it is skirted by more wadis, some of which are very deep, and which had to be crossed by anyone approaching the feature. M. Cece is situated about 2,000 yards east of the road, named Arrow Route by Division, leading to Castel Bolognese, about 13 miles away. It stands nearly 2,300 feet high. All the tracks in the area had become so thick with mud that it was a great effort for a man to pull each foot out of it as he walked along, and the ease with which one could fall over made not a few wetter and muddier than ever.

A few days before M. Cece had been held by elements of the Foresters and the K.S.L.I. but the enemy counter-attacked and regained the feature. By 5th October, in spite of repeated attempts to retake it, the feature was firmly held by the enemy and any further advance up Arrow Route was impossible. It was decided that the feature must be taken by a "set piece" attack, and the Dukes were given this most unenviable task. The commanding officer, Lt.-Col. F. P. St. Maur-Sheil, D.S.O., was ordered to attack on the night 6th-7th and after several reconnaissances in the most appalling conditions decided on a plan. This plan was for "B" Company to attack from the south, "A" Company from the west, "C" in reserve.

The weather was about as bad as it could be, and there were, moreover, no hopeful signs of improvement. For the two previous days the Battalion had mostly been based on houses.

The morning of the 6th brought more rain, and was spent in reconnaissances and orders which were rendered exceedingly difficult by a thick mist which obscured M. Cece from view for most of the morning. Orders were given out by the commanding officer on a ridge south of the feature with only a deep wadi separating the order group from it. There was no zero hour laid down for the attack, but "A" and "B" Companies were to be on the objective by 0230 hrs. on the 7th.

The afternoon was spent in rest and preparation, and "A" Company on the left emerged from their houses and began their long trek with mules to the assembly area about a mile and a half south-west of the objective near the road. The mules found the going very hard and several fell over, but after some very hard work the company arrived at their destination and moved into a house. About 1900 hrs. a violent thunderstorm began, but fortunately it had ceased before the main body of the Battalion had to move.

The command post was established on the ridge south of the objective. At about 2100 hrs. there was a bright moon, and by then "B" Company were on their way to their assembly area near the command post. At 2230 hrs. "A" Company left their assembly area, with a four hour march in front of them. The artillery then began their supporting fire, which took the form of concentrations on the objective and other key points. This continued at set intervals until midnight. At 0130 hrs. "B" Company arrived on the command post ridge, and after a few minutes' rest, set off along a small razor-backed feature which ran across the wadi separating them from the objective. Shortly afterwards "C" Company, who were in reserve, arrived in the area of the command post after an hour and a half's march and lay up.

0200 hrs. found "A" and "B" Companies converging on the objective from west and south respectively, with no signs of any enemy opposition. Shortly after 0230 hrs. reports began to come over the wireless from "B" Company that they were being fired on by a number of spandaus from the area of the crest. The company by this time was advancing up the forward slopes of the objective on the left hand spur of two which ran up to the crest. The company met further heavy fire; and by 0330 hrs. was pinned down and unable to move, with the forward platoon (Lt. R. Hoyle) about 50 feet from the crest in an area studded with small trees and overlooked from the pimple beyond, and other parts of the feature. The remainder of the company were about 100 yards behind.

Meanwhile "A" Company by 0230 hrs. had established a firm base on the western slopes of the objective about 300 yards from the crest. From there two platoons were sent forward, one to the pimple itself and one to the left or north of it. The first platoon under Lt. O'Sullivan were actually climbing up the slopes of the pimple when they ran into enemy positions from which grenades were thrown and Lt. O'Sullivan was seriously wounded. After a heavy fire-fight at close quarters the remainder of the platoon returned to company H.Q. just before first light. The second platoon, which could not now advance owing to the arrival of the dawn, also withdrew to company H.Q. Dawn found the company quite unable to move forward, but firmly established 300 yards west of the objective.

It was decided to withdraw "B" Company before first light and leave "A" Company in its present position, "B" Company's position being utterly untenable on the completely bare ridge. Between 0515 hrs. and 0545 hrs. "B" Company started to withdraw under cover of a very impressive smoke screen put down by the artillery. When dawn arrived, "B" Company reported that they had withdrawn into the wadi running south-west from the objective towards the road with the exception of the forward platoon, which had been unable to withdraw. Soon after first light Lt. O'Sullivan was evacuated, having been extricated from where he lay in close proximity to the enemy, due to the efforts of Lt. Hoyle who was nearby when Lt. O'Sullivan was wounded. Communications with "B" Company then broke down.

The Commanding Officer ordered "C" Company to make their way to the house near the road which had been "A" Company's assembly area the night before, and to be prepared to make an attack from the west at a later date. On their way along the command post ridge the company had one casualty from spandau fire from across the valley, which also shot up the command post. The rest of the journey was completed uneventfully. Later in the morning communications with "B" Company were established again, and they reported that they were at the same house as "C" Company were going to make their H.Q. The company was ordered to remain there and rest until further orders.

The Commanding Officer left the command post about 0900 hrs., and after a short period of rest with the mortar platoon went off to meet the Brigadier. The I.O. was left at the command post to ensure communications with "A" Company until Battalion H.Q. could get in touch with them, and about 1100 hrs. moved down to join them. The C.O. paid a visit to "B" and "C" Companies and moved "C" Company to a house about half a mile west of "A" Company, in the neighbourhood of the wadi running from M. Cece to the road. "B" Company were also moved to another house behind "C" Company at last light. The C.O. went to "A" Company during the afternoon to reconnoitre with the company commander (Capt. A. Burns) and returned at about 1900 hrs. to the command post which had by then been established in the house which all the companies had now occupied. The plan now was for "A" Company to patrol to the area of the pimple and for another attack to be put in, in a day or two's time.

About 2200 hrs. Lt. Hoyle, whose platoon had not been withdrawn, rang up from the mortars to report that his platoon had been extricated under cover of darkness. Before any attempt to sleep could be made, the Commanding Officer received orders from the

Brigadier that the Battalion was to attack M. Cece the following day. Apart from the patrols of "A" Company, which reported enemy spandau posts located on the pimple in some strength, the extremely intricate operation of getting any food at all to the companies and the move in the pitch dark of the R.A.P. to the area of the command post, no further developments occurred that night.

On the morning of the 8th the C.O. went off to "A" Company about 0730 hrs. to make a reconnaissance, and form a plan for the attack. At about 1000 hrs. Battalion H.Q. and the third platoon of "B" Company arrived at the command post in the pouring rain which continued intermittently during the day and throughout the following night. The C.O. returned about 1100 hrs. and met the Brigadier and Divisional Commander who arrived shortly afterwards. Until about 1300 hrs. the C.O. worked out the fire plan, which was to take the form of D.F. rather than concentration on the objective itself. He also wrote out his orders for the company commanders, which were briefly as follows:— "C" Company was to lead the attack on to the objective, followed by "A" Company, who were to be used as circumstances permitted. "B" Company was to be in reserve, and to be used for the portage of supplies, and maintenance of the firm base established by "A" Company. One company of K.S.L.I. was placed under command with the object of protecting the left flank of the Battalion when the C.O. gave the order. The fire plan within the Battalion was that two batteries of Piat and 2in. mortars under command of the C.S.Ms. of "A" and "B" Companies would take up a position in front of the command post and together with six Bren guns from "A" Company support the companies on to the objective, by firing on to the pimple. Zero hour was to be 1530 hrs., and the Battalion fire plan was not to be put into operation until the enemy started to fire. Shortly before zero hour the command post, composed of the C.O., I.O., batmen, two 18 set operators and 22 set operator, moved up to "A" Company area. The C.P. was a hole dug in the side of the hill, with a tarpaulin over the top.

At 1530 hrs. "C" Company started to move up the feature, the objective being the summit, with only one platoon deployed, owing to the nature of the ground. The leading platoon was commanded by Lt. J. K. Sproule, U.D.F., and it was followed about 75 yards behind by the second platoon (2nd Lt. A. C. Mitchell) and company H.Q. under Capt. P. L. H. Hathorn, U.D.F. Lt. J. Wilson commanded the third platoon which followed up about 50 yards behind.

About 50 yards from the summit, the leading platoon was engaged by the enemy with several spandaus. This was the signal for supporting fire to begin, and this was done most effectively from mortars, Piats and Brens distributed along the feature. In spite of murderous enemy fire, the platoon got to within grenade range of the crest, and then moved to the left round the feature to a more covered approach to the summit. Meanwhile the second platoon caught up and put in a frontal assault while the first platoon went in on the left. After furious hand-to-hand fighting in which casualties to both sides were heavy, the enemy was cleared from his positions on the summit. Here "C" Company consolidated temporarily, being held up by withering fire from spandaus in great strength about 100 yards to the right of the pimple and from neighbouring features. Owing to the precipitous nature of the pimple, and the effect of the continual rain, the last 50 yards of the assault had been made almost on all fours, but in spite of all this the attack was pressed home with great determination and the summit was gained.

At this time "A" Company commander, Capt. A. Burns, was in front of his positions, and could appreciate the situation, which he reported to the Commanding Officer, who had moved forward to join him. It was apparent that these machine gun positions on the right had to be silenced before any further progress could be made by "C" Company. "A" Company was therefore ordered to attack immediately through "C" Company with two platoons. This operation was carried out at once, and owing to the urgency of the situation, the Company Commander went forward without his headquarters, leaving behind orders for them to follow up the attack. On passing through "C" Company

over the crest, they met heavy and sustained fire which proved all too accurate, and several casualties were sustained, among them the leading platoon commander, Lt. D. W. D. Farquhar. Despite this set-back, the attack was pressed home against dogged enemy resistance with the second platoon leading, under the Company Commander, and enemy spandau posts were silenced one by one. The ferocity of the fighting can be judged by the fact that from all the many posts which were attacked, only three prisoners were taken. The final success of the operation can be largely attributed to the fine example of Sgt. Emery, the commander of the second platoon, and his runner, Pte. Burton, who were always in front, and between them they silenced at least three spandau posts. The advance against a very determined enemy took the form of short bayonet charges with all weapons firing, followed by the throwing of grenades and then a further charge, until the last machine gun was silenced. The company then consolidated with a view to protecting the right flank of the feature; "C" Company were then able to move forward and extend their consolidation on the left of the feature on the forward slopes. While this was still in progress, the Commanding Officer, who was already on the summit and was directing the dispositions of "C" Company, was killed by a burst of spandau fire, from an adjacent hill, which also wounded the company commander, Capt. P. L. H. Hathorn. Capt. Burns then assumed command of the situation and continued to organise the defence, during which time the enemy counter-attacked for the first time. Later, Capt. E. Oliver took over command pending arrival of the second-in-command, Major V. C. Magill-Cuerden, and established himself at the command post.

The position was now firmly held, and one platoon of "B" Company and the remaining platoon of "A" Company came up the hill to reinforce "A" Company, who only had two weak platoons, in order to guard the dangerous flank on the right. Shortly afterwards a further counter-attack was put in by the enemy, about 15 to 20 men strong, supported by heavy fire from an adjacent hill, but it was beaten off successfully, and again Pte. Burton of "A" Company distinguished himself by breaking up the enemy's ranks with his Bren gun firing from the hip.* Two platoons of the K.S.L.I. company which was under command then arrived, and one was sent to guard the right flank, and one the left. The Brigadier then put the Commanding Officer of the K.S.L.I., Lt.-Col. W. H. Hulton-Harrop, in command of the situation, in order to co-ordinate the defence of the feature by the two battalions.

The immediate problem was the evacuation of casualties which had been heavy. The conditions were so bad that it required six and sometimes eight men to carry a single stretcher down the precipitous slopes which were so deep in mud. In spite of this, with the help of elements of "B" Company, the A Tk. Platoon, other members of Sp. Company and M.T. drivers and traffic control personnel from Brigade H.Q. under the T.C. officer, the wounded were evacuated, and supplies of ammunition and food were carried up to the positions. A fairly quiet night was spent apart from intermittent spandau fire, and the men were able to dig in.

In spite of a further strong attempt by the enemy to retake the feature just before first light on the 9th it was held securely throughout the 9th. During the whole of this day snipers, both ours and the enemy's, were very active and Capt. Burns showed the greatest contempt for the enemy efforts by personally directing our own snipers' fire. The Battalion was relieved by the Loyals during the night 9th-10th and moved back for a much-needed and well-earned rest. A hot meal was provided for the men before they embussed for the rest area, and it was late on the 10th when the last elements joined the Battalion in its new area. One man, who had been wounded in the first attack, and had perforce been left behind, was found when the feature was finally captured, and evacuated safely.

* Pte. Burton was later awarded the V.C. See Frontispiece of our last number.—Ed.

ERRATA.

With reference to the article "Some Impressions of the Anzio Beach-head," which appeared on pages 9 to 15 of the last number of THE IRON DUKE, we have been asked to correct some slips that appeared in the typescript sent to us.

Page 10.—II Flyover Bridge, line one: for "26th January" read "27th January." 5th paragraph, line 5: for "Streatfield" read "Streatfeild."

Page 11.—III Attack on Campoleone, second paragraph, line 9: for "Streatfield" read "Streatfeild."

Page 13.—IV The Wadis, line one: for "The 20th of February" read "The 24th of February."

145 Regiment R.A.C. in Italy.

Since writing the last notes for THE IRON DUKE much has happened. The whole Regiment was very sorry to see Col. "Jacko" depart; he had led us to great victories in Tunisia, and no regiment ever had a sounder C.O. We will long remember the morning he left us when the entire Regiment lined the road out of camp at Bone. One of the last things he arranged was the erection of a commemoration tablet to our gallant dead in the Tunisian campaign in the St. George's Church, Tunis. This has been completed, but we left Africa for Italy before the unveiling ceremony. However, strenuous efforts have been made to get the memorial photographed.

A very hearty welcome was given to our new C.O., "Strick," and we congratulate Henry on his promotion to second-in-command in place of the inimitable "Archie," who left us for staff duty in Palestine. His "Ah, Ah, Ah!" will always echo round the "H.Q." Mess.

The C.O. had just organised a Regimental leave camp in Tunis under Jimmy Ingram when the orders came to move to Italy. Only then did we realise fully the extent of our buildings and "woggeries," from the R.S.M.'s palatial and imposing guardroom, to "B" Squadron's ranch-like cookhouse, and "H.Q." Squadron hearts were sad to think that Sgt. Atkinson's showers (which did work!) would function no more. The movement of stores and vehicles to the docks went surprisingly smoothly, and after several farewell parties in the Bone Officers' Club (surely the best on the Barbary coast), we found ourselves on H.M.T. —. As expected from a ship with a 'Dukes' O.C. troops, Lt.-Col. Howcroft, the short voyage was comfortable and pleasant. We were sorry to see the coast of Africa disappear—one's thoughts turned to so many memories, Medjel-Bab, the Bou, Jacko's cross-country runs, the rugger game with the 1st Battalion, the rest villa and R.A.C. beach, to mention just a few.

So to Italy, where the 'Wops' were really very much like the Wogs, all wanting food, cigarettes and a wash! The task of concentrating ourselves and our vehicles caused Henry many headaches. Strick was called away to command his old regiment in the Hitler line battle, and we congratulate him on his D.S.O. for his exploits. During his absence we were very ably commanded by a Yorkshireman, Lt.-Col. Van S., who was immediately popular with us all.

We soon settled down to European conditions, green fields, factories, and civilisation, but we missed the veiled women, and indeed preferred the smells of Africa to the smells of Italy. Intensive training followed, and slight re-organisation took place. We may have become slightly lethargic after the long spell in Africa. Jeff, one of the originals, left us for the Staff College. We were sorry to see him go, but wished him well—he had so long been a central figure in the Regiment. Most of us managed a leave in Naples or the Sorrento peninsular, and we met many old friends from the 1st Battalion, and heard first-hand about their wonderful exploits in the Beach-head. 4th July, the anniversary of the Regiment, was celebrated in the usual manner, and Italian vino proved just as effective as African. The Pipe Band of the Seaforth Highlanders of Canada were in great form.

From then on battle conditions prevailed, and we moved up through Cassino and Rome as far as Siena. Then followed General Alexander's brilliant switch-over of the Eighth Army to the Adriatic preparatory to the assault on the Gothic line. For two nights we were harboured very close to the 1st Battalion; also near was Reg. Caulfield who had a D.M.A. We were now proud members of the Canadian Corps. We moved into concentration areas, and on 24th August began our stiffest battle—the assault on the Gothic line. The battles were long and costly over extremely difficult country, but the Regiment covered itself with glory, and our Brigade was given the signal honour of wearing the red patch and maple leaf of Canada on our vehicles, and the red patch on our tunic sleeves; an honour we are proud to wear, for no troops could have fought more gallantly than the Canadians. The Canadians really made us feel part of them, and we read the "Maple Leaf" with the same interest as "Eighth Army News" and preferred "Sweet Caporals" to "Players." Towards the end of September we had a welcome respite for maintenance, and during this period the Canadians suggested that our dead should be buried in the same cemetery as theirs. This was carried out, and they lie together at Riccione on the shores of the Adriatic. An impressive commemoration service was held on 1st October.

Early in October we moved up again with our friends the Canadians. "Strick" was in hospital with jaundice and we were under Henry's untiring leadership. By this time the winter was beginning, and small streams were turned into roaring torrents. Movement was slow, and difficult, over completely different country from the mountainous Gothic line. Battles were on a much smaller scale and squadrons were mainly used in fire support of the infantry. The crossing of the Savio was probably the hardest fight during the period; it was here that Pte. Smith of the Seaforth Highlanders of Canada, supported by "A" Squadron, was awarded the V.C. for his magnificent work against Panthers with a Piat. Incidentally, one Panther was captured intact and used with some effect by "A" Squadron against the Germans (a photograph of this tank appears opposite page 85). For reasons of security no details of these and the Gothic line battles may yet be given. However, it can be said that the Regiment was with the Canadian Division from the Gothic line to Ravenna and Forli, the gateway to the Po valley, and we hoped to continue to the very gates of Germany.

Honours and awards announced for the Gothic line battles include:—

D.S.O.	...	Major L. LUSTED
M.C.	...	Major C. L. NEWTON-THOMPSON
		Lt. M. BROOKES
M.M.	...	Cpl. W. COUPLAND

[The following obituary notices of officers killed in action have only just been received from Major Murgatroyd, the 145 Regiment, R.A.C.—ED.]

Major NORMAN JAMES INGRAM, killed in action 18th September, 1944, whilst commanding his squadron during the attack on San Fortunato ridge near Rimini. Jim was commissioned into the Regiment in August, 1940, and went straight to the 8th Battalion, and was thus one of the few original Dukes. He was probably the most popular officer in the Battalion with both officers and men, and certainly had the calmest and most even temperament of any officer I have known. He was killed in his tank. He had just got command of a squadron after being adjutant, which pleased him no end. Jim's home is at Ilkley, Yorkshire.

Lt. GRAHAM FRANK FIELD DOUSE, killed in action in September, 1944, near Rimini. Graham joined the Regiment in North Africa, and was probably our best troop leader. He had done magnificent work in the initial attacks on the Gothic line. His home is in London.

Lt. WILLIAM ERNEST WATSON, killed in action by a mortar shell at the end of August, 1944. He was a typical Irishman from Belfast, and served with the Regiment through the North African campaign. He had just been made Battalion technical adjutant.

Lt. EDWIN WILLIAM XAVIER, killed in action in September, 1944, near Rimini. "Eddie" Xavier was probably the only Burmese officer fighting with a British unit in the 8th Army. He joined the Regiment in North Africa, and soon became a popular figure in it. His mother is now living in Bangalore, India.

All these officers are buried in the 2nd Canadian Brigade cemetery, Riccione.

The following is a letter from Brigadier D. Dawnay, commanding — Tank Brigade, C.M.F., to the Colonel of the Regiment:—

7th March, 1945.

Dear Colonel Pickering,

I have been meaning to write you on the disbandment of 145 R.A.C. (— Battalion Duke of Wellington's Regiment). The Regiment was finally wound up on 13th January and almost immediately afterwards I was given U.K. leave, so I am afraid I have been some time in writing.

I would like you to know how well 145 R.A.C. fought whilst under my command. I took over this Brigade in May, 1944, and was lucky enough to have sufficient time for training before committing the Brigade to action in August in the operations which led to the breaking of the Gothic line. 145 R.A.C. played a most notable part in these operations and earned the unstinted praise of 1st Canadian Infantry Division, all of the Brigade of which they supported at one time or another. Their resolution, skill and willingness to help the infantry in every possible way were most marked and during that very hard fighting which led up to the capture of Rimini they fought many successful actions in hilly and difficult country. Their final role before disbandment was to provide a composite squadron of infantry and tanks to hold part of the line. Every man was a volunteer, which I think speaks for itself.

I am very proud to have had the Regiment under my command. I am more sorry than I can say that due entirely to shortage of reinforcements they had to be disbanded. I found both officers and men deeply conscious of the traditions of the Duke of Wellington's Regiment and most proud of being the armoured representatives of that Regiment. A splendid spirit was always in evidence and a most happy atmosphere existed.

I have been at great pains to help place both officers and men. Almost every officer is placed and a large number of W.Os., N.C.Os. and men have been found fresh employment. The remainder are held as reinforcements which, of course, was the object of the disbandment.

I inspected the Regiment on their final parade. The turn-out and bearing of the men was excellent and they marched past in very good style. I can assure you that 145 R.A.C. ended their career in a state of marked efficiency and well-being and that their name stands very high.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) DAVID DAWNAY.

Diana the Bell.

[The following story, written after the fall of Tunisia, was sent to us in 1943, but had to be held over owing to reasons of security.—ED.]

The story of our bell is not an exciting one; it is rather the story of the affection which an inanimate object can inspire in men's hearts.

The squadron, great dusty beasts rumbling and growling, was moving on past Tunis, dashing along, forcing tanks and crews; a particle only of the flood of Allied troops and war material pouring into the Cap Bon peninsula to destroy the German and Italian forces.

The tanks stopped, there was a jam somewhere ahead, and the halt was in not too healthy a spot, for there was an old enemy vehicle park off to the right, filled with burnt-out German tanks, smashed lorries, and there was, too, a squat mosque-like building. The squadron distrusted such places, it remembered the vehicle park near Montamand, overshadowed by the Bon—there had been snipers there. "You never know your luck," thought the commander of one tank, "have a pot and see what you can spring from the place." The gun fired on his command and a corner of the mosque was shot away in a shower of dust. There was absolutely no movement in the vehicle park. Obviously the place must be clear. Germans would have come out to surrender at that shot; at least they would do so at this stage in the campaign.

The tank which had fired the shot (Diana, her name was, with the appendage to her name "The Huntress") went into the vehicle park to pick up what she could to make life more comfortable; perhaps a range-finder or a periscope binocular to help her to fight better in her next battle, or perhaps a luger pistol or some chairs for her crew. All she found was a bell, in the mosque, a large bell with "Diana" engraved on it. Judging from the notices in the mosque and near by, the bell had been used by the Germans as an air raid and gas alarm. The bell was undamaged by the shot which had only nicked the suspension arm and dislodged it from its bearings.

Diana the tank wanted Diana the bell. Her crew could not imagine why, but they knew that their tank would ever after be incomplete without her namesake. The crew sweated and strained with louvre ropes, and eventually the bell was out in the sunshine, on the back of the tank, the small Diana like a porpoise carried by the big Diana.

The crew were excited about the bell. They loved their tank, and they had fought with her in battle; and here was a bell, not taken in battle but taken in a pursuit of the enemy, taken moreover, solely to the glory of Diana the tank, she who had helped to turn the battle into a pursuit. And therefore the bell was glorified, being now part of the tank.

The chase after the Germans ended up in an olive grove in the peninsular. Tank crews, learning that the enemy was finished in North Africa, went to sleep as much as they were allowed to on the herbs and grass among the low trees. It was an anti-climax after the fierce fighting of the previous weeks, the Battle of Tunis, but a delicious anti-climax. The bell was rigged up between two trees (how the S.S.M. thrashed his brains to discover the best way of suspending it), and an orderly was appointed to strike the hours on it.

Everyone came to know the note of the bell. It was like the bells one heard in England. It conjured up, as one lay with back to hot tank bogie, and with a tin of M. & V. in hand, old villages, and cricket matches on the green, the bell in the village church striking the hour, and stumps being drawn so that enough time would be left to change and have a pint of beer at the Fox & Hounds. To some it was like the bells of the churches of the Yorkshire dales; it was a Cathedral bell to others. To all of us the bell Diana brought the quiet and peace of English summer, to smooth away the hard corners and jagged edges of the mind caused by fear of death and by killing men.

The time came to move on; the bell could not be left—the squadron wanted it to go to England. And there it is now, in England. Please keep it for us, for we would like to see our bell again.

D. R. H. G.

[Diana the bell is now at the Depot.—Ed.]

B.L.A.

[The following is a letter from the Officer Commanding the 7th Battalion, serving in Holland.—Ed.]

8th April, 1945.

Dear Col. Trench,

When I joined the Army I was reproved by my first C.O. for not maintaining a better correspondence. I think he said "You must master events and not let events master you."

However, on 6th April, I think I have every justification for pleading the march of events as an excuse for not sending a complete account of our life since the last IRON DUKE.

My predecessor's last letter took you up to 30th November. We had by that day completed the planning of what has been described since as "Next to Le Havre, the most perfect set-piece attack of the war." This was to destroy the German garrison on the near bank of the Maas at Venlo.

For the second time in three weeks I had just finished off my plan at the O.Gp., when the operation was cancelled and six hours later we were all on the road to relieve 50th (Northumbrian) Division on the 'Island.'

The Island—the salient of the bridgehead over the famous Rhine or Dutch Waal river—has enshrined in it the destinies of more divisions than any other battlefield in this war. It was across this narrow strip of fertile low-lying dyke country, with orchards of every fruit, that Gen. Horrocks' XXX Corps dashed to link up with the 1st Airborne Division. Every field had its scars of graves, smashed vehicles and signs of such divisions as 43 (Wessex), 53 (Welsh), 51 (Highland), Guards Armoured, 101 American Airborne, and the great 50th Division. The 43rd Division actually reached the river north-west of Elst, the town in the centre of the Island, four miles from Nijmegen and Arnhem.

The apple and cherry picking of the autumn had given way to smashed ruins, 1914—1918 mud and the slashing rain of the winter, when our recce parties arrived on 31st November. Slit trenches were flooded and there was hardly one brick standing on another anywhere. There was talk of spending the winter here. The C.O. of the Dorsets talked of sinking obsolete tanks in the mud to make strongpoints.

We trudged up a filthy track that night in the darkness towards the right of the line at Haalderen, once a pretty village on the Rhine, all of us I think with an impending feeling of some future destiny around the scarred orchards, the unbelievable ruins of the street and church.

The next day the C.O. was called away to take over temporary command of a Brigade in the Division, and really never properly returned to the Battalion.

For two days we watched the waters rise—in the Rhine over the towering winter bund, or dyke, on our right, over the sides of our slit trenches. We formed strongpoints amid the ruins and in the cellars—man management became supreme. The German was aggressive with his artillery only and the mortar platoon suffered heavily. On the night of 3rd December I dragged my jeep through the mud and darkness to Brigade for a conference on the evacuation of the Island in case of flooding. The Boche had blown several gaps in the bund that day, and the rushing Rhine flood water had overwhelmed several posts on the north-west of the Island without warning. We expected every distant rumble to be followed by a tidal wave.

Appropriately enough the evacuation scheme was known as 'Noah.' We tied up questions of routes and rearguards before I drove back through the worst storm I've known for many years. Back in the command post the cellar had flooded, and the floating tables already lent the 'Ark' atmosphere to the night. I called a short midnight O.Gp. and decided to spend the night beside the 'phone in the cellar in case of swift flooding needing rapid action; or was it intuition? I would otherwise have been too far away in my sleeping cellar when the alarm was raised. In actual fact my driver and batman were wounded three hours later where I would have been sleeping!

I was dozing at 3 o'clock—two hours after my O.Gp., when the duty officer said "D" Company, who were on the bund on the extreme right, were being heavily Spandau'd. I spoke to Major Barry Kavanagh straight away and found him already standing to. Two minutes later the command post was shelled and Barry reported a strong attack was developing on his company. One thrust had got through down the road.

The battle which followed has been described in the Press and in the A.B.C.A. pamphlet 'War' dated 17th February in an article "Action on the Island." I hope the Editor gets the censor's authority to reproduce it—there seems to be no harm now.*

The repulse of this attack by a parachute battalion which intended to secure the great Nijmegen bridge, which was afterwards to be demolished by a follow-up Sapper company, was a great triumph for the Battalion. It was a soldier's battle—even the cooks joining in. The fact that the Signals kept communications open to each company throughout made the issue never in doubt.

The next few days were spent in re-organising our defences against further flood. Barry Kavanagh flew his pennant on three Mk. III assault boats in which stores and food

* This story appears on p. 69.—Ed.

were rowed up and down to his company from Battalion H.Q. Hordes of pressmen came to talk to the men and the result has been great publicity for the Regiment.

We spent a further 14 days in the sector, before moving back into billets in Nijmegen two days before Christmas.

The Sergeants opened the festivities with a Christmas Eve dance which went with a great swing and led to many an empty breakfast seat next morning. The Brigadier came just before the end to tell of the first of the decorations for the Haalderen battle—the M.C. to Kenneth Evans, whose platoon H.Q. held out throughout the middle of the attack on "D" Company, and Pte. Stimpson, who kept his Bren in action in "C" Company for four hours after being wounded.

The Christmas meal rivalled the best of spreads in England—a feast of turkey, pork, plum pudding, mincepies, fruit, beer, cigars and sweets. Each company had its own dining hall. The only war-like scene was the guard outside—we were still in the throes of the parachute "flap" which accompanied the Ardennes push.

It was here that we celebrated the arrival of twins at the home of Leslie Denton, our adjutant for two years. Just how far-seeing a staff officer Leslie is can be judged by the fact that on the eve of embarkation on 5th June, 1944, he took out an insurance policy for twins!

We had both men's and officers' dances in Nijmegen in New Year week, the latter followed by the sudden appointment of Lt.-Col. J. H. O. Wilsey to command a Brigade in another Division. He was off within 12 hours—and 12 hours later was ordering his Brigade into action in the Ardennes. Few battalions had kept their C.Os. so long as ours and none have had a better leader than "Felix Wilsey." His great bravery at "102," and many times since, have now been rewarded by the award of the D.S.O.

The 'I' staff, headed by Capt. ("Wrecker") Tris Bax, here published the first issue of the "Yorkshire Pud"—a digest of world and Battalion news, with cartoons; which, through snow or battle, has come out every day since.

New Year's Day was spent back on the Island as reserve battalion for five days—the floods had now turned into ice—and to the amusement of many a two-year-old, who seemed to have been born on skates, some of us had our downfalls!

On 6th January we again returned to the Island—this time to Elst, where for a month never a night went by without at least one officer patrol. These patrols were as nerve-wracking as walking across the tight rope over Niagara. They moved feeling their way over ice which at any time might give way, pulling a ladder behind the patrol for negotiating the un-iced ditches, crunching through the frosted snow and trying their skill at rushing a house defended on all sides by wire.

At the end of February we had another six-day break off the Island at Druten, where a taxi service of VI bombs overhead made a rest period more harassing than usual. I wonder if G.H.Q. realise that in a "rest" period, as they are so charmingly called, one works twice as hard.

It was about this time that we discovered that 220 days of the 250 since "D" Day had been spent in the line. I know most people believe the European campaign has been the most strenuous yet—for the Infantry at least—here lies the answer. We also found we had taken more Boche prisoners than we had lost in casualties, and since "D" Day had travelled almost 700 miles.

In March we once again returned to the right sector and Haalderen—*our* place of destiny apparently. For 24 hours we stood by to take part in the Reichswald battle—but it wasn't to be—we were still to be the Nijmegen Home Guard—far more straining than actual fighting. How well the Battalion stood it—how not a man was lost as prisoner—how few were on sickness casualties—speaks well for the Battalion's discipline and the wonderful standard of man-management and alertness of its officers.

While at Haalderen we had our first officer killed in action since last August (a remarkable record seeing we had been in action so long)—Lt. Graham Ellis, M.C. He was killed

leading a fighting patrol after two nights of personal reconnaissance. He was one of the least assuming officers and the most brave I have known. Graham was in Barry Kavanagh's "D" Company—where every officer—Barry, Graham, John Lappin, Walter Horne, and Kenneth Evans had the M.C.

Just before completing our tour at Haalderen we prepared at 12 hours' notice to break out into the German F.D.L.s—mined and wired as they were—but this, like many an operation, was cancelled.

But we had not seen the last of Haalderen. When the Canadian Corps was given the task of clearing up the Island on 2nd April, the Dukes were selected to make the initial breakout. Because of the dykes it was quite impossible to employ armour, and the Battalion attacked on its feet through the minefields towards German strongpoints six months in the building. We had greater support than at El Alamein, over 200 guns on our front! The three leading companies made short work of the opposition, 63 Boche were taken prisoner, 20 killed and every one moved past the objective to chase the rest in full flight across the Lek. For five hours we had no vehicles until sappers cleared the mines.

It was sweet revenge for many of us who had been in both Haalderen parties—and I hope Haalderen becomes a Battalion battle honour. Scattered about the Island since, we have seen many graves of other Germans killed on the 4th December by our D.F. fire.

And now our plans are ready for further advances. As yet we are not a broad arrow in the *Daily Express*—but we soon will be! The long strenuous winter in the line was not wasted—we trained our new N.C.Os. and studied mobile warfare again.

Perhaps our next news will be written in Berlin or Hamburg. We hope so—just as we hope that by then the Regimental Band will be out here to play us in.

I attach the full list of awards of the campaign so far.* We have probably more than any other battalion in the Division now, and how richly they've all been deserved!

Yours ever,

C. D. HAMILTON.

PERSONALITIES.

During this period the following officers have returned from U.K. :—Capt. B. M. Kilner (who was ill in England August-November), Lt. N. Lambert (wounded at Le Havre), Lt. J. Cannon (injured before "D" Day); Lt. D. Delaney (wounded at Fontenay, July, 1944).

The following have joined us :—Major J. K. Rollins, S.W.B., as second-in-command, Lt. V. C. Stephens, Lt. H. R. Boarer.

Sgt. F. Lyons has been commissioned from the ranks.

R.Q.M.S. E. Bush (West Yorks), who has been R.Q.M.S. for two years, has taken over R.S.M. from R.S.M. Townsend.

Lt. D. R. Siddall and Lt. P. Post are sick in hospital.

NIGHT ATTACK AT NIJMEGEN.

ACTION ON THE ISLAND.

By Lt.-Col. C. D. HAMILTON, D.S.O., D.W.R.

Reprinted from *War* of 17th February, 1945, by the Army Bureau of Current Affairs.

D.W.R. were holding a battalion position on the right flank of the Nijmegen bridge-head, known as the Island, having relieved an outgoing unit three days previously. This time had been spent in intensive reconnaissance by the Battalion. The positions had been originally sited two months before, when the ground was firmer, but very heavy

* These, together with citation, appear under Decorations on pages 95-100.

rainfall and lack of maintenance on the dykes had filled all the posts with water. Adjustments had been, and were being, made to make the few houses into strongpoints. The sketch map on p. 71 shows the area and the defence locations.

The Battalion was holding a wide perimeter of an almost complete salient with the Boche in close contact. "A" and "C" Companies were in thick wood. Manœuvre between companies was difficult, because of the deep flooding of the fields in the area, and daylight movement was impossible in three company areas. As there was thus little depth in the position, the main counter-attack company was in the reserve battalion area, 1,000 yards away, but the company command concerned had previously reced the Battalion area.

Early patrolling on the night 3rd-4th December found the enemy in their usual positions and active. Lt. K. Evans, of 18 Platoon, led one patrol to houses about 400 yards in front of his position and saw six Boche. Two of his men were blown up on a minefield and he, with the other surviving member of the patrol, carried the wounded men back.

OVERRUN BY SHEER WEIGHT OF NUMBERS.

At 0315 hrs. heavy spandau firing and mortaring was directed against the forward platoons of "D" Company and at "B" Company, and the C.O. ordered immediate R.A. and mortar D.Fs. to be used as a precaution. An attack had obviously started. Then commander of 18 Platoon reported by 'phone that two sections of his platoon were being overwhelmed by at least a platoon and probably more Germans, and that, for the moment, he himself had been by-passed. A few minutes later he said at least a company had got through, and thought more were following. Considerable casualties were being caused by the platoon H.Q. and section still fighting on. A minute later all communication with him was lost, and it was thought he, too, had been overrun by the sheer weight of numbers of the enemy on a narrow front.

From Battalion H.Q. confused fighting was heard in the village and runners reported that Boche had got to the village centre and were moving left towards Battalion H.Q., having captured the school 200 yards away. O.C. "A" Company (Lt. C. Fox) who commanded the central immediate reserve of three carrier sections and one platoon "A" Company, reported that Germans were passing between him and his platoon. In actual fact, Boche were in the next house.

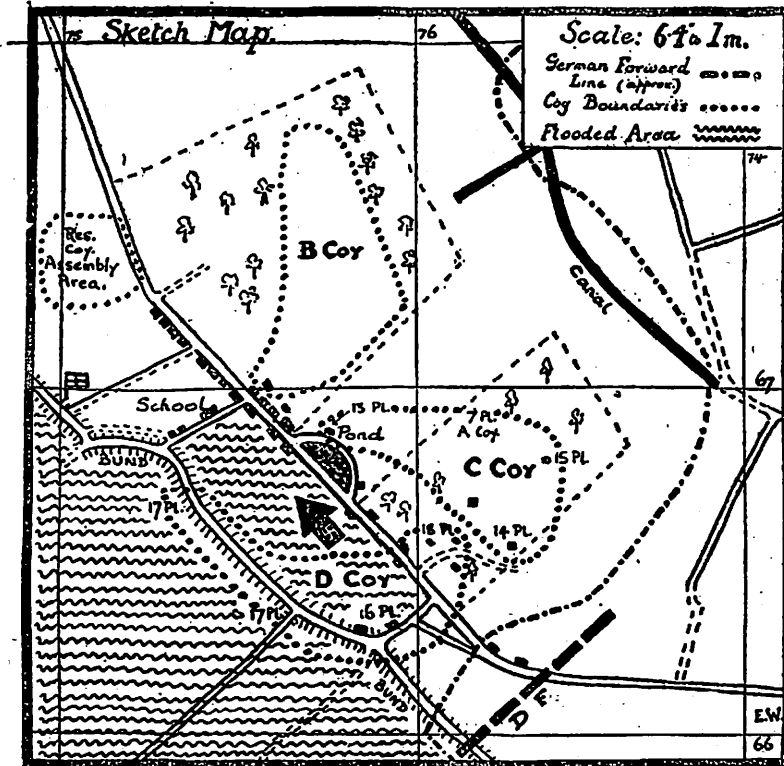
The Boche swept past 18 Platoon down the road on to the front of the reserve platoon of "C" Company, 13 Platoon (Lt. J. Le Cornu). The platoon commander first thought the large body of men were troops withdrawing because of the flooding (which had been serious on other fronts), but, having had no information of that and suspicious of the previous firing, he ordered fire to be opened.

A VOICE SOUNDED IN PERFECT ENGLISH.

A voice then shouted in perfect English: "Stop that b—y Bren. We've got a wounded man here." Some S.Bs. could be seen together with men carrying equipment not properly identified in the dark. The platoon commander stopped his firing, but, on hearing a German voice, reopened his fire and Boche toppled like ninepins, many diving into the two ponds, where they drowned.

The platoon commander kept this fire up all night until his ammunition was gone, resisting all attempts at capture. The Boche fired bazookas and spandaus at his post, killing and wounding a few men.

O.C. "D" Company (Major A. B. M. Kavanagh) reported that a strong attack was in progress against his right-hand platoon, but so far had been held with small arms and grenades, which caused heavy losses to the assaulting troops. So far no attacks had been launched against "B" and "C" Companies.



THE FIRST STEPS.

The Commanding Officer decided that while the confused fighting was sorting itself out the first steps must be to

- (i) smash up any reinforcements for the attack ;
- (ii) prevent any attacks forming up against other companies ;
- (iii) neutralise the enemy position facing " B " Company (Major G. M. M. Smallwood) ;
- (iv) make a firm stop in the village with the only forces in the village uncommitted—three sections of carriers (commanded by Lt. A. Hodge).

At this stage it was vital that all troops should hold firm in their positions preparatory to the penetration being sealed off and the enemy mopped up. The Commanding Officer spoke to all company commanders over the 'phone and R/T to this effect.

All R.A., 4-2in. mortar and M.M.G. tasks were then called for on the front of " C " and " D " Companies and R.A. tasks on that of " B " Company. Later the Brigade Commander gave targets to the mediums on deeper assembly areas. All fire was quickly brought down and must have caused immense damage to the reserve companies who, it was found from prisoners afterwards, were waiting in the target areas for the success signals.

There was indescribable confusion in the village—spandaus, Brens, rifles, stens and grenades being freely used in between houses and across the street. Boche cries in good English of " stop that firing " were frequently heard and ignored.

THE IRON DUKE

TO DRAW GERMAN ATTENTION NORTHWARD.

Though line had failed to "C" Company, the 18 set worked perfectly, and O.C. "C" Company (Major S. V. Fancourt) was ordered to use one platoon and his section of carriers to counter-attack and regain 18 Platoon position and close the gap, but not to prejudice his own company position in doing so. This was speedily carried out by 15 Platoon (Lt. D. Siddall).

O.C. Sp. Company (Major B. V. Thomlinson) in the meantime had managed to make a stop in the village at the road junction east of the school, and all available men were gathered together. The C.O. ordered one section of carriers to work round the orchard next to Battalion H.Q. and seal off further penetration west of the school, and "B" Company were told to send a patrol from their right platoon to draw German attention northwards.

STAND BY TO CLEAR THE HOUSES.

No further attacks developed, and by dawn the reserve company ("D" Company, R.S.F.) was concentrated in the orchard behind the "stop line" in the village, and the company commander was told to stand by to clear the houses down the street and to link up with the sealing off forces.

Just before daybreak the enemy started withdrawing, harassed by riflemen and light machine gunners in the houses either by-passed or uncleared by the Boche. Cooks in the upstairs window of one company cookhouse (because of the difficult daylight maintenance conditions all cooking was done forward) were throwing grenades out to speed the Huns.

By daybreak all seemed clear as far as the ponds behind "D" Company positions, and the company of R.S.F. was moved up to the village to reinforce the defence. Heavy spandau fire, however, was coming from the houses the other side of the pond. "D" Company were engaging the Boche from the right flank, and one party of ten was wiped out completely. The way seemed clear for the final assault.

SIX SPANDAUS WERE FOUND IN THE HOUSE.

Suddenly fire from at least three spandaus was opened on the troops in that area from the right rear from a point which seemed to be near Battalion H.Q. As it was uncertain whether this was a new waterborne approach from the river over the flooded area, the C.O. returned to the centre of the village for more information. Ten Boche with several spandaus were holding out in a house next to Battalion H.Q., and several men had been killed trying to break in. Plans for bringing up an anti-tank gun and the wasp flame-throwing section were considered and preliminary orders issued. Piat had been used without success against the solid concrete gable end.

At this moment came a report that the main force of the Boche had surrendered and 60 prisoners were being marched down the village. Seeing this party, and with the roof of the house set on fire by a Piat fired from Battalion H.Q., the defenders in the house showed a white flag and came out. Six spandaus were found in the house.

"D" Company, R.S.F., completed their mopping up in 18 Platoon area, releasing the sections of 18 Platoon and anti-tank crew taken prisoners. Lt. K. M. Evans (18 Platoon) who had continuously denied his platoon H.Q. to the enemy and never surrendered, was found still in great form with no ammunition left. At 1100 Brigade was told everything was back to normal.

A TRACE FOUND ON THE BODY.

A trace found on the body of the Boche company commander showed the attack was intended to reach the next village nearer the Nijmegen bridge and P.W. said the object was to capture the bridge itself. Three companies of a Para regiment were employed in the attack.

The complete assaulting force was wiped out. One hundred and ten men, including one C.S.M., were taken prisoner and 50 Boche, and the company commander, two officers and another C.S.M. killed inside the Battalion area. Some of these were drowned in the pond attempting to get out of our Bren fire.

Great slaughter must have been inflicted on the remaining enemy companies, forming up 600 to 1,000 yards in front of "D" Company, by the firing of the D.Fs. Among the booty were 25 spandaus and nine bazookas, together with a tremendous amount of small arms dumped in 18 Platoon area. Two German dogs were later found.

D.W.R. casualties were : Ten killed, 19 wounded and two missing (believed drowned).
R.S.F. (reserve company) : One killed, two wounded.

COMMUNICATIONS WERE PERFECT.

The obvious lesson is the principle of defence—if every man stays in his position the attack can be defeated.

Communications were perfect. The C.O. was never out of touch with any company commander, and the 18 set working perfectly when lines were cut. He was thus never out of control throughout the morning. Lines had been laid to platoons and lateral lines between companies (great use being made of captured 'phones—each company had five) so that information was exchanged between neighbouring platoon commanders. Thirty-eight sets were also used when platoon lines were out of action. "D" Company commander forward gave a running commentary of the battle in his cookhouse near Battalion H.Q.

BEWARE OF RUSES.

Other points were :—

- (a) Platoon positions should be well stocked with small arms ammunition.
- (b) Beware of ruses.
- (c) Trip flares are not infallible and 2in. mortars should be held ready to fire illuminating flares to light up the battlefield.
- (d) On dark nights illumination can be provided on the front of the F.D.Ls. by searchlights if a flank position can be found.

S.E.A.C.

Our last contribution, which was also the first for many a long month, left us last autumn "rehabilitating," living in a pleasant camp in a pleasant climate, and going on leave in batches. Our position some four months later is much the same, except that we have all finished our leave and are building up now from the men and resources we have left for another spell of operations. At the same time we are able for the first occasion since we left Burma in '42 to look to our shelved laurels in sport, and to shake the moth-balls out of our discarded suits of service dress.

We have even (forgotten delight) entertained ladies in the Officers' Mess in the welcome persons of Lady Christison and Mrs. Derek Harris, both of whom on different occasions were kind enough to present the trophies at our platoon hockey and soccer finals. We should like to have lingered at least over Christmas but G.H.Q. decreed otherwise and (*pace* the censor) we spent Christmas on a train. We emerged from our compartments somewhat stiff in the joints but all keyed up to celebrate Christmas "in our own time." We accordingly made a very successful marriage between Christmas and New Year, and with the help of our carefully husbanded stocks of ale and scotch and a band conducted by Capt. (ex-R.S.M.) Stannard, who fortunately is stationed in this area, all ranks enjoyed a memorable holiday.

One advantage of having been out East as a Battalion for so long is that whatever station we go to we find old friends. Capt. "Tom" Jowett is at a local internment camp, and Capt. Stannard and Lt. Caldicott are both at an officers' training school. They have all either entertained or been entertained by us on several occasions since we arrived in their midst.

Our main sporting activity at present is soccer, at which we are improving rapidly. Were it not for our old friends the Borders, who have a nasty habit of wrecking unbeaten records, we should be able to boast an unbroken series of wins in the last few months. As it is, we have disposed of airmen, military police and even Scotsmen in recent days. Our rugger is at present extremely sketchy, but under "Peggy" Leach of Skipton we hope to be able to have a reasonable side ready when the rains come. Our main shortage at present is of backs (future drafts please note). Cricket, too, is being played with great gusto if as yet little skill, and we have lately collected the regimental cricket gear from the depot at Peshawar. Boxing and basket-ball too are under weigh. We are fortunate enough to have something like a third of the Battalion playing some form of sport every night.

For the first time too for many a long month we find ourselves esconced in brick barrack blocks most of which boast electric light. The "steaming jungle hell," beloved of war correspondents in these parts and other experienced line-shooters, would fast become for us in these pleasant surroundings a hazy green memory, were it not for jungle warfare courses and exercises. As it is, for a brief moment, we have officers' and sergeants' messes, corporals' room and canteens in the old style, and no one would deny that we are enjoying the change. We have time at last for training cadres and cup competitions, and the Battalion is marching already with a firmer and crisper step. We are confident that the next campaign will demonstrate the fruits of this period of rehabilitation.

OFFICERS' MESS.

Since our last notes we have been in the throes of another move, and have at last settled down in what the old members describe as the finest Mess since Delhi. The move was carried out over Christmas, thus impeding the customary "Ducal" celebrations. However the new year proved an even better substitute. The officers v. sergeants football match will long be remembered. That versatile aircraft (F for Freddie) failed to return to its base once more, though fortunately the crew are reported safe but slightly battered. Mind my ribs.

We are the proud possessors of a fine pub, "The Iron Duke," beautifully decorated by Doc Doups, whose latent artistic powers have just been discovered. The "Baron" Emmet as P.M.C. combats malnutrition with a groaning table—the envy of rationed repatriates. Donald Britton the adjutant supplies the music on a newly purchased piano, varied by Bob Richards' gramophone recitals generally conducted over the last of a bottle. The Iron Duke painted on the wall in the bar looks down with grim approval on Sam Hoyle's capacity. The senior subaltern of all allied armies, Jimmy Mowat, now has the doubtful privilege of paying the higher rate of income tax. We mourn the passing of such a venerable institution. Steve Dunn moved on to Brigade as I.O. and represents the gilded staff on guest nights. Binnie the "Boy" is on his way to rejoin us. The ante-room is being prepared as a gymnasium for his reception. Spectacular guest nights are held weekly, the guests continue to be more and more distinguished as the Colonel appears to know everybody east of Suez. We shall long remember the spectacle of a 15-cwt. truck filled with brigadiers singing doubtful songs at the top of their voices. We have met several old Dukes in this station. Capt. Stannard of the I.M.A. with Jim Caldicott and Capt. Jowett are welcome visitors.

We offer our heartiest congratulations to an old C.O. of this Battalion, Lt.-Gen. Christison, on his K.B.E., and recent spectacular achievements on the Burma front. Lady Christison was very kind to us in our last station. We were delighted when she presented prizes at our platoon soccer finals. Mrs. Derek Harris kindly presented the prizes at our hockey finals.

We sadly bade farewell to Lt.-Col. E. W. Stevens, Tony Firth, Dennis Simonds, John Butterfield, John Willie and Jock Hamilton on their repatriation to the U.K. We welcome an old Duke—our new C.O., who has joined us from G.H.Q., India. Ian Whyte has just arrived and been duly welcomed.

The death of Junior Harris in hospital is a further loss to the Mess, and we take this opportunity to express our deepest sympathy to his parents.

CORPORALS' ROOM.

A corporals' room is a luxury we have not wallowed in for most of the war. Now we have a first class show presided over by that venerable character "Sailor Hill," hindered and/or supported by chaps like "Cushy," "Jeff," "Matloe," "Mac," "Chippy," and "Hamer The Tamer." Complete with bar, even our thirstiest members are refreshed by that dexterous barman Cpl. Shipley. We are sorry to say that not many old "Dukes" are with us at present, owing to circumstances over which not even "Sailor" has any control, but we have many hearty types just the same from regiments for whom we entertain the warmest regard, and should any of you who read these notes ever visit us, or better still rejoin us, we are sure you would agree that we give a very good impression of a happy and united family. We have even fallen recently to giving other regiments' corporals' rooms lessons complete with demonstrations in any sport from darts to soccer. In spite of these boastful words, however, have no doubt that our relations with our neighbouring battalions are as good as ever. We have even entertained a full complement of Scottish corporals without undue damage to the furniture.

One thing that is not settled at the time of going to press is the age-old strife over the cocoanut matting between the sergeants and the corporals. But in spite of the R.S.M. (and we wish he would come out into the open and admit that he was really christened Maurice Tate) the present position is that we have won one game to the sergeants one. There was not more than a dozen runs between us in either game, and so we are busy training (especially the umpire) for the final encounter.

EXPLOITS OF THE DUKES.

[By courtesy of the Editor of the *Yorkshire Post*, we print below extracts from an article which appeared in that newspaper on 18th December, 1944. The article was not brought to our notice until too late for inclusion in our last issue.—Ed.]

The story of the Duke of Wellington's Regiment is the story of the Japanese defeat at Kohima, and their retreat through Assam and Burma.

A Battalion of the "Dukes," operating with a special force (the Chindits) column, behind the Japanese lines, was the first formation working out of the Naga Hills to make contact with the British 2nd Division, which relieved Kohima. This Battalion started training in long-range penetration in November, 1943, and five months later it moved into the Naga Hills to wreck the Japanese lines of communication.

Imphal, capital of Manipur State, was being closely invested by Japanese forces invading India from across the Chindwin. Other enemy troops, moving through the 6,000 feet high Naga Hills, had begun their assault on Kohima. The Assam railway was threatened.

The "Dukes" set out from the base in the Brahmaputra Valley, in jungle green battle dress and slouch hats, with their food, personal kit and weapons carried on their backs. Their mules carried their heavier equipment, wireless sets, batteries, mortars and ammunition. Throughout the whole of their three months in the Naga Hills they were supplied from the air. Rations, arms and ammunition, medical stores, and mail from home, were dropped to them from aircraft.

The "Dukes" were split into two columns for the operation, one under the commanding officer, Lt.-Col. G. W. Stevens, and the other under the second-in-command, Major S. R. Hoyle. It was a

tale of swift brushes with small enemy parties and long marches to places where the enemy were reported to be hiding.

The Japanese were caught napping at Tseminyu. The C.O.'s column received information that an enemy force was in occupation of the inspector's bungalow there, and a platoon was sent out on a long trek to deal with it. The sentry on the bungalow had considered it extremely unlikely that British troops would be in the neighbourhood and had fallen asleep. He was awakened with a crack on the head from a rifle butt, and hand grenades were thrown into the bungalow.

Fierce hand-to-hand battles followed, with the enemy spraying the area with small-arms fire. The sentry proved to be the toughest nut to crack. With several "Dukes" men clinging to him, he rolled down the hillside in an effort to get away, but they clung on to him, and the sentry was the first live prisoner to be taken by our troops in the Naga Hills.

Meanwhile, Major Hoyle's column were moving on to Nerhema. The village had been reported clear of the enemy, but as the column was moving in, the local village schoolmaster came out to warn them that the Japanese had re-occupied the village and were digging in. A night patrol went into the village, and the platoon commander and the schoolmaster crawled to within 100 yards of the enemy positions.

Major Hoyle decided to attack Nerhema that night. Tropical thunderstorms drenched the "Dukes" as they went forward, but at dawn Nerhema and the dominating high ground to the south were in their hands, with the Japanese only 100 yards away still ignorant of their presence. Only when the enemy sent a watering patrol into the village was the presence of British troops discovered. Completely unarmed, the party blundered straight into the "Dukes'" positions, and were mown down by Bren gun fire. Mortars immediately began to pound the enemy around their breakfast fires and finally the Japanese retreated.

At Chezumi the C.O.'s column, too, were having a successful time. Japanese, bathing or watering their mules, were surprised when a neatly lobbed hand grenade fell in their midst and bullets began to whine across the jungle clearing. Others walked into ambushes and traps along all the Naga paths leading south. Finally Kohima fell to the British 2nd Division.

CHOZUMI TO CHAKHABAMA.

AN ACCOUNT OF ONE OF THE ACTIONS FOUGHT BY A BATTALION OF THE REGIMENT DURING THE NAGA HILLS CAMPAIGN, APRIL—JULY, 1944.

This is an account of only one of the several actions fought by this Battalion, but I have chosen it because the complete Battalion took part. Normally we operated as two separate columns numbered 33 Column and 76 Column. Due to both columns operating down the axis of the same track, it was generally impossible to deploy both columns in action together and each column took turns to lead and fight. The result produced a series of small platoon battles with occasionally the big punch of a full column battle group—Chozumi proved the exception.

Briefly the situation prior to this operation was as follows:—The enemy held part of Kohima and fierce fighting was taking place there. His main line of communication was the Kohima—Phak motor road.—Brigade was moving down from the north to cut his line of communication. As a result of this threat, the Jap had dug strong defensive positions astride every track leading to this road. In our area the enemy held the mountain peak at MS 28 just south of Chozumi with over 200 men and some artillery. He was well supplied with M.M.Gs. and small mortars. The villages of Cheswezumi and Thenizumi were similarly held. At Chakhabama a concentration of over a 1,000 enemy were reported, including the divisional H.Q. of General Saito. Two tasks were given to the Battalion. The first task was to drive down the mule track from Chozumi to Chakhabama, destroying the enemy defences. The second task was to ambush the Phak road east of Chakhabama and prevent the enemy using it. Both tasks were to be carried out simultaneously. The Battalion plan was briefly as follows:—Lt.-Col. E. W. Stevens, the Battalion commander, would take three infantry platoons, less animals, and move by Naga trails to Pfsa Chadama, where he would establish a base from which a succession of ambushes could be laid on the road due south. Meanwhile the remainder of the Battalion under Major S. R. Hoyle, 33 Column commander, would endeavour to put the enemy back down the track to Chakhabama. It is here necessary to explain some of the difficulties we were up against. The track itself was suitable for animal transport but it was quite

A BATTALION IN S.E.A.C.
December, 1944.



Officers' and Sergeants' Repatriation Farewell Party outside "The Iron Duke" (Pub sign visible).
Left to right.—Capt. MASTERS, Sgt. ROGERS, Capt. BRITTON, Sgt. DUGMORE, L/Sgt. READY, Sgt. BARDSLEY, Major RICHARDS, R.S.M. WOOD, Capt. DUNN, the C.O., Sgt. SMITH, Sgt. NEWDICK, (?) R.A.M.I.C., Sgt. EDGE, Capt. EMMETT, Major HOYLE, Sgt. ROEBUCK, M.M., Capts. HARRIS, WRIGHT and COLE.



Five Officers in Parade Dress.



The Officers' Cricket XI which played against an Officers' Team of The Border Regiment.

A BATTALION IN S.E.A.C.

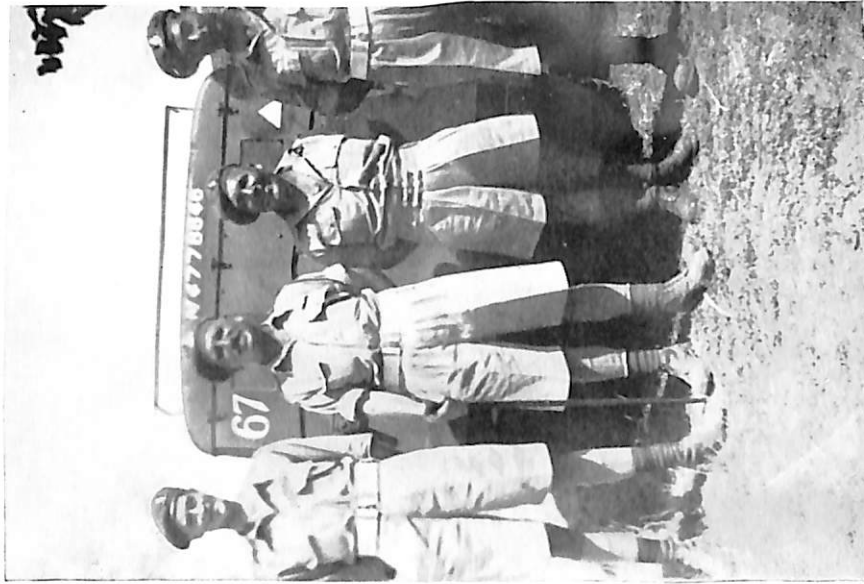


"C" Company, Winners of Seven-a-side Hockey Tournament.
Left to right.—Cpl. SLATER, Cpl. HARRISON, Ptes. TAYLOR, ROBERTS and NORTH, Cpl. PRESTON, Cpl. STUBBINS.



The C.O. presenting Trophy to Cpl. Harrison, Captain of "C" Company Team.

ITALY.



Left to right.—Lt.-Col. B. W. Webb-Carter, D.S.O., R.S.M. Annesley, Driver Garner and L/Cpl. Jackman.
(See pagraraph 8, page 105.)

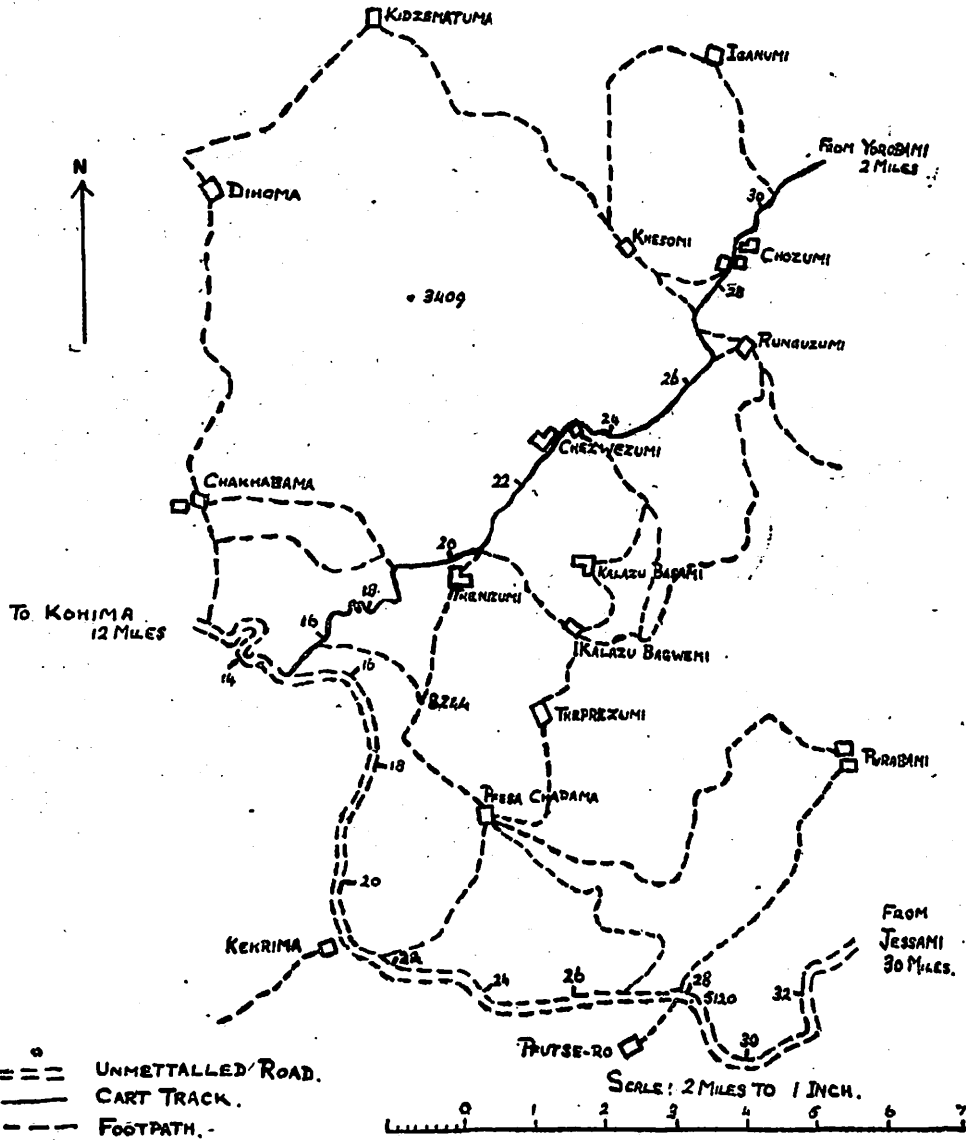
impossible to move animals off the track. These were real mountains, not hills, and were covered in very dense jungle. The average height of each Jap position was 5,500 feet and the slopes very precipitous. It was just possible for infantry without animals to move across country very slowly. It must also be remembered that we all carried 60lb. packs. Moving without animals meant the loss of our heavy weapons and wireless. All our supplies were dropped by aircraft, and without animals and wireless the administrative difficulties were immense. Wounded proved another problem as evacuation meant a 60-mile carry by litter to the nearest dressing station. A direct assault on enemy position was impossible because we had no artillery, and the Air Force were already overstrained by the terrific Kohima battles. The removal of an enemy position became a matter of guile rather than brute force.

Now for events as they actually occurred. The southern Chozumi village was seized and held by two platoons and a support platoon, the garrison commander being Capt. Page; the rear H.Q. of 76 Column and all animals being based in the northern village under the command of Lt. Britton. A platoon under the command of Lt. Scarfe seized and held Runguzumi despite intermittent shelling from the Jap position.

Major Hoyle with 5 Platoon and Support Platoon and 33 Column H.Q. established themselves on the ridge round and above Kesomi village. The previous attempt to cut the track at the junction just south of M.S. 28 had failed owing to intense enemy fire.

The position having been thus partially invested, Col. Stevens and his party were able to move across country by devious routes to Pfesa Chadama, where he established his base. They took with them a dismantled wireless set—each man carrying a small part. On arrival this was erected and communications established once more. It was obvious to us all that this expedition was a most hazardous undertaking and it reflected highly to the credit of the Colonel that he chose the post of extreme danger. With him were a gallant band. Major Firth and Capt. Wright formed his H.Q. staff. Major Simonds was the company commander, while Peter Goately, "Baron" Emmett and Bill Fazackerly were the three platoon commanders. The Baron and his platoon were despatched to ambush the road. An account of this platoon action is included elsewhere. As soon as this party made their presence felt, the Japs took swift action; a party of about 60 led by a disloyal native moved from Kekrima to Pfesa Chadama and attacked the Colonel's base at dawn the next day. The most bitter fighting ensued. The Japs attacking repeatedly with the bayonet, screaming and yelling their heads off. All these attacks were driven back with heavy losses. At times they succeeded in over-running a post only to be driven back by the bayonet. One man wounded and unconscious was bayoneted in the back by a Jap who then left him for dead. He later regained consciousness and managed to crawl back into the perimeter. This man, Pte. Beck by name, has just recovered from his wounds and is back with us again. Fighting continued all day and our casualties continued to increase. Three men had been killed outright and several wounded. Peter Goately, who had commanded his platoon with great gallantry, was shot through the elbow in close quarter fighting. The Colonel, who had been a tower of strength throughout, now realized the Japs' intention. The attackers were a holding force who were trying to pin him down pending the arrival of a stronger force during the night who would launch a decisive attack on the morrow. Accordingly that night he issued orders for a withdrawal under cover of darkness. The wireless was dismantled and distributed amongst the party in small components. Stealthily carrying the wounded they slipped down the hillside; literally slipped—the hillside was very steep and as someone later remarked, "you just sat on your bottom and went"; anyway it worked and all got clean away without interference. The remainder of the night was spent in a nullah and next day they moved to Theprezumi. Here a fresh base was established and the maintenance of the ambushing platoons continued successfully. Known enemy casualties during this action were 17 killed and two wounded.

CHOZUMI TO CHAKHABAMA



Meanwhile the remainder of the Battalion had not been inactive. Major J. W. Williams, the second-in-command of 33 Column, was dispatched with two platoons to attack and seize the village of Cheswezumi. This was a wide encircling move round through Runguzumi and down the Teseru nullah. Charles Scarfe's platoon joined them, having been relieved at Runguzumi by Hugh Bonds' recce platoon. This move achieved complete surprise and caught the Japs at Cheswezumi out of their fox-holes. The attack was pressed home with great dash and after a sharp fight the village was captured, several enemy being killed for no loss.

They learned from the inhabitants that only a few hours before a large Jap force with artillery had rested and fed in the village. This force was subsequently proved to be withdrawing from the M.S. 28 position and escaped being cut off by only a few hours. However, a considerable number of Japs still remained at M.S. 28, but the only track down which they could escape had been blocked. The M.S. 28 position was a formidable one as we later found. The whole hilltop was honeycombed with tunnels and had bunkers to accommodate over 200 men. We harassed the defenders by sporadic mortar and M.M.G. fire from Chozumi. The R.A.F. were called in and obliged with a series of bombing and cannon strafes. This provoked the Japs into retaliation and at dawn one morning he delivered a sharp attack on Chozumi village. This attack was supported by M.M.Gs. and mortars. They succeeded in over-running one of our section posts but were then caught in our fire and driven back with heavy loss. We had two men killed in this action.

The next evening Ken Duell's platoon was ordered to seize the track junction immediately south of M.S. 28. This was successfully carried out moving up the ridge from Khesomi, a very steep climb. No opposition was met and dawn found them dug in astride the track, thus bottling up the enemy completely. The Jap position covered a large area and was clad in thick jungle. Major Hoyle, not satisfied that the exact location of the bunkers had been pin-pointed sufficiently to ensure the accuracy of the dive-bombing, ordered probing attacks to be carried out. Accordingly the next evening two platoons, led by Major Hoyle, left Khesomi and, climbing the steep ridge, joined Duell's platoon before dawn.

Jock Hamilton, the Support Platoon commander, with a detachment of mortars, accompanied this party. Owing to the thickness of the jungle it was found impossible to secure an O.P. for controlling mortar fire. During this recce, a roving Jap L.M.G. shot up the O.P. party, destroying the Barr and Stroud range-taker. Ken Duell took out a patrol in an endeavour to destroy this L.M.G., but reported the bird had flown. At 1000 hrs. the probing attack was put in without the expected mortar support. Capt. Richards' platoon was the left leading platoon with Sgt. Dawes' platoon on the right. Ken Duell's platoon with battle H.Q. moved in rear as reserve. Capt. Shuttleworth and C.S.M. Corke, 33 Column staff officer and column C.S.M. respectively, with those faithful runners Ormiston and Simpson, constituted battle H.Q. The first bound of the leading platoons proved to be the Japs' perimeter and a fierce fire fight ensued. The Jap was deceived into thinking this probing attack was the real thing and obliged by opening up with all his weapons, thus disclosing their position. Sgt. Dawes' platoon over-ran a bunker and destroyed the occupants with a grenade through the slit. Capt. Richards' platoon had two men wounded by the opening bursts of a M.M.G. firing at point-blank range. Both these men were recovered despite intense fire, by Capt. Richards and Sgt. Paramos, his platoon sergeant—a very gallant deed. The object of the probing attack having been achieved in that the complete southern perimeter defences had been pin-pointed, Major Hoyle ordered the leading platoons to withdraw back through the reserve platoon. This was carried out with great skill by both platoon commanders. Sgt. Dawes' platoon succeeded in getting back with no casualties. The very thick jungle was no doubt responsible for saving many lives. Sgt. Dawes' platoon was placed under command of Ken Duell to further reinforce our southern block, and Capt. Richards'

platoon with battle H.Q. returned to Khesomi. Later that day Ken Duell led a patrol into the Jap position and succeeded in locating his watering point, a small pond. He found five Japs bathing and killed the lot by a well-thrown grenade. This patrol returned unmolested.

The next day Capt. Page was ordered to put in a similar probing attack from the north. This proved as successful as the first, all bunkers in the northern perimeter being located. The two leading platoons were commanded by Harry Cole and "Junior" Harris with great skill. Cpl. Evans, leading section commander, was killed instantly by a burst of M.M.G. fire which passed between Harry Coles' legs, slightly wounding him. These were the only casualties sustained and at least two Japs were known to have been killed.

As a result of these probing attacks our indication to the aircraft was corrected and a detailed plan of the position sent to the R.A.F. for briefing pilots. The subsequent accurate bombing and mortaring caused the enemy to withdraw the next day. He accomplished this by slipping down the precipitous hillside under cover of darkness. However, a patrol from Khesomi discovered him moving down the nullah bed between Khesomi and Chozumi. This patrol killed five for no loss and was then ordered to withdraw to allow the mortars to fire. The Japs, however, had very skilfully sited mortars and L.M.Gs. to cover his getaway and as soon as the mortars at Khesomi opened fire a brisk fire fight commenced. A concealed L.M.G. on the high ground above Khesomi opened fire on Major Hoyles' H.Q., the bursts actually passing through the roof of the hut occupied by H.Q. Jap mortar bombs began bursting just short of our perimeter. Fortunately all fell short or our animal casualties would have been heavy. The garrison here was very small as all the encircling and holding platoons previously mentioned had come from this force. Actually holding Khesomi were Capt. Richards' platoon with H.Q. and one detachment of mortars under Jock Hamilton. Signallers, batmen, muleteers and grooms were rushed to the perimeter to repel the expected attack. However, the mortars gave the Jap such a pounding in the nullah bottom that the attack never came and the Japs withdrew north to Iganomi. They appeared to have had no idea of where their own troops were, so we left them to their own devices, having more urgent tasks on hand. They were all subsequently taken prisoners in a starving condition by Nagas and the Essex Regiment who were mopping up in our wake. One prisoner was brought to Capt. Page just after the mortaring. A patrol from Chozumi was ordered into the Jap positions and reported it completely evacuated. This patrol captured five Jap ponies which had been abandoned and they were subsequently used as pack animals and still are to this day. Cpl. Evans' body was recovered and buried with full honours. The M.S. 28 position was now in our hands and 17 enemy graves, including one officer, were counted.

ACCOUNT OF A PATROL ACTION AGAINST THE JAPANESE LINK LINES OF COMMUNICATION FROM THE 30 M.S. AT CHOBAMA TO TUNGJAI.

This line of communication, known as the "Link" line of communication was being used by the Japanese owing to the harassing effects of 23 Brigade's ambushes on the main east to west line of communication from Kchima to Phak. This "Link" went south from Chobama on the 30 M.S. to Tungjai, west to Mao Songsang, and north to Kohima.

At 1030 hrs. on the 29th of May, 1944, Lt.-Col. Stevens called Lt. "The Baron" Emmett to his H.Q. and gave him orders to proceed that evening on a long distance patrol across the main Japanese line of communication and across to the east to the "Link."

The object of the patrol was to discover the strengths of any Japanese garrisons on the "Link" and the amount of troop and M.T. movement which occurred. Also, on the patrol's return, to ambush any target which presented itself on the main line of com-

munication from Kohima. The patrol was to be found from 13 Platoon consisting of two full sections, and one section of engineers.

The remainder of that day was spent in preparation. The men were selected for their ability to endure physical hardship and mental strain, and were commanded by Cpl. H. Hope and Cpl. H. Smith. Gordon Devey accompanied the patrol in an engineering role and acted as second-in-command to "The Baron," whose H.Q. comprised his faithful batman Pte. Jones and runner, Pte. Scott. Fortunately the "Battle Group" had with it some excellent Naga interpreters and scouts, of whom two volunteered to join the patrol. One, later known as the "bravest of all the scouts," was largely responsible for the patrol being successful.

It was decided to make an advance base from which to operate on the summit of Mount Kodamedzu (8,875 feet) overlooking the "Link" from the west.

The advance was to be in three stages: from the column base to the top of the height above M.S. 24; secondly, to cross the road Kohima—Phak and over the valley and up into the hills above the village of Akomi; thirdly, on to the advance base on the summit of Mount Kodamedzu.

At 1700 hrs. the patrol set off down the steep hill side above Pfsa Chedama and halted above the river to consume the last unanxious meal for five days. That night, under cover of darkness, the advance continued over the river and up on to the summit of the height above M.S. 24. The top reached after a most exhausting two hours, a bivouac was formed and standing patrols established on the forward slope about 300 yards from the road, in order that the Japanese movements could be observed till the following evening.

At dawn the following day, 30th May, automatic fire was heard in the direction of the column's stronghold. Then what sounded like mortar fire began—a fierce encounter was obviously in progress. Half an hour passed, then, crack—and below, away to the north, could be seen a Japanese gun firing on to the stronghold.

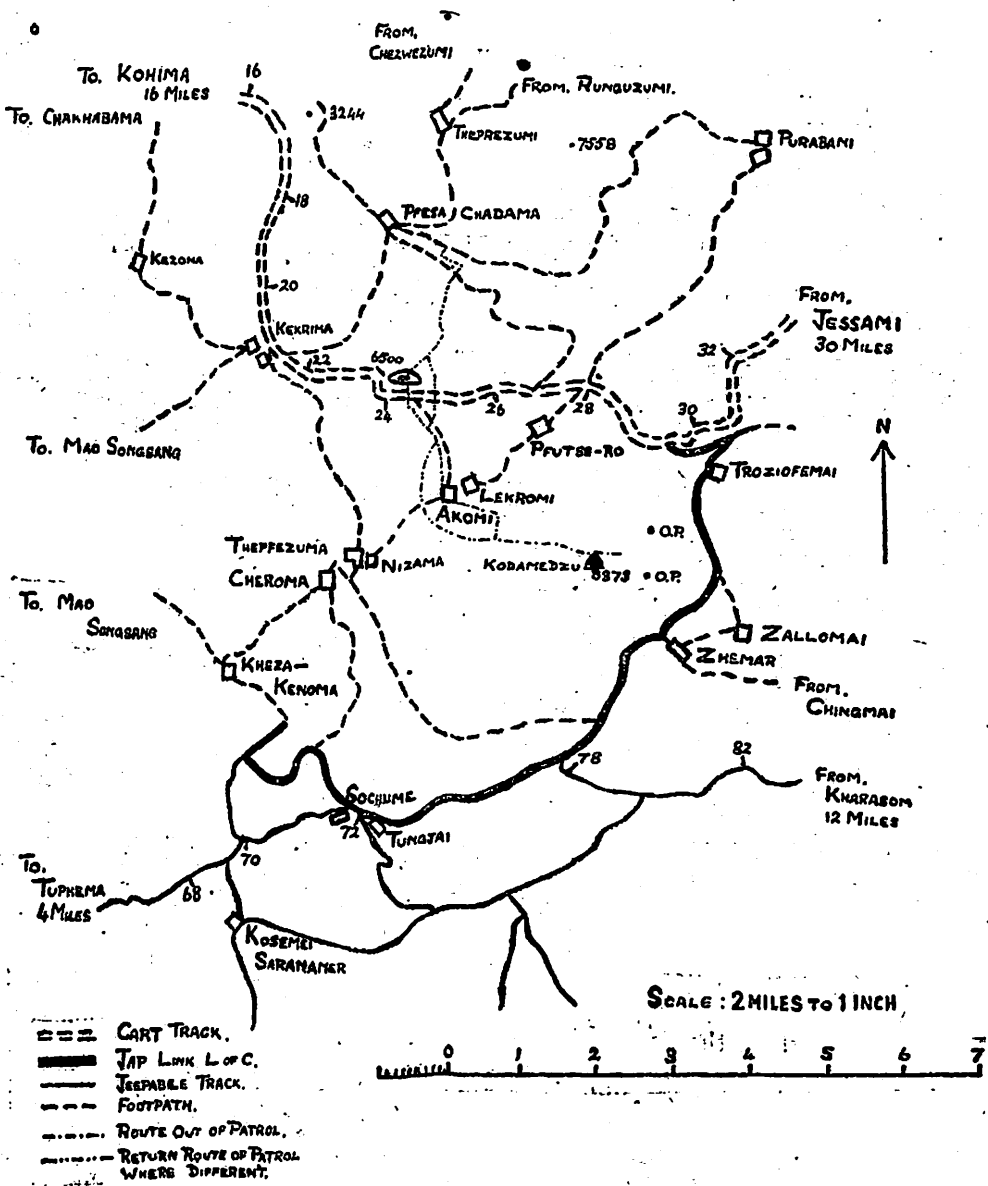
"The Baron" was worried—should he attack the gun and thereby assist in beating off this threat to the column's H.Q., or continue on his allotted task? He decided to carry on and send back a message informing the Colonel of his safety and intention. The noise of battle continued. Two Nagas were procured and volunteered to take the message. They did well—it was later known that they walked right through the battle carrying pitchers of water on their heads, delivered the message, and then faded away in to the jungle. The patrol lay up all that day—observing the enemy's movements on the Kohima road, which were considerable, and was in fact another force moving up to base itself on Kekrima to deal the death blow against the column's stronghold.

Darkness fell—a bright moon—bitterly cold, and the patrol began its second advance to Akomi, down the hillside to the road. Two hundred yards from the road and a party of 30 Japanese came marching along from the Kohima direction, singing at the top of their voices. Down got the patrol and lay very quiet; the Japanese halted just below—smoked—and then moved on. A jeep passed, then silence, an opportunity which was taken and the road crossed. The country now to be navigated was very difficult. Down and down to the valley on a path no more than two feet wide and eventually along a ridge cut into a sheer cliff face. The night was terrifying in its experience. It was impossible not to use the path in the dark, and the patrol had been stumbling along for about an hour, when a Naga coming in the opposite direction bumped into the patrol, went off and called his headman, who guided the patrol over this dreadful valley; over nullahs, deep gorges, up precipitous rock faces, on what seemed an unending journey.

It was 0400 hrs. on the 31st when the village of Akomi was reached, and still about two miles of stiff climbing to that day's bound, the hills above Akomi. The men were dog-tired, progress was beginning to slacken, and "The Baron" decided to rest in the village until daybreak. After hot tea and a smoke the world seemed brighter, and at 0630 hrs. the patrol continued to advance and started the climb up to the plateau above

THE IRON DUKE

THE JAPANESE LINK L. of C.



the village. This was reached at 0930 hrs., a wonderful sight, green grass, majestic pines, a magnificent view falling away to the west and Mount Kopamedzu rising dark in the east. The patrol rested here for 24 hours. A certain amount of information was obtained from the local headman, and, after considerable difficulty, guides were persuaded to lead the patrol up the mountain, which was covered in dense virgin jungle, and no known path existed.

Owing to Japanese atrocities in this area, no definite information could be gleaned from the Nagas about Japanese movements, and it was with a feeling of uncertainty that the patrol went forward on its final stage to the summit of Kopamedzu. Cpl. Smith and three men were left behind in the village of Akomi to watch the tracks leading in from the 24 M.S. and Chobama, where it was known a garrison of 1,500 Japanese were based, in order that the patrol could be informed of any Japanese attempts to cut them off in the rear.

It was another wearying march across broken country to the foot of Kopamedzu, where the mountain rose up to 8,875 feet. The climb began in a torrential downpour which made the ground as slippery as ice, and necessitated each man grasping the nearest tree and pulling himself up to the next. 1730 hrs. and the summit finally gained, each man literally soaked to the skin. Owing to cloud, nothing could be seen of the "Link" below. A tight perimeter was formed in the jungle and the patrol waited shivering and blue with cold for the clouds to lift, which they did at 1830 hrs. "The Baron" then moved forward with an O.P. to observe the "Link," which was clearly visible below. Grand! and quite plainly could be distinguished the enemy's camps and strongpoints all along the track. The Naga scouts were asked if they would go up the track to Chobama in local clothes and bring back what information they could obtain.

It would have been suicidal to have gone any further forward with the patrol as a brush with the enemy in this area would have meant the patrol's extermination. "The bravest of all the scouts" volunteered to go and started singing his war cry of death. Dressed in a loin cloth, he went off, jumping from crag to crag like a mountain goat.

Further O.P.s. were established so that the whole of the "Link" was under observation. All movement was noted and the defensive lay-out logged. There were four camps probably containing a company in each.

Soon after 2100 hrs. the scout returned bringing with him the headman of a village on the east of the track, and an ex-P.W.D. manager who was able to give precise details of the construction of the Japanese defences. These incidentally tallied with the patrol's observations. He also disclosed the whereabouts of the Japanese general H.Q., also the fact that no heavy M.T. could use the "Link" in monsoon weather. The patrol commander now had a complete picture of the situation on the "Link" and was able to start the return journey to Akomi.

Another nightmare! By this time the slope down the mountain was just a waterfall, and it was simply a matter of squatting down and half sliding, half falling down the mountain side. The foot reached, it was another five miles to the R.V. at Akomi. It was two hours before dawn when the patrol, tired, wet through, but cheerful in its success, arrived. Fires were lit, clothes dried. The party left behind had prepared a hot meal, which the patrol now ate with great relish.

It must be stated here that Cpl. Smith had in the patrol's absence received information that the Japanese were combing the village to the north-east of Akomi. Also that a message had been received from Column H.Q. saying they had moved from Pfsa Chedama to Thenezumi.

It was decided to move on to a feature to the west of Akomi at dawn and rest there until nightfall, and then go back across the valley and the road again that night. Once in position on this feature, a welcome rest was possible. Most men had not slept for three days. Nagas informed the patrol commander that eight Japanese were approaching

Akomi from the north in search of rice. An ambush was set on the Lekromi track, but no luck—no Japanese came.

That night, the 2nd of June, the patrol was ready for the final march across the road to regain the column at Thenezumi. It was about 0300 hrs. on the 3rd of June and the patrol half a mile from the Kohima—Phak road when Japanese fires were sighted about 500 yards intervals all along the road. (The Japanese had begun his withdrawal.)

Moving forward by bounds, the patrol continued the advance when Gordon Devey with the leading section heard Japanese voices coming from the area of the track and road junction. An awkward situation. The problem was appreciated and Gordon Devey was ordered to go straight across country with the leading section. The patrol were ordered that in the event of bumping the enemy they would if necessary fight their way across the road and R.V. on the height above M.S.24. Gordon Devey, still with the leading section, had got over the road when he heard footsteps cautiously approaching down the road. Cpl. Smith quickly got his section into position and Gordon Devey went forward to discover what he could, and came face to face with a Japanese sentry who bolted to what turned out to be a Japanese counter-ambush position. He was shot. Dèad silence. "The Baron," still on the south of the road, heard the shot, appreciated what had happened, and immediately got the remainder of the patrol across the road.

The patrol re-organised. It was realised no ambush could now be set. The Japanese was preparing to attack, his movements were audible; but he was too late, the patrol faded out and re-organised at the R.V. The Japanese apparently got lost in the jungle as no attack developed. He could be heard stamping about in the undergrowth, cursing.

At daybreak it was possible to locate a track leading back to the column's new base at Thenezumi, and after a forced march of ten hours the patrol rejoined the column in the evening; having suffered no loss—killed one Japanese—and brought back the information required—which eventually led the commanders to appreciate in good time the Japanese withdrawal to the south from the Kohima area.

Immediately this news was received 33 Column complete moved to Cheswezumi and linked up with Major Williams' force. Hugh Bond's platoon at Runguzumi was dispatched to the assistance of the Colonel's ambushing force. On arrival at Cheswesumi no time was lost and Graham Tedds' platoon with C.S.M. Drury's platoon under command were dispatched to attack Thenezumi that night. Complete surprise was achieved, the Japs being caught cooking their evening meal. They fled in disorder, several being killed by grenades hurled after them. That night, however, they returned and attacked Graham Tedd's force. The attack was repulsed and dawn found us in complete possession of the area.

By now Kohima had fallen to — Division and a Brigade was reported to be driving down the Phak road to Chakhabama, which the Japs were reported to be evacuating. A patrol under command of Lt. Mowat, 33 Column intelligence officer, was dispatched to contact this Brigade. The patrol reported Chakhabama evacuated and Lt. Mowat met the British Brigade Commander. This was the first contact with our own troops for two months. The Brigade Commander was profuse in his praises for the effect our efforts had had on the Kohima battles. Mowat returned safely with the Brigade Commander's new plan which was wirelessly back to our Brigade H.Q. and proved of great value.

Thus ended this particular phase of the operation, the Battalion having fulfilled all its tasks with few casualties and having inflicted heavy casualties on the enemy. The Battalion reformed at Cheswezumi and then moved on in pursuit of a beaten enemy to close the campaign with a triumphant entry into Ukhrul.

These notes would be incomplete without mention of the splendid work done by our two column medical officers. Doc. Doupe and Donald Gunn. Many a wounded man's life was saved by their skill. Padre Gordon, who invariably accompanied his column battle group, played a big part in keeping the men in high spirits. Our animals were kept in good fettle by Capt. Deyes and Eric Hayes, the two column A.T.Os. While the

INFANTRY TRAINING CENTRE.



Rugby Football Team.



"J" Company.



The Wedding of Lt.-Col. P. G. L. Cousens and Miss Joan Robinson at Khartoum,
18th November, 1944. (See page 105.)



"Panther Tank" Captured in Italy by "A" Squadron, 145 Regiment R.A.C.
(see page 64).

difficult task of taking supply drops and feeding us rested in the capable hands of Donald Britton and John Butterfield. The organisation of the Nagas, who were of great assistance to us, was done by the two column I.Os., Steve Dunn being the I.O. of 76 Column.

It really was amazing how cheerful the Battalion kept throughout this long and arduous campaign. Carrying terribly heavy packs, weakened by malnutrition, many suffering from malaria and dysentery, exhausted by the continuous marching, they still managed to raise a smile. After a mug of tea and a cigarette, morale was restored to its normal high level.

Special praise is due to the platoon commanders who throughout showed magnificent leadership, particularly in view of the many independent platoon battles fought many miles away from the main body.

Many paid the supreme price for their gallantry. Capt. Jock Munroe was killed by a booby trap. Capt. Eric Masters fell shot through both legs while directing a mortar shoot. Ken Duell died of typhus and Junior Harris of small-pox. Lt. Wilcox, R.E., was severely injured when his jeep crashed down the mountain side. Peter Goatley has a crippled arm for life. Charles Scarfe is deaf and many others now medical category.

A TANK REGIMENT IN BURMA.

The Regiment went forward to the Arakan early in the winter of 1944. The move from India was made by road, rail and sea, and took some little time to complete, but the Regiment was concentrated before Christmas. At one of the transit camps on the way up we found C.S.M. Hilary and S/Sgt. Chambers of The Duke of Wellington's Regiment on the camp staff. Needless to say, we were in complete possession during our stay there!

We were delighted to find that we were serving under Lt.-Gen. Sir A. F. P. Christison, one of the most distinguished officers of The Duke of Wellington's Regiment, and we were particularly pleased when he came to our Christmas Day service.

During January the Regiment was standing by to take part in a fairly large amphibious operation. Unfortunately for us the Jap decided to pull out of that particular objective without waiting to be attacked, and for a time it looked as though we were going to be completely disappointed.

However, in the middle of January the Regiment was put under command of 26th Indian Division for the operations against Ramree Island. The 26th Indian Division is one of the most experienced divisions in the Arakan and we were extremely lucky to work with them. Unfortunately various considerations prevented the whole of the Regiment from taking part in the operations, but a strong detachment under Alan Bucknall, with a detachment of Bombay Grenadiers and some Indian Engineers under command, took part in the assault.

The assault took place against Kyaukypu on the north coast of the island, and was covered by a considerable naval and air bombardment. Except for the presence of some mines in the anchorage, which gave some anxious moments, the landing was practically unopposed. The squadron landed in support of the first wave of infantry and supported them on to their perimeter, opposition being met with at only one point.

The Japanese were holding a strong position on some hill features to the west of the island. On the following day the squadron moved out to support a battalion of the Lincolnshire Regiment to attack this position. However, the Jap did not wait for it. There is no doubt that the presence of tanks in the assault came as a surprise to him, and it is generally agreed that this was the determining factor which caused him to make a general withdrawal. Without even fighting any delaying actions, he withdrew to a position, about halfway down the island, which was covered by a considerable chaung forming a complete anti-tank obstacle.

The country was extremely difficult for tanks to move in. There was only one road, which crossed numerous chaungs, none of the bridges being strong enough to carry tanks. As a result our progress was too slow for the infantry, who were following up as rapidly as possible. So the squadron withdrew to the beaches where it was re-embarked, and

landed again about halfway down the west coast of the island. The beaches at this point were clearly those on which the Japs expected the original landing to take place. The beaches themselves, and all the roads and tracks round them, were heavily mined. Our sappers did sterling work and no vehicle was lost on a mine during the whole operation.

In the meantime the infantry had found that the Japanese position was too strong to be attacked frontally across the chaung. The commander of the leading brigade decided on a long flank march to get round the head of the chaung and capture Ramree Town.

The march that followed was as hard as it would be possible for tanks to undertake. The road was nothing but a footpath and the sappers with a bulldozer were kept continually at work. There were numerous small chaungs and saddles across hill features, which caused maddening delays. The paddy bunds were for the most part about 3 feet high and usually about 30 yards apart. The strain both on tanks and crews was considerable. It was not possible to let up for a moment, since it was obvious that the Japs would hold a position covering Ramree Town, with a view to allowing an orderly withdrawal from the east coast of the island. The fear that our infantry might come up against prepared positions without tank support was ever present in everybody's minds. Towards the end of the march the bulldozer broke down. From that point onwards the tanks, with the aid of their sappers, had to make their own road. By dint of pulling up trees with tow ropes, shooting them down with their guns and blasting their way through rocky places, this was done. In fact it was done so successfully that not only were the tanks up when the enemy's positions were reached, but a good enough road was made for the 25-pounders to be got forward as well. During this march little opposition was met and the tanks were only in action once.

The Japanese were found to be holding a strong position near Namudwe covering the point where we hoped to rejoin the main road into Ramree. He was holding a number of hill features from each of which he had to be driven in turn. The Squadron was continually in action during the next six days supporting the infantry in their final advance to Ramree. Eventually the Squadron entered the town with the leading infantry on the 21st day after the landing. For the final ten days of this period they had been continually marching and fighting with little time for rest or maintenance.

It is always difficult to assess the casualties inflicted on the Japanese. The extremely thick nature of the country, and the fact that the Jap will go to great lengths in order to remove his dead, make an accurate estimate of the number killed almost impossible. But there is no doubt that the tanks inflicted heavy casualties and in addition can make a definite claim of one field gun and two L.M.Gs. destroyed by their fire. A prisoner of war stated the Japs had meant to hold the covering position at Namudwe for a considerable time. They did not believe that it was possible for us to get tanks up there. When this was done and the effect of the tank fire was seen, the enemy commander gave up any idea of an orderly withdrawal and ordered a *sauve qui peut*. During the operations Tony Richards performed a very gallant action for which he was awarded an M.C.

With the capture of Ramree Town no operations other than mopping up continued on the island. In this the tanks did not take part.

In March the greater part of the Regiment was withdrawn to a rest area, but a small detachment took part in another operation which is still in progress and about which nothing can yet be said. It may, however, be stated that at one point they captured two enemy light tanks intact and caused the Japs to destroy three others. During the move to the rest area the Regiment found itself in a transit camp where Capt. Sissons, late of the — Battalion, was on the camp staff, so that again we fell on our feet in the way of being looked after.

The main drawback to the operations in the Arakan this season from our point of view was that the whole of the Regiment did not get an innings. Those that did get a show did extremely well and enjoyed it. We were lucky in that we suffered few casualties and we are hoping that it will not be long before we get a chance again.

During the operations the Regiment provided a number of men to drive D.U.K.Ws.

for 26th Indian Division. These men did very well indeed and the division was very grateful for their help.

I cannot finish without acknowledging the debt that we owe to the battalion of Bombay Grenadiers which acted as our protective infantry. They never let up for a moment in the protection of the tanks themselves and of the various tank reconnaissance parties that went out on foot. They were always ready to lend the tank crews a hand in a difficult situation. A number of strong friendships sprang up between the sepoys and our men, and we were all delighted when L/Naik Ram Sarup was awarded an M.M. for a particularly gallant action in aid of the crew of a disabled tank.

Repatriation is likely to cause some changes in the Regiment in the near future. But we look forward to having another go at the Japs before long.

10th Battalion.

Some months have elapsed since we were last able to record our doings in THE IRON DUKE, but during this time we have been very far from idle, though our activities have perforce been less spectacular than those of certain other Battalions of the Regiment.

Our rôle of producing trained drafts for overseas theatres of war involves us in a continuous round of strenuous training. Our hope is that as many men as possible who have passed through this Battalion eventually get posted to a Battalion of the "Dukes" or the "Durhams" overseas, and that the training they have done with us stands them in good stead and enables them to hold their own with the best.

All this training, coupled with the shortness of the winter days, have left us only too little time for organized sport. None the less we managed to get several very enjoyable games of rugger earlier in the season, with victories considerably outnumbering defeats. Particularly enjoyable was our visit to No. 4 I.T.C. at Brancepeth, memorable not only for the game itself, but also for the royal reception accorded to us after it. Battalion soccer and hockey teams have also been in action, but in both cases fixtures have been few and far between. More recently we have started cross-country running again; a most successful inter-company competition was won by "A" Company, and we have all the makings of a really good Battalion team.

Comings and goings have been far too numerous to attempt to record in full, but we have had to say farewell recently to such old friends as Major Carroll, Captain Cartwright, Captain Holroyde and Captain Clarke. We wish them all the best wherever they may be. We take the opportunity of welcoming Major Sir-Nugent Everard, Major G. Laing and R.S.M. Bagshaw who have joined us since we last appeared in print.

It is with deep regret that we have to record the death of the following ten men who lost their lives as the result of a training accident on 17th January, 1945:—L/Cpl. M. Fredlieb and Pte. N. Ashton, D.W.R.; Pte. K. Lee, Pte. J. W. Wilson, Pte. P. G. Clements, Pte. E. King, Pte. A. Leighton, Pte. R. H. Winteringham, Pte. M. M. Peddely, and Pte. H. Yates, D.L.I.

All of them were under 20 years of age and unmarried. We extend our sympathy to their families.

We have with us now many friends from the D.L.I. both on the permanent staff and among the trainees. Plenty of friendly rivalry exists between "Dukes" and "Durhams," but the association remains a very happy one. We follow with great interest the doings of other Battalions of the Regiment in all parts of the world, and send our best wishes to them wherever they may be.

OFFICERS' MESS.

As one looks around the Mess with an eye to writing these notes, the difficulty is where to start and what to omit. I suppose the first point to note is the way the "Dukes" and "Durhams" have fitted in together to make a good team.

We now have a "Durham" adjutant, Roy Cross, in place of Robin Cartwright, who is now chasing Huns in his carriers. Major T. St. G. Carroll has left us for the dizzy position of second-in-command No. 4 I.T.C. Martin Curran is back again sporting a wound stripe. Michael Holroyde, Pat Clarke and Johnnie Dodds of the old school have left us, and among the minimum cadre we have now Tony Peel, Bill Burton and Steve Scarlett of the "Dukes," and Jack Vessey and Burt Evenett of the "Durhams."

The most disconcerting thing about the Mess is the frequency with which the faces change; just as you get used to them, they go off and are replaced by a new set, so that after leave it almost feels like a new Mess. Among the non-permanent members we have the pleasure of having Major Sir Nugent Everard with us, and he has told us of his experiences with his tanks and the Boche.

Our Christmas dinner was about "browned off," as, at the critical moment when Sgt. Dixon was due to do his "Jeeves" turn, the kitchen went up in flames. By 10 o'clock we had about given up all hopes of seeing the turkey and plum pudding; however, the intervening hours had been well spent,

and by that time none of us would have minded much what came in. Thanks to Herculean efforts on the part of the Mess staff, however, the dinner when it did arrive was excellent. Toasts were duly drunk to the "Dukes" and "Durhams," and, as a special concession to Bill Webb, the "Welch," and the evening was voted a great success.

Our congratulations to Peter Green and George Blagdon on becoming fathers of a son and daughter respectively. When they get together comparing notes the women simply aren't in it, and any moment we expect to see them take to knitting.

SERGEANTS' MESS.

Many changes have taken place since our last contribution to the Regimental Magazine. We said good-bye to our R.S.M., R.S.M. E. Holmes (D.L.I.) and in his place we are pleased to welcome R.S.M. A. Bagshaw, "an old Duke." We sincerely hope his stay will be a pleasant and happy one.

It was with deep regret we said good-bye to our adjutant, Capt. R. V. Cartwright (on posting), and with him go the very best wishes of all members, hoping he will some day in the very near future come up and see us. "Good luck" and "Good hunting." We are very pleased to welcome our new adjutant, Capt. R. Cross, and hope his stay will be a pleasant and happy one. Again in his off-duty hours (if any) he can enlighten us on the latest book "Release and Re-settlement." Several members have left us for different parts of the Empire and with them go the very best wishes of the Mess. Good luck and God speed. We are pleased to welcome into the Mess C.S.Ms. Nicholson and Wood, S.S.I. Welch, C/Sgt. Radley, Sgts. Priestley, Helliwell and Bolton.

Christmas was spent in the usual Yorkshire traditional manner. Carols old and some new were sung on Christmas Eve. A fancy dress comic football match—officers v. sergeants—was arranged and refereed by our president (Dicky Bye). Smoke of all colours and some very dangerous missiles were used. Costumes were of the very best variety—(the score is secret). We do sincerely hope Capt. R. V. C. (Robin) ("Booby trapped") was made safe before leaving the Battalion. A grand bill of fare was produced and capably looked after by our master cook—"W" Bye. We were fortunate in having as our guests nine members of the Belgian Army. Toasts and speeches in Belgian and English were given. The speech was returned by C.S.M. R. L. Bye. Congratulations to Sgt. (Paddy) Flynn on the award of a certificate of merit by the G.O.C. We offer our heartiest to Sgt. Lydon on his marriage.

Dances are being held on an average every three weeks under the master of ceremonies, one known as Dick Bye—he also conducts the Band and does a bit of crooning—his crooning is not so good!! Much expert advice was given on how to prepare a stone floor for dancing—since preparing floor Dick has lost two stones in weight.

To all Dukes and Durhams wherever they may be we say good luck and soon a grand re-union of two very fine Regiments.

COMPANY NOTES.

"B" COMPANY.—Since the last issue of THE IRON DUKE this Company has risen from Training Company to the dizzy heights of Post Graduate Training and Drafting Company. We are still commanded by Capt. "Smack On" Oxley, and most of the old N.C.Os. are still with us. The only changes are Sgts. Wigan, L/Sgt. Spinner and Cpl. Adlington, who have now gone to H.Q. Company; and Sgt. Larry the Lamb is now in our fold.

The sympathy of the Minimum Cadre was extended to C.S.M. McDonald on his admission to the C.R.S., but having now been discharged, plus a spot of leave, he has returned as robust and active as ever. Needless to say, the sentiments of the N.C.Os. were not endorsed by the trainees. Our C.Q.M.S., "Nap" Stone, has tried taking a leaf out of the C.S.M.'s book by also having a spell of hospital with eye trouble. His place is being ably taken by Sgt. "Chocolate" Cooper, to whom we offer our congratulations on his recent promotion to full sergeant.

We were sorry to lose our second-in-command, Lt. John Wood, transferred to "E" Company, but hope this is only temporary. Our training officer, Lt. Eddie Gregg, left us to take up more active service abroad, and incidentally, Monty's big push only took place after his departure from this Battalion. Other officers too numerous to name have been with us before passing on, and to all these we send our best wishes. We also take this opportunity of welcoming Lts. Smart and Elkington to the Company.

"C" COMPANY.—There have been few changes in "C" Company since we last wrote but life has been far from monotonous. The Company lines look resplendent in their new spring coat of paint, whitewash and creosote. Our fire points are particularly brilliant, and with good reason, though everyone is rather reticent as to what that reason is!

Our cross-country team finished well in the Battalion run, and so-called "friendly" football matches with other companies provide spirited entertainment, as do our N.C.Os.' antics at company dances. It is said that we gave this remote hamlet its first "floor show."

Lt. E. Rowe, the only new arrival, joined as Major Kershaw's second-in-command some time ago, but seems to be on a perpetual course. At least we never see him! C.Q.M.S. King was married quite recently and seems to be thriving on it. We take this opportunity of offering our congratulations. C.S.M. Hill, rather like Mr. Micawber, is still waiting for "Group —" to turn up!

"D" COMPANY.—Since we last recorded any notes for THE IRON DUKE we have had to say farewell to Major Carroll who had commanded the Company for just over a year. He takes with him our best wishes for success in his new job. He is succeeded by Capt. Peel, to whom we offer a hearty welcome. All other changes are far too numerous to record. Sgt.-Major Farmer is still with us and C.Q.M.S. Hunt (D.L.I.) is our quartermaster-sergeant. Sgts. Barrett-Atkinson and Steer are our platoon sergeants now, and we have lately welcomed to the Company Sgt. Spencer (D.L.I.). Another old "Duke" with the Company is Pte. Milton, one of our clerks.

It is not easy to record the doings of a company these days, but one success we are very proud of has been the winning of the fortnightly Battalion drill competition on six successive occasions, a really good effort which reflects great credit on those responsible for their training. We also put up a good performance in the inter-company cross-country race in which we finished third.

Like everyone else, we have been very busy of late smartening up the camp; at present it looks something like an ideal homes exhibition; we feel, in fact, that if Lord Portal wants any tips he could not do better than come and pay us a visit, especially as we now have an expert on hygiene and sanitation in Sgt. Atkinson, fresh from a recent course at Aldershot.

News was heard recently from Lt. Bill Simpson; at the time, we gathered, he was helping to keep "the watch on the Rhine." He talked about having to clear a village street with his platoon by night, but we are keeping very quiet about this in case anyone should get ideas into his head. To him and all those others who have left us for overseas we wish God-speed and a safe return.

"E" COMPANY.—It is the first time we have had the pleasure of publishing our notes in the magazine since the forming of the Company under the command of Capt. J. G. Vessey, assisted by officers and other ranks of the D.W.R. and D.L.I. Regiments, who are a happy band of warriors.

We have had many changes in the Company, including the departure of "Phil Thomas," our admin. officer and crazy man with explosives. Cpls. Peck, Senior, Griffin, Fallon and Rippon have left us and we wish them every success in their new stations, and in their place we welcome Cpl. Baxter and the junior N.C.Os. of the Company who are too many to name, and hope they will settle down and have a happy and pleasant tour of duty.

C.S.M. Bye (Old Dick) still shakes them around on any improvised barrack square and can be heard by all when at his best. The "Quarter Bloke," C/Sgt. Sykes (push-bikes) still gloates over 1157's and 1483's and delights in P.1954 charges—don't we know it! L/Cpl. (Joe) Evins still manipulates the credit and debit balances and is always available to give expert advice to any who care to seek such daring information. Pte. Woodman (Garth to a lot of us) has said cheerio on posting; with him go the very best wishes of the staff. We welcome in his place Pte. T. Sowerby, who has taken over, and hope he will soon settle in. To all who have passed through our hands we say good luck and a speedy return to the Mother Country, "Dukes" and "Durhams"; we are proud of you all. Our Company Commander in the last few days seems to have laid aside his weapon of war and has taken up his fishing rod; pleased to say up to now no one is suffering from fish poisoning. Bigger catches are expected. Cpl. Hunter (ex-Pioneer corporal) still wields a pretty hammer and chisel and his advice on any repairing subject is always of the best order.

"F" COMPANY, the youngest member of the family, which emerged chrysalis-like from the H.Q. Company nest, is now striding manfully shoulder to shoulder with its elder brothers. Major M. Curran returned from B.L.A., temporarily down-graded, is in command, and is ably supported by "Big Bill" Burton. We were all delighted to see the latter's well-deserved third pip arrive. "Steve" Scarlet, also back from B.L.A. and temporarily down-graded, is 'billed' as admin. officer. It has been observed that the injuries to his legs from bullet wounds in no way retard his perambulations to the local hostelry.

We have lately heard from Michael Holroyde, who left us recently and is languishing in an R.H.U. in Belgium with the glint of battle in his eye. Pat Clarke was also another old member of the family who left us recently for rather more distant shores. Owing to the nature of our work it is almost impossible to keep "tab" of all the 'good types' that have passed through us, but wherever they are we wish them all the best of luck and a safe and swift homecoming.

HEADQUARTER COMPANY.—"Long ago and far away" seems to be the last time we appeared in print, and during that period many changes have altered us, whether for good or bad is still to be determined. Our "guiding star," Capt. P. D. Green, having disposed of some of his many and varied "jobs," is now able to devote more of his time to company routine, which in turn has made all and sundry open their eyes early in the morning. In contrast, Lt. "Freddie" Hurst has much on his shoulders by being I.O. and W.T.O., etc., all rolled into one, but manages to get through the work even though it costs a little more hair from that already sadly depleted stock, and it is said that since Lt. Mason took over the task of pioneer officer his home now shows signs of good repair from the garden gate to household furniture, a sure sign that one only needs the tools.

We congratulate Provost Sgt. "Paddy" Flynn on the award of his "Certificate of Merit." Our welcome goes to many who have joined us in recent times—namely, C.S.M. Wood, C.Q.M.S. Radley, "Tech." Sgt. Ken Bolton and Sgts. Priestley and Bennett, who we feel sure will settle down amongst us despite their comments of being isolated in this so-and-so camp.

Old faces are Capt. Ray Swire, who still runs the M.T., assisted by Sgt. Kirkham, and in orderly room the O.R.Q.M.S. (Akriegg) still sits by the fire, continuing to bark at all and sundry who dare to

brave the foe and ask for stationery, while "Ben" Brassington looks on, adding his many woes and worries to the score. Others still swimming are Sgts. "Crash" Burton, Daines, Harton, plus, of course, our rissole-slapping Cook Sgt. "Walter" Bye, who although A.C.C., will remain at heart, what he joined the Army as, "A Duke."

The addition of a young soldiers' platoon caused some dispute as to football prowess, which resulted in the old crocks (permanent staff) suffering defeat. In the Battalion cross-country run we only managed fourth place, but we have already started to train in the hopes that next year may see us well to the fore.

"A" COMPANY.—Our function in life remains constant, but all else in the Company has been subjected to many changes. Capt. Holroyde has departed to the B.L.A. We understand that his troubles were general in character; we were sorry to lose him and wish him luck wherever he may go, and general success. Capt. Hanna is now in command, having put aside his second-in-command's saw and hammer duties, and retaining as a link with a more glorious past an aged carrier coat. Lt. Riley also departed to grander deeds with many whose names are legion and whose stay with us was all too short. C.S.M. "Peggy" Thornton left us on being posted to another company and we extend a welcome to his successor, C.S.M. Nicholson, rapidly recovering from wounds, and hope that his stay with us will be a long one. Of the old originals, few remain. We congratulate Cpl. Hellewell on his promotion and are sorry that it meant his being posted to another company. "Snowy" Price, Syd Cook and the "Silver Tonsilled" Stanley have all departed quite recently. To them and all of the old members of the Company, good luck and a safe and speedy return.

Sport has been rather put in the shade, but an outstanding success was the performance of our cross-country team in winning the Battalion championship, led by L/Cpl. Archer, who won the individual race in grand style.

D.W.R. Infantry Training Centre.

OFFICERS' MESS.

Once again we have some important changes to mention, notably the arrival of our new second in command, Major Carroll, who joined us from the — Battalion. We give him a very hearty welcome and have already found him to be "one of the best". We also welcome Guy Gilbey who has come to take the place of the inimitable Johnny Bedford. The latter, though posted away, has been seen on numerous occasions in the Garrison Area, and in fact seems very reluctant to leave us. Quite a few fellows have left us for a better clime (or should it be "climb"?) and we were sorry to lose them. However, in their places we warmly welcome new "Dukes" arrived to carry on the traditions. We are very glad to have "Paddy" O'Sullivan back with us (though not for the reason behind his return), also Gardner, who joined us a little time ago, and Hutchinson.

Our Christmas party was a huge success, the entertainers were excellent and all there had a really grand time. Another excuse for a celebration was found when we entertained the A.T.S. and Sergeants to a dance a few months ago. It all tends to a much brighter life amid our other many activities.

It is always pleasant to have visitors in the Mess, especially when they are old friends like John Steele; we were very glad to see him. Perhaps the main event in this line was a visit of some French officers (including a General)—certain of our more high spirited members were observed greatly to envy their hats even to the point of trying them on! At the time of going to press we are expecting a few Belgian officers to arrive for a short stay, to study our methods of instruction.

The B.B.C. feature, "Tuesday Serenade", has always been a very popular programme in the Mess, and we were very happy and fortunate to have Stanford Robinson and the Theatre Orchestra with artistes actually to broadcast the programme from our camp. A short concert of popular classics preceded the broadcast, and afterwards we were pleased to entertain conductor, leader and artistes in the Mess—the most notable being those grand pianists, Rawicz and Landauer. It was a splendid evening.

There is at least one member of our community to congratulate on becoming a father namely, Phillip Diggle, and probably before the next issue others will have joined the ranks of proud fathers.

We may hope that before the next issue, V Day will have arrived and bowler hats will be the vogue (definitely a better style of headgear than the Caps G. S. we are now wearing!!!).

Dukes everywhere are doing a grand job of work and we send best wishes for a speedy victory and homecoming to all.

SERGEANTS' MESS.

During these last few months our social activities have consisted of the ever popular dances and various tournaments, darts, billiards, dominoes etc. We spent a pleasant evening as guests of the officers when we were entertained at their dance.

Two of our "Jungle Game Stars" suffered injuries in recent games: namely C.S.M. Shepley a broken ankle, and S. I. (Topper) Brown a dislocated shoulder. Both are almost recovered but will be "out" for the remainder of the season. The "Jong" Fiends have been isolated as a protective measure against infection to the rest of the Mess. A room has been dedicated and reserved for our "Jonging" fraternity. Through the perpetual smoky haze the weird lingo is babbled with varying degrees of intensity—"All the Bam"—"All the wheels"—"Dish"—"Spuggy". One can almost scent the "Chop Suey", or maybe it's just Woodbines.

The collar and tie plus caps G.S. era has arrived. Judging by the broad grins on the faces of our C.Q.M.S.'s Percy Hickox, "Crafty" Smith and "Topper" Brown, its certainly come to stay.

Another of the Spikes arrived, C.Q.M.S. Kennedy. We already have C.M.S. "Spike" Kennedy and visits from "Spike's" father, "Spike", another old Duke. We only need another for game. We are glad to see our Star waitress "Big" Betty, back on the job, welcome home.

We heard with regret that an old Mess member, "Ike" Hatch, has been killed in action in Burma. Our deepest sympathy goes to his wife and child.

CORPORALS' MESS.

Inevitable changes have taken place since our last notes were written, some members have moved further afield, and others have ascended to the higher circles of the Sergeants Mess, and our congratulations are sent to them. Not the least of these changes is the new committee which has been elected, headed by the popular Cyril Wilmot as president of the Mess. Cyril is no ordinary president, for he is an expert on gardening and knows flowers, etcetra by names we have never heard of before. His "duties" are many, the latest being the worming of the cricket pitch, and the P.R.I. was quite shocked when asked for hundredweights of powder instead of ounces to subdue them. Apparently that noble officer was unaware of the number of worms on charge. We are looking forward, however, to the usual enjoyable cricket matches this season against the officers, with the usual result. In the Christmas season our indoor activities were two socials and a dance, all of which were very successful. The last social produced a star attraction in Bruce Trent, the stage and radio star. A weekly whist drive has also been held since Christmas and has proved very successful and popular.

Once again we congratulate members on family additions, namely Cpl. Paddy Waters and Cpl. Johnson,—both of the P.T. Staff. In closing we offer a hearty welcome to all new members of the Mess, and send our good wishes to all "Dukes" wherever they may be.

COMPANY NOTES.

"B" COMPANY.—Since our last notes, momentous happenings have taken place in this War of Nations. At last, the end is in sight! However, the last few months have brought little or no change to the order of things here. Our personnel is much the same, and needless to say we are working harder and longer than ever before.

C.M.S. Shepley finally "got his". In a recent inter-unit fracas (officially designated as rugby) our worthy S. M. received a fracture to his ankle which put him in "dock" for a month, and now leaves him hopping rather unsteadily between Sgts. Mess' and Company Office each day. In all seriousness, however, we can put on record the genuine remarks of admiration passed by the critics, as "Hopalong Shep" stayed on the field up to the last whistle, when nature should have had him laid in hospital. However, it's an ill wind . . . and Shep's incapacitation brought a temporary relief to the Company in the shape of a very old friend of most of us, the unchangeable C.S.M. Stork. He appeared complete with big stick, wide grin and a critical eye on the N.C.O.'s duty roster—the same old "Johnny". We were very glad to see him again and are all hoping that he will be staying in the I.T.C. in some permanent capacity when "Shep" can fully take over "B". Coy's reins again.

That much talked of, but seldom seen, phenomenon designated "promotion" paid us a fleeting visit last week leaving in its wake Cpls. Cain and Sharples—we offer our congratulations. Cpl. Wilson worked us a "fast one"—getting married when nobody was looking. Our sincere congratulations and best wishes to Mr. and Mrs. Wilson. We would also take the opportunity to welcome to the Company C.Q.M.S. Kennedy, Cpl. Ward, L/Cps. Beasley, Farndale and Yeadon.

It is worthy of note that a substitute has been found for the hockey pitch fatigue. We are now spending a night or two every week down in the Castle grounds digging for some long-lost buried treasure under the supervision of Major Hill. It has been suggested in some quarters that a more pleasant way of spending the evening after a hard day's training might be found.

In closing, we would like to express the hope that our next notes will go to press having seen the end of the conflict in Europe and maybe also in the Far East. "Till then", we wish all Dukes 'God-Speed', 'Good Luck' and a 'Safe Return'.

"C" COMPANY.—As these notes are being written the enemy is being kicked about his own backyard, and it is with great pleasure that we recall the part played by the "Dukes" to help bring this about. Certainly we are very proud of the fact that one of the recent V.C.'s awarded went to a former trainee in this Company, Fus. Donnini. Perhaps the Boche has had enough as these notes are being read—we would not be surprised!

The issue of berets to our P.S. caused some excitement recently. N.C.O.'s walked past one another without any acknowledgement; either they didn't recognise one another or felt too self-conscious in their novel head-gear!

We extend congratulations to L/Cpls. Templeman and Webley who have recently "got themselves tied up", and also to Sgt. Cateñ and Cpl. Sharples on their recent promotion. The latter, incidentally, was a former trainee in our Company. The terrible twins, Taylor and Temp. have given up "trapping" now in favour of cycling on a "double galloping bedstead". The writer has heard that they are contemplating fixing a Bren on the rear of the tandem.

Our "Q", P.C.H., has been very unsettled since his pal "Dinger" got his "Bowler". Percy keeps checking his size roll in his Part 1 ready for "der Tag". C.S.M. Suggitt laments the type of rookies we are getting these days and sorts them out in his own inimitable way! Otherwise we are just battling along. The O.C. has another hobby; this time it's the flower garden at the Castle. Maybe we shan't be chased so much as far as the Company gardens are concerned!

Personnel of the P.S. have changed so much that we find it difficult to keep abreast of the times, so in conclusion we wish "Good Luck" to those who have left us since the last notes were written and give a welcome to those who have just joined us. Friends in the — Battallion will be interested to read that Lt. Paddy O'Sullivan has just joined us as I write these notes.

"G" COMPANY.—Since the last issue we regret the loss of Capt. Bedford, who departed on 14 days' embarkation leave. We have been lucky enough to see him again, however, when he called in at the I.T.C. a short time ago. We have also lost Lieuts. Symons and Dixon—we congratulate them on their promotion. We are very pleased to welcome Capt. Gilbey, our new Company Commander. At the present stage of the war his experience will prove more than useful to young officers and trainees alike. We also welcome 2/Lts. Gledhill, Bruce Thompson and Bentley who have joined us recently.

We have repeated our success of last year and won the cross country cup. Our exploits at soccer had better remain unsung, though perhaps the loss of Corp. Sidlow to "H.Q." Company may explain things.

Sgts. Ogden and Verity have recently become proud fathers and we extend hearty congratulations.

Miss Walton has recently been promoted. It is believed that she may be leaving us in the near future. We shall be sorry to lose her if this materialises—the office will not be the same without her.

We wish the very best of luck to all Dukes, both at home and overseas and a safe and speedy return home.

"J" COMPANY.—On a recent C.O.'s inspection of barrack rooms and company areas we were hopelessly outpointed by our brother Company "George". Nevertheless we "passed the muster" as it were and came out if not with colours flying with colours running slightly, particularly the red ochre and whitewash!

Lieut. Oakes our second-in-command left with very short notice to tour the country lecturing on the Burma Campaign. Good luck and "Many happy recruits."

Our training record is still of a very high standard, we have topped the list in either drill or weapons in almost every pass-out. We intend to carry on being "tops."

The Junior Officers have become fairly static for the past four months. The second-in-command, Lieut. (*cadé nullis*) Booth, Lieut. Storey, 2nd. Lts. Geldart, Scott, Bennett and Wilkes, comprise our staff. We stated in a previous issue that we had so many "Subs." they were two for threehalfpence, now we have so many they are four for threepence.

The P.S. recently posed for a photograph the result of which may be seen somewhere in this issue. The photographer remarked that it reminded him very much of pre-war days; we learned afterwards that before the war he was employed at Whipsnade.

We have two Lance-corporals who are invaluable on the 72 hours schemes. L/Cpl. Rowley, who is known for his cooking ability, and L/Corp. Isaacs for his ability to buy eggs from farms where "angels fear to tread." L/Cpl. Isaacs has studied the egg producing problem from all angles, it only remains for him to lay one and his (and our) troubles are over. Congratulations to Sgt. "Buck" Caten on his promotion, and to Cpl. Cain, his successor.

A true story with a moral occurred the other day whilst "X" Squad were on the march. During the short halt the squad were sprawled, as is the custom, on the grass verge. A farmer with his horse and cart passed; he shouted to the Squad "You're having the time of you're lives, I wish I could swop you jobs"; instantly came the reply in true Yorkshire style: "Swop thee jobs, I'd swop the bloody horse jobs"; such is the standard of our recruits.

SPORT.

RUGBY FOOTBALL.—The I.T.C. team won the District cup again this year. As mentioned elsewhere in these notes, Capt. "Johnny" Bedford has now left us and C.S.M. Shepley was put out of the game for the rest of the season.

CROSS-COUNTRY RUNNING.—The District cup was won by the I.T.C. team.

DECORATIONS.

The following is a list of citations of immediate awards made to officers and other ranks of the 1st Battalion in Italy :—

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE ORDER.

CAPTAIN A. BURNS.

For outstanding leadership and personal bravery in the face of strong enemy opposition during the attack and capture of Monte Cece on 8th and 9th October, 1944. The capture of the Monte Cece feature was vital to the advance as the feature was strongly held by the enemy and dominated forward company positions and the main axis of advance. This feature was 759 metres high with sheer slopes near the crest. It rained throughout the 8th and night 8th-9th October—conditions were well nigh impossible over ground which at the best of times was precipitous and difficult.

The Battalion was ordered to attack this feature on the afternoon of 8th October. "C" Company was leading and was being followed closely by "A" Company, under the command of Capt. A. Burns, to assist in consolidation and against counter-attack. The attack commenced at approximately 1530 hrs. 8th October. The leading company came under heavy M.G. and mortar fire from the crest and was held up. The Commanding Officer then ordered Capt. Burns with "A" Company to attack through the leading company. Meanwhile the C.O. went forward to "C" Company, where he was mortally wounded, and "C" Company commander was wounded. Capt. Burns, appreciating the seriousness of the situation, took command of both "A" and "C" Companies, and under intense enemy spandau fire from short range re-organised the company positions and arranged for two platoons of "A" Company to attack the crest. Capt. Burns personally led the attack with the two platoons, which successfully gained the ridge and wiped out the enemy M.G. opposition. The position was consolidated under the orders of Capt. Burns but was counter-attacked during the night 8th-9th October and at first light 9th October. Both these counter-attacks were driven off and heavy casualties inflicted on the enemy. During 9th October all known enemy positions were actively engaged, preventing any further counter-attacks, the position was held and the Battalion relieved during the night 9th-10th October.

Throughout the operation Capt. Burns led his men with courage and cheerfulness. He took every opportunity to wipe out known enemy resistance. He inspired his men with his personal courage in the face of the enemy. It was this officer's leadership and his initiative in taking over control when his commanding officer was killed, together with his total disregard for personal safety which undoubtedly inspired the men during the attack and capture of the objective, which was essential for the successful continuance of the battle.

MILITARY CROSS.

Lt. R. H. HOYLE.

For conspicuous bravery and outstanding leadership during the attacks on Monte Cece from 6th—9th October, 1944.

Lt. Hoyle was commanding the leading platoon of "B" Company which was ordered to attack Monte Cece during the night 6th-7th October. Before reaching the objective the company was pinned down by intense spandau fire from the crest. One platoon of "A" Company which was on the left was also held up and the platoon commander seriously wounded. Lt. Hoyle left his cover and, in spite of the heavy enemy fire, he went to the wounded officer, brought him back under cover and arranged his evacuation. During the re-organisation of the company on the 7th October, Lt. Hoyle and his platoon were allotted the task of protection and cover to the remainder of the company. Although dominated by enemy positions, Lt. Hoyle moved about, exposing himself in order to organise sniping and harassing fire on enemy movement and known posts. When darkness came this officer with his platoon and under heavy spandau fire were able to rejoin the company and take part in the second and successful assault on the feature on the afternoon of 8th October. During the final action Lt. Hoyle commanded his platoon with great skill. This officer's cheerfulness, personal courage and offensive spirit throughout this long period, without a doubt, ensured the firm footing established on this high feature was not lost and led to the final capture of Monte Cece.

DISTINGUISHED CONDUCT MEDAL.

6019290 Sgt. D. EMERY.

For outstanding bravery and devotion to duty during the attack on Monte Cece on the afternoon of 8th October, 1944, and during the night 8th-9th October, 1944.

For the attack on the strongly held Monte Cece feature "A" Company, to which Sgt. Emery belonged, was allotted the task of capturing and holding the right end of the summit. The going was

hard, due to mud and pouring rain, and the climb from the start line to the crest extremely steep. When 20 yards from the crest the leading platoon was halted by concentrated fire from four spandaus firing from the summit. Sgt. Emery, who was acting platoon commander, as his platoon commander had been wounded, was ordered to take his platoon through the leading platoon and assault the crest. He complied with this order immediately and with himself in the van, he led the platoon on to and over the crest, accounting for at least one spandau crew either killed or wounded who fell to his own Tommy gun. The assault was entirely successful and was in a very large part due to this N.C.O.'s outstanding dash and courage in the face of withering enemy M.G. fire. Sgt. Emery immediately re-organised and consolidated his platoon, which had suffered heavy casualties. Almost before this was completed the enemy counter-attacked with some 15—20 men. Once again Sgt. Emery immediately took up a position in front of his platoon, and although exposed to heavy enemy small arms fire engaged the attackers with his Tommy gun and directed the fire of his platoon to such effect that the counter-attack was quickly and completely broken and the enemy withdrew leaving a number of dead and wounded. Throughout the whole action, which lasted until the early morning of 9th October, Sgt. Emery displayed not only the highest qualities of leadership and devotion to duty, but also showed an utter disregard for his own safety during a time of extreme danger. When not engaged actively in attacking and directing fire on to the enemy Sgt. Emery was a constant source of encouragement and cheerfulness to his men, moving amongst them and directing the evacuation of the wounded. There is no doubt that it was in a very large part due to Sgt. Emery's conspicuous bravery that the assault on Monte Cece was a success.

MILITARY MEDAL.

5255951 PTE. (now L/CPL.) L. BURSTON.

For outstanding personal courage and initiative in the face of the enemy during the attack on Monte Cece on 8th and 9th October, 1944.

During the attack on Monte Cece on the afternoon of 8th October Pte. Burston of "C" Company's leading platoon showed great courage and initiative in spite of heavy enemy fire. The advance was temporarily held up by an enemy M.G. post when Pte. Burston, although exposed to fire, engaged the enemy post with his 2in. mortar and silenced it. Having silenced it, he handed over his 2in. mortar and ammunition to his platoon sergeant and went forward armed with a rifle with his section to consolidate on the crest. Whilst consolidating, the enemy counter-attacked and the section was over-run. Pte. Burston extricated himself, however, and, observing an enemy mortar position, advanced towards it to engage it. He was then fired on by several enemy M.Gs. He was not hit but fell to the ground, feigning death, until he was able to roll down a bank out of view and into a trench, where he found a German, whom he captured. Pte. Burston held the prisoner in the trench until dark and then returned with him to his company positions. Throughout this operation Pte. Burston showed outstanding personal bravery which was an inspiration to all about him and his action assisted in the final capture of the objective.

5255043 PTE. B. SALT.

For outstanding courage and devotion to duty. On the night of 8th October Pte. Salt was one of the party carrying ammunition to the forward companies on Monte Cece. The track this party had to use was precipitous and stretches of it were under constant mortar and machine gun fire. Between 1600 hrs. and 2100 hrs. Pte. Salt made the journey six times; he was always the first man to arrive at the top and his load was never less than a box of 1,000 rounds .303. On the way down Salt assisted in evacuating three wounded men by carrying them bodily from the top to safer places farther down the mountain. This soldier was indeed a tower of strength, both by dint of his magnificent physique and by his personal courage and devotion to duty.

549545 SGT. J. GREEN.

For conspicuous bravery and devotion to duty during the attack on Monte Cece on 8th-9th October, 1944. When the Battalion attacked Monte Cece on 8th October, Sgt. Green was in charge of the ammunition carrying party. The route was precipitous and most of it open and under constant enemy M.G. and mortar fire. This route had to be crossed six times to carry up the necessary ammunition. Sgt. Green, with his cheerfulness and personal courage, led his men on to complete the task although casualties were being suffered, until on the last journey he was himself severely wounded. This ammunition was vital to the companies which were enabled to hold their positions against three counter-attacks during the night 8th-9th October.

MEDAL OF THE ORDER OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE.

4604524 PTE. E. JACKMAN.

Pte. Jackman is the oldest soldier of this Battalion. Enlisting on 7th July, 1921, he has served continuously ever since. He is the possessor of the Long Service and Good Conduct Medal. Pte.

Jackman has for the last ten years been employed in positions of trust and has shown himself to be an outstandingly loyal and devoted member of the Regiment. His influence, which is considerable, has always been exerted for the good of the Regiment and I feel most strongly that this excellent type of old Regular soldier should receive recognition for his long years of service. He has been recommended for the B.E.M. by previous commanding officers of this Battalion repeatedly.

The following is a list of citations of immediate and periodical awards made to officers and other ranks of the 7th Battalion in the B.L.A. :—

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE ORDER.

30965 T/LT.-COLONEL (now acting BRIGADIER) JOHN HAROLD OWEN WILSEY.

Lt.-Col. Wilsey has been in command of — D.W.R. since the start of the campaign in Normandy. Except for short periods of rest, the Battalion has been in close contact with the enemy for the whole period, during which the fighting has varied from the heavy battles of early June to active patrolling east of Caen; from the pursuit to the River Seine to the attack on Le Havre, and the recent fighting in Northern Belgium and Southern Holland.

During all this varied fighting the Battalion has always been successful. That these successes were achieved, and with comparatively light losses, was entirely due to Lt.-Col. Wilsey's leadership and efficiency. There is no doubt that his example has been an inspiration to his Battalion, and he has never spared himself so that he has always got the best out of his Battalion.

Lt.-COL. CHARLES DENIS HAMILTON.

At about 0300 hrs. on 4th December, 1944, approximately one battalion of German parachute infantry suddenly attacked — D.W.R. at Haalderen on a narrow front. Owing to the weight of the attack the forward defences were penetrated and approximately a company of infantry reached the centre of the Battalion position, while some reached within 200 yards of Battalion H.Q. Lt.-Col. Hamilton, who was acting C.O. of the Battalion, quickly regained control of the situation. He personally organised two stops near Battalion H.Q. with his only reserves, the carrier platoon, and personnel of Battalion H.Q. It was extremely difficult to find out the exact situation, and confused fighting was going on all over the Battalion area and round Battalion H.Q. between small parties of the D.W.R. and the enemy.

Lt.-Col. Hamilton then ordered the perimeter companies to hold firm, arranged for a counter-attack by the dismounted carrier personnel to eject the enemy from houses around the central cross roads of the position; and another from a flank company to close the gap through which the enemy had penetrated. These arrangements were all successful. The position then was that the enemy were bottled up inside the Battalion area, while any reserves the enemy had were pinned down by heavy and accurate D.F. brought down by artillery, heavy mortar and M.Gs.

As soon as dawn broke, Lt.-Col. Hamilton carried out a further recce with the commander of a company of another unit which had been sent to his assistance; he gave instructions to this company to counter-attack the bulk of the enemy. As soon as this got under way, spandau fire broke out from a house near Battalion H.Q. Lt.-Col. Hamilton immediately returned to organise the destruction of this party, which was soon carried out. This post contained six spandaus.

Within eight hours of the first attack the enemy's very determined attempt to capture the village of Haalderen, as a first step to the destruction of Nijmegen bridge, had been defeated with the loss to him of 50 killed, 110 P.W. and an unknown number of killed and wounded by D.F. outside the Battalion area.

This success at the cost of very light casualties to his own men was very largely due to Lt.-Col. Hamilton's leadership. Throughout a very confused action he had maintained control over the situation, and calmly made his arrangements for the destruction of the enemy. His reces during the night and after first light were carried out in considerable personal danger, and his coolness at all times was an inspiration to his Battalion. It was under his direction that the action was soon brought to a highly successful conclusion.

MILITARY CROSS.

133397 CAPT. S. H. CHASE (R.A.Ch.D.).

On 26th June, 1944, at Fonteney-le-Pesnil, during an attack on St. Nicholas Farm, one company had been held up in an open field by heavy fire from infantry and two or more Panther and Mark IV German tanks. The company withdrew slightly, on orders, to cover of houses and hedges, leaving behind some casualties in the open field. The Rev. S. H. Chase, attached to the Battalion, was forward with the company. In spite of enemy fire, he crawled forward alone into the open field and successfully evacuated a wounded man into the cover of his company. A short while later, in company with one stretcher bearer, he went forward again with a stretcher to bring in any other wounded. He only returned when he had satisfied himself that the remaining casualties were already dead. His devotion to duty and complete disregard for his own safety have been an inspiration to the Battalion.

THE IRON DUKE

247723 Lt. J. LAPPIN.

On 13th July, 1944, this officer was in command of a fighting patrol of six other ranks when contact was made with an enemy platoon in a prepared position near Tessel-Bretteville, Normandy. Led by Lt. Lappin, the patrol attacked the enemy position and killed several men, but was forced to withdraw to some buildings approximately 300 yards away, when the enemy opened up on both flanks with automatic weapons and counter-attacked with two sections. In order to obtain identification his company commander ordered him to attack the enemy position again with the aid of artillery and mortars support. Lt. Lappin personally corrected the registration of the artillery and mortar targets, running forward under fire to observe the shots and returning to give corrections over a telephone installed in the buildings to which he had withdrawn. When the second attack commenced he led his patrol within 20 yards of the artillery concentration and when it lifted rushed over the first line of enemy defences and succeeded in killing five more of the enemy. Again compelled to withdraw owing to superior enemy fire power and counter-attack, he personally covered the withdrawal of his patrol without loss or casualties. His personal courage and leadership were an inspiration to his men and resulted in heavy loss to the enemy.

333686 Lt. W. HORNE.

On 30th October, 1944, this officer's platoon was engaged with the enemy who were holding a portion of the antitank ditch defences north of Telberg, near Roosendaal. The approaches to the enemy defences were over bare open fields and throughout the day efforts to approach nearer to the ditch were subjected to observed enemy small arms, mortar and artillery fire. As part of larger operations, 2nd Lt. Horne's platoon was ordered to gain a footing by night as near the ditch as possible to protect the right flank and keep the enemy engaged. An enemy minefield was suspected as covering the enemy position. That night, in bright moonlight, 2nd Lt. Horne led his platoon across open fields, located and found a passage through the minefield and passed his platoon through to their objective. On arrival near the objective it was found to be held by an enemy post. This was captured. The platoon was subjected to close and heavy fire from at least four M.G.s. and one 2cm. mortar from a dug-in enemy platoon position 30 to 40 yards distant on the ditch defences. 2nd Lt. Horne ordered his platoon to withdraw from such an exposed position to another position a short distance back which was less exposed. Under conditions of bright moonlight, noise and the enemy minefield, this was a hazardous operation. With great courage, patience and skill 2nd Lt. Horne conducted the withdrawal personally, passing through the minefield twice and exposing himself to heavy fire at short range in the moonlight. With the aid of 77 grenades, he covered his sections out and withdrew every man to the new positions. Lt. Horne by his actions showed great courage under fire, skill and patient leadership and achieved with conspicuous success his task of fully engaging the enemy's attention during a difficult and anxious period of the operations.

261636 Lt. K. M. EVANS.

Lt. Evans was in command of 18 platoon, the left forward platoon of "D" Company, at Haalderen 7566 on the night of 3rd-4th December. At 2000 hrs. he led a night patrol which discovered a new enemy position. During his return one man was killed and another wounded on an enemy minefield, but with extreme courage and coolness under enemy fire he found a route back for the rest of his patrol and reached his company H.Q. with valuable information and without further casualties.

At 0300 hours next morning, a strong enemy company group assaulted Lt. Evans' platoon as part of an attack to seize Haalderen and eventually the Nijmegen bridge and two sections were finally overwhelmed. Lt. Evans' platoon H.Q. and one section post continued to deny their position to the enemy throughout the night and finally the Germans gave up all attempts to silence the post. At 0700 hrs. Lt. Evans was joined by a relieving platoon which sealed off the penetration with the result that 110 prisoners were taken inside the Battalion area. When the position was finally cleared, Lt. Evans was found still in a most aggressive spirit with six dead enemy strewn outside his post, but with all his ammunition expended. Lt. Evans' great acts of courage on this night were an inspiring example to his men (the majority of whom had just arrived on draft from the United Kingdom) and who fought off superior numbers long enough to give the Battalion warning of the attack. This officer's successful determination to hold his post at all costs was the principle act in the Battalion's defeat of the enemy attack on Haalderen, the loss of which would most seriously have endangered the Nijmegen bridge.

285989 Lt. W. A. HODGE.

At Haalderen 7566 at 0315 hrs. on 4th December, 1944, an enemy battalion launched an attack on the 7th D.W.R. position with the intention of demolishing the Nijmegen bridge. One company penetrated as far as the centre of the Battalion position and the situation seemed critical. The Commanding Officer ordered Lt. Hodge, who was in temporary command of the carrier platoon, to place a stop of two carrier sections in the centre of the village and, with the remainder of the platoon, to counter-attack another enemy force about 40 strong which was advancing on Battalion headquarters. The situation at this time was most confused with Battalion headquarters cut off from the rest of the Battalion. However, all communications were working and if the Battalion Headquarters could be

safeguarded it seemed possible to launch a counter-attack at dawn. Lt. Hodge immediately set off through the flooded orchard in the darkness to counter-attack a school 150 yards from Battalion headquarters. Little information was available and at least three spandaus were firing from the school. Under the cover of the fire of three Bren guns, Lt. Hodge led his small force of 12 men against the school, planning to throw two '77 grenades to stop the covering fire as he went in with the assault. Both grenades failed to explode, so Lt. Hodge dashed into the school throwing 36 grenades into the first room.

His bold decision resulted in the enemy force being partly wiped out, not without loss to the assault group. The remaining Germans withdrew to another house and defied further attempts at elimination. Lt. Hodge, realising that the information about the school's recapture was vital and also wishing to bring up flamethrowers or an anti-tank gun against the enemy, then crawled 100 yards through the German positions to his Company Commander, who phoned Battalion Headquarters, enabling the counter-attack to be launched at dawn against the main enemy force. Lt. Hodge's personal leadership, outstanding courage and remarkable speed in counter-attacking without any information undoubtedly stopped the German penetration and thus allowed the Commanding Officer to plan two counter-attacks which completely wiped out the enemy forces and ensured the security of the Nijmegen bridge.

95620 MAJOR A. B. M. KAVANAGH.

On 30th October, 1944, this officer's company was engaging the enemy holding a sector of the anti-tank ditch defences on the perimeter of Roosendaal (D.7321). The approaches to the ditch were over bare open ground and throughout the day efforts to close the ditch resulted in heavy casualties from observed fire of small arms, mortar and artillery, and two S.P. tanks which repeatedly shelled the company. Major Kavanagh's company was given the important and difficult task of forcing the ditch soon after darkness to protect the flank of a larger operation later, thus drawing off enemy reserves. The first platoon met an enemy minefield which necessitated a complete change of plan and direction. Major Kavanagh swiftly issued these fresh orders and another platoon led off in another direction. In bright moonlight this platoon, together with Major Kavanagh's command party, advanced across the fields, found a passage through the minefields and arrived on the objective where a pillbox and its garrison on the anti-tank ditch were captured. Because of the urgency and the fact that orders had been given so quickly without detailed reconnaissance, Major Kavanagh went back himself for the rest of the company.

During the consolidation the company was subjected to heavy M.G. fire from close range and ten minutes later by a considerable heavy calibre artillery concentration in which several men were killed and wounded in the open. Due to Major Kavanagh's remarkable calmness and personal courage, the company maintained its position and casualties were successfully evacuated. Orders were then received from Battalion Headquarters that, as the ditch had been forced in strength elsewhere, its task was complete, the company should be withdrawn. This difficult undertaking under close fire and return through an unmarked gap in a minefield was accomplished through Major Kavanagh's ceaseless example and his cool disregard for all enemy fire. Eventually the company returned to its start line, where it was re-organised and took part three hours later in the final storming at 5 a.m. of the inner defences of Roosendaal, in which the company took several prisoners and broke the enemy resistance. All these operations were carried out at short notice because of the necessity to force the town before the enemy reinforcements could arrive. That the two attacks by 7th D.W.R. this night were so successful was in no small measure due to the remarkable tenacity of "D" Company who, though tired after 14 days of ceaseless fighting, were inspired by the patience, leadership, skill in planning and complete disregard of personal safety of Major Kavanagh.

333688 Lt. L. LE CORNU.

2nd Lt. Le Cornu was in command of 13 Platoon, the reserve platoon of "C" Company at Haalderen, when, at 0300 hrs. on 4th December, an enemy company broke into the defences and was advancing towards the centre of the Battalion area. Lt. Le Cornu's post immediately engaged the Boche at 80 yards range with small arms and the attackers scattered, 18 enemy, including the company commander and two officers, being found dead here next morning. The Boche then used bazookas and spandau, which scored direct hits, killing and wounding three of the garrison, in a vain attempt to silence the position. Though by this time 2nd Lt. Le Cornu was cut off he resisted throughout and when two hours later the enemy was driven back from the village 2nd Lt. Le Cornu and his post caused further great casualties. When he was finally relieved, his first thought was to replenish his empty magazines and follow up the enemy, who were finally trapped and 110 taken prisoner. 2nd Lt. Le Cornu's alertness, personal courage and determination to hold his post to the last was an outstanding factor in the smashing defeat of the strong German attempt to penetrate the Nijmegen bridge defences.

The following officers serving with the D.W.R. were awarded the Military Cross while serving with their own regiment, the South Staffordshire Regiment:—

MAJOR G. M. M. SMALLWOOD.

LT. G. E. ELLIS.

DISTINGUISHED CONDUCT MEDAL.

14661145 Pte. C. T. BAKER.

At Haalderen 7566 at 0315 hrs., 4th December, 1944, the enemy launched a full scale attack on the positions of 7th D.W.R. in an attempt to secure the Nijmegen bridge. The enemy companies were first sighted and engaged by a Bren gun team of three men. Their fire drew the fire of at least four spandaus and one man was killed immediately. The enemy then attacked the post with grenades and cup dischargers and isolated it from the rest of the platoon. Pte. Baker was one of the two remaining soldiers. Incensed by the death of his comrade, Pte. Baker took charge, held his fire so his exact location would not be pin-pointed in the darkness. When the enemy section was within five to ten yards of the position, he opened fire and completely wiped out the enemy force, killing six Germans. He then engaged the remainder of the enemy battalion which had over-run other posts and was advancing along the road and caused further considerable casualties, only ceasing fire when his ammunition was completely exhausted. The enemy then attempted to search for the post, but the men went to ground in the ruins of a house until a counter-attack cut off the enemy who had penetrated deeply into the Battalion position. From then onwards they blocked the road and by noises and shouts prevented the enemy withdrawing. When the enemy force was finally rounded up, Pte. Baker and his comrade crawled from their weapon pit still carrying their gun and an armful of empty magazines.

Pte. Baker's great heroism and initiative when cut off and great determination to deny his post until the last not only resulted in the death of many Germans, but was one of the outstanding factors in the destruction of the enemy attempt on the Nijmegen bridge. The fact that Pte. Baker is only 19 years old makes his feat more remarkable.

4611795 Sgt. H. SIMPSON.

During a strong enemy attack on Haalderen 7566 on 4th December, Sgt. Simpson was in command of a section of carriers which was ordered to place a stop across a line of buildings to halt the enemy house clearing operations. That this difficult mission was soon completed in the darkness was due to Sgt. Simpson's great leadership. Shortly afterwards Sgt. Simpson was told to clear the enemy from a school from which Battalion H.Q. was being threatened. Under the cover of Bren fire, this N.C.O. led three riflemen immediately towards the door of the school in face of concentrated fire of six spandaus. Sgt. Simpson was seriously wounded in the leg and fell out, in spite of great pain, he remained on the ground directing the assault, shouting encouragement and refused to be taken to safety until his men, fired by his great example, rushed the door and forced the Boche garrison of 14 men to surrender. This N.C.O.'s decision to assault a greatly superior force and the inspiration he gave his men when wounded saved Battalion H.Q. from encirclement, with the eventual result that a counter-attack was planned which entirely eliminated the enemy force.

MILITARY MEDAL.

5049828 Sgt. L. HIGGS.

In October, 1944, on the Dutch-Belgian frontier north of Poppel, this N.C.O.'s company was holding a defensive position in a thickly wooded country in very close contact with the enemy to the north and east. On 17th October orders were given for identifications to be obtained on this front. In consequence, Sgt. Higgs was detailed as leader of a fighting patrol to obtain these identifications. The enemy from his position in the thick woods had close and excellent observation of our movements. Sgt. Higgs with great skill led his patrol into the woods and immediately by surprise captured two sentries. The enemy reacted quickly and attempted to cut off the fighting patrol, but Sgt. Higgs withdrew his patrol with the prisoners without loss. A further patrol was necessary to penetrate deeper into the woods in conjunction with a platoon attack on the right. Sgt. Higgs immediately volunteered for this, knowing the way in. He re-entered the woods and by skilful scoutcraft captured two more prisoners. He continued deeper into the woods and located the enemy platoon position, which was attacked. Once again he was attacked by the enemy who tried to cut off his patrol. Five enemy were killed and Sgt. Higgs without loss again and with his two prisoners succeeded in withdrawing to his company area. The great personal courage of the N.C.O. and his excellent handling of his patrol accounted for five enemy killed and four prisoners without loss to his patrol. The information he obtained was of great value for identification purposes and also for the later success of a platoon attack on the enemy post in the depths of the forest.

1078129 L/Cpl. W. L. HAWKINS.

At Haalderen 7566 at 0300 hrs. on 4th December, 1944, the Germans launched a strong attack on the 7th D.W.R. positions with the intention of demolishing the Nijmegen bridge. Two enemy companies penetrated the outer defences and were advancing across the flank of 13 Platoon "C" Company which opened fire and caused considerable casualties. The Germans then detached a force to silence the platoon which was attacked by the fire of bazookas, spandaus, grenades and light mortars. After a number of men had been killed and wounded, L/Cpl. Hawkins volunteered to crawl out of the

back of the house which the platoon was occupying and counter-attack with his 2in. mortar. Although the ground around was completely open and mostly under flood, L/Cpl. Hawkins worked his way around the house until he could see the Germans, who were firing at the house from a distance of 50 yards. L/Cpl. Hawkins fired his mortar at low angle at point blank range and with his first shot silenced one spandau. When he had fired all the ammunition he could carry, 12 rounds, L/Cpl. Hawkins withdrew and the enemy ceased their fire. The brilliant stand of his platoon completely demoralised the enemy, 110 of whom were taken prisoner within 100 yards of the platoon. It was only through this newly appointed junior N.C.O.'s initiative and supreme courage in taking on what seemed a suicide task that the platoon was able to continue its amazing resistance in face of greatly superior numbers.

14407560 L/CPL. J. SIMPSON.

On 13th July, 1944, this N.C.O., who is only 19 years of age, was a member of a fighting patrol of six men commanded by No. 247723 Lt. J. Lappin. During two attacks on an enemy platoon in prepared positions near Tessel—Bretteville, Normandy, this N.C.O. showed exemplary courage and leadership and personally assisted Lt. Lappin to cover the withdrawal of the patrol after the attack without loss or casualties. His personal courage, coolness and leadership were an inspiration to the other members of the patrol. Twelve of the enemy were killed during the operation.

4624378 PTE. A. K. KALAHAR.

On 28th September, 1944, during an attack south of the Depot de Mendicite 9710, the platoon in which Pte. Kalahar was a No. 1 Bren gunner was given orders to work round the right flank of a group strongly held farmhouse in order to take up position as fire platoon for an attack by the remainder of the company which was under heavy fire from front and flank. On the company approaching its allotted fire position the section to which Pte. Kalahar belonged found it necessary because of the enemy fire to be supported on to its fire position by the Bren. This support drew concentrated fire on to Pte. Kalahar. Without orders, he moved, still under fire, to an alternative position. During this move he was knocked from his gun by a bullet wound in his shoulder. He crawled back to his gun, got into position and continued to fire until the remainder of his section and platoon were in position. Throughout this period Pte. Kalahar was under fire and he refused to leave his post until, much later, he was given a direct order by his platoon commander to leave his gun.

Pte. Kalahar's behaviour, apart from being an example of bravery and gallantry, was instrumental in the successful accomplishment of his platoon's task.

4751116 PTE. P. STIMSON.

This soldier was a member of 13 Platoon, the reserve platoon of "C" Company, when an enemy company broke into the Battalion defences at 0300 hours on 4th December. The first waves were scattered and almost wiped out by Stimson's post, due to his skilful handling of his L.M.G. From then onwards until 0900 hrs. his house was under constant enemy spandau and bazooka fire and half the garrison of nine were killed or wounded. At about 0500 hrs. Pte. Stimson was wounded in the leg, but although in great pain continued to fire his gun, causing further great enemy casualties. Not until the action was over and 18 enemy dead counted within 80 yards of Stimson's gun did this soldier inform his platoon commander of his wound. He was later evacuated. Pte. Stimson was determined to fire his gun until the last and his great fortitude and skill was a symbol of defiance of this small garrison which ultimately led to the complete overthrow of the enemy attack.

1506652 L/CP. M. BELL.

At Haalderen 7566 on the night 3rd-4th December this N.C.O. was a member of a reconnaissance patrol which was bringing back valuable information about a German position. One man was killed and another wounded on a mine near the enemy position and the Germans opened fire. After making sure no identity had been left on the dead man, L/Cpl. Bell and his patrol commander crawled back through the minefield under fire to deliver their information. Later, on 4th December, L/Cpl. Bell's courage was further in evidence when a strong enemy attack, designed to destroy the Nijmegen bridge, developed on his platoon position to which he had returned. Part of L/Cpl. Bell's section was overwhelmed by weight of numbers and L/Cpl. Bell was ordered to withdraw to a new position on the flank where more damage could be inflicted on the enemy. This change of position was hotly contested by the enemy but L/Cpl. Bell alone covered the withdrawal. When the men reached their position, L/Cpl. Bell's own withdrawal was followed by the Germans. As he reached his new position, L/Cpl. Bell turned and shot the leading German dead at point blank range. L/Cpl. Bell and his men then kept up a determined fire all night against the Germans who finally gave up all attempts to silence the post.

This N.C.O.'s determination to defend his post to the last was a great factor in the demoralisation of the enemy who were crushingly defeated and his personal courage was all the more remarkable as it was his first time in action.

THE IRON DUKE

4612925 Pte. A. L. PEACH.

On 18th June, 1944, Pte. Peach, whilst No. 1 Bren gunner during the assault on Pt. 102, was in a section which came under heavy mortar fire prior to and during the final assault. The Bren gun was destroyed whilst in action and Pte. Peach was wounded. The second-in-command section was killed at the time. Pte. Peach then assumed command of the section and, collecting strays of the platoon on the way, organised the mopping up and re-organisation with skill and determination in spite of his wound. His courage and devotion to duty were a great factor in securing the final objective and re-organising his platoon. He would not leave his group until ordered to return to the Regimental aid post for attention.

3527046 L/Cpl. E. W. DODD.

On 26th June, 1944, an enemy Mk. IV tank penetrated "C" Company position (sheet 37/16 S.E.25000—879674) which was astride a sunken road. The enemy tank opened fire with its machine guns, inflicting casualties on men of the company. No. 3527046 L/Cpl. E. W. Dodd, regardless of the enemy fire, dashed forward to an unmanned Piat lying beside the road and *not* dug in, and engaged the tank at a range of 80 yards. His first three bombs missed but his second three struck the tank and disabled it. It was then abandoned by its crew. Throughout this engagement L/Cpl. Dodd showed complete disregard for his own safety whilst under very heavy machine gun fire from the tank.

4614266 L/Cpl. J. GUEST.

At Haalderen 7566 on 4th December this N.C.O. was in command of three men in a house strong-point cut off during a strong enemy attack on the Battalion position. The enemy force, approximately 25 strong, engaged him with small arms and spandaus and continually called on him to surrender for 2½ hours, but his only answer was more fire. This brave garrison held out until counter-attack relieved them. Without orders, he then led his party in search of Germans and located them three houses away. The men strongly attacked these Huns one of whom surrendered. As several men had been killed on the other side of the house attempting to force an entry, L/Cpl. Guest determined to make the enemy give up. He stood up in full view of the post and called for their surrender. They refused. Thinking they expected to be shot on surrender, L/Cpl. Guest lay down his arms and walked unarmed towards the house, demanding the surrender, which was accepted and ten men were taken prisoner. L/Cpl. Guest's devotion to duty kept open a vital line to Battalion H.Q. by which a counter-attack was ordered, completely overthrowing the enemy and his coolness in encouraging a surrender probably saved further bloodshed of his comrades.

Pte. A. D. PICKSTONE

(awarded while serving with his own Regiment, The South Staffordshire Regiment).

MENTIONS IN DESPACHES.

MAJOR A. B. M. KAVANAGH, M.C.
CAPT. A. V. SOMERVILLE, R.A.M.C.
LT. G. F. DRIVER

SGT. H. HIGGINBOTTOM
L/CPL. J. ARMITAGE
PTE. J. C. T. SMITH

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF'S CERTIFICATE (Gallantry).

MAJOR C. H. HILL
LT. R. H. SMITH
C.S.M. J. ROBINSON

PTE. K. MEEHAM
SGT. W. PARKIN
SGT. K. A. MYNERS

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF'S CERTIFICATE (Good Service).

C.S.M. W. STONE

SGT. A. G. TREEMER

[Other awards appear on pages 64 and 104.]

Our Contemporaries.

We have to acknowledge with thanks the following regimental magazines:—*The Dragon* (Jan., Feb., March, April), *The Snapper* (Jan., Feb., March, April), *The St. George's Gazette* (Dec., Jan., Feb., March), *The Suffolk Regimental Gazette* (Feb., April), *The Lion & The Rose* (Nov., Feb.), *The Die Hards* (Dec.), *The Sapper* (Jan., Feb., March, April), *The Royal Army Ordnance Gazette* (Jan, Feb., March, April), *Our Empire* (Jan., Feb., March, April).

OLD COMRADES' ASSOCIATIONS.

The following is a summary of the cases assisted during the period 1st July, 1944, to mid-April, 1945:—

Fund.	No. of Cases.	Amount Disbursed.
Old Comrades' Association	22	£ s. d. 48 10 6
— Battalion Charitable Fund	10	33 0 0
Regimental Association Fund	16	50 0 0
Mitchell Trust Fund	1	13 0 0
Total		£144 10 6

10th (SERVICE) BATTALION.

While there are bright bits of news to record since our last notes were published there are also some distressing items represented by the death of a number of our members—Lt. Fred Dyson (chairman of the Huddersfield Branch of the O.C.A.), Mr. Norman Moorhouse (a stalwart from Meltham), C.S.M. Frank Gilleard (Keighley) and Sgt. G. E. Smithams (Keighley)—that great rissole expert of the last war. We shall remember them all with affection because they were fine men and great comrades.

All the officers of the O.C.A. remain at their posts, and there is a credit balance of over £21 in hand besides an interest free loan of £50 to the Treasury. So we are all set for a resumption of activity when V-Day arrives—or, perhaps, when the food situation improves and more convenient transport is available to members to attend our re-unions.

To show their appreciation of the generosity of Major W. N. Town (our chairman)—and more to indicate our regard for him—those of our members who have attended war-time annual meetings of the Committee have presented him with a dressing gown (as near as makes no difference in the Regimental colours) as a practical expression of our gratitude for all he has done for the O.C.A. R.Q.M.S. Frank Stephenson (vice-chairman) presided over the function and everybody present had a happy time.

Other personal items of interest to the O.C.A. are that Lt. G. C. Sugden (Bishopthorpe, York) has been awarded the M.B.E. for his services in the Home Guard; Mr. E. Taylor (Sowerby Bridge) has been elected chairman of the Halifax Branch of the O.C.A.; Mr. Arthur Lund (Bradford) has returned from his C.D. post in Scotland to become head of the C.D. Training School, North-East Region, Leeds; and Major John A. Williams, son of our former Padre (Canon T. J. Williams, Vicar of Otley), has been invalided out of the Army after four years' service with the "Dukes" in Burma and India, and has married Miss Kathleen Mary Gray of Bankfoot, Bradford; where Canon Williams was formerly Vicar.

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

Our numbers obviously diminish though the old Volunteer spirit still lives, probably revived in the ranks of the modern Home Guard. The superb success of boys out yonder stimulated us into holding a re-union after a lapse of five years. Though only 17 of us mustered to renew a 45-year-old acquaintanceship, which strengthens as the years go by, we ventured to rally to the Royal Hotel, Brighouse, in January last. The following answered the roll:—A. Parkin (chairman), W. Quarmby, J. Kirk, J. Whiteley, H. North, J. Holmes, J. W. Brook, C. Pownall, D. Preston, L. Taylor, F. Sykes, E. Turner, J. Bailey, J. Brook, H. Tweed, F. Oldfield and E. M. Ward (hon. secretary, 16 Forrest Avenue, Edgerton, Huddersfield). Our guests were the Mayor of Brighouse, Alderman V. F. Bottomley, and H. Wood, Esq. Letters regretting absence due to illness, previous engagements or distance were read from the President, Major W. Roper (Skipton), General R. E. Sugden, Col. R. R. Mellor, Col. W. Denning, Col. K. Sykes, Major Chambers, Capt. J. W. Whittaker, T. Levy, Esq., M.P., J. W. Crossley, W. K. Alderson, H. Wordsworth, J. Shaw and F. North.

The Secretary in his report stated that, in spite of the war causing the abandonment of the social side of the Association's activities for five years, benevolence had been maintained in spite of reduced income, due to non-holding of re-unions. Again the Executive had dipped generously into their own pockets.

Since our last re-union the loss by death is deplored of E. Tolson, M.B.E., Thomas Summerson, George Hinchcliffe, Jim Schofield and Allen Brook (*vide* IRON DUKE February, 1943). Thus the unit thins as time marches relentlessly on. As to finance, a balance of upwards of £32, the highest in the unit's history, was deemed most satisfactory. The Manager of the Royal Hotel, G. Phillips, Esq., was thanked for his kindness in granting us such good accommodation, as well as the provision of an exceedingly good war-time dinner.

At the subsequent "smoker" the toasts of the King, the Regiment and the Borough of Brighouse were duly honoured. Billy Sinda, a local comedian, provided mirth and song, but it was our old colleague, Steven North, who roused us with the memories of long ago with songs, maybe a bit evergreen, but typical of those Transvaal war days long since past. H. Wardingly, son of our late comrade, Tom Wardingley, was at the piano.

We send our sincerest wishes to Dukes at present keeping the old flag flying the wide world over, with a fervent hope that their job will now soon end and home life once again be resumed.

E. M. W.

With an Armoured Spearhead over the Rhine.

Many people must wonder what it is like when they read or hear of an armoured break through. Now we are fighting in Germany, it becomes more than a question.

When we fought in France, Belgium and Holland, people at home would open their newspapers to see photographs of troops and tanks decked out with flowers, men being mobbed and cheered wildly by a delirious crowd of people with a newly-found freedom, flags flying from every building—in fact almost a field day, as troops moved ever forward through occupied Europe.

When our armour entered a village it received the exact intelligence of the enemy moves, the strength, the dispositions and many other details. The F.F.I. White Brigade and other underground movements helped our troops by acts of sabotage, open resistance and in many other ways. But now, when one hears of an armoured break through, one must remember these aids are denied our men.

Being in the lead of an armoured regiment from the break through on the Rhine, we moved rapidly to the forward troops on the ground. These were the air-borne troops who had done such wonderful work in securing a bridgehead for us to manoeuvre in.

It was about 3 o'clock in the afternoon when we began edging forward; our route was a main road up which two troops were to advance, while one troop went along a road running parallel, to the left, I was leading tank on the left route. This was merely a track running through pine woods and we could not move tactically, for there was no leaving the track.

The speed of our advance was to be the speed of the troops on the road, so we advanced, meeting no opposition, yet fearful that every track junction might conceal an anti-tank weapon.

Presently we came upon some farms, and there we were able to use the fields and open ground. As we drew level with the farmhouse, some civilians poked their heads out of the windows; we motioned them forward, and one of them came slowly up to the tank carrying a white cloth in his hand.

Before the advance had begun, each commander had been given printed instructions in German for civilians to read; these instructions bade them stay indoors 48 hours after Allied troops had entered the area. I gave this German a leaflet to read, and never before have I seen such fear in any man. He could not hold the paper still and certainly could not understand it because he was just blind with sheer panic; all I could get out of him was something about his being a Pole.

This I found ever after to be the defence they adopted, they were either Poles, Russians, Czechs or so on—so low and degraded were this race of men they had sunk to denying their birthright. By this time we had advanced about eight miles and no enemy had been encountered. Becoming bolder, we began moving quicker, at times ahead of the centre line, keeping in touch with the advance by wireless. About 6 o'clock the main advance reached the first obstacle, a stream with the bridge blown.

The track we were on led to a bridge over the same stream we were told and within ten minutes we were beside it. It was a wooden bridge, and on the other side was open country for about a mile, then woods again, ideal for defence. I reported our position on the wireless and was greeted with a salvo of H.E. shells while doing so, about six dropping all around us, but fortunately no damage was done.

The Commander wanted to know if the bridge would take tanks. I reported back that it did not appear strong enough, saying a three-ton truck was about all it would bear. I got down to inspect the bridge better and another three shells dropped unpleasantly close. The inspection confirmed my opinion; however, the Commander sent over an expert to decide, and he confirmed what I had already reported. By this time it was dark, and we were not in a very comfortable position; eventually a light troop came forward and took over the bridge and we pulled out to the main column who were halted just short of the blown bridge on the main road. This was 11 o'clock. After filling up with petrol, oil, water and other necessary requirements, we curled up by the tank for a few hours until reveille at 3.30 early morning. This morning we were to be forward troop on the main road. As is our policy, another tank took lead and I became second tank in the spearhead.

During the night the R.E.s. had repaired the bridge and by first light we were off. The road was a good concrete one, fairly wooded on both sides. The visibility was poor and the mist hung low; we began by creeping forward, but "Push on" came over the air like some flay on a donkey's back, so we quickened up the pace.

The next objective was a small town; we went along, seeing nothing of the enemy. Signs of hurried departure were very evident; here and there was a vehicle abandoned. In the centre of the road a cycle lay with a scattered box of rations which must have fallen from the top of a vehicle as it speeded out of range of our advance. Hearts seem to stop their beating as through the mist an 88 m.m. was seen, but it proved to be an abandoned one with five or more beside it; all were in good working order. There were trenches by the side of the road, cleverly sited, well dug and revetted, all showing signs of a rapid departure.

Each house we passed had its white flags hanging from its windows; they all seemed empty, as indeed they were. The people were in the air raid shelters or in the woods. Bang! Out of the woods ahead came a blinding flash as the leading tank was hit. Immediately the tank swung to the left and took to the field on the left; this was lower than the road and more shots followed, but it was not hit again. As by that time I was giving aid with my guns, after a couple of H.E.s. had been sent over into the direction of the firing, a white flag appeared; soon it began to move forward, followed by about eight grey-clad figures, hands held high. The leading tank had been damaged by a bazooka that had hit it, but no one was hurt.

From the prisoners we learnt that the small town ahead was clear; they had been left to delay us. The usual troops who stay to delay us are the S.S. men, the fanatics, who do take some shifting. These were the ordinary Wehrmacht troops.

The prisoners were passed back and we were urged to "get going" again. We entered the town and though we saw and shot up some of the Hun, we met no opposition. It was here that we released many British and American prisoners of war, many of whom were wounded. I cannot tell of their reactions because we had to hold the northern outskirts of the town. Another squadron had to take up the spearhead of the advance. As we probed through the village we passed road blocks that were not in position, blockhouses that were not manned, empty trenches and fire pits. Reaching the outskirts, we saw some transport stuck on the roadside. The Hun was milling around with spades, crowbars, etc., trying to get it on the move, and one vehicle was trying to pull out another. A well-directed H.E. stopped all work on that job, running figures were toppled over by Browning fire and no one escaped that ditching.

We took up positions in the shade of the houses and kept up our observations of the road. Soon shelling began and we had to keep our own heads down in the tanks. As the other squadrons came through and continued to advance, the shelling ceased and we began to think of a cup of tea.

I went into a house and, imagine my surprise at finding two Germans sitting in the back of the house, waiting to surrender; one was a colonel with a wound in the back. We soon got rid of them and shortly after we were back in the column again.

The time was now mid-day. The leading elements were forging ahead to the next objective, a town about the size of Halifax. The only role we played the rest of the day was doing odd jobs on the flanks. The town was reached and by-passed that day and by evening another village north of the town was reached. Orders came through again to take lead and move into a village further north that night.

The time now was 8 o'clock. We began the advance in the dark, along tracks skirting the big town; we crossed a stream by means of a cradle carried on special tanks; we had reached the first village when the commander stopped us, so we pulled into a field on the left of the road. The move was off, until first light in the morning.

No supplies were anticipated, so we were soon asleep. The time was just after midnight. At 2.30 the petrol, oil and food came up; the food, fresh rations, had to be shared out between four tanks. Imagine the job on a dark night, drizzling with rain, sharing the sugar, the tea, raisins, flour, raw meat and various tins of food, a tin of sticky jam between four tanks, too. However, by 4.30 we were on the move again; no time for a meal, not even time for a cup of tea.

For days we live on cups of tea, if we have the time to make it. The meat is usually thrown away as it is impossible to cook it when we are on the move; and so on it goes, with little chance of eating, short snatches of sleep, and no washing, shoving one's neck out until it gets broken. The news says, "An Armoured Spearhead has advanced Thirty Miles."

F. S. S.

Reviews.

SUPERIORITY OF FIRE. A Short History of Rifles and Machine Guns. By Major C. H. B. Pridham, The Duke of Wellington's Regiment, late Officer Instructor, School of Musketry, Hythe (Hutchinson's Scientific and Technical Publications; price 10/6).—In number 49, June, 1941, of THE IRON DUKE, on page 113, we reviewed two earlier publications of Major Pridham's, namely—"Lewis Gun Mechanism Made Easy" and "Defence Against Dive-Bombers and Low-Flying Enemy Aircraft" (sales 125,000 copies). These were technical handbooks of great value to the infantryman, and were especially welcomed by the Home Guard; whilst they had very good sales, running into a number of editions. This new book by Major Pridham is not only of value to the soldier, but is of great interest to the general public; and we expect that it will have a good reception, though with the present paper shortage only a limited edition has been printed so far.

For a war publication it is remarkably well got up. Good clear print, superior paper, and excellently reproduced illustrations. The book is sponsored by a Manchester firm, makers of machine-gun belts. Major Pridham covers a lot of ground. He traces superiority of fire from David's defeat of Goliath, through the English bowmen at Crecy, on to Omdurman, Mons, and the Battle of Britain of this war. In separate chapters he describes the earliest military firearms, quick-firing weapons, and the first fully automatic machine-gun, the Maxim. A point many readers may not have realised before is that it was the parsimony of the Government of the day which refused to provide sufficient numbers of machine-guns after the Russo-Japanese war of 1904-5 had proved their significance for future wars. This led to a critical situation for Britain that could only be saved by intensified musketry training, and making riflemen do the work of machine-guns—a desperate measure possible only to men of our Regular Army. Few readers still know the name of the man who was mainly responsible for this remarkable development of rifle-fire, the late Brigadier-General N. R. McMahon, D.S.O., of the Royal Fusiliers.

The author gives a good deal of space to the development of machine-guns in the 1914-18 war, with lessons learnt from it. He continues with details of automatic weapons of many kinds, including those used in aircraft; and closes the book with a final chapter entitled "Lessons of History."

In this chapter the author quotes from a recent American publication, "For Permanent Victory." In a covering letter, accompanying a presentation copy of his work, Major Pridham writes:—"The authors of this book suggest that nothing except Providence has saved their country. America, they claim, unaided by any ally (since none is mentioned) had defeated Germany in the First World War, saying:—'It is interesting to note that the Germans, at the beginning of their attack in 1914, had on hand 50,000 machine-guns. We had 1,100. It was apparent that we, the unprepared, unarmy (American) nation had girded ourselves and managed to defeat a great Germany army. We had won the war against Germany by offensive action on the western front.' This extravagant claim appears to have been accepted generally in America throughout the period between the two world wars. No mention is made of Britain, of her immense sacrifices during the 52 months of war in 1914-18, or of the fact that American troops never came into action against Germany—and then on a single front only—until the last few months before the Armistice. With this proof before us of what Americans have claimed with regard to World War I, we can only wonder what sort of pretensions they will make after World War II is won.

"This is the result of our neglect to tell the world about British achievements. Britain's case is habitually under-stated, or left untold. Here is propaganda in reverse! Unless a big effort is made to counteract this, it can only have a deleterious effect on British prestige. This grave error should not be made again with regard to World War II, and this book is an endeavour to correct it."

Major Pridham writes in the easy, fluent style that distinguishes his other writings with which our readers have become acquainted in *THE IRON DUKE*. On pages 66 and 67 the 2nd Battalion of the Regiment (the author's old Battalion) are mentioned in connection with their superb musketry during the retreat from Mons.

EDITOR.

INCOME TAX FOR H.M. FORCES AND DEMOBILIZED PERSONNEL. By Capt. G. B. Burr (Jordan & Sons, Ltd., London; price 2/-).—The book, the 1944-45 edition, deals fully with the special problems of the Forces in relation to income tax. The assessment of income is very fully dealt with. There are separate chapters dealing with how tax is deducted from pay, and adjustments made, and reliefs obtained. A new chapter in this edition deals with the points which arise on demobilization, including important new concessions. Practical examples are given throughout, with explanations of technical terms. Altogether a useful handbook for reference.

EDITOR.

Personalia.

We offer our heartiest congratulations to the following retired officers on their birthdays, as follows:—

Colonel A. Curran, 92 on 7th May, 1945.

Colonel B. St. J. le Marchant, 86 on 11th February, 1945.

Colonel E. G. Harrison, C.B., D.S.O., 82 on 11th May, 1945.

We also offer our heartiest congratulations to Lt.-General Sir Alexander Christison, K.B.E., C.B., M.C., on the award of the D.S.O. in April last, and to Lt.-Col. K. G. Exham on the award of the D.S.O., also to Brigadier V. C. Green on the award of the C.B.E. on 10th April. Also to all those recipients of decorations whose names appear on pages 93 to 100.

The following births have been announced:—

RIVETT-CARNAC.—On 8th December, 1944, at Crevenagh Nursing Home, Halifax, to Winifred (née Eglin), wife of Major J. T. Rivett-Carnac, The Duke of Wellington's Regiment, a son, John Clive.

FARRER.—On 13th March, 1945, at Craigie Nursing Home, Dundee, to Sheila (née Robertson), wife of Capt. Raymond A. H. Farrer, The Duke of Wellington's Regiment (B.L.A.)—a daughter (Elizabeth Ann).

GREEN.—On 15th November, 1944, at the Willows Maternity Home, Bramley, to Nell, wife of Capt. P. D. Green, The Duke of Wellington's Regiment—a son.

WADSWORTH.—On 14th March, 1945, at Kingston-on-Thames, to the wife of Major B. W. Wadsworth, The Duke of Wellington's Regiment (S.E.A.C.)—a daughter, Alison.

GEDDES.—On 6th April, 1945, at Rolvendon, to the wife of Capt. the Hon. John Geddes, The Duke of Wellington's Regiment (S.E.A.C.)—a son, Hugh John Reay.

KNIGHT.—On 19th April, 1945, at Elmhurst Nursing Home, Bingley, to Gwen (née Parker), wife of Major J. P. Knight, The Duke of Wellington's Regiment—a son.

COUSENS : ROBINSON.—The marriage took place on 18th November, 1944, at the Cathedral Church of All Saints', Khartoum, of Lt.-Col. Patrick Godfrey Llewellyn Cousens, The Duke of Wellington's Regiment and Sudan Defence Force, third son of the late Col. R. B. Cousens, D.S.O., and of Mrs. Cousens of Edinburgh, and Joan Rosamond Hay, younger daughter of the late Hugh Hay Robinson and of Mrs. Hay Robinson of Eastbourne. A photograph appears opposite page 85.

BUTTERFIELD : HULTON.—The marriage of Capt. John Edward Vincent Butterfield, only son of Lt.-Col. E. Butterfield, D.S.O., and Mrs. Butterfield, Byways, Fleet, Hants, to Barbara Joan Hulton (Junior Commander A.T.S.), only daughter of Sir Roger and the Honble. Lady Hulton of Hulton Park, Bolton, and Lyndhurst, Farington, Lancs., took place at St. Ambrose Church, Leyland, at 11.15 a.m. on 15th February, 1945. Major A. D. Firth was best man, and Capts. Savory and Simmonds also attended. All three officers have recently returned from Burma.

LAING : CROCKER.—On 5th April, 1945, at St. James's, Piccadilly, London, Major George Laing, M.B.E., The Duke of Wellington's Regiment, elder son of Air Vice-Marshal Sir George Laing, K.C.B., C.B.E., and Lady Laing, The Avenue, Andover, Hants, to Kirsten Elizabeth Crocker, V.A.D., R.N., eldest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. C. W. Crocker, Florence Road, Brighton, Sussex.

LAWTON : POGSON.—On 2nd May, 1945, at St. James's Church, Slaithwaite, by the Rev. J. R. Sykes and the Rev. J. P. Makeham, William Tyas Lawton, Captain, The Duke of Wellington's Regiment, only son of Major and Mrs. Norman Tyas Lawton, of Claremont, Holmfirth, to Joan, only daughter of Major and Mrs. William Cecil Pogson, of Hill Crest, Slaithwaite, Yorks.

The engagement is announced from Burma between Captain Anders Frank Sven Westman, The Duke of Wellington's Regiment, son of Mr. and Mrs. Ernest S. W. Westman, of Dannemora, Kenley, Surrey, and Gillian Mary (Jill) Davison, V.A.D., daughter of the late Captain J. F. Davison, M.C., and of Mrs. Davison, of 88 Holland Park, W.11.

On page 94 we record the award of the B.E.M. to L/Cpl. Jackman, a reward for 23 years' unbroken service. Cpl. Jackman, who is serving in the C.M.T., is batman to Lt.-Col. B. W. Webb-Carter, and joined the 1st Battalion a week before the latter.

In a letter forwarding his subscription for THE IRON DUKE, Driver A. E. Garner, serving with the Y.M.C.A. in Italy, writes:—"I am an old 'Duke,' having served in the 1st and 2nd Battalions from 1922 to 1929. I have visited the Battalion in Italy several times lately and am very pleased to see and know that they are carrying on the traditions of the Regiment in a grand way." He forwarded some snapshots, one of which appears opposite page 77. L/Cpl. Jackman, mentioned in the previous paragraph, appears in this photograph.

Lt.-Colonel B. W. Webb-Carter in a letter last March from Italy writes:—"We had an interesting visitor last evening—Pte. Norman of No. 2 Commando. He is the son of Drum-Major Norman, late of the 76th, and nephew of C/Sgt. Tom Norman, who was orderly room sergeant of the 33rd from 1919 to 1938. I remember him as a boy at Ahmednagar in 1930, which makes me feel very old. He was with the — Battalion through the Burma show and subsequently joined the Commandos. No. 2 is, of course, the Commando which poor 'Morny' belonged to."

We have received the following letter from Major R. G. Collins, serving on the British Army Staff S.D. Branch (Air) at Workington:—

1703 K Street, N.W.,
Washington, D.C.,
17th April, 1945.

Dear Colonel,

I have just received the February number of THE IRON DUKE, and I thought I would write and say how good it is to know that it faithfully finds one, however remote the location. Although I have been "airborne" (more accurately "chairborne") since September, 1941, I don't think I have missed getting a single number of THE IRON DUKE, and it is worth a month's leave each time!

I have very little news of anyone in the Regiment, having been in Washington since September

last year. I have an interesting job, being the only parachutist on the staff out here; there is a lot of development going on in airborne matters and one is meant to keep the War Office abreast of it, and conversely to let the Americans know all that is going on at home.

Being deaf, they would not let me stay in a parachute unit, but I was sent out by the D. of Air to report to him on the airborne invasion of Sicily, and stood on the air-strip talking to Johnny Lane (Major J. H. S. Lane) until they took off. Johnny was second-in-command of his parachute battalion. He was just the same as ever—very red and blonde and fat, and suffering (as ever) from dobeey-itch! He was dropped on the wrong side of Mount Etna and I understand he and his "stick" of men were at large for eight days before getting surprised by a Boche patrol. I wrote to his mother about it and she had heard from him, he was in an Oflag in Germany. Johnny and I joined the 1st Battalion D.W.R. by the same train and went out to India to the 2nd Battalion in the same ship, and he joined the parachutists just after I did. The only other Dukes officers that I know of who joined the parachutists were Dick Ince and poor Geoff. Rothery who was killed in North Africa.

On "D" Day I jumped into Normandy with our 13th Parachute Battalion by the indulgence of Generals Browning and Gale, and had a very interesting time. I was merely "spectating" for about a week, and then they gave me a company to command, and about a week after that I got wounded and evacuated. Bobby Bray was the G.I. of our A/B Division and got a very good D.S.O. He was badly shaken up landing in a glider and had quite a time getting to Divisional H.Q., but he "made it" and, as Sgt. Swift reports of Roy Exham, he was "just as he used to be when he was adjutant of the—Battalion in India."

I met "Morny" one day just before he joined the Commandos. It is a gem of a story against myself. I was in mufti in Hatchard's Bookshop in Piccadilly, ordering some books to be sent to Halifax. As I said "Halifax," I added something about the bleakness of that town, and a man laughed; I turned and saw he was dressed in the Dukes uniform and asked him what Battalion. How long had he been in West Africa? Was he a Regular?—Yes. Well, damn it, I ought to know you. What's your name?—Wellington! This is really true. We never served together, but in 1930 Pat Cousens and I played tennis at Queen's against him and one Russel-Roberts in the Public Schools tournament—rather odd that Pat and he and I who all ended up in the Dukes, should have been drawn together that day. "Morny," of course, had no moustache then—anyway, I didn't recognise him in the shop! Then, of course, we said let's go and have a drink, and both in one breath said—Yes, but I must go the bank first!

Do you send THE IRON DUKE to Rem Thackeray's widow? I think I must be one of the very few of the Regiment who met her. She is a most charming person, and I'm sure she would love to get the I.D.

I met Peter Price, Lt.-Col. Owen Price's son, a few months ago at Kansas City, Missouri. He is on the staff of the British Consul there, and we had dinner and a long talk together over the Dukes.

I hope you will not mind this somewhat scrappy effusion—some of it may tie up with other scraps you probably get.

I hesitate to broach this, but being here in America it occurred to me that I might possibly be able to do some shopping on behalf of units; I know one officer here who sent 30 pipes to his Battalion in Burma. I feel it is likely to be a complicated undertaking which may easily lead to disappointment, and I don't know how much longer I shall remain, but if you think I could do anything like that I would be delighted to try. I think possibly the O.C.A. might use me as an agent. Please let me know if you think I could be useful—especially to the bombed-outs—though the West Riding has not been as badly hit as the south, of course.

Yours sincerely,

DICK COLLINS.

The following are some extracts from a letter received from Mr. T. B. Norman, late Q.M.S. (O.R.S.) 1st Battalion (see above):—

"I am afraid I get little Regimental news here apart from THE IRON DUKE. I do meet old 'Dukes' in Bill Burrell and Ruddyman, and on occasions have met Bob Yates. They will all be known to ex-other ranks of the 1905—1920 period. I was interested to hear of Col. Webb-Carter. I remember his joining very well and knew him over a number of years, up to Malta, 1937, when I left the 1st Battalion. I had a word with Capt. Oliver a few days ago and have also spoken to George Henderson, one time rugby, soccer and hockey player, and a survivor of Kut.

"I work at present with an old Duke in Fred Gibson, one time servant to Col. Hayden. Gibson joined in 1908 and finished after the last war, through a bad head wound, as a C.S.M. He keeps surprisingly well considering his disability. I used to meet a Bill Brook whose father also served in the Regiment and was a holder of the M.S.M. Brook re-enlisted and has for some time been in North Africa. I also see one of the younger end in Harry Mellor, a soccer and rugby player of Gosport days. The undaunted 'Horsey' converted Mellor from a soccer to a rugby player. What an enthusiast was Mr. Browne. His contemporaries all seem to be doing well—Faithfull, Dalrymple & Co. I wonder if Mr. [Lt.-Colonel] Faithfull will renew his struggles with Century range when this is all over.

"I was in Hampshire last July and called to see Ted Ovington, ex-bandmaster of the 1st Battalion. He looked wonderfully well and quite happy and content. Like many more of us, his boy was away; he is in the Navy. Few seem to have followed us in the Dukes. Of my own two boys, one is in the

Coldstream Guards in Italy* and the younger one at the A.T. School, — Ted Smith, ex-R.S.M., has a boy in Italy, an ex-A.T. School boy. Murphy's boy Dennis, the red head, survived the *Prince of Wales*' disaster, but has not been heard of since Singapore. By the way, is any news ever received of Brig. Fraser? Dinky Davis, ex-R.B., has a boy with the Marines. My brother, ex-drum-major 2nd Battalion, has a boy who is a Duke but has been with a Commando unit for some time. [See previous paragraph.] When he joined his Commando unit for training he was shown to a hut containing some ten gunners, all would-be tough eggs. He quite solemnly remarked to a sergeant, 'I can't go in with those people.' And 'Why not?' demanded the sergeant. He replied, 'They are all gunners and I am a Duke.' The sergeant told him, even if he was a something king, there was his accommodation and to get on with it. Quite an uproar in the hut, but he made his peace and demonstrated, during training, that there was something in a Duke. He insisted in wearing his Duke's badge for quite a time after joining the Commando. He has since qualified at parachute jumping and thinks he is getting to be nearly a fully trained Commando.

"I do hope that before another March arrives it will have been possible to hold an O.C.A. dinner, always a long looked forward to occasion.

"I was very sorry to read of Col. Cholmley. I was in 'E' Company at Tidworth with him and we always looked upon him as very much an officer and a gentleman."

We were very sorry to hear from Sgt. S. F. Swift, our cartoon contributor of many years, that he had been wounded in Germany. In his letter of 4th April, from 110 British General Hospital, B.L.A., he writes:—"Just a few lines to tell you I have been wounded. Yes, caught a packet. An old acquaintance, an 88 mm. hit us and we literally blew up. The crew escaped with their lives, which is one thing I shall never cease to be thankful for. My wounds are pieces of shrapnel in the legs (our own exploding), also slight superficial scorching. My gunner was in poor shape but I think he will recover; my operator was the same as myself, though he was badly affected by shock. The driver was O.K. except for a small hand wound. I did not suffer from shock in any way. I shall try as I get fit to let you have an article from the turret of a leading tank of a leading column. One thing you can record, the first I.D. over the Rhine crossed in a tank on 28th March, 1945, I mean of course the first since hostilities."

In a previous letter written in March he writes:—"A short while ago we had some flails under command and at a rather sticky part of the operations I had to go and speak to the commander of the troops with us. Imagine my surprise when I saw it was an old Duke, Capt. Taylor. He won the M.C. on "D" day. We had quite a chat and he told me there were still a few Dukes in his regiment, the "Westminster Dragons." I had a chance later to visit them and met quite a few old faces. . . . THE IRON DUKE now goes its rounds among the old Dukes. I have four now in my troop. You can be sure they uphold all the traditions of the Regiment at all times."

On page 102 we print an article by Sgt. Swift of an action he took part in before he was wounded.

We hear from Capt. Charles Oliver that his son, Lt. "Roddie" Oliver, R.N., is home on leave after a very long spell in the Mediterranean. We hope that when he has time he will send us some of his experiences. He has contributed to THE IRON DUKE occasionally for many years and his witty style is much appreciated.

In a letter to Miss Turner enclosing a subscription for THE IRON DUKE, Lt.-Col. G. L. W. Macdonald of the Royal Canadian Artillery writes:—"My grandfather, M. J. Macdonald, joined the 76th Regiment in the sixties, if I remember correctly, and later transferred to the Royal Canadian Rifles, a Regular regiment that was later disbanded in Canada. I have at home a great deal of correspondence when my great-grandfather attempted to obtain for his son a free commission on account of family services, but in the end had to pay. My grandfather was educated at McGill University." The details of service of Mortimer James Macdonald as given in Colonel Hayden's "Historical Records of the 76th Regiment" are as follows:—Ensign 9th November, 1855, lieutenant 2nd July, 1858, exchanged to Royal Canadian Rifle Regiment 22nd April, 1859.

Obituary.

BATE.—On 28th April, 1945, at her house, "Prospect," Palmerston Way, Alverstoke, Hants, Desirée Grace McGuire, daughter of Major W. T. McGuire Bate, late The Duke of Wellington's Regiment, and of the late Mrs. McGuire Bate. Miss McGuire Bate was a valued contributor to THE IRON DUKE; her series of naval cartoons entitled "Lofty" will be remembered by readers, and had it not been for the paper shortage we should have reproduced more of her drawings. She was always most enthusiastic over the magazine. We shall greatly miss her contributions.

CARDEN.—In January, 1945, killed in action in Western Europe, Lt. Aubrey Reginald (Tiny) Carden, The Parachute Regiment and Duke of Wellington's Regiment, younger son of Mr. and Mrs. R. W. Carden, Burchetts, near Haywards Heath, Sussex.

* Since reported killed in action on 18th April, 1945; an obituary notice appears on page 108.—ED.

CARTWRIGHT.—Died of wounds in Burma in March, 1945, Major Guy Valentine Cartwright, The Duke of Wellington's Regiment, serving with The Royal Berkshire Regiment, elder son of Major and Mrs. Cartwright of Wimbledon and Instow and husband of Loveday of 24 Arthur Road, Wimbledon, S.W.19.

JOLLY.—On 28th April, 1945, at 1 Moorgate Avenue, Bradford, Mr. J. B. Jolly, ex-colour-sergeant, The Duke of Wellington's Regiment, aged 75. Mr. Jolly enlisted at Leeds in October, 1891, and was posted to the Depot, Halifax. He joined the 1st Battalion in February, 1892, and went out to Malta with them, serving there and in Dover in 1898, and then went out with the Battalion to the South African war in December, 1899. He was severely wounded at Arundel in February, 1900, was invalided home, and posted to the Depot. He rejoined the 1st Battalion in October, 1902, when they returned to England. After service at York he was reposted to the Depot in 1903. In May, 1906, he joined the 2nd Battalion at Lichfield and later was posted to the 4th Battalion, serving as colour-sergeant to the Cleckheaton Company. He was discharged to pension on completing 21 years' service. After leaving the Regiment he served on the recruiting staff at Bradford from 1912 until 1919, and then with the Ministry of Pensions in Bradford and Leeds until 1935. He leaves a widow, one son and three daughters. We are indebted for the above to Mr. T. Partridge (ex-colour-sergeant, D.W.R.)

HILL.—On 10th August, 1944, killed in action in France, Major Charles Herbert Hill, The Duke of Wellington's Regiment. Major Hill was educated at Sandhurst, which he entered in September, 1939. He joined the 7th Battalion and served with them in Iceland for two years, and then in England and Wales until the Battalion went to Normandy just after "D" Day. The following are some extracts from a letter from his commanding officer:—

"He [Major Hill] was killed leading his company in action on 10th August. We had been in a position for some three weeks in contact with the enemy. Charles led "D" Company. I had made him a major and given him command when the previous commander had been wounded. During those three weeks Charles fully justified my faith and trust in his character, leadership, fine sense of duty and invariable cheerfulness. They were constantly under shell or mortar fire—were always patrolling and doing wonderful work. The Company loved Charles. The whole Battalion knew him and had a great affection for him.

"Then it became possible to break into the Hun lines. We attacked over very difficult low-lying country. "D" Company was leading on the right. There were mines and booby traps, shelling and mortaring and snipers. Charles led his Company without a fault. They got their object and were consolidating. Charles was going from post to post, encouraging, supervising and establishing his Company firmly on the enemy position. It was then that he was killed by a shell or a mortar bomb. He was killed outright in the middle of his duty and in the midst of the Company which loved him."

NORMAN. On 18th April, 1945, killed in action, Guardsman Derek William Norman, The Coldstream Guards, son of Mr. T. B. Norman, late Q.M.S. (O.R.S.) The Duke of Wellington's Regiment. Mr. Norman writes that his son was born in Gosport on 6th September, 1924, while he was serving with the 1st Battalion. A number of those who served with the Battalion between that date and April, 1937, when Mr. Norman left it in Malta, will remember the boy.

***SMITH.**—On 15th October, 1944, at his home in Richmond, Surrey, Mr. J. Smith ("Joe"), late The Duke of Wellington's Regiment. Mr. Smith joined the 1st Battalion in 1894 and served with them in Malta and Dover and throughout the South African War, 1899—1902. He went to the Depot in 1903, and in 1907, after a short spell with the 2nd Battalion in Lichfield, rejoined the 1st Battalion in Sitapur, India. He had been promoted sergeant in 1899 and colour-sergeant in 1902, and in 1907 he served as colour-sergeant of "F" Company. During the last war he returned to England and was posted as R.S.M. to a new army battalion. He was discharged to pension in 1919.

The present writer was company commander of "F" Company from 1905 to 1914 and had a great respect and liking for "Joe" Smith. He was a quiet, unassuming man, with however a keen sense of discipline, and was very popular with all ranks. The notification of his death only reached us recently from Mr. W. J. Simmonds, late sergeant of "F" Company, the 1st Battalion, and an old friend of Smith's, with whom he had kept in close touch until the latter's death.

WOOTTON.—On the 22nd February, 1945, at his home, 11 Melville Place, Pellon, Halifax, Mr. William Wootton ("Dick"), late C.Q.M.S., The Duke of Wellington's Regiment, aged 57 years. Mr. Wootton enlisted in the Regiment on 25th February, 1903, nearly all his service being with the 1st Battalion, with which he served in India, Afghanistan, Egypt, Turkey and Gibraltar. He held the British War, India (Afghanistan, 1919), Long Service and Good Conduct, and King George's Durbar medals, and was discharged to pension on 26th September, 1926. He leaves a widow and a daughter and son, aged 21 and 12 years respectively.

Mr. H. Winn and Mr. T. B. Norman, both late the 1st Battalion, write referring to Wootton's prowess on the cricket and rugby football fields, and of his being a member of the famous rugby team of the 1st Battalion which won renown in India from 1906 to 1913. The funeral took place at Halifax on 26th February; a bugler and bearers from the Depot party attended, and among those attending were Messrs. T. B. Norman, Hemblys, Yaxley, Butterworth, Ben Taylor and E. Moseley, representing the O.C.A., of which Wootton was a life member.

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