

No.62 October 1945



THE IRON DUKE

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

THE IRON DUKE



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

VOL. XXI.

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DEKKO!

DEKKO!

THE IRON DUKE

THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON'S
REGIMENTAL MAGAZINE

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(b) Personal notes.

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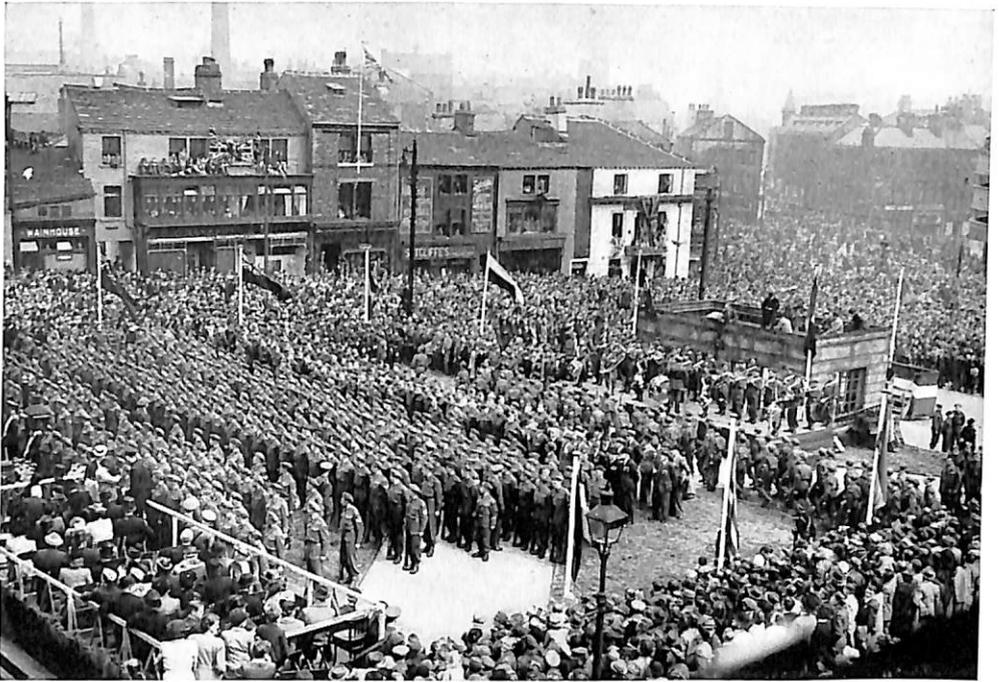
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HALIFAX, 18th JUNE, 1945.



Forming up of the Parade.



God Save The King.

THE DEED OF GRANT.



County Borough of Halifax



To The Colonel
The Duke of Wellington's Regiment
The Officers and Other Ranks

Whereas We the Mayor Aldermen and Burgesses of the County Borough of Halifax in the West Riding of the County of York in appreciation of the glorious traditions of the Duke of Wellington's Regiment and in recognition of the long and historic association of the Regiment with the Town

Do by these presents confer upon you on this the Eighteenth Day of June One thousand Nine hundred and Forty-Five the Anniversary of the Battle of Waterloo the title privilege honour and distinction of

Marching through the streets of the County Borough of Halifax on all ceremonial occasions with bayonets fixed colours flying and bands playing

In Witness whereof we have caused our Corporate Common Seal to be hereunto affixed.

W. W. ... Mayor
... Town Clerk



Civitas Milites Suos Honore
Supremo Salutatur

J.J. Hocking Secy at Hal. 1945

THE IRON DUKE

EDITORIAL.

The surprisingly rapid fall of Japan has brought the greatest of all wars to an end, and with it ends a chapter in the long history of the Regiment that adds to its glorious past records of imperishable deeds. We print below a message from the Colonel of the Regiment, Colonel C. J. Pickering, C.M.G., D.S.O.

THE IRON DUKE now enters a period that will, before long we hope, bring freedom from restrictions, and news of peace-time activities. The English soldier turns from war to the cricket bat and the football with the same thoroughness with which he took up arms in defence of his country; so unlike some nations whose reaction to victory seems to take the form of internecine strife. How well the poet Edmund Blunden has exemplified this English spirit in his book of essays, "Cricket Country."

This number has been produced under the shadow of security regulations, which must still be respected until the Japanese armed forces have carried out the Allied terms. Some time may elapse before the restrictions of paper control are relaxed, and the difficulties of giving space to all contributors, to some extent overcome by the use of small type, are abolished. We ask our readers to forgive the errors and omissions that have occurred in these war-time issues, and to realise the many exasperating difficulties the Editor has had to contend with. We would like here to record the great debt we owe to our printers, Messrs. Lawrence Bros., Ltd., of Weston-super-Mare, who with restricted staff and many other difficulties have given such splendid service; and especially we would mention Mr. W. A. Francis, one of the Directors, who has never failed to respond to the many requests for alterations the Editor had had to make to him. He and his staff take a personal interest in the Regiment, and we feel that they take pride in producing a magazine worthy of it.

An event of outstanding importance recorded in this number is the Civic Honour conferred on the Regiment by the Borough of Halifax, on Waterloo Day, 18th June, 1945. In the account written by Major S. E. Baker, he has, with characteristic modesty, made no reference to his own part in it; and we would like to record his untiring efforts in the task of organising the military side of the ceremony, resulting in such an unqualified success. Throughout the greater part of the war he has "held the fort" at the Depot, and apart from his work for the Prisoners of War Fund and Comforts for the Troops, he has done much to keep touch with, and on many occasions give help to, all units of the Regiment, both over seas and at home. But he has before him a perhaps greater task in the compiling of a History of the Regiment in the War, and he will need the support of the many who can help him to make it worthy of the magnificent achievements of the Regiment.

In the past we have occasionally asked subscribers to send their change of address to the Treasurer and Business Manager, Miss Turner; and a notice regarding this appears on page 148. We would ask readers to pay particular attention to this. It is so easy to send a postcard when an address is changed, and yet many fail to do so, thus causing a great deal of trouble and correspondence, to say nothing of waste of time, to Miss Turner. Please help her in this matter.

A Message from the Colonel of the Regiment.

With the capitulation of Japan and the victorious conclusion of the war, I wish to express to all ranks of the Regiment my deep appreciation and profound admiration for the way in which the Dukes have helped to see this matter through.

It is with the greatest pride that I have read of the glorious deeds and outstanding gallantry of all our Battalions; details of these cannot be given here, but will be immortalised in the Regimental History later on.

The Regiment has fought on all the fighting fronts and has always been in the thick of it; France, 1939-40, Burma, North Africa, Italy and the B.L.A., have all seen the Dukes in action, and communications I have received from senior officers show quite clearly that our Battalions have invariably lived up to the highest traditions of the Regiment.

The exigencies of the service have necessitated the transfer of various Battalions to other branches of the service. It has been a great source of joy to me that these Battalions have insisted on retaining their Dukes' individuality by continuing to wear our badges, and by keeping touch with the Regimental headquarters at home.

Casualties have been heavy, as they were bound to be with Battalions who were called to bear the heat and burden of the day. Let us, therefore, in this time of rejoicing, remember those who will see this green and pleasant land no more, but rest in "some corner of a foreign field that is for ever England."

We have had over 800 prisoners of war, about 600 of which were originally in the hands of the Germans and Italians; the majority of these we have now been able to welcome home. I hope that, before long, our men taken in Singapore will also be home, and that, with care and attention, they will be fully restored to health.

The war has enhanced a spirit of comradeship in the Regiment which, I hope, will be carried on in the piping times of peace. Details will be found elsewhere in this number of the aims and objects of our Regimental Association, which I hope every man who has served in the Dukes will join, and thus maintain his connection with us.

I am very proud that the Regiment has added so much lustre to its name during the period of my Colonelcy.

DUKES: I SALUTE YOU!

30th August, 1945.

C. J. Pickering,
Colonel of the Regiment.

Old Comrades of the World War (1939-45).

Several readers of THE IRON DUKE have asked for information about what we are doing to help those serving in this world war and their dependants—here is the situation.

Our Old Comrades' Association which came into being many years ago, is a peace-time organization which caters for the regular soldier, serving on a normal engagement, who is a member of the Association. A recruit on enlistment may elect to join the O.C.A. He pays a subscription of 5/- per annum payable quarterly, during his first seven years' service. Having paid a total of 35/-, he becomes a life member—he can of course make a single payment of 35/- on enlistment if he prefers.

This arrangement, however, makes no provision for the war-time non-regular, and a scheme to deal with this problem had to be devised.

There were two alternatives, *i.e.*,

- (a) for the O.C.A. to admit the non-regular war-time personnel to membership on some basis or other.
- (b) to start a new World War Association to cater for the non-regular war-time soldier and his dependants.

Our O.C.A. Committee met some time ago to consider the whole question—to act under (a) would mean an alteration in our charter—a complicated procedure—and this, together with other difficulties, resulted in the Committee coming to a unanimous decision and recommending that the O.C.A. should carry on as a peace-time organization catering for the regular soldier, and that a new organization be started which would provide for the war-time non-regular and his dependants. In this I concurred.

The problem has been solved by the formation of a Regimental Association (World War 1939-45), registered under the War Charities Act of 1940. Monies for this fund have been obtained from redundant funds no longer operative, grants in aid from Battalion funds, balances of disbanded unit funds, and finally from an appeal made by the Mayor of Halifax and the Civic Authorities of the neighbouring towns.

The Regimental Association (World War) Fund is administered by a Committee, with myself as Chairman.

The arrangements which have been made will ensure that all who have served in the "Dukes" are covered by the Old Comrades' Association or the Regimental Association.

A soldier who has served in more than one regiment or corps will, on release from the Army, be required to fill up a form stating which Association he wishes to join. He is limited to one only, and his decision is noted by Records and passed to the Association concerned for registration in their books.

I should like to place on record my sincere thanks to the Committees of our O.C.A. and the Regimental Association for the trouble and time they have spent on our behalf.

CHARLES J. PICKERING,
Colonel of the Regiment.

23rd July, 1945.

Civic Honour conferred on the Regiment at Halifax— Waterloo Day, 18th June, 1945.

Towards the end of 1944 the Civic Authorities in Halifax informed Colonel Pickering that they were desirous of conferring on the Regiment the privilege of marching through the town on all ceremonial occasions with "Bands playing, Colours flying and bayonets fixed." The Colonel of the Regiment expressed his appreciation of this honour, and, very appropriately, Waterloo Day was selected as the date for the presentation.

The Battalions at home threw themselves whole-heartedly into the work of preparing for the historic event and contingents from No. 4 I.T.C., 10th Battalion D.W.R., No. 4 Holding Battalion and 6th Battalion D.W.R. arrived in Halifax on Sunday, 17th June; by the courtesy of the Royal Engineers, they were accommodated in barracks. A small but very enthusiastic contingent from the 7th Battalion also arrived from Germany and we were very glad to welcome them.

THE CEREMONY.

The ceremony took place at Bull Green at 1200 hours on Waterloo Day. The day broke fine and warm and Halifax was *en fete*; the authorities had declared the day a public holiday—VE3 was the excuse—and the whole town was gaily decorated; Halifax put on its Sunday best to pay tribute to its Regiment.

The route from the barracks to Bull Green was lined four deep on both sides of the road to watch the march of the Regular troops, and eventually some 25,000 people were packed into Bull Green to witness the ceremony. The parade consisted of 300 Regular troops, 50 from Regimental Home Guard Battalions, 100 members of the various O.C. Associations and about 150 cadets from D.W.R. Battalions, together with their Band. The Regimental Band played the troops on to their markers in Bull Green.

Promptly at 12 noon, the Colonel of the Regiment arrived, accompanied by His Worship the Mayor of Halifax (Alderman Lewis Chambers, J.P.), the Mayoress, the Duke of Wellington (in the uniform of the Lord Lieutenant of the County of London), Major-General T. F. N. Wilson, D.S.O., M.C., Colonel J. C. Kemp, M.C., and Colonel J. M. Cornall, T.D. The troops, under the command of Lt.-Colonel C. R. T. Cumberlege, presented arms and the Colonel of the Regiment took the salute. The Mayor then addressed the parade.

“Colonel Pickering, Officers and Men of The Duke of Wellington’s Regiment,

We are met to-day, Magistrates, Aldermen, Councillors and citizens of this ancient town of Halifax to honour a Regiment so closely attached to us historically and personally. Formed by the linking together of the 33rd and 76th Foot, with both of which Regiments the Great Duke of Wellington had been closely connected, Queen Victoria approved a general order by which in 1853 its Regimental Colours bore the crest and motto of the Great Duke.

The honour is due because for so many decades the Regiment has formed an integral part of our civic life. Those of us who are older remember round this very spot where we are holding this ceremony to-day seeing the gay ribbons of the recruiting sergeant offering the Queen’s shilling and enlisting the sons of our town into this famous Regiment, known familiarly as the “Havercake Lads.”

Colours cherished by the men of the Regiment have hung proudly, in spite of battle scars, in our Parish Church and will from to-day be accompanied by the scroll which we are about to present to the Regiment.

It is fitting that we should be holding this ceremony to-day, the anniversary of Waterloo, because among the battle honours won by the Dukes’ forbears Waterloo stands pre-eminent. History records: “On the afternoon of the battle of Waterloo on 18th June, 1815, when the issue hung in the balance, Col. Elphinstone of the 33rd led the Battalion in a charge against the French Imperial Guard. The enemy’s lines were broken by the gallantry displayed, and from then onwards the triumph of Waterloo was assured.”

Forty-five years ago we watched men of the Regiment swing out of the depot at Highroad Well and to the strains of the Regimental Band entrain for South Africa. (A week ago we joined the veterans carrying their banners at a service of remembrance, still proud of a comradeship formed in the Regiment so long ago.)

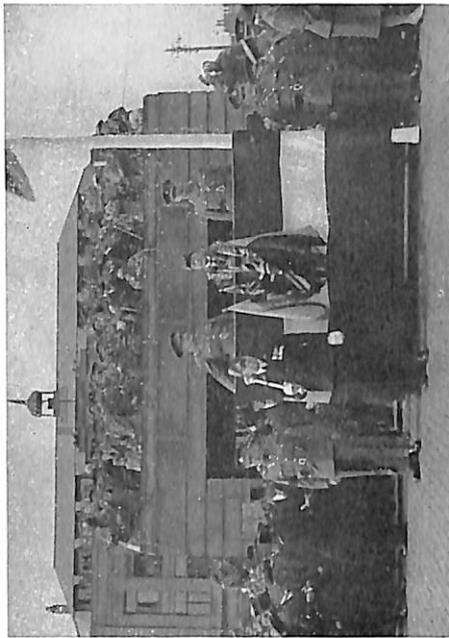
Then came up the war clouds again in 1914 when the German people, hungry for world domination, threw down the challenge, which was accepted by a country unprepared but undaunted, and in that four-year struggle 21 Battalions were formed. Most of those recruits were from the West Riding of Yorkshire. Seventy-two battle honours were won during the campaign and a memorial chapel in York Minster speaks of those brave men of the Regiment who gave their lives in the struggle. What of the Regiment in the campaign in this world war, part of which has already been won? When the lords of the German army were smashing a way to the coast and our army was threatened with annihilation, the 1st Battalion, as part of a rearguard at Dunkirk, fought a heroic battle, making possible that evacuation which will stand out in history for all time. The 1st Battalion played a great part in the North African campaign. Later they were first ashore at Pantellaria and as a tribute to their achievements were allowed to lead the victory march into Rome. On 8th October, 1944, Private Richard Burton, serving with the 1st Battalion, was awarded the first Regimental V.C. of the war.

Future history will record the part played by the 2nd Battalion during the first Burma campaign, and from returning prisoners of war we are now hearing some little of that valour which will bring further laurels to the “Dukes.” And so to-day we wish to honour those who in the ranks of this illustrious Regiment have made the supreme sacrifice, among whom we would remember the late Duke of Wellington and welcome here to-day as an honoured guest his successor, bearing the honoured title.

THE CEREMONY AT HALIFAX, 18th JUNE, 1945.



Approaching the Saluting Base.

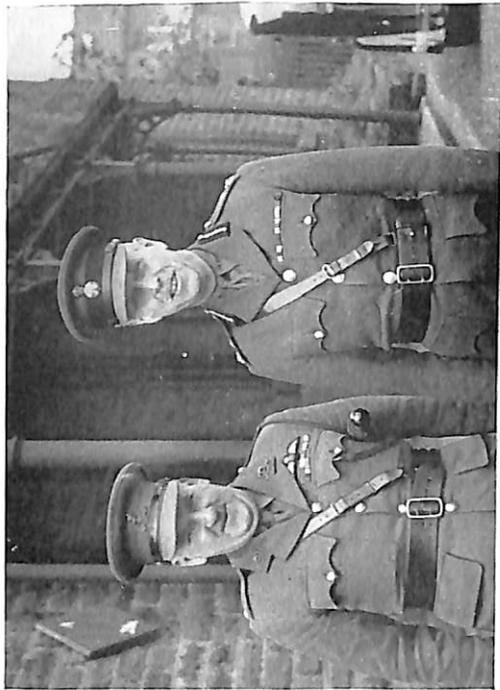


At the Saluting Base.

Col. Pickering, the Mayor of Halifax and the Duke of Wellington.



Col. Pickering handing over the Deed of Grant to the Vicar of Halifax.



Major Huffam, V.C., with the Duke of Wellington.



Colonel R. L. Jephson-Jones, G.C., R.A.O.C. (late The Duke of Wellington's Regiment).
(See page 143.)

2nd BATTALION, WINNERS OF BRIGADE FOOTBALL LEAGUE, INDIA, APRIL, 1945.



Seated (left to right): Pte. ROBERTS, Pte. ATKIN, Capt. BINNIE, M.C., Pte. APPLEYARD, Lt.-Col. J. DALRYMPLE,
Pte. GARTON, Capt. HARRIS, Pte. ROSS.
Standing: Pte. BURTON, C.S.M. ATKIN, Sgt. ALLIBONE, Pte. DOBSON, Cpl. JOLLEY, Cpl. HARRISON, Pte. GATE.
Inset: Pte. SMITH (Capt.).

We seek to honour those who still take active service in the struggle and those who through age and infirmity no longer may don the uniform, yet in their association are proud of the fact that they belonged to this great Regiment.

Finally, we are a peace-loving people and to us war is abhorrent, but when liberty is assailed then we learn that the spirit of those that won for us our heritage still lives and has been and is instanced in the history of the great Regiment that we honour to-day.

I now call upon the Town Clerk to read the Deed of Grant conferring upon The Duke of Wellington's Regiment the honour and title of marching through the streets of Halifax on all ceremonial occasions with bayonets fixed, Colours flying and bands playing."

The Mayor then handed the illuminated address to the Colonel of the Regiment and the latter expressed the thanks of the Regiment in a speech delivered with much feeling, which touched the hearts of all those privileged to hear it.

"Your Worship the Mayor and Citizens of Halifax,—I am proud to accept, on behalf of the "Dukes," whom I have the honour to command, the signal honour which you have to-day conferred on the Regiment.

As many of you will know, the Regiment has been associated with this part of Yorkshire for the past 180 years, and since 1881 its home has been the barracks here. Every man in the "Dukes," therefore, looks on Halifax as his Regimental home, and I know that the thoughts of our men in Germany, Italy, Burma, Palestine and elsewhere will be with us to-day, and they will be wishing that they could be with us here to pay their tribute to Halifax on this historic occasion.

The "Dukes" are very proud of Halifax, and as I move amongst people here I have come to the conclusion that Halifax are proud of the "Dukes," and this fills my heart with pride.

Nobody was more sorry than myself when, owing to the exigencies of the service, it was found necessary for the Regiment to leave the Depot early in the war—but they will be coming back, a bit war-weary perhaps, but full of honours won, and I hope I shall be here to see our soldiers marching up Gibbet Street with bands playing, Colours flying and bayonets fixed—that will be a grand day for us all, and especially for the wives, mothers and sweethearts amongst you whose men are serving with the "Dukes."

I wish to take this opportunity of thanking you all for the way the people of Halifax and district have supported our Regimental Prisoners of War Fund. The generosity of Yorkshiremen is proverbial, but your generosity has been so magnificent that it has enabled us to do everything possible for our Regimental prisoners; the gratitude of those prisoners, who have now come home, shows quite clearly how much this work has been appreciated, and I thank you on my own and their behalf.

I am very glad to have on parade to-day, to show our appreciation of this honour, Regular troops of the Regiment, and I am pleased to welcome a "Dukes" Home Guard detachment, members of our Old Comrades' Associations—the Old and Bolds—and also a detachment from the "Dukes" Cadet units.

Your Worship, I feel very proud that you have seen fit to confer this honour on the Regiment during the tenure of my Colonelcy, and I have the greatest pleasure in accepting it on behalf of the officers, non-commissioned officers and other ranks of The Duke of Wellington's Regiment."

Amongst the distinguished guests present were:—Major-General W. M. Ozanne, C.B.E., M.C., Lt.-Colonel M. V. le P. Trench, Lt.-Colonel A. E. H. Sayers, O.B.E., Brig.-General R. E. Sugden, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., T.D., Colonel R. H. Goldthorpe, D.S.O., T.D., Colonel E. M. Huntriss, M.C., Lt.-Colonel C. M. Bateman, D.S.O., T.D., Lt.-Colonel Sidney Smith, Colonel J. Walker, D.S.O., T.D., Colonel Sir Gilbert Tanner, D.S.O., Lt.-Colonel Sir Alfred L. Mowat, Bt., D.S.O., O.B.E., M.C., Lt.-Colonel R. Rippon, Colonel R. R. Mellor, C.B.E., T.D., J.P., Major J. P. Huffam, V.C., Captain Charles Oliver, Lt.-Colonel H. Dixon, Lt.-Colonel W. A. Hinchcliffe, T.D., Lt.-Colonel G. B. Howcroft, M.C., Lt.-Colonel E. W. Stevens, Major T. W. Milner, M.B.E., Lt.-Colonel C. F. Tissington, M.C.,

Major T. W. Robertson, Major W. W. Skinner, Major John Lepper, Major C. M. L. McCoy (D.L.I.), Chief Commander M. D. Norris, A.T.S., Senior Commander K. Mansfield, A.T.S., and Mrs. C. J. Pickering.

At the conclusion of the ceremony, the parade fixed bayonets, the 3rd Battalion Colours were unfurled, and, headed by the Regimental Band, marched off *via* King Cross Street, and thence, taking a circular route, passed the saluting base at the foot of Bull Green, where, at the request of the Mayor, the salute was taken by Colonel Charles J. Pickering, the Colonel of the Regiment, supported by the Mayor and the Duke of Wellington. There was little cheering, but the crowd looked tense and happy—and very proud.

After passing the saluting base, the parade marched to the Parish Church, where the simple ceremony of handing over the illuminated address for safe keeping was performed by the Colonel of the Regiment; Canon P. E. James, M.A. (Vicar of Halifax), accepting it on behalf of the Parish Church. The parade stood at attention during this part of the ceremony and immediately after it the Colours were ceremoniously marched off and the troops embussed for barracks, where the Home Guard and the members of the O.C.A. were entertained to lunch.

The Civic Authorities entertained the civil and military guests to a magnificent buffet lunch at the Town Hall immediately after the ceremony, where the refreshments, both liquid and otherwise, left nothing to be desired. The Town Hall was most tastefully decorated in the Regimental Colours and there was a profusion of beautiful flowers. The Colours of the 1st and 4th Battalions were displayed at the entrance of the Town Hall and were guarded by a contingent furnished by the 6th Battalion, assisted by Private R. H. Burton, V.C., of the 1st Battalion.

During the luncheon, Colonel Pickering voiced the thanks of the Regiment to the Civic Authorities:—

“Your Worship, Ladies and Gentlemen,—I am sure it will be your wish that I should thank the Mayor and Civic Authorities of Halifax for supplying us with such an excellent repast to conclude the ceremonies in connection with this historic event in the history of the Regiment.

I also wish to express to all the war-time Mayors of Halifax my keen appreciation of the magnificent work which has been done by the Halifax Mayor's Comforts Fund in helping our soldiers, sailors and airmen throughout the war. Although the gratitude of the men and women themselves must, in itself, be a great source of happiness to those who have worked so assiduously, I do wish to say, on behalf of the many “Dukes” you have looked after, how grateful I am for the interest your war-time Mayors have taken in this work, and for the untiring and voluntary devotion to duty that the organisers and workers in your Comforts Centre have shown.

As you will know, an appeal has been made by the Mayor of Halifax and by the Civic Authorities in the neighbouring towns, which we feel belong to the Regiment, for funds for our Regimental Association, the object of which is to help any man who has served in the “Dukes” to get back to civil life. There will probably be some 20,000 of these, and I am sure it is the wish of all of you that we should do all we can to help those who have borne the heat and burden of the day. We must not again be blind to the needs and wishes of those who are responsible for where we stand to-day. I hope, therefore, you will support this appeal to the full. Besides this, our Regimental Association hopes to do a great deal in helping men to find suitable and congenial employments, and I appeal to all employers of labour in this district to get in touch with our Regimental Association if they have jobs to offer. We must never run the risk again of having two and a half million unemployed in this country, and of our returning soldiers feeling that the country they have served so well is too apathetic to give them a square deal.

May I, in conclusion, again say how proud I am of the honour which has to-day been conferred on the Regiment, a pride which is shared by every man whose motto is 'Virtutis Fortuna Comes.'

The Mayor suitably responded and the Duke of Wellington warmly congratulated the Civic Authorities on the arrangements they had made, said how pleased and proud he was to be present on this historic day, and that he would always have the most happy memories of it.

After the parade Halifax let itself "go" and entertained the Dukes right royally; dancing was carried on in the streets till midnight, and bands played in all open spaces and the fun was fast and furious.

The Regimental festivities were concluded by a dance at the barracks in the evening when about 450 guests turned up with the sole purpose of enjoying themselves and, in consequence, everything went with a swing. Colonel and Mrs. Pickering attended during the early part of the evening. It was hot, terribly hot, and the higher one got in the gym. the hotter and more congested it became; though that was probably due to the fact that the bar was in the balcony! The Band followed up its good work of decorating the gym. by giving of its best, and when the temperature became unbearable, there was always the lawn, where one could cool off in the warmth of a summer evening, the like of which Halifax seldom sees. Our thanks are due to the messing staff of No. 2 (Posting) Depot Battalion R.E., who provided a most excellent meal for the guests; the ices, especially, were most welcome.

We must express our appreciation to all members of the Corporation staff who were determined to make the day a success, and spared neither time nor energy in dealing with the most minute details; we are especially indebted to Mr. W. Usher, the Town Clerk, who was responsible for correlating all civil and military matters, and his keenness and enthusiasm were contagious and inspired everyone.

The march past was worthy of the Regiment; can we give it higher praise? It was good to see the glistening eyes of the Regimental Boer war veterans during that time, standing, in pride of place, opposite the saluting base.

Major T. St. G. Carroll was responsible for the arrangements for the parade and for issuing the operation orders, and right well he did his work; even if he did say that the Home Guard would doff caps at the general salute—which savours of the times of pikes and breast-plates.

The thanks of the Regiment are also due to the Chief Constable of Halifax and his staff, whose active co-operation both before the date of the ceremony and on Waterloo Day itself, helped materially.

Amongst the telegrams of greetings and best wishes were those from H.M. the King, Lt.-Colonel B. W. Webb-Carter, D.S.O., Lt.-Colonel C. D. Hamilton, D.S.O. (commanding 7th Battalion), Brigadier J. C. Burnett, D.S.O., Lt.-Colonel M. N. Cox, M.C., Captain R. H. G. Bolton, C.S.M. A. W. Harrison, D.C.M., M.M. (late 2nd Battalion) and Miss Turner.

The Duke of Wellington was entertained by Mr. and Mrs. Sam Smith; their son, Major Roy Smith, M.C., the sole representative of the 58th Anti-Tank Regiment (our old 4th Battalion) on parade, acted as A.D.C. to the Colonel of the Regiment. The Duke visited the barracks on the morning of the 18th, inspected the Band, and was much interested in the portraits of the Great Duke which are the property of the Depot Mess.

The key-note of the ceremony was struck by a remark which the writer overheard when two old soldiers were greeting one another at the station on arrival. "We've come to enjoy ourselves, but we've also come to show Halifax that we are proud of our Regimental home." On that foundation, the day was bound to be a success; minor difficulties were laughed aside, and the many re-unions—both civil and military—of friends who had been parted for upwards of five years were spontaneous in their warmth and very good to see. It made one proud to witness it all and to realise the bond which binds Halifax to the Dukes; truly a memorable day.

S. E. B.

REGIMENTAL NEWS

1st Battalion.

FINAL STAGES IN ITALY.

After the M. Cece action we had no more set attacks to carry out, and after pushing further up Arrow Route, we moved north-west *via* the infamous M. Battaglia—which had cost the Americans and later the Guards so many casualties—to take over from the Americans in the M. Grande sector, about 12 miles south-west and in sight of Bologna. The months of November, December and most of January were spent in these positions on the north-east slopes of the Apennines, with anything from 10—14 days in the line and four days at rest in the Florence area.

As was to be expected, the weather deteriorated sharply from November onwards, with heavy rain and appalling mud, giving way to snow and frost. With the exception of the occasional jeep, which amazingly was able to make its way to the Battalion command post, all supplies were mule or man-packed. The performance of the Indian muleteers and their mules was of a very high order. The greatest credit for the excellence of the supply system must go to Major Jim Sills at Mule Point, and Q.M. (now Capt.) "Chunky" Lyons at "F" Echelon.

Christmas Day was spent in the line; and apart from the consumption of a little extra rum saved up for the occasion, and the earlier than usual visits of Jim Sills, the R.S.M., C.Q.M.S. Dinsdale (now R.Q.M.S.), also a host of brigade staff officers, the day was much like any other. We did, however, celebrate Christmas Day in traditional style in the Borgo S. Lorenzo area on 4th January. It was at approximately 1230 hours on that day when the commanding officer was about to enter "A" Company's dining hall that he was given an urgent message from Brigade H.Q. announcing the immediate award of the V.C. to Pte. Burton of "A" Company. For once timings were perfect. The sergeants and later the officers celebrated the double occasion in true style.

We were relieved towards the end of January by the Americans, and it was known by then that the Division was destined for the Middle East, or to be more exact, Palestine. After an incredible train journey—in box wagons, more commonly known as cattle trucks—a journey which lasted from 6th—8th February, we arrived at Taranto. The journey will be remembered for the feeding arrangements, if for nothing else, for M. & V. appeared at all hours of the day and night, hot, lukewarm and cold. There was nothing else. We spent ten days at Taranto in a primitive camp, the only one, a big redeeming feature of which was the presence of a number of playing fields, rugger, soccer and hockey. The Battalion XV under the ruthless leadership of Major T. F. Huskisson played two gruelling games to a draw with two Foresters and one K.S.L.I. on successive afternoons, and with a day's rest beat a Naval XV. The soccer XI which did not really settle down played a number of games. The hockey XI was more successful, winning one and drawing one of the two games played. Whilst at Taranto we saw quite a lot of the old 4th Battalion, now 58 A. Tank Regiment, R.A. This Regiment was more than helpful in the matter of transport, we having had to hand over everything before we left Northern Italy.

We sailed for Haifa on 18th February, arriving after an uneventful and calm passage on the morning of 22nd February. We were met by Jim Sills, O.C. advance party. Another night in box wagons and we arrived in our area on the following morning.

The first fortnight or so was marked by two events—the enormous amount of rain which fell, and leave for the Battalion by companies, principally to Cairo, also to Alexandria, Beirut, Jerusalem, etc. There is nothing one cannot buy in the Middle East, and with prices playing about on the ceiling, "credits" accumulated during two years of active service suffered a severe setback. After leave we got down to training with a vengeance, and there was practically nothing in the individual, section and platoon line that we did not do.

During mid-April the Battalion entered the following team for the M.E. rifle meeting held in Cairo:—Capt. N. Wimpenny (W.T.O. and umpiring captain), Lts. D. E. Tozer and H. L. Lyons, Sgts. R. O'Shea and A. Cutler, L/Sgt. R. Charnock, Cpls. H. Bennett and R. Kirby, L/Cpl. J. Lee, Ptes. H. Duce, F. Walker, J. Chalk, A. Bishop, E. Ashwood, W. Drake, J. Rowlands, W. Ashfield, L. Hall, W. Fennemore and G. Bailey.

Sgt. Cutler (sniper sergeant) came third in the "C.-in-C.'s 50" with a score of 91, the first and second scores being 95 and 92. Photographs of the first three in the C.-in-C.'s 50, also of the Battalion fire and movement team which came eighth in the competition, are shown opposite page 125. We held our own rifle meeting earlier in the month; "C" Company won the inter-company competition.

V.E. DAYS.

Just as training was becoming more than ordinarily tiresome, and everyone was saying that it was amazing how Germany could still hold out, and one supposed she would go on fighting until the last Bavarian mountain tip had been taken, came the news, first of all on 6th May, of the enemy surrender

in Italy, and on 7th May at 2100 hours the total surrender was announced. At this news the officers' and sergeants' Messes sprang to life, and those of us who were in that night made the first of many serious inroads into the bar stocks. Freddie Huskisson, Peter Faulks, Peter Hathorn and Doc Paterson were still on leave in Beirut, and were expected to and in fact did return on the following afternoon. The following two days were complete holidays, so much so that the orderly room was closed with a notice announcing "Shut until 10th May" on the door. On the evening of the 8th donkey racing was followed by an inter-company cricket match—at one time the two being very much inter-mingled. In the afternoon, after the Prime Minister's speech, a short service was followed by a talk by the C.O. In the evening the Battalion drew with 1st K.S.L.I.—three each—at soccer. In the evening the officers were asked to and accepted an invitation from the Sergeants' Mess where we all heard the King's speech. The rest of the evening was conducted in the style traditional to such occasions, ending up with rugger and the old sport of being weighed. Immediately after the King's speech we treated the surrounding countryside to a first class display of fireworks—or rather pyrotechnics. Everything that gave any kind of illumination was fired, training and G.1098 ammunition alike being thrown into the air. The following morning was given over mainly to recovery from the night before. In the afternoon the highlight of the holiday took place—officers v. sergeants soccer match. It would be easier to describe what didn't happen during the game than attempt to give an accurate report of an encounter in which probably for the first time in the history of the game, a number of infantry weapons, material, etc., were used by both sides. The officers had a formidable trio in defence—Jim Sills in goal, Fred Huskisson and Peter Faulks as backs. The game started much as any other game of soccer starts, but it was not very long before certain new features were introduced, and by half-time thunder flashes and smoke canisters had been used tactically by both sides. The second half produced many surprises, among them being a goal scored from a carrier by the officers—dannert defensive wire used in front of both goals—and the moving of the officers' goal when the sergeants looked dangerous. At one stage of this half a herd of goats and calves was driven across the pitch by some spectators, but it is doubtful if more than a few players knew of this owing to the very excellent smoke screen which was kept up for the greater part of the game. The result has never been agreed upon, although a majority think that the referee's decision of three all is as good as anyone else's. After the game the officers entertained the sergeants in a marquee near the ground—a fitting end to the evening's display.

Very little else was done for the rest of the week.

THE LEVANT.

On 1st June we moved north and by the 3rd we had set up our tents on the racecourse at Damascus. The jobs we had to carry out were most varied, and included being entertained by Emirs, and being initiated into such delicacies as sheeps' eyes, frogs' legs and snails. During our two months in Syria and Lebanon we had a great deal of excellent bathing; we also managed to fit in leave, and training—with tanks and river crossings. A fortnight of our time was spent in the Pine Forest in Beirut where bathing took precedence over all other kind of "training." The end of July sees us back in Palestine.

[The following is an extract of a letter we have received from Lt.-Colonel C. W. B. Orr after the receipt of the above.—ED.]

"We are now back in Palestine again, after a very good two months up north, and are busy settling into a new camp. It certainly is a lot better than the one we had before—good messes, dining halls and kitchens, etc.—but I shall be surprised if we are not under water in the winter! It is a very humid 90 degrees here now but the health of the Battalion remains amazingly good still—touch wood! We spent last week, on our way down from the Lebanon, at a camp near the Li Veni river and did river-crossing exercises, finishing up with a most enjoyable day when we had a rowing regatta in the morning (using assault boats) and swimming sports in the afternoon. Here, unfortunately, the bathing is very dangerous four days out of five and so is suitable only for those who can swim pretty well—probably not more than one-third of the Battalion. I'm afraid we are unlikely to enjoy ourselves quite as much during the next few months as we have lately—old friends gradually leaving us and the most trying weather of the summer still ahead of us. We are beginning to look forward to some rain which should arrive, I think, in October or November, and then we can get going on football once more which will keep everybody happy. Jim Sills, a most excellent chap who came to us from the H.A.C. early in the war, left us last week—the first of our officers to leave us."

HONOURS AND AWARDS.

The following is the latest list of awards made to officers and other ranks of the Battalion:—

O.B.E.

Lt.-COLONEL C. W. B. ORR.

MILITARY CROSS.

*CAPTAIN E. OLIVER.

M.B.E.

*4602491 R.S.M. G. W. ANNESLEY.
*4602376 R.Q.M.S. E. CHERRY.

MENTION IN DESPACHES.

CAPTAIN E. OLIVER.
LT. F. N. POTTS.
4621803 Sgt. J. BENTLEY.
4622579 Sgt. W. BRUCE.
4627480 Cpl. G. WILKINSON.
4623593 L/Cpl. A. WRIGHT.
4619069 Pte. L. GAMBLE.
4619223 Pte. J. W. LARNER.
4617793 L/Sgt. J. DUTTON (killed in action 4th February, 1944).
* Citations appear on page 147.

OFFICERS' MESS.

Major Magill-Cuerden (Essex Regiment)—who commanded since the death on M. Cece of Lt.-Col. F. P. St. Maur Shiel, D.S.O.—left in November to take over command of the 4th Battalion of his own regiment. We were all more than sorry to see him go. He had become very much a "Duke" during his short stay with us. Lt.-Col. B. McCall (R.Fus.) took over command on 26th October, 1944. A week or so later Major P. G. L. Cousens came to us as second-in-command from commanding a S.D.F. battalion.

On the day after we had celebrated Christmas we said good-bye to our I.O., John Streatfeild, who went off to be G.III (1) to Col. "Brian" at 51 B.L.U. John having been severely wounded on Banana Ridge in April, 1943, rejoined us just before we came to Italy and has served continuously as I.O. until he left. He won the M.C. on the Anzio Beach-head.

On 26th March the C.O. left us to go to G.H.Q., M.E.F., as A.A.G. (A.G.3). He also became very "Duke" minded and we were sorry to have to say good-bye to him. He keeps in touch with us. Three days before Pat Cousens left *en route* for the U.K. on Python. Freddie Huskisson, "A" Company commander, was appointed second-in-command in Pat's place and on the C.O. leaving took over the Battalion. The Adjutant, Capt. Bruce Hindley, was finally levered out of his chair after a sitting of over two years, and has taken over "A" Company with whom he started life in the Battalion in 1940. The new adjutant is Freddie Froude, also from "A" Company. Earlier in the month the following officers joined the Battalion:—Lts. C. J. E. Johnston and D. E. Tozer, U.D.F., to "C" Company; Lt. B. Pilling, D.W.R., to "A" Company; 2nd Lt. G. Bullock, K.O.Y.L.I., to "D" Company.

"C" Company now boast of four or five "Zulus" in the Battalion. On the last day of March the Officers' Mess gave a highly successful drink party to which between 40 and 50 officers from within the Brigade and Division came. As we were without a C.O. at the time, Freddie Huskisson, who was acting, made an excellent host. On 16th April Lt.-Col. C. W. B. Orr, O.B.E., arrived from A.F. H.Q. Italy to take over command, and we extend to him our most sincere welcome and every possible good wish for the future. After the V.E. days' celebrations Capt. R. H. Royds left us to take up an appointment in Alexandria. While we were in the Levant there were a number of comings and goings—mainly goings. Capt. (now Major) F. J. Reynolds late 145 R.A.C., joined us and has now taken over "C" Company from Major P. R. Faulks, the latter having now become "headmaster" in the Battalion education scheme.

The release scheme accounted for Capt. "Peter" Hathorn and Lt. "Mac" MacFarlane, both U.D.F. We lose in the former one of the mainstays of the cricket XI and in the latter our full back—and a very excellent one. Within a week Major H. J. T. Sills left us, and we hope will be doing a large turnover on the Stock Exchange by the time this goes to print. Peter and Mac, who joined us at Anzio, had become essentially "Dukes" and we shall miss them a great deal. As for Jim Sills, it is hard to realise that he has in fact left us. He joined this Battalion at the outbreak of war from the H.A.C., and has served with us continuously from France until about a week ago. His going marks the beginning of the end of a chapter in the life of the Battalion. He will be sorely missed by all of us. To all three of these officers we send our wishes for the best of good fortune in their various futures.

SERGEANTS' MESS.

Unfortunately we were unable to make our contribution to the last edition (June) owing to exigencies of the Service. However, we are determined to feature in the future. Shortly after arriving in Palestine, dances and socials were organised. A large number of W.A.A.F.s were invited, but apart from our usual gigolos—namely, Sgt. (Ginger) O'Shea, Sgt. (Harry) Simms and Sgt. (Spud) Baker, the ladies found a scarcity of partners.

Organised functions have been out of the question during June and July owing to moving around the countryside, but we made a special effort and staged a social evening to commemorate a very special

occasion—the departure of our old friend "Big Joe," R.S.M. G. W. Annesley. A presentation was made to him by his successor, C.S.M. "Pat" Birch (now R.S.M.) with an appropriate speech on behalf of the Mess members. R.S.M. Annesley replied with a simple but very touching and sincere gesture of thanks and appreciation. The Commanding Officer, Second-in-Command, Adjutant, Company Commanders and our old friend the "Doc," Capt. Paterson, were invited, and a very enjoyable evening was spent by all.

Unfortunately we were unable to say good-bye to two old stalwarts of the Regiment, R.Q.M.S. "Ted" Cherry, owing to unforeseen circumstances, and O/R.Q.M.S. "Sam" Ambler at 2E. All the Mess members express their deep regret in not being able to give them a send-off. We all wish them the very best of luck and good fortune on their return to civilian life.

We offer our congratulations to C.S.M. Birch (R.S.M.), C.Q.M.S. Dinsdale (R.Q.M.S.), C.Q.M.S. Thompson (C.S.M.) and Sgt. Hunter (C.Q.M.S.) on their promotions. We welcome L/Sgts. Sullivan and Charnock to the Sergeants' Mess and hope they will be very happy amongst us. We also congratulate R.S.M. Pat Birch on being selected for the English representative Rucker XV against Wales and South Africa in Cairo.

On Easter Monday the officers played the sergeants at soccer, the result being a 4-3 victory in the sergeants' favour, but I must confess that the officers were the aggressors and were extremely unlucky.

Best wishes are extended to all our old friends at home and in various parts of the world, and we express the hope that we shall meet together some day soon at an "Old Comrades'" dinner and celebrate in a fashion befitting such an occasion.

We offer our congratulations to R.S.M. G. W. Annesley and R.Q.M.S. E. Cherry on the award of the M.B.E., and we are proud to be able to record their outstanding services. R.S.M. Annesley joined the 3rd Battalion at Pembroke Dock on 14th July, 1919, and the 2nd Battalion on 3rd August, 1919. After serving in Ireland, Egypt, Palestine and Singapore, he left to join the 1st Battalion on home establishment. Since then he has seen service in Malta, and on the outbreak of war went with the Battalion to France, being one of those in the Dunkirk evacuation. Since then he has seen service throughout operations in North Africa, Pantellaria and Italy. He played in Army rugby cup finals in 30-31 and 32-33. In the last Honours List he was awarded the M.B.E.

R.Q.M.S. Cherry, veteran of the last war, transferred to 1st Battalion from the West Yorks on 28th April, 1919, and has served continuously with the Battalion for 26 years. Something of a record we think, taking into consideration the changes which necessarily take place in war-time. He has seen service in Ireland, Gibraltar, Turkey, Malta in peace time, and has been in the quartermongering business of the Battalion throughout this war, having seen service in France, evacuation of Dunkirk, North Africa and Italy. The R.Q.M.S. celebrated his quarter century with "The Dukes" on the Anzio Beach-head. He was presented with the Certificate of Merit in January, 1942, and the M.B.E. this year.

CORPORALS' MESS.

After a hard struggle in removing the Q.M. and his stores, we were able at last to set up a Corporals' Mess in April of this year for the first time since coming abroad. Daye Lindley looked after us, with Busty Townsend ably assisting. Although we were only able to keep open for two months, we made an excellent start towards making ourselves a comfortable Mess. On May Day we had our first dance, which could have been a greater success with more of the fair sex; however, we hope for more success when we get settled down once again. A very successful social was held with the sergeants during April, and the only black spot for us was being defeated by the sergeants in a challenge darts tournament. Next month we are hoping to renew our activities with renewed vigour, and are confident of making for ourselves a Mess which will be a credit to all who share the hard work.

We have lost R.S.M. "Joe" Annesley, and this has been a great loss to the Battalion as well as ourselves. We welcome "Pat" Birch, our new R.S.M., and we shall appreciate his hard work for us, as well as for the rest of the Battalion. The first members of the Mess itself to go were "Sammy" Corker (hygiene corporal) and Harry Presnall (one of the Q.M.S.'s numerous storemen), and this month "Tim" Tite (I corporal) and George Nash (A.C.C.) are leaving us. To all of them we wish the very best of luck and good fortune in their future civilian life.

To all serving "Dukes" everywhere we wish every success, and hope that very soon we shall all be back to see each other once again.

SPORT.

CRICKET.—Great interest and much keenness has been shown by everyone, spectators and players alike, since the Battalion started playing cricket at Julis Camp in Palestine early in May. The wicket there and the cricket field itself seemed far from promising when Capt. Fowler began practices in the evenings. The pitch is of concrete, the outfield is rough, but after a modest beginning it was soon apparent that the Battalion could field quite a strong side, and as the weeks passed great rivalry developed between company sides and some excellent games were played.

The Battalion side played and beat the 2/7th Middlesex, 1st K.S.L.I., 2nd Field Regiment, R.A., Division R.E.s. and 42nd Company, R.A.S.C., but we were twice defeated by the M.E.T.C., both on

their ground and on our own, when the batting of Brigadier Shaw and Capt. Norman Yardley were too much for us.

When we moved into Syria in June a lot of cricket was played between company sides on the Racecourse at Damascus, where a very sporting turf wicket added to the interest and to the uncertainty of the games. During this time Brigade H.Q. instituted a knock-out competition between company sides. The quarter finals of this have now been reached, and "C" Company captained by Major P. R. Faulks, whose fast medium bowling on the turf wicket proved almost unplayable, is the only side in the Battalion now left in the competition.

After we moved to Beirut the Battalion played a game against the Beirut league champion side—Notts County. Our opponents went in first and were dismissed for 90 runs. Sgt. Goodall, who has not been seen enough in the Battalion side, and Pte. Harman, whose slow spin bowling has been a great asset, both bowled well and shared the wickets. We then went in and lost four wickets for 20 runs, when Lt. Matthews was joined by Capt. Hathorn; no further wickets fell, and thanks to a splendid innings by Lt. Matthews, we won by six wickets.

In batting Lt. Tozer has played consistently well throughout the season. Pte. Jones and Pte. Bowman have both batted well on occasions. In bowling the mainstays have always been Major Faulks and Pte. Harman, but Pte. Jones, Hancock and Capt. Fowler have all bowled well from time to time. Through all, the grand old fatherly interest shown by the second-in-command, Major T. F. Huskisson, has been magnificent. He has umpired in almost every game, and it was always a source of great comfort to know that no one on either side would ever be given out leg-before-wicket unless he really asked for it.

RUGGER.—Major T. F. Huskisson played once for an English Services XV in Cairo during March, against South Africa.

MOTOR CYCLING CLUB.



We have a very virile club, of which our Colonel is president. Among our activities are runs to various places in Palestine, cross-country, a sports meeting, and a motor cycle football match. In Syria we were unable to organise any runs at first, but there were plenty of unorganised runs on duty. On the eve of Waterloo Day Pte. Dollive of the Signals made a drawing of the badge for the club, which was approved by the Colonel, who also assisted in designing it. A lithographer in Damascus made a pattern of it in zinc, and eventually a brassfounder was found who turned out 30 badges in brass for 75 piastres each, the final cost to members being 5/7½; that is the only contribution levied and includes entry fee.

On Sunday, 24th June, the M.C. Club held the longest run yet attempted, an average of 180 miles being clocked up on the "speedo's." Unfortunately, owing to the sterner calls of duty, only ten members were able to turn out, but the run was none the less successful. The club left camp at about 10.45 a.m., and covered the 50 odd miles to Baalbek, half of it through the mountains and the remainder along the too-straight road through the Baekar, in about an hour and a half. The chief attraction of Baalbek lies in the ruins of three Roman temples, those of Venus, Bacchus and Jupiter (a happy combination!) built in the years B.C. on the ruins of an older Phoenician temple. On this occasion, however, the greater bait to club members was the refreshment offered by the more modern institution of N.A.A.F.I.

At about 2.30 we set off for Beirut, where we intended to swim before returning to camp. This road winds through an awe-inspiring range of mountains, rising in parts to 6,000 feet above sea level, and still, in mid-summer, with snow on the peaks. The road allows no latitude for error, and as Lt. Deacon says, "One must drag one's attention away from the truly magnificent scenery to the road, which only allows one mistake." After the ride through the warmest part of the day the swim at Beirut was welcome, and at 6, after a light tea, we set off back to camp. The return run, over the two mountain ranges crossed earlier in the day, was accomplished in a little over 1½ hours. It is interesting to note that the sole casualty during the day was the attendant truck, whose duty it was to pick up "those fallen by the wayside." This gave up the ghost 20 miles from camp and was ignominiously brought in later on the end of a two-rope.

**1st BATTALION IN ITALY.
Mt. Cerere, Christmas, 1944.**



Battalion Command Post.

Left to right: Lt.-Col. Mc CALL, Lt. STREATFIELD, M.C., Major SILLS,
Capt. HINDLEY, Lt. SMITH, R.S.M. ANNESLEY.



"A" Company Command Post.
(Christmas tree in background.)

JANUARY, 1945.



"B" Company at play.



"B" Company Officers. Capt. Oliver, M.C., on Sherman.

1st BATTALION IN SYRIA.

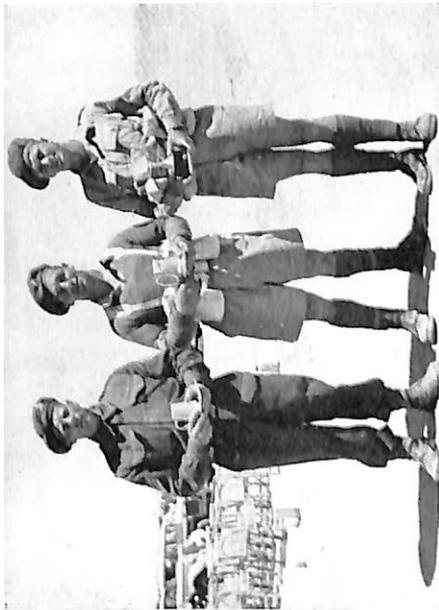


Lt.-Col. C. W. B. Orr, O.B.E., Capt. and Adjt. F. P. Froude, M.C., and Members of Sergeants' Mess, 18th June, 1945.

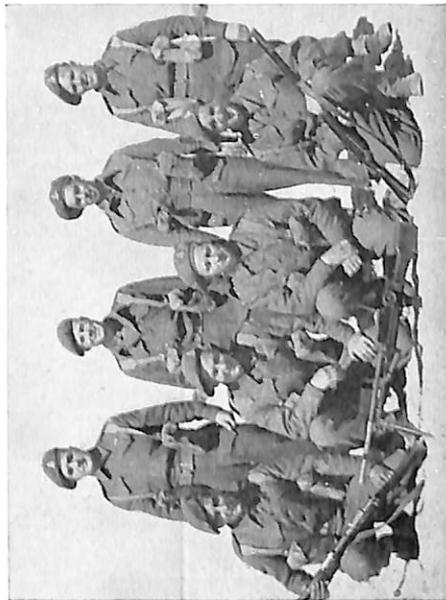


"B" Company's Guests, June, 1945.

MIDDLE EAST. RIFLE MEETING, CAIRO, APRIL, 1945.



First three in Individual Rifle Championship. Left to right: Sgt. CUTLER, Sgt. NIELD and Cpl. MACLEAN (Winner of C-in-C's Cup).



Fire and Movement Team (Eighth in the Rifle Meeting.)

New members are Capt. Wimpenny and Capt. Froude. The former has our deepest sympathy; coming back from Beirut the jeep went into a ditch, Capt. Wimpenny and Capt. Ellam being injured, but not seriously. We miss them!

LIFE IN THE COMMAND POST.

(ON A CERTAIN PIMPLE OF A MERE 1,800 FEET, SOMEWHERE IN ITALY).

This was our home for 15 days. It was small but it was strong. It nestled quietly under the side of a mountain—smoke curling from the small chimney protruding from masses of compo stacked on the roof. A square, sand-bagged, utility building that was to afford five officers with shelter against both weather and any ironmongery the gentle Hun chose to throw at us.

As I have already mentioned, there were five tenants, the C.O., Adjutant, I.O., R.A. Rep. and Pioneer Officer. They entered the place sane of mind, upright, level-headed men. They left half-mad, bent and quite capable of twisting their bodies in a series of contortions that would have put any first contortionist in the shade.

Let me first of all describe the interior of this palatial residence. It was large enough to hold five persons if they sat still and all breathed together. It contained a large, improvised table at one end. This was the property of the C.O. and Adjutant. There was no doubt whatsoever which end belonged to the Adjutant. Two telephones and a mass of papers (covered with queer hieroglyphics), a large map—giving the impression to visitors of an intelligent interest in the war; tins of cigs. and improvised ash trays full of cig. ends—this, shall we say, was the "A" side. The other end of the table was completely devoid of any "bumph" except a "Readers' Digest" giving plenty of elbow room to anyone who wished to sleep and read alternatively. This was the "Tac" side.

A smaller table in the corner covered with (a) bumph, (b) Talc, (c) a map, indicated the working desk of the I.O. Not that he did any work but it did indicate the fact that something intelligent could be derived from the masses of paper and prettily coloured map, if one had the inclination or had studied Old Greek.

On one wall numerous photos of the countryside taken from the air, on the opposite side quite a number of delightful "pin-ups" that help so much in the prosecution of a successful campaign.

There were three telephones—one was constant worry every 24 hours of the day with its consistent tinkling, one was a mystery as no sound came from it as far as anyone can remember and was purely ornamental. The third belonged to the R.A. Rep. and sent out an anæmic tinkle at frequent intervals that no one could interpret except the Rep.

The main feature was a slow combustion stove which caused endless work, for the simple reason that if it wasn't fed with fuel every five minutes it went out, and nothing in the world would start it again unless silent prayers set it in the right mood. I have seen with my own eyes an R.A. major, captain and the adjutant right down to batmen on their knees uttering prayers and blowing gently in a vain attempt to coax a flame from this contraption. I have seen, in the very early hours of the morning, the adjutant, feebly wafting a piece of paper in front of it for the same purpose. On one occasion it took eight and a half hours to boil a cup full of water for the purpose of making tea. In the end one of the officers was detailed to maintain it whatever the situation. This was the R.A. Rep.'s primary job, his second being to call for artillery fire when required.

The roof was very low and was reinforced with six very stout oak beams. With great tact the adjutant put on the first beam as you entered the door "Mind Your Head," and promptly hit his on the second. Taking things all round we could have been worse off (but not much).

Visitors' day was just plain murder. I know exactly how a sardine feels in a tin and I sympathise deeply with this unfortunate fish; people bumped into one another, equipment became tangled and there was a general atmosphere of organised chaos. Incidentally they always arrived when the mid-morning tea was due—a coincidence perhaps, but a monotonous one. The C.P. not being established in the centre of a tea plantation, was rather short of this valuable drink, and so we sacrificed one of our few comforts with an air of martyrdom not unlike that of an old-time saint being burned at the stake.

Life was made bearable by the rum ration, which, though small, was a comfort on really cold nights. In one corner of the C.P. was the reserve rum—the loss of which could be accounted for by (a) reporting to Higher Authority that we had openly defied regulations and had drunk the lot or (b) destroyed through enemy action. Needless to say, the latter was by far the most popular excuse, and one less likely to cause the wrath of those who issue, to be brought on our heads.

For 14 days we endured this—then unable to stand it any longer, the C.O. asked, begged and prayed to be moved. "I'll have my C.P. in a lunatic asylum," he said, "anything but this." So we left it (no doubt to be rented to other unfortunates), and looking back tears come into our eyes when we discuss this "villa of iron" and wished we were back (or do we).

WHAT A RELIEF!

The Brigadier had told us we were being relieved by the Americans in seven days' time and the week passed with growing anticipation. We were in reserve positions at the time. We learned that an advance party was coming up on the day before the relief, and Michael, our I.O., went down the hill at

1300 hours to meet them. The C.O., Adjutant, Pioneer Officer and myself sat in the command post (which leaked when the snow on the roof thawed) in front of a blazing fire. The fire was of oak logs sawn from a tree which Dick and his pioneers had blown down during a demonstration of some cord-like explosive which they had wound round the tree. The tree had been already almost sawn through anyway. The fact that it took four separate attempts to fell the overgrown sapling, the last effort using all that was left of the reel (only about 40 feet), is incidental. It was a good fire and if you wore your duffle coat and two pairs of socks you kept reasonably warm. We waited in a silence broken only by the "clip—tock—ding—bang!" of the leaks in the roof as they dripped into cigarette and jam tins we'd distributed at points on the floor. I was on the lookout at the window (we called it a window for want of a better word) and I saw them coming in the distance, along the mule track from "B" Company, loaded up with all of whatever the Americans call their G.1098. Bruce brought his glasses and found they weren't Americans but two of "A" Company who had lost their way in the smoke screen and were returning to their fold. I resumed my watch and Michael and the Americans entered the command post behind me. Six feet four of Michael and seven or eight five feet odds of Americans had come straight up the mountain side, G.1098 and all, scorning mule tracks. Michael had scorned the mule tracks anyway, the Americans had no other option. Michael looked rather sweet in duffle coat and beret, they looked rather sticky in windproof jackets with fur liners, equipment, bedding roll, automatic rifles and steel helmets. After his exertions Michael was breathing rather heavily, the Americans hardly at all. Then introductions took place. Michael, who is very forgetful, had forgotten their names and they introduced themselves as Major Dombrowski, executive officer, Lieutenant Schultzpengel, commanding officer, Lieutenant Sporelli, heavy weapons, and Lieutenants Bumpstead and O'Tooley of "Item" and "Jigs" companies. We sat round the fire and Lieutenant Schultzpengel produced three bottles of Italian cognac from his bedding roll and some all-American elbow bending took place. Dinner was then served, *compo* dinner, a poor affair, but the duff was rather good and cheered us up a little. After dinner the drip from the ceiling had stopped with the night frost and we sat round the fire. Lieutenant Schultzpengel suggested a game of cribbage at 10 lire a point which was greeted with acclaim by the Americans, with reserve by us. So the United Nations split, a party to either side of the fire. They drank cognac and we drank rum—so did they—our rum. We were deeply engrossed in a *Times* crossword, and in between Bruce asking Michael what such words as "tintinabulation" meant, strange words and phrases sandwiched themselves in from the other side of the fire. "15—2, 15—4, Jeezers Keryst." This continued for a long time and we were very tired and then Brigade rang up to say we had to pull out that night and that the Americans would not be coming up till next day. And so we left them still at it, "15—2, 15—4, —," and we weren't really relieved at all.

2nd Battalion.

OFFICERS' MESS.

Everything that has happened in the past month pales before the magnificent news of victory in Europe. Our gratitude to all who have achieved so much is beyond any words which can be set down here. We had, perhaps, a feeling that we had missed something, but we are confident that some more thrills are in store for us East of the Chindwin.

Naturally—or was it simply another excuse—the event of peace was celebrated with a little merry-making, the main feature of the celebrations being the terrible trial of Adolf Hitler in the Sergeants' Mess. The officers were invited to this most enjoyable event, and liquid refreshment had to be earned by defending Hitler against most frightful abuse. The Commanding Officer, however, in the capacity of supreme judge, passed the sentence demanding the extreme penalty, and Adolf was duly hanged by the neck until he was dragged to the floor and beaten to pulp by Bertie Harris—his defending officer.

The Commanding Officer has left us for a short holiday in the country and we all hope to see him in the near future. Needless to say, his departure was the occasion of yet another of those amazing parties. "Pip" Moran now holds the reins, and continues to spend as much time on the sports fields as he does in the orderly room.

"Joss" Baxter has returned from a "quiet" leave in Yorkshire and tells us that it is a wonderful thing to get a letter every day. We wonder from whom? Stewart Binnie and Sam Hoyle continue to make our lives perilous, being given to attacking each other with swords at the slightest provocation. Harry Cole, now working (?) in the orderly room, remains *au fait* with every situation except the officers' messing. The Baron—now known as "Joe" for some obscure reason known only to Bob Richards—has at last managed to have the ante-room redecorated, refurnished and re everything else, quite regardless of the efforts of the Mess members to save their few remaining annas. Graham Tedd and "Hamish" Mowat are at present on leave in Bombay, and we gather that they are enjoying themselves. Dougie Deyes returns to the Battalion occasionally from a succession of courses. "Peggy" Leach is now so near to civil life that he is regarded as a world authority on "Demob. Regs." Donald Britton spends his time between the orderly room where he is adjutant and his quarters where he practices on a clarinet. We prefer him to work in the orderly room. Eric Hayes runs the transport and the

sport with equal efficiency. "Bertie" Harris, we are sorry to say, is at present in hospital but should be back with us in a week or two. Ian Whyte and Fishbourn, our latest-joined, throw their weight about on the basket-ball pitch, but are otherwise models of decorum. Eric Masters is still a father and mother to the mortar platoon. Apart from playing basket-ball at 6.30 in the morning, when the rest of the Brigade is just getting up, it may be taken that the officers are fairly normal.

To conclude, we cannot forget "Doc" Doupe, whose decorations of our bar and cardroom are the pride of the Brigade. He has been repatriated, as has Bert Mitchell, our late Q.M. We wish them luck where ever they may be.

SERGEANTS' MESS.

Our last contribution was very brief, and a protest is expected from some of our ex-members. We hope that their thirst—for news—will be satisfied by that which follows.

We have a really fine Mess now, and there is no doubt that we set the standard for all the neighbouring units. The artistic interior decoration was placed in the hands of Sgts. Mather and Barks—they made a grand job of it.

Socially we have done well for ourselves. Dances, which have had a large and popular attendance by civil and military alike, owe their popularity to the efforts of C.S.M. "Nutty" Metcalfe and his band of willing helpers during the initial stages of the "campaign." In addition to dances, we have thrown "parties" on almost every pretext. Notable ones were the occasion when we bade farewell to Sgts. Anderson, Barks, Rowe and Tasker. Then again when Sgts. Rumsey, Bleakley and Wild departed to join the paratroops. And again when our magnificent soccer team won the Brigade cup, as the team was afterwards entertained in the Mess. More recently, when V.E. Day came along, we had yet another party. In the Mess, the trial of "Hitler" took place, and we were ably assisted in this entertainment by the Commanding Officer and all the officers. On that occasion Sgt. Knowles (A.C.C.) gave a theatrical impression of Hitler throughout the trial. His primary charge—"Being drunk and refusing to fight"—was viewed with grave concern; as a result of being found guilty, he was duly hanged from a beam in the Mess. Then followed our traditional "sing—say—or pay" programme, Sgt. Barwell acting as M.C. and the performances being well up to standard. An open singing competition was won by Sgt. Allibone, who sang, appropriately, "When the Poppies Bloom Again." He sang it with such fervour that the judges (all still sober) had no difficulty in placing him an easy first. C.S.M. Metcalfe and Sgt. Ford tied for second place. It was not until the "Biggest Liars Competition" came along that the officers found their natural bent. Lt. Tedd, quite unblushingly, took the laurels and the breath of the whole assembly. Cups, suitably inscribed with the date and the events, were duly presented to the winners. In passing, it is fitting to add that we have been both proud and pleased to welcome Capt. (ex-R.S.M.) and Mrs. Jowett to our parties. Capt. (ex-R.S.M.) Stannard has also honoured us with some visits.

On the sporting fields, many members of the Mess have done much to keep the Battalion well to the fore. C.S.M. Atkin and Sgts. N. Smith and Allibone have been regular and prominent members of the Battalion's soccer team. R.Q.M.S. West, C.S.M. Metcalfe, C.S.M. Atkin and L/Sgt. Slater have performed equally well with the Battalion hockey team—so much so that the Area hockey cup is assured of a place of prominence in the Mess. R.S.M. Parr, R.Q.M.S. West, Sgts. Barwell, Allibone, Betton and Godber have all represented the Battalion at cricket—with varying degrees of success. On the subject of the officers v. sergeants' cricket match, we have nothing to say. Sgt. Ford was just beaten (by a better player) in the semi-finals of the Battalion tennis knock-out competition—his conqueror going on to win the trophy.

With the departure of Sgts. R. Mitchell, N. Smith, Slater, Riley and "Honest" (?) John Dawes on repatriation, we have lost a lot of talent. Those left behind tentatively enquire if the party managed to get up the gangway of "That good ship *Venus*" and whether the figurehead and flag were what they had been led to believe. What a rum (XXX) fellow he was—a stern reminder to all!

More recently we have been thrilled by the happy re-appearance of R.S.M. Dyson Ward. After just over three years of captivity and privation in Rangoon he was released, and whilst awaiting a passage home favoured us with a visit lasting a week. His tales are many and varied. Old friends will be happy to know that those who knew him in days gone by say that he has already returned to something of his former self. To him we wish a speedy and joyous return to Mrs. Ward and the children.

To Sgt. Riley we offer our condolences in his sad bereavement.

There has been a lot of deserving graduation from the Corporals' Room of late. We congratulate Sgts. Alexander, L/Sgts. Betton, Baggeley, Morrell, Slater, Wilkinson, Winfield, R. Smith, A. Jolley and Lamert, and welcome them to the Mess. Congratulations, too, to Burton and Beers on their promotions to sergeant.

Meanwhile, release groups, leave in U.K., local leave (and conquests) are all subjects for popular discussion amongst us. It is on that theme that we fade away. Whatever these notes may lack in conviction and grace, continuity in future ones may perhaps hold the interest of members who are going back into the cold and unsympathetic, yet sheltered, life of a civilian. These notes may serve to remind them of a comradeship born and nurtured under conditions which they should never be allowed to forget.

CORPORALS' MESS.

During the past few months there have been several changes in the Corporals' Mess. Several members, notably "Pop" Sutcliffe, Kay and Parkinson, were posted away to another unit. Repatriation claimed "Cushy" Wright, Harry Wragg, "Chippy," "Jeff" and the one and only Billy (Matelow) Hill. Tommy Herbert, who thought he had been too long on earth, went off to join the paratroops, and so our numbers became quite depleted.

The present president, "Mac," when he is not sweating in the P.R.I.'s office, seems to have the running of the Mess well in hand, and we are in a very happy financial position. We have had the opportunity to invite to our socials every member of the Corporals' Messes of the neighbouring units, and we have had some good times.

On the sports fields there is still intense rivalry between ourselves and the Sergeants' Mess, and so far the results show that we are about equal. We cannot secure a win over the officers at basket-ball, as this seems to be their favourite game.

The Battalion continues to call upon two or three members of our Mess for players for the Battalion teams, as will be seen from the photographs.

We send our congratulations to all members who have left us for a variety of reasons, to all members who are still with us, and to all Dukes wherever they may be serving.

SPORT.

During the past six months the Battalion has achieved an ascendancy in all branches of sport unparalleled since pre-war days. We have been fortunate in having moderately good playing grounds, first class equipment, good opposition, but above all, a very high sporting spirit within the Battalion. This last fact is emphasised by the great following which our teams enjoy when playing "away." We are undoubtedly the strongest on the sporting fields, and our fixture lists are always full. In a Brigade Area which includes four British battalions in addition to our own, we have secured the Brigade hockey cup and the Brigade soccer cup. We have lost in the semi-finals of the cricket cup to a team which were the eventual winners of the competition. The rugger season is fast approaching, but at the moment it seems doubtful whether we shall be able to field a Battalion team. We have, however, a fair nucleus of former players, and we have a promise of some reinforcements in the near future. From the latter we hope to be able to build a team.

CRICKET.—Our fortunes have fluctuated during the past six months, but the game has always been followed with the keenest interest. Indifferent wickets and lack of practice had a marked effect on our games when we started, and there was so much "material" of equal merit that it was not easy at first to produce a balanced team.

Though we have lost more matches than we have won, it must be stated that cricket has a large following in the Battalion, and all matches have evoked much lively interest. Apart from Battalion games with neighbouring units and civilian teams, family games of officers v. sergeants, sergeants v. corporals, officers and sergeants v. the rest, inter-platoon matches, etc., are a popular feature.

Unlike the soccer and hockey teams, we have no cups to show for our efforts. Four other ranks of the "Dukes" were picked to represent a Brigade team against a well-known local Indian XI. R.S.M. Parr, Cpl. Dickinson, Pte Smith (56) and Pte. Cunliffe all put up creditable performances, and the fact that the match was drawn was due in no small part to their efforts. Meanwhile, the monsoon rains are breaking, and we must roll up the matting wicket until brighter and drier days come back and the fixture list is once more on the notice board again.

RUGGER.—In spite of many difficulties all efforts have been made to keep the Battalion's traditional game of rugby a feature of the sports programme. In our last station, and in the present one, the nearest rugger ground has been several miles away, and there has been no opportunity for constructing a unit ground nearer home. This has necessarily curtailed the training of new players to replace the many old stalwarts who have left us during the past twelve months. In our last location most of the units were in the same position with regard to players and training as ourselves. To offset these snags a Brigade team was formed and from time to time Stewart Binnie, "Joss" Baxter, "Peggy" Leach, C.S.M. Metcalfe, Sgt. Riley and Pte. Padgett found places. The side was quite a useful one. On reaching our present location we combined with our old friends the Borderers to field a side, and once again the team was as good as any in the district. With the coming of the monsoon we are hoping to play again. Now that "Pip" Moran has rejoined the Battalion, he, together with Stewart Binnie, "Joss" Baxter, Graham Tedd and Pte. Padgett should form a useful nucleus of backs. We have several good forwards in C.S.M. Metcalfe, Ptes. Tomlinson, Regan and others who are shaping well. We look forward to the coming season with interest.

SOCCER.—It's a long time since we have had such grand opportunities and facilities for sport. We have certainly made the most of them, and though out here in peace-time we were always famed as rugger "marvels," we have recently proved ourselves to be a very fine soccer Battalion.

Our rise to fame started in January this year. During March and April we took part in a highly competitive Brigade soccer competition. We carried off the cup in fine style, losing only one match

out of eight. The Brigadier presented the cup. Not a very picturesque object, perhaps, but the Sergeants' Mess, after entertaining the team, observed that it held twelve quarts of beer and three bottles of whisky, and that's the sort of "pyala" we like.

The boys that laid the foundation of our success are shown in a photograph opposite page 117. Naturally, repatriation and leave to U.K. have caused several changes in the team from time to time, but the tremendous spirit and regimental pride which has bound the team together seems to have made every new player perform 100 per cent. better than he ever thought he could.

Much of our success has been due to the fine captaining of our team by Pte. Smith (56). Smith in peace-time played for Leyton, a leading London amateur team, and in his early days he played a lot on the Continent for the London Football Association. A master of control on the field, and a first-class sportsman in every way, we owe him a lot.

Sgt. "Smudger" Smith and "Joe" Stretton, our original right back and left wing respectively, went off in May to the U.K. after doing immense work for the Battalion team. We hope they are getting some equally good football at home. We have not space to review all our personalities, but the following have been awarded their "colours":—C.S.M. J. Atkin, Sgts. Smith and Allibone, Cpls. Jolley (17) and Harrison, Ptes. Atkin, Appleyard, Dobson, Hill (30), Roberts (54), Robertson, Smith (56) and Stretton.

Perhaps the most important thing in Battalion sports is not only to have a lot of "stars," but also to have every man in the unit an active participant in some game or other. In this respect we are proud to say that we can also produce a very aggressive cooks' team under the management of Sgt. Knowles, a batmans' team, and several other sub-unit sides who have a good idea of the game. In future editions we hope to be able to give you news of further successes.

HOCKEY.—As with soccer, so with hockey. The Battalion hockey team carried off the Brigade hockey cup in great style, losing only one match throughout the competition. The cup was presented to Pte. Baxter, the captain of the team, by the Brigade Commander, and the trophy now reposes in the Sergeants' Mess.

Repatriation has caused several changes in the team, and we lost, with regret, Sgt. Riley, Pte. Tutt and the Taylor brothers. Their places have been filled, however, and the present team is as strong as ever. Like the Battalion soccer team, this strength is derived primarily from the fine Battalion spirit which prevails, and which gives every player an added incentive to play his very best. Outstanding personalities in the present team are Capt. Bull (R.A.M.C.) and Cpl. Stubbins, both excellent and stalwart backs, Pte. Baxter and Pte. Ross, who show remarkable ability to control the ball, and Pte. Padgett and Cpl. Kidger-Preston, who are two of the fastest men in the Battalion. R.Q.M.S. West plays a very sturdy game at centre-forward, whilst both Pte. North and Pte. Dobson have played several excellent games in goal.

Although repatriation will shortly cause several more changes in the team, the nucleus is good and the spirit excellent. We hope to continue with our good record on the hockey fields of India for many months to come.

WATERLOO DAY IN INDIA, 1945.

* For the first time in many years the Battalion in India celebrated Waterloo Day with a holiday granted by the Commanding Officer.

The day got off to a good start with an interesting cricket match in which the "Singles" were well beaten by the "Marrieds." The "Singles" lost the toss and were put in to bat. The first wicket fell very quickly and only Major Moran seemed able to stand up to the bowling of R.S.M. Parr and Pte. Cunliffe. The situation improved with the arrival of Pte. Roberts who laid about the bowling in great style, and in a very breezy knock-up he scored 41, hitting Pte. Chew for five successive fours before being well caught on the boundary by C.S.M. Metcalfe. Major Moran was out shortly after for 33, and the last wicket fell with the "Singles" score at 90. Major Moran and Major Baxter opened the bowling for the "Singles" and the first three wickets fell for 30 runs. Pte. Smith then arrived at the crease and gave a fine display of orthodox hitting, made 63 runs before retiring—in order that his energy would be reserved for the football match to be played in the evening. The "Marrieds" declared for 140 runs for nine wickets, thereby winning the match quite comfortably.

The main attraction of the evening was a soccer match against a battalion of a Scottish regiment. This match had been commenced the previous evening on the opponents' ground, but had to be abandoned at half-time owing to the arrival of the monsoon. At very short notice it was decided to replay the match on the "Dukes' ground" on Waterloo Day. Prior to the match the band of the I.M.A., conducted by Capt. Stannard, played to a very large crowd of appreciative spectators. Pte. Smith, captaining the "Dukes," lost the toss and kicked off against the evening sun. The play was extremely keen, both sides swinging the ball about and tackling hard. Fifteen minutes after the kick-off Sgt. Allibone cleared from the "Dukes" penalty area with a long punt which the "Dukes" captain trapped neatly, dribbled very fast up the centre and then swung out to Pte. Pagett on the left wing; Pagett, moving inside very fast, scored with a powerful drive which gave the goalkeeper no chance. The "Dukes" continued to attack and shortly before half-time Pte. Clark tipped the ball past the goalkeeper after a rush more reminiscent of a ruggar match. At half-time the "Dukes" were two up.

The second half produced fewer thrills than the first, and there was no more scoring. The "Dukes" pressed hard all the time and were undoubtedly the better team. Both sides, however, showed signs of fatigue and the finish was weak, although the tackling was as keen as ever.

Following the match the band of the I.M.A. continued to play in the lines, and a supplementary beer issue was made from the Institute. The officers returned to the Mess and were very pleased to entertain Capt. and Mrs. Caldicott and their two daughters, Capt. and Mrs. Stannard and their three daughters, Capt. Samson, D.W.R., the Brigade Commander, and many other friends of the Battalion.

Plans for the entertainment of the children had caused Capt. Emett (the P.M.C.) something of a headache, but as so often happens, it was the children who entertained the officers. We could, if we wished, tell you which little girl attempted to pour ice cream down the Brigadier's neck. We shall probably never know why some little girls threw their drinks over Lt. Hayes. The children and families went home quite happily at 10.30, leaving in the Mess their quite exhausted hosts. The officers then proceeded to revive one another in the accepted manner, and not until 3 in the morning did three lieutenant-colonels and the Brigadier give up their poker-dice.

6th Battalion.

We are very pleased to write that the 6th Battalion is still struggling, if only in name. In November last we came to Colchester and set up business as a P.T.C. Life for a time seemed one continual round of brown paper, string and civilian suits, but when the permanent nature of the job became apparent everyone settled down and the competitive battle of the companies started in earnest. It is rumoured that the Q.M., Lt. (Jamaica) Clark, of the Foresters, simply had to standardise the number and size of the notice boards in the interests of economy. Shell cases were rapidly transformed into cups for this and that, and much ceremony was attached to their presentation. A last chance to recoup losses was afforded in the shape of an inter-company boxing tournament which was a great success and produced some very spirited fighting. The good fortune was shared alternatively between the companies of Paddy Bryan and Tony Savory. Tommy Chadwick, whose company reached the final in all except one tournament; hatched up all kinds of plots to get the honours, but short of corrupting the officials it seemed that it could not be done. One fly-weight of 7st. 6lbs. won his fight in one intake, went to P.D.C. and had one or two there just to keep in trim, and then returned to repeat his success. Like all champions, he had to have his food, and during his stay was a constant source of amazement to the dining hall staff.

The long-awaited V.E. Day eventually arrived, and our celebrations equalled the occasion. The barracks area was flooded with side-shows and stalls, including the "Dukes" Derby with the R.S.M. running the tote swindle. As a result of the festivities, caps, badges and even braces were in increased demand.

With the advance of our armies on the Continent came a new job. We were to prepare to receive ex-P.O.W. for training. A variety of visits to various arms as arranged and the life of the staff became much more interesting. It was a disappointment though, when a visit to Newmarket failed to correspond with Derby Day. At one glider demonstration the disappearance of a great proportion of the spectators was a source of worry to those concerned. Finally the mystery was explained, when the gliders touched down and out tumbled the "bods." It is claimed by some that the eyes of the "powers that be" were successfully diverted from the spectacle, but the whole episode savours of the Nelson touch.

The Freedom party of course was the most momentous occasion, and a good percentage of us managed to attend and renew old friendships. Halifax certainly did us well. The Regimental spirit was so stirring that our cook sergeant, now in the A.C.C., insisted on borrowing a tunic and Duke's badge (strictly *entre nous*, please!).

With our new role we have had an overwhelming influx of personnel from all regiments. We give them a hearty welcome, and hope that in the future their association with the Dukes will be a pleasant memory. The 2nd Battalion is well represented. First to arrive was our C.O., Lt.-Col. C. R. T. Cumberlege, followed by Captains Williams and Roberts, and at the time of writing we are awaiting the arrival of Charlie Grieve. We hope that he is not going to say that he is past playing rugby! Departures too have been many. Capt. John Haldane and Lt. Keighley were posted "heatways," but we hear that the former has dropped into his proper chair and is doing work with the Legal Aid Department. Old faces generally are now beginning to disappear, and in this respect to Major Fontes we extend the wish "Good Luck," and happy choice of civvy suits.

OFFICERS' MESS.

Full house is the true descriptive term for the Mess these days, with a host of new members from many regiments. What seemed at first a rambling building is now a crowded mass of man and beast. The latter are of the canine variety; one permanent member, and one attached for week-ends and periodical ten-day stretches. Since the last time of writing we have been pleased to welcome back to the Battalion Jimmy Green and Johnny Feather, from hospital, both quite fit again. We miss the deeply philosophical if provocative arguments of John Haldane, but have in their place the vagaries

of Capt. (John Willie) Williams, steeped in Admin. and Welfare. He insists that the following letter was received by a P.O.W. in Italy from his girl friend:—

"Dear Jim,—It seems as if you will never return. Frankly, I am tired of waiting, and last Saturday married your father.—Love, Mum."

Dennis Wilson had a sudden urge for the "Red Devils" and is now a glider pilot. He had the good fortune to be stationed very near to us, and paid frequent visits in his old bone-shaker. Finally, however, he managed to extract from some one; in true Leeds style, a superior Morris 8 for the sum of £10. What exactly the stranglehold was he would not divulge.

Lt. "Tich" Parr is shortly to assume the duties of an instructor at a Formation College, and we wish him luck with the warning "get those . . . houses built."

The Mess is very strictly divided now into those members addressed by rank and those addressed as Mister. To fall into the latter category one's release must be due in under two months. The father of the fraternity is Major Fontes, with Major Powell as Hon. A/maceman. Both will be gone before the next time of writing, so we take this opportunity of wishing them good luck in their civilians. Now we can look forward to the rise of Charterhouse in the cricket world, providing the wickets are true and the players can spot the "wrong 'uns."

We congratulate the Commanding Officer, Tony Savory, and Capt. Williams on their Mentions in Despatches, all seen in the *Yorkshire Post* by some officer before the recipient himself knew. John Willie assures us that the oak is a very expensive tree, especially with so many insistent people in the Mess.

During the recent visit of the Regimental Band we held a very successful party in the Garrison Officers' Club. Everyone present was amazed by what can be done with a little effort, even in war-time.

We must congratulate Teddy Manning on his latest family increase, and by the time the next issue of THE IRON DUKE is in print Johnny Feather will have lost his status as a bachelor. To him and his wife we send our best wishes.

To all old 6th Battalion Officers we send greetings, and we would like you to know that we wish to hear more of you.

SERGEANTS' MESS.

The Mess at present is rather like a Blackpool hotel at Bank Holiday. So acute did the problem of accommodation become we have had to move to bigger and better premises, which were opened in true Yorkshire fashion. We really are a mixed bag, and there are a lot of new faces amongst our friends. The introduction of a Scots element has put life into the gathering to some tune. Anything can happen and probably will. On one social evening a game of basket-ball developed and was played under conditions of almost complete darkness. Lt. Green was signed up to complete one of the sides, and the game resulted in a satisfactory draw, C.S.M. Taylor scoring with a foul shot.

We are just riding the crest of popularity of a form of robbery mysteriously termed Euka, which seems to necessitate big pays and visits to other Messes. One of the chief exponents has now departed and his presence in the Mess is very much missed. C.S.M. Melber left for civilian life and we wish him all the good luck in the world. R.S.M. Jessamine of the Green Howards has also departed and in his place we welcome R.S.M. Edwards of the same regiment. Sgt. Dunkin has returned to the Battalion, quite fit again after his spell in hospital.

A party of sergeants represented the Battalion at the Freedom Parade at Halifax, in the role of spectators, and reported that the show was a complete success. What exactly this means we are not quite sure, but they seemed to have enjoyed the trip. It is reported from neutral sources that anyone wishing to be well foddered on a railway journey should stick to C.S.M. Jackson and Sgt. Ancill.

The comings and goings of Mess members are far too numerous to mention in detail, but to all those arrivals we say Welcome, and to those leaving, whatever the reason, we wish all the best of good fortune.

SPORT.

We arrived in station a little too late in the last rugger season but went ahead immediately and had a very good season. Capt. Manning, Lts. Green and Feather, Cpls. Milner, Norgate and Stobbs, Sgts. Hudson and Chamberlain played regularly in the team. Sgt. Hudson has at last found his proper position as leader of the pack and we hope this year he will have more weight to lead. The season wound up with a first class game with the I.T.C. of the Gloucester Regiment as part of the programme for their regimental day. We were beaten 3—0, but are looking forward to having our revenge this season.

The cricket XI has had a very successful season, losing up to press only three matches. Stalwarts of the side have been Q.M.S. (O.R.S.) Johnson, Sgts. Hardisty, Spilsbury and Cpls. Crook and Thompson. The latter has bowled very consistently throughout the whole season, and looks like ending up with a very good average.

To all Dukes wherever you may be we send best wishes. You have all done a good job in bringing this war to the proper conclusion.

7th Battalion.

The campaign in North-west Europe can be marshalled in four distinct phases :—

- (a) The invasion of Normandy ; the American breakout while the British and Canadians drew off the German opposition ; the German counter-attack which cost them their Seventh Army and ultimately the war ; and the push to the Seine.
- (b) The autumn land and airborne operations to secure the Channel and North Sea ports ready for the "knockout" in the spring.
- (c) The winter "tidying up" of the front and the decisive Reichswald attack, which, as Montgomery forecast, really decided the fate of Germany west of the Rhine.
- (d) "The cracking about the North German Plain," in the memorable Montgomery directive to the troops before the Rhine crossing, which led to the final surrender in North Germany and Holland, and the collapse in the Ruhr.

The Battalion has had its role directly in every phase, and the first three have been described in the last three issues of THE IRON DUKE. This story tells how the Battalion came, in phase four, to the end of its long war-time crusade in Europe against Nazism.

When the Second Army crossed the Rhine at the end of March the task of the Canadian Army was, with two distinct operations, to drive to the North Sea and cut off the German Fifteenth Army of 100,000 men in Northern Holland. As far back as February I had been briefed for our possible role, and my little but ever growing file of maps and aerial photographs was a constant embarrassment in security. No one was supposed to be in the secret.

At first the plan was one of Montgomery's celebrated "reserve" operations in case his number 1 plan went wrong. In those days the intention was to cross the Northern Rhine south-west of Arnhem, to swing, build up and take Arnhem from the west, while further troops would presumably press on eastwards and take the pressure off the main Second Army landing further up the river. In fact Montgomery spoke to all commanding officers in 49 Division in February about it.

When the "Island" was cleaned up on 2nd April work on the next stage redoubled. One fine afternoon the full "O" Group was ordered by Brigade to reconnoitre our proposed launching sites for the assault across the Rhine and to study our objectives. Ours was to be the actual house used by 1st Airborne Division in their dramatic last stand last September. All day vast smoke generators threw a great pall of white cloud across the Rhine to hide our build-up. The "O" Group was supposed to get in position at 1400 hours on the banks of the Rhine under this smoke screen, which was to stop for an hour while we lay quiet in the old trenches of last September and did a copy book "recce."

Obviously Fate was not to be tempted in such an orthodox manner. To start with the smoke stopped while we were halfway to the bank side. Everything from Spandau to a far-away railway gun opened up on us. Barry Kavanagh ran the fastest 100 yards I'd ever seen. Leaving the "O" Group to test the marksmanship of the Hun gunners a bit longer, I dashed for the retaining wall of the Rhine and then crawled along the "home" side until I joined two Canadian snipers in the gable end of a boat house at the water's edge. For an hour I watched half a dozen Boche across the water in some section post on our objective pointing every time they saw one of my "O" Group move. But this sort of entertainment became boring after two hours when there was neither sound nor smell of the smoke screen resuming, while the Huns became more and more jumpy at the spectacle of dozens of officers marooned on the river opposite them, all flashing vast map boards and Duke of Wellington's cap badges (among other regiments).

The Boche was clearly puzzled by this perfect battle school example of how not to reconnoitre. I took advantage of the extra time to get the "O" Group to crawl up to me and one by one to study the heights of Arnhem opposite. Eventually to relieve the suspense a thin haze of smoke started drifting over and we decided to make a run for it across 2,000 yards of completely open flooded potato fields. Fate laughed hollowly at our simple trick. The wind promptly changed and the smoke blew away from us. The seven members of the Battalion "brains trust" tried to walk back in the desperate hope that every Boche had been visited with a sudden attack of blindness. Anyhow, the telephone in the German O.P. must have broken down, as the "stunk" we deserved didn't come until later.

As "O" Groups from the whole Division had been out on this organised "jolly," more than one officer was wounded. A further recce the following day was more successful in its camouflage but it only helped to deepen the mystery of why we were going to attack at precisely the point where the Boche expected. Within 24 hours we had a fresh briefing. We were "asked" to continue our recces in the same place for deception (and *we did*) while the new plan changed the main effort from the west to the eastern approach to Arnhem.

56th Brigade thus on 12th April crossed the Rhine higher up, and that night forced the Ijssel and before the Germans could react had three battalions inside the industrial outskirts of Arnhem. Next morning 146th Brigade, after some hand-to-hand fighting with the reserves which the Boche re-switched after falling for our deception plan, built up with a dummy artillery programme, pushed on a little farther while we of the reserve Brigade, intended to take the hills dominating Arnhem and the river, waited about all day, wondering whether we would sail into Arnhem by L.C.T. down the Rhine or cross the much shelled Bailey bridge over the Ijssel.

7th BATTALION IN HOLLAND.



Battalion moving up outside Arnhem.



"A" Company forming up before Arnhem attack.



Attack by No. 16 Platoon and Tanks.



"D" Company's objective.



Crossing Groote Heide.



? After a sniper had had a go (Haalderen).

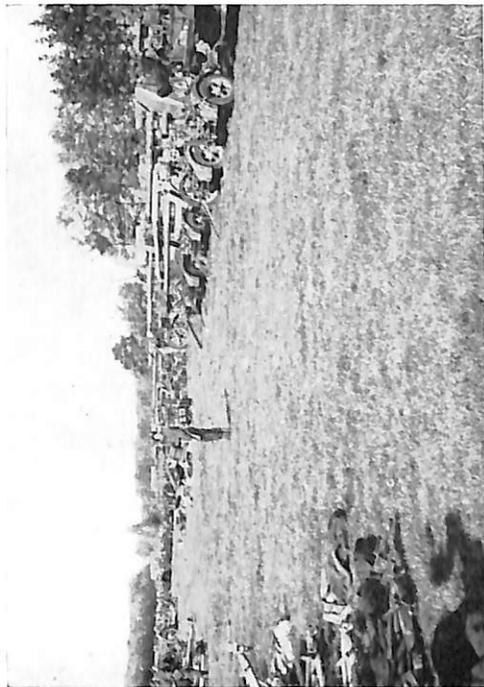
7th BATTALION IN HOLLAND.



Three German Tanks of French make, knocked out by "D" Company outside Arnhem, April, 1945.



C.O. 7th Battalion giving out orders to the Representative of G.O.C. 6th Parachute Division, who surrendered to the Battalion.



German equipment of 6th Parachute Division handed over to 7th Battalion on surrender of the Division, Baam, May, 1945.



V.E. Day Parade, Baam.

By 6 o'clock that night it looked as if there would be "no play" that day for us, but an hour later I was summoned to Brigade and told immediately to take the Battalion behind 56th Brigade, now nearing the centre of Arnhem, and during the night to infiltrate through the town to the north of the station and open up the vital bottle-neck of roads.

The book says "For night attacks one requires hours if not days of preparation. The troops must be rested and properly briefed. If possible there should be a rehearsal over similar ground." This seemed like Latin grammar in the first form where you learn a rule one lesson and break it in the next. I did a record briefing in our assembly area five miles to the west of Arnhem, told Bernard Kilner and "A" Company to set off straight away so he could be firm base, and two minutes later with my "R" party hanging on the carrier like limpets, we rushed off into the night and into Arnhem.

We just missed a bit of German mortar hate as we crossed the bridge. A mile further on I lay with the commander of 146th Brigade under his armoured car and with the aid of the most treacherous torch yet devised heard the latest form—and then moved on to play hide and seek with the headquarters of 2nd S.W.B. among the workers' tenements. The S.W.B. were not where everyone expected them to be—even when I found them I was still not sure of the exact street and it was obvious that my plan was either going to need a lot of modification or a lot of luck.

For once the wireless refused to pick up Brigade. By the time I had come out from under the wireless scout car the S.W.B. headquarters had vanished again. Just in time—as the house crashed into the street—did I spot their wisdom. Then a sound of tramping feet—"A" Company at last, I thought. Instead, Hugh Le Messurier appeared leading my "rear" company, "B" Company. "A" Company's route had been blocked by the detonation of an ammunition truck of the machine gun battalion and would be at least an hour late. Anyhow Hugh did not raise an eyebrow when I told him to capture our original start line (perhaps his eyebrows had all been singed, as everywhere in Arnhem was burning).

Twenty minutes later he signalled his success, and the Sappers started clearing away a gap under the bridge for the rest of the Battalion. I chased off to join him. A new burning inferno forced me to change my route and soon my party was lost in the maze of streets. There was only one solution—out came the street map and a torch, and after a short visit to the enemy lines we found our way reading the street names at the corner houses. Everyone, especially the company commanders, treated every new horror as a great joke, and by dawn the bottle-neck of roads, Arnhem station and the first high ground was ours.

At 1000 hours we joined in a concerted Brigade movement to secure all the high ground, and thus allow a start to be made on the big bridge which was to span the Rhine alongside the ruins of the old Arnhem bridge, for which the Airborne Division had fought for so long. As I have seen more than one battalion literally wiped out in earlier days by counter-attack in street fighting, we pushed on that day carefully, watching our flanks. The Boche were completely out of the picture. Little parties of them would come down the street to reinforce positions captured hours before.

By 1600 hours we had cleared all but the last day's objective—a large series of cross roads on the highest point outside Arnhem. Barry Kavanagh and "D" Company and Hugh with his "B" Company had been told hours before that this would be their task. We decided to infiltrate up to the feature but with our fingers on the guns of the tanks and artillery in case anything happened. It did.

No. 18 Platoon (Ken Evans) drew blood on the left, so Barry pulled his back, made a new plan with the Company and was soon on the feature after a copybook attack. There were 20 prisoners here and a number of dead. The Boche reaction was confusing. He first plastered our area unmercifully for half an hour in which brave C.S.M. Fellows of "A" Company was killed. Just before nightfall he sent in a company of infantry supported by three French Renault tanks to re-occupy the cross roads. Prisoners said they had no idea we were there. "D" Company made short work of the complete outfit.

The night passed without further sensation. A Canadian armoured division passed through early next morning and drove parts of the Boche line back. A readjustment of the Brigade front put Gerald Fancourt and "C" Company into Arnhem Zoo, and in half an hour he was on the air offering the Brigade command a live Polar bear to replace the wooden one on his caravan.

There was no respite. At 5 o'clock next morning we followed the R.S.F. out of Arnhem along the great autobahn leading west to Rotterdam; by midday half Ede was captured and, mounted on tanks, "C" Company, gallantly led by the carrier platoon, rapidly pushed south six miles to the Rhine, thus taking the day's objective of 56th Brigade. I had a very cool reception from the commander of 56th Brigade when he arrived at Wageningen that night! Jack Illingworth, the carrier platoon commander, was blown up on a mine and one of his crew killed, but injured and shaken he carried on. He won an M.C.

Another readjustment that night brought us back to Ede and the most fantastic situation this war. We dug in around houses while the inhabitants celebrated inside. The Boche had gone back five miles to the Grebbe line, and our startling advance was halted while negotiations opened for the passage of food convoys through the Boche lines for the starving people of North-west Holland. We eased a little closer to Klomp, held by a section according to the "I" boys, but actually two companies, and it was in the small holdings here that we heard the final surrender news.

On 7th May we passed through Wageningen again and into German-held Holland—through crowds of cheering Dutch folk shouting "Thank you, Tommy," and kidnapping the crew of any carrier which slowed up. And standing scowling in the crowds were hundreds of German soldiers still fully armed!

The plan was for the 49th Division to disarm the three divisions holding the Grebbe line based on Hilversum and Utrecht, while the following day the Canadian 1st Division went on to The Hague and Rotterdam to put the coastal divisions behind the wire of their own defences. Our "customers" were our old opponents of 4th December, 1944, the 6th German Parachute Division, who had found us in the way when they tried to take the Nijmegen bridge. The word quickly went round the Germans that the "Dukes" were coming along. Perhaps that's why we had not the slightest trouble with them thereafter.

They first passed completely equipped through our "sausage machine." They dumped personal small arms, binoculars and watches in one house with "A" Company; then passed on to the open fields where their larger weapons, steel helmets, anti-gas kit and all the other multitudinous impedimenta of the division was stacked. For two days roads were blocked by hundreds of horse-drawn carts—the platoon trucks of one of the crack German divisions! Afterwards the Germans marched into a large wood, where we guarded them for a week as they made themselves fit for their long march back to prison camps in Northern Germany. I had one exhausting day inspecting every unit of two brigade groups. It had its compensations—the vast German entourage of commanders and staff officers in jack boots and greatcoats was reduced to one officer at the end of the day. The commander had fallen straddling a dyke and the jack boots of his staff had pinched their toes too much."

The troops made many friends in Holland and before they left visited all the great cities.

On V.E. Day I spoke to all companies in turn congratulating the men on their fine bearing throughout the campaign, and a message was sent to the Colonel of the Regiment (see page 135). A memorial service was held a week later.

On 12th May I attended with the Adjutant (Capt. W. L. Benton), Majors Kavanagh and Thomlinson and 60 men, the Divisional thanksgiving service in Utrecht Cathedral, and on 30th May six officers and 180 men marched past Prince Bernhard during the Canadian Army victory parade in The Hague.

And so the great crusade came to an end.

On 1st June our missionary work of re-educating the Germans began in the Ruhr, south of the devastation of Hamm, Dortmund and Essen. We took over from the Americans who stayed a week longer with us until they found it wasn't worth while waiting for a 20-ton flat car to take a 45-ton tank.

At the moment in 49th Division each battalion has the task of keeping law and order in either a stadtkreis—a city, or a landkreis, normally the size of a small British county. We are in the Ennepe Ruhr Kreis with headquarters at Gevelsberg. As it is a big area we have two companies of Belgians and a battery of heavy artillery under command. Our job is to see that the Germans carry out the orders of military government in the area and to take appropriate action if they don't. At the moment they are docile. We've had the additional tasks of gathering and removing over 1,000 tons of German ammunition and battle equipment and nearly 1,000 army vehicles in every state of repair—all inside the Kreis—beside feeding and generally administering 20,000 foreign slave workers and ex P.W. This has involved intensive patrolling to prevent the Russians from taking summary revenge.

We have seen for ourselves some of the horrors of the Nazi New Order. "B" Company found the bodies of 20 Russians and Jews who three months ago had been shot in the back and toppled into a bomb crater inside the steel works at which they were doing slave work. Everywhere are the small camps in which these forced workers were kept, often 100 in one Nissen hut.

Until now every company has been on detachment, but we are concentrating in civilian houses which have been turned into a military compound in Gevelsberg. Part of our command post has been turned into a memorial chapel for over 130 dead and 500 hundred wounded, while in the entrance hall are the finely executed shields of the towns in which we have fought and various mementos. Outside is the Battalion flag which has flown at headquarters throughout the campaign, and our Battalion battle honour board with the great places of memory—102, Fontenay, Cagny, le Havre, Turnhout, Schanker, Roosendaal, Haalderen, Arnhem, Wageningen.

We bestow some of our greatest pride on the Iron Duke Club (with a swinging inn sign based on the cover of the Regimental magazine) and the Battalion Band (conducted by C.Q.M.S. Watkins) which is playing once again. Our U.K. business manager, Major S. E. Baker, O.C. of the Depot party, who has helped us in a thousand and one ways, almost ran himself into a court-martial sending our instruments to Germany within a month of the surrender.

"The Iron Duke" was opened by our previous Commanding Officer so beloved in the Battalion—Brigadier J. H. O. Wilsey, D.S.O.—on Waterloo Day, 18th June, which for the 7th is the anniversary of the great battle at Pt. 102 in Normandy last year. There was a special parade, and at night an officers' cocktail party to which all Dukes' officers in the Division came. Col. D. Strangeways also came from I. Corps.

"B" Company have won the cricket and swimming competitions; "C" Company the athletics; and Sp. Company the football.

So far, except for a few officers, we have been kept intact, but we are threatened with a reduction in numbers soon. Personally I feel we shall have to occupy Germany for 50 years—with a much smaller army of course. The War Office policy at the moment is to keep all T.A. battalions out here intact. It's a good thing for the soldier—nothing is worse than losing one's friends when one needs them most.

HERE ARE SOME ITEMS OF PERSONAL INTEREST.

DEPARTURES.—(a) ON RELEASE.—Capt. B. Temple, our most valued Q.M. for three years, R.Q.M.S. E. Bailey, C.S.M. S. Berry, Sgts. W. A. Charlesworth, and W. Embleton, Ptes. A. Hirst, who joined the Battalion in 1922, A. Whyte and G. B. Buckley.

(b) ON POSTING.—The second-in-command, Major J. R. Rollin (to be A.A. and Q.M., 49th Division), ; Capt. B. M. Kilner, Lts. D. P. Post, H. R. Boarer, L. G. H. Culy, J. D. Delaney, P. A. Debieux, S. G. M. Shires (on posting to S.E.A.C.); Capt. D. H. King (to O.R.G. C.O. O.R.D. C.A., as staff captain).

ARRIVALS.—Capt. D. N. Simmonds, since injured in a riding accident and back in U.K.; Lts. G. P. Temple, E. Brown, S. T. Richards and M. Popplewell.

NEW AWARDS.—M.C.—Major G. V. Fancourt, Lt. F. M. Lyon, Capt. J. K. Illingworth, Capt. J. R. Cannon and Lt. V. L. Stevens. M.M.—Cpl. W. K. Chafer, Cpl. J. Smith, Pte. S. Williamson. Bar to M.M.—L/Cpl. A. D. Pickstone.

C. D. HAMILTON, Lt.-Col.,
Commanding 7th D.W.R.

MESSAGE TO THE COLONEL OF THE REGIMENT, COLONEL C. J. PICKERING, C.M.G., D.S.O.,

FROM LT.-COL. C. D. HAMILTON, D.S.O., COMMANDING OFFICER 7TH BATTALION
THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON'S REGIMENT, ON V.E. DAY, 8TH MAY, 1945.

The officers and men of the Battalion serving in the British Liberation Army have asked me to-day, V.E. Day, to forward to our Colonel our greetings and an expression of loyalty to the Regiment for whose traditions they have fought so well in the last year.

The Battalion has never in this campaign lost a battle. It has never given an inch of ground. No man has ever felt that the Germans were on top at any time. We know that man for man the Germans have been thoroughly whacked wherever we have met them.

We have had to pay the price in killed and wounded for this record. We honour their memory to-day. Those who have taken their place have carried on manfully the traditions of valour of the Battalion so well established in the grim battles of Normandy last June and July. The fact that these reinforcements have all fought so well, whatever their regiment, has been adequate tribute to the name and record of the Duke of Wellington's Regiment.

To-day we have completed the disarming of an old enemy, the German 6th Parachute Division. How long our stay in Germany will last, and what our future will be, I don't know, but whatever our destiny, this Battalion will always honour their Colonel and their Regiment. I hope that the Regiment will have a vigorous Old Comrades' Association in which the comradeship established throughout all Battalions by many very gallant companies of men will be further maintained.

(Sgd.) C. D. HAMILTON.

146th Regiment R.A.C. (D.W.R.)

ARAKAN, 1945.

After the capture of Ramore Island the next operation undertaken by 26th Indian Division involved a landing back on to the mainland again. The object of this operation was to cut the road Myebone—Taungup along which the Japs would have to retreat south in front of the other divisions of 15th Indian Corps; occupy Taungup, which is at the coastal end of the road running over the Arakan Yomas to Promé in the Irrawady valley; and to capture and prepare administrative areas before the monsoon.

This operation was of the type that was termed locally a "Chaung crawl," since all the waterborne approach had to be made up the network of estuaries and rivers which run through the mangrove swamps on that part of the coast. This type of operation became quite commonplace to the troops of 15th Indian Corps last season, but this particular one was on a larger scale than any that had been done previously.

The operation was mounted from Kyauk-pyu on the north coast of Ramree Island. The approach was made up the Thangzit river and the Mai Chaung, and the landing at Letpan, the distance by water being about 60 miles. All troops of the assault force were carried in landing craft and light naval ships.

The old bugbear of the shortage of craft, that hampered us all through this season's operations, was still present. As a result, only a small detachment of the Regiment took part, again commanded by Alan Bucknell. The 4th Indian Brigade Group did the assault, the regimental detachment being in support of a battalion of the Green Howards which made the initial landing. A good number of deceptive operations had taken place during the previous days and it is probable that the Japs were deceived as to the point of attack. In any case the landing was unopposed and a beach area was quickly established.

On the day following the advance south commenced. Movement off the road was impossible in most places owing to the thick jungle. The road itself had quite a good surface as the Japs had been

making considerable use of it, but, as was always the case in the Arakan, numerous diversions had to be made by our sappers, frequently under fire, in order to get the tanks over the chaungs. The battalion of 4th Infantry Brigade leap-frogged forward, a troop of tanks always moving in support of the advancing battalion. The road was frequently under fire from L.M.G. detachments in the jungle-covered hills through which it ran, and from artillery and various types of mortars. The tanks did a good bit of "prophylactic" shooting, which usually succeeded in clearing out the snipers and L.M.Gs. posts. Two major water obstacles, the Lamu Chaung and the Sabyin Chaung, had to be crossed, one of them entailing the use of landing craft. After a month of living by the sea on Ramree Island the climate on the mainland was very oppressive. The tank crews did not have a comfortable time and care had to be taken in avoiding heat stroke.

During the advance to Taungup, a distance of some 50 miles, there were various interesting episodes in which the tanks took a leading part.

The first occurred early on when a detachment of five Jap tankettes were reported advancing up the road towards the beach area at Letpan. The tankette is not a very formidable A.F.V., but on this occasion our tanks were still on the north bank of the Mai Chaung and the 25-pounders were only just commencing to land. So there was a definite risk that the tankettes might get into the beach administrative area. However, luckily for us two L.C.T. that had been landing stores were available, so two troops were quickly got across. They moved down the road in support of a battalion of 7th Rajputana Rifles, while a company of the 13th Frontier Force Rifles worked round and established a block behind the tankettes. Caught between the two we hoped that the tankettes would try to fight it out with our tanks, but the Japs (quite understandingly!) refused to face the issue. They abandoned their vehicles, setting fire to three and running one over the khudside. The fifth was abandoned intact and our chaps immediately took it over to act as an ammunition carrier!

A day or two later a Jap 75mm. firing from a dugout was causing the infantry considerable casualties and delay. A troop of tanks was sent out to deal with it. The ground precluded a close approach under cover. The leading tank came into view of the gun crew at 1,400 yards and proceeded to shoot it out. The enemy shooting was pretty accurate, but in spite of the dust caused by the bursting shells the tank commander rapidly found his target and destroyed the gun.

Probably the most successful little action fought by the tanks took place at a feature known as Hill 370 towards the end of the advance. This feature was an important one dominating the road. It had already been captured by one battalion, but the Japs had counter-attacked them off it. An attack was then put in by the 13th F.F.R. supported by Gordon Buckley's troop. The tank support was so heavy and accurate that the infantry reached the top of the hill without coming under serious fire at all, subsequently destroying the enemy on the position in hand-to-hand fighting. The Brigade Commander said that this operation was a model of tank and infantry co-operation in that type of country. The Commanding Officer of the 13th F.F.R. presented a Japanese flag captured on the position to the troop leader.

On reaching the Taungup the infantry occupied monsoon positions. As there was no further work for the tanks in their proper role they were used as artillery. The 82nd West African Division relieved our old friends of the 26th Indian Division, and the tanks were put under command of the C.R.A. They were put into dug-in positions close to the artillery gun area, and the tank crews had a good deal of fun carrying out long-range artillery shoots with the help of air observation. At the same time instruction was carried on to teach the Africans some tank gunnery. In June the tanks were handed over to 82nd W.A. Division and the men withdrawn, some to go home on repatriation and the remainder to rejoin the Regiment, which was by then back in India.

R. L. AGNEW, Lt.-Col.

WATERLOO DAY, 1945.

Waterloo Day, an unaccustomed holiday for many new personnel of an R.A.C. Regiment in India, was celebrated while one squadron was still in Burma helping to introduce the Japs to their Waterloo.

The day was pleasantly spent. Under cool skies which promised monsoons, donkey races and a "Fun Fair" were held. There was a race for officers, one for sergeants and so on, with a final which made Cpl. Pete Smith champion jockey, best able to carry his mount between his knees. His ass was the pacemaker or pathfinder—with its brethren in pursuit in most of the races. Sgt. Catt was well up, as befitted a former "donkey walloper." Capt. Gorst, mounted for the part, acted as starter for two tonga pony races, but his advice could not prevent favourites cutting corners, and the tote paid rich dividends.

The side-shows, run by sergeants for the commercial benefit of the squadron funds, included such old favourites as cocoanut shies, treasure hunts, etc. The roulette stand was so popular with the camp followers that no one else could approach it.

The afternoon was given to a swimming gala in a bath so small that when the adjutant, Capt. Bilham, and S.S.M. Graham, both men of considerable displacement, competed in the long plunge, the spectators thought that the already promised monsoon had arrived. "B" Squadron scored a remarkable success, taking first three places in the last race to beat "H.Q." Squadron by 24 points to 23.

OFFICERS' MESS.

The Station Officers' Club was taken over completely, and with dance (and later) song, entertained our guests to a very enjoyable evening.

A perfect drill was laid on by the C.O. for "Drinkers" to entertain the "Drinkers," and "Dancers" to entertain the "Dancers." Our newly-joined, fresh-faced subalterns carried out the latter role admirably, but it is doubtful, from recent observations, if they can be classified for the same role next year.

Other news is of our regret in seeing old stalwarts depart to England's green and pleasant land:— Dick Agnew (late C.O.), Alex. Luhrs, Cookie (Mexican Pete), Q.M. Dutot, "Busty" Bilham, and others who were the P.M.C.'s joy in regard to bar sales.

SERGEANTS' MESS.

All members took an active part in the day's celebration and in the evening Gunga Din Graham (S.S.M.) again excelled in the part of Dangerous Dan McGru.

58th Anti-Tank Regiment, R.A.

The last news of the Regiment was published in THE IRON DUKE in February, 1941 (see page 32 of No. 48), when it was recounted how two troops of H.Q. of one battery had landed at Calais in May, 1940, from which only six men returned safely. Major S. E. Baker has now received the war diary of the Regiment for publication in the History he is to compile, and from it we print a short summary.

After service in Scotland and England the Regiment embarked at Liverpool in two portions on 22nd December, 1942, and 6th January, 1943, and arrived at Algiers in the latter month, some guns of one troop being lost by enemy action at sea. They next went into action in February in Tunisia, and were engaged in the heavy fighting of that month and in March, Lt.-Col. Davidson, the C.O., being killed by a sniper on 2nd March while on reconnaissance. In the final advance they took part in the mopping-up operations south of Tunis. During the campaign one Military Medal and five Croix de Guerre were awarded to members of the Regiment, and four others were mentioned in despatches.

In September, 1943, two batteries of the Regiment landed at Salerno in the initial stages of the operation, the remainder landing on D plus 5, on 14th September. Here they took part in the heavy fighting and knocked out six tanks. Under heavy enemy pressure one 17-pounder was lost.

After the fall of Naples the Regiment took part in further heavy fighting on the Volturno, and after a spell of training again went into action in January, 1944, in the area of the Garigliano.

On 1st February personnel of two batteries under command of Major A. S. McDonald were formed into an infantry company to hold a section of the line near Roccavedandro, and on the 15th Major McDonald received wounds from which he died the following morning. On the night of 24th-25th February a German patrol was ambushed, and in recognition of this and the good work done throughout this spell of infantry service, a special message of congratulation was received from the Divisional Commander.

In February and March the Regiment embarked in two portions at Naples and landed in Egypt, and eventually moved up into Palestine. Some months of intensive training followed, and in July they returned to Italy, disembarking at Taranto. They then joined the 8th Army and took part in the operations against the Gothic line in September. In October they were engaged in operations culminating in the capture of Forlì. Great difficulties were overcome in the many crossings of rivers in all these battles, the last action for the Regiment to be engaged in being the crossing of the river Lamone on the night of 3rd December, 1944, and subsequent days' fighting.

The Regiment had a few weeks' rest and then moved down to Taranto. Two troops were sent to Greece for garrison duty near Athens, rejoining the Regiment in March, 1945. For the rest of the war the Regiment was at various places in Italy, and on 9th May they moved up to the Austrian-Italian border.

During the Italian campaign four Military Crosses and two Military Medals were gained by members of the Regiment and seven were mentioned in despatches.

The total casualties of the Regiment from leaving England until the end of the war in Europe were:—Seven officers killed, two missing and ten wounded and 35 other ranks killed, 34 missing and 112 wounded.

No. 4 Holding Battalion.

Since November last year, when Holding Battalions were first formed, many changes have taken place in West Hartlepool. On the first day "Tissy" was to be seen scouring the town seeking the Battalion he had been sent to command. Shortly afterwards, however, the permanent staff started to arrive; it included R.Q.M.S. Smith, a figure now well known to many "Dukes," and who must have nearly created a record, having completed 35 years' service with the T.A. Very soon numbers began to swell until all billets were full, and the Battalion was working to full capacity.

The few of us who remain with the Battalion on the staff see many old friends both officers and other ranks. At first it was casualties from B.L.A., and with each new batch that arrived further news was eagerly sought as to how friends we had left behind were faring.

Now, however, we collect news from all parts of the world, from India, Far and Middle East, as well as from North-west Europe, and we are starting to hear many inside stories of life in P.W. camps as the repatriated prisoners become fit again and report for duty. Several officers returning to us are finding themselves with a Dukers' Battalion at last after having been detached from the Regiment for many years. The majority of those that come here, however, say good-bye to us very shortly after, as they once again depart for distant lands or an appointment in this country, and it always appears that no sooner do we get used to one set of faces than we find that they are no longer with us.

A most successful week-end was enjoyed by a contingent sent from here for the Freedom of the City of Halifax ceremony, and we were privileged to provide the "Colour Party."

Capt. R. P. Robinson has managed to organise many cricket matches between companies and it is hoped that shortly we shall be challenging neighbouring units.

Soon also the football season will be upon us and we can look forward to a good season. Whilst we have Capt. Hesford with us our goal should never be in danger.

We have also started to say good-bye to many old friends and speed them on their way to civvy street. "Tissy" has now left to join his family who, we understand, have just welcomed a second daughter. Col. Howcroft also passed through this Battalion on his way to become a civilian again.

We hope in view of the recent news from Japan that even more "Dukes" will be returning shortly, and that our major task will change from sending men away from home to that of most welcoming everybody back to England.

10th Battalion.

During the comparatively short space of time since last we wrote our notes for THE IRON DUKE, momentous and historical events have taken place. V.E. Day has come and gone; the whirlwind General Election campaign with all its hopes and fears and surprises is already past history; and now at the moment of writing, to the echoing crash of the atomic bomb, the world waits breathlessly for the news that the Japanese war is over. "The tumult and the shouting dies; the captains and the kings depart," but here at Felton life pursues the even tenor of its way as serenely as ever.

The Battalion sent a contingent—some hundred strong—to the ceremonial presentation of the Freedom of Halifax to the Regiment on Waterloo Day, and for those who were privileged to take part in the parade it will remain an unforgettable experience, as well as a unique opportunity for renewing old friendships.

As is usual these days, comings and goings have been far too numerous to make it possible to mention all. Among the officers we have recently welcomed are Major A. P. Mitchell and Lt. J. O. Urmson both of whom have seen considerable service overseas with other Battalions of the Regiment since the beginning of the war. Major Sir Nugent Everard, Bt., and Major George Laing have both left us to take up other appointments. During the past few weeks many old and tried friends have found their way back to civilian life. To R.S.M. Bagshaw, R.Q.M.S. Bainbridge, C.S.M. Bye, C.S.M. Hirst Sgt. Bye and Sgt. Flynn and all who went with them we say "Good-bye," and wish them all the very best of luck for the future.

We have had all too few opportunities for sport, but several very successful inter-company football matches have been played; and judging from some of the form displayed, it seems a great pity that it has not been possible to get a regular Battalion team going. We have no facilities for cricket here but have had two very enjoyable away matches against the I.T.C. at Brancepeth, although on neither occasion could we field a team capable of making much of a fight against opponents who play regularly each week. The Battalion team finished third in the Northumberland District road walk, and three of its members were chosen to represent the District in the Northern Command championships. Two of these—L/Cpls. Archer and Lintell—went on to represent Northern Command in the Army championships.

We are expecting a visit from the Colonel of the Regiment in the very near future and we are confident that he will find in this Battalion, as in all others, the best traditions of the Regiment still very much alive.

COMPANY NOTES.

"A" COMPANY.—Our function in life remains the same as ever, but there have been many changes in staff. We congratulate Lt. Mitchell on the occasion of the birth of a son, and send our best wishes to mother and baby.

Lt. Mitchell and C.S.M. Nicholson have left us to take appointments as W.T.O. and R.Q.M.S. respectively; we were sorry to lose them, and welcome in their place Lt. Glasby and C.S.M. (Buddy) Rogers.

A founder member of the original "A" Company, C.Q.M.S. Fisher, has successfully indented for a hat, bowler, and is now being initiated in the mysteries of civilian life—(life, civilian)—after his long service. We are also sorry to lose Sgts. Sharp and Boshell, posted to another company.

"B" COMPANY.—Since writing our last notes there have been few changes in the Company, and we are still jogging along guided by Capt. Oxley, who has dropped his nom-de-plume "Smack On," since his catchword has become "See what I mean?"

It would appear that the clarion call in the Battalion at the moment is "Pass it to Baker," as in addition to post-graduate training and drafting company we seem to find endless fatigues, and judging by the number of men the Q.M. has had in recent weeks we feel sure he will one day compensate us by having a "buckshee" clothing exchange for permanent staff.

The office staff still handle with ease the apparent millions of bodies passing our way, and it is amazing how the C.Q.M.S. (Nap Stone) ever manages to get the drafts complete with kit. Cpl. Whittaker, assisted by Pte. Woodman, juggles all day with numerous rolls trying to find out who's who and what's what, and L/Cpl. Whitworth still succeeds in making everybody happy with their pay problems.

C.S.M. McDonald has now started counting the Sundays he still has to do in the Army, and by the time these notes are published hopes to be wearing his gent.'s natty suiting. At times, to hear him talk, we have often wondered how the railway company has managed to exist without him during the last few years.

We were sorry to say good-bye to Lt. "Kitchener" Smart who has left us for the I.T.C., and welcome into our midst Lts. Dinkie Davies, Bob Forsyth and Junior Church. Others too numerous to mention have passed our way, and we take this opportunity of wishing them the best of luck wherever they are. Congratulations to L/Sgts. Atkinson and Henry, also Cpls. Welch, Almond, Stone and L/Cpls. Morgan and Lumb on their promotions and posting to the Minimum Cadre.

Twice in the last month we have proved ourselves victors in the soccer "Knock-out" competition, and congratulate all concerned on their fine team spirit.

"C" COMPANY.—The life of the Company continues in the strain of anticipation of peace; the Minimum Cadre living and breathing "What group are you? or Are you of the select Class B?" Yet work carries on and the usual standard of training is maintained.

To uphold morale and aid finance a series of dances has been held in the village hall. These have been an enormous success both to soldiers and civilians alike, but a headache to our administrative officer (Mr. Poole). We welcome Capt. Charlesworth as second-in-command of the Company and congratulate him on his recent promotion.

Lt. Wilkinson, our training officer, appears to have been bitten by the same bug as our previous training officer and is on a perpetual course.

We have just been favoured with a platoon of K.O.Y.L.Is. for their period of training, thereby providing a spirit of rivalry within the Company. The K.O.Y.L.I. have proved to be worthy rivals.

"D" COMPANY.—Changes in the Company have come so thick and fast during the last few months that they are difficult to record. First of all "Skipper" Tony Peel left for another company. All were sorry to see him go, and wish him the best of luck. His place has been taken by Capt. Bill Burton. John Wood has left us for the dizzy heights of an educational college and we welcome back Ted Rontree after a spell in hospital.

C.S.M. Farmer is now fulfilling the duties of a/R.S.M. and the breach is being filled for the moment by Sgt. "Red Row" Atkinson. We were sorry to lose Sgt. Barrett to "A" Company but congratulate him on his promotion, and in his place we welcome Sgt. Sharp.

"E" COMPANY.—We have had many changes since we last published our notes in the magazine. We still have at the wheel Capt. Jack Vessey, now assisted by Lt. M. E. K. Dixon as second-in-command, and Lt. Johnny Rayner as training officer, who chases the Company around from morning till night on field tactics, but most of all delights in taking the Company on his miniature sand table complete in every description. We were sorry to lose our C.S.M. "Dickie" Bye, on his release to Civvy Street and hope he has now settled down and will make good use of the tankard presented to him by the officers and N.C.Os. of the Company. To him and his family we give our best wishes.

We offer our congratulations to "Benny Lynch" (Sgt. Benn), "Sandy" Richardson, "Snatcher" Wright on promotion to sergeant, also Harry Scarle and "Bobby" Hunter to lance-sergeant, and L/Cpls. Hollyman and "Triss" Sharp to corporal. To the remainder of the lance-corporals who are too many to name we offer our congratulations also. To the N.C.Os. who have joined us from other companies we give a welcome and hope they will settle down in our happy band and have a pleasant tour of duty.

The Company was successful in winning the inter-company football competition by defeating "B" Company three goals to one, led by Cpl. Arnie Marden and 2nd Lt. Tregening (the dashing left half).

"F" COMPANY.—We have little of outstanding interest to report on since the last issue of THE IRON DUKE. Amongst new arrivals to the Company we welcome Lt. J. O. Urmson, recently repatriated from Oflog 79, who was taken prisoner while serving with the 1st Battalion in the Anzio beach-head.

Within the last fortnight we have had to say good-bye to C.S.M. Hirst. "Big Joe" will be missed by all ranks and he takes with him into "civvy street" the best wishes of all members of the Company. Others who have lately left us include Sgt. Warren and Cpl. Ironside, both of whom, as representatives of the arm of the law, have come out before their time under Class "B." Our one remaining ex-P.C., Cpl. Stewart, is, of course, green with envy.

Congratulations to Sgt. Reid and Cpl. Robinson on their recent promotion.

D.W.R. Infantry Training Centre.

OFFICERS' MESS.

The end of hostilities in Europe was duly celebrated in our own inimitable way. A V.E. party was organised and held towards the end of May, and in everyone's opinion it was an outstanding success.

On 17th June a detachment of Dukes under Capt. "Monsoon" Gilbey set out for Halifax to take part in the ceremony conferring the Freedom of Halifax on the Regiment. The ceremony took place on the following day, Waterloo Day, and those taking part in the ceremony were supported by a large percentage of the Dukes' officers from the I.T.C. who attended as spectators. Major C. M. L. McCoy and Capt. E. Browne, M.B.E., of the D.L.I., were invited to join the party and both pronounced it a "reeght good do." Our sincere thanks are due to Mrs. McBain who, at very short notice, undertook to repair the Regimental Colours which had been torn during a rehearsal.

The corporals of the I.T.C. were very surprised at their unexpected defeat by the officers at a cricket match held in July; we congratulate Peter Garnett on his score of 25 runs, which included two sixes and cost Colin Hill two pints. Our success was largely due to Topper Browne and Joe Veitch, D.L.I., whose brilliant bowling completely shattered our opponents. In the return match we sustained a heavy defeat. Peter Garnett distinguished himself by dropping three catches on the boundary and was immediately presented with an enamel bucket, much to the amusement of the spectators. We congratulate Jesse Owens Thornton on being second in the Northern Command 100 yards open.

On 28th July, in glorious weather, our inter-company unit sports were held. There was a very good attendance and keen interest was displayed throughout. Inter-company competition ran high; congratulations to "B" Company on winning the challenge cup. The opposite numbers' race provided rare amusement and in spite of the fact that many of our team were not built for speed, their efforts were crowned with success. Amongst the spectators was George Laing, and it was a pleasure to have him with us in the Mess for a few days before he took up a training appointment. We wish him the best of luck.

We were sorry to lose Jack Lawson when he was demobilised at the end of July. Jack was one of the best and we shall miss his pleasant company at all times. All the best to him as Mr. Jack Lawson. We extend a warm welcome to new arrivals—namely, David Horsfall, whose brother John is so well known to most of us, Widdas, Jowett, Thompson, Smart and Lea.

SERGEANTS' MESS.

Demobbed and about to be demobbed is news. Should these notes read like a railway arrival and departure board, then please don't blame us.

Familiar faces we had accepted as part of the Mess itself have vanished, age and service groups are no respectors of persons. The few that have already gone are but the vanguard of a host of others; even as we write, the next group are lined up for the off. Our R.S.M. (R.S.M. Jamieson, D.L.I.) was amongst the early starters; in his place we received R.S.M. Scott, who soon settled down. With an almost complete change of staff, plus a revision of the ante-room, he is certainly making the sparks fly; welcome and the best of luck. All the best to R.S.M. (Jammy)—we'll be seeing you.

C.Q.M.S. "Percy" Hickox no longer aims an artful arrow, while his compatriots C.Q.M.S. "Topper" Brown and C.Q.M.S. "Crafty" Smith drink his beer. We wonder if C.S.M. "Jim" Oakes can keep his old briar burning on civvy rations, or if C.S.M. Prince cooks his wife's breakfast. The empty seat by the radio was "Robbo's" (C.S.M. Robinson); his "small top" group disbanded when the chairman left. To some this civvy street will be a new adventure, to others it means taking up the threads of the old life; whatever it means we wish them all good luck and many happy re-unions.

In the wake of the demobbed came the promotions. We congratulate C.S.M. "Peggy" Martin and C.Q.M.S.s Gommersall, Skipper and Theaker. To the more modest rank of sergeant, congratulations to Sgts. Baxter, Close, Holstead, Kerrod, Ramsey, Landale and Wilmott. Whilst we are on the subject of congratulations, Sgt. Collier receives a slice on his winning the mile for the third year in succession in the I.T.C. sports meeting. Condolences to S.I.M. Wilkinson on the loss of his golf ball; what offers for a set of four clubs?

We announce with regret the death of one of our most popular Mess members, Sgt. Anderson. His most unfortunate accident was a great shock to all who knew him. Our deepest sympathy goes to his wife and family.

With strong rumours of a demob. speed-up we close in a whirl, in fact almost "Group Happy."

CORPORALS' MESS.

Quite a number of social activities have taken place since our last notes were written—at the end of the football season the sergeants inflicted a decisive defeat upon us, but any disappointment was soon dispelled by the social evening provided in the Sergeants' Mess afterwards. In order to make amends for that defeat, two cricket matches were arranged against the sergeants, but unfortunately only one match was played owing to the vagaries of the Durham climate. However, in the match

played the sergeants took their punishment well and were soundly beaten. The members of the Sergeants' Mess were also entertained in the Corporals' Mess, and a very successful and enjoyable evening was spent by all.

Our next sporting event was the cricket match against the officers. It was a great shock to all and sundry when the officers defeated us very soundly, and it was with great feelings of revenge that we waited for the return match. This was duly contested and the result made all members throw out their chests whenever an officer mentioned cricket. The old inseparables "Bill" and "Harry" made a first wicket stand of 185 runs before "Bill" had the misfortune to hit his own wicket when 76. Spectators swear it was due to the stertorous breathing of the fieldsmen that "fogged" his glasses. In spite of numerous "elevations" and the presentation of a large 13-inch bucket to Capt. Garnett by Major Hill, "Harry" was still not out 105 when declaration was made at 203 for 2. To finish off a grand day "Sid" collected 8 for 29 and the officers were all out for 65. We must however congratulate the officers on the marvellous display of good things when refreshment time was called.

The weekly whist drives in the Mess are still going strong and are as popular as ever, in spite of the fact that the F.P.I. seem to hold a monopoly in prize winning.

Many changes have taken place since the last notes were written—quite a number of our members having moved into the higher circle of the Sergeants' Mess; every good wish goes with them. Last, but not least of these changes, is the departure of R.S.M. Jamieson (D.L.I.), who has been "bowler hatted." He will be missed by all members of the Corporals' Mess, and we send our best wishes with him into his new sphere.

Once again before closing we welcome all new members to the Mess and send good wishes to all Dukes wherever they may be.

COMPANY NOTES.

"B" COMPANY.—Since the last IRON DUKE went to press we have celebrated "Victory in Europe" Day and we are satisfied in the knowledge that one half of the job is completed. We would like to take the opportunity to pay tribute to our comrades in the "Dukes" who played their part in the final European campaign with such creditable and final results. The news from Brancepeth is not nearly so sensational. The job of training still goes on—in fact V.E. Day seems to have stimulated the flow of intakes rather than retarded it.

C.S.M. "Shep" has recovered from his rugby injury and is now living a comparatively quiet life growing peas outside his quarters. His return to full duties caused us to lose C.S.M. "Johnny" Stork, whom we last heard to be "h" accentuating the positive somewhere in Germany. All our best wishes have gone with him. L/Cpl. Archer has left us to join the 10th and we welcome in his place L/Cpl. Eastwood. We congratulate Sgt. Kerrod on his promotion. All the P.S. are now "Group-Number" minded. We spend long periods calculating gratuities and trying to whittle our demob. numbers down. C.Q.M.S. Kennedy will have the distinction of being the first in the Company to return to civil life, and is making his preparations to leave with the next group. It is rumoured that the job of Company "Q" will be taken over by Sgt. Les. Farrar. Capt. Ellis has now left the Company to take over a corps training company. We wish him the very best of luck with his 72-hours' schemes, field firing exercises, and other forms of corps squad amusements. We are, of course, under the command again of Lt. Diggle; we hope that this time the position will be permanent, with the resultant promotion which we have long expected to see.

A barbed wire compound was built almost overnight in the camp; we believe its original purpose was to house members of the P.S. above Group 26, but for the time being it is accommodating German prisoners. We are pleased to note that their arrival has caused the disbanding of that popular comedy team—the I.T.C. working party.

We have done well at sport. We took first honours in the I.T.C. athletic meeting, and won the seven-a-side rugby competition.

"C" COMPANY.—The war in Europe has ended since our last issue and with it we have seen the departure to "civvy street" of some of our old Dukes, notable among them Percy Hickox. The writer of these notes was warned by him before he left that no caustic comments were to be made—as though we would! "So long, Percy, and bags of good luck. You—nice man!" Seriously, we wish all who have left us, or will have left when these notes are printed, all the luck and good fortune they richly deserve for the part they have taken in keeping this end of the war up and maintaining the good name of "Dukes." In the reshuffle we have seen Roy Theaker made C.Q.M.S., Jack Landale and Alf Baxter made sergeants, and Ernie Ricketts and Jack Stokes made corporals. Well done lads—good luck!

Sgt. Harry Cockerill coached our tug-of-war team in the recent inter-company sports and they won their contests comfortably. The team went to a sports meeting the following Saturday and reached the final against some of the best civvy teams in the district. At that rate they'll be "pulling up trees" soon, although the one they practise on still stands serenely down the back field. Gigilo Wilkie has been very quiet recently and in that sphere has dropped to second place in favour of Les Broadbent. The latter, not content with the local bus service, has brought his racing model here so that he can get off the mark quicker and it's a long way from—anyhow. The terrible twins, Temp.

and Taylor, have also left, complete with tandem, and we wonder how they are negotiating that hilly region they got to.

The Army is familiar with the scarcity of guardsmen in India. But now we learn that one of our former officers, 6ft. 2ins. Lt. 252 J. Cook, is out there. We imagine that he'll be straightening things out there, bags of bagging and "Get 'em in the book!" Roy Sharples has left us for that region, too, and our good wishes go with him.

"G" COMPANY.—We are not the same any more; early this month the two institutions (any other word would be an insult) "Robo" and "Topper" left us to exchange their authority here for permanent obedience to their better halves; best of luck to them both and to Pop Orchard, our ex-storeman. Their places have been ably filled by Martin and Gumersell, two of our original squad sergeants. We extend our congratulations to them, also to Sgts. Ramsay and Wilmot and Cpl. Kay on their recent promotions.

Capt. Guy Gilbey is still the boss, spending most of his time damping the enthusiasm of certain N.C.Os. who wield a perpetual paint-brush. Lately he has been employed as company gardener with the result that the flowers in front of the company office have nearly disappeared, to the chagrin of "Cyril." We were second in the garden competition. We welcome as our new second-in-command David Horsfall, just returned from the Far East (who on orders of a very high-ranking officer "nobbust just" cleared the water jump, putting the general in a very good humour). Also Charlie Berryman, who has returned to us after a short stay with the 10th Battalion.

Company training has now changed; we no longer send our men to the 10th Battalion but fit them up here for posting overseas. The change should make training more interesting all round, even if the programme is a bit of a headache to start with.

We were fairly successful in the sports, winning the cross-country running cup and tying with Baker Company for the first place in the athletics, although we lost the cup on the medley race; well wangled, Diggle, congrats.

"H" COMPANY.—Amidst the turmoil that has descended upon our community with the start of the demob. period, one is apt to forget the incidents that made news in more normal times. However, we will recount so far as we can such items of news that we can recall before and after that momentous happening. Firstly, from "J" we changed to "H," the reason being of course . . . well, your guess is as good as mine. After a few days of "amend to read as now shown"—sorry, I mean the old "H" Company" or "Well, what blue pencil company are you in now"? we settled down to our new title "J" (as you were) "H." (It's really quite simple when you get into it.)

Our first farewell was to our C.Q.M.S., (Crafty) Smith. We were really getting quite attached to our "Q." During his last few days his "I'm not rightly bothered" was a byword throughout the Company. Good luck, "Crafty," we'll be seeing you. "Whatcha Chum" Skipper, a dark horse in the "Q" stakes, came home in a canter, plus utility crowns. We gather he "wasn't rightly bothered." Congrats., Skip. Capt. H. J. Lawson, who has been our C.O. from the opening of the Company, was our next to go the way of all groups. From C.S.M. to sanitary man and trained soldier to trainee, his departure was felt as a personal loss. I echo the feelings of the whole Company, past and present, when I say "Good luck, and thanks for everything"! There were sighs of relief when Capt. J. H. P. Ellis took over the reins. He was not even mentioned by the usual "well-informed circles." Congratulations to Sgts. Holstead, Close and Cpl. Williams on their long overdue promotions. L/Cpl. Hudson, our storeman, took over I.T.C. postman; his successor, L/Cpl. Edmonds, recently promoted to his present rank, answers to "Tosh," not Corporal. Cpl. Shannon took full advantage of his ten days' leave by getting married. In answer to many correspondents, he did not write "Ten days that shook the world."

This season's I.T.C. sports meeting found us with a serious shortage of athletes. Thanks to Lt. Hutchinson's last-minute round-up and his personal prowess, we came through with anything but ignominy.

One of our squad sergeants detailing the route for a march received a message *via* the company runner, "2nd Lt. Blank says you will proceed by the Church Steves." The sergeant, after five minutes' frantic search of the map, was again approached by the same runner, "As you were, Sarge, I got it wrong, you'll go in shirt sleeves."

Overheard while waiting for transport:—Corporal to Sentry, "Is that a Don R., Sentry?" Sentry to Corporal, "No, Corporal, it's a B.S.A." Truth is stranger than fiction.

SPORT.

CRICKET.—This season has so far been the best ever since the formation of the I.T.C. The team, although not containing any county players, is very well balanced in batting and bowling and has so far won the majority of its matches, but has been robbed on at least three occasions by the curse of the cricketer—namely, rain. All the players are on top of their form and good scores have been recorded by Cpls. Horner, Bateman, Sidlow of the Dukes, Capt. Browne, Cpl. Firstbrook, L/Cpl. Mowbray of the Durhams. Wickets have fallen very regularly to Cpls. Townend, Horner, Coy and Sidlow, and especially to the former who is bowling better than ever this season. "H" Company "Dukes" are already in the final of the company knock-out competition and their hopes run high for the winning of this event.

ROAD WALKING.—The road walking team had a most successful season. For the second year in succession they "walked away" with the District competition and both the Northern Command inter-unit and inter-formation competitions, a really remarkable performance!

ATHLETICS.—The inter-company athletic meeting was held this year under exceptionally favourable weather conditions. The end of the afternoon found two Duke companies, "B" and "G," level on points—the challenge cup going to "B," who had won the medley relay race. 2nd Lt. Thornton won the individual 100 yards and Cpl. Walshaw, for the third year running, won the individual 220 yards. Once again Sgt. Collier proved himself in the mile and 2nd Lt. Bruce won the shot with a put of over 34½ feet. The individual high jump was won by Cpl. Glachan and the individual long jump was won by Cpl. Fox. 2nd Lt. Thornton has had a most successful season. He ran second in the Northern Command individual championships and took part in the Army finals in the individual 100 yards event.

DECORATIONS.

GEORGE CROSS.

CAPTAIN (NOW COLONEL) R. L. JEPHSON JONES, R.A.O.C., late The Duke of Wellington's Regiment.

Colonel Jones and Major W. M. Eastman, R.A.O.C., were awarded the George Cross for a joint achievement (bomb-disposal) in Malta during the enemy's concentrated air attack on the fortress in 1940. They were both invested by H.M. The King at Buckingham Palace last January.

We are indebted to the Editor of the *R.A.O.C. Gazette* for the above information. Unfortunately he was unable to obtain a copy of the full citation for security reasons, but the following is an abbreviated one:—"Showing most conspicuous gallantry in carrying out hazardous work in a very brave manner."

Colonel Jones joined the Regiment on 29th January, 1925, and served with both the 1st and 2nd Battalions and under the Colonial Office until he transferred to the R.A.O.C. shortly before the war. (Portrait opposite page 117.)

The following citation of an award made in 1940 has only recently been released:—

MILITARY CROSS.

CAPTAIN (NOW LT.-COLONEL) ROBERT KENAH EXHAM.

Throughout the operations Captain Exham has been staff captain to the 3rd Infantry Brigade. Under all circumstances and frequently under the most difficult conditions the administrative arrangements for the Brigade invariably worked without a hitch. This was mainly due not only to Capt. Exham's ability, untiring energy and grasp of the situation, but also to his frequent visits to forward units in order to obtain first-hand knowledge of their requirements and difficulties. These visits were paid with complete disregard for all personal danger. To him is due the satisfactory interior administration of the Brigade throughout. As a result there was never any shortage of administrative necessities. Further, in order to ensure that the administrative arrangements worked smoothly until the last possible moment, Capt. Exham remained behind on the beaches after the bulk of the Brigade had embarked. As a result he did not leave Dunkirk until the following night. During the last day he afforded invaluable assistance in organising arrangements for the final evacuation.

The following is a list of citations of immediate awards to officers and other ranks for service in North-western Europe:—

BAR TO DISTINGUISHED SERVICE ORDER.

3944 WS/MAJ. T/LT.-COL. (NOW BRIGADIER) R. N. H. C. BRAY.

On 17th January, 1945, Lt.-Col. Bray, as the senior officer in 5th Infantry Brigade, was required to assume command of the Brigade owing to the indisposition of the brigadier. On 18th January the enemy attacked Zetten and it was necessary to stage a Brigade counter-attack with 56th Brigade, who were in Divisional reserve. Lt.-Col. Bray made a clear and simple plan which was put into execution rapidly and successfully. The ensuing operation lasted for four days. Throughout this period Lt.-Col. Bray handled his own infantry together with the supporting arms which included tanks, M.G.s., 4.2 mortars, artillery and engineers with great ability. The battle itself involved much hard fighting in the village of Zetten and near the Kasteel at Hemmen. At all difficult moments Lt.-Col. Bray was at hand to guide and assist his battalion commanders. This was the first occasion on which Lt.-Col. Bray had ever commanded a Brigade and the whole operation was completely unexpected, yet he handled the situation like an experienced brigadier. Thanks to his personal example and leadership, as well as his competent conduct of the forces under his command, the result of the operation was never in doubt from the start. By the evening of 22nd January the situation had been cleared up completely with comparatively light casualties on our side; 347 prisoners were captured and very heavy losses in killed and wounded were inflicted upon the enemy.

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE ORDER.

LT.-COLONEL (now BRIGADIER) KENNETH GODFREY EXHAM.

At Hotton on 4th January, 1945, Lt.-Col. Exham, from a reserve brigade, was ordered to assume temporary command of an infantry brigade in action after its commander had been killed. The forward battalions were in contact with strong enemy forces in thickly-wooded and hilly country, covered in snow and reached by two inferior hill tracks. Lt.-Col. Exham arrived in the dark, and under his command the brigade attacked next day and gained its objective. At 1600 hours on 5th January Lt.-Col. Exham was planning a further attack for 6th January when an enemy counter-attack gained some vital ground on the brigade front. The situation was anxious.

Battalions were suffering from long exposure in the wintry weather and from casualties; command and control were extremely difficult due to the thick nature of the country, wide frontage and absence of roads. At this stage another battalion was put under command of Lt.-Col. Exham. During the night of 5th-6th January and on 6th January Lt.-Col. Exham was stabilizing his front, visiting the forward troops, making recce's and planning further attacks. On 6th January yet another battalion came under his command. Throughout this period he came under constant heavy enemy mortar and shell fire. His cool bearing and utter disregard for his own personal safety was a fine example to all. On 7th January the brigade attacked and secured all its objectives according to plan. A very great measure of the success of the whole operation was due to the untiring energy and excellent planning of Lt.-Col. Exham throughout the anxious 72 hours. He worked with troops and a staff he did not know, and under abnormal conditions of weather and ground. He had under his command by the final battle five battalions of infantry, a tank regiment and other supporting arms. By his very successful handling of this very large brigade group he showed outstanding qualities of coolness, resource and judgment and the acceptance of responsibilities far above the average.

7TH BATTALION.

MILITARY CROSS.

157323 WS/Lt. JOHN ROWLAND CANNON.

On 20th April, 1945, the Battalion was holding the Ede line (MR. 5885) with the enemy on the Grebbe line 5,000 yards away. A policy of deep daylight patrolling supported by armour was decided upon. Lt. Cannon's platoon, supported by a troop of tanks, was ordered to recce the strongpoint at Klomp which was believed to be heavily mined and defended. This necessitated a 4,000 yards advance by road in daylight in full view of the enemy, before infantry dismounted from the tanks and worked along the hedges into Klomp. Surprise seemed impossible. After a preliminary recce with his orderly, Lt. Cannon then led his platoon into Klomp and a fierce small arms engagement took place, while the tanks which were in reserve were engaged by anti-tank fire. More than six Germans were killed before the opposition, which was at least a company strong, became too heavy. Lt. Cannon then reported to the Commanding Officer by 38 set and was ordered to withdraw his platoon and not to lose any casualties. This was a most difficult operation as the enemy tried to stalk the platoon through a wood and through houses and outflank it as it was withdrawing. Lt. Cannon moved through machine gun and bazooka fire to organise the withdrawal of each section. This was done so successfully and unhurriedly that the platoon and the tanks were withdrawn complete, the last two minutes through mortar fire. Lt. Cannon was the last to leave the area.

Lt. Cannon's patrol produced the complete information required for the attack on the strongpoint which was later cancelled. The success of the operation was due to Lt. Cannon's leadership and bravery, which were all the more praiseworthy when it was known that some negotiations for a cease fire were in progress.

104371 MAJOR GERARD VIVIAN FANCOURT.

At Haalderen (7566) on 2nd April, 1945, Major Fancourt was in command of "C" Company which had the important task of opening up the heavily mined main axis for the subsequent breakout of the Nijmegen salient. The enemy positions facing this company were in strong houses and had been occupied for six months. The ground was known to be heavily mined and only one approach gave any chance of success without heavy casualties on mines—that down the main road, which was guarded by several spandaus and a known D.F. position. Major Fancourt's plan called for the leap-frogging of his three platoons down 2,000 yard advance to his objective—a most skilful operation in the half-light with no possibility of manoeuvre because of the mines. The first objective was taken after a short struggle. As Major Fancourt was with the leading platoon he was able to guide the succeeding platoon on to its next objective. Heavy cross-fire then broke out from further strongpoints in the left-hand company objective, almost abreast of Major Fancourt's position. Major Fancourt, despite the casualties to his company through the enemy fire, decided to push on to his next objective, which was 1,000 yards beyond, with the risk of being isolated. He then led his company through the fire and quickly secured his objective. His quick decisions to maintain his objective ultimately helped the company on his left, drove another enemy post into immediate surrender and allowed the following R.E. to clear the mines from the road far quicker than might have been expected. Major Fancourt's

skilful planning and his own personal calm in a most difficult operation in an enemy minefield was a great example to his company which was so determined to advance that it succeeded in securing the follow-up battalion's first objective.

160871 T/CAPT. JOHN KNOX ILLINGWORTH.

On 17th April, as part of the operation to break out of Arnhem (7478), 7th D.W.R. were ordered to pursue the enemy to the Grebbe line and if possible to trap an enemy force before it could escape. The carrier platoon commanded by Capt. Illingworth led the advance as mobile troops. Through Capt. Illingworth's boldness and complete mastery of his platoon, a distance of eight miles through three villages, a large forest and along roads which were mined and blocked, necessitating detours, was covered by the Battalion in two hours, several enemy being killed and captured. That the operation was a complete success was due entirely to Capt. Illingworth's great leadership and taking chances because of the stakes involved.

After Wageningen had been captured, Capt. Illingworth was ordered to patrol to Renkum to locate the enemy on the Grebbe line itself. Because of the uncertainty of mines, Capt. Illingworth chose to lead a patrol of four carrier crews. After a mile his carrier was blown up and Capt. Illingworth was thrown 20 yards on to his head, the carrier falling on one side and trapping two men. Although wounded in the head and most severely shaken, Capt. Illingworth organised the rescue of the wounded and salvaged the equipment. Still bleeding most profusely, Capt. Illingworth then started out on foot with his remaining men to continue the patrol and refused to turn back. It finally required a personal order from the Commanding Officer before he returned and had his wounds treated at the R.A.P. Even then Capt. Illingworth declined to be evacuated, despite several stitches in his head and after a week's rest was back at duty. Capt. Illingworth's bravery and calm was of the highest order on this day and, fired by his example, his platoon, which lost its remaining officer a few minutes after Capt. Illingworth's accident, continued to patrol most vigorously that day and night.

Lt. FRANK MATTHEW LYON.

At Haalderen (7566) on 2nd April, 1945, this officer was in command of No. 15 Platoon of "C" Company in the initial breakout from the Nijmegen bridgehead. The platoon had the most difficult task of the operation—to assault an enemy post, which had been built up and occupied for six months and was covered by mines. As anti-personnel mines were known to exist in the orchards round the house it was decided to attack frontally down the road which was thought to have only tank mines, a plan which called for courage and not manoeuvre. The leading troops were soon under fire of three M.G.s. Lt. Lyon, with another soldier, then attempted to rush the house, both being hit by bullets, Lt. Lyon's binoculars saving his life. Lt. Lyon withdrew into a nearby ditch, reorganised the section and led another assault which, together with skilfully placed Piat fire, resulted in the destruction of the post, three enemy being killed and 17 taken prisoner. But for this officer's action a most difficult operation to capture the F.D.Ls. might have ensued. His gallantry and skill was all the more praiseworthy as it was his first time in action as an officer.

324893 WS/Lt. VICTOR CLARENCE STEVENS.

At Arnhem (7477) on the night of 14th-15th April, the Battalion had secured its objectives on the perimeter after a final stiff fight at 2000 hours, when a German counter-attack by a battle group of three tanks and a company of infantry developed in the half light. As one platoon of "D" Company appeared to be cut off in a wood during the confused fighting, No. 9 Platoon of "A" Company was placed under command of O.C. "D" Company to restore the situation and also to contact a troop of our own armour which seemed to be engaged by German infantry at close quarters. Lt. Stevens issued rapid orders to his platoon and led it through fairly heavy shelling to contact the "D" Company platoon which was still fighting in the wood. Lt. Stevens assumed command of the total force and personally led a counter-attack-cum-mopping-up operation to clear the wood and also to search the three tanks which by this time had been knocked out. This operation took place in complete darkness in a wood which had for months been mined and wired. It was due to his personality and complete disregard for his own personal safety that the enemy were mopped up after some close quarter fighting. Later in the night, when his platoon sergeant was killed and a runner was severely wounded on a security patrol while the enemy were shelling the area, Lt. Stevens went out to organise the rescue of the men as stretcher bearers were not then available, and then continued with the patrol. Lt. Stevens' example and bearing at all times under fire was entirely responsible for the steadiness of the force and the complete failure of the enemy attack.

BAR TO MILITARY MEDAL.

4914289 L/CPL. ARTHUR PICKSTONE.

At Haalderen (7566) on 10th March, 1945, L/Cpl. Pickstone was in charge of a stretcher-bearer party in our F.D.Ls. standing by to carry wounded from a water-borne operation carried out by 11th R.S.F. 2,000 yards behind the enemy lines. Four men of the R.S.F. were cut off and two who were wounded attempted to crawl back to our lines.

The ground was completely flat and under fire of a dug-in spandau. Without orders, L/Cpl. Pickstone rushed forward across the open ground to rescue the two men. He was hit in the head but continued to move forward until an officer went out to stop him. Meantime the two injured men, inspired by this act of courage, took advantage of the diversion and reached cover, where L/Cpl. Pickstone, still bleeding from the head, finally got to them and helped them in. He then dressed their wounds and refused to be evacuated himself until the operation was completed. L/Cpl. Pickstone's great courage in a hail of bullets was a great inspiration to all men taking part in the operation and had the direct effect of allowing two wounded men to make their way in.

MILITARY MEDAL.

894082 CPL. WILLIAM KENNETH CHAFER.

At Haalderen (7566) on 2nd April, 1945, during the breakout from the Nijmegen salient, this N.C.O. was in charge of a section in No. 18 Platoon, "D" Company, 7th D.W.R. He was ordered to assault a house which was strongly held by a determined enemy, armed with bazooka, spandaus and machine pistols. As he closed up to the house he was shown up by a white very light, but he managed to get in and clear the house and immediately came under strong enemy fire from the house opposite. A bazooka was fired at his house, wounding himself and two men, and his 2 I.C. was killed clearing the house, which left him with two fire men. He climbed upstairs alone and engaged the house opposite with sten fire and in spite of considerable enemy fire, bazooka and spandau, which was being directed at him, he held on to this house, firing his weapon from behind a thin broken wall and held on until assistance came nearly half an hour later. This N.C.O.'s personal disregard for his own danger in spite of the fact that he himself was wounded was an inspiration to his platoon and was in no small way a contribution to the final success of the action.

3655204 L/CPL. JAMES SMITH.

At Haalderen (7566) on 2nd April, 1945, this N.C.O. was in command of a section of a platoon of "D" Company which led the breakout of the Nijmegen salient. After the company had lost the cover of darkness and was in an exposed flat ploughed field, movement became difficult through the fire of an enemy strongpoint which was holding out. L/Cpl. Smith was ordered to pass through the first house in the west side of the road and clear the second house. When he was called forward little was known of the progress of the first section which was under enemy fire. Nevertheless this N.C.O. took his section into the first house across an area constantly being swept by spandau fire from two sides. As he took up a preliminary position he saw a German shoot a member of the leading section. Without any regard for his own personal safety, he ran forward from his cover and shot the German who was trying to get back into another house. He then managed to contact the leading section commander and find out the situation. This valuable information was passed to his platoon commander by continually crossing an open space including a dyke which he had to wade, throughout the time exposing himself to fire and eventually resulted in complete destruction of the enemy post.

14569345 PTE. STANLEY WILLIAMSON.

At Haalderen (7566) on 2nd April, 1945, Pte. Williamson was a member of a platoon of "C" Company which was assaulting an enemy strongpoint, wired and covered by mines, during the initial operation to open the Nijmegen bridgehead. Pte. Williamson and his platoon commander first of all carried out a two-man attack on the post in the darkness, under the covering fire of the other men. Pte. Williamson was hit in the chest, the magazines in his pouches being torn open, but fortunately he was not wounded. Pte. Williamson and his platoon commander then withdrew to a nearby position until a fire plan could be made, and then he went in again with two grenades. This plan succeeded and those enemy not killed were taken prisoner. The great courage and devotion to duty of the private soldier in a difficult operation in which few men could be deployed because of mines and booby traps brought about the capture of a strongpoint without any casualties to the platoon and opened the way for a most successful further company operation.

The following is a list of citations of awards to officers and W.Os. for service in Italy :—

1ST BATTALION.

O.B.E.

LT.-COLONEL C. W. B. ORR.

For services on the Staff as G.S.O.1 (Ops.) at A.F.H.Q.

MILITARY CROSS.

CAPTAIN E. OLIVER.

Capt. Oliver has during the period 1st September, 1944, to 31st December, 1944, commanded "B" Company of this Battalion on many occasions. He has always displayed powers of leadership

of a high order added to a devotion to duty which has been an inspiration to all ranks under his command. A particular example of the behaviour of this officer was during the attacks by the Battalion on M. Cece between 6th and 9th October, 1944. On the night 6th-7th October Capt. Oliver led "B" Company, by a difficult track and under appalling weather conditions, to within 150 yards of the summit of this strongly held enemy position. At this point the company came under heavy short-range M.G. fire from the front and from both flanks and was held up. This officer at once, and with a complete disregard for his own safety, personally supervised the company dispositions. When shortly after light on 7th October orders were received to reorganise the company in preparation for a further assault on the summit, Capt. Oliver again personally, and always under heavy fire, successfully supervised the carrying out of this difficult task. On 8th October this officer once more led "B" Company in the final assault and, when shortly after the attack commenced the C.O. was killed, he assumed command of the Battalion. In this capacity, on the capture of the objective, he at once personally and always under heavy M.G. and mortar fire supervised the layout of the Battalion for defence, and later supervised the supply of ammunition and food and the evacuation of casualties. Capt. Oliver undoubtedly, by his courage and example, contributed much to the success of the operation. This officer was again commanding "B" Company when, during October, 1944, the company was holding a forward position in the M. Battaglia sector, and when in November, 1944, it was holding the left of the M. Castellaro position in the M. Grande sector. On both these occasions the company was subject to accurate and heavy enemy artillery and mortar fire, and it was largely due to the example and devotion to duty of Capt. Oliver that the morale and efficiency of his company was always maintained at a high level.

M.B.E.

4602491 R.S.M. G. W. ANNESLEY.

R.S.M. Annesley has now completed 24 years of service with this Regiment. For nearly a quarter of a century he has shown consistently a high standard of loyalty, discipline and devotion to duty. He is a well-known and respected Regimental figure and has always taken a prominent part in the life of the Regiment in peace and in war. He has represented both regular battalions in the rugby football field and has played for the Army. R.S.M. Annesley has proved himself a R.S.M. of the highest order both in and out of action. At Anzio, and in subsequent operations, he has supervised the supply of ammunition and organised porter and mule columns, often at great personal risk, but always with the greatest coolness and efficiency. His general influence within the Battalion, which is due to his many fine qualities, is one which cannot be over-estimated, and is in itself fully worthy of official recognition.

No. 4602376 R.Q.M.S. E. CHERRY.

This warrant officer enlisted on 30th March, 1918, and has served continuously since that date, seeing service in the Great War. He joined this Battalion in May, 1919, and has been with it ever since, being promoted R.Q.M.S. on 29th June, 1940. During this war he has seen service with the Battalion in France, North Africa and in Italy, including Anzio, the advance to Rome and the advance through the Gothic line from Florence. He has at all times been everything a R.Q.M.S. should be and has been untiring in his efforts to ensure the smooth working of the "Q" side of this Battalion. The period from 1st September—31st December, 1944, has been a particularly difficult one from the "Q" aspect owing to long and difficult lines of communication and the difficulty of obtaining many essential items. R.Q.M.S. Cherry has, throughout this period, displayed untiring energy in ensuring the smooth and efficient working of his branch, thereby removing a heavy load from the shoulders of the Quartermaster. It is largely due to the initiative and efficiency of this warrant officer that the Battalion has never been handicapped by lack of vital stores and equipment.

58TH ANTI-TANK REGIMENT (formerly 4TH BATTALION, D.W.R.).

MILITARY CROSS.

MAJOR ROY SMITH.

During the period 1st September and 31st December, 1944, Major Smith commanded 231st Anti-Tank Battery, who were under command of 128th Infantry Brigade. During the battle for the Gothic line and the subsequent break-through, this officer worked indefatigably and it was largely due to his own efforts that his guns were invariably up with the forward infantry immediately after each objective had been captured. On almost every occasion he accompanied his troop commanders on their recesses for gun positions, at all times showing complete disregard for his personal safety. Prior to the attack on Faenza Major Smith succeeded in getting some of his guns across the river Lamone towed by oxen. Conditions of ground and enemy fire eventually became so bad that, when Major Smith was ordered to take a 2-pounder on to Olmatello, he organised a whole troop into one team to man-handle a single gun to the required position. He personally directed this operation and, although hampered by enemy spandau and mortar fire, by his powers of leadership, resourcefulness and cheerfulness, an operation which at one time seemed impossible was successfully undertaken. Major Smith commanded his battery with distinction in Tunisia and also during the first six months of the Italian campaign from the landing at Salerno and has been once mentioned in dispatches.

THE IRON DUKE

BIRTHDAY HONOURS, MAY, 1945.

O.B.E.

LT.-COLONEL A. E. H. SAYERS.

OLD COMRADES' ASSOCIATIONS.

1st and 2nd BATTALIONS.

The committee of the Association have considered 85 cases during the financial year 1st July, 1944, to 30th June, 1945, and have granted sums as under :—

Fund.	Amount.
	£ s. d.
Old Comrades' Association	78 11 0
2nd Battalion Charitable Fund	36 0 0
Regimental Association Fund	87 14 4
Mitchell Trust Fund	32 10 0
Total	£234 15 4

ERRATUM.

Under 10th (Service) Battalion notes on page 101 of our last issue it was stated that Major John A. Williams had been invalided from the Army. Canon T. J. Williams, father of Major Williams, writing in June, 1945, states that this is not correct, and that at that date his son was serving with the 6th Battalion at Colchester.

D.W.R. Prisoners of War Fund.

CASH DONATIONS FROM 1ST MAY TO 16TH AUGUST, 1945.

1st Battalion D.W.R. ; F. Crouch ; Captain D. S. D. Jones-Stamp ; 4th Battalion O.C.A. ; Harold F. Clay ; N.F.S., Heckmondwyke ; Craven Canine Association, per Mr. G. Leatt ; Mrs. Butterworth ; Sgt. Underwood ; Captain J. E. Pollard ; H.M.S. *Demetrius* ; Anonymous.

DONATIONS IN KIND FROM 1ST MAY TO 16TH AUGUST, 1945.

Miss A. Thompson ; Mrs. E. C. A. Moseley ; Sen. Commdr. C. Hull ; Wells, Norfolk, G.F.S., per Miss Jenny Baker ; Mrs. H. Holt ; Mrs. Cecil Ince ; Mrs. Bromley.

Connaught Memorial Fund.

Amount previously acknowledged ...	£278 2 7
Bank : Interest	12 8
Total 17th August, 1945 ...	£278 15 3

Change of Address.

Subscribers to "The Iron Duke" are reminded that it is impossible for the Business Manager to ensure their copies reaching them unless they send their most recent address, or one from which copies will be forwarded on to them. They are asked therefore to send any change of address to—Miss TURNER, 66 Storeys Way, Cambridge.

The Business Manager would like the addresses of the following :—Major C. G. E. White, Major W. L. James, Major J. T. Rivett-Carnac, Mrs. H. B. Owen, A. V. Clacy, Esq., Mrs. S. Whipp, B. R. Keymer, Esq., Lt.-Col. G. Laing, J. Mayers, Esq., D. M. King, Esq.

Beach-head Breakout.

22nd MAY, 1944.

May in Anzio. We were nearing the end of our fourth month in the Beach-head. Conditions had changed largely since the desperate February days and now approximated to the trench warfare of 1916—1918. There had been a hectic phase in the middle of March when the unsuccessful attack at Cassino was launched and plans were laid for diversionary attacks from the Beach-head. One of these, which had the peculiarly fitting code name of "Wildcat," was a breezy conception involving an attack through the intricate wadi country and the capture of the dominating features of Ration and Carrier Farms. The undisguised aversion shown by all three C.Os. of the Brigade to this singularly ill-inspired operation may have had some share in its subsequent abandonment. In substitution an attack called "Centipede" was planned. This was to be done—inevitably—by the 3rd Brigade, although it was not to be staged in our sector. To effect it we moved from the hideous wadi sector and took over part of the American line to the east of the Flyover Bridge. It was a strange interlude. The contrast between the two areas was staggering. Whereas in the wadis we crouched all day and half the night in our miserable slits and endured the steady trickle of casualties which the heavy shelling entailed, the American sector was—by comparison—a scene of sylvan calm. The country was open and undulating and all positions except Battalion H.Q. and the reserve company were in full view. There was a no man's land of about 1,000 yards as opposed to the grenade-throwing distance which separated the British and Germans. Shelling was light and spasmodic. People ambled about in pairs from position to position by day, and the only concession made to the watching Boche was that senior officers carried rifles to conceal their importance. The object of "Centipede" was to capture a road about 1,200 yards away from and parallel to our positions. Quite why I never discovered. The K.S.L.I. and Dukes were to do the attack with the Foresters in support, and it was timed for 18th March at first light. As an operation the attack was "on" but as we had to cross initially an American anti-personnel mine field—laid with transatlantic vagueness—and advance for over a thousand yards of completely open country, I heard, with little regret, on the evening of the 17th that the attack was cancelled.

Since these still-born activities we had returned to our detested wadis and settled down to a monotonous routine of ten days in the line, four days out in the B echelon area, and four days in the reserve position in the woods south of the Flyover road. Brigadier Jimmie James, who took over the Brigade in the height of the Tunisian battle and commanded us ever since, left us in April, and went to a Brigade in 78th Division. It was a bitter blow to all ranks and it was with deep sorrow and dismay that we heard in July that he had been killed. We felt—unreasonably no doubt—that it would not have happened if he had stayed with us. Our new Brigadier—Dorman-Smith—was a veteran of the Great War and surveying the troglodyte existence of his command he might well have said "This is where I came in." One of the worst features of the wadi country was the feeling of isolation experienced by the different companies, each in their own well-hated gully, and each surrounded by the graves of their own dead. It was impossible to move from wadi to wadi by day and an over-rated pastime at night. Telephone lines were constantly broken by shell fire and if the wireless failed there was no communication until darkness allowed the signallers to sally out for line repair. It seems extraordinary to me now that none of us seemed to think of communication trenches. I suppose the peculiar superstition fostered for weeks that we were only static temporarily and at any moment would debouch triumphant from the Beach-head was perhaps responsible. Combined of course with the strong distaste of the British soldier to any digging not immediately necessary for his personal survival. The Boche of course had dug deeply and continuously. Every night the patrol reports included "sounds of digging and hammering

of wooden stakes." It is the German's appalling industry which is, to me, perhaps his most revolting characteristic.

One of the first orders issued by our new Brigadier was for the construction of a number of communication trenches. The first one—a shallow crawl trench—linked up the Culvert with the notorious Boot wadi. Like a blinding flash of light it struck us all—belatedly—that communication trenches would revolutionise Beach-head life, and frenzied digging by night and where possible by day began all over the Brigade sector. By the beginning of May it was possible to walk in reasonable comfort and almost complete safety from Battalion H.Q. to any company position. Telephone wires laid in the trenches—carefully tacked in along the walls—were now protected from shell fire and if broken could be reached easily by day.

It was about this period that the first whispers of our being involved in an attack in the near future reached us. We shared our sector with the 18th Brigade who had replaced the decimated Guards early in March, and the idea of the attack was sold to the three disillusioned C.Os. of our Brigade as one to be done by one of the battalions of either of the two Brigades. In about a week the field had narrowed to a battalion of the 3rd Brigade, and a certain premonition I felt was shortly justified by my hearing that the Dukes were to have the honour of taking the initial step in the whole vast operation of the break-out. I thought it an odd choice as we had suffered more losses than any other battalion in the Beach-head, but it was the price the 33rd had to pay for its hard-won reputation.

The long-awaited thrust from Anzio was timed to co-ordinate with a new and powerful attack on the Cassino front by the Eighth Army which was being transferred in strength from the Adriatic sector. To mount the break-out strong reinforcements for the Americans were pouring into the Beach-head. The main attack was to be done by the Americans towards Cisterna with the aim of subsequently cutting Routes 6 and 7—the main escape routes of the Germans from Cassino. To veil this the role of the British force in Anzio was to deceive the enemy by indicating an attack astride the main Anzio—Rome road. The diversion was to take the form of an attack by the Dukes on the west of the Flyover Bridge followed by artillery concentration and menacing movements by the 2nd Brigade to the east of the bridge. Our attack, which was to be the first move of the whole operation, was therefore a diversion. The whole object of such a project is to attract the maximum attention to yourself and the more the enemy throw at you the better everybody is pleased—with the exception of yourself.

Our objective was to be the Puntoni feature—a strongly held enemy strongpoint established on commanding ground in the debris of what was once a hamlet. When we first entered the wadis in February, Puntoni had been in our hands, but shortly afterwards it was lost by another battalion to our great discomfort. It was the key of the whole system of wadis and had it been in our hands the enemy occupation of the gulleys in close juxtaposition to our posts would have been impossible. The operation was given the code name "Ant," and after its conclusion the Buffs on our right were to carry out operation "Aphis," a small scale raid on the enemy positions in the wadi Caronte. This in turn was to be followed by the 2nd Brigade "making faces" on a large scale to the right of the Rome—Anzio road, and then—the Boche being presumably pre-occupied about his right—the grand attack by three American divisions would start towards Cisterna.

General Penney, our Divisional commander, had been wounded early in March, and though he remained at duty it was obvious that he was not really fit. In late April he was relieved by Major-General Hawkesworth from the 46th Division, and the sturdy figure of this officer—dressed in shorts, a parachutist's steel helmet and carrying a pole of Boy Scout proportions—was to be seen daily stumping round the forward areas. He and the Brigadier took a great interest in the Battalion's plan for attack, and though I was relieved for a period of command of the Battalion to be "free for planning," my role was usually that of providing an admiring murmur of acquiescence to the schemes of my seniors and betters. Certainly a lot of trouble was taken, and "Ant" was undoubtedly the most

thoroughly planned and foolproof operation that the Battalion took part in in either the North African or Italian campaigns. Our support was generous: four field regiments and two medium regiments of artillery, three platoons of heavy mortars and a company of machine guns. Tanks and tank destroyers were to be at call in case enemy armour took part in the counter-attack. A piece of ground which bore a certain resemblance to Puntoni was found near our B echelon area, and the attack was practised there by the two assaulting companies. A large sand model was made in the reserve area where we would be up to the day of the attack. The whole set-up was very 1918-esque and very rightly so, as conditions approximated very closely to the trench warfare of Flanders.

The plan—as finally evolved—was a frontal two-company assault; the start line to be the line of a track which ran just north of the wadi called North Lobster and which on the day would be held by the K.S.L.I. The reserve company was to take position in the Star Fish wadi which was in front and slightly to the left of North Lobster. The objective of the left company was the ruins of Puntoni itself, while the right company was to capture a heap of rubble called—for some unexplained reason—the “King’s Arms,” which lay to the north-east of Puntoni. To facilitate the advance on the right a platoon of the Foresters who held the Boot wadi was to capture a small feature called Green Bush Hill which dominated the approach to the “King’s Arms.” Both forward companies were to exploit forward and clear enemy positions immediately beyond the objectives and then consolidate on the line Puntoni—Green Bush Hill. The date—which depended, of course, on the progress of the Cassino attack—was provisionally fixed as 21st May.

A few days before that date the Battalion moved back to the B echelon area. Life there had improved somewhat during the last month. Heavy shells continued to fall round the area, but most either whistled over our heads *en route* to Divisional H.Q. behind us or fell in the gun area to our immediate front. The nightly air raids had lessened, too, and now were delivered about twice a week. It was not, however, a restful place—nowhere in that Beach-head was. The troops sat about in their off hours near their little dugouts with ears permanently cocked and ready—rabbit-like—to jump into their burrows at the sound of an approaching missile. General Hawkesworth gave the Battalion a pep talk one morning, and it is a tribute to his personality that he took and held the troops’ interest at once. He gained all our hearts at the end of his address by sending away the Brigadier and confiding to us alone that he was a Yorkshireman and that it gave him a feeling of warm confidence that he had a Yorkshire Battalion in the Division.

The Battalion actually was in excellent heart. Three of our now twice wounded company commanders were back, and a number of seasoned other ranks had also returned. The large new entry was by now absorbed, and the collection of men from the Worcesters, the East Lincs, the Green Howards and the East Yorks were now all good Dukes. Bruce Hindley was back at the adjutancy and we had had a reinforcement of four outstanding South African officers. Like other British battalions in the Beach-head, we were reduced to three rifle companies, but these were up to strength.

On the 20th May the Battalion moved to the Brigade reserve position in those woods behind the Flyover through which we had stumbled on our initial trip to the wadis in the dark days of February. Here I briefed each company in turn on the large sand model, and I flatter myself that every soldier had a fair idea of the operation and its objects. Meanwhile those in the Battalion who were not destined for the assault were working like beavers. Rations and water for 48 hours were laboriously man-handled through the system of communication trenches and dug in in the Boot and Star Fish wadis. Large reserves of ammunition and defence stores were similarly stored and men detailed to bring them up at once to the objectives for the assaulting companies to consolidate rapidly. Gaps were cut in the protecting wire in front of the start line but left in position where they could be kicked aside. The Sappers made similar gaps in the mine fields and the pioneer platoon slaved at the construction of an elaborate command post. This was necessary, as in addition to my own small H.Q. I was to be attended by a gunner officer,

a representative from the support battalion, an officer of the American tank destroyer unit and a tank representative. Each was equipped with at least one wireless set and its acolytes and on the day a Press observer arrived to swell the overblown H.Q. Every officer in the assault was equipped with an air photo on which was marked the various defensive fire tasks each with its appropriate code name. Zero hour was fixed for 2000 hours, which we calculated would just give time for the troops to carry out the assault and exploitation and to commence consolidation just as night fell, and enable them to dig-in under cover from view at any rate.

We heard in the evening of the 20th that the attack was postponed 24 hours, and it was in the early afternoon of the 22nd that the companies began to file along the long lines of communication trenches towards the assembly area in the North Lobster. It was very hot that day and I was glad to stop *en route* at the Battalion H.Q. of the K.S.L.I. near the Flyover road and chat to Bunny Careless, the C.O. The K.S.L.I. played a noble part in our operation. In every battle since the Bou Aoukaz they and the Dukes had fought together and both battalions had complete confidence in each other. The K.S.L.I. had reconnoitred positions, helped in carrying stores, cut wire and taken a hundred tasks off our shoulders. They were now going to serve the Battalion with a hot meal at 1800 hours, and it gave us all heart to know we were assaulting from the firm base of that very good battalion.

At about 6 p.m. we reached the command post, where already a miniature forest of wireless masts waved gently in the breeze. All the supporting arms arrived, including the American tank-destroyer. He was—inevitably—smoking a cigar of a peculiarly evil type. Two sergeants of an army film unit with their monstrous apparatus arrived. We viewed them without enthusiasm and they wandered off in the direction of the Culvert. Officers of the K.S.L.I. pressed round asking if they could help in any way. R.S.M. Arnesley directed the disposition of our military impedimenta, pointing his immense stick to indicate his wishes. Shortly afterwards he and I walked along to the assembly area to see the troops eat their meal. This they were doing with complete composure and impressive appetite. The K.S.L.I. were bustling about waiting on the Dukes hand and foot.

I returned to the command post and crept into the shelter which I was to share with Bruce Hindley, John Streatfeild the I.O., and Charles Ashton the gunner rep. Charles commanded our own battery of field guns which had always supported the Dukes and he had gone through his real baptism of fire with us at Banana Ridge.

The "Military Observer" popped in his head and evidently mistaking the command post for the cloak room, handed us his haversack and mackintosh as he "was going up to have a look." I read through the orders again and looked—for the hundredth time—at the air photo. At about 1930 hours the R.S.M. and I walked back to the North Lobster wadi to see the companies file past towards the start line. We wished each platoon luck as they marched by and felt how hideously inadequate it was. The troops looked fit and confident. Some cracked jokes with a certain bravado, some looked pensive and nearly all of them gave us a plucky smile as they went by. It was almost more than I could bear to see those patient brave men who had borne so much for so long swinging quietly by to face death and mutilation, and I felt—desperately—that I did not mind whether the operation was a success or not if only our already appalling casualty list was not swelled by much.

We moved back to the command post to await the opening of the barrage and then for the first hurried message over the wireless. John moved down the communication trench towards the Star Fish wadi to watch the beginning of the advance. At zero hour we heard the first medium shell whistle over our heads. It landed slap on the ruins of Puntoni itself which became lost to view in dust and smoke. Others quickly followed and the formidable barrage of 96 field guns added its clamour to the inferno of noise. Heavy mortars—directed at the enemy communications—were reaching out hundreds of

yards behind the German front line, and the steady drumming of the Vickers machine guns could sometimes be heard in the brief pauses of the barrage. The two leading companies—"A" and "B"—rose up and advanced steadily forward. Men detailed for the job ran forward and kicked away the wire still standing in the gaps and marked by strands of white tape. Out from the Boot wadi swarmed the platoon of Foresters making for Green Bush Hill. It was a platoon of Welshmen and led by a South African subaltern. The little feature was too close to our positions to be subjected to gun bombardment and it was only infantry mortars which could give covering fire. The Germans were alert and determined. A withering hail of spandau fire met the Foresters. In a few seconds their officer was badly wounded and every N.C.O. a casualty. Despite this the Welshmen made a desperate effort to take the hillock but finally bogged down about 50 yards from the objective. This failure wrecked the chances of "B" Company's attack. It was impossible to press on to the King's Arms with Green Bush Hill still in enemy hands. Charles Gomm (O.C. "B" Company) deflected his right platoon to take the hill and "B" Company swung slightly right-handed to meet the fire coming from that position. The enemy rapidly switched his fire to meet this new threat and in a matter of minutes the company commander, two out of three platoon commanders, the C.S.M. and two of the platoon sergeants were casualties. The 18 set was hit by a burst of spandau fire and wireless communication died. Cpl. Spode, a section commander in the right platoon, took command at this vital moment as the troops hesitated. In a desperate charge he gained Green Bush Hill and—leading the platoon—broke somehow through the wire. His men fought their way through the wire behind him and for a moment the issue hung in the balance. The enemy, however, stood firm and, crouching in their trenches, hurled stick grenades and continued to fire their machine guns at the devoted remnants of the platoon. Spode himself—firing his tommy-gun—actually entered the enemy trench and killed several of the garrison. But by now he was almost alone. The bodies of his dead and wounded comrades dangled on the German wire and there was no option but to retire. Few M.M.s. were more richly earned than Cpl. Spode's. About 20 yards from the German position what remained of "B" Company and its surviving officer—Lt. Johnson—lay down and engaging Green Bush with fire prevented the enemy there from interfering with the left company.

On the left that veteran company commander, Freddy Huskisson, led "A" Company on the attack on Puntoni itself. The steadiness of the company was admirable and they closely followed the barrage as it led them to their objective. The heavy battering of the Puntoni defences seemed to have stunned the Germans for a spell. But although it seemed as if nothing could have lived through the inferno of fire we could soon hear the quick staccato rattle of the spandaus, as the Germans emerging from their deep dugouts under the rubble of the ruined buildings dragged their machine guns with them. The feature was held by elements of the 4th Parachute Division who were, I suppose, the toughest proposition we had to meet in the Beach-head. Pressing so close to the protective barrage, however, "A" Company was able to reach the feature before the garrison could develop its full fire power. We suffered a few casualties from our own shells as a result but saved far more by reaching the parachutists before they had recovered from the bombardment. According to plan, Lt. Froude, leading the forward platoon, by-passed Puntoni and pressing on reached the enemy positions beyond. Here he was held up by a thick belt of uncut wire in which were sown anti-personnel mines. Considerable slaughter had been caused to the Germans in this defence system by the guns, but the survivors stood to mortar and spandau with their customary determination. A grenade-throwing duel ensued and the Boche, suffering more casualties, found it too much for him and withdrew. Meanwhile back at Puntoni a similar duel was being staged. A determined assault broke down in the wire and carpet of mines, and the Germans there—their retreat cut off by Froude's men behind them and conscious of the vital importance of the position—fought it out desperately.

During this hectic phase Pte. Marshall distinguished himself by leaning up against the German wire and tossing grenades into the enemy posts. One spandau was silenced by him but the remaining parachutists still kept up their fire. Freddy Huskisson—walking about amid the inferno—appreciated that it was a physical impossibility to carry Puntoni by assaùlt. Pulling back Froude's triumphant platoon, according to plan, he selected platoon positions which controlled the feature and as darkness began to fall the anxious period of consolidation began. The obstinate Boche in Puntoni itself was kept under continuous and well-aimed fire which prevented them from taking any offensive action. The artillery—changing to its next task—laid a close curtain of fire in front of the digging troops to ensure that no counter-attack could be delivered during this particularly vulnerable period. The men of "C" Company hurried out from the Starfish with tools, ammunition, grenades and rations and dumped them by the platoons of "A" Company—digging frantically in the growing darkness. The men literally sank underground and in an hour "A" Company was firmly established—dug in, wired and in touch with the K.S.L.I. on their left.

At the command post we had a clear picture of events on the left but the gallant failure of "B" Company was obscure for some hours. Our first coherent news was gleaned from Charles Gomm who—hastily bandaged at the R.A.P.—looked in at Battalion H.Q. *en route* to hospital to let us know how things had gone up to the time he was hit. The wireless was dumb and it was from the Foresters at the Boot that we got the news finally that what remained of "B" Company was doggedly engaging Green Bush Hill from their hastily improvised positions. It was obvious that at dawn these devoted remnants would be hopelessly exposed. I spoke to the Brigadier and he delegated to me the responsibility of making the decision to hold on or withdraw. It seemed heart-breaking after the lavish expenditure of blood to give up what "B" Company had gained, but the only solution was to cut our losses on the right. With a final shower of grenades at Green Bush Hill, the pathetically few men of the company who remained unhit retired unwillingly into the all too familiar slopes of the Boot wadi.

Soon after sunset the sounds of furious battle broke out to our right. "Exercise Aphis" was in course of consummation. The Buffs' platoon who executed this raid failed to achieve full success but it contributed to a material degree towards the mental confusion of the Boche as to what was the real point of danger. Shortly after midnight the ponderous operation of the 2nd Brigade began further over to the right. Tanks trundled portentously up and down the Flyover road, fighting patrols pushed forward and brushed with the enemy, and an ambitious artillery programme further galvanised the Germans into hysterical activity on that section of the front.

All this—combined with the carefully planned and lavishly executed artillery defensive fire programme on our own sector—prevented what we had learnt to call "the inevitable counter-attack." We all spent a sleepless night; "A" Company, confident in their newly-won ground, "C" Company still compressed for their spring in the Starfish wadi, waiting for their chance to counter-attack the counter-attack, gunners alert for the S.O.S. call to bring down their shattering fire on all avenues of approach. But the enemy was puzzled and hesitated in the plentitude of threats to commit his reserves. The companies spent a quiet night. At the command post the military observer emerged from his shelter and remained on view until a burst of our Vickers overhead caused him to retire with muttered maledictions on "those spandaus."

Dawn showed the fullness of our success. Puntoni displayed no sign of life. The position was untenable and the stout-hearted garrison there had drawn back to those positions behind them which had been raked by Froude's platoon the previous evening. What enemy there were at Green Bush were sulkily licking their wounds and gave no trouble. Stretcher parties from both sides were busy. The Germans, true to type, sent one elaborately Red Crossed party to have a good look at "A" Company positions, but we were a trifle tired of this over-worked "ruse de guerre" and Freddy Froude put the

whole cortege in the bag to their shrill indignation. By daylight it was possible to see the whole implications of the Puntoni feature. With it in our hands the whole enemy fabric of defence of the wadis crumbled. Signs were not wanting that the Boche was drawing back, and by nightfall we were able to infiltrate forward on a wide front.

Meanwhile at the command post we had been visited soon after first light by the Brigadier—the bearer of tidings that the B.B.C. had announced on the 7 a.m. news that “a North country regiment had had the honour of delivering the opening assault from the Anzio Beach-head.” We felt our friends at home must have benefited a lot from this triumph of discretion. About noon it appeared that the Boche was not going to be rude that day. The casualty returns were now complete. As always, they were not so bad as we had feared. About 16 killed and 75 wounded—practically all from the 200 men odd of the two assaulting companies. The few number of killed was a great relief. We felt we could afford to drink our delayed rum ration. Like guttering candles, the personnel of Battalion H.Q. flared up in a transient brilliance of speech and action. Brigade H.Q. was bombarded with brisk reports and returns and the ancillary H.Qs. of the gunners and other supporting arms felt the impact as their exhilarated representatives crisply reported their views on the situation.

That afternoon the Battalion was ordered to hand over to the K.S.L.I., and as the light failed the weary troops began to file back along the long communication trenches. Already we had heard that the main American attack had been launched and was going well and we felt that we had done what was required of us. It was pleasant the following day to get confirmation of this. General Hawkesworth—suddenly posted to another appointment—took the trouble in the short half-hour before he was due at the air strip to write me a note, an extract of which read, “Please tell your officers and men that the task which they carried out on the evening of the 22nd fully achieved its main object. I am certain it contributed directly to the successes gained by the American Corps the next day. The determination and gallantry with which the operation was carried out reflects the greatest credit on the whole Battalion.” This epitaph by a fighting General, of whose death in harness I have only learnt while writing this account, leaves nothing more to be said. The Dukes had performed worthily their last task given to them in what had now ceased to be the Beach-head.

B. W. W. C.

H.M.S. Wellington.

At Milford Haven,

8th August, 1945.

Dear Sir,

H.M.S. *Wellington*, on completion of 11 years' service, is about to be de-commissioned, preparatory to being laid up in the reserve fleet. As there will be nobody living on board, I shall be obliged if you will stop the despatch of any further copies of THE IRON DUKE to us.

Although our contacts with you have dwindled during the past few years, especially since the war, with the constant change of officers on board, we have always taken a particular interest in your magazine, and in the activities of the Regiment, and take this opportunity of wishing you all good luck in the future.

I am, yours truly,

R. D. DEAYTON,

Wardroom Mess Secretary.

We are sorry to receive the above news. Those who were serving with the 1st Battalion in Malta in 1935 will remember the occasion when H.M.S. *Wellington* called there on her way to New Zealand, and the guest night held in the Mess for the officers of the ship. On page 186 of No. 32 (October), 1935, of THE IRON DUKE we published a letter from H.M.S. *Wellington*, written at Singapore, and as far as we can trace this was the only news we have had from her till now. Ed.

Personalia.

We offer our heartiest congratulations to Lt.-Colonel F. A. Hayden, D.S.O., O.B.E., on reaching his 84th birthday on 1st August, 1945.

We also offer our heartiest congratulations to Colonel R. L. Jephson Jones, R.A.O.C., on the award of the George Cross, details of which appear on page 143, also to all those whose names appear under Decorations.

The following births have been announced:—

WHITAKER.—On 18th July, 1945, at the Penylan Nursing Home, Cardiff, to Margaret, wife of Lt.-Colonel N. R. Whitaker, late The Duke of Wellington's Regiment, twins, Helen Margaret and Robert Duncan.

TAYLOR.—On 6th August, 1945, at Adlington Hall, Cheshire, to Rosemary, wife of Major C. G. Ravenscroft Taylor, The Duke of Wellington's Regiment—a daughter (Ann Elizabeth Ravenscroft).

The following weddings have been announced:—

HOLT : BURNELL.—On 12th June, 1945, at St. James' Church, Gerrards Cross, Lt. Brian Alan Whittell Holt, The Duke of Wellington's Regiment, elder son of G. M. W. Holt of 12 Great Marlborough Street, W.1., and Mrs. Holt of Home Park Road, Wimbledon, to Joan Patricia Burrell, Section Officer, W.A.A.F., only daughter of Mr. and Mrs. E. C. Merrick Burrell of White Knowle, Gerrards Cross, Bucks.

MATTHEW : KERR.—At St. Mary's Church, Haddington, on the 30th June, 1945, by the Rev. W. J. Forbes, B.D., Captain Alexander Matthew, R.A.C., elder son of Dr. and Mrs. Matthew, Laughing Stock, Carlisle, to Helen Rose, eldest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. R. B. Kerr, Barney mains, Haddington. Captain Matthew has recently returned to England from Burma, where he was serving with the 146th Regiment, R.A.C. (D.W.R.).

SIDDALL : WAITE.—On 14th July, 1945, at Claremont Methodist Church, Kelvington, Glasgow, by the Rev. G. Rupert Evans, Lt. Denis Rowland Siddall, The Duke of Wellington's Regiment, only son of Mr. and Mrs. H. V. Siddall, Grafton House, Halifax, to Marie (A.T.S.), only daughter of the late Capt. Peter White, The Cameronian Highlanders, and the late Mrs. White of Prestwick, Ayrshire.

The engagement is announced between Major Richard Henry Ince, The Duke of Wellington's Regiment (attached Parachute Regiment), elder son of Lt.-Colonel and Mrs. C. W. G. Ince, Littlecroft, West Clandon, Surrey, and Angela Virginia Riddoch, A.T.S., eldest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. A. Riddoch, Clevehurst, Edgeborough Road, Guildford, Surrey.

The engagement is announced between Major T. St. G. Carroll, The Duke of Wellington's Regiment, son of the late Lt.-Colonel H. A. Carroll, The Royal Munster Fusiliers, and of Mrs. Carroll, Corin, Camberley, and Ivy Mary Porter, The Laurels, Frimley, younger daughter of the late Sir William Porter, Bt., and Lady Porter.

In a letter dated 8th August, 1945, Lt.-Colonel C. D. Hamilton, commanding officer of the 7th Battalion, in Germany, gives the following news of officers of the Regiment now serving out there:—
"Brigadier R. N. H. C. Bray (who, as announced under Decorations, recently gained a bar to his D.S.O.) is commanding the 185th Brigade in the 3rd Division. Colonels Strangeways and Böttler are on the H.Q. Staff of the 1st Corps occupying Westphalia. Robin Cartwright is on Brigadier "Bobby" Bray's staff. Brigadier Kenneth Exham is now commanding 146th Brigade in the 49th Division, and is coming to see us soon. Lt. Norman Cox is at 21st Army Group. Major Arnold Woodcock is at H.Q. 8th Corps. Recently Colonel Wood of the 10th Battalion came to see me out here. When I was unwell on leave recently he gave me an extra week's leave. The Battalion is five miles from my home. I hear that the 5th Dukes, without their searchlights, are guarding 21st Army Group H.Q."

Colonel J. S. Spencer, a former C.O. of the 6th Battalion, has, we hear, been attached to the United States Army, serving with the Troop Carrier Service. In February last he was sent over to France to make a survey of all fields; and a month later, together with Colonel Duke, Troop Carrier Chief of Staff, and Colonel Jones of the U.S.A., drew up a scheme for the protection of troop carrier bases.

Lt.-Colonel Harvey, now commanding the 30th Battalion The Royal Norfolk Regiment in Italy, writing in June last, says:—"I have now been overseas just on two years; time flies. Whilst visiting Perugia I came upon Willie Wathen, covered in red flannel; he is a colonel in charge of Sub-Area 215, that was last April. I also came across a Lt.-Colonel Niven, R.A.M.C., just posted from Malta, who told me 'Boffin' [Major Sir Robert Henniker, Bt.] is in good form. On my way north I recognised and stopped C.S.M. "Chinny" Holder, who is at No. 8 Con. Depot, Pesaro. He was riding a cycle and looking very fit. In Pesaro, at No. 5 General Hospital, I found the commandant, Colonel Knight, was in Kamptee with us, and answered for Capt. Cummins who was the Battalion M.O., while he was

on leave. Incidentally Cummins is a P.O.W. with the Japs. Pte., now C.S.M. Holt of rugger fame in 'Horseys' day is near Forli. Whilst down in Rome I ran into Owen Price; he was something in the Allied Control. He was in high spirits and is I think near Ancona. 'Babe' Webb Carter is, I see in G.R.Os., a G.S.O.1., and Maurice Davy a G.2, an instructor in Infantry at the Artillery School. . . . I have now taken over the command of this unit of the famous 9th Foot from 21st May. The unit is spread all over Italy, from Perugia in the centre to Ancona, Forli, Bologna and Padua, to mention most places. Guard duties, garrison duties, escorts everywhere, P.O.W. camps, black market raids, etc., etc. I have Capt. D. S. Kirkby (a Duke) as my adjutant. Lt. P. V. Lacey, also a Duke, is in the unit too. . . . I spent a few hours in Venice; there is plenty of iced beer there!!"

Last June we had a letter from Lt.-Colonel N. I. Marples enclosing a copy of the *U.S.I. Journal of India*, which contained an article on the first Burma campaign. Col. Marples is on the Chief Military Press Censor's staff in New Delhi and says a colleague of his is Lt.-Colonel Gledhill, late of the 1st Battalion. Lt.-Colonel Marples was last with the Regiment in 1942, when he served in the 2/6th Battalion under Lt.-Colonel Sayers.

Major Bruce Murgatroyd, late of the 145th Regiment, R.A.C. (formerly 8th D.W.R.), in a recent letter enclosing some notes about the memorial plaque in Tunis published on page 159 of this issue, writes:—"Dukes are very scarce in Greece. So far I have only found Major David Luscombe, who is with B.M.N.; we see quite a lot of each other. The D.A.C.Q., L.F.G., is Lt.-Colonel V. D. Siddons, who was Padre of the 1st Battalion in France in 1939-40. He visits me regularly and still gets his IRON DUKE, and is intensely interested in the doings of the Regiment."

Major J. D. Lunt, writing from the School of Infantry, Warminster, in July last, says:—"The other day while reading through Arthur Bryant's 'Years of Victory,' I came across the following reference to the Regiment which may interest some of your readers:—

"The 50th were called the Dirty Half Hundred because of their black facings, while those of the 33rd, which matched their coats, were falsely reputed by envious rivals to have been taken from them as a punishment for having lost their Colours."

"I am here now as an instructor on the senior wing, having been snatched off a draft to come here. I just missed Paddy Everard and George Laing who have been doing this course, but have seen a lot of Johnny Lane, newly returned from a Hun prisoner-of-war camp. Johnny was in great form and has gone off to an airborne show. Captivity did not seem to have dampened his spirits. I also met Douglas Jones-Stamp in town; he also had returned from a prison camp. Those who served with the 76th in Multan and Delhi will be amused to know that Douglas was as sartorially perfect as ever, with a neatly-rolled umbrella, carnation and bowler hat, none the less distinguished for the fact that it was slightly moth-eaten after five years in store!

"Others whom I have contacted recently include Derek Harris who has a job at Northumbrian District, and Ken. Gregory, now out of the Army and training to be a parson at Oxford. He is living at Westerham in Kent. I also met Summers the other day; he set up the Army 100 yards record long before I joined, and later left us for the R.A.S.C. He is now commanding an R.A.S.C. holding unit.

"On the course here at present is Hinchliffe of the 5th Battalion. They seem to have had a variety of roles in this war, going to France as an S.L. unit, then on to L.o.C. duties, and finally serving as honest-to-God infantry with the Czechs at Dunkirk, where they apparently did very well. They seem to be more than pleased that they have reverted to the rifle and bayonet."

We are indebted to Major S. E. Baker for the following yarn anent the ceremony in Halifax:—"On the evening of Waterloo Day about 300 people were waiting for the last bus in the town which serves the route to the barracks. Two Dukes, who had taken part in the parade, were last of the queue. When the bus arrived the two Dukes strolled to the head of the queue and got on to the bus first. There were angry murmurs from the crowd, which were quelled when a sapper of the Royal Engineers shouted out to them: 'You've given them the freedom of your town to-day. Surely that includes priority on your Corporation buses!'"

Mr. F. May, who has recently moved to Hythe from Canterbury, in a letter to Miss Turner, sending his change of address (we wish others would be as punctilious), wrote:—"In Dover the other day I noticed the grave of Ensign Hart, 33rd Regiment, killed in the Battle of Waterloo. Now they have taken the railings down it is plain to see. It is in Old St. Mary's churchyard."

Sgt. S. F. Swift (our cartoonist), who is serving with the 5th Royal Inniskilling Dragoon Guards in Germany, writing last June after a spell of leave home, says:—"At present I am billeted in Itzheao, a garrison town about 60 miles from Hamburg. I must say Jerry goes in for comfort in his barracks. These are a treat. Very modern and stylish. We were guarding S.S. P.O.Ws., but they have gone now and we are not tied quite so much. We are going to Berlin on garrison duty soon, but before that we have a big parade for Marshal Zhukov. Hamburg is a shambles; what destruction, it is unbelievable. I went to E.N.S.A. to see 'Peer Gynt' in one of the few theatres left standing. It

was a fine show. I think we ought to take our hats off to E.N.S.A. for being brave enough to show troops decent classical stuff as they are doing. Also to the artistes who make such a good job of it. It is surprising how it is appreciated. I think the days when a smutty, second-rate show would do are over now. We have a lot to thank some of the new young chaps who have joined the Army for they have brought a fine spirit into it. Also to the old ones who have tempered that spirit with their wit and patience and example into the finest team ever put into action. Yes, much as I detest war and all the terrible havoc and misery it has caused, I admit it has brought men to know and tolerate each other. Men from walks of life who otherwise would be poles apart."

Refugees on a Troopship.

Of all the many and varied cargoes carried by a troopship it must be admitted that refugees are not the most popular. And it was therefore with amused annoyance and some mild profanity that, while we were still busy disembarking our last load, we found the oncoming list included 370 Greek refugees and 170 Arabs.

There is always an art in disposing people in troopships. One finds it wise to separate for instance soldiers and prisoners of war of the same nationality, or Italians and French, and soon; in this case we clearly had to put an Italian pioneer company out of the way of the Greeks, and then we could fill the middle of the ship with the patient British soldiery whose prejudices are so general and indiscriminate that they can be put next to any foreigners whatsoever. So the Greeks had to go aft, and so, for various reasons had the Arabs. By the grace of Allah the Arabs did not arrive, so the mutual reactions of Greek and Arab refugees still remain untested.

Late in the evening, last of all the embarkation, our Greeks arrived—mostly women and children and old men. They came under the auspices of U.N.R.R.A., escorted by 2 American doctors and 2 American nurses—the doctors painfully young, and none of the four knowing any language but English, except one nurse who held forth when necessary in French as presumably spoken in Cincinnati, Ohio. She was a good girl, this one, and worked like a Trojan to get her charges settled. With her aid we got them shepherded into troop decks where they were to be accommodated at about half the rating for troops—still pretty crowded. But not her efforts nor those of all the ship's staff could get them sat down long enough to count them or to organise a meal.

We were inclined to be annoyed about this at first, till we realised the trouble. Their baggage was arriving (by lighter, as they had done themselves), and as this represented the whole of their possessions on earth neither our efforts nor the prospect of a meal nor any other inducement could divert them from the overwhelming need to make sure that nothing was lost.

When at last, at 9 p.m. or so, all was on board, organisation began. They sat at their tables and got a meal; all the sick and elderly came with their tales of woe, and we put as many as we could in hospital where conditions were better than on troop deck. The oldest was 81 and might be considered to be entitled to a bed rather than a hammock. One very decent family had a mentally defective boy, so we fixed them up, most comfortably of all the lot, in the cells! Before long we found they had let off one of the cells to another family who had some special difficulty. And so all evening it went on, this attempt to deal with special cases. But when we had to put 40 or so in hospital, the rest had to settle as well as they could on the floor (more correctly on the deck), on tables or in hammocks. They were apparently used to hard lying, and once they had realised that there was no more space in the hospital we got no more complaints.

From the American nurse we began to learn their history and to find that we were carrying some of the most interesting refugees in existence. They were classed as Greeks, but in fact they were Spanish Jews. Their wanderings had begun in 1940 odd when Jews were expelled from Spain and a number of the refugees were accepted by the Turks and settled in Salonica. There they had worked and prospered, but with fantastic obstinacy continued to be not merely Jews, but Spanish Jews, and their home language even now was Spanish.

By a strange trick of fate they owed their survival to this fact. When all the Greek Jews were rounded up the majority were sent to Poland or to some unknown, and it was feared final, destination. But our friends put in a claim to some sort of Spanish nationality, got the benefit of what must have been a very serious doubt in some Nazi's mind, and were packed off to Spain! Franco apparently thought little of them after keeping them in jail a few months shot them across to Casablanca. There our Americans took charge and told us of a weary journey across Africa, a short sea trip, another long train journey, and now a few more days at sea.

The nominal rolls which came with them showed them to be grouped in large families—almost clans—all with Spanish names.

We were intrigued at first to find a family amongst them called Christos, which seemed a peculiar name for a Jew, but on investigation we found this was a family of gypsies who had somehow got mixed with them. As experienced wanderers they carried much more equipment with them, including a monstrous silver-plated tea urn (a Samovar, we were told), which added no little distinction to their table.

We always suspected their corner of the deck being dirty, but they had so much baggage there that we could never find out how much dirt was hidden under it. But mostly they were very clean

people, and fairly tidy; their chief departure from the normal routine of a troopship was a tendency to use every available corner for washing clothes, even during the sacred ceremony of ship's inspection. They gave the impression of being for the most part people of some standing and education. Besides their Spanish and Greek almost all of them spoke French, and many had good baggage and the remains of good clothing.

What does the future hold for them? In a geographical sense they have completed the circle of many centuries, for one more train journey from our port was to a camp in Palestine. In Palestine some of them meant to stay; forty or so had permits and another hundred had applied and hoped to get permission to stay. But most of them, whatever their sentiments towards this land of their origin, were anxious above all things to get back to Greece and to rescue what remains there might be of their businesses in Salonica. Whether they got there in time to be involved in more trouble we do not know. But we have every faith that people who have survived their history of the last 500 years will still be found holding up their heads wherever the next turn of fortune's wheel may land them. And so far as we are concerned who took them through one short stage of their wanderings, we wish them good luck.

G. B. H.

Memorial Plaque to 145th Regiment, R.A.C. (D.W.R.) in Tunis.

A marble plaque, designed by a Leeds soldier, C.Q.M.S. R. Iredale, and erected by the 145th Regiment, Royal Armoured Corps (converted from the 8th Battalion, Duke of Wellington's Regiment), has been unveiled in the English Church of St. George in Tunis in memory of the men of the Regiment who lost their lives in the Tunisian campaign from Medjez-el-Bab to Cap Bon. Many of the men whose names are on the plaque came from the West Riding.

The Regiment left Africa before the unveiling but there was a simple unveiling ceremony conducted by the Rev. Isaac Dunbar, the padre who lived in Tunis throughout the German occupation.

The plaque is of grey marble with the 33rd and 76th badges and the R.A.C. badge in the centre and the scroll and motto underneath. The badges are in silver and gold and the lettering in gold and black.

The names on the plaque are as follows:—Majors T. A. Foweraker, A. S. C. Gibson and A. B. Kempster, Lt. C. J. S. Abbott, Sgt. J. Myers, L/Sgts. H. Gibson, G. Holmes, Cpl. J. H. S. Fox, L/Cpls. E. Frost and H. Gee and Troopers N. P. Smith, G. Hawbridge, G. H. Todd, C. H. Dobbs, E. Mortimer, G. G. Brown, W. Rutherford, J. Bonfield, R. Brady, F. Fasel, C. Wardle, A. Duncan, H. D. Ellis, G. Hamshaw, G. Robertson, J. Farr, G. Ackroyd, S. Andrews, A. Thackray, G. Robertson, G. W. Gribbin, T. M. Crossland and L. Rivers.

St. George's will, I think, become quite a Mecca when conditions are normal, as the Brigade of Guards and the K.O.Y.L.I. have also put up memorial plaques.

B. M.

[Unfortunately a photograph of the plaque is too indistinct to be reproduced.—Ed.]

Regimental Association Fund.

The above Fund, which is registered as a war charity, has been formed, with the following three main objects:—

- (1) To assist any man who has served in the Regiment with gifts or loans to help him to get back to civil life.
- (2) To assist any man who has served in the Regiment who has been injured during the war or whose health has been impaired by war service.
- (3) To assist dependants of men of the Regiment who have been killed in action or whose death is attributable to war service.

The calls on the Fund are likely to be heavy. Some 10,000 Dukes will be demobilised in the course of the next year or so.

All Regiments are making similar appeals in the areas they serve in peace time, and many of the Mayors and Chairmen of Urban District Councils in the Halifax area have promised their active support. We wish to ensure that all Dukes will be treated at least equally well as men of other regiments.

It is hoped that the response to the appeal will be a generous one. As the Fund is registered as a war charity anyone signing a deed of covenant to pay a fixed sum over a number of years will benefit the Fund to double the amount while income tax is 10s. in the £. Details concerning this can be obtained from the O.C., Regimental Depot Party, Duke of Wellington's Regiment, Halifax, to whom all subscriptions should be sent.

S. E. B.

MY NEW CAP.

This cap, G.S., I must confess
Suits not my style of beauty,
I only wear the beastly thing
Because it is my duty,
And if I put on something else,
The Adjutant would shoot me.

But soon, I pray, may come the day,
When having done my quota
Of coal fatigues, I say "Farewell"
And leap into my motor,
And merrily trundle up to town
To buy myself a Boater.

I know some chaps prefer tweed caps,
Bridegrooms affect a topper,
For horsey coves the billy-cock's
The only headgear proper,
While gay young things find pleasure still
Dehelmeting the copper.

Give me the straw that once I wore
At Henley's Royal Regatta
Midst coaches' oaths and coxs' squawks
And girls' light-hearted chatter.
What care I if facetious friends
Are rude about my hatter.

Bring back those sage and halcyon days,
'Ere man became a killer,
When through the long, hot afternoons
I flirted with Camilla,
My youth and vigour at the sculls,
Her beauty at the tiller.

So tempt not me with caps, S.D.
Or gaily coloured beret,
Whether it be as green as grass
Or ruddier than the cherry.
Such gauds may suit the paratroop,
But not yours humbly, very.

I do not ask for pluméd casque,
For bearskin or biretta,
For bonnet—Scotch, or such as worn.
By Great-aunt Henrietta.
All I desire's a shady straw,
The shabbier the better.

O world distraught! What ills are wrought
When nations start to wrangle;
Rebellion, terror, hate, disease,
Finances in a tangle;
And I must wear a silly hat
Set at a silly angle.

O. P.

Extracts from Letters from Germany.

Liaison H.Q. (Special),

B.L.A.,

15th May, 1945.

Yes, it certainly has been a great week, and I have been trying for days to write to you as I have lots to tell you. We have unfortunately left our farm house, and are now installed in three rather dingy suburban bungalows in Luneburg, which is not so nice, but nothing to complain about. I have only been here off and on, anyway.

My most glamorous activities have been to accompany "Monty" on his two meetings with Marshal Rokossovski who, and not Zhukov, has turned out to be our opposite number. On both occasions we flew up in Monty's private Dakota, which is very comfortable and upholstered in pale green leather.

The first meeting took place on our side at H.Q. 6th Airborne Division at Wismar on the Baltic coast. Rokossovski was received with a very smart guard of honour, provided by the Oxford and Bucks Light Infantry, and an artillery salute, while a Red Flag was broken alongside the Union Jack. There was then a great deal of photography and speech making on the steps of the Mess. We then went inside, and the two Commanders discussed the recent campaigns in front of a big map. This was interesting, as was Monty's announcement that the final and complete unconditional surrender of all German forces had been signed early that morning and would come into effect at midnight next day. This was news to almost everybody there, including the Russians.

After this, we had a stand-up buffet lunch. This was a mistake as the Russians are not used to eating standing up and, as they were being rather shy and unforthcoming anyway, the party was rather hard work. Rokossovski is a fine looking man and has a good sense of humour. Monty presented him with a signed photograph of himself.

On the way home we did a sight-seeing tour over Hamburg and Bremen. The destruction in both is colossal—acres and acres of nothing but empty shells of houses.

A few days later we did the return visit to the Soviet zone. We were met at the demarkation line by guides, and had about a ten-mile drive. Along the whole route there were Red Army soldiers in pairs at about 100 yards intervals, with red flags on their bayonets, the very smart and efficient women traffic police at all cross-roads, triumphal arches with greetings "to our gallant British allies" at the entry to all the villages—and not a German to be seen.

Monty was received by a guard of honour of Cossack cavalry, including light guns and a mounted band. After a general salute, they marched past at the trot. The Cossack commander was a very handsome, much medalled man on a beautiful horse; the rest of them were rather raggle taggle, but impressive with their waving sabres and hoarse war cries.

We then walked for about a quarter of a mile amid a sort of free-for-all feu de joie of very lights, rockets and artillery, to a house which had apparently been taken over for the occasion. It was a lovely small country house, somebody's summer shooting box, beautifully situated among trees by a lake. At the porch, Monty and Rokossovski were presented with large bouquets by two dozen Russian girls, and then after more photography, and the return gift of a portrait of Rokossovski, we were taken in and sat straight down to a typical Russian feast. This time, the Russians were, of course, on their own ground, and had no inhibitions, so a good time was had by all. Monty did his stuff very well but, of course, is not a keen party man. He overcame his principles sufficiently to drink a glass of vodka and some champagne, but the party did not develop into an orgy, which I think the Russians hoped it would. Even so, several people on both sides had had more than enough to drink before the end.

After the meal we had a first class Russian concert of singing and dancing, which lasted for an hour, and so back to the cars, which had meanwhile been decorated with bunches of flowers. It must be admitted that the Russians put on a good deal better show than we did, and were, I think, disappointed that we were not more strongly represented. Apart from Monty, there was only Gen. Barker, 12th Corps, and Gen. Bols, 6th Airborne Division, and myself, with a few A.D.Cs. and things. We are not very good at entertainment.

However, in the meantime, Kenneth had been accompanying Gen. Dempsey on similar parties with the Commander of the 49th Russian Army, General Grishin. These, for some reason, took place on the same day as ours and had been arranged first, which was why Ken. went with Gen. Dempsey and I with Monty. Lucky for me in that mine were the more notable occasions, though I gather the others were the better parties. Anyway, on the 18th, Gen. Grishin is coming here, and we are mobilising the whole of our interpreter staff and planning to do him proud.

Apart from parties, we are chiefly engaged at present on the exchange between us and the Russians of ex-prisoners of war, and my most interesting experience so far has been helping to arrange the evacuation of 9,000 British and American from a camp at Barth on the Baltic coast near Straslund. I went up to Wismar to try and arrange for their evacuation by road, but about an hour after I had arrived there an officer arrived from the camp with the news that there was an aerodrome near the camp and that the Russians would guarantee safe passage to our aircraft if we could arrange to evacuate them by air. To cut a long story short, we spent the whole night driving and telephoning and got to Barth at 6 a.m. with the news that the aircraft would start arriving at 2 p.m. I spent a most interesting morning in the camp, which, however, became rather trying as the time approached for the aircraft to arrive. The arrangements had been laid on very hurriedly and we had no communications with our side so had no means of knowing if they were proceeding according to plan. The ex-prisoners were, of course, in a state of tense excitement, and I was petrified with fear that there had been some delay or that the Russians had not had time to distribute orders to their artillery not to shoot our aircraft down. As it was, the first aircraft was sighted exactly at 2 p.m., and soon landed safely. It was a most exciting and moving moment—soon the Fortresses started coming in in waves of six, and as the first aircraft had brought an American Air General who was to control the evacuation, there was nothing more for me to do, so I decided to clear out as there was a Russian party brewing up for the evening, and I was a bit tired, having had no sleep the night before. So I drove back to Wismar to sleep, which I did soundly, in the room of John Wrightson, whom I think I mentioned in my last letter. The Russians had really been very good to our men in the camp since they liberated it about a fortnight ago, and allowed us to organise the evacuation exactly as we pleased.

I've been to Wismar off and on a good deal. It's an attractive place, though much damaged. The trip into the Soviet territory was most interesting, apart from the camp. Their area presents a picture of rural calm compared to ours, partly because all the Germans streamed into our zone to surrender and our forward areas are still chaotic with abandoned transport everywhere and enormous encampments of Germans just parked in the fields waiting until we can deal with them, and partly because the Russians have no heavy motor transport and the roads are practically empty except for Red Army men driving about in their little horse-drawn country carts or in old-fashioned dogcarts, etc., taken from the local farmers.

I and my driver came back alone without any sort of pass from the Russians and I was a bit doubtful if we should get through. Actually, I was only stopped twice; the first time, the sentry recognised the British car, which was very unusual in a Russian sentry, and waved us on at once; the second sentry demanded documents, so I showed him my British identity card, which impressed him a lot. *En route* I picked up five Americans who had broken away from Barth three days before to try and make their own way out. They were very sick when they heard that the camp was now in process of being evacuated.

I had a fantastic day on 3rd May, when the Germans first started surrendering in mass, which was before the actual official surrender was signed. I was up on the other side of the Elbe, and it was practically impossible to get along the roads for Germans streaming in in every kind of vehicle—motor

and horse drawn. At one point I got stuck for an hour and a half in a complete block. It was a narrow road on an embankment and some of the vehicles in front had got stuck or just been abandoned; others coming behind had double-banked, and in places triple-banked them, and as none of the Germans seemed to have any idea where they were heading for, they mostly just sat and waited for something to happen. They were a complete mixture of soldiers and civilians, men, women and children, and there were also a lot of our ex-prisoners in all sorts of vehicles which they had commandeered, some on bicycles and some even on horseback. We only got through eventually by forcing sufficient Germans to drive their vehicles over the embankment and thus clear a path. Altogether it was a very odd experience, and very satisfactory to have seen with one's own eyes the complete collapse of the German Army.

Luneburg is quite a pleasant town, but nothing outstanding. It is more or less undamaged. The spring is much later than with us and all the lilac is just coming into full bloom, which is nice, as there is masses of it—some of the country districts have long hedges of it.

26th May, 1945.

Life has been a good deal quieter since I last wrote, and the only big "do" has been a party given by General Dempsey for the Russian General Grishin, commanding 49th Army. This took place here. It started off with a parade with a guard of honour from the Grenadier Guards—very smart, and a selection of every kind of British tank, flame thrower, flail, etc., etc. After the parade we drove to General Dempsey's own H.Q., which is a very nice house. I understand it belongs to the director of the local brewery, whose wife was apparently American, and must have been responsible for the interior decoration, which is American Colonial style, very tastefully modernised, with very nice large windows. After some champagne cocktails—also very large—we sat down to a most excellent cold meal which was all ready laid out on the long table. I don't know where all the food came from, but it was a most impressive spread and very nicely prepared and set out with salads, etc.—to drink, champagne or hock and subsequently brandy. The china and glass was borrowed from Hamburg City Corporation for the occasion and was also very fine. After dinner we went out into the garden—most luckily it was a lovely day—and the massed pipers of 15th Division performed, with a short interlude of Highland dancing. Altogether it was a very good show, and a most successful party, and the only snag was that I had to conduct the Russians back to the border, which is a two-hour drive each way.

General Grishin's staff are a very nice lot, very cheerful and more forthcoming than most of their compatriots. They thoroughly enjoyed their day, and were most impressed with the pipers, who were very smart. None of the Russians had ever seen a kilt before, and General Barber, the Commander of 15th Division, who is 6ft. 8ins. tall, came in for a lot of attention. We have asked six of the staff to come to a private party with our Liaison H.Q., and they have all accepted, though it remains to be seen whether they will actually turn up. It will be something of a triumph if they do, particularly as the prospective guests are four lieutenant-generals and two major-generals.

The Army Commander's party has been, as I said, the only high light of the period. For the rest, we have been engaged on our present job, which is the exchange of prisoners of war and displaced persons—interesting and useful work. We have three posts on the border, and are at present passing 2,000 a day through each, and theoretically getting a similar number from the Russians, though they are a bit erratic. We hope to increase the numbers shortly as the transport situation improves. Our H.Q. remains at Luneberg, and Ken. and I spend generally alternate days visiting the posts, which is very pleasant when the weather is nice, as the country is very pretty, particularly round Schwerin and north of that. There is masses of broom in full bloom at the moment; which is most lovely.

On Thursday both Ken. and I went up to Wismar as Roy is there now. We had lunch with him and then went on to see the hand over of the day's 2,000 and to meet a new Soviet Colonel, who has just taken over their post in that area. Unfortunately he sat us straight down to another very solid meal which was rather a strain. Luckily, however, there was not much to drink—a bottle of yellow Chartreuse, followed by some Soviet red wine. He was very pleasant and friendly, and in fact the Russians all the way through are being very friendly and co-operative at the moment. That, I think, is about all I have to tell you. The news of Himmler's suicide was just as much a surprise to us as to you, although it happened just round the corner. A young Russian who was in here yesterday was most insistent that I should take him to see the body, but somewhat to my relief we weren't able to see it as the doctor was apparently examining the brain. The weather has turned miserably cold again, which is a pity, as we had some lovely days round last week-end.

There is a very attractive family of birds inhabiting our garden at present. I don't know what they are, but think they must be tree-creepers, of which I seem to have heard. That's what they do anyway. There are about six young ones, and the parents are teaching them to catch grubs in the apple trees.

Must stop now and have a bath, which is rather an odd business, as we have quite a nice enamel bath, but it is in the cellar and has no running water. There is, however, an old-fashioned copper near it which, after about an hour's heating up, produces quite a nice hot bath,

R. G. T.



"Stand to attention,
when you say "~~scram~~" to an officer!"

Letter written by the First Duke of Wellington.

A letter in the handwriting of the first Duke of Wellington has recently become the property of the Depot Museum. The subject matter is of no general interest, but the letter and envelope are well preserved; on the latter is the Duke's crest and the date, 21st October, 1830.

The letter was written to a Mr. Thomas Carter, whose son went to South Africa during the Boer war and died a few months ago. In the sale of his effects, the letter was purchased by the father of Captain P. L. H. Hathorn, who is now serving with our 1st Battalion.

Captain Hathorn has generously presented the letter to the Depot and it forms a very welcome addition to the Regimental Museum.

The present Duke of Wellington has seen the letter and states that he is sure that it is genuine.
S. E. B.

Obituary.

We regret to record the following deaths :—

BEESE.—At his home address, 28 Ashville Gardens, Halifax, ex-R.Q.M.S. Alfred Beese, on the 16th June, 1945, in his 76th year. Mr. Beese was born in Calcutta and joined the Regiment as a boy in 1883 and saw service with the 2nd Battalion in the West Indies. He was promoted colour-sergeant in 1896 and later to quartermaster-sergeant and was discharged to pension in 1907, when he took over management of Halifax Barracks canteen. Later he obtained the post of barrack warden in Halifax and retired from that position in 1930 when the position became redundant. Mr. Beese leaves a widow, three sons—all serving in the R.A.F.—and four daughters.

Captain C. Oliver writes :—“ ‘Alfie’ Beese, as he was known to his intimate friends, was a good man at any job he tackled. He was very good at cricket, bowled very well, and was also able to knock up runs very quickly when the opportunity came along. I remember one match in particular against Ryburn Valley when Beese had a great slogging day against the slow bowler, many balls being knocked right over the building ; he got many runs but I forget his score. In the Mess Beese was a very popular member, and ready at any time to assist in arranging any Mess function, of which there were many in those days. A cheeffer and loyal friend.”

HOYLE.—On 8th July, 1945, at his home address, 109 Bay Street, Stratford, Ontario, Canada, ex-C/Sgt. Thomas E. Hoyle. Mr. Hoyle joined at Halifax in 1884 and proceeded with the 2nd Battalion to Bermuda, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Jamaica and Barbados, where he served as Officers' Mess sergeant. He came home invalided in 1892 and served with the 1st Battalion for two years, when he was posted to the Depot, where he served as Officers' Mess sergeant, with the rank of colour-sergeant. From there he went to Keighley as instructor on the permanent staff of the 3rd Volunteer Battalion D.W.R. (now the 6th Battalion). He was discharged to pension in 1908 and took over a restaurant in that town. In 1913 he sold it and emigrated to Canada, obtaining a post as timekeeper in the Grand Trunk Railway Workshops at Stratford, Ontario. He was pensioned at the age of 70 in 1934. As a life member of the Old Comrades' Association, he kept contact with the Regiment and its activities by a regular correspondence with the secretary. Mr. Hoyle leaves a son and two daughters ; the late Mrs. Hoyle was a native of Halifax, N.S.

LAVERACK.—On 19th July, 1945, in Western Europe, killed by enemy-laid mines whilst on reconnaissance, C.S.M. Robert Victor Laverack, R.E. C.S.M. Laverack was the only son of Major T. V. Laverack, late Q.M. the 1st Battalion. He was born in Sheffield in 1920, while his father was serving there with the 2nd Battalion. He accompanied his father and mother to Egypt and Singapore and to Devonport in 1927 when Major Laverack joined the 1st Battalion there. At the age of 15 he entered the Boys' Army Technical Training School and passed into the Royal Engineers in 1938. In 1939 he went out to France with the Expeditionary Force, and was evacuated to England through Cherbourg. He reached the rank of sergeant in 1942 and went out to North Africa with an army troops company R.E., and after seeing much service there was promoted C.S.M. He went on to Italy, where he volunteered for a course of instruction in mine warfare. In March, 1945, he was drafted to Germany and was serving there at the time of his death.

WINN.—On 20th May, 1945, at his home, 5 Poplar Avenue, Sowerby Bridge, ex-R.S.M. Harry Winn, in his 64th year. Mr. Winn joined the Regiment at Halifax on 28th November, 1898, and saw service during the South African campaign, being awarded the Queen's and King's medals. After his discharge in 1920 he was employed by Messrs. Siddall and Hilton, Sowerby Bridge, until the outbreak of the present war, when he voluntarily joined the recruiting staff and the West Riding Special Constabulary. He was later appointed local fuel overseer for Sowerby Bridge and it was while holding that position that he was taken seriously ill and died after a very short illness. He leaves a widow and one son, the latter serving in the R.A.O.C.

Captain C. Oliver writes :—“ I first remember Winn as a corporal after the South African war, then again as a colour-sergeant in the 1st Battalion, and afterwards as R.S.M. He was always a very quiet unassuming man, efficient at all times, a good disciplinarian and a very good comrade. He did not take any active part in outdoor sport but was always interested and ready to give a helping hand in the organisation of games, etc.”

Our Contemporaries.

We have to acknowledge with thanks the following regimental magazines :—*The Dragon* (May, June, July, August), *The Snapper* (May, June, July, August), *The St. George's Gazette* (April, May, June, July), *The Suffolk Regimental Gazette* (June), *The Lion and The Rose* (Summer), *The Journal of The South Wales Borderers* (May), *The Die Hards* (March, June), *The Sapper* (May, June, July, August), *The Royal Army Ordnance Gazette* (May, June, July, August), *Our Empire* (May, June, July, August).

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